

The Presence of the Past:  
History, Memory, and the Making of St. Jan Hus

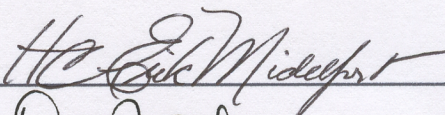
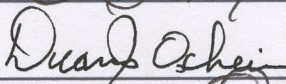
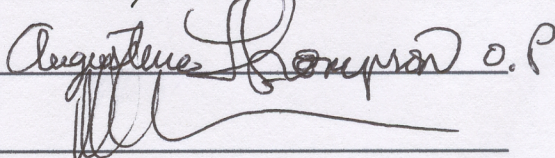
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## Abstract

Jan Hus, a popular preacher and reforming priest from Prague, was executed for heresy by the Council of Constance on July 6, 1415. This dissertation examines the commemoration of Hus by both fifteenth-century Bohemian religious dissidents and sixteenth-century German Lutherans in order to see how a heretic could be transformed into a saint through the memorialization and veneration of his followers. This process of transformation, which took place over nearly 150 years, was ultimately an attempt by both groups to create a usable past for themselves – a past in which neither popes nor emperors were the sole determinants of orthodoxy, but where adherence to biblical norms and the willingness to suffer were the true marks of sanctity. The commemoration of Hus took place in a variety of media, and it was the work of many individuals and groups. Thus, this work traces the use of sermons, liturgy, vernacular song, visual artwork, pamphlets, theological tracts, and religious plays to create and celebrate the memory of Jan Hus. The analysis of these sources reveals that the commemoration of Hus changed and developed over time; depending on the specific exigencies that confronted the Bohemian Hussites and German Lutherans, different aspects of Hus's teachings and life became more prominent in representations and memorializations of him. Within the variations that existed among the commemorations, one major evolutionary trend persisted. Whereas Hus's Bohemian descendants considered him to be a traditional patron saint and holy man who merited liturgical commemoration and the celebration of a feast day in his honor, sixteenth-century Lutherans considered Hus to have been a

prophet of their own movement and the first man to have spoken out against the papal Antichrist in Rome. Despite this shift from patron to prophet, Hus maintained a central place in both groups' relationship to their past: a past that was constructed, selective, ideologically useful, and intimately connected to the conflicts and interests of the present.



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## Abbreviations

AČ	<i>Archiv Český</i>
ARG	<i>Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte</i>
BRRP	<i>Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice</i>
CV	<i>Communio Viatorum</i>
Documenta	F. Palacký, ed., <i>Documenta mag. Joannis Hus: vitam, doctrinam, causam in Constantiensi concilio actam et controversias de religione in Bohemia, annis 1403-1418 motas illustrantia</i>
FRB	<i>Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum</i>
<i>Geschichtsschreiber</i>	Karl Höfler, ed., <i>Geschichtsschreiber der Husitischen Bewegung in Böhmen</i>
<i>Historia et Monumenta</i>	Matthias Flacius Illyricus, ed., <i>Joannis Huss et Hieronymi Pragensis confessorum Christi historia et monumenta</i>
PL	J.P. Migne, ed., <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, sive bibliotheca universalis, integra, uniformis, commoda, oeconomica, omnium SS. Patrum, doctorum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum</i>
PMOO	C.G. Bretschneider, ed., <i>Philippi Melanthonis Opera quae supersunt Omnia</i>
<i>Regulae Veteris</i>	Matej of Janov, <i>Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti</i>
SRS	G.A. Stenzel, ed., <i>Scriptores Rerum</i>

*Silesiacarum*

- UB* F. Palacký, ed., *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte des Hussitenkrieges vom Jahre 1419-1436*
- UBZG* F. Palacký, ed., *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte Böhmens und seiner Nachbarländer im Zeitalter Georgs von Podiebrad*
- WA* *D. Martin Luthers Werke*
- WABr* *D. Martin Luthers Werke: 4. Abt.: Briefwechsel*
- WATR* *D. Martin Luthers Werke: 2. Abt.: Tischreden*
- Zwischen Zeiten* F. Seibt, ed., *Jan Hus: Zwischen Zeiten, Völkern, Konfessionen: Vorträge des internationalen Symposions in Bayreuth vom 22. bis 26. September 1993*

## Introduction

### *“Cuius hodie memoriam agimus:”* History, Memory, and the Legacies of Jan Hus

#### Approaches to the Past and Early Modern Religious Reform

Jan Hus was a reforming priest and popular preacher from Prague who was executed at the Council of Constance in 1415 for his supposed adherence to heretical sacramental beliefs and his unwillingness to submit to the council's authority. In the wake of his death, Hus became a patron saint to both dissident Bohemians in the fifteenth century and sixteenth-century Lutherans, but the ways in which the groups remembered him were very different. The Bohemians, who came to call themselves Utraquists after their practice of taking communion in both kinds (*sub utraque specie*), treated Hus as a traditional martyr-saint, replete with a feast day and liturgy. The Lutherans hailed him as a prophet of their movement and the first expositor of the nascent gospel. This dissertation is ultimately about the different ways in which these nascent religious movements used Jan Hus to authorize their respective dissents. On the one hand, traditional conceptions of sanctity and liturgy informed the Utraquists, who established a national church on the basis of traditional Catholic notions, but with unique objects of devotion. On the other hand, the Lutherans hearkened back to Hus's opposition to the papal church and perceived his execution as both a warning against Catholicism and a mandate for church reform. In the context of the Lutherans' polemical battles with the Catholic church, Hus evolved from a misunderstood, essentially catholic reformer to a radical critic of the Roman



church whose apocalyptic speculations and apocryphal predictions were fulfilled by the Lutheran church.

At the core of this dissertation are two questions: *why* did Utraquists and Lutherans commemorate Jan Hus as a founding saint and prophetic forerunner; and *how* did authors and artists from both traditions make use of available media to disseminate their ideas about Hus's importance in the rhetoric and practice of reform? Regarding the first question, it is my belief that both the fifteenth-century Bohemians and the sixteenth-century Lutherans made strategic use of Hus as the personification of the struggle between the true church, understood as a suffering minority within the larger, visible church on earth, and the institutional church. This conflict was eternal – it had begun with Cain and Abel – and through his preaching and death Hus was recognized as an avatar of this cosmic battle. Thus, the Bohemians venerated Hus as an ideal priest and holy man whose martyrdom had sanctified an entire nation and protected it from the Antichrist's attacks. For Lutherans, Hus's writings and his execution proved that he had been an opponent of the papal Antichrist and a crucial forerunner to their movement who gave witness to the existence of a hidden –chain of witnesses" that had only become visible with the rise of the Lutheran movement.<sup>1</sup> In both of these contexts, to commemorate Hus was to recognize and identify with that which he had died for: in one case, the establishment of a Bohemian national church free from he

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<sup>1</sup> On the development of the theory of the chain of witnesses among Lutheran authors, see: Robert Kolb, *For All the Saints: Changing Perceptions of Martyrdom and Sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation* (Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 1987); and idem., "God's Gift of Martyrdom: The Early Reformation Understanding of Dying for the Faith," *Church History* 64 (1995), 399-411.

domination of the papacy, and in the other, the revival of the true church and the exposure of the Antichrist who had perverted the institutional church.

This analysis of why the figure of Hus came to be significant in various religious and polemical contexts ultimately illuminates how Lutherans and Utraquists commemorated Hus in order to justify and legitimize their dissent from the traditional church. The Utraquist church venerated Hus with the traditional tools of Catholic liturgy and piety. Hus became the subject of a saint's life and *passio*, which were read aloud during the celebration of his feast day. These readings took place within the context of the Mass, and Utraquists composed new liturgical songs, poems, and chants to celebrate their patron. Preachers delivered sermons in praise of Hus, and vernacular songs were written and sung in his honor. Monumental artwork and manuscript illuminations visually commemorated Hus's death and vividly depicted the practices and beliefs for which he had been martyred. Indeed, by 1500 the Utraquist clergy and laity had granted Jan Hus all of the trappings of a saint, and the annual veneration of him as a divine patron and protector was one of the most distinctive marks of the Czech national church.<sup>2</sup> I would argue that the Utraquist leaders who employed traditional forms of veneration, but chose a new, truly holy subject for them, were making a decisive claim to be the representatives of the true church. They were identifying themselves with Jan Hus, who was officially a heretic, but actually the

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<sup>2</sup> On the importance of Hus's feast day as a site for the articulation of a Czech national consciousness, see: David Holeton, "The Office of Jan Hus: An Unrecorded Antiphony in the Metropolitan Library of Estergom," in J. Alexander, ed., *Time and Community: In Honor of Thomas Julian Talley* (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press, 1990), 137-152; Joel Seltzer, *Framing Faith, Forging a Nation: Czech Vernacular Historiography and the Bohemian Reformation, 1430-1530* (Unpublished Dissertation: Yale University, 2005), especially chapter 4; and the second half of: František Šmahel, "The Idea of the 'Nation' in Hussite Bohemia," R. Samsour, trans., *Historica* 16 (1969), 143-247; and *Historica* 17 (1970), 93-197.

embodiment of the values (patience, humility, purity, and the desire to preach) that had been pervasive in the apostolic church. The Utraquists' recognition of this reality, and their own experience of suffering at the hands of Catholic bishops and kings, therefore marked the Utraquists as the only Christians who were actually worthy of that name.

In spite of the fact that the traditional veneration of saints faded over the course of the first decades of the Reformation, the influence of holy men did not. Hus never gained the liturgical trappings of canonization in the sixteenth century, but Lutherans did make use of a variety of new media to marshal the symbol of Saint Jan Hus, and the historical reality of opposition to Rome that he personified, to overcome specific historical exigencies and demonstrate the Roman church's enslavement by the devil.<sup>3</sup> As print media became the main vehicle for the conflict between Martin Luther, his followers, and the papacy, Hus appeared in multiple editions of his own works, illustrated pamphlets, plays, printed sermons, woodcuts, political writings, and church histories. In all of these genres, Hus's writings and other Bohemian works commemorating him served as key elements in the creation of a broader, eschatologically oriented historical narrative that culminated in the Lutheran reform. In particular Hus came to be known as a prophet of Luther's mission through the widespread belief that, before his death, Hus had said: —They will roast a goose now (because Hus means goose' [in Czech]), but in one hundred years they will hear a swan sing, and they shall

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<sup>3</sup> On this continuity in conceptions of sanctity (if not in the liturgical veneration of them), see: Kolb, *For All the Saints*, 4ff. See also: Carol Piper Heming, *Protestants and the Cult of Saints in German Speaking Europe, 1517-1531* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State UP, 2003).



suffer.”<sup>4</sup> Given the apparent fulfillment of this prediction in the work and person of Martin Luther, Hus assumed a prominent role in Lutheran historical frameworks as a divinely inspired seer who had foreseen and inspired the culmination of human history. This connection was publicized in pamphlets, plays, woodcuts, and even commemorative coins and medals, and so the story of Hus’s resistance, prophecy, and martyrdom came to occupy a central place in the publications and artistic production of the German reformation.<sup>5</sup>

The various media that the Utraquists and Lutherans used to commemorate Hus, and the differing conceptions of sanctity that informed them, showed the two churches’ different approaches to the past. The Utraquists’ liturgical commemoration of Hus was ultimately intended to preserve the *memoria* of their patron saint. As scholars such as David D’Avray and Otto Gerhard Oexle have argued, medieval liturgy was intended to reintegrate the dead saint into the living community of the church.<sup>6</sup> Especially through intercessory prayer, the saint was given a vital role in the church while the living worshipers

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<sup>4</sup> This quote is from Luther’s *Glosse auf das vermeinte kaiserliche Edikt* (1531). See: *WA* 30, pt. 3, 321-388, 387: –Sie werden itzt eine gans braten (denn Hus heisst eine gans), Aber uber hundert jaren werden sie einen schwanen singen hoeren, Den sollen sie leiden.” On this prophecy and its role in Reformation polemics, see: Gustav Adolf Benrath, –Die sogenannten Vorreformatoren in ihrer Bedeutung für die frühe Reformation,” in B. Moeller, ed., *Die frühe Reformation in Deutschland als Umbruch* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998), 157-166; and Robert Scribner, –Incombustible Luther: The Image of the Reformer in Early Modern Germany,” *Past and Present* 110 (1986), 38-68, 41-42.

<sup>5</sup> For an extensive analysis of the images of Hus contained in Reformation pamphlets, including illustrations, see the catalogue from an exposition on the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther’s death: *Luther mit dem Schwan: Tod und Verklärung eines grossen Mannes* (Wittenberg: Schelzky & Jeep, 1996), especially pp. 119-28. See also: Robert Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford UP, 1994), especially 220-224.

<sup>6</sup> Otto Gerhard Oexle, –Memoria und Memorialbild,” in K. Schmid and J. Wollasch, eds., *Memoria: Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1984), 384-440; and idem., –Memoria und Memorialüberlieferung im früheren Mittelalter,” *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976), 70-95.

affirmed that the sacred social bonds that defined the church could not be broken by death.<sup>7</sup> The Lutherans' incorporation of Hus into their tradition as a forerunner and prophet, however, never sought to make him an active participant in their sacred community; rather, Lutheran authors made Hus a vital participant in the eternal struggle that had culminated in the establishment of their church in the sixteenth century. Hus became a vital link in a continuous apocalyptic and prophetic history that was nearing its ultimate and long awaited end.<sup>8</sup> In contrast to some contemporary scholars, however, I would reject the view that the Lutherans' understanding of the past, and their move away from traditional conceptions of *memoria*, created a sense of history that was —~~p~~rfane, finite, finished, and separate."<sup>9</sup> Rather, history became a sacred drama in which many actors, including Hus, played out an essential (and eternal) conflict between God and the Devil. This drama was approaching its climax in the sixteenth century, but that climax was dependent on, and inextricably linked to, the previous actions that had led to its culmination in the German reformation. The execution of Hus and the actions of his followers were, therefore, understood to have great significance as typological parallels to the development of the Lutheran movement, and

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<sup>7</sup> On the social bonds and obligations that linked the living and dead in medieval society and the church, see: Patrick Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994); and *idem.*, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> On the apocalyptic dimension of Lutheran church history, see: Irena Backus, *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation (1378-1615)* (Boston: Brill, 2003); Robin Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1988), especially the first chapter; and John Headley, *Luther's View of Church History* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1963).

<sup>9</sup> See especially: Craig Koslofsky, "From Presence to Remembrance: the Transformation of Memory in the German Reformation," in A. Confino and P. Fritzsche, eds., *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture* (Chicago: U. of Illinois Press, 2002), 25-38, 34.

through prophecy Hus's words and actions attained relevance as an eschatological projection of the future that awaited the Lutherans and, indeed, the whole world.

### Towards of Synthesis of Religious Commemoration

The commemoration of Hus and the development of usable pasts in the Bohemian and German reformations have not gone unstudied by previous scholars. Many individual authors have considered the cult of Jan Hus in Bohemia and the propagation of the links between Hus and Luther in the sixteenth century; the problem is that no one has taken a long view of the memorialization of Hus or compared the purposes and patterns of commemoration in the Czech and German lands, respectively. I therefore view this dissertation as an opportunity to build upon and synthesize the extant body of scholarship that has illuminated a number of instances and episodes of commemoration in order to situate individual authors and works within a broader narrative about the development and role of distinctive engagements with the past in dissident religious movements. This dissertation is not, however, merely an effort to extend the temporal scope of previous examinations of the commemoration of Jan Hus. Rather, it is an effort to understand how actors in the past made use of a variety of technologies, literary forms, and rituals in order to communicate their religious ideas to broad segments of their societies. By examining a number of different genres of texts, styles of cultural performances, and forms of oral discourse, it is my hope to paint a more complete portrait of how religious leaders sought to convince their various

audiences that their idiosyncratic (and technically heretical) ideas were worthy of consideration and acceptance.

There has certainly been a significant output in recent scholarship that has focused on the use of various media in the dissemination of religious ideas in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, although most of it has focused on specific genres, cities, or short periods of time. David Holeton, for instance, has found and edited a number of liturgical texts for the celebration of Hus's feast day on July 6.<sup>10</sup> Jana Fojtíková has studied Czech vernacular songs about Hus, authors such as Jan Royt and V.V. Štech have found and analyzed a number of pictorial representations of the Bohemian martyr, and Ota Halama is in the midst of a project that will explore the themes of all extant fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sermons preached on July 6.<sup>11</sup> While many of these scholars know each other and present their work at the same conferences (notably the biennial conference on the Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice), their relationships have not inspired synthetic work on the commemoration of Hus.

Similarly, more analytic works on the Bohemia reformation as a whole tend to divide the fifteenth century into discrete blocks of time. Most scholarship, notably that of Howard Kaminsky, has focused on the period from Hus's death until 1436, when the Bohemians reached an accommodation with the Council of

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<sup>10</sup> See: Holeton, "The Office of Jan Hus:" and *idem.*, "O Felix Bohemia – O Felix Constantia: The Liturgical Commemoration of Saint Jan Hus," in *Zwischen Zeiten*, 385-401.

<sup>11</sup> Jana Fojtíková, "Hudební doklady Husova kultu z 15. a 16. století: Příspěvek ke studiu husitské tradice v době přebělohorské," *Miscellanea Musicologica* 29 (1981), 51-142; Jan Royt, "Konografie Mistra Jana Husa v 15. a 18. století," in M. Drda et al., eds., *Husitský Tábor Supplementum I* (Tábor: Sborník Husitského Muzea, 2001), 405-451; and V.V. Štech, "Jan Hus ve Výtvarném Umění," in J. Hanuš, ed., *Mistr Jan Hus v životě a památkách českého lidu* (Prague: August Čaluda, 1915), 81-98. Dr. Halama has not yet published his work, but has been generous enough to share his initial findings with me.

Basel and agreed to a peace treaty known as the *Compactata*.<sup>12</sup> After this agreement, the Bohemian reformation lost or marginalized much of the religious dynamism that had previously motivated it, so many studies end with the Basel agreement or refer to the ensuing 184 years of Utraquist history in a cursory manner. Even in studies concerned with the Bohemian reform after Basel, authors have subdivided the fifteenth century; the era of George of Poděbrady's influence and reign in Bohemia (roughly 1450-1471) have been the subject of two excellent, if dated, English monographs, while the German scholar Winfried Eberhard has focused his wonderful analyses of politics and religion in Bohemia to the years following 1478.<sup>13</sup> The most recent English work on the Bohemian Reformation, Thomas Fudge's *The Magnificent Ride*, does cover the entire fifteenth century. His emphasis on popular religious mentalities lends his work a synchronic character, however, so it is difficult to gain a sense of the overall narrative of the development of the Utraquist church.<sup>14</sup> Even the magisterial and massively learned three-volume German edition of František Šmahel's *Die Hussitische Revolution*, easily the most complete history of the Hussite movement and Utraquist church, is primarily concerned with historiography and the formative, radical years of the Bohemian reformation.<sup>15</sup> Despite the insight and

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<sup>12</sup> See particularly his monograph: *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1967).

<sup>13</sup> On George's reign, see: Otakar Odložilík, *The Hussite King: Bohemia in European Affairs 1440-1471* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1965); and Frederick Heymann, *George of Bohemia: King of Heretics* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965). On late fifteenth-century Bohemia, see especially: Winfried Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände in Böhmen, 1478-1530* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> František Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, A. Patchovsky, ed., T. Krzenck, trans. (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2002).

usefulness of all of these studies, the fifteenth-century Bohemian reformation has not yet received a treatment like that of Zdeněk David's on the sixteenth-century Czech church.<sup>16</sup> It is my hope to address this strange lacuna in the scholarship on late medieval and early modern religious history.

Over the last fifty years there have also been a number of individual articles and essays that have considered the discovery and commemoration of Hus in the Lutheran reformation. Many of these studies have, however, focused exclusively on the theological relationship between Hus and Luther; they have tended to ask how closely Hus's ideas conformed to Luther's, or how clearly Luther understood Hus's theological positions on issues such as justification by faith, the pope's position within the church, or the sacraments.<sup>17</sup> More recent studies have moved beyond the relationship between Hus and Luther, and their authors have explored how other reformation authors "canonized" Hus in their works.<sup>18</sup> This recognition of Hus as a proto-Lutheran martyr was part of the more general Lutheran establishment of their own church history, replete with its own saints, which typically incorporated anyone and everyone who had ever opposed the papacy.<sup>19</sup> These articles, despite their move past the question of Hus's

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<sup>16</sup> I refer here to David's *Finding the Middle Way: The Utraquists' Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2003), which is a monographic adaptation of many of his earlier articles on sixteenth-century Czech Utraquism.

<sup>17</sup> On these issues, see: Walter Delius, "Luther und Huss," *Lutherjahrbuch* 38 (1971), 9-25; Bernhard Lohse, "Luther und Huss," *Luther* 36 (1965), 108-122; S. Harrison Thompson, "Luther and Bohemia," *ARG* 44 (1953), 160-181; and Scott Hendrix, "We Are All Hussites? Hus and Luther Revisited," *ARG* 65 (1974), 134-161.

<sup>18</sup> See, for instance: Robert Kolb, "Saint John Hus' and Jerome Savonarola, Confessor of God: The Lutheran 'Canonization' of Late Medieval Martyrs," *Concordia Journal* 17 (1991), 404-418; and "Jan Hus und der Hussitismus in den Flugschriften des ersten Jahrzehnts der Reformation," in H.-J. Köhler, ed., *Flugschriften als Massenmedium der Reformationszeit* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), 291-307.

<sup>19</sup> On this process, see: Euan Cameron, "Medieval Heretics as Protestant Martyrs," in D. Wood, ed., *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), 185-207.

correspondence to Luther's theological positions, have too often merely catalogued sixteenth-century publications of Hus's works or have failed to examine the role he played in specific Lutheran polemics against the Catholic church. Heiko Oberman has come closest to what I do in this dissertation in his 1999 essay on the importance of eschatology in understanding the links between Hus and Luther.<sup>20</sup> This thematic focus allowed Oberman to emphasize how Luther himself chose to highlight the eschatological components of Hus's thought and the parallelism of their roles as apocalyptic prophets in the renewal of the gospel. I hope to add a broader comparative element to this type of investigation, both by including fifteenth-century Bohemian commemorations of Hus in this dissertation and by examining the specific debates and arguments in which Hus played a vital role in the German reformation. Instead of just analyzing Hus's place within the broad contours of sixteenth-century polemics and historical thought, it is my goal to explore how specific conflicts between the Utraquists and the Catholics, and between the Lutherans and the Catholics, yielded historical and commemorative responses that were tailored to meet the needs of those moments.

### The Contexts of Commemoration

I would suggest that the different technologies of commemoration that differentiated the Utraquists and the Lutherans, as well as their distinctive sensibilities to the past, ultimately influenced the *how* part of this dissertation, even though I argue that they did not affect the *why*. Whether we are discussing a

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<sup>20</sup> Heiko Oberman, "Hus and Luther: Prophets of a Radical Reformation," in C. Pater and R. Petersen, eds., *The Contentious Triangle: Church, State, and University* (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, 1999), 135-166.



rhymed liturgical song or a printed pamphlet decrying the fallibility of church councils, both of these sources ultimately employed the figure of Jan Hus as a personification of true Christianity vis-à-vis the false, institutional church in order to justify the veneration of the former and the rejection of the latter. This common impulse drove the commemorations of Hus that form the core of this dissertation, but historical circumstances dictated when these commemorations were produced and which elements of Hus's story came to the forefront in memorials to him.

This dissertation therefore traces how historical exigencies shaped commemorations of Hus over nearly a century and a half, and how commemorative practices helped to define and articulate the founding narratives of two different churches and to sustain those churches through series of religious, political, and military challenges to their legitimacy. Underlying this organization is the thesis that the sharpening of political and religious tensions in a variety of contexts led to spikes in the production of commemorative materials. It was primarily in times of particular strife that the example of the martyred Hus became evidently relevant and the story of his resistance and victory especially inspiring to those who claimed to be his heirs.

This dissertation is divided into two parts and seven chapters. The first part of the dissertation covers the commemoration of Hus in the Bohemian context from the time of his death until about 1500. The first chapter of the dissertation deals with the background of the Hussite movement, Hus's life and preaching, and his death. It also details the very earliest commemoration of Hus by a witness to his martyrdom, Petr of Mladoňovice, a Bohemian priest, Johannes

Barbatus, and the leader of the Bohemian reform after Hus's death, the preacher Jakoubek of Stříbro. The argument of this chapter is that Hus's words and deeds at Constance, as well as the efforts of Jakoubek and Petr, decisively cast Hus as a martyred saint, rather than as a condemned heretic. Both Petr's and Barbatus's accounts, and Hus's own correspondence, conformed his experience in Constance to that of the earliest saints and Christ himself. The establishment of this conformity in the immediate aftermath of Hus's death allowed the Bohemians to look past the institutional church's condemnation of him and acknowledge his place among the martyred saints of the true church. The second chapter looks past 1415 and uses the veneration of Hus in order to answer a key question: how did the Bohemian reformation develop from the execution of one man to a rebellion against the nation's king and the universal church in only four years? In this chapter, I argue that in these years the Bohemians developed a national martyr complex, and that they generalized the suffering of Hus to the entire Czech people. With Hus as their example, and having recognized the necessity of suffering for divine truth, the Bohemians in the 1410s became convinced that it was their duty to shrug off the authority of the papacy and its political allies in order to recreate God's earliest church in the Czech lands. Hus's death inspired a sense of "national messianism" among the Bohemians, and revolution thus became a legitimate option in the course of the new Israel's fulfillment of its obligations to God.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> On the notion of national messianism in the Czech context, see: Rudolf Urbánek, "Český mesianismus ve své době hrdinské," in idem., *Z Husitského Věku: Výbor historických úvah a studií* (Prague: NČAV, 1957), 7-28; and Šmahel, "The Idea of the Nation," especially 201-205.

The third and fourth chapters trace the long term political and religious developments that resulted from the revolution in 1419. Chapter three analyzes Roman efforts to eradicate the Hussite church in the 1420s, with particular attention to the rhetoric and reality of holy war between the Czechs and their neighbors. It then turns to the conciliatory efforts that followed on the heels of five failed crusades against the Hussites, and the Bohemians' efforts to establish a viable national church that would institutionalize and stabilize the gains made by the Hussite movement in the previous decades. The overall argument of this chapter is that in spite of the Hussite movement's need to sacrifice (or at least marginalize) some of its most radical and dynamic elements in order to become the Utraquist church, the Bohemians consistently turned to the words and example of Jan Hus throughout their negotiations with Catholic leaders in order to justify their changing relationship to the secular and religious hierarchies of the wider world. The fourth and final chapter of the dissertation's first part narrates the struggles that accompanied Utraquism's attempts to coexist with Catholicism, both within the Czech lands and in Christendom as a whole. In particular, it tracks the development of liturgical commemorations of Jan Hus for July 6, which became a sort of cultural "immune system" that allowed the Utraquists to differentiate themselves from Rome and assert their connections to the earliest, heroic Hussites who had begun the Bohemian reform.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The notion of ritual practice as a culture's immune system is from: Jan Assmann, "Der zweidimensionale Mensch: das Fest als Medium des kollektiven Gedächtnisses," in idem., ed., *Das Fest und das Heilige: Religiöse Kontrapunkte zur Alltagswelt* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1991), 13-30, especially 23-24; and idem., *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: C.H. Beck, 1992), 140ff.

Throughout these two chapters, one of the main emphases is still the concept of Christian suffering: its central role in Bohemian conception of the church, the Catholic Church's efforts to marginalize it in its ongoing debate with the Utraquists, and Hus's embodiment of Bohemia's suffering and his centrality in the rhetoric of conflict throughout the fifteenth century.

By the end of the fifteenth century, Utraquism had truly established itself as the national church of the Czech lands. The second half of the dissertation turns to the German Lutheran movement in order to consider how commemorations of Jan Hus helped to shape and sustain the development of a second dissident movement and church. Chapter five considers the role of Hus in the earliest stages of the reformation conflict, with particular attention to Luther's discovery of Hus as a forerunner and the initial publication of works attributed to Hus that supported Lutheran ideas. This chapter analyzes how Hus was transformed into an apocalyptic and prophetic witness against the papal Antichrist with whom Luther currently struggled. This transformation was largely due to the publication by Otto Brunfels, a Strasbourg schoolmaster and botanist, of a number of apocalyptic texts that were mistakenly attributed to Hus. Thus, the explosion of printed media in sixteenth-century Germany allowed both widespread familiarity with the Bohemian reformer, Jan Hus, and the misrepresentation of Hus's ideas and emphases. Chapter six moves into the 1530s in order to examine the use of Hus's execution by Lutherans in their conflict with Pope Paul III over church councils. In 1536 the pope attempted to convoke a general church council to settle the religious schism in Germany and begin the reform of the church, but Luther and

his followers, especially Johannes Agricola, presented Hus's death as evidence of the gross errors that councils were capable of. This chapter also examines the use of novel media, particularly plays, to publicize the dispute over council and the story of Hus's execution, and this analysis points to the incorporation of all available media in the debate between the Lutheran and Catholic churches. As in the fifteenth century, the interpretation of Jan Hus's execution became a linchpin in the presentation of the fundamental and intractable differences between two alternate understandings of authority in the church.

In the final chapter, I conclude the dissertation by examining the incorporation of Hus into Lutheran church histories at mid-century. My emphasis in this chapter is on the ways in which Lutherans cited the example of Hus and his followers in order to endure the challenges they faced after the death of Luther in 1546 and the outbreak of war with the Catholic Emperor Charles V in 1547. Lutherans faced a number of crises – ideological, political, and military – in the late 1540s, and in response to these they constructed Lutheran church histories to demonstrate how God had sustained his church and its leaders in times of trouble. In these histories, Hus assumed a central place as one of the fearless witnesses who had opposed the papal Antichrist and sustained the suffering people of God. He had also foretold the eventual defeat of that Antichrist, even as his actions inaugurated the eschatological process that would result in the true church's victory. In these histories, then, Hus became not just a forerunner of Luther's movement, but of the imminent return of Christ and the vindication of his church. These three chapters all suggest that as exigencies changed in the German

reformation, so too did the commemoration of Hus. Although the Bohemian reformer was consistently represented as a martyr whose work had foreshadowed and anticipated the completion of reform in the Lutheran movement, his critique of the papal church, his trial and martyrdom, and his prophetic voice alternately came to the fore depending on the circumstances that spurred the publication and dissemination of sixteenth-century Hussitica.

The chapters of this dissertation move chronologically from the death of Hus and the origins of the Hussite movement up until the incorporation of Hus into Lutheran church histories in the 1550s. Underlying the different circumstances and sources of each chapter, however, is a continuous emphasis on the presence of the past in the polemics and ideology of the Utraquist and Lutheran churches throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By demonstrating this essential continuity, it is my hope to break down three *de facto* barriers that often confine early modern historians. The first of these is a spatial border that often keeps our field of vision limited to one nation or linguistic group. The second is a temporal barrier between “medieval” and “early modern” history that tends to divide European history around 1500, particularly if one is interested in religious history. Finally, there is an analytical barrier that often prevents us from employing different types of sources and placing them side by side in order to assess the full range of media that early modern people were exposed to. Liturgists read liturgy; political historians read political narratives and diplomatic texts; scholars of religion read saints’ lives and sermons; social historians read pamphlets. This is a schematic view, to be sure, but it all too often

has a foundation in scholars' practice. By maintaining a narrow thematic focus on the commemoration of Jan Hus in this dissertation, I have tried to create a wedge that allows us to prize open these barriers and acknowledge the impulses and ideas that moved across the notional boundaries that divide the Czech and German cultural spheres, the medieval and early modern periods, and the disciplines of history and religious studies.

With this research, I have also tried to take seriously the challenge of Constantine Fasolt, who, in a series of provocative publications, has demanded that historians own up to the simple fact that the writing of history is an unmistakably political act, and that scholarly reconstructions of the past are often (or perhaps always) based upon the political and social interests of the present.<sup>23</sup> Fasolt also points out "history's origin in the great early modern war on medieval forms of order," and that it was used as a "weapon" against forms of ecclesiastical and secular government whose claims to eternal and ultimate authority had become unsustainable.<sup>24</sup> This dissertation is therefore a story of that origin, and an affirmation of Fasolt's thesis about the development of modern historiography. It is also a story, though, of the past's ambiguity, and of the ways in which opponents and interlocutors could interpret the same events and still reach opposite conclusions. In the case of the commemoration of Jan Hus in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the central notion that the past was ripe for manipulation in current debates became part of more fascinating phenomenon in

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<sup>23</sup> The most substantial treatment of this theme is in his: *The Limits of History* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 2004). See also his elaboration on the themes raised in this book, with responses from other scholars, in: idem., "History and Religion in the Modern Age," *History and Theory* 45 (2006), 10-26; and idem., "The Limits of History in Brief," *Historically Speaking* 6 (2005), 5-10.

<sup>24</sup> Fasolt, "The Limits of History in Brief," 8.



which the *actual* religious and military conflicts of the past were revived in an *intellectual* struggle between those who canonized or demonized Hus. Here, historiography aped the history it sought to exploit and explain. If Thomas Kuhn was correct when he asserted that ~~in~~ history, more than in any other discipline I know, the finished product of research disguises the nature of the work that produced it,<sup>25</sup> then I hope that this dissertation will help to dispel some of the fog that obscures the origins of that discipline, and make plain the politics of commemoration that inspired and sustained the cult of Jan Hus in Utraquist Bohemia and Lutheran Germany.

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<sup>25</sup> This quotation is from Kuhn's book *The Essential Tension* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1977), and it is cited in: Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, 39.

## Chapter One

### **“*Sit Martyr Gloriosior:*” Suffering, Sanctity, and the Death of Jan Hus**

#### Introduction

On July 6, 1415, in the presence of the Holy Roman Emperor and the assembled fathers of the Council of Constance, the Bohemian priest Jan Hus was degraded from his rank, solemnly defrocked and shaved, and forced to wear a paper crown decorated with demons; upon this hat was written, “This is a heresiarch.” The ritual degradation began with the removal of the communion chalice from Hus’s hands:

After he descended from the table, the said bishops at once began to unfrock him. First they took the cup from his hands, pronouncing this curse: —Cursed Judas, because you have abandoned the counsel of peace and have counseled with the Jews, we take away from you this cup of redemption.”<sup>1</sup>

As the bishops finally placed the heretic’s cap upon Hus’s head, Hus reportedly said, —My Lord Jesus Christ on account of me, a miserable wretch, bore a much heavier and harsher crown of thorns...Therefore I, a miserable wretch and sinner, will humbly bear this much lighter, though degrading, crown for His name and truth.”<sup>2</sup> After Hus had been prepared for death in this manner, he was led outside

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<sup>1</sup> Petr of Mladoňovice, who wrote the account of Hus’s time in Constance and the events leading up to it, served as the secretary of Lord John of Chlum at the Council and lived with Hus during his first days in Constance. —Et vero de mensa dicta descendente, statim dicti episcopi eum degradare incipientes, calicem imprimis ab ipso auferentes de manibus ipsius, dixerunt hanc oracionem malediccionis: \_O Iuda maledicte, ut quid dereliquisti consilium pacis et cum Iudeis consiliatus es, auferimus a te calicem hunc redempcionis.” See: Petr of Mladoňovice, *Relatio de Magistro Johanne Hus*, in *FRB* 8, 25-120, 116-117.

<sup>2</sup> —Dominus meus Ihesus Christus propter me miserum multo duriozem et graviorem spineam coronam innocens ad turpissimam mortem ferre dignatus est, et ideo ego miser et peccator hanc multo leviozem, licet blasphemam, volo ferre humiliter pro ipsius nomine et veritate.” Mladoňovice,

past a place where his books were being burned, and taken to his pyre. Petr of Mladoňovice reported that Hus prayed joyfully there, and that —some of the lay people standing about said: —We do not know what or how he acted and spoke formerly, but now in truth we see and hear that he prays and speaks with holy words.”<sup>3</sup> Hus continued to pray even as the fire was lit around him, singing the Psalms, —Christ, Thou son of the living God, have mercy upon us,” and —Thou Who art born of Mary the Virgin.”<sup>4</sup> Eventually, the smoke cut off his songs, and Hus was burned completely. After Hus’s body had been incinerated, his executioners made sure to destroy every bit of his remains: —The executioners threw the clothing into the fire along with the shoes, saying: —So that the Czechs would not regard it as relics’...So they loaded all the ashes in a cart and threw them in the river Rhine flowing nearby.”<sup>5</sup>

This account of the execution of Jan Hus was written by Petr of Mladoňovice, and it was the first and most important narrative of Hus’s martyrdom written by his Bohemian supporters. Petr was the secretary of Lord John of Chlum, one of Hus’s noble escorts in Constance, and he was an unabashed follower of Hus.<sup>6</sup> Thus, his portrayal of the trial consistently emphasized the injustice of the process, the unwillingness of the council fathers to

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*Relatio*, 117. For a full analysis of the significance of the heretic’s hat and the symbolic meaning behind this ritual defrocking, see: Milena Kubiková, —The Heretic’s Cap of Hus,” *BRRP* 4 (2002), 143-150.

<sup>3</sup> —Quidam autem astantes laici dicebant, —Nos nescimus, que et qualia prius fecit seu locutus est, nunc vero videmus et audiemus, quia sancata verba orat et loquitur.” Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 118.

<sup>4</sup> Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 119.

<sup>5</sup> —Et tunicam...iecerunt una cum sotularibus in ignem, dicentes: —Ne forte Boemi illud pro reliquiis habeant...’ Et sic una cum singulis dictis ticionum cineribus cuidam carruce imponentes, ad Reni flumen vicinum ibidem dimersum proiecerunt.” Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 120.

<sup>6</sup> For a biography of Petr, see: Matthew Spinka, *John Hus at the Council of Constance* (New York: Columbia UP, 1965), 79-86. On Petr’s further career in relation to the Hussite movement, see: František Bartoš, —Osud Husova evangelisty Petra Mladoňovice,” *Theologická Příloha Křesťanské Revue* 30 (1963), 79-85.

credit Hus's arguments, and the complicity of Emperor Sigismund in the condemnation of Hus.<sup>7</sup> Although recent research has shown that the trial proceeded according to the most rigorous standards of late medieval judicial procedure, and that Hus was given multiple opportunities to recant and avoid execution, this justification of the outcome at Constance was irrelevant in fifteenth-century Bohemia.<sup>8</sup> Petr's narrative, Hus's sermons, and his correspondence with his followers in Prague all created a stylized image of his trial in which a complex process was condensed into a re-creation of the passion of Christ. This depiction of Hus's death consciously evoked the sufferings and paradoxical victory of Jesus in Jerusalem, and it was central to the establishment of the movement that bore Jan Hus's name and struggled for the establishment of a reformed Christian church in Bohemia and Moravia.

I would suggest that the events of Hus's trial in Constance ended up mattering very little in the aftermath of his execution. What came to be much more significant was how those events came to be remembered. The process of remembrance included several steps. The first stage took place even before Hus died. In his sermons and letters he prepared himself to become a martyr and instructed his friends and followers to view his death as an authentic act of

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<sup>7</sup> For a critical interpretation of Petr's attempt to turn Hus's trial into a *Passionsbericht*, with Petr himself cast as an apostle, see: Hubert Herkommer, "Die Geschichte vom Leiden und Sterben des Jan Hus als Ereignis und Erzählung," in Grenzmann and Stackmann, eds., *Literatur and Laienbildung im Spätmittelalter und in der Reformationszeit* (Metzler: Stuttgart, 1984), 114-146, especially 117-120. On Sigismund and Hus's trial, see most recently: Jeanne Grant, "Rejecting an Emperor: Hussites and Sigismund," in C. Ocker et al., eds., *Politics and Reformations: Communities, Polities, Nations, and Empires: Essays in Honor of Thomas A. Brady, Jr.* (Boston: Brill, 2007), 459-470.

<sup>8</sup> The most recent examination of the justice of Hus's trial has come from the Czech scholar Jiří Kejř. Somewhat surprisingly, he exonerates the council and Sigismund and concludes that Hus's trial was fair by the standards of the day. For the details of the trial and its conclusion, see: Kejř, *Husův Proces* (Prague: Historica, 2000), 137-199.

Christian self-sacrifice. After his death, the preservation of Hus's letters and sermons and the composition of passion narratives, popular songs, and liturgy further transformed Hus's condemnation into a saint's *passio* that was worthy of veneration. In the wake of Hus's death, then, commemorations of his life and death served a similar function to that of martyr acts in the antique church.<sup>9</sup> Especially during the third century, commemorations of the martyrs killed by the Roman government became central elements in the popular devotion of the Christian church.<sup>10</sup> The recollection of the martyrs' brave deaths and the rehearsal of their final words and deeds emphasized the centrality of suffering in Christian identity.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the frequent repetition of these stories on the martyred saints' feast days allowed some Christians to internalize the values of martyrdom and prepare themselves for this ultimate sacrifice. Even those who did not have any desire for martyrdom would have seen that the martyrs had achieved something remarkable; their spectacular deaths had given striking witness to the Christian worldview and allowed the gospel to proceed out from Israel and reach the entire world.<sup>12</sup> Martyrs became, for early Christians, the perfect pedagogues

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<sup>9</sup> On the genre of martyr acts in the late antique church and their function as literary memorials to Christian saints, see the historiographical introduction to: Nicole Kelley, "Philosophy as Training for Death: Reading the Ancient Christian Martyr Acts as Spiritual Exercises," *Church History* 75 (2006), 723-747.

<sup>10</sup> On the importance of martyrdom to late antique Christianity, especially as a means of distinguishing this tradition from Judaism, see: Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999), especially 63-66.

<sup>11</sup> This emphasis on the centrality of suffering in Christian experience is the major theme developed by Elizabeth Perkins in her: *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in Early Christianity* (New York: Routledge, 1994). Perkins had a distinctly feminist orientation in her scholarship, and her central ideas have been expanded to include male martyrs and influences on them from outside the Christian tradition, especially from Stoic philosophy. See the excellent analysis in: Kelley, "Philosophy as Training for Death," 738-739.

<sup>12</sup> Spectacle was particularly meaningful within the Roman context; Christian martyrs subverted the spectacle of punishment engineered by the Roman government and turned torture and death into a reward. On the impact of the subverted spectacle on Christian and pagan audiences, see:

and witnesses for Christ who held up an example to the Christian community of the ultimate mimetic identification with Christ.

Martyrs also served as ideal proponents of resistance and rebellion, as the act of martyrdom subverted the political theater of executions, in which royal and ecclesiastical powers could assert their control over the lives of their subjects.<sup>13</sup> Martyrs chose punishment, and through their public declarations and writings they reframed death as a reward for their faith. Martyrdom called into question the fundamental definitions of right and wrong that had been established by the state (and church).<sup>14</sup> Further, the martyr's self-sacrifice served as the foundation for an alternate, dissident social order based on the example and instructions of Christ and shifted attention to a new locus: the community of God's people on earth, who were disenfranchised from earthly power and suffered for their faith.<sup>15</sup>

The commemoration of Hus's death became one element in the foundation of such a community in Bohemia. Alongside it, though, existed an indigenous

Elizabeth Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia UP, 2004), 120-125.

<sup>13</sup> The notion of martyrdom as political theater attained importance again in the early modern period, especially during the sixteenth century. On executions as theater, and their role in English political and religious culture, see: Sarah Covington, *The Trail of Martyrdom: Persecution and Resistance in Sixteenth-Century England* (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 12-25 and 174. For France, see: David El Kenz, *Les bûchers du Roi: La culture Protestante des martyrs (1523-1572)* (Seysse: Champ Vallon, 1997), especially 46-61.

<sup>14</sup> The martyr's final words became, over time, the central "ritualized and performative speech act" that defined a judicial execution as a legitimate martyrdom. Public declarations of faith at the time of death served to attach central religious ideas to the sacrifice of the martyr and identify the person with their faith. Often, biblical passages or common prayers became martyrological maxims that appeared frequently in many martyrs' final confessions of faith. On final words as speech acts, see: Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 95. On the development of martyrological maxims in the French context, see: El Kenz, *Les Bûchers*, 154.

<sup>15</sup> This tension in martyrdom has been illuminated best by Nikki Shepardson. She highlights the role of later martyrologists in turning the subversive act of martyrdom into a foundation for a new community. In her view, women are especially meaningful in this context, as their perceived weakness makes them ideal vessels for a display of God's strength, and less dangerous as political activists. See her: *Burning Zeal: The Rhetoric of Martyrdom and the Protestant Community in Reformation France, 1520-1570* (Bethlehem: Lehigh UP, 2007), 80-85.

program for church reform that had shaped Hus throughout his life and preaching career. For the half century previous to 1415, Bohemian priests and preachers had been identifying the moral decay they saw in the world with the work of Antichrist and his followers.<sup>16</sup> It was incumbent on the preacher, then, to name Antichrist and make his impact on the world clear, while fortifying the people of God with the sacrament of the eucharist. Only the absorption of God's teaching and the consumption of his body could protect the Christian from the temptations of Antichrist.<sup>17</sup> In terms of salvation, forewarned was truly forearmed. Hus had seen himself as engaged in the climax of this ongoing battle, and his followers took up this idea after his death and used it to justify their national counteroffensive against Antichrist. It was in this context that Origen's words became especially meaningful: "We pray that we are able to accept the power from God, that we might be able to endure so that our faith is made more clear by oppressions and tribulations, and that through our suffering the ignorance of those is overcome, just as the Lord said: In our suffering we gain our souls."<sup>18</sup> Hus's suffering and martyrdom crystallized Bohemian ideas about reform; their memory served as a spur to reform and even revolt in the wake of his death. Hus himself sought to shape this memory with his words and deeds, and his closest followers

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<sup>16</sup> On the development of apocalyptic thought in late medieval Bohemia, and the position of preachers in the opposition to Antichrist, see: David Holeton, "Revelation and Revolution in Late Medieval Bohemia," *CV* 36 (1994), 29-45.

<sup>17</sup> One hallmark of the early Bohemian reform was an emphasis on frequent communion for the laity. On eucharistic devotion in Bohemia, see: David Holeton, *La communion des tout-petits enfants: Étude du mouvement eucharistique en Bohême vers la fin du Moyen-Âge* (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1989), especially 25-80.

<sup>18</sup> "Oremus accipere a deo virtutem, ut sustinere possimus, ut fides nostra in pressuris et tribulationibus clarior fiat, ut per pacienciam nostram illorum superetur imprudencia, et sicut dixit dominus: In nostra paciencia aquiramus animas nostras." This quotation is from Origen's seventh homily on the book of Judges; it was quoted in Jakoubek of Stříbro's sermon on the first anniversary of Hus's death, "Sermo habitus in Bethlehem a quodam pio in memoriam novorum martyrum M. Johannis Hus a M. Hieronymi," in *FRB* 8, 231-242, 236.

shaped the narrative of his death further. In their hands, the celebration of Hus's *memoria* became a holy legacy that defined the Bohemian people as the authentic inheritors of God's truth.

### Sacraments, Preaching, and Suffering: Reform Ideology in Pre-Hussite Bohemia

As has been long recognized by scholars, Hus followed in a Bohemian tradition of reforming preachers and scholars. Three men in particular, Conrad Waldhauser (d. 1369), Jan Milíč of Kroměříž (d. 1374), and Matěj of Janov (d. 1393), served as models for Hus's preaching and writing career. These earlier religious reformers planted many of the ideas that would invigorate the Hussite movement in the 1410s and 1420s.<sup>19</sup> The primary ideas that emerged from these reformers and inspired Hus and his followers concerned eschatology, the necessity of preaching, and the role of the eucharist in defining a community of Christians. Another major theme in the work of these men dealt with the reality of suffering; they understood that reform was never easy, and that it would be opposed by the Antichrist. Thus, the work of reform carried cosmic as well as practical significance in terms of representing resistance to the power of the Devil.

The reform tradition in Bohemia began with the preaching of Conrad Waldhauser in the 1360s. He was brought to Bohemia by Charles IV and

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<sup>19</sup> There is a danger of reading the reform in Prague before Hus teleologically, and only finding elements that "fed" to his ministry. While this would undervalue the originality and goals of the individual reformers in the fourteenth century, it is important to see the emergence of themes and ideas that influenced Hus or provided opportunities for the growth of the Prague reform. For an example of scholarship that contextualizes Hus without reading his ideas backwards, see the introductory section in: Olivier Marin, *L'Archevêque, le maître, et le dévot: Genèses du mouvement réformateur pragois, années 1360-1419* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2005), 11-24.



preached to the court in German and Latin. While he was the earliest reform preacher in Bohemia about whom we know anything, he already employed apocalyptic themes in his sermons. Waldhauser denounced false prophets who deceived the people on behalf of Antichrist.<sup>20</sup> He drew attention to the deceptive nature of Antichrist by focusing on the attempts of his followers to seduce Christians away from the true faith.<sup>21</sup> Waldhauser's work was continued by Jan Milíč of Kroměříž. In his preaching and short writings, eschatological considerations attained a primacy that they had lacked in Waldhauser's message.<sup>22</sup> Milíč saw the world on the brink of the second coming, and he saw the effects of Antichrist's presence everywhere. Particularly hateful to Milíč was the corruption of the clergy brought about by their civil endowment.<sup>23</sup> Milíč also famously equated Antichrist with empire. This attribution was characteristic of Milíč's institutional understanding of Antichrist, as he located corruption and satanic influence within the general establishment of the clergy within the church and empire.<sup>24</sup> In order to resist the corporate evil of those opposed to Christ, Milíč

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<sup>20</sup> Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), 289.

<sup>21</sup> Bernard McGinn, who has written extensively on medieval conceptions of Antichrist, has observed two poles in the description of this figure. On the one hand, there was a dread associated with his power and the physical threat he posed to Christians. On the other hand, he was also considered to be deceptive; he could emerge from within the church to corrupt its institutions and doctrine. This latter, internal/deceptive understanding of Antichrist flourished in the Bohemian context. See: Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994), especially 4-5. See also: idem., "Portraying Antichrist in the Middle Ages," in W. Verbeke et al., eds., *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages* (Leuven: Leuven UP, 1988), 1-48, 17-18.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Moree, "The Role of the Preacher According to Milicius of Chremsir," *BRRP* 3 (1998), 35-48, 35.

<sup>23</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 11ff. See also: Thomas Fudge, "The Night of Antichrist: Popular Culture, Judgment, and Revolution in Fifteenth-Century Prague," *CV* 37 (1995), 33-45, 34.

<sup>24</sup> There is a legend that Milíč once called Charles IV the Antichrist to his face during an impassioned sermon; this seems to be only legend, however, as Milíč was appointed by Charles IV as a preacher and worked closely with him. The legend does represent, though, the preacher's concern for how the empire had corrupted the church by giving it wealth, ownership of land, and a

did offer a palliative to those who suffered the oppression of the wicked. His preaching and practice showed a new interest in the prophylactic effects of frequent communion, which he saw as the –antidote for apocalyptic angst.”<sup>25</sup>

Milíč’s sacramental vision was embodied in the establishment of –Jerusalem,” a house for reformed prostitutes in Prague, in 1372.<sup>26</sup> Throughout the early 1370s, people would go to Jerusalem to hear Milíč preach and take communion, and within its walls many of the social barriers of late medieval Prague were broken down; class, gender, clerical status, and ethnic identity were all subsumed under the social body constituted by the reception of the eucharist.<sup>27</sup> The idea of a physical place in which all the qualities of true Christianity could be made manifest was an actualization of the symbolic dichotomy between Babylon and Jerusalem, *synagoga* and *ecclesia*. Milíč also argued that this community needed to sustain itself with the frequent reception of communion. Although weekly reception was tolerable, daily reception of that sacrament was preferable. This practice shifted the focus of the ritual from consecration to consumption, and

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stake in worldly power. On the dangers of clerical wealth, see: Milan Opocensky, –Eschatology and Social Transformation: The Legacy of the First Reformation,” *Brethren Life and Thought* 35 (1990), 48-51. 49.

<sup>25</sup> Fudge, –The Night of Antichrist,” 34.

<sup>26</sup> On the early career of Milíč and his establishment of Jerusalem, see: David Mengel, –From Venice to Jerusalem and Beyond: Milíč of Kroměříř and the Topography of Prostitution in Fourteenth-century Prague.” *Speculum* 79 (2004): 407-442. Suffice it to say here that in 1363 Milíč had given up a successful career in the established church and imperial court in order to become a preacher and reformer of morals in Prague. His main focus as a reformer became the rehabilitation of prostitutes.

<sup>27</sup> Beyond a house for reformed prostitutes, Jerusalem became a veritable school for preachers. Many students in Prague listened to Milíč’s sermons and became attuned to his eucharistic piety. On the sacramental developments at Jerusalem, see: David Holeton, –Sacramental and Liturgical Reform in Late Medieval Bohemia,” *Studia Liturgica* 17 (1987) 87-96, 88. See also: Peter Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-century Bohemia: The Life and Ideas of Milicius de Chremsir (d. 1374) and his Significance in the Historiography of Bohemia* (Slavkov, CR: EMAN, 1999), 72-76.

this eucharistic emphasis would be consistent among Milíč's heirs in the Bohemian reform movement.<sup>28</sup>

The sacramental body, as a social representation of the body of Christ, had effectively become the locus of social renewal and individual reform; Milíč's Jerusalem served as a bastion of true Christianity in the apocalyptic struggle with Antichrist. Beyond the eucharist, Milíč also identified another means of combating the Antichrist. The preaching of the word of God would allow true priests to draw in people like fishermen, and the net of the word would snatch them from the false teachings of Antichrist.<sup>29</sup> God was responsible for sending preachers so they might expose this falsity: "For he sends angels or preachers with the trumpet of preaching and a great voice, that they might destroy the aforementioned scandal from the kingdom of God, or the church...[and] eradicate the tares, heretics, pseudo-prophets, and hypocrites."<sup>30</sup> The eucharist would then fortify the individuals gathered by the preacher and solidify their membership in the gathered community of the elect. The word and the sacrament thus represented two vital components in the preservation of God's people in the last days.

After Milíč's death, his admirer and disciple Matěj of Janov incorporated some of Milíč's writings into his own work and composed a short and laudatory

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<sup>28</sup> On the importance of frequent communion in Bohemia for Milíč, see: HOLETON, *La Communion des tout-petits enfants*, 26-33.

<sup>29</sup> Milíč wrote two collections of sermons, or postils, in order to diffuse his beliefs on preaching to his disciples at Jerusalem. On the eschatological importance of preaching in these collections, see: MORÉE, *Preaching in Fourteenth-century Bohemia*, 161-165.

<sup>30</sup> "Mittat angelos sive predicatores cum tuba predicacionis et voce magna, ut tollant predicta scandala de regno dei sive ecclesia...eradicent zizania, hereticos et pseudo-prophetas et yppocritas." This quotation is from Milíč's "Ibellus de Antichristo," which his follower Matěj of Janov incorporated into his larger work, the *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*. See: *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 368-381. This quote, 379.

biography of Milíč.<sup>31</sup> This biography, which was a direct model for some elements of Jakoubek of Stříbro's elegy for Jan Hus in 1416, presented Milíč as a zealous priest who preached indefatigably against pseudo-prophets and false monks on behalf of the law of Jesus. In this, he acted ~~in~~ the manner of Elijah."<sup>32</sup> Further, Matěj equated the opponents of Milíč and Jerusalem to the ~~members~~ of Antichrist," who hounded the preacher until he suffered ~~various~~ impediments and anathemas, up to his expulsion from the kingdom into exile."<sup>33</sup> Despite this persecution, though, Milíč comported himself as a true prophet; he continued to preach the word of God and minister to his people, and his perseverance ultimately guaranteed his place in the emergent pantheon of Bohemia's native saints. Indeed, Matěj's hagiography of Milíč helped constitute this assembly of saints, and the portrayal of his mentor became a salient model for the later valorization of Hus.

Matěj of Janov contributed further to the development of Bohemian apocalyptic and eucharistic thought, but less as a preacher and more as a speculative apocalyptic theologian.<sup>34</sup> His work focused on the immoral clergy and

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<sup>31</sup> Actually, two biographies of Milíč exist, but recent scholarship suggests that the second was the work of a seventeenth-century Jesuit, Bohuslav Balbín. Matěj's work, however, certainly originated soon after Milíč's death, and was incorporated into Matěj's masterwork, on which see below, fn. 43. On the biographies, see: David Mengel, "A Monk, A Preacher, And a Jesuit: Making the Life of Milíč," *BRRP* 5, pt. 1 (2004), 33-55. The text of Matěj's biography is contained in: *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 358-367.

<sup>32</sup> "Fanti autem zely ad modum Helye fuit hic dignus deo presbiter pro lege Jhesu et ipsius veritate et virtute, quod quasi incessanter ac infatigabiliter cum multitudine pseudoprophetarum, religiosorum, sacerdotum, alias legis pteritorum." *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 360.

<sup>33</sup> "Varias inpediciones et anathematizaciones, et ultimo expulsionem de patria in exilium." *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 364.

<sup>34</sup> A good, short biography of Matěj is included in Kaminsky, *A History*, 14-23.

pope as the embodiments of Antichrist in his time,<sup>35</sup> and he furthered Milíč's sacramentalism as a means of strengthening the faithful for the end of the world. Matěj also articulated a strong Biblicism that focused on the primitive church as the ultimate model for the purity of Christian life.<sup>36</sup> Given the context of the Great Schism and the visible fracturing of the Catholic Church in 1378, the institutional church lacked the unity that was a defining mark of the apostolic church. Thus, Matěj determined that ~~the~~ locus of reform lay in the holy people, the community of the saints *within* the ecclesiastical establishment. By reestablishing the pure, simple church of Christ, this community could show how the work of Antichrist in the church might be undone.<sup>37</sup> This smaller body was strengthened by frequent communion, as Milíč would have had it, and opposed the false preaching of Antichrist's followers. For Matěj, the act of eucharistic consumption and the hearing of God's word united priest and people into a gathered community whose very existence was an act of defiance in light of the power of Antichrist within the larger church.<sup>38</sup>

Matěj's great work, the *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, added a new depth to his speculations about the nature of Antichrist.<sup>39</sup> In it, he argued that the

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<sup>25</sup> Roberto Rusconi, "Antichrist and Antichrists," in B. McGinn, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism Volume 2: Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture* (New York: Continuum Publishing, 2000), 287-326, 314.

<sup>36</sup> Jana Nechutova, "Matěj of Janov and His Work *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*: The Significance of Volume VI and its Relation to the Previously Published Volumes," *BRRP 2* (1998), 15-24, 16.

<sup>37</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 21. Emphasis original. See also: Karel Skalický, "Křev Kristova a Církev Antikristova v Teologii Matěje z Janova," in J. Lášek and K. Skalický, eds., *Mistr Matěj z Janova ve své a v naší Době* (Brno: L. Marek, 2002), 47-69, especially 49.

<sup>38</sup> David HOLETON, "The Evolution of Utraquist Eucharistic Liturgy: A Textual Study," *BRRP 2* (1998), 97-126, 111.

<sup>39</sup> Matěj's speculations about the Antichrist evolved out of his determination that any innovation without an explicit scriptural mandate was the work of Antichrist. Similarly, any ecclesiastical or

followers of Antichrist were located primarily within the church, as ~~those~~ seducers are not from among the barbarians, gentiles, or Jews, but are Christians.”<sup>40</sup> For Matěj, the opposition between the ~~“sons of God”~~ and the ~~“sons of men”~~ was timeless; the conflict over piety that he observed in his contemporary Bohemia was just the most recent stage in a conflict that had raged since the murder of Abel by Cain.<sup>41</sup> It was incumbent on the people of God to resist any impositions put upon them by the pope, or popes, as ~~—gain~~, those seducers are those appearing pious. . . and such people, who seem to be the wisest and most holy in the church, therefore are believed to be elect members of the Redeemer.”<sup>42</sup> For Matěj, preachers like Milič were the foremost opponents of such false Christians. They were blessed with the ~~—spirit~~ and power of Elijah,” would ~~—be~~ able to restore, by their persuasion and concern, the totality of the elect.”<sup>43</sup> These preachers would also prepare the way for the return of the actual prophet, whose appearance would precede the return of Christ. True preaching, then, carried an eschatological weight: ~~—These~~ previously mentioned preachers are glorious, and

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secular figure who supported these innovations was a member of Antichrist’s following. See Nechutova, ~~—The~~ Significance of Volume VI,” 16-17.

<sup>40</sup> ~~—Certum est, quod isti seductores non erunt de barbaris, genti[li]bus aut Judeis, sed erunt de christianis,”~~ *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 292.

<sup>41</sup> See: Skalický, ~~—G~~kev Kristova,” 58.

<sup>42</sup> ~~—Inveniuntur ergo seductores isti inter christianos apparentes pios...et tales, qui sancciores et sapienciores apparebunt in ecclesia, propterea electa membra Redemptoris esse credentur.”~~ *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 295. For the fullest account of the role and identity of Antichrist in Matěj’s thought, see: Karel Chytil, *Antikrist v Naukách a Umění Středověku a Husitské Obrazné Antithese* (Prague: NCACFJ, 1918), especially 120-123.

<sup>43</sup> Matěj here emphasizes the corporate nature of these true preachers who would invoke the spirit of the Elijah; they would spread throughout the world to counter the deceptive work of Antichrist and his followers. The quote reads: ~~—predicadores corporaliter]~~ posset sua sollicitudine et suasionem restaurare universitatem electorum.” *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 355-356.

they will destroy Antichrist, disperse his body and devour it through the spirit of the mouth of Jesus Christ and [thus] become incorporated into Christ.”<sup>44</sup>

A popular desire for sermons accentuated the eschatological importance of preaching in Prague.<sup>45</sup> One major witness to this desire was the endowment and opening of the Bethlehem Chapel in 1391. The Chapel served as a spatial successor to Milíč’s Jerusalem, and was opened by a royal courtier and a Prague Old Town official who both had been supporters of Milíč.<sup>46</sup> This worship space was reserved for preaching in Czech and did not function as a sacramental station.<sup>47</sup> While the people gathered at Bethlehem, then, lacked the eucharistic focus of those who had been at Jerusalem, they did coalesce around the word of God, so Bethlehem Chapel functioned as a physical locale in which the often invisible true church of God assembled as a clearly defined, visible community.<sup>48</sup> This was one of the most significant inheritances that the later Bohemian reformers received from Milíč, Matěj, and the founders of the Bethlehem Chapel:

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<sup>44</sup> “Et illi sunt predicatoris predicti et gloriosi, et ipsi per spiritum oris Jhesu Christi interficiant Antichristum et dispercent corpus eius et vorabunt et Christo incorporabunt.” *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 20.

<sup>45</sup> From the time of Waldhauser on, a number of sermon collections for the liturgical year, called *postilla*, were written in Bohemia. While no identified collection by Matěj exists, there are eight citations of a collection by an anonymous “Parisian Master” at about this time, and we do have two *postilla* by Milíč and five anonymous collections from the late fourteenth century in Prague. On the ubiquity of *postilla* in the Bohemian context, see: František Bartoš, “Dvě studie o husitských postilách,” *Rozpravy Československé Akademie Věd* 65 (1955), 1-56, especially 5-13.

<sup>46</sup> The two founders, John of Milheim and the merchant Kříř, secured property from the parish church of Sts. Philip and James upon which to build the chapel. These two men had previously been frequent attendees at services held in Jerusalem. See: Matthew Spinka, *John Hus’ Concept of the Church* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965), 42.

<sup>47</sup> Otakar Odložilík, “The Bethlehem Chapel in Prague: Remarks on its Foundation Charter,” in G. Stökl, ed., *Studien zur älteren Geschichte Osteuropas* (Graz-Köln: Verlag Hermann Böhlau, 1956), 125-141, 141; modern scholars have also noted that the exclusively Czech preaching at the chapel created a “language frontier” in Prague that heightened tensions between the Germans and Czechs in the city. See: Thomas Fudge, “‘Ansellus Dei’ and the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague,” *CV* 35 (1993), 127-161, 143.

<sup>48</sup> On the early history of the Bethlehem Chapel and its transformation into a “Husite cathedral,” see: Bohumil Ryba, *Betlemské Texty* (Prague: Orbis, 1951), 13-33. See also: Alois Kubíček, *Betlemská kaple* (Prague: Statní nakladatelství, 1953).

means of transforming metaphysical or eschatological categories into visible entities which had recognized means of affirming their identity as true Christians. These modes of actualization complemented a philosophy of holy separation that also influenced later Bohemian reformers.

Both Milíč and Matěj emphasized the difference that existed between the institutional church and the true church of God. For both of these men, the latter was marked by moral purity and sacramental piety; these indigenous ideas about the opposition between the institutional church and the actual church were complementary to the philosophical and theological ideas of the English doctor of theology John Wyclif, who played an important role in the theological systematization of the Bohemian reformation. Wyclif was an Oxford professor who espoused a radically realist philosophy.<sup>49</sup> This philosophy, which would lead Wyclif to deny transubstantiation as an impossible destruction of the substance of the bread and wine, was taken up with considerable enthusiasm by Bohemian masters at Charles University, including Jan Hus.<sup>50</sup> Since at least the end of the fourteenth century, contacts between English universities and Charles University

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<sup>49</sup> For Wyclif, there was an inherent connection between a substance's material components and its universal essence; the congruence of the material and ideal natures of a substance was absolute and necessary. This philosophical position, which derived from Plato's idealism, was in marked contrast to the Aristotelian nominalism that prevailed in late medieval universities. This school of philosophy placed less emphasis on the relationship between material bodies and their philosophical reality. On Wyclif's realism, see: Alessandro Conti, "Wyclif's Logic and Metaphysics," in I.C. Levy, ed., *A Companion to John Wyclif* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 67-125, especially 67-78. More generally, see: Marcia Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400-1400* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1997), especially 254-262..

<sup>50</sup> Wyclif's sacramental heresy was, however, not received as enthusiastically by Bohemian scholars. The quodlibet debates at Charles University during the first decade of the fifteenth century give ample witness to the academic struggle over Wyclif's ideas that dominated Prague university affairs. On Wyclif's philosophical realism and its reception by Charles University, see: Vilém Herold, "Wyclif als Reformer: Die philosophische Dimension," in *Zwischen Zeiten*, 39-47. On the transmission of Wyclifite books in Prague, see: Anne Hudson, "Lollard Compilation in England and Bohemia," in idem., *Lollards and their Books* (Ronceverte, WV: Hambledon Press, 1985), 31-42.



in Prague allowed Wyclif's works to be known in Bohemia. Wyclif's philosophical realism became significant in the Bohemian context, as it served to distinguish the Bohemian scholars from the more nominalist German masters at Charles University.<sup>51</sup> In short, Wyclif's philosophy provided the intellectual elite of Bohemia with a discourse that distinguished them from their institutional rivals and allowed them to frame the ideas of reform in a rigorous, academic language. This translation of extant religious ideas into an academic idiom served to unite the popular movement for eucharistic piety with a group of clerical and intellectual leaders who would usher them into revolution fifteen years later.

In terms of the ideology of reform, however, Wyclif's ecclesiology and its emphasis on predestination proved to be his most significant contributions to the Bohemian cause. Wyclif developed a rigorously predestinarian system for defining Christian identity. According to Wyclif, neither holding an office nor any other institutional affiliation could make someone a Christian – only election by God could guarantee ultimate salvation.<sup>52</sup> Despite the lack of visible signs that would differentiate the elect and the foreknown, though, Wyclif did believe that the church of the elect would correspond to a local, visible church on earth. This realist correspondence would result from the strict policing of theology and

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<sup>51</sup> An excellent account of the impact of Wyclif's writings in Bohemia is in: Katherine Walsh, "Wyclif's Legacy in Central Europe in the Late Fourteenth and Early Fifteenth Centuries," in A. Hudson and M. Wilks, eds., *From Ockham to Wyclif* (New York: Blackwell, 1987), 397-417. See also: Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages c. 1250-1450*, 2 vols. (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1967), 676.

<sup>52</sup> The consequences of this strict predestinarian view resulted in the devaluation of the institutional church, as none of its institutions or sacraments could reliably impart grace or sanctity upon an individual or community. On these ecclesiological problems, see: Enrico Molnar, "Wyclif, Hus, and the Problem of Authority," in *Zwischen Zeiten*, 167-182, 174.

behavior, especially clerical morals, by the secular power.<sup>53</sup> This control, however, rarely worked effectively, as secular authorities were susceptible to the power of the institutional church and seduction by Antichrist. Thus, the people of God often suffered from persecution, and were forced to exist among the larger body of those controlled by members of Antichrist, who were entrenched in positions of secular and religious authority.<sup>54</sup> Wyclif's apocalyptic outlook resonated with the notions of persecution and eschatological conflict that Milič and Matěj had inculcated among the people of Prague, and the combination of eschatological concerns and Wyclif's philosophical ideas prepared a generation of leaders for the growth of the Bohemian reform; sacramental piety, academic rigor, and eschatological expectations all coalesced in Prague based on these disparate, but complementary influences. Jan Hus would inherit these influences and embody them in his life as an academic, popular preacher, radical dissident, and martyr. I would suggest that Hus truly represented the synthesis of the reforming ideals that had percolated around Prague for the previous forty years.

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<sup>53</sup> This seeming contradiction in Wyclif's system (between the lack of visible proof of election and the existence of an earthly church) is best explained by Wyclif's political theology, which depended up secular powers to police the church and make it correspond to the political realm. Howard Kaminsky has argued that this valorization of the secular state is Wyclif's most revolutionary idea. See his: "Wyclifism as Ideology of Revolution," *Church History* 32 (1963) 57-74, 62.

<sup>54</sup> Wyclif also thought that the people of God would be an oppressed minority. Wyclif's definition of the church, though, as the totality of the predestined, was the single concept to which Hus and later Hussite leaders owed the greatest intellectual debt. On Wyclif, see: Francis Oakley, *The Western Church in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1979), 199; and Michael Wilks, "Wyclif and the Great Persecution," in A. Hudson, ed., *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice, Papers by Michael Wilks* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2000), 179-203. 198ff.

### Reform Ideology and Hus's Early Career

Jan Hus received and redefined all of these influences. He was born in the early 1370s in the small town of Husinec, from which he derived his name. His family was poor, but his mother intended that Jan become a priest. Although the location of his early schooling is debated, it is certain that Hus arrived in Prague no later than 1390 to begin his university education.<sup>55</sup> He matriculated at Charles University in Prague and followed the regular course of academic advancement, receiving his master's degree in 1396. While there, he was definitely exposed to Wyclif's philosophical writings, three of which Hus copied in 1398.<sup>56</sup> It has been argued from the late nineteenth century onwards, especially by German scholars, that Wyclif was the most significant (or only significant) influence on Hus's development.<sup>57</sup> Because of Hus's dependency on Wyclif for much of his later ecclesiastical vocabulary, this conclusion is, at first sight, reasonable. A theory of Wyclif's central or exclusive influence, however, fails to recognize the impact

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<sup>55</sup> For a brief account of the scholarly debate on Hus's early biography and education, see: Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*, 7-11.

<sup>56</sup> Hus was mostly interested in Wyclif's philosophical, as opposed to theological, treatises. The main work that Hus copied in 1398 was the *De Ideis*, which became one of the most popular Realist tracts in Prague in the first decade of the fifteenth century. On Hus and Wyclif's theology, see: Vilém Herold, "How Wyclifite Was the Bohemian Reformation?" *BRRP* 2 (1998), 25-37, 34.

<sup>57</sup> Johann Loserth was the strongest supporter of the view of Hus's absolute dependence on Wyclif for his theological views. In 1884, Loserth published *Hus und Wiclif, zur Genesis der hussitischen Lehre*, which laid out the extent of Hus's borrowings of Wyclif's work, especially in the composition of *De Ecclesia*. Loserth's student Mathild Uhlirz furthered this view in her 1914 book, *Die Genesis der vier Prager Artikel*; in her argument, Wyclif's influence went beyond just Hus and was the primary ideological foundation of the Hussite reform program in general. Since the pre-war period, many scholars, including Czechs, have accepted this line of argument. More recently, the impact of indigenous reformers has come more to the fore, especially in the work of historians such as Vilém Herold and the Belgian, Paul De Vooght. For an account of this debate over influences on Hus and the Bohemian reform, see most recently Herold's: "How Wyclifite was the Bohemian Reformation?" and "Wyclif's Ecclesiology and its Prague Context," *BRRP* 4 (2002), 15-30.

on Hus of Bohemian sacramental thought or the moral and pastoral imperatives that emerged from the preaching of Milíč and Matěj. Even during the early stage of Hus's development, it seems that he mixed intellectual influences with popular and pastoral concerns in order to create his own view of his vocation as an academic and preacher.

Jan Hus never took his doctorate in theology, mainly because he committed himself to many duties outside of the university, especially preaching. Despite the fact that he had been elected to the position of Dean of the Faculty of Arts in 1401, Hus became the chief preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel in March of 1402, and preached there for ten years. The chapel could hold up to three or four thousand people, and František Šmahel has estimated that Hus preached over 3,500 sermons there; these numbers suggest that Hus would have had a nearly unmatched public visibility in Prague and the ability to reach a huge number of the city's residents from his pulpit.<sup>58</sup> Hus also petitioned the church of Sts. Philip and James to allow the Chapel to become a sacramental station during his first year there. This request was approved, and Bethlehem Chapel thus became a place where the Bohemian emphases on frequent communion and the preached word could come together.<sup>59</sup> Hus was a supporter of communal hymnody in worship, and the singing of Czech spiritual songs became a hallmark of worship

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<sup>58</sup> František Šmahel, "Literacy and Heresy in Hussite Bohemia," in P. Biller and A. Hudson, eds., *Heresy and Literacy, 1000-1530* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1994), 237-254, 243.

<sup>59</sup> Ernst Werner has traced the development of Hus's sacramental thought, and convincingly argues that Hus supported frequent communion because of its roots in the primitive church as well as in late medieval Bohemia. Werner also correctly asserts that communion held a secondary place among Hus's concerns, as preaching and the exposition of the Bible were his primary concerns. See: Ernst Werner, *Jan Hus: Welt und Umwelt eines Prager Frühreformators* (Weimar: Verlag Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1991), 101-104.

in the Chapel.<sup>60</sup> These efforts suggest that Hus was trying to create a visible, ideal community of Christians at Bethlehem, and in doing so, he tempered the theological absolutism of Wyclif's predestinatory thought.<sup>61</sup> It seems that Hus recognized the unsatisfying consequences of predestination, in which uncertainty about election and a devaluation of actions as determinants of the reception of grace deprived the laity of hope in seeking salvation.<sup>62</sup> Thus, Hus tried to provide visible signs to his audience that would confirm their status as members of the true church. Sacramental practice and attendance at Bethlehem were two of these, but Hus demanded more; he espoused a strict morality that linked living practice with true faith.<sup>63</sup>

In his preaching, Hus primarily sought to inculcate demonstrable changes in his audience's behavior. In terms of sacramental theology, he emphasized the penitential cycle that preceded reception of communion as the way in which the individual believer could reconcile himself to God and the sacramental

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<sup>60</sup> It is generally conceded that Hus was not a liturgical reformer, as were the later leaders of the Bohemian reform. He did, however, encourage some changes in the church rite in order to encourage lay participation in worship, and he himself translated some Latin hymns into Czech. See: Enrico Molnar, "The Liturgical Reforms of Jan Hus," *Speculum* 41 (1966), 297-303.

<sup>61</sup> Jarold Zeman, "Restitution and Dissent in the Late Medieval Renewal Movements: the Waldensians, the Hussites, and the Bohemian Brethren," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 44 (1976) 7-27, 15.

<sup>62</sup> Heiko Oberman has argued that a semi-Pelagian theology, in which "faith validates itself in works of perfection," was in dialogue with a more Augustinian, confessional theology in the late medieval period. The latter was an expression of a more perfected faith that gave thanks for a completed process of testing faith over a lifetime, and perhaps more suited to the theologian than the layperson. Hus, with his pastoral mission, sought to mitigate the absolutism of predestination with his attention to the idea that "God does not withhold his grace from those who do their very best." See: Heiko Oberman, *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 127 and 129.

<sup>63</sup> On Hus's emphasis on faith resulting in changed behavior and the living of a pure life, see: Ivana Dolejšová, "Eschatological Elements in Hus's Understanding of Orthopraxis," *BRRP* 4 (2002), 127-141, especially 128.

community.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, Hus's language in his Bethlehem sermons was directed towards his audience's spiritual transformation and their adoption of a new life. In Ivana Dolejšová's words, out of love for the *lex Christi*," believers should adopt the *vita Christi*."<sup>65</sup> This terminology was significant. Although in the first decade of the fifteenth century this invocation of the imitation of Christ was moral, it could also be shifted towards the acceptance of suffering and persecution as an essential element in the imitation of Christ. Hus understood that the requirements of following Christ would often place believers, whether clerical or lay, in opposition to cultural norms and the wishes of the higher authorities.

Hus geared many of his sermons towards students and priests, and he often focused on the damage that wicked priests could do to the church. He preached strongly against clerical sins such as simony and non-residence, and demanded that priests live according to a higher standard of godly behavior.<sup>66</sup> One can see the development of Hus's reforming ideology in a 1407 sermon delivered at a synod of Prague clergy.<sup>67</sup> The synodal sermon was a time for a chosen preacher to encourage and chastise his peers in the priesthood, and the selection of Hus for the second time (he had preached the synodal sermon as well in 1405) was a considerable honor.<sup>68</sup> In this sermon, Hus launched a strenuous

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<sup>64</sup> On this emphasis, which was one way for believers to achieve some certainty regarding their salvation, see: František Graus, "The Crisis of the Middle Ages and the Hussites" in S. Ozment, ed., *The Reformation in Medieval Perspective* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 76-103, 83.

<sup>65</sup> Dolejšová, "Eschatological Elements," 133. See also: Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*, 43-49.

<sup>66</sup> On these emphases in Hus's preaching at Bethlehem, see: Thomas Fudge, "Ansellus Dei," 149.

<sup>67</sup> The Latin original was preserved by Matthias Flacius Illyricus in his 1558 collection of Hus's works under the title, "Sermo Synodaliz Ioannis Hus, Habitus in Die Lucae Evangelistae in Curia Archiepiscopi Pragensis," See: *Historia et Monumenta*, vol. 2, 32r-36v.

<sup>68</sup> The tradition of reforming synodal sermons in Prague extended back to the fourteenth century, and Milíč gave three of these in between 1364 and 1373. In this, as in many other ways, Hus's

assault on clerical vice. Preaching on Ephesians 6:14-15,<sup>69</sup> Hus called for the clergy to gird themselves with righteousness and conform to the life of Christ while putting off their desire for worldly power, riches, or the satisfaction of their carnal lust. He also emphasized the necessity of the preaching office for priests, and stated that if a priest did not bravely announce the Gospel, then he was nothing but a “dumb dog,” for whom “death and eternal damnation is prepared.”<sup>70</sup> This damnation awaited because the seductions of the world had distracted the clergy from their appropriate duties. Unfaithful clergymen were like Judas, because they could not persevere in their calling and had fallen prey to the temptations of the devil. Hus used harsh language to describe such a priest; he was a “joint heir of Antichrist,” (*cohaeres Antichristi*) “an adversary of Christ, the Behemoth,” (*adversarius Christi, Behemoth*) “a prince of darkness,” (*princeps tenebrarum*) and “blood stained with the taint of his sins” (*sanguineus ex peccati macula*).<sup>71</sup> Hus’s hope was to promote the peace of God by reforming the pastors and preachers who oversaw God’s people in Prague and all of Bohemia. Unfortunately, the comprehensive vision of moral reform he held for his peers, and the strident language he used to express it, were not popular.

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sermons represented the culmination of Bohemian trajectories of reform. On these sermons, see: Herold, “How Wyclifite?” 27-28.

<sup>69</sup> “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.” Hus, “Sermo Synodalis,” 32r.

<sup>70</sup> “Vos state constanter Evangelium populo nuntiantes, quia et mutis canibus interitus, et indigne praedicantibus poenarum exitus est paratus.” Hus, “Sermo Synodalis,” *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> These execrations are from a series of accusations that Hus makes concerning all of the evils introduced into the world by bad priests. Rather than holding to the high standards of Christ, they engaged in every sort of betrayal and wickedness. For the entire passage, see: Hus, “Sermo Synodalis,” 33r.

So, beginning in 1408 Hus and his lay supporters entered into a period of crisis that would lead to his death and the birth of a popular movement of religious dissent. In that year, some priests cited Hus to the Archbishop of Prague, Zbyněk Zajíc of Hasenburk, and on June 16, the Prague synod passed a resolution forbidding any attacks on church authorities in Czech sermons.<sup>72</sup> These initial attacks broadened over the course of the year, as Wyclif's teaching on remanence was censured by the archbishop, and two Czech academic masters, Stephen Pálež and Stanislav of Znojmo, were charged with heretical teachings in Rome.<sup>73</sup> Both masters ultimately recanted and became staunch opponents of Hus and other Bohemian reformers in Prague. Hus himself was charged with heretical Wyclifite beliefs before the archbishop, and the ubiquity of such charges prompted king Wenceslas IV to step in.<sup>74</sup> Wenceslas was concerned that his kingdom would be stained by a reputation for heresy, so he exerted considerable pressure on the archbishop to declare that his clergy were orthodox. This action by Wenceslas revealed the initial alliance between the Bohemian reformers and the king. Much as Wyclif had taught, Hus also believed that the king could act as a vicar of the church and effect its reform if the ecclesiastical hierarchy was remiss in its duty.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> For the origins of Archbishop Zbyněk's attacks on Hus, and the general development of attacks on Wyclif's theory of remanence in Prague, see: Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*, 79ff.

<sup>73</sup> The basis for the condemnation of Wyclif was a selection of forty-five articles taken from his work and officially condemned by Charles University in 1403. This condemnation was the work of the German majority at the university, and support for Wyclif became a mark of the Bohemian teachers and students. Zbyněk thought that the suppression of Wyclif's ideas was not being carried out, and that the Bohemian masters at the university were actively teaching the prohibited ideas. On the prohibition of the articles, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 24-25.

<sup>74</sup> For a concise biography of Wenceslas and an analysis of his motivations for trying to limit this religious controversy, see: František Bartoš, "Husův Král," *Jihočeský sborník historický* 13 (1940), 1-15, 11-13.

<sup>75</sup> Wyclif relied on the monarch to impose reform on the unwilling clergy. Throughout the period of his conflict with Zbyněk, Hus referred to Wyclif's ideas concerning the duty of the king regarding the oversight of the Church. On this, see: Werner, *Welt und Umwelt*, 106-107. See also:



The alliance between the Wyclif-inspired reformers and the king, however, would prove to be more tenuous than Hus and his colleagues knew.

At first, this alliance seemed solid. In 1409, Hus joined with many of the Bohemian university masters who supported Wenceslas's shift of allegiance in the Great Schism to the conciliar plan that supported a church assembly in Pisa.<sup>76</sup> Their support ultimately resulted in a great victory for the reformers, the Kutná Hora Decree of 1409. Wenceslas learned that the German university masters would not support his withdrawal of allegiance from the Roman pope, Gregory XII. Therefore, Wenceslas reversed the constitution of the university, giving the Bohemian nation three of four votes in university decisions. The German nations, which had held three votes, were given only one.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the university voted its approval of Wenceslas's new conciliar preference, and the German masters and students left en masse for the new university in Leipzig, which was founded to

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Bernhard Töpfer, *—Lex Christi, Dominium und kirchliche Hierarchie bei Johannes Hus im Vergleich mit John Wyklif,* in *Zwischen Zeiten*, 157-165.

<sup>76</sup> In 1409, a number of French and Belgian cardinals decided that the Schism had gone on too long; they conceived a plan to call a church council in Pisa, depose the two current popes, and elect a new pope. A delegation from this group had persuaded Wenceslas to declare neutrality in this matter, thus tacitly withdrawing his allegiance from Gregory XII and approving the council's decisions. Zbyněk kept his allegiance to Gregory, and thus opposed the king; he only switched his allegiance when brought up on charges before the new pope, John XXIII. The best account of the calling of the council and its ramifications in Bohemia is: Paul De Vooght, *L'Hérésie de Jean Huss* (Louvain: Publications universitaires de Louvain, 1975), 103-128; see also: Kaminsky, *A History*, 62-71; and Peter Segl, *—Schisma, Krise, Häresie und schwarzer Tod: Signaturen der „Welt von Hus,“* in *Zwischen Zeiten*, 27-38, esp. 32-34.

<sup>77</sup> Prior to 1409, there were three German sub-nations in the university, and only one Bohemian grouping. The result of the Kutná Hora Decree was that Charles University became almost exclusively Bohemian. It also became a pillar of support for the reform of the church and Wyclifite thought. Thus, the Decree is often seen as a watershed moment in the religious reform of Bohemia taking on a nationalist ideology. The continued opposition of the exiled German masters to Hus, especially at the Council of Constance, fostered the idea of the opposition between Bohemia and the German-speaking lands as an opposition between the holy people of God and their foreign oppressors. On nationalist ideology in the Bohemian reformation, see: Šmahel, *—The Idea of the „Nation.“* On the Kutná Hora Decree more specifically, see: Werner, *Welt und Umwelt*, 86-87. See also: František Bartoš, *—Příspevky k Dějinám Karlovy University v Době Husově a Husitské,* *Sborník historický* 4 (1956), 33-70, especially 33-40.

shelter the scholars in exile.<sup>78</sup> Archbishop Zbyněk opposed the king in this matter, though, and he suspended Hus, whom he saw as a leader of the university's insurrection, from preaching. Hus's subsequent election as the rector of the university in October, 1409, did not help matters, as it seemed a deliberate provocation of the archbishop, and Zbyněk registered charges against Hus in Rome.

These charges led to the promulgation of a papal bull on June 16, 1410, which prohibited preaching in private chapels.<sup>79</sup> The observance of this bull would have prevented Hus from preaching in Bethlehem, but Hus ignored it. In fact, he preached a sermon on Luke 5 in defiance of the order, noting that Jesus had preached outdoors at Genesareth (Lk. 5:1), "because wherever there was an audience of people, there holy preaching could take place."<sup>80</sup> In response, the archbishop excommunicated Hus, and the pope appointed four cardinals to look into the matter.<sup>81</sup> The cardinals upheld the archbishop's actions, and demanded

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<sup>78</sup> It is interesting to note as well that the Kutná Hora decree helped to shape a distinctly German consciousness among the community of immigrants in Prague. On the formation of a German-speaking community in Prague and its self-consciousness as distinct from the Czechs, see: Leonard Scales, "At the Margins of Community: Germans in Pre-Hussite Bohemia," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6<sup>th</sup> series, 9 (1999), 327-351, especially 331ff.

<sup>79</sup> This bull was actually issued by Pope Alexander V in March, but Zbyněk did not publish it in Prague until June; it also condemned Wyclif's writings wholesale and demanded that all copies of his works be surrendered to the archbishop. This demand met with widespread resistance, and the university formally protested on June 21. Hus complied with the order, but refused to stop preaching. The text of the bull can be found in: *Documenta*, 374-376. Hus's protest against the order, and an appeal to the apostolic see against it, can be found in the same volume, 387-396. On the university's response, see: Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*, 93-95.

<sup>80</sup> The entire text of the sermon can be found in: Jan Sedlák, *M. Jan Hus* (Prague: B. Stýbla, 1915), 159-164. The beginning of the sermon reads: "Ostendit ewangelista, quomodo salvator noster predicavit verbum dei sollicite et populus audiebat avide. Predicavit autem stans secus stagnum Genesareth, ut facto ostenderet, quia ubicunque fuerit populi audientia, ibi potest esse predicatio sancta."

<sup>81</sup> Hus's excommunication was coupled with a condemnation of Wyclif's teachings. This parallelism in the judicial procedures against Hus and Wyclif prevailed until 1415 and beyond, and the grounds for the conviction of Hus rested on the condemnation of Wyclif's sacramental teachings. See Kaminsky, *A History*, 82.

that Hus appear in Bologna to answer the charges against him. When Hus did not appear, Cardinal Odo da Colonna extended the excommunication against Hus and stated that anyone who aided him would come under the penalty of excommunication as well.<sup>82</sup> Here, local authorities and the ecclesiastical hierarchy acted in concert to stop Hus's preaching, but at this point Hus could depend on the support of the king. Wenceslas IV opposed the excommunication of Hus, and in Bohemia it was never promulgated.<sup>83</sup> In short, royal support offset the opposition of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and protected Hus, but this did not last.<sup>84</sup>

Hus lost Wenceslas's support over the issue of a crusade indulgence. In 1411, Pope John XXIII called a crusade against King Ladislas of Naples, who was a supporter of the rival pope, Gregory XII. Hus, who did not oppose the practice of offering indulgences in principle, objected both to the calling of a crusade against a Christian king and the theology espoused by the indulgence sellers.<sup>85</sup> Although Wenceslas demanded that any opposition to the indulgence

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<sup>82</sup> For an account of the initial judicial procedures against Hus, see: Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*, 94-101.

<sup>83</sup> From the first excommunication of Hus until his death, his lawyers and representatives wrote and appeared on Hus's behalf in Rome. Proceedings against Hus were also complicated by the death of several leaders who had excommunicated him. Because of these irregularities and the efforts of Hus's legal support, especially Jan of Jesenice, Hus always contended that he had met the legal requirements imposed upon him. The Roman judges of his case, though (the lead judge changed three times between 1410 and the beginning of the Council of Constance), considered his failure to appear to be grounds for imposing a major excommunication upon him. On these further proceedings, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 67-75.

<sup>84</sup> It is worth noting here that during the year 1410 King Wenceslas and Queen Sophie of Bohemia wrote multiple letters to Rome protesting the continued prosecution of Hus; in defending Hus and the ministry of Bethlehem chapel, Wenceslas referred to Hus as "capellanus noster fidelis devotus dilectus, ad eandem capellam confirmatus, pacifice praedicet verbum dei." For this letter and others, see: *Documenta*, 422-425.

<sup>85</sup> Hus argued that the crusade preachers in Prague underemphasized the necessity of contrition in the penitential cycle; they promoted a highly mechanical conception of the relationship between the purchase of the indulgence and its salvific benefit. Hus's protest initially took the form of a quodlibet debate at the university in which he declared that the pope had exceeded his power, and thus no longer had to be obeyed by Christians. For the university's disavowal of Hus's position,

preachers stop, Hus and Jerome of Prague (d. 1416) continued to speak against them. Jerome was a dedicated Wyclifite and popular preacher who had already run into trouble while trying to spread Wyclif's realist philosophy in Vienna.<sup>86</sup> He was also an ardent religious nationalist who consistently pushed an image of the Czech nation (defined as those who spoke Czech) as "sacrosanct." He also placed faith and blood alongside language as the defining characteristics of the holy Czech nation. His advocacy for the Czechs, and his outspoken distaste for Germans, endeared him to the urban crowds who heard him speak, but angered the king, who relied on the German burghers of the Old Town for political and financial support.<sup>87</sup> Jerome also participated in a university disputation against indulgences in 1412, and there used strong nationalist rhetoric in his description of the persecution of Bohemian religious leaders.<sup>88</sup> Taken together, Jerome's inflammatory speeches and Hus's opposition to the indulgences sparked popular demonstrations in Prague.

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see: *Documenta*, 448-450. For the text of John XXIII's bulls proclaiming the indulgence and crusade, and Hus's written responses to them, see: *Historia et Monumenta*, vol. 1, 171r-191r.

<sup>86</sup> Jerome had been in England in 1406, and he had brought back with him a significant number of Wyclifite texts and a real dedication to the radical consequences of Wyclif's philosophical and theological ideas. After his stay in England, Jerome continued on a scholarly peregrination around Europe before returning to Prague, and then he went to Hungary and Vienna in 1410 to try to preach to King Sigismund; while there, his ideas aroused the anger of German university masters who had fled to Vienna from Prague after the promulgation of the Kutná Hora Decree, and he was arrested and tried for heresy; he fled to escape punishment. On Jerome's time in England and his Wyclifite formation, see: František Šmahel, "Eben und Werk des Magisters Hieronymus von Prag: Forschung ohne Probleme und Perspektiven?" *Historica* 13 (1966), 81-111, 95-97 and 104-105. On the Vienna incident, see: Paul P. Bernard, "Jerome of Prague, Austria, and the Hussites," *Church History* 27 (1958), 3-22, 5-7.

<sup>87</sup> On the nature of Jerome's nationalism, which was primarily religious, and the use of language as a defining characteristic, see: František Šmahel, *Idea Národa v Husitských Čechách* (Prague: Argo, 2000), 44-48; see also Ferdinand Seibt *Hussitica: Zur Struktur einer Revolution* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1965), especially 77-86.

<sup>88</sup> On this disputation, see: Reginald Betts, "Jerome of Prague," in *idem., Essays in Czech History* (London: Athlone Press, 1969), 195-235, especially 215-217. See also: Šmahel, "Eben und Werk des Magisters Hieronymus," 98-100.

During the summer of 1412, riots broke out and crowds attacked indulgence sellers. A procession took place in Prague in which a person dressed as a prostitute and bedecked in writs of indulgence rode through the city in a wagon amidst jeering crowds.<sup>89</sup> On July 10, three young men in Prague named Martin, Jan, and Stašek, denounced indulgences during worship services in Prague churches. They were imprisoned and summarily executed. A great crowd assembled and bore their bodies to Bethlehem Chapel, where they were buried. The crowd sang *—Isti Sunt Martyres,*” and such actions invested the three young men with an aura of sanctity, despite the fact that they had acted in defiance of royal orders.<sup>90</sup> Later, Hus was accused of leading this demonstration himself:

He [Hus] later ordered his priests and disciples to carry them to the Bethlehem Chapel singing *—These are Saints,*” and the next day he ordered that instead of the masses for the dead, the martyrs’ mass be sung. Thus he sanctified and, as far as he could, canonized those beheaded youths.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Jerome of Prague has also been implicated in planning and carrying out this procession. Such processions were common vehicles for the expression of anti-clerical sentiments, and this particular manifestation focused the laity’s attention on a particular aspect of clerical vice. On this procession, see: Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 304. See also: Thomas Fudge, *—The Crown and Red Gown: Hussite Popular Religion,* in T. Johnson and R. Scribner, eds., *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400-1800* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 38-57, 53.

<sup>90</sup> The apprehension and beheading of the three men took place because of a royal order that had been passed prohibiting the public denunciation of indulgences. The three men’s protest took place the next day, so it is possible they never knew of the royal decree. *—Isti Sunt Martyres*” was an introit from the common for martyrs which comprised part of the liturgy for many saints’ feasts. Hus’s role in these events is hotly debated in modern scholarship. He was accused at Constance of having led the procession and saying a martyr’s mass for the three men, although Hus stated that he was not there. Scholars now tend to be hesitant in identifying the leaders of the procession or sponsors of the liturgical celebration of the three men, as the sources conflict. Kaminsky argues that Jan of Jičín led the procession, while other scholars assign a leading role of Jerome of Prague. On this, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 81; see also: Renee Neu Watkins, *—The Death of Jerome of Prague: Divergent Views,* *Speculum* 42 (1967), 104-129, 110; and Fudge, *—Asellus Dei,* 154.

<sup>91</sup> *—Reclamantes decolati sunt, quos ipse postea suis clericis et discipulis ad cappellam Bethleem cum cant: Isti sunt sancti mandavit deportari et in crastino loco misse defunctorum missam de martiribus cantari iussit et sic illos decollatos sactificavit, et quantum in eo fuit, canonisavit.*” This quotation is from a series of articles against Hus presented by Stephen Pálež during Hus’s trial at Constance. Hus himself denied the accusations, stating that he was not there during the procession. See: Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 106.

These events legitimized popular resistance to the king and church for the sake of Bohemian reform ideology. For Hus and his followers, the sale of indulgences represented the peddling of salvation, which could not be for sale. The execution of the three young men represented a tyrannical exercise of power, which suggested the king's complicity in the suppression of the truth. The Bohemian reform thus gained its first three martyrs, and they were associated indelibly with the Bethlehem Chapel. This association, and the celebration of death gained in resistance to the corruption of the church, would both become central elements in a post-1415 Hussite identity, and they had their roots in the indulgence controversies of 1412.

These disturbances provoked intense royal opposition to Hus, who was seen to be the leader of popular resistance, so in October a sentence of excommunication was finally read out against Hus in Prague. It contained the stipulation that the city would come under the ban if Hus did not appear in Rome.<sup>92</sup> Hus's association with radical popular protest and his unwillingness to follow the king's wishes in religious matters had deprived him of the king's support, so Hus went into exile to preserve Prague from the interdict. The exile of the leader of the reform movement in Prague had unintended consequences, though. Hus's absence allowed the development of other leaders in the movement with their own, often more radical ideals of reform, and Hus's exile provided proof of the willingness of the king and local bishops to collude in order to suppress the proclamation of God's word and law in Bohemia.

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<sup>92</sup> The sentence of aggravated excommunication, with its attendant threat of interdict on any "city, town, castle, village, suburb, exempt or non-exempt place" that harbored Hus, can be found in: *Documenta*, 461-464.

### Hus's Exile: The Crystallization of Reform Ideology

During Hus's time in exile the movement for religious reform in Prague became more radical in its opposition to king and pope. Certain themes that had begun to develop in the sermons and writings of authors like Hus, Jerome of Prague, and Hus's follower Jakoubek of Stříbro (d.1429) appeared to take on new importance as political and religious oppression mounted.<sup>93</sup> In response to Hus's exile, Jakoubek, who would assume more and more importance as a leader of the Prague reformers, had one of Hus's tracts, *De sex erroribus*, inscribed on the walls of the Bethlehem Chapel. The entire text was an attack on six theological errors that Hus saw as endemic among the clergy. Using patristic citations and biblical texts, he argued against the clergy's claims to powers that were prerogatives of God alone.<sup>94</sup> In the fifth chapter of the work, Hus argued that not all excommunications were binding, because excommunications were legitimate only if they punished mortal sin. If they were imposed for another reason, a

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<sup>93</sup> Jakoubek was a university master and priest who would eventually succeed Hus as the main preacher at Bethlehem Chapel; he rose to prominence in the Bohemian reform beginning with the exile of Hus, and he became one of the instrumental figures in introducing the practice of utraquism in 1414. He was a dedicated devotee of Matěj of Janov, whom he frequently quoted, more vociferous than Hus in his attacks on the papacy, and was a key figure in promoting the veneration of Hus as an authentic Bohemian saint. The fullest treatment of his life is: De Vooght, *Jacobellus*. See also: Kaminsky, *A History*, 52-55 and 98-126.

<sup>94</sup> For instance, Hus wrote against the clergy's putative ability to create Christ's body in the eucharistic consecration and their demand that the laity worship (or believe in) the power of humans to loose and bind. Overall, the text comprises six chapters, each named for the central error it discusses: —~~C~~are," —~~C~~redere," —~~R~~emittere," —~~O~~bediencia," —~~E~~xcommunicacio," and —~~S~~ymonia." The text is entirely devoid of references to Hus's ongoing struggles with the church authorities, but the treatise seems to be an extended justification of Hus's positions, which Jakoubek would have interpreted for the laity at Bethlehem Chapel. The entire text is printed in: Ryba, *Betlemské Texty*, 41-63.

Christian did not need to enforce or respect them.<sup>95</sup> In this context, Luke 6:22 was essential: “Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.”<sup>96</sup> Here, oppression could serve as proof that a person was truly following the precepts of divine law. Conformity to the *lex Christi* would necessarily garner resistance, and the individual’s conscience was decisive in recognizing whether or not one was truly following Christ and resisting a church hierarchy that was increasingly seen to be satanically inspired.

Hus’s exile also witnessed the promulgation of a text that explicitly condemned king Wenceslas for his complicity in the exile of Hus. A brief text purporting to be a manifesto of the “The Community of the Free Spirit of the Brotherhood of Christ” lamented the king’s appointment of German sympathizers and persecution of Hus. Wenceslas’s attack on Hus revealed that the king was a “follower of Nero the king,” and that he “had fallen from the love of God and also from his kingliness.”<sup>97</sup> The pamphlet also decried the persecution of Jerome of

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<sup>95</sup> Basing his argument on a number of patristic citations, Hus asserts: “Ex iam dictis patet, que excommunicacio ligat, et que non: qui iniusta non ligat, nec a comunione sanctorum eicit.” Here we see his definition of the church as a predestined community, rather than a hierarchical body. See: Ryba, *Betlemské Texty*, 50.

<sup>96</sup> For this quotation of the Bible in the context of Hus’s writings, see: Ryba, *Betlemské Texty*, 52.

<sup>97</sup> The text that contains these quotations has engendered much scholarly debate. It seems to be a German translation of an authentic Hussite text from 1412 (internal evidence makes the dating secure), but F. Bartoš has argued that it is in fact a German parody of proto-Hussite propaganda used to drive a wedge between the king and his Bohemian subjects. H. Kaminsky sees no reason to suppose a German author from the text itself, and suggests that it could be an authentic proto-Hussite piece of propaganda. Either way, it seems that the pamphlet reflects common perceptions of Wenceslas and his religious opponents during the early months of Hus’s exile. For the text of the pamphlet, see: František Bartoš, “Hus a jeho strana v osvětlení nepřátelského pamfletu z r. 1412,” *Reformační Sborník* 4 (1931), 3-8. Ernst Werner later misidentified this text as a witness to chiliasm in 1420; for Bartoš’s strident rejoinder (Werner later accepted Bartoš’s dating), see: F. Bartoš, “Nový pramen k dějinám českého chiliasmu?” *Theologická Příloha: Křesťanské Revue* 28 (1961), 10-16. For Kaminsky’s summary of the debate over this source, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 84-87. These quotes: Bartoš, “Hus a jeho strana,” 5.



Prague in Vienna in 1410, and wondered how the king could establish the power of German heretics over the Bohemian people. Hus, however, would marshal the nation, “not as a goose, but as a lion,” and so the author exhorted: —Dar, holy community in Bohemia, let us stand as a cohort with our head, master Goose, and master Jerome [of Prague], our leader, and whoever thus is a true Christian, let him join with us.”<sup>98</sup> The manifesto used this militant language to reject the authority of Wenceslas, who had fallen prey to the “lies of Antichrist,” and linked him to the other primary enemy of faithful Christians, the institutional church.<sup>99</sup>

Along with the implicit attacks on the church’s judgment in *De Sex Erroribus* and the rejection of Wenceslas’s moral authority, Hus’s exile also witnessed a more explicit attack on the Catholic church in 1412, when Nicholas of Dresden authored his *Tables of the Old and New Color*, a collection of nine comparisons between the practice and doctrine of the primitive church and those of the contemporary church.<sup>100</sup> Nicholas was a German teacher and author who had likely come to Prague in 1411 and settled at the House of the Black Rose with other exiles from the diocese of Meissen.<sup>101</sup> His *Tables* survived in over a dozen

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<sup>98</sup> —Darumb, liebew heyligew gemain in Pehaim, stee wir zw hauffen mit unserm hawpp maister Ganns und maister Jeronimo unserem fueraer, und wer da well sein Christi, der naig sich czu uns.” Bartoš, —Hus a jeho strana,” 7.

<sup>99</sup> The ensnarement of the king by the “lug Antichristi” is opposed in the text to the “ewangelio Christi, dar inn dy lautter warhait ist.” The notion here that the common people have received the truth from their leaders highlights the potential opposition between king and people, as the former has definitively sided with the German oppressors, heretics, and those who favor “icht anders den lug predigt des Antichristi.” See: Bartoš, —Hus a jeho strana,” 6.

<sup>100</sup> The best critical edition of this work is: Howard Kaminsky et al., eds., —Master Nicholas of Dresden: The Old Color and the New,” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 55, pt. 1 (1965), 3-93.

<sup>101</sup> Nicholas was one of the leading members of the so-called —Dresden School,” a group of German scholars who immigrated to Prague from Dresden after the bishop of Meissen (in whose diocese they lived) forbade the teaching of the Bible in secondary schools. These German masters, especially Nicholas and a man named Peter, attained considerable prestige and influence in the Bohemian reform until the end of the 1410s, when many of them embraced a more sectarian,

fifteenth-century manuscripts; they consisted of collections of scriptural and patristic texts praising the apostolic church set against condemnations of the late medieval church. These contrasts were often summarized in pictorial form and served as the foci for popular processions or demonstrations; the pictorial summaries of the text thus allowed for its critique of the contemporary church to transcend the boundaries of literacy and take root in popular consciousness.<sup>102</sup>

The first table presented Christ bearing his cross (see figure 1), with a caption reading, “The last among men.” (Isaiah 53:3) It further quoted, “If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.” (Matt. 16:24) In contrast to this humility, the pope was shown riding a fine horse and arrayed in costly garments (see figure 2). The caption under this image read, “The Supreme Pontiff, employing the insignia of the apostolic office.”<sup>103</sup> Here, the images condensed the central message of the text: in the accumulation of worldly honors and power, the pope and the institutional church had deviated from the models of the early church and Christ himself.

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Waldensian outlook that distanced them from the mainstream of Bohemian reform. Nicholas himself left Prague around 1417, and was executed in Meissen. For his biography and literary work, see: Kaminsky, "Old Color and New," 5-28. See also: František Bartoš, *Husitství a Cizina* (Prague: Čin, 1931), 125-147.

<sup>102</sup> Thomas Fudge refers to processions based on the parading of these antithetical images, and the chronicle of Procopius the Notary (1476) also attests to the use of the *Tables* in demonstrations. Fudge also notes that antithetical images, one of them mimicking the first set of images in Nicholas's work, were painted in the Bethlehem Chapel. Thus, one sees the continued concentration on Bethlehem as a spatial center for reform. See: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, especially 228-229. For Procopius's chronicle and his account of the processions, see: *Geschichtschreiber*, vol. 1, 67-78, 72.

<sup>103</sup> This description is contained in Kaminsky, *A History*, 41. The quotation for the image of pope comes from the Decretals and demonstrates how more recent authorities had been used to justify deviance from the model of Christ.



**Figure 1: “The Last Among Men”**  
**Jena Codex (c.1495)**  
**MS NKP IV B 24, f. 12v**

**Figure 2: “The Supreme Pontiff”**  
**Jena Codex (c.1495)**  
**MS NKP IV B 24 f. 13r**

The striking contrast between the images would have demonstrated how obvious this deviance was for those who were paying attention, but Nicholas provided a further means of establishing the basis for this contrast in his *Tables*. At the beginning of the fifth table, under a picture of a black horse upon which sat a man holding a scale, the text read (see figure 3):



**Figure 2: “The Black Horse of Revelation 6”  
Jena Codex (c. 1495), MS NKP IV B 24, f. 24v**

Lo a black horse, and he that sat on him had a balance in his hand (Apoc. vi, 5). *Gloss*: The balance is the scripture, because just as the weight of a body is known by a balance, so by the holy scripture is known the weight of a spirit. For the holy doctors have their knowledge from the scriptures because they humbly subject themselves to scripture, adapting their understanding to it. But heretics have knowledge from their own hands, for, pretending to be doctors, they adapt it to their understanding.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> I follow Kaminsky’s English translation of the original here; the original Latin is in a facing column to the translation. See: Kaminsky, “Old Color and New,” 47.

Here, Nicholas established Scripture as the ultimate judge of orthopraxy and the primitive church as an ideal model for contemporary Christian society.<sup>105</sup> The Bible was thus a living book whose mandates had to be followed, even if submission to them required the believer to remove himself from the institutional church. The corruption of that body demanded the establishment of a counter-community of the faithful who maintained the “old color,” and Nicholas’s work helped to convince many that such a withdrawal was necessary and imminent.

The antitheses that formed the backbone of Nicholas’s propaganda gained a scholarly complement in the year 1413. In that year, Jan Hus wrote *De Ecclesia*, which was without doubt the most significant theological explanation of the opposition between the true and false churches that had gained such a striking popular expression in Nicholas’s work. Initially composed as both a response to his scholastic opponents’ writings and an apology for his defiance of the pope, *De Ecclesia* was read aloud on June 8, 1413 before eighty people in the Bethlehem Chapel. The book was composed of two main parts; its first ten chapters were a reasoned defense of a Wyclifite ecclesiology in which the church comprised the totality of the predestinate, and the last sixteen chapters were an impassioned response to a group of Prague masters who had condemned Hus’s teachings in February, 1413.<sup>106</sup> This work was a detailed synthesis of biblical citations,

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<sup>105</sup> Nicholas’s emphasis on the necessity of applied idealism placed him firmly within the Bohemian tradition as represented by Milíč and Hus; he was clearly inspired by Hus’s ideas in many of his writings, and Nicholas’s intellectual development in Prague reflected his absorption of both indigenous Bohemian and Wyclifite influences. On this, see: Kaminsky, “Old Color and New,” 10 and 16. See also: Werner, *Welt und Umwelt*, 133-134.

<sup>106</sup> The king ordered a meeting of the theological faculty early in 1413 and had them ratify the interdict against Prague and issue condemnations of Hus’s teachings. On February 6, the masters issued this *Consilium*, to which Hus replied in the second half of *De Ecclesia*. On the composition and reading of Hus’s *De Ecclesia*, see: Spinka, *Hus’ Concept of the Church*, 252.

patristic sources, and Wyclif's ecclesiology as refracted through the sacramentalism and moralism of the Bohemian reform. Hus accepted that the church militant was a mixed body in which the damned and saved were virtually indistinguishable, but he firmly dissociated the true church of those whom God had elected for salvation from any institutional markers of sanctity. Indeed, he especially criticized prelates who claimed sanctity based on their offices (echoing Matěj), and suggested that —however much holy men are praised by men, that much more should they abase themselves and humble their mind for fear that praise will remove [their] more worthy merit.”<sup>107</sup>

The second half of the work was marked by an anticlericalism that saw exactly this embrace of worldly praise as one of the chief sins of the contemporary clergy. Echoing his 1407 synodal sermon, Hus equated the worldly clergy to Judas, whose greed led him to betray Christ. Rather than following the mores of Peter, the clergy sought gold and high offices, and thus betrayed the teachings and model of Jesus.<sup>108</sup> After constructing a dichotomy between the “true vicars of Peter” and the “vicars of evil,” Hus denied the validity of the latter's acts: “If, however, he [the faithful Christian] truly knows that the mandate of the pope obviates the mandate or council of Christ or inclines towards some evil for the church, then he ought bravely to resist, lest he become a participant in a crime

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<sup>107</sup> “Unde sancti viri quanto magis laudantur ab hominibus, tanto magis se humiliant et magis timore mentem deprimunt, ne laus deiciat a merito magis dignis.” All quotes from *De Ecclesia* come from S. Thompson Harrison's edition: Jan Hus, *Tractatus De Ecclesia* (Prague: Komenského Evangelická Fakulta, 1958). This quote: 99.

<sup>108</sup> This typology comes from Augustine, in his *Super Johannem*. Hus developed it in order to use the concept of the “Judas clergy” as a standard by which to judge the clergy and pope wicked, thus justifying dissent from their teaching and judgments. See: Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 114-115.

from his consent.”<sup>109</sup> Hus never rejected the papacy as a viable institution, and he argued that a good pope was necessary for the proper management and development of the church. The problem, though, was that the office of the papacy did not guarantee the holder’s sanctity, and thus the pope could become the most powerful member of Antichrist through his own moral corruption.<sup>110</sup> At that point, the believer was justified in resisting the acts and teachings of the pope. Hus even claimed that God often eschewed the high and mighty of the world, and that he instead revealed the way of truth” to “the laity, the simple, and the poor priests, who decide to obey God rather than men.”<sup>111</sup>

Hus’s claims that the teachings and judgments of the pope and the hierarchical church could be rendered invalid by their own sin were motivated to some extent by his own situation. He was under the sentence of aggravated excommunication, his appeals to the pope had been rejected, and in response he had appealed to the judgment of Christ himself.<sup>112</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that Hus ended his book with two chapters on excommunication and ecclesiastical censure, especially the interdict, in which he explained why they were often

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<sup>109</sup> –Si autem cognoscit veraciter, quod mandatum pape obviat mandato vel consilio Christi vel vergit in aliquod malum ecclesie, tunc debet audaciter resistere, ne sit particeps criminis ex consentu.” Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 164.

<sup>110</sup> Hus treats this topic extensively in chapter sixteen, and repeatedly concludes that while a pope can be the highest authority and worthy of veneration and respect because of his actions on behalf of the Gospel, he can also be seen as the abomination of desolation, —si in papa conspicitur vita Christo contraria in superbia, in avaricia, in inopia, in ambicione, in extollencia potestatis, in preponderancia legis sue supra legem Christi.” Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 140.

<sup>111</sup> –Benedictus ergo sit deus et pater domini Ihesu Christi, qui abscondit viam veritatis a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelavit eam laicis, simplicibus et pauperibus sacerdotibus, qui eligunt magis deo quam hominibus obedire.” Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 201.

<sup>112</sup> In his appeal, Hus argued that the Cardinals in charge of his case had refused to hear his representatives and imprisoned them without guilt. Hus saw these actions, and his reconciliation with his initial accuser, as invalidating the legal process against him. Because he could not get fair treatment from his judges, he appealed to the judgment of Christ. On this attempt to supersede the Roman judicial process, see: Kejř, *Husův proces*, 97ff. The text of this appeal is in: *Documenta*, 464-466.

illegitimate. In general, Hus argued that a person could only be legitimately brought under excommunication for a blatant breach of God's law.<sup>113</sup> Adultery, simony, murder, or blasphemy could result in a legitimate excommunication. Disobedience, however, was not such a crime, and often this punishment was used to curtail the holy exposition of the sins of Antichrist's followers:

First he [Antichrist] defames the disciple of Christ, then accuses and cites him [to Rome], then he excommunicates and suspends him. If he cannot be delivered to jail or death, then Antichrist invokes the secular arm, and thus prevailing he heaps on his conquest with a malicious interdict. Most principally he proceeds thus against those who expose the iniquity of Antichrist, who has seized the clergy for himself.<sup>114</sup>

This interpretation of the ecclesiastical judicial process undercut its claims to legitimacy by turning it into a tool used by those who would avoid having their own sins revealed. This, coupled with Hus's criticism of the clergy's sins and his valorization of the laity and simple priests, effectively provided a learned formulation of the popular antipathy for the ecclesiastical hierarchy that had been brewing in Prague since the indulgence controversy. From his exile, Hus formalized the reform movement's anticlericalism and systematized the separation of the true church, made up of the faithful followers of Christ, from the institutional church, which was infested with the Judas clergy. Although *De Ecclesia* was read to only eighty people in the Bethlehem Chapel, we can guess that those people, literate in Latin and inspired by the words of their exiled leader,

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<sup>113</sup> It is not surprising that Hus focused on sins of speech in his consideration of legitimate excommunication. Ever the preacher, Hus attacked the interdict as an institution because it cut innocent people off from the Word of God. Hus considered disobedience to God, rejecting the speech of God (*sermonum Dei*), theft, adultery, lying, blasphemy, false testimony, and all types of slander to be worthy of excommunication. See: Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 219-220.

<sup>114</sup> —Primo discipulum Christi infamat, postea accusat, deinde citat, excommunicat, suspendit, et si non potest tradere in carcerem vel in mortem, tunc brachium seculare invocat, et nec sic valens cinvere superaccumulat per maliciam interdictum. Principalissime autem sic procedit contra illos, qui denudant nequiciam Antichristi, qui clerum pro se maxime usurpavit." Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 226.



spread the ideas that it contained among the Bohemian people. Furthermore, the ideas in *De Ecclesia* integrated and built upon the popular messages spread by Jakoubek and Nicholas of Dresden.<sup>115</sup> Thus, Hus articulated a body of criticism that became common currency within the Bohemian reform, and which exploded into action after his arrest and execution in Constance.

#### Hus's Trial and Death: Martyrdom and *Memoria*

Events external to Bohemia caught up with Hus while he worked in exile. The Holy Roman Emperor, King Sigismund of Hungary, had pressured the pope of the Pisan line, John XXIII, to call a new council to finally resolve the problem of the Great Schism, so John issued a proclamation to convene a council on November 1, 1414.<sup>116</sup> Besides ending the schism, the council would also take up the issue of Wyclifite heresy in Bohemia, so Sigismund sent two Bohemian knights to Hus to invite him to the council; the two knights promised Hus a safe-conduct in the name of Sigismund, who would guarantee Hus's safe journey to, and return from, Constance. The exact terms of the safe-conduct, and what was committed to writing or only orally promised, have been debated ever since.

Suffice it to say that Hus went to the Council of Constance not as a condemned

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<sup>115</sup> *De Ecclesia* also achieved considerable circulation as a manuscript. František Bartoš has identified twenty manuscript copies of the work, and this must represent only the tip of the codicological iceberg, as many Hussite manuscripts were destroyed during the seventeenth century; given Hus's condemnation by Constance, his works would have been sought out especially. On the circulation of *De Ecclesia*, see: František Bartoš, *Literární Činnost M. J. Husi* (Prague: NČAVU, 1948), 86-87.

<sup>116</sup> On the Council of Constance, see: Walter Brandmüller, *Das Konzil von Konstanz, 1414-1418* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1991); and Phillip Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance (1414-1418)* (New York: Brill, 1994), especially 3-31.

heretic, but as an invited and protected guest of the highest secular lord in Christendom. Hus had an expectation that his case would be fairly heard.<sup>117</sup>

Hus's letter declaring his intentions to accept the emperor's invitation presented a fascinating insight into Hus's mindset before his trip to Constance. As such, it deserves to be quoted at length:

I have taught nothing in secret, but in public, for my ministry was attended mostly by masters, bachelors, priests, barons, knights, and many others; I thus desire to be heard, examined, and to preach not in secret, but at a public hearing, and to reply with the aid of the Spirit of God to all who should wish to argue against me. I will not, I hope, be afraid to confess the Lord Christ and, if need be, to suffer death for His most true law. For He, ~~the~~ King of kings and the Lord of lords," (I Tim. 6:15) the true God, being poor, mild, and humble, ~~suffered~~ for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His footsteps." He, ~~who~~ committed no sin, on whose lips no guile could be found," (I Pet. 2:21-22) who humbled Himself, having by His death destroyed our death, has placed us under an obligation to suffer humbly and not in vain. For He said: ~~Blessed~~ are those who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:10)<sup>118</sup>

In this passage, Hus showed that he was fully committed to the example of Christ, even if that required suffering and death. His use of scriptural citations and consistent positioning of his own expected trials as lesser than, but typologically

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<sup>117</sup> For an overview on the council and its treatment of Hus, see especially: Louise Loomis, trans. and ed., *The Council of Constance: The Unification of the Church* (New York: Columbia UP, 1961), especially 36-43; and Amedeo Molnár, "Die Antworten von Johann Hus auf die fünfundvierzig Artikel," in R. Bäumer, ed., *Das Konstanzer Konzil* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977), 275-283.

<sup>118</sup> The letter dates from September, 1, 1414. "Nam sicut nichil in occulto docui, sed in publico, ubi magistri, bacalarii, sacerdotes, barones, milites et ceteri homines plurimum conveniunt, sic opto non in secreto, sed in publica audientia audiri, examinari, predicare, et omnibus, quotquot arguere voluerint, iuvante spiritu domini respondere. Nec, spero, verebor confiteri Christum dominum, et pro eius lege verissima, si oportuerit, mortem pati. Ipse enim rex regum et dominus dominancium, deus verus, existens pauper, mitis et humilis, passus est pro nobis, nobis relinquens exemplum, ut sequemur vestigia eius; ipse qui peccatum non fecit, nec inventus est dolus in ore eius, qui se humilians, morte sua mortem nostram destruxit et nos ad paciendum humiliter obligavit, nec in vacuum, cum dixerit: Beati, qui persecucionem paciuntur propter iusticiam, quoniam ipsorum est regnum celorum." See: Václav Novotný, *M. Jana Husi Korespondence a Dokumenty* (Prague: NKVPNHC, 1920), 197-199, 198.

similar to, those of Christ created a distinctive parallelism that would shape his further self-presentation at the trial.

This parallelism gained a more broadly based complement even as Hus prepared to defend of his teachings. In the autumn of 1414, Jakoubek of Stříbro and other leaders of the reform in Prague reintroduced the practice of lay communion in both kinds. This practice began in three churches in Prague, including Bethlehem Chapel, and represented a form of embracing the practice of the primitive church and the literal words of the Bible. After all, Christ himself instituted communion in both kinds at the Last Supper, and here Bohemian reformers adopted that practice as binding in the fifteenth century. Although there is little doubt that Jakoubek was the leading force behind the reintroduction of the chalice for the laity, there has been considerable scholarly debate over the influences that inspired his decision.<sup>119</sup> Whether the initial impetus for this revived practice came from Jerome's observation of Orthodox practices, Wyclif's eucharistic theories, the influence of German Waldensianism, or an extended consideration of Matěj of Janov's eucharistic teachings, though, Jakoubek himself would later characterize his decision to communicate the laity in both kinds as a

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<sup>119</sup> The essential debate in this matter is whether or not the impulse for utraquism was internal or external to Bohemia. The essential positions are that: 1) Jerome of Prague inspired a renewed utraquistic practice after seeing it done in Orthodox churches while journeying to Jerusalem; 2) the German masters from Dresden inspired it based on their Waldensian leanings; 3) Jakoubek derived utraquist ideas from Wyclif's tracts, 4) Jakoubek considered utraquism to be a logical extension of Matěj's teachings on the eucharist, and 5) there was a continuous practice of utraquism in Bohemia from the time of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. The current state of the debate considers the fourth or second positions to be most convincing, with Helena Krmíčková's recent contributions to the debate arguing strenuously for a Janovite origin. On the historiographical debate over the origins of utraquism, see: Bartoš, *Husitství a cizina*, especially 71-80; Kaminsky, *A History*, 98-108; and Helena Krmíčková, *Studie a texty k počátkům kalicha v Čechách* (Brno: Masaryková univerzita, 1997); and idem., "The Janovite Theory and the Renewal of the Lay Chalice," *BRRP* 3 (2000), 63-68, 63-64.

revelation.”<sup>120</sup> This revelation, no matter the combination of sources that inspired it, established a ritual act that constituted a church separate from that in Rome. The reintroduction of communion in both kinds established, in the mind of the Hussite leaders, a direct link to the practice of the primitive church and showed that those who accepted utraquism comprised a separate church of the elect that had emerged from the previous forty years of Bohemian reform and constituted an alternative to the corrupt institutions of the church.<sup>121</sup>

Jan Hus himself was initially hesitant about the validity of this eucharistic practice, and he worried that its revival would divide the Christian community in Bohemia and arouse resistance from abroad. Eventually, Hus did come to support the chalice, and he issued a statement from Constance that it was “permissible and useful” for the laity to consume both the bread and wine; he later wrote two letters fully in favor of utraquism and requested that no one oppose the sacrament of the cup of the Lord which the Lord instituted through Himself and through his apostle, and to which no Scripture is opposed, only custom.”<sup>122</sup> While at

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<sup>120</sup> Jakoubek described his decision in this way: “In general I shall term ‘revelation’ a mode of knowledge coming from the scrutiny of the law of the Lord, and from the solid expositions and authorities of the ancient saints...By this definition I can concede that I had a revelation, for I have knowledge from the Law and from authoritative writings, and this knowledge, newly acquired in this manner, can be generally called a revelation.” This is quoted in: Kaminsky, *A History*, 100. See also: Ferdinand Seibt, “Die revelatio des Jacobellus von Mies über die Kelchkommunion,” *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 22 (1966), 618-624.

<sup>121</sup> The path of reform that this alternate church envisaged required a view of the past that emphasized the deformation of initial institutions and ideas. Jakoubek would later systematize this historical outlook with his work on the Apocalypse and the seven ages of the world, but the idea that the history of Christianity was marked by consistently increasing corruption emerged in this period and justified the radical return to the practice of the primitive church. See: Kaminsky, *A History*, 121; on Jakoubek’s developing sense of history, see: Amedeo Molnár, “Poslední věci v pohledu Jakoubka ze Stříbra,” *Theologická Příloha: Křesťanské Revue* 22 (1955), 38-42.

<sup>122</sup> Hus’s determination on the utility of the chalice was somewhat qualified, and he did not embrace the absolute centrality of the restored chalice as Jakoubek did. His tract, which was based on a notion of the spiritual necessity of communion of both kinds, was written some time in November, 1414. On this, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 128. The cited letter was dated June 21, 1415, and in it Hus requested that his immediate successor at Bethlehem, Preacher Havlík, accept

Constance, Hus came to be associated strongly with the institution of the lay chalice. His Bohemian accusers at Constance claimed that he supported lay communion in both kinds, along with holding to Wyclif's theories of remanence.<sup>123</sup> The fathers at the Council of Constance also would not stand for the Bohemian assault on the tradition of the church, and moved to suppress the practice of *utraquism*. So, on June 15, 1415, the Council officially forbade the consumption of the wine by the laity during the celebration of the eucharist.<sup>124</sup> For the Bohemians, this condemnation represented decisive evidence that Antichrist had completely subverted the Council; the Council fathers had in this way presumed to declare the actions of Jesus himself heretical.<sup>125</sup> This condemnation of the lay chalice would come to be inseparably linked to the condemnation of Jan Hus, which took place only three weeks later. In both cases, the symbolic embodiments of the purity of the early church – the holy man and Christ's blood – were rejected by a church council. Over time, the veneration of each became integral elements in the initial development of a –Hussite" movement.

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the institution of *utraquism*. He also decried the condemnation of *utraquism* by the Council of Constance in a letter dated about June 20, 1415. On Hus's acceptance of *utraquism*, see: William R. Cook, "The Eucharist in Hussite Theology." *ARG* 66 (1975) 23-35. 26-27. For the text of the two letters, see: Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 271-273 and 277. This quotation, 277.

<sup>123</sup> Hus was also accused of Donatist teachings and of accepting all of Wyclif's articles as orthodox. See: Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*, 338-339.

<sup>124</sup> The complete record of the thirteenth session of the council, which condemned *utraquism*, is available in the third volume of the exhaustive record of business of the Council of Constance, edited and published by: Hermann von der Hardt, *Magnum Oecumenicum Constantiense Concilium*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt and Leipzig: Officina Christiani Genschii Helmestadii, 1697-1700). Many of the proceedings have also been published by the Hungarian Piarist fathers on their website. For this convenient reference, see: <http://www.piar.hu/councils/ecum16.htm>.

<sup>125</sup> Nicholas of Dresden, in his *Apologia*, reflected the Bohemians' horror at this judgment: "Suppose as a possibility that Christ and his Primitive Church, with their apostolic life and evangelical practice, were to come into the midst of the Council of Constance, and were to say to the multitudes there, as he said and taught at Capernaum: 'Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you...' Those at the Council would probably not withdraw from him scandalized, as did those at Capernaum, but would hereticate and condemn him, according to their condemnation [of the lay chalice], saying that this was not their custom." See: Kaminsky, *A History*, 115.

As communion in both kinds was reintroduced in Prague, Hus traveled to the assembled council in Constance. Before leaving, he posted notices for both the ecclesiastical and secular authorities publicly proclaiming his willingness to face judgment. In one notice, he asserted: —And if any heresy should be proved against me, I do not refuse to suffer as a heretic; for I fully trust in the dear God that He will not permit slanderous people, opponents of the truth, to be victorious over the truth.”<sup>126</sup> Hus continued to project the air of an innocent man as he rode to Constance, often stopping in towns along his route to speak with monks and preachers about his religious ideas, practices, and impending hearing. Although our only source for this journey was unapologetically pro-Hus, none of the people he spoke to were so alarmed by his teachings that they raised public objections to them at his trial.<sup>127</sup> Thus, one can see a certain optimism in Hus about his upcoming hearing — he seemed to firmly believe that his teachings and practice were orthodox, and trusted that God would exonerate him. On the other hand, though, he was reconciled to the possibility of his death. He admitted that he might need to suffer or die for the doctrines that he had taught. This revealed a certain pessimism, grounded in experience, about the willingness of the church to accept criticism of itself. Hus continued to defend his own teachings and seemed to have some expectation that others would recognize their orthodoxy and

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<sup>126</sup> —Abude-li na mě které kacierstvi dovedeno, neodmlívám jako kacíř utrpěti; jehož ufám uplně milému bohu, že ť lidem utrhavým pravdy protivníkóm nepřepustí nad pravdú svítěziti.” Hus posted these notices in German, Czech, and Latin around the city of Prague so all people could respond to his requests to report any knowledge of his wrongdoing. This quotation comes from Hus’s letter in Czech from the end of August, 1414. See: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 195-196, 196.

<sup>127</sup> Mladoňovice’s *Relatio* serves as our main source for Hus’s journey. As an example of the favor Hus found, Mladoňovice included a letter from Hus to his friends in Prague that read stated that he had been well received and had pleasant conversations with priests and jurists in Nuremberg, the city of Lauf, and also Hersburg. For the text of this letter, see: Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 32.

applicability as models of clerical correction. Alongside this hope, however, Hus had his doubts that he would have the opportunity to present his ideas in a context that would allow their full explication.

The best witness to this tension between hope and fear was Hus's preparation of a sermon to deliver at the Council of Constance. Despite the seemingly innocuous title of the sermon, *De Pace*, this discourse was essentially a blistering attack on clerical sin.<sup>128</sup> From the outset of the sermon, Hus laid out a triplex definition of peace: between man and God, man and himself, and man and his neighbors. In each of these cases, peace was predicated upon the observance of laws that governed each interaction.<sup>129</sup> Hus saw rampant sin in the church around him which destroyed the peace that should exist between man and God. This peace was not destroyed by external enemies, though: —There is peace, and there is not peace. Peace with the pagans, peace with heretics(!), but not proceeding from the sons [of the church]. The voice of lament in this time says: I nurtured and exalted sons, but they despise me! They despised and dishonored me with their disgraceful lives.”<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> A facing page edition of this text, with a Czech translation, was produced in 1995. The edition is derived from eleven manuscript and early printed versions of the sermon, which are detailed on page 85. All citations are from this edition: Mistr Jan Hus, *Sermo de pace – Řeč o míru*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., F. Dobiáš and A. Molnár, eds. and trans. (Prague: Česká křesťanská akademie, 1995).

<sup>129</sup> There is certainly a great deal of irony in Hus's assertion that heretics did not bother the church, but it does suggest that he felt himself to be entirely orthodox. —Est enim pax hominis ad Deum, hominis ad seipsum, et hominis ad proximum. Et tota illa pax consistit in observancia mandatorum... Nichil enim dissolvit pacem cum Deo, nisi peccatum, quia solum ipsum dividit inter Deum et hominem iuxta illud Ys. 59: „Iniquitates vestre diviserunt inter vos et Deum.” Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 34.

<sup>130</sup> —Et pax est, et non pax est. Pax a paganis, pax ab hereticis, sed non profecto a filiis. Vox plangentis in tempore isto: Filios enutrivit et exaltavi, ipsi autem spreverunt me! Spreverunt me et maculaverunt a turpi vita.” Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 50. He also cited this passage in his 1407 synodal sermon. See: *Historia et Monumenta*, vol. 2, 34v. The second to last line from the quotation is from Isaiah 1:2; this quote is taken entirely from the thirty-third sermon on the *Song of Songs* by Bernard of Clairvaux. See: *PL*, vol. 183, 959. Bernard cultivated a “prophetic-reforming” view of

Because of this deviation from the laws of God, Hus saw six key features of God's righteousness that had been lost in the world: concord or unity, humility, poverty, chastity, endurance, and the fruitful preaching of the gospel.<sup>131</sup> The loss of these virtues, especially among the clergy, proved that the world had moved into the last days, and only an embrace of those virtues would allow Christians to resist their enemies – the flesh, the world, and the devil. Those enemies would try to overcome the followers of Christ with harsh penalties and great suffering, but ~~w~~with the armor of faith and in loving endurance, great security will suffuse the soldier of Christ...and he will be a more glorious martyr than his counterparts in the primitive church.”<sup>132</sup> This greatness derived from the strength of the opposition that this martyr would face. The clergy, who at first ~~h~~ad put on the person of Christ Jesus,” had failed to preach or live morally, and thus ~~h~~ave been transfigured by Antichrist and devils into angels of light, thieves and robbers, slaughterers of sheep and traitors who make the house of prayer a den of thieves.”<sup>133</sup>

Although Hus never had the opportunity to deliver this sermon at the council, it encapsulated the tension that his earlier proclamations had contained. He seemed to hope for the reformation of the clergy, and wanted to provoke them

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the preaching ministry that made him a favorite of the early Bohemian reformers, and Hus often cited his homiletic works in his own preaching. On Bernard's spirituality, see: Stephen Robson, *“With the Spirit and Power of Elijah” (Lk. 1:17): The Prophetic-Reforming Spirituality of Bernard of Clairvaux, as evidenced particularly in his Letters* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2004), especially chapter 1.

<sup>131</sup> ~~I~~usticie Dei legisque eius sunt: concordia, humilitas, paupertas benigna, castitas, paciencia, et predicatio ewangelii fructuosa.” Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 54.

<sup>132</sup> ~~I~~n hiis armis fidei et in caritativa paciencia pululat Cristi militi maior securitas...sit martyr gloriosior ceteris paribus quam foret in ecclesia primitiva.” Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 42.

<sup>133</sup> ~~I~~psi pastores personam Iesu Cristi induti, verbum Dei non anunciantes, etsi non superadderent malicias alias, sunt antichristi et Sathana transfiguratus in angelum lucis, fures et latrones, mactatores ovium et proditores, facientes domum oracionis speluncam latronum.” Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 76-78.



to self-correction with his words. Superseding this hope, though, was a tone of condemnation that identified the collective clergy as the agents of Antichrist and as seemingly incapable of reform. Coupled with this tone were strident attacks on specific clerical sins, especially simony and concubinage.<sup>134</sup> Hus articulated an explicit willingness to die in order to spread the message of the imminent need for reform. He argued for both the desirability and necessity of martyrdom in the church, and seemed willing to become one of those *pastors who are by their office the light and sun of the world, illuminating it and bringing it to life.*<sup>135</sup>

This sermon was not the first time that Hus contemplated the meaning of martyrdom for Christians. Indeed, throughout Hus's preaching career he articulated a thorough understanding of what he considered to be the fruits of martyrdom. This terminology is appropriate, because in Hus's writings martyrs were those who had accepted the *fruitful grain* of the word of God and in turn bore more abundant fruit.<sup>136</sup> Thus, by examining what he preached on the feast days of martyr saints, it is possible to understand what Hus himself thought about the ideas of suffering and sacrifice on behalf of Christian truth. This understanding is essential, because I would argue that Jan Hus sought to embody the traits of ideal Christian martyr-saints in his own trial and execution, and in

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<sup>134</sup> For example, in a section on the poverty of Christ, Hus condemned the seeming acceptance of simony in the church: *—Sed quod lucrum turpius quam simoniace heredis gradus ecclesiasticos defedantis, cuius tamen lucri vilissimi heredes Gezi et Iude et Simonis questum existimant pietatem, dum exata et data vel caucionata pro gradu episcopatus vel dignitatis alterius, magna pecunia ab illis dicitur magna fore gracia.* Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 66.

<sup>135</sup> *—Ipsi etiam pastores sunt ex officio lux et sol mundi, ipsum illuminans et vivificans.* Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 78.

<sup>136</sup> In the beginning of his sermon on St. Lawrence, Hus included a lengthy metaphor of the good grain (*granum frumenti*) that fell on the earth. This grain is the Scripture, and *—multum fructi beatitudinis attulit.* See: Jan Hus, *—In Die S. Laurentii*, in V. Flajšhans, ed. *Spisy M. Jana Husi, vol. 7 and 8: Sermones de Sanctis* (Prague, Nákladem J.R. Vilímka, 1907), 125-129, 125.

doing so consciously tried to place his own death within the rubric of a saint's *passio* and imbue it with a specific meaning. Through his words, deeds, and correspondence, then, Hus sought to shape the *memoria* of his death even before it was created and decisively cast himself as a true imitator of Christ.

For Hus, The saints' deaths were generative, as Christians who witnessed the spectacle of their deaths had a firm witness to the ~~ce~~elestial contemplation, the persistence of good works and the toleration of adversity within them."<sup>137</sup> The maintenance of Christ-like behavior in the face of persecution was a necessary mark of the martyrs, as their humble acceptance of punishment was a sign of their faith and a rebuke to their pseudo-Christian adversaries. Following Origen, Hus had preached that ~~ap~~ostles and holy martyrs did not persecute, but suffered persecution, did not slander, but bore slanderous speech, did not blaspheme against God, but were killed by blasphemers."<sup>138</sup> These characteristics formed a pattern of maintaining a witness while suffering persecution, and it was ultimately binding: ~~Fr~~ what does follow me' mean except imitate me?' For Christ suffered for us,' said the apostle Peter, leaving us an example, that we might follow in his footsteps."<sup>139</sup> Over time, Hus's understanding of imitation focused

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<sup>137</sup> ~~S~~ancti facti sunt spectaculum iustis hominibus, ut spectent in eis contemplacionem celestem, assiduitatem bonorum operum et tolleranciam adversorum." Jan Hus, ~~De~~ martiribus communis," in Flajšhans, *Sermones de Sanctis*, 352-355, 352.

<sup>138</sup> ~~A~~postoli et martyres sancti non persecucionem fecerunt, sed persecucionem pertulerunt, non maledixerunt, sed maledicta sustinuerunt, non blasphemaverunt Deum, sed a blasphematoribus interfecti sunt." See: Jan Hus, ~~A~~tendite a falsis prophetis," in A. Shmidtová, ed., *Magistri Iohannis Hus Opera Omnia, Tomus VII: Sermones de tempore qui Collecta dicuntur* (Prague: Academia Scientiarum Bohemoslovenicae, 1959), 381-393, 384-385.

<sup>139</sup> ~~Q~~uid est me sequatur,' nisi me imitemur?' Christus enim pro nobis passus est,' ait apostolus Petrus, nobis relinquens exemplum, ut sequamur vestigia eius." This quote is from the homilies of Augustine, and was cited in: Hus, ~~In~~ Die S. Laurentii," 127.

on the necessity of suffering and on the act of martyrdom as the mark of a true follower of Christ.

In a sermon on the feast day of St. Wenceslas, the patron of Bohemia, Hus made a strong case for the value and virtue of suffering. Wenceslas was a king, but in secret he had practiced self-mortification and acts of charity to the poor in his kingdom.<sup>140</sup> Wenceslas even bore death at the hands of his brother with equanimity, —because denying himself the desires of flesh and the world, and bearing his cross, that is, affliction, [and] following the Lord with his actions, he gave up his corporeal life for Christ.”<sup>141</sup> This willingness to face death resulted, though, in Wenceslas’s reception of a more meaningful crown, that of the martyr, for —whoever shall have persevered up until the end, this person will be saved, and thus be crowned, for he shall have struggled righteously.”<sup>142</sup> Wenceslas, who was a virginal king as well as a martyr, thus defeated two of the main enemies of the Christian with the actions he took in life and death: —*fr* martyrs conquer the world, virgins the flesh, and preachers the devil.”<sup>143</sup> Bearing these eternal

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<sup>140</sup> On the development of the Wenceslas cult and the attention paid to his proper attention to his royal duties and personal piety, see: David Mengel, —*Holy and Faithful Fellowship: Royal Saints in Fourteenth-century Prague*,” in V.E. Doležalová et al., eds., *Europa a Čechy na konci středověku: Sborník příspěvků věnovaných Františku Šmahelovi* (Prague: n.p., 2004), 145-158; František Graus, —*La sanctification du souverain dans l’Europe centrale des Xe et XIe siècles*,” in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés, IVe-XIIIe siècles* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981), 559-572.

<sup>141</sup> —*Regans seipsum quoad voluptates carnis et seculi, tollens crucem suam, id est afflictionem, sequens Dominum in moribus, vitam pro Cristo tradidit corporalem.*” See: Jan Hus, —*In die Venceslai*,” in *Magistri Iohannis Hus Opera Omnia Tomus XIII: Postilla Adumbrata* (Prague: Academia, 1975), 432-437, 432.

<sup>142</sup> —*Qui autem perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit, et sic coronabitur, si sic certaverit legitime.*” See: Jan Hus, —*In die Bartholomei*,” in Flajšhans, *Sermones de Sanctis*, 331-337, 335.

<sup>143</sup> —*Patet hoc ex victoria hostium, a quibus impugnatur homo, qui sunt mundus, caro, et demon. Martires enim mundum, virgines carnem, predicatorum dyabolum vincunt.*” Jan Hus, —*Commune Virginis martiris*,” in Flajšhans, *Sermones de Sanctis*, 374-375, 375.

conflicts in mind, Hus sought to take on all three aspects of this holy victory over the enemies of God, and thus bear a striking witness to his followers in Bohemia.

While in Constance, Hus's correspondence to his friends and followers in Bohemia reflected the themes he had developed in his sermons and applied them to his own life and impending death. In a series of letters written in 1414 and 1415, he presented himself as willing to take up the martyr's crown for the sake of the renewal of Christianity.<sup>144</sup> In November, upon his arrival in Constance, he wrote: "Be diligent about your salvation, hearing the Word of God with circumspection, lest you be beguiled by the messengers of Antichrist. They make light of men's sins, do not punish them, flatter their superiors, do not warn the people against sins."<sup>145</sup> These messengers were the false, seductive leaders of the church, and their power suggested that:

The Day of Judgment is approaching, death saddens many, and the kingdom of God is drawing nigh to the sons of God. On these accounts discipline your body, fear not death, love one another, and by your remembrance, reason, and will, stand ever firm in God.<sup>146</sup>

Hus himself emphasized that he had been given "time to remember our King, the merciful Lord God Jesus's terrible disgrace, and to meditate on His cruel death

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<sup>144</sup> For an analysis of Hus's conception of martyrdom as depicted in his correspondence, see: Brad Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), especially 65-69.

<sup>145</sup> "Přilni byli svého spasenie, slyšice slovo boží v opatrnosti, aby nedali se zklamati poslóm Antikristovým, jenž hřichy lidu lehčie, z hřichu netrestei, svým starším pochlebují, hřichov lidu neoznamují, sami se velebie, z svých skutkův se honsie, moc svú veličie." This letter was written on November 16, 1414. See: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 223-224, 223.

<sup>146</sup> "Neboť súdny den se blíží, smrt mnohé trutí a synóm božím nebeské se královstvie blíží. Pro něž své tělo krofťe a smrti se nebojte, spolu se milujte a paměti, rozumem a vólí v bohu vřd ycky stójte." Novotný, *Korespondence*, 224. It is interesting to note that remembrance, reason, and will (memoria, intelligentia, amor/voluntas) are the three elements of the "psychological trinity" that Augustine analyzed as the faculties that allow a human to love God and contemplate his truth. On Augustine as an expositor of the importance of memory in Christianity, see: Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance*, 17.

and, for that reason, to suffer more gladly.”<sup>147</sup> It seems to me that Hus intended the remembrance of suffering to have a new spur, and that he intended for his endurance of persecution and his refusal to submit to serve as a reminder to his fellow Bohemians of the necessity of following in the footsteps of the Lord.

On June 27, just over a week before his execution, Hus wrote the following “To his friends in Bohemia:”

Who can describe all the tortures by which the saints of the New and the Old Testament suffered for God’s truth, particularly those who rebuked the priestly wickedness and preached against it? It would be a strange thing if now one would not suffer on account of a brave stand against wickedness, especially that of the priests, which does not allow itself to be touched.<sup>148</sup>

Here, Hus explicitly used his own suffering as a barometer by which to assess the truth of his own teaching. By undergoing trials similar to the martyrs and saints who had preceded him in the church, Hus assured himself that he was expounding a similar truth. I would argue that he expected his death to be just the type of spectacle that had inspired Christianity throughout its history. To ensure this, Hus explicitly evoked the Lord’s passion during the final phases of his trial, and although he minimized his suffering compared to that of Christ, Hus repeatedly drew attention to how his trial was typologically similar to the sham trial, mockery, and public humiliation and suffering of Jesus. For example, Hus embraced his own crown and prayed that God would forgive his enemies, as Christ had done upon the cross. Hus also combined his execution with a public

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<sup>147</sup> This passage, written at the end of June, 1415, is quoted in: Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 67.

<sup>148</sup> “Kto muoť všěcky muky vypsati, kteréť sú I v Novém a Starém záakoně světi pro pravdu boťi trpě li, a zvláště ti, jenť sú kněťskú zlot treskali a proti nie kázali? A divná věc bude, ktoť nyní neutrpí, bude-li státi statečně proti zlosti a zvláště proti kněťsk é, jenť sebe nedá dotknúti.” See: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 325-326.

profession of faith in Christ. This occurred with words; as Hus went to the stake he prayed aloud, “I am willing to bear most patiently and humbly this dreadful, ignominious, and cruel death for Thy gospel and for the preaching of Thy word.”<sup>149</sup> His confession also occurred with unspoken deeds – as Mladoňovice’s narrative described the event, it was Hus’s apparent joy and steadfastness alongside his words that impressed the bystanders and his audience in Bohemia.<sup>150</sup>

A final typological parallel between Hus’s execution and that of Christ and other Christian martyrs was the presence and cooperation of the secular authorities. The Emperor Sigismund authorized and approved of Hus’s execution. Rather than honoring the safe conduct that had supposedly guaranteed Hus’s return to Bohemia, Sigismund presided over the session of the council that witnessed the final condemnation and degradation of Hus.<sup>151</sup> In this, he confirmed his earlier renunciation of Hus. On June 7, Sigismund had “counseled” Hus to recant his beliefs and seek the forgiveness of the council:

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<sup>149</sup> “Domine Ihesu Christe, hanc diram, ignominiosam et crudelem mortem propter ewangelium tuum et predicacionem verbi tui volo pacientissime et humiliter sustinere.” Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 118.

<sup>150</sup> Robin Darling Young has noted the self-consciousness of many martyrs’ evocation of the trial and death of Jesus. Over time, these martyrs became sources themselves that later Christians could draw upon as examples of a “god death.” On this, see: Young, *In Procession*, 19-24. Later martyrs could then draw on both the example of Christ and the stories of primitive Christian martyrs when looking for models. On the imitative nature of martyrdom in the early modern context, see: Bernd Moeller, “Inquisition und Martyrium in Flugschriften der frühen Reformation in Deutschland,” in S. Menchi, ed., *Ketzerverfolgung im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 21-45, especially 33-40.

<sup>151</sup> Sigismund’s role in the condemnation of Hus, and the opposite role played by the Bohemian nobility in Petr’s account (that of loyal protector) would set up the main political tension of the following century in Bohemia. The contrast between the faithful nobles and faithless king would justify resistance to Wenceslas and Sigismund beginning in 1419. On this, see: Karel Hruza, “Die hussitischen Manifeste vom April 1420,” *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 53 (1997), 119-177, 139-140. See also: Grant, “Rejecting an Emperor,” 460.

And they, on account of our honor and our brother and of the kingdom of Bohemia, will grant you some mercy, and accept your penitence...But if you wish to hold those [articles] obstinately, then in truth they know well what they must do with you. I told them that I am not willing to defend any heretic; indeed if one should remain obstinate in his heresy, I myself would kindle [the fire] and burn him.<sup>152</sup>

Sigismund was, in this matter, as good as his word. Although Petr depicted this trial and outcome as an instance of gross injustice and betrayal, Hus seemed to have embraced it. The coexistence of optimism and fear that had marked Hus's decision to go to Constance had been stripped away by the trial process, and Hus had come to see himself as another true martyr who had been called to adopt the most literal form of the imitation of Christ.

In sum, Hus appears to have consciously aligned his own execution with those of earlier Christian martyrs in order to define himself as their heir and equal. Certainly his teaching had been his own; it had been indelibly imprinted with his influences and forebears, as were his ideas about what dangers confronted the authentic followers of Christ. In light of the seduction of Antichrist and the considerable worldly power of his followers, Hus advocated recourse to the strengthening effect of the eucharist and the preached word of God. The eucharist connected the believer both with Christ himself and with his sacramental community on earth, while preaching reminded believers of the inspiring wisdom of God, the power of God, and the remarkable feats of the prophets, apostles, and

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<sup>152</sup> –Et ipsi tibi propter nos et honorem nostrum et fratrem nostrum et regnum Boemie facient gratiam aliqualem, et penitenciam suscipias...Si vero vis pertinaciter illos tenere, vere tunc ipsi bene sciunt, quid debent tecum facere. Ego dixi eis, quia nullum volo hereticum defendere, ymo si unus vellet in sua heresi esse pertinax, ego solu vellum succendere et comburere ipsum.” Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 81. It should also be noted that earlier, on April 8, Sigismund had retracted all of the safe conducts he had issued for those at the Council of Constance. This action exposed Hus to legal danger, and justified his continued imprisonment. For the text of the abrogation, see: *Documenta*, 543-544.

saints who were maintained by their faith in him. It is difficult to say whether or not Hus had ever planned to become “a more glorious martyr” than those about whom he had spoken and written, or if he only tried to practice what he had preached. No matter what his intentions may have been, though, the consequences of his actions were truly remarkable. In an incredibly short period of time, Hus was canonized and enshrined as a true martyr and the patron saint of a national reform and revolution in Bohemia. In this process, the ideas that Hus had espoused and embodied were taken up, transformed, and ultimately gave rise to both a political and a religious radicalism that he had never envisioned. Despite his best efforts to shape the memory of his own death, Hus could never have foreseen how later historical contexts and exigencies would affect the recollection of his martyrdom.

#### The Passions of the Hus: The Textual Commemoration of Hus’s Death

In the very first year after Hus’s death, various authors worked to construct literary and homiletic monuments to Hus that would preserve the story of his martyrdom for the people of Bohemia. In these passion narratives, the details and overall depiction of Hus’s execution emphasized his role as a suffering saint and came to serve as a basis for the ritual commemoration of Hus.<sup>153</sup> These were particularly Bohemian adaptations of the saint’s *passio*, and their authors desired that their texts would capture the essence of Hus’s trial and death while drawing obvious parallels between him and his Christian predecessors in

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<sup>153</sup> On the earliest commemoration of Hus in Bohemia, see: František Bartoš, *M. Jan Hus v Bohoslužbě a Úctě Církve Podobojí a v Podání Prvého Století po své Smrti* (Prague: Nákladem Vlastním, 1924).



martyrdom. The rapid diffusion of these texts and their long term survival in Bohemia also suggest that Hus was successful in shaping the interpretation of his death among his followers and constructing an image of himself as an authentic holy man. Hus's interpretation of his own death, though, was transformed by his followers and was deployed by them in ways that Hus could not have foreseen.

The first of the passion narratives about Hus was written by Petr of Mladoňovice, who had already written the exhaustive account of the trial in Constance.<sup>154</sup> While his larger narrative had sought to include and explain every detail of the trial in order to definitively prove the dishonesty and injustice of the proceedings, Petr's shorter, more emotionally affective *passio* picked its spots. Sigismund's shame came into the foreground, and there were more explicit demands that the reader or listener emulate certain aspects of Hus's piety. The second passion narrative was written by Johannes Barbatus, who was a rural priest in Bohemia and had been in correspondence with Hus since at least 1411.<sup>155</sup> In Barbatus's text, the parallels between Hus and Christ were emphasized, and he explicitly placed Hus within the chain of biblical and early-church martyrs who had endured pain and death for God.<sup>156</sup> Here again, there was an explicit demand

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<sup>154</sup> Petr of Mladoňovice, "Narratio historicae condemnatione et supplicio Joannis Hus in synodo Constantiensi," in *FRB* 8, 121-149; the text was written in both Czech and Latin, and the two versions appear in facing columns in the *FRB* edition. The vernacular version is slightly longer, but the two cohere in the significant details and emphases.

<sup>155</sup> We have a copy of a letter that Hus sent to Barbatus from May 25, 1411, in which Hus encouraged Barbatus in his ministry. Interestingly, Hus noted in that letter that God sends "tentationes varias ad probandum vestram constantiam," and that those harassing Barbatus were "Antichristiani." These words of encouragement would become an ironic prophecy of Hus's fate in 1415. For the text of the letter, see: *Documenta*, 16-18.

<sup>156</sup> Johannes Barbatus, "Passio M. Johannis Hus etc. secundum Johannem Barbatum, rusticum quadratum," in *FRB* 8, 14-24; the text is preserved in two recensions, both of which appear in this edition. One version is longer than the other, but again they agree in the major points and emphases. On the two versions of the text, see: Jan Sedlák, "Několik textů z doby husitské," *Hlidka* 28 (1911), 321-327.

in the text for the audience to remember Hus and to hold his example up as a paragon of Christian perseverance and faith. What emerges most strongly from a consideration of both these texts is how clearly they served a memorial function and attempted to preserve Hus's place in the Bohemian consciousness despite the Council of Constance's effort to eliminate any positive valence for the reformer's life and ideas.

Mladoňovice explicitly intended his book to be a "memorial to future generations" concerning the life and death of Hus.<sup>157</sup> The image that Petr created focused on Hus's perseverance in the face of overwhelming injustice, and Emperor Sigismund emerged as the primary guilty party in Hus's execution. During Hus's trial, "the emperor himself sat in the highest place on his throne, wearing a crown of gold."<sup>158</sup> Sigismund's chief flaw was that he let the church authorities tempt him away from the protection he had promised to Hus. This temptation took the form of an offer of eternal glory. If Sigismund would oversee the execution of Hus, "With this most beautiful deed you will gain for yourself and immortal name among those coming after you, both young and old."<sup>159</sup> Petr suggested in the details of his narrative, though, that after reneging on the safe conduct Sigismund knew that he had betrayed a sacred promise. When Hus proclaimed his innocence before the council and stated that his appeal to Jesus was permissible in both legal and spiritual terms, "he held his eyes fixed on the

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<sup>157</sup> Petr used the term "*monumentum posteris*" to describe his work, and also claimed that the promulgation of his narrative would effectively prevent the Roman church from attaining their desire to "stop us his [Hus's] mouth" to halt his criticism of the church's immorality. See: Mladoňovice, "*Narratio Historicae*," 121-122.

<sup>158</sup> "*Imperator ipse loco celsior in suo solio sub corona aurea sedebat.*" Mladoňovice, "*Narratio Historicae*," 127.

<sup>159</sup> "*Hoc siquidem pulcherrimo facinore immortale nomen apud posteros, iuvenes iuxta ac senes, tibi parabis.*" Mladoňovice, "*Narratio Historicae*," 128.

emperor. He [Sigismund] immediately began to blush furiously.”<sup>160</sup> In this text, Sigismund’s motivations and deeds stood in stark contrast to Hus’s; while the emperor betrayed divine virtue to secure the council’s promise of eternal renown, the Bohemian martyr trusted that God would judge him justly and suffered the council’s injustices in order to attain a certain, heavenly reward.

One essential basis for this contrast was Petr’s depiction of Hus as embodying a Christ-like piety. As in his earlier account, Petr described Hus’s prayers for his enemies, whom Petr routinely called “false witnesses” (*falsos testes*). Hus also invoked the example of Jesus as the ultimate justification for his actions, confessed his sins and did penance before his death, and based his final profession of faith on the central prayer in Christian piety, the Lord’s Prayer.<sup>161</sup> Because of his invocation of central Christian ideas and his dedication to the teachings of Christ, Hus served as an ideal model for the true Christians in Bohemia. As such, Petr asserted that those who read (*lectores*) or heard this text would derive much good from it.<sup>162</sup> The rehearsal of Hus’s life and death also prevented the suppression of God’s truth in the world. The Council of Constance had tried to enact this suppression through Hus’s degradation and execution, but the leaders of that gathering had made a mistake. They destroyed Hus’s body:

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<sup>160</sup> “Haec cum loqueretur, oculos in imperatorem defixos habuit. Ille vero statim vehementer erubuit.” *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> There was some dispute over whether or not Hus had received absolution for his sins before his death. In Mladoňovice’s text, he assured his readers that Hus had received penance and absolution: “Caeterum dubium non est, quin septimo die ante passionem suam fuidam monacho doctori confessus sit, sibi a concilio concesso, a quo et absolutus est, cuius rei ipse in epistola, quam in carcere scripsit, mentionem facit.” Mladoňovice, —*Narratio Historicae*,” 142.

<sup>162</sup> Petr suggested that the readers and “qui multa bona ex eo audiverant.” This assertion of the role of hearing, and the fact that the text was written in Czech as well as Latin, suggest that it would have had some role in public recitations of the account. For the quote, see: Mladoňovice, —*Narratio Historicae*,” 148.

—After everything had been burned to cinders with fire and when the dust and earth had been dug up to a great depth and set in a cart, then they scattered it in the Rhine flowing past, that his name would be utterly extinguished among the faithful.”<sup>163</sup> This effort to destroy the memory of Hus, though, failed precisely because the narrative of Hus’s life and death had survived him, and he had become, through the recitation of this *passio*, a new saint whose ideas and faithful death served as a mandate for continued resistance and reform in Bohemia.

The second passion narrative took a different tack in its presentation of Hus’s suffering and death, although its larger purpose was the same. For Johannes Barbatus, Hus’s trial and execution were typologically related to those of Jesus, and he built up this parallelism throughout his account. In Barbatus’s account, Hus’s place of death was —Calvary,” and Hus ended his life with the same prayer to God that Jesus did in the Gospel of Luke (23:46), —Into your hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit.”<sup>164</sup> Through this emulation, Hus attained a place among the true martyrs of the church, whose witness to the truth of the gospel had helped promote the growth and sustenance of the church.<sup>165</sup> In reference to Hus’s

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<sup>163</sup> —Postremo omnia igne in cinerem concremata cum pulvere ac terra alcius effossa in bigas imposuere, deinde in Renum praeterlabentem dissecerunt, quod ipsius nomen prorsus apud fideles extinguerent.” Mladoňovice, —Narratio Historicae,” 147.

<sup>164</sup> Hus’s prayer is slightly different; Jesus committed himself to his Father’s hands, while Hus committed himself to Christ himself. The parallelism, though, is clear, and suggests that Hus’s commitment was the seal of his imitation. For this quote and the reference to Calvary, see: Barbatus, —Passio M. Johannis Hus,” 17.

<sup>165</sup> In his *Apologeticum*, Tertullian noted that —sanguis est sanguis Christianorum.” This view of the generative quality of martyrdom persisted throughout Christian history. According to Boyarin, Tertullian’s view of martyrdom became normative over the course of the third century and prevailed in later Christian history. Darling Young expresses this view of martyrdom through an economic metaphor, noting that —many investors are rewarded” for supporting a martyr whose death yielded a potentially large number of new converts and encouraged Christians. See: Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 66; and Darling Young, *In Procession*, 9 and 12. For a convenient online edition of Tertullian’s work (1952, edited in text by Carl Becker), see: [http://www.tertullian.org/latin/apologeticum\\_becker.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/latin/apologeticum_becker.htm).

suffering, Barbatus claimed: —<sup>166</sup> account of this the song of the remarkable martyr Lawrence is deservedly able to be sung: „you examined me with fire, and iniquity was not found in me.“<sup>166</sup> In this understanding, the judicial trial of Hus at Constance was only the visible representation of the process of a divine trial that tested his dedication to the teachings and example of Christ. Clearly, Hus had passed the more meaningful, divine process of judgment, for —what glorious profit it is to suffer for righteousness and not look to the agony of mortal suffering.”<sup>167</sup> This appreciation for the salvific implications of choosing death was precisely what distinguished the martyr from a mere criminal and marked him as a true follower of Christ.

In following the mandates of divine law, Hus personified the teaching of Matthew 5:10, which would become a watchword for the movement that bore Hus’s name: —Blessed are those who suffer persecution because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>168</sup> Barbatus cited this verse explicitly in arguing that Hus’s death illustrated the surest way to attain salvation:

For it is better and greater for man to be designated for the kingdom of God and the narrow way through perseverance, as long as tribulation and adversity come upon man, than through frequent communion or entering into the church or the assistance of the Mass, and not wanting to suffer anything, not even a word of reproach.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> —Propter quod canticum martiris eximii Laurentii non inmerito decantare poterit: „Igne me examinasti, et non est inventa in me iniquitas.“” Barbatus, —Passio M. Johannis Hus,” 22.

<sup>167</sup> —Quam gloriosum fenus eciam pro iusticia agonisare et non agoniam mortalis egritudinis expectare.” *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> It should be noted that the choice of this text echoed Hus’s letter to his Bohemian friends and followers from Constance. See chapter 1, footnote 117, above. This text had also been used in Bohemia to describe the suffering of the saints under Antichrist in Matěj’s time. In the *Libellus de Antichristo*, Milič had argued that —Beati, qui persecucionem paciuntur propter iusticiam, et maxime propter verbum dei et hoc sub Antichristo, qui venit.” This quotation occurs in a passage where Milič dates Antichrist’s arrival on earth to 1365. See: *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 373.

<sup>169</sup> —Melius enim et magis homo disponitur regno dei et vie anguste per pacienciam, dum tribulaciones et adversitates adveniunt homini, quam per frequentem comunionem aut ecclesie

This quotation suggested that the normative vehicle for salvation in the church, the sacraments, should be subordinated to the acceptance of persecution on behalf of God, which was the most certain means of attaining salvation. After Hus's death, suffering assumed a primacy that it had previously lacked. In order to support this assertion of the absolute value of suffering, Barbatus evoked the memory of Moses, Abraham, Joseph, and the Maccabees, all of whom were persecuted on behalf of the chosen people.<sup>170</sup> Thus, the entire account begins with the simplest of commands, "Be mindful of Moses,"<sup>171</sup> and Barbatus directed this imperative to the "assembly of the faithful" in Bohemia. This assembly (*concio*) was in direct opposition to the council (*concilio*) that had condemned Hus,<sup>172</sup> and it was through the act of remembering that the assembly could maintain their adherence to the example of Christ as enacted by Hus at Constance.

Currently, two manuscript copies of Barbatus's *passio* exist with an appended letter commending the text; Jakoubek of Střibro wrote these letters, and his recommendation shed light on how the emerging Hussite leadership envisaged the role of commemorations of Hus in Bohemian religious life.<sup>173</sup> Beyond the

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intracionem vel misse astacionem, et nichil pati velle, ymmo nec verbum obprobriosum." Barbatus, "Passio M. Johannis Hus," 15.

<sup>170</sup> After Hus's death, the Bohemian identification with Israel as a chosen people in the world gained increasing popularity and currency. The language of the "elect nation" helped foster a brand of national messianism that understood the Czechs' role in the world as bringers of divine knowledge. On this development, see: Urbánek, "Český mesianismus," 10-11.

<sup>171</sup> "Estote memores Moysi!" "Memores" here has the meaning of "not forgetting" as well as temporarily attentive to his story and example. By using the future imperative as well (*estote*), Barbatus demands the continuation of this act of commemoration. See: Barbatus, "Passio M. Johannis Hus," 14.

<sup>172</sup> The "concio fidelis" was the intended audience for Barbatus's passion narrative. His apostrophe to this group set up the ongoing opposition between the institutional and actual churches in his narrative. For this quote, see: Barbatus, "Passio M. Johannis Hus," 15.

<sup>173</sup> One version of the passion narrative and the appended letter was printed initially by Palacký in the *Documenta*, 556-558 (MS Třebon 179), and it was edited and reprinted by Novotný in *FRB*, 8;

introduction of communion in both kinds, Jakoubek had assumed leadership of the reform movement in Prague, and after Hus's death he had been installed as the preacher at Bethlehem Chapel. Dom Paul De Vooght has rightfully considered Jakoubek to be the true founder of the "Hussite" movement, as the reformed and nationalistic Christianity of Bohemia obtained through the ministry of Jakoubek a patron saint, confessor, and martyr, Master Jan Hus who was a good angel of God sent through Jesus Christ."<sup>174</sup> The diffusion of the passion narratives was one way in which the sanctity of Hus was promoted. Through the accounts themselves, and the letters that suggested how they should be interpreted, authors like Mladoňovice, Barbatus, and Jakoubek could shape a distinctive Bohemian spirituality based around the central concept of the necessity of suffering and the veneration of Jan Hus.

Steadfastness ought to be prayed for, so that having girded [ourselves] with the arms of our law-giving Lord, Jesus Christ, and the examples of the most Christian teachers, we might thus strive to live, so that we are able to reach the

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it is the basis for the above analysis of the *passio*. This text noted at the end, concerning the letter, that: "Hec scripsit Jacobellus Moraiaim cuidam plebano in Strzemilow Wiglefiste et eadem scribit multis per partes diversas." This comment suggests that the letter and narrative were intended to be diffused throughout Moravia. A second version of the text was edited by Jan Sedlák in 1911 (Dietrichsteinská knihovna v Mikulově MS I 48); the version of passion narrative he discovered was essentially the same as that edited by Palacký, although the appended letter contained extra material. Sedlák hesitated to definitively name Jakoubek as the author of the letter, although its emphases and style suggest that he was the most likely author. See: Sedlák, "Několik textů," 323.<sup>174</sup> De Vooght exhaustively and convincingly made the argument that through the restoration of the chalice and his establishment of a cult for Hus, Jakoubek essentially established Hussitism as a viable national religious movement in Bohemia. For this quote, see: De Vooght, *Jacobellus*, 78. These sentiments echo those of František Bartoš, who called Jakoubek a "second founder" of Hussitism and pushed his central role in the development of Hussite religious and political ideology in the 1410s and 1420s. See: František Bartoš, "Betlémská kázání Jakoubka ze Stříbra z let 1415-6," *Theologická Příloha: Křesťanské Revue* 20 (1953), 53-65 and 114-122, 53.

gates of salvation.”<sup>175</sup> This exhortation from Jakoubek represented the core of how Hus’s death was to be remembered among the Bohemians. His willingness to accept martyrdom, and the firm belief that in doing so he attained salvation, presented the Hussites with a clear example of the paradoxical victory of the Christian. Although the saints must endure “this miserable life” and the “deceitful scorn of this wrathful and wicked age,” God will “raise up the contrite, the humbled, and the despised in future blessedness over all the world.”<sup>176</sup> This exchange of temporary suffering for an eternal reward was a central motivation for continued reform in Bohemia despite the loss of the movement’s spiritual leader. Hus’s patient suffering effectively reversed the legal or worldly judgment upon him:

Having defeated all his enemies, he possessed the most secure triumph – for all his finished labors he possessed peace without end...Therefore our most true teacher, Jan Hus, having as examples the fathers of both Testaments, through perseverance hastened to the struggle placed before him, faithfully imitating the author and guarantor of faith, Jesus Christ.<sup>177</sup>

Many scholars have argued that Hus’s ideas were only of secondary importance in the development of Hussite ideology, and it was actually the

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<sup>175</sup> “Orandum est pro perseverantia, ut accincti armis legiferi domini nostri Jesu Christi et exemplis magistri christianissimi sic studeamus vivere, ut ad portum salutis valeamus pervenire.” *Documenta*, 558. This language is used almost exactly in the Sedlák recension of the text, where the author notes: “uexemplo invictissimi athlete Jesu Christi et doctoris christianissimi et magistri sic studeant bene vivere, ut ad portum salutis valeant pervenire.” This parallelism reinforces the notion that Jakoubek was the author of both letters. See: Sedlák, “Několik textů,” 326.

<sup>176</sup> “Ucontritos, abjectos, et contemptos in futuro gaudio supererigat universis. Haec est enim conditio et beata sors sanctorum in misera vita degentium, ut saevientis seculique malignantis sprete fallacia ad aliam firmati fide incedant qualitatem.” *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> “Devictis cunctis hostibus securum possidet triumphum – omnibus expletis laboribus requiem possidet sine fine...Ideo magister noster veracissimus J. Hus tantam exemplacionem patrum utriusque testamenti per pacienciam ad certamen sibi propositum cucurrit, auctorem fidei et confirmatorem Jesum Christum fideliter imitando.” See: Sedlák, “Několik textů,” 327.



commemoration of his death that was his greatest legacy in Bohemia.<sup>178</sup> The passion narratives suggest that this was true. The content of Hus's teachings were incorporated insofar as they gave evidence to his castigation of the sinful clergy and highlighted the moral opposition between Hus and his accusers, but his ecclesiology and its implications were notably absent. Rather, the key point was that the council condemned both Christ's institution of the eucharist and the holy preacher, Hus, rather than examine itself and pursue a path of self-correction. By condemning the innocent, the council revealed itself to prefer Barabbas and Simon Magus to those who loved God, and this institutional abandonment of sanctity led Jakoubek to finally lament, "O death of righteousness, how bitter your memory!"<sup>179</sup>

Over the first half of 1416, this lament gained renewed currency through the prosecution and execution of Hus's radical compatriot, Jerome of Prague. Jerome had traveled to Constance in the autumn of 1414 and been imprisoned. He was accused of holding heretical Wyclifite beliefs and denouncing the council's treatment of Hus and Wyclif; Jean Gerson also spoke against Jerome's previous conduct in Paris, and his flight from the inquisitor in Vienna in 1410 also surfaced during his trial in Constance.<sup>180</sup> Jerome was kept in deplorable conditions in

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<sup>178</sup> For interpretations of Hus's role in the development of the Bohemian reform that stress the secondary impact of this theology, see, e.g. : Holeton, "Revelation and Revolution," 34; Kaminsky, *History*, 55; and, most explicitly, Holeton, "O Felix Bohemia," especially 386.

<sup>179</sup> "O gemenda Constancia! Dimittis Barrabas, Gezitas, Simones...iustum autem et pium amicum dei sic pertractas!...O mors iusticie, quam amara memoria tua! O nephanda Constancia, quis spiritus te impegit animam iusti captare et sanguinem innocentem condemnare!" See: Sedlák, "Několik textů," 324.

<sup>180</sup> For a sympathetic scholarly account of Jerome's trial and his opponents in Constance, see: František Šmahel, *Jeronym Pražský: život revolučního intelektuála* (Prague: Svobodné Slovo, 1966), 151ff. One of the key primary sources for his trial is a narrative by Petr of Mladonovice, who composed a passion account that is similar in many respects to that he authored for Hus. On

Constance for many months, and he publicly recanted his adherence to Hus's and Wyclif's teachings on September 11, 1415. For Petr of Mladoňovice, who was sympathetic to Jerome, it was only the inhuman conditions of his captivity that led Jerome to his abjuration. In substance, Jerome's confession was a repudiation of Hus and Wyclif, as well as a formal acceptance of the council's condemnation of the two men. When confronted with a list of articles extracted from their teachings, Jerome admitted that "many things in the aforesaid articles are notoriously heretical and have previously been condemned by the holy fathers; indeed certain ones are blasphemous, others erroneous, and others scandalous."<sup>181</sup> The following day, Jerome was forced to send a letter to Bohemia in which he condemned Hus and approved the council's verdict concerning his execution.<sup>182</sup> After his recantation, however, Jerome was still kept in captivity; his continued poor treatment led him to reverse his earlier abjuration and assume a place among the slowly growing company of Bohemian martyrs.<sup>183</sup>

Because of this relapse into heresy, Jerome's accusers characterized him as a "dog returning to his vomit."<sup>184</sup> Despite this, however, Jerome was granted a public hearing at which to make his confession on May 23, 1416, and several

Clem, see: Petr of Mladoňovice, "Narracio de Magistro Hieronymo Pragensi, pro Christi nomine Constancie exusto," in *FRB* 8, 339-350, 339-340.

<sup>181</sup> "Predictorum articulorum plures sunt notorie heretici et dudum a sanctis patribus reprobati, quidam vero blasphemii, alii erronei, alii scandalosi." Mladoňovice, "Narracio de M. Hieronymo," 344.

<sup>182</sup> On this open letter, see: Watkins, "The Death of Jerome of Prague," 112.

<sup>183</sup> The narrative sources are quiet about the months following Jerome's initial abjuration. Reginald Betts has argued that Jean Gerson, who had an intense dislike for Jerome, kept him in harsh conditions and that this spurred his renewed opposition to the council, and Šmahel has documented the renewed judicial proceedings against Jerome that began early in 1416. See: Reginald Betts, "Jerome of Prague," in *idem., Essays in Czech History* (London: Athlone Press, 1969), 195-235, 226; and Šmahel, *Jeroným Pražský*, 173-175.

<sup>184</sup> In the final judgment against him, Jerome was indeed called "canis ad vomitum rediens." See: Mladoňovice, "Narracio de M. Hieronymo," 348.

accounts of his confrontations with the council fathers survive. There was Petr of Mladoňovice's specific account of this hearing;<sup>185</sup> another anonymous, but obviously pro-Jerome, account;<sup>186</sup> an astonishing letter in which the Italian humanist Poggio Bracciolini held up Jerome as a paragon of humanist virtues,<sup>187</sup> and accounts by several Catholic authors, including the French cardinal Guillaume Filastre.<sup>188</sup> What is most striking about these diverse sources is that their factual accounts largely agreed with each other, even if their interpretations diverged. According to Poggio, Jerome defended himself at first by adducing a series of great philosophers and religious figures who had been persecuted unjustly. Jesus, Socrates, Moses, Plato, and John the Baptist all formed one chain of those who ~~h~~ave been most unworthily dealt with, overborne by false witnesses, and condemned by the most unjust judgments."<sup>189</sup> Poggio noted that Jerome seemed to include Wyclif, Hus, and himself in this group of men who were despised for their proclamation of moral and religious truth:

He remarked that holy men of old were accustomed to discuss their differences of opinion in matters of belief, not with the view of impugning the faith, but of investigating the truth – that St. Augustine and St. Jerome had thus differed in opinion, and had upon some points even held contrary sentiments, without any suspicion of heresy...When Jerome made these declarations the assembly was affected with the greatest sorrow; for everybody wished that a man of such extraordinary talents should repent of his errors and be saved...Dwelling on the praises of John Huss, he said that he entertained no principles hostile to the constitution of the Holy

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<sup>185</sup> Petr of Mladoňovice, "Vita Magistri Hieronymi, pro Christi nomine Constantiae exusti," in *FRB* 8, 351-367. This text has been edited in both the Czech and Latin in facing columns; the vernacular version also appeared as the text to Jerome's entry in a 1495 Czech translation of Jacopo de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*.

<sup>186</sup> "De vita Magistri Ieronimi de Praga," in *FRB* 8, 335-338; see also, *UB*, 354-357.

<sup>187</sup> Poggio Bracciolini, "Letter to Leonardo Aretino, 1416," in M. McLaughlin and J. Ross, eds., *The Portable Renaissance Reader* (New York: Viking Press, 1953), 615-624.

<sup>188</sup> For the Catholic sources, and a comparison of these accounts with that of Poggio, see: Watkins, "The Death of Jerome," especially 126ff.

<sup>189</sup> Bracciolini, "Letter to Aretino," 619.

Church, and that he only bore testimony against the abuses of the clergy, and the pride and pomp of prelates.<sup>190</sup>

Poggio's admiration for Jerome's humanistic construction of truth took a backseat in the Bohemian accounts of the trial.<sup>191</sup> In these, Jerome became another prophetic figure who was persecuted and rejected by the church because of his harsh criticisms and bold assertion of the truth. Petr compared him to Elijah, who ~~in~~ a chariot of fire was boundlessly led from doubt into a paradise of joy." By his profession and death, Jerome also was saved from the faulty remembrance of men and turned into a timeless ~~example~~ and mirror of perseverance and imitation."<sup>192</sup> The essential component of Jerome's profession of faith was an affirmation of the holiness of Jan Hus and John Wyclif. As he was led to his pyre, the anonymous author notes that he said in German(!) to the crowd: ~~that~~ "Jan Hus preached correctly and in a holy manner, whom I celebrate in hope, that here a good and forceful preacher has been."<sup>193</sup> For Jerome's Czech apologists, the chief sin of the council was that it had not taken the criticisms of the Prague reformers seriously. Instead it had killed them and condemned their

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<sup>190</sup> Bracciolini, ~~Letter~~ to Aretino," 621.

<sup>191</sup> Poggio was very impressed by Jerome's wit, intelligence, and nimble arguments. At one point, Poggio even called Jerome the best of the humanists, for he ~~approached~~ nearer [than any other] to that standard of ancient eloquence which we so much admire." This admiration was in tension, though, with Poggio's concerns about the truthfulness of Jerome's testimony, and his seemingly equal concerns for the council's ability to discern truth from falsity: ~~If~~ his real sentiments agreed with his professions, he was so far from deserving to die that his principles did not even give just ground for the slightest offence." See: Bracciolini, ~~Letter~~ to Aretino," 615 and 617.

<sup>192</sup> This entire passage described Jerome as: ~~egregius~~ vir Hieronymus de Praga, ipsius evangelice veritatis zelator intrepidus, cruore proprio sigillans ac morte, per quam eiam velut alter Helias in curru igneo in paradysum voluptatis immense deducebatur absque dubito, serie mortis eius a memoria hominum ex temporum fluxibilitate et successu prolapsa, poweris professoribus veritatis exemplum et speculum perseverancie et imitacionis." Mladoňovice, ~~Narracio~~ de M. Hieronymo," 339.

<sup>193</sup> ~~daz~~ Iohannes Hus wier helig unde rechtig vorortelt, wem ich yn hob wol begent, dz her gut und worheftig prediger des ewangelium Christi ist gewest." See: ~~De~~ vita," 337; compare this to the version in Petr's *passio*, which notes that Jerome said in German: ~~ut~~ interim taceam honestatem eius et morum candorem, legis divinae et evangelii Jesu Christi fidus concionator erat." See: Mladoňovice, ~~Vita~~ Magistri Hieronymi," 366.

assertions of God's law as heretical. It is fitting, then, that Petr included a comment by Jerome that suggested the inescapability of God's demands that the church reform itself: "In truth, I will affix this spur to your consciences after my death, and I appeal to the highest and most just judge, God almighty, that in his presence with a hundred years having passed you will respond to me."<sup>194</sup> In many ways, the Hussite movement was an ongoing version of that demand – its growth and development into a national church consistently demanded that the Catholic church recognize its theological claims and its grievances. The content of those grievances would include the execution of holy men like Jerome and Jan Hus, and the continued memorialization of their deaths helped to fuel the persistence of the Bohemian reform movement in the face of secular and ecclesiastical opposition.

Mladoňovice's narratives, Barbatus's *passio*, and the various accounts of Jerome's death collectively comprised the raw materials from which the Hussite movement developed one of its most distinctive features: the institution of a feast day for Jan Hus and Jerome on July 6, the anniversary of Hus's martyrdom. The celebration of this day incorporated other Bohemian martyrs as well, including the three youths killed in the indulgence controversies of 1412, but Hus was the focus of this liturgical celebration.<sup>195</sup> Indeed, even on the first anniversary of Hus's

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<sup>194</sup> "Ego vero post fata mea vestris conscientii stimulum infigo et morsum, ac apello ad celsissimum simul et aequissimum iudicem, deum omnipotentem, ut coram eo centum annis revolūtis respondeatis mihi." Mladoňovice, "—Vita Magistri Hieronymi," 365. It should be noted that during the Lutheran reformation this statement by Jerome was conflated with one of Hus's (today you may roast a goose...) to create a prophecy of Luther and his reform. On this prophecy in sixteenth-century Lutheranism, see: Scribner, "Incombustible Luther," 41-42.

<sup>195</sup> The most extensive analysis of the liturgical celebration of Hus's feast day can be found in the work of David Holeton. On the early growth of the celebration of Hus's feast day and the development of a specific liturgy for that day, see: Holeton, "Θ Felix Bohemia," especially 390. For an analysis of the relevant literature on the topic, see also his: "Λ Libellus," especially 464-466.

death we have a record of his feast being observed, with Jakoubek preaching a sermon based on the pericope of Matthew 5:10, —Blessed are those who suffer persecution because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>196</sup>

Jakoubek’s sermon, which drew heavily on patristic sources to establish the virtues of martyrdom, firmly established a nascent Bohemian pantheon of martyrs and exhorted the audience to remember their sacrifices and emulate them, because —through the destruction of our bodies we are able to rejoice eternally with Christ in the fellowship of the one triumphant church with these [Bohemians] and the other blessed martyrs.”<sup>197</sup>

Jakoubek began his sermon with the construction of a fascinating parallel between the Bohemian martyrs and John the Baptist. Jakoubek asserted that it was not for sin or heresy, but because of his rebuking the powerful, that the Baptist was killed. If, however, a Christian became the enemy of a king or other powerful person because of moral censure, —you are blessed with John; for John also was not killed because of his Gentile ways or heresy, but because he castigated Herod for his adultery.”<sup>198</sup> While Jakoubek did not mention names, this example of a powerful king eliminating a voice for moral reform, as well as the identical names of John/Jan, must have called to mind Hus’s clashes with Wenceslas and Sigismund. The preacher used this example, as well as lengthy quotations from

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<sup>196</sup> Jakoubek, —*Sermo habitus*.” Novotný edited this text, and has argued for assigning it a later date than 1416 (perhaps 1417); he claims that Barbatius’s passion narrative, which helped shape Jakoubek’s narrative, could not have reached him by July, 1416. Bartoš has argued persuasively for a date in 1416, though, in his *Literární činnost M. Jakoubka ze Stříbra* (Prague: ČAVU, 1925), 45. Most contemporary scholars have accepted Bartoš’s dating.

<sup>197</sup> —*Per dissolutionem corporis possimus cum Christo in consorcio ecclesie triumphantis una cum hiis et ceteris beatis martiribus eternaliter congaudere*.” Jakoubek, —*Sermo habitus*,” 242.

<sup>198</sup> —*Beatus es cum Johanne. Nam et Johannes non propter gentilitatem neque propter heresim interfectus est, sed quia corripiebat Herodem propter adulterium eius*.” Jakoubek, —*Sermo habitus*,” 232.

Cyprian and Origen, to try to encourage his audience to steadfastness in the face of opposition. Jakoubek knew that there would be “fear in the presence of men, and terror before the tyrants,” again emphasizing the opposition of wicked kings, but he also pushed the value of opposition as a positive witness to the world.<sup>199</sup> Jakoubek stated that the strength to exhibit steadfastness in the face of fear and persecution came from God, and would show the oppressors the extent of divine power. Following Origen, and quoting from Romans 5:3-4, Jakoubek also saw a positive value for suffering among the faithful themselves, “for suffering produces steadfastness, steadfastness truly faith, and faith, moreover, hope.”<sup>200</sup>

Jakoubek sought to promote this hope by rehearsing the stories of the Bohemian martyrs, including Jerome. By meditating on their lives and deaths, the congregation sustained a living memory of Jesus’s life that continually illustrated the ideals of a Christian community:

The aforementioned five brothers in Christ,<sup>201</sup> after frequent and devoted consumption of the divine eucharist without hypocrisy or pretense, walked in humility, steadfastness, and truth, remembering with a life-giving memory the sad life of our redeemer God with its total poverty, punishment, and the ignominy of his cross.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Jakoubek often emphasized the role of fear in driving Christians away from the demands of their faith. Here, the “timor affacie hominum, terror coram tyrannis” was seen as a deterrent to a confession of faith and acceptance of suffering. For this quote, see: Jakoubek, “Sermo habitus,” 235. On the theme of terror in Jakoubek’s preaching, and that of other Hussite authors, see: Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 16-18.

<sup>200</sup> Citing Origen’s seventh homily on the book of Judges, Jakoubek argued about perseverance that: “Oremus accipere a deo virtutem, ut sustinere possimus, ut fides nostra in pressuris et tribulacionibus clarior fiat, ut per pacienciam nostram illorum superetur imprudencia, et sicut dixit dominus: In nostra paciencia aquiramus animas nostras; quia tribulacio pacienciam operatur, paciencia vero probacionem, probacio autem spem.” See: Jakoubek, “Sermo habitus,” 236.

<sup>201</sup> This reference is to the three young men killed in Prague in 1412, as well as to two laypeople executed for preaching “Hussite” ideas (i.e. utraquism) in Olomouc in 1415. For details of these martyrs’ deaths, see: Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, 926-927.

<sup>202</sup> “Prefati vero quinque in domino fratres post crebram ac devotam divinissime eucharistie sumpcionem sine ypocrisi et ficcione in humilitate et paciencia et veritate ambulabant, vivaci memoria memorantes vitam nostri dei redemptoris totam pauperam, penalem ac dolorosam cum ignominia crucis sue.” Jakoubek, “Sermo habitus,” 241.

This quotation suggested how the ideals of martyrdom could be translated to an entire community. The willingness to suffer, the constant recollection of Jesus's suffering, an active eucharistic devotion, and the refusal to give in to the fear of persecution allowed the community to embrace the spirit of martyrdom that had inspired Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs. Jakoubek, who had restored *utraquism* in Bohemia, maintained the centrality of communion as a means of fortifying God's people and enabling them to endure the tribulations of the present world. The martyrs of the Bohemian reform had left the community with sufficient examples and warnings about Antichrist and how to resist him; it was, however, the Hussites' responsibility to remember these warnings and act upon them.

It was Hus's death that served as the most dramatic of these warnings. With his death, Hus had embraced suffering and sacrificed himself in order to expose the evil of Antichrist and model ideal Christian behavior. Paul De Vooght has shown that Jakoubek's depiction of Hus in this sermon was modeled upon the biography of Milič composed by Matěj; it is not surprising, then, that Jakoubek would attribute the preacher's "spirit and power of Elijah" and the power to defeat Antichrist to Hus.<sup>203</sup>

For the Lord gave to him an erudite tongue, so that he knew, when he ought to produce a sermon; he had love and a heart of mercy for all men, even for his enemies and persecutors; and just as a second Elijah he zealously attacked the abundant iniquity of Antichrist and his simoniac clergy.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> De Vooght, *Jacobellus*, 77; For Matěj's specific references to preachers' having playing the role of Elijah, see above, Chapter 1, fn. 21 and 36.

<sup>204</sup> —Dominus enim dederat sibi ligwam eruditam, ut sciret, quando deberet sermonem proferre; qui habuit dileccionem et viscera miseracionum ad omnes homines, eciam ad inimicos et persecutores,



Jakoubek also called Hus —a counterpart of Elijah, whose spirit, so we piously believe, ascended through fire into heaven and the fellowship of the angels.”<sup>205</sup> Hus had truly fulfilled the dual prophetic roles of offering moral guideposts to believers while exposing the identity and actions of those who brought wickedness into the world. His ministry and death had also laid the foundations for a more lasting renewal in Christendom, and the commemoration of Hus provided his followers with a touchstone of their unique identity as the true church. Hus and the other leaders of the Prague reform had crafted an interpretation of July 6, 1415, that cast Hus as the suffering saint, and it was the performance of Hus’s *memoria* that would continue to sustain his followers as they created the Hussite revolution.

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qui velud alter Elyas zelanter invexit contra suberhabuntem iniquitatem Antichristi et symoniaci sui cleri.” Jakoubek, —*Sano habitus*,” 238.

<sup>205</sup> —Eius spiritus in igne instar Helie, ut pie credimus, ascendit in celum ad consortium angelorum.” Jakoubek, —*Sano habitus*,” 240.

## Chapter Two

### “*Vincit Qui Occiditur*:”

### The Recollection of Hus as a Mandate for National Revolution

#### Introduction

As a result of Jan Hus’s death, many elements within Bohemian society coalesced around his memory and united in resistance to their king, Wenceslas IV, the Holy Roman Emperor and Hungarian king, Sigismund, and the Council of Constance itself. Almost immediately after Hus’s death, 452 nobles of Bohemian and Moravia affixed their seals to an official protest of Hus’s death.<sup>1</sup> Charles University followed with a proclamation declaring Hus’s innocence and orthodoxy,<sup>2</sup> and popular preachers in Prague ascended their pulpits to compare the Council with the “abomination of desolation” described in the book of Daniel.<sup>3</sup> These initial responses presaged the widespread recognition and celebration of Hus’s sanctity in Bohemia. Indeed, over the course of the years immediately following the execution of Hus, his martyrdom came to stand for all of the suffering and persecution of the Bohemian nation, and the invocation of his name served to legitimize political resistance as well as religious deviance. Hus’s execution represented, for his countrymen, a decisive attack on their nation by the

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<sup>1</sup> This text originated in a meeting of fifty-eight barons held on September 2, 1415. After circulating throughout the kingdom, the letter accumulated 452 noble seals affirming its conclusions. See: —Iterae baronum, nobilium et militarium regni Bohemiae...quibus Constantiensi concilio exprobrant condemnationem et mortem Joannis Hus atque vincula Hieronymi Pragensis,” in *Documenta*, 580-590; on its circulation, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 143-144.

<sup>2</sup> —Festimonium Universitatis Pragensis de M. Johanne Hus et Heironymo de Praga,” in *FRB* 8, 228-230.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel 9: 27, 11: 31, and 12: 11. This terminology is also echoed in the so-called “little apocalypse” in the synoptic gospels, especially Matthew 24.

Antichrist, and it was incumbent upon his followers to defy the sinful world order that had been complicit in his death.

The Council of Constance and the king of Bohemia came to be considered the primary agents of Antichrist in this attack, and their continued actions against the Bohemian reform only strengthened this perception. The condemnation of *utraquism* and Hus in 1415 had occurred in the midst of the Council of Constance's efforts to heal the papal schism that had existed since 1378, and the Bohemian demands for the moral qualifications of religious leaders and attacks on the pope represented a grave danger to a church in the midst of reunification. Indeed, many Catholic authors ultimately saw the reform movement in the Czech lands as a challenge to the ecclesiology espoused by the papacy and its theological supporters, as Hus and his followers questioned the prevailing identification of the church as "existing among all faithful, in the unity of faith, the rites of the sacraments, and the precepts of God."<sup>4</sup> In scrutinizing the nature of the priesthood and the qualifications of membership in the church, the Bohemian heretics undermined many of the central tenets in the Catholic conception of the church as the body of God, constituted by a united, if qualitatively unequal, head and members. Particularly as the new pope, Martin V, elected in November, 1417, began to employ the rhetoric of holy war against the "Hussite" heretics in

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<sup>4</sup> In light of Hussite ecclesiology and the conciliar challenge to the papal monarchy, many Roman authors began to write critically about the nature of the church. In the early 1430s, John of Ragusa, who opposed the Hussites at the Council of Basel, defined the "ecclesia catholica" as "ex cunctis fidelibus, in unitate fidei, ritu sacramentorum, et praeceptorum Dei existentibus." See: Joannes de Ragusio, "Oratio de communione sub utraque specie," in Joannes Dominicus Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova, et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 29 (Paris: H. Welter, 1901-1927), 699-868, 771.

Bohemia, the stakes of the reform rose to new heights.<sup>5</sup> The choice that had been presented to Jan Hus – to die for his faith or submit to the diabolical forces in the world – became a choice that confronted both the priests and laypeople of the Czech lands. The Bohemian people came to see themselves as the only truly Christian people on earth, a holy remnant that had been isolated and threatened by the actions of Antichrist’s followers.<sup>6</sup>

Given the intensifying opposition of the council and pope, and the continuing complicity of the Bohemian crown, the Hussites utilized a language of “national messianism” to understand themselves as God’s chosen people on earth. The idea of Czech chosenness had been developing since the time of Charles IV, and nationalist discourse emerged both in the controversy over the Kutná Hora decree in 1409 and in Jerome of Prague’s speeches during the indulgence controversy of 1411-1412.<sup>7</sup> As Joel Seltzer has recently shown, the national consciousness of the Bohemians tied language and faith together to create an image of the “*fideles Bohemi*” who had received God’s teachings and become the

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<sup>5</sup> The use of the term “Hussite” to describe the Bohemian reform movement after the death of Jan Hus is somewhat controversial. The Bohemians themselves did not use the term to describe themselves, and it was often a term of opprobrium. Given my emphasis on the centrality of Hus’s memory in establishing the movement, however, I have chosen to use this term to describe the Bohemian reform up until the Council of Basel. After that point, I will refer to the Bohemian national church as the “Utraquist church.” My reasons for this semantic shift will be discussed below, in chapter 3. For recent summaries on the debate over the term “Hussite” and its applicability to the Bohemian reform movement, see: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 41ff.; and Zdeněk David, *Finding the Middle Way: The Utraquists’ Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2003), x-xv.

<sup>6</sup> On the development of a “remnant ecclesiology” in Bohemia and in late medieval Europe as a whole, see: Scott Hendrix, “In Quest of the Vera Ecclesia: The Crises of Late Medieval Ecclesiology,” *Viator* 7 (1976), 347-378; and Paul De Vooght, “Écclésiologie des adversaires de Huss au Concile de Constance,” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 35 (1959), 5-24.

<sup>7</sup> On the long term development of “national messianism” in Bohemia, see: Urbánek, “Český mesianismus,” 7-28; and Šmahel, “The Idea of the Nation,” especially 201-205.

new Israel.<sup>8</sup> This self-image encompassed the suffering of the Israelites, especially the Maccabees, their connection to a specific land, and their linguistic differences from their neighbors. For the Bohemians, the preservation of biblical practice, primarily in the observance of communion in both kinds, and the ubiquity of persecution, especially as seen in the execution of Hus, demonstrated that the Hussites had had been chosen as God's people during the "night of Antichrist."<sup>9</sup> And through the commemoration of their patron saint and apostle, Jan Hus, the Bohemians established a binding model for themselves that valorized suffering and the confession of faith up to death.<sup>10</sup>

One key factor in the widespread establishment of the veneration of Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs as models for the Czech nation was the agitation of popular preachers. Jakoubek of Střibro, Hus's ultimate successor as the preacher in Bethlehem Chapel, and Jan Tělivský, a former Premonstratensian canon, both emphasized Hus's death repeatedly in denigrating the king and pope; their sermons also positively invoked Hus's memory to create a standard of morality and courage in facing the threats of Antichrist. These sermons, along with popular and liturgical songs, employed Hus as a personification of Bohemian values. These values were identical to those of the early church – moral purity, perseverance, and courage in the face of opposition – and Hus's ministry in

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<sup>8</sup> Seltzer persuasively argues that the language of the Czech nation, which was constructed in sharp opposition to the German nation, was often used to cover up the lack of unanimity among the Bohemians in religious issues. For his analysis of Bohemian nationalist discourse, see his: *Framing Faith*, especially chapter 4, 207-265.

<sup>9</sup> On eucharistic practice and persecution as signs of election, see: Thomas Fudge, "The Law of God: Reform and Religious Practice in Late Medieval Bohemia," *BRRP* 1 (1998), 49-72, 62ff.; and Holeyton, "Relation and Revolution," 40.

<sup>10</sup> On the idea of Hus as a "binding model" for Bohemian Christians, see: Amedeo Molnár, ed., *Výzva Jana Tělivského: Výbor z kázání* (Praha: Edice Kalich, 1954), 21.

Bohemia and the nation's veneration of him consecrated the new Hussite church as the true heir of the apostles. Especially in the years right after Hus's execution, it seemed that his suffering was also visited upon Bohemia as a whole. Interdict and violence kept his memory alive among the nation, as stories of his perseverance in the face of persecution permeated Bohemian society and spurred his followers to acts of personal sacrifice. The making of new martyrs reaffirmed Hus's importance as a model and standard for self-sacrifice in an era marked by the struggle between faithful Christians and the forces of Antichrist.

I would suggest, then, that the invocation of Hus's name and the rehearsal of his death represented textual relics that guaranteed his presence among the community of faithful Bohemians. The singing of songs and preaching of sermons served as pieces of occasional literature that brought the recollection of Hus's death to the minds of his followers at key moments in the development of the Bohemian religious reform.<sup>11</sup> When the archbishop pronounced an interdict, the pope condemned the Hussites, or the emperor threatened holy war, the invocation of Hus's name and memory of his death functioned as a reminder of the paradoxical victory that faithful Christians could win. Suffering in this life foretold eternal bliss, and the martyr's faith and death foretold the ultimate vindication of his followers. The veneration of Hus as a true saint ritually reinforced these central conceptions. By celebrating Hus's ascendancy into

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<sup>11</sup> Patrick Geary has argued for understanding the various forms of hagiographic literature and commemorations of saints as "always precipitated by some specific need external to the life of the saint or the simple continuation of his or her cult." For him, politics and familial claims to power were the most frequent spurs to hagiographic production. Geary has also emphasized the importance of physical remains in concentrating *memoria* and serving as a site for the negotiation of human relationships based on sacred obligations. See his: *Living with the Dead*, 22 and 202ff.

heaven as a true martyr, the Bohemian nation reassured itself of the rewards that awaited them collectively for their continued perseverance. Thus, the rehearsal of Hus's martyrdom and the assertion of his sanctity allowed the Bohemians to tacitly assure themselves of their own salvation. I would argue that the commemoration and veneration of the martyr St. Jan Hus provided the Bohemian nation with certain proof that the experience of suffering on behalf of God would lead to its ultimate redemption and vindication as true believers in, and practitioners of, the Gospel.

#### Beyond Bethlehem: The National Spread of the Cult of St. Jan Hus

Even as the passion narratives of Hus's trial spread throughout Bohemia and Moravia, the nascent Hussite movement gained considerable political support in the Czech lands. On September 2, 1415, less than two months after the execution of Hus, a letter began to circulate among the nobility in Bohemia and Moravia.<sup>12</sup> In time, 452 nobles affixed their seals to the document, which was a formal protest concerning events in Constance.<sup>13</sup> The letter's central purpose was to unreservedly affirm the orthodoxy of Jan Hus:

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<sup>12</sup> This letter was in all likelihood a response to a letter sent to the nobility of Bohemia and Moravia by the Council fathers on July 26, 1415. That first letter was primarily a plea for the nobles to reject the "impiorum saevitiam et malignantium iniquitatem" and reintegrate their kingdom into the church. The nobles' response was a protestation of Hus's orthodoxy and a claim that they had to respect divine truth, rather than the dictates of the institutional church. This distinction reflects Hus's ecclesiological language and the ideas of leaders such as Nicholas of Dresden. For the Council's letter, see: "Concilium Constantiense literis ad Bohemos datis condemnationis et supplicii Joannis Hus rationem reddit hortaturque eos, ut haereses vitare earumque doctores amovere studeant," in *Documenta*, 568-572, the above quote, 568. For the Bohemian nobility's letter, see: "Litterae baronum," 580-590.

<sup>13</sup> This letter gave evidence that the nobility would continue to provide vital material and political support to the Hussite movement; this galvanized the Bohemian reform and spurred the university to add its support. See: Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution*, 930-937; see also František Bartoš, *Do*

Master Jan Hus himself was a good man, righteous and catholic, and for many years in our kingdom he comported himself [well] and affirmed this by his life, habits, and reputation...he taught and preached to us and our subordinates in a catholic manner, and in his writing left much, that constantly execrated all errors and heresies.<sup>14</sup>

Interestingly, the letter also averred that Hus had been brought down by “the instigation, accusations, and denunciations of enemies and traitors,” and later referred to Hus’s opponents at Constance as “~~iv~~als and traitors to our kingdom of Bohemia and margravate of Moravia.”<sup>15</sup> Such language suggested that Hus’s death was perceived to be an attack on the reputation and honor of the entire kingdom, and that those “~~domestic~~ apostates” who had brought about Hus’s death were considered to be political traitors as well.<sup>16</sup> This letter, which was signed and delivered without the approbation of King Wenceslas, demonstrated how quickly Hus’s death became a rallying cry and point of unity for an emerging Bohemian national consciousness. Within months of his death, it came to be a symbol of the unjust persecution of the Bohemian nation and language.

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*čtyř pražských artikulů: z myšlenkových a ústavních zápasů let 1415-1420* (Praha: Nákladem Blahoslavovy společnosti, 1940), 10-11.

<sup>14</sup> “Ipse M. Joannes Hus fuit vir utique bonus, justus et catholicus, a multis annis in regno nostro vita, moribus et fama laudabiliter conversatus et comprobatus...nos et subditos nostros catholice docuit, praedicavit et in scriptis multa reliquit, omnes errores et haereses constantissime detestando.” See: “~~I~~terae baronum,” 581.

<sup>15</sup> The letter states that Hus was attacked by “~~inimicorum~~ and proditorum accusationes, delationes, et instigationes;” the latter reference is to: “~~de~~tractores, deo et hominibus odibiles, ac nostri regni Bohemiae et marchionatur Moraviae aemuli et proditores.” See: “~~I~~terae baronum,” 581.

<sup>16</sup> For instance, the nobility expressed in their letter a deep concern that because of the lies spoken against them, “~~n~~less a corrective revision is quickly gained, the aforementioned kingdom and margravate with their faithful Christians will sustain the irrecoverable damnation and ruin of their souls.” See: “~~I~~terae baronum,” 582. There was also a linguistic element in the council’s polemics against the Czech nation. The idea of the Bohemians as an heretical nation tied in to their linguistic identity, and much of the rhetoric on both sides equated the Czech word “~~jazyk~~” (language/tongue) with the Latin “~~natio~~” or “~~gens~~.” This related both to the vernacular preaching and the limited use of Czech in worship that characterized the Bohemian reform. See: Šmahel, *Idea Národa*, 58-61; and Seibt, *Hussitica*, 80-83.



Along with authoring this letter, the nobles also formed a Hussite League bound by pledges of mutual defense for the protection of God's Law.<sup>17</sup> The nobility, in offering their protection to the religious reformers, stepped into the vacuum of moral and political leadership that had been created by Wenceslas's support for Hus's exile in 1412 and the Emperor Sigismund's conduct during Hus's trial. The league's rhetoric also demonstrated how the execution of Hus came to stand for a larger attack on the honor and orthodoxy of Bohemia, an attack that the aristocratic element in Bohemian society felt compelled to redress. Therefore, the members of the Hussite League supported the religious reform that had begun in Prague, and many churches in the Bohemian and Moravian provinces came to be administered by Hussite priests. Particularly in southern Bohemia, in the region where Hus had preached during his exile, these local parishes adopted the practice of giving communion in both kinds and fostered a growing veneration of Hus.<sup>18</sup> A local writer with Catholic sympathies lamented, ~~they~~ they call anyone evil who does not hold with Hus; and [they say that] whoever renounces the truth, and pays the tithe, sins mortally. And they add that Hus accomplished more in the Catholic church and did more miracles than Sts. Peter and Paul, because those men did miracles corporeally, but Hus did them

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<sup>17</sup> The formation of this noble Hussite League (and a rival league of Catholic nobles as well) was a continuation of the aristocracy's struggles with King Wenceslas, which had begun in 1390 over issues of the administration of the kingdom's law courts. This contest over power in regional administration continued through the first decade of the fifteenth century, and culminated in the Hussite League's formation and protection of the nascent dissident movement. On the history of the struggle between king and nobles, and the formation of the noble leagues, see: John Klassen, *The Nobility and the Making of the Hussite Revolution* (New York: Columbia UP, 1978), especially chapter 7.

<sup>18</sup> The copies of Barbatus's *passio*, for instance, were sent to churches in southern Bohemia and Moravia, respectively. See: Sedlák, "Několik textů."

spiritually.”<sup>19</sup> The comparison to Peter and Paul was especially significant, as Hus’s feast day took place on, and had partially superseded, the octave celebration of those saints’ feast. Peter had been the first pope, so the preference for this latter founder of a distinctive Bohemian church contained an implicit critique of papal claims to primacy. This anecdote from provincial Bohemia also gave evidence to a larger trend that profoundly disturbed the Roman imperial and religious hierarchy: with the nobles’ support, and without opposition from King Wenceslas, the Roman church was losing land and parishes to the Hussites.

Since Wenceslas was proving ineffective in limiting Hussite gains in his kingdom, the Council and Holy Roman Emperor began to take steps to suppress the spread of the Bohemian reform. In March of 1416, Sigismund wrote to the nobility of Bohemia and Moravia in an effort to win them back to the papacy’s side and to calm their anger over Hus’s execution. Sigismund presented himself as having had his hands tied in the issue of Hus’s death. He protested that Hus had refused to listen to reason and maintained his heretical stance throughout his trial, and that Sigismund had been compelled by the circumstances to act in concord with the council fathers, despite his wishes to the contrary.<sup>20</sup> Alongside this apology for his actions, though, Sigismund took a hard line against the Hussite nobles, warning them that —if you want to sustain and defend the cause of Jan Hus

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<sup>19</sup> This letter was written from the vicinity of Kozi Hradek, where Hus had found refuge during his exile. The quote reads: —*Quemlibet malum appellant, qui cum Hus non tenet; et qui abrenuntiavit veritati et qui decimas dat, peccat mortaliter. Et addunt, quod Hus plus profecit in ecclesia catholica et plura fecit miracula, quam S. Petrus vel Paulus, quia isti corporaliter fecerunt, Hus autem spiritualiter.*” See: *Documenta*, 636-638, 637. On southern Bohemia and Hus’s exile there, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 165-167.

<sup>20</sup> The letter is dated to March 21, 1416. On Hus’s execution, Sigismund wrote: —*Atque deum testamur, nos tantopere doluisse eo, quod ei accidisset, ut nihil posset ultra.*” Similarly, he professed, —*nihil nos in hac re facere posse, neque erat commodum amplius de re disserere.*” See: *Documenta*, 609-613, 612.

with an obstinate and pertinacious spirit, indeed it will be most difficult for you...and if you do not obey, you will bring a holy war upon yourselves.”<sup>21</sup>

This was also not the first time that a Catholic authority figure had invoked the possibility of a holy war against Bohemia. As early as May, 1414, the chancellor of the University of Paris, Jean Gerson,<sup>22</sup> had written to the archbishop of Prague, Conrad, that he had to keep an eye on the Lord’s field, or else Satan would come and –sow the tares of wicked doctrines through his ministers, the heretics.”<sup>23</sup> Gerson was concerned that the heresies of Wyclif had taken root, and that the –good seed” of the church had been lost.<sup>24</sup> As Gerhard Ladner and Phillip Stump have shown, the use of this sort of extended agricultural metaphor in this context drew on a long tradition in the Christian rhetoric of reform,<sup>25</sup> and Gerson

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<sup>21</sup> —*¶* si tam obstinato et pertinaci animo causam Joannis Hus sustentare et defendere velitis, id quidem vobis difficillimum erit... ac ni obtemperaveritis, sacrum vobis bellum consciscetis.” *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Gerson (d.1429) was a leading academic and church reformer in Paris, as well as a mystical theologian. He viewed the church as an earthly reflection of the –celestial hierarchy,” an idea he took from Pseudo-Dionysius, and as such would not tolerate any threats to the constitution of that hierarchy. On Gerson’s early career and his ideas on the fundamental nature of the church, see: G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, *Jean Gerson, Apostle of Unity: His Church Politics and Ecclesiology*, J.C. Grayson, trans. (E.J. Brill: Boston, 1999); and Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, PN: Pennsylvania State UP, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> This letter, which was dated May 27, 1414, referred to Satan as the one, –qui per ministros suos haereticos superseminavit zizaniam pestiferarum doctrinarum, quas apostolas varias et peregrinas appellat.” This is a references to the parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew 13. The parable began: –The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.” See: Jean Gerson, –Epistola ad Conradum archiepiscopum Pragensem, ut haeresim in dioecesi sua pullulantem exstirpare studeat atque, si necesse sit, etiam \_auxilio secularis brachii’ utatur,” *Documenta*, 523-526, 523.

<sup>24</sup> The central dichotomy in the letter is between the –bonum semen” of the church (including the sacraments, the Bible, and church rituals) and the –zizanium” of the heretics. On the specific errors of Wyclif in Prague, see: Gerson, –Epistola ad Conradum,” 524. Gerson often depicted the church as containing the –semen Dei” within itself, and as such he sharply condemned anything that limited its growth and development. On the notion of –semen Dei,” see: Hendrix, –In Quest of Vera Ecclesia,” 367; and Brian Tierney, –The Idea of Representation in the Medieval Councils of the West,” *Concilium* 19 (1983), 25-30.

<sup>25</sup> Drawing on the work of Gerhard Ladner, who studied early medieval Christian ideas of reform in depth, Stump has shown that certain idioms of reform prevailed at Constance. One way of talking about reform employed the terminology of –controlled vegetal growth.” For instance, John XXIII had to be pruned from the church, as did Hus and Jerome. This language of pruning had a

continued with this image to demand that Archbishop Conrad appeal to King Wenceslas, who was ~~the~~ the hatchet of the secular arm, destroying heresies with its authority and sending [them] into the fire.”<sup>26</sup> Later that same year, Gerson wrote again to Conrad after reading some of Hus’s writings. The Parisian chancellor noted that Hus was a Donatist, and that his teaching that his teachings on moral sin and authority represented a great heresy. Again, Gerson suggested that Hus’s heretical ideas should be exterminated ~~by~~ by fire and sword.”<sup>27</sup>

Gerson, who became one of the major voices for reform at the Council of Constance, continued his agitation against the Bohemians while there.<sup>28</sup> In particular, he played a considerable role in the trial of Jerome of Prague and authored a substantial tractate against communion in both kinds for the church leaders assembled there. His early militancy also became the default position for

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parallel in the surgical language detailed above, and the notion of heresy as cancer was the theme for the sermons preached before the execution of Hus and Jerome by the Bishop of Lodi. On the origins of agricultural metaphors for church reform, see: Gerhard Ladner, *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1959), especially 20-22; on these metaphors at Constance, see: Phillip Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance (1414-1418)* (E.J. Brill: New York, 1994).

<sup>26</sup> Prior to recommending the enlistment of the king, Gerson discussed the answers to heresy that the church had employed throughout its history. His specific references are to miracles (~~sc~~ miraculorum”), the arguments of theologians (~~sc~~ disputationis argumentativae per doctores”), and the actions of councils and emperors (~~sc~~ sacrorum conciliorum, faventibus imperatoribus”). In this case, though, he recommended quick, decisive action by the king: ~~sc~~ securis brachii secularis, excidens haereses cum auctoribus suis et in ignem mittens.” This seems to be a reference to John the Baptist’s preaching in Matthew 3:10, where he said about the Pharisees and Sadducees: ~~sc~~ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” See: Gerson, ~~sc~~ Epistola ad Conradum,” 524.

<sup>27</sup> This comes from a list of twenty heretical articles that Gerson extracted from Hus’s writings. They were dated September 24, 1414, and mostly condemn Hus’s supposed Donatism and his teachings that a foreknown person cannot have true authority within the church. See: ~~sc~~ Articuli a Joanne de Gersono et magistris Parisiensibus exhibiti contra M.J. Hus,” *Documenta*, 185-188, 188. For commentary on the articles, see: De Vooght, *L’Hérésie de Jean Huss*, 294-302.

<sup>28</sup> While at Constance, Gerson became a champion of the idea that an assembly of bishops was the appropriate vehicle for the restoration of the unified papacy. In his view, such an assembly was the most perfect analogue to the company of the disciples who established the church after Jesus’ death. On this view of the council, see: John Ryan, *The Apostolic Conciliarism of Jean Gerson* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), especially 23-25; and Daniel Hobbins, ~~sc~~ The Schoolman as Public Intellectual: Jean Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract,” *American Historical Review* 108 (2003), 1308-1337.

the council fathers' interactions with Bohemia. Just a week after Sigismund sent his letter to Bohemia, the council sent its own missive to the heretics. The letter explicitly condemned Hus as "having received the noxious cups of error from the hand of Satan" and called for the elimination of his "descendants in wickedness" who still populated the Bohemian realm.<sup>29</sup> The letter further demanded that orthodox nobles eliminate "all the madness of this sort, the pseudo-doctors, and their followers," or face canonical sanctions.<sup>30</sup> The council also empowered Jan Tělezný, Bishop of Litomyšl, to act as the spokesman for the council in Bohemia and make use of ecclesiastical censures to enforce orthodoxy in the realm. Thus Tělezný, who had more authority and force of personality than Archbishop Conrad, proclaimed and actively enforced an interdict on the city of Prague in November of 1415 and again in February, 1416 (it would last until 1419).<sup>31</sup> This use of the ban, which had been threatened in 1412 to drive Hus from the city, had serious, unintended consequences for the Catholic church in Prague; as orthodox priests left their urban churches, priests with Hussite sympathies took possession of these parishes.<sup>32</sup> Prior to the imposition of the interdict, only the Bethlehem

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<sup>29</sup> These lines are from a letter to the orthodox nobles of Bohemia, who had formed a Catholic League to oppose the Hussite League. The letter dates from March 27, 1416, and can thus be understood as part of a concerted effort between emperor and church to eliminate the Hussite threat in Bohemia. The description of Hus as a "pseudo-doctor" reads: "ex susceptis de manu ipsius Satanae errorum poculis noxialibus impleverunt usque ad summum eius, et dimiserunt etiam reliquias parvulis suis." For the full text of the letter, see: *Documenta*, 615-619; this quote, 616.

<sup>30</sup> "Omnes huiusmodi falsas insanias, pseudodoctores, sectatores eorum." *Documenta*, 618.

<sup>31</sup> Because of his forceful personality, staunch Roman orthodoxy, and independent status as a lord with considerable land and power, Jan was known in Bohemia as "Iron Jan." He remained one of the most outspoken opponents of the Hussites until his death, and he set the tone for Roman polemics against the Hussites within Bohemia. In authorizing Jan, rather than Conrad, to deal with the Bohemian heresy, the council here recognized these abilities. On "Iron Jan," see: Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution*, 941ff.

<sup>32</sup> The Chronicle of the University of Prague noted: "Anno dominis 1416 currente ante Purificationem archiepiscopus cum prelati et clero Pragensi fecerunt interdictum...pro quodate

Chapel and one parish belonged to ultraquist priests; from the winter of 1415-1416 on, however, the nascent Hussite church predominantly ministered to the urban population.<sup>33</sup>

These efforts by the emperor and council to rein in the growing Hussite movement demonstrated a profound misunderstanding of the situation in Bohemia and Moravia. Hus himself had written extensively about how inappropriate ecclesiastical censures could be ignored,<sup>34</sup> and Sigismund's weak apology for his complicity in Hus's death would have been offset by the diffusion of Mladoňovice's and Barbatus's passion narratives and their depiction of Sigismund's role in the trial. Similarly, the council's characterization of Hus as satanically inspired would have enraged the Bohemians who were coming to see Hus as a saint, and even the threat of holy war would not deter a nation who saw suffering for the truth as an essential element in Christian life. In these circumstances, the execution of Jerome of Prague only confirmed the Bohemians' worst fears concerning the satanic corruption of the Council of Constance.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, although the Bohemian king had attained substantial power under the rule of Charles IV, during Wenceslas's reign the nobility had recaptured a

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sunt fere omnes ecclesie presbyteris vocatis Wiglefistis, qui libere et divina officia et verbum domini predicaverunt plebanis...tunc vulgus in clerum adversum graviter insurrexit et facta est divisio in populo, Wiglefiztis suorum presbyterorum divina visitantibus." See: "Fak Zvaná Kronika University Pražské," in *FRB* 5, 567-588, 580.

<sup>33</sup> For a more detailed history of Telezný's intervention and the transition of the Prague parishes to ultraquist ministers, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 158-161.

<sup>34</sup> See above, chapter 1, at notes 94 and 112.

<sup>35</sup> At the time of Jerome's trial, on May 23, 1416, Charles University sent a protest against Hus's execution and a proclamation of Jerome's orthodoxy to Constance. Concerning Hus, the university wrote: "tota sua cura primeve ecclesie mores in clero restaurabat et populo, qui eciam in verbi fortitudine et sapientia ceteros superabat in omnibus omnia exercens opera caritatis." For this letter, see: "Festimonium Universitatis," 229.

significant portion of the realm's political prerogatives.<sup>36</sup> The formation of the Hussite League suggested that the nobles considered the religious issues to be within their local jurisdictions, and Sigismund's attempts to reassert the king's ultimate authority on behalf of his brother would have seemed an empty gesture. Given the nobility's support for Hussitism, then, and the seizure of Prague's parishes by priests administering communion *sub utraque*, it is possible to say that within a year of Hus's death, and certainly by the time of the execution of Jerome of Prague, the Hussite movement in Bohemia had been established through concerted political action in the kingdom despite the efforts of the Catholic and imperial hierarchy to eliminate Hus's legacy.

This political action, to be sure, was complemented by a more popular religious affirmation of Hus's sanctity and an attendant condemnation of the emperor and the Catholic church. One medium in which the growing anti-Catholic sentiment reared its head was that of popular song. Vernacular songs came to articulate a critique of both the church and empire that increasingly identified Hus as an embodiment of a distinctively Czech political and religious consciousness. Thomas Fudge has persuasively argued that popular songs in the

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<sup>36</sup> During the late fourteenth century, Charles IV used every available means to promote a cult of holy kingship in Bohemia. He notably began a cult of Charlemagne in Prague and highlighted the veneration of St. Wenceslas. On this, see: Mengel, "Holy and Faithful Fellowship;" and Marie Bláhová, "Der Kult des heiligen Wenzel in der Ideologie Karls IV," in M. Derwich and M. Dimitriev, eds., *Fonctions sociales et politiques du culte des saints dans les sociétés de rite Grec et Latin au Moyen Âge et à l'époque moderne* (Lahrgor: Wrocław, 1999), 227-236. After Charles's death, though, Wenceslas did not have the force of personality or the competence to maintain a heightened veneration for the king. During his reign, many political writings came to divorce the person of the king from the impersonal "realm" or "crown" of Bohemia, and the nobles came to see themselves as the guardians of the latter. On this development, see: Joachim Prochno, "Ferra Bohemiae, Regnum Bohemiae, Corona Bohemiae," in M. Hellmann, ed., *Corona Regni: Studien über die Krone als Symbol des Staates im späteren Mittelalter* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1961), 198-224, especially 223. More generally on the nobility and their efforts to achieve political power in the early fifteenth century, see: Klassen, *The Nobility*, 47-60.

Hussite movement were the “main vehicle for mass propaganda” that pushed the formula “German equals Catholic, and Catholic equals Antichrist.”<sup>37</sup> Jana Fojtíková, who has done much to identify and analyze the songs that comprised the musical cult of Jan Hus, concluded that the corpus of songs about this martyr often employed Bohemian nationalist discourse; alongside this theme, the songs also articulated a strong moral critique of the episcopal hierarchy and laid out the pious and saintly life that Hus led prior to his martyrdom.<sup>38</sup> These biographical, moralistic, and nationalist strains coexisted within the songs and resulted in strikingly original and comprehensive articulations of a distinctively Bohemian program for reform.

One of the earliest Czech songs that commemorated Hus, “*Naděje boží Mistr Jan Hus*,” (“With Divine Hope, Master Jan Hus”) tied all of these themes together and combined them with a specific exhortation to the Bohemian people. In the song, Hus was described as having been “burned for the truth of God in Constance by that gang of bishops.”<sup>39</sup> Further, the council fathers were characterized as “monkish, from cathedral chapters, and German, who uttered untrue testimony in Constance against Master Jan out of anger and without

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<sup>37</sup> For Fudge, the Bohemian Reformation was a process of predominantly oral communication, so songs came to be, for him, the most pervasive and significant means of communicating key ideas in the movement. He has isolated songs that were performed primarily out of the context of worship, thus arguing that songs were a “popular” medium. On this, see: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 187 and 190. As a complement to Fudge’s emphasis on popular song, one should see Zdeněk Nejedlý’s monumental study on Hussite song, where he concludes that liturgical song, and especially the use of Czech, reinforced the ideology of reform that had developed in the Hussite milieu. See: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, 6 vol. (Prague, ČSAV, 1954-1956), especially vol. 3, 376-381.

<sup>38</sup> Jana Fojtíková, “Hudební doklady Husova kultu z 15. a 16. století: Příspěvek ke studiu husitské tradice v době přebělohorské,” *Miscellanea Musicologica* 29 (1981), 51-142, 59-63.

<sup>39</sup> Fojtíková dates this song to 1416, and its Czech title is “*Naděje boží Mistr Jan Hus*.” In the first verse it reads: “*jenť jest upálen pro pravdu boží v Konstanci od roty biskupské*.” See Fojtíková, “Hudební doklady,” 105.



mercy,” and who could not perceive the holy truths that ~~the~~ Czech lands know well.”<sup>40</sup> In opposition to the angry and envious monks and canons, Hus had taught the commandments and prophecies of the Bible, and through his death he attained a heavenly reward. His life and death contained an essential lesson for his followers: ~~If~~ we sinners want to be there [in heaven], we must suffer for the truth, glorify the truth, vilify injustice; live with love and mercy, strengthening ourselves with the body and blood of God in union to the end.”<sup>41</sup> Within this song, many key themes in early Hussite polemics achieved a pithy, memorable expression. Hus had been a living saint who stayed faithful until death, and he was killed by bishops and monks who were motivated by ethnic differences as well as moral corruption. The Czechs were a chosen nation who maintained true faith, especially through the practice of *utraquism*, but they would have to suffer for their beliefs and practices. This oppositional view of the world, in which Czech versus German and Hussite versus Catholic became the key operative categories, would only achieve greater clarity and intensity over the course of the 1410s.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> This comparison and critique were contained in the second verse of the song: ~~Fen~~ jest kázal svaté čtení,| to česká země dobře ví,| ale rot mniská,| knovnická,| německá| vydali svědectví| křivé do Konstancí| na mistra Jana| za zlosti,| bez milosti.” *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> ~~Chceme-li~~ my hříšní tam býti,| musíme pro pravdu trpěti,| pravdu velebiti,| křivdu tupiti,| ťiv u býti v lásce a v milosti,| sebe posilňujíc| tělem boží m a krví| vespolek| do skončení.” *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Although anti-German rhetoric was pervasive in popular Hussite propaganda from the 1410s, Šmahel has also cautioned that antipathy toward the Germans was not a sufficient cause for reformation and revolution; he wisely draws attention to internal religious developments in Bohemia and social inequality as equally significant elements in the *“pluralist”* analysis of the Bohemian reform. See: Šmahel, *La révolution Hussite*, 17-21.

These themes were further developed in a song from either 1417 or 1418, –*Fvóřče milý, zřel sě tobě.*”<sup>43</sup> In particular, this composition attacked the –devilish obstinacy” of the clergy who denied the blood of Christ to the laity while claiming –you are not worthy to receive the blood of God, but priests are worthy to receive this sacrament.”<sup>44</sup> The song called this clerical bias into question and claimed that:

To eat the body and drink the blood  
faithfully until the day of judgment  
in this one cannot die  
until the arrival of God.

In whom is it better to believe  
regarding the salvation of all people:  
God and his saints,  
or the Council of Constance?<sup>45</sup>

This passage denigrated the judgment of the council and placed the saints and God himself in explicit opposition to Constance. The song demanded a choice between the two, and the act of singing itself represented a commitment. By deriding the council and openly demanding the body and blood of Christ, the laity placed themselves in the camp of God and the Bohemian reformers, as opposed to that of the devilish hierarchical church. In this regard, Hus was also held up as a polar opposite to the priesthood gathered in Constance. While many priests were

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<sup>43</sup> This song comprised thirty-five quatrains, and in the twenty-seventh verse it referred to: –Two years before this| the priesthood dwelling in Constance| accomplished nothing good| except exterminating two masters.” (*Dvě létě tomu minuly,| jakž kněžstvo v Konstanci ležie. | Nic dobrého neučinili,| neť dva mistry zahubili.*) Depending on if the –two years” referred to Hus’s or Jerome’s death, the song would date to 1417 or 1418. For the full text of this song, see: *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 262-265.

<sup>44</sup> The tenth verse reads: –A řkúc sprostným: Nejste hodni| božie krve přijímati,| ale kněže jsú duostojni| té svátosti poťív ati.” *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 263.

<sup>45</sup> This passage comprises two verses: v. 16: –Ělo jiesti a krev píti,| ať pravě do dne súdného,| tomuť nelžě zahynúti| ať do příchodu božieh o.” v. 17: –Komuťť jest lépe věřeno| o spasení všeho lidu:| bohu-li a svatým jeho| čili sboru Konstanskému?” *Ibid.*

slaves to —frnication, pride, greed, even simony,” Hus himself —ived in righteousness, hated sin, esteemed working, taught the commandments of God, and gave his life for this.”<sup>46</sup>

A final song further encapsulated the oppositional language that developed in the period immediately following Hus’s death in terms of comparing true holiness and authority with the false council. Called “*O svolánie Konstanské*” (—Θ, you Council of Constance”), it decried the death of Hus with strong language: —Oyou Council of Constance who call yourself holy, how could you with such neglect and great lack of mercy destroy a holy man? Has it been his guilt to show many their sin, moved to do so by God’s grace so they would do penance?”<sup>47</sup> Here, the idea that Hus’s moral critique of the church drove it to destroy him came to the fore. The council’s inability to acknowledge the truth of Hus’s accusations and insights about its corruption forced the song’s writer (and singers) to wonder: —are you without the understanding or even the intellect for truth, defaming the truth with your screaming nonsense [and] Jewish ways?”<sup>48</sup> These references to the council’s conduct and superficial legalism recalled Mladoňovice’s account, when the council refused to even hear Hus’s attempts to

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<sup>46</sup> The song developed this opposition over several verses. Hus’s praises were sung in verses 27–29, with this quote coming from 29: —Mistr Hus ťiv byl v spravedlnosti,| hyzdil hřiechy, chválil cnosti,| učil příkazanie božie | a svůj život za to dal.” Verse 30 contained the depiction of priests quoted above: —Smilstvo, pýchu i lakomstvie| i také svatokupectvie.| Tot’ nám svědčí svaté čtenie,| ťe ť kněz nemá mieti zbožie.” See: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 264.

<sup>47</sup> This song potentially dates to 1415. Nejedlý gives this date because the song makes no mention of Jerome’s death among its accusations towards the council; Fojtíková follows this dating. Both texts contain the original Czech version of the song; I follow Fudge’s translation here. On dating, see: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 3, 355; see also: Fojtíková, —Hudební doklady,” 54. For this translation, see: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 191.

<sup>48</sup> —Nebo jste bez rozumu| a pravého duvodu| křikem vašim nesmyslným,| obyčejem ťid ovským| pravdu potupili.” Fojtíková, —Hudební doklady,” 101.

explain his theology through biblical citations.<sup>49</sup> In this song, then, the council's behavior demonstrated that it had strayed from its foundations. Its treatment of Hus showed that it could not recognize holiness, and its condemnation of ultraquism showed that the council had no basis in Christ's life and teaching. Thus, the song's fourth verse addressed the council in an apostrophe and accused: "You do not recognize a gift from God; you repay evil for good and you show ungratefulness to your savior."<sup>50</sup>

It is difficult, or perhaps impossible, to delineate clearly between these popular songs and those that were sung primarily in the context of worship. In fact, a Latin version of "Θ *svolánie Konstanské*," entitled "Θ *Quam per Contrarium*," functioned as a part of the liturgical commemoration of the feast of Jan Hus.<sup>51</sup> Liturgical songs were composed in Latin throughout the early growth of the Hussite movement, but vernacular singing took place alongside the liturgy.<sup>52</sup> This coexistence suggests that the official commemoration of Hus that

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<sup>49</sup> For example, Mladoňovice's account emphasized that Hus was not allowed to respond to the accusations against him on the final day of his trial. He was commanded to be silent during the pronouncement of that articles, but then his silence was taken as consent to his guilt. See: Mladoňovice, *Relatio*, 113ff.

<sup>50</sup> "Bořich daruov neznaje| zlé za dobré vracuješ| nevděčnost ukazuješ| k spasiteli svému." See: Fojtíková, "Hudební doklady," 100.

<sup>51</sup> It is not entirely clear when a fully independent liturgy for the feast of Jan Hus developed, but it certainly did so by the end of the fifteenth century. It seems that over the course of the first half of the century, the Hussites used a patchwork of elements from other feasts and the common elements from the feasts of the martyrs. The full development of Hussite liturgy will be treated in chapter four, below. On the development of liturgical propers for the feast, and especially the composition of prosae for the mass, see: Holeton, "Θ Felix Bohemia," especially 393-397.

<sup>52</sup> Nejedlý has emphasized that there were some portions of the Hussite movement that sought to create a vernacular liturgy, but that these efforts were limited in Prague and opposed by the university masters who made up a substantial portion of the movement's leadership. The "open question" of the appropriate Hussite liturgical language until the end of the 1420s, however, allowed the singing of Czech songs within the worship context. See: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 5, 136-143. On the development of a Czech liturgy over time, see: Hana Vlhová-Wörner, "The Jistebnice Kancionál – its Contents and Liturgy," in J. Kolár et al., eds., *Jistebnický Kancionál: MS Praha, Knihonva Národního muzea II C 7, Kritická edice: 1. Graduale* (Prague: Monumenta Liturgica Bohemiae, 2005), 107-133, especially 123-133.

took place in the context of the celebration of his feast day inspired, and was energized in turn, by the popular veneration of Hus that developed throughout Bohemia. The synergy of liturgy and popular song that the early Hussite movement cultivated resulted in a vibrant culture of worship that alarmed the local representatives of the Catholic hierarchy.

There are several sources that demonstrated the impact of these songs on the Hussites' opponents. As early as 1416, the cathedral chapter in Olomouc wrote to the council of Constance protesting the Hussites' religious innovations. One specific complaint was that the Bohemians "held a feast for the publicly condemned heretics Jan Hus and Jerome in churches and in the presence of many people," and that "they sang *Gaudeamus*' and other songs concerning the martyrs, comparing them to the holy martyr Lawrence with respect to their suffering and merits."<sup>53</sup> A Czech chronicle from 1476 also recalled specifically that:

They [the Hussites] have celebrated a feast for them [Hus and Jerome] every year up until the present, and they composed a vernacular song for the laity: "Pro naději boží Mistr Jan Hus" – that in churches, taverns, homes, and schools they should sing it in memory [of him] as well as other songs against the pope and the holy church of God.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> This letter was written in December 1416, and protested ritual innovations by the Hussites and their supposed disrespect for the sacraments, especially the eucharist; it immediately brings Barbatus's passion narrative and his invocation of St. Lawrence to mind. Concerning the growing veneration for Hus, they wrote: "Pro Iohanne Hus et Ieronymo dampnatis hereticis publicis faciunt in ecclesiis coram multitudine populi exequias tamquam pro fidelibus defunctis, alii faciunt festivitates et cantant *Gaudeamus*' et alia tamquam de martyribus, comparantes eosdem meritis et penis sancto Laurencio martyri." See: *UB*, 386-391, 386-387. It should be noted that "Gaudeamus" is the title of an introit used in the mass for All Saints' Day.

<sup>54</sup> The chronicle was written by Prokop, a civic notary, and remarked: "Celebrantque festum eorum per annos singulos usque in praesens et laicis cantionem in vulgari composuerunt: *V naději boží Mistr Jan Hus* – quam in ecclesiis in tabernis et scolares in recordatione per domos solent cantare et alias cantiones contra papam et ecclesiam sanctam Dei." See: *Geschichtschreiber*, vol. 1, 7.

Even one hundred years after its composition, “*–V naději boží Mistr Jan Hus*” remained a provocative text. On July 7, 1521, a procession of Czechs protesting the existence of mendicant houses in Prague sang this song in front of cloisters, recalling the anger directed at friars that had characterized the early Hussite movement.<sup>55</sup> The continued relevance of popular singing, then, and the concerned responses to it by ecclesiastical authorities, attested to the perceived power of Hussite songs in the Czech reform movement.

These songs both reflected the Hussites’ veneration for their patron saint and used the trope of Hus’s trial to express new ideas and different emphases within the rhetoric of the Bohemian reform. This rhetoric increasingly came to identify Hus’s fate with that of the Bohemian nation as a whole, and his sanctity was cast in stark contrast to the wickedness of the Council of Constance. These songs reflected and helped to foster a polarized view of the Bohemian reform. On one side stood the Bohemians and their patron saint, “*–Master Jan Hus, the holy man produced by the Czech lands,*”<sup>56</sup> on the other stood the council that “*–did nothing good, except exterminate two masters.*”<sup>57</sup> The political actions of the Bohemian nobles and the Holy Roman Emperor had certainly added a new dimension to this war of words, and actions by the newly elected head of the church would only heighten this tension and lead the Hussites and Catholic church towards open warfare.

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<sup>55</sup> The story of these events is recounted in a vernacular Czech chronicle of the sixteenth century. On the chronicle and this procession, see: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 192.

<sup>56</sup> The song “*–V naději boží Mistr Jan Hus*” describes him as: “*–mistr Hus Jan z české země svatý vydán.*” See: Fojtíková, “*–Hudební doklady,*” 105.

<sup>57</sup> This characterization is from “*–Vóřce Milý, zřel sě tobě:*” —*–Ničobrého neučinili, neř dva mistry zahubili.*” See: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 264.

### Martin V against the Hussites

One of the decisive events in the escalation of the conflict between the Hussites and the Catholic church was the election of Pope Martin V on November 11, 1417. Throughout his pontificate, he remained a staunch opponent of the Bohemians, and it was his unwillingness to negotiate with the heretics that resulted in the prosecution of five crusades against them over the course of the 1420s.<sup>58</sup> In short, Martin refused to countenance the existence of the Hussites because they had destroyed the unity of the church that Martin's election was supposed to have guaranteed. Martin's election had certainly been a cause for celebration among Catholics, as it signalled the end of the Great Schism.<sup>59</sup> In the Hussites' opinion, however, this process only demonstrated the perversion of the church. In order to accomplish this election, the former Pope John XXIII had been condemned as a heretic and excommunicated; the recognition that the previous head of Christendom had actually been a heretic only seemed to prove the Hussites' point that a pope could be morally unfit and a tool of Antichrist, if not Antichrist himself.<sup>60</sup> These sorts of accusations were exactly the kinds of ideas that Martin wanted to eradicate, so the pope immediately began to issue decrees that would arrest the growth of heresy in Bohemia. Now that the church hierarchy

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<sup>58</sup> On Martin and the crusades against the Hussites, see: František Bartoš, "An English Cardinal and the Hussite Revolution," *CV* 6 (1963), 47-54.

<sup>59</sup> On the election of Martin V, see: Karl Fink, "Die Wahl Martins V," in R. Bäumer, ed., *Das Konstanzer Konzil* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977), 306-322.

<sup>60</sup> Jakoubek, for instance, noted in MS NKP VIII E 3: "Nullum hominem deberent assumere in papam, nisi qui esset vite sancte, quia iam propter illum Johannem XXIII. papam omnes confundimur ridentibus Judeis et Grecis." This passage is quoted in: Bartoš, "Betlemská kázání," 116.

had been restored to unity, the rest of Christendom could follow suit.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, in February of 1418 the council, under the aegis of Martin V, issued twenty-four articles that would serve as the basis for the reintegration of Bohemia into the holy church. The list demanded that:

Second: All priests, masters and clerics, who have spread errors or heresies through teaching or preaching in the aforementioned Kingdom of Bohemia and have infected others there should abjure those errors of John Wyclif and Jan Hus who have been condemned in this holy council. They should renounce those errors which they have taught...

Fourteenth: Each and every tract of John Wyclif translated into the common language by Jan Hus and Jakoubek, as well as others written by them in the common tongue in which they outlined their errors should be delivered into the hands of the legate or of the ordinary under penalty of excommunication...

Sixteenth: Likewise, all the writings of Jakoubek concerning the eucharist under both kinds, concerning Antichrist in which he refers to the pope as Antichrist and says that Holy Writ speaks of him coming personally,<sup>62</sup> should be delivered up and burned.

Seventeenth. In like manner, all of the songs introduced to the detriment of the sacred council and of catholic men of whatever state who resisted the Wyclifites and the Hussites, or the songs which praise Jan Hus and Jerome, the condemned heretics, are forbidden under the heaviest penalty which is to be decided.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ironically, the election of Martin required that he had to appease the national parties of cardinals who had conceded to the election of an Italian pope; this was particularly true for the French party, as the enmity between the two groups had propagated the Schism since 1378. In order to do this, Martin signed a number of concordats with kings and the Holy Roman electors that ceded patronage rights to certain ecclesiastical positions within the various kingdoms to the secular lords. In effect, he established the sorts of national churches that he wanted to suppress in Bohemia. These concordats, however, did establish a detente between the pope, the cardinals, and the highest secular lords, and allowed Martin V to try to cleanse the church of heresy. On these agreements, see: C.M.D. Crowder, *Unity, Heresy, and Reform, 1378-1460: The Conciliar Response to the Great Schism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), 20-24; and Antony Black, *Council and Commune: The Conciliar Movement and the Fifteenth-Century Heritage* (London: Burns & Oates, 1979), 13-18; and Johannes Helmuth, "Reform als Thema der Konzilien des Spätmittelalters," in G. Alberigo, ed., *Christian Unity: The Council of Ferrara/Florence, 1438/39 - 1989* (Leuven: University Press, 1991), 75-152, especially 108-109.

<sup>62</sup> De Vooght has noted that Jakoubek was much more insistent on identifying the pope with the Antichrist, which was a shift in emphasis from Hus's considerations on the matter. See: De Vooght, *Jacobellus*, 74.

<sup>63</sup> These articles are translated in a collection of documents relating to the crusades against the Hussites that has been edited and translated by Thomas Fudge as: *The Crusade Against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418-1437: Sources and Documents for the Hussite Crusades* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 17-20.



These articles suggested some of the key doctrinal points and actions that had come to the pope's attention. Martin censured the veneration of Hus and Wyclif as doctors of the church, vernacular teaching, utraquism, and the use of apocalyptic language to attack the church hierarchy. Further, he attempted to restrict one form of popular veneration, i.e. the singing of songs in praise of the Bohemian martyrs, that also denounced the "council and catholic men of whatever state." These articles also recognized the role played by certain Bohemian priests, notably Jakoubek, in the diffusion of these ideas and practices among the religious leadership and laity in Bohemia. It is fascinating to see how central the writings and commemoration of Hus was in these articles. Hus, Wyclif, and Jerome were all perceived as sources for heresy, as well as inappropriate objects of veneration. Much as Jerome's recantation in Constance was substantively based upon his rejection of Hus and acceptance of his condemnation by the council, these articles effectively required the same thing of the entire Bohemian nation. Indeed, Martin V even felt it necessary to explicitly command that "each and every cleric and lay person who would preach, teach or defend the heresies and errors of John Wycliffe and Jan Hus...must be punished as relapsed heretics."<sup>64</sup> Given the rapid spread of the veneration of Hus, and its popularization in the first years after his death, it is no surprise that these demands were never met.

"Among all of the other pastoral duties by which we are burdened, the main one is this. Heretics with false doctrines and errors must be expelled completely from the fellowship of Christians and uprooted as utterly as God will

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<sup>64</sup> This condemnation was in article twenty-three. See: Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics*, 20.

enable us to accomplish.”<sup>65</sup> With these words, Martin V opened the bull *Inter Cunctus* and formally imposed canonical sanctions on the Czech lands for their continued heresy. In this proclamation, the threats of the previous articles were given a final form, and the pope recognized the obstinacy of the Bohemians and the depth of their commitment to heretical ideas:

They have thrown behind themselves the fear of God as well as worldly shame and have received neither the fruits of conversion nor repentance because of the wretched destruction of the aforementioned Jan Hus and Jerome. Like men drowning in a pit of sin they do not cease to blaspheme the Lord God, taking his name in vain, since the father of lies has damnably darkened their minds, and they read and study the books mentioned earlier containing these errors and heresies which the aforesaid synod has condemned to be burned.<sup>66</sup>

Here again, a central issue was the inability of the Bohemians to give up their devotion to their heretical leaders. Even though they had been executed, their followers had learned nothing from these punishments and instead continued to study their books, which contained only errors. Like the popular songs studied above, the writings of Hus and Wyclif preserved their ideas and assured their continued presence in the Bohemian reform. It is worth recalling that Jakoubek had one of Hus’s tracts inscribed on the walls of the Bethlehem Chapel even before Hus’s death. During his exile and trial, the visibility of his words served as a reminder of his teachings.<sup>67</sup> From the Catholic perspective, Hus’s other writings served a similar function after Hus’s death. This devotion to one’s heretical

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<sup>65</sup> Martin V, *Inter Cunctus*, in Fudge, *The Crusade Against Heretics*, 45-49, 45.

<sup>66</sup> Martin V, *Inter Cunctus*, 47.

<sup>67</sup> Indeed, the words of one popular Czech song told its audience who wanted to learn God’s truth “to learn it on the walls of Bethlehem,” referring perhaps to the inscriptions of “*De sex erroribus*,” the Credo, and the Decalogue on its walls. The public visibility of these words, along with the presence of two works by Jakoubek, meant that the words of Hus remained accessible to the community of his followers in Prague. One these inscriptions, see: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 232.

predecessors was not surprising to the pope, and he explained it in part by constructing the “heretical genealogy” of the Hussites.<sup>68</sup>

In certain places in the world, namely Bohemia and Moravia, and in the adjoining areas, certain heresiarchs have arisen against not just one but numerous doctrines of the Catholic faith...They have been deceived through Satanic subtlety and in terms of evil have gone from bad to worse. Despite the fact that they arose in different parts of the world they are all one, with their tails joined together as it were. Namely, John Wyclif of England, Jan Hus of Bohemia and Jerome of Prague of damnable memory, and they have gathered together no small number of unfaithful, [causing] ruin and misery.<sup>69</sup>

The “no small number of unfaithful” included the preachers and teachers who had furthered the growth of the Bohemian heresy. Jakoubek of Stříbro and Jan Kárdinal of Rejnštejn, who was the rector of Charles University, were both named by the Council of Constance as “principle heresiarchs and founders of that sect” and commanded to answer for their heresy in Rome.<sup>70</sup> Martin’s bull depicted Jan Hus as a key link in a chain of heretics that had arisen on one end of Christendom and managed to seduce an entire kingdom on the other. Their false teaching had extended over generations, and with each successive generation they had seduced more people. Wyclif himself had spawned two heresiarchs in Bohemia, and they in turn had gathered a multitude of followers. These followers had turned an entire nation away from the traditional church, and this widespread corruption was Martin’s chief concern.

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<sup>68</sup> On the notion of “les généalogies hérétiques,” and the understanding of Hus’s relationship to Wyclif, see: Catherine Chène, “Ihérésie hussite vue par un dominicain observant: le *Formicarius* de Jean Nider (ca. 1380-1438),” in A. de Lange and K. Utz Tremp, eds., *Friedrich Reiser und die “waldensisch-hussitische Internationale”* (Heidelberg: Verlag Regionalkultur, 2006), 317-340, especially 324-325.

<sup>69</sup> Martin V, *Inter Cunctus*, 45-46.

<sup>70</sup> Given Kárdinal’s position, his citation to Rome could be read as an attack on the university’s support for the Hussite movement. Article eleven in the council’s decree identified eleven leaders of the Hussite movement and demanded that they “should be compelled to to come to the Roman court and apostolic see.” See: Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics*, 19.

From the outside, this corruption had continued the spread as distinctively Bohemian ideas continued to develop; particularly in the area of eucharistic theology, the Hussites sought to restore ancient practices and to bring all Bohemian Christians into the sacral community that was created through participation in communion. It was only in March of 1417 that Charles University officially pronounced its determination that utraquism was licit. Prior to this, conflicts between conservative masters and more progressive teachers, as well as between the university and the cathedral chapter, had made any unified pronouncement impossible.<sup>71</sup> By the early spring of 1417, the growth of popular support for communion in both kinds forced the university to either sanction utraquism or risk losing its authority among the Hussite masses and leadership. Although the university hesitated to declare utraquism requisite for salvation, it did declare that utraquism had been the norm in the primitive church and rejected the Council of Constance's condemnation of the practice.<sup>72</sup>

The university's official support for utraquism also lent de facto support to a further eucharistic practice that several Hussite priests, notably Jakoubek, had re-introduced: infant communion. For Jakoubek, the cleansing of baptism enabled all Christians to receive the benefits of communion, including infants. Using John

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<sup>71</sup> After Hus's death, there was a split among the university masters between those who wanted to pursue a thorough reform of the Bohemian church and those who merely held to utraquism as a ritual difference between the Bohemian and the Roman churches. Although the more conservative masters initially held greater influence, by 1417 the more progressive masters had assumed control of the university. For a detailed account of these conflicts, see: Jiří Kejř, "Deklarace Pražské University z 10. března 1417 o Přijímání Podobojí a její historické Pozadí," *Sborník Historický* 8 (1961), 133-156.

<sup>72</sup> On the importance of the statements made by university, see: Kejř, "Deklarace Pražské University," 146-147; see also: Kaminsky, *A History*, 235-237. For the full text of the declaration, edited and translated into Czech, see: "Univerzitní Deklarace Schvalující Kalich," in A. Molnár, ed., *Husitské Manifesty* (Prague: Odeon, 1980), 57-60. In this, utraquist is called "the life-giving medicine," offered by to those who "do not want to be separated with the ultimate force from divine life and the celestial kingdom." See: "Deklarace," 59.

6:53 as the central proof-text, Jakoubek argued for the necessity of the *utraquist* for all Christians, no matter their age.<sup>73</sup> The Bohemian understanding of the eucharist as a prophylactic against Antichrist's influence also made it important for infants and small children, who had no other recourse in terms of resisting the Antichrist's power.<sup>74</sup> Jakoubek went so far as to have a text he had written in defense of infant communion, *De communione parvulorum baptisatorum*,<sup>75</sup> inscribed on the walls of the Bethlehem Chapel.<sup>75</sup> The institution of infant communion signalled the final stage in the practical equation of the Bohemian nation with the elect of God. By incorporating all Bohemians, no matter their age, into the body of believers that were united by the communion, the uncertainty of predestination was countered by this ritual display of unity.

The campaign for infant communion was successful, insofar as a synod of the Hussite leadership that met in September, 1418, included a call for it among its twenty-three articles regarding Hussite belief and practice.<sup>76</sup> Howard Kaminsky has called the articles of the synod a "formula for coexistence" among

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<sup>73</sup> In the essential study on this topic, David Holeton has drawn attention to the centrality of this verse in Jakoubek's understanding of infant communion. See: Holeton, *La communion des tout-petits enfants*, especially 120. The text of the verse reads: "Jesus said to them, I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

<sup>74</sup> According to Thomas Fudge, "the lay chalice leveled the eschatological plain and the *utraquist* eucharist for all the baptized, including babies, extended the antidote against Antichrist." See: Fudge, "The Night of Antichrist," 45.

<sup>75</sup> On the composition of this text and its inscription at Bethlehem, see: Ryba, *Betlemské texty*, 29-31.

<sup>76</sup> There is some scholarly debate over whether this synod, known as the St. Wenceslas Synod, took place in 1418 or 1419. The manuscript that details its proceedings and conclusions dates the proceedings to 1418, but Bartoš and Robert Kalivoda have argued that it should be dated to 1419. In dating the synod to 1418, I follow the codicological evidence and Kaminsky's argument for the earlier date. See his: *A History*, 259-263, especially fn. 124. The article on infant communion reads: "Parvuli post baptismum sunt corpore et sanguine domini discrete communicandi." For the full text of the Synod's articles, see: "Articuli XXIII a magistris cleroque Pragensi contra pullulantia Taboritarum sectae dogmata publicati," in *Documenta*, 677-681; this quote, 678.

the conservative and radical elements in the Hussite movement,<sup>77</sup> and from this point it is possible to outline the Hussite coalition that had taken control of much of Bohemia by 1418. Hussite nobles throughout the kingdom had installed Hussite priests in the parish churches they controlled and had formed an alliance to defend the religious reform. The university had lent its theological approval to the reintroduction of ancient eucharistic practices, and had also affirmed the orthodoxy of Jan Hus. Many priests and preachers had begun to give communion in both kinds to the laity, and there is evidence that they supported the de facto canonization of Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs. And while it is difficult to document, there is also evidence that the people of Bohemia venerated Hus in their songs and had lost considerable faith in their king and the traditional church. This coalition, whose foundation would prove to be more tenuous than it initially appeared, was held together by its practice of communion and its distinctive religious ideology. That ideology was propagated by a host of preachers whose words complemented and clarified the practices that had developed in the wake of Hus's execution.

#### Preaching and the Patron Saint: St. Jan Hus, 1415-1418

The sermons that provided a communal setting for religious instruction served as a primary locus for the diffusion of religious and political ideas in Bohemian society.<sup>78</sup> In particular, these sermons pushed for the recognition of

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<sup>77</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 262.

<sup>78</sup> The study of preaching and sermons as a distinctive genre has gained considerable scholarly momentum over the last twenty years. While the literature on preaching has reached an impasse in terms of determining how written records of preaching differ from the live event of the sermon, it

Hus's sanctity and the identification of the Czechs with the people of God. These sermons did not occur only on July 6. They took place weekly, or even daily, and represented the consistent effort of the Hussite priests to engage in the "drip-drip" method of inculcating beliefs that depended on the repeated, consistent rehearsal of common themes and values.<sup>79</sup> This preaching contained several core elements: Hus was a saint whom had been killed by Satan's minions; the Catholic church had lost all claims to sanctity, and the Hussite church in Bohemia was the true heir to the pure, apostolic church; the servants of Antichrist had thoroughly corrupted the visible church, and this signaled the imminent return of Christ; and the Eucharist was both an essential mark of the Hussites' status as the true church and the only guaranteed protection against the temptations of the world and Antichrist.

Perhaps the key figure in the early development of these ideas in sermons was Jakoubek of Stříbro. Given his position as the main preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel, and his role as an influential teacher of other priests, Jakoubek

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has done much to relate the preachers' texts to the liturgical, social, and performative contexts in which they were delivered. On the interpretive issues facing scholars studying sermons, see: John O'Malley, S.J., "Introduction: Medieval Preaching," in T. Amos et al., eds., *De Ore Domini: Preacher and Word in the Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1989), 1-11; Nicole Bériou, "Conclusion: La parole du prédicateur, objet d'histoire," in M. Lauwers and R. Dessi, eds., *La parole du prédicateur, Ve – Xve siècle* (Nice: Collection du Centre d'Études Médiévales de Nice, 1997), 479-488; and Beverly Kienzle, "Medieval Sermons and their Performance: Theory and Record," in C. Muessig, ed., *Preacher, Sermon, and Audience in the Middle Ages* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 89-124.

<sup>79</sup> This idea of "drip-drip" preaching, which gradually shaped religious sensibilities in a process akin to erosion, comes from David d'Avray's concept of "normal preaching," which was a complement to "revival preaching." Building on this idea, Augustine Thompson has argued that certain times of the year, especially saints' days and Lent, created an atmosphere conducive to revival preaching, but that the other periods of the year demanded normal preaching. On these ideas, see: David d'Avray, "Method in the Study of Medieval Sermons," in N. Bériou and D. d'Avray, eds., *Modern Questions about Medieval Sermons: Essays on Marriage, Death, History and Sanctity* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi Sull'alto Medioevo, 1994), 3-29, 8-9; and Augustine Thompson, O.P., "From Texts to Preaching: Retrieving the Medieval Sermon as an Event," in *Preacher, Sermon, and Audience*, 13-37, 27-28.

exerted considerable influence on the development of a distinctively Hussite style of preaching. This style was homiletic, and it focused on the exegesis of specific biblical verses and the process of relating them to other meaningful passages over time.<sup>80</sup> Thus, Jakoubek wrote a number of *postilla* during the years immediately following Hus's death that allowed him to construct extensive commentaries on eschatological and moral books of the Bible that he read in order to shed light on the Hussites' contemporary historical situation.<sup>81</sup> For instance, in 1415-1416 Jakoubek prepared a *postil* that took its pericopes from the book of Job and from Matthew 24. At the beginning of his sermons on Matthew, Jakoubek noted: "This gospel concerns the dangerous last times, and it is necessary that it be made known, so the faithful may thus be able to avoid the cunning of the Devil."<sup>82</sup> This emphasis on warning and revelation was consistent throughout the text, and accompanied a central assertion that the reappearance of martyrdom and the restoration of utraquism in the Czech lands conclusively proved that the primitive, apostolic church had been reborn in Bohemia. The opposition it faced from the

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<sup>80</sup> This style of preaching, which stayed close to the biblical text as the basis for exposition, differed from scholastic sermons, which were thematic, structured by logical divisions, and intended more for learned audiences, especially in universities. On the variations in types of sermons and their intended audiences, see: O'Malley, "Introduction," 3-10.

<sup>81</sup> Building of his earlier catalog of Jakoubek's works, in 1955 Bartoš was aware of twelve different *postilla* by Jakoubek, two of which were written in Czech; Ota Halama has recently analyzed these latter writings and concluded that the use of *exempla*, scatological and other earthy language, and the development of certain themes suggest that these were popular writings directed to the laity in Prague. This popular orientation in the *postilla* had not been previously noted. On Jakoubek's homiletic output, see: Bartoš, *Literární Činnost*, 60-66; and *idem.*, "Dvě studie," 12-13. On the popular elements in the *postilla*, see: Ota Halama, "Jakoubkovy české postily," in O. Halama and P. Soukup, eds., *Jakoubek ze Strážnice: Texty a jejich působení* (Prague: Filosofia, 2006), 183-208.

<sup>82</sup> "Evangelium hoc est de temporibus periculosissimis et est necesse, ut propaletur et sic ut possint fideles astuciam dyaboli fugere." See: Bartoš, "Betlémská kázání," 55. Bartoš has identified the author and dating of this collection, which he dated based on internal references to events and the sequence of Sunday sermons. This Latin composition is contained in MS NKP VIII E 3 in the Czech national library. Ota Halama has recently discovered a later, Czech translation of the *postil* in the Strahov monastery library, and is in the process of editing and publishing his work.



papacy and the Council of Constance was, for Jakoubek, only the most recent stage in the eternal conflict between God and Satan that had begun in Eden and with the murder of Abel by Cain.<sup>83</sup>

In this *postil*, Jakoubek emphasized what had been lost in the church since the apostolic age. For him, the primary problem was that the clergy had become too rich and too powerful after the Donation of Constantine. Prior to the Donation, the poverty of the clergy had fostered “bravery, fortitude, love, and perseverance,” which was seen in the fact that “many became martyrs.”<sup>84</sup> After the endowment of the clergy, however, “the love of many cooled,” and as a result “Antichrist is now the high point of evil and malice, and is protected by the appearance of sanctity.”<sup>85</sup> Jakoubek was more explicit than Hus in identifying the pope as Antichrist, and thus he saw the institutional church as the primary agent in furthering Antichrist’s power. Despite the ecclesiastical authority assumed by Satan’s followers, Jakoubek saw God providing guidance and strength to his faithful people. Following earlier Bohemian authors, Jakoubek saw preachers playing a vital role: “God will stir up his faithful preachers, who will bravely

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<sup>83</sup> This historical scheme culminated in Jakoubek’s “Exposition on Revelation” (*Výklad Zjevení*), which he wrote from 1420-1423. His historical view was Augustinian, and comprised seven ages of world history, and he and the Hussites were living at the end of the sixth age. Prior to the systematization of this historical theology in the *Výklad*, Jakoubek articulated his view of the increasing corruption of the world and the imminent last battle in a number of his sermons. On Jakoubek’s view of history, see: Molnár, “Poslední věci,” 40; see also: Pavlína Cermanová, “Jakoubekův a Biskupcův Výklad na Apokalypsu: Porovnání s důrazem na interpretaci antikristovského mýtu,” in *Jakoubek ze Stříbra: Texty a jejich působení*, 209-228, especially 213-215.

<sup>84</sup> The reference here was to “virtutes, caritatem, fortitudinem, et pacienciam.” Referring to the early church, Jakoubek noted: “Et usque in dotacionem pape fiebant martires, sed invalescente malicia refriguit caritas multorum. Unde si nunc adhuc sic evangelico modo viveret, bonum quidem multum ecclesie proveniret.” See: MS NKP VIII E 3, f. 111v.; c.f. Bartoš, “Betlemská kázání,” 60-61.

<sup>85</sup> “Antichristus sit summitas malicie et nequicie, que iam est tecta specie sanctitatis...Cuius adventus in prodigiis et signis mendacibus, sicut nunc sunt, cum dicunt ymagines signa facere atque miracula.” See: MS NKP VIII E 3, f. 113r.; c.f. Bartoš, “Betlemská kázání,” 59.

propagate the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ and preach faithfully, thus destroying the snares of Antichrist.”<sup>86</sup>

These preachers, beyond bringing the word of God to the people, also performed another vital function: they distributed the chalice. In the text *–Salvator Noster*,” which Jakoubek wrote and had inscribed on the wall of Bethlehem Chapel alongside Hus’s *–De sex erroribus*,” he wrote: *–The soldiers of Christ ought to prepare themselves. Therefore, reflecting daily, [they ought] to drink the cup of blood, so they might also be able to pour out their blood for Christ.*”<sup>87</sup> Not surprisingly, this call to self-sacrifice found models in the saints of the early church and in the recent Bohemian martyrs, for *–whoever perseveres up until the end, not assenting to evil because of terror, threats, or persecution, \_that one will be saved, ‘ just as is well-known concerning Master Jan Hus.*”<sup>88</sup>

Many of these themes appeared in other sermon collections from the same years. In particular, the notion that Bohemia represented the reincarnation of the early, pure church proved to be popular. One preacher from before 1419 observed that he lived during the *–time of Antichrist*,” and that true martyrdom had

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<sup>86</sup> *–Dominus excitabit suos fideles sacerdotes, qui audacter veritatem d.n. J. Christi propalabunt et predicabunt fideliter, recia Antichristi per hoc destruentes.*” Quoted in: Bartoš, *–Betlemská kázání*,” 117. This attitude reflected that of Milíč and Matěj, and should be attributed to Jakoubek’s close reading of Matěj’s *Regulae Veteris* and its portrayal of prophetic preachers. On Jakoubek’s reliance on Matěj, see: De Vooght, *Jacobellus*, 295-298.

<sup>87</sup> This is a quotation from Cyprian, and it reads: *–parare se debeant milites Cristi, considerantes idcirco cottidie calicem sanguinis bibere, ut possint et ipsi propter Cristum sanguinem fundere.*” It is cited in: Molnár, *–Poslední věci*,” 120.

<sup>88</sup> *–Qui autem perseveraverit usque in finem, scil. malicie, propter terrores et minas aut persecuciones non consenciens, \_his salvus erit, ‘ sicut patet de Mag. J. Hus.*” Quoted in: Bartoš, *–Betlemská kázání*,” 117. *–His salvus erit*” is probably best understood as a mistranscription (or mistranslation) of Matt. 10:22: “et eritis odio omnibus propter nomen meum qui autem perseveraverit in finem hic salvus erit.”

disappeared in the church from the time of Pope Sylvester until now.<sup>89</sup> He further characterized the Catholic church as —~~the~~harlot who always thirsted for the blood of the righteous” and the Council of Constance as —~~h~~onored not by Christ Jesus, but by Antichrist!”<sup>90</sup> This last comment resulted from the fact that —~~tho~~se who were jealous of the truth judged the communion chalice an error, and condemned an innocent man to death, as is clear concerning Master Jan Hus.”<sup>91</sup> A third preacher, most likely writing in 1415, referred to the Council of Constance as the —~~s~~ynagoge sathane” for its prohibition of the chalice, and otherwise explicitly identified the pope with Antichrist.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> This citation refers to MS NKP VI E 24, also from the National Library in Prague. Bartoš has published some material from this manuscript, and argues for a pre-1419 date because of the lack of references to actual revolution in the text. The sermons in VI E 24 are bound with works of Jakoubek, but contain different emphases and themes than Jakoubek’s work. It does appear, however, that much of the *postil*’s language was influenced by Jakoubek. Ota Halama has called such a work —~~J~~acobelliana,” as it derived from his influence but was actually composed by an unknown author who had read or heard Jakoubek’s works. The reference to Sylvester concerned the impact of the Donation of Constantine. The quote reads: —~~P~~rius quam fuit dotata ecclesia Romana a Constantino, multi fuerunt martires et sancti homines, qui, cum debuit dotari Silvester papa ducebatur ornatus in equo albo diversis ornamentis, sibi multi sancti non assenserunt allegantes scripturam contra eos evangelicam, quod talis dotacio non deberet fieri et sic abstraxerunt se ab illis Romanis dotatis et predicabant contra eos.” On this manuscript, see: František Bartoš, —~~S~~borník husitského kazatele asi z r. 1415,” *Vestník České Akademie Ved a Umení* 57 (1948), 15-33. For this quotation, see: MS NKP VI E 24, f. 107r.

<sup>90</sup> The anonymous author referred to —~~H~~la meretrix, que sitit semper sanguinem iustorum,” and stated concerning Constance: —~~V~~ideamus de qua ecclesia sunt monachi, reges, principes et concilium Constanciense, qui sunt multum dotati...Non sunt ornati Christo Jesu, sed Antichristo!” See: MS NKP VI E 24, f. 33r. and 173r.; c.f. Bartoš, —~~S~~borník husitského,” 18.

<sup>91</sup> —~~E~~muli veritatis communionem calicis iudicant errorem et hominem innocentem abiudicant morti, sicut patet de M. J. Hus.” See: MS NKP VI E 24, f. 147r.; c.f. Bartoš, —~~S~~borník husitského,” 18.

<sup>92</sup> This third collection is from MS NKP VI E 23, also in the National Library. It also fits into the category of —~~J~~acobelliana,” and seems to have been influenced by his popular preaching. Bartoš first published excerpts from the collection in 1955, and at that time considered it anonymous. In a later article, however, he advanced the theory that this collection was written by Jan Ťelivský. Although his dating of the collection (more on this in fn. 117, immediately below) and attribution of it to a student or auditor of Jakoubek remains convincing, this attribution of authorship seems dubious. On this manuscript, see: Bartoš, —~~Ď~~vě studie,” especially 13-20. See also: *idem.*, —~~P~~očátky Jana Ťelivského v Praze,” *Theologická Příloha: Křesťanské Revue* 33 (1966), 44-47. For the reference to the synagogue of Satan, see: MS NKP VI E 23, f. 149v.

This collection also contained a wonderfully rich understanding of Bohemia's role in the restitution of the church. In a long quotation concerning the chain of saints that had appeared in Bohemia, the author articulated the belief that as chaos and evil increased in the world, so too did the vigor with which God's truth was preached among his faithful people:

This world is restless and is much disturbed, if Bohemia has within it a righteous man sent by God: saint Adalbert,<sup>93</sup> Matěj, Milíč, and Jan now in 1415 incarcerated by Antichrist in Constance. God is accustomed to awaken such men, that they might announce the truth and will of God to the world, so they might not have any excuse. And this truth is miraculous, because the more the world is against it, the more gloriously it shines forth and the more delightfully it is made known and increased.<sup>94</sup>

This passage revealed a certain hubris concerning Bohemia's status as the essential site in which God's truth was consistently revealed as a counter to the chaos of the world at large. Bohemia also served as a goad to the rest of the world, as its acceptance of the truth served as a standard for other nations. The appearance of a series of righteous men also set Bohemia up as the new Israel with its own prophets and saints, or as the renewed apostolic community as depicted in Acts. In this context, Acts 13:47 was particularly meaningful: ~~F~~or

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<sup>93</sup> St. Adalbert (known as St. Vojtech in Czech) was the patron of the archbishopric of Prague; he served as the bishop of Prague in the tenth century, but was forced out of the position after demanding that the diocese's clergy undertake reform. He then became a missionary, preaching in Hungary, Poland, and Prussia. He was martyred in Prussia in 997. Hus considered Adalbert to be a great reformer, and was later painted as the bishop's assistant at Mass in the Vlinevsky altarpiece from the 1470s. On Hus's relationship to Adalbert, see: Anežka a Vidmanová, ~~H~~us a Svatý Vojtěch," in J. Polc, ed., *Svatý Vojtěch: Sborník k mileniu* (Prague: Zvon, 1997), 107-112.

<sup>94</sup> The reference to Hus's imprisonment, as opposed to his execution, dates this passage to the first half of 1415. St. Adalbert (also known as Vojtech), to whom the preacher refers, was a bishop of Prague; he was driven from the city after trying to reform in clergy, and became a missionary to Hungary and Prussia. He was martyred in Prussia in 997, and was a patron of Bohemia. ~~H~~ste mundus fluctuat et turbatur multum, si virum iustum a Deo missum in se habet Bohemia: sanctum Adalbertum, Mathiam, Milicium et Johannem nunc a.d. 1415 in Constancia incarceratum ab Antichristo. Deus solet excitare quosdam, ut annuncient mundo veritatem et voluntatem Dei, ne habeant excusacionem. Et ista veritas est mirabilis, cum plus ei adversatur, plus elucescit, plus fortis, plus delectabilis et plus augmentatur et publicatur." See: MS NKP VI E 23, f. 101r.; c.f. Bartoš, ~~D~~vě studie," 14.

this is what the Lord has commanded us: I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”<sup>95</sup> This recognition of the responsibilities attendant upon the Bohemians’ elect status suggested that an “inner universalism” existed alongside the nationalism of the Hussite movement.<sup>96</sup> The vehicle for the spread of the Hussites’ renewed Christianity was the truth of Christ’s teaching.

This “truth” was both moral and theological; it was contained in the original institution of the eucharist and in the strict moral standards that true Christians had to keep: “Therefore let all shun drunkenness from wine, and the love of women, but cling to the truth, which overcomes all!”<sup>97</sup> This truth was contained in the gospel, and had no other foundation. Ornate vestments, rich sacramental vessels, and decorations in church buildings had been introduced only after the era of Christ and his apostles. As such, they were neither necessary nor salutary and had no basis in this Hussite preacher’s conception of truth. Similarly, “papal and human laws” regarding fasting, indulgences, clerical dues, and ecclesiastical censures all originated under the rule of the popes, not Christ himself.<sup>98</sup> Even the learning and scholarship of the universities fell outside of the foundation of Christ’s teachings. For the Hussites, and despite the university

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<sup>95</sup> Urbánek pointed out the importance of Acts 13 for the Hussites in the 1410s, especially in highlighting the missionary quality of the Hussites as an elect nation. On this, see: Urbánek, “Čelší mesianismus,” 10.

<sup>96</sup> Šmahel, “The Idea of the Nation,” 187.

<sup>97</sup> “Omnes igitur fugiant inebriacionem vini, fugiant mulierum amorem, veritati autem adhereant, que super omnia vincit!” See: MS NKP VI E 24, f. 114r.; c.f. Bartoš, “Sborník husitského,” 19.

<sup>98</sup> In MS NKP VI E 24, on f. 230r., the author gave a long list of the innovations of the papal church and contrasted them with the early church, in which “postoli ad nichil aliud obligaverunt populum conversum nisi ad evangelium.” Indeed, the overriding contrast in this passage between the onerous “tradicionibus” of the institutional church and the “libertatem evangelii” of the apostolic age. C.f. Bartoš, “Sborník husitského,” 24.

training of preachers such as Jakoubek and Hus, the only knowledge that was necessary was that of the Scripture and the practice of the early church. All else was superfluous, and potentially dangerous. Given this understanding of the truth, then, the decrees of the church councils, and especially those of Constance, were tested according to their conformity with the teachings of Christ. What adhered to this truth, was permissible, but all else was merely the product of the –ongregation of Antichrist.”<sup>99</sup>

This truth, then, had an antagonistic character to it; it was the weapon that the true church would use to reveal the innovations and perversions of Antichrist’s people on earth:

He who will come at the last day frees those people and destroys their adversaries through vengeance, because truth overcomes all things (*quod veritas omnia vincet*)...Great is the Lord – the Truth of which the Babylonians are afraid. We ask the Lord, that he might rouse such among you, who have the spirit of Daniel, that they might dare to speak the truth and reveal the wickedness of priests and their secret destructiveness.<sup>100</sup>

Because of the combative nature of the truth, then, and its revelatory nature, its proclamation would certainly arouse the opposition of the institutional church.

Hus’s death certainly gave evidence for the consequences of speaking –with the spirit of Daniel.”<sup>101</sup> Despite this, though, the Hussite preachers encouraged their

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<sup>99</sup> On judging the works of the council, Jakoubek argued in MS NKP VIII E 3 on f. 94r.: –Homo autem, videns illos se d. Christo et sanctis non conformari, sed illis in toto esse contrarios, si veritatem cum sanctis auderet dicere, diceret, quod non.” C.f. Bartoš, –Betlemská kázání,” 116.

<sup>100</sup> De omnibus hiis liberabit eos et adversarios destruet per vindictam, qui (tak) ultimo veniet hoc, quod veritas omnia vincet...magnus est Dominus – Veritas, quem pavebunt Babilonite. Rogemus Dominum, ut suscitet vobis tales, qui habeant spiritum Danielis et audeant dicere veritatem et sacerdotum malicium et devoracionem occultam detegere.” See: MS NKP VI E 23, f. 105r.; c.f. Bartoš, –Dvě studie,” 19.

<sup>101</sup> On Hus’s death, and its relation to his speaking the truth, Jakoubek stated: –Θ quanti sunt in ducentis annis fideles Christi combusti, non propter errorem, sed Domini evangelium...Cur igitur M. J. Hus et duo in Olomucz sunt combusti, nisi quia veritas prosternitur?” See: MS NKP VIII E 3, f. 70v.

audience to embrace the suffering that adherence to the truth required. One Hussite preacher noted that —in these times preachers and lovers of the truth are persecuted and slandered...so now they deny the truth, especially priests.”<sup>102</sup> These priests were afraid of losing their parishes, and of incarceration, just as the laity were afraid of losing their goods and property, or being subjected to a crusade.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the crusade against Ladislav, the repeated interdicts imposed on Prague, and the trials of Hus, Jerome, and the other Hussite martyrs created an atmosphere that was saturated with threats.

This feeling of danger was intensified because of the church’s alliance with the secular powers of the world. After all, crusades needed troops, and even Hus’s execution required the consent of Sigismund and the participation of the Bavarian duke’s soldiers. Given the collaboration of the emperor and kings with the pope, then, it seemed to the Hussites that the threats from the council and Sigismund in 1416 could easily develop into the systematic oppression of their religious movement. One preacher complained that many people withdrew from the truth during times of persecution, although —when there is no tribulation, they believe the truth and think themselves willing to die for it.”<sup>104</sup> Another compared Sigismund’s reign over the Holy Roman Empire to the fourth kingdom (that of

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<sup>102</sup> This text is drawn from MS F 40, held by the Prague Cathedral Chapter. This manuscript will be abbreviated: MS kapitol. F 40. Bartoš has dated this text to the years 1416-1419, because of the frequent internal references to the interdict that was on the city until early 1419. The author’s perspective certainly seemed to be shaped by the circumstances of the interdict and the escalating tension between the Hussite and Roman churches. On the provenance of the manuscript, see: Bartoš, —*Ďvě studie*,” 21; this quote reads, —*istis temporibus predicatorum et veritatis amatores persecuntur et diffamantur... Veritatem nunc negant et specialiter sacerdotes.*” See: MS kapitol. F 40, f. 8r.-8v.

<sup>103</sup> On the variety of threats leveled against the priests and laity in Bohemia, see the texts assembled from MS kapitol. F 40 in: Bartoš, —*Ďvě studie*,” 22-23.

<sup>104</sup> —*Nunc multociens recedunt a veritate, quando tribulantur; quando venit persecutio, tunc fugiunt, licet, quando non fuit tribulatio, credebant veritati et mori se pro eadem putabant.*” See: MS NKP VI E 23, f. 101v.; c.f. Bartoš, —*Ďvě studie*,” 18.

iron) in Daniel's prophecy,<sup>105</sup> and stated that those rulers who set themselves against God's law "were not kings, but tyrants," who "sought vain glory and not the good of the kingdom, but greed and gluttony, sloth and nothing for the state."<sup>106</sup>

Despite the threat posed by the alliance of kings and church, the Hussite preacher's response was clear: "A man should not grow weak when the enemies of the truth say, 'Now we are succeeding, and those [who love truth] will not stand.' We ought to be confident, because the truth overcomes all things."<sup>107</sup>

*Veritas super omnia vincit*: this was the essence of the Hussite preachers' message to their followers in the years immediately following Hus's death. This was "the truth of which the Babylonians are afraid," and it had emerged with the preaching of the Bohemian reformers. Indeed, the idea that truth would conquer derived from Hus's own words. In 1413, he wrote to Jan Kardinál of Rejnštejn: "Whoever fears death, loses the joys of life. The truth overcomes all things. He who is killed, conquers, because no adversity harms him, if no iniquity rules over him... Blessed is the man who suffers temptation, because, when he shall be tested, he will grasp

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<sup>105</sup> This refers to Daniel 2: 40-43: "40 Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. 41 Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. 42 As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. 43 And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay."

<sup>106</sup> In MS NKP VI E 24, f. 214v., the preacher claimed that those who opposed God's law "Non sunt reges, sed tyranni traditores legis divine...que ignorat Deum et eius legem." Later, (f. 218v.), he stated "Reges querunt vanam gloriam et non rem publicam, sed avaricidiae et gulositates, oicia et nichil de republica." C.f. Bartoš, "Sborník husitského," 25.

<sup>107</sup> "Non debet homo vacillare quod inimici veritatis dicunt: 'Iam vincemus et ipsi non stabunt.' Debemus confidere, quia veritas super omnia vincit." See: MS NKP VI E 24, f. 26r.; c.f. Bartoš, "Sborník husitského," 31.



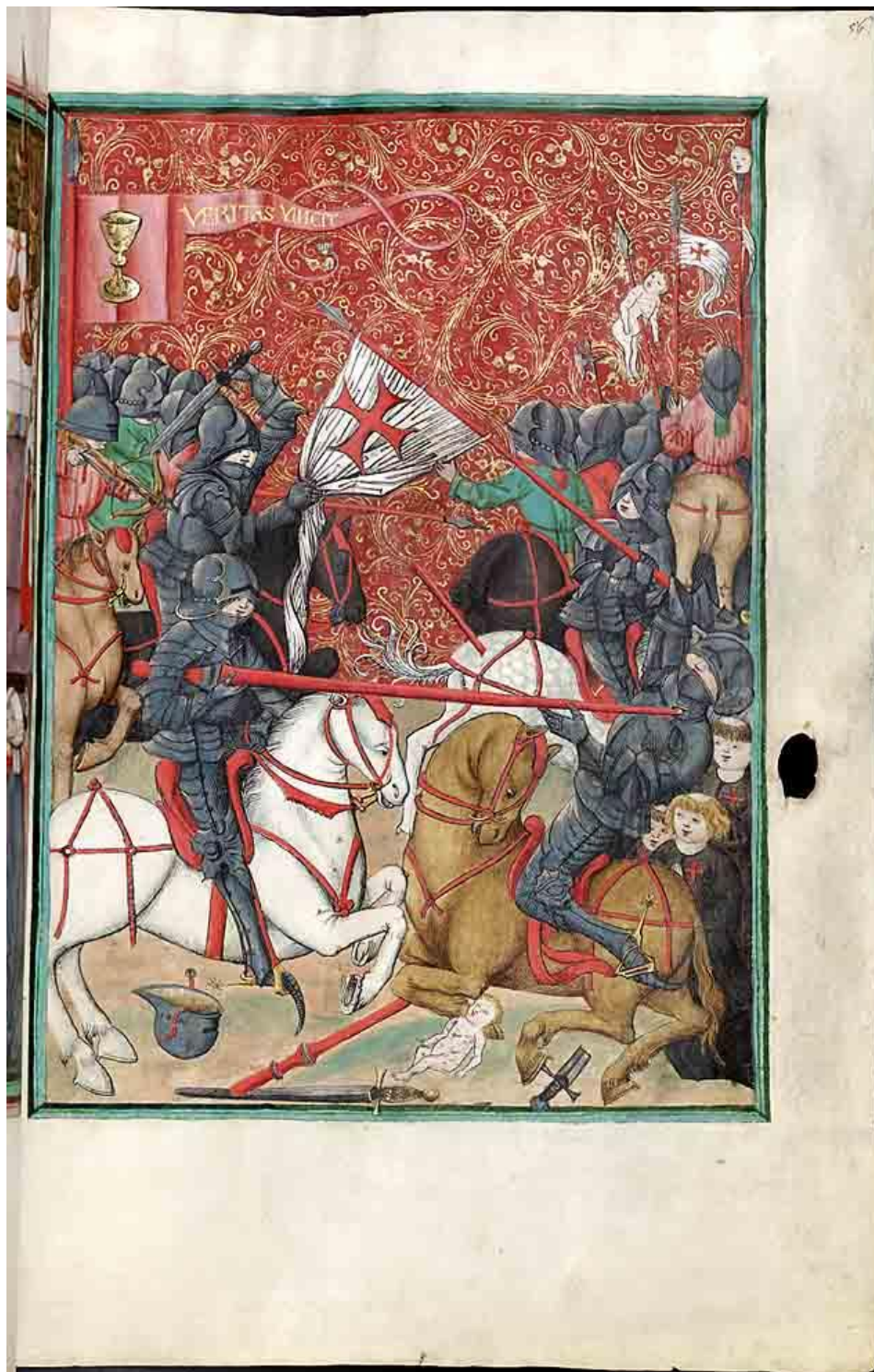
the crown of life.”<sup>108</sup> After Hus’s death, the idea that truth would conquer became one of the key slogans for the Hussite movement. Over time, it would grace the banners of Hussite delegations and armies, as depicted in an image of Hussite armies battling crusaders from the turn of the sixteenth century (see figure 1).<sup>109</sup> In the years 1416-1418, the repetition of this phrase bore witness to the “invincible truth” (*invicta veritas*) that could not be suppressed, even through persecution and martyrdom.<sup>110</sup> The popularization of the Hussite movement through songs and sermons, and the increasing support it found from the Bohemian and Moravian nobility, suggested that Hus’s death had come to be understood as a true sacrifice on behalf of God’s truth. Despite his death, Hus’s message became the inspiration for a societal rejection of the judgment of both the institutional church and state. The truth that Hus had personified came to be understood by his followers as the foundation for religious and political life. Thus, when the emperor stepped in and tried to suppress this truth, it became necessary to defend it and ensure its victory.

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<sup>108</sup> “Qui mortem metuit, amittit gaudia vite. Super omnia vincit veritas. Vincit, qui occiditur, quia nulla ei nocet adversitas, si nulla ei dominatur iniquitas... Beatus vir, qui suffert temptationem, quia, cum probatus fuerit, accipiet coronam vite.” This letter was written in June, 1413. For the full text, see: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 169-171; this quote, 170.

<sup>109</sup> In 1432, when the Hussite delegation arrived at Basel to enter into negotiations with the council meeting there, one Catholic account noted: “Verum cum prope essent dicti Bohemi, venerunt nova quod venierent cum magna superbia et ambitione in curribus et in equis, portantes tam in vexillis quam in coopertis curruum in quibusdam depictum calicem cum hostia, in quibusdam vero literas exprimentes ‘veritas omnia vincit.’” See: Johannes de Ragusio, “Fractatus quomodo Bohemi reducti sunt ad unitatem ecclesiae,” in E. Birk and F. Palacky, eds., *Monumenta Conciliorum Generalium Seculi Decimi Quinti*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Aulæ et Status, 1856), 133-286, 258. The Jena Codex, arguably the most significant expression of late fifteenth-century Hussite visual art, also included an illumination of Hussite armies confronting Catholic crusaders. Above the Hussites is a banner emblazoned with “Veritas vincit.” On this manuscript, see: Zoroslava Drobná, *The Jena Codex: Hussite Pictorial Satire from the End of the Middle Ages* (Prague: Odeon, 1970).

<sup>110</sup> On the notion of invincible truth, see: Urbánek, “Český mesianismus,” 20.



**Figure 1: Hussite warriors with a banner declaring “Veritas Vincit”  
Jena Codex (c. 1495), NKP IV.B.24, f. 56r**

### Sigismund and Anti-Hussite Violence: Prelude to Revolution

In *Inter Cunctus*, Martin V partially blamed the growth of the Hussite movement on the proper authorities in Bohemia: “They negligently permitted their [the heretics’] erroneous and wicked teachings through inordinate delays and thus they [the heretics] grew strong and numerous.”<sup>111</sup> Given this failure, and the seeming insufficiency of church punishments (including the interdict on Prague) in eliminating the Hussite heresy, then, the pope turned to other secular powers within the Empire. In order to ensure that no further spread of this heresy could occur, the pope demanded that the Hussites be subjected to “severe pain and excruciating punishment in order to make them an example for others. Thus if the fear of God does not prevent them from leaving off such evil deeds, the severity of our discipline may constrain them.”<sup>112</sup>

The agent of that discipline was destined to be Sigismund, the Hungarian king, Holy Roman Emperor, and heir to the throne of Bohemia. He had shown himself to be a staunch defender of the church in the past, and John XXIII had even conferred a golden rose upon him in 1415 to honor Sigismund’s support for him against Ladislas of Naples and the emperor’s role in convening the Council of Constance.<sup>113</sup> In terms of the Bohemian heresy, Sigismund had already written to the nobility in 1416 to demand their obedience and aid in eliminating the

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<sup>111</sup> See: Martin V, *Inter Cunctus*, 46.

<sup>112</sup> Pope Martin V, *Inter Cunctus*, 47.

<sup>113</sup> The granting of this honor to Sigismund was detailed in the chronicle of Ulrich Richental. For this episode, see: Ulrich Richental, “Chronicle of the Council of Constance,” L. Loomis, trans., in J. Mundy and K. Woody, eds., *The Council of Constance: The Unification of the Church* (New York: Columbia UP, 1961), 84-199, 112. See also: Odilo Engels, “Der Reichsgedanke auf dem Konstanzer Konzil,” in Bäumer, *Das Konstanzer Konzil*, 369-403.

Hussite heresy. In December of 1417, he also wrote to King Wenceslas and chastized him: —We cannot regard you as our brother if you do not, in the manner of our forebearers, exterminate all heretics...Let every Czech, German and Latin [speaking] person be aware that I can scarcely wait for the day to come when I shall drown every Wycliffite and Hussite.”<sup>114</sup> This sort of language generated a remarkable antipathy for Sigismund among Bohemian authors, but more sympathetic writers did their best to lionize the emperor and validate his actions at Constance. One key text in this process was the chronicle of Ulrich Richental, a Constance burgher and observer of the council. Richental’s chronicle would be copied and printed numerous times during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and functioned as an alternative to Mladoňovice’s account of Hus’s execution.<sup>115</sup> It also served as a key primary source for later Catholic historians such as Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini and Johannes Cochlaeus in their accounts of the Hussite heresy, and thus helped to define the Bohemian heresy from an opposing perspective for more than a century.<sup>116</sup>

The key achievement of Richental’s text was its exculpation of Sigismund for Hus’s death. It achieved this by showing that it was Hus, not Sigismund,

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<sup>114</sup> This quotation is from a letter of December 4, 1417, addressed to King Wenceslas. The original Latin is contained in: *Geschichtschreiber*, vol. 2, 252-254. The English translation here is from: Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics*, 50.

<sup>115</sup> The earliest surviving manuscript of the chronicle dates from 1423, and six fifteenth-century manuscripts of Richental’s chronicle survive in Germany and the Czech Republic, and many of them are richly decorated. The chronicle was also printed by Anton Sorg in Augsburg in 1483, and again in 1536. On the surviving copies of the chronicle, and their depictions of Hus, see: Royt, —Konografie Mistra Jana Husa v 15. ať 18. století,” 407; and Štech, —Jan Hus ve Výtvarném Umění,” 86.

<sup>116</sup> Hubert Herkommer has analyzed Mladoňovice’s and Richental’s accounts alongside each other and detailed their use in later polemical controversies. He generally views Richental’s account as more reliable, because it lacked the blatantly apologetic tone and purpose of Mladoňovice’s, despite the former’s occasional factual errors (such as dating Hus’s death to July 8). See: Herkommer, —Die Geschichte vom Leiden.”

whose actions rendered his safe conduct null and void. Almost immediately after describing Sigismund's reception of the golden rose, Richental included an account of Jan Hus's attempting to escape the city in a hay wagon. Hus was discovered, though, by one of his noble Bohemian protectors, Henry of Latzenbrock. Richental narrated an exchange after Latzenbrock apprehended Hus and returned him to the city in which the Bohemian noble asked: "Master Hus, why have you broken your own safe-conduct?"<sup>117</sup> Hus had no reply, but this attempted escape and verbal exchange justified Hus's immediate imprisonment in the Dominican monastery and his liability to a trial for heresy; he himself had knowingly abrogated his safe conduct and attempted to flee, thus cancelling any obligation that Sigismund had for his safety. Richental also provided an account of a second escape attempt by Hus (also by means of a hay wagon). During this latter escapade, Hus was discovered trying to flee through a crowd to safety, "for there were more than eighteen thousand people in the court who had heard that they were bringing him before the Pope."<sup>118</sup> Almost immediately after the description of Hus's second escape attempt, Richental described Sigismund's reaction:

While Hus was being held there our lord the King wanted to help him, and thought it would be a great disgrace to him if his safe-conduct were broken. But the learned men told him there was and could be no law by which a heretic had safe-conduct, and, when he heard their severity, he let it be.<sup>119</sup>

In both cases, Richental juxtaposed Hus's cowardice with the honor of the emperor. Sigismund sought to do what was just, even as Hus betrayed his

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<sup>117</sup> Richental, "Chronicle of the Council of Constance," 113.

<sup>118</sup> Richental, "Chronicle of the Council of Constance," 130.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

obligations and tried to flee. This image was further strengthened in Richental's description of Hus's death. After the degradation of Hus, the council fathers "delivered him over to the civil justice." As the highest noble in Christendom, Sigismund claimed the duty of dispensing Hus's punishment: "—Sice I am the one who wields the temporal sword, take him...and deal with him as a heretic."<sup>120</sup> The details of Hus's burning contained a profoundly strange, if striking, commentary on the Bohemian heretic. When Hus was burned, "The the worst stench arose that one could smell, for Cardinal Pancratius had had a mule that died of old age and was buried there, and when the heat went into the earth, the stench arose. All the ashes that were left they threw into the Rhine."<sup>121</sup> As one manuscript copy of the chronicle depicted the event, two winged demons hovered above the pyre, awaiting Hus's soul (see figure 2). To the right of the pyre, however, flew the royal flag, suggesting that the man who would become the king of Bohemia had overseen this execution and thus safeguarded his inheritance from the ministry of the vile heretic. The Hussites' saint had been transformed into a coward and heretic whose end was marked by the stench of a burning mule corpse, while the emperor had become the strong right arm of the orthodox church who had removed the heretic from the midst of the church.

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<sup>120</sup> Richental, "Chronicle of the Council of Constance," 132.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*





**Figure 2: Hus's execution, with demons awaiting his soul  
Pražský Rukopis (1464), MS NKP XVI A 17, f. 111v.**

The Council of Constance was formally closed in April, 1418. Martin V, who had issued strong statements against the Hussites in February, empowered Sigismund at the end of the council to act against the heretical Bohemians, and sent a legate, Cardinal Giovanni Domenici, O.P., to aid the emperor in this task. Sigismund headed east in the fall of 1418, and by December he had issued an open letter to Wenceslas demanding his presence in Skalica, near the Moravian

border with Austria, on February 9, 1419.<sup>122</sup> In February, Fernand of Lucena, who acted as Domenici's vicar, also cited Wenceslas's queen, Sophie, to appear before him for supporting heresy.<sup>123</sup> Thus, the full strength of the imperial and ecclesiastical hierarchy came to bear on the sovereign of Bohemia. Given the orders of his brother, heir, and emperor, and the papal legate's pressure on his queen, Wenceslas finally took action against the Hussites in Prague and the provinces. On February 25, 1419, Wenceslas demanded that all Hussite priests without legal title to their parishes surrender them to the appropriate Catholic incumbents. As a concession to his Bohemian subjects, the king allowed four churches to remain open for public Hussite services. Besides these four churches, and whatever private altars the Hussites could gain access to, communion in both kinds was forbidden at other churches in Prague. Wenceslas's limited toleration of utraquism also did not include infant communion, which was outlawed.<sup>124</sup> On February 26, the day after the royal pronouncement, the archbishop lifted the interdict from Prague, and Catholic services resumed in the city.

This unprecedented, decisive royal action shocked the Hussites. Added to this disturbing turn of events was the outbreak of religious violence in Kutná

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<sup>122</sup> On Sigismund's actions and those of the papal legate, see: Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution*, 988-990. A chronicle known as the "Anonymus de origine Thaboritarum" began with the king's actions, noting the cooperation of the king and legate in eventually bringing the interdict on Prague to an end. See: "Anonymus de origine Thaboritarum et de Morte Weceslai IV, Regis Boemiae," in *Geschichtschreiber* 1, 528-536, 528.

<sup>123</sup> Queen Zophie had been a frequent member of the congregation during Hus's tenure at the Bethlehem Chapel, and she had continued to support utraquism and serve as a focus for noble support of the movement since 1415. Fernand, who was bishop of Lucena, became the de facto legate to Bohemia in early 1419, as Domenici was in poor health and had neither the physical vigor nor combative temperament that the position required. Fernand would become one of the most hated Roman figures for early Hussitism. On these developments, see: Bartoš, *Do čtyř*, 33.

<sup>124</sup> The "Summary of Lawrence of Březova" referred to the suppression of utraquism in Prague and the prohibition of infant communion. See: "Výtah z Kroniky Vavřince z Březové," in *FRB* V, 537-543, 538. See also: Holeton, *La Communion des tout-petits enfants*, 195ff.



Hora, the second largest city in Bohemia. Since 1416, this city had been a bastion for Germans with Catholic sympathies who had conducted a campaign of terrorism against the Bohemian Hussites.<sup>125</sup> According to several sources, the Catholics in that city captured Hussites and threw them down mine shafts to kill them, although some were decapitated first. The Kutná Horans offered bounties for heretics, with priests being worth five times as much as laymen.<sup>126</sup> This offer of a bounty, as well as the efficient manner of the executions, led to perhaps 1600 deaths at Kutná Hora by 1420. The sheer number of the dead here lent a new aspect to the culture of martyrdom that had developed in Bohemia since 1412. Laypeople and simple priests, people who had done nothing besides “favor the most holy communion chalice,” here joined the charismatic leaders of the reform movement in martyrdom. In Lawrence of Březova’s account, their support for utraquism and the preaching of God’s law marked the Hussites as targets for the “Germans and cruel persecutors” who had become their enemies.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Kutná Hora’s importance derived from the fact that it was the home of very rich silver mines. These mines were staffed primarily by Germans who had been brought into Bohemia by the Luxembourg kings, and they overwhelmingly remained faithful to the Roman church. On Kutná Hora’s importance to the Bohemian reformation, see: Jiří Kejř, *Právní život v husitské Kutné hoře* (Prague: Nakl. Československé akademie věd, 1958).

<sup>126</sup> For a full analysis of the sources on the Kutná Hora pogrom,” see: Ota Halama, “The Martyrs of Kutná Hora, 1419-1420,” *BRRP* 5, pt. 1, 139-146. See also: Kaminsky, *A History*, 310-311.

<sup>127</sup> These numbers derive from the account of the executions given in the chronicle of Lawrence of Březová, a Hussite chronicler who recorded many of the key events in Bohemia from 1414-1422. His account of the Kutná Hora massacres read: “Nam prefati veritatis emuli, sacerdotes et laycos communionem calicis zelantes in diversis regni locis venando Montanis praesentabant et aliquos pro pecunia vendebant; quos montani Theutonici, Boemorum et presertim veritatis Christi diligentium crudeles persecutores ac inimici, variis blasphemiiis, et diversis penarum afficiendo generibus ad foveas profundissimas, seu ssachtas, nocturnis presertim temporibus inhumaniter jactabant, quosdam vivos, quosdam vero decollatos... infra breve tempus ultra xvi centena hominum sacratissime calicis communioni faventium sunt per eos miserabiliter interempta et ad ssachtas projecta, lictoribus sepe pro fatigatione trucidationis lassatis.” See: Lawrence of Březová, “Kronika Husitská,” in *FRB* 5, 327-534, 351-352. On Lawrence’s career as a Hussite author and chronicler, see: Rudolf Urbánek, “Vavřinec z Březové a jeho satirické skladby v rukopise Budyšinském,” in *Z Husitského Věku*, 29-35.

The dramatic royal and imperial turn against Hussite practices and the expansion of violence both posed serious threats to the coalition of forces that had come together to support the expansion of the religious reform movement in Bohemia. The university masters and nobility, in particular, would not countenance an open rebellion against Wenceslas. The allowance of some utraquist practices, and the preservation of the four churches, persuaded them that the king did not want to completely reverse the Hussite gains of the previous three and a half years.<sup>128</sup> Because the nobility and university leadership contemplated a rapprochement with Wenceslas, a space opened up in the Hussite movement for a more radical approach to social and religious change. With the social elite seemingly withdrawing from the alliance for religious reform, a new coalition of the urban lower classes, rural radicals, and charismatic preachers surfaced and attacked the institutions and leaders of the incipient Catholic renewal.

### Reform, Revolution, and the Language of Conquest

From the end of February, 1419, the king's orders supporting traditional communion practices and Catholic priests diffused throughout Bohemia and Moravia. While it is impossible to accurately judge the extent to which these royal pronouncements were effective in the Bohemian provinces, there was one definitive reaction to the closure of rural parishes to Hussite services. A number of priests in an area south of Prague, near the castle of Bechyně, began to meet in

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<sup>128</sup> Kaminsky has also noted that the nobles had faith that this burst of decisive activity would soon subside; they felt that Wenceslas would return to his normal, hands-off style of rule: "they [the nobility] might well comfort themselves with the thought that the king's new policy could be a passing episode in a reign characterized throughout by weakness and irresolution." See: Kaminsky, *A History*, 269.

the open air and distribute the eucharist on a hilltop that they named Mt. Tabor, after the location of Jesus's transfiguration.<sup>129</sup> The first of these outdoor gatherings took place in April, 1419, and this practice continued at Tabor and spread throughout southern and western Bohemia. Over time, these outdoor services would become the focus for an intense apocalyptic spirituality that saw the mountain meeting places as ~~a~~ divinely appointed mount of refuge from the Jews, 'a place where the Primitive Church – Christ and his disciples – was revived after Jesus had died, a place where the law constituting the church was imposed in the classic form.'<sup>130</sup> Outside of aristocratic oversight or the watchful eye of royal councillors, and beyond the restraining influence of the moderate university masters, Tabor and other Hussite hilltop churches came to be a key site for the development of resistance to Wenceslas's efforts to quash the Hussite movement.

A complementary development took place within Prague. As the university masters and nobles tacitly ceded their leadership in the movement to avoid open rebellion, popular preachers and the urban masses of Prague came to the fore. Under the leadership of the preacher and former Premonstratensian monk, Jan Želivský, the people of Prague came to see the king's intervention as one more effort by Antichrist to subvert or destroy the people of God. Želivský had been preaching in Prague since at least 1418, and he was one of the Hussite

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<sup>129</sup> On the transfiguration, see: Mt. 17: 1-2, Mk. 9:1, and Lk. 9:28-29. The mountain is not named in these passages, but Mt. Tabor was also the location where Jesus issued the Great Commission to his disciples after his resurrection (Mt. 28:16-21). Christian tradition conflated the two from at least the fourth century.

<sup>130</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 282.

preachers who had lost his church to Wenceslas's decree.<sup>131</sup> Țelivský relocated to the monastery church of Our Lady of Snows in the New Town in early 1419 (one of the four church reserved for utraquism), and in his pulpit there he combined apocalyptic rhetoric with a message of social equality that attracted the urban poor. Țelivský's passionate style of preaching and his attribution of the "authority for reform" to the urban masses made him one of the dominant voices in Prague from 1419 until his death in 1422.<sup>132</sup>

Our major source for Țelivský's rhetoric of reform in early 1419 is a series of Latin outlines that he produced for his sermons at Our Lady of Snows. These have been edited by Amedeo Molnár, and they routinely emphasized two major themes that made a Bohemian capitulation to the king's demands and a cessation of Hussite piety impossible.<sup>133</sup> The first of these themes concerned the chosenness of the Bohemian nation. For Țelivský, the witness of preachers such as Milíč and Hus was proof that Bohemia had been chosen by God to share his truth with the

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<sup>131</sup> Relatively little is precisely known about Țelivský's early career in Prague. Amedeo Molnár, the editor of his sermons and a sympathetic interpreter of Țelivský, believed that he came to Prague only in 1418; Bartoš and Kaminsky (who bases his argument on Bartoš) think Țelivský arrived in Prague as early as 1416, but that he only assumed prominence as a radical Hussite preacher in 1419. I tend to follow Molnár's dating. Either way, the experience of losing his parish, St. Stephen's na Rybníčku, was decisive in shaping Țelivský's response to royal and imperial authority in 1419. On Țelivský's earlier career, see: Bartoš, "Počátky Jana Țelivského," and *idem.*, "Dvě studie," 21-37; see also Amedeo Molnár, "Țelivský, prédicateur de la révolution," *CV 2* (1959), 324-334. The most recent account concludes that the evidence does not provide decisive support for either date of his arrival in Prague. See: Bořeň na Kopiczková, *Jan Țelivský* (Prague: Mellantrich, 1990), 35.

<sup>132</sup> František Šmahel differentiated Țelivský from Jakoubek by noting that the former was willing to grant "Reformkompetenz" to the people, instead of only to the priests and nobles. For Țelivský, the "Volk" comprised the greater part of the church, and thus had the authority to dictate and direct its reform. See: Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution*, 634.

<sup>133</sup> These sermons appeared as: Amedeo Molnár, ed., *Dochovaná Kázání z roku 1419, pt. 1* (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé Akademie Věd, 1953).

rest of the world.<sup>134</sup> Much as an earlier preacher had seen the presence of holy men in Bohemia as a sign of Antichrist's presence in the world at large, Třelivský's sense of "national messianism" required the Bohemians to actively promote God's law and resist any efforts to suppress that law. It was a given that suffering would accompany this resistance, and as such persecution and legal oppression only confirmed Třelivský's belief in Bohemia's elect status.<sup>135</sup> The willingness of the Bohemians to recognize God's truth, which was the opposite of worldly wisdom, caused them to be among the nations who had heard and received the gospel, as "Peter showed Judea, which he converted, Paul the gentiles, among whom were a faithful people...Andrew showed Achaia; John, Asia; Thomas, India; [and] I trust the holy Jan [Hus], Bohemia."<sup>136</sup> Třelivský also directly told his audience: "You now know, in what way the word of the Lord has been established through all of Bohemia and Moravia, and how the princes of priests accuse her [i.e. the Czech lands], speaking slander to the kings and princes."<sup>137</sup> Utraquism and the preaching of the pure gospel were the contents of the "word of the Lord," but these were rejected by the worldly powers. This rejection did not, however, ultimately matter, because in Třelivský's sermons opposition served as a unique proof of salvation.

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<sup>134</sup> Molnár has noted that Třelivský saw Prague as having been the lucky recipient of a chain of gifted preachers. Their continuous ministry (and it seems that he included himself among them) showed God's concern for the Czech people. See: Molnár, *Výzva Jana Třelivského*, 11.

<sup>135</sup> See: Urbánek, "Český mesianismus, especially 10-11; and Šmahel, "The Idea of the 'Nation,'" 201-205. See also: Holeton, "Revelation and Revolution," 40.

<sup>136</sup> "Deo eius iudicium timeamus, quia quis suam iusticiam ostendet, Petrus Iudeam, quam convertit, Paulus gentiles, quorum fuit fidelis plebanus, Corinthios, Gallatas, Colossenses, Thessalonicenses, Philippenses, Romanos, Andreas Achaiam, Iohannes Asiam, Thomas Indiam, spero sanctus Iohannes [Hus] Bohemiam." This quotation is from: "Dominica Tercia post Octavam Pasche," in *Dochovaná Kázání*, 86-99, 96.

<sup>137</sup> "Sic nunc scitis, quomodo factum est verbum Domini per universam Bohemiam et Moraviam, et quomodo principi(pes) sacerdotum accusant eam, crimina regis et principibus dicentes." From: "Feria Secunda post Pascha," in *Dochovaná Kázání*, 28-31, 29.

Teřivský treated Hus and Jerome as models whose ministry and death proved that ~~the~~ truth of the Lord does not gain ground without suffering and without a fight. Suffering and struggle accompany the renewed word in the Czech lands.”<sup>138</sup> Suffering was thus the second major theme in Teřivský’s sermons, although this was always a mere prelude to the joy that would reward faithful Christians:

O, how they rejoiced at the condemnation of the gospel in Constance and the death of St. Jan Hus, thinking that now their heresies would not be preached or made public. And those, who weep and are sad here, are heavenly men, indeed called to heaven. He [Jesus] consolingly says to those: your sadness, however, will be turned into long and eternal joy, but the joy of the world is very brief.<sup>139</sup>

Perseverance in faith was the only guarantee that sadness would fade and be replaced by joy: ~~Jesus~~ Christ is true God and true man, and who believes this with a faith formed by love, he will conquer the word, and thus persevering will finally triumph.”<sup>140</sup> This was a fairly commonplace confession of faith, but in Bohemia in 1419 the Hussites felt that they could take nothing for granted. The attribution of authority or supremacy to the king and pope could effectively diminish the absolute lordship of Christ, and thus this reaffirmation of Jesus’s identity was a decisive statement. More telling was the explicit connection Teřivský drew between the Bohemian martyrs and victory: ~~This~~ is well known

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<sup>138</sup> Molnár, *Výzva Jana Teřivského*, 21.

<sup>139</sup> ~~Θ~~, quantum gaudebant de condemnatione ewangelii in Constancia et de morte sancti Ioh[annis] Huss, putantes, quod iam non predicabitur nec eorum heresis publicabitur. Et tales, qui hic flent et tristantur, sunt homines celestes, ymo celum vocantur. Quos consolando dicit: *Tristitia autem vestra vertetur in gaudium* longum et eternum, sed gaudium mundi est valde breve.” See: ~~Đ~~ominica Secunda Post Octavam Pasche,” in *Dočovaná Kázání*, 60-71, 63. The pericope for this sermon was John 16: 16-22, and the italicized section is from v. 20.

<sup>140</sup> ~~Χ~~ristus Iesus est verus Deus et verus homo, et quod qui credit hec fide formata caritate, ille vincit mundum et sic perseverans finaliter triumphabit.” From: ~~Θ~~ctave Pasche,” in *Dočovaná Kázání*, 48-59, 55.

concerning all the saints who believed in Christ: they conquered, that is, persevered, as Master Hus, Jerome, etc. did.”<sup>141</sup> Thus, for Țelivský perseverance was “a great sign” that allowed the faithful Christian to move past suffering in this world and attain joy in the next, and Hus’s death had been just such a sign.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, by linking perseverance and victory, Țelivský tapped into another theme that had animated the Bohemian reform since 1413:

—And they will cast you from the synagogues and cause your death, believing themselves to excel in obedience to God;” “and you will be hated by all men on account of my name. You will be betrayed by your parents and relations.” This is more, than to suffer at the hands of Stanislas and Palec. However, this is nothing with regards to my victory in the opinion of the world, because I know that *he who is killed, will conquer*.<sup>143</sup>

Jan Hus wrote those words as consolation to his friend, Křisťan of Prachatice, when Hus was in exile. He later repeated them in a letter to Jan Kardinál, stating that “he who is killed, will conquer, because no adversity harms him, if no iniquity rules over him.”<sup>144</sup> Jakoubek echoed these words in his sermons from 1415-1416: —Therefore, the faithful should be confident, because

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<sup>141</sup> —Patet hoc de omnibus sanctis qui Cristum crediderunt, vicerunt, id est perseveraverunt, ut magister Ioh[annes] Huss, Ieronimus, etc.” From: From: —Octave Pasche,” 56. It is worth noting that Țelivský included Nicholas of Dresden, who was killed in Meissen in 1417, as one of the Bohemian martyrs. Later in his sermon collection, he noted: —Θ, quantum venenum fuit porrectum magistro Iohanni Huss, Ieronimo, [sive] Michaheli in Polonia et Nicolao sacerdote Christi in Misna [et hic a magistris in Praga], non eos nocuit, quia non consenserunt.” See: —Ascensio Domini,” in *Dochovaná Kázání*, 118-129, 126-127.

<sup>142</sup> —Θ, quanta signa sunt secuti magister Ioh[annes] Huss et Ieronimus, qui usque in finem perseveraverunt! Hoc est est signum magnum.” See: —Ascensio Domini,” 129.

<sup>143</sup> —Absque synagogis facient vos et morte afficient ex vobis, credentes se obsequium prestare deo; (Jn. 16:2) et eritis odio omnibus hominibus propter nomen meum. Trademini a parentibus et cognatis. (Lk. 21:16-17) Quod est plus, quam pati a Stanislaio vel Palecz. De victoria autem mea nihil ad famam seculi, quia scio, quod vincit, qui occiditur.” This quote is from a letter from Hus to Master Křisťan of Prachatice, from late March or early April, 1413. The full text has been edited in: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 162-163; this quote, 163. František Holeček, has argued that this quote needs to be understood as a reflection of Hus’s view on the price of the struggle with Antichrist. See his: —Ministri dei possunt in dampnationem perpetuam papam male viventem detrudere: Hus a problém Antikrista.” This paper was originally given at a 2007 conference for the Czech regular clergy, and its full text is available at: [www.volny.cz/kvpzr/Hus.htm#\\_ftn87](http://www.volny.cz/kvpzr/Hus.htm#_ftn87).

<sup>144</sup> —Vincit, qui occiditur, quia nulla ei nocet adversitas, si nulla ei dominatur iniquitas.” For further reference to this quote, see page 42, fn. 131, above.

with the help of God all that power and great avarice are about to be defeated. Even if they will be killed with bodily death, they will conquer, because it is written: He who is killed, conquers.”<sup>145</sup> Interestingly, the Latin phrase, *vincit, qui occiditur*,” does not appear in the Vulgate. Novotný considered it to be a paraphrase of Psalm 50: 6, or Romans 3:4, but this actual phrase became significant in the Hussite context through Hus’s writings, not those of Scripture.<sup>146</sup> It was not surprising, then, that Tělivský should use this phrase as well, writing on the Octave of Easter: *—Everyone who has killed you, thinks himself to excel in obedience to God. Because he who is killed, conquers.*”<sup>147</sup> The transition between the two ideas here was rapid and somewhat disconcerting, but these were notes that Tělivský wrote for himself. Given the influence that Hus and Jakoubek had on him, the repetition of the verse from John 16, and the earlier use of this watchword in writing on perseverance, we can interpret this phrase as a sort of maxim that encouraged the Hussites in times of oppression.<sup>148</sup>

What is striking about this phrase, and the growing use of the maxim *—veritas vincit*” as well, is their attention on the idea of conquest. The idea that a Christian would gain his life through losing it was prominent in many of Jesus’

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<sup>145</sup> *—Confidant ergo fideles, quia omnem potestatem illam quoque cupiditatem magnam cum Dei auxilio sunt devicturi, etsi morte corporis trucidabuntur, tamen vincunt, quia scriptum est: Vincit, qui occiditur.*” See: MS NKP VIII E 3, f. 127r.; c.f. Bartoš, *—Betlemská Kázání*,” 117.

<sup>146</sup> Psalm 50: 6 in the Vulgate reads, *—Vincas, cum iudicaris;*” Romans 3:4 quotes from the verse in Psalms. It should be noted here that Jakoubek referred to Hus in his writings as an authoritative church father who was equal in status to people like Jerome or Augustine. In his text, *—Salvator Noster*,” Jakoubek included Hus in a catena of proofs concernin utraquism, noting, *—eum istis sanctis et doctoribus concordat sancte memorie egregius magister Iohannes Hus, fidelis predicator ewangelii Iesu Christi.*” The full text is in: B. Ryba, ed., *Betlemské Texty* (Prague: Orbis, 1951), 105-139; this quote, 138. For Novotný’s analysis, see his: *Korespondence*, 163.

<sup>147</sup> *—Ioh. 16: 2: —Omnis, qui interfecit vos, arbitretur se obsequium prestare Deo.*” *—Quia ille vincet, qui occiditur.*” See: *—Octave Pasche*,” 57-58.

<sup>148</sup> Nicole Kelley has pointed to the widespread use of biblical passages as maxims that Christian martyrs used during their executions to demonstrate their actions’ biblical foundations and their Christian identities. See her: *—Philosophy as Training for Death*,” 740-741.



teachings.<sup>149</sup> This focus on death as a form of conquest or victory was more unique to the Hussites. These phrases first appeared during Hus's exile, then again immediately following his death, and during the period of Wenceslas's attempted re-imposition of Catholicism in Prague. For Třelivský, God providentially gave aid to his people in times of loss and struggle that ensured their ability to persevere. This assistance came via the work of inspired preachers, and Hus himself was one of these: —Just as Elisha had a double share of the spirit from the merits of Elijah, so I strongly hope about contemporary preachers from the merits of Master Jan Hus."<sup>150</sup> For Třelivský, Hus inspired his successors not only with his words, but also empowered them through his death, and thus served as a guarantor that they would ultimately prevail in their struggles with their king and the Catholic priests whom he supported.

This spiritual power did not manifest itself in the same way during 1419 that it had during the previous years. The eschatological rhetoric that underlay the *postilla* of the previous years intensified in Třelivský's sermons and prompted more activist efforts to oppose the king's imposition of Catholic worship. Třelivský embodied the prophetic elements of preaching that often surfaced in times of crisis.<sup>151</sup> Taking inspiration from Elijah's conflict with the priests of

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<sup>149</sup> See, e.g., Matt. 10:39 and 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 17:33; and John 12:25. Each of these verses emphasizes the paradox of gaining eternal life through the loss of one's physical life, but none use the language of conquering one's opponents.

<sup>150</sup> —Sicut Helizeus habuit duplum spiritum ex meritis Helie, sicut spero moderni predicatores forte ex meritis magistri Ioh[annis] Huss." See: —Octave Pasche," 57. The reference to the —spirit of Elijah" here as the motivator of true preaching also had a long pedigree in the Hussite tradition, and dated back to Milíč and Matěj. On the persistence of this theme in the Hussite movement, see: Molnár, —Poslední věci," 38.

<sup>151</sup> Nicole Bériou has argued the prophetic preaching was the unstable complement to the organized and structured preaching that emerged from university milieux in the Middle Ages. It was occasional, often occurred at exceptional times, and eschewed the logical structures that

Baal, he attempted to imbue his audience with a zeal for physical resistance and the overthrow of worldly powers.<sup>152</sup> Much as revival preachers in the Italian cities had used their charismatic authority to encourage the *popolo* to dramatically alter the social and political lives of their small republics,<sup>153</sup> Telivský took advantage of the authority he had gained through his preaching to promote mass political action in the forms of processions and extraordinary gatherings in and around Prague. The language that he used to push his activist program for reform would have been familiar to his audience, with ideas of conquest and faith coming to the fore. These tropes, however, framed some extraordinary shifts within his own thinking. Conquering and perseverance in suffering were not absolutely synonymous. Rather:

Thus the apostle says here: —Who is it who conquers the world, except you who believe, since Jesus is the son of God?” (Jn. 5:5) as if he were saying: Who has the help of Jesus the son of God, conquers the world. In fighting for his truth, [and] having war permitted to them, they are able to fight without care (*secure*).<sup>154</sup>

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distinguished normative preaching. She explicitly links the emergence of prophetic preaching with times of economic or political crisis. D’Avray has also suggested that such preaching depended on the public perception of the preacher’s charisma and its occurrence within specific temporal contexts (such as Lent or the celebration of public holidays) that heightened the audience’s religious enthusiasm. See: Bériou, —Conclusion,” 482-483; and d’Avray, —Method,” 8-9.

<sup>152</sup> On the figure of Elijah as a justification for violent conflict with spiritual opponents, see: Howard Kaminsky, —The Prague Insurrection of 30 July 1419,” *Medievalia et Humanistica* 17 (1966), 106-126, 110.

<sup>153</sup> The essential study on charismatic preaching and political action in the medieval Italian communes is: Augustine Thompson, O.P., *Revival Preachers and Politics in Thirteenth-Century Italy: The Great Devotion of 1233* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 1-8. On the French context, and with an emphasis on apocalyptic discourse and public processions, see: Jean-Arnaut Dérens, —La prédication et la ville: pratiques de la parole et ‘religion civique’ à Montpellier aux XIVe et XVe siècles,” in *La prédication en Pays d’Oc (XIIe – début XVe siècle)* (Fanjeaux: Editions Privat, 1997), 335-362, especially 335-341.

<sup>154</sup> —Sic hic Apostolus dicit: —Quis est autem, qui vincit mundum, nisi qui credit, quoniam Iesus est Filius Dei,” q[uasi] d[iceret]: qui habet in auxilium Filium Dei Iesum, vincet mundum. Bellando pro sua veritate, bellum licitum habentes, possunt secure bellare.” See: —Octave Pasche,” 56.

Interestingly, *secure*” could mean *with authority*” as well as *without care*,” and both suggested that Jesus’ authorization provided certain justification for conflict. It would appear that over the course of the Spring of 1419 Třelivský pushed not only Hus’ message, that *he who is killed, conquers*,” but also introduced the idea that *he who fought, and presumably killed, conquered as well*. This introduction of a justification for war drew on the rhetoric of conquest and suffering that preachers such as Jakoubek and Třelivský had been developing since 1415; within the heightened conflict of 1419, this familiar language became framed by the context of local religious and political oppression. The king and those who sided with him had conceded their place at the head of the chosen nation of Bohemia, but the nation itself could not give in. The people of Prague, and those who had formed holy congregations on the mountaintops, were required to bring Bohemia back into full conformity with God’s law.

The conflict between Třelivský’s activist rhetoric and the authority of the king came to a head in July, 1419. On July 6, the fourth anniversary of Hus’ martyrdom, King Wenceslas removed the councilmen of the New Town in Prague and replaced them with men whom he thought would be more activist in their suppression of Hussite deviance. He had been frustrated by the time it had taken to evict Hussite priests from their parishes, and by the resistance of the common people to his policies.<sup>155</sup> His new councilors acted decisively to quell popular demonstrations, threatened the use of violence to enforce the king’s religious

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<sup>155</sup> Procopius’ chronicle noted that the laity in Prague attended Hussite services in great numbers and *—sū specie utraque communicabunt, bohemicæ missas cantantes.*” Further, *—Wylefistae in sermonibus suis papam et praelatos confundebant et ad suam sectam populum blanditiis ypocritis seducebant.*” On these impediments to recatholicization, see: *Geschichtschreiber*, vol. 1, 75.

edicts, and imprisoned recalcitrant Hussites who sought to protest the repressive measures. To put it mildly, this move, and its timing, were ill conceived. To take decisive, anti-Hussite measures on Hus's feast day must have seemed a willful provocation. In response, Hussite leaders intensified their campaign against the king. Arguing that "the commonwealth can never be well ruled unless the kings and princes are governed by the Word of God," Tělivský forcefully proclaimed that "to disobey an evil prince is to obey God."<sup>156</sup> He also reminded his listeners of the Bohemian martyrs whom had been killed by the princes and prelates affiliated with the pope. He noted that the clergy never did the killing, but enlisted secular powers to do their work for them:

The clergy did not kill Christ with their own hands, but shouted, agreeing in their hearts, "Crucify! Crucify!"... Thus now it has been done in Constance, so all are murderers who consented to the death of Master Jan Hus [and] Jerome, and to the death of the lay people who were beheaded in the Old Town of Prague, and who were burned in Olomouc.<sup>157</sup>

This invocation of Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs who had been victims of the clergy and their secular catspaws heightened the sense of implicit threat that the king's actions had produced. This threat spurred dramatic action, though, that caught the king completely off guard.

In the provinces, the open air celebrations that had begun in April were reaching a remarkable climax. On July 22, perhaps 40, 000 people gathered on the

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<sup>156</sup> These lines are from Tělivský's sermon notes for July 16, 1419, which are contained in MS NKP V G 3 in the Czech National Library. This manuscript is the continuation of the one edited by Molnár, but has not itself been edited. These lines are quoted in: Kaminsky, "The Prague Insurrection," 110.

<sup>157</sup> "Sicut clerus propria manu Cristum non occidit, sed clamabat consenciendo in corde, 'Crucifige! Crucifige!'... Sic nunc factum est in Constancia, ergo omnes homicide sui consenserunt ad mortem Magistri Iohannem Huss, Jeronymi. Et ad mortem laicorum qui sunt decolati in antiqui civitate Pragensi. Et qui sunt in Holomucz combusti." See: MS NKP V G 3, f. 19v; c.f. Kaminsky, "The Prague Insurrection," 110.

mountaintop known as Tábor to hear preaching, make their confession, and take communion in both kinds.<sup>158</sup> Pro-Hussite sources have portrayed this gathering as a demonstration of simple Christian piety and equality, while anti-Hussite sources have suggested that the Hussites at Tábor hatched a conspiracy to overthrow the king.<sup>159</sup> Either way, it would seem likely that Želivský made the 100 mile round trip to Tábor in order to participate and rally support for the beleaguered Prague Hussites. Howard Kaminsky has argued that he also enlisted aid for a specific action he was planning for the following week: a Hussite demonstration in Prague that would forcibly remove the king's new councilors from office in the New Town.<sup>160</sup> Whether or not Želivský's Prague demonstration was coordinated with provincial Hussite agitation, the timing of the meeting at Tábor on July 22 and the ensuing first "Defenestration of Prague" made one thing clear. The king's actions from February until July prompted a series of popular reactions that rallied the Hussite population against the king and helped create the critical mass for a full-scale revolution in 1419.

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<sup>158</sup> "In festo autem Sancte Marie Magdalene magna multitudine populi sexus utriusque, et etiam parvulorum ad prefatum montem congregata de diversis regni prefati paribus ultra quam XL millia personarum sacramento corporis et sanguinis Domini, sub utraque specie...communicarunt cum devotione." Lawrence of Březová "Kronika Husitská," 344-345.

<sup>159</sup> Howard Kaminsky has done the most thorough comparison of sources in analyzing these mass gatherings, and has notably contrasted the positive account of Lawrence of Březova and the negative *Anonymus de Origine Taboritarum*, which argued for the development of a conspiracy on July 22 that included the election of a Hussite king, Nicholas of Hus. For Kaminsky's comparison, see his: "The Prague Insurrection," 114-117; c.f. *A History*, 284-289. On the Anonymus and its relation to Lawrence's text, see: František Bartoš, "Husitského a Bratrského Dějepisectví," *Sborník Historický* 2 (1954), 83-112, especially 83-97.

<sup>160</sup> The relation between these two events is the central thesis of Kaminsky's, "The Prague Insurrection." His analysis is largely a counter to earlier scholarship, which saw urban radicalism in Prague and the provincial meetings at Tábor in isolation from each other. I follow Kaminsky's interpretation, which sees the two developments as closely related and argues that the events of July 30 were planned in light of the July 22 mass rally. For an oversight of the earlier trends in viewing the events as separate, see: Bartoš, *Do čtyř*, 42-45.

On July 30, 1419, Jan Țelivský preached a sermon at Our Lady of Snows that ended at about 8:30. Following Kaminsky's analysis of the events of that day, this sermon was saturated with confrontational language.<sup>161</sup> The pericope was from Mt. 7: 15-21, and warned —Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.” (v. 15-16) He noted that —thefairthful community does not persecute the magistrates and councilors, but these persecute the faithful Christians.” Violence and persecution were the behaviors that showed the magistrates to be —false prophets” who bore —evil fruit.” Țelivský traced the contrast between persecutor and persecuted back through the Bible and church history, including Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob, the Jews and Christ, heretics and Christians(!), and finally the members of the Council of Constance and Jan Hus.<sup>162</sup> Framed by these contrasting pairs, Hus served as the latest victim in a conflict that had been going on for over 1400 years. It was up to the Hussites to decisively end this conflict, or at least to reverse the pattern of victimhood, that characterized this conflict over time. Indeed, as Țelivský ended his sermon he assured his listeners by wondering aloud, —Death, where is your victory?” (I Cor. 15:55) and by

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<sup>161</sup> The following analysis depends on Kaminsky's argument that we must read Țelivský's sermon notes for July and August, 1419, out of order. In his view, the ostensible sermon for July 30 had been written before July 22, and a new sermon was needed to reflect the post-Tábor situation. The texts of the two sermons certainly support this argument, although there is little external evidence for the view. The specific relationship between the content of the sermon and the social action that subsequently occurred, though, and relatively mild content of the sermon originally written for July 30, provide substantial support for Kaminsky's view, which I follow. See: Kaminsky, —The Prague Insurrection,” 120-124.

<sup>162</sup> This language also echoed one of Hus's own sermons, —Attndite a falsis prophetis,” in which he cited Origen on the relationship between persecutor and persecuted. For Hus's use of this idea, see above, Chapter One, fn. 156. For this chain of persecutors: —Sic falsi prophete veros prophetas, sic enim Cayn persecutus est Abel, non Abel Cayn...Ezau Iacob, non Iacob Ezau...Canonici, plebani, monachi, moniales Sanctum Ioh. Huss, sed non Huss canonicos.” See: MS NKP V G 3, f. 39r.

claiming that in doing God's will his audience would achieve sanctification. In short, the Hussites would show themselves to be the good tree who could not bear bad fruit.<sup>163</sup> Such assurances, the use of oppositional language, and the invocation of Hus as a key player in the eternal conflict between good and evil were all typical of Țelivský's language, especially in July, 1419. As such, on the surface there was nothing unusual about this sermon.

What was unusual was the fact that many of his listeners had come to church armed, and that at the end of the sermon Țelivský led his congregation in a procession to his former parish of St. Stephen's, carrying a monstrance and a consecrated host.<sup>164</sup> The Catholic priest at St. Stephen's had barred the doors while he celebrated Mass inside, perhaps hearing the noise of Țelivský's progress towards to church. It did not matter; Țelivský's followers broke down the door of the church, disrupted the Mass, and Țelivský proceeded to celebrate communion in both kinds at the high altar of the church. At the end of the celebration, he led the crowd to the New Town hall, where several of the newly elected town councilors had gathered. The crowd demanded the release of Hussite prisoners held in the building, and the councilors attempted to stall. Infuriated, the crowd stormed the building and threw several councilors out of a window to the crowd

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<sup>163</sup> These assurances assumed the form of a series of biblical quotations with which Țelivský called his audience to clear demonstrations of their rejection of false prophets through action. On folios 42r and 42v, Țelivský invoked 1 Cor. 15:55-56: "—Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;" 1 Thess. 4:3: "—It is God's will that you should be sanctified;" and Matthew 7:17-19: "—Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." See: MS NKP V G 3, f. 42r-42v.

<sup>164</sup> The presence of armed men in the congregation was one piece of evidence Kaminsky has used to demonstrate the planned nature of day's protest. The following events of the day are fairly well known and documented in the sources. For summary and analysis, see, for instance: Kaminsky, "—The Prague Insurrection," 111-114; or Kopiczková, *Jan Țelivský*, 55-59.

below. Those that were not killed by the fall, were set upon by the Hussites. As the councilors died, Ťelivský, still holding the monstrance, urged the crowd on.

Soon after, mounted troops arrived from the Prague castle. The crowd and troops did not fight, and the soldiers soon retreated from the tense situation.

Ťelivský and his people chose new, Hussite councilors for the New Town, thus effecting an overthrow of the king's appointees. Wenceslas succumbed to this show of force, and he approved the selection of the new councilors.<sup>165</sup> He had tried to stop the spread of Hussitism in his kingdom, but had failed. His efforts to restore Catholic supremacy had been derailed by Ťelivský and the people of Prague. This frustration proved to be too much for Wenceslas, and perhaps out of rage, or strain, or grief, he had an apoplectic stroke on August 16, 1419. His death was, in one way, a mark of the Hussites' victory over his attempted Catholic restoration. It was also the direct cause of a more lasting revolution. With Wenceslas's death, Hus's executioner, the Emperor Sigismund, was set to ascend to the throne of Bohemia. His proposed ascension would be the final trigger for a full-scale revolution and the complete synthesis of political and religious rhetoric regarding the necessity of resistance, and would presage over fifty years of warfare and negotiation to determine the place of Hussitism within Christendom.

### Conclusion: Hus, Bohemia and the Ideal of Suffering

Consider the Martinic Bible. It is a manuscript of Bohemian origin, written around the year 1430. It is a fairly standard manuscript, with only five figural illuminations, but written in a clear hand. At the very beginning of the text,

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<sup>165</sup> On the fallout of the July 30 demonstrations, see: Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution*, 1003-1005.



it offers a remarkable image of the de facto process of canonization that followed Jan Hus's death in July, 1415 (see figure 3).

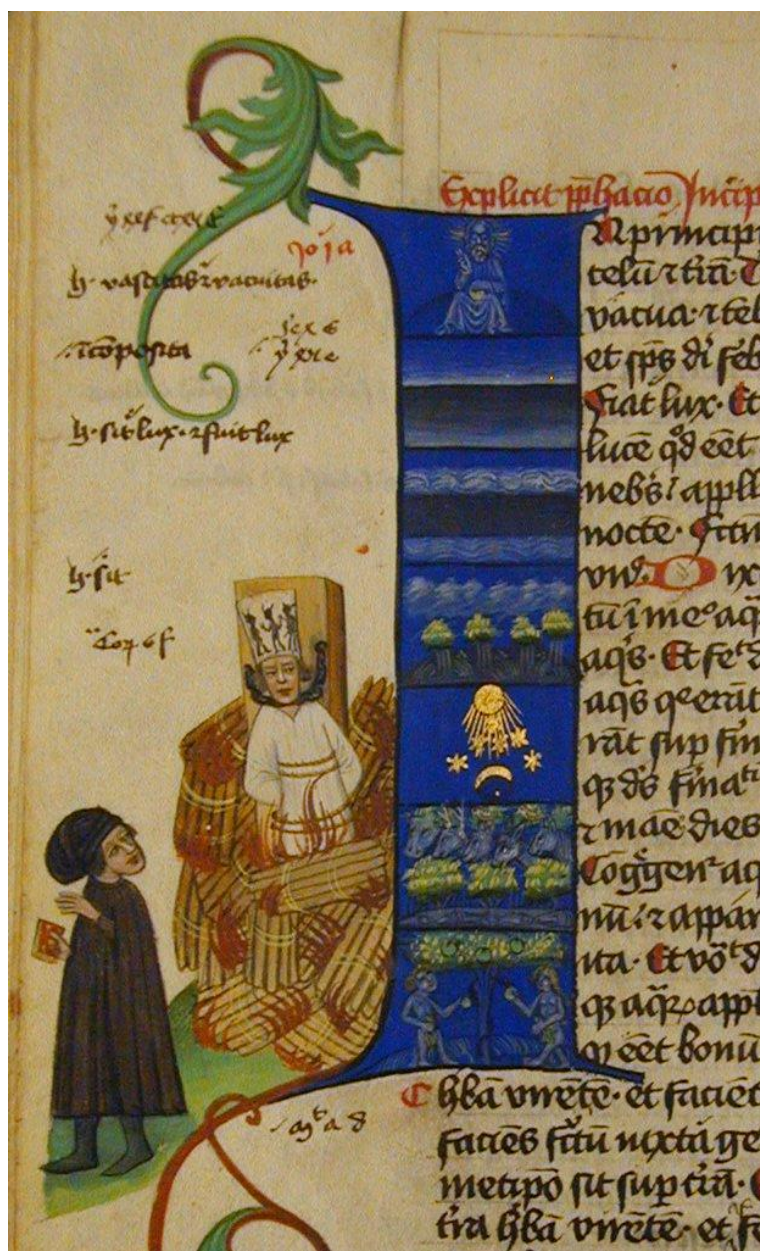


Figure 3: Martinic Bible (c. 1430),  
MS KAVČR 1 TB 3, f. 11v

For the *Incipit* of the book of Genesis, an illuminator crafted the first known Bohemian depiction of Jan Hus's execution. Hus wore the heretics' hat described by Mladoňovice, Barbatus, and Richental, and he was bound to the stake by a

chain at his neck. These features would become standard in the pictorial representations of Hus that came to be painted and printed over the course of the following century, but this illumination contained one anomaly.<sup>166</sup> In the foreground of the illustration, a man holding a small book was shown leaving the site of Hus's execution, looking back to the martyr. This man, who may have represented Petr of Mladoňovice, carried with him the literary account of Hus's death that would allow his memory to survive his spectacular, corporeal death.

Over the course of the years 1415-1419, sermons, songs, and passion narratives commemorating Hus's death played a key role in bringing a discourse of martyrdom and suffering into the mainstream of Hussite religious and political thought. The reality of suffering, the necessity of perseverance, and the realization of victory through death all stayed within the foreground of Bohemian ideology because of both continued oppression and the increasing veneration of Hus as an ideal type. Through the yearly commemoration of his death on July 6, and the more pervasive invocation of Hus's example in popular preaching and song, he came to occupy a central place in a nascent, national discourse that regarded the Bohemian Hussites as a chosen people whose divine status necessitated the imitation of the early church. Much like the Israelites or the early church martyrs, the Hussites faced the opposition of the world and Antichrist because of their adherence to God's law. Hus's own words also echoed in those of his followers, and the recurrence of central themes from his own letters and sermons maintained

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<sup>166</sup> The development of these visual tropes in depictions of Hus continued through the German and English reformations of the sixteenth century. On the continued development of these distinctive visual markers, see: Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, "The Iconography of the Acts and Monuments," in D. Loades, ed., *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1997) 66-142, 90ff..

his presence in the midst of the Hussite community. These words also assumed a new meaning, as quasi-prophetic utterances that gained special relevance in the atmosphere of heightened conflict that accompanied Martin V's pronouncements and the threats of Emperor Sigismund. As the situation suggested that perhaps the truth would not prevail against the papacy and its political supporters, the Bohemians' faith in this mandate only grew.

Despite their threats, the king and the pope ultimately played key roles in helping to prove the validity of the Hussite worldview; by colluding in the death of Hus and engaging in the continued oppression of the Bohemians, both emperor and pope served to confirm the Hussites' identification with the persecuted early church. And as the rhetoric and actual modes of persecution intensified, so too did the Hussites' conviction of their own status as the true church. The widespread identification with the ideals of martyrdom, and the willingness of many Bohemians to suffer for the truth, pushed the nation into open rebellion against their king and the highest representatives of religious orthodoxy. It is my contention that the commemoration of Hus, and the persistence of his *memoria* within the Bohemian reform, played a vital role in inspiring and sustaining this revolt. I would also suggest that the survival of this commemoration was one key way in which the Hussites survived both holy war and the Catholic church's efforts for reconciliation. Even as violence and the subsequent promise of peace served as a lure to draw the Hussites back into the universal church, the Bohemians would not surrender the veneration of Hus, the triumphant martyr,

who continued to cast a long shadow over the course of Roman-Bohemian interactions throughout the fifteenth century.

## Chapter Three

### *“Venit inimicus homo, et superseminavit zizaniam:”* Crusades, Councils, and the Transformation of the Hussite Movement

#### Introduction

In the wake of Wenceslas's death in 1419, the conflict between the Hussites and the Roman church changed dramatically. Faced with the development of revolutionary rhetoric and the outbreak of violence, the Catholic church deployed all of its available means to arrest the growth of Hussite heresy. Papal interdicts and indulgences, the threat and prosecution of crusades, theological disputation, and diplomatic negotiation were all employed against the Bohemians. Over the course of the 1420s, these efforts were abject failures. The Hussites' self-perception as an elect nation who had been chosen by God to disseminate his truth in the world sustained them throughout their struggle with the Roman church and emperor. Indeed, as chapter two demonstrated, conflict only affirmed the Hussites' understanding of themselves as the embattled true church. Every effort to isolate and attack Bohemia backfired precisely because it provided the persecutory stimulus the Hussites needed in order to sustain their identity as the suffering followers of Christ, the apostolic church *redivivus*. Attacks by the Hussites' German neighbors and the militant rhetoric of the revived papacy only served to unite the Hussites in opposition to those who sought to destroy their church and nation.<sup>1</sup> The Hussite theologian and apologist

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<sup>1</sup> The conflicts of the 1420s revealed and strengthened the linguistic nationalism of the Bohemians; beginning in 1420, Hussite authors often highlighted how the pope and emperor had stirred up the Bohemians' "natural enemies, the Germans" to oppose the "most faithful Czech

Peter Payne's words to the Emperor Sigismund in 1429 were thus entirely typical when he asserted that the Bohemians' willingness to suffer was —the glory of the saints and the exaltation of humble Christians, the glory of the lowly, the riches of the poor, and the invincible strength of the righteous.”<sup>2</sup>

The 1420s provided the Hussites with many opportunities to prove their willingness. In all, Pope Martin V proclaimed five crusades against Bohemia from 1420-1431, and both the Emperor Sigismund and various German princes marshalled troops for these incursions against the Hussites. These wars were often instigated by, and in turn inspired, a sharply polarized rhetoric that described the conflict in apocalyptic terms. Both the crusaders and the Bohemians imagined themselves as the heirs of the apostolic age, willing to become martyrs and opposed by the diabolical forces that had taken over the world. In particular, Sigismund came to be identified with the “great red dragon” of Revelation, a pretender to the Bohemian throne whose persecution of his potential subjects showed his true nature. In turn, Hus and his successors among the Bohemians were described with identical terms, and this characterization made compromise impossible. There could be no negotiations with the followers of the Antichrist, no matter who they were.

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kingdom” and —our language.” These terms were used repeatedly in the Hussite manifestoes of 1420. See especially the —Manifest Pražanů do Českých Krajů,” in Molnár, *Husitské Manifesty*, 64-66.

<sup>2</sup> —Ipsa est gloria sanctorum et humilium exaltatio christianorum, laus deiectorum, prosperitas miserorum et invictissima fortitudo iustorum.” This quotation comes from an oration by Peter Payne delivered before Sigismund in 1429 at Bratislava; the speech was part of a meeting at which the Hussites presented their demands and requirements for Sigismund if he wanted to be accepted as the king of Bohemia. See: Peter Payne, —Oratio ad Sigismundum Regem Bratislaviae A.D. 1429 Habita,” in F. Bartoš, ed., *Peter Payne Anglici, Positio, replica, et propositio Concilio Basiliensi a 1433 atque oratio ad Sigismundum* (Tábor: Taboriensis ecclesia evangelica fratrum Bohemorum, 1949), 81-90, 85. On the meeting at Bratislava, see: František Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution 1424-1437*, J. Klassen, trans. (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1986), 42.

Or could there be? The failure of the fifth crusade in 1431 led to the use of new tactics by the Hussites' Catholic interlocutors. During periods of peace, the religious energy of the Bohemian reform tended to lead to internal fissures and conflict. Chiliasm, communism, and the self-interest of the Bohemian nobility all led to internal divisions over the first two decades of the Hussite movement, but in each case the entropy of the Hussite movement was overcome by the reemergence of external threats. Beginning in 1431, negotiation became the preferred means by which the church dealt with the Hussites, particularly through discussions at the Council of Basel in 1433. These negotiations led to the *Compactata*, a peace treaty and affirmation of Bohemian orthodoxy that was ratified in 1436 and made Emperor Sigismund's uncontested ascent to the throne of Bohemia possible.<sup>3</sup> This treaty was the result of a split within the Hussite camp, as moderate nobles and theologians made peace a priority and alienated the more radical Hussites centered around Tábor. This split led to a brief but decisive civil war in which the radical Hussites were defeated at Lipany in 1434. This military defeat, which signaled the "end of the revolution in Bohemia, though not of the reformation," paved the way for the seeming domestication of the Hussites

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<sup>3</sup> The Basel *Compactata* was the result of nearly four years of negotiations between the Council of Basel and the Hussites; this agreement was one of the major accomplishments of the fathers at Basel. The *Compactata* allowed communion in both kinds to the Bohemians, as long as consubstantiation was taught in the churches, and communion in both kinds was not taught to be necessary for salvation. The *Compactata* also forbade calling the Bohemians heretics, and served as grounds for the peaceful existence of the Bohemian national church, which came to be called the Utraquist church. On Catholic perceptions of the *Compactata*, see Hermann Hallauer, "Das Glaubensgespräch mit den Hussiten," *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanusgesellschaft* 9 (1971), 53-75. See also: Winfried Eberhard, "Der Weg zur Koexistenz: Kaiser Sigmund und das Ende der Hussitischen Revolution," *Bohemia* 33 (1992), 1-43.

by the Basel leadership.<sup>4</sup> The price of establishing a Bohemian national church, now christened the Utraquist church after the ritual practice ceded to it in the *Compactata*, seemed to be the loss of the radical and militant ideology that had motivated Hus's friends and followers.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the shift from the Hussite movement to the Utraquist church that took place with the acceptance of the *Compactata* and Sigismund's kingship, the original vision of the Hussite movement survived.<sup>6</sup> The cult of Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs, whose numbers had swelled during the crusades of the 1420s, kept the memory of suffering and martyrdom alive among the Bohemians. Even as the Hussites' opponents at Basel tried to split the Hussites and recast the movement's history, various leaders within Bohemia turned to Hus for inspiration and as an embodiment of their reform program. Although the cessation of conflict and the desire for reconciliation minimized Hus's relevance as a martyr who could be imitated, he and his death maintained their central place in the

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<sup>4</sup> Frederick Heymann, *John Jiřka and the Hussite Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1955), 318.

<sup>5</sup> I use the name "Utraquist church" to describe the national church in Bohemia after 1436, when it was recognized as legitimate by the Council of Basel and the Emperor Sigismund. This is in contradistinction to the "Hussite movement (or church)," which existed from 1415-1436. I make this distinction to highlight the structural changes and different self-understanding by Bohemian church leaders that accompanied the ratification of the *Compactata*. This naming convention differs from that of Zdeněk David, who has made an impassioned case for only using "Utraquist/Utraquism" to describe the Bohemian reform. On this terminology, see above, Chapter 2, fn. 5; and David, *Finding the Middle Way*, xiii-xiv.

<sup>6</sup> As early as 1431, Johannes Nider argued that the practice of utraquism was the only substantive difference between the majority of Hussites and Roman orthodoxy. His view, which he expressed in reports to the council fathers at Basel, came to be adopted by the majority of the Hussites' opponents. On Nider's equation of utraquism with Hussitism, see: Michael Bailey, *Heresy, Witchcraft, and Reform: Johannes Nider and the Religious World of the Late Middle Ages* (unpublished dissertation, Northwestern University, 1998), 126.



Bohemians' identity as the chosen recipients of God's truth —over and above other peoples."<sup>7</sup>

Ultimately, then, the story of the Hussite movement, and the response to it by preachers, polemicists, and legates, was one of adaptation. Initially, the Catholic Church failed to comprehend fully the nature of Hussite identity, because it could not take seriously the role of Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs in the formation of that identity. Despite this inability, the fathers of the Council of Basel managed to create distance between the peaceful desires of the Utraquist church and the reforming impulses of their more radical coreligionists, and thus defused some of the power of those founding martyrs. The Hussite movement, on the other hand, ceded its messianic impulses and desire for the reform of all Christendom; instead, it turned towards the establishment of a lasting reform in Bohemia, and retreated behind the linguistic and religious boundaries of their own kingdom. Catholic authors came to view Hus as a heretic who had been duly tried and executed, a diabolically inspired preacher who had seduced the people of Bohemia. His legacy was a ritual practice and devoted followers who had further misled the Bohemian nation and instilled a hatred of the Catholic clergy in the people.<sup>8</sup> The apparent success of the fathers at Basel and Sigismund was that they had defused this hatred with the promise of peace and limited concessions. The

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<sup>7</sup> The Hussite archbishop Jan Rokycana made precisely this claim during his presentation at the Council of Basel regarding communion in both kinds. For his argument, see: Jan Rokycana, —*Oratio seu Praesentatio Bohemorum, facta coram domino legato praesidente in concilio Basileensi in ipso primo adventu,*” in Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova, et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 30, 260-269, 263.

<sup>8</sup> On this perception of the Hussite movement by Roman authors, see: Thomas Fudge, —*Seduced by the Theologians: Aeneas Sylvius and the Hussite Heretics,*” in I. Hunter et al., eds., *Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 89-101.

open question, however, was whether such tactics could totally eliminate the memory of Hus from the Bohemian lands. Even if Hus had been one who merely sowed tares among the Bohemian people, they had sunk deep roots that would prove nearly impossible to eradicate.

### The Prelude to the First Crusade

In 1418, after returning to France from the Council of Constance, Jean Gerson wrote the following words as an admonition to an unnamed heretic who sought to reform the church without the proper authorization from his ecclesiastical superiors:

You seek to exercise zeal against the sinner; you seek to banish them from the earth. I will give you an antidote that does not involve verbal strife, flogging, imprisonment, blows or wounds, danger to you: live worthily yourself and pray for others; endure them and lament for them.<sup>9</sup>

Certainly, this advice was ironic given Gerson's participation in the burning of Hus and Jerome, but this was the Parisian scholar's final consideration of the Hussite heresy.<sup>10</sup> These thoughts represented a minority opinion by 1418, though, as the militancy of both the papal and Hussite parties had reached new heights. I

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<sup>9</sup> This quotation is from Gerson's *De Consolatione Theologiae*, a dialogue between a monk, Monicus, and a pilgrim, Volucer. Throughout the text, Volucer was the voice of reason and true religion, who responded to Monicus's cynical or misinformed questions. The text also included poetic digressions that recast the dialogue into more pithy formulations. The third book of the dialogue dealt primarily with Hus, although Gerson never mentioned him by name; both Burrows and Miller, though, find the allusions to Hus's theology and heresy to be clear. The anonymity could be explained by Roman prohibitions on debating condemned heretics, who had proven themselves immune to argumentation. All quotations from *De Consolatione Theologiae* here are from Clyde Miller's edition and translation, which was based on a 1472 edition of the text printed in Cologne (by Arnold ther Hoernen). For this quotation, see: Jean Gerson, *The Consolation of Theology*, C. Miller, ed. and trans. (Norwalk, CT: Abaris Books, 1998), 207.

<sup>10</sup> On this text and its analysis of the Hussite heresy, see: Mark Burrows, *Jean Gerson and De Consolatione Theologiae* (JCB Mohr: Tübingen, 1991), 201ff.; and *idem.*, "Jean Gerson after Constance: 'Via Media et Regia' as a Revision of the Ockhamist Covenant," *Church History* 59 (1990), 467-481.

would suggest that another passage from *De Consolatione Theologiae* represented a more appropriate epigram for the following years, as it captured the polarized rhetoric of both sides in the impending conflict:

Zeal is like fire, it burns within the heart  
Inciting it forcefully to where one tends;  
Restrain it, make it toe the mark.  
In it two passions collide equally –  
Each alone remains too much, too wanton:  
Love impels from one side, hatred rages from the other.<sup>11</sup>

In 1419 and 1420, restraint was equally lacking among the Bohemian and foreign Catholic parties. Particularly after the death of Wenceslas, the nature of the conflict between the Hussites, the nobility, and the Bohemian king changed dramatically. Gone was the somewhat bumbling king who had allowed Hussitism to flourish with his benign neglect and hesitation. In his place was his brother, Sigismund, an ambitious ruler known for his allegiance to the Catholic church and his anti-Bohemian sentiments. Sigismund had much at stake in successfully claiming the Bohemian throne. Although Sigismund was both the king of Hungary and the Holy Roman Emperor, František Bartoš has noted that these were “paper crowns;” that is, Sigismund had neither practical control nor a steady income from either title, and he needed a reliable territorial and monetary base to maintain his power and defend Europe from the encroaching Ottomans.<sup>12</sup> Given

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<sup>11</sup> Gerson, *The Consolation of Theology*, 169. Gerson had previously defined “zeal” on page 167: “I intend to speak about the consolation achieved through patience, but I think I will do it by beginning with how to control zeal. Zeal has much power among the passions...Even if zeal sometimes means envy, sometimes hatred, sometimes pretense, we will use ‘zeal’ here to stand for the powerful desire by which anyone is roused to remove what seems opposed to something he loves.”

<sup>12</sup> On Sigismund’s “dvoji papírová koruna,” see: Bartoš, *Do čtyř*, 45. Because of the Ottoman threat to Hungary, Sigismund had spent much of 1419 in that kingdom (which he had not stayed in at length since 1412). He stayed there until the winter of that year, and did not enter Moravia until just before Christmas, 1419. On the threat of an Ottoman invasion and Sigismund’s response, see:

this need, then, Sigismund acted decisively over the second half of 1419 to secure Bohemia. Sigismund found ready partners in this goal; the Bohemian nobility had proven hesitant to embrace revolt under Wenceslas, and by September they and a group of Prague burghers had produced a series of articles laying out their conditions for accepting Sigismund as their king. These articles sought the legal toleration of utraquism, the use of the vernacular in the mass, the free preaching of the Gospel, and a requirement that Catholic bishops would ordain priests who would give communion in both kinds to the laity.<sup>13</sup> The articles also asked for political concessions, including Sigismund's promise to promote only Czechs to positions of authority within the government and his recognition of the nobles' rights to the land that had been secularized since 1416.<sup>14</sup>

At first blush, Sigismund appeared very willing to win over the nobility and burghers by recognizing their concerns. Sigismund was evasive on the religious issues, vaguely suggesting that they could be reconsidered by a future church council, but he did take steps to show his good faith to the Hussite nobility. In December, 1419 he named Čeněk of Wartenberg the regent of Bohemia, replacing Wenceslas's widow Sophie in that position. Wartenberg was quite open in his Hussite sympathies, so this appointment assuaged the Hussite party and showed Sigismund's canniness in trying to conquer the Bohemian

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Wilhelm Baum, *Císař Zikmund: Kostnice, Hus, a války proti Turkům* (Prague: Mladá Fronta, 1996), 173ff.

<sup>13</sup> There is no certain date for the assembly of burghers and nobles that drafted this set of articles, although Kaminsky dates the articles to late August or early September, 1419. Two recensions of the articles survive, one in Czech and one in German. The Czech version is edited in: *AC* 3, 206-208. For a discussion of the dating of these articles, see: Kaminsky, *A History*, 296-297.

<sup>14</sup> The Prague burghers also demanded certain concessions that mixed religious and political concerns; they asked that brothels not be re-opened in the city, and that Sigismund would confirm the acts of the magistrates appointed against Wenceslas's wishes in the wake of the July defenestration. Kaminsky, *A History*, 298.

nobility with kindness.<sup>15</sup> In light of Sigismund's assurances, the nobles did homage to Sigismund as their rightful ruler at a diet held in Brno on December 25. On December 27, a delegation from Prague arrived, and they also submitted to Sigismund. As a result of their capitulation, German townsmen and priests who had been driven out of the city in the tumults of 1419 returned, on account of which a great fear and panic took possession of the adherents of the truth."<sup>16</sup> The relative ease of this political victory over the Bohemian nobility and Prague emboldened Sigismund considerably. Upon arriving in the Silesian town of Breslau (Wrocław) in January, 1420, to arbitrate a dispute between the king of Poland and the Teutonic knights, Sigismund issued a series of letters to the royal towns in Bohemia demanding that their councils act immediately to suppress the *Wickliefie*." According to Lawrence of Březová, Sigismund even told his officials that they should persecute and imprison Wyclifites, Hussites, and those practicing communion with the chalice in every way, and exterminate them if possible."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Sigismund also appointed two nobles with Roman sympathies as Chief Steward and Chief Chamberlain of the kingdom. These latter positions conferred control over the royal castles and royal towns (including Prague) in Bohemia. On Sigismund and his treatment of the nobility, see: Heymann, *John Třtka*, 105. See also: Baum, *Císar Zikmund*, 178-179.

<sup>16</sup> *Quamobrem timor magnus et pavor veritatis adherentes invasit, canonicis, plebanis ac ceteris sacerdotibus et religiosis nec no et secularibus certis, qui post mortem regis Wenceslai propter Hussitarum timorem de civitate fugerant, cum gaudio Pragam revertentibus.*" This account comes from: Lawrence of Březová, *—Komika Husitská*," in *FRB* 5, 354.

<sup>17</sup> In a letter written on February 1, Sigismund commanded the city governments in western Bohemia: *Hirumme euch allen gemeinlich und auch eim yttlichen dem sein bei der selben buesze gebite, das er der Wicklefie entweiche, und den von Pilsen und Piesk und den Grecz ader in andern steten wo das were in unseren behmischen kunigreich do si ir sampnung haben ein hulfe noch rot geben, und auch sich nicht zu in sammen, noch imant zu sammen lassen nuert, das si genczlich von dem selbe newm glauben entwichen und der kirchen begot und geheis das si das halden und kein rumor noch murmeley ubiral nicht aufrichten.*" See: *—K. Sigmund ad die böhmisches Ständes des Saatzer Kreises*," *UB*, 15-17, 16. Lawrence cited an unknown letter of Sigismund to his officials that ordered: *Wikleffistas et Hussitas et calicis practisantes communionem modis omnibus arceant, persequantur et pro posse exterminent.*" See: Lawrence of Březová, *—Komika Husitská*," 357.

This harsh rhetoric and Sigismund's swing to a firmly anti-Hussite position were major miscalculations. Although the aristocracy had pledged their support for Sigismund, their opinion did not mirror that of the majority of Hussites in Bohemia. Indeed, since the mass meetings at Tábor and the Prague insurrection of July, 1419, Hussite radicalism had continued to escalate in the Bohemian countryside. Two mass meetings took place in September, 1419, the first on the seventeenth and the second on the thirtieth. The product of the first meeting was a sharply worded manifesto marked by a pronounced apocalyptic tone: "We now clearly see the great abomination standing in the holy place as prophesied by the prophet Daniel: the ridicule, blasphemy, and suppression, and repudiation of all of God's Truth, and the glorification of all Antichristian hypocritical evil, under the name of holiness and benevolence."<sup>18</sup> This manifesto was not the only objection to Sigismund's coronation that employed apocalyptic language. In Prague, Tělivský equated Sigismund to the great red dragon from Revelation, and decried any compromise with him.<sup>19</sup> Tělivský preached throughout October and November against the magistrates of Prague and the nobility as well, referring to them as "our Pharisees departing from those

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<sup>18</sup> "Již zjevně viduce ohavnost velikú stojící na swaté místě jakž jest prorokováno od Daniele proroka; posměch a rúhání, potlačenie a zawrťe nie všie prawdy božie, a přeweliké zwelebenie všie zlosti antikristské pokrytske, pod jmeném swátosti a dobrotivosti." The manifesto is reprinted in: *AČ* 3, 205-206; this quotation, 205-206.

<sup>19</sup> In a sermon on Matthew 22:15, Tělivský referred Revelation 12:3 – "Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads," stating that the dragon came and made war on those who upheld God's law: "Et ? est draco in malicia(?) ...et abys bellum cum." See: MS NKP V G 3, f. 214r. On the influence of this imagery in Bohemia, see: Molnár, "Prédicateur de la révolution," 329; and Klassen, "Images of Anti-Majesty," 273.

preaching the truth” because of their collaboration with Sigismund.<sup>20</sup> Țelivský’s preaching and the popular agitation outside of Prague coalesced in late October, when Hussite forces seized the Prague New Town and the royal fortress of Vyšehrad just south of the city. They feared an attack by royalist forces that had been stationed at Prague Castle and throughout the Lesser Town, and the two sides fought a series of pitched battles throughout the city in early November.<sup>21</sup> Although the Hussite forces were largely victorious, driving Sigismund’s supporters from their positions in the Lesser Town and around Prague castle, the Prague magistrates surrendered the ground the Hussites had gained to the royalists in a truce that was signed on November 13, 1419.<sup>22</sup>

This capitulation, as well as the acts of homage that were performed in Brno in December, seemed to suggest that the political leaders who had supported the Hussite movement’s growth under Wenceslas had turned to Sigismund and against the continued religious reform of Bohemia. In light of this betrayal, many of the priests and laypeople who had been assembling in the great outdoor gatherings of 1419 decisively abandoned hope for the reformation of all Bohemian society. Instead, they began to call for the withdrawal of all godly

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<sup>20</sup> –Sic hodie nostri pharisei abierunt ab quibusdam veritatem predicantibus.” MS NKP V G 3, f. 209r. On the following page, Țelivský also complained of the –pharizei sedent in iudiciis tradentes fideles.”

<sup>21</sup> After the large outdoor meeting of September, 30, a large gathering was scheduled for Prague on November 10. In the weeks leading up to proposed assembly, the forces in the city that desired the coronation of Sigismund acted to suppress the factions in Prague that supported the provincial radicals (especially Țelivský’s followers) and prohibit people from coming into the city. A buildup of military forces by the royalists and Hussites occurred over the course of October, and the Hussites, led by the one-eyed noble Jan Țiřka, seized the Vyšehrad fortress on October 25. On these events, see: Heymann, *John Țiřka*, 83-85.

<sup>22</sup> The truce was scheduled to last until April, 1420, and its terms required the Hussites to stop destroying church property and return the Vyšehrad to royalist supporters. This last concession was especially damaging, as it ceded control of the access points to Prague from the south to Sigismund’s supporters. On the terms of the treaty, see: Lawrence of Březova, –Kronika Husitská,” 350ff.

people to five cities in western Bohemia.<sup>23</sup> These radicals, led by the priest Wenceslas Koranda, prophesied the destruction of the world by an act of divine judgment and the subsequent return of Christ in February, 1420.<sup>24</sup> When these predictions failed to come about, the separatist tendencies of those who had withdrawn from the larger world were transformed into calls for vengeance. The chiliasts' logic was that Christ's return could not take place until the godless had been removed from the earth. The agent of this cleansing would be the faithful people of God, rather than angels or God himself.<sup>25</sup> In this way, the nationalist and messianic sentiments that defined the Bohemians as God's chosen people gained a new valence in which the Hussites' universalist mission took on a new, violent aspect. As one Hussite preacher stated it, "The time to wander with the pilgrim's staff is over. Now we shall have to march with sword in hand."<sup>26</sup> Given the development of this chiliastic justification for violence, and Sigismund's nearly contemporaneous call for the persecution of Wyclifite and Hussite heretics in Bohemia, conflict was inevitable. The scope and longevity of the military

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<sup>23</sup> The idea of the five cities of refuge derived from Isaiah 19:18, which predicted that "On that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan." The cities in Bohemia that were designated as safe places were: Tátec, Louny, Slaný, Klatovy, and Pilsen, with the last being designated as "The City of the Sun" from the same prophecy by Isaiah. See: Heymann, *John Třtka*, 74-77; and Howard Kaminsky, "Chiliasm and the Hussite Revolution," *Church History* 26 (1957), 43-71.

<sup>24</sup> Koranda had been the spiritual leader of the Pilsen Hussite community and a main figure in the mass meetings of 1419. In particular, he had been a leading voice at the September meetings which prompted the movement of Hussite forces to Prague in October.

<sup>25</sup> On the development of this belief in human agency and its role as a prerequisite to the return of Christ, see: Fudge, "The Night of Antichrist," 40ff.; for a Marxist interpretation of the move to violence, see: Ernst Werner, "Popular Ideologies in Late Medieval Europe: Taborite Chiliasm and its Antecedents," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2 (1959-1960), 344-363. Kaminsky has assembled an extensive collection of the primary sources detailing the chiliastic movement in his: *A History*, 310-330 and Appendix III, 517-550.

<sup>26</sup> This quotation is from: Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 696.



conflict, though, as well as the diversity and militancy of the rhetoric that justified it, could not have been anticipated by any of the combatants in the winter of 1420.

In March, 1420, Sigismund took two decisive steps that pushed Bohemia into a state of war that would last for over a decade. Perhaps the emperor was confident in the alliances he had forged with the nobility of Bohemia; perhaps he was concerned by the growth of the chiliastistic movement in western Bohemia, and acted in order to arrest the further growth of religious radicalism. No matter his motivations, on March 15 Sigismund signed off on the execution of Jan Krása, a Prague merchant who was in Breslau on business.<sup>27</sup> Krása was denounced and tried before an ecclesiastical court for having spoken against the Council of Constance and its execution of Hus and Jerome. Despite being tortured, Krása refused to recant, and he denied that utraquism was a sin. The Hussite chronicler Lawrence of Březova described Krása's execution:

He was dragged through the city by horses and assailed with various blasphemies and insults, and he was consumed in a pit of fire. He was exhorted by many admonitions, but reposed as much as possible in the truth of God, untouched by the impious in their evil. He endured, steadfast and constant in our faith, and persevered in holiness with the manner of a vigorous soldier, the strongest champion of the Lord, praying for his enemies, accepting all their blasphemies, heretications, abuses and insults, and even sustaining their harshest penalties.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Throughout the development of the Hussite movement, the city of Breslau was a sort of anti-Prague; its patrician oligarchs were consistently pro-Rome, and the city and its allies in Silesia did whatever they could to undermine the Hussite movement both militarily and politically. On the city's role in anti-Hussite actions, see: Heymann, *John Třitka*, 109-110.

<sup>28</sup> "Per tortores quoque ac lictores equis per civitatem tractus blasphemii diversis ac probris afficitur et ignis consumitur voragine. Qui quamvis variis fuerit admonitionibus exhortatus, quatenus veritate legis Dei relicta impiis acquiescat in malitia, stabilis et constans in fide nostra permansit ac in sancto perstitit proposito tanquam miles strenuus, Athleta Domini fortissimus, orans namque pro suis inimicis, omnes eorum blasphemias, hereticationes, probra ac derisiones, nec non et penas sustinuit durissimas." See: Lawrence of Březová, "Kronika Husitská," 358.

The execution of Krása gave a clear indication of how Sigismund's supporters would deal with Hussite sympathizers; this message was amplified and clarified only two days later, when the papal envoy Fernand of Lucena publicly proclaimed a crusade bull against the Bohemians, *Omnium Plasmatoris Domini*, in Breslau.<sup>29</sup> Martin V had issued the bull on March 1 in Florence, and its promulgation only two days after Krása's gruesome execution added explicit papal approval to the measures taken by the local court. The crusade bull itself was essentially an apology for Sigismund and a validation of his role as emperor and king in helping the church to —ling the flock to the royal sheep fold...lest it graze in infected pastures filled with the pitfalls of reprobates."<sup>30</sup> The bull also asserted concerning Sigismund:

On the basis of the purest motives and a yearning to use the power granted him as king to the praise of God he has turned against these people of profanity, evil and iniquitous reprobation, the Wyclifites and Hussites as well as others who have become fascinated by the darkness. Through superstitious assumptions and doctrines they and their disciples have become maddened through these dogmas, errors, and heresies. They want to subvert the true faith and to lead the flock into danger through errors and devious methods into the outer chambers of hell.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> On Fernand of Lucena and his role in the events of March, 1420, see: Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution*, 1072.

<sup>30</sup> —Regiam evocetur ad caulam, vigiliis nos congruit vacare sollicitis, ne reproborum ad praecipitiaque trahentium distentis laqueis contagiosam depascat." Martin V, *Omnium Plasmatoris Domini*, in *UB*, 17-20, 17.

<sup>31</sup> —Sane carissimus in christo filius noster Sigismundus, Romanorum rex illustris, prout tam fide dignorum relatione plurimorum, quam celebri increbescente fama didicimus, sicuti inspiramine fulciente divino, in universalis tunc scissure supposite reintegratione ecclesie, eciam non sine gravium sarcina expensarum, immensos fructuosissimos quoque non abnuit subire labores, ita fidei zelo, devotionis ardore et compassionis pietate suadentibus, ulteriori christiane religionis propagationi intimis intendens affectibus, cupiensque sibi a rege supremo collatam in gloriosi sui exaltationem nominis, et adversus profane malignantis ac iniquitatis reproborum homines Wiclefistas Hussitasque et reliquos, quibus fascinatis intelligentie obstructo lumine tenebrarum ut alumni supersticiosos eorum assertionibus et doctrinis vesanisque dogmatibus et erroribus, ac heresum fomentis, catholicam scilicet ecclesiam comprimere, orthodoxam quoque fidem subvertere et gregem huiusmodi per errorum eorundem scopulos in devium ductum primi gehenne municipii faucibus libare satagunt." Martin V, *Omnium Plasmatoris Domini*, 18.

Along with the promotion of Sigismund as the executor of the church's will in the crusade, Martin promised a series of indulgences to those who participated in the crusade, including an offer of the full remission of sins for those who fought, even if they proved to be arsonists, violators of the clergy, or blasphemers in the course of the crusade.<sup>32</sup>

This bull, which was a logical extension of Martin's earlier invocation of ecclesiastical censures in *Inter Cunctus*, ultimately suggested that the execution of the Hussite martyrs would be generalized to the Bohemian population as a whole. The three Prague martyrs of 1412, Hus, Jerome, the victims of the Kutná Hora purges, and now Jan Krása had all been victims of the opposition that the Hussites faced from the world. Their stories and the memory of their steadfastness therefore provided a distinctive religious focus that prompted a decisive, unified political and military response to the impending crusade. Within the context of the declaration of the crusade in 1420, the rhetoric of tyranny and martyrdom came to the foreground of Bohemian reactions to the invasion of their kingdom.

### The Rhetoric and Reality of Victory in the First Crusade

The Hussite response to the declaration of the crusade and the execution of Krása was remarkable in both its unity and its rapidity. By April 3, the city of Prague issued a manifesto to the Czech provinces calling for them to take up arms and defend their nation against the provocations of ~~our~~ natural enemies, the

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<sup>32</sup> On the indulgences offered by the pope, see: Martin V, *Omnium Plasmatoris Domini*, 19-20.

neighboring Germans.”<sup>33</sup> Within three weeks (on April 20), another manifesto circulated among the nobles of Bohemia and Moravia. Surprisingly, the named authors of this tract were Čeněk of Wartenberg, Sigismund’s regent in Bohemia, and Ulrich of Rosenberg, who would later prove to be the emperor’s and pope’s most reliable noble supporter throughout the Hussite wars.<sup>34</sup> In these manifestoes, there were no signs of the cleavages that had divided the Bohemians in late 1419. Faced with an external threat, the religious radicals, nobility, and burghers of Prague came together to face their enemies with a united front. Despite their material and religious differences, this unity was based on several key foundations. The first was a devotion to the Czech language and nation. In the polemics that emerged from the crusade, Bohemian authors regularly equated the Czech language (*—jazyk*) with the Czech nation, and they regularly portrayed Sigismund and his soldiers as those who wanted to eradicate the Czech tongue.<sup>35</sup> The second foundation of unity was the memory of Bohemian suffering over the previous five years. In almost every piece of Czech propaganda from 1420, the executions of Hus, Jerome, and Krása played a decisive role as evidence of the

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<sup>33</sup> Here, I use the term Czech to include both Moravians and Bohemians; the chief unifying factor in determining membership in this nation was linguistic, as Czechs were those who spoke Czech, not those (e.g. Germans) who lived in the Czech lands but spoke foreign languages. On the idea of the Czech lands as the new Israel, see: Urbánek, *—Český mesianismus*,” 10. This identification of the Czechs’ enemies as *—přátele naše přirozené, Němce okolní*” came from the *—Manifest Pražanů*,” 65.

<sup>34</sup> See: *—Páni a Pražané všem Čechům*,” in Molnár, *Husitské Manifesty*, 67-70. Wartenberg’s opposition would have been shocking to Sigismund, who had earlier honored Wartenberg in Breslau. The regent’s role in the drafting of this proposal therefore represented a radical change in his relationship with Sigismund. Heymann has also suggested that Rosenberg’s name was affixed without his knowledge, as Rosenberg was a staunch Catholic and began a friendly and loyal correspondence with Sigismund as early as May, 1420. Thus, his participation in the drafting of the nobles’ manifesto seems unlikely. See: Heymann, *John Třtka*, 113-114.

<sup>35</sup> On the equation of the Czech language with the Czech nation, see: Šmahel, *—The Idea of the Nation*,” vol. 17, 115-118; Hruza, *—Die hussitischen Manifeste*,” 129; and Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 228-230..

faith of the Czech nation and the satanic inspiration of its foes. The third foundation was a marked distrust and loathing for Sigismund, who came to embody tyranny and the forcible suppression of God's truth.<sup>36</sup> The fourth and final basis for unity was the development of a baseline of religious practice that all the Hussites could accept as normative and binding; these normative practices came to be enshrined as the Four Articles of Prague, which would serve as the core of Hussite "orthodoxy" for the following decades.

The manifestoes of April, 1420 expressed all of these themes, often with striking imagery and harsh language. The tract of April 3 dealt primarily with the Roman church, which it described as a stepmother (*mačecha*) church and a "most brutal snake that gave birth to a damned fetus...and poured out a deadly poison on us all."<sup>37</sup> The manifesto also lamented that the "innocent cross of Christ, full of patience and divine gentleness," had been "lifted up by a bloody hand in Breslau" and turned against Bohemia in the crusade.<sup>38</sup> In short, the church had betrayed its pastoral mission in order to suppress the truth of God that had been revealed in Bohemia with violence. The letter of April 20 laid out the Hussite case against Sigismund more fully; the authors described Sigismund not as the rightful king of Bohemia, duly elected and crowned, but as a "great and

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<sup>36</sup> On this idea, see: John Klassen, "Images of Anti-Majesty in Hussite Literature," *Bohemia* 33 (1992), 267-281.

<sup>37</sup> "Jako nejukrutnější had porodila zlořečený plod...a vylila na nás všečen smrtelný jed." "Manifest Pražanů do Českých Krajů," 64.

<sup>38</sup> The manifesto first decried the declaration of the crusade: "Vratislavi krvavými rukama zjevně vyzdvihla kříž ukrutný proti všem věrným našeho království." It later compared the crusader's cross to "ten bezbranný kříž Pána Jeť íše, plný snášenlivosti a dobroty boží." "Manifest Pražanů do Českých Krajů," 64-65.

cruel enemy of the Czech kingdom and language.”<sup>39</sup> His hatred for the Czechs was easily inferred from his conduct at Constance, where he supported the council’s condemnation of communion in both kinds and “disgraced and stained us before all Christians with the most heinous insult,” of the accusation of heresy.<sup>40</sup> The second manifesto also accused Sigismund of more direct attacks on the Czech people: he stood by the papal legate as he called for a crusade, condemned Krása to die “for no other reason, than for the consumption of the blood of God,” and commanded the slaughter of Hussite sympathizers by the miners at Kutná Hora.<sup>41</sup> Finally, “to the remarkable shame and disgrace of the Czech crown and language, he ordered Master Jan Hus of glorious memory to burn in the presence of the Council of Constance without regard to his safe conduct.”<sup>42</sup>

These texts dissociated the person of Sigismund from all of the trappings of royal power in Bohemia. Although he was called the Roman emperor and Hungarian king, he was shown to be in opposition to the nation, kingdom, crown, and language of Bohemia. This rhetorical distancing was not entirely new; throughout the fourteenth century the nobility of Bohemia had contrasted the “*natio*” or “*corona*” of Bohemia and the person of the king, so they could claim their prerogatives as representatives of the former over and against the interests of

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<sup>39</sup> “Neboť to dobře víte, že Jeho Milost není ještě pány českými za krále volen, ani k Českému království korunován, ale království a jazyka českého jest veliký a ukrutný nepřítel.” “Páni a Pražané všem Čechům,” 67.

<sup>40</sup> “Nejprve, že nejohavnější potupou všem křesťanům nás potupil a zhaněl, a to kacířstvím.” *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Regarding Krása, the manifesto stated that he was dragged by horses in Breslau and burned, “to nic pro jiné, jediné pro krve boží přijímání.” “Páni a Pražané všem Čechům,” 68.

<sup>42</sup> “Ak znamenité hanbě a potupě koruny a jazyka českého mistra Jana Husa slavné paměti...před sborem kostnickým přikázal upáliti bez ohledu na svůj glejt.” *Ibid.*

the latter.<sup>43</sup> Regarding Sigismund, Czech authors strengthened this opposition by characterizing him as a tyrant whose unjust exercise of power invalidated his claim to the crown of the Czech lands. In one open letter to Sigismund, he was addressed as “another Herod” who persecuted true Christians.<sup>44</sup> This letter also rehearsed Sigismund’s offenses against the Czechs – it explicitly referred to the executions of Krása and Hus and the murders at Kutná Hora. Interestingly, the letter also testified to the Czechs’ confidence in their ability to maintain the truth despite the opposition of Sigismund, for “blessed are those who suffer persecution on account of righteousness; and in addition, blessed are you, when men revile you.”<sup>45</sup> Here again, the pericope for the sermon on the first anniversary of Hus’s death appeared as an explanation for the suffering of the Bohemians. Given the imminence of a crusade, the Hussite marshalled their best theological arguments to both understand what was happening to them and justify their response to the military threat facing them. This response included the twin demonization of Sigismund as a cruel tyrant and the lionization of Hussite saints as examples of true faith.

In May, 1420 the city of Prague issued an open call to all Czechs to come to the city and defend her from the impending invasion of Sigismund and his

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<sup>43</sup> Joachim Prochno has gone so far as to see “*Rex und terra als Gegensatz*” in legal documents and political documents of the late fourteenth century. See: Prochno, “*Ferra Bohemiae*,” 207.

<sup>44</sup> This letter was written in response to a letter purportedly written by Sigismund to condemn the Czechs for their rebellion and arrogance in assuming that only they had received true Christian teaching. On Sigismund’s letter, see below, n. 104. Here, Sigismund was called an “*alter Herodes*” for his attempt to suppress God’s truth by force of arms. See: “*Responsum communitatum Pragensium super praescripta litera Sigismundi*,” in *UB 2*, 525-527, 527.

<sup>45</sup> “*Beati, qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iusticiam; insuper: beati, cum maledixerint vos homines.*” —“*Responsum communitatum Pragensium*,” 525. The reference here was to both Matthew 5: 10-11, which had come to serve as a main biblical watchword for the Hussite movement, and Luke 6:22, which Hus referred to in *De Sex Erroribus*. On these biblical citations and their importance to the Hussite movement, see above, Chapter 1, fn. 96 and 197.

army of crusaders. This plea for help was swiftly answered, and military forces from southern and northwestern Bohemia quickly arrived in the city to bolster its defenses and prepare for an extended siege. The forces from Tábor, which had grown from a site for impromptu outdoor worship services to a fortified town and permanent community for the most radical Hussites, arrived on May 20 under the command of Jan Țiřka.<sup>46</sup> He ultimately assumed command of all of the Hussite forces, and took steps throughout June to harrass royalist forces in the area and prepare Prague for Sigismund's attack.<sup>47</sup> During this crusade, and until his death in 1424, Țiřka would be revered by all Hussites as an avenging angel sent by God to protect Bohemia; despite the fact that he was blind in one eye, and lost the other to an arrow wound in 1421, Țiřka reputedly never lost a battle.<sup>48</sup> Even after his death, the Hussite general served as a military counterpart to Hus in

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<sup>46</sup> Over the course of 1419 and 1420, Tábor grew into a regional center that supported local agriculture, crafts, and the formation and maintenance of permanent armies. These so-called military brotherhoods became the shock troops of Hussite forces throughout the 1420s, and they attained a nearly mythical status as the unstoppable warriors of God (–boři bojovníci”). In its earliest phase of development, Tábor experimented with a communist economy, and was characterized by chiasm and religious experimentation. By 1420, though, the city had elected its own bishop, retreated from a purely socialist economic system, and eradicated the most radical religious elements from its midst. Tábor has fascinated historians (especially Marxist historians) with its radicalism and military success, and as such has garnered significant scholarly analysis. On the development of Tábor, see: Josef Macek, *The Hussite Movement in Bohemia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Prague: Orbis, 1957), especially 31ff.; Howard Kaminsky, "The Religion of Hussite Tabor," in M. Reichigl, ed., *The Czechoslovak Contribution to World Culture* (The Hague: Mouton, 1964), 210-223; and idem., *A History*, 310ff.; Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 148ff.; and idem., "Crime, Punishment and Pacifism in the Thought of Bishop Mikuláš of Pehřimov, 1420-1452," in *BRRP* 3 (2000), 69-103; and František Šmahel, *Dejiny Tábora* (České Budejovice Jihočeské Naklad, 1988); and idem., *Hussitische Revolution*, 1032ff.

<sup>47</sup> Jan Țiřka was a member of the lower nobility who was an early and devoted devotee of the Bohemian reform movement. He certainly heard Jan Hus preach in the Bethlehem Chapel, and he may have participated in the Prague defenestration of July 30, 1419. Țiřka was also a military genius who used peasant wagons loaded with light artillery as mobile fortresses that offset the strategic advantages of heavy cavalry. The best biography of Țiřka in a major language remains: Heymann, *John Țiřka*.

<sup>48</sup> For instance, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, in his history of Bohemia, was fascinated by Țiřka. Aeneas included to story of Țiřka's losing his second eye, but also noted that even after he was blinded he continued to direct Hussite forces in battle by having aides describe the terrain and the disposition of troops. On Aeneas and Țiřka, see: Howard Kaminsky, "Pius Aeneas among the Taborites," *Church History* 28 (1959), 281-309; and Fudge, "Seduced by the Theologians."



Bohemia's commemoration of its heroic protectors and patrons.<sup>49</sup> In spite of his preparations and continuous attacks on the crusaders, perhaps 80,000 armed men had surrounded Prague by early July.<sup>50</sup> The crusaders' army controlled the two castles that dominated access to the city from the north, west, and south, and outnumbered the defenders by a ratio of four or five to one. Hussite sources claimed that the invading army committed atrocities against the local population. Any Bohemians that the army captured, whether Hussite or Catholic, were burned as heretics. On July 6-7, 1420, the invaders even captured and executed an elderly village priest and several children because of their adherence to *utraquism*.<sup>51</sup> This sort of violence and the creation of new Hussite martyrs quickly became a prominent feature of the Hussite commemoration of the invasion, especially as Hussite chroniclers created lasting literary monuments to the war.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the overwhelming strategic advantages of Sigismund's forces, the actual battle for Prague in the first crusade was shockingly small. It consisted of a single skirmish for one strategic point of access to the city (the Vítkov hill) on July 14. Žižka and a small force of soldiers, along with a group of Hussite women

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<sup>49</sup> On the commemoration of Žižka after his death, see: Thomas Fudge, "Žižka's Drum: the Political use of Popular Religion," *Central European History* 36 (2003), 546-569; and Heymann, *John Žižka*, 442-447.

<sup>50</sup> This is the number that Heymann gives, cutting in half Lawrence of Březova's estimate of 150,000 troops. Šmahel suggests a further reduction, arguing that the number of crusaders was likely around 30,000. On these differing claims, see: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 76.

<sup>51</sup> This episode took place in the village of Arnoštovice, when forces under the duke of Austria detoured and killed the village priest, Václav, his assistant, three adult peasants, and four children under the age of twelve. The story of their death was recounted in: Lawrence of Březova, "Kronika Husitská," 385-386. On this group's place among the early Hussite martyrs, see: Thomas Fudge, "Žilivský's Head: Memory and New Martyrs among the Hussites," *BRRP* 6 (2007), 111-132.

<sup>52</sup> Lawrence noted that daily the crusaders would stand on the opposite bank of the Vltava and howl like dogs at the city, crying: "Haha! Hus! Hus! Heretic! Heretic!" Concerning prisoners, Lawrence reported: "Si quis casu in manus eorum Bohemus incidebat, eundem sine mora, nisi cito liberartur per Boemos in campis cum ipsis iacentes, absque omni misericordia comburebant velut hereticum." See: Lawrence of Březova, "Kronika Husitská," 384.

and other Prague citizens, repulsed an attack there by German troops. Lawrence of Březova described one of the women:

Though she was without armor, her spirit surpassed the men's, and she did not want to retreat from her place. She said, "It is not right for a faithful Christian to yield to Antichrist!" And thus, fighting courageously, she was killed and gave up her spirit.<sup>53</sup>

The highest estimate for the crusaders' casualties during this attack was 500 men; the Hussites lost very few soldiers as well, but gained a psychological advantage over the crusaders that far outweighed the military consequences of the engagement. After the battle, Hussite troops gathered for worship in view of the invading army and sang the *Te Deum Laudamus*, "Because not by their strength, but through a miracle, did God give the few of them victory over their enemies."<sup>54</sup>

After this victory, the Hussite defenders of Prague could make a greater claim to the support of God in their battle against the crusaders. Considering both sides had made exclusive claims to divine sanction, this must have damaged the morale of the crusaders. Sigismund's decisions in the wake of the defeat would further weaken their resolve. Rather than continuing the attack on the city, he held his troops back and forbade the bombardment of the city with artillery. Some in the crusading army suspected collusion between the Bohemian Catholic lords and Sigismund to preserve Prague, as the nobility argued that allowing Germans to take the Czech capital would demonstrate the weakness of the Czech lands and

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<sup>53</sup> *Una itaque ex pretactis mulieribu, licet inermis, virorum vincebat animum nolens a loco suo pedem retrahere: Antichristo, inquit, non licet fideli christiano cedere. Et sic animose pugnans, interfecta spiritum cedere.* See: Lawrence of Březova, *Kronika Husitská*, 388.

<sup>54</sup> *Pragenses vero flexis in campo Hospitalensi genibus grates deo persolvunt Te Deum Laudamus' altis vocibus personantes, quia non robore eorum, sed miraculose in paucis eis de hostibus dedit victoriam.* *Ibid.*

make them subject to continued attacks by German princes.<sup>55</sup> Whether or not this analysis was accurate, as it did come from a German Catholic source, by late July it appeared that Sigismund had thrown his lot in exclusively with the Catholic Bohemian nobility. With their support, he was officially crowned King of Bohemia in St. Vitus Cathedral on July 28, 1420. He had claimed the prerogatives of the office since the previous fall, and had been recognized as the de facto king at the Bohemian diet held in Brno in December, 1419. It was the act of coronation, however, that made his status official, even if relatively few nobles participated in the election and coronation. Indeed, the purely symbolic nature of Sigismund's accession to the throne was emphasized before all when he withdrew from Prague with his troops only two days after his coronation.<sup>56</sup> The first crusade against the Hussites had failed to eliminate the Hussite heresy in Bohemia, even if it had nominally installed a Catholic king in the Czech lands.

From the Hussite perspective, of course, the war in 1420 proved to be a great success. The Hussites broadcast their victory through a new wave of propaganda that picked up the themes of the April manifestoes and intensified their abuse of Sigismund, who became the target of increasingly pointed personal attacks. Lawrence of Březova, heretofore known as the main chronicler of the

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<sup>55</sup> Heymann cites two German sources, the Magdeburger *Schoppenkronik* and Eberhard Windeck's account of Sigismund's reign, that purportedly detailed secret talks between Sigismund and Catholic Bohemian nobles in which the nobles discourage the conquest of Prague. On these talks, see: Heymann, *John Třitka*, 143.

<sup>56</sup> The presence of a significant number of Bohemian nobles among Sigismund's army, as well as their participation in his coronation, could have posed a problem for Hussite narratives of national unity and chosenness. Bohemian authors, though, had already run into "domestic apostates" before, and Joel Seltzer has convincingly argued that other Bohemian sources often attributed disunity among the Bohemians to the instigation of outside forces. On these explanations for Bohemian collaboration with Sigismund, see: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 207-210.

Hussite revolution, authored two devastating satires against Sigismund.<sup>57</sup> Titled “The Grievance of the Czech Crown against the Hungarian King and the Council of Constance,” and “The Czech Crown’s Rebuke of the Hungarian King, that he accepted the Crown improperly and that he violently oppresses the Czech Kingdom,” and distributed in both Czech and Latin versions, these satires railed on Sigismund’s myriad failures and his pretensions to kingship. These texts, which were written in the voice of the embodied Czech Crown, lamented her loss of “my dear husband Wenceslas,” who had been a good steward, and the bloodthirsty Sigismund’s attempt to replace him. The crown referred to herself as a widow, and disdained the pretensions of that “little non-noble,” Sigismund.<sup>58</sup> He had, after all, revealed himself to be a criminal who had sanctioned the “illegal murder” of Hus at Constance and the many crimes of Fernand of Lucena, who was a creature of the devil.<sup>59</sup> The letters also echoed Tělivský’s identification of Sigismund as the red dragon of the Apocalypse and finally dismissed him as “a twig of a foreign noble root, diseased and covered with dung.”<sup>60</sup> Both of these tracts highlighted the qualities of nobility and kingliness that Sigismund lacked in

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<sup>57</sup> The texts themselves were anonymous, but several scholars have made persuasive arguments for Lawrence’s authorship based on the consistency of their outlook with his chronicle, the overlap of their content with that of the chronicle, and what is known of Lawrence’s whereabouts and political/polemical outlook during the period of the first crusade. See: Urbánek, “Vavřinec z Březové a jeho satirické skladby,” 29-35; and Klassen, “Images of ‘Anti-Majesty.’”

<sup>58</sup> The text referred to the recently departed king as “*malého milého chotě Václava*,” and to Sigismund as a “*nešlechtníka*.” This term uses the diminutive ending to render its subject ridiculous, as well as the negative form to deny his essential nobility. See: Lawrence of Březova, “*Žloba koruny České k Bohu na krále Uherského a sbor Kostnický*,” in J. Daňhelka, ed., *Husitské Skladby Budyšínského Rukopisu* (Prague: Orbis, 1952), 23-31, 27.

<sup>59</sup> On Hus, the text referred to his “*bezpravné smrti*” at the hands of Sigismund and the Council of Constance. Interestingly, the satire referred to Jerome as Hus’s journeyman (“*tovaryše*”), thus relegating him to an inferior position. In contrast, Krása was shown in full parallel to Hus, as the letter included the detail that he had been burned and had his ashes thrown in a river: “*našimi smykati a potom upáliti a upáleného do řeky vrci*.” See: Lawrence of Březova, “*Žloba koruny České*,” 27-28.

<sup>60</sup> Klassen, “Images of ‘Anti-Majesty,’” 275.

order to attack his claims to the throne of Bohemia. His inability to wage war, his unwillingness to support justice, and his poor stewardship of the Czech kingdom all invalidated his claims to authority, and his defeat at Prague had provided decisive proof of his inadequacies.<sup>61</sup>

Beyond these satirical tracts against Sigismund, the Hussites also celebrated their victory in song. One victory hymn composed in the wake of the battle at Vítkov hill praised God for his support of the Hussites:

For He frightened and confounded  
Overwhelmed and sternly pounded  
All those thousands of Barbarians  
Suabians, Misnians, Hungarians!<sup>62</sup>

The more famous musical monument to the Hussite victory in the first crusade, however, was the song that Rudolf Urbánek deemed the Hussite *Marseillaise*, “*Povstaň, povstaň veliké ěsto Pražské*” (“Arise, arise, great city of Prague”).<sup>63</sup> This song invoked biblical images of tyranny and patriotism to recast the battle for Prague as a great struggle between the people of God and an evil king. The first verse called on all Czechs to rise up ~~against~~ this king of Babylon, who threatens the city of Jerusalem, Prague.”<sup>64</sup> The song also demanded that the people of God ~~o~~verturn this idol of Nebuchadnezzar,” and ~~s~~trike down the enemy of God and his false teacher, Antichrist, lest he spread more heresy in the

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<sup>61</sup> Jeanne Grant has shown that the king was supposed to be an ~~aug~~menter of the kingdom.” Because Sigismund had done the opposite, he had revealed his lack of suitability as a king. On this idea, see: Grant, “~~R~~ecting an Emperor,” 460-461; and Klassen, “~~I~~mages of Anti-Majesty,” 278

<sup>62</sup> Cited and translated in: Heymann, *John Třitka*, 140, n. 10.

<sup>63</sup> Urbánek, “~~V~~avřinec z Březové a jeho satirické skladby,” 30.

<sup>64</sup> The imperative command: ~~ar~~ise, arise” carried through the verse as a call to resist: “~~P~~roti tomu králi Babylonskému, ještěť hrozí městu Jerusalemskému, Pražské obci.” The full text of the song is printed in: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 341-342, 341.

holy church.”<sup>65</sup> The central comparison in the song was between Bohemia and Judith. Just as she defeated a siege and beheaded the tyrant, the Hussites who were “friends of the law of God” struck down the “the cruel Holfernes.”<sup>66</sup> This song systematically compared Sigismund to the great tyrants of the Old Testament, and the Hussites assumed the mantle of the new Israel who alone worshipped God. Because the Hussites were the new Israel, they could expect the miraculous intervention of God in their battle against tyrants and the godless. Thus, the outcome of the battle for Prague in July, 1420, provided conclusive evidence of God’s support for his people and his opposition to the emperor and Catholic church.

In the Hussite propaganda analyzed so far, several key themes emerge quite clearly. The Czech lands were the new Israel, oppressed by their enemies but chosen by God. Sigismund had become the ultimate tyrant and an analogue to the Old Testament enemies of Israel whose actions betrayed his claims to protect the best interests of Bohemia. Jan Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs, especially Jan Krása, had become central figures in the conflict between Babylon and Jerusalem; their deaths were potent reminders of both the depravity of the Czechs’ enemies and the strength of the Hussites’ faith. It was in the midst of the siege of Prague, and in the immediate aftermath of the battle for the city, that the final component of Hussite identity emerged. In a series of manifestoes issued in July,

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<sup>65</sup> Verse three began against with the imperative: —Ziř Nabuchodnosorovu sochu,” and verse five commanded the attack on Antichrist: —Porazil bořieh o nepřietele, Antikrista, faleřne jeho učitele| ať nekází viece bludóv v svatém kostele.” Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 342.

<sup>66</sup> —Judith vdova Oloferna mocného| přemohlat’ jest pokorú ři vota svého| a jeho mečem s’ala hlavu v stanu jeho.| Protoř sobě zvol krále šlechtného,| jeřtoř by byl přietel zákona bořieh o| ať by porazil Oloferna ukrutného.” *Ibid.*

1420, the alliance of the Hussite nobility, the burghers and university masters of Prague, and the religious radicals from the provinces all backed the formulation of four articles of the Hussite faith.<sup>67</sup> These articles formed a platform for compromise among the various parties in Bohemia, and also articulated a set of core beliefs and practices that functioned as a concrete expression of the binding “law of God” (*boží zákon*).<sup>68</sup>

Although the order in which these articles were expounded changed, their substance remained the same in all the Hussite manifestoes. The Four Articles of Prague, as they came to be known, asserted the necessity of the free preaching of the Word of God by Christian priests; demanded that the laity receive communion in both kinds; forbade priests from holding temporal power or civil authority; and mandated that secular authorities act to suppress public mortal sins.<sup>69</sup> These articles represented a compromise between the most puritanical elements in the Hussite alliance and the more moderate nobles and Prague burghers, and their creation was necessitated by the presence of the army outside Prague. The invasion of Bohemia demanded that the Hussites present a unified front, and the

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<sup>67</sup> The Hussites issued three main manifestoes during the month. The first was a German manifesto that was intended for the besieging army. It was dated July 1, 1420. A second manifesto was sent to Venice on July 10; that city had been at war with Sigismund for several years over the emperor’s and republic’s claims to commercial and political dominance on the Croatian coast, and for this reason the Hussites thought the republic might be sympathetic to their cause. A third manifesto from July 20 was written in Latin and circulated throughout Bohemia and the neighboring countries. All three manifestoes are edited in: F. Bartoš, ed., *Manifesty Města Prahy z Doby Husitské* (Prague: Nákladem Obce Hlavního Města Prahy, 1932), 275-285. On Sigismund’s war with Venice, see: Baum, *Císař Zikmund*, 162ff.

<sup>68</sup> The “law of God” was a very common and important concept in early Hussitism. According to Thomas Fudge, the law of God was a combination of scriptural teaching and the practice of the early church, and it was set in opposition to the “German and pagan laws” that were a product of human invention. For Fudge, the law of God, the veneration of St. Jan Hus, and the lay chalice were the three key components of a “Hussite myth” that justified the revolution of 1419-1420. For his formulations, see: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 125ff.; and idem., “The Law of God.”

<sup>69</sup> The original Czech text of the Four Articles is preserved in: *AC* 3, 213-216.

gravity of the threat allowed the Praguers and their provincial allies to overlook theological differences that would later drive them apart. Indeed, it is not surprising that the final paragraph of the Four Articles proclaimed that:

Whoever depends on and fully stands under the commandments of God, must be an opponent to all evil and every odious person who would compel and drive us away from this good thing, according to the law of God and his truth. According to our vocation, we must defend the truth and ourselves with worldly arms against such an outrage.<sup>70</sup>

The propagation of the articles through the manifestoes led to an immediate response from Fernand of Lucena, who attacked the Hussites' "empty faith" and "vain hope" that their actions could purify Christendom.<sup>71</sup> Fernand argued that the authority of the church was superior over all people, and that it could not err. Thus, in matters of faith and practice, submission to its decisions was the only guarantee of righteousness. The papal legate also denied the Hussites' ability to clear themselves of the stain of heresy, since they had rebelled against their king, committed the crime of regicide, and had defended heresies that had resulted from their infection with erroneous teaching.<sup>72</sup> The articulation of the Four Articles, and the immediate response by Fernand in the context of the first crusade's failure, suggested a new status quo in the conflict between the Hussites and the Catholic church. Both sides had adopted uncompromising,

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<sup>70</sup> "Jeňť zálezie pod přikázáním bořím, pilně státi, a všemu zlému, protiwnému i kař dému, kdořby nás od toho dobrého nutil a pudil, musíme podlé zákona bořieh o a prawdy jeho odporni býti, a podlé našeho powolánie proti takému násilí musíme prawdy i sebe brániti rukú swětskú." *AČ* 3, 216.

<sup>71</sup> Fernand stated that "vana est illis spes" that the Hussites could purify Christianity. In fact, the legate called such efforts a sign of the Hussites' "vana fiducia" in God's ability to reform the world through the institutional church. See: Fernand of Lucena, "Die päpstlichen Legaten Ferdinand Bischof von Lucca Antwort auf die vier Prager Artikel," in *UB* 1, 33-37, 34.

<sup>72</sup> "Fenemini quoque ad expurgationem infamiae linguae et regni Bohemiae: sed hoc modo, ut illi, qui si sint infecti erroribus aut haereses defendunt, desistant ab eis et reconcilientur ecclesiae, non autem ut opponendo se aut etiam rebbellando regi et domino suo naturali, ultra infamiam haeresis, crimen et infamiam laesae majestatis incurrant." Fernand of Lucena, "Antwort auf die vier Prager Artikel," 35.



militant language and considered themselves the chosen instrument of God in removing heresy and wickedness from the church. Both sides had turned to military means in order to effect this reform, and each side had identified heroes and villains who had arisen in the course of the conflict as models of inspiration and targets of demonization. These trends would continue over the course of four more crusades and another decade. The tragedy was that the rhetoric of holy war and martyrdom became so entrenched that only the absolute defeat of one side or another would allow the possibility of negotiation and the serious pursuit of a lasting peace.

#### After Vítkov: Entropy and Unity among the Hussites

In the wake of the first crusade's collapse and the proclamation of the Four Articles, authors with anti-Hussite tendencies began a polemical response to the propaganda that had flourished in 1420. While some of the responses were humorous or satirical and attacked the Hussites' arrogance in their assumption that they alone constituted the true church, other texts tried to undercut Hussite claims that their nation had produced true martyrs for the church. Rather, Catholic polemics equated the fallen crusaders with true martyrs, comparing them to such heroes of the faith as John the Baptist, Laurence, and Stephen.<sup>73</sup> The soldiers had truly become "consecrated martyrs," because:

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<sup>73</sup> In November of 1420, the Hussites recaptured the fortress of Vyšehrad and killed a number of Catholic knights. In the wake of this disastrous battle, one Catholic author, Samson of Časlav, wrote a poem that described the conflict as a victory for the Catholics, as they gained a number of heavenly intercessors through the death of their knights. He compared the dead to: "Dum ipsos per passionem fert ad celi mansionem est Baptista capitatus| Barnabus quoque crematus| Laurentius est assatus| Steffanusque lapidatus| Katherina decollata| et Ludmilla iugulata." For an introduction

They poured out their blood  
 For Christ, whom they loved.  
 Having been marked with the cross  
 They rejoice in the heavenly light,  
 And on that account there should be no mourning,  
 But rather rejoicing,  
 For those who precede us  
 And receive the crown!<sup>74</sup>

Such rhetoric sought to re-establish Catholic claims to being the only true church and the church's links to the heroic Christians of an earlier age. The counterpart to this sort of rhetoric was a portrayal of the Hussites as a horrible novelty arising out of devotion to —Wyclif, the duke of Hell and patron [saint] of Bohemia, and Hus, his only begotten son.”<sup>75</sup> Wyclif was characterized as the —precursor of Antichrist” who —is worshipped as a God in Bohemia,” and he, Hus, and their followers were collectively identified as —the red dragon having seven heads, the calf adored at Horeb, truly the serpent who seduces.”<sup>76</sup> With such descriptions, Catholic authors drew upon biblical images to cast the Hussites as heretics par excellence, seductive and idolatrous. A letter reputedly written by King Sigismund added pride, the chief characteristic of heretics, to the catalogue of Hussite errors : —You alone are the light, illuminating minds shrouded by the

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to the text and edition, see: Miloš Pulec, —Ideologické zbrojnice protihusitského spikuti,” *Theologická Příloha: Křesťanské Revue* 30 (1963), 112-115; this quotation, 114.

<sup>74</sup> —Quorum suum funderunt| Pro christo quem amaverunt| nam signati sua cruce| celesti fruuntur luce| obque non esset lugendum| sed potius congaudendum| ipsis qui nos precesserunt| ac coronam acceperunt.” *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> This take on the origins of the Hussite heresy came from a satirical —Hussite mass” that imagined how the heretics worshipped. The Hussite creed began: —Credo in Wykleph, ducem inferni, patronum Boemie, et in Hus filium eius unicum.” For a full text of the —Antihussitische Messen,” see: Paul Lehmann, *Die Parodie im Mittelalter*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1963), 217-223.

<sup>76</sup> The Introit to the Mass described Wyclif as —in Anglia condempnatur et tanquam Deus in Bohemia adoratur.” Hus and the other leaders of the Hussite movement were called: —Hic est draco rufus habens capita VII; hic est vitulus (calf) adoratus in Oreb; hic est vere serpens qui seduxit.” See: —Antihussitische Messen,” 217-218.

shadows of ignorance.”<sup>77</sup> After all, the destruction of monasteries, the humiliation and punishment of priests, monk, and nuns, and the destruction of sacred art were all the marks of true Christianity!<sup>78</sup> Sigismund further attacked the Hussites for adding Hus and Jerome of Prague to the catalogue of saints while failing to observe the feasts of true saints. In doing this, Sigismund declared: —You receive with joyful souls male and female preachers of the novel and unheard of wisdom that it is impossible to sin.”<sup>79</sup> This rhetoric acknowledged that the Bohemians venerated Wyclif, Hus, and other Bohemian reformers as saints, but interpreted this veneration as an act of idolatry. New saints and new teachings were disparaged as perversions of the church’s sacred tradition.

Andrew of Brod, a Bohemian Catholic author, wrote perhaps the most comprehensive response to the Hussite victories of 1420. Writing in about 1421, he used the words of Isaiah 5:20 to describe the Hussites: —Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness.”

Andrew used this prophetic lament over Israel to describe the Czechs, who were

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<sup>77</sup> This letter prompted a reply by the Prague Hussites, which was quoted above at n. 104. Here, Sigismund’s accusation read: —Vos estis lumen, inlustrans mentes ignorantiae tenebris obvolutas; lumen enim decretorum Constantiensis concilii respectu luminis vestrae peritiae obfuscatur.” See: —Itera regis Sigismundi, qua inproperat et ironice scribit Pragensibus, eos quasi deridendo,” in *UB 2*, 523-525, 524.

<sup>78</sup> Lawrence of Březova detailed the destruction of monasteries as early as August, 1419, and the Hussites consistently destroyed monastic foundations during their wars with the crusaders and Catholic Bohemian nobles. Třtka in particular was known for his hatred of monks, and he executed a number of them during his campaigns. On the destruction of churches and monasteries in Bohemia, see: Lawrence of Březova, —Kronika Husitská,” 347. On Třtka’s anti-monastic actions, see: Heymann, *John Třtka*, 102.

<sup>79</sup> Here, Sigismund also referred to laypeople considered to be saints by the Bohemians. These would likely have been Krása and/or the three youths killed in 1412: —Insuper magistros Johannem Hus et Jeronymum et quosdam laicos pro lege Christi, ut asseritis, mortificatos sanctorum annotastis katalogo, quorum etiam festa solemniter celebratis, aliorum sanctorum festa obmittentes, optantesque ad coronam similem pervenire, praedicatores etiam et praedicatrices a seculis inauditae sapientiae, quas errare est impossibile, gratulantibus animis suscepistis.” *Ibid.* It seems that the inability to err referred to the Hussites’ unwillingness to recognize the judgment of the Roman church in issues of determining heresy.

hypocrites who preach the word of God, but do the opposite in their deeds,” and a nation of tyrants...that spares neither God, nor his saints, nor his monasteries and churches.”<sup>80</sup> For Andrew, the Wycliffite heresy in Bohemia had flourished with the permission of God, on account of the sins of men.”<sup>81</sup> The heretics’ military success, though, revealed that they were not true Christians. After all, Jesus and his followers suffered and died, rather than fought. Here again, the Hussites’ claims that they represented the true church were belied by their actions, with which they foresook the example of Jesus.<sup>82</sup> For Andrew, the true followers of Christ and the apostles were those Catholic priests in the Czech lands who had suffered for their faith and died at the hands of the impious, at least bodily, made one with their head [Jesus Christ].”<sup>83</sup> All of these responses to the Hussites, and especially Andrew’s, neatly inverted the polemics of the Bohemians themselves. Sigismund was not the red dragon; the Hussite leaders were. Hus and his followers were not martyrs; the Bohemian Catholics and crusaders were. The pope and council fathers had not introduced novelties and diverged from true Christianity; the Hussites and their idol, Wyclif, had done this. The overall effect of these polemics, then, was to recast Sigismund’s defeat in

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<sup>80</sup> Andrew, who had been one of Hus’s opponents at Constance, wrote his *Tractatus De Origine Hussitarum* in the aftermath of the first crusade; these descriptions of the Hussites came from a section of the text containing four descriptions of the hypocrites: *alia natio, generatio quae sibi munda videtur et tamen non lota a sordibus suis. Ecce ypocritae qui praedicant praecepta et legem domini, sed contraria in operibus faciunt... Natio Quarta est tyrannorum...Ista natio nec deo nec sanctis eius nec monasteriis nec ecclesiis parcat.*” See: Andrew of Brod, *Tractatus de Origine Hussitarum*,” in *Geschichtschreiber 2*, 327-353, 333.

<sup>81</sup> *Ut ergo sciant homines et cognoscere valeant, Wicifeca dogmata non a deo sed permissione dei propter peccata hominum a diabolo procedere.*” Andrew of Brod, *Tractatus*,” 330.

<sup>82</sup> *Christus mortuus est non armis pugnando, non occidit sed vivificando moriebatur et alii sancti pro fide Christi moriebantur quidem sed non mortificabant, sufferebant injurias, non inferebant, molestabantur, non molestabant.*” Andrew of Brod, *Tractatus*,” 345.

<sup>83</sup> *Nonne isti omnes quia justis et bonis crudelium persecutorum se martyrio pertulerunt et mortui sunt una cum suo capite saltem corporaliter a manibus impiorum.*” Andrew of Brod, *Tractatus*,” 329.

1420 as a prelude to a greater victory. The apostle Paul himself had cautioned that there would be heresies;<sup>84</sup> it was up to the Catholic church to stand firm and to continue its resistance to the diabolically inspired Hussites in order to show that it had the approval of God.

Even as these authors were coming to grips with the failure of the first crusade, the Hussite alliance that defeated Sigismund's army was dissolving. The Hussite alliance had become tenuous even before the fighting of July, 1420 began. The Taborite forces who came to Prague were horrified by the opulence of the capital's churches and the immoral lifestyle of the burghers. And while the Four Articles provided a core of religious practices that united all Hussites, they did not offer guidelines for the application of the articles to Bohemian society. The Taborites and other provincial Hussites were particularly concerned with how the suppression of mortal sin would be carried out. They wanted to reform all public life along apostolic lines, and demanded sumptuary laws and prohibitions on prostitution and drinking.<sup>85</sup> So, when the Prague pastors, university masters, and burghers refused to enact the moral reforms that the Taborites demanded, the Taborites left the city. By August 22, the alliance of the Czech people that had defeated Sigismund and his army had collapsed.

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<sup>84</sup> I Corinthians 11:19 - "No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval."

<sup>85</sup> The Taborites wrote twelve articles for the reform of Prague and presented them on May 27, 1420, but these had not been applied because of the exigencies of the impending siege. The Taborites presented the articles again on August 5, and they included: 3. that there would be no toleration for sexual sin, including adultery and prostitution; 4. that there would be no drinking in taverns; 5. people would not be permitted to wear expensive clothes or jewelry; 6. that the market places should be reformed, with honest business dealings and no useless things being sold; and 7. that any "pagan or German" laws be taken off the books in Bohemia, and that they be replaced with "divine law." Other articles covered the regulation of priests' moral lives and their payment from common chests. These articles are preserved in: Lawrence of Březova, *Kronika Husitská*, 397-400. See also the discussion of the alliance's dissolution in: Kaminsky, *A History*, 376-377.

This cycle of unification in the presence of a military threat and dissolution afterwards would become typical for the Hussites over the course of the 1420s and early 1430s. The dynamic of religious reform in Bohemia simply contained too many centrifugal elements in which different parties among the Hussites followed different trajectories of social and political reform based on their understanding of how the purification of religion should affect secular life. In late 1420 and early 1421, these centrifugal elements were at their most evident. On the one hand, the Prague Hussites wanted to establish a national church under the aegis of a sympathetic king;<sup>86</sup> they sought a new candidate (from Poland-Lithuania) to take the throne of Bohemia, and they rejoiced in 1421 when the archbishop of Prague, Conrad, served communion in both kinds.<sup>87</sup> On the other hand, the Tábórites had elected their own bishop, Nicholas of Pelhřimov (called Biskupec, the little bishop), and were seeking to establish relatively independent communities in the south of Bohemia that were only nominally united on a regional level.<sup>88</sup> This Tábórite “party of order” was also contending with extreme chiliasts in their area who sought to reestablish Edenic norms in human society. These Adamites, who were also known as Pikharts and may have represented an antinomian amalgamation of Waldensian, Hussite, and Free Spirit ideas, engaged

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<sup>86</sup> On the election of a new king, see: William Cook, “Negotiations between the Hussites, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Roman Church, 1427-1436,” *East Central Europe* 5 (1978), 90-104.

<sup>87</sup> Jakoubek played a leading role in the attempted establishment of a Hussite national church, and he relied on the support of the university and other moderate reformers in the city. His goals, however, conflicted with Telivský’s desire for a more radical transformation of social life in the city. On this conflict, see: Ferdinand Seibt, “Communitas Primogenita,” *Historisches Jahrbuch* 81 (1962), 80-100. The details of Conrad’s shift to Hussite allegiance are contained in a contract he signed with the city councils of the New Town and Old Town in Prague, in which he swore to uphold the Four Articles “contra predictum regem Sigismundum.” The contract is preserved as: “Itera adhaerentiae Domini Archiepiscopi Pragensis,” in *UB* 1, 78-81.

<sup>88</sup> On the election of Nicholas, see: Fudge, “Crime, Punishment and Pacifism,” 70ff. See also: Kaminsky, *A History*, 386ff.

in free love and violently plundered neighboring communities for what they needed.<sup>89</sup> The Tábórites, led by Jan Třtka, purged the Adamites in August and October, 1421, and thus eliminated this most extreme form of Hussite communitarian life.

Alongside all of these forms of Hussite belief and practice that argued for various forms of cooperation between the church and state, the lay theologian Peter Chelčický articulated a separatist ideology that was strongly opposed to any Christian involvement in the government or in state-sponsored violence.<sup>90</sup> Over time, his writings would influence a small group of Bohemians who retreated from the world and formed their own sect within the larger Bohemian reform movement.<sup>91</sup> The rapid appearance and uneasy coexistence of all of these various groups in 1420 and 1421 demonstrated how fractured the spiritual and political landscape of Bohemia had become in the wake of the Hussites' success against Sigismund. Without the existence of an external goad to unity, questions over the

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<sup>89</sup> On the relationship of the Adamites to the Waldensians and heresy of the Free Spirit, see: Robert Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1972), especially 119ff. For an account of Adamite beliefs, see the confession of their leader, Martin Húška in: Lawrence of Březova, "Kronika Husitská," 416.

<sup>90</sup> For instance, in 1420 or 1421 Peter wrote a tract, "On Spiritual Warfare," that attacked the Hussites in general, and Třtka in particular, for their engagement in violence. Peter argued that God could not be served by violence, and that only the Devil profited from it. For excerpts of this tract, see: Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics*, 85-87. On Peter's life and teaching, see: Matthew Spinka, "Peter Chelčický: The Spiritual Father of the Unitas Fratrum," *Church History* 12 (1943), 271-291; Murray Wagner, *Peter Chelčický: A Radical Separatist in Hussite Bohemia* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983), especially 86-90; and Pavel Soukup, "Metaphors of the Spiritual Struggle Early in the Bohemian Reformation: the Exegesis of *Arma Spiritualia* in Hus, Jakoubek, and Chelčický," *BRRP* 6 (2007), 87-110.

<sup>91</sup> This group became known as the Unitas Fratrum (or Bohemian Brethren), and they founded their own church in 1457. On the formation and theology of the Unitas Fratrum, see: Peter Brock, *The Political and Social Doctrines of the Unity of Czech Brethren in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries* (The Hague: Mouton, 1957); Milos Strupl, "Confessional Theology of the Unitas Fratrum," *Church History* 33 (1964), 279-293; JZeman, "Restitution and Dissent;" and David Holeyton, "Church or Sect? The Jednota Bratarská and the Growth of Dissent from Mainline Utraquism," *CV* 38 (1996), 5-35.

relationship between the secular and sacred spheres tended to create rifts in the Bohemians' unity and led to the fragmentation of the Hussite movement.

Luckily for the Hussites, Sigismund, the pope, and his legates consistently provided an impetus for unity. And whenever the Hussites needed to come together, they could rely on the Four Articles and the commemoration of Jan Hus as a foundation for their renewed unity. For instance, many nobles in Moravia hesitated to join with the Bohemian Hussites in 1420, as they feared an attack from Sigismund's kingdom of Hungary, which bordered the margravate. In order to bring the Moravian lords into the orbit of political Hussitism, and to help protect them from this threat, a national diet was scheduled for June 1, 1421 in the town of Čáslav. The diet brought together the high nobility of Bohemia and Moravia, the lords and knights who supported the Tábórite community, including Jan Třeták, the Archbishop of Prague, and many university masters and the representatives of the Prague towns.<sup>92</sup> There were two main outcomes of the diet; the first was a manifesto that affirmed the Four Articles and condemned Sigismund:

The Hungarian king Sigismund and his supporters have done the most damage, and through his injustices and cruelty the entire kingdom of Bohemia has suffered very serious harm. We have never accepted him as our king and not as hereditary lord of the Czech Crown. By his own worthlessness he has demonstrated that he is unfit to bear this [responsibility]...The king is an infamous despiser of these holy truths [i.e.

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<sup>92</sup> The most extensive treatment of the diet in English is that of Frederick Heymann: "The National Assembly of Čáslav," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 8 (1954), 32-55. The following analysis relies heavily on Heymann's work. Ferdinand Seibt has convincingly shown that the representatives of Prague assumed a leading role in the diet, and that the city had come to think of itself as the head of the kingdom in place of the king or nobility. On this, see: Seibt, *Hussitica*, 167-176.



the Four Articles] which are clearly shown in Holy Scripture. He is the murderer of the honor and the people of the Czech nation.<sup>93</sup>

This letter, which was written in Czech, largely repeated the language of the previous year, but gained additional authority from the support it garnered from every element in the Czech lands. Even as the Hussites censured each other and struggled to understand the social and political outcomes of religious reform, they could unite behind their animus for the Emperor. In a second document, a list of fourteen articles condemning the emperor, the diet rehearsed Sigismund's sins: he had stolen the crown of Bohemia and seized funds set aside for widows and orphans; he had ceded Brandenburg to Frederick of Hohenzollern without the Bohemian estates' permission; he had murdered Krása and supported the crusade in Bohemia; he had publicly accused Bohemia of heresy at the Council of Constance; and he had participated of the execution of Jerome of Prague.<sup>94</sup> Not surprisingly, the grievances began with the execution of Hus: ~~In~~ the first place, your Grace allowed Master Jan Hus to burn while under your safe conduct, to the disgrace and dishonor of the entire Czech nation."<sup>95</sup> All things considered, the first half of the articles documented Sigismund's complicity in the deaths of a remarkable number of Bohemian citizens. As such, it seems safe to say that by 1421 the unity of Hussitism depended heavily on the memory of Bohemian

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<sup>93</sup> For the full text of this declaration, dated to June 7, see: ~~Proceedings of the Diet of Čáslav,~~ in *The Crusade against the Heretics*, 117-121, 119. The original Czech is preserved in: *AC* 3, 226-230.

<sup>94</sup> In 1420, Sigismund seized the crown jewels of Bohemia and everything else made of precious metal to melt down and pay the crusading soldiers; this was the theft that the articles spoke of. He also ceded to Brandenburg to Frederick to garner his support; the alienation of any crown lands of Bohemia was illegal without the approval of the kingdom's nobility. The entire list of article against Sigismund, and the other texts that were prepared at Čáslav, are included in: Lawrence of Březova, ~~Āronika Husitská,~~ 485-491, which Lawrence kept in their original Czech.

<sup>95</sup> ~~První neřád, ře Vař Milost Mistra Jana Husi pod svým glejtem dopustila upáliti na hanbu a potupu všemu českému jazyku.~~ See: Lawrence of Březova, ~~Āronika Husitská,~~ in *FRB* 5, 489.

suffering at the hands of the Holy Roman Emperor. It was the invocation of the various Czech martyrs, and the concomitant threats of new crusades and the making of new martyrs, that allowed the Hussites to come together and forge their alliances again.<sup>96</sup>

### The Hussite Wars, 1421-1431

These threats were soon forthcoming, as Martin V joined with the emperor to authorize a string of ill-conceived holy wars against Bohemia. After the disastrous first crusade, Sigismund retreated from the military leadership of further military expeditions against Bohemia. In his place, several papal legates assumed command of these holy wars. The first to take the reins, Cardinal Branda Castiglione, led two failed incursions into Bohemia. In the second crusade, which took place in August and September, 1421, a large force led by the legate and several German princes became bogged down during a siege of Tatec in western Bohemia.<sup>97</sup> Although this army expected a simultaneous attack on Bohemia by Sigismund and a Hungarian army in the east, this second invasion never

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<sup>96</sup> The Bohemian cause gained an ambivalent new martyr in 1422, when Jan Želivský was killed by the town government of the Old Town after leading a series of disastrous military ventures outside of the city. The people of Prague quickly recognized the radical preacher as an authentic martyr, and one account of the aftermath of his death noted that a procession of women carried his head through the city on a plate, recalling the death of John the Baptist. Želivský did take his place among the company of Hussite martyrs over time, but his acceptance was more problematic and uneven than that of Hus, Jerome, or even Krása. On the death of Želivský, see: Fudge, "Želivský's Head," 112-116. On his place among the Bohemian martyrs, see: Joel Seltzer, "Re-envisioning the Saint's Life in Utraquist Historical Writing," *BRRP* 5, pt. 1 (2004), 147-166, especially 154-157.

<sup>97</sup> On the role of Tatec in the defense of Bohemia during the first and second crusades, see: Petr Hlaváček, "Beginnings of Bohemian Reformation in the Northwest: Waldensians and the Reformers in the Deanery of Kadaň at the Turn of the Fourteenth Century," *BRRP* 4 (2002), 43-56, especially 53.

materialized.<sup>98</sup> Thus, when an army of Bohemians threatened the crusaders in early October, the German army retreated. A sortie from Tãtec inflicted heavy losses on the retreating army, and the second crusade faded away.<sup>99</sup> In the fall of 1422, Branda led another effort to return Bohemia to orthodoxy by force. In October of that year, a number of German lords and Bohemian Catholics gathered a large military force at Cheb, near the Czech border with modern Bavaria. Frederick, Margrave of Brandenburg, was theoretically in charge of the military operations of the crusade, but the princes' and cities' troops gathered under his banner complained of a lack of pay. The Emperor Sigismund was also notable in his absence, and the memory of the previous crusades' failures likely weighed on the invading forces. This crusade ended with the gradual defection of troops, fragmentary efforts at negotiating a public hearing for the Hussites, and minimal fighting.<sup>100</sup>

After this failed campaign, it would be five years before Martin authorized another invasion of Bohemia. For the fourth crusade, he turned to the English cardinal, Henry Beaufort, the Bishop of Winchester, to lead the attack. Cardinal Beaufort spent considerable time in England trying to recruit soldiers and raise money, and planned to meet with the German army raised by Frederick of

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<sup>98</sup> Sigismund's failure in this respect was curious, as he had written to Cardinal Branda on July 19, 1421 asserting his distress that the reunification of the church he had overseen was now being destroyed by the Bohemians: "Quam gloriam reportare possemus, si unione ecclesie christianorum facta, Teurisque inimicis christifidelium intransibus crebro christianorum partes repulsis sepissime, Wiklephistarum et Hussistarum pessimum omnium hereticorum genus nollemus destruere" The letter is printed in: UB, 136-139; this quotation, 137. On the greater concerns for Christian unity in the context of fifteenth-century conflict with the Ottomans and Hussites, see: Norman Housley, *Religious Warfare in Europe, 1400-1536* (New York: Oxford UP, 2002), especially 20.

<sup>99</sup> On the events of the second crusade, see: Heymann, *John Tãtka*, 265-285.

<sup>100</sup> For an overview of the third crusade, and the decisive role played by troop defections and a fear of the Hussites, see: Frederick Heymann, "The Crusades Against the Hussites," in H. Hazard, ed., *A History of the Crusades, vol. III: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Madison: U. of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 586-646, 609ff.

Brandenburg in June, 1427.<sup>101</sup> When he arrived in Nuremberg on June 13, where the army had gathered prior to the invasion, Beaufort learned that he had missed the army's departure. He delayed in the city, and did not catch up with the crusading force until July 28. By the time Beaufort arrived, the army had retreated from an inconclusive siege of the town of Střibro, believing that a large Hussite army was approaching.<sup>102</sup> Beaufort and the crusaders tried to regroup at Tachov, but a Hussite army arrived on August 4 and attacked the crusaders. The Hussites took the city, and the fourth crusade ended as its predecessors had: a victim of poor coordination among its leadership, limited logistical support for an extended campaign, and a lingering fear of Hussite military prowess that led to an unwillingness to engage the enemy directly.

This series of military failures had significant repercussions for the long term dynamics of the papacy's engagement with the Hussite heresy. On the one hand, the continued defeat of the crusader armies allowed for the development of rhetoric that equated the fallen Catholics with the saints and martyrs of the early church. As early as 1422, in a sermon before Martin V, John of Ragusa lamented the fury of the Hussite heretics and the death of Catholic priests and monks, —some cut in two, some drowned in rivers, others stoned, others burned with fire, and others slaughtered by the sword.”<sup>103</sup> Thomas Netter, an English author who

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<sup>101</sup> On Beaufort's efforts to rally the English for the crusade against the Hussites, see: G.A. Holmes, —Cardinal Beaufort and the Crusade Against the Hussites,” *The English Historical Review* 88 (1973), 721-750.

<sup>102</sup> On the leadership of the crusade and its initial plan of attack, see: Bartoš, —An English Cardinal.” For more details on the conduct of the campaign, see: idem., *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 25-40.

<sup>103</sup> In 1422, John of Ragusa preached a sermon on the utility of councils to Martin V in Rome. Ragusa was trying to get the pope to observe the requirement of the decree *Frequens*. He and other reformers were ultimately successful, and the council of Pavia/Siena began in 1423. One of

dedicated his *Doctrinale Fidei Ecclesie* to Martin V in 1427, described the conflict in Bohemia as such:

In Bohemia the devout are all experiencing the most extreme form of Wycliffite savagery: the ransacking of holy sites, the burning of monasteries, the rape of virgins; terrible slaughters, the butchering of saints, the use of hammers to dismember them limb by limb; even the use of millstones to grind the saints' bodies; they drink molten metals, and willingly accept exile in return for their great devotion. They are afflicted a hundred times more cruelly by "Christians" who bear that name falsely than by actual Turks or Saracens.<sup>104</sup>

In contradiction to this rhetoric of savagery and martyrdom, the four failed crusades seemed to invite a negotiated end to the conflict. Cardinal Beaufort himself, in 1427, wrote a letter to the Bohemians before joining the forces of the crusade (it seems that his delayed meeting with the troops resulted from his waiting for a reply). He asked the Hussites to recall their forefathers and their loyalty to the church; further, Beaufort said, —"We first offer you the gift of peace. Do not refuse it! We invite you to the unity of of the catholic [church]: come."<sup>105</sup> Beaufort also added a truly unique concession in his letter. He stated that —"We all

Ragusa's argument for the council was that they had proven to be effective means of destroying heresy. On the death of Catholic priests in Bohemia, Ragusa noted: —"Probat eorum seviciam innumerabilis clericorum, sacerdotum, religiosorum ceterorumque fidelium interitus, quorum alii secti, alii fluminibus proiecti, alii lapidati, alii igne consumpti, alii in occisione gladii mortui sunt." For the text of this sermon, see: Walter Brandmüller, *Das Konzil von Pavia-Siena 1423-1424*, vol. 2 (Münster: Verlag Aschendorff, 1974), 89-124, 113-114. On Ragusa and his arguments for the council, see: Brandmüller, *Das Konzil*, vol. 1, 50-51.

<sup>104</sup> There was a large outpouring of English anti-Hussite literature in the 1420s. This stemmed in part from Beaufort's failure as a legate and also from Pope Martin's suspicion that England harbored Wycliffite/Hussite heretics. Indeed, in 1427 Wyclif's body was finally disinterred and destroyed, per the Council of Constance's orders. In 1428, Martin V went so far as to complain in a letter to English bishops that —"there remain in England not a few shoots of this heresy which if they are not cut off will grow so high that it is greatly to be wondered whether England will suffer the fate of Bohemia." This letter is cited in: Holmes, —"Cardinal Beaufort," 736. On Netter and the production of anti-Hussite polemics in England, see: Michael Van Dussen, —"Bohemia in English Religious Controversy before the Henrician Reformation," *BRRP* 7 (forthcoming). This quotation from Netter's *Doctrinale* is taken from Van Dussen's translation.

<sup>105</sup> Beaufort referred to Bohemia as having been a —"magistra virtutis" for all Christendom in the past. On the offer of peace, he said: —"Pacis ergo munusculum primo vobis offerimus. Nolite renuere. Ad unitatem catholice invitamus: venite." This letter was edited by F. Bartoš and included in his: —"An English Cardinal," 52-54; this quotation, 53.

have erred and each of us has strayed from the way of the Lord.”<sup>106</sup> Although Beaufort conceded that the church had erred in its handling of the Bohemians, he still demanded that the Bohemians —assume the role of the penitent son” in returning to the church. All in all, this letter expressed a possibility of peaceful reunion that had been lacking in both sides’ rhetoric.<sup>107</sup> As a means of encouraging an irenic conclusion to the wars between Bohemia and her neighbors, Beaufort even offered to set up a disputation between theologians from both parties, a suggestion that was characteristically rejected out of hand by Martin V.<sup>108</sup>

Despite the pope’s rejection, Emperor Sigismund was interested in a meeting with the leading Hussites. He had been involved in extended fighting against the Turks throughout the latter half of the 1420s, and greatly needed to concentrate his resources on the threat to the eastern borders of his territories. The Hussites, on the other hand, desired a public hearing for their ideas and sought to bring Sigismund and his followers into agreement with their ideas on religious reform. After fitful negotiations over the location of the proposed meeting, Sigismund and a number of Hussite leaders convened in Bratislava on April 3,

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<sup>106</sup> —Sed omnes erravimus et unusquisque declinavit a via Domini.” *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> Even in this demand, Beaufort used the language of the parables in Luke 15 (The parables of the lost sheep, lost coin, and prodigal son) to express his hope that the Bohemians would be —found” and returned to the church: —Famen redeuntibus ceteris redite et vos, filii penitentis formam assumite, ut ovem perditam pius pastor inveniat et decime dragme reperte vicina plebs congaudeat ac penitenti populo non tam humana quam angelica vox applaudat.” Bartoš, —An English Cardinal,” 53-54.

<sup>108</sup> Bartoš, —An English Cardinal,” 50. Martin wrote: —Satisquidem clara est fides Christiana, quae adversus tot precillas haeresum et persecutionum semper emersit et ita dilucidata est ab antiquis sanctis patribus et doctoribus, ut ulteriori disputatione non egeat.” See: *UB* 1, 555-556, 555.

1429.<sup>109</sup> Sadly, this meeting's promise of a peaceful end to what was now a decade-long conflict proved to be only an irenic dream. Indeed, Peter Payne, the English Hussite, set a hostile tone for the assembly with his opening speech.<sup>110</sup> Peter, who had emerged over the course of the 1420s as the main theological proponent of the Hussite military brotherhoods, chose as the theme for his address at Bratislava the familiar Hussite idea that "truth conquers all."<sup>111</sup> This was, of course, a reference to the words of Jan Hus that had become a Hussite motto after his death, and in Payne's speech, it functioned as a means for chastizing Sigismund and attributing his military defeats at the hands of the Hussites to the fact that he opposed Christ's truth with his persecution of the Hussites. In his address, Payne presumed to instruct the emperor: "Be mindful of omnipotent God, who punishes all wrongs, overcomes all violence, overwhelms all oppression, and whose truth overcomes all things."<sup>112</sup> Payne used the Hussites' military success against Sigismund as proof of this, noting that "when you were with God, you triumphed over the pagans, but when you abandoned God, you were conquered by peasants."<sup>113</sup> Payne was clear in attributing all the Hussites'

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<sup>109</sup> For a summary of the negotiations that led to Bratislava, and an account of the proceedings there, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution 1424-1437*, 38-43. See also: Cook, "Negotiations between the Hussites," 93.

<sup>110</sup> On Peter Payne's career among the Hussites, with particular attention to his promotion of Wyclif's ideas on the church and civil dominion, see: William Cook, "John Wyclif and Hussite Theology, 1415-1436," *Church History* 42 (1973), 335-349.

<sup>111</sup> After the death of Jiřka in 1424, his followers formed a military brotherhood that referred to itself as the "Orphans" and controlled significant portions of eastern Bohemia. Payne came to be associated with these groups as their theological spokesman. On his association with the Orphans, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution 1424-1437*, 39.

<sup>112</sup> "Memorque Dei omnipotentis, qui omnes punit iniurias, violencias vincit et oppressiones opprimit et cuius veritas super omnia vincit." Peter Payne, "Oratio ad Sigismundum," 85.

<sup>113</sup> "Ecce enim, qui cum esses cum Deo, triumphasti in paganis, sed cum Deum reliquisti [sic], expugnaris a villanis." Peter Payne, "Oratio ad Sigismundum," 88.

success to divine help, stating that —we do not ascribe this victory to ourselves, but to God the author of triumphs.”<sup>114</sup>

Payne grounded his understanding of Hussite victories in biblical examples of the miraculous outcomes of seemingly hopeless battles. Payne cited the Maccabees (1 Maccabees 3:16-19), Gideon (Judges 7), Judith (Judith ch. 8-13), and Joshua (Joshua 12), among others, as clear evidence that God would intervene on the side of the righteous during war. He also used Mark 13:9 to prove that the Hussites’ suffering and triumph had been ordained by God: —You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them.” Payne argued that —this can openly be seen today in this most Christian kingdom, which is surrendered to hatred and blasphemy among all people and nations because of the witness of Christ, that is the body and blood of Christ.”<sup>115</sup> Payne also noted that the prelates, princes, and kings had done more than merely verbally attack the Bohemians:

They drag the elect before them through tyranny and the prelates cast them from the synagogues through excommunication; those elect, however, thus dragged and vexed by kings and prelates, were clearly of Christ’s lot, handed over on account of their witness to him, and we see them killed in the flames and by the sword.<sup>116</sup>

Granted, in this passage Payne did not mention Hus or Jerome of Prague by name.

The reference to councils, though, and the elects’ death by fire and sword, must

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<sup>114</sup> —Non hoc nobis, sed Deo auctori triumphatorique ascribimus.” *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> —Et hoc hodie patentissime discernitur in hoc christianissimo regno, quod propter testimonium Christi scil. corporis et sanguinis Christi datum est in odium et in blasphemiam omnibus hominibus et regnis.” Payne, —Oratio ad Sigismundum,” 83.

<sup>116</sup> —Quod sic patet, quia ipsi trahent electos ante se per tirannidem et prelati extra synagogas eos eicient per excommunicacionem, ipsi autem electi, sic tracti et vexati a regibus et prelati, pauci valde erunt de sorte Christi, propter cuius testimonium tradentur, ut modo cernimus, in mortem ruentes in flamma et gladio.” *Ibid.*



have brought the events of Constance to the listeners' minds. Payne ended his speech by demanding that Sigismund repudiate his former actions, and accept the Hussites' Four Articles, for the Hussites would never stop fighting him otherwise: –For you know, o mortal and perishing king, that not for our sake do we wage war against you, but for the truth of Christ we rebel against you."<sup>117</sup>

Needless to say, Sigismund was unmoved by Peter Payne's provocative address. In fact, the emperor's response was to issue letters to Pope Martin V and Frederick of Brandenburg promising that Sigismund would lead a new crusade against the Hussites that summer.<sup>118</sup> This fifth holy war did not immediately materialize, and after the meeting in Bratislava, the Hussite armies took the offensive against their neighbors. From Autumn, 1429 until February, 1430, Bohemian armies rampaged through Franconia and Saxony in what was later called –the Glorious Campaign."<sup>119</sup> The success of the Hussite armies, and the failure of negotiations, finally led Sigismund and the German princes to assemble a fifth and final crusade. Although Sigismund and Frederick of Brandenburg initially opposed a full-fledged holy war, fearing that they would have to fund it, the new papal legate Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini assuaged the German nobility by

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<sup>117</sup> –Nunc ergo scias, o rex mortalissime et caduce, quod non pro salute nostra bella tecum gerimus, sed pro Christi veritate tibi rebellamus." Peter Payne, –Oratio ad Sigismundum," 87.

<sup>118</sup> All told, Sigismund issued thirteen letters on April 10 calling for various German bishops, dukes, town councils, and other nobles to assemble troops and money for a renewed campaign (–Feldzug") against the Hussites. He issued further letters, including one to Frederick of Brandenburg on April 16, planning a multi-pronged attack from Austria as well as the German lands. On these letters and their recipients, see: J.F. Böhmer, ed., *Regesta Imperii, vol. 11: Die Urkunden Kaiser Sigmunds (1410-1437)* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968), entries 7194ff.

<sup>119</sup> On the Glorious Campaign, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 41-60.

promising that the pope would pay for the war.<sup>120</sup> On March 20, 1431, Cesarini proclaimed the crusade bulls offering indulgences to participants, and on June 29 the crusading army left Nuremberg. Throughout July, the crusade suffered from the problems that had limited the first four expeditions into Bohemia: low morale, indecision among the crusade's leadership, and a legitimate fear that the crusaders could not win against the Hussites in battle.

In an effort to shore up morale, Cesarini sent a manifesto to the Hussites demanding their capitulation and return to the church. Cesarini expressed his sorrow that he had to enter Bohemia with the army, and stated that all those involved in the crusade only wanted to see the nation return to the bosom of the church. Cesarini wrote in order to dispel the rumor spread by several sowers of tares...that the army of the faithful has entered their kingdom for this reason: that men might burn and destroy it and massacre [the inhabitants].<sup>121</sup> Instead, the army only entered Bohemia to convince the Hussites of its fraternal charity" and so they might come to know our gentleness."<sup>122</sup> Cesarini ended his missive to the Hussites with the proclamation that we bring peace with us. We offer peace and rest; they are there for those who accept them."<sup>123</sup> This statement was ironic on two levels. The first was that soon after the delivery of the manifesto, on August

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<sup>120</sup> On Cesarini and his career as a papal diplomat, see: Gerald Christianson, *Cesarini: The Conciliar Cardinal, The Basel Years 1431-1438* (St. Ottilien: Eos Verlag der Erzabtei, 1979).

<sup>121</sup> Nonnulli zizanie seminatores, ut predictas incolas ab unione et pace christianorum avertant, eisdem persuadere nituntur exercitum fidelium in predictum regnum ob hanc causam intraturum, ut illud destruant homines interficiant stragesque et incendia comittant." F. Bartoš published this manifesto and analyzed its role in the fifth crusade in his: "Manifesty Nuncia Cesariniho Husitům," in B. Jenšovský and B. Mendl, eds., *K dějinám československým v období humanismu* (Prague: České akademie věd a umění, 1932), 178-191; this quotation, 189.

<sup>122</sup> One of Cesarini's main points in the manifesto was that the Roman church would forgive the Bohemians and welcome them back, but that the Hussites had to trust in the fraternal caritate ob omnibus de nostro" and nostrum mansuetudinem." *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Pacem nobiscum portamus, pacem offerimus et quietem, dummodo sint, qui acceptant." Bartoš, "Manifesty Nuncia Cesariniho Husitům," 190.

1, the crusading army entered Bohemia and laid siege to Tachov, thus belying the manifesto's assertions of the crusaders' intentions. The second level of irony was revealed two weeks later, on August 14, when a large Hussite force engaged the crusaders at Domažlice, a Hussite bastion near Tachov, and forced the crusading army into a headlong flight. The crusaders' casualties were light, but they lost almost all of their supplies and wagons; included among the Hussite booty was Cesarini's regalia.<sup>124</sup> It was this crushing loss of face and the reaffirmation of the Hussites' military superiority that effectively did bring peace to Bohemia. With the collapse of the fifth crusade, Catholic leaders abandoned all attempts to settle the Hussite schism militarily and sought a negotiated peace.

#### From Crusade to Conciliation: The Negotiations at Basel

If Domažlice finally ended any hopes that a crusading army could eradicate the Hussite heresy, two other events that preceded this decisive battle presented a genuine opportunity for the rapprochement that had previously been impossible. The first of these was the death of Pope Martin V on February 20, 1431 and the subsequent election of Cardinal Gabriele Condulmer as Pope Eugenius IV on March 3.<sup>125</sup> Martin had been an implacable enemy of the Hussites, and his death signalled the potential for a shift in papal policy vis-à-vis

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<sup>124</sup> Accounts of the battle suggest that it was over before it began. Apparently, the majority of the crusaders broke ranks and fled upon hearing the approach of the Hussite soldiers, who sang their battle hymn, —“Warriors of God.” For the text of this song, see: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 200-202. Bartoš notes that Cesarini's robes, cardinal's hat, crucifix, and bell were all captured and remained in Bohemia until the seventeenth century. On the battle of Domažlice and its aftermath, see his: *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 68-70.

<sup>125</sup> On the election of Eugenius, see: Joachim Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV and the Council of Basel and the Secular and Ecclesiastical Authorities in the Empire: The Conflict over Supreme Authority and Power in the Church* (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 1978), 10-11.

the Bohemians. The second event that transpired was the opening of the Council of Basel on July 23 of the same year. This assembly was convened as a result of the Constance decree *–Frequens,*” which mandated that general councils occur every seven years.<sup>126</sup> In one of his last acts, Martin had issued a bull that appointed Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (who was to lead the crusading forces at Domařlice) as his legate for the council. The wording of this bull, which affirmed five goals for the impending council, was somewhat vague regarding the Bohemian heretics.<sup>127</sup> In it, Martin stated that the council should propose, debate, decide on, and carry out whatever actions were necessary for the extirpation of the Bohemian heresy.<sup>128</sup> Surprisingly, though, it did not name holy war as the necessarily appropriate means. Since open debate and negotiation could accomplish the desired end, then, after the death of Martin, the opening of the council, and the battle of Domařlice, there existed a legitimate possibility for negotiations that would end a decade of warfare in the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> On the use of this decree as a justification for Basel’s existence and actions, see: Werner Krämer, *Konsenz und Rezeption: Verfassungsprinzipien der Kirche im Basler Konziliarismus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1980), especially 6ff.; Johannes Helmuth, *Das Basler Konzil 1431-1449: Forschungsstand und Probleme* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1987); and Nelson Minnich, *–Councils of the Catholic Reformation (Pisa I to Trent): An Historiographical Survey,*” *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 32 (2000), 303-337.

<sup>127</sup> Martin’s five stated goals for the council were: 1) the reform of the clergy, 2) the return of the eastern church to union with Rome, 3) the preservation of the church’s freedoms, 4) the maintenance of peace in Christian kingdoms, and 5) *–the taking of measures concerning the heresies and errors in Bohemia.*” See: Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV*, 10-11.

<sup>128</sup> *–Aciam ibidem cum debita maturitate et deliberacione, prout in tanta re convenit, ea omnia proponendi, decernendi, concludendi, et exequendi, per que hereses et errores tam de Bohemia...penitus extirpentur.*” This bull confirming Cesarini as legate was promulgated on February 1, 1431, and confirmed by Eugenius on March 12. This quotation is included in: Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV*, 11, n. 3.

<sup>129</sup> The council was not opened by Cesarini himself, who was preparing for the crusade against the Hussites at the time. Instead, two theologians deputized by Cesarini, John of Ragusa and John Palomar, opened the council in his place. On the opening of the council, see: J. Kubalik, *–Jean de Raguse: Son importance pour l’ecclésiologie du Xve siècle,*” *Révue des sciences religieuses* 41 (1967), 150-167; and Christianson, *The Conciliar Cardinal*, 27-30.

The Hussites themselves provided another impetus for negotiation. On July 21, 1431 they disseminated a long manifesto “under the seal of all who adhere to the evangelical truth” in German and Latin that laid out twenty grievances against the church.<sup>130</sup> In the introduction to the long, open letter, the Hussite authors made clear that they would never surrender in their battle with the Catholic church:

Therefore, it is the nature of true faith, that the more it is prohibited, the more it is inflamed. On account of this, the servants of God are not able to be conquered by tribulations, because the more they are punished, that much more are they stirred up and comforted, and the power of faith is secure in the face of contradiction and attacks.<sup>131</sup>

What the Hussites desired was the emendation of the church. The twenty articles that followed enumerated the exact nature of the clergy’s sins that had damaged the church. They committed simony and sexual sins; inappropriately judged others; forbade the translation of the Bible, and thus denied it to the laity; condemned communion in both kinds; and attacked anyone who disagreed in matters of faith and practice: “and if one wanted to respond to them with the sacred Scriptures, then they say that he is a worthless and obdurate heretic, and they refuse to be taught.”<sup>132</sup> Even after this grim depiction of the church’s hierarchy, however, the Hussite manifesto proposed a solution to these twenty

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<sup>130</sup> On this manifesto, see: E.F. Jacob, “The Bohemians at the Council of Basel,” in R.W. Seton-Watson, ed., *Prague Essays* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1948), 81-123, 82.

<sup>131</sup> “Ha etiam est natura verae fidei, quod quanto magis prohibetur, tanto plus accenditur. Propter quod famuli dei in tentatione non poterunt vinci, quia quanto plus puniuntur, tanto plus accenduntur et confortantur, et virtus fidei est segura in contradictione seu impugnatione.” The full text of the manifesto is contained in: Johannes de Ragusio, “Fractatus quomodo Bohemi reducti sunt ad unitatem ecclesiae,” in E. Birk and F. Palacký, eds., *Monumenta Conciliorum Generalium Seculi Decimi Quinti*, vol. 1 (Vindobonae: Aulae et Status, 1856), 133-286; this quotation: 156.

<sup>132</sup> Of the twenty articles, eleven dealt with priests or bishops improperly receiving money for their services; the last article concluded by noting “si ipse vult respondere eis et se defendere per sacram scripturam, tunc dicunt, quod ipse sit frivolus haereticus et induratus, et nolit informari.” The articles are printed in: Johannes de Ragusio, “Fractatus,” 158-167; this quotation, 167.

problems within the church. If the church would accept the Four Articles as the basis for a thoroughgoing reform of itself, the Hussites felt that the Christian religion could be redeemed. This manifesto showed the Hussites' desire for the universal reform of the church. The wars of the 1420s had served as a sort of proof that the Hussites had been chosen and protected by God; the Hussites' success had confirmed the national and messianic impulses that had been stirring since the earliest days of the Bohemian reform. Now, it was the Hussites' duty to use the general council at Basel as a launching pad for the overall reform of the Christian church.

Despite the Hussites' desire for reform and the willingness of the council fathers to negotiate, a certain militancy remained below the surface of their opening interactions. Even in the council's letter to the Bohemians inviting them to Basel, the wording recalled Constance. The letter lamented that "a hostile man came and sowed tares in Bohemia," and that "errors, false opinions, and schism," had sprung up in his wake.<sup>133</sup> In the immediate context of the letter, this man was Satan, but the council's letter could have easily been understood to refer to Hus or Wyclif. The letter did assure the Hussites that the council would eliminate this spirit of dissension with the help of Holy Spirit. Beginning in the autumn of 1431, then, the Council of Basel took extensive steps to grant the Hussites an open hearing on their program for religious reform. In October, the council sent two

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<sup>133</sup> "Venit inimicus homo, et superseminavit zizaniam... saepe numero in Christiana religione pullularunt errores, opiniones, et schismata: sed interventu sanctorum conciliorum spiritus sanctus illa procius effugavit et penitus extinxit." See: Johannes de Ragusio, "Fractatus," 136-137. This reference is to Matthew 13:24-30, the parable of the tares and the good seed, which ends with a reference to judgment: "Et both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

ambassadors, Johannes Nider and Johannes Gelnhausen, to meet with Hussite ambassadors in Nuremberg.<sup>134</sup> Their negotiations with the Hussites were slow, but they finally produced results in May, 1432. After receiving a safe-conduct and assurances that they would get an open hearing on the Four Articles at Basel based only on the teachings of Scripture or early church practice (the so-called Cheb Judge), the Hussites agreed to send a delegation to the council.<sup>135</sup>

These successful initial negotiations, however, took place in the context of grave problems that arose among the Hussites and the council. The first of these issues was the increasing disunity of the Hussites. As had been typical throughout the 1420s, the Hussites followed up their victory at Domažlice with a series of fractious confrontations on religious issues. In a meeting on October 15, 1431, the Hussites decided to accept an invitation to Basel despite the objections of the Táborite party.<sup>136</sup> On January 6, 1432, Hussite theologians and the leaders of the military brotherhoods again met to hammer out a series of articles that further defined Hussite orthodoxy. These articles, which affirmed a number of positions that were in concert with the traditional church, were agreed upon by the Prague

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<sup>134</sup> Nider in particular served as an early expert on the Hussites for the council, and he authored a tractate on their heresy as a sort of manual for the council's dealings with the Bohemians. On this manual, see: Chêne, "Hérésie hussite," and Michael Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 2003), 58ff. On Nider's and Gelnhausen's mission more generally, see: Franz Egger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Predigerordens: Die Reform des Basler Konvents 1429 und die Stellung des Ordens am Basler Konzils (1431-1448)* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 135ff.

<sup>135</sup> The "Cheb Judge," which excluded papal decrees or the rulings of councils as authorities in the Hussites' debate with the council fathers at Basel, was one of eleven conditions the Hussites demanded for their participation in the council in May, 1432. These conditions were granted, and this made Hussite participation in the council possible. On the negotiations for the Cheb Judge, see: Jacob, "The Bohemians at the Council," 83-84; and Cook, "Negotiations between the Hussites," 96-97.

<sup>136</sup> On this meeting, see: Jacob, "The Bohemians at the Council," 82; and Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 71.

Hussites and the Orphans, but the Taborites never supported them.<sup>137</sup> Johannes Nider, who was the council's primary negotiator with the Hussites at this early stage, noted the dissension that split the Hussite ranks. Nider perceived that —within Prague, there are many who are faithful in their hearts,” and who would happily reunite with the Catholics, but that all Bohemians would defend communion in both kinds.<sup>138</sup> Nider isolated utraquism as the one thing that all the Hussites agreed upon, and he pushed hard for the council to encourage a Hussite delegation so that it might raise other, more divisive issues and cause deeper rifts among the Hussites. It was not only the Hussites who were suffering from disunity over the course of 1431 and 1432. Indeed, Eugenius IV tried to dissolve the council of Basel in December, 1431 because of poor attendance and as a means of asserting his supremacy over the assembled council fathers. The response to this papal fiat from Basel was decisive; Cesarini and the other conciliar leaders refused to leave the city and demanded that the pope reconsider.<sup>139</sup> Early in 1432, Cesarini wrote a series of letters to the pope that

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<sup>137</sup> These articles affirmed the value of fasts and the veneration of the saints, confirmed the doctrine of Purgatory, upheld the seven sacraments and the doctrine of the real presence, and allowed priests to wear vestments and perform the full canon of the Mass. Each of these statement rejected positions held by the Taborites or that derived from Wyclif's theology, and thus represented a more moderate form of Hussite practice. They are printed in: Johannes de Ragusio, —Fractatus,” 182-184.

<sup>138</sup> Nider wrote to Ragusa, and highlighted the differences between the Prague Hussites and the military brotherhoods. Of Prague, he noted: —Sunt enim plures in Praga...qui corde fideles sunt;” and further stated that —In veteri Praga in omni loco ecclesiastico non alia vidit in Bohemorum ceremoniis, nisi sicut in nostris ecclesiis, excepta practica communicandi sub utraque specie.” See: Johannes de Ragusio, —Fractatus,” 140-141. See also: Chène, —Ihérésie hussite,” 329.

<sup>139</sup> Johannes Helmraath has argued that by the time of Basel, councils claimed a —Reformmonopol” for themselves. The idea that the council was the most appropriate, or only, vehicle for church reform helped justify the hardline conciliarist position taken against Eugenius. See: Helmraath, —Reform als Thema der Konzilien,” 81; see also: idem., —Theorie und Praxis der Kirchenreform im Spätmittelalter,” *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte* 11 (1992), 41-70; and Scott Hendrix, —Nicholas of Cusa's Ecclesiology between Reform and Reformation,” in G. Christianson and T. Izbicki, eds., *Nicholas of Cusa on Christ and the Church* (Boston: E.J. Brill, 1996), 107-126.



argued that the council had to stay in session in order to deal with the Hussite heresy.<sup>140</sup> Emperor Sigismund concurred, hoping finally to assume the throne of Bohemia in Prague, and by the end of 1432 Eugenius had backed down. In December, the pope sent four envoys to Basel to assist the –several prelates and others gathered at Basel in order to deal with the heresy in Bohemia.”<sup>141</sup> This language, as well as Nider’s desire to exacerbate potential divisions within the Hussites, suggests that the council’s approach to the Hussites was not geared towards mutual understanding and reform.<sup>142</sup> Rather, the council would try to return the Hussites to orthodoxy through a policy of canny concessions and the exploitation of differences between the delegates from Prague, Tábor, and the Orphan military brotherhood.

The Hussites came to Basel full of optimism and certainty that their theological arguments would sway the council. The Hussite embassy arrived on January 4, 1433, –carrying banners on their covered wagons that depicted a chalice with the host, upon which there were also words proclaiming: “Truth conquers all things.”<sup>143</sup> These banners made evident the Hussites’ belief that they had received an essential truth that would conquer the inertia of the council and

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<sup>140</sup> On these letters, see: Christianson, *The Conciliar Cardinal*, 46ff.

<sup>141</sup> This wording denied the assembly the status of a general or ecumenical council, and Cesarini pushed further for a revocation of the bull of dissolution, –*Quoniam alto*.” On Eugenius’s limited approval of the council, see: Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV*, 16-17.

<sup>142</sup> Interestingly, Nider did not view the Hussite heretics as inspired by demons; in contrast to witches, then, they could be dealt with by theological disputation and the careful use of concessions. Overall, Nider saw the Hussites as dangerous opponents of reform, but felt that they could be undermined and brought back into the church. On the differences between witches and heretics in Nider’s thought, see: Bailey, *Battling Demons*, 125; and Margit Brand, *Studien zu Johannes Niders deutschen Schriften* (Rome: Istituto Storico Domenicano, 1998), especially 25-26.

<sup>143</sup> –Portantes tam in vexillis [banners] quam in coopertis curruum in quibusdam depictum calicem cum hostia, in quibusdam vero literas exprimentes “veritas omnia vincit.” This description was included in: Johannes de Ragusio, –*Fractatus*,” 258.

pope. Jan Rokycana made this belief even more explicit in his opening address to the council. Rokycana was the vicar-general of the Archbishop of Prague, and he had served as the main preacher at the Týn church in Prague's Old Town since 1427. Since the death of Jakoubek in 1429, he had become the leading voice of moderate Hussitism and the strongest proponent of a Bohemian national church.<sup>144</sup> At Basel, he articulated a strong sense of Bohemia's status as a people chosen by God to reform the universal church:

We Bohemians are called heretics, cursed, blasphemed, mocked, and have suffered persecution; we have been called the refuse of the world, the filth of all things, and made a spectacle for the world; but we have been converted back to the bishop and pastor of our souls, the Lord Jesus Christ, we have received a multitude of good things from God our savior *over and above other peoples*, and we do not cease to receive them from day to day.<sup>145</sup>

This —multitude of good things” was the Four Articles, and they represented the truth and law of God. Rokycana lamented that these truths had been lost to the church, as ~~truth~~ and virtue, which once conquered all things (*—quae olim super omnia vincebant*”), are now conversely crucified, crushed underfoot, and held up for show.”<sup>146</sup> He was confident, however, that the contemporary church would turn back to the model of the apostolic church, the ~~—safest model~~” for sanctity, and

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<sup>144</sup> Rokycana first came to prominence by negotiating a truce between Třitka and Prague in 1424, and he rose quickly through the ranks of the Hussite clergy during the 1420s. For his biography and work on behalf of the Hussites, see: Frederick Heymann, “John Rokycana: Church Reformer between Hus and Luther,” *Church History* 28 (1959), 240-280.

<sup>145</sup> “Nos namque, Bohemi, quia maledicimur, persecutionem patimur, blasphemamur, deridemur, haeticamur tamquam purgamenta eius mundi, omnium peripsema, et spectaculum huic mundo facti sumus; conversi tamen retrorsum ad episcopum pastoremque animarum nostrarum Dominum Jesum Christum, cum bona multiplicia supra gentes ceteras a Deo salvatore nostro suscepimus, et de die in diem suscipere non cessamus.” See: Jan Rokycana, “Collatio seu Praesentatio,” 263. Emphasis mine.

<sup>146</sup> “Veritas autem et virtus, quae olim super omnia vincebant, jam rursus crucifiguntur, conculcantur, et ostentui habentur.” Rokycana, “Collatio seu Praesentatio,” 267.

accept the law of God anew in order to reform the church.<sup>147</sup> The Hussites were not prepared to surrender their distinctive beliefs or practices, and they were convinced that their “truth” would prevail at Basel.

Cardinal Cesarini did not silently accept this challenge to the council’s authority. On January 28, he delivered his own address to the Bohemians.<sup>148</sup> He conceded that truth was essential for “true unity and perfect fraternal love,” but he wanted to know exactly what that truth consisted of. Therefore, he asked that the Hussites provide the council with their positions on twenty-eight articles of faith. These articles concerned the seven sacraments, Purgatory, clerical possessions, prayers for the dead, the use of the chrism and vestments by priests, and the nature of predestination.<sup>149</sup> These choices were not innocent; they all dealt with issues that had proved to be divisive among the Hussites during the previous years, and Cesarini hoped that the Hussites would reveal the fissures in their delegation in trying to answer them.<sup>150</sup> The Hussite delegation refused to get into

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<sup>147</sup> Rokycana referred to the primitive church as the “*lux mundi*,” and the “*exemplar tutissimum*,” which he hoped the contemporary church would look to as the model for the ideal constitution of the church. See: Rokycana, “*Oratio seu Praesentatio*,” 266.

<sup>148</sup> On this speech, see: Christianson, *The Conciliar Cardinal*, 77. Ragusa also noted in his text that the council had the condemned articles of Hus and Wyclif read out publicly as a response to Hussite claims that both men had been evangelical doctors: “*Et quia novissimi proponentes Bohemorum multum invective contra nos locuti fuerant, et damnatos Johannem Wicleph et Johannem Hus cum sua doctrina multum commendaverant, eos etiam evangelicos doctores nominando...legerentur coram Bohemis articuli Wicleph condemnati, ad ostendendum ipsum non fuisse doctorem evangelicum, sed condemnatum haereticum.*” See: Johannes de Ragusio, “*Fractatus*,” 269.

<sup>149</sup> Cesarini stated initially that he only desired “*vera unitas et perfecta fraternitas.*” The full text of this speech is contained in: Johannes de Ragusio, “*Fractatus*,” 273-274.

<sup>150</sup> The internal divisions that Cesarini hoped to take advantage of had become evident in a series of debates between Hussites who ascribed to Wyclif’s theology and more conservative Hussites over the last half of the 1420s. Peter Payne, the English Hussite who was one of the Bohemians’ four speakers at Basel, was the strongest proponent of Wyclifite ideas, and he was opposed by Jan Přibram, who only diverged from Roman positions on the issue of communion in both kinds. On these debates, see: Cook, “*John Wyclif and Hussite Theology*,” 340-347. On Cesarini’s exploitation of these debates, see: Gerald Christianson, “*Wyclif’s Ghost: The Politics of Reunion at the Council of Basel*,” *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 17 (1985), 193-208.

a discussion of these issues, and would speak only on the Four Articles. This refusal suggests that the Hussite delegation was aware of the limits to its unanimity, and that the ambassadors wanted to present a united front at Basel. In the three months of debate from January until April, 1433, Jan Rokycana; Nicholas of Pelhřimov, the bishop of Tábor; Ulrich of Znojmo, a priest who worked in Čáslav;<sup>151</sup> and Peter Payne, the spiritual advisor to the Orphans, did exactly that as they argued at length for the validity and universal necessity of adopting the Four Articles as binding for the entire church.

It is not necessary to rehearse the debates between the Hussites' representatives and the council's speakers here. It has been done elsewhere, at considerable length and in exhaustive detail.<sup>152</sup> Suffice it to say that the debates were carried out in a thoroughly scholastic manner and centered around questions of ecclesiology and the clergy's pastoral mission. Whether the specific debate was on the validity of communion in both kinds, the endowment of the clergy, the necessity of punishing public sin, or the requirement that all true priests preach, at the heart of all the exchanges was a fundamental question of where authority was located in the church. The conciliar representatives tended to emphasize Christ's

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<sup>151</sup> Relatively little is known of Ulrich; he had studied in Prague (he received his bachelor's degree in 1416), but after receiving this degree, nothing is known of his activities until 1433. He was a last minute addition to the Hussite delegation, but despite his lack of academic rank Jacob describes him as "perhaps the most accomplished academic mind of the four Hussite speakers, and a moderate who offended less than Payne or Nicholas." See: Jacob, "The Bohemians at the Council," 89.

<sup>152</sup> See: Jacob, "The Bohemians at the Council;" Paul De Vooght, "La confrontation des thèses hussites et romaines au concile de Bâle (Janvier-Avril 1433)," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 37 (1970), 97-137 and 254-291; Egger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Predigerordens*, 140-163; Krämer, *Konsenz und Rezeption*, 69-124; J. Santiago Madrigal, "Eucaristía e Iglesia en la Oratio de Communione sub Utraque Specie de Juan de Ragusa," *Revista Española de Teología* 53 (1993), 145-208 and 285-340; and Thomas Prügl, *Die Ekklesiologie Heinrich Kaltheisers OP in der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Basler Konziliarismus* (München: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1995), especially 56-86.

foundation of the church in Peter, and his promise that the Holy Spirit would guide the church for all time. This infusion of the spirit made it impossible for the church to err in essential matters of faith.<sup>153</sup> The Catholic speakers also emphasized that the church was the mystical body of Christ, a mixed body of believers united under one head by its common rituals, traditions, and faith.<sup>154</sup> This “organic” image of the church also emphasized the necessity of the clerical hierarchy that directed this body in its faith.<sup>155</sup> Conversely, the Bohemian speakers emphasized the predestinate nature of the church, and demanded the contemporary church’s conformity to the standards and practices of the apostolic age. For the Hussites, there was no promise of salvation linked to the institutional continuity of the church. Rather, the key factor for them was God’s election, but this emphasis was offset by their continued insistence that moral conduct, the preaching of the word of God, and the reception of the eucharist in both kinds could signal one’s elect status.<sup>156</sup> Paul De Vooght has pithily suggested that the

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<sup>153</sup> This view of the church as inerrant was put forth most strongly by John of Ragusa in his reply to Rokycana on the issue of utraquism. He argued that the “consuetudo” of the church could establish a “veritas catholicae fidei” which was binding for Christians. At one point he simply argued: “ecclesia regitur a Spiritu sancto, sed Spiritus sanctus errare non potest, ergo nec ecclesia.” On Ragusa’s view of the inerrancy of the church, see: Madrigal, “Eucaristía e Iglesia,” 287-295; and idem., *La Ecclesiología de Juan de Ragusa O.P. (1390/95-1443): Estudio e interpretación de su Tractatus de Ecclesia* (UPCO: Madrid, 1995), 178ff. See also: Amedeo Molnar, “La pensée hussite dans l’interprétation de Jean de Raguse,” *CV* 26 (1983), 143-152.

<sup>154</sup> On the organic metaphor, see: Madrigal, *La Ecclesiología*, 183; Krämer, *Konsenz und Rezeption*, 83; and Helmuth, *Das Basler Konzil*, 365ff.

<sup>155</sup> Heinrich Kaltheisen, in his discourse on preaching, was very explicit in his assertions that proper authorization and hierarchical control were necessary elements in the constitution of the church. He argued that hierarchical sanction was the only necessary qualification for making a true preacher. On hierarchy and authority, see: Prügl, *Die Ekklesiologie Heinrich Kaltheisens*, 74-76; and De Vooght, “La confrontation des thèses hussites,” 271-272. See also: Kubalik, “Jean de Raguse,” 159.

<sup>156</sup> This position was obviously beholden to Hus’s adaptation of Wyclif’s ecclesiology, in which absolute predestination was moderated by the practice of the church. On the Hussite position generally, see: Krämer, *Konsenz und Rezeption*, 87; and Jacob, “The Bohemians at the Council,” 93 and 104. On the role of eucharistic practice in defining the church, see: David Holeyton, “The Communion of Infants: the Basel Years,” *CV* 29 (1986), 15-40.

debates revealed a confrontation between the Hussites' *–esprit évangélique*" and the Catholics' *–mentalité canonique,*" and it certainly seemed that the outlooks expressed in both sides' speeches were incommensurable.<sup>157</sup> Despite the atmosphere of debate and intellectual exchange, then, I would suggest that the disputations between the Hussites and the Council of Basel revealed a strong undercurrent of conflict that could not be ultimately resolved.

One place where the essential differences between the Bohemians and their interlocutors became clear was in the former's references to Jan Hus. Particularly during Nicholas of Pelhřimov's debates with the Frenchmen Giles Charlier over the punishment of mortal sins, the Bohemian martyr came to the foreground. In the first place, the Táborite bishop based his initial speech on Hus's *Sermo de Pace*, the oration Hus had planned to deliver at Constance.<sup>158</sup> Pelhřimov used Hus's notion that man's peace with God depended upon his following God's law; violations of that law made peace with God impossible, and therefore required decisive action to stop those violations.<sup>159</sup> Secondly, Charlier was Jean Gerson's nephew. While Gerson's writings had already been used extensively in the debate over *utraquism*, the confrontation of his nephew with Hus's ideas on peace with God would have been an eerie rehearsal of Constance.<sup>160</sup> Thirdly, Nicholas explicitly made reference to Hus in his

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<sup>157</sup> De Vooght, *–La confrontation des thèses hussites,*" 282.

<sup>158</sup> See above, chapter 1, n. 129 and following.

<sup>159</sup> On Nicholas's use of Hus's framework, see: Fudge, *–Crime, Punishment, and Pacifism,*" 89.

<sup>160</sup> In his reply to Rokycana, Ragusa quoted from Gerson's 1417 tractate on the necessity of communion in both kinds extensively. Indeed, he ended his discourse by quoting Gerson's seven rules for debating heretics from that treatise. He also used Gerson's definitions of who could be a true expositor of Scripture to refute the Hussites' exegesis of Scripture. On these borrowings, see: Madrigal, *La Ecclesiologia*, 76. See also the text of Ragusa's *–Oratio de communione sub utraque*

castigation of the clergy. For Nicholas, simony was the worst sin in the church (and therefore the most serious sin of all), so it required correction most urgently. The problem was that when good preachers such as Hus sought to illuminate this sin in order to root it out, they were ignored, despised, or suppressed ~~at~~ the instigation of evil clerics.”<sup>161</sup> In the case of Hus, he was forbidden to preach at Bethlehem, and this limitation of free preaching represented a second great sin.<sup>162</sup> Nicholas also lamented that the church suppressed utraquism, and he linked the deaths of Hus and Jerome to their support for this pillar of God’s law. Nicholas’s speech culminated in his assertion that the Four Articles were all components of the ~~truth~~ of God,” and that —its not seemly for us to follow the customs of men.” Instead, the Hussites would support Christ’s institution of the eucharist despite the disapproval of the universal church.<sup>163</sup> In Nicholas’s oration, the practice of communion in both kinds, free preaching, and the necessary suppression of clerical sin all came together, particularly in the ministry and death of Jan Hus. He had been, in short, an embodiment of the Four Articles and victim of the church’s resistance to these divine truths.

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specie,” in Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova, et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 29, 699-868, 725ff. and 864ff.

<sup>161</sup> Nicholas characterized Hus as a: ~~p~~redicatore utique evangelicum, virum bonum et iustum et catholicum, a multis annis in regno nostro una moribus et fama laudabiliter comprobatum. Qui legem evangelicam iuxta expositionem ss. Doctorum, se veraciter in lege dei fundancium, omnes errores et hereses constantissime detestando et ad detestandum eosdem continue et fideliter amonendo, ad pacem quoque et veritatem, quantum sibi fuit possibile, verbo, scriptis, et opere iugiter exhortando.” See: Nicholas of Pelhřimov, ~~O~~ratio pro Bohemorum articulo de peccatis publicis puniendis, habita in concilio Basiliensi die 20. et 21. m. Januarii a. 1433,” in F. Bartoš, ed., *Orationes quibus Nicolaus de Pelhřimov...et Ulricus de Znojmo...in Concilio Basiliensi anno 1433 ineunte defenderunt* (Jihočeská Společnost: Tábor, 1935), 3-29, 24.

<sup>162</sup> Nicholas argued that the bull forbidding Hus to preach at Bethlehem was proclaimed ~~ad~~ instigationem mali cleri, coreccionem suorum peccatorum non sustinentis, emanavit, ut in capella magna, in medio civitatis Pragentis sita, predicacio sibi restringatur.” *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Nicholas noted: ~~P~~ropter quod consuetudo mala sive disuetudo, obvians huic optime Christi institutioni, debet cedere, destrui et eradicari, cum dei veritatem, non hominum consuetudinem nos sequi oportet.” See: Nicholas of Pelhřimov, ~~O~~ratio,” 25.

The identification of Hus as a perfect preacher was even stronger in Ulrich of Znojmo's discourse on the necessity of free preaching in the church. For Ulrich, there were two kinds of priests: those who held their office only through ordination (~~–~~*sacramento*"), and those who held it because of their righteousness (~~–~~*iusticia*").<sup>164</sup> Ulrich never denied the validity of the former's office, but he did warn them about the consequences of their failure to fulfill their pastoral mission: ~~–~~You turn towards Peter, but consider Judas."<sup>165</sup> For Ulrich, the failure of the priesthood resulted from their greed for wealth and worldly power, their sexual sins, and their ignorance. He recommended that the clergy should heed the words of Jan Hus, ~~–~~the most laudable preacher of the kingdom of Bohemia," that he ~~–~~had left in writing on the walls of the Bethlehem Chapel for the future remembrance of posterity" about these sins.<sup>166</sup> Ulrich further noted that Hus had suffered and died for his revelation of these sins and his defense of ~~–~~evangelical truths," and thus personified the values of the righteous priest.<sup>167</sup> For Ulrich, as with earlier Hussite priests and preachers, Hus's life and death functioned as a binding model for the priesthood: ~~–~~For we who saw and heard [him] were not able to remain silent."<sup>168</sup> Ulrich followed up this assertion by reading an excerpt from

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<sup>164</sup> ~~–~~Quidam sacerdotes sunt sacramento et iusticia." On this two-fold definition of the priesthood, see: Ulrich of Znojmo, ~~–~~Posicio fratris Ulrici de Znoyma in materia tercii articuli de predicacione libera verbi dei," in Bartoš, *Orationes*, 86-108, 92.

<sup>165</sup> ~~–~~Attendis Petrum, sed Judam considera." Ulrich of Znojmo, ~~–~~Posicio," 93.

<sup>166</sup> ~~–~~Et istam simonicacam heresim laudabilis predicator regni Bohemie dive memorie Johannes Hus, sacre theologie baccalarius formatus, solempniter detestus est scripto, verbo, et opere ad tantum, quod ad futuram posterorum memoriam in pariete capelle Bethlehem in Praga in scriptis reliquit." Ulrich of Znojmo, ~~–~~Posicio," 96. This reference was to Hus's *De Sex Erroribus*, which Jakoubek had had inscribed at Bethlehem.

<sup>167</sup> ~~–~~Propter quod a quibusdam prelatis canonicisque fratribus in odium captus est et usque ad mortem diram propter clamores et delaciones eorundem pro veritatibus evangelii passus est persecucionem." *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> ~~–~~Non enim possumus, que vidimus et audivimus, non loqui." This assertion came from Ulrich's ~~–~~Reŕcatio" to Charlier's speech, and is contained in Bartoš, *Orationes*, 133.



the confession of faith that Hus had prepared for the Council of Constance, *De Sufficientia legis Christi*. Ulrich concluded by saying, “If this is the protestation of a heretical or sinful man, He will judge, who illuminates the hidden shadows and makes known the counsel of the heart.”<sup>169</sup>

In these speeches, as well as in the negotiations and letters that preceded them, the Hussite embassy and the council’s speakers revealed that a deep rift existed between the two parties about the nature of the church and the necessity of reform within it. At key points throughout the debates between the Bohemians and the council fathers, Jan Hus surfaced as an embodiment of that intractable difference. He had demanded reform, but had been ignored. He had lived up to the high moral standards demanded of true priests, but had been censured for it. He had proclaimed God’s truth, which conquered all things, but had been killed for its sake. These debates, despite their exposure of the differences between the two sides, did ultimately yield an imperfect truce between Bohemia and the universal church. The Basel *Compactata*, part peace treaty and part theological confession, created a lasting peace that both sides felt would allow them ultimately to accomplish their goals of creating a more perfect ecclesiastical unity.

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<sup>169</sup> “Si ista protestacio est hominis erronei aut heretici, Ille iudicabit, qui illuminabit abscondita tenebrarum et manifestabit consilia cordium.” Ulrich of Znojmo, “Replacatio,” 134. This is a reference to I. Cor. 4:5: “He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts.” The text of Hus’s confession is contained in: *Documenta*, 267.

### The End of Hussitism, The Origins of Utraquism

On April 14, 1433 the Hussite embassy left Basel to return to Prague. A delegation from the council accompanied them in order to continue the negotiations between the parties and to try to hammer out the specifics of a treaty that would end all warfare between the Hussites and the Catholic magnates of the Holy Roman Empire. The delegation arrived in Prague in May, and a month later the council's ambassadors witnessed the beginning of a Bohemian diet that met at the university in Prague. During the diet, Prokop Holý (Prokop the Bald), the leader of Tábor's military forces, confirmed that the Bohemians would not surrender the Four Articles without a fight.<sup>170</sup>

The God who knows all things, knows that it was your party that started the war and ravaged the kingdom with fire and sword. We, with the help of God, have risen against the unjustified violence and up to now have had to defend ourselves. These wars, cruel as they were, produced many a spiritual gain and will produce others as we believe. Many obdurate enemies of the sacred Four Articles have in the end, through word and deed affirmed their faith in them and become their voluntary defenders unto their deaths... That these truths which bring salvation to all the faithful have come to the knowledge of so many people, we accept as a special gift from God. And we fear, these wars will not cease unless the Church accepts these truths in good faith.<sup>171</sup>

Prokop made clear in this speech that the Hussites had not surrendered their adherence to the Four Articles as binding evangelical truths. His outspoken willingness to continue fighting also suggested that the Basel delegates would have to work to find grounds for a lasting peace. This basis for peace would

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<sup>170</sup> Prokop was the most successful Hussite commander after the death of Jiřka. Despite the fact that he was a layman, he accompanied the Hussite delegation to Basel and was held in high esteem by Cesarini. Until 1434, he would be the leading voice of the Táborites in their interactions with Prague and the Orphan brotherhood. On Prokop's military and diplomatic career, see: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 110ff.; and Jacob, "The Bohemians at the Council," 90-91.

<sup>171</sup> This speech is quoted at length in: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 101.

ultimately be the most characteristic symbol of the Hussite movement: the communion chalice.

The Roman representatives came to realize that this major concession was necessary to gain peace with the Bohemians; upon their return to Basel in July, then, the ambassadors to Prague recommended offering the Bohemians the right to communion in both kinds, if they would accept limitations to the other three of the Four Articles. Juan Palomar, who served as Cesarini's chief representative on the delegation, argued that this concession would win the Hussite nobles and moderate Prague priests over, and would likely result in a Hussite civil war that could break the power of the military brotherhoods.<sup>172</sup> In August of 1433, then, the council fathers decided to grant the communion chalice to the Bohemians, and sent one more embassy to Prague carrying a provisional agreement for peace between the Bohemians and the Catholic church. On November 21, 1433, the text of the Basel *Compactata* was read aloud in a meeting of the Bohemian diet, and was greeted with enthusiasm. The promise of peace and the acceptance of the chalice had proven attractive enough that the Hussites surrendered much in their program that would have transformed the ecclesiastical order.

The original text of the *Compactata* comprised eleven articles that addressed the demands made by the Czechs in their Four Articles.<sup>173</sup> The first of these articles proclaimed “a firm and lasting peace and ecclesiastical unity” in Bohemia, and the second declared that no Christians should condemn the Czechs

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<sup>172</sup> On Palomar's role in the negotiations, see: Christianson, *The Conciliar Cardinal*, 117; and Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 108-109.

<sup>173</sup> The full text of the *Compactata*, as well as the Czech diet's response to them, can be found in: AČ 3, 398-412.

for heresy, or invade the kingdom in the name of the church. This article confirmed that the Bohemians were “reverent and obedient sons of holy mother church,” and in it the church withdrew its prior condemnation of the Bohemians as heretics.<sup>174</sup> In article three, the council gave a limited approval to the practice of communion in both kinds; this continued the council’s reversal of its earlier decisions, as the recognition of *utraquism*’s validity countermanded the condemnation of communion in both kinds that Constance issued on June 15, 1415. The *Compactata* allowed the laity to commune in both kinds only if they were of the age of discretion and conformed to the universal church in all other liturgical and theological issues. Priests serving communion in both kinds were also required to affirm the doctrine of concomitance, and teach that *utraquism* was not necessary for salvation.<sup>175</sup> The concession of *utraquism* was also limited in that it demanded that those who wished to commune in one kind, according to tradition, be allowed to maintain this practice. This restriction effectively forced the Hussites to recognize and accept the continued presence of a Catholic minority in Bohemia. Regarding the other three of the Four Articles, the *Compactata* rejected essential elements of the Hussites’ demands. Sins were not to be punished by private persons, but only by those with institutional authority. Priests could preach “freely,” but only if licensed and approved by their clerical superior. Finally, the council stated that priests could own and use material

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<sup>174</sup> Article 1 mandated that each and every faithful Christian in the Czech lands should “recipient et acceptabunt et facient bonam, firmam, et perpetuam pacem et ecclesiasticam unitatem;” the second mandated that all members of the universal church “eum eis Christianam pacem observent, ipsosque tamquam fratres eorum, sanctae videlicet matris ecclesiae filios reverentes et observentes.” See: *AC* 3, 398-399.

<sup>175</sup> “Ipsi debent firmiter credere, quod non sub specie panis caro tantum, nec sub specie vini sanguis tantum, sed sub qualibet specie est integer totus Christus.” *AC* 3, 400.

goods.<sup>176</sup> The text of the treaty ended with another affirmation of the council's desire for a lasting peace and an assurance that the embassy had authority from the council to offer this agreement to the Hussites.

In light of this promise of peace, and given the concession of the chalice, the Bohemian nobility and moderate Hussite leaders pushed for the acceptance of the council's offer. The Taborites and Orphans successfully lobbied for a counter-offer to the *Compactata* that made communion in both kinds binding for all of Bohemia, but the ambassadors from Basel flatly rejected this demand in January, 1434.<sup>177</sup> From that point, the tensions and differences of opinion that had existed among the Hussites boiled to the surface. The Taborites and Orphans wished to continue to push for the acceptance of the Hussites' full program for reform, while the more moderate factions in Bohemia wanted peace. For the Taborites, their bargaining position depended upon their military success. Unfortunately for them, they had been bogged down in an unsuccessful siege of the Catholic stronghold of Plzeň since July of 1433, and their failure there had both drained their resources and damaged their reputation as invincible warriors.<sup>178</sup> In May of 1434, then, the Czech nobles seized the Old and New Towns of Prague, and they quickly moved to attack the field armies of the radical brotherhoods in order to

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<sup>176</sup> Each of these emendations to the Four Articles cited the Hussites' articles and isolated single words or ideas within them that would be changed. In the article on free preaching, for instance, the *Compactata* focused on *-libere*" and limited its use to those who had explicit approval from their bishop or abbot. See: *AC* 3, 401-403.

<sup>177</sup> On the Hussites' internal negotiations regarding the *Compactata*, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 110-111.

<sup>178</sup> The siege of Plzeň was supposed to be a joint venture by the Orphans, Taborites, and Prague Hussites; only Tábor sent a significant number of troops, though, and the siege was unsuccessful throughout 1433. Plzeň was the target because it was the strongest Catholic bastion in western Bohemia and the head of a powerful regional association that had politically and militarily resisted the spread of Hussitism. The most detailed analysis of the siege and its impact on internal Hussite tensions can be found in: Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution, 1592-1641*.

remove them as an obstacle to peace. The nobles' and brotherhoods' forces finally fought at Lipany on May 30. The nobles lured the Tábórites from their hilltop position with a false retreat, and then encircled their enemies. Although a few of the brotherhoods' leaders were captured and survived, including Peter Payne, most of them were killed in the fighting or executed after the battle.<sup>179</sup> In short, the Czechs accomplished themselves what no German army had been able to do: they had completely defeated the military might of the brotherhoods' armies and routed the warriors of God, "ark against ark."<sup>180</sup> (see figure 1)

This climactic internecine battle was a fitting, if tragic, end to the Hussite movement. When external attacks ended, and when there was no need for all Bohemians to rally together for the defense of the law of God, the tensions between the moderate and more extreme factions in the Bohemian coalition destroyed the Hussite movement. At Lipany, the all-encompassing, messianic vision of the Hussites was destroyed and replaced by the moderate, nationalist vision of the Utraquists. In order to construct a Czech national church around the celebration of communion in both kinds and to consolidate the religious and political gains made during the revolutionary period of Hussitism, the more transformative and militant goals of the movement had been discarded. While many scholars have seen Lipany as the end of the Hussites, or as the beginning of

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<sup>179</sup> One of the nobles who participated in the battle was Ulrich of Rožmberk, the most powerful Catholic lord in Bohemia. After the battle, his forces herded captured soldiers into barns and burned them alive. The number of dead was perhaps 900 men. On the battle of Lipany, see: Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, 1639ff.; on the executions of the brotherhoods' soldiers, see also: Rudolf Urbánek, "Lipany," in idem., *Z Husitského Věku*, 158-177.

<sup>180</sup> Thomas Fudge described the battle as such, drawing on a Bohemian description of a battle in 1423 between the Tábórites and their erstwhile allies from Prague. During the battle, each army was led by a priest bearing a monstrance; the presence of the host at the head of each army led to this reference to the Israelites. See: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 115.

their “taming” by the papacy, I would suggest that this interpretation is incorrect.<sup>181</sup> Although the most dynamic and radical of Hus’s heirs were defeated at Lipany, they were not destroyed; the Utraquist church in Bohemia also maintained a distinctive, Czech national identity for almost two hundred years after this conflict. In the second half of 1434, Emperor Sigismund repeatedly came to the fore as an important actor in the process of ratifying the *Compactata* and finalizing the peace between Prague and Basel. Of course, he did have a vested interest in this process, as the establishment of peace between the Utraquists and the universal church would allow him to take the Bohemian throne that he had laid claim to almost fifteen years earlier. In order to secure his official election to the throne, Sigismund consistently made concessions to the Bohemians in order to keep the process of negotiation moving along. His first concession came on the heels of Lipany, when he condoned the election of Jan Rokycana as the archbishop of Prague during a meeting of the Bohemian diet. Sigismund conceded that this election would have to be approved by the pope, but he volunteered to pressure Eugenius to accept this extraordinary election.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Scott Hendrix referred to the Bohemian church after Basel as “tamed,” and lamented its willingness to pursue “peaceful coexistence” with the Catholic church rather than continuing its drive for reform. Zdeněk David has opposed this view of post-Basel Utraquism most forcefully, arguing that it ignores the Bohemians’ considerable accomplishment in establishing a tolerant, “liberal” church in the face of challenges from Rome. See: Hendrix, “In Quest of ‘Vera Ecclesia,’” 374; and David, *Finding the Middle Way*, 2ff. See also: Frederick Heymann, “The Hussite-Utraquist Church in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 52 (1961), 1-16.

<sup>182</sup> On the election of Rokycana, see: Heymann, “John Rokycana,” 247; and Winfried Eberhard, “Zur reformatorischen Qualität und Konfessionalisierung des nachrevolutionären Hussitismus,” in F. Šmahel, ed., *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation in Spätmittelalter* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1998), 213-238, 217.



**Figure 1: A priest with a monstrance precedes Žižka and Hussite troops into battle  
Jena Codex (c.1495), MS NKP IV B 24, f.76v**

Sigismund also agreed to a series of requirements formulated by a Bohemian diet in March, 1435, that he would have to meet in order to become king.<sup>183</sup> These included granting considerable judicial power to the nobility in the provinces, elevating Utraquist nobles to positions of high authority in the

<sup>183</sup> Sigismund was presented with two lists of “claims and settlements,” one by the nobles and one by the cities of Bohemia, that he would have to agree to as a prerequisite to his election as king of Bohemia. The full text of these lists of articles can be found in: *AC* 3, 419-421.



kingdom, and not promoting foreigners at court at the expense of Czechs. Strikingly, these political concessions echoed those that Sigismund had made in 1419 when he tried to win the nobility over to his side in the wake of Wenceslas's death.<sup>184</sup> Sigismund agreed to these terms, and also to the demand that he have a Utraquist chaplain at his court, in order to secure the full support of the Bohemians for his election.<sup>185</sup>

Sigismund had hoped that this would take place in July, 1435, at a diet held in Brno. Unfortunately, representatives from Basel at the diet angered the Bohemians by refusing to address the topic of the Catholic minority in the kingdom, and many of the Bohemian delegates withdrew from the meeting.<sup>186</sup> Sigismund, however, offered his support to the Bohemians and went behind the backs of the Basel delegates to propose what Winfried Eberhard has called the *–kaiserliche Kompaktaten.*<sup>187</sup> These articles promised that no Bohemians would be subject to ecclesiastical courts outside of the kingdom, that no foreigners would be promoted over Czechs in the court, that Bohemian bishops would not hinder the practice of communion in both kinds, and that Catholics services would

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<sup>184</sup> On the political negotiations surrounding Sigismund's election to the Bohemian throne in 1434-1435, see: Eberhard, *–Der Weg zur Koexistenz,* 30-36. On the concessions he made in 1419, see above: n.13 and following.

<sup>185</sup> *–Prošé, aby jiný kaplanów nemiewal, jednom ty, jeť to tělo boťie a krew páně pod obojí způsobú skutečně rozdávali.* *AC* 3, 419.

<sup>186</sup> By July 1435, Basel's representatives had grown impatient with the Bohemians' seeming failure to comply with the demands of the 1433 *Compactata*, especially concerning the clause that they should conform with Roman practice in all ritual matters beyond the practice of communion in both kinds. These accusations of liturgical and theological deviance would surface repeatedly until the abrogation of the *Compactata* in 1462, when they served as the basis for the cancellation of the treaty. On the breakdown of negotiations in 1435 between the Basel envoys and Utraquists in Brno, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 128-129.

<sup>187</sup> See: Eberhard, *–Der Weg zur Koexistenz,* 30. The full text of these agreements is contained in: *AC* 3, 427-431.

not be held in areas where communion in both kinds was prevalent.<sup>188</sup> Remarkably, Sigismund submitted his imperial *Compactata* on July 6, 1435. Twenty years after he had participated in the Hus's execution, Sigismund provided a series of assurances that guaranteed the survival of the Utraquist church, and thus his ascension to the throne of Bohemia. Sigismund's official acceptance of the throne was delayed by one more year, though, and it was not until July, 1436 that Sigismund and the religious leaders of the Bohemian Utraquists met in Jihlava, a prominent town on the trade route between Vienna and Prague. On July 5 and 6, a series of ceremonies took place in the town square during which representatives of the Bohemian diet formally accepted the Basel *Compactata* as binding in the Czech lands. Rokycana read out the council's decree that the Czechs were free from the taint of heresy, and one of Basel's envoys, Bishop Philibert of Coutances, celebrated Mass. Sigismund also wrote to Basel recommending the recognition of Rokycana as archbishop of Prague, and the consecration of two suffragan bishops, Martin Lupáč and Wenceslas of Mýto.<sup>189</sup> On July 6, Petr of Mladoňovice publicly announced the Utraquists' acceptance of the *Compactata*. This elder statesman and partial founder of Hussitism had broken from Rokycana and the other moderate leaders of the

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<sup>188</sup> This last concession effectively divided the Czech lands into separate and distinct –sub utraque” and –sub una” regions. It was meant to minimize tensions between the two parties, but also ghettoized the Catholic minority and led to the continued polarization of the Czech religious landscape. See: *AC* 3, 429-430.

<sup>189</sup> The issue of Rokycana's election as archbishop and the appointment of other Hussite bishops would prove extremely divisive in the aftermath of the confirmation of the *Compactata*. Although Sigismund did write a letter requesting approval of his election, he also secretly suggested that the council delay making a decision and let the Czechs find a new, more appropriate candidate for the office. Sigismund's letter is preserved in: *AC* 3, 445-446. On the intrigue surrounding Rokycana's election, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution, 1424-1437*, 133-134.

movement in 1427 over issues of proper worship,<sup>190</sup> but he agreed to participate in the ceremony that would finally establish the legality and orthodoxy of the church that had developed out of Hus's ministry and death. The question that would determine the next half-century of Bohemian religious history, however, was how the example and commemoration of Hus would shape the Utraquists' response to their continued conflict with the Catholic church.

### Conclusion

God aroused in the glorious kingdom of Bohemia his faithful servants, the preachers of his word, who, considering that the deformation of the church had taken place, and the example of Nehemiah's weeping over the desertion of the city and temple of Jerusalem, the destruction of its gates, and the rebuilding of these things, began to grieve, lament together, and to wonder, if they would be able in any way to rescue those seduced by the Antichrist... They were powerful and wise in word and deed, and in a small amount of time, with God helping them and granting abundant grace to the words of his representatives, they steered the souls of many towards submitting to the evangelical truth. For the seed of the divine word fell in good and fertile soil through the grace of God, who gave words of great power to his evangelizing servants.<sup>191</sup>

With these words, Nicholas of Pelhřimov, the bishop of Tábor, introduced his history of the Bohemian reform and the community of Tábor. Nicholas began to write this chronicle in 1435, after the disastrous battle of Lipany and during the

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<sup>190</sup> On Petr's split with Rokycana and his retreat from leadership in the broader Hussite movement, see: Bartoš, "Øsud Husova evangelisty Petra Mladoňovice;" and Spinka, *John Hus at the Council*, 79ff.

<sup>191</sup> "Suscitavit in inclyto regno Bohemiae servos suos fideles, verbi sui praedicatores, qui talem ut praemitterentur ecclesiae considerantes deformationem, exemplo Neemiae deflentis civitatis et templi Jerusalem desertionem, eiusque portarum combustionem et de reaedificationem harum cogitantes coeperunt dolere et vehementer contristari et variis modis anxii cogitare, si possunt per antichristum seductis quomodolibet subvenire... Erant viri potentes et prudentes in opere et sermone modico tempore multorum animos ad acquiescendum veritati evangelicae inclinarunt Deo cooperante et legatorum suorum sermonibus copiosam gratiam largiente. Semen enim divini verbi in terram bonam et fertilem cecidit per gratiam Dei, qui dedit evangelizantibus servis suis verbum virtute multa." See: Nicholas of Pelhřimov, *Cronica causam Sacerdotum Thaboriensium continens et magistrorum Pragensium eiusdem impugnationes*, in *Geschichtschreiber* 2, 475-822, 476.

gradual marginalization of the Táboriges during the Czechs' negotiations with Sigismund and Basel.<sup>192</sup> Despite these losses in the political and military arenas, Tábor and Nicholas would survive until the 1450s, and they maintained their devotion to the founding vision of Tábor and the Hussite movement until the bitter end. In this work, Nicholas highlighted the Táborige priests' fidelity to this original vision, and it is not surprising that he began with the work of prophetic preachers who first brought God's word and law to Bohemia and thus sought to rebuild the city of God that had been destroyed by the Antichrist. Jan Hus was certainly one of these preachers who had received "words of great power." This "good, righteous, and catholic man" had been given to Bohemia as "a gift from God," and he had been a "faithful champion" for Christ and "our teacher of blessed memory."<sup>193</sup>

I would suggest that this text bore striking witness to the continued relevance and power of Hus's memory, even as the Hussite movement transformed itself into the Utraquist church. By 1436, the messianic self-image and apocalyptic language that had characterized Hussitism in the days of the first crusade had disappeared. The passionate invocations of Jan Krása and the martyrs of Kutná Hora had faded. The vision of a universal church reformed along the lines of the Four Articles had been surrendered to secure the establishment of a reformed Utraquist church. Despite these losses, however, the figure of Jan Hus

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<sup>192</sup> On the composition of the *Cronica*, see: Fudge, "Crime, Punishment, and Pacifism," 71.

<sup>193</sup> Nicholas first described Hus as: "Ūm ex dono et gratia Dei bonae, laudabilis et sanctae memoriae ut speratur mag. Johannes Hus sacrae paginae baccalaureus formatus et praedicator utique evangelicus, vir bonus et justus atque catholicus." He further described Hus as: "athletam suum fidelem et nostrum divae memoriae magistrum Johannem Hus." See: Nicholas of Pelhřimov, *Cronica*, 477 and 568.

and the program for reform that he had come to embody in the Bohemian commemoration of his death survived as a symbol of hope and a testament to the power of truth. Throughout the remainder of the fifteenth century, Hus would continue to serve as a resource and inspiration for the Czechs as they sought to cultivate “good and fertile soil” for the reestablishment of God’s church in the world. Even though the process of negotiation at Basel and the Bohemian civil war had seemingly sapped the Utraquists of their dynamism and power, throughout the rest of the fifteenth century they would repeatedly demonstrate their continued fidelity to the reforming vision of Hus and the other Bohemian martyrs.

## Chapter Four

### “*Filii sanctorum sumus:*” Utraquist *Memoria* and Saint Jan Hus

Sing, tongue, of the glorious battle  
Of the struggle in which  
The zealous servants of the divine God fight  
Against the treachery of the wicked  
And perverse enemy

The kingdom of the Bohemians begat  
A virtuous man  
Chaste, pure, and fruitful  
She cherishes this courageous man in her bosom  
She sends [him] forth with living faith to the Council...

Just as the depraved will be condemned,  
So the true man was by the deceitful,  
Just as the depraved will be bound by harsh chains,  
So the righteous man was by the sinful,  
The holy man, burned with fire  
By his cruel tormenters.

This faithful servant is crowned  
With the laurel crown of life  
And is elevated with honor  
In the kingdom of heaven  
He who triumphs, as he struggles  
With the wickedness of the world.<sup>1</sup>

This processional hymn was a uniquely Czech adaptation of the famous song by the sixth-century poet Venantius Fortunatus, “*Pange, lingua, gloriosi.*” That song, as it spread throughout Christendom, was sung as a processional song during church rituals, with the laity joining the clerical choir to repeat a verse

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<sup>1</sup> “*Pange, lingua gloriosi| prelium certaminis| quo bellantur studiosi| servi divi numinis| contra dolos  
criminosi| et perversi agminis.| Virum gignit virtuosum| Bohemorum regio,| castum, pium,  
fructuosum| suo fovet gremio,| viva fide animosum| transmissit concilio.| Tanquam pravus  
codempnatur| verus a fallaciibus| vinclis duris mancipatur| iustus a scelestibus| sanctus igne  
concrematur| sevis a tortoribus.| Hic fidelis coronatur| servus vite laurea| et honore sublimatur| in  
celorum patria| qui triumphat, dum luctatur| mundi cum malicia.*” The entirety of this hymn is  
printed as: “*Johannis Hus Ympnus,*” in *FRB* 8, 420-421.

(typically the second) in between the proclamation of the others.<sup>2</sup> Especially on Good Friday, the congregation would sing a verse extolling the “*Crux fidelis*” as the clergy processed to the altar and choir; one can similarly imagine a crowd in Prague singing of Jan Hus, the “haste, pure, and fruitful” priest, on July 6. In 1492, this version of “*Pange, lingua*” was included in an early book, the *Breviarium Pragense*, that was printed in Nuremberg and is now held in the Czech National Library (MS NKP 42 G 28).<sup>3</sup> Scholars believe that this song may have been composed much earlier than the 1490s, and perhaps even in the 1420s.<sup>4</sup> No matter the date of its composition, though, the inclusion of this song in a book of worship represented a remarkable trend in the history of the fifteenth-century Bohemian church: the development of a liturgical cult of Jan Hus that established both his sanctity and his intimate connection with the entirety of the Czech nation that “begat a virtuous man.”

In itself, this hymn seemed to repeat many of the themes that developed in the years immediately following Hus’s execution in Constance. Hus was a holy and pure man who had been wrongfully accused and tormented by his enemies; he had been a faithful son of the Czech nation, who had been imprisoned for speaking the divine truth; and he would be exonerated and exalted by God, who

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<sup>2</sup> On the origins of the hymn and its performative aspects in the medieval church, see: Andreas Haug, “Ritual and Repetition: The Ambiguities of Refrains,” in M. Bruun et al., eds., *The Appearance of Medieval Rituals: The Play of Construction and Modification* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 83-96, 84-85.

<sup>3</sup> This incunabulum was printed by Georg Stuchs in Nuremberg. The copy held in Prague bears an explicit that dates the volume: “Breviarium horarum canonicarum secundum veras rubricas archiepiscopatus Pragensis ecclesiae ordinatus...impensis ac sollerti cura ingeniosi viri Georgii Stuchs de Sultzpach quam nitide in inlyto Nurenbergensium opido impressus anno 1492.” On the printing history of this work, see the introductory essay to the text by V. Novotný in: *FRB* 8, CXX-CXXII.

<sup>4</sup> On the debate over the dating of this text, see: Novotný, *FRB* 8, CXX. See also: Fojtiková, “Hudební doklady,” 69 and 90.

recognized Hus as a faithful martyr. What was remarkable about this hymn, though, was that it could not be taken by itself. Rather, it had to be read alongside a number of other liturgical hymns, vernacular songs, and sermons that began to proliferate in the last decades of the fifteenth century. It had to be understood within the context of Utraquist ceremonies that took place in churches that were decorated with monumental images of Hus or other Bohemian heroes, and during a ritual that culminated in the communal reception of the eucharist in both kinds. This Bohemian version of “*Pange, lingua gloriosi,*” was so significant precisely because it was representative of a much larger push by Bohemian preachers, artists, and patrons to turn the veneration of Jan Hus into a site for the articulation of a reflective and self-confident Utraquist identity. In short, the *memoria* of Jan Hus came to encapsulate the totality of what it meant to be a Utraquist, one of “the zealous servants of the divine God.”

This assertion of Utraquism’s identity became increasingly important over the course of the 1400s, as this church faced a number of threats to its existence. One set of threats to Utraquism was religious, as the popes and their representatives repeatedly attempted to invalidate the concessions it had granted in the Basel *Compactata*. Particularly in the years around 1450, Pope Nicholas V used all of the religious resources available to the church – indulgences, charismatic preaching, negotiation, and naked threats – to undermine popular support for the Bohemian church. The papacy also refused to consecrate an archbishop in Prague or Utraquist priests, so the Czechs faced an often critical



lack of clerical leadership.<sup>5</sup> Finally, Bohemia and Moravia also contained substantial Catholic minorities among their populations, and especially among the nobility. The continued coexistence of Catholic and Utraquist populations within the Czech lands, especially after the Peace of Kutná Hora granted full legal protection to the Catholic minority in 1485,<sup>6</sup> demanded a constant process of negotiation between the imperatives of pragmatic toleration and the survival of the independent Utraquist church. These internal and external threats to the continued institutional viability of Utraquism demanded that the Bohemians marshal their forces to provide themselves with an ideological stability that their church practically lacked as they struggled with ~~the~~ treachery of the wicked.”

These religious threats were paralleled by political sources of instability. Even after the ascension of Sigismund to the Bohemian throne in 1436, the remainder of the fifteenth century witnessed dynastic transitions, foreign invasions, and the nearly constant struggle for power between Catholic kings and the Utraquist nobility. With the exception of the fourteen year reign of the Utraquist King George (Jiří) of Poděbrady (d. 1471), the Czech lands witnessed short, tempestuous royal regimes in the 1400s. It would only be in 1526, with the assumption of the throne by the Habsburgs, that the crown of St. Wenceslas would be held by a stable dynasty. Along with this shuffling of royal power, the Czech lands were also the victim of foreign invasion. With the support of the

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<sup>5</sup> On the persistence of the ~~–Priestermangel~~” in Bohemia, see: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, 43-48.

<sup>6</sup> On the consequences of the legal establishment of the Czech lands’ ~~–Doppelkonfessionalität~~” in the *Compactata*, and its renewal in the 1485 Peace of Kutná Hora, see: Anna Skýbová, ~~–Politische Aspekte der Existenz zweier Konfessionen im Königreich Böhmen bis zum Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts,~~” in G. Vögler, ed., *Martin Luther: Leben, Wirk, Wirkung* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1986), 463-480; see also: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, 45.

papacy, the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus (d. 1490) sought to secure the Bohemian crown for over a decade beginning in 1469. Although ultimately unsuccessful in his bid for the crown, Matthias posed a constant threat to the Czech lands during the 1470s.<sup>7</sup> The presence of this political and military threat, and the contemporaneous challenges to the religious legitimacy of Utraquism, created an atmosphere marked by serious questions about the foundations of authority in Czech society. Thus, the Utraquists turned to their past, and reconnected it with their present, in order to answer these questions and affirm their historical foundations and their “living faith.”

I would argue that this reconnection took place primarily through the distinctive rituals of the Utraquist church, both in the weekly celebration of communion in both kinds and in the annual observance of Hus’s feast day. July 6 became a primary temporal and liturgical moment when Czech Utraquists could both celebrate the religious values and beliefs that Hus embodied and establish their own religious and social solidarity with their founder and with each other. Augustine had written that “the Christian people should celebrate the *memorias* of the martyrs with religious observances, both for provoking imitation, and so that the people might be brought into a close relationship (*—eonsocietur*”) with the

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<sup>7</sup> Matthias never claimed Moravia and Bohemia, but did gain the territories of Silesia and Upper Lusatia from the Jagiellon king of Bohemia, Vladislav. On Corvinus’s efforts to secure the throne of Bohemia, see the dual articles by: Zsuzsa Teke, “Der ungarische König (1458-1490),” and František Šmahel, “Der böhmische König,” in H. Duchhardt, ed., *Der Herrscher in der Doppelflicht: Europäische Fürsten und ihre beiden Throne* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1998), 11-28 and 29-49, respectively. On Corvinus’s family history, see: Marcus Tanner, *The Raven King: Matthias Corvinus and the Fate of his Lost Library* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2008), 23-32.

saints' merits and aided by their prayers.'"<sup>8</sup> I would add that such observances also allowed the Christian people to be brought into a close relationship with each other and to affirm their membership in a defined religious community. Jan Assmann, writing about the role of memory and commemoration in the formation of cultural groups, has argued persuasively that rituals and festivals provide unique opportunities for a social body to define itself and protect itself from threats to its existence. For Assmann, distinctive communal rituals are a culture's "immune system," and communal participation allows for the circulation of cultural antibodies that resist the imposition of external ideas and suppress internal chaos.<sup>9</sup> This medical metaphor is certainly germane in the case of the Czech Utraquists: when faced with external and internal threats to their unity and existence, the Utraquists turned to the most distinctive mark of their identity as a church and created (or elaborated upon) a ritual through which they could proclaim the most unique and constitutive elements in their cultural identity: the celebration of communion in both kinds and the veneration of Saint Jan Hus.

Indeed, the weekly consumption of the cup, and the more extraordinary commemoration of Hus's *memoria*, acted as dual foci for the articulation of an anti-Roman, uniquely Bohemian religious identity that came increasingly under fire in the last years of the 1400s. During times of political and religious strife, the commemoration of Hus returned him to the center of the Bohemian sacral

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<sup>8</sup> "Populus Christianus Memorias Martyrum religiosa solemnitate concelebrat, et ad excitandam imitationem, et ut meritis eorum consocietur atque orationibus adjuvetur." This quotation comes from the tenth book of Augustine's *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, and is cited in the article: "Memoria," in C. Du Cange, ed., *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, vol. 5 (Niort: L. Favre, 1885), 335-336, 335.

<sup>9</sup> For the development of this metaphor, see: Jan Assmann, "Der zweidimensionale Mensch," 23-24; and idem., *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, 140ff.

community. His *memoria* provided a means for the celebration of values linked with the Utraquist church – piety, perseverance, and fearlessness in the face of persecution – and constitutive of Czech identity. By celebrating and venerating the *memoria* of Jan Hus, Utraquists in the late 1400s were making decisive claims about their contemporary world and their place in it. They were collectively claiming the “laurel crown of life” and asserting their status as the sons of the saints.

### The Establishment of the Utraquist Church

In the years immediately following the Utraquists' acceptance of the Basel *Compactata*, it was not at all clear the the nascent national church would survive. It faced the opposition of its own king, continued efforts by the papacy to undermine its legitimacy, and internal divisions that threatened its development. Even in the first year of its official existence, the Utraquists saw the presumptive archbishop of Prague, Jan Rokycana, expelled from his parish at Our Lady of Týn and driven to eastern Bohemia, where he sought the protection of magnates sympathetic to the new Bohemian national church.<sup>10</sup> Prague also witnessed the return of monastic communities and the restoration of many forms of traditional religious practice, including the veneration of images. The author of these actions, Bishop Philibert of Coutances, had been a legate from Basel and remained in Prague to oversee the implementation of the *Compactata* on the council's

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<sup>10</sup> Otakar Odložilík, *The Hussite King: Bohemia in European Affairs 1440-1471* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1965), 15.

behalf.<sup>11</sup> His presence and influence threatened to eliminate Utraquism even before it took root in the city.

Bishop Philibert sought to limit the practice of communion in both kinds, which was the most obvious concession that the fathers of Basel had made to the Utraquists. The limitations he tried to impose depended upon a narrow reading of the text of the treaty, and derived from his idea that the chalice could be consumed only by those who “had its use” at the time of the *Compactata*’s ratification.<sup>12</sup> Thus, instead of a basis for a lasting bi-confessional peace in Bohemia, Philibert understood the *Compactata* as a temporary concession that would disappear with the death of first-generation Utraquists. This narrow reading also provided Catholic preachers and leaders with grounds for assaulting the Utraquists’ compliance with the terms of the treaty. A strict determination of who actually had the use of the chalice would have marked many Bohemians as taking the cup without the church’s proper authorization, and thus these illegal participants in communion in both kinds proved the continuing existence of heresy in Bohemia.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Philibert was joined in Prague by Juan Palomar, who had been instrumental in Basel’s negotiations with the Bohemians throughout the 1430s. On their mission in Prague after the acceptance of the *Compactata*, see: Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, 1676ff.

<sup>12</sup> This reading of the *Compactata* depended on a specific interpretation of the granting of the cup only to those who currently “*sum habent*.” Because the treaty denied the communion of infants, this temporally restricted utraquism to one or two generations. This grammatically strict limitation of treaty was protested by the Utraquist leadership, and the ambiguity of the text provided continued grounds for recriminations throughout the fifteenth century. For the disputed text, see: AČ 3, 399; on Philibert’s construction of the text, see: Frederick Heymann, *George of Bohemia: King of Heretics* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965), 9-10.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

Philibert enjoyed the backing of King Sigismund in his efforts, as well as a surprising degree of popular support among the burghers of Prague.<sup>14</sup> Sigismund, however, quickly distinguished himself (again) as a target of popular ire. One reason for this backlash was Sigismund's willingness to break the terms of the imperial compacts he had agreed to in 1435. He never sought out a Utraquist chaplain, he appointed Catholics as the mayors of the Prague towns, and he did not attempt to suppress public sin.<sup>15</sup> More spectacularly, when an old lieutenant of Třtka's, Jan Roháč of Dubá, denounced Sigismund and took refuge in a castle near Kutná Hora, the king took decisive steps to quash this reappearance of Hussite radicalism.<sup>16</sup> Roháč had named his fortress Sión, and was using it as a base for attacks on neighboring castles;<sup>17</sup> Sigismund laid Sión under siege, though, and it fell to his forces on September 6, 1437. Roháč was captured and brought back to Prague, where he was tortured and publicly executed. On September 9, he was hung by a golden chain on a three story gallows, along with fifty of his followers, in a huge public spectacle that was intended to cow potential dissidents among the city's populace.

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<sup>14</sup> In contrast to his attempts to limit the concessions made in Compactata, Philibert did feel bound by the terms of the treaty to consecrate Utraquist priests and even serve communion in both kinds himself. These public acts endeared him to the moderate Utraquist population in Prague, and the burgher chroniclers of the city characterized Philibert favorably in their works. See: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 99.

<sup>15</sup> On the king's failures to keep the promises he made during the negotiations of 1435, see: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 103.

<sup>16</sup> On Roháč's rebellion and the context of Sigismund's reign in Bohemia, see: Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, 1687ff. See also: P. Čornej and B. Zilynskyj, "Jan Roháč z Dubá a Prha Konec Jana Roháče – pověst a skutečnost," *Pražský Sborník Historický* 20 (1987), 35-60.

<sup>17</sup> The name of the castle was in reference to Isaiah 37:32: "For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this." On this reference, see: Rudolf Urbánek, "Jan Roháč z Dubé," in *Z Husitského Věku*, 178-190, 186.

Instead, this show of judicial force revived memories of Sigismund's brutality and his murder of those who professed evangelical truths.<sup>18</sup> A contemporary song lamented Roháč's death, and referred to him as the prophetic "*vox in Rama*" that had recognized Sigismund's treachery, but had not been heeded by God's people.<sup>19</sup> Sigismund died soon after his execution of Roháč, and many Utraquists considered his death the providential just deserts for his history of cruelty.<sup>20</sup> Sigismund's death also signalled the beginning of a lengthy period of political instability in the Czech lands, as his successor ruled for only two years and left no heir. Following his death, there would be no king on the throne of Bohemia from 1440 until 1453, a political circumstance that allowed for the proliferation of conflicts between shifting alliances of Utraquist and Catholic nobles.<sup>21</sup> During most of the 1440s, no individual noble achieved preeminence in the kingdom, and the Utraquist church enjoyed no centralized, secular support for its expansion.

The church offset this lack of political support by establishing its own infrastructure for clerical oversight: a consistory of four priests who oversaw

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<sup>18</sup> Roháč's execution and its political aftermath are both discussed in: Fudge, "The 'Crown' and Red Gown."

<sup>19</sup> The reference here is to Matthew 2:18, which quotes from Jeremiah: "*Vox in Rama est audita, dum erat inquisita falanx perturbans populum.*" On the biblical characterization of Roháč, see: Emil Pražák, "Otázka významu v latinské písni o Roháčovi," *Česká Literatura* 32 (1984), 193-202, 197.

<sup>20</sup> Sigismund died in December, from complications resulting from the amputation of his toe due to gout. The Bohemians referred to Sigismund's illness the "ife of hell" ("*oheň pekelní*"), and interpreted his inability to be healed as a precursor to the dmanation that awaited him. See: Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 120-121; and Čornej and Zilynskyj, "*dn Roháč z Dubé,*" 58-59.

<sup>21</sup> Sigismund's successor, Albrecht of Austria, ruled only until 1439, when he died while on campaign against the Turks in Hungary. After Albrecht's brief reign, there was no undisputed heir to the throne of Bohemia, although Sigismund's daughter gave birth to a son, called Ladislav Posthumus, in February 1440. Because of his young age, Ladislav was not accepted as king of Bohemia until 1453, so the kingdom endured an interregnum of thirteen years. On the politics of the succession in Bohemia after Sigismund's death, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 12ff.

clerical education and enforced morality among the Utraquist clergy. This consistory was established in 1437 under the leadership of the elderly Křisťan of Prachatice, Hus's friend, and had its base in Rokycana's former parish at Our Lady of Týn.<sup>22</sup> Under the aegis of the consistory, the Bohemian clergy met as a whole in repeated diets that sought to articulate a body of definite Utraquist theology. Notably, in 1443 the clergy accepted the real presence of Christ in the eucharist and the doctrine of transubstantiation at a diet in Kutná Hora. Although the priests of Tábor, and especially Nicholas Pelhřimov, resisted this formulation, Rokycana and his allies espoused a sacramental theology that was in line with Catholic orthodoxy.<sup>23</sup> These diets were a key component in the establishment of a Utraquist ecclesiastical hierarchy that would foster the growth of the larger church. This hierarchy received two unexpected boosts in 1448, one from a papal legate and the second from a Utraquist noble who would become the church's most important protector.

In May of 1448, the Spanish cardinal Juan Carvajal arrived in Prague to an enthusiastic reception by the city's residents. The people of Prague thought that Carvajal, who was serving as a legate for Pope Nicholas V, had arrived to confirm the *Compactata* and affirm Rokycana's election as archbishop.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, Carvajal had neither the authority nor the inclination to do either. Rather, he was

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<sup>22</sup> Sigismund did support the establishment of the consistory, and Křisťan's role at its head. This move was typical of Sigismund's willingness to make concessions in order to co-opt the support of moderate Utraquists. On the establishment of the consistory and its role in the governance of the Utraquist church, see: Thomas Fudge, "Křisťan and the Lower Consistory in Prague, 1437-1497," *BRRP* 2 (1998), 67-98. See also David, *Finding the Middle Way*, 31; and Eberhard, "Der Weg zur Koexistenz," 36ff.

<sup>23</sup> On this synod and its effect on the establishment of a national Czech ecclesiastical hierarchy, see: Heymann, "John Rokycana," 248ff.; and Šmahel, *Die hussitische Revolution*, 1838-1839.

<sup>24</sup> For an overview of Carvajal's embassy, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 47ff.



in Prague to determine whether or not the Utraquists could be made amenable to the retraction of the *Compactata*. Once Carvajal realized that this was not the case, he tried to slip out of the city surreptitiously. Unfortunately, when he left he was carrying an original copy of the *Compactata* with him. A troop of cavalry from Prague managed to stop him before he slipped into Catholic lands, but the farce of Carvajal's mission in the Bohemian capital marked a decisive shift in the Utraquists' perception of their relationship with the papacy. Whereas before the Utraquists had viewed the pope and his representatives with respect, Carvajal's dishonesty provoked the scorn of the populace. A popular song from 1448 derisively remarked of the cardinal:

May God deign to bless you  
That you never return to us,  
Never again to the Czech lands!  
But that we should drive away  
This whole priestly race after you  
For there will never be unity  
As long as your tail (read: prick) remains here!<sup>25</sup>

In the wake of Carvajal's embassy, Prague welcomed the return of Rokycana to the city. Whereas before he had feared that the Catholic establishment might attack him, he no longer held that concern. Rokycana enjoyed a triumphal procession through the city and was reinstalled in Our Lady of Týn; he would serve there as the main preacher and head of the Utraquist consistory until his death in 1471. Despite the fact that he was never officially consecrated as the archbishop in Prague, after 1448 Rokycana was the undisputed

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<sup>25</sup> The text of this song is recorded and translated in: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 111-112.

leader of the Bohemian national church.<sup>26</sup> Although he suffered repeated attacks from Catholic authors and the more radical descendants of Petr Chelčický, Rokycana successfully established a centrist religious coalition that governed the Utraquist church throughout the fifteenth century.

In September of 1448, Prague experienced another event that would prove decisive for the long-term growth and development of Bohemian Utraquism. On September 2, the Utraquist nobleman George (Jiří) of Poděbrady staged a coup to remove the Catholic leadership in Prague from their positions of power.<sup>27</sup> George had become a growing force in Czech politics over the previous decade, using marriage alliances and his bona fides as a dedicated Utraquist to gather a large coalition of anti-Catholic nobility under his leadership.<sup>28</sup> The majority of Prague's citizens supported George's attack; Carvajal's embassy had convinced most that a lasting peace with Rome and its adherents was impossible, so the establishment of a Utraquist government in Prague was necessary. Some nobles did protest George's actions, and especially his confinement of the supreme burgrave of Prague, Menhart of Hradec, in Poděbrady. Overall, though, his assumption of power was marked by a surprising absence of resistance.

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<sup>26</sup> Rokycana became the administrator of the consistory in December of 1448, when the elderly Jan of Příbram died. Příbram and Rokycana had been allies since 1443, when they had worked together against the Taborites at Kutná Hora, and Příbram's death left Rokycana as the undisputed leader of the Utraquist church. See: Heymann, "John Rokycana," 250.

<sup>27</sup> On George's attack on Prague's Catholic leadership and its aftermath, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 42-46.

<sup>28</sup> George descended from a moderately powerful family whose holdings were east of Prague. His father, Viktorin (d.1427) had been a close friend of Jiříka, and George was raised in an atmosphere of "Hussite rigorism." He married twice, and both his wives added considerable land to George's holdings. His familial relationship to Jiříka also endeared George to the nobles and knights who had supported Tabor and the Orphans prior to 1436, and their support enabled George to form a "League of Poděbrady" in 1444. This league opposed the pro-Roman policies of Menhart of Hradec and Ulrich of Rožmberk, the most powerful nobles in the kingdom. On George's family history and his rise to power, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 31-36; and Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 13-16 and 43-49.

By 1448, then, the constellation of power within Bohemia seemed to augur well for the future of the Bohemian church. Despite the efforts of Catholic representatives in Prague, especially those of Carvajal and Philibert, to undermine the establishment of Utraquism, the church had survived and Jan Rokycana had assumed leadership of the national church. This church as a whole had also formulated a series of doctrines and practices that were almost universally acceptable to the wide spectrum of Hus's descendants in Bohemia, and the consistory had shown itself to be a capable governing body for the Utraquist clergy. Finally, the national church had gained a powerful protector in the person of George of Poděbrady. Despite his occasional conflicts with Rokycana, George would prove to be a stalwart defender of the prerogatives of the Bohemian church. Indeed, between its unconsecrated archbishop and the de facto *gubernator* of Bohemia, by 1448 the Utraquist church had institutionally established itself as a viable national church within the Czech lands.<sup>29</sup>

#### The Renewed Papal Threat: The Preacher and the Prelate

Even as the establishment of this new Utraquist status quo in Bohemia was taking place, events beyond the Czech borders signalled the renewal of conflict with the Catholic church. Notably, the Utraquists now had to deal with a new pope, Nicholas V, who had succeeded Eugenius IV in March of 1447. Nicholas

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<sup>29</sup> In the wake of George's successful seizure of Prague, he and his allies continued to press the Catholic nobility, who had formed an alliance for self-defense, the League of Strakonice. After breaking the power of this alliance through limited military action and the appointment of several Catholic nobles to positions of high authority in Prague, George began to refer to himself as the *administrator* or *governor* of Bohemia in his correspondence. See: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 45; and Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, 1842

was faced with the challenge of fully defeating the conciliarists of Basel, who had fitfully maintained that council's supremacy over the papacy throughout the 1430s and 1440s;<sup>30</sup> led by the French cardinal Louis Aleman, the conciliar fathers even deposed Eugenius and elected their own pope, Felix V, in 1439.<sup>31</sup> By 1448, the papacy had secured its ultimate victory over the recalcitrant council.

Throughout the previous decade, Eugenius had agreed to several concordats with secular lords to secure their recognition of his supremacy. Notably, the 1438 Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges and the 1448 Concordat of Vienna (which was finalized by Nicholas) secured the allegiance of the French king and Holy Roman Emperor to the Roman pontiff.<sup>32</sup> The support of these rulers aided Eugenius and Nicholas considerably, as did Eugenius's securing the Decree of Union with the Greek Orthodox Church in July, 1439. This Decree authorized the reunion of the Eastern and Western churches, and came about as a result of the Byzantine emperor and church's need for allies in their struggle with the Ottomans.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> The Council of Basel actually closed while meeting in Lausanne. While this assembly consistently contested the supremacy of Eugenius, who called a counter council in 1438 in Ferrara-Florence, after 1439 it experienced a consistent loss of its leading lights, including Cesarini, to Eugenius. On this drain of leadership, see: Minnich, "Concils of the Catholic Reformation," 315ff.; and Christianson, *The Conciliar Cardinal*, 149 and 185ff.

<sup>31</sup> On Aleman's role at Basel, see: Black, *Council and Commune*, 39-40; and Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV*, especially 62-66.

<sup>32</sup> In order to gain these monarch's recognition of Eugenius, he had to concede them the right to the appointment of high ecclesiastical offices within their realms. Besides Bourges and Vienna, Eugenius also concluded a concordat with the electors of the Holy Roman Empire in 1439 and supported Alfonso of Aragon's claims to the kingdom of Naples. On Eugenius's granting of concordats, see: Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV*, 164 and 196-210; Morimichi Watanabe, "Authority and Consent in Church Government: Panormitanus, Aeneas Sylvius, Cusanus," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 33 (1972), 217-236, 236; and Helmuth, "Reform als Thema," 108-109.

<sup>33</sup> On the politics of reunification and the Ottoman threat to the Greek church, see: Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge, UK: University Press, 1959), especially 85-130; idem., *Church Union: Rome and Byzantium, 1204-1453* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1979), especially articles 10-17; and Deno Geanakoplos, "The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Latin Churches," *Church History* 24 (1955), 324-346.

By making this agreement with the Greek church and his agreements with the kings of Europe, Eugenius guaranteed his status as the highest religious authority in Europe. Nicholas's pontificate began just as this reassertion of papal supremacy reached its climax. It seemed in 1448, then, that the only remaining hurdle to the European church's full reunification was Utraquist Bohemia. I would argue that we could understand the *Compactata* as the first of the concordats. This treaty recognized a functionally independent national church, potentially ceded the right to the selection of the archbishop of Prague to Sigismund and the Bohemian estates, and sanctioned liturgical idiosyncrasies. The continued validity of the *Compactata* could be understood as an assertion of the papacy's limited authority in Bohemia, so Nicholas therefore turned his full energies to gaining the Bohemians' return to orthodoxy and full communion with the Roman church.

Nicholas did not, however, try to use military force to accomplish this feat. Rather, he turned to a skillful diplomat, Nicholas of Cusa,<sup>34</sup> and a famous charismatic preacher, Giovanni da Capistrano,<sup>35</sup> to undermine Utraquist

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<sup>34</sup> Cusa had initially been an ardent conciliarist, and had even written an extended defense of the conciliar definition of authority in the church, the *De Concordantia Catholica* of 1433. His shift to the recognition of the pope's supremacy in the church depended on the pope's ability to bring the earthly and heavenly hierarchies into line with each other (a pseudo-Dionysian ecclesiology akin to Gerson's at Constance), and the Decree of Union proved Eugenius's ability to do this. On Cusa's ecclesiology and his shift to papalism, see: Peter McDermott, "Nicholas of Cusa: Continuity and Conciliation at the Council of Basel," *Church History* 67 (1998), 254-273, 261; and Watanabe, "Authority and Consent," 221.

<sup>35</sup> Capistrano was an Italian Franciscan, a disciple of St. Bernardino of Siena, and a leader of the Observant movement within the friars. He led a distinguished career as a reformer, preacher, inquisitor, and missionary before dying in 1456, immediately after leading an army of Hungarian peasants in the spectacular Christian victory at the siege of Belgrade. On Capistrano's career within the Franciscan order, see: John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order: From its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968), 447; on Capistrano's service as an inquisitor, see: Kaspar Elm, "Johannes Kapistrans Predigtreise diesseits der Alpen (1451-1456)," in H. Boockmann et al., eds., *Lebenslehren und Weltentwürfe im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur*

supremacy in Bohemia. These men, who were remarkably different in both temperament and training, were two of the most gifted individuals in service to Rome. Nicholas of Cusa occupied the more prominent official position of the duo. He had been named a cardinal by Eugenius in 1446, and was appointed papal legate for the Holy Roman Empire after his service in securing the Concordat of Vienna.<sup>36</sup> On January 4, 1451, Nicholas authorized Cusa to enter into discussions with the Bohemians in order to work towards their reform and return to unity with the church.<sup>37</sup> Capistrano worked more loosely within the structure of the church's hierarchy. He had come from Italy to Vienna in 1451 at the invitation of Frederick III, the Holy Roman Emperor, in order to conduct a "revivalistic" preaching campaign against sin in the city. While there, Capistrano was enlisted by Pope Nicholas V to enter Moravia and Bohemia in order to convert the residents back to the Roman church. Nicholas empowered Capistrano as an inquisitor for the Czech lands, and Capistrano entered Brno, the largest city in Moravia, in July of 1451.<sup>38</sup> Cusa's diplomacy and Capistrano's preaching mission together represented Nicholas's strategy for the return of Bohemia to full communion with the Catholic church: negotiation and the demonstration of the benefits of

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*Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 500-519, 503. On Capistrano's missionary activity in Hungary and his death in the crusade at Belgrade, see: Norman Housley, "Giovanni da Capistrano and the Crusade of 1456," in *idem.*, ed., *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century: Message and Impact* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 94-115.

<sup>36</sup> On Cusa's increasing prominence in papal policy for the German lands, see: Hallauer, "Das Glaubensgespräch mit den Hussiten."

<sup>37</sup> Nicholas V ordered Cusa to go to Bohemia and busy himself "in reductione Bohemorum et ad reformanda illius regni." The text of the bull is included in: C. Baronio and A. Raynaldi, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 28 (Paris: H. Lagny, 1864), 538.

<sup>38</sup> On Capistrano's mission in Vienna and his commission to go to Bohemia, see: Elm, "Johannes Kapistrans Predigtreise," 504-507; and Petr Hlaváček, "Errores quorundam Bernhardinorum: Franciscans and the Bohemian Reformation," *BRRP* 3 (2000), 119-126, 119.

obedience would combine with the threat of censure and violence to bring the Utraquists back into the fold of Christendom.

In many ways, the two men's missions were doomed to fail before they began. For instance, Nicholas V's mandate to Cusa did not allow the Cardinal to make any concessions to the Bohemians in securing their return to the church. Rather, he was to demand their surrender of communion in both kinds, and seek the Bohemians' recognition of ~~those~~ things that you see obtaining their return to the increase of faith, our honor and that of the Apostolic See, the exaltation of the ecclesiastical order and the good direction of Christians residing in it."<sup>39</sup> This ~~exaltation~~" necessarily required obedience, so Cusa demanded the Bohemians' submission to his (and Nicholas's) definitions of correct belief and practice. As early as 1433 Nicholas had admonished the Bohemians with the words: ~~When~~ you are outside of the peace and unity of the church, not life, but the judgment of death is to be expected."<sup>40</sup> His letters of 1452 built upon this theme, and offered obedience to the Roman see as the sure means of ~~happily~~ obtaining the desire for true peace" and securing ~~true~~ and effective union."<sup>41</sup>

The problem, for Cusa, was that the Utraquists had elevated the wisdom of their contemporary leaders above the teaching of the church. These leaders,

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<sup>39</sup> Cusa was told to bargain, arrange, discuss, and urge the Bohemians to accept those things ~~quae~~ pro illorum reductione, incremento fidei, nostro et Sedis Apostolicae honore, ac ordinis Ecclesiastici exaltatione et bono regimine Christicolarum in eo residentium, ac animarum ipsorum salute videris expedire." *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 28, 538.

<sup>40</sup> ~~Quare~~ cum extra pacem et unitatem ecclesiae sitis: non vitam sed mortis iudicium expectatis." This letter from 1433 was collected with five other letters written by Nicholas during his tenure as legate to the Holy Roman Empire and published as: *De Amplexenda Unitate Ecclesiae ad Bohemos*. This was printed as part of: *De concordantia catholica libri tres* (Paris: no publisher, 1514); this quotation: Cusa, *De Amplexenda*, Vr.

<sup>41</sup> Cusa noted that there were many people in Moravia and Bohemia who wanted ~~orae~~ pacis desideria foeliciter adipiscis," and ~~ad~~ obedientiam Sacrosanctae Romanae ecclesiae revocare." Given these desires, Cusa asked the Bohemians ~~unc~~ ad vera et effectualem unionem inclinari." Cusa, *De Amplexenda*, XIIIr.

however, had proven to be sinful men, ~~w~~ho like beasts do not see the light, and do not even recognize their mother.”<sup>42</sup> In Nicholas’s thought, the worst of all these seductive and false leaders had been Jakoubek of Střibro. Indeed, Cusa referred to the Bohemians consistently as ~~Jacobellianos~~,” a highly idiosyncratic epithet in anti-Bohemian rhetoric.<sup>43</sup> According to Nicholas, prior to 1415 the Bohemians and the rest of Christendom had accepted the wisdom and guidance of the church’s sacred hierarchy. Jakoubek, though, thought himself ~~w~~iser and holier” than the true leaders of the church, ~~a~~nd on his word, and from his preaching, many people received a multitude of errors, that he himself had confessed in his sermons.”<sup>44</sup> Cusa was certain that the Bohemians remained ~~i~~n servitude to the prince of darkness,” and he was not afraid to provoke them. After demanding their return to the church, he invoked their own history to demonstrate the outcome of deviance: ~~Y~~ou have experienced how many bad things you suffer, when you place those who introduce novelties against the Roman church’s faith and observance before the warnings of your mother.”<sup>45</sup> The message here was clear: the Utraquists would have to submit to the Roman church or endure further suffering at its hands.

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<sup>42</sup> ~~Q~~ui lumen non vident, adeo bestiales; qui matrem non cognoscunt.” Cusa, *De Amplexenda* XIIIv.

<sup>43</sup> In a short, undated letter that precedes the bulk of Cusa’s correspondence, he refers to the Bohemians as ~~Jacobellianos~~ qui iacobelli vesaniam sequentes communionem utriusque specie quo ad populum laicalem sua sponte contra ritum ecclesiae catholicae continuant.” Cusa, *De Amplexenda*, XIIIr.

<sup>44</sup> ~~I~~pse enim ob veritatem evangelicam, asseruit ritum communionis sub utraque specie quo ad laicos repetendum, et ad verba illius ex cuius praedicatione multi multorum errorum occasionem receperunt, ut ipsemet in quodam sermone suo confessus est.” This quotation comes from a letter dated October 11, 1452. See: Cusa, *De Amplexenda*, XIXr.

<sup>45</sup> ~~E~~xpertis estis quanta mala passi estis: eo nonnullos qui contra Romanae ecclesiae fidem et observantiam novitates introduxerunt monitis matris vestrae praeposuistis.” Cusa, *De Amplexenda*, XIIIv.



This impression was complemented by the preaching and missionary work of Giovanni da Capistrano in Moravia, which demonstrated the benefits of returning to the Roman obedience. In Brno, he began preaching, and Gabriel of Verona, who later served as the vicar of the Franciscan Observants in Bohemia, noted that Capistrano converted 700 people and healed thirteen deaf people on August 15.<sup>46</sup> Capitalizing on this miraculous proof of the validity of the Catholic church, Capistrano moved on to the episcopal city of Olomouc, where he pursued a strategy of “trickle-down” missionary work.<sup>47</sup> Capistrano believed that by pursuing the highest officials in Bohemia and Moravia, he could use them to pressure their subordinates and their peers into a return to the orthodox church. In Olomouc, Capistrano succeeded in bringing the nobleman Beneš Čerohorský of Boskovic back to the Catholic Church: —with two thousand of his vassals, he [Beneš] embraced the truth of the Apostolic See.”<sup>48</sup> Beneš’s son, called Prothasius (or Tas), an adolescent —famous for his learning and morals,” obtained the episcopal see of Olomouc after this mass conversion, so that —defender of

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<sup>46</sup> These results of Capistrano’s mission are recorded by his most sympathetic modern biographer, Johannes Hofer, in his: *Johannes Kapistran: Ein Leben im Kampfum die Reform der Kirche*, 2 vols., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle Verlag, 1965), vol. 2, 73-74. On Gabriel of Verona, see: Petr Hlaváček, “Bohemian Franciscans between Orthodoxy and Nonconformity at the Turn of the Middle Ages,” *BRRP* 5, pt. 1 (2004), 167-189, 172ff.

<sup>47</sup> Hofer described the situation in Bohemia and Moravia on the eve of Capistrano’s mission as mirror opposites. In Bohemia, the nobility preferred the Roman church, but the majority of common people adhered to Utraquism. In Moravia, the nobility adhered to the Czech national church, while the people were largely Catholic. This state of affairs helped determine Capistrano’s strategy. See: Hofer, *Ein Leben*, 72.

<sup>48</sup> —Cum duobus millibus subditorum veritatem Romanae Sedis amplexus est: filius eius, doctrina et moribus clarus, non diu postea Olomucensis Ecclesiae pontificatum obtinuit.” The account of this conversion is contained in: Luke Wadding, *Annales Minorum seu trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, vol. 12 (Florence: Ad Claras Aquas, 1931), 104. See also: Zdeněk Nejedlý, —Česá missie Jana Kapistrana,” *Časopis Českého Musea* 74 (1900), 57-72, 220-242, 334-352, and 447-464, 64ff.

religion was born from a persecutor.”<sup>49</sup> This episode with Beneš and his family was to be a model for further conversions, and when he summed up his mission in Moravia, Capistrano noted that “not just many barons and nobles, but also more than four thousand priests abjured the Hussites’ errors at my hands, along with many other converts, who did so under the direction of their converted barons.”<sup>50</sup>

There was a flip side of Capistrano’s success; his efforts at conversion, and his aggressive and intemperate attitude, both provoked angry responses in many circumstances. For example, Capistrano sought the conversion of Jan Tovačovský of Cimburk, a high-ranking Utraquist layman in Moravia, throughout the summer of 1451. Jan rebuffed Capistrano with harsh language, though, noting that although “it seems that your writings sing with sweet delights, they nevertheless contain serpent’s poison.”<sup>51</sup> The Utraquist priests of Kroměříž were even more harsh in their condemnation of Capistrano’s efforts to win over the Moravian nobility and clergy. On August 21, in a letter inviting Capistrano to a public disputation, they condemned him with sharp language:

But you, in your diminution and contempt for the evangelical truth, ejaculate the greatest blasphemies, condemn communion in both kinds, which is permitted and bestowed upon the Christian people as a necessity,

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<sup>49</sup> Wadding included an excerpt from Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini’s *Historia de Europa*, chapter twenty-three, on the conversion of Beneš and his followers: “Num quamvis pater eius olim Ecclesiam persequeretur, Hussitarum labe infectus, praedicante tamen in Moravia Joanne Capistrano, summi nominis Theologo, cum omni familia sua haeresim abiuraverat, ex persecutore religionis tutor effectus.” *Ibid.* C.f. the 1551 edition of the *Historia de Europa*, printed in: *Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei Senensis...opera quae extant omnia...quorum elenchum versa pagella indicabit* (reprint Frankfurt am Main: Minerva GMBH, 1967), 387-471, 414-415.

<sup>50</sup> “Non solum multo Barones, Nobilites, sed et Sacerdotes ad plusquam quatuor millia meis in manibus Hussitarum errore abjuraverint, praeter multos alios conversos, qui sub ipsorum Baronum conversorum dominio degunt.” Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, 103.

<sup>51</sup> “Icet scripta tua dulcia canant blandimenta, tamen venenum aspidum includunt.” The correspondence between Cimburk and Capistrano has been preserved in: Johannes Hofer, “Die auf die Hussitenmission des hl. Johannes von Capistrano bezüglichen Briefe in Codex 598 der innsbrucker Universitätsbibliothek,” *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 16 (1923), 113-126. This comment by Cimburk came from a letter of August 25, 1451.

and attack it as heresy and error with a sacrilegious mouth. O scale of Behemoth and tail of Antichrist!<sup>52</sup>

Capistrano's campaign ultimately provoked the Bohemian estates to ask Cusa in his capacity as the papal legate to the Empire to silence Capistrano. Their letter to Cusa protested that Capistrano accused them of heresy, which was explicitly forbidden in the *Compactata*,<sup>53</sup> and further noted that he was provoking violence with his rhetoric:

For we heard, against God and righteousness, the aforementioned priest, under the authority of his bull, call us and the evangelical truth heretical. Now that he was sent to us, it is as if he sharpens the sword against us that was until recently kept in its sheath.<sup>54</sup>

Capistrano fought back against these accusations. He wrote to Cusa and angrily asserted: "If we excuse heretics, we condemn ourselves; it has never been our practice to waver about our faith."<sup>55</sup> He further demanded that the church augment the benefits it offered to repentant Utraquists with the strongest weapons in its arsenal: the seizure of heretics' possessions and land, and the use of harsh

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<sup>52</sup> "Sed etiam in decrementum et contemptum veritatis evangelice plurimas eructasti blasphemias, dum communionem utriusque speciei permissam populo christiano [et] necessario tribuendam ore sacrilego tamquam erroneam et hereticam impugnas et condempnas. O squama Bechemoth et cauda antichristi!" This letter is printed in: Hofer, "Afidie Hussitenmission," 119-120, 119.

<sup>53</sup> "Suis in sermonibus, haereticare publice coram numerosa populi multitudine minie est veritus, in contemptum nedum traditionis Evangelicae, ac praxis ipsius Domini nostri Jesu Christi auctoris et institutois eiusdem, verum etiam in derogationem totius Ecclesiae primitivae." Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, 144. The first article of the *Compactata* prohibited any Catholic from calling the Bohemians heretics, and affirmed their status as "filiis ecclesiae filios reverentes et observantes." On this article, see above, chapter 3, fn. 174.

<sup>54</sup> "Dum namque Monachum praedictum sub bulla et auctoritate suis contra Deum et justitiam audivimus nos et veritatem Evangelicam, uti jam praemissum est, haereticare, quasi servetum dudum in vagina gladium contra nos iterum acueret." Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, 145. The letter is dated the fourth day of Lent, 1452.

<sup>55</sup> "Si haereticos excusamus, nos ipsos condemnamus; nostri moris numquam fuit circa fidem claudicare." Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, 150. The occasion of this letter was the arrival of a Utraquist delegation at the Diet of Regensburg in 1452. Cusa received the Bohemian embassy, and Capistrano felt it necessary to protest possible concessions to the Utraquists. On the diet, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 76; and Hallauer, "Das Glaubensgespräch," 61-67.

judicial punishments, including torture, against the Bohemians.<sup>56</sup> Arguing on the basis of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, Capistrano made his final case for dealing harshly with the Utraquists:

The Gloss argues, that it is possible on the authority of the Church to make war, according to that which is true, against the enemies of the faith and those who impugn the Church...many barons, knights, and nobles have offered themselves, their people, and their goods for this, and, if there is need, they will expose themselves to death for the defense of Catholic truth...This proceeds from no other cause, than the word of truth, which false people can never resist, *since truth conquers all things*.<sup>57</sup>

Capistrano's optimism about the possibility of a renewed crusade and his ironic invocation of Hus's famous dictum revealed his concern for the Utraquists' continuing existence. The recalcitrance of the Utraquists and their continued resistance to even the most gifted of the pope's agents demonstrated that the Bohemian national church would not simply disappear. Although Cusa had tried to negotiate with the Hussites, his mission was considered a failure in Rome. Capistrano, despite his gifts as a preacher and his reputed miracles, also failed to significantly limit the influence of the Utraquist church in Bohemia and Moravia.<sup>58</sup> Conversely, these men's missions helped to reify and even enlarge the

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<sup>56</sup> Capistrano recommended: *acriter cruciandos, eorum bona confiscanda, et poenas varias et acerrimas in eosdem cumulandos, ac Indulgentias plenarias Catholicis exhibitas, in favorem fidei et exterminium eorundem.*" Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, 151.

<sup>57</sup> *Glossa arguit, quod auctoritate Ecclesiae potest fieri bellum, secundum quod verum est, contra inimicos Fidei, et contra illos, qui Ecclesiam impugnant...multi Barones, Milites et nobiles se offerunt cum propriis personis et rebus, etiam, si opus est, ad mortem se exponere pro defensione Catholicae veritatis...Hoc autem non aliunde procedit, quam a verbo veritatis, cui mendaces resistere numquam valent, quoniam omnia vincit veritas.*" Emphasis mine. Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, 155.

<sup>58</sup> In 1455, in a speech before Pope Calixtus III, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini expressed his doubt about Capistrano's miracles. Although the monk was a *—r Dei plenus*," the failure of his mission cast doubt on his abilities to perform miracles, which were effective against heretics: *—Hodie autem non est ita nobiscum Domini manus, ut mirabilia per nos operari velit... Illud notissimum est, quia post praedicatione Johannis remansit Bohemia eadem quae prius fuerat.*" See: Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, *—Oratio XVII: Habita coram Callixto Papa III. de compactatis Bohemorum,*" in idem., *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae, quarum multas ex mss codd. nunc primum eruit,*

gulf they had perceived between Prague and Rome. In the wake of their efforts, the religious and political elites of the Czech lands sought to fortify their kingdom against all efforts at conversion. A consequent retrenchment of the Utraquist church took place in the 1450s and set the stage for a new generation in the ongoing conflict between the Utraquists and the papacy that would witness new periods of armed conflict and the articulation of a confident, and even militant, Utraquist identity.

### The Establishment of the Utraquist Kingdom

Evan as Capistrano and Cusa were engaging in their verbal fencing with the Utraquists, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, the bishop of Siena, engaged in behind the scenes efforts to win George of Poděbrady over to the papacy. Piccolomini had begun his career as a conciliarist and later as a diplomat for the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III of Austria, and was an expert on central European politics.<sup>59</sup> In 1451, he undertook a diplomatic mission for Nicholas V to Vienna, and while on this embassy he journeyed to Bohemia and met with the leaders of Tábor and separately with George of Poděbrady in the Moravian town

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*reliquas hinc inde dispersas collegit* (Lucae: P.M. Benedini, 1755), 350-385, 363-364. On this speech and its impact on relations between Rome and the Czech lands, see below, fn. 74 and following.

<sup>59</sup> Piccolomini began his career as a secretary at Basel, and was an ardent conciliarist. He lost faith in Basel's ability to reform the church, though, and left Basel to work in the chancery of Frederick III in Vienna. He became a confidant of Cardinal Carvajal, was ordained a priest in 1445, and became a bishop in 1447. For a good biographical overview of Piccolomini's life and career, see the introductory essay in: Gerald Christianson et al., eds., *Reject Aeneas, Accept Pius: Selected Letters of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II)* (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2006). On Aeneas and his ties to central European politics, see: Eric Meuthen, "Ein „deutscher“ Freundeskreis an der römischen Kurie in der Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts," in R. Bäumer et al., eds., *Synodus: Beiträge zur Konzilien- und allgemeinen Kirchengeschichte* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1997), 487-542, 513-514.

of Benešov.<sup>60</sup> Piccolomini left his meeting with George very impressed with the Bohemian magnate, and he recorded his thoughts on the meeting in a lengthy letter to Cardinal Carvajal in August, 1451.<sup>61</sup> Based on their discussion, Piccolomini considered George to be “a great and powerful man, whom the majority of the kingdom would follow.”<sup>62</sup> George’s greatness devolved from his judicious use of power and his willingness to enforce his claims with the force of arms, and his apparent pragmatism in the use of religious justifications for his actions.<sup>63</sup> Piccolomini did recognize that the Utraquists were religiously opposed to Catholic beliefs and practices. In writing to Carvajal, he admitted that “I did believe that the rite of communion alone separated this people from us, but now that I have had experience with them, I know this people to be heretical, unfaithful, and rebellious before God.”<sup>64</sup> Piccolomini’s hope, though, was that the right rewards would entice George to lead this heretical people back to obedience, and that George’s political calculations would outweigh his religious belief.

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<sup>60</sup> The most substantial treatment of Aeneas’s 1451 trip to Bohemia remains: Kaminsky, “Pius Aeneas.” See also: Fudge, “Seduced by the Theologians.”

<sup>61</sup> The letter has been preserved as: Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, “Dialogus contra Bohemos et Taboritas de sacra communione sub una specie, Epistola CXXX,” in *Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei Senensis...opera quae extant omnia*, 660-678.

<sup>62</sup> “Nam magnum illum et potentem virum, quem regni pars maxima sequitur.” Piccolomini, “Dialogus,” 663.

<sup>63</sup> It should be noted that greatness was, for Piccolomini, a value-neutral or even suspicious character trait. In his historical and political writings, Aeneas often argued that greatness could only come at the cost of Christian virtues. On the idea of greatness in Piccolomini’s writings on Bohemia, see: Hans Rothe, “Aeneas Sylvio de Piccolomini über Böhmen,” in H. Harder and H. Rothe, eds., *Studien zum Humanismus in den Böhmisches Ländern* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1988), 141-156, especially 150.

<sup>64</sup> “Credebam solius ritu communionis hunc populum a nobis esse secretum, sed nunc expertum habeo, haereticum esse populum hunc, infidelem, Deo rebellem.” Piccolomini, “Dialogus,” 663.

This desire, even if it cynically –saw religion essentially as politics,” had the advantage of recognizing the political reality in Bohemia.<sup>65</sup> Throughout the first years of the 1450s, George capitalized on his 1448 coup and consolidated his power among the Bohemian nobility. This increase in his influence was commensurate with his role in securing political and religious stability for the Czech lands. In April of 1452, a national diet affirmed George’s leadership of the nation as its –*gubernator*” and witnessed a religious agreement between the Utraquists and Catholics in Bohemia, especially on matters of sacramental theology.<sup>66</sup> A number of priests from the area around Tábor, including the old bishop Nicholas Pelhřimov and Václav Koranda, did not approve of this rapprochement, and they openly resisted the establishment of a moderate coalition around George. When George moved towards Tábor in force during the summer of 1452 in order to gain its submission, though, the majority of the Táborites capitulated without a struggle. A few, including Pelhřimov, refused to submit, and the elderly bishop was jailed in Poděbrady.<sup>67</sup> With this final collapse of Tábor, the Utraquist church under Rokycana achieved a lasting hegemony in Bohemia and formed an ideological bulwark for the political stabilization of the kingdom.

The first step to this stabilization was ending the interregnum. Thus, in November of 1452, a delegation of Czech nobles traveled to Vienna, and there they offered Ladislav Posthumus, Sigismund’s grandson, the throne of Bohemia. This offer was contingent, though, on his acceptance of a series of conditions that

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<sup>65</sup> Howard Kaminsky used these words to describe Aeneas’s entire approach to religion. See: Kaminsky, –Pius Aeneas,” 302.

<sup>66</sup> Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, 1842.

<sup>67</sup> On Poděbrady’s role in the end of Tábor’s existence as an independent entity, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 66-67; and Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 59-61.

were prerequisites to his election as king.<sup>68</sup> These conditions required that Ladislav should uphold the Four Articles, take up residence in Prague, recognize the secularization of church lands, and select Czech advisers, officials, and deputies for his court.<sup>69</sup> Ladislav also had to accept George of Poděbrady as his guardian in Bohemia. This made sense on a number of levels; George's leadership of the Utraquist nobility would insulate the new, Catholic king from religious objections to his reign, and the king's allegiance to Rome would pacify the substantial Catholic minority within the Czech lands.<sup>70</sup> George gained major political concessions from his guardianship of Ladislav. A series of documents issued in Ladislav's name appointed George as the regent of Bohemia for six years (until Ladislav came of age) and ordered all officials in Bohemia to obey George, as he spoke for the king.<sup>71</sup> The decrees also affirmed that George had served well as —powerful governor for two years,” thus legitimizing his previous activities as the de facto ruler of Bohemia.<sup>72</sup> All in all, the Bohemians' formal recognition of Ladislav as their king in July 1453 both established George as the

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<sup>68</sup> Ladislav was the son of Sigismund's daughter, but had been born after the emperor's death. In 1440, he was considered too young to be elected as the Bohemian king. By 1452, he was 12 years old, and considered a good compromise candidate for the throne of Bohemia. The full text of the articles is contained in: *AC* 4, 413-415. Ladislav's acceptance of the nobility's terms follows on 416-419.

<sup>69</sup> —Najprwé o ty čtyři artikule, o kteréž se jest tato země zasadila, i smluvá se o to stala s konciliem Basilejským a kompaktata sepsaná mezi tým zbornem Basilejským a králostwem tiemto i markrabstwim Morawským, kteréž to držim e a drže ti mienime, aby chom w tom byli zachowáci.” *AC* 4, 413. On the further demands of the articles and their relation to earlier compromises between the Bohemian estates and their kings, especially Sigismund, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 85.

<sup>70</sup> On these political negotiations, which took place in early 1453, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 71-73.

<sup>71</sup> Two proclamations, dated May 1 and 2, 1453, confirmed George's position and extended his power over six years. The first of these proclamations was in Czech, which Ladislav did not speak, and the second was in his native German. The full text of the decrees is in: *AC* 15, 211-213.

<sup>72</sup> Ladislav's German decree of May 2 referred to George as —ainem gewaltigen gubernator desselben kunigreichs auf zway jar.” *AC* 15, 212.



power behind the Czech throne and provided the regent with a royal protégé and ally who would help George secure internal peace over the next decade.

External events provided a further impetus for the consolidation of George and Ladislav's political power. Following the Ottoman's conquest of Constantinople in May, 1453, the papacy issued a call for a unified European crusade against the sultan. Particularly during the German *Reichstag* of 1454, which met in Regensburg, both Giovanni da Capistrano and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini gave energetic orations demanding the aid of the German princes in Christendom's struggle against the Muslims.<sup>73</sup> Bohemia's reputation for military prowess proved to be an irresistible lure for the papacy, and Piccolomini began a campaign to forge a lasting peace with the Utraquists in order to enlist the Bohemians in the struggle with the Ottoman Empire. This campaign was aided by the death of Pope Nicholas V in March, 1455. He, like Martin V in the 1420s, had resisted any concessions to the Utraquists. The new pope, Calixtus III, proved to be more amenable to negotiation, and in September of 1455 Piccolomini made his case for confirming the Basel *Compactata* and incorporating the Utraquists into a European crusade. In a speech before Calixtus, Piccolomini argued that the pope should affirm the legitimacy of the *Compactata* based on a certain calculus of souls. By recognizing the Utraquist church, the church could gain access to Bohemia and begin its peaceful reconversion.<sup>74</sup> The nobility, who were pro-

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<sup>73</sup> On the *Reichstag* of 1454 and the renewed call for a crusade against the Muslims, see: Johannes Helmuth, "The German Reichstage and the Crusade," in N. Housley, ed., *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century: Message and Impact* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 53-69.

<sup>74</sup> Piccolomini also suggested that recognizing the *Compactata* would give the pope access to new streams of revenue by granting official benefices in Bohemia and Moravia. On the background and details of Aeneas's argumentation in 1455, see: Kaminsky, "Pius Aeneas," 295.

Rome, would appoint Catholic priests and gradually re-introduce traditional practices.<sup>75</sup> Further, the pope could expect an immediate return for granting this favor, as the Bohemians could be counted on to fight against the Ottomans. After all, if the wars of the 1420s had proved anything, it was that the Czechs were fearsome warriors. Finally, Piccolomini claimed that because of Basel's recognition of *utraquism's* validity, and its basis in the Bible, the acceptance of the Bohemians' idiosyncratic eucharistic practice would not —violate the integrity of our faith."<sup>76</sup> Because it passed this test, and because of the obvious practical advantages it bestowed, Piccolomini urged the pope to confirm the *Compactata* and begin a dialogue with George and Ladislav to enlist the Bohemians in the impending crusade.<sup>77</sup>

Unfortunately, the death of Ladislav cut off this potential dialogue between the pope and Bohemia's Catholic king. In November of 1457, Ladislav died after contracting plague. He had spent much of the previous year traveling between Hungary, Vienna, and Prague, as he prepared for a marriage to Princess Madelaine, the daughter of Charles VII of France. Ladislav had arrived in Prague on September 29 in order to prepare for his future queen's arrival, but he took ill on Sunday, November 20. He died three days later, only seventeen years old. Ladislav's death, and the absence of an heir to his throne, obviously threatened

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<sup>75</sup> In this speech, Piccolomini continued to embrace a "trickle-down" approach to winning back the Bohemians through the intervention of the "barones, et optimates" who desired reunion with Rome. Piccolomini, "Oratio XVII," 374.

<sup>76</sup> Aeneas granted that the *Compactata* and their support of communion in both kinds should be invalidated —si exconcessione communionis violatur integritas fidei nostrae." He concluded, however, that it did not. See: Piccolomini, "Oratio XVII," 369.

<sup>77</sup> Piccolomini also seemed to hope that the pope would recognize him as the only person capable of administering this rapprochement. He may have even aspired to a cardinal's cap in return for his service. See: Kaminsky, "Rus Aeneas," 296-297; and Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 82-83.

the internal peace and possible rapprochement with the pope that had developed during his reign.<sup>78</sup> The laws governing succession to the Czech throne were murky; legitimate claims existed for the Duke William of Saxony, the margrave of Brandenburg, and even for Charles, the brother of Madelaine and second son of Charles VII of France.<sup>79</sup> Another candidate existed, though, who had exercised authority in Bohemia for almost a decade. Despite his lack royal blood, or of any claim to the throne through marriage, George of Poděbrady quickly established himself as a leading candidate for the throne of Bohemia.

George took immediate steps to maintain peace upon Ladislav's death. Acting as regent, he called a diet for December 1457, which confirmed him in his position until the election of a new king. George also betrothed his daughter to Matthias Hunyadi, the newly elected king of Hungary.<sup>80</sup> This alliance initially served George well, as his ties to the Hungarian royal house granted him considerable social prestige and gained him a powerful regional ally.<sup>81</sup> George also benefited from the fact that he was the only Utraquist candidate for the throne. The Utraquist church was more united in 1458 than it had been during its entire prior existence. Rokycana was its undisputed leader, the conflicts with Cusa and Capistrano had galvanized its leadership, and Calixtus III had shown himself

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<sup>78</sup> This was particularly true because George was almost immediately accused of poisoning Ladislav. The death of a young, seemingly healthy king, and the immediate benefit that accrued to George, made him a clear scapegoat concerning Ladislav's death. On the polemics against George concerning Ladislav's death, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 147-149.

<sup>79</sup> On the laws of succession established in the fourteenth century, and their implications for the election of a king in 1457, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 90.

<sup>80</sup> Matthias had previously been imprisoned by Ladislav as a threat to the Hungarian throne. His release and subsequent betrothal to George's daughter provided further "proof" of George's complicity in Ladislav's death. On Matthias's ascent to the throne of Hungary, see: Tanner, *The Raven King*, 49-51; and Jörg Hoensch, *Matthias Corvinus: Diplomat, Feldherr, und Mäzen* (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1998), 45-59.

<sup>81</sup> See: Hoensch, *Matthias Corvinus*, 52-55; see also: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 151ff.

to be amenable to the formal confirmation of the *Compactata*. The vocal support of the Utraquist majority in Prague, the church's leaders, and the Utraquist nobility ultimately tipped the balance in favor of George at the electoral diet that began in Prague on February 27, 1458.

A number of Utraquist authors and preachers voiced their support for George during his election, and they used nationalist rhetoric that had become familiar during the revolutionary years of 1419 and 1420. Martin Lupáč wrote and distributed a pamphlet that strongly protested the election of any German as king of Bohemia. Lupáč argued that a German would neither defend the Utraquist faith nor protect the kingdom's privileges and possessions.<sup>82</sup> Further, he stated that Poděbrady had made the kingdom "famous and equally glorious" during his regency and, "having been reared in our Bohemian faith," had proven himself "able to successfully defend it."<sup>83</sup> According to Piccolomini, Rokycana preached from Our Lady of Týn that it would be better for Bohemia to rid itself of kings entirely, and live under the rule of judges like ancient Israel, than to accept a German king.<sup>84</sup> The representatives of Prague at the diet also publicly stated that they would accept no one but a Bohemian for their king.<sup>85</sup> Many of the Bohemian

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<sup>82</sup> "Seclusis hiis quod si regem Theotonicum habebimus, nec privilegia nostra conservare... nec fidem nostram ampliare valebimus in futuro." Nicholas Tempelfeld, a priest of Breslau and disciple of Capistrano, included Lupáč's pamphlet in his "Tractatus, utrum liceat electo in regem Bohemiae dare obedienciam." This tractate has been edited by Johannes Loserth in: *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 61 (1880), 89-187, 171.

<sup>83</sup> "Hic in fide nostra Bohemica enutritus eandem potenter defensare poterit... Sub cuius regimento et gubernacione factum est regnum nostrum famosum pariter et gloriosum." See: Tempelfeld, "Tractatus," 170.

<sup>84</sup> Piccolomini, in his *Historia Bohemica* (1458), recorded Rokycana's suggestion: "si nemo tanto fastigio dignus videretur, Hebraico more iudices assumendos, veterisque legis exempla memorans." See his: *De Ortu et historia Bohemorum*, in *Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei Senensis... opera quae extant omnia*, 81-143, 143.

<sup>85</sup> The Prague declaration was reported in a letter from the delegation of the Czech city of Cheb to the town council. The letter, dated February 28, 1458, read: "Den camerer und den burgermeister

nobles also supported George and the Utraquist church, and their support proved to be decisive. On March 2, the powerful Catholic nobleman Zdeněk of Šternberk publicly proclaimed George the king of Bohemia. George's election as king of Bohemia seemed to establish the political ascendancy of Utraquism in the Czech lands, and held out the possibility of Utraquist Bohemia's again becoming an integral part of the Holy Roman Empire and all Christendom.

This possibility would require sacrifice. The Bohemian *Ordo coronationis* dictated that the archbishop of Prague crown the new king; obviously, this was impossible, but Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, sent two bishops from his kingdom to perform this task. When they arrived in Prague, though, they presented George with a formula he would have to consent to in order to gain their participation in the coronation.<sup>86</sup> The formula amounted to a series of promises that would bind George to Rome. George promised to “bring back and restore the rites and cult of the holy Roman church,” to live in “obedience and conformity to the mores of other Catholic and Christian nations,” and to reject “all errors, sects, and heresies.”<sup>87</sup> George consented to this formula, largely because the conditions did not explicitly require him to reject the legitimacy of the

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von Prag czu den herrn auff unsrer seyten, haben yne lazn sagen, daz sy keinen andern konig haben wollen, dann einen Behem.” The letter is edited in: Adolf Bachmann, ed., *Urkunden und Aktenstücke zur österreichischen Geschichte im Zeitalter Kaiser Friedrich III. und König Georgs von Böhmen (1440-1471)* (Vienna, G. Gerolds Sohn, 1879), 212-213, 212.

<sup>86</sup> Before leaving for Prague, the bishops had a long consultation with Cardinal Carvajal, the papal legate to Hungary. Carvajal had taken a position on George that was similar to that of Piccolomini, and this compromise formula was likely the outcome of that meeting. On Carvajal and the bishops, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 94-95.

<sup>87</sup> “Ego Georgius electus rex Bohemiae...promitto, spondeo, polliceor atque juro coram Deo...obedientiam et conformitatem, more aliorum Catholicorum et Christianorum regum...ab omnibus erroribus, sectis et haeresibus, et ab aliis articulis sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae et fidei Catholicae contrariis recovare, et ad verae Catholicae et orthodoxae fidei observationem ac obedientiam, conformitatem et unionem, ac ritum cultumque sanctae Romanae ecclesiae reducere et restituere volo.” The full text of the coronation formula is contained in: *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 29, 148.

*Compactata*, and he was crowned on May 7, 1458, in St. Vitus Cathedral.

According to the *Ordo*, the new king always received communion in both kinds at the coronation. While in the fourteenth century this would have been an exceptional act, a sign of God's confirmation of the king's sovereignty, in 1458 this ritual act could be seen as an affirmation of George's Utraquist identity. On one level this ambiguity was immensely helpful. In accepting the coronation oath, but choosing to believe it did not invalidate the *Compactata*, George gained the crown, hinted to Rome that he would work towards its goals, and maintained his position as a defender of the Utraquist faith.

George's ascension to the throne had serious, unintended consequences that would alter the course of Bohemia's relations with the papacy for the rest of the fifteenth century. Indeed, the papal reaction to his coronation eventually led to civil and international war, so it is necessary to examine how the conditions of George's oath were interpreted by the curia. The pope saw George's coronation oath as a promise that he would return Bohemia to Catholic orthodoxy. When this did not immediately happen, the papacy finally lost the hope that Bohemia could be reunified with the universal church. Somewhat surprisingly, the primary voice expressing this pessimism was Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who had become Pope Pius II on August 9, 1458.<sup>88</sup> His hopes for George of Poděbrady had been frustrated, and he had become more cognizant of how deep the divide was between Utraquist practice and the rituals that defined the traditional church. One valuable source for Pius's mindset regarding the Utraquists was his *Historia*

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<sup>88</sup> On Pius's election, see the introductory essay in: G. Christianson et al., *Reject Aeneas*, 49-50; and Cary Nederman, "Humanism and Empire: Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, Cicero, and the Imperial Idea," *The Historical Journal* 36 (1993), 499-515.

*Bohemica*, which he wrote while visiting the spa town of Viterbo immediately before the conclave that elected him pope.<sup>89</sup> In the *Historia*, Piccolomini defined the Utraquists by their lack of discernment in religious matters, and their veneration of unworthy or wicked men. Rokycana, Třítka, and Jan Třelivský were all examples of the false leaders and “rotten limbs of the church” whom the Bohemians had considered holy.<sup>90</sup> Piccolomini derisively commented on the Taborite veneration of Třítka that “for a blind people, a blind man is a fitting king.”<sup>91</sup> Piccolomini particularly dwelled on the Bohemians’ preference for wicked men over the true saints of the church. Třelivský’s followers had paraded through Prague with his head, wailing and calling him holy.<sup>92</sup> The Taborites placed an image of Třítka above their gates, and performed religious rites (“*sacra*”) for him every year.<sup>93</sup> Finally, the Utraquists venerated Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague as saints, who “among the Bohemians merited the honor of the martyrs, no less than Peter and Paul have among the Romans.”<sup>94</sup>

All of these examples of the false attribution of sanctity to evil men convinced Pius II that the Bohemians would never willingly return to obedience

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<sup>89</sup> On the composition of the text, see: Rothe, “Piccolomini über Böhmen.”

<sup>90</sup> Specifically, Piccolomini referred to Hus and Jerome of Prague as “*umbra ecclesiae putrida*” that had to be cut off from the body of the church. This language echoed that used by Gerson and the other members of the Council of Constance in their condemnation of Hus. See: Piccolomini, *Historia Bohemica*, 106.

<sup>91</sup> “*Caeco populo, caecus placuit ductor.*” Piccolomini, *Historia Bohemica*, 111.

<sup>92</sup> “*Mulieres quae Ioannem monachum veluti divinum habebant, caput eius intercipientes, pluribus diebus ululantes per urbis ecclesias circumtulerunt, beatum vociferantes, sanctum et Deo plenum virum, qui pro veritate partum traditionibus occubisset.*” Piccolomini, *Historia Bohemica*, 112.

<sup>93</sup> “*Thaborenses, qui reliquas pictures abominantur, Zischae tantummodo, et angeli cuiuspian calicem manu tenentis, effigiem supra portam urbis pinxere, eique sacra quotannis agunt.*” Piccolomini, *Historia Bohemica*, 114. Piccolomini also included the apocryphal story that Třítka, before his death, ordered his followers to flay his corpse and use his skin to fashion a war drum. He hoped that even in death he would terrify the Hussites’ enemies. On this tale, see: Fudge, “*Třítka’s Drum*,” especially 556-561.

<sup>94</sup> “*Ioannes ac Hieronymus apud Bohemos martyrum honores meruere, nec minores quam Petrus et Paulus apud Romanos habiti.*” Piccolomini, *Historia Bohemica*, 105.

to the papacy. And just like Jiřka, George of Poděbrady had become a second king for the blind Bohemians. George's activities as king had only confirmed this impression; in a decisive ritual act in 1461, George marched in a Utraquist Corpus Christi procession alongside Jan Rokycana.<sup>95</sup> He also took communion in both kinds on this day, and thus publicly declared his adherence to the Utraquist church. George knew that this act was provocative. Thus, he sent an embassy to Rome early in 1462 to seek Pius II's formal recognition of the *Compactata* and his recognition of Rokycana as the archbishop of Prague. These twin goals, and especially the second, were rather unrealistic. Pius II had revealed a deep antipathy for Rokycana in his writings, and even in 1455 he had never countenanced Rokycana's suitability as the archbishop-elect.<sup>96</sup> The ambassadors to Rome, perhaps knowing of Pius's feelings towards Rokycana, left aside his case and pushed only for the recognition of the *Compactata*. They failed to achieve this limited goal, though, and in March 1462, the pope denied the *Compactata*'s validity and demanded a public affirmation of King George's obedience to the Catholic church. During the public session of the Roman consistory on March 31, Pope Pius II formally revoked the *Compactata* and condemned all deviations from Catholic ritual practice as heresy.

Pius's invalidation of the *Compactata* was couched in two long, passionate, and learned orations on Utraquist history and theology. In the first,

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<sup>95</sup> In a report to Duke William of Saxony from July 22, 1461, a German observer reported George's participation along with his queen in Rokycana's procession. This account is preserved in: Adolf Bachmann, ed., *Briefe und Akten zur österreichischen-deutschen Geschichte im Zietalter Kaiser Friedrich III* (Vienna: G. Gerolds Sohn, 1885), 144-149, 147. See also: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 129 and 137.

<sup>96</sup> For instance, in his 1455 speech, Piccolomini referred to Rokycana as an *–anima nigra et pestilens*." He would also decry his lack of learning and his usurpation of the episcopacy in Prague. See: Piccolomini, *–Oratio XVII*," 357.



which he issued on March 22, Pius II revealed his intimate knowledge of Utraquist history and decried the deviant church's unfailing devotion to sinful and heretical men.<sup>97</sup> Pride of place went to Jakoubek, "certainly a great man neither in intellect nor education," who introduced theological and sacramental novelties in Bohemia.<sup>98</sup> Jakoubek was joined by Peter Payne, the "arch-heretic," at the head of the Hussite pantheon, and they were responsible for the Four Articles and the *Compactata*.<sup>99</sup> In his speech of March 31, Pius turned to more recent history to argue forcefully that the Utraquists had rendered the *Compactata* null and void with their continued religious deviance. Utraquist priests denied the doctrine of concomitance, and attacked those who took communion in one kind.<sup>100</sup> By such acts, the Utraquists revealed that they would "ignore their fathers," refused to conform to "the pristine norm of the living church," and invalidated the *Compactata* by failing to adhere to its terms.<sup>101</sup>

Pius's abrogation of the *Compactata* ushered in a new era of relations between Prague and Rome. Upon learning of Pius's actions, George again demonstrated his religious affiliation by marching in the Utraquist Corpus Christi procession on June 17. On August 10, George convened a meeting of his court in Prague. Two days later, he unreservedly declared his support of communion in

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<sup>97</sup> Pius II's oration from March 22, 1462 is preserved only in a Czech transcription by one of George's envoys, Václav Koranda the younger. The full text of this speech is preserved in: *AČ* 8, 336-342.

<sup>98</sup> Pius II described Jakoubek as "zajisté člověk nevelikého rozumu ani učenie." *AČ* 8, 338.

<sup>99</sup> The speech referred to Peter Payne (English) as an "arcikacieř." *AČ* 8, 340.

<sup>100</sup> The text of this speech is preserved in *AČ* 8, 360-363. On the Utraquists' non-compliance with the terms of the *Compactata*, see: 361-362.

<sup>101</sup> "Ignoraverunt patres eorum, et multi excessus intercesserunt, qui adhuc non in parva parte durant: non potest dici sufficiens regis obediencia, nisi novitates tollantur et omnia reducantur ad pristinam vivendi normam." *AČ* 8, 360. Much as the Bohemian estates had attacked Capistrano in 1452 for hereticating those who took communion in both kinds, in 1462 Pius II here attacked the Utraquists for accusing those who took communion in one kind of being heretics and damned, and thus contradicting the *Compactata*'s insistence that neither side accuse the other of heresy.

both kinds and asked those assembled if they would defend the Czech lands and the *Compactata*, if the kingdom was threatened with invasion.<sup>102</sup> Many of those assembled declared their support for the king and the Utraquist church, and even the Catholic nobles pledged to defend the honor and prerogatives of the crown.<sup>103</sup> These expressions of support from the political leaders of the kingdom were mirrored by declarations that both the Utraquist and Catholic clergy of Prague made in September. Under pressure from George, both sides promised to continue to uphold the terms of the *Compactata* and professed loyalty to the king.<sup>104</sup> Taken together, these declarations showed that George was able to muster an impressive amount of support from the estates of Bohemia, despite the papal denial of the Utraquist church's legitimacy. The Utraquist church itself was not silent in light of this attack on its foundations, and the early years of George's reign witnessed the production of some remarkable texts that grounded the sanctity and orthodoxy of the Bohemian church in the person and teaching of Jan Hus.

### Hus and the Reassertion of Utraquist Identity

Jan Rokycana was one key figure in this historical regrouping of Utraquist identity in its founder. In his *Postilla* from 1456, which was widely

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<sup>102</sup> Two accounts, one positive and one negative, survive that describe this assembly. In the pro-George account, written by an unknown author, George swears that "Pro veritate tam sancta [i.e. communion in both kinds] non solum bona temporalia, sed collum exponere proponimus." This account is preserved in: *UBZG*, 272-275, 272-273. The negative account follows on 275-277, and also affirms George's promise to "hold, defend, and live according to this practice." See: *UBZG*, 275.

<sup>103</sup> One account of the assembly noted that the Catholic nobles (lit. "ex parte communionis sunt unius speciei requisivit") promised to cooperate and oppose "quosque tales, qui bonum commune et pacis attemptaverint infringere." See: *UBZG*, 273. See also: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 136-138.

<sup>104</sup> On this synod, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 289ff.

circulated in manuscript and was intended to serve as an instruction manual for Utraquist preachers, Rokycana often included references to the history of the Bohemian church as a means of legitimizing current practice, particularly with reference to communion in both kinds.<sup>105</sup> Rokycana blended biblical citations and references to Hus's and Jakoubek's teachings in order to argue for the continuing validity of the Utraquists' sacramental practice, and he articulated what I would call a "traditional" Utraquist self-understanding. He emphasized patience in the face of suffering and the opposition of the true and false churches, and identified the former as a sign of one's membership among the elect, which he equated to the Utraquist church. The Utraquists' sacramental practice was one sign of their status as the true church. In one sermon on the Tuesday after Easter, then, while preaching on the last chapter of Luke, Rokycana addressed the issue of why communion in both kinds had ended as a common practice in the church, since it had been established as the correct practice by Christ. In a comment on Luke 24:45, —~~the~~ he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures," Rokycana emphasized that the disciples had initially been confused, but that Christ subsequently opened their minds. The existence here of a time of incomprehension referred to the period preceding the revelation of the chalice in 1414, when the church had effectively forgotten Christ's teachings.<sup>106</sup>

Interestingly, Rokycana emphasized Hus's role in authorizing the chalice, quoting

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<sup>105</sup> On the composition of the *Postilla* and its preservation by students who recorded Rokycana's sermons, see: Heymann, "John Rokycana," 258. The *Postilla* is available in a modern edition: Jan Rokycana, *Postilla*, F. Šimek, ed., 2 vol. (Prague: České Akademii Věd a Umění, 1928-1929).

<sup>106</sup> Rokycana read Luke 24 in light of John 6, and he argued that this "opening" regarded the necessary manner of taking communion as revealed in John. For this line of argumentation, see: Jan Rokycana, "V úterý velikonoční," in idem., *Postilla*, vol. 1, 675-694, 691-692.

a letter that Hus wrote to Jakoubek in which he said that he would help institute the practice of communion in both kinds.<sup>107</sup> Further, Hus had defended the consumption of wine by the laity before the whole council of Constance by referring to I Corinthians 11:23: “for what I received from the Lord I also passed on to you.”<sup>108</sup> Rokycana ended this sermon by reminding his audience that “you have seen this written on the walls of Bethlehem,” and that they should joyfully accept the body and blood of Christ, which they would drink with him in his kingdom.<sup>109</sup>

This sermon used Hus’s words, and their inscription on the walls of Bethlehem Chapel, as a source of authority that was complementary to the biblical texts Rokycana cited. He also used the story of Hus’s execution as an example of how true Christians could be condemned illicitly by the adversaries of God’s truth. In a sermon for the fourth Sunday after Holy Trinity, then, Rokycana explicitly compared Hus to Christ, Peter and Paul, and Saint Stephen. By following these men’s example, Hus had proved himself to be “a chosen vessel”

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<sup>107</sup> “Milý Kubo, nekvap tím, když ť se bóhdá vrátím, chci ť toho věrně promoci!” Here, Hus counselled Jakoubek to “at rush” in the introduction of chalice, and said that he would help settle the question of the chalice’s validity when he returned. This has been typically understood by scholars as a hesitant or ambiguous statement of Hus’s support for communion in both kinds, but here Rokycana took it as a statement of unflinching support. See: Rokycana, “V úterý velikonoční,” 693.

<sup>108</sup> The passage continued in Corinthians to one of the key prooftexts for communion in both kinds: “on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” Rokycana noted in his sermon that the council “judged this as a heresy.” *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> “Ato máte napsáno na stěně v Betlemě. Protož, milí křesťané, přijímajte rádi, vášně jeho drahé tělo a krev svatú z kalichu a drověřte jemu, že bóhdá budeme s ním píti nóv v království jeho.” Rokycana, “V úterý velikonoční,” 694.

of God's spirit.<sup>110</sup> In placing Hus alongside these martyrs of the earliest church, Rokycana drew on a vein of Hussite preaching that both Jakoubek and Ťelivský had mined in the 1410s. By understanding Hus's death as the most recent rehearsal of a timeless conflict, Rokycana placed Hus on a level with the universally recognized martyr-saints of Christianity. Significantly, this comparison of condemned witnesses came as part of Rokycana's preaching on Jesus's injunction, "do not judge, so that you will not be judged."<sup>111</sup> The council's judgment of Hus, then, invited its own eventual condemnation by God; the contemporary condemnation of the Utraquists by the pope could be understood in a similar light, and Hus's patient suffering of his punishment could be seen as a model for the mid-century Utraquists.

Rokycana was more explicit about the value of patience in his description of the seven characteristics of a man predestined to salvation. In a brief addendum to his *Postilla*, Rokycana laid out these seven marks of salvation (and seven marks of damnation), so a man might comprehend and learn, if he will be saved.<sup>112</sup> These seven marks were: the acceptance of poverty, the avoidance of sexual sin, the willingness to do penance, the constant expectation of the heavenly kingdom, the exercise of mercy or pity, the desire to follow the Lord's commandments, and the willingness —to suffer patiently, and to praise and thank

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<sup>110</sup> —"Nádoba vyvolena jest mi tento." Rokycana, "Neděle čtvrtá po svaté Trojici," in idem., *Postilla*, vol. 2, 208-230, 216.

<sup>111</sup> Luke 6:37. In his sermon, Rokycana included a paraphrase of the council's final verdict on Hus, in which the fathers said, "We commend your soul to every demon!" This ironically presaged these men's own condemnation. See: Rokycana, "Neděle čtvrtá po svaté Trojici," 217.

<sup>112</sup> "Jest sedm znamení a povah zvláštních, po kterých člověk myš porozumečti a poznati, bude-li spasen." Jan Rokycana, "Povahy spasencuov a zatracencuov," in idem., *Postilla*, vol. 2, 901-905, 901.

beloved God” for the opportunity to suffer on his behalf.<sup>113</sup> Hus had specifically exhibited the willingness to suffer, but his attacks on clerical sin and his conduct during his trial equally had attested to his avoidance of sin and expectation of the heavenly kingdom. Hus could thus be understood as a personification of Christian values, and this theme was taken up In the years following the composition of Rokycana’s *Postilla*. Other preachers turned to Hus and portrayed him as a saint whose life and death were models for imitation, and who was capable of intercession on behalf of the Czech people.

In a sermon prepared for the feast day of Jan Hus in the early 1460s, the preacher at Bethlehem Chapel, Václav Dráchow, built upon the themes that Rokycana had developed.<sup>114</sup> Preaching on Ecclesiasticus 45:1, —Mose was beloved by God and men, whose memory is in benediction,” Dráchow asserted that —nevertheless [these words] can easily be adapted and spoken with divine hope about that powerful preacher of good memory, Master Jan Hus, whose *memoria* we celebrate today.”<sup>115</sup> Dráchow went on to enumerate six reasons why Hus had been esteemed by God: his observance of the mandates of God, his humility, his faithfulness, his prudence and modesty in speech, his purity in mind

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<sup>113</sup> Rokycana advises to audience to —*řpělivě snášíš, chválíš milého Boha a děkuješ.*” Rokycana, —*Povahy,*” 902.

<sup>114</sup> Dráchow was Jakoubek’s successor as preacher at Bethlehem Chapel, a post he held until his death in 1469. Besides this sermon, which is preserved in MS Pražského hradu F 59, Dráchow wrote one sermon collection for holidays and feast days, and two more for the Sundays during the liturgical year. On Dráchow’s career and writings, see: Bartoš, —*Ďvě studie,*” 54-55. This particular sermon has been edited by Novotný in *FRB* 8, 373-376. For a codicological analysis of the manuscript, see: Novotný, *FRB* 8, CI-CIII.

<sup>115</sup> —*Possunt tamen convenienter adaptari et dici de isto in spe sancto et strenuo predicatore, bone memorie Magistro Iohanne Hus, cuius hodie memoriam agimus.*” Dráchow, —*Sermo de M. Iohanne Hus,*” 374.

and body, and his patience.<sup>116</sup> Concerning this patience, Dráchow noted that earthly tribulation tested the believer, “just like gold in the fire,”<sup>117</sup> and to this effect he cited the letter of Paul to the Philippians (1:29): “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him.” Hus had certainly followed this mandate, and Dráchow summed up his preaching on the positive value of suffering for the believer by taking a quotation from a letter written by Jan Hus to Martin of Volyn in 1414.<sup>118</sup> Hus had written to Martin, “You know that because I cursed the avarice and sinful lives of the clerics, I am suffering persecution by the grace of God, which will rapidly reach its culmination in me. I do not fear being destroyed for the sake of Christ Jesus’s name.”<sup>119</sup>

For Dráchow, the holy suffering of Hus made him worthy of recollection and imitation. Thus, he ended his sermon with repeated biblical citations to passages in which the people of God were called upon to remember their righteous predecessors. Dráchow cited Proverbs 10:7, “The memory of the righteous will be a blessing, but the name of the wicked will rot,” and Ecclesiasticus 35:9, “The sacrifice of the righteous man is acceptable, and the Lord will not forget his memory,” in order to show that God himself pledged to remember those who were faithful to him. Certainly, then, it was incumbent on

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<sup>116</sup> “Sextum, tollerancia adversorum pacienter reddit hominem dilectum, et acceptum deo.” Dráchow, “Sermo de M. Iohanne Hus,” 375.

<sup>117</sup> “Fales probat sicut aurum in igne per tribulaciones.” *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> This letter is a fraternal admonition to Martin, that he avoid the sins that Hus had attacked in other members of the clergy. Hus recommended especially that Martin avoid the company of women and hearing their confession, and that he decline benefices. The full text of the letter, which was dated to early October, can be found in: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 204-206.

<sup>119</sup> “Scis etiam, quia detestatus sum avariciam et clericorum inordinatam vitam, propter quod ex dei gracia persecucionem pacior, que cito in me consumabitur. Nec vereor confundi pro nomine Chrsit Ihesu.” Dráchow, “Sermo de M. Iohanne Hus,” 375-376.

the people of God to do the same, so Dráchow further dictated ~~that~~ the good people bless and praise the life of the saints, and imitate them,” so they could claim a share of their eternal rewards.<sup>120</sup> The act of commemoration staked the Christian’s claim to an inheritance, and the Utraquists did this as the followers and imitators of Hus. It was fitting, then, that Dráchow quoted Tobit (2:18) to declare along with his congregation that ~~we~~ are the sons of the saints and we look forward to the life, that God gives to those who never shift their faith from him.”

Dráchow’s esteem for Hus could also be seen in another of his sermons. In his 1461 collection of Sunday sermons, Dráchow inserted a sermon *—In die sanctorum martyrum*” towards the end of his collection.<sup>121</sup> This sermon was clearly intended for the celebration of July 6, as witnessed by a brief inscription that preceded the text of the sermon itself. In a macaronic aside, Dráchow wrote: *—Alleluia, pray for us, Saint Jan Hus. Here ends the Passion of St. Jan called Hus, a master of Prague University finished in the year 1461.*”<sup>122</sup> The sermon itself took Hebrews 12:6 as its pericope: *—Because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son,*” and centered on a fairly straightforward injunction to its audience. The repeated command was that true

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<sup>120</sup> *—Unde hic boni sanctorum vitam benedicunt et laudant et eos imitantur.*” Dráchow, *—Sano de M. Iohanne Hus,*” 376.

<sup>121</sup> This sermon collection is currently held at the Czech National Library as MS NKP III H 9; the Sunday sermons comprise the first 350 folios of the manuscript, with the sermon *—In die sanctorum martyrum*” (f. 352r-358r) and a sermon for Advent (358v-366v) following.

<sup>122</sup> *—S zemi dosti hluboko gi gesstie wykopawsse, na kary gsu wsypali a w Ryn, genz tudiez tecze, wsypali su gehu pamatku wiecznie, czoz gest na nich bylo, shladiti chtiecze. Alleluja, ora pro nobis, s. Johannes Hus. Explicit passio sancti Johannis dicti Hus magistri Pragensis universitatis sub anno domini Mo CCCC sexagesimo primo finita.*” Dráchow, *—Sano de martyribus,*” 352r. The Czech inscription briefly rehearsed the treatment of Hus’s body after his execution, and noted that it was placed in a cart (*—na kary*”), and thrown in the Rhine (*—w Ryn*”), which flowed from the site where he had been killed. These details would have been familiar from Mladoňovice’s account of Hus’s execution.



Christians ought to avoid the vain things of the world, and embrace suffering for the Lord. This would result in their gaining a true reward in heaven. Here again, Dráchow chose a text that emphasized the filial relationship between the Utraquists and God. In the initial invocation of Hus's prayers on behalf of the congregation, Dráchow treated the Bohemian martyr as a holy patron of the Czech people. By rehearsing the *Passio*, and preaching on the virtues of the saint, Dráchow upheld his part of the bargain between the living and dead members of the church that Patrick Geary has highlighted in his work on medieval commemorations of the dead. According to Geary, the living owed the dead "certain obligations, the most important that of *memoria*, remembrance."<sup>123</sup> In return for this commemoration, dead saints would return gifts to the living based on the idea of "proportional reciprocity."<sup>124</sup> Because the saint was in the presence of God, and had been judged worthy by him, he could give much greater gifts than he received from those who venerated him. This relationship still demanded the consistent memorialization of the saint, though, and Dráchow's sermons highlighted how this could take place both in the celebration of the saint's *memoria* and in the individual's emulation of the virtues that the saint had embodied.

One of the most interesting things about Dráchow's 1461 sermon was how the manuscript noted the inclusion of Hus's *Passio* in the celebration of his feast day. It seems that it was read prior to the sermon, which could explain why

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<sup>123</sup> Geary, *Living with the Dead*, 2.

<sup>124</sup> Geary, *Living with the Dead*, 81. See also: Oexle, "Memoria und Memorialüberlieferung," 85.

Dráchow's sermons on Hus did not contain much biographical detail;<sup>125</sup> Hus's biography would have been covered by the reading of the *passio*. Dráchow's sermons also hinted at another key element in the commemoration of Saint Jan Hus. His pericope from Ecclesiasticus, "*Dilectus Deo et hominibus...*" echoed a liturgical *prosa* that was first preserved in a 1462 manuscript from the Czech town of Třeboň.<sup>126</sup> This genre of liturgical song, which came to constitute a substantial part of the evening service on the saint's feast day, aided in the construction of a saint's "liturgical *vita*."<sup>127</sup> This *vita* emphasized many of the same themes that were included in the *passio*, but set them to musical arrangements. The 1462 *prosa*, called "*Rex Regum*" after its first line, strongly emphasized the parallels between Hus's life and death and those of Jesus Christ. In the text of the song, Hus also "becomes God's lamb who bears the sins of his nation and, in the end, also like Jesus, is vindicated by God."<sup>128</sup> This *prosa* echoed Dráchow's sermon in its first verse, which established the celebration of Hus's feast:

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<sup>125</sup> In terms of biographical detail, for instance, the sermon edited by Novotný mentioned only that Hus "obprobria a malis et hereticationes, excommunicationes et persecuciones passus est et tunc captivitatem, in qua infirmitatem habuit, dolorem, falsa testimonia et post diram moretem!" Dráchow, "Sermo de M. Iohanne Hus," 376.

<sup>126</sup> This song has been preserved in multiple manuscripts, the earliest being MS Třeboň A 16, f. 43r-43v. It was also part of the Leipzig manuscript witness to the office of Jan Hus that developed by 1500. On the manuscript witnesses to this text, see: Fojtiková, "Hudební Doklady," 88-89; and Holeton, "Libellus," 467ff.

<sup>127</sup> Thomas Heffernan has convincingly argued that liturgy and saints' *passios* developed in dialogue with each other, and that the literary genre of the *passio* evolved to fit into the specific context of the feast day celebration. Over the course of the Middle Ages, the divine office on feast days developed certain components (the vigil, the reading of the *passio* during Matins, and a second Nocturn) that encouraged the production of liturgical songs, sermons, and prayers that celebrated the saint's memory. See his: "The Liturgy and the Literature of Saints' Lives," in T. Heffernan and E. Matter, eds., *The Liturgy of the Medieval Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2005), 65-94.

<sup>128</sup> Holeton, "felix Bohemia," 395.

O Christ, drinking your chalice at time of the sabbath day  
 On the octave of the founders Peter and Paul  
 The pious, righteous, and holy man, the illustrious Master  
 Hastened boldly to the eternal reward  
 A priest beloved by man and God  
 He shone forth equally [to Peter and Paul] in his learning and morals.<sup>129</sup>

This assertion of Hus's equality to Peter and Paul, who were called founders in this verse, established Hus as the founder of a new church. This new church's existence was required by the wickedness of the extant church, which "*Rex regum*" referred to as the "accomplices of Antichrist" who killed "the little lamb of the Lord."<sup>130</sup> This use of the diminutive ensured that Hus would not be thought equal to Christ, but also emphasized his typological similarity to the Lord. The *prosa* emphasized the parallels to Christ over and over again, asserting that "the just man gave out good gifts on behalf of the wicked, when he bent his knee and prayed with tears, offering himself as a victim and as a sacrifice."<sup>131</sup> The key here was that the Catholic church had been unable to recognize Hus's true sanctity and good intentions. The *prosa* assured its singers and audience, though, that Hus would ultimately be recognized as a true saint by the whole world:

Having poured out his blood for your blood,  
 The end of the great saint was thus concluded  
 [But] he holds the crown with the holy martyrs,  
 So that when the judge comes at the end of the age,

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<sup>129</sup> –Christe, tuum calicem tunc die sabbati| in octava principium bibens Petri, Pauli,| ad eternum bravium cucurrit fortiter,| pie, iuste et sancte preclarus Magister,| deo et hominibus dilectus presbiter,| doctrinis et moribus clarebat pariter." –*Rex Regum*," 243.

<sup>130</sup> –Et cum in Constancia foret concilium,| sub salvato conductu ad malignancium| properat ecclesiam domini agnellus,| Possint fideles Christi dolenter deflere,| complices Antichristi dum iustum premere| pretendunt, hic miretur celum atque tellus." –*Rex Regum*," 244.

<sup>131</sup> –Dona bona pro malis iustus reinpendit,| dum cum lacrimis orat genuaque flectit,| se tradens ad victimam, it ad ymolandum." –*Rex Regum*," 245. This passage also echoed the song, "*Quam per Contrariam*," which stated that the Council of Constance "repayed evil for good" in the case of Hus. This suggests an intertextuality in Hussite devotional and liturgical sources that created associations and strengthened common themes among the various materials. On this earlier song, see above, chapter 2, fn. 50.

The eyes of the wicked and the good will then perceive  
That Jan called Hus bears the crown of heaven.<sup>132</sup>

This future, universal recognition was contrasted with the current acceptance of Hus's sanctity only by the Bohemian people. Indeed, the last two verses of the *prosa* laid out how the entirety of the Czech nation lamented the loss of Jan Hus and venerated his holy life and death. The song's author here reconstructed the entirety of Czech society and depicted it as harmoniously united in mourning for their fallen saint:

Let there be great sadness and intense wonder  
If there is no lamentation among the faithful Bohemians  
As they consider the illustrious man.  
You radiant university of scholars,  
A united society of doctors and masters,  
Lament your pious, beloved companion.

School of preachers and gathering of virgins,  
Sorrowful widows and faithful spouses,  
And the whole holy community of artisans,  
Illustrious lords with the marks of glory,  
Magnates and nobles, brave soldiers  
May all the Bohemian nobility mourn.<sup>133</sup>

These verses represented the most explicit expression of how the commemoration of Hus effectively constituted the Czech nation. United in celebrating the *memoria* of this new Bohemian patron saint, the Utraquists could reaffirm their commitment to their distinctive religious ideas. I would argue that the saint's *passio*, the preacher's sermon, and the sung liturgy formed a significant

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<sup>132</sup> —sanguine pro sanguine tuo suo fuso,| optimo sancto fine taliter concluso,| cum sanctis martiribus tenet aureolam,| ut cum iudex venerit in fine seculi,| bonorumque malorum tunc cernent oculi,| quod Johannes dictus Hus celi fert coronam.” —Rex regum,” 245.

<sup>133</sup> —Esset nimis dolendum et valde mirandum| Bohemis fidelibus, si non deplangendum| ducerent continue tam virum preclarum. | Candida scolarium tu universitas,| doctorum, magistrorum concurs societas,| socium deplangite vestrum, pium, carum| scola predicatorum sartaque virginum,| merores viduarum fidesque coniugum| totaque artificum sancta comunitas,| glorie insigniis preclari domini,| magnates et proceres, milites strenui| cunctaque Bohemica plangat nobilitas.” —ReXRegum,” 276.

pedagogical ritual and ideological triad whose separate elements reinforced the teachings and religious values expressed in each other. Here, the rehearsal of Hus's suffering and death, the invocation of his prayers and articulation of the values he embodied, and the communal celebration of his sanctity would have combined to present a compelling statement of Utraquist identity. This identity had come under repeated attacks in the thirty years after the Utraquists had gained the *Compactata*, but these texts suggest that the embattled church could turn to its own history and tradition in order to assert its continued legitimacy and strength. The 1460s and 1470s would witness continued challenges to the Czech nation and its church, but the ideology of chosenness and the veneration of Hus as a personification of that special status would sustain the Utraquists in their successful resistance to military incursions and internal attempts to reimpose traditional norms on Czech Utraquists.

### The Popes and Prague

Even as the August 1462 Czech diet produced the collective affirmation of George's sovereignty in the Czech lands, it also witnessed a confrontation that would set the tone for the last decade of George's rule. At that diet, the Czech king's former representative in Rome, Fantino de Valle, returned and submitted a list of demands that Pope Pius II had issued as a potential basis for George's obedient return to the Catholic church.<sup>134</sup> The articles contained a number of truly

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<sup>134</sup> Fantino had served as George's procurator in Rome for three years, and the pope and the embassy that sought the confirmation of the *Compactata* agreed that he would be an ideal candidate to present Pius's propositions to the Bohemian king. There was a conflict of interest, though, as George never formally released de Valle from his service. Thus, his employment as the

impossible demands; they required George to state that any person taking communion in both kinds was ~~de~~ “determined to place his soul in perdition,” and to ~~utterly~~ “utterly destroy” the spiritual authority that Jan Rokycana exercised among the Utraquists.<sup>135</sup> The articles also mandated that the clergy in Prague cease any disputation of religious questions pertaining to the Catholic faith, and that ~~every~~ Czech song cease, that is sung for the confounding and disgrace of the holy Roman church and the Supreme Pontiff.”<sup>136</sup> In response to these demands, George acted precipitously. Despite Fantino’s new status as a papal legate, George arrested and imprisoned him. This action suggested to Pius that George was not only a heretic, but also a dishonorable man who did not recognize the legal protections afforded to ambassadors. This provocation thus pushed Pius to take additional steps against George.

Despite George’s support within Bohemia and Moravia, he had only ever exercised the slightest authority in Silesia and Upper Lusatia, the two additional territories of the Czech kingdom. In particular, the city of Breslau had proved to be a thorn in George’s side.<sup>137</sup> The city had been resistant to Hussite and Utraquist ideology since 1420, when Jan Krása had been executed in the city. During the

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pope’s special legate to the Czech diet seemed to be a betrayal to George. On Fantino’s mission, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 278ff.

<sup>135</sup> There were eleven articles in Fantino’s list; the last described the rejection of the practice of communion in both kinds by ~~the~~ “the universal and catholic church,” and after this Fantino noted: ~~Ab~~ “Ab illis videlicet ritu seu modo communionis utriusque speciei tamquam perniciosis abstinere mandavit et secus facientes in perdicionem animarum suarum facere decrevit.” See *SRS* 8, 111-114, 114.

<sup>136</sup> Article five officially forbade any discussions or arguments about the church that disturbed the peace; article seven dictated that: ~~cessat~~ “cessat omnis cantus Boemicus, qui in confusionem et dehonestacionem sancte Romane ecclesie et summi pontificis canitur.” See: *SRS* 8, 113.

<sup>137</sup> Although this city is now located in Poland, and is called Wrocław, in the fifteenth century the city’s elites were primarily German speaking, and identified strongly with the Holy Roman Empire; the vast majority of sources from the period refer to the city as Breslaum, and I have maintained that usage.

early 1450s, the city had also hosted Giovanni da Capistrano, and while in the city he had gained a number of disciples who emulated his virulent anti-Utraquist ideology and preaching.<sup>138</sup> Since 1457, Breslau had refused to recognize George's sovereignty over the city, and Pius took the city under his protection in March of 1463. In Pius's declaration of his support for the rebellious city, he asserted that "George remained bound by Satanic snares and obstinate in his defiance."<sup>139</sup> Because George also wanted to lead others into a similar path of error, and to "freely pour out his poison and oppress the aforementioned clergy, captains, consuls, and community of Breslau," the pope dissolved the bonds that tied the city to its nominal sovereign and placed it under the oversight of his legates.<sup>140</sup>

The pope's encouragement of Breslau's separatist tendencies sparked a strong reaction by George. In July of 1463, in the presence of the entire Czech diet, George again affirmed the legitimacy of communion in both kinds. He based his support for this practice on the approbation of the Council of Basel and Pope Eugenius IV, the observance of the *Compactata* by kings Sigismund and Ladislav, and the demonstrable peace in Bohemia that had stemmed from the treaty.<sup>141</sup> George further attacked the pope as a disturber of the peace, and denied

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<sup>138</sup> After the confrontation with Cusa over the direction of his Bohemian mission in 1452, Capistrano spent several months in Breslau. While there, he founded an Observant Franciscan house and also conducted a preaching campaign against the Utraquists and against local Jews. On Capistrano's time in Breslau, see: Elm, "Johannes Kapistrans Predigtreise," 512-513.

<sup>139</sup> Pius's declaration of his protection for Breslau was issued on April 4, 1463, and was accompanied by a bull making the offer of protection official. In the first proclamation, Pius characterized the Czech king as: "Hem tantum Georgius Sathane laqueis ligatus in sua pertinacia obstinatus permansit." The full text of the proclamations and bull can be found in: *SRS* 8, 183-187, 184.

<sup>140</sup> "Igitur Georgius ipse eius venenum liberius effundat ac dictos clerum capitaneos consules et communitatem Wratislavienses... opprimeret." *SRS* 8, 185.

<sup>141</sup> The only surviving account of the speech was preserved by an envoy from Breslau, whose report was forwarded to the city council of Breslau and the pope. His summary of the speech paraphrased George: "Feneamus sacram communionem sub utraque specie, non tamen contra

that the Catholic church necessarily constituted the Christian church.<sup>142</sup> His confident attack on the papacy and his assertion of Utraquism's continuing legitimacy proved to be the final straw for Pius II. Thus, on June 16, 1464, Pius heard a final indictment of George while presiding over the papal consistory. The indictment implicated George in the death of Ladislav Posthumus, accused him of illegally imprisoning Menhart of Hradec in 1448, and condemned him for supporting Rokycana and the illicit practice of giving communion to infants.<sup>143</sup> The charges against George also condemned his imprisonment of Fantino in 1462, and noted that Rokycana had erected a statue of the Bohemian king in Prague with a sword in one hand and a chalice in the other. Upon the chalice was inscribed, "the truth of God will conquer" (*veritas dei vincet*).<sup>144</sup> Besides this blasphemy (or even idolatry), George had also oppressed the faithful Christians of Breslau and "spilled the blood of an infinite number in Bohemia for their obedience to the Apostolic See."<sup>145</sup> The totality of these actions ultimately convinced the papacy that "surely a man could be defeated, but never corrected."<sup>146</sup>

Pius II responded to these charges with a formal excommunication of George and condemnation of the Utraquist church. He also issued a formal

obedienciam in hoc facimus pape, quia eam ex concessione sacri concilii Basiliensis et confirmacione pape Eugenii hoc regnum obtinuit et circa tres predecessores nostros reges Bohemie, videlicet Sigismundum Adalbertum et Ladislaum practicavit: quare dominus papa nunc nos et non illos velit culpabiles facere." See: *SRS* 8, 258-260, 259.

<sup>142</sup> For a further analysis of George's speech and its impact on the diet, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 343-344.

<sup>143</sup> The full text of the articles proposed against George is printed in: *SRS* 9, 77-81.

<sup>144</sup> "Nam quid aliud cult statua illa Girsici regia corona ornata una manu calicem tenens deauratum et alia gladium in publico foro noviter per heresiarcham Johannem Rochkiczam ad Girsici gloriam erecta ac carmen editum super calicem: veritas dei vincet." *SRS* 9, 78.

<sup>145</sup> "Infinitus numerus pro obediencia apostolice sedis in Bohemia sanguinem fudit." *SRS* 9, 80.

<sup>146</sup> "Stringuntur enim hereticorum corda quibusdam insolubilibus sathane cathenis, postquam se illi principi tenebrarum dedicarunt, ut nullo unquam tempore penitere permittantur; ob hoc observatum est tales posse vinci sed non corrigi." *Ibid.*



citation that demanded George's presence in Rome within 180 days to answer for the crimes of which he was accused.<sup>147</sup> In this citation, Pius drew upon his extensive familiarity with Utraquist history to articulate a scathing indictment of the Bohemian king and the church he protected. He noted that George had been "educated and reared" among heretics, whose "head and progenitor was the heresiarch Jan Hus, condemned to the fire by the great synod of Constance's righteous judgment, and after whom the followers of this heresy are called Hussites."<sup>148</sup> Even more dangerously, George used his power to spread this heresy, as "he tried to propagate and spread the damned sect of the Hussites to all men in the kingdom [of Bohemia] and margavate [of Moravia], as well as the neighboring provinces, and openly showed himself to be a heretic."<sup>149</sup> This abuse of power, along with George's support of the heretical Bohemian church, forced Pope Pius to summon George so the king might answer for his crimes. Unfortunately for Pius, this appearance would never take place. Indeed, having issued the citation to George, the pope left to lead an army of crusaders that was assembling at Ancona against the Turks.<sup>150</sup> It seems that Pius understood his efforts to eliminate George and the Bohemian heretics as the first step in this

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<sup>147</sup> These two texts are contained in: *SRS* 9, 81-86.

<sup>148</sup> Pius's thumbnail sketch of Utraquist history in this text firmly located the origin of the heresy with Hus's life and death. Regarding the Bohemian heretics, the pope noted: "Varios errores seminare cepissent, quorum omnium pestiferum caput et sator malorum fuisset Johannes Hus heresiarcha, qui magne Constanciensis sinodi justo iudicio igni damnatus est, a quo postmodum huiusmodi heresis sectatores Hussite nominati sunt...inter quos eciam educatus esset atque nutritus Georgius Pogibrat, nunc se pro rege Bohemie gerens." *SRS* 9, 84.

<sup>149</sup> "damnatam Hussitarum sectam in eisdem regno et marchionatu et vicinis provinciis seminare et propagare totis viribus conaretur seque palam hereticum ostenderet." *SRS* 9, 85.

<sup>150</sup> Pius had issued a call to all of the princes of Europe to send troops to Ancona for a crusade against the Ottomans, which he thought would be his crowning achievement and greatest contribution to the church. He had been planning this grand attack for several years, and was greatly disappointed when no secular rulers sent the troops they had promised. On Pius's plans for the crusade, see: Nancy Bisaha, "Pope Pius II and the Crusades," in N. Housley, ed., *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century: Message and Impact* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 39-52.

crusade. He had begun his final speech against George by noting that ~~it~~ is fitting that we proceed against the Turks, but likewise we are bound to make provision not just for external, but also for domestic [enemies], because it would be insufficient to step back from external wars, except that domestic wars be concluded first.”<sup>151</sup> Apparently, he felt that his citation of George and the abrogation of the *Compactata* had effectively eliminated the Utraquist threat, so he could move against the Ottomans. Pius’s departure for Ancona, however, coincided with a precipitous decline in his health. He arrived at Ancona on July 18, and died there on August 14, 1464.<sup>152</sup> At that point, both of his crusades against the church’s enemies were in danger of collapse.

Within a year, though, the new pope, Paul II, resumed the campaign against the Bohemian heretics. He took a series of decisive steps against George and the Utraquist church: he again took Breslau under papal protection; demanded that the emperor remove George from power; and renewed the citation of George to Rome. In his letter to the emperor, Paul denied George’s sovereignty, and referred to the Bohemian lord as one who merely ~~began~~ to call himself king.” The pope further demanded that Emperor Frederick ~~retract~~ the sovereign power that George is perceived to have,” so that this ~~putrid~~ member of the church” and ~~prince~~ of the synagogue of Satan” might be more easily destroyed.<sup>153</sup> In

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<sup>151</sup> —~~I~~cet contra Turcos simus profecturi, nichilominus tamen nedum externis sed eciam domesticis providere tenemur, quia parum esset bella externa remove, nisi domestica prius compescantur.” *SRS* 9, 81.

<sup>152</sup> On the death of Pius II, see: Christianson et al., *Reject Aeneas*, 52-53.

<sup>153</sup> In this proclamation, Paul described the judicial progress ~~contra~~ Georgium, inceperat qui se dicit Bohemie regem.” The letter abrogated any bonds or ties of loyalty that George claimed, and asked the emperor ~~retrahat~~ potencia quam Georgius impresenciarum habere cernitur.” Paul II believed that if George was legally separated from his allies, ~~putridum~~ membrum et ab ecclesia

demanding that George appear in Rome, Paul II empowered three cardinals, including Cardinal Carvajal, to oversee the case against the heretical king. In an open letter to “each and every Christian,” the three papal officials described George as “~~p~~ertinacious and incorrigible,” and “~~r~~elapsed into heresies” such as “~~p~~erjury, blasphemy, sacrilege, and other crimes and deviations.”<sup>154</sup> The cardinals ultimately declared that an interdict should be imposed on any place that sheltered George, and invoked the aid of secular powers in bringing this heretic into the presence of the pope.<sup>155</sup> Paul’s legate in Bohemia, Bishop Rudolf of Lavant, went even further in a report to the pope from April of 1465; he recommended that after the king had been cursed, anathematized, and declared a heretic, that “~~a~~ crusade should be preached and dedicated against him and his adherents.”<sup>156</sup>

The problem with declaring a crusade against the Utraquists had been that no secular lord had presented himself as a suitable candidate to either lead the military campaign or assume the throne of Bohemia after George’s removal. Although the latter consideration was still a concern in 1465, in that year Paul II did find a number of allies to prosecute a war against Geoge of Poděbrady. These allies were a group of Catholic nobles from the Czech lands, led by Zdeněk of

precisum facile perdet et Satane synagoge principem destruet.” For the full text of the letter, see: *SRS* 9, 133-134, 133.

<sup>154</sup> In the text, George was alternately accused of “~~s~~e pertinacem et incorrigibilem ostendat,” and referred to as “~~i~~psum Georgium super heresum, relapsus in illas, perjurii blasphemie sacrilegii aliisque criminibus et excessibus et omnibus prenarratis habet et movet ac habere et movere vult et intendit.” For the full text of the citation, see: *SRS* 9, 135-139, 136.

<sup>155</sup> “~~A~~gravandi reaggravandi interdictum ecclesiasticum ponendi et auxilium brachii secularis invocandi aliaque omnia et singula faciendi et exequendi, que in premissis necessaria fuerint seu quomodolibet oportuna consuetudine et ordine apostolicis stilo palatii.” *SRS* 9, 137.

<sup>156</sup> “~~S~~i vero per sedem apostolicam haeticus declaratus, anathematisatus, maledictus. . . crux quoque contra ipsum et ei adhaerentes daretur et praedicaretur.” This letter was composed in Prague on April 17, 1465, and contained Rudolf’s report on the state of religious and political affairs in the Czech capital. Rudolf was pessimistic about the possibility of the George giving up his heretical beliefs, so he advocated harsh measures against him. For the full text of the letter, see: *UBZG*, 349-352, 352.

Sternberg, who had formed a defensive league against what they saw as George's absolutist pretensions and consistent prejudicial actions against Catholics in Bohemia and Moravia.<sup>157</sup> These dual claims gained increasing credibility over the summer of 1465, when George concluded a punitive expedition against Hynek Bítovský, a Moravian lord who had broken a number of provincial laws. Lord Hynek claimed that George had attacked him on religious grounds, which seemed dubious since the Catholic Bishop Tas of Olomouc participated in the attack on Bítovský.<sup>158</sup> Hynek's protests against George found a sympathetic ear at the curia, though, and the pope openly began to support the Czech Catholic nobility's struggle against their king.

The League of Catholic nobles first presented a list of grievances to George in a meeting of the national diet on September 25, 1465. Their concerns were overwhelmingly political, and concerned topics such as coinage, the seizure of free lands as fiefs, the levying of taxes, and the rules of succession to the Bohemian throne.<sup>159</sup> The only demand that was specifically religious concerned

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<sup>157</sup> There was, of course, a longstanding tradition of noble leagues in Bohemia, and they had formed both in the aftermath of Hus's execution and during George's rise to power in the 1440s. This particular league formally constituted itself on November 28, 1465, at the castle of Zelená Hora, from which it took its name. The group acted prior to its formalization, though, as an interest group at George's court and in the national diet. On the formation of this league, see: H. Markgraf, —Die Bildung der katholischen Liga gegen König Georg von Podiebrad," *Historische Zeitschrift* 38 (1877), 48-82 and 251-273. See also: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 389ff.

<sup>158</sup> George had besieged Hynek's castle at Cornštejn in December of 1464; the castle surrendered on June 9, 1465. Bishope Tas, who had ascended to the see of Olomouc with the help of Capistrano, participated in the siege; he also pleaded on behalf of George to the pope in this matter, but the pope proved to be unwilling to change his earlier support for the rebel. On the Cornštejn affair, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 162-167.

<sup>159</sup> Altogether, the dissident nobles presented twelve articles to George, and he answered each of the complaints in turn. The articles expressed the nobles' concern that George was not consulting the high nobility on matters of state, and that he was accumulating too much power to himself and to a chosen group of Utraquist nobles at the expense of the realm's great families. The text of the articles can be found in: *AC* 4, 102-105; the king's answers follow on 105-109.

–Rokycana and his priests,” who –make trouble, vituperate, and rail at us.”<sup>160</sup>

Despite the largely political nature of these complaints, the papal legate in the Czech lands reiterated the papacy’s support of all those opposing George. Bishop Rudolf released all crown servants from their obligations to George, and promised that any who returned to the true faith –shall deserve to receive the benefit of absolution and forgiveness.”<sup>161</sup> Paul II followed up Rudolf’s actions with his own bull of December 8, in which he referred to George as —thson of perdition” and reiterated that the officials and nobles of the Czech lands were –absolved from any service, homage, or allegiance” to George.<sup>162</sup>

In the face of this opposition from both home and abroad, George displayed remarkable patience. He pursued a diplomatic solution to the attacks on his sovereignty by the pope, and commanded his followers in the Czech lands to refrain from any attacks on the rebellious League of Zelená Hora. In April of 1466 George and his opponents agreed on a temporary peace treaty that was to extend into the next year, and this truce allowed George to secure the support of his princely allies in the German lands. George also ensured that King Casimir IV of Poland remained neutral in his conflict with the papacy.<sup>163</sup> Unfortunately for George, though, there was no cessation in the papal attack on him to match the

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<sup>160</sup> Article four read: –Faké Mistr Rokycana s swými některými kněť imi na nás I na naše wtd y wolaji smyšlenými a neduowodnými věcmi, bůřice, hanějice, a poštiwajice; řkúce: O že nenie, kto toho pomstie! Jakoby nás wtd y chtěli w hromadu spolu swaditi.” See: *AC* 4, 103.

<sup>161</sup> Rudolf noted that all –a nobis beneficium absolucionis vel relaxacionis meruerint obtinere.” See: *SRS* 9, 144.

<sup>162</sup> –Asolvantur et ab omni fidelitate homagio atque servicio in futurum prestando penitus liberuntur.” The full text of the bull is available in: *SRS* 9, 147-149, 148.

<sup>163</sup> Casimir recognized that he could not afford the military entanglements that making a claim on the Bohemian throne would entail. His policy was to act as a mediator between Prague and Rome, and to maintain diplomatic ties to each side. This approach served Casimir well until 1469, when he decisively shifted his allegiance to George.

temporary peace within Bohemia. In December of 1466, Paul II again condemned George as a relapsed heretic, calling him the “son of perdition” and “the usurper of the kingdom of Bohemia, covered with the depravity of damnable heresy and one who steals from orthodox faith and the most salubrious institutions of the holy fathers.”<sup>164</sup> Paul also formally invalidated George’s claims to sovereignty, thus rendering the throne of Bohemia vacant in the eyes of the pope. In March of 1467, during the ritual cursing of Christ’s enemies on Maundy Thursday, Paul publicly excommunicated, cursed, and anathematized George, and further extended the excommunication to “~~h~~ and every one of those following or assisting George, or those submitting to him or favoring him with aid, council, or good will.”<sup>165</sup> This extension of George’s status as excommunicated represented the final step in the progressive ecclesiastical censure of the Bohemian king and his followers. The pope had revoked the *Compactata* and supported dissident cities and lords in the Czech lands; he had condemned George and his followers as obstinate heretics, and had cursed them as followers of Satan. This demonization of the Bohemians gave carte blanche to those, like Hynek Bítovský, who opposed George for any reason. The pope’s blanket condemnation justified any and all actions against the king, and both the Bohemian rebels and Matthias of Corvinus took advantage of the open-ended support the pope promised in order

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<sup>164</sup> “~~P~~erdicionis filius, Georgius alias Girsicus de Constat et Podiebrat, regni Boemie occupator, damnabilis heresis pravitare respersus atque sacrilegus ab orthodoxe fidei et sanctorum patrum saluberrimis institutis.” The bull was issued on December 23, and it called for an inquisitor to try George as a relapsed heretic. For the text of the bull, see: *SRS* 9, 210-213, 211.

<sup>165</sup> At the beginning of the pope’s curses, he mentioned the Patarenes, Poor of Lyon, Fraticelli, Wycliffites, and Hussites as notorious heretics worthy of condemnation. He also stated: “~~H~~em excommunicamus et anathematizamus omnes et singulos ipsi Georgio adherentes assistentes obsequentes faventes aut sibi auxilium consilium vel favorem.” For the text of the full speech, see: *SRS* 9, 222-223, 222.

to promote their respective plans for attaining political power in the Czech kingdom.

### The Resurgence of Holy War

In April of 1467, the truce between King George and the League of Zelená Hora ended; on May 1, the League sent a formal letter of challenge to George, thus opening hostilities in a Czech civil war.<sup>166</sup> Open warfare actually began in Silesia, when troops from Breslau attacked some of George's personal holdings and seized the town of Frankenburg. George did not immediately respond to this assault, but instead directed his attention to six castles owned by Zdeněk of Sternberg. These fortresses were located in Bohemia, and George's emerging strategy in the civil war was to preserve the Bohemian heartland and protect access to Prague and Kutná Hora. George was largely successful in the goals over the course of 1467, and by the end of the year there was evidence of desperation among the rebellious Czech nobles. George had beaten back Breslau's army in Silesia, and his forces had surrounded Sternberg's main castle at Konopiště.<sup>167</sup> Neither the princes of Germany nor the king of Poland had stepped forward to claim the "vacant" throne of Bohemia, and the papacy's support had proven to be merely moral; as the year ended, George's position seemed to be gaining in strength vis-à-vis his internal and external opponents.

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<sup>166</sup> There was a storm of correspondence in late April that laid out the grievances of the Catholic lords and George's responses to their charges. At the same time, the papal legate in Breslau, Bishop Rudolf, preached an incendiary sermon that declared the crusade against George and absolved his subjects from their ties or loyalty to the Bohemian king. For the Czech correspondence, see: *AC* 4, 139ff. On Rudolf's sermon, see: *SRS* 7, 127-130, 129.

<sup>167</sup> On the progress of the military campaigns over the course of 1467, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 454-459.

In March of 1468, though, the Bohemian war was effectively internationalized. Matthias Corvinus, formerly George's son-in-law, stepped forward at that time to make a play for the crown of Bohemia. Matthias claimed that he was acting to protect the true church in the Czech lands and to end the threat of moral corruption and heresy that the Utraquists posed. He was also fulfilling a promise he had made as early as 1465, when in a letter to Pope Paul he had stated:

There is nothing too arduous or too dangerous which, when imposed upon me by the vicar of God on Earth, nay by God himself, I should not regard as a pious and salutary act and which I would not want to take on with intrepid eagerness, especially if it serves to fortify the Catholic faith and to destroy the perfidy of Godless men... Thus, whether the call is to war against the Czechs or against the Turks – Matthias and his Hungarians will be ready. To the extent of the strength that I and my kingdom possess, we are and will always remain dedicated above all to the Apostolic See and Your Holiness.<sup>168</sup>

At that time, though, the papacy had not considered Matthias a suitable champion and candidate for the throne of Bohemia. He was engaged in warfare against the Turks, faced considerable opposition from his own nobles and the emperor in Vienna, and was relatively new to his own throne. By 1468, though, the Turkish threat had temporarily receded, and all the other candidates for the Czech crown had removed themselves from contention.<sup>169</sup> Thus, the ambitious Matthias moved to the forefront of the conflict against George and the Bohemian Utraquists.

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<sup>168</sup> The text of this letter is included in: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 420-421.

<sup>169</sup> Early in 1468, Matthias received a delegation from Istanbul with which he reached a long-term truce. He also pacified a revolt in Transylvania in late 1467, and had passed comprehensive tax reforms in the previous years that increased his income threefold. Given this stability in Hungary's internal affairs, Matthias was well prepared in 1468 to take on an external war against George. On these political developments in Hungary, see: Tanner, *The Raven King*, 63-64; and Teke, —*De ungarische König*,” 18-19.



Paul II immediately took steps to bolster Matthias's initial campaign against George. On April 20, Paul repeated his earlier condemnation of George's followers, calling them ~~the~~ arrogant sons born of their father Satan...who are cursed just like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whom the earth could not sustain but swallowed them, so that they descended while living into the inferno."<sup>170</sup> Paul also issued a call for all faithful Christians to take up arms for ~~the~~ elimination of this pestiferous heresy and the extermination of the memory of George and his followers."<sup>171</sup> Paul also offered extensive indulgences for any and all who took up arms against the Bohemians or monetarily supported the war against them. Two weeks later, Paul spoke again of a holy war against George. He ordered that a crusade be preached amongst the Catholic German kingdoms, and offered the remission of sins to those who would fight against the heretics.<sup>172</sup> With the support of the papacy, and bolstered by an influx of crusaders, Matthias led an army of almost 20,000 men into Moravia. Although 1468 witnessed only indecisive military engagements, it considerably weakened George's position. On a personal level, several of George's closest friends and advisors died, either in

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<sup>170</sup> This is a reference to Numbers 16, in which these three men opposed the rule of Moses and Aaron. In response, God caused the earth to open up and swallow the men, their possessions, and their followers. In this pronouncement, Paul II referred to George's followers as: ~~—~~ifii superbie tradendi sunt Sathane patri eorum...sicut maledicti fuerint Chore, Datan et Abiron, quos terra sustinere non potuit sed vivos absorbit, ita ut descenderint in infernum viventes." See: *SRS* 9, 265-267, 267.

<sup>171</sup> Pope Paul II demanded that faithful Christians take up ~~—~~arma pro defensione fidei...ad eliminandum huiusmodi pestiferam heresim et Georgium memoratum et sequaces eius exterminandos." See: *SRS* 9, 267-270, 268.

<sup>172</sup> On May 6, Paul sent a letter to the German princes ordering that ~~—~~ex ea cruce signatus exercitus educeretur." He further ordered that ~~—~~insuper cruciatam contra huiusmodi haereticos praedicandi, et ab aliis praedicari faciendi, et cruce signatis contra eosdem haereticos pugnantibus, vel ad id contribuentibus non solum semel in vita, sed et in mortis articulo juxta ordinationem tuae fraternitatis ut indulgentiam plenariam consequuntur, concedendi." For the full text of this proclamation, see: *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 29, 448-449, 449. The immediate consequence of the crusade declaration was the formation of an army of mercenary crusaders in Silesia and Lusatia who attacked George's allies in Lusatia and Silesia.

battle or from illness. A number of George's allies also defected to the side of the seemingly ascendant Hungarian king.<sup>173</sup>

The early months of 1469 witnessed a radical reversal of George's and Matthias's military fortunes. On the first of January, a manifesto circulated throughout Bohemia and Moravia to rally the Czechs to George's cause. This manifesto recalled the propagandistic texts that had been so successful during the early 1420s, and it used highly biblical rhetoric to inspire ~~all~~ loyal Czechs and Moravians, genuine lovers of God's truth and the descendants of our own Czech tongue [read: nation].<sup>174</sup> The manifesto was purportedly written by 3000 lovers and defenders of the Czech nation and law of God, who swore ~~to~~ preserve and save the holy truth, that is, the holy chalice...and the common good of the Czech and Moravian lands.<sup>175</sup> The manifesto identified the papacy as the main perpetrator of the attacks against the Czech lands. The pope, rather than defending the holy truth, *provokes* all the nations and surrounding tongues of the earth against us, and incites them through his writings, legates, interdicts, and crusade.<sup>176</sup> In doing so, he revealed himself as ~~the~~ "man of sin" who ~~boasts~~ of

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<sup>173</sup> The defections mostly came from the ranks of the Moravian towns and nobility, who had seen George retreat from their territory and yield it to Matthias. The concern was that George's strategy of preserving Bohemia's defenses had relegated Moravia to an afterthought. On the defection of the Moravian nobility, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 500ff.

<sup>174</sup> The manifesto was addressed to: *—Všem věrným Čechům a Moravanům, pravým milovníům bojí pravdy a následovníkům vlastního českého jazyka.*" The full text of the manifesto is printed as: *—Provolání k Bojí na Obranu Pravdy,*" in Molnár, *Husitské Manifesty*, 229-240, 229. On the equivalence of language and nationality in Czech thought, see above, chapter 3, fn. 35.

<sup>175</sup> The authors collectively promised *—ujit a zachovat jeho svatou pravdu, totiž svatý kalich...i také jazyk svůj český a obecné dobré této České a Moravské země.*" *—Provolání k Bojí,*" 230.

<sup>176</sup> *—Ašvecky národy a jazyky okolních zemí proti nám popuzuje a štve skrze svá psaní, skrze své legáty, skrze klatby a kříže.*" *Ibid.*

his cleverness and flaunts his wickedness, that he can destroy the most holy gospel and all Christian law, to give another in its place.”<sup>177</sup>

The pope, of course, did not act himself. Rather, ~~he~~ incites the Hungarian king from one side, and the German nation threatens from the other.”<sup>178</sup> The authors of the tract, though, assured their audience that the Czechs would not be defeated by the pope and his agents. Rather, like Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and Samson, the Bohemians would prevail against their enemies. The manifesto also invoked the victory of the Maccabees over Antiochus and the Jews’ defeat of Holofernes and his army as an example of God’s protection for his people: ~~the~~ Lord God permits his elect to be exposed to trials, but he does not suffer them to succumb.”<sup>179</sup> After all, ~~those~~ whom the Lord loves, he chastizes and reproves.”<sup>180</sup> This recalled Dráchow’s 1461 sermon and its pericope from Hebrews, which noted that God disciplined those he loved. The circumstances of the civil war and the conflict with Matthias certainly provided evidence of this testing, but the authors of the manifesto remained certain of their victory. Much as *Ťiřka* and his soldiers, ~~equipped~~ only with faith in Christ and heavenly aid, and empowered by his holy blood,”<sup>181</sup> had defeated Sigismund and his mighty army, the Utraquists under George would defeat Matthias and his allies. The Utraquists, after all, had been continually strengthened by the blood of Christ, ~~which~~ he

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<sup>177</sup> ~~En~~ člověk hřichu se holedbá svým dūmyslem a chlubí svoj špatností, ře mūře vyvrátit svatosvaté evangelium a vřechen křesřanský zákon a dát místo něho jiný.” ~~Provolání k Bojī,~~ 233.

<sup>178</sup> ~~Žedné~~ strany řtve krále uherského, z druhé popuzuje národ německý.” *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> ~~Pán~~ Būh dopouřtī, aby jeho vyvolení buli vystavovani zkouřkām, ale nedepouřtī, aby podlehli.” ~~Provolání k Bojī,~~ 234.

<sup>180</sup> ~~Būh~~ s námi nakládá po svém zvyku: ty, které miluje, trestá a kárá.” ~~Provolání k Bojī,~~ 235.

<sup>181</sup> The text described *Ťiřka* and his followers as: ~~yzbrojených~~ pouhou Kristovou virou a nebeskou pomocī a posilněných jeho svatou krvī.” ~~Provolání k Bojī,~~ 236.

condescended to shed for our sins.” The manifesto then rhetorically asked: “Why then should we hesitate to shed our sinful blood for his truth, and expose our necks?”<sup>182</sup> Here again, the manifesto recalled an image that had been used earlier in Utraquist propaganda. Much as the *prosa* “*Rex Regum*” had described Hus as “having poured out his blood for your blood,” this text demanded a similar trade. God had given his truth to the Czech lands; this truth required that the Czechs “defend, preserve, and protect what almighty God in his mercy has vouchsafed to you above all other nations and tongues.”<sup>183</sup>

This ideological boost to George’s war with Matthias received military aid in February, when Matthias overextended himself in an attempt to take Kutná Hora. George split his troops in response to Matthias’s push, and managed to surround the Hungarian army. Despite his overwhelming strategic advantage, however, George agreed to a parley with Matthias. Although their discussion, which took place on February 27 in the town of Vilémov, was conducted in private, the results were clear. Matthias and George agreed to an armistice, Matthias agreed to mediate between George and Pope Paul II, and Matthias agreed to withdraw with his army from Czech lands. George also apparently promised to support Matthias as a candidate for Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>184</sup> In the

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<sup>182</sup> Referring to Christ’s atonement for men’s sins, the manifesto noted that Jesus “ráčil prolíti za naše hříchy, aby nás obmyl od hříchů a vykoupil od zatracení... Proč bychom my litovali prolít svou hříšnou krev pro jeho pravdu a nasadit svá hrdla?” “Provolání k Boji,” 238.

<sup>183</sup> “Braňte a hajte a zachovejte to, co vám všemohoucí Pán ráčil ze své milosti dát nad jiné národy a jazyky!” “Provolání k Boji,” 239.

<sup>184</sup> On this disastrous military blunder by Matthias, and ensuing negotiations at Vilémov, see: Hoensch, *Matthias Corvinus*, 104-106; and Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 518-521. Heymann, who is normally quite sympathetic to George, is almost disdainful of the way in which George ceded his military advantage for Matthias’s dubious promise of support in Rome and withdrawal from the war. His final judgment was that George’s hope for peace based on the provisions of the

months that followed this agreement, George was as good as his word. He sent envoys to the Saxon elector and the margrave of Brandenburg to push Matthias's candidacy as emperor. He and Matthias also met in Olomouc on April 7, at the expiration of the armistice, where they were to ratify a final peace treaty. This meeting proved to be a farce.

The first stumbling block to a lasting peace was Zdeněk of Sternberg and his allies. These Catholic lords effectively refused to negotiate with George, and instead undertook to elect Matthias as the king of Bohemia. They were supported in this effort by the papal legates at the meeting, and on April 17 they asked Matthias to accept the crown of the kingdom. Matthias was cagey in acceding to this request; he hesitated to accept the crown without a corresponding offer of military and financial aid. On April 20, though, in a meeting with George, Matthias offered a list of conditions that the Bohemian king would have to meet in order to secure peace in the Czech lands. The list of demands required that George: take communion only in one kind; support Matthias in his efforts to convert any and all Utraquists back to the Catholic faith; allow Matthias to appoint an archbishop of Prague; adopt Matthias as his son; and allow Matthias to keep and protect the lands he had seized during the previous year's war.<sup>185</sup>

Needless to say, these demands were unacceptable to George. He and his followers countered with a request that Matthias seek a hearing for Georg at the

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*Compactata* remained his primary objective throughout his conflict with Matthias, and that Vilémov seemed to offer a roadmap to that peace.

<sup>185</sup> In total, there were eleven demands that George would have had to meet to secure peace in Bohemia. The only concession to George in the articles was that: *–ipse donec vivit, sit et dicatur rex, et habeat titulum cum proventibus.*” This recognition of George's title, while stripping him of his real authority, was totally unacceptable to George. The full text of the demands is printed in: *UBZG*, 569-570.

curia (as he had promised at Vilémov) and an offer of extending the armistice until the following year. While Matthias accepted the extension of the armistice, he did not relent in his demands. Rather, on May 3, after a meeting of a rump electoral diet in the cathedral of Olomouc, he accepted the office of Bohemian king. He swore the coronation oath and received the homage of Zdeněk of Sternberg and his followers; Bohemia now had two kings.<sup>186</sup>

George responded to the election of Matthias decisively. His first step was to secure the support of Poland's King Casimir by offering to name his son the presumptive heir to the Bohemian throne.<sup>187</sup> George then ensured internal stability at a June diet of the Bohemian estates, and his armies subsequently entered Silesia and Moravia and reclaimed substantial territory in both regions. Despite the capture of George's son Viktorin in July, George's armies continued to harass Matthias's forces in Moravia. In November, George's younger son Henry defeated an army led by Matthias himself near the heavily fortified town of Hradiště.<sup>188</sup> This loss, and the general military success of the Bohemian armies throughout the summer, persuaded a number of Moravian lords to actively fight alongside George. Matthias's dubious election backfired; rather than leading the people of the Czech lands to reject their heretical king, Matthias's usurpation caused many to resist the foreign monarch and join with their native ruler. Just as had happened repeatedly in the 1420s, the impatience of the Utraquists'

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<sup>186</sup> On the election of Matthias as king of Bohemia, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 220-221; and Šmahel, "Die böhmische König," 34-35.

<sup>187</sup> Heymann has noted that George won Casimir's support by recognizing the Jagiellon's dynastic claim to the Bohemian throne "if not de jure as a hereditary right, at least de facto by the firm promise of a certain election." See his: *George of Bohemia*, 533.

<sup>188</sup> On the military campaigns of 1469, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 540-546.

opponents had resulted in their overplaying their hand and provoking a strong military and ideological response.

The following year witnessed a further strengthening of George's position. Militarily, Czech troops invaded Hungary and Silesia; George's success in these campaigns inspired a number of the members of the League of Zelená Hora to withdraw their support from Matthias and recognize George as their sovereign. Internationally, Duke William of Saxony agreed to a marriage between his daughter and George's younger son, and both the Holy Roman Emperor and King Casimir strengthened their ties to George, realizing that Matthias posed a significant threat to each of their power bases in central Europe.<sup>189</sup> The amelioration of George's position led Matthias to seek a peace treaty with George at the end of 1470. George refused this offer, largely based on his sense that Matthias could not be trusted to keep his word. After rejecting Matthias's proposals, George and his allies sought a broker for a lasting peace in a most unexpected place: Rome. In March of 1471, an embassy from Saxony arrived in Rome and formulated ten articles –concerning the return of the kingdom of Bohemia to true obedience to the Apostolic See.” In contrast to earlier proposals, these articles represented real compromises on both sides. For instance, they would not require George to take communion in one kind, but only to publicly confess that communion in both kinds was not necessary for salvation.<sup>190</sup> The

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<sup>189</sup> George benefited from the German prince's doubts about Matthias's ambitions in the Holy Roman Empire. Although some of the German princes, notably the Bavarian Wittelsbachs, recognized Matthias's claims to the throne of Bohemia, none of them considered granting him the electoral dignity over George. On the shift of political support towards George in 1470, see: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 246ff.

<sup>190</sup> The first article required George's confession. For the full text of the Saxon proposals, see: *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 29, 502-504, 502.

articles did require the Bohemians to halt the practice of giving communion to infants, and granted the pope the full authority to appoint an archbishop of Prague. This appointee was to oversee the correction of the entire clergy in Bohemia, both Utraquist and Catholic, and oversee all ordinations.<sup>191</sup> All in all, these so-called “Saxon Proposals” pointed to the possibility of rapprochement between George and Pope Paul II.<sup>192</sup> George had survived the military threats posed by his domestic opponents and Matthias, and he had shown his unwillingness to compromise on the essential elements of his Utraquist faith. These articles successfully sought out areas where compromise was possible in order to create a space for a negotiated peace.

This potential foundation for peace was never utilized. Even as the embassy in Rome worked toward the final formulation of the articles, George of Poděbrady, the king of Bohemia, died. He was fifty years old, and he died unexpectedly on March 22.<sup>193</sup> He was preceded in death by Jan Rokycana, the unconsecrated Utraquist archbishop, who had died on February 22. These two figures had dominated Utraquist Bohemia for the previous two decades. They had been the key pillars in the establishment and maintenance of a distinctive national church in the Czech lands, and together they had overcome military, political and religious threats to the existence of an independent, Utraquist Bohemia. Despite

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<sup>191</sup> All in all, three of the ten articles dealt with the appointment of the archbishop (article two), his powers to correct abuses in the clergy (article three), and his authority over ordination (number five). The fifth article also mandated that George and the archbishop work together, “ne populus dicti regni exinde in seditionem aut tumultum, seu rebellionem, aut pertinaciam aliquam provocetur.” See: *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 29, 503.

<sup>192</sup> For the full details of the Saxon mission to Rome, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 576-582.

<sup>193</sup> George died in his bed in Prague. He was suffering from dropsy, and had become very overweight due to an inability to move. His death, however, was sudden and unexpected, so he might have suffered a heart attack or stroke brought on by his general ill health. On the death of King George, see: Heymann, *George of Bohemia*, 584.



the challenges from Matthias Corvinus, Pope Paul II, and the League of Zelená Hora, the last years of George's reign represented the apogee of unified political support for the Utraquists. With his death, and throughout the ensuing half-century of rule by the Polish Jagiellon dynasty, the Czech lands and their native church would have to negotiate a different challenges. The post-monarchical Utraquists had to maintain their identity in spite of their monarch's active hostility towards them and in ideological opposition to the Catholic church in the Czech lands.

#### Utraquism after Poděbrady: Songs, Sermons, and New Saints

In the wake of George's death, the Utraquist nobility and their Catholic allies moved quickly to elect a new king of Bohemia. In a provincial diet held at Kutná Hora, the assembled lords chose Vladislav, the son of King Casimir IV of Poland, as the new king of Bohemia and the Czech lands. A delegation from the diet left immediately for Krakow, and on June 16 they received a solemn declaration from Vladislav that he would uphold the Basel *Compactata* and respect the traditional prerogatives of the Czech nobility.<sup>194</sup> Armed with these assurances, the Czech embassy invited Vladislav to Prague, where he was crowned King Vladislav II of Bohemia on August 22 by three Polish bishops in the cathedral of St. Vitus. Vladislav's coronation followed the procedures laid out

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<sup>194</sup> As had become normative in the Utraquist era, the nobility presented Vladislav with a list of articles that he had to promise to uphold in order to be crowned. Both Sigismund and Ladislav Posthumus had had to the same, and the promise to uphold the *Compactata* was the first and foremost consideration in these articles. Vladislav also promised to uphold the traditional rights and privileges of the nobility, and promote native Czechs to the highest political and religious offices. All in all, Vladislav agreed to nineteen conditions to his election. For the full text of his acceptance, see: *AC* 4, 451-455.

in Charles IV's *Ordo coronationis*, just as George's had, with one major difference; Vladislav took communion only in one kind at his coronation, and thus affirmed his allegiance to Catholic tradition and practice. Despite his personal ties to Catholicism, Vladislav knew that he owed his election to the Utraquist majority in Bohemia. Thus, he did not resist the election of Václav Koranda (the younger), a vociferous opponent of rapprochement with the papacy, as administrator of the Utraquist clergy following Rokycana's death, and he did not push for the election of an orthodox archbishop for Prague.<sup>195</sup> Instead, Vladislav adopted a *laissez-faire* attitude towards the Utraquists, and he allowed the nobility to oversee religious affairs in their domains.

Matthias Corvinus never surrendered his claim to the throne of Bohemia after Vladislav's election, but he practically gave up his aspirations of becoming the true king of all the Czech lands. Following Vladislav's election, his father Casimir invaded Hungary at the behest of Matthias's domestic enemies.<sup>196</sup> Although this Polish invasion was driven back, and Matthias eliminated his Hungarian rivals, the threat of another military intervention by the Poles and the decreasing vigor of Matthias's allies in Moravia and Silesia led to a *de facto* peace between Vladislav and Matthias. In December of 1478 the two rulers formally

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<sup>195</sup> At the time of his election as administrator, Koranda was serving his second term as rector of the Charles University. He lived to be almost one hundred (1422-1519), and served as the administrator of the Utraquist consistory until 1497. For a brief biographical summary of Koranda's life and career, see: Noemi Rejchrtová, "Czech Utraquism at the Time of Václav Koranda the Younger and the Visual Arts," *CV* 20 (1977), 157-170 and 233-244, 157-158. See also: Fudge, "Reform and the Lower Consistory," 91-92. Koranda was referred to as the younger to distinguish him from a Taborite leader from the 1420s and after who shared this name.

<sup>196</sup> The opponents of Matthias's rule in Hungary were led by the clerical hierarchy of the nation, notably Archbishop János Vitéz of Esztergom and the bishops of Pecs and Zagreb. They were in contact with the Polish court, and solicited an invasion on behalf of Casimir, Vladislav's younger brother. On this maneuvering, see: Tanner, *The Raven King*, 70ff.; and Hoensch, *Matthias Corvinus*, 125ff.

ended the war between them with a pact made at Olomouc. This pact formally recognized Matthias's rule in Silesia, Lusatia, and Moravia, but dictated that these provinces would revert to Vladislav or his successor upon Matthias's death.

Vladislav was also given the right to purchase these territories back from Matthias for the incredible sum of four hundred thousand ducats.<sup>197</sup> This agreement was formalized and ratified by a Czech diet that met on July 21, 1479, and thus the Bohemians' war with Matthias ended after more than a decade.<sup>198</sup>

By 1479, then, there seemed to be real peace in Bohemia and the Czech lands. The papacy had largely given up in its efforts to eliminate the Utraquist church, and Vladislav appeared to have accepted his status as the king of a bi-confessional realm.<sup>199</sup> The threat posed by Matthias had been removed, and the Utraquist church was under the strong leadership of Koranda and the Utraquist nobility. That the Utraquist church considered itself to be in a strong position was evident at a national diet in 1477, when the delegates read the *Compactata* aloud, "affirmed that they would defend Christ's truth with their lives," spoke out against monks and apostate Utraquist priests, and even "spontaneously broke out into a song calling the bishops and cardinals 'false prophets.'"<sup>200</sup> The Utraquists further solidified their ties to the estates in 1478 during a national synod of the

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<sup>197</sup> The full text of these agreements, which were signed on December 7, 1478, has been published in: *AC* 5, 377-387.

<sup>198</sup> On the July diet, see: František Šmahel, "Pražské Povstání 1483," *Pražský Sborník Historický* 20 (1986), 35-102, 42.

<sup>199</sup> Pope Paul II died only three months after George, on July 26, 1471. His successor, Sixtus IV, never had a great deal of interest in Bohemian affairs; although he did place Vladislav and Casimir under the ban, it was never enforced, and he reestablished diplomatic ties with both Krakow and Prague by 1483. See: Odložilík, *The Hussite King*, 269.

<sup>200</sup> The remarkable events of this diet were included in two vernacular chronicles written in Prague over the course of the late fifteenth century. These details are included in the analysis of: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 116-117.

Utraquist clergy, nobility, and burghers that met at the Charles University in Prague.<sup>201</sup> This so-called St. Lawrence Diet (it met over St. Lawrence's Day, on August 10 and 11) reconfigured the Utraquist consistory so that it would comprise eight priests and four laymen. These laymen would function as the protectors of the church and serve as a sort of coordinating committee for the Utraquist city governments and nobles.<sup>202</sup>

Despite the apparent strength of the Utraquist church in the late 1470s, though, there were some underlying problems. The most pressing of these was the increasing difficulty of attaining ordination for Utraquist priests. While candidates had previously traveled to Italy to seek out the services of agreeable Italian bishops, after 1475 the route to Italy was blocked by the papacy and antagonistic nobles.<sup>203</sup> The Utraquists also had to deal with the results of Vladislav's patronage of the Catholic church. Most notably, the king supported the foundation of many Franciscan houses throughout the Czech lands. Ten new monasteries were established over the course of the 1470s and early 1480s, including the opening of

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<sup>201</sup> Accounts of the assembly noted that no individual space could be found that was large enough for all of those attending the diet. Thus, many attendees were forced to stand in the streets and courtyards surrounding the Carolinum, the largest hall at the university. On the background of the meeting and its decrees, see: Šmahel, "Pražské Povstání," 50-52. The relevant documents produced by the synod are contained in: *AC 5*, 375-377.

<sup>202</sup> Winfried Eberhard argues persuasively that the St. Lawrence Diet established "ein erstes konfessionelles Bündnis" in Europe, claiming that the alliance of nobility, city councilmen, and clerics here established the means for social discipline and religious conformity that scholars such as Heinz Schilling have identified in the second half of the sixteenth century. Eberhard contends that confessionalization took place in the last two decades of the fifteenth century in Bohemia, and uses much of Schilling's methodology to analyze the political leadership of Utraquism up until 1530. On Eberhard's arguments, and the role of the St. Lawrence Diet in them, see: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, 46-70; and idem., "Zur reformatorischen Qualität und Konfessionalisierung des nachrevolutionären Hussitismus."

<sup>203</sup> On the increasing pressure of the "Priestermangel" after 1475, see: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, especially 47-48.

a house in Prague in 1482.<sup>204</sup> While the Franciscans impressed some Bohemians with their asceticism and piety, they also provoked strong reactions with both their lifestyle and their preaching against the Utraquists. Petr Hlaváček has noted that ~~the~~ Franciscans functioned (like [sic] the Jesuits would a century later) as the spiritual storm troopers of the Roman Church in Bohemia.<sup>205</sup> The spread of the Franciscans throughout the Czech lands, then, provided widely visible evidence for the king's support of anti-Utraquist elements within the church. This support gained a more definitive political form in 1479, when the king and Catholic nobles gathered at a diet on St. Wenceslas's day. This assembly was a counter to the previous year's diet of the Utraquist clergy and nobility, and this synod took steps to restrict the liberties and autonomy of the Czech cities.<sup>206</sup> Prague itself became subject to additional restrictions in 1479, as the papal legate in the city placed it under the ban.<sup>207</sup> All of these measures resulted in the creation of a hostile environment for Utraquism in the city of Prague and all of Bohemia. This atmosphere would only become more tense over the following year.

Problems started over a song, *“Věrní Křesťané, silně doufajte”* (~~Faithful~~ Christians, have great hope”). This Czech song was a strident defense of communion in both kinds, and it declared that utraquism had been explicitly

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<sup>204</sup> On the foundation of these houses, and the king's support of the Franciscans, see: Hlaváček, ~~Errores~~ *quorundam Bernhardinorum*,” 121.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> At the diet, the assembled nobles sought to take away the cities' vote in the national diet, and also to restrict the ability of burghers to purchase available land in Bohemia. On the decisions of the diet, see: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, 50-51. The decrees of the diet have been printed in: *AC* 4, 496-502.

<sup>207</sup> Šmahel has drawn attention to the fact that the ban on Prague hurt the Catholics in the city more than the Utraquists; he did not draw an explicit parallel between the situation in 1479 and that in 1416, but in each case the imposition of a papal interdict on the city allowed Utraquist priests to assume religious leadership in the city. On the interdict and its consequences, see: Šmahel, *Práské Povstání*,” 44-45.

commanded by Christ and Paul in the New Testament. This may have been what the 1477 Utraquist diet had sung, and in 1479 King Vladislav outlawed the public singing of “Faithful Christians” as a threat to public order.<sup>208</sup> This song, which had been composed at least fifty years earlier, had been expanded to include some timely and pointed lyrics. It decried the “great sacrilege” of the “vagabond troop” of mendicant friars, and attacked the “arrogant priests and false prophets, the bishops the cardinals.”<sup>209</sup> Although it did not attack the king explicitly, and dwelled mostly on priestly sins, the verses’ condemnation of communion *sub una* and the Franciscans contained implicit attacks on King Vladislav and his support for both. Thus, the king ordered his officers to arrest anyone who persisted in singing the song, and prominent burghers in both Prague and Kutná Hora were imprisoned and tortured as a result.<sup>210</sup>

Following these arrests, Vladislav arrested four prominent priests in Prague, including Michael Polák. Polák was, as his name indicated, from Poland, studied at Charles University, and had served under Jan Rokycana as a priest at both Our Lady of Týn and the St. Giles parish church in Prague’s Old Town.<sup>211</sup> These positions had established Polák as one of the leaders of the Utraquist

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<sup>208</sup> Although the chronicles that recorded the 1477 diet did not give a title to the song, it did mention several lyrics about “biskupiech, o kardinálech falešných prorocích.” The second verse of “Věrní Křesťané” likewise condemned “falešných prorokuov,| biskupuov, kardinálov.” The full text of the song is edited in: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 235-237. On the 1477 diet, see: Seltzer, *Framing Faith*, 117.

<sup>209</sup> Two fifteenth-century manuscripts contain this song. The first was the Jistebnický Kancional, which was copied in the 1420s or 1430s. The second was the Jena Codex, which was bound between 1495 and 1510. This second manuscript included two additional verses, and the first attacked “Óveliké rúhání| děje se od nich nyní| Kristově pravdě zjevné| od roty poběhlé.” For the codicological history of the song and these later verses, see: Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 6, 237. On the false prophets and priests, see the previous note.

<sup>210</sup> On Vladislav’s efforts to suppress the song, see: Seltzer, “Rænvioning the Saint’s Life,” 158-159; and Šmahel, “Pražské Povstání,” 48-49.

<sup>211</sup> Our best source for Michael’s biography is a letter he wrote in 1476. For a biographical summary and edition of this letter, see: Bartoš, “Dvě Studie,” 68-71 and 81-82.

clergy, and Polák quickly became the spokesman for the four imprisoned clerics. He frequently read from the Bible with his fellow priests, and ate and slept little; he prayed and cried “tears of devotion” constantly, and wore chains around his throat and legs.<sup>212</sup> Not surprisingly, Michael died after subjecting himself to these bodily mortifications. Similarly unsurprising was the fact that Michael was venerated as a saint after his death. One vernacular chronicler memorialized Polák as —a man of God, certainly a great saint...and our exemplary father. I end here the *Life* (—*život*”) of the holy priest Michael, whose soul was accepted into God’s kingdom and heavenly joy.”<sup>213</sup> With his death, Polák joined the company of Bohemian martyrs and personified the central elements in Utraquist sanctity. He had been unjustly killed for his defense of the chalice, and he had maintained his faith in the practice and law of Christ despite his bodily suffering.<sup>214</sup> He had also provided an example that would be taken up during the years following his death, as King Vladislav’s policies of Catholic restoration pushed the Utraquist population of Prague beyond its breaking point.

In 1483, Vladislav exercised his right to appoint the members of the Prague town councils. Unfortunately for him, in this year he replaced the outgoing

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<sup>212</sup> The details of Michael’s suffering were included in contemporary vernacular chronicles, and were drawn from the account of one of the priests who was in captivity with Michael. The narrative suggested parallels with many late-medieval hagiographic tropes, and sought to establish Michael’s sanctity through his patient and joyous suffering. On the account of Michael’s imprisonment, see: Seltzer, —Re-envisioning the Saint’s Life,” 159-160.

<sup>213</sup> Seltzer, —Re-envisioning the Saint’s Life,” 160.

<sup>214</sup> Joel Seltzer has noted that Utraquist saints were drawn mostly from the ranks of parish priests, which is unsurprising given the Utraquists’ lack of bishops and distaste for the monastic life. Priests could also, however, embody central tenets of Utraquist faith: the demonstration of clerical and pastoral leadership, the faithful administering of the sacrament, the public profession of their faith, and the patient suffering of physical harm. These characteristics, of course, were all embodied by Jan Hus. See: Seltzer, —Re-envisioning the Saint’s Life,” 153-154.

councilmen with an overwhelming proportion of Catholics.<sup>215</sup> The councils of the Old and New Town had traditionally been either balanced between Catholics and Utraquists, or slanted towards Utraquists in their composition. Vladislav's decision to fill the councils with loyal Catholics (and royalists) represented the culmination of his *Restorationspolitik*, especially when coupled with the interdict on Prague, the execution of the popular priest Polák, and the assault on the cities' rights at the 1479 diet.<sup>216</sup> Much as had happened in July of 1419, the king did not take the strength of Utraquist loyalties and institutions into account, and he did not appear prepared for the response to his decisive actions. On September 24, 1483, Utraquist congregations gathered in all three Prague towns at eight in the morning and waited for a signal. In a coordinated action, they proceeded from their churches to attack the Franciscan convents of St. James and St. Ambrose. At St. Ambrose, the Utraquist mob cut down the cross in front of the convent and razed both the church and cloister.<sup>217</sup> Saint James's was also destroyed. The *Prague Uprising* continued for almost two weeks, with the Utraquist populace driving the Catholic clergy and monks from the city and forcing prominent Catholic citizens to flee. The leadership of the uprising also

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<sup>215</sup> František Šmahel has exhaustively studied the council politics of Prague during the reign of Vladislav; he has convincingly argued that from March-July of 1483 the king took action to remove Utraquist sympathizers from the city government through outright appointments and efforts to alienate his opponents. On Vladislav's efforts to minimize Utraquist power in the city governments of Prague, see: Šmahel, *Prážský Povstání*, 56-66; and idem., *Husitské Čechy: struktury, procesy, ideje* (Prague: Lidové Noviny, 2001), 119ff.

<sup>216</sup> On the results of the king's pro-Catholic politics, see: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, 52ff.

<sup>217</sup> These monastic foundations had been established in 1482, when Pope Sixtus IV lifted the interdict on Prague. The removal of the ban allowed for the rapid expansion of Roman institutions in Prague, and was another cause of the Prague uprising. The attack on St. Ambrose was memorialized in the *Chronica Fratrum Minorum de Observancia Provinciae Bohemiae* (MS NKP VIII F 75). This text, and the events of the Prague uprising, have been analyzed in: Hlaváček, *Bohemian Franciscans*, 181ff.



conducted an extensive correspondence campaign to justify their actions and reestablish Prague's identity as a Utraquist city.<sup>218</sup>

On October 6, the newly constituted city councils of Prague and the assembled Utraquist clergy of the city issued a manifesto to King Vladislav. The manifesto contained twenty-three articles, and the authors stated that if the king accepted them, then peace would be restored in Prague and the residents of the city would accept the king in the city. In the manifesto's opening address, the collective authors invoked the memory of Michael Polák to lament that —our excellent neighbors” have experienced imprisonment, agony, and torture, including —many fine people from the spiritual and secular estates, like the priest Michael of good memory.”<sup>219</sup> They further demanded that the king recall and observe the oaths that —he deigned to write and pledge, while being received and crowned in our presence.”<sup>220</sup> The manifesto itself reiterated the call for the king to recognize the traditional rights of the urban communes, the knights, and the burghers of the realm. Three articles (one, four, and five) also demanded the king's recognition of the validity of administering communion in both kinds, while the sixth article affirmed the permanence and binding nature of the *Compactata*. The sixteenth article asserted that there was no place for monks or priests in Prague who censured Utraquism, and a second clause in the fifth article

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<sup>218</sup> For a full account of the uprising and the events that took place from September 24 to October 6, see: Šmahel, *Husitské Čechy*, 124-131.

<sup>219</sup> —Před tím také našim suseduom znamenitým zjednali sú, že někteří z nich bez viny, jakož nie nenie na ně shledáno, jimáni, trápeni, a zmučeni, jiní výborní z světských i z duchovních, jako dobré paměti kněz Michal.” For the full text of the manifesto, see: Šmahel, —Pražský Povstání,” 94-99, 95.

<sup>220</sup> The introduction requested that the king remember the promises that he had made regarding the religion, peace, legal rights, and —other good traditions” of his subjects, and reminded him of the oaths —řáčil se zapsati, slíbiti, přísieci při přijímání na mezích i při korunování.” *Ibid.*

actually stated that ~~no~~ one in this city may give [communion] in one kind either publicly or in secret.”<sup>221</sup> All in all, this manifesto demanded that the king recognize Prague as an exclusively Utraquist city and rescind his pro-Catholic actions of the preceding years. Although the Utraquists were speaking from a position of strength, the king could not give in to their demands. Rather, the king and the Utraquist estates had to reach workable compromise that would both guarantee the rights and existence of the Bohemian national church and provide assurances to the king and the substantial minority of Catholics in the Czech lands. The two sides finally ratified this compromise in 1485, in a treaty that has come to be known as ~~The~~ Peace of Kutná Hora.”

From 13 to 20 March, 1485, King Vladislav, the Catholic nobles who supported him, and representatives of Utraquist nobility and cities met in Kutná Hora.<sup>222</sup> At the end of these meeting both sides agreed to a thirty-one year treaty between the Utraquists and Catholics. According to the terms of the treaty, neither church would attempt to expand its sphere of influence after the ratification of the agreement. Each side would accept its current parishes and territories, and both churches would halt all polemics against the other. The ~~Peace~~” recognized the lasting validity of the *Compactata* and established both the Catholic and Utraquist

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<sup>221</sup> —~~By~~ ~~řá~~dný nesměl v tomto městě dávatí pod jednu zpuosobú zjevně nebo tejně.” The subclauses of article five also mandated that no one preach against communion in both kinds or speak against it in confession, and that no one condemn Utraquists for their practice of the sacrament. See: Šmahel, ~~Pr~~ahský Povstání,” 97.

<sup>222</sup> The assembly that produced the Peace of Kutná Hora in March of 1485 was the result of over a year of negotiation between the king and his Catholic allies and the Utraquist lords and cities. On the negotiations between the two parties in 1484, see: Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände*, 55. The two parties’ correspondence has been collected and edited in: *AC* 4, 506-512.

churches as legally protected and coequal within the Czech lands.<sup>223</sup> Most remarkably, the agreement also recognized the religious freedom of all individuals; nobles were forbidden to compel their tenants and subjects in matters of religion, and people were allowed to attend worship wherever they chose.<sup>224</sup> The successful conclusion of the Peace of Kutná Hora put the kingdom of Bohemia in a truly unique situation. Not only was it the first European state with multiple legally protected churches, but it was also a kingdom that could truly be at peace *with itself* for the first time in seventy years. The cooling of the conflict between the two churches did not mean that their coexistence would be easy. Rather, the post-Kutná Hora era dictated a change in how that conflict was expressed. The Utraquists in particular found new ways to articulate their status as separate from Rome, and in doing so they turned to their own history as a source for the means to express their unique identity. In this turn to the past, the celebration of Jan Hus's feast day provided an ideal site for this expression. It was both a temporal and social *lieu de mémoire* in which the recollection of the past served as a justification for the realities of the Utraquists' present.

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<sup>223</sup> The text of the "Peace" is printed in *AČ* 5, 418-427. For a series of letters written from Kutná Hora describing the treaty, see also: *AČ* 4, 512-516. Thomas Fudge offers the best summary and analysis of the agreements in: "The Problem of Religious Liberty in Early Modern Bohemia," *CV* 38 (1996), 64-87, 69-70.

<sup>224</sup> This guarantee of individual freedom of worship was unique among early modern agreements on the establishment of bi-confessional states. For a comparison of the 1485 "Peace" to the later agreements, such as the 1555 Peace of Augsburg, see: Jarold Zeman, "The Rise of Religious Liberty in the Czech Reformation," *Central European History* 6 (1973), 128-147, 138ff.

Martyrdom and *Memoria*: The Figure of Jan Hus

In the wake of the Peace of Kutná Hora, Utraquist preachers, artists, and patrons created a series of increasingly confident and even militant expressions of their religious identity.<sup>225</sup> Indeed, authors and preachers such as Václav Koranda used oppositional and even antithetical images to assert Utraquism's identity as the true church, separated from the false Roman church by its eucharistic practice and the presence of visible saints within it.<sup>226</sup> After all, the "faithful Bohemians alone" defended the evangelical truth of the chalice, while the Roman church, "which committed many murders...calls itself the church, but is rather the synagogue of Satan."<sup>227</sup> Koranda also preached that God had left his body and blood for his believers, "firstly, so the memory of Christ's passion would always endure in our hearts and minds."<sup>228</sup> He continued by stating:

In this way, we are able to shed our own blood on behalf of Christ, who thirst to drink the blood of Christ, because consolation is contained in that chalice, consolation in adversity and suffering. Hence in the primitive

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<sup>225</sup> For instance, Jan Royt has noted that the Utraquists became increasingly militant in their self-expression after 1483, as the radical Utraquists had assumed increasing importance in the wake of the Prague uprising. See: Jan Royt, "Utrakvistická ikonografie v Čechách 15. a první poloviny 16. století," in D. Prix, ed., *Pro Arte: Sborník k Poctě Ivo Hlobila* (Prague: Artefactum, 2002), 193-202, 199.

<sup>226</sup> On the use of antithetical imagery at the time of Koranda, see: Rejchrtová, "Czech Utraquism," 234-238.

<sup>227</sup> "Romana ecclesia multociens cecidit, ut dictum est de multis papis, ideo non sunt ipsi vera ecclesia sancta, sponsa Christi, quia non fundantur in confessione vere fidei et veritatis Christi...que est de communione preclari calicis, ymo eam hereticat, confundit, condemnat, deridet et propter eandem precipit occidere fideles Bohemos. Ideo dicens se ecclesiam esse, non est, sed est synagoga Sathane." This quotation comes from a sermon in MS kapitól. F 116; this was a Utraquist postil dating after 1480, and there is some debate over its author. Václav Novotný has argued that the most likely author was Václav Koranda, based on thematic and linguistic evidence from the texts. Although Novotný hesitated to identify Koranda decisively as the author (based on the lack of an autograph or definitive attribution), it seems likely that the author was Koranda or one of his students. See: Novotný, "Hsiitská kázání z konce XV. století," *Věstník Kralovské České Společnosti Nauk* n.v. (1930), 1-32, 16-17.

<sup>228</sup> Koranda noted that God had left his body and blood for his believers, "Primo ideo, ut semper memoria eius passionis duret in nostris mentibus ac cordibus." See: Novotný, "Hsiitská kázání," 7.

church, because faithful Christians daily communed in both kinds, they were made strong in adversity.<sup>229</sup>

Here, the Bohemians' leader identified his church as the true heir of the heroic, apostolic age of the church. In doing he asserted the Utraquists' status as the "sons of the saints," the heirs of the holy men who had guided and inspired Christians in the first centuries of the church's existence and again in the 1400s.

At the center of the Utraquist claims to their status as the true church stood the figure of Jan Hus. In substance, the commemorations of Hus that proliferated in the late fifteenth century shared many features with those of the 1410s and 1420s. What was different in the late fifteenth century was the range of media that the Utraquists took advantage of in their efforts to identify themselves with the martyrdom and virtues of their patron saint. For instance, Hussitism and Utraquism had always contained a strong ambivalence towards images and art. On the one hand, there was a fear that rich decoration would distract the believer from his focus on God and lead to the worship of the decadent works of men. On the other hand, even the earliest Hussites had made use of antithetical artwork to express their condemnation of the papacy and had taken up images of the chalice (and goose!) as symbols of their movement.<sup>230</sup> By the late fifteenth century, there was a considerable push to use the visual arts as a means of illustrating Utraquist

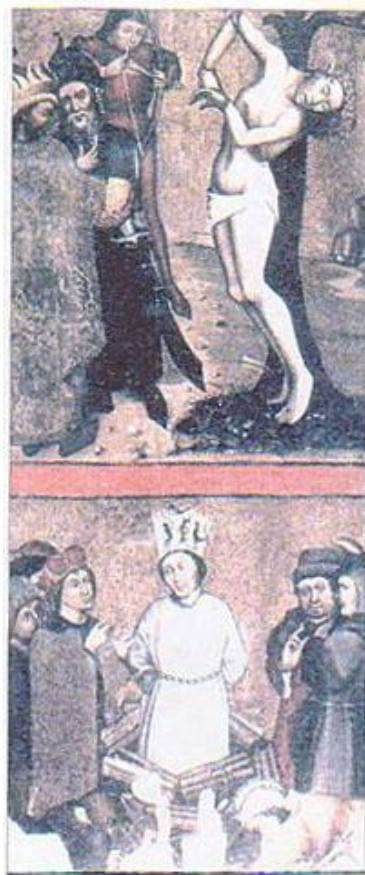
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<sup>229</sup> "Quomodo possumus propter Cristum sanguinem proprium fundere, qui sanguinem Cristi erubescimus bibere, quia in illo calice consolacio et reposita est in adversis et consolacio in paciencia. Unde in primitiva ecclesia, quia fideles christiani quottidie cunicabantur eukaristia 2eis speciei, ideo fortes facti sunt in adversitatibus." *Ibid.*

<sup>230</sup> On the tension between iconophobia and the use of the visual arts in Hussitism and Utraquism, see: Milena Bartlová, "The Utraquist Church and the Visual Arts before Luther," *BRRP* 4 (2002), 215-223; Karel Stejskal, "Funkce Obrazy v Husitství," *Husitský Tábor* 8 (1985), 19-28; and Noemi Rejchrtová, "Obrazoborecké Tendence Utravistické Mentality Jagelonského Období a jejich Dosah," *Husitský Tábor* 8 (1985), 59-68. On Hussite symbolism and the conflict with Rome, see: František Šmahel, "The War of Symbols: The Goose and the Chalice against the Cross," *BRRP* 4 (2002), 151-160.

theology. The results of this push can be seen in both monumental and printed media, despite seventeenth-century Catholic efforts to eliminate the visual traces of the Czech lands' heretical past.<sup>231</sup>

Consider this panel from an alterpiece in the Bohemian town of Roudnice (figure 1). This painting, which dated from approximately 1485, depicted the execution of Jan Hus under an image of St. Sebastian's martyrdom:



**Figure 1: The martyrdoms of Sts. Jan Hus and Sebastian  
Altar painting from Roudnice nad Labem, c. 1485<sup>232</sup>**

<sup>231</sup> It is generally conceded by historians of the Bohemian reformation that many works of art and manuscripts containing distinctively Utraquist themes were destroyed during the re-Catholicization of Bohemia following the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. Some liturgical manuscripts show signs of pages' being removed where Hus's feast day materials would have been, and we know that there was an altar to Hus in the late Gothic cathedral of St. Barbara in Kutná Hora that was destroyed in the seventeenth century. On this altar, see: B. Altová and H. Štroblová, eds., *Kutná Hora* (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové Noviny, 2000), 333.

This painting came from the church of St. Wenceslas, and comprised one side of a wooden door; on the opposite side were images of Saints James and Lawrence.<sup>233</sup> The art historian Milena Bartlová has argued that this door was part of ~~an~~ Utraquist ark, that is an altar tabernacle, which was closed by the painted panels and in the centre of which was the symbol of the eucharist, either presented in an exhibited monstrance, or represented by the traditional image of the Man of Sorrows.<sup>234</sup> The centrality of the martyrs here, and their framing of the consecrated eucharist, emphasized (like Koranda's sermons) the close connection of Christian suffering and devotion to the body and blood of Christ. The inclusion of Hus in this particular company of martyrs also carried several other significances. The visual parallel between Hus and Lawrence certainly recalled the passage from Barbatius's early *passio* of Hus: —~~Ů~~ account of this [Hus's suffering] the song of the remarkable martyr Lawrence is deservedly able to be sung: you examined me with fire, and iniquity was not found in me."<sup>235</sup> On the other hand, St. James was executed at the order of Herod Agrippa, Lawrence was executed under Valerian, and Sebastian was martyred by the Emperor Diocletian. These associations would have reminded the painting's audience of Sigismund's role in Hus's execution, and perhaps warned the viewers of the dangers of trusting

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<sup>232</sup> This image is taken from: Royt, "Ikografie Mistra Jana Husa," 434.

<sup>233</sup> On the total composition of the door, see: František Fišer, "Husovo Upálení z Roudník," *Husitský Tábor* 7 (1984), 421-422.

<sup>234</sup> Bartlová, "The Utraquist Church and the Visual Arts," 222. The depiction of Christ as the Man of Sorrows was a prominent theme in Utraquist art, particularly when images showed Christ's blood being captured in a chalice. This image emphasized the salvific results of Christ's suffering, and the sanctity of his blood. On the Man of Sorrows in Utraquist art, see: Zuzana Všečeková, "The Man of Sorrows and Christ Blessing the Chalice: the Pre-Reformation and the Utraquist Viewpoints," *BRRP* 4 (2002), 193-214; and Milena Bartlová, "Původ Husitského Kalicha z ikonografického hlediska," *Umění* 44 (1996), 167-183.

<sup>235</sup> On the passage, see above, Chapter 1, fn. 167.

kings to respect Christian truth and sanctity.<sup>236</sup> Despite this painting's near singularity as a surviving fifteenth-century monumental representation of Hus's martyrdom, then, I would argue that it was representative of Utraquist commemorative strategies in the last years of the 1400s. As the Utraquists worked out how to express their distinct confessional identity vis-à-vis the Catholic church, they turned to Jan Hus as the very embodiment of that distinction and of their continuity with the earliest Christians.

Those elements of continuity were further strengthened in another iconographic depiction of Hus, this time from a manuscript illumination. The *Smiškovský Gradual* (figure 2), a liturgical book produced c. 1490 for a wealthy Kutná Hora family, contained an illuminated initial that depicted Hus with Saints Stephen and Lawrence.<sup>237</sup> Here again, Hus was portrayed as a companion and colleague to the earliest martyrs of the Christian faith, but in this illustration the artist linked all three with another group of Bohemian martyrs. At the bottom of the folio there was a depiction of a Hussite priest being thrown into the mine shafts outside of Kutná Hora. This reminder of the pogroms of 1419-1420 provided a further pedigree for Utraquism as the heir of the apostolic church.<sup>238</sup>

Not only was the Bohemian church's founder a holy martyr, but many other

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<sup>236</sup> On the association of these martyrs with evil kings, see: Royt, "Utrákvistická ikonografie," 198.

<sup>237</sup> The composition of this image and the production of this manuscript are detailed in: Milena Bartlová, "Conflict, Tolerance, Representation, and Competition: A Confessional Profile of Bohemian Late Gothic Art," in *BRRP* 5, pt. 2 (2005), 255-265, 257.

<sup>238</sup> In 1492, these martyrs gained renewed currency among the Utraquists, as the bodily remains of many of the executed Hussites were recovered from the mine shafts outside of Kutná Hora. In particular, the body of the priest Jan Chůdek was retrieved, and the remains reportedly "gave off a beautiful and sweet scent like myrrh." Although it is tempting to equate the priest in the illumination with Chůdek, this may not be possible. Chůdek was decapitated before being thrown in the mine, and his remains were headless. On the commemoration of this story in the vernacular chronicles, see: Seltzer, "Re-envisioning the Saint's Life," 164-165; and Halama, "The Martyrs of Kutná Hora," 141.



Utraquists had also given their lives for God's truth. The pictorial synthesis of Jan Hus, Sts. Lawrence and Stephen, and the murdered "faithful Czechs" of Kutná Hora visually depicted the Bohemians' understanding of their own past as inextricably linked to the suffering and martyrdom that had characterized the true, apostolic church.



Figure 2: The initial "S" with Sts. Hus, Stephen, and Lawrence  
Smíškovský Gradual (MS ONB cod. s.n. 2657), f. 285r.<sup>239</sup>

<sup>239</sup> This image is taken from: Royt, "Konografie Mistra Jana Husa," 443.

This theme of the collective martyrdom and the consequent collective blessedness of the Bohemians was taken up in other media as well. In particular, liturgical texts provided a means for the Utraquists' collective affirmation of their status as true Christians. One antiphon for the celebration of July 6 in particular, "Christ, King of Martyrs" (*Christum regem martyrum*), articulated the message of the above images in considerable detail.<sup>240</sup> As such, it deserves to be quoted in full:

Christ, king of martyrs  
 Reigning in the glory of the kingdom of God  
 Whom we praise today, and all those of Bohemia  
 Martyrs in the hope of Christ, in the memory  
 Of those who for the love of his law  
 And the consumption of his holy blood and body  
 Were injured with fire, smitten with iron  
 Thrown into mines, drowned in the waves  
 Living, they were extraordinarily oppressed  
 Even innocent children.  
 O author of faith make us strong  
 From the merit of those  
 Acknowledged in your law  
 Give your chalice worthily to drink  
 That we might also be able to pour out  
 Our blood for you  
 Fearing no one.  
 O teacher of truth, be now the protector  
 Of the Bohemian flock  
 From those jealous of your law  
 That they might know  
 That your truth conquers and holds forever.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> "Christum regem matyrum" is preserved in several manuscripts, notably the Ezstergom manuscript from c. 1500 and the contemporaneous manuscript MS NKP VI C 20a, f.96v-97r. The former manuscript contained a full set of liturgical propers for the celebration of July 6, while the latter contained a text of "Rex regum," the Latin version of "Svolanie Konstanské" and "Naději boží Mistra Jan Hus." On these manuscripts, see: František Fišer, "Hodinkové Oficium Svátku Mistra Jana Husa," *Časopis národního muzea* 135 (1966), 81-98.

<sup>241</sup> —Cristm regem martyrum| regnantem dei patris in gloria,| quem [laudamus] hodie omniumque Bohemorum,| spe Cristi martirum, in memoria,| eorum pro eius legis dilectione| sacrique corporis ac sanguinis sumptione| igne lesi, ferro cesi,| fossis iacti, undis mersi,| mire sunt oppressi viventes,| eciam pueri innocentes. | O fidei auctor,| Sis nostri roborator,| Ob eorum merita| In tua lege agnita| Da digne tuum calicem bibere,| Ut possimus eciam fundere| Nostrum pro te sanguinem,| Timentes neminem. | O

This liturgical song took up a number of common themes in Utraquist religiosity and also made a strong, comprehensive statement about what being a Utraquist meant to the author. Most obviously, the song ended with the reiteration of the Hussite slogan “*veritas vincit*.” These words both recalled Hus, who was “burned with fire,” and served as a promise of God’s abiding concern for his people. This antiphon also contained the idea that the Bohemians were willing to shed their blood for the blood of Christ, in both a sacramental sense through their consumption of the chalice and an actual sense, in which the Bohemians practiced a more literal *imitatio Christi*.<sup>242</sup> The song’s focus on the chalice was complemented by its emphasis on the Utraquists’ “love of his law,” another common theme in Hussite and Utraquist religious thought. Finally, it is worth noting the way that the Bohemian people are described in the text: as a flock whose teacher (Christ? Hus?) was also its protector, and as a nation who produced many martyrs whom that nation remembers with respect and love.

There could be concerns about the intelligibility of a text such as this. Could the people celebrating the July 6 feast day really comprehend the theological and ecclesiological statements contained in a Latin liturgical song? In the case of “*Christum regem martyrum*,” it appeared that at least one Utraquist preacher included comments on this antiphon in his sermon for July 6, seemingly

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veritatis tutor,| Esto nunc protector| Bohemice gregis| Ab emulis tue legis,| Ut cognoscant,| quia veritas tua vincit et manit in eternum. —MS NKP VI C 20a, f. 96v-97r.

<sup>242</sup> The notion of Christ’s blood strengthening the believer to shed their own blood for Christ was evident in the prose “*Rex Regum*” and its description of Hus: “*sanguine pro sanguine tuo suo fuso,| optimo sancto fine taliter concluso,| cum sanctis martiribus tenet aureolam*.” See above, this chapter, fn. 132.

in order to amplify its message and themes. Thus, it becomes clear that the Latin liturgical texts did not exist in a vacuum, but were included among, and interpreted by, vernacular elements of the celebration of the saint's *memoria*. In 1478, the priest Václav of the St. Gallus parish in Prague preached a sermon for July 6.<sup>243</sup> The recorded version was macaronic, and it included many Czech vernacular phrases within its predominantly Latin text. The sermon took Matthew 5:11 for its pericope, and emphasized that suffering in this world was a mark of sanctity and election.<sup>244</sup> Indeed, Václav began his sermon with the observation that ~~t~~oday we have the *memoria* of the martyrs of Christ, who did not begrudge (~~n~~*elitobali jsu*) him their souls up to their death on account of the name of Christ and his truth. For no persecution, no suffering...[and] not even death could separate them from Christ."<sup>245</sup> In this sermon, the willingness to suffer was the mark of faith *par excellence*. Indeed, Václav asserted that ~~O~~r savior praises his soldiers (~~m~~*ilites*), and on account of their great suffering calls them blessed," and he further noted that ~~b~~ecause few are found who suffer persecution, therefore few reach the kingdom of heaven."<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> This sermon, entitled ~~S~~ancti Johannes Hus," is preserved in MS NKP XXIII F 113, f. 50v-52v. I am grateful to Dr. Ota Halama of the Evangelical Theological Faculty at Charles University for bringing the existence of this sermon to my attention. Dr. Halama is currently preparing an article on all of the manuscript sermons for July 6 that exist for the period 1415-1620, and he was kind enough to share his initial research with me.

<sup>244</sup> "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."

<sup>245</sup> ~~H~~odie habemus memoriam martyrum Christi qui nelitobali jsu animas suas usque ad mortem propter nomen Christi et veritatem eius. Nam nulla persecuas, nulla angustia...neque mors...potuit eos separe a Christi." Priest Václav, ~~S~~ancti Johannes Hus," 50v.

<sup>246</sup> ~~I~~stus salvator noster laudat suos milites, et propter magnam pacienciam propter quam vocat eos beatos;" and ~~q~~uia pauci inveniuntur qui persecucionem paciuntur ita pauci tangent [touch/come upon] ad regnum caelorum." Priest Václav, ~~S~~ancti Johannes Hus," 51r and 52r.

This description of the saint as a soldier was often applied to Jan Hus in the late fifteenth century.<sup>247</sup> His death in spiritual combat with the insitutional church marked him as a warrior of God, much as *Ťiṭka* and his soldiers had been, and allowed him to embody Václav's assertion that —~~who~~ whoever wants to be saved, he will have to suffer."<sup>248</sup> At the end of this sermon, Václav referred to some of the great martyrs of the Christian tradition and gave solace to those who feared that they would not be able to emulate them. In describing these saints, Václav stated that they had been:

Burned with fire, and smitten with iron: St. Paul by the sword, St. Peter by crucifixion, Jan Hus by fire. But we, if we are not able to tolerate such torment, at least...we should endure being cursed on account of God...[and] those calling us heretics on account of the truth and law of God.<sup>249</sup>

*—Igne lesi, ferro cesi:*" the inclusion of this rhymed commemoration of the martyrs' deaths seems to me to be more than coincidental. Rather, I would view the repetition of this couplet as an example of a preacher using the various elements in the celebration of Jan Hus's feast day to reinforce the messages contained in other parts. Indeed, by combining homiletic, liturgical, and visual elements, Utraquist priests could harness the full potential of worship as a multi-media experience in order to impart distinctive and persuasive messages about the essential elements of Utraquist religious identity.

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<sup>247</sup> On the image of Hus as a *—Kristovým rytířem,*" see: Royt, *—Monografie Mistra Jana Husa,*" 406. See also: Bartlová, *—Původ Husitského Kalicha,*" 179.

<sup>248</sup> *—Quisque voluit salvus esse, oportebit pati.*" Priest Václav, *—Sancti Johannes Hus,*" 51r.

<sup>249</sup> *—Igne lesi, f'ro cesi, S. Paulus gladio, S. Petrus cicute [cruciate?], Johannes Hus igne, sed nos si talia tormenta tolerare non possimus sed hoc saltem...tolle'mus propter deum cum maledicimur...vocantes nos hereticos propter veritatem et legem domini.*" Priest Václav, *—Sancti Johannes Hus,*" 52r.

A final key medium in the crafting of religious messages for July 6 was vernacular song. The popes and their representatives had decried and forbidden the singing of Czech songs throughout the fifteenth century, but their prohibitions had little effect. The trial of Michael Polák had its roots in a controversy over popular song, and the last decades of the fifteenth century witnessed a marked proliferation of songs commemorating Jan Hus and other Bohemian martyrs. One song, “We Commemorate the Czech Martyrs” (*–Mučedlníkův českých připomínáme*”), recalled the victims of the Kutná Hora pogroms in familiar language.<sup>250</sup> After rehearsing the deaths of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague, the song recalled “all other Czechs, who suffered for Christ:”

There were many in the mountains, thrown in the mines  
And others cruelly beheaded with the sword  
And some thrown in the rivers‘ waters  
Or suffering with various afflictions.<sup>251</sup>

Despite this familiar catalogue of horrors, though, the song ended on a hopeful note. Because of the faithful sacrifice of these Bohemians, “The Czech lands can repose with joy, [and] delight in their quantity of martyrs.”<sup>252</sup> Here, the end result of religious persecution was the creation of many intercessors who could work on behalf of their nation, but it was the people’s responsibility to venerate them.

Thus, the first verse of the song proclaimed:

We commemorate the Czech martyrs  
With worshipful hearts we remember them  
Having great joy because of this,

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<sup>250</sup> For the full text of this song, see: Václav Novotný, *Husitský zpěvník : nábožné písně o Mistru Janovi Husovi a Mistru Jeronymovi* (Prague: K. Reichel, 1930), 45-47.

<sup>251</sup> “Množit’ jsou u Hory v šachty vmetání | A jiní ukrutně mečem stínání | A někteří v říčních vodách stopeni, | Mrskáním jináč rozličně trápeni.” Novotný, *Husitský zpěvník*, 47.

<sup>252</sup> “Česká země můž se šťastnou položití, | Z počtův mučedlníkův se potěšiti.” *Ibid.*

Praising the Lord God because of their victory.<sup>253</sup>

A final song text further linked the act of worship and veneration with the salvation of the Utraquist people. Included just after the text of “Christ, King of Martyrs” in MS NKP VI C 20a, the song “Eternal Lord” directly requested a divine reward as a result of the Czechs’ elect status:

Eternal lord, pious Jesus Christ  
 Forgive our sins, give us gifts of glory  
 Uniting us in the homeland with the glorious  
 Preacher Jan, the blessed martyr.  
 Where there are no mournful battle cries  
 No lamenting and no envious people  
 Who are able to kill your saints  
 Rejoicing for eternity. Amen.<sup>254</sup>

This song contained a remarkably clear expression of the Utraquists’ hope that they would join their patron in heaven. Even more remarkably, the manuscript preserved this text with an interlinear Czech and Latin translation (see figure 3). The coexistence of the two versions of the song suggested that it could be sung by the entire congregation, or perhaps incorporated as a liturgical prayer sung by a choir or the officiating priest. There were some variations in the two versions. The Czech text referred to Hus as a preacher (“kazatelem”), rather than a martyr, but also noted that in “the homeland” there would be no reason to fear “Constance’s burning, or any other condemnation.”<sup>255</sup>

<sup>253</sup> “Mučedlníkův českých připomínáme| Srdcem nábožným sobě rozjímáme,| Potěšení velké z toho majice,| Z vítězství jich Pána Boha chválíce.” Novotný, *Husitský Zpěvník*, 45.

<sup>254</sup> “Sempiternae domine, ihesu christe pie,| dimitte peccamina, da dona glorie,| socians in patria nos predicatori| glorioso iohanni, beato martiri,| Ubi nulli amplius clamores queruli,| Nullus luctus, nullique emuli| Tuis sanctis nocere queant,| Gaudentibus in eternum. Amen.” This text is preserved in MS NKP VI C 20a, f. 98v. See also the contemporaneous MS NKP VI B 24, f. 300r-302r., for a second copy.

<sup>255</sup> The song asked that the Czechs be allowed to join Hus: “Kdeť to již se nebojí| Constanského upálenie,| Ani kterého kaceřovanie.” *Ibid.*





**Figure 3: First two lines of song “Sempiterna Domine,”  
MS NKP VI C 20a, f. 98v.**

The totality of these texts - the sermon, liturgical and popular song, and art – suggests that Utraquist leaders in the 1480s were engaged in a process of –liturgical inculturation.”<sup>256</sup> They were taking advantage of church rituals to promote a specific form of cultural memory that identified a specific object of commemoration and created a narrative in which that object represented the identity of the larger cultural group.<sup>257</sup> In the case of Utraquist worship, the elements of ritual worked together to allow for the group’s establishment of Hus’s

<sup>256</sup> The scholar Paul Post has used to this term to describe the ways in which collective rituals promote the celebration and preservation of specific events and people as emblematic of group identity. Post argues that the reification of these elements provokes cultural anamnesis and instills normative moral and religious values in the ritual’s participants. See: Paul Post, –Introduction and Application: Feast as a Key Concept in a Liturgical Studies Research Design,” in P. Post et al., eds., *Christian Feast and Festival: The Dynamics of Western Liturgy and Culture* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 47-77, 61.

<sup>257</sup> Assmann, –Der zweidimensionale Mensch,” 21.



formal sanctity through monumental art and the liturgy, the explicit articulation of the link between Hus and the later Utraquists in the sermon, and the collective affirmation of Hus's status as patron in the congregation's singing. The celebration of July 6 as a Utraquist holy day served as an ideal moment for the collective expression of Utraquist identity, even as participation in the *memoria* constituted the Utraquist church. By reconstructing the overall dynamics of the observance of this holiday, then, we can begin to understand how Utraquist preachers and leaders brought their congregants into the church and what their understanding of that church was.

#### The Experience of Utraquist Identity

Jan Assmann takes a very high view of what ritual can accomplish within a cultural group. He has argued that feasts and festivals function in societies as a time out of time, when a group reconnects to its history as the past and present are united in a ritualistic simultaneity (*-Gleichzeitigkeit*). For Assmann, feasts and religious festivals are ideal moments for the establishment of a culture's connection to its most primal constituent figures and myths. After all, ritual allows for the embodiment (*-Verkörperung*) and the enactment (*-Inszenierung*) of a group's identity by choosing and reifying an object of devotion that becomes a stand-in and intercessor for the group at large.<sup>258</sup> In the process of ritualization and formalization, the group completes its invention of a new tradition and masks

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<sup>258</sup> On Assmann's very high view of rituals and festivals' ability to function as a site for the expression of group values, see his: "Der zweidimensionale Mensch," especially 18-25; and idem., *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, 143.

any novelty with the trappings of the sacred.<sup>259</sup> To conclude this chapter, then, let us to examine the staging and performance of the feast of July 6 in order to analyze how civic and religious ritual, popular participation and religious instruction interacted on this day to create a comprehensive statement of Utraquist identity. I would argue that by doing so we can gain a more clear vision of what it meant to be Utraquist, and how the *memoria* of Jan Hus served as a lens through which the current world and the recent history of Bohemia were refracted in order to reveal the outlines and contours of God's plan for his people.

With some imagination, it is possible to reconstruct what the observance of Hus's feast day in Prague would have been like in the last decade of the fifteenth century. On the broadest scale, the entire city could serve as a stage for the articulation of Utraquist identity. It had done so in 1461, when King George declared his allegiance to the Utraquists by marching beside Rokycana on Corpus Christi day, and had done the same even in 1412, when students and townspeople processed through the Old Town to enshrine the first martyrs of the "Hussite" movement in Bethlehem Chapel. For the celebration of July 6, we have the following account:

On Sunday for the vigil of Master Jan Hus and Master Jerome of Prague, God's martyrs, after morning mass, as well as on the Monday of this holiday, the Prague City Council had a bonfire lit on the small island under the bridge near the cross; on the bridge tower the trumpeters trumpeted and the drummers drummed in celebration; on the bridge they

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<sup>259</sup> On the need for formalization and ritualization in the creation of new traditions, see: Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, ed. (New York: Cambridge UP, 1983), 1-14, 4-6; and the comments in: Paul Post, "Rituals and the Function of the Past: Rereading Eric Hobsbawm," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 10 (1996), 85-107, especially 91-92.

shot from arquebuses, and from the mills they shot from the ramparts towards Petřín Hall.<sup>260</sup>

Such actions declared July 6 a holiday and also showed the civic government's support for this celebration. This official approbation was complemented by popular participation and public displays of Utraquist faith. In 1521, July 6 witnessed a Utraquist procession through the streets from the former Franciscan monastery of St. James (destroyed in the 1483 Prague insurrection) to Tělovský's former church of Our Lady of Snows (the originating site of the 1419 defenestration). During this march the people sang songs in honor of Jan Hus and also —Fithful Christians, have great faith."<sup>261</sup> This song had sparked the controversy that led to the martyrdom of Michael Polák and the Prague insurrection of 1483, and the public singing of Czech songs had aroused the anger of the Bohemians' opponents as early as 1416. The crowd could have sung songs such as —Wh Divine Hope, Master Jan Hus," or —Θ, You Council of Constance." These songs had existed for more than a century by 1521, and the latter's tune had been adapted to other lyrics. One musical homologue which dated from the end of the fifteenth century, —Θ Christ, Judge of Every Age" (*—Kriste, soudce všech věcí*"), maintained a vitriolic tone against the Roman church.<sup>262</sup> The song opened with a plea to God that he would —release us from the fury of Antichrist's cunning, who sat down like God in the temple of the holy church, glorifying his

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<sup>260</sup> This description came from 1517. The celebration of July 6 was mentioned as early as 1503, but at time the day was observed as a fast of supplication for rain. At that time, the vernacular chronicler noted that the fast failed because Prague Catholics would not observe the fast. In 1517, the fast had obviously turned into a feast. This passage from the chronicles is translated and cited in: Seltzer, —Re-envisioning the Saint's Life," 147.

<sup>261</sup> Seltzer, —Re-envisioning the Saint's Life," 165-166.

<sup>262</sup> On the composition of this song and its relation to —Θ svolanie Konstanské," see: Fojtiková, —Hudební Doklady," 83. The full text of —Θ Christ, Judge of Every Ages" has been edited in: Novotný, *Husitský zpěvník*, 124-127.

sin, disgracing your truth, [and] truly tormenting us.”<sup>263</sup> This song also attacked the Roman church and its —monkish brigade, you who glorify yourself, boast of your purity, and vilify all others.”<sup>264</sup> A song such as this, especially when sung during a procession between two historically loaded religious buildings, suggested that the memory of past conflicts between the Utraquists and the Catholic church had not faded, but rather animated popular action and made use of the sacred geography of Prague to instill meaning in collective demonstrations of piety and affiliation.

A second, contemporary song offered a clearer focus on Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague as true martyrs of the church. Entitled —Beloved Hus, Condemned in Constance” (*—Husi milá, v Konstanzi odsouzená*”), this composition commemorated Hus as one who —professed the law of God” and —died for the truth of the holy church.”<sup>265</sup> This song articulated a highly developed theology of martyrdom. It noted that Hus died for his profession of faith, and that —his soul was set free in the flames:”

And yet you rejoice, and dwell with God  
 You worked faithfully, and declared  
 The law of God to the people, and therefore  
 You received the martyr’s crown.  
 Jerome, you went after him  
 Like Peter after the Lord,  
 So the law of God was also proclaimed by you.  
 And you did this, so you could confirm  
 Master Jan Hus with your words, and also

<sup>263</sup> —Zaviť nás ukrutnosti,| Antykrysta chytrosti,| Jenť v chrámě církve svaté| Jako Bůh posadil se,| Bludy své zvelebujíc,| Tvou pravdu potupujíc,| Věrné pro ni suť ujíc.” Novotný, *Husitský zpěvník*, 124.

<sup>264</sup> —Nuťe ty, církvi Římská| I všecka zběři mnišská,| Jenť se samou velebiš| A nevinností chlubiš,| Jiné všecky tupiš.” Novotný, *Husitský zpěvník*, 125.

<sup>265</sup> On the composition and manuscript history of this song, see: Fojtiková, —Hudební Doklady,” 82; and Novotný’s introductory notes in: *FRB* 8, CXXXVI. The full text of the song has been edited in: *FRB* 8, 445 and Fojtiková, —Hudební Doklady,” 120-121.

There accept the martyr's crown.<sup>266</sup>

In this passage, “Beloved Hus” both laid out the reward of self-sacrifice for Christ and established the priority of Hus as the patron of the Utraquist church and the object of popular devotion. David Holeton has noted that Hus was commemorated for his continuing love and pastoral care for his national church. Jerome, though venerated for his martyrdom and honored for his learning (‘... *arcium magister doctissimus*...’) is much more of a one-dimensional figure, having never caught the popular imagination as did Hus.<sup>267</sup> This song certainly bore out Holeton’s observation, as did the liturgy that formed the core of communal worship on July 5 and 6.

By the turn of the sixteenth century, there were multiple manuscript witnesses to specific liturgical prayers and songs written for the observance of Hus’s *memoria*. Two liturgical song books from Kutná Hora contained a *prosa* honoring Hus and placing him in the lineage of Christian martyrs.<sup>268</sup> A breviary printed in Nurember in 1492 also contained three Latin prayers for Hus, and two additional manuscripts contained nearly complete texts for the liturgical prayers to be said during Matins and First and Second Vespers on the feast day of July 6.<sup>269</sup>

The first of these manuscripts is held currently in Esztergom, in Hungary; the

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<sup>266</sup> —*Āiř se radujeř, neb s bohem přebývář, | Jeřtoř vĕrnĕ pracoval, zakon boři lidu | Se oznamoval, a protoř jsi mučedlnicku korunu přijal. | Jeronyme, tys za nim řel jako Petr za Panem aby tam tebu take byl | zakon boři oznamen. | O toř pracoval, aby mistra Jana Husa | Řeči potvrzoval, a teř si tam take | Mučedlnicku korunu přijal.*” Fojtikova, “Hudebni Doklady,” 120-121.

<sup>267</sup> Holeton, “The Office of Jan Hus,” 142.

<sup>268</sup> Both the Smiřkovsky gradual mentioned above (c. 1495) and the so-called Kuttenberg Kancional (MS ONB Mus. 15.501) from c.1491 contained materials for the observance of Hus’s *memoria*, including the prose —*ricalis turma, gaude.*” On the prose, see below. For information of these manuscripts, see: Holeton, “ Felix Bohemia,” 398.

<sup>269</sup> A copy of this breviary, the *Breviarus Horarum Canoniarum secundum Rubricam Archiepiscopatus Ecclesie Pragensis* is held as MS NKP 42 G 28 in Prague. The prayers for Hus are on folios 2av-2bv.

second manuscript, which was photographically reproduced in the early twentieth century in Leipzig by František Bartoš, has since been lost.<sup>270</sup> These liturgical texts would have formed the backbone of the worship services held on the evening of July 5 and in the morning and evening of July 6. These services provided the frame for the popular singing, processions, and festivities detailed by the chronicles. Here, the liturgy was the “work of the people:” the prayers, songs and supplications they offered in exchange for Hus’s intercession with God and the consequent blessings that the Utraquists could expect. In the reciprocal economy of salvation, the liturgical veneration of the saint constituted the church’s offering to their patrons and main means of evoking divine favor.<sup>271</sup>

Despite the deviant object of July 6’s commemoration, the shape of the day’s liturgy would have been familiar to medieval Catholics. The round of services would have contained many familiar Psalms and prayers, and the celebration of a Mass during the morning service would have been typical of the celebration of saints’ days.<sup>272</sup> This familiarity, though, would have faded with the first antiphon of the liturgy, which praised Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague:

Two lamps arose from among you [Prague]  
 And through bitter martyrdom crossed over to heaven.  
 Dreadful Constance crowned them with fiery flames,  
 The army of heaven unites with them in the heavenly firmament!  
 With firm faith and bountiful hope, Jan Hus  
 The servant of God, together with Jerome, clung to the Lord.

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<sup>270</sup> On these two manuscripts, and for a detailed comparison of their contents, see: Holeton, —“A Libellus,” 466ff. The full text of the Esztergom manuscript’s liturgy for Jan Hus has also been edited and printed in: Fišer, —“Hdinkové Oficium,” 83ff.

<sup>271</sup> On the idea of veneration and memorialization as the church’s responsibility in its interactions with the saints, see: Geary, *Living with the Dead*, 79.

<sup>272</sup> It should be noted that some of the prayers for July 6 were drawn from the common liturgy for martyrs of the church, particularly at the end of the Matins service. For an overview of the observance of saints’ days in the medieval church, see: Heffernan, —“Liturgy and Literature,” especially 71ff.

Praise for the one God, who places the martyrs in divine heaven!  
Grant that their merits may benefit us through our heavenly songs.<sup>273</sup>

This text established the sanctity of both Hus and Jerome, and also explicitly linked the celebration of their memory with their merits, which would benefit the Czech people as a whole. The intercessory link between Hus and the Czech people became more clear in the other prayers for this vigil. One responsory song asserted that Hus's example and intercession was meant to grant comfort and confidence to the Czech people; this prayer began by commanding, "Rejoice, happy Bohemia, in this last hour. The Lord is inclined to look upon you most mercifully;" this gladness resulted from the fact that Hus had shown the Czech people "the royal way."<sup>274</sup> Hus was further called "this excellent doctor of truth, the light of honesty" and the "pious and kindly pastor, light of the Bohemian people" who, through his criticism of sin, pastoral kindness, and spectacular martyrdom had embodied the sure path to heaven.<sup>275</sup>

The liturgical commemoration of Hus as recorded in these manuscripts also made use of extant Utraquist texts. Both the Leipzig and Esztergom orders of service included "Christ, King of Martyrs" and the Utraquist version of "Sing, Tongue, of the Glorious Battle" as hymns during their services, and the Leipzig

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<sup>273</sup> "Nam duo luminaria ex te emererunt,| Ac per acra martiria ad celum migrarunt| Quos dira Constancia flamma incedii coronavit| Hos celi milicia empireo polo sociavit| Fide firma, spe benigna Iohannes Huss| Cristi verna, una cum Ieronimo| adhererunt Domino| Laus uni Deo, qui ethereo hos martires locans celo| Nobis eorum meritis dat uti ymnis celicis." Fišer, "Hodinkové Oficium," 83.

<sup>274</sup> The responsorium to the previous prayers read: "Gaude, felix Bohemia, hora nempe novissima| Te respexit Dominus solito clemencius| Dum doctorem veritatis, coruscantem honestatis| Verbis et operibus, tibi dedit eximium| Ioannem presbiterum, predicatorem egregium,| Prebentem iter regium." *Ibid.*

<sup>275</sup> "Pastor pie [alt. "bone"] ac benigne, lux Boemice gentis,| Consolator desperatorum et reprehensor viciorum| Duc nos ad regnum celorum. Alleluia| Qui propter testimonium veri tulit martirium| Et per incendium migravit ad refrigerium civium celestium." This prayer was also included in the Leipzig manuscript, with the substitution of one word ("bone" for "pie"). See: Holeton, "A Libellus," 471-472.

office included the *prosa* ~~R~~*ex Regum*,” which had been used in the commemoration of Hus in the early 1460s. This last text in particular had created the image of a kingdom united in its veneration of Jan Hus, while the two hymns contained promises of the ultimate victory that resulted from the Czech martyrs’ deaths. The veneration of this victory, and the understanding of the Bohemians’ collective suffering as a mark of their sanctity, both established the Utraquist saints’ equality to earlier saints and identified the Utraquists as the descendants and heirs of the apostolic church. Thus, the Czech martyrs and their coequal status with earlier saints guaranteed the Utraquists’ status as the true church.

There were many signs of the Utraquists’ election, most notably the ~~in~~numerable patrons” who had come from Prague and all Bohemia. One prayer for July 6 proclaimed that this ~~leg~~ion of saints shines with a variegated light in heaven with the Son of God.”<sup>276</sup> The following prayer begged for these patrons’ aid: ~~A~~All you soldiers (~~m~~*ilites*) of Christ, we are crying in the valley, we sad people implore you. Come before the king of glory with prayer, that he might absolve us of sin!”<sup>277</sup> The comparison of the saints to soldiers was taken up in the responsorium, ~~R~~ejoice, People of Bohemia,” which described Hus and Jerome as ~~e~~quals of the citizens of heaven” and celebrated the fact that ~~the~~ warrior (~~a~~*thleta*) of Christ ascends to the sure height of heaven” to receive ~~his~~

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<sup>276</sup> This antiphon from the second vespers ceremony (held on the evening of July 6) began: ~~In~~numeris gaudeat Praga patronis,| Quos misit Deo in ore mucronis,| Quorum reliquie celicis sunt recondite donis.| O felix Boemorum regio,| De qua sanctorum legio| Lumine claret vario celo cum Dei Filio.” Fišer, ~~H~~odinkové Ofícium,” 86.

<sup>277</sup> ~~V~~os, milites omnes Cristi, nos valle clamantes| Tristi precamur,| Regem glorie prevenite oramine| ut nos absolvat crimine.” *Ibid.*



inheritance as a martyr by divine grace.”<sup>278</sup> This martial and agonistic imagery linked Hus and Jerome to earlier martyrs as well; one of the best known narrative prosae concerning Hus, “Rejoice, Priestly Troop,” placed Hus within the more fantastic and legendary chain of Christian martyrs.<sup>279</sup> Here, the Bohemian saints were compared to the Theban legion, those “pure boys, the warriors (*—athlete*”) of Thebes, who are also rosy martyrs.” After this comparison, the song recalled the legendary 11,000 virgins murdered along with St. Ursula by the Huns.<sup>280</sup> Hus and Jerome stood at the head of this chain of suffering witnesses, and proved that they were “constant warriors, lovers of the law of Christ which they followed up until death, condemned by the court of the reprobate in Constance... who in the name of the suffering Christ wash their robes in blood and have the joys of eternal life in the heavenly court.”<sup>281</sup>

These liturgical texts also contributed to the biographical commemoration of Hus. They included details about his trial and execution, and about his ministry in Prague. “*Rex Regum*” was the richest in biographical details regarding Hus’s trial; it recalled Hus’s degradation from priestly rank and the heretic’s hat that was placed on his head, and interpreted this trial as the sacrifice of the “Lord’s

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<sup>278</sup> —*Etare, gens Boemie, quod rex celestis| curie sanctos recepit hodie| Ioannem Huss ac Ieronimum,| Sodales sanctorum civium... Nam athleta Cristi certa celi conscendit culmina. | Alleluia!* Preces, Criste, auscultare, iuvans eadem intrare| martirum consorcia sua divina gracia.” Fišer, —*Hóinkové Oficium*,” 85.

<sup>279</sup> This prose was included in the Leipzig office of July 6, and could also be found in the Smiškovský and Kutteneberg Kancionals from the 1490s. Holeton also documents this song’s inclusion in five early sixteenth-century liturgical books. See: Holeton, “*Θ Felix Bohemia*,” 400.

<sup>280</sup> —*Et pueri nivei| et athlete Thebei| martiresque rosei| Post hos fallax tenellarum| triumpharat autem puellarum| undenis in millibus.*” Regarding the Thebans, the color imagery here suggests that the red of the martyr’s blood is, in reality, the snowy whiteness of purity. As for the 11,000 girls, they are likely the attendants sent to accompany St. Ursula on her marital journey to pagan Germany. See: Holeton, “*Θ Felix Bohemia*,” 400.

<sup>281</sup> —*Qui constantes bellatores| legis Christi zelatores| Sunt secuti usque mortem| reproborum per cohortem| dampnatos in Constancia... Christi passi pro nomine| stolas laverunt sangwine| eterne vite gaudia| habent in celi curia.*” *Ibid.*

little lamb” by the “satanic cohort” gathered at Constance.<sup>282</sup> Another hymn, “Let the Chorus of the Faithful Applaud,” recalled Hus’s conflict with Sigismund at his trial. This song characterized the king as “the cruel Ahab and bitter Herod, who like the deaf serpent ignored the salutary teaching” of Hus.<sup>283</sup> The author of this hymn built up this parallel by comparing Hus to Elijah and John the Baptist, the two prophets who had contended with Ahab and Herod in I Kings 16-19 and Matthew 14, respectively. The song called Hus a “zealot for his [God’s] law,” and stated that Hus, having been filled with God’s spirit like these two biblical prophets, was commanded to convict the clergy of their sinfulness.<sup>284</sup> The price of his attack on clerical sin was death, and a final song, “In Honor of the Priest of the Holy Law,” rehearsed the treatment of Hus’s body:

He was given while living to the flames, and his ashes were drowned.  
For the wicked expected that he would be erased from the earth  
And the pious man would be rooted out from the memory of the pious  
people.<sup>285</sup>

The veneration of Hus’s memory, especially as it was enshrined in the liturgy for July 6, ensured that this effort to “root out” Hus from the minds of his followers failed. The celebration of Hus’s *memoria*, however, did not only rely on liturgical texts to tell the story of Hus’s death. The celebration of saints’ days had included readings from the saint’s *Vita* or *passio* since the earliest centuries of the church, and we know that narrative accounts of Hus’s death circulated beginning

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<sup>282</sup> For these details concerning Hus’s trial, and the placement of “ReRegum” within the Leipzig office of July 6, see: Holeyton, “*Libellus*,” 474.

<sup>283</sup> The hymn “*Plaudat Chorus Fidelium*” followed the “*Antiphona ad Magnificat*” in the Matins service, and referred to Sigismund as: “*Aille Achab durior| et Herode austerior| ut aspis surda pertransiit| monita salutifera.*” Holeyton, “*Libellus*,” 473.

<sup>284</sup> “*Zlatorem sue legis| Johannem Hus dedit [Deus] populo| Quem replens suo spiritu| ut Heliam et Baptistam| scelestum clerum, ne periret| iussit ei arguere.*” *Ibid.*

<sup>285</sup> “*Iste flammis vivus datur| Cuius cinis ut mergatur| Precepit nequicia| Ut de terra eradatur| Et piorum evellatur| Pius a memoria.*” This text is edited in full in: *FRB* 8, 438.

in the first year after his death.<sup>286</sup> In 1495, Mladoňovice's short account of Hus's death was printed in Prague as part of a Czech translation of the Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, as was a short account of Jerome's trial and death (see figure 4).<sup>287</sup>



**Figure 4: Image of Hus burning from Czech edition of the *Golden Legend* Jena Codex (c. 1495), MS NKP IV B 24, f. 41v.**

<sup>286</sup> Readings from the *Acta Martyrum* occurred during worship services for the saints from at least the fifth century, and possibly much earlier. In the earliest witnesses to this practice, readings from the saints' *Vitae* were included in the vigil services for their feasts. See: Heffernan, "Iurgy and Literature," 72-73.

<sup>287</sup> This incunabulum was issued in a modern facsimile edition in 1926 as: Zdeněk Tobolka, ed., *Pasional: Čili, Život a Umučení všech svatých mučedníkův* (Prague: n.p., 1926). This reproduction was unavailable to me, so I have used the version of Hus's *passio* which were bound in the Jena Codex c. 1500. Although the printed text came from the Prague incunabulum, the borders of some pages were decorated with floral motifs by the Codex's scribe.

These two “unofficial” *Vitae* were appended to the end of the collection, and the narrative of Hus’s trial was preceded by four letters that he wrote to Bohemia from Constance.<sup>288</sup> This collection of texts was marked with a header that read: —“Master Jan Hus of holy memory spoke these things in his suffering in prison, and they were recorded by Master Mladoňovice of Prague.”<sup>289</sup> As discussed above in chapter one, Mladoňovice had been explicit about the memorial function of this text. He had noted, much as the liturgist in “In Honor of the Priest of the Holy Law” had, that the council fathers at Constance had tried to eradicate the physical remains of Hus, —so that his name would be utterly extinguished among the faithful.”<sup>290</sup> The proliferation of this printed text would have ensured that this eradication would not happen, especially because these texts were printed in Czech. The narrative readings on July 6 could thus augment the Latin liturgical songs and chants in order to guarantee the comprehensible perpetuation of the story of Jan Hus’s life and death. In turn, this retelling was complemented and amplified by sermons preached on July 6 that brought home the theological implications of the veneration and commemoration of Jan Hus.

Dearest! Today we celebrate the memoria of our faith faithful and holy Bohemian martyrs in the hop of God, namely Master Jan Hus, Master Jerome and all others, who in these unsafe and last days suffered diverse torments and cruel death for the name of Jesus Christ, for the evangelical law, and for his truth.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> These letters dated from June 26, 24, 10, and 27, and were later translated into Latin and German and reprinted in 1536 and 1537 by Martin Luther and Johannes Agricola. On the survival of these letters in the German reformation, see below, chapter 6, fn. 94 and following.

<sup>289</sup> —“Futo se bude prawiti Mistr Jan Hus swate pamieti kterake gest vtrpenie miel; a gest sepsanie Mistra Mladienioweze veženie Prazskeho.” *Jenský Kodex*, f. 41v.

<sup>290</sup> —“Postremo omnia igne in cinerem concremata cum pulvere ac terra alcius effossa in bigas imposuere, deinde in Renum praeterlabentem dissiecerunt, quod ipsius nomen prorsus apud fideles extinguerent.” Mladoňovice, —*Narratio Historicae*,” 147.

<sup>291</sup> —“Charissimi! Hodie memoriam agimus nostrorum fidelium Boemorum, in spe dei sanctorum martirum, scilicet Magistri Iohannis Hus, Magistri Ieronimi et aliorum omnium, qui in istis temporibus inseguris et novissimis passi sunt diversa tormenta et diram mortem pro nomine Iesu

With these words, Václav Koranda began his sermon for the celebration of July 6.<sup>292</sup> In the following lines, he named the other Bohemian martyrs whom he commemorated: five drowned in Plzen, those murdered in the mines of Kutná Hora, the “esteemed preacher of holy truth,” Michael Polák, and even “many infants and pregnant women killed by crusading Germans” during the war with Matthias Corvinus.<sup>293</sup> What united all of these martyrs, along with their identity as Bohemians, was their devotion to Christ and his law. For Koranda, this law was based on the observance of God’s commandments, especially regarding communion in both kinds: —They had a righteous cause, true faith, and the evangelical truth of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, which he left for all faithful Christians to drink from the sacred chalice.”<sup>294</sup>

Jan Hus enjoyed primacy among this company of martyrs. Much of Koranda’s sermon told the story of Hus’s martyrdom, beginning with his campaign against clerical sin in Prague and culminating in his death at the stake. Regarding Hus’s trial, Koranda recalled that Hus’s judges had condemned his soul to hell and the demons who resided there; Koranda argued, though, that this “condemnation was not in their power,” and that the Lord promised to judge those

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Cristi, pro lege ewangelici, pro veritatibus eius.” Václav Koranda, “Sermo de martyribus Bohemis,” *FRB* 8, 368-372.

<sup>292</sup> The only means of dating this sermon is its mention of Michal Polák’s death, which would place it in the 1480s or 1490s.

<sup>293</sup> “Quanti infantes et mulieres pregnantes a Theotunis cruciferis sunt occisi.” *Ibid.* This sermon, which was edited by Novotný, came from MS kapitol. F 116. On the arguments for Koranda’s authorship of this manuscript, see above, fn. 227.

<sup>294</sup> “Causam iustam habuerunt, ut fidem veram et veritatem ewangelicam et sanguinem preciosum domini Jesu, quem reliquit omnibus christianis fidelibus ad bibendum de calice sacrato, et tunc propter eum passi diversa tormenta.” Koranda, “Sermo de martyribus,” 369.

who sought to judge others.<sup>295</sup> Regarding the Bohemian martyrs more generally, Koranda asserted that “no one canonized them, neither the pope, nor the holy church.” They had been canonized, though, “by the supreme pontiff and prince of priests, the Lord Jesus...As he said, ‘you are blessed, when men curse you and reproach and condemn your name as evil on account of the son of man.’”<sup>296</sup>

The condemnation of Hus and the other martyrs resulted from their dedication to the chalice. Koranda’s demand of his congregation, then, was that they “imitate the faith, especially regarding the eucharistic sacrament in both kinds, about which there has been great dissension and difficulty. For in this we ought to imitate Master Jan Hus in the faith which he had and maintained, and for which he suffered.”<sup>297</sup> With this declaration, Koranda brought together the two most distinctive characteristics of Utraquist faith: the veneration of Saint Jan Hus and the practice of taking communion in both kinds. This synthesis pointed to one key element in the celebration of July 6. After the morning service on that day, there would have been a solemn Mass and the celebration of the eucharist. At that moment, the Utraquist community would communally affirm its identity through the consumption of the sacramental wine, and thus ritually connect itself to the

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<sup>295</sup> “Sicut dixerunt Magistro Iohanni Hus sancte memorie: ‘Animam tuam committimus demonibus ad infernum,’ tamen hoc non est in eorum iudicio et condempnatio non est in eorum potestate.” This detail of Hus’s condemnation came from Mladoňovice’s work. In the *Relatio* (FRB 8, 117), it read: “Antequam autem coronam blasphemie papiream suo imponerent capiti, inter cetera dixerunt ei: ‘Committimus animam tuam dyabolo.’” The *Narratio Historicae* (FRB 8, 139) noted: “Priusquam autem coronam, in ludibrium ipsi ex papyro factam, imposuerunt capiti eius, inter caetera convitia dixerunt: ‘Animam tuam devovemus diabolis inferni.’”

<sup>296</sup> “Famen eos nullus canonisavit, nec papa, nec ecclesia sancta, etc. Dicendum, quod sunt canonisati a supremoo pontifice et principe pastorum, domino Iesu...Unde dicit: ‘Beati eritis, cum maledixerint vobis homines et exprobaverint et eiecerint nomen vestrum tamquam malum propter filium hominis.’” *Ibid.* The scriptural reference here was to Matthew 5: 11-12, which had served as the pericope for the priest Václav’s sermon on July 6 in 1478.

<sup>297</sup> “Imitamini fidem, specialiter circa sacramentum altaris eukaristie sub duplici specie, circa quam est magna difficultas et dissensio. Sed nos imitemur hunc Magistrum Iohannem Hus in fide, quam habuit, tenuit et pro illa est passus.” Koranda, “Sermo de martyribus,” 371-372.

earliest Hussite congregations of the 1410s. This collective action, along with the prayers, processions, and songs in honor of Hus allowed the Utraquists of Prague to give visible form to the true church that had been established in Bohemia. And July 6 provided a unique temporal moment when the reemergence of God's law, the restoration of the true sacraments, and the prophetic sanction for both of these crystallized in the *memoria* of Saint Jan Hus.

### Conclusion

After reviewing and analyzing these sources for the commemoration of Jan Hus on July 6, I am struck by the many different levels on which they could communicate to their participants and audience. On the national level, July 6 reaffirmed the Czechs' chosen status and highlighted the divine aid that they had received throughout their history. Not only had God sent them —innumerable patrons” and holy men, but he had protected the Bohemians from —Ahab and bitter Herod,” kings such as Sigismund and Matthias Corvinus, and the Antichrist who had tried to suppress God's truth and had killed his saints. On a civic level, the celebration of July 6 allowed the Utraquists to revisit the newly sacred sites of their city and recall its survival and the conflict that had marked its history in the 1480s. Particularly in singing songs like —Faithful Christians,” the Utraquist populace of Prague gave voice to the continuity that existed between them and their forebearers. On a religious level, the performance of the liturgy on July 6 allowed Utraquist congregations to collectively assert their faith in God and give thanks for his preservation of his chosen people. Within this affirmation of God's

sovereignty, Jan Hus, “the excellent doctor of truth,” played a vital role as the Bohemians’ special intercessor. He had shown the Czechs the “royal way,” and as a people they had chosen to take this difficult path.

Of course, the claims to the Utraquists’ special status and true faith contained in these rituals and texts concealed or ignored the many fractures and divisions that had marked Bohemian history in the fifteenth century. The celebration of Hus’s *memoria* did not provide an outlet for the commemoration of the Taborite radicals or the recognition of the Czech lands’ substantial Catholic minority. Because of this inability to publicly admit the imperfect unity of Utraquist Bohemia, the *memoria* of Jan Hus was a blunt instrument for asserting collective identity. I would suggest, though, that the masking of difference and dissidence constituted a major component in this commemoration’s utility. Primarily, the veneration of Hus and the celebration of July 6 as a saint’s day presented a detailed narrative of Czech history in which each actor was cast in a defined role as a saint or demon, a faithful Christian or cruel oppressor. The invocation of the physically absent saint in the context of liturgy and church ritual also reintegrated Hus (and the other Bohemian martyrs) into the larger community of the faithful and reconstituted the ties of affection and obligation that bound them. This community was necessarily united in faith and observance, and the affirmation of these bonds served as a counter to political, military, and religious threats to this church. The memory of shared suffering and Hus’s martyrdom had galvanized the Hussites in the 1410s and in the years of the crusades. The commemoration of the heroic early martyrs provided inspiration in the 1450s and



during the struggle to establish a Utraquist kingdom despite the opposition of the papacy and Matthias. The model of Hus's sanctity had inspired later martyrs like Michael Polák, and the model of radicals like Želivský inspired those who led the Prague insurrection of 1483 and fought for the Peace of Kutná Hora. In short, the *memoria* celebrated on July 6 articulated a strong collective identity that had been marked by decisive social action and protest throughout its existence. The commemoration of Hus contained a reservoir of associations – with sacrifice, resistance, collective action, and perseverance – that could be activated and deployed in order to inspire and sustain the Utraquist church and the Czech nation in the face of any threat to their existence and independence as the chosen people of God.

## Chapter Five

### *“Nostrum seculo prodire, hoc est, recte canonisari:”* The Lutherans’ Discovery of Hus and the Revelation of Antichrist

#### Introduction

By 1517, the Bohemian reformation was over a century old. The Utraquist and Catholic churches in the Czech lands shared an uneasy coexistence, and the Utraquists had developed artistic, literary, liturgical, and homiletic traditions of their own that provided them with a substantial basis for their independent ecclesial existence. Even as the Utraquist church matured and staked a lasting claim to its status as the national church of the Czech people, a new dissident movement was emerging in Germany. At the Saxon university of Wittenberg, Martin Luther had begun his own reform. In July of 1519, during an academic disputation with Johannes Eck in Leipzig, Luther was brought face to face with Hus. As Luther and Eck debated the issue of papal supremacy in the church, Eck, who was considered a master disputant, pursued an ingenious strategy. He attacked Luther’s contention that the pope, and even a general council of the church, could err in specific questions of faith by equating Luther’s position to that defended by Hus more than a century earlier at Constance. Over two days of debates, Eck painted Luther further into this Hussite corner. Eventually, he wrung a devastating concession from Luther, who acknowledged that some of Hus’s articles condemned at Constance were indeed ~~most~~ Christian and evangelical.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Luther asserted at Leipzig that: *“Hoc certum est, inter articulos Iohannis Huss vel Bohemorum multos esse plane Christianissimos et Evangelicos, quos non possit universalis ecclesia damnare.”*

Eck's rhetorical strategy was brilliant on a number of levels. On one level, he parlayed Luther's agreement with Hus on one specific point into a general conflation of the Wittenberg Augustinian and one of the most hated and feared heresiarchs of the medieval church. On a second level, Eck also forced Luther, who was attempting to tap into German nationalist feelings against the foreign pope, to defend the Bohemian Hus, whose followers had devastated German lands and armies throughout the 1420s. Luther's defense of the hated heretic had immediate political repercussions, and it also provided his opponents with ample opportunities to expose the hypocrisy in his Germanophilia.<sup>2</sup> On a third, intellectual level, Eck had also managed to force Luther into defending an author whose works he was not entirely familiar with. Luther had to play catch up in order to flesh out his defense of Hus in the wake of Eck's accusations, and as he scrambled to determine the extent of his agreement with Hus, Catholic authors could continue to tar Luther with the brush of the Hussite heresy. In both the immediate context of Eck's disputation with Luther, and in the broader context of Luther's early engagement with the pope and his supporters, Eck's accusation that Luther was another Hus was potentially devastating.<sup>3</sup>

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A full account of the Leipzig debate has been edited as: *Disputatio Iohannis Eccii et Martini Lutheri Lipsiae habita* (1519), in: *WA* 2, 250-383.

<sup>2</sup> Duke George of Saxony, for instance, responded very negatively to Luther's identification with the Hussites and became Luther's main secular opponent in the German lands. His territories had been devastated by Hussite armies during the Glorious Campaign, and George himself was the grandson of the Utraquist King George of Poděbrady, which perhaps made him especially sensitive about the implications of heresy. In a 1525 letter to Luther, Duke George explained that he had fought against Luther solely because the reformer had proven himself to be "ein patron der Behemischen secten," who had revived the errors of Wyclif and Hus. On Duke George's response to Luther, see: Oberman, "Hus and Luther," 148-149. For the text of George's letter, see: *WABr* 3, 66-651, 648.

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of Luther's self-identification with Hus, with particular attention to their theological positions, see: Lohse, "Luther und Huss;" Delius, "Luther und Huss;" Hendrix, "We Are All Hussites?" and Benrath, "Disogenannten Vorreformatoren."

This accusation did, however, have unintended consequences. Indeed, as Luther and his earliest followers and supporters began to examine the history of medieval heresy in general, and Jan Hus in particular, they realized that both his writings and martyrdom provided evidence of one essential fact: that the pope was the Antichrist, and that he and his followers had acted decisively in the past to violently suppress the gospel. In the wake of Leipzig, the “discovery” and dissemination of the papacy’s true identity as the Antichrist was one of the central features of Luther’s conflict with the established church.<sup>4</sup> Within Luther’s polemical campaign against the papal Antichrist and its —“Babylonian captivity” of the church, then, Hus’s death came to represent *prima facie* evidence of the lengths to which the pope and his followers would go to limit any critical examination of their shortcomings and perversion of the church. It was incumbent upon Luther, then, to ensure that all of Germany understood the threat to Christianity that the papal Antichrist presented.

What was truly remarkable about Luther’s campaign against the papacy, though, and Hus’s role within it, was not just its content; rather, the revolutionary aspect of this confrontation was that it took place *in print*, and that Luther in particular empowered the lay public to act as a judge in determining the outcome

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<sup>4</sup> Scott Hendrix has shown that by 1521 Luther had come to definitively equate the pope with Antichrist, and that this identification had led him to accept the fact that there were two, opposing churches that had come into being, and that Luther’s “break with the Roman church was categorical.” See: Scott Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy: Stages in a Reformation Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 121ff.; and Hans Hillerbrand, “The Antichrist in the Early German Reformation: Reflections on Theology and Propaganda,” in A. Fix and S. Karant-Nunn, eds., *Germania Illustrata: Essays on Early Modern Germany Presented to Gerald Strauss* (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992), 3-18.

of the conflict.<sup>5</sup> The Leipzig debate and Luther's later self-defense before the emperor at Worms in 1521 were both major events during which the reformer confronted his accusers and opponents. These interpersonal engagements both also had incredibly important afterlives, as printed versions of the encounters flooded the German lands and broadcast the story of the Wittenberg professor's defiance of the highest secular and religious authorities in the Empire. Portable, widely accessible to readers and listeners, and persuasive as part of a broader ideological campaign, pamphlets and other forms of printed media brought Luther's debate with the Catholic church out of academic settings and into the market, tavern, and people's homes.<sup>6</sup> The ubiquity and influence of religious publications in the first years of Luther's reform turned the first half of the 1520s into what Andrew Pettegree has called a "pamphlet moment:" a period when timely, reactive, and polemical texts could galvanize public feelings, inculcate

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<sup>5</sup> Luther's willingness to bring theological arguments before the common man was a major scandal to Catholic authors, who maintained that theology was only the province of the learned. On Luther's appeal to the public, and Catholic responses to it, see: Helmar Junghans, "Der Laie als Richter im Glaubensstreit der Reformation," *Lutherjahrbuch* 39 (1972), 31-54; and David Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents: Catholic Controversialists, 1518-1525* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 212-213.

<sup>6</sup> Over the last thirty years, there has been considerable scholarly attention paid to the role of pamphlets in the dissemination of the German reformation, and to the interaction of written media with oral forms of communication in crafting a persuasive reformist message. Mark Edwards has argued that pamphlets and other written media formed the first step in a two step process of publicizing Luther's reformist ideas, as written materials could reach opinion leaders and literate members of society who could popularize what they read through oral channels. On the relationship between pamphlets and the broad dissemination of Reformation ideas, see the discussion between Bernd Moeller, Tom Brady, Steven Ozment, and Bob Scribner in: P. Alter et al., eds., *Stadtbürgertum und Adel in der Reformation: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der Reformation in England und Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979), 25-79. See also: Mark Edwards, Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1994), especially 58.

dissident religious ideas, and ensure that a local debate over the theology of indulgences could reach out and affect the entire Holy Roman Empire.<sup>7</sup>

Although Martin Luther and those who were sympathetic to him dominated the early pamphlet wars that helped disseminate the reformer's ideas, they were not unopposed. Indeed, many learned and prolific Catholic authors wrote against Luther and his new teachings, and in many of their publications they continued to assert Luther's connections to, and equivalence with, earlier heretics. In a very real sense, these authors argued that in terms of heresy there was nothing new under the sun; Luther and his followers were simply new Hussites, who had clearly revived Waldensianism and Donatism in their own right. The continuity that authors such as Eck, Hieronymus Emser, or Johannes Cochlaeus found in the heretics' doctrine provided Catholics with intellectual and rhetorical structures that helped them understand and refute Luther's arguments.<sup>8</sup> It also drew attention to the fact that Luther was not the first to write and speak out against the papacy, and that his arguments about the pope's identity as Antichrist were grounded in a historical counter-tradition that saw the highest authority in the earthly church as a mask for the greatest enemy that God's true church could face.

Over the course of the first half of the 1520s, then, there were a large number of publications that either disseminated Jan Hus's writings to the German

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<sup>7</sup> On the idea and characteristics of a "pamphlet moment," see: Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2005), 163-170.

<sup>8</sup> On these early Catholic pamphleteers and their arguments against Luther, see: Hubert Jedin, "Die geschichtliche Bedeutung der katholischen Kontroversliteratur im Zeitalter der Glaubensspaltung," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 53 (1933), 70-97; and John Flood, "The Book in Reformation Germany," in K. Maag, ed. and trans., *The Reformation and the Book* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1998), 21-103, 59ff.

public or related the details of his trial and execution. These publications constituted an effort both to rehabilitate a man known as a heretic and as an arch-enemy of the German nation, and to establish the intellectual pedigree of Luther's assertion of the pope's diabolical nature. As early as 1520, two large print runs of Hus's *De Ecclesia* were released in Germany, and by 1525 five more editions of writings attributed to Hus had been published, mostly in Strasbourg. Also in Strasbourg, Otto Brunfels, a botanist and schoolmaster, published Latin and German accounts of Hus's trial, while a host of other authors published apologies for Hus's theology and defenses of his orthodoxy and faith.<sup>9</sup> Catholic authors continued to assert Hus's heretical status, but their efforts paled in comparison to those of Luther and his supporters. It is therefore possible to say that by 1525 Jan Hus's teachings and biography were well publicized among the German reading public, and that a person's interpretation of his trial and execution – as either a righteous judicial act or a gross miscarriage of justice – revealed that person's receptivity to Martin Luther and his new movement. Catholic authors had successfully linked the two men in the public's eye, but they had failed to establish the moral and religious valence of that connection.

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<sup>9</sup> Brunfels, who was a minor figure in the reform movement of Strasbourg, has found no biographer in the modern era. Brunfels was a correspondent of Luther's, a schoolmaster, and a significant member of the scientific republic of letters that was emerging across Europe, but he is best known from Carlo Ginzburg's work on Reformation-era Nicodemism. Ginzburg saw Brunfels as the chief exponent of the permissibility of dissimulation, and thought that Brunfels's *Pandectae*, an encyclopedia of Biblical extracts, was the handbook of early modern Nicodemism. Carlos Eire has effectively refuted this assertion by determining that Ginzburg extrapolated too much from very few references to dissimulation in that work, but this work was the last major consideration of Brunfels's religious thought. For this academic debate, see: Carlo Ginzburg, *Il Nicodemismo* (Torino: G. Einaudi, 1970); and Carlos Eire, "Calvin and Nicodemism: A Reappraisal," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 10 (1979), 44-69. The best overall introduction to his life and work remains: F.W.E. Roth, "Ott Brunfels: Nach seinem Leben und literarischem Werk geschildert," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 9 (1894), 284-320.

It was the discovery, deployment, and exploitation of that connection that linked Lutheran commemorations of Jan Hus with those of the fifteenth-century Czechs. In spite of the fact that Luther's reform rendered the cultic practices of the Utraquists obsolete as a form of memorialization, the literary recognition of Hus's sanctity in the German reformation kept his memory, and the history of the Hussite movement, alive in the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Recently, scholars such as Constantine Fasolt and Craig Koslofsky have argued that during the early modern period, and especially during the German reformation, people's sense of the past changed. For Koslofsky, it was the Reformation's rejection of Purgatory and consignment of the dead to a social and physical burial space outside the community of the living that severed the present's direct relation to the past.<sup>11</sup> He sees the German reformation as rejecting *memoria* and its emphasis on the presence of the dead in living society, which therefore led to "a past that is history: profane, finite, finished, and separate."<sup>12</sup>

Fasolt also sees a decisive shift in the present's relationship to the past taking place during the early modern period, and particularly accompanying the German reformation. Fasolt is more elusive about the specifics, but he is clear that early modern Europe witnessed "history's origin in the great early modern war on

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<sup>10</sup> It is well known that Luther and his followers sought to gradually eradicate the cult of saints from Christian practice, as the veneration of saints and invocation of them as purveyors of divine aid was thought to lessen Christians' absolute devotion to, and dependence on, Jesus Christ as the sole mediator between man and God. On Luther and the cult of saints, see: Kolb, *For All the Saints*, especially chapter 1. See also: Heming, *Protestants and the Cult of Saints*.

<sup>11</sup> Koslofsky persuasively argues that extramural burial, which became common practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, along with Protestant prohibitions on masses for the dead and their rejection of Purgatory, effectively removed the dead from the community of the living and eliminated the beliefs and practices that had maintained the religious connections between the *ecclesia militans* and the *ecclesia dormiens*. On this argument, see the introduction to his: *The Reformation of the Dead*; see also: idem., "From Presence to Remembrance."

<sup>12</sup> Koslofsky, "From Presence to Remembrance," 34.



medieval forms of order” and its use ~~as~~ a weapon against a certain form of government.”<sup>13</sup> Fasolt claims that this new historical mentality depended in part on the principle that ~~the~~ past is gone forever;”<sup>14</sup> he asserts that early modern scholars had to fence off portions of the past so they could mine the sources that emerged from that specific context in order to make claims about their present. Fasolt’s larger point is that contemporary historians do exactly the same thing, but that we are less aware that we are doing it, and less honest in acknowledging that ~~the~~ history is not as innocent as it appears to be. It is not merely a form of understanding, but also a form of self-assertion.”<sup>15</sup> This observation is certainly true, and a striking demand that those of us who write history be aware of our own, often hidden, ideological commitments. Within this larger project, though, there lies a similar assumption to the one that Koslofsky makes: that the past and present were indelibly separated by the transformation of a living, organic, and present past into a distinct, separate, and distant history.

I would contend, however, that the past remained a vital, dynamic presence in the first years of the German reformation. Even as traditional forms of memorialization were challenged and discarded in some places, new, widely available literary forms arose that witnessed to the importance of commemoration

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<sup>13</sup> Fasolt’s argument is that humanist and reformist writers turned to the past in order to render imperial and papal claims to the timeless and eternal basis for their authority untenable. In his view, the return of scholars *ad fontes* was part and parcel of their campaign to undercut contemporary papal and imperial claims to divinely ordained power, as ancient historical sources contradicted essential arguments made to support the papacy’s primacy and the emperor’s claims to be the heir of Rome’s power. See: Fasolt, *“The Limits of History in Brief,”* 7-8; and *idem.*, *The Limits of History*, especially 19.

<sup>14</sup> This is one of three key principles in Fasolt’s analysis of a modern historical sensibility. The second principle is that a text derives its meaning from the temporal and spatial context in which it was composed, and the third states that ~~you~~ you cannot tell where you are going unless you know where you are coming from.” See: Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, ix.

<sup>15</sup> Fasolt, *“The Limits of History in Brief,”* 5.

in the sixteenth century. The religious struggle that had arisen from Luther's resistance to the papacy represented the continuation, and culmination, of past conflicts, and a full appreciation of contemporary events depended on a knowledge of the history of the contentious relationship between the Roman Antichrist and those who had opposed it. I would therefore argue that Luther's forced recognition of Jan Hus, and his and his followers' subsequent embrace of the Bohemian martyr as a key forerunner, provide an ideal lens through which we can view the continuities and novelties of the German reformation's sense of the past as inextricably linked to its immensely complicated present.<sup>16</sup> That Luther could rejoice over Hus's emergence in the 1520s "to be rightfully canonized" by those who opposed the papal Antichrist bore clear witness to the continued presence of the past in sixteenth-century Germany.

#### Luther, Leipzig, and the Discovery of Hus

Martin Luther, like Jan Hus, began his controversy with the pope over the issue of indulgences. Beginning with the composition and subsequent publication of his *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517, and then over the course of 1518, Luther engaged in a series of literary and interpersonal debates in order to clarify his opposition to the sale of indulgences in the German lands and his underlying concern over the theology of justification that permitted and encouraged their

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<sup>16</sup> The use of the term "forerunner" has been the subject of intense scholarly debate, largely because it implies a certain causal relationship between fifteenth-century dissidents and the German reformation. Heiko Oberman has, however, embraced the use of this term in order to argue that "Forerunners of the Reformation are therefore not primarily to be regarded as individual thinkers who express particular ideas which 'point beyond' themselves to a century to come, but participants in an ongoing dialogue – not necessarily friendly – that is continued in the sixteenth century." See: Oberman, *Forerunners*, 42.

sale. Luther gained several semi-public forums to air his concerns, including a meeting of his Augustinian chapter in April of 1518 and later in a discussion with Cardinal Tommaso Cajetan at an imperial diet in Augsburg.<sup>17</sup> These meetings were accompanied by the exchange of textual arguments, refutations, and counterclaims among Luther and several interlocutors: Johannes Tetzel, the Dominican whose sale of indulgences aroused Luther in the first place; Sylvester Prierias, an Italian Dominican who served as the Master of the Sacred Palace in Rome; and Cajetan himself.<sup>18</sup> In both the face-to-face discussions and literary exchanges that Luther engaged in during 1518, his opponents considered Luther's rejection of indulgences to be tantamount to denying the church's ability to authorize ~~the~~ teaching and practice of the church in respect of faith of morals."<sup>19</sup> These early conflicts also revealed a pattern in the institutional church's strategy for dealing with Luther in which direct, personal confrontation and literary engagement were employed as complementary means for the contradiction and suppression of the Wittenberg professor's religious opinions.

Alongside these strategies of engagement, ecclesiastical authorities were also preparing a heresy trial against Luther. In August of 1518, Pope Leo X authorized Cajetan either to secure Luther's recantation or to arrest and deliver

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<sup>17</sup> Cajetan, who had served as the general of the Dominican order for a decade prior to 1518, was named a cardinal in that year. He was an ardent papalist, but also agreed to treat Luther with clemency at the request of Elector Frederick of Saxony. On Cajetan's interview with Luther in Augsburg, see: Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 56ff.

<sup>18</sup> On the literary battle between Catholic authors and Luther over the course of 1517 and 1518, see: Kurt-Victor Selge, "Der Weg zur Leipziger Disputation zwischen Luther und Eck im Jahr 1519," in B. Moeller and G. Ruhbach, eds., *Bleibendes im Wandel der Kirchengeschichte* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1973), 169-210.

<sup>19</sup> In the first half of 1518, Prierias wrote a *Dialogue Concerning the Power of the Pope* against Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*. In this work, his fourth premise stated that anyone who dissented from ~~the~~ teaching and practice of the church" was a heretic, as much as anyone who denied the authority of the Bible. The premise is quoted in: Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 28.

him to Rome, and in November of that same year Leo issued the bull *Cum Postquam*, which affirmed papal teachings on indulgences and threatened excommunication to any who denied their validity.<sup>20</sup> The authors of these papal decrees, and of the other texts written against Luther in 1518, recognized that Luther's attack on indulgences was also an implicit attack on the pope's primacy in the church. The pope had authorized the sale of indulgences; therefore, all obedient Christians should accept their legitimacy as well.<sup>21</sup> Luther himself was careful at this time not to question openly the pope's ultimate authority in the earthly church. Rather than questioning the papacy's legitimacy in a broad sense, Luther instead appealed to other sources of authority within the church – notably the Bible, a general church council, or the opinions of the church fathers – in order to argue that individual popes could err, and that in those circumstances they should be corrected.<sup>22</sup> This limited, initial recognition of the pope's ability to err in the matter of indulgences proved to be only the first step down Luther's slippery slope of qualifying papal authority, which ultimately led to his total rejection of the papacy as a diabolical institution bent on the destruction and perversion of God's church on earth.

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<sup>20</sup> Leo's August letter to Cajetan, called "Postquam ad aures," was printed as part of Luther's account of his meeting with Cajetan in Augsburg. Luther's text, which was printed in 1518 under the title *Acta Augustana*, has been printed in: *WA* 2, 1-26; the letter was included on 23-25. The bull *Cum Postquam* has been printed in: K. Aland and C. Mirbt, eds. and trans., *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums und des Römischen Katholizismus*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1967), 503-504.

<sup>21</sup> On the interpretation of the entire indulgence debate as an initial attack on papal authority, see: Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 30.

<sup>22</sup> Hendrix has argued that Luther's protest against the pope and his decrees concerning indulgences still cited a "consensus of authorities," including conciliar decrees and the opinions of the church fathers, rather than any pure scriptural principle. Hendrix concludes that the events of 1518 skewed Luther's consensus towards a strict biblicism, but that he still recognized other sources of authority in the church during these early years of his reform. See: Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 68-69.

In the wake of Luther's meeting with Cajetan at Augsburg, the Wittenberg reformer published an account of this confrontation.<sup>23</sup> This text came out late in 1518, and upon reading it the Ingolstadt professor of theology Johannes Eck issued twelve articles to serve as the basis for an academic disputation with Luther.<sup>24</sup> Eck had already scheduled a debate with Andreas Karlstadt, and he decided to use this disputation as an opportunity to confront Luther and his heretical ideas. The twelfth article that Eck proposed concerned papal primacy; in it, he asserted that —We deny that the Roman church was not superior to all others before the time of Sylvester.”<sup>25</sup> Luther responded to Eck's twelfth article in his own publication, called *The Dispute and Explanation of Brother Martin Luther, against the Accusations of Doctor Johannes Eck*.<sup>26</sup> In this text, Luther set forth a proposition that countered Eck's. Luther argued that the supposed primacy of the Roman church over all others was a recent innovation, and had only occurred within the last 400 years, —against which are the confirmed history of 1100 years,

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<sup>23</sup> *Acta Augustana* (1518). See: *WA* 2, 1-26.

<sup>24</sup> Eck, who was one of Luther's most prolific opponents in the early years of the Reformation, was an academic prodigy who earned his master's degree at fifteen and his doctorate at twenty-four, in 1510. He became a professor of theology at Ingolstadt in the same year, and kept this position until his death in 1543. For a good overview of his life and work as a scholar and polemicist for Rome, see: Erwin Iserloh, *Johannes Eck (1486-1543): Scholastiker, Humanist, Kontroverstheologe* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1981).

<sup>25</sup> —Rromanam ecclesiam non fuisse superiorem aliis ecclesiis ante tempora Sylvestri negamus, Sed eum, qui sedem beatissimi Petri habuit et fidem, successorem Petri et vicarium Christi generalem semper agnovimus.” This article addressed the historical argument that the papacy's primacy devolved from the Emperor Constantine's support, rather than the decree of Christ or the establishment of the apostolic church. This article was printed as part of the: *Resolutio Lutheriana super propositione sua decima tertia de potestate papae* (1519). See: *WA* 2, 180-240, 185.

<sup>26</sup> Martin Luther, *Disputatio et excusatio F. Martini Luther adversus criminationes D. Iohannis Eccii* (1519). See: *WA* 2, 158-161.

the text of divine Scripture, and the decrees of Nicaea, the holiest of all councils.”<sup>27</sup>

The proposition that the pope’s claims to universal authority in the church were not based on scriptural or ancient historical foundations represented a new severity in Luther’s anti-papal rhetoric. This proposition also served as the main starting point for the dramatic confrontation between Eck and Luther that took place at Leipzig in July, 1519. Luther faced a certain risk in participating in this disputation. He had never received the local bishop’s or university’s permission to participate, and technically traveled to Leipzig only as a member of Karlstadt’s party.<sup>28</sup> The Leipzig disputation actually commenced on June 27, when Eck and Karlstadt began their debate. Eck and Luther began their disputation on July 4, and it continued for nearly eleven days. In his opening address to Duke George, who hosted the debate, Eck referred to his impending descent —into the arena.”<sup>29</sup> Academic disputations did assume a more agonistic character over the course of the Reformation, as they became one of the primary —means for engagement” (~~—~~*Kampfmittel*) between Rome and her adversaries.<sup>30</sup> Disputations became a

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<sup>27</sup> —Contra quae sunt historiae approbatae MC annorum, textus scripturae divinae et decretum Niceni Concilii omnium sacratissimi.” Luther, *Disputatio et excusatio*, 161.

<sup>28</sup> On the potential danger posed to Luther by his travel to Leipzig, which lay in the domains of the Catholic Duke George of Saxony, and Luther’s decision to travel to the debate as part of Karlstadt’s party, see: Selge, —Der Weg zur Leipziger Disputation,” 197-198.

<sup>29</sup> Eck began his —Protestatio” in the presence of —vobis illustrissimis, nobilibus, magnificis et excellentissimis dominis,” by noting that he he prepared to descent —in arenam.” See: *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 254.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Fuchs, in his analysis of colloquies and disputations in the German reformation, has shown that the —Idealtypus” of the academic disputation split during the Reformation into friendly colloquia and hostile, antagonistic debates. Leipzig was undoubtedly one of the latter, which Fuchs describes as —perhaps the most effective weapon of the Reformation” in its public battle with the Roman church. See his: *Konfession and Gespräch: Typologie und Funktion der Religionsgespräche in der Reformationszeit* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1995), 14 and 132ff. See also: Bernd Moeller, —Zwingli Disputationen: Studien zu den Anfängen der Kirchenbildung und des

form of intellectual combat in which novel and traditional religious ideas were tested, and which became fodder for publicity wars that followed the actual events.

The debate between Eck and Luther began with a consideration of the pope's primacy in the church. Their exchange began in a typically scholastic fashion, as each cited biblical sources, patristic and medieval church fathers, and canon law in order either to defend or reject the central proposition that "the monarchy and supremacy was established in the church of God by divine law and Christ."<sup>31</sup> On the second day of the debate, Eck pursued a new strategy. In his response to Luther's denial that "Peter was the absolute ruler (*monarcha*)" in the church instituted by Christ," Eck asserted that Luther was repeating John Wyclif's erroneous conclusion that it was not necessary to believe in the primacy of the Roman church.<sup>32</sup> Eck further stated that Luther's mistake was also "among the pestilent errors of Jan Hus," who had taught that "Peter is not, and was never, the head of the holy, universal, Roman church," and that "the sovereignty and foundation of the papacy arose from the emperor."<sup>33</sup> Eck was familiar with Catholic writings against Hus and his followers; in his speeches against Luther, he made reference to St. Giovanni da Capistrano, Nicholas Cusa, and John of Ragusa

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Synodalwesens im Protestantismus," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung* 56 (1970), 275-324, especially 301-310.

<sup>31</sup> "Monarchia et unus principatus in ecclesia dei est de iure divino et a Christo institutus." This was Eck's primary assertion against Luther's thirteenth proposition, and he began the debate by defending this position. See: *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 255.

<sup>32</sup> "Venio ergo ad principale quod [Luther] petit, probaturus primatum ecclesie Romane esse de iure divino et constitutione Christi, ita quod Petrus fuerit monarcha ecclesie a Christo institutus." *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 274.

<sup>33</sup> "Sic inter pestilentes Iohannis Hus errores ille quoque connumeratur: Petrus non est et nec fuit caput Romane ecclesie sancte catholice...Et: Pape prefectio et institutio a Cesare emanavit." *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 275.

as opponents of the Bohemians.<sup>34</sup> This learned historical accusation seemed, however, to catch Luther off guard.

Martin Luther's initial reaction to this accusation was to deny that he held any positions in common with the Bohemians, who ~~be~~ behave unjustly, because they separate themselves from our unity[!] on their own authority."<sup>35</sup> Luther quickly moved on, though, to a discussion of the schismatic Greek church's sanctity, and threw Eck's accusations back at him in the conclusion to his oration. Luther wondered why, if Eck was so knowledgeable and passionate about the Hussites' heresy, he had never written against them.<sup>36</sup> In the judgment of S. Harrison Thomson, Luther's reaction to Eck's accusation of his Hussite sympathies revealed a telling ignorance:

He [Eck] had been able to broaden the field of debate in a way which obviously caught Luther unprepared... Luther did not know much about the doctrinal position of the Utraquists who were traditionally Hussites, save that they were vaguely schismatics, nor were his ideas of Hus himself more than very meagre and undocumented.<sup>37</sup>

In the wake of his initial denial, Luther examined the decrees of the Council of Constance to learn more about Hus's teachings. After this preliminary research, Luther was forced to modify his initial rejection of Hus and the Bohemians, and he conceded that ~~am~~ among the articles of Jan Hus and the Bohemians, many are clearly most Christian and evangelical, which the universal

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<sup>34</sup> For Eck's references to the Hussites' opponents, see: *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 283.

<sup>35</sup> Luther began his response to Eck's accusation by stating: ~~in~~ique faciunt Bohemi, quod se auctoritate propria separant a nostra unitate." *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 275.

<sup>36</sup> ~~In~~ fine, quandoquidem adeo displicent Bohemi d.d. egregio, ostendat memoriam et ingenium suum: scribat contra eos. Satis ego miror, tam multos inveniri Bohemorum criminatores et hostes, nullum tamen esse qui fraterna charitate dignetur eorum errorem confutare in gloriam Romane ecclesie." *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 278.

<sup>37</sup> Thomson, who is best known as the editor of Hus's *De Ecclesia*, argued persuasively that before Leipzig Luther had known almost nothing of Hus's actual teachings or doctrines. See his: "Luther and Bohemia," 169. See also: Delius, "Luther und Huss," 9-13.



church cannot possibly condemn.”<sup>38</sup> Among these articles was Hus’s seemingly unproblematic affirmation that “I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, and the communion of the saints.”<sup>39</sup> On the following day, July 6, the one hundred and fourth anniversary of Hus’s death, Luther went further:

Among the articles of Hus is also: “There is one holy and universal church, which is the totality of the predestined.” Another is: “The holy, universal church is one in number, just as much as there is only one number of all the predestinate.” These two are not Hus’s [teachings], but Augustine’s...and are repeated by the master [Peter Lombard].<sup>40</sup>

With this series of statements, Luther considerably redefined his position vis-à-vis Hus. He put aside any sort of reflexive denial of their theological or ecclesiological affinities, and began to acknowledge that Hus’s condemned positions shared some elements with his own teachings. Despite this acknowledgement, Luther never offered any sort of blanket approval for Hus’s teachings. Later in his debate with Eck, Luther rejected what he saw as Hus’s Donatist tendencies: “I know, and I know well, that an evil prelate should not be rejected. Therefore I also condemn this Hussite article.”<sup>41</sup> Despite Luther’s qualification of his support for Hus and his teachings, Eck ultimately concluded that Luther “was certainly a protector of the Bohemians.”<sup>42</sup> Whether or not this accusation was entirely true, the course of the Leipzig disputation forced Luther

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<sup>38</sup> “Hoc certum est, inter articulos Iohannis Huss vel Bohemorum multos esse plane Christianissimos et Evangelicos, quos non possit universalis ecclesia damnare.” *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 279.

<sup>39</sup> “Credo in spiritum sanctum, sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum communionem.” *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> “Inter articulos Huss est et ille ‘Una est sancta universalis ecclesia, que est predestinatorum universitas,’ item alius ‘Universalis sancta ecclesia tantum est una, sicut tantum unus est numerus omnium predestinatorum.’ Hii duo non sunt Huss sed Augustini...et repetuntur per magistrum 4. sententiarum de sacramento Eucharistie.” *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 287.

<sup>41</sup> “Scio et optime scio, quod prelatus malus non sit reiiciendus. Ideo et ego damno Hussiticum articulum.” *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 302.

<sup>42</sup> “Pulchre certe Bohemis patrociniatur.” *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 294.

to recognize that Constance had wrongfully executed Hus, and more generally that councils could err in matters of faith. Eck vigorously attacked Luther's claim on this matter, even calling him "a pagan and tax farmer."<sup>43</sup> In terms of Luther's understanding of his relationship to Hus, then, the Leipzig debate had two main consequences. The first was Luther's recognition that he and Hus shared some key theological and ecclesiological positions, and that both of them had suffered (or were suffering) persecution for these ideas. The second consequence was Luther's acknowledgement that many of the institutions of the church, whether the papacy or the church councils, were the vehicles of that persecution. Thus, in the aftermath of Leipzig Luther moved further towards a strict biblicism in his search for authority in the church, even as the Wittenberg reformer's supporters and opponents further explored Luther's relationship to the Bohemian martyr, Jan Hus.<sup>44</sup>

#### Leipzig's Afterlife: Publicizing the Hus and Luther Connection

Although the actual confrontation between Martin Luther and Johannes Eck ended on July 14, 1519, the conflict that began there extended over several years. Over the course of 1520 in particular, the questions that were raised in Leipzig over the pope's primacy, the nature of authority in the church, and the

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<sup>43</sup> "Si creditis concilium legitime congregatum errare et errasse, estis mihi sicut ethnicus et publicanus." *Disputatio Lipsiae habita*, 311.

<sup>44</sup> Scott Hendrix in particular has shown that Eck's accusations concerning Luther's Hussite sympathies helped Luther's broader development towards a categorical rejection of the authority of tradition and papal decrees in the church. Although Luther had not articulated a strict "sola scriptura" principle by the Leipzig debate, Hendrix suggests that his rejection there of Constance's inerrancy helped lead Luther towards the position that only the Bible could be trusted as a source of religious authority. See his: *Luther and the Papacy*, 88-89; and idem., "We Are All Hussites?" 138ff.

relationship between Luther and Jan Hus became popular topics in a rapidly expanding polemical exchange. It was in the wake of the Leipzig debate, and in response to the issues contested there, that many new authors entered the lists either for or against Luther and his increasingly harsh rhetoric aimed at the pope and the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy. It was after Leipzig, then, that the German reformation entered the height of its —pamphlet moment.” From 1520-1526, almost three quarters of the total pamphlets published in Germany in the first third of the sixteenth century appeared.<sup>45</sup> Luther himself was the dominant figure in this burst of publication (over 250 editions of works by Luther were printed in 1520 alone), and in these seven years perhaps six and half million copies of pamphlets appeared, the majority of which were written in the vernacular.<sup>46</sup> This groundswell of pamphlet literature included a number of works by and about Jan Hus, so Luther’s and his followers’ knowledge of the Bohemian reformer increased dramatically over the course of 1519-1520.

Luther himself became much more familiar with Hus’s religious teachings late in 1519. On October 3, Luther informed his friend and mentor, Johannes Staupitz, that he had received two letters from Utraquist priests in Prague, —along

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<sup>45</sup> For an overview of publication activity in these years, with special attention to the works of Luther, see: Edwards, *Printing*, 17-25..

<sup>46</sup> Hans-Joachim Köhler, who headed a project on early modern pamphlets in Tübingen, has produced the most decisive statistics for printing in the early Reformation. Köhler has discovered over 6,000 editions that were printed from 1520 until 1526, and has conservatively estimated that these included 6.6 million total copies. Köhler’s work has also shown that a dramatic linguistic reversal took place in the years around 1520, as the proportion of vernacular pamphlets rose from 28% to 74% in the three years from 1519 to 1521. See: Köhler, —The Flugschriften and their Importance in Religious Debate: a Quantitative Approach,” in P. Zambelli, ed., *Astrologi hallucinati: Stars and the End of the World in Luther’s Time* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 153-175; and idem., —Fagestellungen und Methoden zur Interpretation frühneuzeitlicher Flugschriften,” in idem., ed., *Flugschriften als Massenmedium der Reformationszeit* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), 1-27.

with the book of Jan Hus, which I have not yet read.”<sup>47</sup> The two Czechs to whom Luther referred were Jan Poduška, the pastor at the Týn church in Prague, and Wenceslas Rořd’alovský, who served as his vicar. These Utraquist leaders had not been at Leipzig, but had heard of Luther’s role in the debate from a man named Jakub, an organist who had been present and had spoken with Luther.<sup>48</sup> Poduška and Rořd’alovský sent letters to Luther on July 17, 1519, and the latter included a copy of Hus’s *De Ecclesia*. Both letters were full of praise and hope for Luther’s anti-papal actions; Poduška stated: —God has established you as an overseer over his people, because you do not hide what is necessary for their salvation, but as you work, you bring it forth into the light.”<sup>49</sup> Poduška further called Luther a —valiant hunter of pseudo-apostles,” and assured him that he had significant support in Bohemia: —There are many dear people in Bohemia, faithful to God, who are sustaining you with prayers both day and night.”<sup>50</sup> Rořd’alovský’s letter to Luther focused more on Hus; he described how Jakub had told him that Luther —greatly desired” Hus’s books, —so that you might examine and judge who that man was... from the true likeness (*—imagine*) of his own soul, that is, from his books.”<sup>51</sup> Rořd’alovský was certain that the example of Hus would aid Luther in

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<sup>47</sup> —Accepi hac hora ex Praga Bohemiae literas sacerdotum duorum factionis illius de utraque specie, eruditos sane in Scripturis sanctis, una cum libello Iohannis Hus, quem nondum legi.” See: *WABr* 1, 513-515, 514.

<sup>48</sup> On Jakub’s role as the mediator between Luther and the Utraquist leadership, see: Thomson, —Luther and Bohemia,” 170.

<sup>49</sup> —Deus te speculatorem super populo suo constituit, huic saluti necessaria non abscondas, sed, sicut facis, in lucem proferas.” The full text of the letter is printed in: *WABr* 1, 416-418; this quotation, 417.

<sup>50</sup> —Ergo, mi frater Martine, confortare in Domino, et est robustus venator pseudoapostolorum...Sunt in Bohemia plurimi fideles Deo et chari, qui te noctes diesque orationibus adiuvant.” *WABr* 1, 418.

<sup>51</sup> —Veterum idem Iacobus te admodum desiderare dicebat libros Iohannis de Huss, Bohemorum apostoli, ut quis fuerit ille vir, et quantus, non ex vulgi aura neque ex Constantiensi male consulto

his ongoing struggle with the papacy, and he ended his letter by offering the encouragement that –what once Jan Hus was for Bohemia, you, O Martin, are for Saxony.”<sup>52</sup>

Because Roř d’alovský’s was aware that hostile reports could falsify or misrepresent Hus’s teachings, he sought to present Luther with the Bohemian –apostle’s” most substantial writing in order to reveal the Bohemian saint’s –true likeness.” Luther attested to the impact that *De Ecclesia* had on him. In February of 1520 he wrote George Spalatin, professing his amazement over what Hus’s work contained:

Unknowingly, I have thus far taught and held everything that Jan Hus [did]. Johannes Staupitz has also taught it unknowingly. In short: unknowingly, we are all Hussites. Indeed, Paul and Augustine are, word for word, Hussites. See the monstrous things we have become, I beg, without this Bohemian leader and doctor.<sup>53</sup>

Whether or not Luther’s enthusiastic self-identification with Hus was entirely accurate, this letter did attest to the fact that Luther had lost any reservations he had concerning his relationship to the Bohemian heresiarch. Within a month of Luther’s letter to Spalatin, Thomas Anshelm had brought out an edition of *De Ecclesia* with an initial print run of 2,000 copies;<sup>54</sup> with this publication, it

Concilio, sed ex ipsius vera animi imagine, id est libris, tandem aestimes ac cognoscas.” This letter is printed in full in: *WABr* 1, 419-420; this quotation, 419.

<sup>52</sup> –Hoc unicum sciens addo, quod olim Iohannes Huss in Bohemia fuerat, hoc tu, Martine, es in Saxonia.” *WABr* 1, 420.

<sup>53</sup> –Ego imprudens hucusque omnia Iohannis Huss et docui et tenui. Docuit eadem imprudentia Iohannes Staupitz. Breviter: sumus omnes Hussitae ignorantes. Denique Paulus et Augustinus ad verbum sunt Hussitae. Vide monstra, quaeso, in quae venimus sine duce et doctore Bohemico.” This letter, which Luther wrote in the middle of February, is printed in: *WABr* 2, 40-42; this quotation, 42.

<sup>54</sup> In a letter written on March 19, 1520, Luther commented to Spalatin: –Iohannem Huss quoque, si voles, lege, lectumque remitte, omnibus non modo placet, Sed miraculo quoque est tum spritus tum eruditio eius. 2000 Exemplaria edita sunt a Thoma Anshelmo.” See: *WABr* 2, 72. The edition to which Luther referred was printed under the title: *De Causa Bohemica* (Hagenau: Thomas Anshelm, 1520).

became possible for Luther's private acknowledgement of his support for the Bohemian heretic to become a matter of public consideration. For good or for ill, *De Ecclesia* allowed a larger public to judge what relationship, if any, Luther had with Jan Hus.

Despite its size and dense style, *De Ecclesia* was printed for a second time in 1520, this time under the title *An Extraordinary Book on the Unity of the Church, whose author perished at the Council of Constance*.<sup>55</sup> Both of these volumes were simple; they appeared without prologues or epilogues, and the plain text of Hus's original was accompanied only by an index at the beginning of the work. Within the index, certain topics that had become relevant in the context of Luther's dispute with the papacy came to the fore. Index entries included: "The errors of the priests concerning the sacraments and the keys;" "The pope is able to err;" "A licentious pope is a heretic;" "How priests usurp power;" "It is not necessary to obey the pope's subordinates in all things;" "On the vicar of Antichrist;" and "The sons of God conquer the beast through death."<sup>56</sup> This index suggests that *De Ecclesia* was intended to function as a sort of reference book for anti-papal polemics. Hus, who had been inextricably linked to Luther's cause at Leipzig, here became an intellectual authority whose writing bolstered the arguments that Luther was developing against the papacy. Despite his official status as a heretic, then, Hus and his most authoritative work attained the status of an anti-papal proof text over the course of 1520.

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<sup>55</sup> Jan Hus, *Liber Egregius de unitate Ecclesiae, Cuius autor periit in concilio Constantiensi* (Basel: Adam Petri, 1520).

<sup>56</sup> The index precedes the actual text of *De Ecclesia* in each edition. It is unpagged in Anshelm's edition, and numbered A2r-A4v. in the *Liber Egregius*.

Even as Luther's increasing contacts with Bohemia resulted in the initial publication of Hus's work, Catholic authors responded sharply against Luther's attacks on the papacy. Hieronymus Emser, Duke George of Saxony's chaplain, exchanged a series of pamphlets with Luther that sought to undercut Luther's professed ties to Jan Hus.<sup>57</sup> Johannes Eck himself also continued to write against the Wittenberg professor, and was either the author or target of seventeen publications by early 1520. The theological faculties of both Louvain and Cologne also condemned Luther's stated positions from the Leipzig debate. Pope Leo X also reopened the curia's investigation of Luther, and he appointed three separate commissions to prepare a condemnation of Luther's theology in the first half of 1520.<sup>58</sup> Despite these external pressures, Luther's cause was bolstered by Elector Frederick of Saxony's continued support. Late in 1519, he denied a request to send Luther to a hearing before the Archbishop of Trier, and he continued to support Luther despite consistent pressure to disavow his patronage for the Wittenberg professor.<sup>59</sup> By the middle of 1520, then, it appeared that Luther could not rely on any support for the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Empire or in Rome. It was still possible, however, that he could find support among the

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<sup>57</sup> Emser initially wrote a letter to the administrator of the Catholic clergy in Prague, Jan Zak, to assure him that the Bohemian Utraquists did not enjoy international support. Luther responded to this letter, originally published as *De disputatione Lipsicensi, quantum ad Boemos obiter deflexa est* (Leipzig, Melchior Lotter d.Ä., 1519), with a statement clarifying his support of the Bohemian reformer. His reply, *Ad aegocerotem Emserianum M. Lutheri additio* (Wittenberg: Johannes Grunenberg, 1519), was also printed together with Emser's original letter, under both titles, by Silvan Otmar in Augsburg, in 1519. For a complete summary of Emser's polemical exchanges with Luther, see: Ludwig Enders, ed., *Luther und Emser: Ihre Streitschriften aus dem Jahre 1521*, 2 vols. (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1889).

<sup>58</sup> For a summary of Catholic polemical and judicial responses to Luther after Leipzig, see: Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 89ff.

<sup>59</sup> On Elector Frederick's support for Luther, and the mediating role played by Luther's friend and correspondent George Spalatin (who served as Frederick's confessor), see: Wilhelm Borth, *Die Luthersache (Causa Lutheri) 1517-1524: Die Anfänge der Reformation als Frage von Politik und Recht* (Lübeck: Matthiesen Verlag, 1970), 59ff.

imperial nobility. Two publications in the summer of 1520 confirmed these impressions.

The first of these was the proclamation of a papal bull against Luther, *Exsurge Domine*. This bull, which was promulgated on June 15, 1520, condemned forty-one separate teachings of Luther and demanded that he recant them and seek forgiveness within sixty days of the bull's publication in Saxony. The bull took its title from Psalm 74:22, —~~R~~ise up, O Lord, and render judgment in your cause," and condemned Luther's revival of heretical ideas —of the Greeks and Bohemians." According to Leo X, Luther had taken up these ideas —~~t~~he suggestion of the enemy of humankind, so in recent years they have been kindled anew, and sown in our lifetime among certain fools in the renowned German nation."<sup>60</sup> *Exsurge* spoke out particularly strongly against Luther's teachings on indulgences, which were condemned in six separate articles, and also against Luther's stances on Purgatory, papal primacy, and the penitential cycle within the church. Only two articles addressed Luther's relationship with Hus; the thirtieth noted that Luther had taught that —~~e~~certain articles of Jan Hus condemned at the Council of Constance were most Christian, true, and evangelical, which the universal church could never condemn."<sup>61</sup> The thirty-third article, which did not mention Hus by name, also stated that Luther professed that —~~b~~urning heretics is against the will of the Spirit."<sup>62</sup> At the core of all of these articles was a single

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<sup>60</sup> —~~H~~umani generis hoste suggerente, noviter suscitatos, et nuper apud quosdam leviores in inclitya natione Germanica seminatos." For a full text of the papal bull *Exsurge Domine*, see: Aland and Mirbt, eds., *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*, vol. 1, 504-513; this quotation, 505.

<sup>61</sup> —~~A~~qui articuli Joannis Husz condemnati in Conilio Constantien. sunt Christianissimi, verissimi, et Evangelici, quos nec universalis Ecclesia posset damnare." *Exsurge Domine*, 507.

<sup>62</sup> —~~H~~aereticos comburi, est contra voluntatem spiritus." *Ibid.*



issue: that Luther contested how orthodoxy and orthopraxy were established in the church. Luther denied that tradition or papal and conciliar decrees were suitable authorities for determining belief and practice, and he therefore called the foundations of the church into question. *Exsurge* recognized this subversive challenge for what it was, and with it Pope Leo X used the harshest ecclesiastical penalty at his disposal in order to suppress Luther's dangerous teachings.

Johannes Eck was made responsible for the promulgation of this bull in the Holy Roman Empire, and he traveled north in September of 1520 to post the bull in the dioceses of Meissen, Merseburg, and Brandenburg. But because Eck faced sharp opposition to his posting of the bull in Leipzig, he was forced to leave the area and return to Ingolstadt for his own safety.<sup>63</sup> In publishing this bull, Eck made one significant miscalculation; the pope had empowered Eck to name Luther's supporters in the bull and impose canonical sanctions on them as well. Eck eventually appended six names to the bull, which included Andreas Karlstadt and the prominent lay humanists Lazarus Spengler in Nuremberg and Willibald Pirckheimer in Augsburg. This inclusion spurred Karlstadt to author his first treatise against the papacy in October of 1520, and the expanded list also persuaded many learned men in the empire who had been neutral (if perhaps sympathetic) to Luther's reform to break openly with the traditional church. In particular, the sudden condemnation of prominent humanists seemed to identify Luther's cause with the new learning over and against the traditional

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<sup>63</sup> On the publication of *Exsurge* in the German lands, see: Iserloh, *Johannes Eck*, 49-55; see also: Borth, *Die Luthersache*, especially 78-87.

scholasticism of many university faculties, especially those dominated by Dominicans like Eck.<sup>64</sup>

Luther did eventually respond specifically to this bull, but the promulgation of *Exsurge Domine* and its creation of a condemned “Luther party” in Germany also coincided with one of Luther’s most dramatic (and successful) attempts to elicit support for his reformist ideas. In August of 1520, *Luther’s Address to the Christian Nobility* appeared, a text that essentially demanded that the secular nobility reassert their prerogatives in the administration of the church.<sup>65</sup> The *Address* began with the premise that the church had constructed three “walls” to insulate itself from reform. The first of these was popes’ assertion that “the temporal power has no jurisdiction over them;” the second was the church’s belief that no one could interpret the Bible except the pope; and the third was the contention that only the pope could call a council.<sup>66</sup> Luther attempted to destroy these walls with his *Address*. He attacked the notion that the temporal powers had no jurisdiction over the church by stating that all Christians were of the same estate, and merely held different offices. From this erasure of distinction, Luther concluded that:

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<sup>64</sup> It has long been an historiographical trope that Luther was supported by humanists at the time of Leipzig, and opposed by Scholastic theologians. David Bagchi, however, has argued against this idea by pointing to the humanist orientation that coexisted alongside the scholastic background of men like Eck, Emser, and Cochlaeus. For Bagchi’s revision of the simple equations of Lutheran/humanist and Catholic/scholastic, see his: *Luther’s Earliest Opponents*, 76ff. See also: Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995); and James Overfield, “Scholastic Opposition to Humanism in Pre-Reformation Germany,” *Viator* 7 (1976), 391-420.

<sup>65</sup> This book immediately popular, and went through at least fourteen editions in the first two years after its publication; it was also translated into Italian in 1523. This text has been edited and printed as: Martin Luther, *An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation von des Christlichen Standes Besserung*, in *WA* 6, 381-469.

<sup>66</sup> “Wen man hat auff sie drungen mit weltlicher gewalt, haben sie gesetzt und gesagt, weltlich gewalt have nit recht ubir sie, sondern widderumb, geistlich sei ubir die weltliche.” On the “drei mauren” in papal rhetoric, see: Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 406-407.

Forasmuch as the temporal power has been ordained by God for the punishment of the bad and the protection of the good, therefore we must let it do its duty throughout the whole Christian body, without respect of persons, whether it strikes popes, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, or whoever it may be.<sup>67</sup>

Luther also attacked the other “walls” built up by the church’s hierarchy.

Regarding the idea that only the pope could interpret Scripture, Luther tacitly invoked his previous assertion that all Christians were of the same estate, and thus deserved equal access to the text of the Bible and the interpretation thereof.

Invoking the story of Balaam’s ass in Numbers 22, Luther rhetorically noted that “If God spoke by an ass against a prophet, why should he not speak against the Pope through a pious man?”<sup>68</sup> As for the third wall – that only the pope could call a council – Luther turned to church history to disprove this supposed papal prerogative. He noted that the council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 was convoked by all the apostles, and that the Council of Nicaea, “the most celebrated council of all,” had been summoned by the Emperor Constantine.<sup>69</sup> After rejecting these three walls, Luther went on to excoriate the church’s hierarchy for its pomp, greed, bloated size, and constant monetary exactions for offices and services. His goal with this section was to apprise the German nation of the many ways in which the papacy defrauded them and seized their money, with an eye towards empowering and inspiring the German nobility to summon a new council to correct abuses in the church.

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<sup>67</sup> “Drumb sag ich, die weil weltlich gewalt von got geordnet ist, die boszen zustraffen und die frumen zuschutzen, szo sol man ihr ampt lassen frei gehm unvorhindert durch den gantzen corper der Christenheit, miemants angesehen, sie treff Bapst, Bischoff, pfaffen, munch, Nonnen, odder was es ist.” Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 409.

<sup>68</sup> “Hat got da durch ein eselinne redet gegen einem Propheten, warumd solt er nit noch reden kunnen durch ein frum mensch gegen dem Bapst?” Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 412.

<sup>69</sup> Luther referred to Niceae as “das berumptiste Concilium;” see: Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 413.

The second part of Luther's *Address* therefore laid out twenty-seven articles concerning specific ecclesiastical abuses and proposed solutions to these problems. The articles addressed issues such as the pope's claims to obedience and temporal power, the proliferation of financial instruments that enriched the papacy, excesses in popular religion (including the celebration of saints' days and pilgrimages), and support for mendicant friars and monastic foundations. Many of these articles addressed practical or monetary concerns, but towards the end of the tractate Luther turned to a broader critique of the papacy. After his consideration of all the pope's illicit exactions and his claims to bind and loose people from oaths, Luther exploded:

If there were nothing else to show that the Pope is Antichrist, this would be enough. Do you hear this, O Pope: you are not the most holy, but the most sinful! Would that God would hurl your throne headlong from heaven, and cast it down into the abyss of hell...through your mouth and pen Satan lies as he never lied before, teaching you to twist and pervert the Scriptures according to your own arbitrary will. O Lord Christ, look down upon this; let your day of judgment come and destroy the devil's layer in Rome.<sup>70</sup>

Luther followed this rant identifying the pope as Antichrist with a surprising article. The twenty-fourth reform proposal that Luther offered simply asserted that ~~It~~ is high time to take up earnestly and truthfully the cause of the Bohemians to unite them with ourselves." He noted that the Germans must accept that Hus and Jerome of Prague had been burned in violation of a safe-conduct, ~~and~~ that thus God's commandment was broken and the Bohemians aroused to

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<sup>70</sup> ~~Wen~~ kein ander boszer tuck were, der do beweret, das der Bapst der recht Endchrist sei, szo weere eben diszes stuck gnugsam, das zu beweren. Horestu es, bapst, nit der allerheiligst, szondernn der aller sundigst, das got deinen stel vom himel auffschirest zurstore und in abgrund der hell senck...unnd leugt durch dein hals und fedder der bosz Satan, als er noch nie gelogen hat, swingst unnd dringst die schrifft nach deinem mutwillen. Ach Christ, mein her, sicch erhab, lasz her brechen dien jungsten tag, und zurstore des teuffels nehst zu Rom." Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 453.

great anger.”<sup>71</sup> For Luther, then, the issue with Hus’s execution was not just his teaching, —although my understanding has not been able to find any error in him.” Luther wanted to address the injustice of Hus’s execution and the betrayal of the safe-conduct given to him by Sigismund. Luther actually stepped back from acknowledging Hus’s orthodoxy, saying —I have no wish to make a saint or martyr of Jan Hus (as some of the Bohemians do).”<sup>72</sup> Despite this verbal distancing, Luther did use Hus as an example of the papacy’s antichristian actions and perversion of secular leadership in his *Address to the Christian Nobility*.<sup>73</sup> Just as Luther’s ongoing persecution by the pope provided evidence that the church’s hierarchy had been subverted by Antichrist in order to suppress the evangelical truth, so had Hus’s execution proven the extent of the papacy’s power and corruption.

This particular polemical deployment of Hus would only grow in importance over the ensuing years. Hus’s execution (and later, his writings) became a key reference point for Luther’s case against the Antichrist, even as Luther categorically came to identify the papacy with the book of Daniel’s (11:31

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<sup>71</sup> —Es ist hoh zeit, das wir auch ainn mal ernstlich und mit warheit der Behemen sach furnehmen, sie mit uns und uns mit ihnen zuvoreinigen... Johannes Husz unnd Hieronymus von Prag zu Costnitz wider Bepstlich, Christlich, und Kaiserlich geleid unnd eid sein vorprand, damit wider gottis gepot geschehen, und die Behemen hoch zu bitterkeit vorursacht sein.” Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 454.

<sup>72</sup> —Ich wil hie Iohannis Husz artickel nit richten, noch sein irtumb vorfechtenn, wie vol mein vorstand noch nichts irrigis bei ihm fundenn hat... Ich wil auch Johannem Husz keinen heiligen noch Marterer machen, wie etlich Behemen thun.” Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 454-455.

<sup>73</sup> Luther argued that Sigismund had been made an oath-breaker in the matter of Hus’s execution, and that this was just one example of pope’s acting against kings’ best interest. Luther also cited the contemporary conflict between King Louis of France and Emperor Maximilian, which had been fueled by Pope Julius II. See: Luther, *An den christlichen Adel*, 453-454.

and 12:11) —abomination of desolation.”<sup>74</sup> The precipitating event in Luther’s unequivocal identification of the papal Antichrist was certainly the publication of *Exsurge Domine*, which convinced Luther that the pope would never accept any sort of meaningful reform in the church. As a response, Luther published two explicit texts against the bull, one in German, *Against the Bull of Antichrist*, and one in Latin, *Against the Accursed Bull of Antichrist*; along with a broader condemnation of the church’s oppression from within by the papacy, *A Prelude to the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*.<sup>75</sup> Each of these texts examined how various papal teachings perverted true doctrine and exposed the souls of Christians to grave danger, and all of them promoted one underlying idea: —consider whoever was the author of this bull [*Exsurge*] to be the Antichrist, and I write against that Antichrist, having recovered the truth of Christ, which was in me, and that he is trying to destroy.”<sup>76</sup> Luther also made his case in German, stating that: —The pope is God’s enemy, the persecutor of Christ, who disturbs Christendom, and the true Antichrist.”<sup>77</sup> Luther capped these initial literary responses with a shocking public act. On December 10, 1520, he burned a text of

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<sup>74</sup> Heiko Oberman has pointed, for instance, to Luther’s 1527 Luther commentary on Isaiah 97, where he wrote that —Hus, with his blood, brought forth the Gospel which we have today.” See: Oberman, —Hus and Luther,” 157.

<sup>75</sup> Luther wrote *De captivitate Babylonica ecclesiae praeludium* in August and September, 1420, and it was immediately printed by Melchior Lotther in Wittenberg in two editions. This text has been printed in: *WA* 6, 484-573. *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi bullam* appeared in three editions, one printed by Lotther in Wittenberg, another printed anonymously in Augsburg, and a third printed by Adam Petri in Basel. For a complete edition and full bibliographical information concerning this text, see: *WA* 6, 595-612. *Wider die Bulle des Endchrists* was published by Lotther as well, and also in Strasbourg and Baden. It was a slight expansion on the Latin *Adversus*, and has been edited and printed in: *WA* 6, 613-629.

<sup>76</sup> —Ego, quisquis fuerit huius Bullae author, eum pro Antichristo habeo, et contra Antichristum haec scribo, redempturus veritatem Christi, quod in me fuerit, quam ille extinguere conatur.” Luther, *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi bullam*, 598.

<sup>77</sup> —Der bapst sei gotis feind, Christus vorfolger, der christenheit vorstoror, und der rechte Endchrist.” This line concludes *Wider dei Bulle des Endchrists*. See: Luther, *Wieder die Bulle*, 629.

the bull *Exsurge Domine* and books of canon law in Wittenberg. This act could recall for us the burning of Hus's books as he went to his pyre in Constance; Luther inverted the theological condemnation implicit in that act, and he therefore tacitly declared the pope's words and judgment to be heresy.

Luther used a last, more exhaustive response to the pope's bull to reinforce his initial polemical and ritualistic responses to the pope's condemnation of his teachings. Early in 1521, Luther wrote his *Defense and Explanation of all the Articles*, a point-by-point apology for the forty-one articles condemned in *Exsurge*.<sup>78</sup> In spite of the more measured tone in this work than in *Against the Bull of Antichrist*, it did contain some sharp rhetoric. Particularly in discussing the execution of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague, Luther condemned that actions that "heretics and apostates and antichristians" had taken against the Bohemian reformers. In discussing the thirtieth condemned article, that "Certain articles of Jan Hus...are most Christian, most true, and altogether evangelical," Luther made an important qualification to this statement:

In truth I have I have greatly erred here, and have also already retracted and condemned this thing that I have said, "Certain articles of Jan Hus, etc." Now I say, not only certain, but all, articles of Jan Hus, condemned at Constance, are altogether Christian; and I confess that the pope with his followers acted in this matter like the true Antichrist, condemning the holy gospel along with Jan Hus, and placing the teaching of the hellish dragon in its place.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> This text, which was printed early in 1521 by Melchior Lotther in Wittenberg and in Augsburg by Jörg Nabler, appeared under the title: *Grund und Ursach aller Artikel D. Martin Luthers, so durch römische Bull unrechtlich verdammt sind*. Facing-page editions of the Augsburg and Wittenberg versions of the text, which varied in orthography, rather than content, appear in: *WA* 7, 299-457.

<sup>79</sup> "Für war ich hab hie fast geirret unnd hab auch zuvor dissen Artickel widderruffen unnd vordampt inn dem, das ich gesagt habe: "Etlich artickel Joannes Husz, ' etc. Also sag ich itzt: Nit etlich allein, szondernn alle artickel Joannis Husz, zu Costnitz vordampt, seinn gantz Christlich, und bekenne, das der Bapst mit dem seinen als ein rechter Endchrist hie gehandelt, das heilig

Luther did not simply end with this strong statement of support for Hus. Rather, he offered a critique of how Hus limited his attack on the papacy:

St. Jan [Hus] did not do enough and only began to present the gospel. I have done five times more, but I still fear that I do too little. Jan Hus did not deny that the pope was highest in all the world...But even if St. Peter himself were sitting in Rome today, I would still deny that he is pope, and above all other bishops by God's decree. The papacy is a human invention of which God knows nothing.<sup>80</sup>

Here, Luther used Hus's critique of the papacy as a lens through which to view the proper scope and exercise of church reform. Because Hus had pulled up short, and not rejected the papacy *tout court*, Luther criticized his forerunner's partial efforts at reform. If Hus's words, however, had failed to reveal the full extent of the papacy's corruption, his death had certainly done the job. In his response to the thirty-third article against him, that "the burning of heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit," Luther asserted that Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague, who had been wrongfully burned, "were good Christians who were burned by heretics and apostates and antichristians, that is, the papists, for the sake of the holy gospel."<sup>81</sup> Statements such as these reflected the fact that by early 1521, Luther had absolutely rejected the papacy as the seat of Antichrist in the world. On January 3, 1521, the pope offered his own absolute rejection; in the

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Evangelium mit Johanne Husz vordampft und an sein stat des hellischen tracken lere gesetzt hat." Luther, *Grund und Ursach*, 431.

<sup>80</sup> "Es hat auch S. Joannes zu wenig than und nur angefangen das Evangelium auff zu werffen. Ich hab funffmal mehr than, dennoch hab ich sorg, ich thu ihm auch zu wenig. Ioannes Husz leugnet nit, das der Bapst der ubrist sei inn aller welt...Ich aber, wenn heuttigs tags sanct Peter selbs zu Rom sesse, vorneine ich dennoch, das er Bapst were ausz gotlicher ordnung uber alle andere Bisschoffe. Es ist ein menschen fund des Bapstum, da got nichts von weisz." Luther, *Grund und Ursach*, 431 and 433.

<sup>81</sup> "Joannes Husz und Hieronimus, frum christen, sein vorprant von ketzern, abtrinnigen und Endchristen, den Papisten, umb des heiligen Evangeli willen, wie ich droben gesagt." Luther, *Grund und Ursach*, 439.



bull *Decet Romanum Pontificem*, Leo X formally excommunicated Martin Luther, and the break between the Wittenberg reformer and the Catholic church became official, final, and complete.

### Expanding Luther's Critique and the Image of Reform

By the beginning of 1521, then, Martin Luther had officially broken with the Catholic Church, had been excommunicated by Pope Leo X, and had decisively linked himself with the Bohemian heretic Jan Hus. Luther had also condemned the entire institution of the papacy and its various officials, and he had decried the subversion of all Christendom by this *—Endchrist.*” The Wittenberg professor had stated these opinions in private letters, public declarations, and, perhaps most significantly, in a number of Latin and vernacular publications that allowed his conclusions to reach a broad audience throughout, and even beyond, the German lands. In many ways, the pope's excommunication of Luther represented a key beginning, rather than an ending, in the course of the German reformation. This condemnation forced people to choose between, and to ally themselves with, either the voice of reform in the Holy Roman Empire or with the traditional church that had structured and sustained religious life in Europe for over a thousand years.

For many people in Germany, this choice was mediated by the polemical and propagandistic texts that had begun to pour forth from the many presses in the Holy Roman Empire. In countless dialogues, diatribes, printed sermons, and other pamphlets, Luther's reform and the church's tradition were juxtaposed and placed

in direct opposition to one another. As a number of scholars have recently shown, Luther and his allies dramatically outstripped their opponents in the production of polemical and apologetic publications.<sup>82</sup> Edwards notes that Luther himself out-published all Catholic authors of controversial literature by a ratio of 5:3, while Cole puts it more poetically; he notes that “in the 1520’s the bloom on the rose of the printing industry was a Protestant flower.”<sup>83</sup> While scholars have rejected traditional views of the Catholic polemicists of this period as theologically vague, too “Scholastic” for popular consumption, or less intellectually gifted than their interlocutors, the fact remains that during these crucial, early years of the German reform Luther and his allies out-published their opponents by a magnitude of at least three to one.<sup>84</sup>

Scholars have suggested several reasons for the disparity in publishing between Luther, his supporters, and authors with Catholic sympathies. Mark Edwards has suggested that it was an issue of audience; while Luther and his followers geared their texts towards “a broad audience, including all literate laity,” Catholic authors aimed their texts only at “opinion leaders, such as clerics, councilors, and rulers.”<sup>85</sup> Early Protestants quickly shifted to the use of the vernacular in their publications in order to appeal to this larger audience, while

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<sup>82</sup> See, e.g.: Miriam Chrisman, *Lay Culture, Learned Culture: Books and Social Change in Strasbourg, 1480-1599* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982), 30-43; Edwards, *Printing*, especially 27ff.; Richard Cole, “The Reformation Pamphlet and Communication Processes,” in *Flugschriften als Massenmedium der Reformationszeit*, 139-161; and Richard Crofts, “Printing, Reform, and the Catholic Reformation in Germany (1521-1545),” *SCJ* 16 (1985), 369-381.

<sup>83</sup> Edwards has found 875 printings of Luther’s explicitly controversial works from Luther for the years 1518-1544, as compared to 514 Catholic works. See his: *Printing*, 29; see also: Cole, “The Reformation Pamphlet,” 147.

<sup>84</sup> Crofts, “Printing, Reform, and the Catholic Reformation,” 373. Compare these numbers to those of Edwards, cited in the previous note.

<sup>85</sup> Mark Edwards, Jr., “Catholic Controversial Literature, 1518-1555: Some Statistics,” *ARG* 79 (1988), 189-205, 191.

Catholic authors still produced more Latin than vernacular pamphlets into the 1550s.<sup>86</sup> An appeal to the laity not only increased the Protestants' potential audience, but also made their publications a more attractive product for printers. Thus, Luther's followers quickly gained a commercial advantage over Catholic authors. John Dolan has argued that widespread feelings of anti-curialism in the Holy Roman Empire also limited the appeal of Catholic publications, as did their style; besides being written in Latin, many Catholic texts were relatively long and written in a dense, scholastic style.<sup>87</sup> The lack of coordination and funding for Catholic authors has also been well-documented. Bishops in Germany were very slow to financially support their apologists, and Hubert Jedin has documented the repeated, failed efforts of men like Johannes Fabri and Jerome Aleander to gain diocesan or curial support for a long-term polemical campaign against Luther.<sup>88</sup>

David Bagchi has persuasively argued that two deeper, underlying "dangers" faced Catholic controversialists and limited their publication activities. The first of these dangers arose from Luther's excommunication in January, 1521. After he had been formally condemned for heresy, Luther was necessarily considered obdurate and pertinacious. Therefore, Catholic authors could not debate with him, in print or *viva voce*, because the pope had condemned him, and there was no further room for debate. This ban on debate did not prohibit polemicists from attacking Luther personally, but did limit the scope of Catholic

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<sup>86</sup> "Of the 1763 printings of Catholic controversial works for the period 1518-1555, 60.5% were Latin." Edwards, "Catholic Controversialist Literature," 190.

<sup>87</sup> John Dolan, "The Catholic Literary Opponents of Luther and the Reformation," in E. Iserloh, ed., *Reformation and Counter-Reformation: History of the Church, vol. 5* (London: Burnes and Oates, 1980), 191-207, especially 193.

<sup>88</sup> See: Jedin, "Die geschichtliche Bedeutung," especially 73ff.; and Joseph Lortz, "Wert und Grenzen der katholischen Kontroverstheologie in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts," in A. Franzen, ed., *Um Reform und Reformation* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1968), 9-32.

responses to Luther's ideas.<sup>89</sup> The second major constraint on Catholic writers concerned audience. For them, the weighty theological issues and ecclesiological questions that Luther had raised were in no way fit for public consumption. These issues were within the purview of trained theologians only, so any public consideration of these issues had to very careful *not* to sound like an appeal for public support or approval of Rome's positions. As Bagchi puts it: —The \_judgment of the people' was the Romanists' pet hate, and they frequently characterized Luther's motive in writing pamphlets as the courting of it."<sup>90</sup> Because of these self-imposed limitations, and given the commercial and stylistic advantages of Luther's and his followers' texts, it is not surprising that the Protestants enjoyed market dominance in the pamphlet wars that accompanied Luther's reform.

This decisive advantage in terms of market saturation was essential to the spread and acceptance of Luther's ideas. As Robert Scribner has argued:

The task of Reformation propaganda was primarily to spread and win allegiance to the evangelical message. This posed several problems. The message had to be transmitted in clear and easily assimilable form; there was the need to break down old patterns of thought and values; and one had to create powerful symbols of attachment to the new movement. Finally, these had to be integrated into an ordered structure of values and allegiances, in a new —symbolic universe."<sup>91</sup>

At the center of this new —symbolic universe" was the figure of Martin Luther.

Luther's dominance of the press as an author (1568 separate editions of his works were printed by 1525), and his centrality as an actor in the developing protest against the papacy, turned the growth of the German reformation into a

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<sup>89</sup> Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 211 and 250-251.

<sup>90</sup> Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 212.

<sup>91</sup> Scribner, *For the Sake*, 9.

referendum on the popular acceptance of Luther himself.<sup>92</sup> Scribner has emphasized that early portrayals of Luther in pamphlets, portraits, and other popular media showed him as a “pious teacher,” a man of the Bible, and a monk.<sup>93</sup> These images promoted Luther’s role as a type of saint who was inspired by the holy spirit in order to return the church to its apostolic purity. In early portraits, Luther’s image was often surrounded by a halo or nimbus, with a dove over him. (see figure 1) Such depictions offered Luther as a divinely appointed alternative to the pope, and the identification of the latter with the Antichrist made the choice between the two much simpler.<sup>94</sup> The figural representation of Luther-as-holy-man also transcended the barriers that the printed word could impose. One did not have to be literate to understand the presentation of Luther as a saint. Rather, one merely needed to accept the transference of traditional symbols of sanctity to a new figure: Martin Luther.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Peter Matheson, for instance, has noted that the propaganda of the early Reformation tended to highlight two religious “personalities,” rather than outline distinctive theological systems. Harry Oelke has emphasized Luther’s centrality in the establishment of this personality, as the “reformatorische Zentralgestalt” from 1519-1525. See: Peter Matheson, *The Rhetoric of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 110; and Harry Oelke, *Die Konfessionsbildung des 16. Jahrhunderts im Spiegel illustrierter Flugblätter* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1992), 231ff.

<sup>93</sup> Scribner, *For the Sake*, 17.

<sup>94</sup> For an analysis of early images of Luther, see especially: Scribner, *For the Sake*, chapter 2; and Martin Warnke, *Cranachs Luther: Entwürfe für ein Image* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1984).

<sup>95</sup> On the transference of traditional notions of sanctity to Luther, see: Scribner, “Incombustible Luther;” and Kolb, *For All the Saints*, 103ff.



**Figure 1: Portrait of Martin Luther (1521)  
Hans Baldung Grien**

Even as Luther's supporters began to depict him as a new holy man, authors and artists began to take up Luther's identification of the pope with the Antichrist and reinforce it visually. Early in 1521, the artist Lucas Cranach the Elder and the Wittenberg professor Philip Melancthon produced a pamphlet combining twenty-six woodcuts with biblical and interpretive captions, the *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. The woodcuts were arranged in thirteen antithetical pairs, with one image depicting a scene from the life of Christ, and the

second depicting the practices of the contemporary papacy.<sup>96</sup> Much as Nicholas of Dresden's *Tables of the Old and New Color* had done a century before, these antitheses served to highlight the disjunction between the ideal Christian life as embodied by Jesus and the wealth, pomp, and claims to worldly power that characterized the contemporary papacy.<sup>97</sup> This disjunction served as a basis for the denial of the pope's authority in religious matters, as well as a foundation for the invalidation of his jurisdictional claims vis-à-vis Luther. The first of the *Passional's* antitheses showed Jesus fleeing the Jews who would make him king, while its complementary image showed the pope defending his status as a secular ruler, backed by artillery and troops. (see figure 2) The second pair of images contrasted Jesus' crown of thorns with the pope's triple tiara, while the sixth antithesis contrasted an image of Jesus bowed under the weight of the cross with a depiction of the pope being carried in a rich sedan chair, giving a sign of blessing. Melancthon's text sarcastically commented: "Thus the pope bears his cross, that baptized Christians are forced to bear him with their arms."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> The *Passional* was immediately commercially successful; it went through ten German editions and one Latin edition within several years. The initial printing of the Latin and German editions was done by Johannes Grunenberg in Wittenberg in 1521. For complete bibliographical information, and an edition of the German captions from the first edition, see: *WA* 9, 690-715. The images from the pamphlets are included as an unpagged addendum to the volume.

<sup>97</sup> On the *Tables*, see above, chapter 1, fn. 100 and following. Art history scholars have noted the similarities between Cranach's *Passional* and the *Tables*, especially regarding the illustrations of the latter in the Jena Codex. Despite the similarities, though, there appears to have been no actual connections between the texts. For a full analysis of the *Tables* with reference to their similarities to Cranach's later work, see: Karin Groll, *Das "Passional Christ und Antichristi: von Lucas Cranach d. Ä."* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), especially 21ff.

<sup>98</sup> "Sic etiam fert crucem Papa, ut baptisati Christiani cogantur eum humeris suis portare." Cranach and Melancthon, *Passional*, B3r. For an illustration of this antithesis from the *Tables*, see above, chapter 1, figures 1 and 2.

### Passional Christi und



#### Christus.

Do Jhesus innert wurde/das sie kommen wurden vnd yhnem zum König machen/ist er abermals vffsin bergt geflohen/ er als lan. Johan. 6. Mein reich ist nicht vß dieser welt. Joh. 18. Die Könige der welt hirschen yr/vnnd die gewalde haben/ werden gnedige hern genandt/ yr aber nicht also/sonder der do grosser ist vnther auch/fall sich nydern/als der weniger. Luc. 22.

### Antichristi.



#### Antichristus.

Auß obrt kaye die wir sonder zweiffell zum keyserthub haben/ vnd auß vnser gewalt/ seynt wir des keyserthumbs/ so sich das volldige/ ein rechter erbe. de. pastoralis ad fi. de sen. et re. vñdi. Sūma summarū. Nichts anders ist in des Pappsts geyslichē rechte zu finden/dan das es synen abgot vnd Antichrist vñ alle keyser/ König vñ fursten yrhebet/ als Petrus voigsagt hat. Es werden kōmen vnuerischambe Bischoff die die weltlich harschafft werden vñachten. z. Pet. z. A ij

**Figure 2: The First Antithesis from *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (Wittenberg: J. Grunenberg, 1521), A1v.-A2r.**

In later polemics, these specific antitheses were linked to Hus's teachings on the papal Antichrist, and Hus came to be identified as the first man who had dared to expose the antithetical relationship between the pope and Christ, an exposure that had cost him his life. Hus's willingness to suffer death clearly placed him within the camp of Christ as illustrated in the *Passional*; indeed, the text's antithetical images clearly differentiated between Christ and the pope, and they made the ultimate consequences of offering obedience to one or the other authority figure absolutely clear. Luther's writings of 1520, and his excommunication, had begun the process of creating two churches in the Holy Roman Empire. Cranach and Melancthon's work visually depicted the foundations and practice of these diametrically opposed institutions, and thus



reinforced and popularized the conclusions that Luther had come to over the course of his early conflict with the papacy.<sup>99</sup> The ramifications of this elaboration on Luther's earlier writings were substantial, as Luther's followers increasingly depicted him standing against the papal Antichrist who continued to dominate the ecclesiastical and secular world despite his clear opposition to God's injunctions.

The valorization of Luther as an authentic saint was bolstered in 1521 by his dramatic confrontation with the new Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, at an imperial diet in Worms.<sup>100</sup> Luther was called before the emperor to defend his teachings and writings on April 18, and Charles issued a final condemnation of Luther on May 25.<sup>101</sup> Charles placed Luther under the imperial ban, and this decision made Luther an outlaw as well as an excommunicate Christian, and after this judgment Elector Frederick of Saxony secreted Luther in one of his castles, the Wartburg. In the wake of the diet of Worms, Luther's confrontation with the emperor assumed a certain mythic quality. Pamphlets, such as one entitled *The Passion of Dr. Martin Luther*, drew a parallel between Luther's experience at Worms and Christ's passion.<sup>102</sup> In this pamphlet, the archbishops of the Empire

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<sup>99</sup> On the creation and reinforcement of a public perception of Luther's antithetical relationship to the traditional church through visual images and pamphlets, see: Oelke, *Die Konfessionsbildung*, 230-231.

<sup>100</sup> Luther had initially appealed to the emperor in the Fall of 1520 to protest his innocence and orthodoxy. Charles agreed to hear Luther's appeal in person, and issued an imperial safe conduct for Luther's journey to Worms. On the negotiations and assurances leading up to Worms, see: Borth, *Die Luthersache*, 99-107.

<sup>101</sup> At the Diet, Eck acted as the emperor's spokesman and prepared the imperial case against Luther's teachings as a heretic and threat to the peace of the German empire. For an overview of Luther's self-defense and the case against him, see: Fuchs, *Konfession und Gespräch*, 187ff.; and Borth, *Die Luthersache*, 108-125.

<sup>102</sup> This pamphlet appeared twice, as: *Doctor Mar. Luthers Passio durch Marcellum beschrieben* (Augsburg: S. Grimm, 1521); and as: *Ain schöner newer Passion* (Augsburg: M. Rammingen, 1521). And English translation of the text is available in: Roland Bainton, "The Man of Sorrows in

were compared to Annas and Caiaphas, while Luther was accused of heresy by false witnesses, such as Eck: —~~W~~hen many witnesses had accused him falsely there came in two tongue-thrashers, John Rabula and John Eck, the official of Trier, and they testified, He said the Council of Constance erred and that the pope is Antichrist, who, however, can commit no sin.”<sup>103</sup> Luther’s reply to these accusations was to attack the ~~p~~apists” who had distorted biblical teachings for their own ends. Luther claimed that he had resuscitated the gospel, ~~a~~nd if the German nation will follow and observe my words, she will be free from the fangs of the Romanists and the courtesans.”<sup>104</sup>

The climax of this *passio* was not the execution of Luther, but the burning of the books and an image of the reformer. Thus, even though Luther was not killed at Worms, the condemnation of his works and his bold confession of faith before the imperial estates added a new, martyrological layer to the growing perception of Martin Luther’s sanctity. The confrontation at Worms also created another level of association between Luther and Jan Hus. Both had been excommunicated by the pope, and had subsequently gone before the Holy Roman Emperor and been condemned, despite their evangelical confessions of faith. The outcomes of these confrontations were obviously quite different, but both Hus’s and Luther’s trials ultimately served as key events in the foundational narratives of the Hussite and Lutheran movements. Literary accounts of the events at Worms, similar to Mladoňovice’s narrative of Hus’s execution, gave a distinctive

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Dürer and Luther,” in *idem.*, *Studies in the Reformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 51-61, 54-58.

<sup>103</sup> Bainton, “The Man of Sorrows,” 55.

<sup>104</sup> Bainton, “The Man of Sorrows,” 56.

spin to the “passion” of their subjects and conformed them to traditional saints’ lives. The recognition of Luther’s sanctity also created a space for the beatification of further dissidents and reformers who had suffered at the church’s hands; given his prominence in the polemics surrounding Leipzig, Hus was an obvious candidate for Lutheran canonization. As Luther retreated into the Wartburg in 1521, and as he began to work on his translation of the New Testament into German, it fell to other authors to explore the ramifications of these associations and transformations. And it was this continuing research that led to the *de facto* demonization or canonization of Jan Hus by an international assemblage of Catholic authors and Luther’s supporters, respectively.

“*Lupus gregem circuit*.” Luther as Heretic

In the wake of Worms, after Luther’s defiant self-defense and Elector Frederick’s decisive action on his behalf, a significant outpouring of Catholic polemic used the history of Hus’s execution and its consequences as a warning of what could result from Luther’s heresy. In the years following 1521, a number of writers approached the “*causa Lutheri*” from the perspective that he was one more heretic in a long line of disturbers of the religious and secular peace, who should be dealt with as his forerunners had been. One of the earliest responses to Luther after Worms came from the king of England, Henry VIII, who had received a copy of Luther’s work *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church* in April of 1521.<sup>105</sup> After reading the book, Henry determined to write a refutation of it;

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<sup>105</sup> On Henry VIII’s receipt of Luther’s work and his initial response, see: Erwin Doernberg, *Henry VIII and Luther: An Account of their Personal Relations* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1961), 4ff.

although contemporary scholars question how much of that response actually emerged from the king's pen, it certainly reflected his concern and revulsion regarding Luther's attack on the traditional church. Thus, in October of 1521 Henry sent his *Defense of the Seven Sacraments against Martin Luther* to his agent in Rome, John Clerk, with instructions that Clerk present the work to the pope and give a dedicatory oration that echoed the contents of Henry's written condemnation of Luther's heresy.<sup>106</sup>

The king's *Defense* was, at its core, a refutation of Luther's attack on the seven traditional sacraments of the church. In *The Babylonian Captivity*, Luther had denied the sacramental status of ordination, extreme unction, marriage, and confirmation; he had also sought to alter the practice of the eucharist. In light of these assertions, Henry sought both to discredit Luther as a heretic and to defend the traditional sacramental practices of the church. In Clerk's presentation speech to Leo X, Henry's representative borrowed from Eck's polemics to attack the Saxon reformer. He stated that Luther's teaching "was born in the den of the Hussites' heresy," and later asserted that the Hussites were Luther's "parents and wet nurse."<sup>107</sup> Indeed, Clerk's speech was rife with references to Luther's status as the heir of the Hussite heresy:

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See also: Richard Rex, "The English Campaign against Luther in the 1520s," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series 39 (1989), 85-106.

<sup>106</sup> Preserved Smith, "Luther and Henry VIII," *The English Historical Review* 25 (1910), 656-669, 658.

<sup>107</sup> This text, along with Clerk's oration, the pope's response, and a papal bull offering a ten-year indulgence to anyone who read the *Defense*, has been edited and printed as: Pierre Fraenkel, ed., *Heinrich VIII.: Assertio septem sacramentorum adversus Martinum Lutherum* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1992). In his opening speech, Clerk referred to the rise of the Lutheran heresy: "His proximis annis in Germaniae Wintenburgensi gymnasio ex Hussitanorum haeresum latibulis nata primo, deinde orbis Christiani nullis non finibus sparsa perciosa Martini Lutheri dogmata."

Following in the footsteps of the Hussites, he added more poison, so now he might appear to be a more formidable enemy. To some extent he equals all heresiarchs in doctrine, but exceeds them in spirit and iniquity... insofar as it is easier to add wickedly to evil deeds that have been begun, than to begin wickedness, and to expand what had been founded, than to found something.<sup>108</sup>

This analysis of Luther's heresy as a continuation and expansion of the Hussite heresy a century earlier developed out of the *Defense*'s sacramental focus. The Bohemians had attacked the eucharist itself, so it was natural that Luther had moved beyond their critique and against the other sacraments. Henry himself, in the *Defense*, disparagingly referred to Luther's adoption of Hussite beliefs. Concerning his teaching on the eucharist, the king noted: "In this matter, Luther clearly reveals what drives his soul, so that he now soothes the Bohemians, whose perfidy he had previously detested."<sup>109</sup> In Henry's mind, Luther's shifting position vis-à-vis the Bohemians resulted from the fact that Luther was considering a flight to Bohemia. The English king believed that the Germans had had enough of Luther, and were preparing to drive him off. Thus, Luther was making ready to return to the womb that had figuratively borne him.

Henry's *Defense of the Seven Sacraments*, and Clerk's dedicatory speech, did not develop the links between Luther and the Hussites in any sort of systematic manner. The accusation of Luther's renewed and exacerbated Hussitism was a rhetorical gesture designed to discredit Luther, but the pamphlet

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Clerk also referred to the Hussites as Luther's "parentem et altricem." See: Fraenkel, *Assertio septem sacramentorum*, 107 and 109.

<sup>108</sup> "Hussitanis vestigiis adhaerens tantum insuper veneni addidit, ut nunc tanto formidabilior hostis appareat, quanto magis haeresiarchas omnes doctrina aequat: spiritu et iniquitate vincit – tanto quidem graviore cum periculo, quanto male inceptis peiora addere facilius est, quam male incipere, et inventa augere quam invenire." Fraenkel, *Assertio septem sacramentorum*, 109.

<sup>109</sup> "Hoc loco plane se ostendi Lutherus, quid agitet in animo, quum Boemos, quorum perfidiam pridem execrabatur, nunc tam blande vicissim demulceat." Fraenkel, *Assertio septem sacramentorum*, 136.

contained no extended doctrinal or historical comparison between the Bohemians and the Saxon heretic (perhaps because no one in Henry's court was that familiar with Hus's teachings). Following the publication and translation of the *Defense* into German, other authors did expand on the identification made by Henry and Clerk. In 1523, for example, the Catholic polemicist Johannes Cochlaeus published a lengthy excerpt from the chronicle *Wandalia* by Albert Krantz, which covered the history of Bohemia from the reign of King Wenceslas until the ascension of King Sigismund to the Czech throne in 1436.<sup>110</sup> Krantz's chronicle was unsympathetic towards the Hussite movement, and he had a particular interest in Bohemia's relations with the German lands, and the political and military insecurity that resulted from the Hussite revolt against the church and their king. The chronicle also documented the relations between Czechs and Germans within Bohemia, especially at the Charles University in 1409 and during the initial struggle over Sigismund's status as heir to the throne in 1419. Broadly speaking, Krantz's narrative consistently emphasized the opposition between "the majority of Germans, who were faithful and good Christians," and the Bohemian heretics, who "raged cruelly against all the faithful."<sup>111</sup>

Krantz's attention to the natural antipathy between Czechs and Germans certainly would have turned Luther's defense of Hus into an act of betrayal. This

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<sup>110</sup> *Wandalia* (Köln: Johann Soter, 1519) was one of Krantz's histories of "Germania Magna" which also included the books *Dania* and *Saxonia*. Cochlaeus published his German translation of the relevant passages as: *Hystoria Alberti Krantz von den alten hussen zum Behemen in Keiser Sigmunds zeiten, etc.* (Strasbourg: Johannes Grüninger, 1523). On Krantz's work and influence as a historian, see the recent monograph: Ulrich Andermann, *Albert Krantz: Wissenschaft und Historiographie um 1500* (Weimar: Verlag Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1999), especially 249ff.

<sup>111</sup> In discussing anti-monastic violence in Prague, Krantz compared "eins grossen teils die tütschen, die da glaubig und gut Christen waren," with the Bohemians, who "wüchsen die ketzer und wüteten wider alle Christglaubigen." See: Krantz, *Hystoria*, C2r.-C2v.

interpretation of the chronicle itself was only heightened by the introduction and epilogue to the text written by Cochlaeus, who distinguished himself over the first thirty years of the Reformation as Luther's most prolific and vociferous opponent.<sup>112</sup> Cochlaeus dedicated this work to Duke George of Saxony, the main secular supporter of Catholic polemicists against Luther in the Empire; he also praised the "mighty" King of England, Henry, who opposed Luther's heresy with his weighty words.<sup>113</sup> According to Cochlaeus, he had made this history available for a simple reason. He hoped that by revealing the history of the "old Hussites," the public would comprehend that "this new font of heresy and disunion [i.e. Luther] can never do good things, bring good things, or end in any good thing."<sup>114</sup> Cochlaeus warned that Luther's heresy would ultimately result in greater chaos than Hus's had, as "Luther has bragged of himself for a long time, that if Hus was a heretic, then he [Luther] was ten times the heretic."<sup>115</sup> Cochlaeus further worried that the sheer number of Luther's books available in both Latin and German would provoke rebellion and bloodshed such as had never been seen before. Indeed, Cochlaeus feared that Luther's heresy would result not "in a little spark, but in a great and destructive fire, which no one will be able to put out except with

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<sup>112</sup> From 1522-1525, Cochlaeus wrote eighteen original works against Luther and his supporters, and also edited or translated fourteen other texts. On Cochlaeus's initial publication efforts on behalf of the Roman church, see: Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 209. For Cochlaeus's biography and long-term role in anti-Lutheran polemics, see below, chapter 6, especially fn. 102 and following.

<sup>113</sup> Cochlaeus praised "den grossmechtigen künig von Engelland, dieweil e.f.g. so unrüwigen und ressigen wolffen mit teglichen streit so ernstlich wert und widerstat." Krantz, *Hystoria*, A2r.

<sup>114</sup> "Hab ich dise hystorien der alten hussen mit schlechten worten vertütscht. Daraus meniklich abnemen mag, dz newe fünd ketzeryen und zertrennungen nimer güt thuen, nichtz gütz bringen, kein güt end nemen." Krantz, *Hystoria*, A2r.-A2v.

<sup>115</sup> "Und luther hat sich lang berüme was Jo. Huss ein ketzer gewesen sei, so sei er x. mal me ein ketzer." Krantz, *Hystoria*, A2v.

massive distress and sorrow.”<sup>116</sup> Considering the upheaval that heresy inevitably caused, Cochlaeus ended with an admonition: —Therefore the common man should not believe in new teachings lightly, but live in obedience to authority at all times, and not esteem novelty, because it always begets misery, suffering, and adversity.”<sup>117</sup>

With this text, Cochlaeus established an admonitory parallel between the fifteenth-century Hussite movement and Luther’s incipient reform. Cochlaeus’s comparison here was outcome driven; it was the political turmoil and religious violence that resulted from religious novelty that linked Luther to the Hussites. Other Catholic authors sought to establish a more systematic and theological set of connections between Luther and the heretics that had come before him. One anonymous author, for instance, published a pamphlet entitled *The Articles and Origins of the Waldensians, the Poor of Lyons, John Wycliffe, and Jan Hus*.<sup>118</sup> This text ultimately united all of these heretics into a “school of knaves” (*–buben schule*) whose teachings had inspired and sustained each other. Hus had been “trained and poisoned” by the teachings of Wyclif, who in turn had “studied and been taught” the heresy of the Waldensians and the Poor of Lyons.<sup>119</sup> The body of this pamphlet detailed the teachings of all these heresies, and in these descriptions

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<sup>116</sup> –damit nit utz kleinen füncklin ein gross und schedlich feüer werd, das darnach nieman dan mit grosser not und schaden mocht verleschen.” Krantz, *Hystoria*, F4r.

<sup>117</sup> –Darzu sol der gemein man nit leichtlich an solche nüwe ler glauben, sunder alle zeit in gehorsame seiner oberkeit leben, und nicht nüwes ansahen, dan es alwege gross leid, iamer, und not gebiert.” *Ibid*.

<sup>118</sup> *Artikel und ursprung der waldenser, und der armen von Lugdum, auch Joannis wicleffens und Joannis Hussen* (Nuremberg: Jobst Gutknecht, 1524).

<sup>119</sup> Regarding Hus’s education, the author noted: –Studieret da selbst in der ketzerey Wycleffs hieroben vermeldet underweyset und vergiffet worden hat der selbig die gemelten artikel Wycleffs.” Similarly, regarding Wycliffe’s studies he stated: –In sollicher obgemelter der Waldenser und Lugduner ketzerey und buben schule ist erzogen Johannes Wycleff in Engelandt welcher so studiert und geleret wardt.” See: *Artikel und ursprung*, B3v. and B1v.



the author was fairly accurate. He highlighted the Waldensians' emphasis on the apostolic life and the preaching of the gospel. Regarding the Poor or Lyons, he emphasized their rejection of the Catholic church as the whore of Babylon, their claims to an origin at the time of Pope Sylvester (which the pamphlet's author disproved as a historical fantasy), and the sect's Donatism. For Wycliffe, the pamphlet concentrated on his denial of the pope's primacy, his belief in remanence, his loathing of the mendicant orders, and the limitations he sought to impose of the church's wealth and claims to temporal authority. As for Hus, the author was fairly repetitive. He noted that the Bohemian had denied the existence of Purgatory, rejected the primacy of the Roman bishop, and attacked both the mendicant orders as founded by the devil and the secular priesthood as too wealthy. In a final note, this pamphlet also decried the practice of lay communion in both kinds, which the author attributed to the German Master Peter of Dresden, who had initiated the practice in Prague.

This text never mentioned Luther by name. In spite of this absence, I would suggest that this pamphlet was intended to be a short reference on the origins of heretical ideas that had arisen again with Luther, so Catholics could recognize the diabolical pedigree of his teachings. Among the errors of Wyclif, the author included: ~~It~~ is not necessary to salvation to believe that the Roman church is the highest among the churches."<sup>120</sup> Eck had accused Luther of exactly this error at Leipzig, and many of the other heretical ideas in this pamphlet would have been familiar to an audience that had followed the development of Luther's

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<sup>120</sup> ~~Est~~ ist nit auss notturft der seligkait zu glauben die Römische kirch die obersten zu sein unter den kirchen." *Artikel und ursprung*, B2r.

conflict with the papacy.<sup>121</sup> In particular, the many references to the idea that “the Roman church is a synagogue of the devil,” or that ecclesiastical sanctions did not matter because the prelates of the church were “the court of the Antichrist” would have resonated with the reading and listening public in 1524.<sup>122</sup> Polemical ideas that had become common cultural currency in the pamphlet war between Luther and his Catholic opponents were here portrayed as the curriculum of a heretical school that had existed since the reign of Pope Innocent II in the mid-twelfth century.

The implicit ties at the center of the *Articles and Origins* were made explicit in another text, the Dominican Bernhard von Luxemburg’s *Catalogue of all Heretics*.<sup>123</sup> This text was originally published in 1522 in Cologne, where Bernhard was a professor of theology and diocesan inquisitor. It was reprinted in Cologne in 1523, 1525, and 1529, in Paris in 1524, and in Strasbourg in 1527. The *Catalogue* comprised four books. The first was a general consideration of the nature and characteristics of heretics, and drew heavily on biblical, patristic, and medieval sources to create an exhaustive portrait of those who propagated theological errors. The second and third books were a “catalogue of three-hundred heretics,” arranged alphabetically. Bernhard equated these three hundred men to the three hundred foxes that Samson used to burn the Philistines’ grain in Judges

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<sup>121</sup> See above, fn. 32.

<sup>122</sup> “Die Römische kirche ist ein Sinagog des teuffels und der Babst ist nit der nechst Vicarius oder Stadthalter Christi und der Aposteln;” “Der bann des Babstes und eist yegklichen Prelaten ist nit zu achten wann sie seind die gerichte des Endechrists.” *Artikel und Urpsrung*, B1v and B3r.

<sup>123</sup> Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus haereticorum omnium pene, qui a scriptoribus passim literis proditi sunt* (Cologne: Eucharius Cervicornus, 1522).

15.<sup>124</sup> Bernhard explained this image: —Samson’s little foxes are the people with the stain of heretical depravity, having different faces, but bound together by their burning tails, which represent the flames of arrogant vanity.”<sup>125</sup> This vanity was the most essential characteristic of heretics, since they pridefully rejected the authority of the church and presumed to replace it with their own teachings. Bernhard’s list of heretics included those from both ancient and more recent church history, and each entry included details on where and when the heretic had lived, what his most characteristic teachings had been, and who wrote against or suppressed each heresy. The *Catalogue*’s fourth book brought Bernhard’s consideration of heresy in the church into his contemporary age. In thirteen chapters, he exhaustively characterized and refuted the errors of Martin Luther, and in doing so he systematically established Luther’s essential continuity and equality with the church’s most dangerous opponents and enemies.

Throughout the *Catalogue*, Bernhard used zoological metaphors to describe heretics. Besides foxes, he compared them impure dogs, —a wolf circling the flock,” filthy pigs, cruel lions, and —ancient and twisted serpents, lying hidden in the darkness of caverns, unable to bear the bright light” of true faith.<sup>126</sup> All of these comparisons showed that heretics were bereft of human understanding as well as motivated by cruelty, greed, and the uncontrollable impulse to destroy

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<sup>124</sup> In Judges 15:5-6, Samson tied pairs of foxes together, and attached torches to their tails. Then, he released the foxes among the Philistines orchards and fields, and the crazed animals burned them all to the ground.

<sup>125</sup> —Samsonis vulpecule sunt persone labe heretica depravate, facies habentes diversas, sed caudas ignitas adinvicem colligatas, quae de vanitate flammee superbie conveniunt in hoc.” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, B4r.

<sup>126</sup> —Dicuntur etiam serpentes super pectus reptantes, antiqui et contorti, in cavernarum tenebris delitescentes, clarum solem non sustinentes, qui oppressus est eorum sensus” .Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, f. A3v.

Christ's church. Despite the threat of such men, though, Bernhard offered historical reasons for hope:

In the earliest storms of the nascent church, ferocious beasts tried to destroy the leading men of the Christian religion with the weapons of faithlessness, but were frustrated, for wisdom conquers malice, Christ conquers the world, and sincere truth conquers the darkness of empty pride. The heretics surrendered themselves to the swollen spirit of ambition, and did not meditate on the meaning of the words of divine scripture (which God only reveals to the humble), and so they died in their foolishness.<sup>127</sup>

Following this characterization, Bernhard rhetorically asked: —~~W~~ere now are these heretics?" His answer was that they ~~h~~ad become angels of darkness" whom the world had forgotten. While Bernhard here considered ancient heretics — Mani, Arrius, Sabellius, and Julian the Apostate — he included ~~t~~hat impure man, Luther," at the end of this passage.<sup>128</sup> His point in including Luther was to show that ~~t~~he truth was the conqueror of all things," (a suggestive echo of the Hussite slogan), and to therefore prove that Luther would join the company of forgotten and condemned heretics when God willed it.<sup>129</sup>

When speaking of individual heretics in the *Catalogue*, Bernhard used similar metaphors and applied his categorical statements to specific cases. In his entry on Jan Hus, for instance, Bernhard employed the metaphor of the serpent. For Bernhard, Hus's primary sin had been his propagation of error throughout Bohemia, and ~~t~~hose heretics are called Mother' who beget errors in others."

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<sup>127</sup> ~~P~~rimaeva nascentis ecclesiae tempestate, feroces beluae proceres Christiane religionis perfidiae armis delere conati sunt, at frustra, sapientia siquidem vicit malitiam, Christus mundu, et vanitatis umbras, syncera veritas. Surrexerunt haeretici ambitionis spiritu tumidi, divinae scripturae verba non sensum (quem solus deus revelat parvulis) meditantés, sed perierunt in insipientia sua." Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, A2r.

<sup>128</sup> Bernhard referred to ~~I~~mmundus ille Lutherus est, qui circa coeli cardines perambulat, et seipsum ignorat, qui suiipsius immemor, coelum terrae miscens, se totum gaudet commovere orbem." *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> ~~V~~eritas quippe super omnia victrix." *Ibid.*

Hus was then compared to an evil serpent, because ~~F~~ornication is the mother of heretics, and disorder conceives them, a viper begetting vipers.”<sup>130</sup> In a separate, collective entry on the Hussites, Bernhard also stated that almost all of the Czech lands were infected by Hus, so that ~~n~~oble Bohemia” became rotten like a ~~p~~utrid fish.”<sup>131</sup> It was his role in spreading heresy that also linked Hus to Luther. In the fourth book of the *Catalogue*, Bernhard lamented that just as ~~P~~rague (~~P~~raga”) was made corrupt (~~p~~rava”)” by Hus, so Luther had twisted Wittenberg, its university, and its noble ruler so that it had become ~~V~~iperberg.”<sup>132</sup> Indeed, Bernhard also asserted that Luther was not an ~~i~~nventor of new errors, but an imitator of old errors,” who ~~w~~as trying to revive the old, burned stalks of the Bohemians” in order to overthrow the Catholic church.<sup>133</sup> According to Bernhard, ~~t~~he Roman church has succumbed to no heresies, and he need not fear, who holds the faith that the Roman church holds.”<sup>134</sup>

Among the fourth book’s chapters on Luther, Bernhard included one that detailed the burning of Luther’s books and image in Rome on June 12, 1521.<sup>135</sup> In

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<sup>130</sup> ~~D~~e hoc heresiarcha impletur est dictus Haimonis super illud Osee.ii. Fornicata est mater eorum, confusa est quae percepit eos. Vipera viperam generans. Heretici dicuntur mater qui gignant alios in errores” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, F4r.

<sup>131</sup> ~~Q~~uidam nobilis Bohemus ex domo quam putridi piscis vocatur.” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, F2v. The Bohemians occupied a central place in Bernhard’s catalogue. Besides Hus’s entry, and this general entry on the Hussites, Bernhard also included a collective entry on the Táborites along with individual entries for: Jerome of Prague, Jakoubek of Střibro, Jan Třitka, Jan Tělivský, Jan Rokycana, Nicholas Biskupec, and Peter Payne.

<sup>132</sup> ~~P~~raga facta est prava, eoque Hussitas generavit. Ita civitas Wittenberch quasi albus mons, per Illustriss. Principem Fridericum ducem Saxonie Electorem sacri Imperii sublimata fuit, ratio illustrationis universalis studii, sed conversum est lumen eius in tenebras, et de Wittenberch facta et Viperiberch.” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, L3r.

<sup>133</sup> ~~N~~on est factus inventor novi erroris, sed veteris imitator...puto Martinus non nostre sed bohemicus antiquas stipulas combustas reviviscere conatur.” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, M1v-M2r.

<sup>134</sup> ~~E~~t nullis heresibus Romana succumbit ecclesia, non timet errare qui tenet fidem quam Romana tenet ecclesia.” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, M1v.

<sup>135</sup> On the burning of Luther’s image in Rome and Worms, and on the legend that images of Luther were often unable to be burned, see: Scribner, ~~I~~ncombustible Luther,” especially 45-46.

his description of the event, Bernhard noted that a frame was erected in the “field of games” in Rome, and on one side was painted Martin in a monastic habit, and on the other side, on small boards, was written “Martin Luther, declared a heresiarch and condemned for heretical doctrine.”<sup>136</sup> Bernhard followed this description by recounting Luther’s objection to the burning of heretics, and then included the Edict of Worms imposing the imperial ban on the Wittenberg professor. The juxtaposition here of Luther’s rejection of capital punishment for heresy with the papal and imperial condemnations of Luther for just that crime suggested that Luther’s defense of heretics, and especially Hus, against burning was primarily motivated by self-interest. Luther knew what fate awaited him, and therefore sought to invalidate the punishment his deviance merited. Ultimately, all of these texts by Catholic authors sought to make their case against Luther as persuasive as possible by linking his protest against the church to those of earlier heretics. By explicitly connecting Luther with previous heretics, authors such as Cochlaeus and Bernhard von Luxemburg sought both to highlight the danger posed by Luther and to present a series of guidelines for his condemnation and the suppression of the movement that had grown up around him. Because Luther was qualitatively identical to previous heretics, he should share the punishment that had been decreed for heretics since the time of Korah and his followers: he should be burned and eternally separated from the people of God.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> “In campo agonis... erecta erat machina, ab una parte fuit depictus Martinus in habitu monachi, ab altera parte fuit scriptum in tabellis, Martini Lutheri heresiarche doctrina heretica declarata et reprobata.” Bernhard von Luxemburg, *Catalogus*, L3v.

<sup>137</sup> In his chapter on Luther’s rejection of burning heretics, Bernhard von Luxemburg invoked the story of Korah in Numbers 16 to show that God himself had instituted capital punishment for heretics, as all heretics “Christe praefigurati sunt... qui vivus descendit ad ignem infernalem.” *Catalogus*, L4r.

### Rehabilitating Hus

The campaign against Luther conducted by men such as Eck, Emser, Cochlaeus and Bernhard ultimately failed. Indeed, according to the scholar Euan Cameron:

It backfired against the old Church to a quite remarkable degree. Catholics had hoped that prospective converts to the Reformation would fear, or be appalled by, the opprobrium and contempt traditionally felt for earlier heretics by “good Christian” society. Instead, the Protestants looked again at the older heretics and saw in them, with progressively greater certainty, a foreshadowing of their own mission. Thus the heretics did not drag the Reformers down; the Reformers dragged the heretics up.<sup>138</sup>

The continuity between Luther and medieval heretics such as Hus that Catholic authors had worked so hard to illuminate was thus a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they had succeeded in publicizing Luther’s links to previous dissidents from the church. On the other hand, however, they failed to prove decisively that this association was a sufficient cause to reject Luther. And in the first half of the 1520s, a number of Lutheran authors took up the case of Jan Hus and published both primary sources and polemical pamphlets that sought to associate him definitively with their own cause, but on their own terms. Lutheran authors considered Hus not to be a threat to order or a terrible heretic, but the first exponent of a renascent gospel and a martyr who had given his life to expose the papal Antichrist.

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<sup>138</sup> Euan Cameron, “Medieval Heretics as Protestant Martyrs,” in D. Wood, ed., *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), 185-207, 187-188.

While Hus would be the central focus of many Lutheran pamphlets over the 1520s, one of the first sources on the Bohemians that came out in Germany after Worms actually focused on Jerome of Prague. In 1521, two German translations of Poggio Bracciolini's letter describing Jerome's death were printed, one in Erfurt and one in Augsburg.<sup>139</sup> These texts had been preceded by a Latin edition of the same letter in 1518,<sup>140</sup> but it would seem that the text had gained new relevance after Luther's defense of Jerome and Hus in his *Defense and Explanation*. Poggio's letter was published without any significant introduction or explanation. In the German editions, a brief statement above the body of Bracciolini's letter merely noted that Jerome had been burned as a heretic, and that the following letter showed that ~~he~~ [Jerome] defended his case with learned speech to the last."<sup>141</sup> The pamphlet itself had no clear confessional slant. Rather, it merely reported on the death of Jerome and let Poggio's own ambivalence towards Jerome come through, an ambivalence that was marked by Poggio's obvious admiration of Jerome's humanist virtues and his sadness over the death of this potentially great man.

Other texts left less to the audiences' interpretations. In 1524, for example, an edition of the Bohemian and Moravian nobility's letter protesting the execution

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<sup>139</sup> Two editions of the Augsburg translation were printed, under the title: *Wie Hieronymus von Prag ain anhängen Johannis Huss...verurteilt und verprant worden ist* (Augsburg: Erhard Oeglin Erben, 1521). The Erfurt edition appeared as: *Ein sendt brief, wie Hieronymus eyn junger Joannis Huss Im Concilio fur ein Ketzer verbrannt* (Erfurt: Mathes Maler, 1521).

<sup>140</sup> *De Condemnatione Hieronymi in Concilio Constantiensi* (Strasbourg: Matthias Schürer, 1518).

<sup>141</sup> *Wie Jeronimus ain iunger Joannis Hussen ain bohems ketzer des glaubens berprent ward im concily zu Constentz und mit was dürstikait er antwort seinen widerparten, und zuletzt sein sach mit clüger red the auslegen.*" *Wie Hieronymus von Prag*, B2r.



of Hus was published in Basel.<sup>142</sup> A biblical epigraph on the title page made the editor's allegiances clear; citing Psalm 20:8, it noted "Those men are brought down and have fallen, but we have risen and are exalted." The introduction to the text clarified the polarized mentality implicit in this quotation, stating that the events of the Council of Constance needed to come to light, because "we saw that confessors bearing the Christian name began to be burned there, and the eyes of many were illuminated, so that having cast off fear they undertook to defend the truth against the repugnant Italian tyranny that is upon us."<sup>143</sup> By printing the nobility's letter in defense of Hus, this pamphlet sought to contradict the idea that dissent from the papacy would inevitably lead to political disorder. Here, the text's editor emphasized the alliance between Hus and the political elites of his kingdom, and how their cooperation led to the eradication of papal tyranny in Bohemia: "Nevertheless, nothing could be a greater consolation to us, than if our leaders became like this."<sup>144</sup>

A German translation of the Hussites' Four Articles was also published in 1524, in both Augsburg and Erfurt.<sup>145</sup> The text, which drew upon a confession of faith presented by the Hussites at Basel in 1433, was translated by Martin Reinhart from books he had found in a Rostock library. Some Hussite texts had

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<sup>142</sup> *Epistola LIIII Nobilium Moraviae, pro defensione Iohannis Huss, ad concilium Constantiense* (Basel: Andreas Cratander, 1524). On the original composition of this letter, see above, chapter 2, fn. 12.

<sup>143</sup> "Viderimus tum quoque cum Christiani nominis professores exuri coeperunt, illuminatos fuisse multorum oculos, ut iam tum deposito metu, veritatem tuendam susceperint, contra tam foedam in nos Italarum tyrannidem." *Epistola*, A2r.

<sup>144</sup> "Nobis interim nulla esse potest maior consolatio, quam si dicus nostri similes facti fuerimus." *Epistola*, A3r.

<sup>145</sup> Martin Reinhart, ed. and trans., *Anzaygung wie die gefallene Christenheit widerbracht müg werden in iren ersten standt* (Augsburg: Heinrich Steiner, 1524). A second edition was printed by Michel Buchfürer in Erfurt during the same year.

been printed in that city by Nicholas Rutze as early as 1482, but it does not appear that Luther or his supporters were familiar with these translations until Reinhart published his edition.<sup>146</sup> Reinhart's goal was to use this text as a demonstration of how the church could be brought back to its apostolic roots, and how the temporal powers could act to improve ~~the~~ spiritual estate with its disordered life."<sup>147</sup> For him, the Hussites' articles, especially those that mandated the punishment of manifest sin by the secular powers and dictated that the church surrender all claims to civil authority, provided a model for the necessary melioration of the spiritual estate. The articles also gained moral weight from the fact that they had emerged from the movement founded by ~~the~~ holy knight and martyr of Christ, Jan Hus, who was ~~ru~~elily killed by the synagogue of Satan, the Council of Constance."<sup>148</sup> Reinhart was concerned that the Hussites had partially forgotten what had happened to ~~—~~Jan" when they agreed to negotiate with the Council of Basel, but he still recognized the value of the Four Articles; they had functioned as a brake on the church's claims to dominion, and they had served as the basis for the establishment of a church that successfully opposed ~~the~~ accursed See and

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<sup>146</sup> The scholar Siegfried Hoyer has shown that Rutze's work on Bohemian texts was known, however, by Matthias Flacius Illyricus, who thought that Rutze had been a member of a Waldensian conventicle that collected and published heretical works. Hoyer has disproved the existence of this conventicle, but has maintained that Rutze's work constituted the earliest German publications of Hussite works. See his: ~~—~~Nicolaus Rutze und die hussitische Gedanken im Hanseraum," in K. Fritze et al., eds., *Neue Hansische Studien* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1970), 157-170; and idem., ~~—~~Jan Hus und der Hussitismus," especially 300.

<sup>147</sup> At the beginning of the text, Reinhart included three notes declaring the pamphlet's purpose. The second noted wanted to demonstrate ~~—~~Wei der gaystlichen standt der mit seinem unordenlichen lebenn dises fals die grösst ursach gebessert weden soll." The third preliminary statement offered to show ~~—~~Was der weltlichen oberkayt in disem handel züthun gebüren." See: Reinhart, *Anzaygung*, A1v.

<sup>148</sup> ~~—~~Der haylige Ritter und martrer Christi Joannes Huss in des Sathans synagog dem Concilia Constantz yemerlich vertilget." Reinhart, *Anzaygung*, A3r.

abomination, full of all darkness.”<sup>149</sup> Much like the publication of the nobility’s letter in defense of Hus, Reinhart’s publication of the Four Articles highlighted how the Hussites had allied themselves with the nobility and sought to restore their prerogatives in society, often at the expense of the church’s claims to secular prerogatives. The existence of this alliance undercut the Catholic polemicists’ equation of heresy and sedition, and it further showed how ecclesiastical reform could directly benefit the secular elites of the Holy Roman Empire.

These sources’ appeal to the secular nobility was echoed by another pamphlet written explicitly by a layman, *A Lament concerning the Great Abuse of Christian Life*.<sup>150</sup> This tract was highly anticlerical, and it decried the sinfulness of priests, the hardships they imposed on the laity, and their unwillingness to be reformed by true pastors such as Martin Luther. The author, Hans Schwalb, complained that —oupastors have a great number of goods, and an income of 500 guldens...and they do no work, they do not teach, they do not preach.”<sup>151</sup> Schwalb complained that the pope also imposed the ban on any who truly fulfilled their office, and that Catholic priests —~~sa~~ that whoever believes the words of Doctor Martin does not believe correctly and is against God,” even though ~~the~~ worthy Doctor Martin speaks the proper truth, as the apostles and Christ himself had

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<sup>149</sup> In his introduction, Reinhart referred to the papacy as ~~der~~ verfluchte stül und gewel, aller finsternus vol.” Reinhart, *Anzayung*, A3v.

<sup>150</sup> This pamphlet appeared in two editions in 1521, both under the same title: *Beclagung eines Leyens genant Hanns Schwalb uber vil missbrauchs christenlichs lebens, und darinn begriffen kürtzlich von Johannes Hussen*. One edition was printed by Johann Stuchs in Nuremberg, and the second was published by Melchior Ramminger in Augsburg. The two editions showed orthographical variations, but their content was essentially identical.

<sup>151</sup> —~~A~~er unser pastores haben grosse guetter ain Jar funffhundert gulten ein zü kommen...Und sie thün kain arbeit darumb, Sie leeren nicht, Sie predigen nicht.” Schwalb, *Beclagung*, A2v-A3r.

spoken.”<sup>152</sup> In addition to these standard anti-clerical complaints, Schwalb added a novel element.<sup>153</sup> He grounded his complaint over how the Catholic church was treating Luther in a historical account of the papacy’s treatment of Jan Hus and the Bohemians.

Schwalb was upfront in his defense of Hus, who had spoken about the power of the pope and the knavery of the priests, so they burned him and regarded him as a heretic.”<sup>154</sup> Schwalb denied that Hus was a heretic, and also defended the Bohemians as a whole against the charge that they considered Germans heretics and had killed them. In general, Schwalb protested against capital punishment for heretics or nonbelievers, saying: “One should therefore burn no one, but convert Jews and Turks with good works and learned words, and in this way bring them to the Christian faith, and not burn them with fire, which is neither legal nor godly.”<sup>155</sup> Schwalb’s protest against the execution of heretics here reflected the ideas that Luther espoused in his *Defense and Explanation of all the Articles*; it showed that Luther’s campaign against the papacy and its practices had spread to

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<sup>152</sup> “Das der wirdig Doctor Martinus die rechten warhait sagt als die aposteln und Christus selber gesagt haben. Das yeglicher unser priester sollich warhait widerruffen und sprechen wie den worten Doctor Martini glaubt glaub nicht recht und sey wider Gott.” Schwalb, *Beclagung*, A4r.

<sup>153</sup> Hans-Jürgen Goertz has argued in several books that anticlerical sentiments were a fundamental element in the popular reception and acceptance of Luther’s revolt against Rome, and has documented these anticlerical sentiments in a number of texts from the early German reformation. Since the publication of his major book on this topic, *Pfaffenhass und gross Geschrei* (München: C.H. Beck, 1987), however, many scholars have reexamined his contention that anticlericalism was central to the success of Luther’s reform. For a revision of Goertz’s thesis, see particularly the essays of B. Moeller and M. Brecht in: P. Dykema and H. Oberman, eds., *Anticlericalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York: Brill, 1993). For an overview of the debate, see the introduction to: Geoffrey Dipple, *Antifraternalism and Anticlericalism in the German Reformation: Johann Eberlin von Günzburg and the Campaign against the Friars* (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1996).

<sup>154</sup> “Also hat magister Johannes Huss den behem gesagt von dem gewalt des Babst und büberey der pfaffen darumb haben sie in gebrant, und geschätzt fur ain ketzer.” Schwalb, *Beclagung*, A2r.

<sup>155</sup> “Dannoch soll mann kainen verbrennen, Juden, Türcken mit gutten wercken gelernten worten under weysen und zum Christen glauben zihen. Und nit mit fewr verbrennen welchs nit götlich oder recht ist.” Schwalb, *Beclagung*, A2v.

a second layer of authors and polemicists with their own interests and polemical targets. This expansion of Luther's critique via other authors was an example of what Mark Edwards has called the "multiplier effect." Luther's writings influenced other authors, who incorporated his ideas into their own texts, which could then reach a broader audience of both readers and listeners.<sup>156</sup> In this way, the awareness of Hus as a forerunner of Luther whose death and legacy had relevance for the German reform spread over the course of the 1520s. The figure of Hus was becoming more than an element in Catholic authors' accusations against Luther; it was becoming a key foundation for the growing campaign against the clerical and papal abuse of power in the church.

Early in 1524, the Provincial of the Augustinian order in the Rhineland, Conrad Treger, wrote a polemical pamphlet, *An Admonition and Answer to a Worthy Common Confederation*, against the Lutheran heresy.<sup>157</sup> Treger lived in Strasbourg, a city that had begun to experience religious reform the previous year, and he was engaged in an ongoing dispute with the leaders of the city's nascent evangelical movement.<sup>158</sup> Treger's pamphlet was not ultimately effective in

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<sup>156</sup> On the idea of the "multiplier effect" as a way of analyzing the impact of publications on popular mentalities, see: Edwards, *Printing*, 37-38.

<sup>157</sup> Conrad Treger, *Vermanung bruder Conradts Treger Augustiner ordens. an ein lobliche gemeyne Eydgenossenschaft vor der Böhemschen ketzerey unnd antwort* (n.p: n.p., 1524). Treger, who was from Freiburg and had taken his doctorate in theology there, had resided in Strasbourg since 1515, when he was assigned to the Rhenish-Swabian province of the Augustinian order. He had begun to dispute Luther's teachings as early as 1521, and throughout the first half of the 1520s he continued to publish and participate in disputations on behalf of the Roman church. For a summary of Treger's life and work, see: Adolar Zumkeller, "Konrad Treger OESA (c.1480-1542)," in E. Iserloh, ed., *Katholische Theologen der Reformationszeit*, vol. 5 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1984), 74-87; and idem., "The Augustinian Theologian Konrad Treger (ca. 1480-1542) and his Disputation Theses of May 5, 1521," in F. James and H. Oberman, eds., *Via Augustini: Augustine in the Later Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation* (New York: Brill, 1991), 130-141.

<sup>158</sup> Strasbourg's urban reformation had begun in earnest in 1523, when the popular preacher Matthäus Zell, the former monk Martin Bucer, the clerical administrator and humanist Wolfgang

convincing people to turn away from the incipient reform, but his exchange with the city's reformers did attest to a larger phenomenon within the development of the German reformation; as the conflict between the Catholic church and the German dissidents intensified in the years 1523-1525, the struggle took on an increasingly apocalyptic tone that emphasized either the papacy's identity as the Antichrist or the German heretics' role as the diabolically inspired persecutors of the church.<sup>159</sup>

The *Admonition*, which was dedicated to the leadership of the Swiss cantons and was intended to demonstrate the dangers posed by Luther's heresy, highlighted seventeen lies that Luther had put forth to discredit the church, all of which Treger correspondingly refuted. In the preface to his *Admonition*, Treger sought to remind his addressees of the dangers posed by people such as Martin Luther. He began by recalling the "condemned and noxious Bohemian heresy" that had been cited as an inspiration by Luther and his followers, despite the fact that it nearly destroyed Christendom. Referring to the Hussite heresy, Treger stated: "It has not been forgotten by the enemy of peace and the human race, how much evil, fire, murder, lamentation, misery, and distress he incited through such

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Capito, and his protégé Caspar Hedio began to preach in the city. Although these men had been inspired by both Luther and Strasbourg's own tradition of urban preaching (best exemplified by Geiler von Kaysersberg in the early sixteenth century), the city's reformation developed independently from Wittenberg. On the direction of Strasbourg's reformation, see: Marc Leinhard and Jakob Willer, *Strassburg und die Reformation* (Kehl: Morstadt Verlag, 1981); Miriam Chrisman, *Strasbourg and the Reform: A Study in the Process of Change* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1967); and most recently: James Kittelson, *Toward an Established Church: Strasbourg from 1500 to the Dawn of the Seventeenth Century* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2000).

<sup>159</sup> Bob Scribner argued that the year 1524 in particular witnessed a high tide of prophetic and apocalyptic writings because of an unusual number of astrological conjunctions that occurred in that year. On heightened eschatological expectations in these years, see: Scribner, *For the Sake*, 123-124.

heresy some years before.”<sup>160</sup> Treger further asserted that the Bohemians had been worse than the Turks, and that they had based their violent acts of murder on a perversion of Jesus’ statement in Matthew 10:34 that “I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” Treger feared that Luther and his ilk were “followers of this Bohemian gospel,” and that their actions would result in more bloodshed and war.<sup>161</sup> For Treger, Luther was simply another heresiarch who would divide the church into “many cancerous sects,” and thus arouse the anger of God against the German lands. In short, Luther’s resuscitation of the foul Bohemian heresy amply demonstrated that he was one of the “false prophets” that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 7 whose words would produce only the bad fruit of dissension of conflict.<sup>162</sup>

This book provoked an almost immediate response from Wolfgang Capito, one of the leaders of the Strasbourg reform.<sup>163</sup> Capito’s text, called simply *Brother Capito’s Answer to Brother Conrad’s Admonition*, was an exhaustive rebuttal of Treger’s book.<sup>164</sup> In it, Capito dissected Treger’s preface, foreword, and each of his seventeen sections in order to defend the foundations of both Luther’s theology and the exercise of reform in Strasbourg. In his reply to Treger,

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<sup>160</sup> “Dann dem feynd des fridens und menschlichs geschlechts ist nit vergessen was grossen übeln, brand, todtschleg, angst clag, jamer und not er durch sollich ketzerey vor etlichen jaren gestiftt.” Treger, *Vermanung*, A2r.

<sup>161</sup> After discussing the Hussites’ misreading of Matthew 10, Treger noted that Luther and his followers “sollichem Böhemschen Ewangelion anhengig seind.” Treger, *Vermanung*, A3r.

<sup>162</sup> Treger stated his fear that Luther’s teachings would result in: “Die loblich Christenlich Teütsch nation in sollich angst not und qual als im unseligen Böhemerland beschehen. Und in so vil schandtlicher Secten... Wiewol uns Christus vor solchen falschen Propheten treülich warnung gethon hat, Matthei am sybenden Capital da er unns sagt. Es were vil falscher Propheten kommen doch sollen wir sie bey iren fruchten erkennen lernen.” Treger, *Vermanung*, A3v.

<sup>163</sup> On Capito’s response to Treger, and the hiss desire to allay any concerns that the reformers intended to be politically disruptive, see: James Kittelson, *Wolfgang Capito: From Humanist to Reformer* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), especially 116ff.

<sup>164</sup> Wolfgang Capito, *Antwort B. Wolffgang Fab. Capitons auff Brüder Conradts Augustiner ordens Provincials vermanung* (Strasbourg: Wolfgang Köpfel, 1524).

Capito took issue with the Augustinian's interpretation of Bohemian history, and set out his own account of the origins and development of the Hussite movement in order to refute Treger's claims that Hus's only legacy was war and dissension. In Capito's version of events, war had resulted from the illicit practice of selling indulgences (and the declaration of false crusades against Christians), Emperor Sigismund's bad faith at Constance, and the clergy's unwillingness to countenance reform. The Hussites' theological deviance was not the issue. Rather, the church's recklessness in using the sword to settle theological matters was the central concern.

Capito's history of the Hussite movement was remarkably thorough; he had read Piccolomini's history of Bohemia, and also made reference to the noble's letter in defense of Hus and the official acts of Constance and Basel.<sup>165</sup> In his account, Capito described the founding of Tábor, Žižka's role in the Hussite wars, the founding of the Orphan party after Žižka's death, and the disastrous battle of Lipany in 1434. And although Capito did acknowledge the presence of many sects and schismatic groups in Bohemia, he anachronistically placed the blame for this on the Council of Basel, whose offer of partial accommodation had fractured the Hussite movement.<sup>166</sup> Capito, much like earlier authors, refuted the

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<sup>165</sup> Capito's history of the Bohemian reform spread over twelve pages; he directly cited Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (–Die wort aus Enea Sylvio des bapst und der hystorien will ich hinach setzen"), the –Geschriff des adels an das Concilium," and the acts of the councils. Capito also referred to –Die Böemer hystori," which was an anonymus –wrrhafftig Cronik" that refuted Treger's account of events; unfortunately, Capito gave no indication of which chronicle he had read. See: Capito, *Antwort*, C4r-E2r.

<sup>166</sup> –Das auch vil secten in Boem seind erstanden hatt sein ursprung auch vom Concilio zu Basel, die haben in ettlich artickel uss krafft eins anloss nachgeben ettlich abgeschlagen und das gebuss also ins maul bracht den adel beredt, das er müssen Römisch pfaffen haben." Capito, *Antwort*, E1r. This causal explanation ignored the splits among the Hussites of the 1420s, detailed above in chapter 2.



Catholic argument that the Hussite movement had been characterized only by violence; in Capito's learned history, violence had actually been the result of ecclesiastical and imperial provocations, to which the Bohemians appropriately and lawfully responded. Thus, Hussite history did have an admonitory function for the German nation, but it pertained to the tyrannical exercise of power meant to limit or suppress reform.<sup>167</sup>

Capito's conclusions about the Catholic church's persecutory nature were couched in humanist argumentation and mild language. Other texts with similar content that emerged from Strasbourg in 1524 and 1525 were much less restrained in their anti-papal polemic. Jan Hus maintained a central place in these other texts, but it was a different Hus than had previously appeared in the pamphlet wars of the German reformation. The "new" Hus, who figured as the central actor in seven different publications, was an apocalyptic prophet who railed at the papal Antichrist.<sup>168</sup> No longer just a victim of the pope whose death had a revelatory function, Hus became an active voice whose writings had exposed the pope's true identity. Heiko Oberman has persuasively argued that Hus's death became, for Luther, the beginning of the end; Hus was "the first martyr of the Antichrist and, as such, a prophetic forerunner who enabled Luther to discover 'time' – that eschatological time shortly before the final judgment."<sup>169</sup> Hans Hillerbrand has also highlighted Luther's belief that his identification of the Pope with Antichrist

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<sup>167</sup> Kittelson notes that Capito was here warning the government of the German cities that disorder would only arise if they tried to suppress reform through violence. See: Kittelson, *From Humanist to Reformer*, 117.

<sup>168</sup> For an overview of these texts and the prophetic image of Hus in them, see: Hans-Gert Roloff, "Hus in der Reformationspolemik," in H. B. Herder and H. Rothe, eds., *Studien zum Humanismus in den Böhmischesen Ländern* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1988), 111-129.

<sup>169</sup> Oberman, "Hus and Luther," 157

marked the escalation of the end times.<sup>170</sup> The demonstration that Hus had taken initial steps towards this identification therefore added a new dimension to Luther's anti-papal rhetoric. He was no longer a singular "fox in Rama," but the last representative of a prophetic and apocalyptic tradition that had long decried the papacy's corruption.<sup>171</sup> Thus, Luther could bring the eschatological process inaugurated by Hus to its conclusion.

### Brunfels, Hus, and the Papal Antichrist

The main exponent of this newly apocalyptic Hus was Otto Brunfels, a renegade Carthusian monk who had settled in Strasbourg after 1521. Within Strasbourg, Brunfels was a bit of an outsider. He was considered "too Lutheran" by the leaders of the local reform, who had established an irenic, eclectic, and independent religious life in the city, so he never joined the inner circle of Strasbourg's preachers and reformers. He did, however, establish a relationship with Johann Schott, the main printer of Luther's works in Strasbourg, who published Brunfels's scientific and religious texts.<sup>172</sup> Schott also published many of Ulrich von Hutten's texts, and the printer may have introduced the two men after Brunfels's departure from his Carthusian convent.<sup>173</sup> Ulrich von Hutten was an imperial knight, a humanist, and the crowned poet laureate of the Holy Roman

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<sup>170</sup> Hillerbrand, "The Antichrist in the Early German Reformation," 15.

<sup>171</sup> On the intellectual creation of this chain of witnesses to Rome's corruption and identity as the church of Antichrist, see: Cameron, "Medieval Heretics," 197 ff.; and below, chapter 7, fn. 13 and following.

<sup>172</sup> On Schott's role as a printer and supporter of Luther in Strasbourg, see: Chrisman, *Lay Culture, Learned Culture*, 29.

<sup>173</sup> On the relationship between Ulrich von Hutten and Brunfels, see: Karl Hartfelder, "Otto Brunfels als Verteidiger Huttens," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 47 (1893), 565-578.

Empire. He was also an ardent nationalist, who considered the pope to be the natural enemy of the German people. He came to Luther's attention for his edition of Lorenzo Valla's work on the Donation of Constantine, and he also fought alongside Franz von Sickingen in the Knight's Revolt against the Archbishop of Trier.<sup>174</sup> Von Hutten was also a book collector, and at some point he came to own a number of Bohemian manuscripts. Brunfels, as a friend of Hutten and a scholar with wide-ranging interests, obtained these manuscripts after Ulrich's death in 1523. They would ultimately become the foundations for a three-volume collection of Hussitica that Brunfels began to edit and publish in the following year, in which Hus was portrayed as an apocalyptic prophet who had identified and decried the abomination of desolation that had established itself in the temple of God.

In August of 1524, Otto Brunfels wrote to Martin Luther, informing him of his plan to publish a number of texts by Jan Hus, and asking him for his support for this project.<sup>175</sup> Brunfels framed the entire project as a means of revealing ~~that~~ Antichrist and abomination, who sits in the temple of God, displaying himself as if he were God." This revelation was necessitated by the fact that ~~—thi~~s the time, in which people do not accept sound doctrine, but turn to the beast, and receive his mark on their right hand and on their foreheads."<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Ulrich von Hutten was born in 1488, and he died in 1523. He spent his early career as a peripatetic humanist, eventually being crowned poet laureate of the Holy Roman Empire in Vienna (the most likely place for his obtaining Hussite manuscripts). On Hutten's time in Vienna, see: Hajo Holborn, *Ulrich von Hutten and the German Reformation*, R. Bainton, trans. (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), 29. For an overview of his life, see: Carlheinz Gräter, *Ulrich von Hutten: Ein Lebensbild* (Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss Verlag, 1988).

<sup>175</sup> The text of this letter is printed in: *WABr* 3, 372-376.

<sup>176</sup> ~~—Est enim tempus, in quo sanam doctrinam non recipiunt, sed ad bestiam convertuntur, ut recipiant characterem suum in manu sua dextra et in frontibus suis. Hic est ille Antichristus et~~

Given this state of affairs, Brunfels proposed to publish the works of Jan Hus, ~~a~~ man (as you well know) of great faith, holiness, and erudition, who also... was the first in the nascent church who dared to confess Christ in the presence of the entire synagogue of Satan."<sup>177</sup> Brunfels went on to affirm the texts' authenticity and to note that he had gotten them from Hutten's library, so ~~we~~ are able to affirm in good faith and from the oldest exemplars that they are not spurious."<sup>178</sup> At the end of the letter, Brunfels requested that Luther reply to him if anything in the collection was useful, telling him ~~first~~ what was acceptable to Christ," and then including some words in praise ~~of~~ that most famous knight of immortal memory, Ulrich von Hutten, from whose treasures this was bequeathed."<sup>179</sup>

In October, Luther replied to Brunfels with a brief letter. In his note, Luther commended Brunfels's project and praised Hus lavishly: ~~I~~rejoice that Jan Hus, truly a martyr of Christ, has emerged in our age to be rightfully canonized, and so the papists might be destroyed."<sup>180</sup> Luther went on to say that he did not think his support was necessary for the project's completion, and he added: ~~I~~ have nothing to advise. I only pray that you commend me, a wretched man, to Christ in your prayers."<sup>181</sup> It seems, therefore, that Luther had only a passing

abominatio, quae sedet in ecclesia Dei, ostentans se ipsum quasi sit deus." Here, Brunfels invokes 2 Thess. 2 and Revelation 13 and 19 to describe the apocalyptic threat facing Christians in his era. See: *WABr* 3, 333 and 336.

<sup>177</sup> ~~V~~ir (tu melius nosti) multa fide, sanctimonia, et eruditione quoque... primus, qui in nascente ecclesia coram tota synagoga satanae ausus est Christum confiteri." *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> ~~Q~~uomodo vero in nostras manus venerit, quia prolixa est fabula, hoc satis dictum sit, de libris Huttenicis interceptis mihi esse redditum, et quod bona fide vetustissimisque exemplaribus testari possumus, supposititium non esse." *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> ~~S~~i quid ergo poterit tibi esse usui, primum Christo acceptit refer... deinde clarissimo equiti et immortalis memoriae Ulricho Hutteno, ex cuius relictis thesauris est." *WABr* 3, 335.

<sup>180</sup> ~~G~~audete Iohannem Huss, vere martyrem Christi, nostro seculo prodire, hoc est, recte canonisari, etiam si rumpantur papistae." This letter is printed in: *WABr* 3, 359.

<sup>181</sup> ~~N~~ihil habeo, quod moneo. Unum te oro, ut me Christo precibus commendes, miserum hominem." *Ibid.*

interest in Brunfels's project, despite his admiration for Hus. This lukewarm response apparently did nothing to diminish Brunfels's own enthusiasm, and he wrote to Luther again in the spring of 1525. He began by saying that Luther's reply had greatly affected him, and went on to extol Hus further, calling him: ~~that~~ extremely holy man, who is worthy above others who are revered. For he was the first man after Wyclif who dared to cast a stone at Antichrist, by whose actions Hus was seen to die, and who [Antichrist] now reigns over impious men with power and condemns the righteous dead."<sup>182</sup> This statement encapsulated Brunfels's goals in editing and publishing Ulrich von Hutten's Hussite texts. On the one hand, he desired to cast his own stone at the Antichrist and expose the papacy as the abomination of desolation; on the other hand, he wanted to reverse the condemnation of the ~~righteous dead~~" and publicize Hus's sanctity so he might be ~~rightfully canonized,~~" as Luther had put it. For Brunfels, Hus's writings were ideal vehicles for these related goals, as they decried the transformation of the church into a perverted ~~Antichristianity~~" and provided a detailed attack on nearly every pillar of the papacy and its power.

Despite Brunfels's protests to the contrary and his praise for Ulrich von Hutten, the great irony of his books of *Hussitica* was that almost none of the texts they contained were actually written by Jan Hus. The longest individual piece in the collection, *Concerning the Anatomy of Antichrist*, appears to have been

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<sup>182</sup> Brunfels referred to Hus as: —~~M~~xime sanctus ille vir, prae caeteris est dignus, qui celebretur. Primus fuit, qui post Vuiclephum, in Antichristum ausus est primum lapidem iacere. A quo licet succumbere est visus, tamen potenter nunc regnat, et condemnat iustus mortuus, vivos impios." This letter, which was likely written in April of 1525, has been printed in: *WABr* 3, 476-478; this quotation, 477.

written by an anonymous fourteenth-century author;<sup>183</sup> the last major text in the first volume, *On the Reign, People, Life, and Manner of Antichrist*, was an assemblage of passages from the third book of Matěj of Janov's *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*.<sup>184</sup> Brunfels attributed twenty eight sermons to Hus, but they actually came from a later, anonymous Bohemian preacher, and two biblical commentaries, on Hosea and Ezekiel respectively, should also be attributed to Matěj.<sup>185</sup> Indeed, *none* of the texts in this volume was definitively written by Hus, but that fact was likely irrelevant in 1524. Brunfels's learning, his convincing assertions of the texts' Hussite provenance (which were almost accurate), and the celebrity of Hus in Germany in the mid-1520s all would have made this collection a welcome addition to the armory of anti-Roman polemics that had arisen in the previous decade. The contents would also have resonated during a period of intense conflict between the papacy and the German cities and territories that had undertaken ecclesiastical reform.

By the middle of 1525, Brunfels had published three volumes of Hussitica. Brunfels's correspondence with Luther served as the prefaces for each individual volume, the first of which was entitled *On the Anatomy of Antichrist* and contained eight shorter tracts by Hus concerning the diabolic foundations of the visible church.<sup>186</sup> The second volume was published as *Certain Passages from the*

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<sup>183</sup> On the provenance of this text, see: McGinn, *Antichrist*, 331.

<sup>184</sup> Vlastimil Kybal, the editor of the modern edition of Janov's work, has detailed the excerpting process from the *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti* that ultimately resulted in the texts from Brunfels's collection. For a detailed summary of the correlations between the original text and the 1524 edition, see: Janov, *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, vol. 5, xxvi-xxvii. See also the introductory essay by Eric Beyreuther in: Matěj of Janov, *Opera* (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1975), 1-27.

<sup>185</sup> Kybal, *Regulae*, xxvii. See also: Bartoš, *Husitství a cizina*, 209-217.

<sup>186</sup> Otto Brunfels, ed., *De anatomia Antichristi, Liber unus* (Strasbourg: Johann Schott, 1524).

*Prophets Hosea and Ezekiel on the Horrors of the Papist Priests and Monks*, and its biblical commentaries attacked the sins of the secular and regular clergy.<sup>187</sup>

The third volume of Brunfels's collection, called *The Sermons of Jan Hus to the People*, contained twenty-eight sermons and a second, heavily illustrated text, *The Consistorial Process against the Martyr Jan Hus*.<sup>188</sup> This last work was also published separately from the sermons, and appeared in an anonymous German translation.<sup>189</sup> The titles of Brunfels's books were highly characteristic of their content. Almost every page of his collection railed against "the Antichrist who is in false Christians, and especially false prophets;"<sup>190</sup> (sermon twenty-eight in *The Sermons*) "the hypocritical priests, who do not choose work, but rest, and do not accept contempt on behalf of Christ, but honor;"<sup>191</sup> (commentary on Hosea 9 in *Certain Passages*) "and also the Antichrist, who just like Christ is made head over all false Christians, and who under the guise of the religion of Christ is contrary to the Lord."<sup>192</sup> ("Prologue in Explanation of the Kingdom of Antichrist" in *The Anatomy of Antichrist*) In short, Brunfels's edition of these works created a comprehensive image of "Antichristeitas:" a religion that was a complete

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<sup>187</sup> Otto Brunfels, ed., *Locorum aliquot ex Osee et Ezechiele prophetis, cap. v. et viii.* (Strasbourg: Johann Schott, 1524).

<sup>188</sup> Otto Brunfels, ed., *Sermonum Ioannis Huss ad populum, tomus tertius* (Strasbourg: Johann Schott, 1525). The second text in the book was entitled: *Processus Consistorialis Martyrii Io. Huss*. These volumes have also been printed together in a modern facsimile edition as: Matěj Janov, *Opera*.

<sup>189</sup> Both the Latin and German editions were also printed by Schott in 1525; the German translation appeared under the title: *Geistlicher Blüthandel Johannis Hussz zü Costentz verbrannt* (Strasbourg: Johann Schott, 1525).

<sup>190</sup> "Quapropter Antichristus est maxime in falsis christianis, et praecipitem pseudopropheta esse putandus, timendus, atque cavendus." Brunfels, *Sermonum*, 50r.

<sup>191</sup> "Nam sicut saepe iam dictum est, sacerdotes huiusmodi hypocritae, non laborem eligunt, sed quietem; non contemptum suscipere pro Ihesu, sed honorem; non pati pro virtute et veritate, sed honorabili amicitia et societate fungi." Brunfels, *Aliquot Locorum*, 15r.

<sup>192</sup> "Unde etiam Antichristus sicut Christus conformiter capitur nunc pro quolibet falso christiano divisum, qui sub specie Christi religionis, contrarius est Christo." Brunfels, *De Anatomia*, 1v.

inversion of true Christianity, replete with seduced believers, wicked priests, false prophets, and Antichrist at its head.<sup>193</sup> These three volumes ultimately comprised an encyclopedic description of Antichrist and his followers, and it served as a prescriptive guide for true Christians so they could recognize and resist the temptations and threats of the papal Antichrist.

The chief attraction of the texts was they linked the figure (if not the actual teaching) of Jan Hus, ~~an~~ apostle of the nascent church of Jesus Christ, a man outstanding in wisdom, doctrine, and clearly of blameless life,” with a number of criticisms that had become central in Luther and his allies’ struggle with the Catholic church.<sup>194</sup> As editor of the texts, Brunfels made sure that these links were impossible to miss. The texts themselves contained numerous marginal notes that highlighted key points and provided biblical references. At the end of the tract on the anatomy of Antichrist, for instance, Brunfels’s marginal notes affirmed that ~~the~~ pope is Antichrist;” that ~~the~~ Antichrist is subject to no law;” and that ~~the~~ cunning of Antichrist is founded primarily in our teachers and canons.” Finally, Brunfels noted that the Antichrist would come from Rome, which was equivalent

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<sup>193</sup> The concept of ~~Antichristeitas~~” came from the *Liber de regno, populo, vita, et moribus Antichristi*, especially in reference to the role of wicked priests in this false religion: ~~Et~~ sicut sapientia hominis lucet in vultu eius, sic depicta Antichristeitas lucet in vultu, id est, apparatu talium hypocritarum doctorum et magistrorum, apparente coram hominibus magnifico et glorioso;” and ~~Hoc~~ igitur manifestum suae Antichristeitas indicium deferent, quod seipsos corrigi nequaquam patiuntur, sed magis addunt odire ex suos animos, fideles licet correctores.” See: Brunfels, *De Anatomia*, 93r-93v.

<sup>194</sup> ~~Joannes~~ Huss, nascentis Ecclesiae Ihesu Christi apostolus, vir sapientia, doctrina, vitaeque inculpatae praestantia clarus, populum Boemicum fide instituit.” This description came from Brunfels’s prologue to: *De Anatomia Antichristi*, iv.



to Babylon, and that he had countless followers, because he seduced many —on account of his sweet affability.”<sup>195</sup>

In case these marginalia were not sufficient, Brunfels also added a series of appendices to *On the Anatomy of Antichrist*. These addenda discussed the scriptural names of Christ and Antichrist, the prophecies concerning each, biblical descriptions of Christ and Antichrist through their respective body parts, and a —*Summa* of the entire life” of Christ and Antichrist.<sup>196</sup> In the —*Summae*,” Brunfels laid out twenty-three opposing features of Christ and Antichrist. Several of these seem to come straight from the *Passional Christi et Antichristi*, including the tenth: —Christ fled the royal office, and the pomp of this world,” while Antichrist —Possesses a kingdom, provinces, and the world.”<sup>197</sup> The sixteenth opposition contrasted Christ’s crown of thorns with pope’s triple tiara, while the twentieth characteristics of their lives noted that Christ —bore his cross with his body,” while the Antichrist —does not know the cross of Christ.”<sup>198</sup> These contrasting marks of Antichrist’s and Christ’s life echoes the first, second, and sixth antitheses of the *Passional* almost directly, thus suggesting that Brunfels consciously conformed his (and —Hus’s”) description of Antichrist to the visual and polemical propaganda that had emerged from Luther’s conflict with the papacy. We can understand

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<sup>195</sup> —Papa antichristus;” —Atichristus nulli iudicio subiectus;” —Vrsutia Antichristi Fundator prima canonistarum et magistrorum nostrorum;” —Atichristi origo ex Roma; —Babylon est Roma;” —Seducet ante se innumerabiles.” For these marginal notes, see: Brunfels, *De Anatomia*, 39v., 41v., 43r., 44r., and 45v.

<sup>196</sup> All told, there are sixteen pages of appendices describing the various aspects of Christ and Antichrist, and their absolute opposition to each other. For instance, Brunfels included forty-eight biblical prophecies for both Christ and Antichrist, and had them on facing pages of each other. The appendices do not have page numbers, but are marked as: Ca1r-Dd3r.

<sup>197</sup> —x: Fugit ministerium regni et pompan huius mundi;” —x: Possidet regna, provincias, et orbem terrarum.” See: Brunfels, *De Anatomia*, Dd3r.

<sup>198</sup> —xx: Crucem gestat in corpore;” —x: Crucem Christi nescit.” *Ibid.*

Brunfels's volumes of *Hussitica*, then, as an encyclopedic grounding of Lutheran anti-papal polemic in its scriptural and historical foundations as articulated and represented by Jan Hus.

Although Brunfels considered Hus to be a valuable witness to the pope's identity as the Antichrist, he was also aware that Hus had not simply been a Lutheran born a century too early. Thus, after his appendices on the Antichrist, Brunfels included two final addenda to *On the Anatomy of Antichrist*. The first of these listed ten errors held by Jan Hus, which mostly concerned Hus's contention that there were two separate estates in human society, the secular and the spiritual, and that the spiritual power (*potestatem*) governed a separate sphere of authority.<sup>199</sup> Here, Brunfels acknowledged that Hus had not gone far enough in his critique of the papacy and its claims to dominion; despite Hus's moderation on this point, Brunfels still found many things in his writings that could serve as a basis for the Lutherans' assault on the institutions of the Catholic church. In an appendix listing the "Evangelical Articles of Jan Hus," Brunfels therefore emphasized Hus's distaste for the monastic life, his support of preaching, and his affirmation that "interior confession alone is sufficient for the salvation of sinners."<sup>200</sup> Five articles also directly attacked the papacy's authority, claiming that a pope who had possessions was a heretic, that the indulgences of the pope

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<sup>199</sup> The first two articles among Hus's errors stated: "Quod duplicem potestatem facit, secularem et spiritualem;" and "Quod duos gladios tribuit Ecclesiae, et praelatis eius, spiritualem et carnalem." The sixth noted: "Quod gubernationem sacerdotum spiritualem (ut ipse vocat) similiorem esse dicit gubernationi Die, et propinquiores ad ipsam, quoque gubernationem Regum terrae." See: Brunfels, *De Anatomia*, Dd3v.

<sup>200</sup> Brunfels listed twenty-five evangelical articles, of which four denied the validity of the monastic life ("Peccant fundantes claustra, et ingredientes sunt viri diabolici"), three attacked the wealth of the clergy ("Contra sacram scripturam est, quod viri ecclesiasticae habent possessiones"), and two separate articles affirmed the virtue of preaching (even without a bishop's permission) and the sufficiency of interior confession. *Ibid.*

were not binding, and denying that the pope was the vicar of Christ. The last article was the most explicit: —**THE KINGDOM OF THE POPE IS THE KINGDOM OF ANTICHRIST.**”<sup>201</sup>

It was in the “paratextual” elements of the Brunfels’s collection that he made his argument about Hus’s relationship to the German reformation most clear. While the texts that Brunfels published under Hus’s name certainly spoke for themselves in their attacks on clerical sinfulness and their description of the Antichrist’s machinations, it was the collection’s letters, appendices, and indexes that repeatedly and emphatically placed —Hus’s” critique within the context of the contemporary conflict that surrounded and included Brunfels. Brunfels made Hus’s relevance for that conflict especially evident in a final publication that he included with *The Sermons of Jan Hus to the People*. This last text was entitled *The Consistorial Process and Martyrdom of Jan Hus*; it contained an account of the trial and execution of Hus and an exegetical essay on the book of Revelation that proved that the papacy was Antichrist. Brunfels, as always, provided his reader with a detailed history of how he got his sources for this text, noting that they had originated in Bohemia and had come to him from Ulrich von Hutten’s library.<sup>202</sup> The source for this pamphlet does not appear to have been Mladoňovice’s long narrative or short *passio* concerning Hus’s time in Constance. Brunfels’s narrative contained almost no references to the individual participants

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<sup>201</sup> The ninth article called papal excommunications the “*ensura Antichristi*,” the thirteenth outlawed the popes’ possessions, the seventeenth denied the value of indulgences, and the the fourteenth asserted: “*Ecclesia Romana est synagoga Satanae; nec PAPA est immediatus vicarius Christi.*” The last article read: “*REGNUM PAPAE, [sic] EST REGNUM ANTICHRISTI.*” *Ibid.*, emphases original.

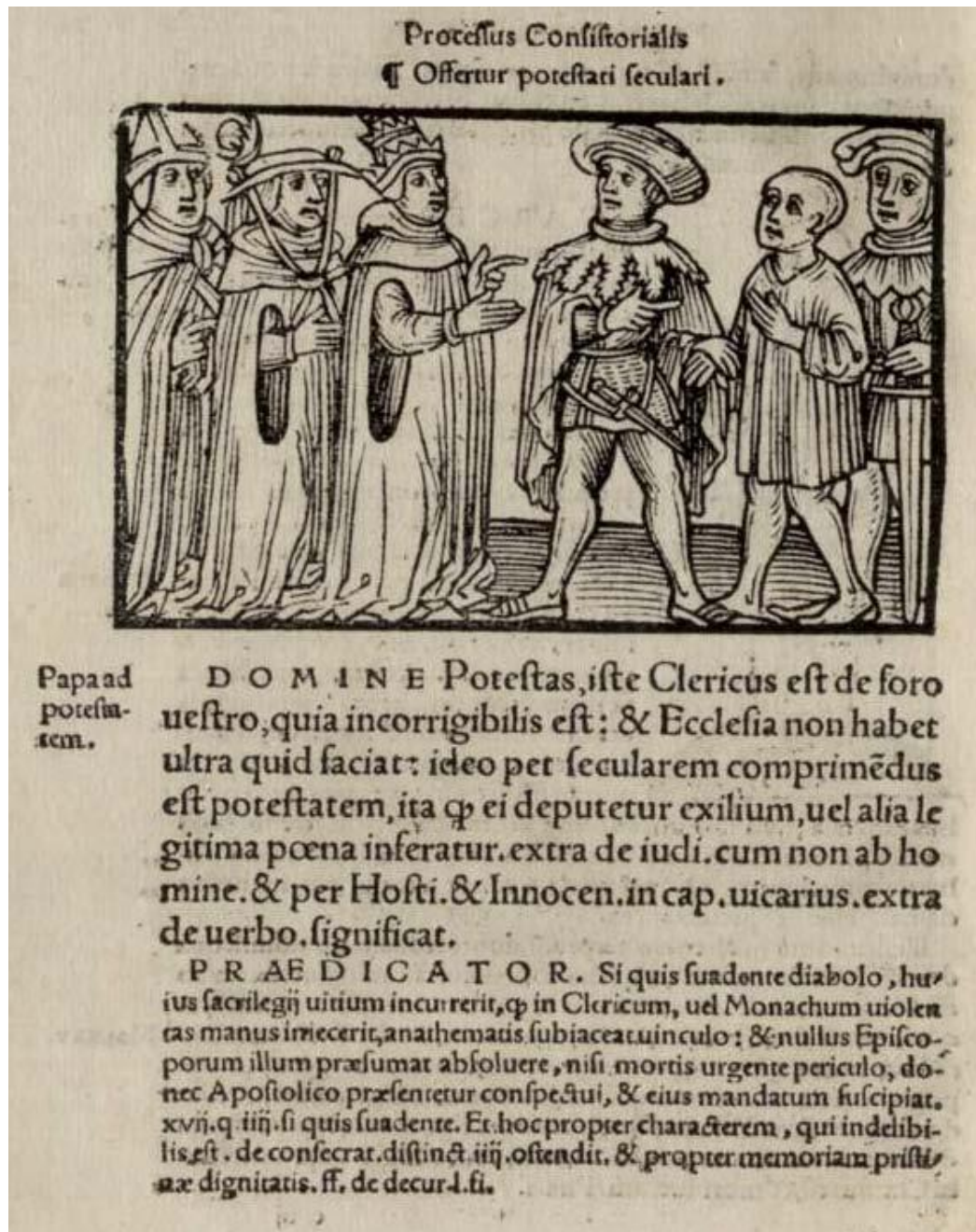
<sup>202</sup> “*Nunc ut cunq̄ue de innocentia et martyrio suo, hystoria venit in manus...Ea, mirabili, providentia Dei, ex thesauris relicta est fel. mem. christianissimi et doctissimi viri Ulrichi ab Hutten: cui etiam ex Behemia est reddita.*” Brunfels, *Processus Consistorialis*, A1v.

in the trial identified by Mladoňovice and lacked specific details about Hus's protestations and final actions when being led to his pyre. Indeed, Brunfels's text had no pretensions of being a detailed, narrative account of Hus's trial and death; rather, it was a typological interpretation of Hus's martyrdom as an idealized confrontation between a pious Christian and Antichrist's representatives on earth.

The text concerning Hus's trial and execution proceeded by using woodcuts to narrate the events of the actual judicial process against Hus, while biblical and patristic passages served as a commentary on the events themselves. The images in the pamphlet began by showing Hus preaching and serving communion in both kinds, while a third image showed the ~~n~~otaries who sit with ill temper, writing and observing the preacher, so they might accuse him."<sup>203</sup> Other images depicted Hus's arrest and a hearing before an episcopal judge and Hus's defrocking during his trial. The commentary on the images established the biblical precedents for Hus's words and deeds and juxtaposed these with the decretals and canon law that supported the church's positions against Hus. The typological nature of this text was most clear in its portrayal of Hus's trial. In it, a dialogue between the anonymous pope and an anonymous secular lord (called only *-Potestas*" in the text) was lifted directly from the Bible, with references provided in the text itself: (see figure 3)

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<sup>203</sup> ~~S~~edent Notarii cum stomachos, scribentes et observantes PRAEDICATOREM, ut accusent." Brunfels, *Processus Consistorialis*, A2r.



**Figure 3: Hus being turned over to Emperor Sigismund**  
*Processus Consistorialis Martyrii Io. Huss, C3v.*

**Secular Power:** What accusation do you offer against this man? (Jn. 18)

**Pope, with his prelates and bishops:** If this man were not an evildoer, we would not hand him over to you. (Jn. 18) He has provoked the people with his preaching. (Lk. 22)

**Secular Power:** You take him, and judge him according to your law: I find no guilt in him. (Jn. 19)

**Pope, and his followers:** It is not proper for us to execute anyone. (Jn. 18)  
But if you allow this man to go, you are no friend of Caesar. (Jn. 19)<sup>204</sup>

In this text, then, the portrayal of Hus's execution was denuded of its distinctive marks. His trial became a stand-in for any miscarriage of justice by the papal church, and Hus's fate therefore came to represent the potential outcome of any reformer's attempts to confront and condemn the power of the papal Antichrist. In the final illustration of Hus's trial, though, Brunfels offered some hope for those who opposed the Antichrist. Despite the secular power's and the pope's sanction of Hus's execution, the image of Hus's death showed Hus's soul being received by an angel above his pyre, which marked him as a saint. (see figure 4) Brunfels hence offered two biblical passages as confirmation of the pictorial valorization of Hus. He cited Revelation 14:12: —**H**is is the patience of the saints, who maintain the mandates of God and faith of Jesus Christ;" and Daniel 11: —**T**hey will perish in the flame of fire, so that they might be purified."<sup>205</sup> This text was, in many ways, an appropriate cap to the incorporation of both the history of Hus's martyrdom and his writings in the nascent Lutheran tradition. Between the debate at Leipzig in 1519 and the publication of Brunfels's collection of Hussitica in 1524 and 1525, Hus's words and his death had come to provide ample proof of the Antichrist's dominion in the church. Hus had also

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<sup>204</sup> —**P**otestas: Quam accusationem affertis adversus hominem hunc? (Ioh. 18)| Papa, episcopi et Praelati cum suis: Si non esset hic malefactor, non tibi tradissemus eum. (Ioh. 18) Conmovit enim populum, praedicans (Luc. 22)| Potestas: Accipite eum vos, et secundum legam vestram iudicate eum: ego nullam invenio in eo caussam. (Ioh. 19)| Papa et sui: Nobis non licet interficere quenquam (Iohan. 18) Sed dimittis hunc, non es amicus Caesaris. (Iohan. 19)" Brunfels, *Processus Consistorialis*, C4r.

<sup>205</sup> Brunfels's quotation —**R**uent in flammam ignis, ut dealbentur," (*Processus Consistorialis*, D2r.) is actually a conflation of the Vulgate translation of Daniel 11:33 and 35, which reads: (v.33) —**E**t docti in populo docebunt plurimi: et ruent in gladio, et in flamma;" and (v.35) —**E**t de eruditibus ruent, ut conflentur, et eligantur, et dealbentur."

become a partner – albeit a junior partner – in Luther’s work of reform, despite the fact that he had been executed at Constance over a century earlier. Through the dissemination of Hus’s works, including those that were falsely attributed to him, and through the proliferation of both hostile and sympathetic accounts of his death, the links between Luther and Hus assumed a significant place in the polemics of the German reformation, links that would be highlighted time and again as the German reformation developed and spread over the course of the sixteenth century.



**Figure 4: The Execution of Jan Hus**  
*Processus Consistorialis Martyrii Io. Hussi, D2r.*

## Conclusion

Many scholars have seen a shift in the polemics that shaped the German reformation around the years 1525-1526. The suppression of the Peasants' War's revolutionary violence in 1525, on the one hand, and the establishment of political alliances based around confessional allegiance at the Diet of Speyer in 1526, on the other, demonstrated that the Reformation was discovering its limitations in terms of social change even as it continued to spread throughout the German principalities and cities of the Empire. Harry Oelke has suggested that the period from 1526 until about 1538 should be understood as the "stabilization of the Reformation."<sup>206</sup> David Bagchi, following Hubert Jedin, has preferred to use the more militant terminology of "trench warfare," in which both the nascent Protestant confessions and the Catholic church turned towards consolidating their gains, or at least solidifying their territorial possessions, and shoring up the ideological foundations of their churches.<sup>207</sup> Miriam Chrisman has analyzed this transformation in terms of the pamphlet battles that each side continued to wage, and has suggested that in 1525 publicists on both sides shifted from a polemical to a propagandistic style. While the former sought to provoke "rational, if contentious discourse," the latter's goal was indoctrination: "the object was to control group attitudes and behavior."<sup>208</sup> All of these scholars are describing a similar process, if from different vantage points. All of them agree that after 1525 the emphases in the publication and propagation of the German reformation

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<sup>206</sup> Oelke, *Die Konfessionsbildung*, 256ff.

<sup>207</sup> Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 14.

<sup>208</sup> Miriam Chrisman, "From Polemic to Propaganda: The Development of Mass Persuasion in the Late Sixteenth Century," *ARG* 73 (1982), 175-195.



shifted towards appeals for political support and toward social and religious consolidation.

With this shift, the urgent need to expose the papal Antichrist faded somewhat. The construction of political alliances, the introduction of visitations and catechisms among the Lutherans, and the continuing impulse towards settling religious differences through colloquies all militated against the continuing escalation of apocalyptic rhetoric. Despite this shift, however, Jan Hus maintained his place within Protestant rhetoric and ideology, especially as the desire for a peaceful settlement to the Empire's religious schism led towards the convocation of a general council to resolve the dispute. In the discussion over the council, Hus's experience at Constance, which had already become known through the publication of pamphlets such as *The Consistorial Process and Martyrdom of Jan Hus*, played a central role in Lutheran protestations over the impending council's authority. There was a shift in how Hus was used by Lutheran authors, especially as new sources from the fifteenth century became available, but underlying this transformation was a continued, and deeper, Lutheran engagement with history. This chapter has argued that Martin Luther and his earliest supporters had turned to the past, and especially the Hussite past, in order to provide their campaign against the papal Antichrist with an reformist pedigree and an exemplary forerunner in the figure of Jan Hus. In place of Koslofsky's vision of the sixteenth century's "profane, finite, finished, and separate" past, then, I would suggest that Luther and his allies looked back and saw a history full of typological parallels, prophetic voices, and an eternal struggle between Christ and Antichrist

in which they were still engaged. Throughout the 1530s, this perception only gained strength as Jan Hus assumed a role as the German reformation's John the Baptist, who had foretold the coming of one greater than himself.

## Chapter Six

### *“Mittet post me magis strenuos:”* The Drama of Hus’s Death and the Reformation in the 1530s

#### Introduction

Over the course of the 1530s, one of the major theological and political issues that continued to divide Protestants and Catholics was the acceptability of a church council as an arbiter in the growing rift between the confessions. Although Martin Luther had called for a council to hear his case in the very first years of the previous decade, many questions about the viability of a council plagued the reformer and his followers.<sup>1</sup> Would the pope preside over a council? Where would it be held? What would the chief purpose of the council be? What would the lay nobility’s role be in the council? All of these concerns, and an abiding skepticism over the papacy’s willingness to seriously pursue reform, made convening a church council immensely problematic. Despite the difficulty of answering the above questions, the council continued to loom large in the debates between Lutherans and Catholics throughout the 1530s. Given intensifying Catholic efforts to convene a council, climaxing in Paul III’s issuing a bull of convocation in June of 1536, Lutheran authors launched a multi-media campaign

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<sup>1</sup> Luther had appealed to a future council as early as 1520 in response to the pope’s condemnation of his teaching in the bull *Exsurge Domine*. According to Hubert Jedin, the absence of a conciliar condemnation of Luther’s teaching provided a way for many German people to continue to read his books without worrying about their definitively heretical nature. See: Hubert Jedin, *History of the Council of Trent*, 2 vols., E. Graf, trans. (London: Nelson, 1957), vol. 1, 187.

to delegitimize church councils and question the good intentions of the Catholic party regarding their proposed council.<sup>2</sup>

In the context of this campaign, Jan Hus again became a central figure in Lutheran polemics against the Catholic church. One of the strongest Lutheran arguments against church councils was the sordid history of those gatherings. Rather than holy assemblies of the united church, the councils had revealed themselves to be the “synagogue of Satan” that overstepped their jurisdiction and routinely undermined or suppressed true faith.<sup>3</sup> In its condemnation and execution of Hus, then, the Council of Constance had simply taken its place in the long line of councils that had actively and even violently worked to destroy the true church. If the pope himself had come to be clearly identified as the Antichrist over the first fifteen years of the Lutheran reform, then during the 1530s the council came to be understood as a primary arena in which the papal Antichrist acted: “He saturates our church with innocent blood as a true scourge and Satan’s own servant, that father of all lies and sponsor of all murder.”<sup>4</sup> The Lutherans’ rhetoric against church councils drew on history to make its point; all one had to do was look back through the annals of the church to perceive the overwhelming evidence of the councils’ misdeeds. Luther himself spearheaded this

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<sup>2</sup> For a full summary of the Lutheran arguments against councils, see: Thomas Brockmann, *Die Konzilsfrage in den Flug- und Streitschriften des deutschen Sprachraumes 1518-1563* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 262-287. See also: Jedin, *History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 1, 320ff.

<sup>3</sup> This terminology came from: Johannes Agricola, ed., *Disputatio Ioannis Hus, quam absolutum ageret Constantiae, priusque in carcerem coniceretur* (Wittenberg: Nicolaus Schirlenz, 1537). Agricola noted that Hus was killed, “propter confessionem Evangelii gratiae, et gloriae Beati Dei, A Synagoga Satanae, quae Constantiae confluerat.” (Aiiiv)

<sup>4</sup> “Und erfülle also, wie ein rechter rüstzeug und eigener knecht Satane, des vater aller lügen und stifter aller mörderi, unser kirchen mit unschuldigen blut.” See: Martin Luther, “Aschreibung eines heiligen freien christlichen Concilii” (1538), *WA* 38, 280-289, 285.

historiographical campaign, authoring eighteen works on historical councils and the current debate from 1532-1539.<sup>5</sup> In the framework of Luther's literary output, Hus's surviving letters from Constance, the accounts of his trial, and the ample records of his teachings made him an ideal historical centerpiece for Lutheran anti-conciliar polemics. His story provided authentic proof of the ways in which councils had deliberately acted to destroy God's people on earth.

Thus Johannes Agricola, one-time student of Luther's and a schoolmaster in Luther's hometown of Eisleben, took up the task of bringing Hus's story to the German public's attention.<sup>6</sup> He edited and translated Hus's correspondence, published tracts on Hus's eucharistic understanding, and even shepherded the Hussite *Passionsbericht* of Petr of Mladoňovice to press in 1529. With all of these pieces, Agricola sought to reach the German public with his message about the wickedness of church councils. His efforts to communicate the perfidy of the Catholic church culminated in the first Lutheran history play, the *Tragedia Johannis Huss* (1537).<sup>7</sup> This play depicted the death of Hus under the rubric of a saint's play, in which the humble and holy hero chose death over dishonoring God, and this turn to drama represented a novel effort to marry the historical argumentation of Luther's conciliar writings with the potential for popular

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<sup>5</sup> Mark Edwards, Jr., "Luther's Polemical Controversies," in D. McKim, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2003), 192-208, 201-202.

<sup>6</sup> The standard biography for Agricola, if not a terribly flattering one, is still the 1881 volume by Gustav Kawerau, now available in a modern reprint: Gustav Kawerau, *Johann Agricola von Eisleben: Ein Beitrag zur Reformationsgeschichte* (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1977).

<sup>7</sup> Johannes Agricola, *Tragedia Johannis Hus welche auff dem Unchristlichen Concilio zu Costnitz gehalten allen Christen nuetzlich und troestlich zu lesen* (George Rhau: Wittenberg, 1537).

instruction inherent in drama.<sup>8</sup> Because they were “More subtle and flexible than a formal oration, more immediate and effective than a printed tract and probably more congenial to the listener than a sermon,” plays could extend the reach of Luther’s and his followers’ writings about Hus and against church councils.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the *Tragedia* starkly characterized Hus and his opponents as near caricatures to reframe Mladoňovice’s account of Hus’s trial as a dramatic confrontation between good and evil.

Agricola’s progression towards drama was mirrored by one of the Lutherans’ sharpest polemical opponents, Johannes Cochlaeus (d. 1552). Cochlaeus, beginning with his first publication against Luther in 1520, consistently placed the new movement of reform in parallel with the Bohemian Hussites.<sup>10</sup> His chief argument was that since Hus’s heresy had led to an immense political and social upheaval during the fifteenth century, then Luther’s much more serious heresy could only lead to the destruction of all order in the Holy Roman Empire. Over the first two decades of the German reformation, then, Cochlaeus published comparisons of Hus’s and Luther’s sermons, editions of previous literary works that attacked the Hussites, a response to Luther and

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<sup>8</sup> Most scholarship on drama in the period of the Reformation deals with English drama, but its conclusions are germane for use of plays in Lutheran areas as well. Specifically no the saint play in the Protestant traditions, see: Benjamin Griffin, “The Birth of the History Play: Saint, Sacrifice, and Reformation,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 39 (1999), 217-237. On the potential for plays to reach broad audiences through their combination of aural and visual teaching, see, for example: Dermot Cavanagh, *Language and Politics in the Sixteenth-Century History Play* (New York City: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003); David Scott Kastan, “Holy Wurd’s and Slypper Wit: John Bale’s King Johan and the Poetics of Propaganda,” in P. Herman, ed., *Rethinking the Henrician Era: Essays on Early Tudor Texts and Contexts* (Urbana: U. of Illinois Press, 1994), 267-282; and Greg Walker, *Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics and the Court of Henry VIII* (New York City: Cambridge UP, 1991), especially 9-13.

<sup>9</sup> Walker, *Plays of Persuasion*, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Remigius Bäumer, *Johannes Cochlaeus (1479-1552): Leben und Werk im Dienst der Katholischen Reform* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1980), especially 113.

Agricola's collection of Hus's letters, and a comprehensive history of Hus's trial and execution that explicitly contradicted the Lutherans' interpretation of this event. In these texts, Cochlaeus consistently used humanist methods to attack his opponents. He meticulously cited his sources, used philology to attack Luther's and Agricola's positions, and emphasized the contradictions that he found in his opponents' work.<sup>11</sup> His emphasis on the disjunction between Luther's and Hus's theology ultimately served to highlight the potential Pandora's Box that the Lutherans had opened with their historical arguments against church councils. When the past was opened up as a source for religious polemics, it could cut both ways; even as the Lutherans based their critique of councils on the history of Hus's trial and execution, Cochlaeus used Hus's own words to point out the marked differences between his theology and that of Luther. For Cochlaeus, these inconsistencies served to undercut the essential claims that the Lutherans made about their own foundations in past movements that opposed the papacy.

Cochlaeus ultimately turned to drama as well in order to broadcast his reading of the relationship between Hus and the German reformers. He wrote a comic rebuttal to Agricola's play, *Ein heimlich Gespräch von der Tragedia Johannis Hussen*, in 1538.<sup>12</sup> Cochlaeus's work, however, talked past Agricola's rendering of Hus's martyrdom. Rather than addressing the legitimacy of the

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<sup>11</sup> On Cochlaeus's formation as a humanist and his reliance on humanist scholarly methods, see: Monique Samuel-Scheyder, *Johannes Cochlaeus: Humaniste et adversaire de Luther* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Johann Cochlaeus, *Ein Heimlich Gespräch von der Tragedia Johannis Hussen*, H. Holstein, ed. (Max Neimeyer: Halle, 1900). The original publication took place in Mainz, and was printed by Peter Jordan. A second edition was published in 1539, without publication data. Holstein argued that the edition was printed in Dresden by Wolfgang Stückel, who had previously worked with Cochlaeus to print his *Seven-headed Luther*. On the publication history of the play, see Holstein's introduction in: *Ein Heimlich Gespräch*, v-vii.

Council's execution of Hus, Cochlaeus's play centered on depicting the fissures within the reformers' ranks and their subjection to their wives' control. Cochlaeus satirized his opponents and their adherents rather than engaging their arguments directly, presenting an irate Luther, his cowering toadies, and their dominant wives in order to undercut both the unanimity of Lutheranism and its claim to a historical foundation in Hus. The humorous style and dramatic medium that he chose also built upon the polemical foundations he had built with his previous publications; *Ein heimlich Gespräch* took Cochlaeus's arguments against Hus and Luther in a new direction by appealing to its audience's desire to laugh, rather than its need to intellectually grapple with the implications of Lutheran historical arguments. The overall intent of Cochlaeus's critique was, somewhat paradoxically, to highlight the dangerous parallels between Hus's and Luther's threat to ecclesiastical, political, and social order while illuminating the disparities between Luther's and his supposed forerunner's theology.

Both Agricola and Cochlaeus provide examples of the new forms of propaganda that controversialists deployed in the theological debates of the Reformation. I must say that I use the word propaganda intentionally. Following Miriam Chrisman and Andrew Pettegree, it seems to me that neither Cochlaeus nor Agricola was interested in spurring "rational, if contentious, discourse" with their work.<sup>13</sup> Rather, each imagined an audience with whom they shared core values and allegiances. The dramatic form of these works allowed for engagement with the emotions and visual perception of these audiences to implant and

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<sup>13</sup> Chrisman, "From Polemic to Propaganda," 176. See also: Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, 183-184; and Scribner, *For the Sake*, especially xxxi-xxiv.



strengthen essential ideas in Lutheran and Catholic discourse.<sup>14</sup> I view these plays not as efforts at converting audiences or at bringing the lapsed back into the fold, but as novel attempts to elicit pathos or comic derision among partisan crowds, or to inculcate essential beliefs in the school-age actors who often performed such plays.<sup>15</sup> By the middle of the 1530s, and particularly during the controversy over the Council of Mantua and the Lutherans' historical arguments against it, both sides worked to sustain and invigorate their adherents while creating rhetorical and emotional distance between the Lutheran and Catholic camps.<sup>16</sup> Drama became one particularly striking medium in which the past was made present on the stage, and the continuity of reform literally enacted, even as its rhetoric could, in Cochlaeus's hands, seek to sever the links between the Bohemian and German reform movements.

#### Martin Luther and Mantua: The *Konzilsfrage* in the 1530s

Throughout the first twenty years of the reform spawned by Martin Luther, leaders of both the traditional and dissident churches made frequent calls

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<sup>14</sup> Glenn Ehrstine's recent work demonstrates how the Protestant reformers felt about the didactic potential of drama, noting that its visual character allowed its message to sink in more deeply and quickly than in strictly oral media such as sermons. For a summary of Ehrstine's findings, see his: —*Seeing is Believing: Valten Voith's Ein Schön Lieblich Spiel von dem herlichen ursprung* (1538), Protestant 'Law and Gospel' Panels, and German Reformation Dramaturgy," *Daphnis* 27 (1998), 503-537.

<sup>15</sup> Pettegree has drawn attention to the importance of drama in pedagogy during the reformation. He sees a —synergy of different modes of communication" that allowed the messages contained in drama to sink deeply into the consciousness of students. See: Pettegree, *The Culture of Persuasion*, 87. On performances in the schools, see also: Derek van Abbé, *Drama in Renaissance Germany and Switzerland* (Melbourne: Melbourne UP, 1961), 7-13.

<sup>16</sup> David Bagchi argues for a fundamental shift in the goal of propaganda (towards reinforcement, rather than persuasion) on the Catholic side during the second half of the 1520s. See : *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 14. Mark Edwards, Jr., sees a similar process at work in Lutheran propaganda, and dates the shift to around 1527. See his: —*Luther's Polemical Controversies*," 200.

for a council to settle religious conflicts and pursue the reform of the church. Within the Holy Roman Empire, these calls for conciliar solutions to ecclesial issues were coupled with political concerns; the imperial diets of Speyer in 1526 and 1529 called for a *recht frei Concilium* that would meet on German soil under the leadership of the Emperor to minimize the growing turmoil of the Reformation.<sup>17</sup> A number of factors conspired, however, to prevent the actual convocation of such a council. The first obstacle was the unwillingness of the Popes of the 1520s, Leo X and Clement VII, to seriously consider a council. The papacy was still working to maintain its supremacy within the church after the tumultuous fifteenth century debates over conciliarism, and both of these popes feared that calling a council would expose their administrative and fiscal practices to internal and external criticism.<sup>18</sup>

Voices of reform arose in the curia during the 1530s, notably those of Cardinal Gasparo Contarini, Cardinal Egidio of Viterbo, Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio, and Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, and their desire for church reform came closer to actualization with the election of Farnese as Pope Paul III in 1534. Paul III formed a panel of distinguished church leaders including Contarini to identify areas of pressing concern in the church in 1536, and this internal critique

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<sup>17</sup> The best account of the continued demand for a council remains Hubert Jedin's. On the political aspect of the conciliar question, see: Jedin, *History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 1, 250ff.

<sup>18</sup> Jedin, *History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 1, 254. The practice of patronage within Rome itself was one major source of the pope's power and income (along with his control of the Papal States), and the Renaissance popes feared that a council would censure their distribution of offices and disrupt the papal bureaucracy. For an outstanding account of the workings of papal patronage, especially under Leo X, see: Ingrid Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1998). On the origins of the papacy's drive to become a territorial and political power in Italy in the fifteenth century, see: Paolo Prodi, *The Papal Prince, One Body and Two Souls: the Papal Monarchy in Early Modern Europe*, S. Haskins, trans. (New York: Cambridge UP, 1987), especially 71-84.

was one aspect of Paul's efforts to reform the Roman curia and episcopate.<sup>19</sup> The commission issued a report, *Consilium de Emendanda Ecclesia*, in 1537, and the content of this report focused on the restoration of the pastoral mission of the church. In terms of reforming the church in —~~had~~ and members,” this report focused on the improvement of those who mediated between the two, the bishops and priests of the church.<sup>20</sup> By authorizing and taking seriously the report of the cardinal commissioners, Paul III demonstrated a commitment to internal reform that would offset the Protestant critiques of the Catholic clergy.

The other front on which Paul III tried to further efforts at reform was in the convocation of a general church council. In opposition to the hesitation and waffling of previous popes, Paul III issued a bull of convocation for a council in June of 1536, setting the opening date for the following May 23 in Mantua. While this decisive action initially quelled lay leaders' concerns over the pope's willingness to seriously undertake reform, the bull raised as many questions as it answered.<sup>21</sup> The location of the council was highly problematic; Mantua, while technically in domains controlled by the Holy Roman Emperor, was too Italian for the German nobility and Lutheran leaders. Given this location, many of the

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<sup>19</sup> For a full account of the establishment of this group of ombudsmen and the impact of their findings, see: John Olin, *Catholic Reform from Cardinal Ximenes to the Council of Trent, 1495-1563: An Essay with Illustrative Documents and a Brief Study of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (New York: Fordham UP, 1990), 19ff.

<sup>20</sup> Olin includes the entire text of the report in his book. See: Olin, *Catholic Reform*, 65-79. On internal efforts at reform, see also the first chapter of: Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Cambridge UP, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> There had been previous missions by papal legates to the Holy Roman Empire to feel out the support of prominent nobles for a council, notably by Rangoni in 1533 and Vergerio in 1535. These missions were either rejected by nobles in the Schmalkaldic League, though, or not taken seriously because of lingering doubt from Clement VII's reign. The issuing of the bull of convocation, though, and the accompanying mission of papal legates to the German lands, convinced a number of leading nobles of the sincerity of Paul III. On the earlier missions, see: Eike Wolgast, —Das Konzil in den Erörterungen der kursächsischen Theologen und Politiker 1533-1537,” *ARG* 73 (1982), 122-152, 123-131.

German princes wanted safe conducts granted for themselves or their representatives, and this demand angered papal representatives. This demand for specific safe conducts was also fueled by the wording of the bull, which specifically stated that the council was being called to combat heresies. The implicit equation of Lutheranism and heresy seemed to make it impossible for the Lutherans to gain a fair hearing at the council, especially since the pope would be involved in the council as both a party to the dispute and its ultimate judge.<sup>22</sup>

The Lutheran leadership also adduced other specific arguments against the imminent council. Lutheran authors argued that Scripture should be the only standard for judging doctrinal orthodoxy.<sup>23</sup> Neither the decrees of former councils nor extra-biblical writers could be admitted as authoritative unless they were in explicit accordance with the text of the Bible. Similarly, Lutheran polemicists argued that a council had no scriptural mandate, and thus could not be a final judge in doctrinal debates. In fact, the Bible made no mention of the pope at all, so his primacy at the head of the council was incompatible with biblical teaching.<sup>24</sup> In both of these arguments, the notion of *sola scriptura* was taken to one of its logical extremes in terms of excluding “traditional” sources of authority in the church. Some authors and lay leaders also voiced concerns over the emperor’s alienating his prerogative to judge the issue of religious reform within

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<sup>22</sup> On the Protestant grievances, see: Jedin, *History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 1, 298ff.

<sup>23</sup> This demand for limiting the authorities in the theological debates at a council reflected those of the Hussites before Basel; these demands led to the granting of Cheb Judge in 1432, which served as the ground rules for the dialogue at the council. On the Cheb Judge, see: Bartoš, *The Hussite Revolution 1424-1437*, especially 79-80.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Brockmann offers the most complete account of Lutheran authors’ efforts to discredit the upcoming council; he exhaustively catalogues and cites various pamphlets that take on the topic of the council. See: Brockmann, *Die Konzilsfrage*, 261-267, on the incompatibility of the proposal for the Mantuan council and biblical teachings.

the empire; this episode of foreign (specifically Italian) influence in seemingly domestic affairs particularly angered the Saxon Elector John Frederick, who proposed a counter-council convened within the Empire by the Protestant princes that would include the Emperor, Catholic princes, and pope as participants.<sup>25</sup> This jurisdictional argument also denied the papacy the right to preside over a dispute in which he was an active participant, and thus the legal and theological issues with the convocation of the council were combined in Protestant anti-conciliar rhetoric.

It should finally be noted that voices on both sides of the growing confessional divide rejected the desirability or practicality of a general council. Many authors and church leaders expressed serious concerns about the possibility of a unified church in the empire, and preferred extending the toleration for a bi-confessional state expressed in the 1532 Truce of Nuremberg.<sup>26</sup> Luther himself was highly pessimistic about the potential for ecclesiastical reunification, and the proliferation of Lutheran confessional documents, notably the *Augsburg Confession* of 1530, established a baseline of essential Lutheran beliefs that could not be sacrificed for the sake of unity.<sup>27</sup> By 1536, though, these essential beliefs gained a more assertive expression in documents such as the *Schmalkald Articles*. The strength of the Protestant princes and Luther's concerns over leaving a

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<sup>25</sup> Wolgast, "Die Konzil in der Erörterungen," 141-146.

<sup>26</sup> This political decision stopped lawsuits by Catholic leaders who were trying to reclaim church lands that had been alienated during the first years of the Reformation. This juridical decision effectively recognized the legitimacy of two confessions in the Empire and laid the groundwork for the 1555 Peace of Augsburg. On the impact of the Truce, see: Thomas Brady, Jr., *Protestant Politics: Jacob Sturm (1489-1553) and the Protestant Reformation* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1995), 82.

<sup>27</sup> Brockmann, *Die Konzilsfrage*, 286-287. On the origin and meaning of the Augsburg Confession among Lutheran leaders, see also: Robert Kolb, *Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Faith, 1530-1580* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), 43-59.

theological testament at the end of his life led him to articulate his ecclesiological beliefs more aggressively. According to William Russell, the *Augsburg Confession* had been somewhat defensive:

The task of the Lutherans was to demonstrate that they were catholic Christians whose teaching was neither innovative nor heretical. The Lutherans were on trial and the burden was on them to prove their orthodoxy. In 1536-38, when Luther wrote the *Schmalkald Articles*, the situation (at least in Luther's mind) was somewhat different. Luther wrote as if the theology and practice of the church of Rome were now on trial.<sup>28</sup>

Over the course of the 1530s, it seems that the *Augsburg Confession's* desire for catholicity had been subsumed in the quest for confessional clarity. In particular, the Lutherans' continued assault on the primacy of the papacy and the sacrificial character of the Mass made any hope for theological rapprochement an irenic dream. The Lutheran position had moved to a point of diametric opposition to many essential tenets of Catholic ecclesiology and eucharistic theology.<sup>29</sup>

The Lutheran party was not alone in its skepticism over the proposed council and its ability to mend the religious rift in the Empire. In particular, Johannes Cochlaeus argued vociferously that the council should only define the Lutherans as explicitly heretical and decide to suppress it through the full

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<sup>28</sup> Russell makes the argument that Luther thought he was dying when he wrote the *Schmalkald Articles*; this belief gave this text a "testamentary" aspect that required bold formulations that would last into posterity. He downplays the political aspects of the *Articles* (namely, that Luther wrote them as a position paper for the powerful Elector of Saxony), but he rightly asserts that Luther clearly asserted the essential elements of his teaching in this text so it could serve as a platform for dispute at the upcoming council. For the quote, see: William Russell, "The Theological 'Magna Charta' of Confessional Lutheranism," *Church History* 64 (1995), 389-398, 394.

<sup>29</sup> Regarding the *Schmalkald Articles*, Russell asserts that Luther elaborated on the "evangelical pillar" of his teaching in the second part. The four articles therein recognized the centrality of Christ for salvation and rejected any necessary mediators between Christ and the individual. This *Hauptartikel* led to the conclusions of the next three articles, which rejected the sacrificial nature of the Mass, the validity of the monastic life, and the primacy of the pope. See: Russell, "The Theological 'Magna Charta,'" 393.

cooperation of the church and Emperor.<sup>30</sup> For Cochlaeus, as for many other German Catholic authors and leaders, the Lutherans had decisively shown themselves to be pertinacious heretics; this reality precluded any disputation and required strong action against the heretics.<sup>31</sup> As such, much of this wing of the Catholic anti-Lutheran effort sought to draw attention to the politically subversive and disruptive nature of Lutheranism. By creating a strong parallel between religious dissent and political upheaval, Cochlaeus and other like-minded polemicists sought to undercut any attempted reconciliation with the Lutheran party.<sup>32</sup>

One strategy in particular that emerged from the formulation of the Lutheran party's rejection of the viability and legitimacy of the upcoming church council was the exposure of the historical errors and contradictions contained in previous councils. The essential idea was that Lutherans could show councils to be a font of merely human teaching, and thus reject the binding nature of their findings or decrees.<sup>33</sup> By exposing the conflicting definitions of orthodoxy and orthopraxy that had emerged from past convocations of church leaders, Luther and his allies hoped to show that these bodies were incapable of formulating true

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<sup>30</sup> Samuel-Scheyder, *Cochlaeus: Humaniste et adversaire*, 558.

<sup>31</sup> This stance reflected the official limitations on disputation with heretics that had handicapped Catholic polemicists in the previous decade. On the prohibition of debate with heretics, see: Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 213-214.

<sup>32</sup> On Cochlaeus and these efforts, see: Ralph Keen, "Johannes Cochlaeus: an Introduction to his Life and Work," in T. Frazel et al., eds. and trans., *Luther's Lives: Two Contemporary Accounts of Martin Luther* (New York: Manchester UP, 2002), 40-52, 45. For general responses among the Catholic party to ideas of reconciliation, especially that of Aleander, see: Jedin, *History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 1, 329ff.

<sup>33</sup> Luther had been forced to make this concession at the Leipzig Debate in 1519; although Eck's efforts to equate Luther's ideas with those of Hus had caught Luther by surprise at that time, Luther came to forcefully articulate his adherence to the Bohemian reformer's positions on authority, particularly regarding the ability of human councils to err. On Leipzig, see: Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, especially 87-88.

doctrine and had in fact usurped the place of Christ at the head of the church. By claiming an authority that belonged to Scripture alone, and by often contradicting or even hereticating the practices of Christ himself, the councils of the church had often proven themselves to be ~~the~~ "the school of Satan," as opposed to holy assemblies.<sup>34</sup>

It was in this vein of historical argument against past councils that Jan Hus came to the foreground of Lutheran polemics. His execution (and that of Jerome of Prague) at the hands of the Council of Constance had been the most recent and spectacular example of the injustices perpetrated by councils. In the Lutheran view, Hus was executed because of his exposure of the papacy as a corrupt institution and his defense of *utraquist* communion; the condemnation of Hus was therefore a condemnation of Christ's own institution of Eucharistic practice. His trial and death, then, provided ample proof of the errant qualities of church councils and their tendency to place themselves above the teachings of Christ.<sup>35</sup> Hus had also humbly appealed to his own conscience and the proof of Scripture during his trial.<sup>36</sup> This appeal closely mirrored Luther's own at the Diet of Worms, which provided Lutherans with a model for the confession of Protestant faith.<sup>37</sup> Hus therefore became a prototype for the new Protestant saint who was

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<sup>34</sup> This language reflected the Hussites' argument that the June 15, 1415 condemnation of communion in both kinds effectively rendered Christ himself a heretic. See above, chapter 1, especially at fn. 140.

<sup>35</sup> Hans-Gert Roloff, "Die Funktion von Hus-Texten in der Reformations-Polemik," in Milde and Schuder, eds., *De Captu Lectoris: Wirkungen des Buches im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), 219-256, 241.

<sup>36</sup> During his examination by the council fathers, Hus had stated: "I pray, give me the least one of the Council who would instruct me by better and more relevant Scripture, and I am ready instantly to recant!" See Mladoňovice's account in: Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 225.

<sup>37</sup> For an analysis of Hus's confession becoming a model for Lutheran conceptions of sanctity, see: Benrath, "Die sogenannten Vorreformatoren," 160.



characterized by the bold proclamation of truth and his potential to be emulated by other believers.<sup>38</sup> Hus was not a perfect intercessor whose admirable death separated him from the capabilities of other believers, but rather an imitable Christian whose behavior was a model for Lutherans.<sup>39</sup>

### Luther, Constance, and the Question of Councils

Luther, as he so often did, set the agenda for the Protestant polemics against historical councils.<sup>40</sup> Building on his demonstrable appreciation for Hus, Luther composed a number of anti-conciliar tracts, both excoriating Constance in particular and setting its errors in the context of conciliar history in general. Luther grounded his assault on historical councils in his firm belief that the church should base its practices on scriptural mandates, arguing that the Bible alone dictated the authoritative teaching and practice of the church:

In summary, put them all together, both fathers and councils, and you still will not be able to cull from them all the teachings of the Christian faith, even if you culled forever. If it had not been for Holy Scripture, the church, had it depended on the councils and fathers, would not have lasted long.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> On Luther and his conception of sanctity, including a comparison to traditional beliefs on saints' exemplarity, see: Heming, *Protestants and the Cult of Saints*, 63-64. See also: Kolb, "Saint John Hus," 405.

<sup>39</sup> The distinction between admirable and imitable saints is André Vauchez's, and he made it for the high medieval period. It seems to be applicable to the early modern period, though, and in particular to the new, limited conceptions of sanctity among Protestants that Heming articulates. For Vauchez's original formulation, see: André Vauchez, "Saints admirables et saints imitables: les fonctions de l'hagiographie ont-elles changé aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge?" in *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde Occidental (IIIe-XIIIe siècle)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1991), 161-172.

<sup>40</sup> On this, see: Jaroslav Pelikan, "Luthers Stellung zu den Kirchenkonzilien," in K. Skydsgaard, ed., *Konzil und Evangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1962), 40-62.

<sup>41</sup> "Und summa, thu sie alle zusammen, beide, Veter und Concilia, so kanstu doch nicht die gantze Lere Christlichen glaubens aus inen klauben, ob du ewig dran klaubst, Und wo die Heilige Schrifft nicht gethan und gehalten hette, were die Kirche der Concilii und Veter halben nicht lange blieben." See: Martin Luther, *Von den Conciliis und Kirchen* (Wittenberg: Hans Lufft, 1539). It appears in *WA* 50, 488-653; this quote: 547.

At best, councils could confirm teachings contained in Scripture and reject innovations or deviations from scriptural norms. At worst, councils actually had attempted to support innovations or sanction extra-biblical teachings. This line of argumentation led Luther to reject the legitimacy of all but four councils (Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon), because these alone had fulfilled their purpose by decisively affirming the authority of the Bible and condemning heretical deviations from acceptable, biblical belief and practice.

One of Luther's most sustained and specific attacks against the usurpation of the councils came in 1535, when he wrote a pamphlet against the Council of Constance. It was initially published in Latin under the title *Disputatio circularis feria sexta contra Concilium Constantiense et suos confessores*, and was published again in German during the same year.<sup>42</sup> The emphasis throughout this tract was on the ways in which the Council opposed itself to the teachings of Christ, and thus should be known as the "*Obstantiense Concilium*," because it was in opposition ("*obstantia*") to Christ.<sup>43</sup> The council erred by arguing that the tradition or custom ("*consuetudo*") of the church was binding, whereas the institution of Christ was heresy.<sup>44</sup> In speaking specifically of the condemnation of communion in both kinds, Luther forcefully argued that the church called people

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<sup>42</sup> Martin Luther, *Disputatio Circularis Feria Sexta contra Concilium Constantiense et suos confessores* (Johannes Luft: Wittenberg, 1535); the German reprinting was under the title: *Ettliche spruche Doc. Martini Luther, wider das Concilium Obstantiense, (wolt sagen) Constantiense* (Hans Lufft: Wittenberg, 1535). The two tracts appear side-by-side in: *WA* 39, 9-38.

<sup>43</sup> Luther, *Disputatio Circularis*, 13.

<sup>44</sup> The term "*consuetudo*" had a specific sense in canon law, where custom served as a repeated action intended to create a legal precedent without legislation." I thank Fr. Augustine Thompson for bringing this legal meaning of the word to my attention.

heretics who conformed to the practice of Jesus himself.<sup>45</sup> In contradicting Christ, this council and the papacy that presided over it proved themselves to be ~~the~~ kingdom of Antichrist, because it opposes itself to, and places itself above, God and all divine [law] and sits in the temple of God just as God did.”<sup>46</sup>

Hus played a key role in the revelation of the council’s diabolic nature. Besides being condemned for adhering to the validity of utraquist communion, the Council of Constance also targeted Hus for exposing the sinful and impure behavior of the pope and other church leaders. His moral censure was as problematic for the ecclesiastical hierarchy as his theological dissent; Hus was the victim of ~~pure~~ “tyranny” and ~~arrogant~~ “murder” because ~~they~~ [the church’s hierarchy] were caught, railed at, and revealed in theft by Jan Hus, the most faithful hound of the church.”<sup>47</sup> Hus’s persecution therefore revealed the essential interaction between the false, institutional church of Antichrist (represented by the council) and the true, suffering church of Christ: the former would always ~~damn~~ the smaller and better” group of true Christians who would persevere, ~~For~~ Christ

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<sup>45</sup> See for example article nineteen, where Luther notes the condemnation of those who follow Christ’s example in opposition to custom: ~~N~~am dicere eum Haereticum esse, qui sequitur institutionem et verbum Christi.” See: Luther, *Disputatio Circularis*, 16.

<sup>46</sup> ~~N~~os dicimus, Ecclesiam Papae esse regnum Antichristi, quod se opposuerit et extulerit supra Deum et omnia divina et in templo Dei sicut Deus sedeat .” Luther, *Disputatio Circularis*, 31. This is a reference to 2 Thess. 2:4 - ~~H~~e will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.” On Luther’s identification of the pope with Antichrist, see: Ulrich Asendorf, *Eschatologie bei Luther* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1967), especially 159ff.

<sup>47</sup> ~~P~~ost cum per Ioannem Hus, fidelissimam Caniculam Ecclesiae in furto deprehensi, allatrarentur et proderentur.” Luther, *Disputatio Circularis*, 34. This puzzling reference to Hus as a ~~e~~anicula” (little dog) could be an allusion to Horace, who referred to the philosopher Diogenes of Sinope as ~~H~~la canicula;” Diogenes’s scorn for public institutions and exposure of hypocrisy would explain the comparison.

will aid us, as long as we faithfully confess him, [we] who begin and perfect his work in ourselves until the end.”<sup>48</sup>

If the *Disputatio Conciliaris* was Luther’s most specific blast at the sordid history of Constance, he generalized the arguments he articulated there in his other works of the mid-1530s. In the published version of a disputation on the power of councils held in Wittenberg in 1536, Luther argued that nothing harmed the church more than church councils. Because the pope was no longer subject to the authority of councils, but had usurped the leadership of all councils after Nicaea, he had subverted them from their original purposes and used them to accomplish his own goal.<sup>49</sup> This goal was nothing other than establishing himself as an equal to God in terms of authority, and by seeking this the pope had revealed himself to be a slave of Satan.<sup>50</sup> Luther also argued that the councils were merely representations of the church, not the true church itself.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, the Council of Constance had tried to destroy the true church, but had failed: “In the Council of Constance there were truly murderers and heretics, namely the papists,

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<sup>48</sup> “Christus enim nobis aderit, donec fideliter eum confessi fuerimus. Qui et inaecepit et perficiet opus suum in nobis in finem.” Luther, *Disputatio Circularis*, 36.

<sup>49</sup> The disputation was held as the examination for the promotion of Iacobus Schenck and Philippus Motz to doctors of theology; the disputation occurred on October 10, 1536. Luther later had the thirty articles for the disputation printed, with his arguments defending the articles. They were published as: *De Potestate Concilii* (Wittenberg: no printer, 1536), and it appears in *WA* 39, 181-197. The text was also translated into German and printed three times in 1536 and 1537. On the pope as head of the council, Luther argued: “Inter caetera monstra in Ecclesia et illud non est minimum, quod Ecclesiam devastat potestas sancti concilii. Ante concilium Nicaenum papa erat sub concilio, sed postea sibi reiecit papa non solum Ecclesiam, verum et concilia, ita ut esset caput concilii.” (188)

<sup>50</sup> The identification of the pope as a “incipium Satanae” comes from: Luther, “Convocatio concilii liberi Christiani,” 285. In terms of authority, the pope had overstepped his bounds by trying to control both church councils and the secular authorities who attended them. In this way, the meaningful distinctions between the secular and ecclesiastical hierarchies were abolished, and the papal Antichrist assumed power over the whole world. On this, see: Asendorf, *Eschatologie bei Luther*, 183-185.

<sup>51</sup> “xii. Es zeugen die historien, das die Concilia zum meren mal nur die representirende kirch gewest seind und gar elten die rechte kirch.” See: Luther, *De Potestate Concilii*, 187.

but the church did not fail, because Jan Hus was there, and Jerome.”<sup>52</sup> In these early works on councils, Luther articulated his belief that the true church existed in opposition to the nominal head of the church and the collective representation of the church in a council. He further developed this negative assessment as he considered the prerogatives of the pope in relation to the council.

In the *Schmalkald Articles* of 1537, Luther claimed that ~~the~~ Pope would as soon see all of Christendom lost and every soul damned as allow himself or his followers to be reformed even a little and permit limits on his tyranny.”<sup>53</sup> This unwillingness characterized the obstinate institutional church that looked more to the preservation of its own powers than the salvation of souls. Luther further noted that councils could not possibly effect any positive change in the church, because they were held under the auspices of ~~the~~ Pope and the devil himself, who does not intend to listen, but only to damn, murder, and drive us to idolatry.”<sup>54</sup> The idolatry of which Luther spoke was the demand to recognize papal decrees and innovations as binding, when in fact they were devilish

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<sup>52</sup> This quotation came from a separate account of the disputation of October 10. It is included in *WA 59*, 712-716, under the title, *Die Disputation de Potestate Concilii*. This quote: ~~In~~ Constantiensi concilio fuerunt homicidae et haeretici veri, nempe papistae, et tamen non ceciderat ecclesia, quia erat Ioannes Hus ibi, Hieronymus,” 713.

<sup>53</sup> This translation is from William Russell’s analysis and translation of the *Schmalkald Articles*. This quote is from: William Russell, *Luther’s Theological Testament: The Schmalkald Articles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 118. Further citations will simply be to *Schmalkald Articles* and page number. On the gradual development of Luther’s thinking on the pope, see: Ulrich Pflugk, —Luther und der Papst,” *Luther* 31 (1960), 130-138; and Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*.

<sup>54</sup> Luther’s emphasis on the role of the emperor in both the earliest, legitimate councils and in the proposed council at Mantua was somewhat problematic. Johannes Eck had pointed out as early as 1520 that the Emperor Sigismund had been at Constance, and had sat in judgment of Hus, but Luther did not accept that gathering as legitimate. On this argument, see: Bagchi, *Luther’s Earliest Opponents*, 94. This quotation is from the end of the second part of the *Articles*. The second part deals with the —office and work of Jesus Christ,” and forms the main basis for contention between the Lutheran and Roman party. The fourth article of this part deals with the office of the pope, and Luther uses it to demolish the theological foundations for his primacy and role in the church. For this quote, see: *Schmalkald Articles*, 132.

attempts to subvert Christendom. In an edition of letters that Hus had written from Constance (1536), Luther had also noted that, ~~It~~ [the papacy] filled all the churches in the whole world with the enormous lies of indulgences, purchased Masses, and the sundry trafficking of good works, such as priests and monks have and offer.<sup>55</sup> These lies, coupled with the church's desire to preserve its own power at the cost of the gospel, led Luther to further explore the historical church councils to discover the roots of their deviations from scriptural norms.

Councils, for Luther, had an essentially negative function. In his view, the only appropriate actions for a church council were to evaluate contemporary doctrine and practice in order to be sure it was aligned with biblical norms.<sup>56</sup> Any innovations or deviations were to be anathematized and forbidden. Luther elaborated upon this essential point at length in the 1539 publication, *On the Councils and the Church*.<sup>57</sup> This exhaustive tract consistently argued that councils existed only to confirm the true authority of the Scriptures, and that whenever they had propagated new teachings or practices they had erred. The tract was

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<sup>55</sup> –Alle Kirchen in der gantzen welt erfüllet mit gewaltigen luegen, Ablas, Kauff Messen und allerlei jarmarckt der guten werk, so da Pfaffen und Muench veil boten und hatten. Solchs war die frucht des aller heiligsten Concilii.—This quotation is from the German translation of Luther's 1536 edition of four letters written by Jan Hus, to which he added an explanatory preface. See: Martin Luther, *Etliche Brieue Johannis Huss des heiligen Merterers, au dem gefengnis zu Constentz, An die Behemen geschriben, Mit einer Vorrhede Doct. Mart. Luthers*, J. Agricola, trans. (Wittenberg: Joseph Klug, 1537), in *WA* 50, 16-39, 24.

<sup>56</sup> It is worth noting that much of Luther's early rhetoric against the primacy of the papacy emerged out of his contention that only a council could have supreme authority in hearing his case. Luther appealed to a council following his excommunication in June, 1520; in arguing for the jurisdiction of a council for his case, Luther was forced to downgrade the pope's status as a judge in issues of faith. On this appeal and its role in Luther's struggle with the papacy, see: Pflugk, —Luther und der Papst," 134-135.

<sup>57</sup> This work was Luther's great historical consideration of the institutional makeup of the Roman church. He published it in part to demonstrate his familiarity with, and mastery of, Catholic historical sources. He desired to show that he knew his subject matter very well in order to justify his critique of it. The sober scholarship of the piece is at odds with some of its incendiary tone, as well as the other anti-Roman polemics of his later years. On this piece, see: Mark Edwards, Jr., *Luther's Last Battles: Politics and Polemics, 1531-1546* (Ithaca, Cornell UP, 1983), 93-96.

largely concerned with a historical study of the four councils that Luther recognized as legitimate. Each of these gathered under the aegis of emperors to condemn heresies, but never to establish new doctrine:

A council is thus nothing other than a consistory, a royal court, a supreme court, or the like, wherein the judges, after hearing the parties, pronounce their sentence, but with such humility, ~~–according to the law,~~” that is, ~~–Our~~ office is *anathematizare*, to condemn; but not according to our whim or will, or newly invented law, but according to the ancient law, which is held as the law in the whole empire.” Thus a council also condemns a heretic, not according to its own discretion, but according to the law of the empire, that is, according to Holy Scripture, which they confess is the law of the holy church.<sup>58</sup>

This conception of the limited role of church councils was clearly at odds with Luther’s perception of the church’s practice; the innovations that Luther cited in the case of Constance would have clearly placed that gathering within the realm of the innovative and diabolic, ~~–that spends its first year in arriving and quarreling~~ over who shall sit at the head...the second year in reveling, banqueting, racing, and fencing; the third year in other matters or also in burning, perhaps a John Huss or two.”<sup>59</sup>

The last section of *On the Councils* differed from this historical study in its intent. Rather than just attacking the sins of the institutional church, Luther outlined his own conception of what constituted a church. He had been working in

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<sup>58</sup> –So ist nu ein Concilium nicht anders, denn ein Consistorium, Hofegericht, Camergericht, oder desgleichen, Darinnen die Richter nach verhör der Part das urteil sprechen, doch mit solcher demut: Vm rechts wegen, das ist: unser Ampt ist Anathematisare, verdamnen, aber nicht nach unserm kopff, noch willen, oder neuem ertichten recht, sondern nach dem alten recht, dam in gantzen Reich gehalten wird fur recht. Also verdampt ein Concilium auch einen Ketzer nicht nach irem dunckel, sondern nach des Reichs recht, das ist nach der heiligen Schrifft, wie sie bekennen, welchs der heiligen Kirchen recht ist.” Luther, *Von den Conciliis*, 615-616.

<sup>59</sup> –Da man das erst jar zubringt mit der ankunfft, mit zancken, welcher obenan sitzen...Das ander jar mit prangen, Bancketen, Rennen unde Stechen. Das dritte jar mit andern sachen, oder auch mit verbrennen, etwa eins Johann Hus oder zween.” Luther, *Von den Conciliis*, 622.

all of the above materials to criticize the notion that either the pope or a council represented (or ruled) the church of Christ. So, Luther identified seven essential markers of the true church that downplayed the exercise of authority and emphasized service. The first six of these were unsurprising: the word of God was truly preached in it; baptism was administered properly (i.e. infant baptism); the eucharist was given in both kinds; it had the office of the keys, but only for discipline; ministers and leaders performed their office; and proper worship occurred with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.<sup>60</sup> The last mark emphasized Luther's theology of the cross: —The holy Christian people are externally recognized by the holiness of the sacred cross. They must suffer every misfortune and persecution, all kinds of trials and evil (as the \_Our Father' says) from the devil, the world, and the flesh, for with this they are made like their head, Christ."<sup>61</sup> The centrality of suffering here separated the true church from the institutional and official church, which was in fact the —devil's chapel." This chapel had all of the outward marks of the true church, —since the devil is always God's ape."<sup>62</sup> Its members, however, lacked the willingness to bear suffering, and

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<sup>60</sup> Luther, *Von den Conciliis*, 630-641.

<sup>61</sup> —Zim siebenden erkennt man eusserlich das heilige Christliche Volck bei dem Heiltum des heiligen Creutzes, das es mus alles unglück und verfolgung, allerlei anfechtung und ubel (wie das Vater unser betet) vom Teufel, welt, und fleisch...leiden, damit es seinem Heubt Christo gleich werde." See: *Von den Conciliis*, 641-642. Robert Kolb has recognized the absolute centrality of Luther's conception of suffering and martyrdom in his theology, a centrality that even his followers marginalized. For Kolb, —Luther's understanding of martyrdom illustrates his \_theology of the cross,' a theology of paradox which equates God's wisdom with what seems foolishness to the sinner and God's power with what seems impotence to the sinner (I Cor. 1:18-2:16)." On martyrdom and suffering in Luther's thought, see: Kolb, —God's Gift of Martyrdom," 404.

<sup>62</sup> —Da nu der Teuffel sie, das Gott eine solche heilige Kirche bauet, feiret er nicht und bauet seine Capellen dabei, grösser, den Gottes Kirche ist...Wie er denn allezeit Gottes Affe ist und will alle ding Gott nach thun und ein bessers machen." Luther, *Von den Conciliis*, 644. On the idea of the origins of the idea of the Devil as God's ape in the early church and classical



so were revealed as servants of Antichrist, rather than true Christians who would willingly take up the cross of Christ.<sup>63</sup>

This conception of the conflicting natures of the true and false church highlighted the importance of Hus in the polemics over the impending council at Mantua. If suffering and persecution were key marks of the true church, while pomp and glamour were marks of the false, then the execution of Hus at Constance was one of the clearest and most dramatic examples of the clash between them.<sup>64</sup> Hus's confession of God's truth, and his obvious willingness to take on martyrdom rather than surrender that truth, made him a key example of how God's church survived and thrived through the spectacular death of true witnesses. Martyr's blood was godly seed, and the growth of the Utraquist church in Bohemia bore witness to the long term effects to the impact of Hus's sacrifice.<sup>65</sup> In his edition of Hus's letters from Constance, Luther included a letter written on June 24, 1415, about two weeks before Hus's death. In it, Hus had written:

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literature, see: Alfred Adam, "Der Teufel als Gottes Affe," *Lutherjahrbuch* 28 (1961), 104-109.

<sup>63</sup> Luther's articulation of the "theologia crucis" attained a substantial articulation in the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518. His emphasis on the Christian state as being an emulation of Christ's suffering remained as a focus of this theology. On this, see: Walther von Loewenich, *Luthers Theologia Crucis*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Wittenberg: Luther-Verlag, 1967), especially 14-25 and 135-144.

<sup>64</sup> This view was obviously parallel to that which developed in the Hussite movement in the years immediately following Hus's death. I have argued above, in chapter 2, that this Hussite worldview drew much from the early church and its focus on martyrdom (and the literary development of the cult of the martyrs). See: chapter one, especially at fn. 9 and following. This view was also central to Luther's larger conception of church history, in which the persecuted true church resisted the institutional church and its efforts to destroy the remnant of faithful Christians. See: Headley, *Luther's View of Church History*, 39ff. Karl Witte has also argued that for Luther the world belonged to neither the God or the Devil. It was the "Kampfplatz beider." Because of this, the world required suffering from those who would truly emulate Christ. See: Karl Witte, "Glaube und Geschichte bei Luther," *Luther* 31 (1960), 47-60, especially 58-59.

<sup>65</sup> Kolb, "God's Gift of Martyrdom," 403.

Surely now the wickedness and abomination and shame of Antichrist has manifested itself in the pope as well as in others of the Council! The faithful servants of God can now understand the meaning of the Savior's words when He said: 'When you see the abomination in a desolate place of which Daniel prophesied, let him who reads understand!' 'The abomination' is the great pride, avarice, and simony; and 'the desolate place' is the dignity that is devoid of humility and of other virtues, as we clearly see in those who hold offices and dignity.<sup>66</sup>

Here the identification of the council with the church of Antichrist was intended to have a proscriptive effect as well as an historical one. The example of Hus served to warn contemporary Protestants about what they could expect from the Mantuan council, and from the Catholic church in general. Luther disseminated this message through his historical examinations of councils and his excoriation of Constance in particular. This initial work set the stage for further efforts by both Catholic and Lutheran authors, to reveal the true history of Jan Hus. These efforts, which were the fruits of Johannes Cochlaeus's and Johannes Agricola's labor, respectively, pushed Reformation polemics into new media in order to direct the impact of the story of Jan Hus's execution in the debate over both councils and the church. The interplay of these men's pamphlets and plays revealed a great deal about the perceived limitations and opportunities of polemic genres in the second full decade of the Reformation.

#### The Council as Unholy Assembly: Agricola on Hus

Historians have not been kind to Johannes Agricola. His authoritative biography is over a century old, and he has appeared most recently as the losing contestant in an ongoing debate with Philip Melanchthon over the uses of the

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<sup>66</sup> Martin Luther, *Etliche Brieve Johannis Huss*, 28-29. The English translation of the letter is in: Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 282-283.

law.<sup>67</sup> Typical treatments of Agricola portray him as the slightly dim but loving student of Luther who took up his ideas with considerable enthusiasm and limited acumen, who as a result ended up infuriating his teacher.<sup>68</sup> Known mostly for his role in the antinomian controversies with Melancthon and Luther, at the end of which he submitted to Luther's conclusions regarding the value of the law, Agricola's original contributions to the Lutheran cause have been subjected to limited and largely negative historiographical evaluations.<sup>69</sup> In general, contemporary Lutheran research has ignored the breadth and creativity of Agricola's efforts to disseminate Lutheran theological ideas.<sup>70</sup> Especially on the topic of Jan Hus and the Council of Constance, the teacher from Eisleben drew upon a number of genres and his own experience as an educator in order to build up the image of Hus as a Lutheran saint who was persecuted by the church of Antichrist at Constance. This image served as a warning to Protestants who might

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<sup>67</sup> Timothy Wengert, *Law and Gospel: Philip Melancthon's Debate with John Agricola of Eisleben over Poenitentia* (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, 1997). See also: Matthias Richter, *Gesetz und Heil: Eine Untersuchung zur Vorgeschichte und zum Verlauf des sogenannten Zweiten Antinomischer Streits* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1996), especially 59-66.

<sup>68</sup> The most egregious example of this tendency in scholarship is Joachim Rogge, whose 1960 monograph on Agricola portrays his subject as a slavish imitator of Luther. See: Joachim Rogge, *Johann Agricolas Lutherverständnis: Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Antinomismus* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1960).

<sup>69</sup> Mark Edwards, Jr., has written the most concise account of the antinomian controversy that divided Luther and Agricola in 1537-1538. In brief, Agricola taught and preached that the law had no place in leading the repentant believer to salvation; he thought that the conviction of the law would merely breed resentment and contempt for God. In 1537, Hans Luft printed three sermons by Agricola that articulated this belief. Later in that year Agricola published *A Short Summary of the Gospels*, which further elaborated upon this position. In January of 1538, Luther suspended Agricola from preaching and teaching in Wittenberg, where he had been since being expelled from the court of Albrecht of Mansfeld in late 1536. Luther staged a disputation with Agricola on January 12, 1538, and afterwards the two were reconciled. On this debate, see: Mark Edwards, Jr., *Luther and the False Brethren* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1975), 156ff. For an excellent account of the theological background to the debate, see: Wengert, *Law and Gospel*, especially 25-40.

<sup>70</sup> For example, Joachim Rogge accepted Cochlaeus's depiction of the rift between Agricola and Luther being healed only by the intervention of their wives. Rogge never cites his source for his account of the reformers' reconciliation and never reveals that it came from a blatantly hostile, comic work! See: Rogge, *Johann Agricolas Lutherverständnis*, 97-98.

seek reconciliation with the papacy at Mantua and as a means of constructing an historical continuity between the nascent Lutheran church and its Bohemian forerunner.

Agricola's work as a reformation polemicist and pamphleteer drew heavily on his experience as a schoolmaster in Eisleben during the 1520s. As a teacher of children in the realm of the Lutheran Count Albrecht of Mansfeld, Agricola consistently had to discover new or better ways to inculcate the beliefs of the new movement in his charges. He demonstrated a considerable amount of creativity in doing this: Agricola made use of classical drama, especially Terence, to instill moral behavior and eloquence in his students; he authored a collection of German adages with distinctly Lutheran commentary to recast traditional wisdom in the light of the Reformation; and he wrote a series of catechisms that developed into a question and answer format that was easily comprehensible to students.<sup>71</sup> In each of these cases, Agricola adjusted traditional modes of teaching or the collection of wisdom in order to encompass Lutheran teachings. He also moved consistently towards simplified language and rhyming lines so that even the less educated might remember the wisdom he collected. Finally, Agricola demonstrated a polemical outlook in his publications. In his "30 Questions for Young Students," Agricola included anti-Roman polemic alongside his

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<sup>71</sup> Agricola was not alone in his appreciation of Terence as a teacher of practical morality and rhetoric. Luther himself praised this classical playwright as a worth model for students. On this, see: Thomas Bacon, *Martin Luther and the Drama* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1976), 60-64. On Agricola and Terence, see Kawerau, *Ein Beitrag*, 77-78; on Agricola's publication of a collection of adages, see: Sander Gilman, "Johannes Agricola of Eisleben's Proverb Collection (1529): The Polemizing of a Literary Form and the Reaction," *SCJ* 8 (1977), 77-84; on Agricola's catechism, see: Kawerau, *Ein Beitrag*, 75. On Agricola's catechetical compositions and other Lutheran educational materials from the 1520s, see: Wengert, *Law and Gospel*, 47-76.

explanations of Lutheran doctrine. This oppositional tone was not typical of early Lutheran catechisms, but demonstrated that Agricola sought out all opportunities to show Lutheranism in sharp contrast to Catholicism.<sup>72</sup>

One of the strategies that Agricola pursued in his religious polemics to crystallize this difference was to show the unwillingness of the Catholic hierarchy to contemplate reform, while Lutheranism was predicated upon that very notion. The execution of Hus was a clear example of the church's obstinacy, and Agricola sought to highlight the continuities between Hus's call for reform and the theology of the Lutheran party. In particular, Agricola played up Hus's biblicism, his adherence to the law of Christ as the standard for right behavior, and his eucharistic theology as orthodox and correct in the Lutheran sense.<sup>73</sup> These continuities in belief underlay the continuities of persecution and opposition that both Hus and Luther faced, and Agricola made use of Hus's death to demonstrate that a church council was nothing more than "Antichrist's school." Hus also came to be seen as a prophet of the Lutheran reform who had predicted that Antichrist's church would be overcome, and that another prophet would arise who would complete the reform that Hus had begun. This prophecy expanded upon that of the goose and swan, however, and was located firmly in the contents of Hus's known writings.<sup>74</sup> I would argue that Agricola's writings about Jan Hus can be understood best as an effort to ground the prophetic mandate for the Lutheran

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<sup>72</sup> Kawerau, *Ein Beitrag*, 73.

<sup>73</sup> Heiko Oberman has argued that Hus's emphasis on the law of Christ was the chief area of congruence between him and Luther. This emphasis downplayed the authority of papal law and portrayed it as an innovation of Antichrist. This revelation deprived the pope/Antichrist of his vehicle for making his diabolic will into law. See: Oberman, "Hus and Luther," 165.

<sup>74</sup> For a cogent discussion of the importance of this prophecy for Luther's self-conception, see: Benrath, "Die sogenannten Vorreformatoren," 160. See also: Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis*, 47.

reform within a factual history of Hus's suffering and death in Constance. Hus had been the "prophetic shepherd" whose death provided decisive evidence of Antichrist's dominance in the institutional church. The truth, however, had survived because of his witness; he had left the true church "forewarned, fortified, and undaunted."<sup>75</sup>

The earliest of Agricola's publications on Hus was a translation and reprinting of Petr of Mladoňovice's history of Jan Hus's trial and execution at Constance. Published as *History und warhafftige geschicht wie das heilig Evangelion mit Johannes Hussen im Concilio zu Costnitz durch den Bapst und seinen anhang öffentlich verdampt ist im Jare nach Christi unsers Herren geburt 1414*, this lengthy tract displayed Hus's bravery in facing down the entire hierarchical church and emperor himself in order to proclaim the truth of the gospel.<sup>76</sup> In publishing it, Agricola highlighted the source's authenticity. Agricola detailed from whom he had gotten manuscripts of the text and who had translated it out of Czech.<sup>77</sup> He also stressed the reliability of Petr as a narrator. His account

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<sup>75</sup> Oberman, "Hus and Luther," 143 and 147.

<sup>76</sup> Petr of Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht wie das heilig Evangelion mit Johannes Hussen im Concilio zu Costnitz durch den Bapst und seinen anhang öffentlich verdampt ist im Jare nach Christi unsers Herren geburt 1414*, Johannes Agricola, trans. (Hagenau: Johannes Secerius, 1529). This text is almost identical to that translated into English by Matthew Spinka in his *Jan Hus at the Council of Constance*, 89-234. The only significant deviations are the inclusion by Agricola of a lengthy sermon by the Bishop of Lodi given at Hus's degradation and the exclusion or rearrangement of certain letters exchanged by dignitaries at the beginning of the text. The sermon seems to function as a thorough statement of Roman belief about heresy and the necessity of its extirpation. This may serve as a warning to Lutherans about how a council would view their reform. For the text of the sermon, see: Petr of Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht*, L5r. and following (the sermon is unpaginated within the larger text).

<sup>77</sup> The text came from the library of Paul Rockenbach, then was translated by Nicolaus Krompach into German; Agricola seems to have included this history to counter claims that he invented the text himself, which were used later against Hus's letters. See: Petr of Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht*, A1v.

was not composed fatuously, with highly elaborate words.”<sup>78</sup> Rather, Petr had been an authentic witness and participant in the events he recorded: “In [this] writing he recorded what he himself heard and saw and truly experienced, and we know that his witness is true.”<sup>79</sup> Ritchie Kendall has noted the routine contrast in English religious polemics between straight talking, humble Protestants and their smooth-tongued, innately deceitful Catholic opponents.<sup>80</sup> It seems as if Agricola played on this contrast, allowing the clarity of Biblical truth in Petr’s narrative to stand in stark contrast to Hus’s opponents’ pedantry and deceitful words. Thus, Agricola largely left this text to itself; there was almost no commentary, and he allowed the story itself to prove the injustice of Hus’s execution.

This history provided ample ammunition for Lutheran authors and preachers who desired to condemn Constance as an unholy gathering. While the orthodoxy of Hus’s eucharistic beliefs came up repeatedly in the text, especially in the context of debates over the necessity of receiving communion in both kinds and the acceptability of a belief in remanence, these sacramental questions were secondary in this text.<sup>81</sup> The much more problematic aspect of Hus’s teachings was his ecclesiology, and especially his arguments about the inability of a morally corrupt pope to be a true head of the church. His assertions that the church was

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<sup>78</sup> In his introduction, Agricola referred to the text as “eynfeltigst verfasst/ nicht mit hohem geschmukten wortten.” Petr of Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht*, A1v.

<sup>79</sup> “In schrifft verfasst/ selbs gesehen und gehört/ und warhafftiglich erfahren/ Und wir wissen/ dass sein zeugnis war ist.” *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Kendall especially made this observation about the playwright and bishop John Bale, who also wrote a Protestant history play (on the English King John) in 1537. On his ideal of the plain speaking Protestant hero, see: Ritchie Kendall, *The Drama of Dissent: the Radical Poetics of Nonconformity, 1380-1590* (Chapel Hill, NC: U. of North Carolina Press, 1986), 99.

<sup>81</sup> Mladoňovice included an accusation against Hus that he taught remanentist beliefs in 1410; Mladoňovice related that: “Der Johann Hus hat sich beyd auff Gott und sein gewissen beruffen und öffentlich verantwort, Er hette es nie gesagt noch geleret.” Petr of Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht*, F1r.

the assemblage of the predestined and had no definite relationship to the visible church in head or members, and his argument that a foreknown pope could not be the true head of the church, obviously posed a problem for the church.<sup>82</sup> Given the unsettled state of the conciliar and papalist arguments over authority in the church, this heretical outburst concerning the predestinate definition of the church could not be tolerated.<sup>83</sup> Drawing on a number of articles from *De Ecclesia*, Hus's prosecutors showed that he was trying to undermine the church by calling the foundations of the papacy and the validity of papal claims to jurisdiction into question.<sup>84</sup>

The overwhelming impression that a reader takes from this text is of the incommensurability of the two views of orthodoxy represented in the text: Hus as a witness to the law of Christ that demanded moral accountability in the church, and the Council of Constance as an expression of a consensual view of orthodoxy

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<sup>82</sup> One of the consequences of Hus's predestinarian ecclesiology was the idea that the pope, if he had been predestined for damnation, could not be the head of the true church. Here, one's soteriological status outweighed institutional offices. This argument was condemned by the council in their hearing of Hus on June 8, and Hus defended it in his "First Reply to the Final Formulation of the Charges against Him," of June 18-20. His ninth reply stated: "It should not be believed that every Roman pontiff whatever is the head [persevering in the merits of life] of whatever particular holy Church, unless God predestined him." In his twenty-first reply, he noted that "If the pope is wicked, and particularly if he is foreknown, then like the apostly Judas he is a devil, a thief, and son of perdition." For his full reply, see: Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 260-264; these quotes, 261 and 263. Luther also picked up on this theme, noting in his afterword to Agricola's edition of Hus's letters that Hus had stated: "Wenn der Bapst nicht from ist, so ist er nicht ein heubt der heiligen Kirchen." See: Luther, *Etliche Brieve*, 34.

<sup>83</sup> Interestingly, the Lutheran assault on Constance did not dwell on the fact that the pope and council were in a dispute over who had ultimate authority in the institutional church. Rather, they were shown to be unified, likely as a way of emphasizing the monolithic and overwhelmingly dangerous opponents they faced in reform. The emphasis was on how Antichrist had subverted the entire Roman church and exercised control over it through the work and office of the pope. On this, see: Headley, *Luther and Church History*, especially 62.

<sup>84</sup> The account of Hus's trial included a number of articles that would undercut any institutional definition of the church, including: the foreknown are never part of the true church (Gvv), the papal dignity arose from the emperors (H1r.), not all popes have been the true head of the church (Hiir), and nobles can compel priests to godly living (H5r.). For the entirety of the condemned articles, see: Petr of Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht*, G4v-J5v.



that required submission and located truth in the unanimity of ecclesiastical (and secular) authorities.<sup>85</sup> In Mladoňovice's account, Hus stood ~~a~~alone against the two greatest powers on earth."<sup>86</sup> Despite the support of several Bohemian lords, the portrayal of Hus was of a lonely prophet, a voice crying out in the wilderness of Antichrist's assembly, whose death was a clear imitation of Christ's. Agricola's version of Mladoňovice's narrative would serve as the foundation for Lutheran polemics regarding Hus's execution over the next decade. It served as the framing text that allowed for *elaboration*, through the publication of Hus's letters written from prison in Constance; *generalization*, in using Hus's death as one example of other faulty decisions by councils; and *dramatization*, as the factual narrative was transformed into a polemic play that used stark characterizations and stage direction to intensify the impact of Hus's story.

Agricola himself engaged in one form of generalization: in the mid-1530s he portrayed Hus as a forerunner of the Lutheran reform who was connected with earlier voices of reform in the Catholic church, particularly through his eucharistic beliefs. This demonstration of continuity allowed Agricola to temper the isolation of the reformer at Constance with the knowledge that God had acted throughout the history of the church to ensure the persistence of true doctrine and belief despite the consistently increasing power of Antichrist in the world.<sup>87</sup> In 1537,

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<sup>85</sup> Hubert Herkommer has done much to analyze how Mladoňovice's narrative functioned as an ur-text for Lutheran portrayals of Hus. According to Herkommer, the text grew over time to become a thinly veiled *Passionsbericht*, which he argued limited its historicism and accuracy. On the portrayal of Hus by Mladoňovice as an innocent whose suffering proved his elect status, see: Herkommer, "Die Geschichte vom Leiden und Sterben," 119.

<sup>86</sup> Agricola noted that Hus stood: ~~a~~allein widder die zwo grosten gewalte auff erden." Mladoňovice, *History und warhafftige geschicht*, A2r.

<sup>87</sup> This was the central dynamic in the early Lutheran understanding of church history. After Christ and the apostles, the power of Antichrist consistently increased in the world, especially as many

Agricola published a florilegium that placed the key teachings of Hus within the context of the Bible and patristic and medieval writers.<sup>88</sup> The purpose of this collection was to show –on which arguments this pious book-keeper of God’s oracles leaned.”<sup>89</sup> Agricola prefaced the collection of authorities with a letter from Hus to his Bohemian friends that he had written from prison in Constance, in which he argued that the writings of Paul and the Gospels were the only foundations that the church needed. Granted, many authorities within the church had confirmed these teachings over time. Drawing on authors such as Augustine, Cyprian, Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, and Nicholas of Lyra, Agricola showed that Hus’s eucharistic beliefs and promotion of the law of Christ were in concert with many of the pillars of the Catholic tradition. The authority of these teachers and saints, though, depended solely on their consonance with the teachings of Christ. Thus, if any of them had deviated from their first foundation (i.e. the Gospels), then they would lose their authority.<sup>90</sup>

To demonstrate how this could happen, Agricola included the conciliar decrees against utraquism from Constance at the end of the collection. He also included his own marginal commentary, in which the teaching and practice of Christ was set in firm opposition to the –*consuetudo*” of the contemporary church.

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Christians apostasized and became slaves to the institutional church. Despite the consistent decline of the visible church, though, true doctrine survived through the constant witness of the Scripture and the ministry of witnesses to the doctrines contained in the Bible. On this view of history, see: Headley, *Luther’s View of Church History*; and Robert Kolb, *For All the Saints*, especially 24-27.

<sup>88</sup> Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*.

<sup>89</sup> –Quibus argumentis nitatur pius ille ratiocinator oraculorum Dei.” Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*, A2v.

<sup>90</sup> In Hus’s apology for himself, which Agricola appended to the collection of the fathers’ *dicta*, Hus had argued that the teachings of Jesus were the point from which all Christian doctrine had to proceed: –Et quia omnem fidelem hominem necesse est a Christo Iesu incipere, tam obiective quoque effective, Dante primam fidem principaliter eo quoque oportet omnem fidelem incipere a primo principio.” See: Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*, B6r.

The agglomeration of texts from orthodox thinkers and its blatant disjunction with the rulings of Constance showed how the authorities of the church could be in disagreement with each other. This disagreement showed that Scripture and the law of Christ, which never contradicted each other, were the only sufficient guides for the true faith, and that the church's doctrinal authority derived only from its agreement with the teaching of Christ. For example, Agricola included texts from Pope Gelasius (d. 496), who required Christians to take communion in both kinds in order to show that they were not Manichaeans. Agricola quoted Gelasius's dictum: ~~Who~~ "Who receives one [species] without the other, when taking the sacrament, commits sacrilege."<sup>91</sup> This quotation demonstrated the temporary and contradictory nature of papal and conciliar decrees, given the juxtaposition of Gelasius's ruling with Constance's decrees against utraquism. Alongside these latter texts, in an almost gleeful marginal note, Agricola stated: ~~Note~~ "Note that the institution of Christ is an error and an impediment to the salvation of the faithful, O Blasphemy!"<sup>92</sup> With contradictory teachings here shown alongside each other, the dependence of Catholicism on a perception of its unanimity and the strength of its tradition was shown to be misplaced. The discordant voices of orthodox belief suggested that one had to reach past any and all human teachings in order to discover the self-sufficiency of the law of Christ.

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<sup>91</sup> ~~Qui~~ "Qui sumendo Sacramentum, unum sine alio recipit, Sacrilegum committit." Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*, A5r. This quotation appears to be a paraphrase of St. Pope Gelasius I's decree that all Christians should take communion in both kinds, a decree intended to expose Manicheans in Rome. This decree was attributed to Gelasius by Gratian. C.f. *PL* 187, 1736.

<sup>92</sup> ~~Nota~~ "Nota Christi institutio est error et impedimentum salutis fidelium, O Blasphemia," Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*, B3r.

Hus's role as an exemplar for Agricola was largely dependent on his adherence to that law. In his apology for his theological positions, Hus noted that all he wanted to do was defend the law of Christ.<sup>93</sup> The law of Christ was to be understood as Christ's institution of the sacraments; the prohibition of Jesus's own practice at the Last Supper by the church was tantamount to the rejection of his concern for his followers' salvation. The collation of fathers that supported Hus's opinions dwelled upon the necessity of receiving communion in both kinds in order to revive both body and soul.<sup>94</sup> The denial of the second element, then, was contrary to both the original foundation of the sacrament by Jesus and the best interest of the Christian laity. The Council of Constance was therefore shown to advance its own interpretation and interests against the needs of the larger church. This opposition characterized the hierarchical church that sought only to defend its own decisions despite their blatant contradictions with the norms of the primitive church and Christ's teachings.

The fact that the institutions of the early church had been put aside by the papacy did not come as a surprise to Hus. He considered himself to be living in the last days, and he worried greatly about the lengths to which Antichrist and his followers would go to destroy the true church of God. Thus, Hus understood his own execution as the price that necessarily had to be paid for raising objections to the subjection of the law of Christ to human teaching. Besides drawing strength

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<sup>93</sup> –Et intendendo cordialiter Dei honorem, veritatis professionem, extirpationem suspicionis sinistrae in proximis et defensionem legis Christi.” Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*, B5r.

<sup>94</sup> Following Ambrose, Agricola asserted that the body of Christ was eaten for the wellbeing of the body, while the blood was consumed for the health of the soul, –Quia caro Christi pro salute corporis, sanguis vero, pro anima nostra, sumitur...In sanguine enim sedes animae dicitur esse, qui sanguis effusus est, sicut Moses praefiguravit, Caro inquit pro corpore nostro offerut, Sanguis vero pro anima.” Agricola, *Disputatio Ioannis Hus*, B2v.

from the history of the church, then, Hus also looked forward to the continued perseverance of God's people and hoped they would draw inspiration from his death. Agricola made sure that this example was brought to the attention of Lutherans with his 1537 translation of Luther's edition of Hus's letters into German.<sup>95</sup> The four letters described the opposition of Antichrist to the church of Christ, included moral exhortations from Hus to his Bohemian followers, and argued for the necessity of suffering among the followers of Christ.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, this belief in the centrality of suffering in Christian life was one of the essential common denominators between Hussite and Lutheran theology. Perseverance in the face of that suffering was both an essential mark of the church and a sign that God continued to act in history to preserve his people despite the overwhelming power of their worldly opponents, and that —~~H~~ [God] has granted us time so that the long-drawn-out and great testing may divest us of great sins and bring us consolation."<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> This collection was briefly referred to above, at fn. 53. In 1536, Luther published an edition of four letters by Hus in Latin, with his own foreword; its original title was: *Tres [sic] Epistolae Sanctissimi Ioannis Hus* (Wittenberg: Joseph Klug, 1536). Agricola translated the letters into German, and published them with a new afterword by Luther in 1537. It was published as: *Etliche Brieue Johannis Huss des heiligen Merterers, au dem gefengnis zu Constantz, An die Behemen geschriben, Mit einer Vorrhede Doct. Mart. Luthers*, J. Agricola, trans. (Wittenberg: Joseph Klug, 1537). All told, six different editions of the letters were published in 1536-1537. The Agricola edition is printed in: *WA* 50, 16-39. On the publication history of this text, see also: Roloff, "Die Function von Hus-Texten," 252. The letters themselves, particularly that of June 24 (the second in the collection) survive in a number of manuscripts that predate the publication of this collection, and were also printed in Czech around the turn of the sixteenth century as part of the material on Hus in the Czech *Legenda Aurea*. See, for instance, the copies now contained in the Jena Codex (c. 1495) at f. 39r. and following. On the Jena Codex, see above, chapter 4, at fn. 286. For a full analysis of the codicological history of the letters, see: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 269, 310-311, 316-317, and 324.

<sup>96</sup> In the fourth letter, originally written on June 27, 1415, Hus noted that —~~H~~ would be a strange thing if now one would not suffer on account of a brave stand against wickedness, especially that of the priests, which does not allow itself to be touched!" Luther, *Etliche Brieue*, 31; the English translation is from: Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 289.

<sup>97</sup> This quotation is from letter of June 27. See: Luther, *Etliche Brieue*, 31; and Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 288.

In these letters, Hus called on all Christians to continue their perseverance in opposition to the false church, and prophesied the continued appearance of men who would lead this opposition. Hus identified the enemy of all true Christians in the institutional church, in —the wickedness and abomination and shame of Antichrist [that] has manifested itself in the pope as well as in others of the Council!”<sup>98</sup> He was also clear that this institution could never totally overwhelm the true church, because: —Trust God that after me He will send braver men, and that they exist even now, who will better declare Antichrist’s wickedness and will risk dying for the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will grant you and me eternal joy. Amen.”<sup>99</sup> Such an invocation of future Christians functioned as a complementary prophetic mandate for the Lutherans. This hope for future martyrs expanded Hus’s apocryphal reference to the swan who would follow him, and this would have appealed to a Lutheran audience who could collectively identify themselves with those —braver men.” Hus not only looked back to the martyrs who had inspired his own sacrifice,<sup>100</sup> but also anticipated the continued resurgence of the true church under the leadership of those opposed to Antichrist and his followers.

The demonstration of continuity seemed to be the ultimate goal in Agricola’s primary source publications on Jan Hus. Agricola sought to

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<sup>98</sup> See: Luther, *Etliche Brieve*, 28-29; and Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 282-283.

<sup>99</sup> This quotation is printed on: Luther, *Etliche Brieve*, 29; the English translation is from: Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 283.

<sup>100</sup> In the first letter published by Luther and Agricola, originally written on June 26, 1415, Hus compared his opposition to the council fathers at Constance with that of St. Catherine of Alexandria, who had refuted fifty learned masters with her inspired wisdom: —So St. Catherine, a young maiden, should have retreated from the truth and faith of the Lord Jesus Christ because fifty masters stood up against her!” See: Luther, *Etliche Brieve*, 26; and Spinka, *Hus at the Council*, 288.

disseminate evidence of the recurrent confrontation between the true and false churches, and the accounts of Hus's death, the florilegium that proved his orthodoxy, and his letters all provided eloquent testimony to the cost of opposition. The shorter, vernacular letters, especially with their incendiary foreword and afterword by Luther,<sup>101</sup> provided an exclamation point to the meaning of his suffering, and made clear that the expectation of persecution should shape the Lutheran church. Just as Hus had prophesied the appearance and success of Luther, so his conflict with a council predicted the outcome of a renewed confrontation between the Gospel and the church of Antichrist. These raw materials for an interpretation of Hus's relationship to the Lutheran cause required wider dissemination and interpretation to be sure their message emerged clearly, and those twin processes would require Agricola's publication of the *Tragedia Johannis Huss*.

#### The Council as Arbiter of Orthodoxy: Cochlaeus on Hus

In contrast to Johannes Agricola, Luther's opponent Johannes Cochlaeus has received significant scholarly interest. He has been lionized or demonized, depending on the author's confessional allegiance, but he has always stirred

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<sup>101</sup> Luther had included the preface to his Latin edition of the letters, but a new afterword was included in the German version. In it, Luther cited various Catholic authors and leaders who had supported Hus including Erasmus and, quite shockingly, the Emperor Maximilian: "Ich hab von glaubwürdigen leuten gehoret, das Keiser Maximilian hab pflegt zu sagen vom Hus: Hehe, Sie haben dem fromen man unrecht gethan. Und Erasmus Roterdamus inn den ersten tractetlin, so ich noch habe, offentlich im druck schreibet: Johannes Hus ist exustus, non convictus, Das ist: Johannes Hus ist verbrand und noch nie überwunden." See: Luther, *Etliche Briefe*, 36.

strong emotions among those who have studied him.<sup>102</sup> Cochlaeus was born in 1479 in Wendelstein, a town near Nuremberg, and came from a humble background. He studied in Cologne from 1504, and was there exposed to humanist scholarship, but came late to his priestly vocation. Early in his career he formed connections to the prominent humanist Pirckheimer family of Nuremberg, and it was as a tutor to three children from that family that he went to Bologna. There, Cochlaeus worked towards a degree in theology, receiving his doctorate in 1517 (at age thirty-eight) and ordination the following year.<sup>103</sup> Monique Samuel-Scheyder has emphasized the continued importance of Cochlaeus's pre-seminary education in his later work. In light of his early geographical and historical work, the *Brief Description of Germany* (1512), she saw a continued humanist and nationalist bent to his work. He attacked his opponents using humanist literary and philological techniques, and he consistently based his criticism of the Lutheran movement on its threat to German order and security.<sup>104</sup>

Cochlaeus emerged as a leading Catholic opponent of Luther in the early years of the Reformation. From 1522 to 1525, he published eighteen tracts against the Saxon reformer, despite official hesitation about the legitimacy of debating

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<sup>102</sup> The most enthusiastic of the analyses of Cochlaeus is certainly that of Remigius Bäumer, *Johannes Cochlaeus*. The most negative, doctrinaire assessment of Cochlaeus is: Gotthelf Wiedermann, —Cochlaeus as Polemicist,” in P.N. Brooks, ed., *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary, 1483-1983* (New York City: Clarendon Press, 1983), 195-205.

<sup>103</sup> The best short biographical sketch of Cochlaeus is available in: Keen, —Cochlaeus: an Introduction,” 40-42.

<sup>104</sup> Samuel-Scheyder maintained throughout her massive biography of Cochlaeus that he should be viewed as a German humanist writing in defense of the church. Bagchi modified this finding somewhat, noting that Cochlaeus's nationalism at least was oriented towards Rome, as all the marks of German civilization (chiefly the status of its emperor and its Christian piety) had devolved to it from Rome. See: Samuel-Scheyder, *Humaniste et adversaire*, e.g. 447; and Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 113.



with a heretic and a distinct lack of financial support from the church.<sup>105</sup> In his writings on Hus, though, Cochlaeus was surprisingly restrained in his critique of the fifteenth-century heretic. He admitted that Hus held some orthodox positions, held back from openly inflammatory or derogatory remarks, and largely allowed the contradictions or pro-Catholic elements in his opponents' texts speak for themselves. Underlying this rhetorical restraint was an uncompromising belief in the essentially just treatment of Hus's case by the authorities at Constance. The nearly irreparable harm that proceeded from Hus's protest against the authorities of the church convinced Cochlaeus that the opposition of individual judgment and arrogance to the collective wisdom of the church inevitably led to subversion, disorder, and war.<sup>106</sup>

Cochlaeus's interpretation of Hus stemmed from this primary insight, especially because he viewed Luther in parallel to Hus. Whatever threat Hus had posed as an opponent of ecclesiastical authority, Luther was much worse because the events of the Peasants' War and other disturbances in the Empire (e.g. the Anabaptist kingdom of Münster) proved Luther's harmful intentions vis-à-vis ecclesiastical and secular authorities. If Hus's heresy, which was relatively minor in and among itself, led to a truly devastating outburst of violence and disorder (exemplified by Tábor and the crusades of the 1420s), then how much worse would the fallout be from Luther's heresy, which was infinitely more terrible than Hus's? The arrogance and pride of Hus, which were his primary faults, were

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<sup>105</sup> Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents*, 209-214.

<sup>106</sup> Throughout Cochlaeus's work, he emphasized the validity of institutional consensus and unanimity as a guarantor of correct belief. On Cochlaeus's definitions of orthodoxy, see: Ralph Keen, "The Arguments and Audiences of Cochlaeus's *Philippica VII*," *The Catholic Historical Review* 78 (1992), 371-394, 388-390.

intensified by Luther; the Saxon reformer exhibited ~~an~~ almost diabolical obstinacy, an inability to accede to reason, church discipline, or the threat of punishment by civil powers,” that made negotiation or any movement towards rapprochement pointless.<sup>107</sup>

The primacy of this oppositional spirit was one characteristic element in Cochlaeus’s portrayal of Hus and his execution at Constance. Paradoxially, he juxtaposed the continuity in pride between Hus and Luther with a discontinuity in theology. Part of Cochlaeus’s rhetorical strategy was to undercut the historical basis that the Lutheran party sought in Hus. By paradoxically highlighting Hus’s Catholic orthodoxy on the eucharist (especially in terms of transubstantiation) and his recognition of the primacy of the pope, Cochlaeus sought to sever any meaningful theological ties between Prague and Wittenberg. Without a theological core to the relationship between Hus and Luther, all that was left was their pertinacity. This trait alone united them, and was an expression of the recurrent opposition that the church faced from heretics.<sup>108</sup> Indeed, Cochlaeus asserted that Luther demonstrated ~~ob~~stinate impiety,” a ~~h~~ardness of heart,” and hatred for the clergy, just as Hus had, but that these identical traits had been

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<sup>107</sup> Keen, *“Johannes Cochlaeus: an Introduction,”* 47.

<sup>108</sup> In printing his 1549 analysis of Luther’s teachings, the *Commentaria de actis et scriptis Martini Luther Saxonis*, Cochlaeus used an essay on history by Conrad Braun as his preface. In this essay, Braun claimed that the past allowed us to interpret how current events would play out in the future due to the cyclical nature of history. This understanding of history allowed Cochlaeus to infer that the consequences of Hus’s attack on Rome could be used as a barometer for the impact of Luther’s heresy. It also attested to the recurrent rise (and subsequent fall) of heresies against the church. On this, see: Keen, *“Johannes Cochlaeus: an Introduction,”* 51.

magnified in the Saxon reformer – Luther himself had said, “If Hus was a heretic...then I am ten times the heretic.”<sup>109</sup>

These heretics could not be suppressed by mere talk, but had to be defeated by a coalition of political and military powers and the church. Throughout the 1530s, then, and particularly in his role as chaplain to Duke George of Saxony, Cochlaeus pursued a strategy of trying to alert secular authorities in the Empire about the danger of Luther’s reform;<sup>110</sup> religious upheaval would inevitably lead to political upheaval, just as had happened in fifteenth-century Bohemia. Cochlaeus portrayed Luther as posing a threat to the common good, here represented by the united political and ecclesial order, just as Hus had.<sup>111</sup> To this skepticism regarding the possible effects of negotiation, Cochlaeus added a distinct element of German patriotism and chauvinism: “Therefore I now declare in public what hitherto I have mentioned only privately; that if any German says that Johann Huss was not a heretic, and was thus wrongly condemned and burned at Constance, he is to be rightly and justly considered an

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<sup>109</sup> The reference to “obstinate impiety” and “hardness of heart” is taken from: Johannes Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei* (Leipzig: Nicolaus Wolrab, 1538), B3r. Luther’s own reference to his heresy and its comparison to Hus’s comes from 1521’s *Martini Lutheri responsio extemporaria ad articulos, quos Magistri Nostri ex Babylocica et Assertionibus eius excerpserat, quos venienti WORMATIAM obiicerent tanquam haereticos*, which is printed in: *WA* 7, 605-613. The full quote reads: “Collectores. ‘Si Johannes Huss fuit haereticus, ego,’ inquit Lutherus, ‘plus decies haereticus sum, cum ille longe minora et pauciora dixerit velut inchoans lucem veritatis aperire.’ Lutherus. Quia maiora vitia et plures abusus Papae tetigi.” See: *Responsio extemporaria*, 612.

<sup>110</sup> Cochlaeus became the chaplain to Duke George in 1527. George was the rare Catholic prince who supported Roman polemical efforts in any significant way, and it was under his patronage that Cochlaeus engaged in protracted “French warfare” against his Lutheran opponents through consistent attacks on Luther and publications supporting traditional Catholic religious practices and doctrines. See: Keen, “Cochlaeus: an Introduction,” 43 and Bagchi, *Luther’s Earliest Opponents*, 14.

<sup>111</sup> On Cochlaeus’s strategy of equating ecclesiastical order with political order, see: Samuel-Scheyder, *Cochlaeus: Humaniste et adversaire*, 365.

enemy and a traitor to our country.”<sup>112</sup> Cochlaeus depicted Hus as a foreigner and enemy of Germany whose followers had devastated portions of the Empire, and he and his political patron both excoriated anyone who could support such an enemy of the German people. Cochlaeus’s nationalism and his uncompromising view of heretics here combined to foster in him a remarkable cynicism regarding the benefit of conciliation and negotiation in dealing with Luther and his followers.<sup>113</sup>

Cochlaeus’s fascination with the Hussites began during his earliest polemical efforts against Luther. Already in 1523, he brought to press portions of Albert Krantz’s work *Wandalia* that contained a negative assessment of the fifteenth-century Bohemian Hussites. He also procured a number of manuscripts from Bohemia itself and began to prepare a comprehensive history of that kingdom until the death of the heretic king, George of Poděbrady, in 1471.<sup>114</sup> Apparently this work, which had begun while Cochlaeus was working under the patronage of the Bishop of Meissen, was largely completed in 1534. Unfortunately, at that time Cochlaeus could not support the cost of publication, so he turned to composing his analytical biography of Luther, the *Commentaria*.<sup>115</sup> It was not until 1538 that Cochlaeus started to publish anti-Hus tracts, and these were largely in response to the pamphlets and books written by Agricola and

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<sup>112</sup> This quotation was from Cochlaeus’s *Paraclesis*, which he wrote in 1525. See: Bagchi, *Luther’s Earliest Opponents*, 107.

<sup>113</sup> Keen, “The Arguments and Audiences,” 377.

<sup>114</sup> On these early efforts at procuring and publishing relevant materials, see: Bäumer, *Leben und Werk*, 112. On Krantz’s work and its relevance in Reformation polemics, see: Beatrice Reynolds, “Latin Historiography: A Survey, 1400-1600,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 2 (1955), 7-66, 42-43. See also: Harald Bollbuck, *Geschichts- und Raummodelle bei Albert Krantz (um 1448-1517) und David Chytraeus (1530-1600) : Transformationen des historischen Diskurses im 16. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2006).

<sup>115</sup> Bäumer, *Leben und Werk*, 102.

Luther.<sup>116</sup> In these, he used his technique of exposing contradictions within Lutheran authors' works while emphasizing the pride, arrogance, and socially subversive outcomes of tolerating or negotiating with heretics.

In 1538, Cochlaeus published a pamphlet in Latin entitled *De immensa misericordia Dei*. This work, which was dedicated to Pope Paul III, attempted to answer a question that perplexed its author: why had God not destroyed Germany despite the existence of a horrible schism in that land for twenty years? Cochlaeus asserted that "nothing more certain is to be expected for us, than [our] destruction and consumption, unless we desist from our strife."<sup>117</sup> The method for the restoration of unity and concord, though, was undecided. Cochlaeus noted that "many of our country long with many sighs and desire the future general council, through which the Holy Spirit, who is the God of peace, and not dissension, will recall us to pious agreement."<sup>118</sup> The body of the tract, however, called his hope into question. The heretics' stubbornness, personified by Luther, made a peaceful settlement of the schism impossible. After all, within six years of Luther's beginning to preach, the peasants had arisen and destroyed many castles and monasteries throughout Germany, thus proving the disastrous results of religious

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<sup>116</sup> This dating of Cochlaeus's publications against Hus was part of a pattern in polemical publication that Richar Crofts has noted. He has observed a lag time (often of two or three years) between Protestant and Catholic publications on controversial issues, with Catholics trailing their opponents to the press. On this pattern, see his: "Printing, Reform, and the Catholic Reformation."

<sup>117</sup> "Nihil igitur certius nobis expectandum est, quam interitus et consumptio, nisi a contentionibus noxiis desistamus." Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, B1r.

<sup>118</sup> "Hinc tot gemitibus plerique nostrum suspirant, ac desyderant futurum Concilium generale, per quod revocet nos in piam concordiam spiritus sanctus, qui est Deus pacis, non dissensionis." Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, A3r.

discord.<sup>119</sup> These attacks on the twin structures of the secular and ecclesiastical order demonstrated the implacable hatred among the people aroused by the writings and speeches of Luther, in which calumnies and cries against the Pope and all the clergy are very frequently, most bitterly, and most furiously hurled.”<sup>120</sup>

Alongside this certainty of the obstinacy of Luther and his followers, Cochlaeus laid out the theological divergences between the Saxon priest and his supposed forerunner. *De immensa misericordia Dei* highlighted ten doctrinal areas and placed Hus’s teachings on them alongside Luther’s. The positions of Hus and Luther were gleaned from the texts of their sermons, and this method showed how Cochlaeus made use of one “Protestant” text against another.<sup>121</sup> Throughout this lengthy comparison, Cochlaeus ironically insisted on Hus’s adherence to Catholic positions. His essential orthodoxy in points of doctrine, especially concerning transubstantiation and the validity of the church’s penitential cycle, was contrasted sharply with Luther’s deviant beliefs and rejection of traditional Catholic religiosity. For instance, on the one hand Hus maintained the centrality of the rite of confession in the church. On the other hand, Luther rejected confession as a rite that led to the “horrendous destruction

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<sup>119</sup> “Cum autem Lutherus sex annis adversus Ecclesiam novas suas contentiones scripsisset atque predicasset, insurrexerunt rustici, qui mox intra tres menses innumeras fere arces ac Monasteria devastaverunt” Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, G2v. The timeline here is confused, and seems to date the origins of the Lutheran movement to 1519, perhaps with the Leipzig Debate, because this spurred the first major exchange of Lutheran and Catholic polemics in the press.

<sup>120</sup> Cochlaeus maintained a certain elitism in his writings that inevitably characterized the followers of Luther as the peasants (*rustici*); this interpretation of the social appeal of Lutheran teachings highlighted the subversive or disruptive elements in his teaching and ignored its support from the burghers or princes of the Holy Roman Empire. “Ex scriptis atque sermonibus Lutheri, in quibus frequentissimis atque amarulentissimis conviciis atque calumniis, in Papam et in omnem Clerum furiosissime eiaculatis.” Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, E3r.

<sup>121</sup> Cochlaeus treated the status of priests, ecclesiology, the confession of sins, the necessity of satisfaction in penance, the eucharist, the value of good works, monastic vows, the saints and their images, Purgatory, and free will as the arenas for comparison between Hus and Luther.

of souls” and let ~~a~~ll the demons rend the soul into a thousand parts and crush it thoroughly.”<sup>122</sup>

This emphasis on Hus’s orthodoxy could make a reader wonder why he was executed for heresy, but Cochlaeus justified Hus’s prosecution by his harsh criticism of the clerical hierarchy and his unwillingness to recant the articles that the church authorities found problematic.<sup>123</sup> The judgment of Constance was also justified *ex post facto* by the continued schism and rebellion of the Bohemian kingdom. The prolonged military struggle between that nation and the papacy and emperor, as well as the continued impenitence and heresy of the Taborites, suggested that Hus’s inspiration of his ~~d~~flowers” made him guilty. One could also read a subtle critique of the conciliar solution to Hus’s heresy in this account; the execution of Hus did little or nothing to quell the incipient revolt against the church and only aroused the Bohemians, who were ~~m~~ore similar to beasts than penitent men.”<sup>124</sup> In short, the conciliar prosecution of a stubborn, but nearly orthodox, heretic led to war and schism. Cochlaeus was gravely concerned with what would result from the contemporary struggle that was consuming the Empire in the 1530s.

Cochlaeus published another major work against Hus and Luther in 1538, his *Warhafftige Historia von Magister Johan Hussen*, in order to further

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<sup>122</sup> For this argument, Cochlaeus quoted Luther’s statements that confession led to the ~~h~~rrendam cladem animarum,” and allowed ~~a~~nimam omnes daemones in mille partes concerperent ac penitus comminuerent.” See: Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, E4v.

<sup>123</sup> Hus was ultimately shown as arrogant and obstinate in his refusal to recognize his errors, and this made his execution by Constance legitimate: ~~Q~~ui etsi reprobis in quibusdam doctrinae suae articulis fuit, ac propter pertinaciam, cum revocare nollet, iuste a Concilio Constantiensi damnatus.” Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, E1v.

<sup>124</sup> On the Taborites, whom Cochlaeus equated with the totality of Hus’s followers in this text, he asserted: ~~d~~e iis [the sacraments] nihil curabant, bestiis similiores quam poenitentibus.” Cochlaeus, *De immensa misericordia Dei*, C4v.

strengthen the parallels he had highlighted in his previous work.<sup>125</sup> Rather than presenting a topical comparison of Luther and Hus, as he had done earlier, this text presented a narrative account of Hus's teaching, trial and execution; to this narrative Cochlaeus appended an extensive attack on Agricola and Luther's editions of Hus's letters and a short comparison of Wyclif, Hus, and Luther on the eucharist. Both of these sections sought to contradict and tear down the historical interpretations that Agricola and Luther had put forth in their earlier works. Thus, throughout the *Warhafftige Historia*, Cochlaeus grounded his presentation in clearly identified historical sources. These included Ulrich Richental's chronicle of the Council of Constance, the official acts of the Council, and even Mladoňovice's account of Hus's trial. Cochlaeus's attention to sources was perhaps meant to forestall the questions of authenticity that he himself raised regarding Luther's edition of Hus's letters.<sup>126</sup> The *Warhafftige Historia* largely built upon Cochlaeus's earlier juxtaposition of the parallel threats and opposed theologies that Hus and Luther represented. The narrative itself showed how the pride of the heretic was righteously opposed by the unity of the church, while the framing materials tried to drive significant wedges between Luther and his supposed forerunner.

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<sup>125</sup> Johannes Cochlaeus, *Warhafftige Historia von Magister Johan Hussen, von anfang seiner neuen Sect, biss zum ende seines lebens im Concilio zu Costnitz* (Dresden: Wolfgang Stoeckel, 1538).

<sup>126</sup> In the last section of the *Warhafftige Historia*, Cochlaeus contended that Luther had forged the letters he attributed to Hus. In particular, Cochlaeus argued that the letters' dates and use of titles to refer to various figures, especially Sigismund, proved that they were written after Hus's death. This humanistic argumentation, although incorrect, suggested that the Lutherans had constructed a false continuity between Hus and Luther. On the true provenance of the letters, see above, fn. 95. For Cochlaeus's argument, see: *Warhafftige Historia*, G1r-G1v.



Cochlaeus began his text by clearly emphasizing the importance of unity and concordance in demonstrating truth. He claimed that he had composed this work because he could not ~~pass~~ over in silence or permit that the Council of Constance did anything unjust to Hus.<sup>127</sup> For Cochlaeus, Hus's unwillingness to concede anything to the universal church (~~g~~*gemeiner kirchen*) marked him as a hopeless heretic. Throughout the text, Cochlaeus presented Hus as opposed to ~~h~~ the clergy in the whole world," "the universal church," and the ~~R~~Roman see and [all] ordained authority."<sup>128</sup> The image of the unity that opposed Hus also included worldly authority. Cochlaeus routinely paired secular and sacred authorities as the targets of Hus's subversive preaching, and Cochlaeus depicted Sigismund as a righteous king and emperor who sought to protect his domains from heresy.<sup>129</sup> The story of Hus's trial itself also showed Hus to have been in bad faith: Cochlaeus included Richental's story of Hus trying to escape from Constance in a hay wagon, and this attempted flight rendered the safe conduct issued by Sigismund moot. The proud heretic was also shown to be a coward at heart who was afraid to face judgment for his obstinate heresy.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> ~~J~~edoch kan ich keines wegs vorschweigen oder zulassen das dem Hussen im Concilio zu Costnitz sey unrecht geschehen." Cochlaeus, *Warhafftige Historia*, A2r.

<sup>128</sup> ~~a~~lle Clerisey in der gantzen welt," ~~e~~meine kirch," and ~~R~~omische stuel und ordentlicher Oberkeit." Cochlaeus, *Warhafftige Historia*, C1r-C1v.

<sup>129</sup> For instance, Cochlaeus accused Hus of inciting the people against their rightful lords: Hus and his followers ~~m~~achten auch das volck durch wickleffische artickeln gegen der weltlichen oberkeit uppig und widersetzig. Denn wickleff leeret das keener sey ein weltlicher Herr oder ein Prelat oder ein Bischoff dieweil er in einer todtsund ist." Hus was also accused of bringing ~~a~~yd, turft, freuel, hasz, betrug und listikeit zuvoraus in so offentlicher empoeerung und ungehorsam gegen aller Oberkeit gesitlichen und weltlichen." See: Cochlaeus, *Warhafftige Historia*, C1r. and C4v.

<sup>130</sup> Much of Cochlaeus's account of Hus's trial and execution was devoted to explicit rejections of the version offered by Petr of Mladoňovice. Cochlaeus argued that Hus's literary productivity while in prison made any argument that his imprisonment was damaging tenuous; he also argued that Hus's trial offered ample opportunities for him to speak in his own defense before qualified judges, not wicked Sophists. Cochlaeus also went to great

Cochlaeus also made sure to show that Hus's pride in opposing the totality of worldly authority had been superseded by that of Luther. Cochlaeus actually referred to Luther criticizing Hus for not going far enough in his criticism of the church:

Hus was much more modest and less brazen than Luther. Because Hus did not condemn the holy canons and decretals of holy teachers as freely as Luther, who boasts of such evil in himself, Luther thought that God had let him [Hus] be burned, because he had esteemed and conceded too much to the Roman idol.<sup>131</sup>

This quotation demonstrated the second major theme of this work; although Hus and Luther were united in their opposition to the pope, they were divided by significant differences in their theology. In the doctrinal comparison that followed the narrative account of Hus's trial and execution, Cochlaeus pointed out that Hus actually held orthodox views on transubstantiation and the sacrificial nature of the Mass.<sup>132</sup> Given the publication of the *Schmalkald Articles* a year earlier, such an observation placed a firm wall between the sacramental theologies of Hus and Luther.<sup>133</sup>

lengths to prove that Hus's execution was not due to any animus on the part of his prosecutors, especially Stephen Paleč and Michael de Causis, but resulted from his unwillingness to submit to the mercy of the Council. See: Cochlaeus, *Warhafftigte Historia*, D3v-F1r.

<sup>131</sup> —Wiewol auch in diser ubertretung Huss vil bescheidener und weniger unverschempt gewesen ist dann Luther. Denn Huss die heyligen Canones die Decretales die heylign leerer nicht so freuelich verworffen hat wie Luther, der sich solcher bossheit selbst rhuemet und meint, Got hat yn (den Hussen) darumb lassen verbrant werden das er dem Roemischen Abgott (wie er den Babst nennt) zuvil geehrwirdiget und zugegebn habe." Cochlaeus, *Warhafftigte Historia*, A2v.

<sup>132</sup> This comparison also included Wyclif, whose ideas on the moral qualifications for positions of authority was portrayed in this text as the font of Hus's heresy. In terms of the Eucharist and Wyclif's belief in remanence, his position was shown to be the most heretical of the three men. In comparison to his blatant heresy and Hus's surprising orthodoxy, Luther was depicted as occupying an uncomfortable middle ground that was ambiguous on the real presence, but emphatically denied the sacrifice of the Mass. See: Cochlaeus, *Warhafftigte Historia*, F2v-F4r.

<sup>133</sup> In the first article of the second part of the *Schmalkald Articles*, Luther noted that justification by faith obviated the necessity of a sacrificial mass and made such a concept

This second theme, however, was less developed in this text than in Cochlaeus's other publications. He did try to cast doubt on Hus's and Luther's theological relationship, but this served merely as a counterpoint to Cochlaeus's justification of the actions of Constance regarding Hus. His death was required by his obstinacy and arrogance, and thus the action of the council represented the necessary exercise of justice by the church and secular powers, rather than a cruel suppression of the truth. Cochlaeus portrayed the trial of Hus as running according to judicial norms and marked by unusual offers of mercy and leniency. The jealousy of Hus's Bohemian accusers, the resentment of prelates exposed in their sins, and the capriciousness of the emperor regarding Hus's safety played no part in Cochlaeus's account. Rather, he offered justifications for all of the players' parts in the drama of Hus's trial and execution. In each and every case, conformity with the law and concern for the stability and spiritual welfare of Bohemia dominated the thinking of Hus's interlocutors, judges, and even his executioners.<sup>134</sup>

In these two works, Cochlaeus explicitly answered the charges and historical interpretations of Luther and Agricola regarding the death of Jan Hus. Where one side saw the machinations of Antichrist, the other saw the orderly exercise of secular and sacred justice. Where one side saw Hus as the champion

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tantamount to denying the saving power of Christ. Luther declared: "Upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the world."

<sup>134</sup> This style of analysis took its inspiration from Richental; Herkommer has argued that Richental's chronicle was a better source for Hus's death than Mladoňovice's account, because it lacked the obvious ideological flourishes that made the latter's narrative blatantly apologetic. Cochlaeus's account also sought to attribute the various participants' actions to their duties, and emphasized the procedures of the trials, rather than personal motivations. On the differing styles of the accounts of the trial, see: Herkommer, "Die Geschichte vom Leiden," 129-130.

of the law of Christ, the other saw him as a pertinacious heretic who would not recognize the wisdom of the universal bride of Christ. This exchange of historical polemic was marked by an attention to sources, questions over the authenticity of Lutheran claims to correspondence with Hus's ideas, and the underlying question of whether or not the Council of Constance had erred in its condemnation of Hus. These questions and sources did not necessarily make their way into the popular consciousness. The language, length, and subject matter of these works in some ways gravitated against their impact in the popular realm. Also, each side put forth entirely plausible historical readings of eye-witness accounts of the event. And yet, their interpretations were completely contradictory. The past revealed itself to be ambiguous in this case, an open source that both sides could exploit to further their own arguments about the present. Given this ambiguity, the competing narratives of Hus's trial and death needed to be offered to the public in a form they could digest and debate. Agricola had proven himself to be a popularizer in the past; thus, it is not surprising that he moved into a new genre, historical drama, in order to portray Hus as a proto-Lutheran martyr before the masses. Conversely, it is not entirely surprising that Cochlaeus followed him in this direction; the Catholic polemicist had countered each of Agricola and Luther's moves before, and his humanist training had given him the tools to compose such a piece. It is to this dramatic exchange, then, that I will turn in order to see how Agricola and Cochlaeus brought Hus's story to broader audiences in order to carry on the dispute over Mantua and the errancy of church councils.

### From Pamphlets to Plays: Popularizing Hus?

Why did Agricola first turn to drama as a means of disseminating Hus's story to the German public? While Luther and Melanchthon both approved of drama as a tool for education, neither had made use of its polemical potential in any sustained way.<sup>135</sup> Beginning in the 1530s, Lutheran authors composed plays based on the apocryphal and historical books of the Old Testament, and these had begun to reveal how ideal the stage could be to convey moral truths, but it was only with Agricola that drama was used to portray events from more recent history. In the *Tragedia Johannis Huss*, Agricola acted as a "veritas-producing" author who had gone back in time to perform an act of historical salvage;<sup>136</sup> he used the particular qualities of drama to overcome the dominant construction of the past and re-present Hus as the authentic, holy man that he had actually been. These qualities included drama's ability to visually present moral lessons and

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<sup>135</sup> Luther approved of drama as a tool for teaching practical eloquence and morality, and even authored an introduction to a translation of the book of Tobias in 1534 that encouraged the reading of this book as a biblical morality play that contained wisdom for the common people. On Luther and morality plays, see: James Parente, *Religious Drama and the Humanist Tradition: Christian Theater in Germany and in the Netherlands, 1500-1680* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1987), especially 22-26. Melanchthon in particular emphasized the educational value of drama, and pushed for classical drama's inclusion in school curricula. On Melanchthon, see: Bacon, *Martin Luther and the Drama*, 54.

<sup>136</sup> Thomas Betteridge employs the idea of the "veritas-producing historian" to describe John Bale, particularly in his play on King John, and speaks more generally about English Protestant history writing as an effort to discover the true nuggets of history that had been distorted by Roman authors. David Scott Kastan echoes this idea, and draws on William Tyndale to articulate a parallel process of "the scriptures opening" and history's opening through the work of Protestant translators and authors. See: Betteridge, *Tudor Histories*, 84; and Kastan, "Holy Wurd's and Slypper Wit," 273.

personify the forces of evil in order to starkly and strikingly present a sort of  
 –moral instruction by contrast.”<sup>137</sup>

Moses wishes the Word of God to be considered and pondered through the eyes: for this reason, earnest and moderate plays (not histrionic performances as earlier under the papacy) can render the Word more apt and distinct. For such spectacles strike the eyes of the masses and at times move more than public sermons.<sup>138</sup>

As this quote from 1542 demonstrated, drama was considered to be a primarily visual media by the German reformers. Because of this, many reformers felt that it was uniquely suited to serve as a complementary medium in the spread of the reform’s theology and ideology. Drama in the reformation, then, was not intended to conform to generic standards and function as theatrical art. Rather, it was intended to complement sermons, polemical publications, and the Bible as a means of conveying religious truth.<sup>139</sup> Because it was both spoken and visual, the reformers felt it was particularly appropriate as a means of instructing the common man in morality and theology. Thus, reformation drama tended towards simplified language and straightforward presentations of good and evil. In spite of

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<sup>137</sup> This idea was Melanchthon’s. He justified the inclusion of certain plays in school curricula because he felt that their presentation of morally ambiguous or immoral actions presented a good contrast to correct behavior and would serve as a sort of –immoral exempla” that taught morality through the presentation of its opposite. On this, see: Parente, *Religious Drama*, 20 and 30.

<sup>138</sup> This quote is from Georg Major, a Lutheran schoolmaster of Magdeburg. He advanced this argument in support of a Lutheran Passion play that was performed in Dessau in 1542. His main argument was that the spread of the gospel could use any means necessary, so the rehabilitation of characteristically Catholic genres of performance were licit, so long as the media did not distract from the gospel message. On the Lutheran debate over this Passion play, see: Ehrstine, –Seeing is Believing.” For this quote, see: *idem.*, *Theater, Culture, and Community in Reformation Bern, 1523-1555* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 5.

<sup>139</sup> This idea is Timothy Jackson’s: –In the intellectual and religious climate of the Reformation, however, drama is not seen as an autonomous genre conforming to its own demands: rather, as a means of communication it is compared favourably with the sermon; for not only could the stage be used to disseminate the Word of God, it could also use means denied to the preacher to make its message more attractive.” See his: –Drama and Dialogue in the Service of the Reformation,” in H. Robinson-Hammerstein, ed., *The Transmission of Ideas in the Lutheran Reformation* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), 105-131, 112.

this simplicity, the occasional nature of drama also limited its ability to change people's minds.<sup>140</sup> Plays served more as sites in which an author, actors, and audience could come together to affirm their common beliefs and draw inspiration from the laudable behaviors of biblical and historical characters who had served as authentic witnesses to religious truth.

In order to maximize the impact of these stories, the characters in reformation-era drama were less individuals than representations of moral categories:

The Protestant propagandists had no use for the convention that the characters are living beings whose troubles the audience shares...their prime concern was not to speak to the sensibilities of their spectators but to address their intellect with an irrefutable example supported by a clear exposition of the success of relying on God for protection when oppressed for their faith.<sup>141</sup>

Because Lutheran dramaturgy was geared towards the inculcation of the movement's core values in the audience, the playwrights stressed the centrality of faith and how —man was rewarded for his passive subordination of his soul to God's care."<sup>142</sup> Particularly in tragic plays, the protagonists accepted that God's justice would prevail over human action, and thus confessed their faith in the sovereignty of God and their ultimate salvation because of this faith. In contrast to this —virtuous passivity," the antagonists in Lutheran plays were driven by their

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<sup>140</sup> In terms of drama's intended audience, it is significant that during the 1530s plays were produced in a 4:1 ratio of vernacular vs. Latin. On the vernacularization of drama, see: Jackson, —Drama and Dialogue," 116. On drama's limitations as a polemical genre, see: Walker, *Plays of Persuasion*, especially 234.

<sup>141</sup> J.S. Street, *French Sacred Drama from Bèze to Corneille: Dramatic Forms and their Purposes in the Early Modern Theatre* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1983), 56.

<sup>142</sup> Parente, *Religious Drama*, 85.

own evil intentions.<sup>143</sup> According to Clifford Davidson, evil in medieval and early modern drama was never a merely philosophical category; rather, it was a motive force that spurred specific human actions, a nearly manic drive within certain people to harm others, especially the passive saint who sought only to receive God's word, wisdom, and (sometimes) suffering.<sup>144</sup> Thus, the villains in Lutheran dramas came across not as misguided or conflicted individuals, but as stark personifications of negative traits such as envy, greed, or vengeance who were driven by diabolical inspiration.

This schematization of characters was part and parcel of a larger impulse within Lutheran dramaturgy: Lutheran authors sought to maintain the ability of drama to impress messages upon its audience while limiting the potential for the spectacle of a play to distract the audience from its core message. The conformity of characters to impersonal moral categories was one way this took place, as the antithesis between good and evil was unmistakable on stage. Lutheran authors also typically eschewed Passion plays or other forms of drama that encouraged an overly sentimental reaction to their subject, as opposed to an intellectual comprehension of its message. Lutheran playwrights also made use of framing materials to make the moral and theological lessons of their plays absolutely clear. Prologues, epilogues, and argumenta all served to clearly articulate the overarching message of a given play.<sup>145</sup> Lutheran authors also made use of

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<sup>143</sup> For this term, see: Stephen Wailes, *The Rich Man and Lazarus on the Reformation Stage: A Contribution to the Social History of German Drama* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna UP, 1997), 305.

<sup>144</sup> Clifford Davidson, *Deliver Us From Evil: Essays on Symbolic Engagement in Early Drama* (New York: AMS Press, 2004), 96.

<sup>145</sup> Protestant dramatists developed framing materials in their plays to clearly state the moral and didactic purposes of their productions. By using plain speech, with minimal staged elements to detract from the moral core of the play, Protestants sought to minimize the emotional response of



–*deixis*,” a dramatic device in which a commentator appeared on stage to explicitly lay out the soteriological message of the play.<sup>146</sup> The use of framing materials, avoidance of overtly sentimental material, and antithetical characterization in Lutheran drama all made certain that a given play was impossible to misinterpret, while still serving as a memorable vehicle of instruction.

Agricola’s *Tragedia Johannis Huss* capitalized on, and helped develop, these dramatic tools in order to place the story of Hus’s execution within a distinctively Lutheran historical and soteriological framework. The play itself was a traditional five-act tragedy that used the text of Mladoňovice’s account as the foundation for its narrative; the action in the play stuck close to its source, and relied on framing materials to make the moral lessons of the play clear. Indeed, Agricola wrote both an introduction to the play to lay out his reasons for the publication of the play and a rhymed foreword in which he placed Hus within a succession of biblical reformers who had been ignored and persecuted by their contemporaries. In the introduction, Agricola was explicit about his desire to popularize Hus’s story; he had put the story into rhymed verses, and composed it as a traditional tragedy so it could be understood and enjoyed by –*Jedermann*.”

Agricola wrote: †have happily seen that this story has been read and performed

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audiences. This minimization allowed the audience to devote their attention to the intellectual comprehension of key messages. On the literary development of framing materials, see: Herbert Walz, *Deutsche Literatur der Reformationszeit: Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1988), 116. On the Protestants’ goal of intellectual apprehension, see: Ehrstine, –*Seeing in Believing*,” 533ff.

<sup>146</sup> Ehrstine argues that antithesis and deixis were the two main ways that Protestant playwrights guaranteed the integrity of their theological messages in their plays. He sees these as efforts to –*overdetermine*” the play and precluding misinterpretation. See: Ehrstine, *Theater, Culture, and Community*, 292.

for the masses, for everyone young and old,” so that all would know ~~that~~ Christ with his word had been openly condemned, without any timidity, by the Antichristian synagogue in the Council of Constance.”<sup>147</sup> Much of Agricola’s language in framing his play used images of unveiling, illuminating, or revealing the wickedness of the papal Antichrist and his church, and he insisted that this wickedness was an historical constant. What had happened at Constance would happen again, if the pope were given a chance to convene a council. Therefore, ~~one~~ should avoid and flee from all the councils of bishops, because I have never seen a good result from a council.”<sup>148</sup>

For Agricola, one of the primary ways that councils had become vehicles for ~~wickedness and tyranny~~” was through their subversion of the earthly powers. The worldly authorities were forced to act as mere ~~servants and executors~~” of the pope’s will.<sup>149</sup> Hus’s story taught this lesson well, as the Emperor Sigismund, ~~who~~ at other times had been a wise lord,” was enchanted by the pope and and faithlessly rescinded his safe conduct for the Bohemian priest. This betrayal had

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<sup>147</sup> ~~nach~~ dem die historia/ des heiligen Merterers Hohannis Hus inn reime und einer Tragedien weise/ vorfasst/ habe ich gerne gesehen/ das solche Historia auch der massen gelesen und gespielt wuerde/ Auff das jederman/ jung und alt...wir den inn dieser Historia sehen/ das Christus mit seim wort/ von der Antichristischen Synagog im Concilio zu Costnitz/ on alle schew offentlich verdampt worden ist.” Agricola, *Tragedia*, A2v-A3r.

<sup>148</sup> This conclusion was actually that of Gregory of Nazianzus (d. 389), who had had difficult dealings with the second council of Constantinople over his consecration as archbishop of that city. Agricola paraphrased him: ~~Man~~ alle Concilia der Bischoffen fliehen und vermeiden sol/ Denn ich hab noch keines Concilii gut ende gesehen.” Agricola, *Tragedia*, A6v-A7r.

<sup>149</sup> Agricola here picked up Luther’s distinction between the earthly and spiritual realms, and accused the popes of acting improperly to influence the political powers and force them to do his bidding. Such actions by church leaders were one of Luther’s primary targets in his critique of the politicization of the hierarchical church. On the powers of the two regiments, see: Gunnar Hillerdal, —Luthers Geschichtsauffassung,” *Studia Theologica* 7 (1953), 28-53, 29-42; and David Whitford, —*Eura Religionis* or Two Kingdoms? The Late Luther on Religion and the State in the Lectures on Genesis,” *Church History* 73 (2004), 41-62. Agricola’s full quote reads: ~~Keiser/ Koenige/ Fuersten/ und Herrn/ diese grosse hohe gewalt/ welcher von Gott ds Regiment uber die erbe bevolen/ des Babst und der seinen Tyranny diener und executores sein muessen/ und sich auch irer greulichen suenden teilhaftig machen.~~” Agricola, *Tragedia*, A7r.

led to warfare and bloodshed, and caused great harm to the whole Holy Roman Empire.<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, the suborning of the emperor was only one element of the overall perversion of the judicial process in Hus's trial. Agricola brought out other elements in his introduction that would be emphasized in the text of the play as well: Hus had been falsely promised a safe conduct, illegally imprisoned, given no chance to defend himself or answer the charges against him, and he had been condemned by false witnesses motivated by their own ~~bloodthirsty~~ and murderous hearts." Agricola emphasized the role of these witnesses by comparing them to Annas and Caiaphas, who had turned Christ over to Pilate; this parallel to the trial of Christ presented a striking testimony to the repetitive quality of persecution and attempted suppression of God's messengers.<sup>151</sup>

If the persecution of the faithful was a constant, so too was their perseverance. For Agricola, Hus was an ideal Christian whose life and death witnessed to the way in which the faithful were tested and purified by fire, like gold.<sup>152</sup> He also embodied Tertullian's dictum, ~~that~~ the blood of Christians is very fruitful, and the more one suppresses Christians, the more spring up from

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<sup>150</sup> On Sigismund, Agricola noted: ~~das~~ Koenig Sigmund/ welcher sonst ein weiser herr gewesen/ das man mit dem armen man also geschwind gefaren/ sich also had durch diese buberei lassen betriegen." Ibid. On the church's ability to subvert the political powers, Agricola further claimed: ~~Was~~ sag ich aber davon? Diewiel itzt zu unser zeit Keiser und Koenige/ Fuersten und herrn/ von dem Babst und den seinen/ also bezaubert und verblend sind/ das sie im nicht allein die fuesse/ sonder auch schier/ ich weis nicht was mehr kuessen(!)." Agricola, *Tragedia*, A7v.

<sup>151</sup> Agricola laid out these procedural irregularities on pages Avr-Avir; he mentioned the ~~blutduerstig~~ und moerderlich hertze" of the witnesses in the context of an extended comparison of them to Annas and Caiaphas, who had protested to Pilate that they did not desire Jesus' death while handing him over for judgment (see John 18: 31-32): ~~gleich~~ als sie seines todes nicht begerten/ Uberantworten in dem Koenige/ wie Annas und Caiphas den Herrn Christum/ wollen also seines bluts und todes nicht schueldig sien." Agricola, *Tragedia*, A5v-A6r.

<sup>152</sup> ~~Bis~~ so lang das die gleubigen/ wie das gold/ dardurch geleuttert/ inn die ewige freude gefuert." Agricola, *Tragedia*, A4v.

their blood.”<sup>153</sup> If war and bloodshed had followed the condemnation of Hus in Constance, that did result from the defense of Christian doctrine by the faithful Bohemians. Further, Hus’s witness was a direct antecedent of the Lutheran reform. The culmination of his revelation of the church’s perfidy was ongoing, and was moving towards its climax in Lutheran Germany. Agricola included Hus’s prophecy of the swan in his introduction, claiming that Hus had predicted a metamorphosis in which he, the goose, would “be transformed into a snow white swan” with a “bright and lovely voice, whom not only Bohemia, but nearly the entire world, would hear sing and cry out.”<sup>154</sup> Through this prophecy, and the contention that church history witnessed the cyclical persecution of faithful Christians by the institutional church and its master, Antichrist, Agricola tied Hus’s story from the past to the present conflict in Germany over the impending council at Mantua. Although the names of the actors had changed, the underlying dynamic at a council would be the same: the faithful preacher of the Gospel would be killed for his opposition to Antichrist’s synagogue.

The *Vorrhede* to the play continued with this theme, and clearly explained the didactic and moral lessons of the subsequent drama. This foreword was written in rhyming couplets, and would have been spoken on stage in advance of the play’s action. In it, Agricola laid out a pattern of God’s interaction with the world in which sin took root, a pure man came forth to preach the truth and

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<sup>153</sup> “Denn es war ist/ wie Tertullianus spricht/ das der Christen blut seer fruchtbar sey/ und je mehr man Christen wuerge/ je mehr aus irem blut wachsen.” *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> The prophecy reads here: “Inn deme das sie herhoffen/ durch iren mord/ dieser Gans geschrey zu stillen/ erweckt Gott der Herr (wie Johan Huss zuvor verkuendiget hat) diese vorsengte Gans.../das sie in ein schnee weissen schwan vorwandelt wird/...dieses Schwanes helle und liebliche stimme/nicht inn Behem allein/ sondern uber die gantze welt schier/hoeren singen und klingen.” Agricola, *Tragedia*, A3v.

denounce this sin, but was rejected by society. In the wake of this rejection, horrible consequences were visited upon the people who eschewed God. Noah, Lot, Moses, Daniel, and, of course, Jesus were all examples of these despised prophets.<sup>155</sup> After Jesus and the apostles, this chain of pure men seemed to have been severed. The martyrdom of Hus, however, revived this traditional scheme. He had been “a pure man, and a son of God,” whose story had been preserved for over a century for the sake of Christians’ edification.<sup>156</sup> Hus had opposed the Antichrist, who was the Pope, in his iteration of the cyclical confrontation of truth and godlessness: “Ad the Antichrist came openly, who set himself obviously and in power within the city of God up until this time. By this I mean the Pope, who is that selfsame Antichrist.”<sup>157</sup> The renewal of the gospel by Hus, though, had potentially dire consequences. If God’s word, “the beloved treasure,” were rejected again, God’s punishment would quickly descend on the German lands. Therefore, Hus’s story needed to be told, because the events of his life and death distilled the cycle of history into an easily comprehensible story of faith, betrayal, and salvation that illuminated the necessary Christian response to persecution for the sake of God’s word.

For Agricola, Jan Hus was a personification of Lutheran values. The play’s action consistently showed him passively resisting the opponents of the Gospel, and placing his faith in God to justify his actions. Agricola emphasized

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<sup>155</sup> For example, Noah preached against the fleshly lusts of the world (“fisches brunst”), but those around him thought “Das er ein Nar und luegner wer.” Therefore: “Welchs Gott die leng also verdros| Das er die welt mit wasser gros.| Verseuffet gantz all Creatur| Behilt Noa die sienen nur.” Agricola, *Tragedia*, Biiiv.

<sup>156</sup> “Wie auch geschehen ist verwar| Vor hundert| drey und zwentzig jar.| Den fromen Man und Gottes kind| johan Huss| davon wir spilen hint.” Agricola, *Tragedia*, B3r.

<sup>157</sup> “Und kam der Antichrist so frey.| Der satzt sich auch gewaltig dar| An Gottes stat gantz offenbar.| Den Babst ich mein zu dieser frist| Der ist derselbig Antichrist.” *Ibid.*

the parallels between Hus's trial and that of Jesus, much as Mladoňovice had done in his account, but placed emphasis on Hus's theological statements, rather than his actual death, to focus the audience's attention on the doctrine that motivated Hus, rather than on the man himself.<sup>158</sup> He humbly submitted to the judgment of the council, much as Christ himself had done before Pilate, yet refused to compromise on the confession of Christian truth. Even in his first speech of the play, Hus stated that he would confess God's word: "I hope sooner to choose death, than I will conceal the truth."<sup>159</sup> The essential truth that Hus defended throughout the play concerned his own beliefs; he refused to recant errors that he had never held concerning the sacrament, the trinity, and the nature of the priesthood.<sup>160</sup> He also forgave his persecutors and prayed for the mercy of God's judgment at his death, again echoing the passion of Christ.<sup>161</sup> Hus's prayer represented his ultimate action in the drama of his death. At the end of his confrontation with the council, there was no specific staging of his actual execution. Although Mladoňovice included specific details about Hus's burning,

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<sup>158</sup> In Hus's interaction with the council, we see the "virtuous passivity" that Stephen Wailes has identified as a central value in Lutheran drama. The consistent focus on Hus's theological statements also suggested how Protestant authors had adapted the medieval saint's play to their own ends. Although saints had been rejected as "the embodiments of the miraculous," their lives could still "be used as a means of teaching, of clarifying the nature of the Word" in history and human action. On passivity, see: Wailes, *The Rich Man*, 305. For an analysis of the Protestant adaptation of medieval saints' plays, see: Peter Happé, "The Protestant Adaptation of the Saint Play," in C. Davidson, ed., *The Saint Play in Medieval Europe* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), 205-240, 214.

<sup>159</sup> "Vor in erscheinen an dem ort/ Und da bekennen Gottes wort./ Hoff ehr den tod zu erwelen/ Her ich dwarheit wolt verhelen." Agricola, *Tragedia*, C1v.

<sup>160</sup> In particular, Hus denied that he had ever taught or believed in remanence or Donatism, and denied the bizarre charge that he considered himself the fourth person of the Godhead. The accusation read: "Zu letzt merckt mich gar eben| Johan Huss hat sich ausgeben.| Vor die viert person der Gottheit| Ein doctor gehort hat den bescheid." Agricola, *Tragedia*, E8v.

<sup>161</sup> "Ich bit Herr Christ an dieser stat| Vergib mein feindn ir missethat| Umb deiner grossn barmhertzigkeit| Du weist mein not und grosses leid...Thus in barmhertziglich vorzeihn| Und mich von alln suenden freien." Agricola, *Tragedia*, F2r.

including the prayers and songs he uttered on his pyre, Agricola left these out. The stage directions in the play simply said: —~~A~~ter this, he is led out and burned.”<sup>162</sup> This reticence concerning Hus’s actual death was typical of the Lutheran dramaturgical sensibility; plays were not supposed to induce a sentimental consideration of death, but present sound doctrine. So, Agricola here constructed a Protestant passion, acceptable because its emphasis was on the hero who confessed God’s word. Hus’s confession was to be emulated, not venerated, and the positive example of his doctrine existed in stark contrast with the diabolic roles played by the members of the Council; this was —~~m~~oral instruction by contrast” at its most striking.<sup>163</sup>

Agricola typically embodied evil in his work by demonstrating the blatant opposition of the council members to God’s word, either through envy of Hus or greed for power. Even before Hus appeared on the stage, Michael de Causis and Stephen Páleč gathered a small cabal of monks and bishops to condemn Hus’s teachings falsely. They acted in secret, and agreed to misrepresent Hus’s teachings. Ironically, the —~~f~~alse” teachings in Hus’s works that they extracted conformed to Lutheran orthodoxy: Hus had condemned simony, questioned the pope’s status as the head of the church, and demanded that the clergy live moral

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<sup>162</sup> The stage direction on FvV reads: —Nach solchem wird er hinaus gefurt und verbrant.” There is nothing in the play to indicate whether or not the execution of Hus was actually performed on stage. Even if it was, the considerable attention paid to Hus’s last words by Mladoňovice in his narrative was marginalized in Agricola’s play. This is somewhat surprising, in that his burning would have made for a remarkable spectacle on stage, but this hesitation reflected Luther’s insistence that an emphasis on suffering detracted from the victory of ultimate salvation and resurrection. On Luther’s rejection of passion plays, see: Bacon, *Martin Luther and the Drama*, 43.

<sup>163</sup> On the juxtaposition of good and evil as a means of moral instruction, and this quote, see: Parente, *Religious Drama*, 30.

lives.<sup>164</sup> The clergy also refused to hear Hus's arguments for his positions or engage him with biblical arguments throughout the play. In Act Three, Hus answered a charge against him that he supported the use of the sword against his opponents. Hus stated that he referred only to the spiritual sword, *–as* St. Paul has written about it."<sup>165</sup> The stage directions mandated that the bishops and cardinals *–scream angrily*" at this pronouncement, just they had previously mocked Hus's defense of Wyclif: *–Then the Cardinals and Bishops should all laugh, and at the last statement shake their heads angrily.*"<sup>166</sup>

This spectacle of men bedecked in the robes of the Catholic bishops and monks mocking the word of God would have made a strong case for the perfidy of the Catholic hierarchy. Here, the active conflict on stage between the holy, patient Hus and the raucous, wicked Church fathers would have personified the images of sanctity and depravity that had become common cultural currency in the first twenty years of the Reformation. Hus, the humble Christian who stood in steadfast opposition to the Roman Antichrist here served as an admirable model for *–Jedermann.*" His theology was biblical and simple, laid out in the clear mnemonic units of rhymed couplets. The collective Catholic clergy, on the other hand, represented the diabolical rejection of the word of God that served as the

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<sup>164</sup> The conspiracy to give false witness echoed one of Agricola's chief complaints about the trial in the introduction, and the body of Hus's teachings emphasized his conformity to Lutheran teaching. On the irony of Hus's *–heresy*" for a Lutheran audience, see, for example, the speech by a monk: *–Das ein jder auch gar eben| Nach den Aposteln sol leben.| Das ist ketzrey/ des seid bericht| zu leiden und zu dulden nicht.*" Agricola, *Tragedia*, C1r.

<sup>165</sup> *–Inn meinen predigten gelert/ Von helm des Heils und Geistes schwert/ Wie Sanct Paulu davon hat geschreiben/ Solchs hab ich mit fleis getrieben.*" The response by the council read: *–Da sollen sie in alle zornig anschreien.*" Agricola, *Tragedia*, D2v.

<sup>166</sup> This response occurred after Hus stated that Wyclif had been *–bilig*," and *–Und wold das auch die seele mein| Bey Wickleffs seel moechte sein.*" The subsequent stage direction reads: *–Da sollen die Cardinele und Bischoffe alle lichen/ und zum letzten vor zorn ire koepff schuetteln.*" Agricola, *Tragedia*, D2r.



basis for Hus's positions. In setting Hus against the council, and particularly through his stage directions, Agricola created what Glenn Ehrstine has called "*Merkbilder*:" scenes in which the actors were set in static positions that created a visual counterpoint to the opposition of their moral and theological viewpoints.<sup>167</sup> Such scenes served as mnemonic devices that visually captured the essential differences between Lutheran and Catholic teaching. The solitary Hus praying before the shouting council fathers therefore functioned as a dramatic antithesis that both visually and theologically highlighted the evil nature of the council and the danger it posed for true Christians.

Agricola ended the play where he had begun, with Hus's prophetic mandate for the Lutheran reform; thus, as the action concluded and Hus was led out of the council, a prophet emerged onto the stage, again proclaiming that although the poor goose was killed, a white swan would sing beautifully in a century and be heard throughout the land.<sup>168</sup> Agricola appended an urgent justification for resistance to the Roman Church to this foretelling of Luther's mission. In the "*Beschlus*" to the play, Agricola stated that the Gospel had been revealed a century earlier, but still had not triumphed. He feared that Germany's punishment would be harsh for its rejection of the Word of God, since it had been

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<sup>167</sup> Ehrstine argues that by freezing the actors and using clear stage directions, Reformation dramatists drew attention to the content of the actors' words and helped eliminate any potential ambiguity in the moral lessons of the play. The creation of static tableaux on stage also allowed the words to be associated with striking, carefully crafted visual spectacles that helped the message stick in the audience's mind. See: Ehrstine, *Theater, Culture, and Community*, 218 and 224.

<sup>168</sup> "Das itzund uber hundert jar| So wird euch komen gantz vorwar.| Ein weisser Schwan thu ich bekant| Wird lieblich singen inn die Land.| Des stim ir muesst on ewren danck| Hoeren zum end vom anefang." Agricola, *Tragedia*, FvV.

proclaimed so clearly.<sup>169</sup> Without commitment and a willingness to “bear his [Jesus’s] cross in every place,”<sup>170</sup> the German lands would become merely one more people who had rejected the clear articulation of God’s word and succumbed to sin and Antichrist himself. The irony here, of course, was that Agricola’s plea echoed that of Johannes Cochlaeus in *De immensa misericordia Dei*. Both authors wondered that God had not destroyed the impenitent Germans, and demanded that the nation embrace the true faith. The substance of that faith, however, was quite opposite, as were Agricola’s and Cochlaeus’s approach to drama and its potential for religious propaganda.

#### Confrontation on Stage

If earnest theological exposition and the dramatic juxtaposition of moral opposites were the vehicles by which Agricola desired to reach his audience, Cochlaeus’s *Ein heimlich Gespräch* used comedy to satirize the relationships between the Lutheran reformers in order to point out the contradictions that emerged from a consideration of their work. This play was written specifically as a rejoinder to Agricola’s tragedy, and made use of a range of polemical and propagandistic techniques to minimize Agricola’s play’s impact. From the *Seven-headed Luther* to the *Commentary*, Cochlaeus had geared his polemics to the exposure of Luther’s moral, theological, and intellectual self-contradiction.<sup>171</sup>

Cochlaeus’s play allowed for a similar sort of revelation, but with an added comic

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<sup>169</sup> “Je heller/ klerer/ das Wort ist| Je groesser die straff ist zur frist.” Agricola, *Tragedia*, F6v.

<sup>170</sup> “Uns allin so wir im vertrawen/ Allzeit inn not auff in bawen./ Lassen uns gefallen sein wort/ Tragen sein Creutz an allem ort.” *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> On Cochlaeus’s modus operandi regarding Luther’s work, see: Wiedermann, “Cochlaeus as Polemicist,” especially 197; and Ralph Keen, “Johannes Cochlaeus: an Introduction,” 43.

element that made his theological opponents targets of ridicule and contempt. Drawing on the medieval genre of the *Fastnachtspiel*, Cochlaeus presented the Lutheran leaders as clueless and gluttonous priests who were emasculated by their shrewish, if clever, wives.<sup>172</sup> Shrovetide plays often centered around depictions of gluttony, drunkenness, and sexuality, and Cochlaeus drew on all of these themes in his presentation of Luther and his cohorts.<sup>173</sup> Cochlaeus grew up near Nuremberg, and had his earliest education in this city, which was a major center for the performance of these comic and earthy plays.<sup>174</sup> This genre had also been adapted previously in the reformation to target indulgence sellers and the immorality of the clergy, and it seems very likely that Cochlaeus the polemicist would have known of this development.<sup>175</sup> Thus, we can see Cochlaeus drawing on both the genre's use in reformation polemics and his likely exposure to the plays as a youth in Nuremberg in order to fashion his own satirical attack on his opponents.

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<sup>172</sup> The *Fastnachtspiel*, or Shrovetide plays, developed in the fifteenth century as a form of satirical comedy that involved little staging and the lampooning of certain common character types. They were typically performed during Carnival. Hans Sachs (d. 1576), a sixteenth-century *meistersinger* from Nuremberg, did much to develop this genre, but its reliance on stock characters (including the lusty or gluttonous priest and the shrewish wife) made its conventions easily recognizable and exploitable by other authors. On the origins and development of the *Fastnachtspiel* genre, see: Eckehard Catholy, *Fastnachtspiel* (Stuttgart: Sammlung Metzler, 1966). On its prominence in reformation polemics, see: Jackson, "Drama and Dialogue," 106-107; and Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 80-85.

<sup>173</sup> Johannes Merkel, *Form und Funktion der Komik in Nürnberger Fastnachtspiel* (Friedburg im Breisgau: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1971), especially 192-201.

<sup>174</sup> On the tradition of Shrovetide plays in Nuremberg specifically, see: Samuel Kinser, "Presentation and Representation: Carnival at Nuremberg, 1450-1550," *Representations* 13 (1986), 1-41; and Alison Stewart, "Paper Festivals and Popular Entertainments: The Kermis Woodcuts of Sebald Beham in Reformation Nuremberg," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24 (1993), 301-350, especially 309ff.

<sup>175</sup> As early as 1523, the Bernese author Niklaus Manuel had written anti-Roman Carnival plays. On these early adaptations of the *Fastnachtspiel* to reformation polemics, see: Glenn Ehrstine, "Of Peasants, Women, and Bears: Political Agency and the Demise of Carnival Transgression in Bernese Reformation Drama," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 31 (2000), 675-697, especially 675-677.

This parody existed alongside Cochlaeus's more substantive humanist and theological critiques of the *Tragedia Johannis Huss* and sought to defuse any respect or admiration for either the play itself or its author. Cochlaeus depicted Luther and Melancthon as furious over Agricola's publication of the *Tragedia*, because the confessions of Hus revealed that he held theological positions contrary to Luther, especially on the eucharist and the primacy of the Pope. In the play, Luther was disturbed that Agricola's work would show ~~how~~ Wyclif, Hus, and I are bitterly against each other concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ."<sup>176</sup> Luther was shown as being well aware of these contradictions, and desperate to suppress the knowledge of them. As such, the *Tragedia*'s author was a traitor who had, perhaps unwittingly, shown that ~~otherwise~~ in many articles of teaching and faith he [Hus] remained a papist, against our teaching."<sup>177</sup> When asked by Luther in the play what they should do if princes and rulers realized this inconsistency, Agricola replied: ~~W~~ will deny, shout down and silence them with evil words."<sup>178</sup> The comical interchanges between Luther and his followers revealed that all of them realized their unstable footing in history, but sought to tie themselves to past heretics in order to show

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<sup>176</sup> This echoes Cochlaeus's earlier work in the *Warhafftige Historia* that demonstrated their differences more systematically, but places the argument in a more comical context. The quote reads: ~~Wie~~ Wickleff, Hus, und ich hart wider einander sind in dem artickel vom Sacrament des leibs und bluts Christi." Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 9.

<sup>177</sup> ~~Ist~~ aber sunst in vil artickeln der lehre und des glaubens Bapistisch bliben, wider unsere lehr." Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 16.

<sup>178</sup> ~~Wir~~ wollen sei wol mitt boesenn worten abweisen, uberschreien und dempffen." Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 21.

that they were not a ~~new~~ sect” who ~~cannot~~ prove that before this any sect, people, or nation have held this faith with us, which we hold unanimously.”<sup>179</sup>

This revelation of understanding their own novelty tied into another of Cochlaeus’s rhetorical strategies. He consistently stated that the Lutherans could only win over the common folk, who alone were foolish enough to be swayed by the false teachings of the reformers. Cochlaeus communicated a certain elitism by appealing to his audience’s discernment regarding the *Tragedia*’s historical con and lack of literary quality. Throughout the play, Philipp Melanchthon was the voice of humanism; he routinely articulated Cochlaeus’s complaints about the lack of literary merit in Agricola’s play. At the beginning of *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, Melanchthon condemned the *Tragedia*, noting that it had too many characters for standard tragedy, factual inaccuracies, and ~~childish~~ paired rhymes.”<sup>180</sup> Agricola’s play featured thirty-eight characters, while classical tragedies seldom had more than ten, but none of his characters had servants or retinues with them.<sup>181</sup> In this, the author had failed doubly, with regards to the aesthetics of drama and his depiction of medieval society, respectively. Further, the ~~barbaric ineptitude~~” of the play meant that it could not possibly appeal to the learned, and ~~is~~ even a disgrace and diminishment of the whole university [in

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<sup>179</sup> Luther complains that he will be known as: ~~der~~ Erst von diser neuen Sect, und wir moegen nit beweisen, das zuvor einche Sect, volck oder Nation disenn glauben, welchen wir halten einhelliglich, mitt uns gehalten hab.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 19.

<sup>180</sup> ~~D~~arzu seind die reime vilmals ungereimpt, und kindisch gekuppelt und mit unnoetigen worten genoetigt.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 4.

<sup>181</sup> ~~A~~dre Tragedien haben seldom uber x. person, offtmals weniger, dise aber hat xxxviii person, und wo die selbigen solten auch knechte bei sich haben, nach gebür und gewonheit ires stands, so wurde wol ein gantzes här daraus.” *Ibid.*

Wittenberg].”<sup>182</sup> While the *Tragedia* could still appeal to *jedermann*” or be understood *bei gemeinem volck*,” Cochlaeus derided this popular appeal as the result of the Lutherans’ inability to win over the elite members of society.

Cochlaeus assaulted the personalities of his opponents in order to further portray them as laughable or unappealing. Throughout the play, Cochlaeus developed an atmosphere of dread in which Agricola and Luther’s other followers walked on eggshells around their leader, who was always full of anger (*zorn*) or displeasure (*unmüt*). Luther himself lamented that he was often ruled by his anger, so one can easily imagine a red-faced, bellowing actor storming this way and that on stage while his followers cowered before his wrath;<sup>183</sup> Luther’s anger over the publication of the *Tragedia* was so great that he wished someone would lop off the playwright’s fingers!<sup>184</sup> Agricola, who distinguished himself as the target of Luther’s ire, was baffled by Luther’s anger. He claimed that all he wanted to do was ensure that the common man was made aware of the papists’ knavery in councils, and surmise that what was done to Jan Hus in Constance, also could be done to our Dr. Martin in the future council.”<sup>185</sup> And yet, Luther’s

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<sup>182</sup> *Disē barbarische ineptia und grobe unhoeflicheit nimpt euch nit allein den glimpff und glauben dises handels. Sonder ist auch der gantzen universitet ein schand und verkleinerung bei den gelerten.*” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 12-13.

<sup>183</sup> Luther expressed his concern that anger often made him lose control; Spalatin responded: *Der geist sol in euch herschen, nitt das fleisch, der zorn ist ein werck des fleischs, und thüt nit gottes gerechtigkeit, darum solt ir dem zorn nit raum geben.*” This must be read as an ironic dig at Luther’s emphasis on man’s righteousness before God, and his own inability to live up to his theological standards. See: Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 15.

<sup>184</sup> When Luther first read the *Tragedia*, he stated: *Was hilft michs, das ich Johan Hussen hoch berhueme wider die Papisten, so meine gsellen mit irem nerrischen schreiben, einen rechten Papisten in der lere aus im machen, brechen was ich bawe, und verderben was ich güt mache. Ich wolte, das man solchen Büchschreibern die finger abhawet, und die hende in heiss pech stecket.*” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 7.

<sup>185</sup> *Ass diser ursach, das der gemeine man uss der historia vernimpt der Papisten schalkheit im Concilio, und daraus vermutet, wie mann Johanni Hussen gethan hab zu Costnitz, also*

concern for the exposure of inconsistencies and rifts between him and his forerunner led to his anger over being betrayed by his friends. Luther lamented, “I am hindered not only by my enemies, the papists, but by my best friends.”<sup>186</sup>

Cochlaeus portrayed the rift over the *Tragedia* in the same terms as Luther’s splits with Carlstadt, Bucer, Oecolampadius, and Zwingli. Luther was furious that anyone could disagree, intentionally or not, with his interpretation of theology and history.<sup>187</sup> The implication here was that the Protestant reformers would propagate a never-ending series of fissures within their own ranks. Their teaching had proven to be divisive throughout the Empire, and would continue to splinter into ever smaller groups.

The conflict between Luther and Agricola climaxed in Act Three, with Luther forbidding Agricola from writing or preaching any more. This dramatic impasse between the men led to Cochlaeus’s comic resolution: Agricola’s wife and daughter successfully intervened with Luther’s wife on his behalf, and she in turn convinced Luther to rescind his ban of Agricola.<sup>188</sup> In the fourth Act, Agricola turned to his wife, Martha, for aid. She agreed to help him, even though she described him to her daughter as “a glutton” who “often does not bring ten

wurde man auch unserm Doctori Martino in zukunfftigen Concilio mitfarn.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 10.

<sup>186</sup> “Es hindern mich nit allein meine feind, die Papisten, sonder auch mein beste freunde.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 14.

<sup>187</sup> In an amusing interchange, Spalatin asked Luther why he was so upset with his good friends. Luther’s reply suggested his lack of reliable allies: “Was güte fründ? Zwinglius und Ecolampadius waren auch mein güte fründ, heten aber meine sach schier gar verderbt.” This dialogue revealed Luther’s concern that anyone would keep faith with him. See: Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 15.

<sup>188</sup> In a letter written by Cochlaeus on April 27, 1539, he said that the play was composed “contra uxoratos sacerdotes et monachos nimis foede conturbat lectorem verborum obscoenitibus...Ego atem lus placide per iocos absque omni verborum obscoenitate in dialogo teuthonico, quo favete irridentur superbae et imperiosae dominae illae Wittenbergenses.” It is quoted in Holstein, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, v-vi.

groschen home in a whole week, but has only filled his throat.”<sup>189</sup> She further lamented the poverty she was forced to endure, and suggested that it was better to be married to a farmer than a poet or playwright. Fearing greater poverty, she approached the wives of the other reformers, seeking an intercessor with Luther’s wife, Kätha. The wives resolved to fix the rift between their husbands, but not before they shared bawdy gossip: Spalatin was unable to give his wife a child,<sup>190</sup> and Melanchthon’s wife had to go to his study to get any attention, because he loved his books so much.<sup>191</sup> This sort of sexual joking was standard in a *Fastnachtspiel*, and presented one more avenue of mockery that could be exploited to degrade Cochlaeus’s opponents.<sup>192</sup> Here, the Catholic polemicist used the full range of generic expression in the Shrovetide play in order to make the Lutherans objects of ridicule.

Ultimately, Spalatin’s wife introduced Agricola’s wife and daughter, Orta, to Luther’s wife. Hearing that the publication of the *Tragedia* has caused Luther to ban Agricola from preaching, Kätha promised a resolution. Her resolution was to promise Ortha to Luther as a wife, if Kätha preceded him in death!<sup>193</sup> Both

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<sup>189</sup> –Dein Vater ist ein Prasser, darzu ein spieler, und noch mehr, das ich nit sagen wil, hat mir offt ein gantze wochen nit zween groschen in die kuchen gegeben, hatt nur seinen hals gefüllet.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 24.

<sup>190</sup> –Mein herr reucht auch nit all zü wol. Das were mir aber ein geringe pein, wenn ich nur kinder von im ziehen möcht.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 27.

<sup>191</sup> –Mein Herr rüset mir in sein Studorium, und heilt mich auff...Wisset ir nitt, wie die müssigen und fürwitzten Sudler thün? Vil leckens und fantasierens, unnd nichts darhinder.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 28.

<sup>192</sup> On the prominence of this theme in Shrovetide dramas, see: Leif Søndergaard, —Combat between the Genders: Farcical Elements in the German Fastnachtspiel,” *Ludus: Medieval and Early Renaissance Drama* 6 (2002), 169-187, especially 173-174.; and Stewart, —Paper Festivals,” 313.

<sup>193</sup> Kätha: –Ortha ich hab dir in sonderheit ein güt wort verliehen.” Ortha: –Was ist es Gnedige frau?” Kätha: –Ich hab dir erworben, wenn ich sterbe, das mein herr kein andre neme dann dich.” Ortha: –Ich were ewerm herrn vil zu gering undn zu klein.” Kätha: –Sorge nitt. Es erstickt kein mauss (wie man saget) unter eim hewschober.” Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 35. The



Agricola and Luther agreed to this settlement with little prompting. Thus, it was not through theological disputation or rational argument that the rift between the reformers was healed, but through the promise of a nubile bride to the aging Luther. This humorous resolution to the argument between Agricola and Luther would have shown both to have been servants to their most base drives: Agricola offering his daughter out of fear of Luther and poverty, and Luther compromising his theological principles out of desire for a young bride. Also, both men were effectively emasculated by their wives' action; the resolution they could not reach was easily achieved by Kätha, Martha, and Ortha, with the women's manipulation superseding the supposed leadership of the men. Here, Cochlaeus employed the "world turned upside down" model of Carnival entertainments to make a strong statement about the leaders of the Lutheran church.<sup>194</sup> They were ruled by their passions and their wives, and thus could not provide reliable leadership or insight into substantive religious issues.

Hus himself was curiously absent from *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, except for the affirmations of Hus's Catholicism by the Lutheran reformers themselves. Cochlaeus's focus on Hus's orthodoxy regarding the eucharist and the pope's status within the church could make one wonder why Hus had been executed at

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Sprichwörter that Cochlaeus employed here seems to suggest that Luther would be so self-absorbed that he would never notice the little mouse living with him. On this saying, see: Horst Beyer, *Sprichwörterlexikon: Sprichwörter und sprichwörtliche Ausdrücke aus deutschen Sammlungen vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C.H. Beck, 1985).

<sup>194</sup> On the role of women in Carnival and the inversion of gender hierarchies, see most famously: Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women on Top," in *idem.*, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1975), 124-151; and Robert Scribner, "Reformation, Carnival, and the World turned Upside-Down," in I. Bátori, ed., *Städtische Gesellschaft und Reformation* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1980), 222-252.

all.<sup>195</sup> This question, however, remained unanswered, as the primary focus here was on lampooning Cochlaeus's opponents. Cochlaeus had already articulated his substantive and scholarly critique of the Lutherans' reliance on Hus; with his comedy, he merely sought to defuse their turn to drama and render his opponents as targets for mockery. His tangential engagement with the historical and theological issues that Agricola raised suggested strongly that Cochlaeus was working here in the realm of propaganda. The portrayal of a furious Luther and his cowering followers would amuse a Catholic audience, as would the portrayal of the domestic dynamics in the Lutherans' households. The contradictions that Cochlaeus exposed could also provide further ammunition for criticism of the Lutheran cause. The elitism of the piece also would have appealed to audiences who felt socially separate from the theoretically Lutheran masses, and the character of the reformers in the play would make any commitment to the new church seem misguided or downright foolish.

Were these plays successful? In terms of popularity and performance, it is hard to say. Agricola's play was performed in Torgau for the household of the elector of Saxony in February of 1538.<sup>196</sup> This performance was a major impetus for Cochlaeus's play; in the short introduction to the text, he noted "It has been written to me concerning the *Tragedia*, that frequently it has been performed publicly in Torgau."<sup>197</sup> The performance of the play for such a powerful aristocrat

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<sup>195</sup> "Jo. Huss sei nitt wider die Monarchiam, das ist, wider die Oberstenn gewalt des Bapsts, wie ich...der [Hus] denn Bapst so hoch gehalten hat, welchen wir so gross verdammen." Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 18.

<sup>196</sup> On this performance, see: Kawerau, *Ein Beitrag*, 121.

<sup>197</sup> The introductory elements in Cochlaeus's play are underdeveloped compared to those in Agricola; rather than engaging in deixis, Cochlaeus used the more traditional tactic of employing the introduction to dedicate his work to a powerful, interested party, in this case to a Catholic lord

must have alarmed Cochlaeus, so he produced his own drama to discredit the author of the *Tragedia* and to turn the play itself into a laughingstock. While it is very difficult to say whether or not this satirical smear campaign worked, Cochlaeus's play was published in a second edition in 1539; this attested to its geographical popularity, if nothing else, as the first edition was printed in Mainz and the second was produced in Dresden.<sup>198</sup> I would suggest, though, that the importance of these plays went beyond the number of performances or editions that they spurred.

The plays' significance derived from their relationship to the earlier publications of their authors. Both Agricola and Cochlaeus had previously stayed within the bounds of the genres that the reformation had helped to make famous. Printed editions of earlier authors, collections of letters, and florilegia of classical and patristic texts were familiar to the reading public of the Holy Roman Empire, as were printed *ad hominem* attacks and copies of disputation articles. When all of these things came out over a short period, and articulated precisely opposite interpretations of the same historical moment, it was nearly impossible to sway minds or make an impact on the general public. Thus, Agricola turned to a different genre, one he had used effectively as a schoolmaster, to shift the terrain of the historical argumentation that he and Cochlaeus had been engaged in. His *Tragedia* sought to induce pathos for Hus in his audience by combining the literary and visual elements of drama to persuasively represent Hus's story. He

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in southern Bohemia, Johan Horatio of Budweis. On the *Tragedia*'s performance, Cochlaeus wrote: "Es ist mir darueben geschreiben, das offft gedachte Tragedia sei zu Torgäu öffentlich gespielt worden." Cochlaeus, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, 2.

<sup>198</sup> Holstein, *Ein heimlich Gespräch*, vii.

stayed true to his sources, but created a series of striking *Merkbilder* to cut through the plethora of materials concerning Hus and create a lasting impression on his audience: a Catholic council was the synagogue of Antichrist, and allowing one to sit in judgment of the reformation would only result in the death of “the braver men” that had followed Hus. Conversely, Cochlaeus sought to defuse the potential attraction of the *Tragedia*’s portrayal of Hus as the tragic hero. To do so, he drew on the satirical tradition of the *Fastnachtspiel* to again shift the polemical terrain of his debate with Agricola. The issue was no longer the righteousness or injustice of Hus’s trial at Constance. Rather, the focus was on the follies of the Lutheran leadership and their ridiculous behavior. Cochlaeus, rather than re-presenting the history of Hus, cut out this middle man and directly attacked those claiming to be his heirs. Because history could be used to provide “the sanction of precedent” by both sides, Cochlaeus returned to the present to turn his interlocutors into buffoons.<sup>199</sup>

This particular interchange suggests to me that authors on both sides of the growing confessional divide turned to dramatic traditions in order to reach audiences in new and potentially more effective ways. For Agricola, martyr plays and classical tradition provided him with models for how to present the eternal battle of good and evil on stage. Both of these traditions, however, came to be adapted for the circumstances of the late 1530s. The face of evil, for Agricola, had to be that of a misguided and wicked council. For Cochlaeus, the stock characters of dramatic satire acquired the names of the Catholic party’s most vocal opponents. In the midst of these two authors, and Luther himself, stood the history

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<sup>199</sup> Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” 2.

of Hus's trial and execution. The sources on his life and death had furnished this battleground, and would do so again in the apocalyptically tinged years following the Augsburg Interim. Even as he had become the archtypal Lutheran saint or diabolical heresiarch in the 1520s, he had become the flashpoint of the debate over church councils in the 1530s. It was in this context that the debate over Hus's death led to the dramatic reinterpretation of the Council of Constance, and of the underlying meaning of church history.

## Chapter Seven

### *“Quod furor, aut aetas tollere nulla potest”* Hus and Luther at the Crux of Prophecy and History

#### Introduction

On February 18, 1546, Martin Luther died. In commemorating his friend and mentor, Philip Melancthon wrote: “It is especially necessary to give thanks to God, because through him [Luther] He restored the light of the Gospel to us and the memory of its doctrine was preserved and propagated.”<sup>1</sup> With the passing of the great reformer, a struggle ensued over the meaning of his legacy and the continued preservation of the doctrines he had championed. The urban reformers, university professors, and militant polemicists who had diffused Luther’s message for almost three decades could no longer rely on the dominant personality and acerbic temperament of their leader to unify them. In the years following 1546, then, the leadership of the Lutheran movement fractured around issues such as the validity of resistance to political authorities, the salvific implications of good works, and the relationship between the law and gospel.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This quotation is taken from: Philip Melancthon, *History of the Life and Acts of Dr. Martin Luther*, in T. Frazel et al., trans. and eds., *Luther’s Lives: Two Contemporary Accounts of Martin Luther* (New York: Manchester UP, 2002), 14-39, 22.

<sup>2</sup> The initial split in the Lutheran leadership resulted in the formation of a so-called “Philippist” party centered on Melancthon and the university in Wittenberg and a group of “Gnesio-Lutherans” gathered at Jena. Irene Dingel has characterized the recurrent arguments among the Lutheran leadership as a “culture of conflict” that prevailed until 1580. On schisms in Lutheranism after 1546, see: Robert Kolb, “Dynamics of Party Conflict in the Saxon Late Reformation: Gnesio-Lutherans vs. Philippists,” *The Journal of Modern History* 49 (1977), 1289-1305; and Irene Dingel, “The Culture of Conflict in the Controversies Leading to the Formula of Concord (1548-1580),” in R. Kolb, ed., *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550-1675* (Boston: Brill, 2008), 15-64.

This split within the ranks of the Lutheran leadership could not have come at a more perilous moment. Just as Luther's theological heirs were coming to grips with a Luther-less church, the German princes and imperial cities that had protected the reform came under attack from Emperor Charles V, who in 1546 finally acted to purge the Holy Roman Empire of its religious schism.<sup>3</sup> In that year, Charles invaded southern Germany and instigated the Schmalkaldic War, which ended decisively with the emperor and his allies' victory in the battle of Mühlberg (April 24, 1547). The result of this armed conflict allowed the emperor to start rolling back the Lutheran reform by imperial fiat and the naked display of military strength. The vehicle of this attack on the Lutheran reform was the Augsburg Interim. This religious settlement called for the restoration of much of Catholic religious life, but it also allowed certain Lutheran practices to remain and articulated a compromise position on the doctrine of justification.<sup>4</sup> The Interim thus gained the grudging support of some Lutherans, led by Philip Melanchthon, who determined that the restoration of traditional ritual practices concerned matters that were indifferent or inessential in terms of salvation.<sup>5</sup> These *adiaphora*

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<sup>3</sup> On Charles's interest in the suppression of Lutheranism and the politics of the religious schism up until 1546, see: Horst Rabe, "Zur Entstehung des Augsburger Interims 1547/48," *ARG* 94 (2003), 6-104, especially 10-15; and idem., "Zur Interimspolitik Karls V." in L. Schorn-Schütte, ed., *Das Interim 1548/50: Herrschaftskrise und Glaubenskonflikt* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 2005), 127-146.

<sup>4</sup> The Interim granted the chalice to the laity in communion, and also allowed the marriage of priests. For those who opposed the Interim, these concessions were meant to mask the reintroduction of essential Catholic doctrines and practices in the Mass. On these compromises and the formulation of the Interim, see: Oliver Olson, "The Three Headed Dragon, Scourge of the Reformation," *Lutheran Quarterly* 7 (1993), 293-314.

<sup>5</sup> Melanchthon maintained that ritual matters were indifferent in terms of salvation, and that traditional practices were allowable so long as they did not depend upon theology that contradicted the Lutheran conception of justification or Jesus's role as the sole mediator between man and God. Melanchthon and his followers, deemed "Philippists" by their opponents, thus proposed an alternate set of church regulations of Saxony, called the "Eipzig Interim." On Melanchthon's theological arguments, see: Dingel, "The Culture of Conflict," 34ff.; and Günter Wartenberg, "Das

could thus be accepted as the unfortunate consequences of Charles's victory over the Lutheran estates.

Not all Lutherans, however, accepted this new status quo, so the Interim effectively crystallized the fissures that had opened at the death of Luther and pushed the anti-Interim –Gnesio-Lutherans” towards increasingly radical positions. This party initially centered on the lower German city of Magdeburg, which refused to surrender to Charles after the Schmalkaldic War. Magdeburg thus became a refuge for exiled Lutheran preachers and authors, and over five years of intermittent siege warfare and constant political pressure the city's presses churned out anti-imperial, anti-Interim, and anti-papal polemic at a remarkable rate.<sup>6</sup> Led by the former Lutheran bishop of Naumburg, Nicholas von Amsdorf, and the vitriolic polemicist Matthias Flacius Illyricus, the clergy of Magdeburg laid out a theory of resistance to Charles V and voiced a strident call for perseverance in light of the oppression they faced. With markedly apocalyptic images and ideas, the Magdeburgers recast the military, political, and internal threats to the Lutheran reform as the final stage of the eternal conflict between God and Satan.

In meeting these challenges, the leadership of the post-Luther reform turned to the broad sweep of the history of the God's church on earth in order to understand their place in that church and to fashion their response to the crises

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Augsburger Interim und die Leipziger Landtagsvorlage zum Interim,” in I. Dingel and G. Wartenberg, eds., *Politik und Bekenntnis: Die Reaktion auf das Interim von 1548* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2006), 15-32.

<sup>6</sup> On Magdeburg as the center for Lutheran resistance to the emperor and the Interim, see: Nathan Rein, *The Chancery of God: Protestant Print, Polemic and Propaganda against the Empire, Magdeburg 1546-1551* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008); and Thomas Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation: Magdeburgs "Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1548-1551/2)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).



they faced. By looking backwards, Lutheran authors sought models and precedents for how they should react to their new and frightening circumstances. They were also searching for prophecies that could provide some reassurance or certainty regarding the future work and progress of reform. This quest for prophetic keys to the interpretation of contemporary history was a distinctively Lutheran phenomenon, and it was not limited to the Bible.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Lutheran writers mined the history of the church from the apostolic age until their present in order to find those men and women who never lost sight of God's true teaching, and whose confession of the truth provided evidence of the survival of the true church throughout the period of the papal Antichrist's ascendancy in the world. This "chain of witnesses" attested to the continuous survival of the true church and emphasized that this church was marked by its purity of doctrine and its willingness to suffer for divine truth.<sup>8</sup>

Matthias Flacius Illyricus, one of the leaders of Magdeburg's Gnesio-Lutherans, played a decisive role in the construction of this distinctively Lutheran church history. He wrote a *Catalogue of Witnesses to the Truth* (1556), which provided biographical sketches and highlighted the key doctrinal teaching of 400 witnesses who had opposed the papal Antichrist with their words and lives.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Robin Barnes has emphasized Lutheranism's exploration of history as the key to understanding both the present and the eschatological future. For Barnes, "apocalyptic expectancy and a growing interest in history were thus two sides of the same coin." See his: *Prophecy and Gnosis*, 103.

<sup>8</sup> On Luther's sense of church history as marked by suffering and persecution, see: Headley, *Luther's View of Church History*, 101 and 221ff. On later Lutherans' emphasis on the chain of witnesses as the bearers of pure doctrine, see: Kolb, *For All the*, especially 27ff.

<sup>9</sup> Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Catalogus testium veritatis, qui ante nostram aetatem reclamarunt Papae* (Basel: Johann Oporin, 1556). These four hundred witnesses were representative of the 7,000 pure men who would not abandon their faith in God according to Elijah in I Kings 19:18: "Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel--all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him." The Lutheran reformers were conceived of as the heirs to

Flacius also served as the organizer and architect of the *Magdeburg Centuries* (1559), a massive church history that traced the development and deformation of true doctrine in the church from its inception until the thirteenth century.<sup>10</sup> This church history employed a massive number of primary sources to detail the history of the church and its teachings, and the *Centuries*' doctrinal emphasis effectively divorced the history of the church from the institutions of the Catholic church. Finally, Flacius also edited and published numerous books of Hussitica, culminating in his publication of a two-volume collection of texts by and about Hus, the *Historia et monumenta* (1558), and his edition of the so-called *Confessio Waldensium* (1568), a reprint of Nicholas of Pelhřimov's 1431 Taborite confession.<sup>11</sup> These texts revealed how the Lutherans' most recent, and most successful, predecessors had shown themselves to be proponents of God's true church.

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these 7,000, and thus the reformation was absolved of charges of novelty. See: Martina Hartmann, *Humanismus und Kirchenkritik: Matthias Flacius Illyricus als Erforscher des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2001), 17; and Gregory Lyon, "Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64 (2003), 253-272.

<sup>10</sup> The first volume of this work appeared under the title: Matthias Flacius Illyricus et al., *Ecclesiastica historia integram ecclesiae Christi ideam...per aliquot studiosos et pios viros in urbe Magdeburgica* (Basel: Johann Oporin, 1559). Although Flacius and his collaborators planned volumes for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, these were never completed. Current scholarship has shown that Flacius did not actually write very much of the *Centuries*' text; rather, Johannes Wigand was ultimately responsible for most of the final content in the work. On the authorship and organization of the *Centuries*, see: Ronald Diener, *The Magdeburg Centuries: A Bibliothecal and Historiographical Analysis* (unpublished dissertation: Harvard Divinity School, 1978); and Heinz Scheible, *Die Entstehung der Magdeburger Zenturien: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der historiographischen Methode* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1966).

<sup>11</sup> Matthias Flacius Illyricus, ed., *Joannis Huss et Hieronymi Pragensis confessorum Christi historia et monumenta* (Nuremberg: Johann vom Berg and Ulrich Neuber, 1558). Flacius became interested in Hussite history while residing in Magdeburg and carrying out his research for the *Catalogus*. On his research and publication activities regarding the Hussites, as well as his ideas that Hussite history contained valuable warnings for Luther's followers, see: Oliver Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002), especially 325-329.

These three publishing projects revealed Flacius's comprehensive approach to church history. They described the universal origins and diffusion of true doctrine in the church; they also narrated the lives and (sometimes) deaths of those who had professed these doctrines. The professions of faith and perseverance of these witnesses lent a human face to the promulgation of good doctrine. Finally, the life and martyrdom of Jan Hus, and the fortunes of his followers after his death, provided Flacius with a highly detailed, deeply significant blueprint for the potential pitfalls of ecclesiastical reform. Hus stood at the head of the Lutheran chain of witnesses, so the history of his life and of the movement that bore his name represented the most spectacular example of the dynamics that shaped the true church's contact and conflict with the church of Rome. Irena Backus has recently drawn attention to —the creative role of history in the Reformation as a decisive factor in the *affirmation* of confessional identity.”<sup>12</sup> It is my contention that the historical speculation of Lutherans after Luther's death, and especially their consideration of Hussite history, was decisive in the *creation* of that identity. In their analysis of the church's past, Lutherans came to understand themselves as both the inheritors of a tradition of opposition to the Antichrist and the culmination of a chain of witnesses that extended back to Christ's first followers. The sacrifices and sufferings of these earlier witnesses, and their foreshadowing of the Lutheran reform, provided models for emulation, stories for inspiration, and decisive evidence that God's teaching and word had continually fortified his people on earth. In the propagation of church histories, Lutheran authors sought to reify their conception of the past and make it available

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<sup>12</sup> Backus, *Historical Method*, 5; emphasis mine.

to a larger public seeking confirmation of their beliefs and a key to interpreting their suffering. The history of the church, and the history of the Bohemian church in particular, provided this key to unlocking Luther's legacy and the apocalyptic significance of the German reformation.

### Lutheran History in a Prophetic and Apocalyptic Frame

Lutheran responses to the crises of the late 1540s were fundamentally grounded in that tradition's approaches to, and understandings of, the past. For Martin Luther, the history of the church was equivalent to the history of God's word in society. Indeed, Luther defined the church as that small body of people who proclaimed God's word in the world at any given time. Luther did not, however, focus on the individuals who proclaimed the gospel; he maintained a focus on the gospel itself as a set of essential doctrines and truths that were eternally made known to the world through the gospel.<sup>13</sup> Luther did have some appreciation for individuals who had outspokenly defended God's truth and even given their lives on its behalf, and he believed that they would always be a persecuted minority within the institutional, visible, and universal church. This "hidden" church, sustained and set apart by its faith to the gospel, was the historical locus for communal Christian life. Although it was misunderstood and

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<sup>13</sup> This understanding of the church as the sole possessor of God's Word has been extensively analyzed with reference to Luther's writings in: Headley, *Luther's View of Church History*, especially 55-60; and Markus Wriedt, "Luther's Concept of History and the Formation of an Evangelical Identity," in B. Gordon, ed., *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1996), 31-45.

even hated by the larger church, it had served as the mouthpiece for the proclamation of the gospel.<sup>14</sup>

In spite of the fact that Luther placed the word at the center of church history, his followers increasingly shifted their attention to the individuals – the chain of witnesses – who had taught that word throughout history.<sup>15</sup> These witnesses included the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, the apostles in the New, and a series of church doctors and medieval “heretics” who had taught proper doctrine, but were persecuted by the papal church for their opposition to the institutional church’s norms. Over time, this opposition became the central mark of the Lutheran witnesses, and their individual stances on issues such as justification, the principle of *sola scriptura*, or the nature of the church came to matter less than their rejection of, or resistance to, the papacy.<sup>16</sup> This resistance assumed such a central place in Lutheran historical discourse because Lutherans had increasingly come to emphasize the diabolical nature of the visible church, and to identify the institution of the papacy with the highest Antichrist who had seduced true Christians and led them to damnation.<sup>17</sup> The church’s domination by the Antichrist was *the* central factor in the decline of the church as an institution, because the pope had convinced the world of his sacred authority

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<sup>14</sup> John Headley, “The Reformation as Crisis in the Understanding of Tradition,” *ARG* 78 (1987), 5-23.

<sup>15</sup> Philip Melancthon, for instance, identified an unbroken chain of witnesses as evidence of God’s continuing presence in the world. On this modification of Luther’s understanding, see: Bruce Gordon, “The Changing Face of Protestant History and Identity in the Sixteenth Century,” in *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, 1-22. See also: Kolb, *For All the Saints*, 24-27.

<sup>16</sup> On opposition as the main characteristic of the Lutherans’ medieval saints, see: Cameron, “Medieval Heretics and Protestant Martyrs,” 195.

<sup>17</sup> On the earliest history of the Lutheran identification of the pope with Antichrist, see: Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 112ff. See also: Volker Leppin, *Antichrist und Jüngster Tag: Das Profil apokalyptischer Flugschriftenpublizistik im deutschen Luthertum 1548-1618* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1999), especially chapter 7.

and had managed to rule a false church based on this perception.<sup>18</sup> Many within this “church of hypocrites” believed it to be holy, but it had actually perverted and destroyed divine truth through its institution of the sacrificial mass, its pretensions to worldly authority, and its teachings on indulgences, intercession, and good works. The diametric opposition between this visible, false church and the hidden, true church was the central dynamic of Lutheran church history. And according to the Lutherans, that history was nearing its climax as the conflict between the renewed gospel in Germany and the tyranny of the papal Antichrist approached its resolution.<sup>19</sup>

The awareness of an imminent end that percolated throughout the Lutheran reform gave the German reformation a distinctly apocalyptic cast. The crises of the 1540s heightened this apocalyptic tone, and Lutheran historical works of this period proceeded from the position that human history was coming to a massively important turning point. Authors such as Philip Melanchthon and Johannes Carion situated this turning point within universal historical schemes that used biblical prophecy to construct a chronology for succeeding eras of human history.<sup>20</sup> The most well-known of these chronologies derived from Daniel’s prophecy of the four kingdoms (Daniel 2:31 and following), which was widely considered to have prophesied the rise and fall of the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires. In the mid-sixteenth century, the Holy Roman

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<sup>18</sup> Headley, *Luther’s View*, 195ff.

<sup>19</sup> Robin Barnes has referred to the “proliferation of last things” in Lutheranism, as Lutheran authors determined that the conflict between Luther and the papacy was the culmination of the conflict between the true and false churches. See his: *Prophecy and Gnosis*, especially 71.

<sup>20</sup> On Melanchthon and Carion’s work, see: Backus, *Historical Method*, 327ff.; and Joachim Knappe, “Melanchthon und die Historien,” *ARG* 91 (2000), 111-126.

Emperor and his alliance with the pope were thought to bear the last vestiges of Rome's imperial power, so their collapse under the weight of Luther's renewed revelation of the gospel suggested an end to the age of the godless empires on Earth.<sup>21</sup> Melanchthon overlaid this political schematization of history with a supposed prophecy by Elijah that the world would go through three ages, each two thousand years long;<sup>22</sup> these three ages could also be broken down into six millennia, which Luther did. He assigned governors to each period: Adam for the first, Noah for the second, Abraham for the third, David for the fourth, Christ for the fifth, and the Pope for the sixth. That last millennium was coming to an end, though, and this ending demanded a radical transition to a new form of earthly and ecclesiastical government.<sup>23</sup>

No one believed that the passing of the current age would be peaceful or easy. Indeed, most Lutheran authors understood that a frightening series of "birth pangs" would presage and accompany the dawning of the new age.<sup>24</sup> This liminal moment would witness the condensation of all the suffering and turbulence that

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<sup>21</sup> On the use of this prophecy in structuring historical writing around 1550, see: Alexandra Kess, *Johann Sleidan and the Protestant View of History* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 129-130.

<sup>22</sup> Here, Melanchthon referred to the so-called "house of Elijah," which saw history comprising three two-thousand year ages. This scheme had been developed in the Talmud and Jewish apocalyptic texts, and was brought to the awareness of Christian authors by Augustine. On the house of Elijah, see: Headley, *Luther's View*, 109-111.

<sup>23</sup> In the *Tischreden* for October 19, 1540 (#5300), Luther noted: "Die welt teil ich in 6 aetates: Aetas Adae, Noha, Abraham, David, Christi, und des bapsts." See: *WATR* 5, 51. On this periodization in Luther's thought more generally, see: Headley, *Luther's View*, 109-110.

<sup>24</sup> The language of the messianic birth pangs came out of Matthew 24:8, where Jesus prophesied: "All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Melanchthon, in his preface to Carion's *Chronica*, cited this passage as evidence of the imminent end of the age. See: Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis*, 107.

had marked the church's history within a short period of time, and this imminent struggle would serve as the final purgation of the church. Lutheran authors adopted a typological hermeneutic in interpreting the impending apocalyptic turmoil. They looked backwards to the Bible and more recent history to find models and precedents for their situation, and time therefore assumed a unified character in which past and present were inextricably linked and bore witness to the eternal opposition of absolute good and evil in the apocalyptic drama.<sup>25</sup> Irena Backus has thus noted that Lutheran church history could be oddly static, with different actors playing the same roles in an ongoing cosmic drama.<sup>26</sup>

This typological interpretation of the past and present was complemented by a prophetic element that added a futuristic orientation to Lutheran considerations of the incipient end of the age.<sup>27</sup> The prophetic elements of Lutheranism did look backwards; as the previous chapter showed, Hus's apocryphal prophecy of Luther's appearance was central in many Lutheran polemics against the papacy. Lutheran authors also knew that an ultimate resolution to their struggle with Antichrist was coming, and that the seeds of this resolution were present in the world.<sup>28</sup> The combination of this apocalyptic/prophetic mind set and the typological reading of the past effectively caused the

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<sup>25</sup> On the unity of past and present in an apocalyptic view of history, and this unity's revelatory function, see: Ronald Reid, "Apocalypticism and Typology: Rhetorical Dimensions of a Symbolic Reality," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 69 (1983), 229-248, 232ff.; and Richard Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Apocalypticism, Art and Literature* (Seattle: U. of Washington Press, 1981), 14.

<sup>26</sup> Backus, *Historical Method*, 330.

<sup>27</sup> On the balance of typological and prophetic thinking in apocalyptic rhetoric, see: Stephen O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford UP, 1994), 45-50.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Emmerson has argued that the elements of the "already" and the "not yet" coexist in apocalyptic thought, and that they introduce a certain tension in the minds of authors. See his: *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, 63.



temporal distinction between past, present, and future to collapse. The dissolution of temporal boundaries can result in the establishment of a distinctive tense, “the prophetic present,” to describe and analyze the contemporary world. In this temporal framework, past models, current actions, and future events were inextricably linked as complementary elements in the progress of salvation history.<sup>29</sup>

I would argue that the idea of the prophetic present, in which an author’s or community’s situation was felt to *reflect* the entire history of Christianity and *project* its future, helps explain the Lutherans’ turn to history around the midpoint of the sixteenth century. By presenting authoritative histories of past Christians, Lutheran authors hoped to spur their contemporaries to perseverance; by mapping out the entire sweep of the church’s history, they also hoped to foretell what awaited those who maintained their faith in the true doctrines of God. In short, sixteenth-century Lutheran historiographers presented their readers with a compelling view of the past that demanded present action in order to secure future blessings. The eschatological imperative contained in the prophetic present drove the historical sensibility of mid-century Lutheran authors, even as the sense of an imminent end grew stronger with the onset of a series of crises in the late 1540s.

### The Third Elijah: Lutherans and the Death of Luther

“I have lived long enough that I have certainly earned death, and I have really begun to avenge my Lord Christ on the papacy. After my death they will

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<sup>29</sup> For further comment on the prophetic present, see O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse*, 70ff. For a concise statement of the specifically rhetorical ramifications of the collapse of temporal distinctions, see: Barry Brummett, “Using Apocalyptic Discourse to Exploit Audience Commitments Through Transfer,” *The Southern Communication Journal* 54 (1988), 58-73, 70.

really begin to feel [the impact of] Luther for the first time.”<sup>30</sup> Luther did not speak these words in late 1545 or early 1546, as he actually approached the end of his life. Rather, he wrote them in 1531, in the *Warning to His Dear Germans*. This text, which was reprinted nine times in 1546 and 1547, certainly seemed to cement Luther’s status as a prophet among his followers.<sup>31</sup> In it, he predicted a war with the Holy Roman Emperor and laid out a theory of resistance to imperial decrees in matters of faith, while decrying the papal Antichrist that had subverted the emperor and turned him against the evangelical truth.<sup>32</sup> Fifteen years after the composition of this tract, Luther’s death seemed to presage a final assault on evangelical Germany and the fulfillment of his prophecies. Conversely, Luther’s death also offered his followers a place to begin in their consideration of their place within God’s church and within God’s plan for that church.

This consideration began within days of Luther’s death in February 1546, when three of his companions, Justus Jonas, Michael Coelius, and Johannes Aurifaber wrote a detailed account of Luther’s last days and death.<sup>33</sup> This text, *On*

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<sup>30</sup> “Ich hab lang gnug gelebt, den tod wol verdienet und meinen Herrn Christum am Bapstum redlich angefangen zu rechnen. Nach meinem tod sollen sie aller erst den Luther recht fülen.” Martin Luther, *Warnung an seine lieben Deutschen* (1531), *WA* 30/III, 252-320, 279.

<sup>31</sup> These years witnessed three editions from Wittenberg (by Hans Lufft), three in Nuremberg, and one each in Augsburg, Strasbourg, and Tübingen. On the printing history of this text, see the introductory essay in: *WA* 30/III, 267-269.

<sup>32</sup> Although Luther is not often associated with the idea of resistance to proper authority (and is often accused of encouraging a distinctively submissive bent in his followers), this text did empower believing Christians to defy the emperor if his actions restricted the proclamation of the Gospel or contradicted its teachings. On this text’s approach to resistance, see: Cynthia Schoenberger, “Luther and the Justifiability of Resistance to Legitimate Authority,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40 (1979), 3-20; and David Whitford, “From Speyer to Magdeburg: The Development and Maturation of a Hybrid Theory of Resistance,” *ARG* 96 (2005), 57-80.

<sup>33</sup> Luther died in Eisleben, the same town where he was born. He was there to mediate a dispute between nobles in the county of Mansfeld, and he had been in the town for over two weeks. Jonas was a former student of Luther’s and a pastor in Halle; Coelius was the court preacher in Mansfeld; and Aurifaber was Luther’s personal secretary. For an exhaustive examination of the events surrounding Luther’s death and the immediate commemoration of him, see: *Martin Luther*

*the Christian Departure of the Praiseworthy Doctor Martin Luther from this Mortal Life*,<sup>34</sup> highlighted Luther's prayerful commendation of his soul to God, his affirmation that he maintained his teaching up to death (and thus did not recant), and his lack of discomfort and torment in dying. Susan Boettcher has persuasively shown that this description conformed to the characteristics of the "good death" that emerged in the late medieval literature of the *ars moriendi*, and this portrayal certainly emphasized the peaceful and pious nature of Luther's last moments on earth.<sup>35</sup> Alongside this account, Luther's followers also preached a number of sermons that affirmed Luther's heavenly reward and even portrayed him as new sort of saint.<sup>36</sup> Jonas and Coelius, for example, preached sermons in Eisleben just days after Luther's death and prepared them for publication seven weeks later.<sup>37</sup> Melanchthon and Johannes Bugenhagen, one of Luther's fellow professors at the university, also preached over the reformer's body in the castle church in Wittenberg, and their sermons were published both separately and together.<sup>38</sup> It was in these four sermons that Luther's friends and former students

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*seliger gedechnis: The Memory of Martin Luther, 1546-1566* (unpublished dissertation: University of Wisconsin, 1998), chapter 2.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Coelius and Justus Jonas, *Vom Christlichen abschied aus diesem tödlichen leben des Ehrwürdigen Herrn D. Martini Lutheri bericht* (Wittenberg: George Rhau, 1546).

<sup>35</sup> Boettcher, *The Memory of Martin Luther*, 175-198.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Kolb in particular has drawn attention to the ways in which Luther's followers portrayed him as a prophet and saint, despite their rejection of medieval hagiographical models. See his: *For All the Saints*, especially 136-138.

<sup>37</sup> These sermons were printed together as: *Zwo Tröstliche Predigt uber der Leich D. Doct. Martini Luther zu Eissleben den XIX. und XX. Februarii* (Wittenberg: George Rhaw, 1546).

<sup>38</sup> After his death in Mansfeld, Luther's body was brought to Wittenberg via Halle. Luther's body arrived on February 22, and was laid in the castle church. On the ceremonies attending the transfer of Luther's body and his funeral, see: Coelius and Jonas, *Vom Christlichen abschied*, C4v.-D3r. Coelius and Jonas's account was published in one pamphlet along with Melanchthon's *Oratio Uber der Leich des Ehrwürdigen herrn D. Martini Luthers* (which was a German translation of his Latin speech) and Bugenhagen's *Ein Christliche Predig uber der Leich und begrebdnuss des Ehrwürdigen D. Martini Luthers*. This volume, which did not have a separate title, was printed in Nuremberg by Johann vom Berg and Ulrich Neuber in 1546.

began to grapple with his legacy, and to comprehend what the life and death of ~~–~~this great teacher, prophet, and reformer of the church sent by God” meant for that church.<sup>39</sup>

In looking back on Luther’s life and work, Philip Melancthon asserted that Luther had been a prophet, and one of five ~~–~~great miracle workers (~~–~~*Wunderleuten*”), teachers, and leaders,” in the history of God’s people.<sup>40</sup> Melancthon also included Luther within a larger group of church fathers who had taught true doctrine in the church since the time of the apostles, and he joined this cluster of post-apostolic fathers to the Old Testament patriarchs, the prophets and righteous kings of Israel, and the New Testament apostles to create a chain of individuals whom God raised up to fight error and to govern his church and people.<sup>41</sup> After working his way through this list of God’s mouthpieces and agents, Melancthon concluded by asserting that ~~–~~in the last and least age of the world...the pure teaching of the Gospel has been illuminated more brightly and purely in the words and writing of the praiseworthy doctor, Martin Luther, and has again been brought to light.”<sup>42</sup> Luther’s presence in the church and his

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<sup>39</sup> ~~–~~Disen hohen Lehrer unnd Propheten unnd von Gott gesandten Reformatoren der Kirchen.” See: Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, F4v.

<sup>40</sup> Melancthon referred to: ~~–~~diesen unsern hohen Wunderleuten, Lernern, und heubtern,” who were Isaiah, John the Baptist, Paul, and Augustine. See the individual printing of this work as: *Oratio Uber der Leich des Ehrwirdigen herrn D. Martini Luthers...Verdeuscht aus dem Latiein durch D. Caspar Creutziger* (Wittenberg: George Rhaw, 1546), A4r. On Melancthon’s commemorative work on Luther more generally, see: James Weiss, ~~–~~Erasmus at Luther’s Funeral: Melancthon’s Commemorations of Luther in 1546,” *SCJ* 16 (1985), 91-114.

<sup>41</sup> The complete list of post-apostolic fathers and teachers included: ~~–~~Policarpus, Ireneus, Gregorius Neocesariensis, Basilius, Augustinus, Prosper, Maximus, Hugo, Bernardus, Taulerus, und etliche anders an andern orten.” From the Bible, Melancthon included Adam, Seth, Enoch, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Elijah, the twelve prophets, John the Baptist, and the Apostles. See: Melancthon, *Oratio*, A3v-A4r.

<sup>42</sup> ~~–~~As das letzte und schwechste alter der Welt...zu unser zeit die reine Lere des Evangelii durch den mund und schriffte des ehrwirdigen D. Martini Luthers viel heller und reiner wider angezündet und ans licht bracht ist.” Melancthon, *Oratio*, A4r.

teaching thus suggested that God had not forgotten his people, but had provided the church with a “witness” (*zeugnis*) to reveal divine truth.

Luther’s eminent place among this company implied that he was, in the eyes of his followers, an equal to the prophets and apostles. Luther had certainly claimed this role for himself in his conflicts with his opponents, but Melanchthon’s affirmation of this status in his memorial to Luther suggested the lasting power of the prophetic authority attributed to the Wittenberg reformer.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, Melanchthon valorized Luther’s role as a prophetic “instrument” (*Werckzeug*) of God, and he asserted that God had granted authority to Luther: “Now, I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over the nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”<sup>44</sup> Melanchthon consistently highlighted Luther’s constructive prophetic role in his sermon: Luther had explained the proper Pauline notion of justification, he had translated the Bible so the common man could have access to God’s word, and he had also restored the proper observance of Christian ceremonies and sacraments. Conversely, Luther had “uprooted” theological errors concerning good works, penance, the veneration of saints, and papal pretensions to earthly and spiritual power.<sup>45</sup> In all of these things, Luther had amply

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<sup>43</sup> On Luther’s claims to prophetic authority, and especially his self-identification with Paul as an apostle and representative of God, see: Edwards, *Luther and the False Brethren*, 125-126; and Oberman, *Hus and Luther*.

<sup>44</sup> Melanchthon referred to God’s raising up “ein solche Werckzeug wider die feinde des Evangelii,” and then cited the commissioning of Jeremiah (Jer. 1:9-10) as an analogue to God’s calling of Luther. See: *Oratio*, B2r. On the importance of Luther’s prophetic instrumentality in Melanchthon’s writings, see: Irena Backus, *Life Writing in Reformation Europe* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), especially 2-5.

<sup>45</sup> Melanchthon laid out this list of accomplishments in: *Oratio*, A4v.-B1r.

demonstrated his capacity for the prophetic revelation of God's will in both tearing down false teachings and raising up true doctrine in their place.

The other immediate commemorations of Luther explicitly extended Melancthon's comparison of Luther to the biblical prophets. Michael Coelius, in a sermon delivered in Eisleben, equated Luther with Elijah and John the Baptist (who was also known as the second Elijah), a comparison that would become ubiquitous:

For just as Elijah in his time attacked and conquered idolatry, so did Dr. Martin Luther disturb and strike to the ground the tremendous idol of the papal indulgence, and just as Elijah killed the priests of Baal, so did the man of God knock against the mass-priests and their idol.<sup>46</sup>

Here, Coelius explicitly linked Luther's prophetic mission with his ongoing conflict against the papacy. His prophetic role was not only to proclaim the gospel and interpret the law, but to overthrow the pope and topple the idol he had erected. Bugenhagen's Wittenberg sermon on Luther's death picked up on these themes, but he shifted his attention to Luther's successors and asked that –God grant to the successors a double portion of the spirit of God, in order that they say even more than the great, beloved man [Luther] has said...as once the Prophet Elisha asked from Elijah, as he was taken away from Elisha in a cloud."<sup>47</sup> Coelius also noted that Luther's heirs, like Elisha, had picked up the prophetic mantle of

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<sup>46</sup> –Denn wie Elias zu seiner Zeit die Abgötterei angegriffen und niedergelegt, also hat D. Martin Luther auch den gewaltigen Abgott des papstischen Ablass angetastet und zu Boden geschlagen, und wie Elias die Pfaffen des Baals getödtet, also hat der Mann Gottes mit dem Schwert göttliches Wortes die Messpfaffen und ihren Abgott umgestossen." This sermon, which was delivered on February 20, 1546, was originally printed as part of the pamphlet, *Zwo Tröstliche Predigt*. It has been edited and reprinted in: Karl Förstemann, ed., *Denkmale, dem Martin Luther von der Hochachtung und Liebe seiner Zeitgenossen errichtet und zur dritten Säcularfeier des Todes Luthers* (Nordhausen: Verlag von Ferd. Förstemann, 1846), 54-74; this quotation, 58-59.

<sup>47</sup> –Gebe Gott das auch auff die nachkommen der Geyst Gottes zweymal mehr zu reden sei denn der hohe theure Man geredt hat...Wie denn der Prophet Elisa von dem Elia bittet da er von dem Elisa in eim wetter hinweg genommen ward." Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, H2v.

their teacher. In Coelius's thought, it was Luther's books and writings that contained his spirit (and the Holy Spirit), and would enable his followers to continue his battle against idolatry.<sup>48</sup>

This notion that God might doubly bless Luther's followers and successors was especially important, as they all recognized that the times in which they lived were rife with threats of apostasy and persecution. Justus Jonas predicted that the papists would strike back at the Lutherans within two years of the death —of the great high prophet.” He further noted that —after the death of each high prophet and beloved man of God, a horrid punishment has followed... Thus certainly also after the death of this man, Doctor Martin, a terrible retribution will follow across Germany.”<sup>49</sup> Melanchthon also recognized that —the death of great teachers and leaders often signifies that their followers will suffer greatly,” and he pointed to the strength of both the Turks and the Lutherans' enemies in the German lands as portents of that suffering.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, he ended his *Oratio* with a plea that God —will mercifully avert such retribution,” and with a prayer that the whole earth would uphold the true church and its godly teaching.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> —Will sollen aber auch nicht unterlassen, mit dem Elisa nach dem Mantel dieses Elia zu greifen, welches sind seine Bücher, die er aus Eingebung Gottes Geistes geschrieben und hinter sich verlassen, auf dass wir auch seines Geistes heraus empfangen.” Förstemann, *Denkmale*, 61.

<sup>49</sup> —Aber bald noch eines jeden hohen Propheten und theuren Manns Tod, hat allezeit eine Grosse gräuliche Strafe gefolget... Also wird gewisslich auch nach des Mannes, D. Martini, Tode eine gräuliche Straf folgen über Deutschland, wo es sich nicht bessert.” This quotation is taken from the sermon preached by Justus Jonas on February 19, 1546, which comprised the second half of *Zwo Tröstliche Predigt*. It has been edited and printed in: Förstemann, *Denkmale*, 33-51; this quotation, 48.

<sup>50</sup> —Grosser fürtrefflicher Lehrer und Regenten tod oftmals den Nachkommen grosse straffen bedeutet.” Melanchthon also referred to the —Fürckische Tyran” and —ander unser Feinde” in Germany. See: Melanchthon, *Oratio*, C3v.

<sup>51</sup> —Aff das nu Gott solche straffe gnediglichen abwenden wolle.” These words begin Melanchthon's closing prayer, which ended with the hope that all Christians might join with the saints in a future age, after the teaching of Christ is completely revealed to them. See: *Oratio*, C3v.-C4r.

There was a sort of implicit apocalypticism in these invocations of imminent suffering and the identification of Luther as the “third Elijah.” For these authors, Luther assumed the role of one of God’s two witnesses from Revelation 11, and his chief mission had been to expose the papal Antichrist.<sup>52</sup> Apocalyptic analogies could also be much more explicit. Michael Coelius, for instance, situated himself and his audience in “the last days under the papal Antichrist, where all error, heresy, sects, and idolatry had come together in a soup-stock of atrocity.”<sup>53</sup> Coelius noted that the world was full of idolatry and the “desolate atrocity” of various sects that sought to outdo each other in righteousness, and he referred to Luther as “a proper Elijah and John the Baptist for our times.”<sup>54</sup> Bugenhagen also stated that he and his fellows had to fight “against the kingdom of Satan, and against various damnable idolatries and human laws.”<sup>55</sup> Bugenhagen cast this opposition in explicitly apocalyptic terms, and equated Luther with the angel in Revelation 14:6-7:

He had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth – to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

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<sup>52</sup> In Revelation 11:3, God refers to “my two witnesses” who will prophesy for three and a half years. These witnesses were often equated with Elijah and Enoch (or Moses), so Luther’s identification with the third Elijah placed him prominently in the eschatological context. On the interpretation of Revelation 11 after Luther’s death, see: Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis*, 63-65.

<sup>53</sup> “Izund in den letzten Tagen unter den päpstischen Antichrist, da sind alle Irrthum, Ketzerey, Secten und Abgötterey, zusammen in eine Grundsuppen alles Gräuels geflossen.” See Coelius’s sermon in: Förstemann, *Denkmale*, 57.

<sup>54</sup> Coelius referred to Luther as: “ähnlich ein rechter Elias und Johannes Baptista zu unsern Zeiten.” See: Förstemann, *Denkmale*, 73.

<sup>55</sup> Bugenhagen noted that the Lutherans had to struggle “wider das Reyck des Sathans, wider so mancherley schendliche Abgötterey und menschen satzung, Ja, wie es Paulus nennet, wider die Teuffels leiten inn aller welt.” See: Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, F3v.



Bugenhagen asserted that Luther's revelation of the opposition between law and gospel, "through which the entire Scripture was opened," was the key to the angel's "eternal gospel."<sup>56</sup> Luther's fellow reformers and followers, then, were like the second angel in Revelation 14, who followed the first and proclaimed (as in Revelation 14:8): "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries." Their job was to give solace to "the downtrodden and afflicted church," and to assure it that its adversaries would not cause it misery for long.<sup>57</sup> For Bugenhagen, this assurance derived from Christ's words to his disciples in John 16: "I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy."

Bugenhagen offered an even greater assurance to his audience concerning God's goodness and mercy towards his people. He affirmed that not only had Luther been a prophet and the angel of the gospel, but he had also been the subject of prophecy. In this context, Bugenhagen repeated the well-known prophecy spoken by Hus before his death: "You are roasting a goose now, but God will raise up a swan whom you will not roast or burn."<sup>58</sup> The fact that God had fulfilled this prophecy through Luther's career demonstrated, for Bugenhagen, that God kept his promises to his people. Jonas also invoked Hus's

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<sup>56</sup> "Diser Engel der da saget, Fürchet Got und gebet ihm die Ehre, war D. Martinus Luther... Das sind die zwei stücke der Lerhe D. Martini Luthers das Gesetz und Evangelium durch welche die ganze Schrifft geoffnet wirdt und Christus erkand wird." Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, F4v.-G1r.

<sup>57</sup> "Nach der lere dises Engels wird folgen ein ander Engel welcher trost wird predigen der betrübten und angefochten Kirchen... Wie denn der ander Engel sprach, Sie ist gefallen, Sie ist gefallen, Babylon die grosse Stad. Darumb werden die widersacher von disem unsern betrübness nit lang sich frewen." Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, G1r.

<sup>58</sup> "Ihr bratet (saget Johan. Huss) yetz ein gans, Got wirt aber einen Schwan erwecken den werdet ihr nicht brennen noch braten." Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, G1v.

prophecy as a sign of God's intervention on Luther's behalf. According to him, Luther had exposed the falsity and spiritual bankruptcy of the papacy to all, which ~~ne~~ neither feared nor spared anyone, but they could not burn or kill him."<sup>59</sup> In both of these cases, Hus's prophecy had served as a guarantee of Luther's survival, and as a prophetic seal on the validity of his preaching and teaching mission.

The long life and peaceful death of Luther, despite the imminence of persecution or the strength of opposition, thus inspired a certain optimism among these sermons' audiences. Yes, the world had entered the last days. The ultimate resolution of the conflicts that would mark that time, however, would result in the fall of Babylon, the destruction of God's enemies, and the vindication of the reform that was Luther's legacy. Luther's epitaph and final prophecy concerning his conflict with the pope attested to his own belief that his movement for reform would ultimately overthrow the Antichrist: —~~P~~ope, while living I was your plague, and dying I will be your death."<sup>60</sup> This attitude reflected, and helped to shape, that of Luther's followers as they confronted their mentor and founder's death. This attitude was also in close parallel to that of Hus's followers in the years after 1415, as they canonized their former teacher and friend and took radical steps to preserve the reform he had helped to start. For Hussite Bohemia, those included the rejection of an emperor and a declaration of holy war against the vast majority of Christendom. Luther's followers in the German lands were

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<sup>59</sup> —Niemand gefürchtet noch gescheuet, den haben sie nicht mögen braten oder umbringen, wie sie wol oft im Sinn gehabt und herzlich gerne gethan hätten." See Jonas's sermon in: Förstemann, *Denkmale*, 50.

<sup>60</sup> Bugenhagen, who referred to this statement as Luther's —Epitaphum und Prophecey," included both Latin and German versions of it at the very end of his sermon: —Pestis eram vivus, moriens tua mors ero Papa." Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, H3r. Jonas also included this epitaph at the end of his sermon.

given a similar choice after his death, as they were presented with both ~~grave~~ conflict and devastation in the German lands.”<sup>61</sup> It was in this context that Hussite history gained renewed relevance and provided the Lutherans with a template for preserving reform in the face of military conflict, political oppression, and internal fissures.

### The Roman and Imperial Offensive, 1546-1548

Even before the death of Luther, there were signs that the pope and his secular allies were mustering for a decisive strike against Lutheran Germany. On a number of fronts, both political and religious, domestic and international, there was a conjunction of events that allowed Pope Paul III and Emperor Charles V to marshal their respective resources against the Lutheran schismatics in the Empire. The first indication was the conclusion of the Treaty of Crépy between Charles and King Francis I of France in September, 1544;<sup>62</sup> the Crépy agreement both established peace between the monarchs and guaranteed their support for the opening of a general church council.<sup>63</sup> Taking advantage of this novel degree of cooperation between monarchs, Paul III issued a bull of convocation for a general council that would assemble in Trent. Read publicly in papal consistories in

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<sup>61</sup> “Schwere krieg und verwüstung in Deudschem Land.” Melanchthon, *Oratio*, C3v.

<sup>62</sup> This treaty ended the long-term conflict between Francis and Charles, and it coincided with an Ottoman retreat in the Balkans and Hungary. The coincidence of these factors allowed Charles to turn his attention to religious issues in the Empire. On these events, see: Horst Rabe, *Reichsbund und Interim: Die Verfassungs- und Religionspolitik Karls V. und der Reichstag von Augsburg 1547/1548* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1971), chapter 1.

<sup>63</sup> Francis in particular made a secret promise to send French ecclesiastical officials to the council, and to give his support as a king to the proceedings. On the specific terms of this treaty, and especially its concern for the upcoming council, see: Jedin, *A History*, vol. 1, 501-502. See also: Ferdinand Seibt, *Karl V. Der Kaiser und die Reformation* (Berlin: Siedler, 1990), 155ff.

November 1544, the bull *Laetare Jerusalem* declared that the council would open on March 15 of the following year.<sup>64</sup>

This bull allowed very little time for the organization of the council, but Paul III felt it necessary to move quickly in order to capitalize on the peace established at Crépy and to head off any attempt by Charles to convoke a national German diet in order to resolve the religious discord in the Empire.<sup>65</sup> The problem, for Charles, was that by 1545 he was well aware that the Lutheran leadership would never accept the decisions of what they perceived as a partisan Catholic council. He feared that the Lutherans would raise the arguments that they had been developing since the mid-1530s against a general council.<sup>66</sup> When Charles granted his backing to Paul III concerning the upcoming council, and when he gained Francis's support as well, both the emperor and pope knew that the Lutherans would have to be broken – militarily and politically – if they were ever to acknowledge Trent. Thus, Paul and Charles undertook negotiations to determine what aid the pope could lend the emperor for a war against the powers of the Schmalkaldic League. These negotiations took time, as the pope tried to get the council he had called underway and Charles participated in an imperial diet

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<sup>64</sup> For the relevant sources concerning the promulgation of the bull and its announcement to the emperor and kings of France and England, see: *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. 33, 79 and 80.

<sup>65</sup> On the political dimensions that lay behind the terms of *Laetare Jerusalem*, see: Jedin, *A History*, vol. 1, 503ff.; and Rabe, "Zur Entstehung," 12-15.

<sup>66</sup> Protestant propaganda from this period against Trent did mainly recapitulate earlier arguments against the council. The difference, as Thomas Brockmann has pointed out, is that with Trent the council's opponents gained proof that their earlier suppositions were correct. More specifically, Protestant propaganda denied Trent's authority based on: the lack of lay participation in the council, the pope's role as a disputant and judge in the conflict with the Lutherans, the partisan nature of the council and the prohibition on Protestant books decreed by the council, and the location of the council outside of the Empire. On these arguments, see: Brockmann, *Die Konzilsfrage*, 333-341.

throughout the first half of 1545.<sup>67</sup> By June, though, the emperor and the pope had worked out a plan for the papacy's involvement in a war against the German Lutherans. The pope granted Charles V a large subsidy for the war and supplied 12,500 troops for a period of four months. He also ceded Charles half of the revenues of Spanish church properties for the same period, and the right to sell off Spanish church properties up to a value of half a million ducats in support of the war effort.<sup>68</sup> With this promise of material support in hand, Charles began to plan for a strike against the Schmalkaldic League.

In terms of achieving his desired goal of eradicating the political pillars of the Lutheran reform, Charles's alliance with the papacy came at an opportune moment. The Schmalkaldic League, despite its growth in light of the retreat of Catholicism in northern Germany, was experiencing internal strain.<sup>69</sup> The princes of the League, notably Landgrave Philip of Hesse and Elector John Frederick of Saxony, had spearheaded a series of attacks on the Catholic Duke Henry of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel in the early 1540s to deprive him of Brunswick and bring that land into the Lutheran political and religious orbit. The two princes were successful in this gambit, but the burden of the war debt was onerous, and

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<sup>67</sup> The convocation of the Council of Trent was slowed by an apathetic response to the bull of convocation by the secular rulers of Europe, and by the pope's strict timeline for its convocation. Cardinals were only designated as papal legates for the council in February, 1545, and many bishops who resided in Rome only left for Trent at the end of March. On the organizational troubles of Trent, see: Jedin, *A History*, vol. 1, 509ff. See also: Eduard Stakemeier, "Früherer Lehrentscheidungen und reformatorische Anliegen," in R. Bäumer, ed., *Concilium Tridentinum* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1979), 199-250, especially 200-206.

<sup>68</sup> The terms of this treaty are detailed in: Jedin, *A History*, vol. 1, 522-524; and Rabe, *Reichsbund und Interim*, 47-50.

<sup>69</sup> The expansion of the League in the German north depended on the League putting pressure on the prince-bishoprics in the region and the death of Catholic incumbents in local polities. On the expansion of the League in the north, see: Thomas Brady, Jr., "Phases and Strategies of the Schmalkaldic League: A Perspective after 450 Years," *ARG* 74 (1983), 162-181, especially 171-172; and Adolf Hasenclever, *Die Politik der Schmalkaldener vor Ausbruch des schmalkaldischen Krieges* (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1965), 151-180.

fell mostly on the wealthy, southern cities of the League. These cities gained the least from this war, and the trade upon which their fortunes depended required peace to flourish. Thus, the militantly expansionist campaigns against Duke Henry revealed a significant cleavage between the nobles and cities who formed the core of the Schmalkaldic League. While the former viewed war as an acceptable means of increasing both their own prestige and the territorial expanse of the Lutheran reform, the latter viewed armed conflicts as disruptive to necessary trade and as a dangerous transgression of the acceptable boundaries between religion and temporal affairs.<sup>70</sup>

In addition to exposing the fault lines within the League, the attack on Duke Henry also provided Emperor Charles with an excuse to assault the Schmalkaldeners. Indeed, as Charles assembled papal and imperial troops in southern Germany during the imperial diet at Regensburg in 1546, he stated that his purpose was to redress the Schmalkaldic princes' attack on Henry. Charles himself was aware that this political pretense would not disguise the religious causes of the war for long. In a letter to his sister, Maria of Hungary, Charles noted that he would attack Philip and John Frederick as "disturbers of the peace," but recognized that: "Although this pretext will not deceive anyone for any length of time about the fact that it is a question of religion, it will at least help to divide

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<sup>70</sup> This analysis of the strain within the Schmalkaldic League depends upon the research of Thomas Brady, who has shown that the wars with Duke Henry revealed key weaknesses in the League. The first was the differing perceptions of the utility of war among the cities and princes; the second was the League's "ideological confusion" about the boundaries between religion and politics, and about the limits placed on the League's actions by the alliance's defensive nature. On these strains, see: Brady, *Protestant Politics*, 272-273.

those who have seceded.”<sup>71</sup> Charles issued an order mobilizing his troops on June 10, 1546; in the following months, his soldiers and those of the Schmalkaldic League met only in inconclusive engagements. Despite the lack of any decisive battle, Charles’s forces did force the surrender of a number of southern Schmalkaldic cities.<sup>72</sup> In February of 1547, the League also lost Strasbourg, as that city’s government surrendered to Charles in exchange for his recognition of the city’s traditional political rights and his promise that the city could maintain its evangelical religion.<sup>73</sup> Along with the loss of many of its urban members, the Schmalkaldic princes were hurt by the alliance between Charles V and the Lutheran Duke Moritz of Saxony, the so-called –Judas of Meissen.”<sup>74</sup> The seeming betrayal by this German prince, along with the loss of the cities, weakened the Protestant coalition. Charles and his forces took advantage of this weakness, and he won a shattering victory over Philip’s and John Frederick’s armies at Mühlberg on April 24, 1547. The Saxon elector was taken prisoner in the course of the battle, and Lutheran authors immediately began to lament the defeat of the –elected martyr of Jesus Christ, Duke of the afflicted, Prince of the

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<sup>71</sup> This letter is cited in: Jedin, *A History*, vol. 2, 204. On Charles’s rhetorical justification for the war, see: Seibt, *Karl V.*, 164-166.

<sup>72</sup> On the submission of many southern Schmalkaldic cities in late 1546, see: Georg Schmidt, –Die Freien und Reichstädte im Schmalkaldischen Bund,” in V. Press and D. Stievermann, eds., *Martin Luther: Probleme seiner Zeit* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1986), 177-218, 206ff.

<sup>73</sup> The internal and external negotiations behind Strasbourg’s capitulation are detailed in: Brady, *Protestant Politics*, 304-317.

<sup>74</sup> Moritz’s alliance with Charles V was based on the inter-Saxon rivalry between the ducal and electoral houses, and on Moritz’s calculations about the strength of Charles’s position. On Moritz’s political calculations and decision to ally with the emperor, see: Wieland Held, *1547, Die Schlacht bei Mühlberg/Elbe: Entscheidung auf dem Wege zum albertinischen Kurfürstentum Sachsen* (Leipzig: Sax-Verlag Beucha, 1997), especially 25ff.

confessors of the faith, Count of the truth...Heir to eternal life, and after this life, the Victor over Charles and Judge of his Betrayers.”<sup>75</sup>

This “passion” of the Elector would soon become applicable to the Protestant churches of Germany at large, as Charles took immediate steps to reintroduce Catholic practices in Lutheran territories. Protestant preachers were driven from their pulpits, Spanish and papal troops occupied southern cities, and bounties were offered for the capture of prominent religious dissidents.<sup>76</sup> Charles also summoned an imperial diet for September, 1547, which would negotiate both a political settlement to the war and set a course for the determination of religious questions in the Empire. The most famous, if least effective, outcome of this “Armored Diet” was the Augsburg Interim; this temporary religious settlement was intended to dictate religious belief and practice in the German lands until a universal church council (i.e. Trent) could decide matters permanently.<sup>77</sup> The promulgation of the Interim should have been Charles’s great triumph. He had defeated his political enemies, brought the Lutheran princes to heel, and

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<sup>75</sup> This quotation was taken from a 1548 pamphlet, *Des gefangenen Churfürsten Rechter Titel So ihm itziger zeit von allen gotseligen waren Christen billich gegeben wirt*. The opposition between the Christ-like John Frederick and the Judas-like Moritz was a popular topic among Lutheran polemicists who were trying to make sense of the disastrous battle of Mühlberg. According to Nathan Rein, one prominent interpretation was that the Lutheran defeat attested to the movement’s righteousness; the Schmalkaldic War was Luther’s *theologia crucis* on a huge political and military scale. See his: *The Chancery of God*, 74-75. Philip of Hesse was also held captive, but because of his bigamy (cited as a reason for his imprisonment) he never became an object of popular veneration.

<sup>76</sup> As an outcome of the war, Württemberg and Constance were occupied by imperial troops and the constitutions of many southern cities were altered to allow the appointment of Catholic councilors. Prominent Lutheran pastors such as Nicholas Gallus or Regensburg and Caspar Aquila of Saalfeld were also driven from their respective parishes, and a 5,000 gulden bounty was placed on Aquila because of his activity as a pamphleteer. On these actions against the Lutherans, see: Olson, *Matthias Flacius*, 106-108.

<sup>77</sup> Besides the religious question, the Augsburg diet also dealt with the political ramifications of the war and the establishment of a permanent public peace (“Einfrieden”). The political determinations of the diet have been exhaustively examined in: Rabe, *Reichsbund und Interim*, 179ff.



theoretically forced all the religious parties in the Empire to recognize the Council of Trent as the ultimate arbiter in theological and ecclesiastical disputes.

Unfortunately for the Emperor, the Interim actually managed to arouse considerable resistance from both Catholics and Lutherans, and its demands for religious compromise galvanized a renewed opposition movement based in the city of Magdeburg.

The problem with the Interim was that its attempt to please everyone with a compromise succeeded only in alienating the hardliners in both parties whose positions had been crystallized by three decades of confessional conflict and the experience of the Schmalkaldic War. Within Charles's own camp, some of his advisors advocated a full restitution of Catholicism in Germany based on Charles's rights as a conqueror.<sup>78</sup> This position was opposed by pragmatists who felt it was necessary both to offer concessions to the Lutherans in some religious matters and to emphasize the need for reforms within the Catholic church order.<sup>79</sup> The moderates prevailed in this debate, and in December of 1547 a committee began to formulate a compromise settlement for religious questions in the Empire. The committee included Michael Helling, later Bishop of Merseburg, Julius Pflug, the bishop of Naumburg-Zeitz, and the much-maligned Johannes Agricola, who was the court preacher for Brandenburg at that time.<sup>80</sup> These three men

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<sup>78</sup> The most notable advocate of this position was Pedre de Soto, Charles's confessor. Horst Rabe has done considerable research to illuminate the internal conflicts among Charles's advisors at Augsburg. On de Soto's influence in Charles's inner circle and his position on a Catholic restoration in the Empire, see: Rabe, —*Źr Entstehung*,” 28-29.

<sup>79</sup> Nicolas de Granvelle was the main proponent of this position; he ultimately triumphed, as witnessed by de Soto's dismissal from his role with Charles. On the resolution of this conflict, see: Rabe, —*Źr Interimspolitik*,” 135; and idem., —*Źr Entstehung*,” 29-30.

<sup>80</sup> Helling and Pflug were both well-known and well-respected Catholic moderates in the Empire. Although Helling had been present at the opening of Trent, his moderate and reformist views

sought to craft a theological statement that carved out a middle ground on the issue of justification, made concessions on certain other issues of church practice, but mainly preserved traditional Catholic beliefs and practices concerning the liturgy, sacraments, and ecclesiology. The result of their efforts was promulgated on May 15, 1548, as *The Declaration of the Holy, Imperial Majesty, concerning the Practice of Religion throughout the Empire*; it was more commonly known as the Augsburg Interim.<sup>81</sup>

The Interim did not, on its surface, pose a grave military or political threat to the Lutheran church in the way that the Schmalkaldic War had. It did, however, pose a different sort of problem. The Interim opened up the possibility of negotiation with the papacy and its political allies, and this potential for rapprochement functioned drove a wedge between Lutherans who preferred peace and those who wanted to continue the struggle against Charles V and the pope. The preface to the Interim laid out the text's purpose. Citing the emperor's desire to rid the "whole Christian world, and especially the sacred empire of the German nation" of "the pernicious quarrels of religious controversy," the authors of the text proposed a single set of religious laws that would govern the Empire's churches until the Council of Trent could propose a universally binding

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were more akin to those that triumphed in the imperial court than those that prevailed at the council. It is generally conceded that Pflug and Helling were the decisive influences on the final formulations of the Interim; Agricola, who had been estranged from the Lutheran leadership since the antinomian controversy of the late 1530s, seems to have been included mostly as a concession to the emperor's Lutheran allies. On these men and their contributions to the Interim, see: Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 94-95. See also: Rabe, "Zur Entstehung," 53-63.

<sup>81</sup> Joachim Mehlhausen has collated and edited fourteen early printed editions of the Interim, and has produced a German and Latin facing-page edition of the text. The following citations are from the Latin version of the Interim printed as: Joachim Mehlhausen, ed., *Das Augsburger Interim von 1548* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1971).

settlement.<sup>82</sup> The Interim asked that the German nation, “following in the footsteps of the greater part of our sacred fathers,” would work towards “the uprooting of the seeds of discord in this matter” and live peaceably together, observing the practices and statutes of the universal church.<sup>83</sup> The preface ended by asserting that the emperor would work, as much as he was able, for “the promotion of God’s glory, the settlement of religious controversy, and the preservation of a lasting peace.”<sup>84</sup> The price of this peace, though, was the surrender of certain article of faith and practice that had become central to Lutheran identity over the first three decades of the German reformation.

The text of the Interim included twenty-six separate sections. They covered the seven sacraments, the nature and authority of the church, the administration of church rituals, the soteriological value of good works, and the nature of man. Many of these sections articulated normative Catholic theology. Article twenty-three, for example, promoted the veneration of saints and stated: “We do not only venerate the saints and give thanks for them, but we pray to be protected by their prayers and merits in all things by the aid of divine

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<sup>82</sup> The opening paragraph expressed the emperor’s wish for religious peace in the “universo orbi christiano et inprimis sacro imperio Germanicae nationis,” and that the church would be saved from “perniciosissimi controversae religionis dissidii, ex quo hactenus omnes discordiae, rancores, bella, angustiae et gravamina statuum processerunt.” Mehlhausen, *Das Augsburger Interim*, 29.

<sup>83</sup> “Insequentes sanctorum patrum maiorumque nostrorum vestigia... in adhaesionem et submissionem huius concilii communiter consenserint ac... pro tollendis discordiarum seminibus hanc rem usque ad progressum et determinationem generalis concilii.” Mehlhausen, *Das Augsburger Interim*, 31.

<sup>84</sup> “Quicquid enim sua maiestas ad promovendam Dei gloriam, ad componendam controversam religionem, conservandam firmam pacem, iusticiam et tranquillitatem... efficere et promovere poterit, in eo sese iuxta officium suum imperiale cum omni clementia sese exhibet promptissimam.” Mehlhausen, *Das Augsburger Interim*, 37.

protection.”<sup>85</sup> Article seven, regarding good works, asserted: “Works are commanded by God as necessary for salvation, and they are especially urged according to this saying of Christ: If you wish to enter into [eternal] life, preserve the commandments.”<sup>86</sup> It was not, however, doctrinal assertions such as these that sparked a remarkable Lutheran response. Rather, the great irony of the Interim was that precisely the compromises in the text – on the doctrine of justification, the granting of the communion chalice to the laity, and the marriage of priests – provoked vehement responses from the Lutheran leadership.<sup>87</sup> These concessions proved that the pope and his imperial ally were trying to seduce the Protestants into negotiations and allowances that would do nothing less than subvert the core principles of Luther’s reformation.

#### Resistance, Schism, and Magdeburg’s “Chancery of God”

To Lutheran eyes in 1548, the Interim was dangerous because it could persuade the unwary to accept many Catholic beliefs and practices while believing that they preserved the core of Lutheran doctrine. Indeed, in the years following the promulgation of the Interim, debates over how much compromise with Catholic bishops or secular lords was permissible sparked a bitter and lasting schism within Lutheran ranks. On the one hand, some Lutherans refused to

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<sup>85</sup> “Nec solum veneramur sanctos et pro his gratias agimus, sed eorum precibus et meritis in omnibus divinae protectionis auxilio muniri postulamus.” Mehlhausen, *Das Augsburger Interim*, 125.

<sup>86</sup> “Etsi opera a Deo mandata ut necessaria ad salutem, auct praecipue urgenda iuxta illud Christi: Si vis vitam ingredi, serva mandata.” Here, the text refers to Matthew 19:17. See: Mehlhausen, *Das Augsburger Interim*, 55.

<sup>87</sup> This concession of the chalice, a ritual innovation that had proven very popular throughout the German reformation, was a clear parallel to the Council of Basel’s policy towards the Bohemians in the *Compactata* and the flowing theological arguments for the licit consumption of the eucharistic wine by the laity. See above, chapter 3, fn. 175 and following.

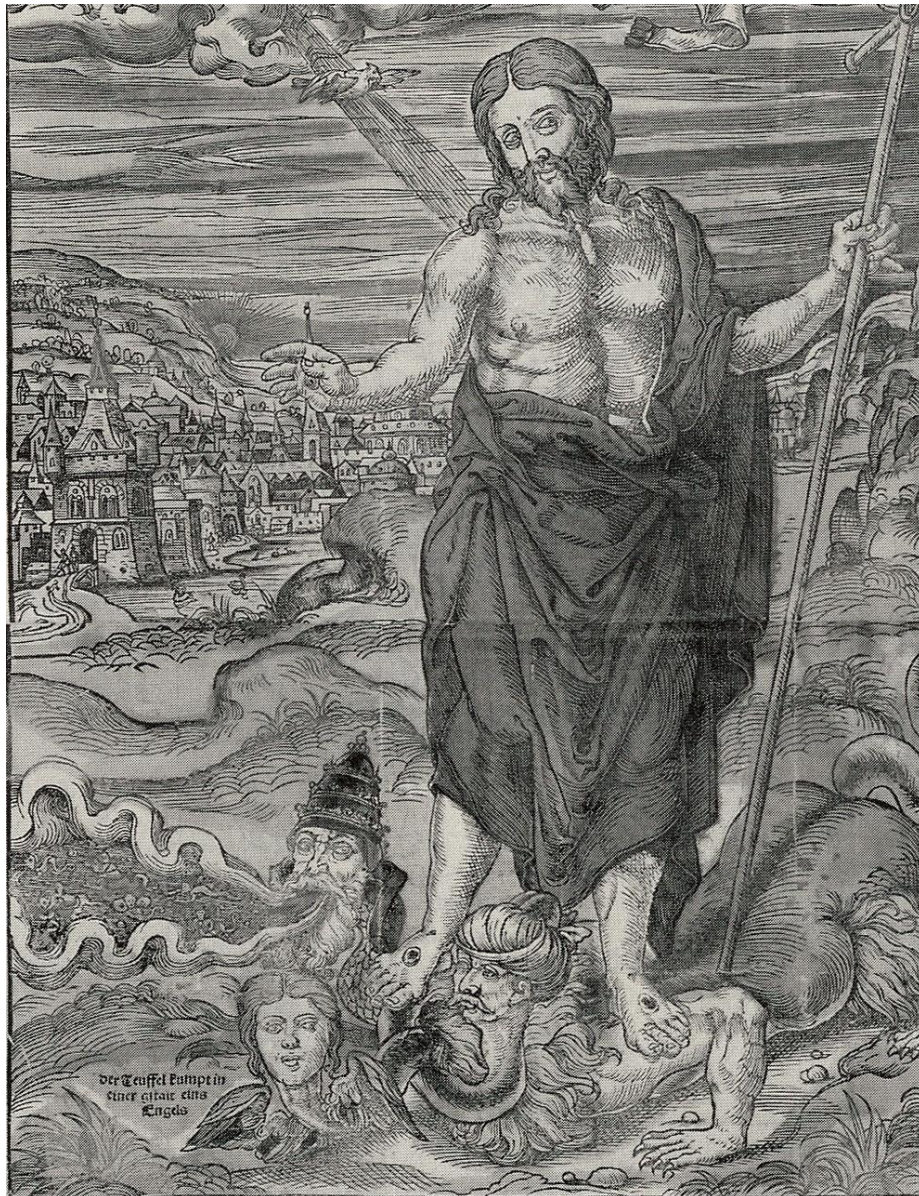
countenance any compromise with Charles and the papacy. If the Interim seemed to agree with Luther's teaching on justification, this was an illusion. This position was best represented by the novel —lgo” of the Lutherans: the three-headed dragon of the Interim.<sup>88</sup> (see figure 1) This figure appeared in a host of pamphlets in the years immediately following the Interim's publication, and it articulated a comprehensive critique of Charles's compromise. The dragon had three heads: one was an angel, one was a Turk, and the central head wore the papal tiara. The Ottoman's head symbolized unbelief, and suggested that persecution by the godless was imminent. The papal head showed who the true author of the Interim was, and implied that papal subjection was the Interim's ultimate goal.<sup>89</sup> The angel head was meant to show the Interim's —seeming innocence.” The Interim could sound Lutheran, and it contained some teachings that apparently aligned with the reformers' theology. The agreement between the Interim and true doctrine was, however, illusory. Alberus's pamphlet made the deceptive nature of the angel head explicit by including the caption: —The devil comes in the guise of an angel.”<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Olson, —Scourge of the Reformation,” 293.

<sup>89</sup> Olson, —Scourge of the Reformation,” 294-295.

<sup>90</sup> This undated, illustrated broadsheet by Erasmus Alberus showed Christ standing atop the Interim dragon, with Magdeburg in the background. By the angel's head, a caption read: —Der Teuffel kumpt in einer gestalt eins Engels.” This appears to be a reference to 2 Cor. 11:14, where the author warned his audience about deceptive false apostles, noting that —Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.” On this pamphlet's publication, see: Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 403ff.



**Figure 1: Jesus defeating the “Interim Dragon”**  
**Broadsheet by Erasmus Alberus, *Also spricht Gott, Dis ist mein lieber Son***  
**(Magdeburg: no publisher, no date)**

This hermeneutic of suspicion was exemplified by the Lutheran pastors and publicists who gathered at the city of Magdeburg in the wake of the Schmalkaldic War. Magdeburg was an imperial free city that had refused to surrender to Charles after the defeat of the princes at Mühlberg. The city had a well-developed printing industry, which was taken advantage of by a number of



Lutheran polemicists who refused to accept the Interim, and sought refuge in the city. The combination of Magdeburg's presses and the sudden influx of prominent Lutheran polemicists resulted in a massive literary campaign that sought both to justify the city's defiance of the emperor and to articulate a comprehensive rejection of the Interim. Among the most prominent Lutheran refugees in the city were Nicholas von Amsdorf, the former Lutheran Bishop of Naumburg, who came to the city in 1548 and served as the superintendent of its churches;<sup>91</sup> Nicholas Gallus, a former student of Luther's and a deacon in Regensburg;<sup>92</sup> and Matthias Flacius Illyricus, a professor at the university in Wittenberg and a prolific pamphleteer.<sup>93</sup> The arrival of these men in Magdeburg signaled the escalation of the city's campaign against the Interim and the hardening of battle lines between the Magdeburg publicists and their former teachers and colleagues in Wittenberg.

Recent scholarship has shown that the Magdeburgers espoused a distinctive "urban theology" that united political and theological arguments in their rejection of the Interim.<sup>94</sup> On the one hand, they based their resistance on the

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<sup>91</sup> Amsdorf (d. 1565) was an old friend of Luther's and an early convert to Luther's new theological ideas. Amsdorf helped direct the Wittenberg movement while Luther was ensconced in the Wartburg, and was considered one of the main leaders of the Lutheran movement both during and after Luther's life. For a biography of Amsdorf and an analysis of his role in Magdeburg, see: Robert Kolb, *Nicholas von Amsdorf (1483-1565): Popular Polemics in the Preservation of Luther's Legacy* (Nieuwkoop: B. De Graaf, 1978), especially chapter 2.

<sup>92</sup> On Gallus's role in Magdeburg and his career as a second-generation Lutheran preacher and publicist, see: Whitford, "From Speyer to Magdeburg," 69-71.

<sup>93</sup> Flacius was, and still is, one of the most polarizing figures in the Lutheran reformation. He was a Croat who came to Wittenberg with Luther and Melancthon in 1539, and was a gifted Hebraist and biblical exegete. He was also a vitriolic author who wore out his welcome in Wittenberg, Magdeburg, and Jena over the course of his career. For a short, sympathetic overview of his career, see: Oliver Olson, "Matthias Flacius Illyricus," in J. Raitt, ed., *Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland, 1560-1600* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1981), 1-17.

<sup>94</sup> The two most important recent works on Magdeburg in the wake of the Schmalkaldic War are Thomas Kaufmann's *Das Ende der Reformation* (2003) and Nathan Rein's *The Chancery of God*

idea that they were defending imperial cities' traditional liberties against an overreaching emperor, so their resistance was founded on a firm legal basis.<sup>95</sup> On the other hand, they saw the emperor as a "papal hireling" whose political actions were a mask for the destruction of the Lutheran church and the renewed Gospel. Because the emperor had no authority in matters of religion, then, resistance against the emperor was theologically legitimate.<sup>96</sup> The denial here of a secular lord's authority in religious matters was disingenuous. Luther's *Appeal to the German Nobility* had argued precisely for this authority, so this rejection of the emperor's prerogatives certainly had more to do with his confession than his legal authority. The propagation of these messages therefore demonstrated how political and religious interests and rhetoric were entwined in the production of the texts and in their intended targets.<sup>97</sup> The cooperation of religious and political leaders in Magdeburg and the city's perseverance in the face of overwhelming opposition both demonstrated how political resistance and the preservation of doctrinal purity could rally people against the threats that faced the Lutheran cause. Given the possibility for peace that the Interim held out, and given the collapse of Lutheranism's political bulwarks, Magdeburg's example as a defiant

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(2008). Rein's work began as a dissertation at Harvard University; Kaufmann's massive book appeared while Rein was finishing his research and writing. Thus, Rein's book has to be read as an analytical complement and thematic overview of Kaufmann's exhaustive work on individual pamphlets and the overall task of the Magdeburg publicists. Rein is well aware of Kaufmann's authoritative study, and acknowledges his debt to Kaufmann's statistical and bibliographical work. On this urban theology, see: Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 180.

<sup>95</sup> Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 169.

<sup>96</sup> Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 78 and 81. Based on a reading of Matthew 22:21 ("Render unto Caesar..."), the Magdeburg theologians argued that while the emperor was due certain things, he had no right to those things that were due God. Thus, any claims he made to authority in religious matters invalidated his overall claims to authority. On the development of this line of arguments, especially in the *Magdeburg Confession* (1550), see: Whitford, "From Speyer to Magdeburg," 75.

<sup>97</sup> On the role of the city government in the production of anti-Interim publications and their cooperation with the pastors of Magdeburg, see: Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 17ff.; and Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 120ff.



Lutheran *corpus christianum* proved to be essential for the survival of the Lutheran church. The city's urban theology of dissent, broadcast throughout the Empire by its pamphlets, proved to be an ideal vehicle for the maintenance of a defiant strain of Lutheranism that recalled Luther's conduct at Leipzig and Worms and the open conflict that had characterized the earliest years of the German reformation.

This campaign was also similar to that waged by the preachers and civic leaders of Prague in 1419-1420, but the Magdeburgers took advantage of printed media to disseminate their message more widely to the German public. Bohemian leaders were able to turn local public opinion decisively against Sigismund and his forces in the build-up to the first Hussite War, but their manifestos never had the reach of Magdeburg's pamphlets. To understand how print expanded the reach and influence of religious dissidence, it is worth considering the actual arguments used by the Magdeburgers against Charles and the Interim. In 1548 and 1549, Magdeburg's publishers put out 143 editions from their presses defending the position the city had taken against the emperor.<sup>98</sup> One of the most comprehensive and representative of these texts was Nicholas von Amsdorf's *Answer, Creed, and Confession concerning the Fine and Lovely Interim*, which uncompromisingly rejected the imperial Interim. In this text, Amsdorf, the superintendent and elder statesmen of the Magdeburg Lutherans, openly asserted that in times of struggle it was necessary to publicly confess the faith, —so our Lord Jesus Christ will vouch

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<sup>98</sup> Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 17. See also the tables and graphs in: Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 559-565.

for you in turn on the last day before his heavenly Father and all the angels.”<sup>99</sup>

Amsdorf further asserted that Christians must be willing to sacrifice both their “body and goods” to fight against the “Devil’s apostle, the pope in Rome and to defend poor, afflicted Christians through and with God’s word.”<sup>100</sup>

Amsdorf’s *Answer, Creed, and Confession* also specifically attacked the “Mass-priests” and their history of treating true Christians as heretics. Invoking the eternal battle that had begun with Cain and Abel, Amsdorf lamented that Catholic authorities “had damned, burned, and murdered many pure people, whose blood cries and calls out daily to heaven.”<sup>101</sup> Because of this history of persecution, nothing from Rome could be trusted, including their apparent acceptance of certain doctrines and practices that had been promoted by the Lutheran reformers. Even though the Interim allowed communion in both kinds and the marriage of priests, Amsdorf was concerned that the recognition of the Interim would tacitly serve as an acknowledgement of the pope’s and emperor’s authority over these issues.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, referring to Catholic bishops and church councils, Amsdorf forcefully asserted that “they are not the people who can or

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<sup>99</sup> “So wirdt euch Jhesus Christus unser lieber Herr am Jungsten tage für seinem himlischen Vatter unnd allen Engeln widderumb bekennen.” Nicholas von Amsdorf, *Antwort, Glaub, und Bekentnis auff das schöne und liebliche Interim* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1548), A2r.

<sup>100</sup> “Widder den Teuffels Aposteln den Babst zu Rom mit unnd durch Gottes wort zuverteidigen die armen betrübtten Christen.” Amsdorf, *Antwort*, A2v.

<sup>101</sup> “Viel frommer Leute darumb verdammte verbrant und ermordet haben, welcher Blut teglich gen Himmel schreiet und rüffet.” Amsdorf, *Antwort*, A3r. The reference here was to God’s accusation of Cain after his murder of Abel in Genesis 4:10: “The Lord said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.”

<sup>102</sup> On this concern as a central motivating factor in Amsdorf’s publications against the Interim, see: Kolb, *Amsdorf*, 78-81.

should command what Christians should believe or esteem. That is for only one man, who is called Jesus Christ our Lord.”<sup>103</sup>

Amsdorf also feared that the acceptance of these two concessions could serve as a gateway of sorts, and that they would lead the faithful to accept the Interim’s more dangerous avowal that the Mass was a sacrifice rendered by the priest on behalf of the people. Amsdorf considered the sacrificial Mass to be the “Interim’s beautiful idol,” but he asserted that this idea would have been alien to the “first, ancient Fathers and the beloved apostles who founded the holy Christian church.”<sup>104</sup> Amsdorf also noted that the Interim promoted good works as playing a role in human justification, and that it valorized fasting and the intercession of saints as effective means of accruing merit before God. The propagation of these beliefs showed that the papal church was intent on maintaining the appearance of sanctity while eliminating its substance. Thus, The pope’s sovereignty within the visible church, with its pomp and ceremonies, proved to Amsdorf that the true church was actually something else. Following Luther, he argued that “the true Christian church is bound to no particular place, estate, or office,” but is marked by the preaching of the gospel and its participation in the “succession of the word.”<sup>105</sup> For Amsdorf, the church did not

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<sup>103</sup> “Denn sie seind nicht die leutte welche der Christenheit gebieten können oder sollen was sie gleuben odder halten soll. Es ist ein ander unnd einiger Man der heisset Jhesus Christus unser lieber Herr.” Amsdorf, *Antwort*, A3v.

<sup>104</sup> Amsdorf referred to the sacrifice of the Mass as “der schöne Abgott das Interim, man soll inn allen Kirchen widderumb Messe halten;” and he referred to the sacrifice in the Mass as a “Hmana traditio,” which “Gleuben und halten sie nicht die alten ersten Veter, die lieben Aposteln wleche der heiligen Christlichen Kirchen grundfesten.” See: Amsdorf, *Antwort*, B3v. and B4v.

<sup>105</sup> “Die Christliche Kirche an keinen ort stant oder ampt gebunden ist, sondern wo Gottes wort die stimme unsers breutgams und hirten klinget daselbst ist die rechte war Christliche Kirche.” This true church, for Amsdorf, participates in the “Successionem verbi et doctrinae.” See: Amsdorf, *Antwort*, E2v. and E3r.

reside with the ~~apes~~ and priests” (*–affen und Pfaffen*)” of the Catholic Church and their rites, but in the preaching of the gospel, ~~because~~ the word of the Lord abides forever.”<sup>106</sup>

Coming on the heels of Luther’s death, the Schmalkaldic League’s defeat in at Mühlberg, and the imposition of the Interim, pamphlets such as this one served a vital purpose in ensuring the survival of the Lutheran movement. They suggested that in spite of the political and religious vicissitudes of the true church, it would survive so long as it remembered its eternal mandate to confess divine truth, preach the gospel, and remember the church’s foundation in the teachings of Christ and the examples of the apostles and martyrs. The difficulties that the Magdeburgers faced only proved to them that their struggle was weighted with eschatological significance.<sup>107</sup> The emperor’s war was merely a political mask for the pope’s assault on religious reform, and the pope was the Antichrist. Thus, Magdeburg’s situation in 1548 seemed to place the Lutherans there firmly in the prophetic present. Biblical mandates provided them with models of resistance, and the apocalyptic overtones of their suffering demonstrated that their actions had eternal consequences; the attacks they faced also affirmed Luther’s identification of the church as a hidden, persecuted minority oppressed by the visible church of the hypocrites. Thus, the pamphlets that flowed from the presses of Magdeburg tapped into well-established Lutheran ecclesiological and eschatological ideas in order to galvanize their readers against the Interim.

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<sup>106</sup> *–Quia Verbum Domini Manet In Aeternum.*” Amsdorf ended his pamphlet with this assertion, after derisively dismissing the papal Antichrist and his followers. See: Amsdorf, *Antwort*, E4r.

<sup>107</sup> On the suffering of the Lutherans as a sign of both their election and the imminence of the end of time, see: Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 58 and 75.

This response to the Interim was not, however, universal among Lutherans. Even as the Magdeburg publicists actively resisted the imposition of the Interim and prepared for the emperor's reaction, Philip Melanchthon and his colleagues in Wittenberg were charting their own passive resistance to the Interim's dictates. Melanchthon, the primary leader of the Wittenbergers after Luther's death, was primarily motivated by a desire to restore peace to the German lands. Melanchthon, like Luther, acknowledged the role of secular lordship in the *œura religionis*" and also accepted that matters of doctrine could be separated from matters of ritual practice.<sup>108</sup> Melanchthon had argued for the negotiability of ritual matters during the battle over the Augsburg Confession in 1530, and his position did not change much over the next three decades.<sup>109</sup> Debates about the performance of rituals were, for Melanchthon, ultimately indifferent to the faith; they were adiaphora.<sup>110</sup> Several scholars have recently

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<sup>108</sup> Both Timothy Wengert and James Estes have argued that it is necessary to frame Melanchthon's response to the Augsburg Interim within the framework of his entire career as a student and colleague of Luther's. Thus, both trace his actions and writings of 1548-1549 back to ideas concerning the role of magistrates and princes in religious reform that Luther and he had developed in the 1520s. This long-term examination of Melanchthon's political theology and approach to ritual reveals that his actions in response to the Interim represented the culmination of two decades of political and religious development. See: Timothy Wengert, "Not by Nature *Philoneikos*: Philip Melanchthon's Initial Reactions Against the Augsburg Interim," in Dingel and Wartenberg, *Politik und Bekenntnis*, 33-49; James Estes, *Peace, Order, and the Glory of God: Secular Authority and the Church in the Thought of Luther and Melanchthon, 1519-1558* (Brill: Boston, 2005); and idem., "The Role of Godly Magistrates in the Church: Melanchthon as Luther's Interpreter and Collaborator," *Church History* 67 (1998), 463-483, 474.

<sup>109</sup> On Melanchthon's preparations for the Augsburg Diet of 1530 and the Confession's influence on his later writings on imperial authority and religious reform, see: Charles Arand, "The Apology as a Backdrop for the Interim of 1548," in Dingel and Wartenberg, *Politik und Bekenntnis*, 211-227; on the early Reformation controversies and their impact on discussions of ritual and doctrine, see: Estes, *Peace, Order, and the Glory of God*, especially chapter 1.

<sup>110</sup> For a short but insightful overview of the issue of adiaphora in the wake of the Augsburg Interim, see: Dingel, "The Culture of Controversy," 30-39.

highlighted the fact that the Augsburg Interim accepted this distinction as well, and that it tried to separate the *lex orandi* from the *lex credendi*.”<sup>111</sup>

For Melancthon and his Wittenberg colleagues, as with the Magdeburgers, the sacrificial theology that accompanied the reinstatement of Catholic ritual struck too close to the heart of Lutheran theology. Thus Melancthon, along with his colleagues Georg Major and Caspar Cruciger, rejected the Augsburg Interim even before it was made public.<sup>112</sup> After the publication of the Interim in May, Melancthon and his colleagues issued two additional “Judgments” of the document.<sup>113</sup> In all of these texts, the Wittenbergers completely rejected the Interim’s theology of justification. Melancthon and his colleagues repeatedly emphasized that “we are justified through faith,” and that while good works could result from justification, they could not contribute to it. Thus, regarding the Augsburg Interim’s teaching on good works, intercession, and justification, the Wittenbergers’ June 16 “Judicium” concluded:

Therefore, we cannot counsel that anyone accept the book [i.e. the Interim] in this clause...concerning the doctrine of faith and good works

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<sup>111</sup> Rein notes that the emperor had hoped to use common ritual practices to visibly unite the divided church in the empire, so that theological differences could be healed, or at least partially ameliorated, by common practice. This hope never really materialized. See: *The Chancery of God*, 95-97. See also: Olson, *Matthias Flacius*, 155.

<sup>112</sup> Melancthon first gained access to the text of the Interim via Duke Moritz in March, 1548. The Emperor Charles had given a copy of it to Moritz so the latter’s theologians could review its terms; Moritz demanded this because Charles wanted to apply the mandates of the Interim to the Lutherans in Saxony, despite the terms of the earlier agreement made between the monarchs. Thus, under the elector’s aegis, the leaders of the Saxon Lutherans issued a statement denying the Interim’s validity on April 24, 1548. On the course of the internal Saxon review of the Augsburg Interim, see: Heinz Scheible, “Melancthon’s Brief an Carlowitz,” in R. Decot and G. May, eds., *Melancthon und die Reformation: Forschungsbeiträge* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 304-332; and Wengert, “Not by Nature *Philoneikos*,” 33-35.

<sup>113</sup> The texts of all three writings have been edited and printed in *PMOO* 6; the April 24 document, signed by Melancthon, George Major, Johannes Pfeffinger, and Caspar Creuciger, 865-874; the mid-May “Judicium,” signed by Melancthon, Creuciger, Major, and Johannes Bugenhagen, 908-912; and the June 16 “Judicium,” signed by Bugenhagen, Pfeffinger, Creuciger, Major, Melancthon, and Sebastian Fröschel, 924-942.

we, through God's grace, teach truly, just as we have explained and preached it now for many years in this church, because it is also clearly put forth in divine Scripture.<sup>114</sup>

Despite this blanket rejection of the Augsburg Interim's *doctrine*, however, the Magdeburgers criticized Melanchthon for his seeming capitulation to Emperor Charles and Elector Moritz concerning ritual *practice*. Over the course of 1548, Moritz called upon Melanchthon and his Lutheran colleagues in Saxony to formulate an alternative to the Augsburg Interim. Their efforts ultimately resulted in the so-called Leipzig Interim, a church order for the Saxon lands initially formulated in October and finalized in December of 1548.<sup>115</sup> The theologians gathered at Leipzig preserved the essential Lutheran teachings on justification by faith and emphasized Christ's role as man's sole mediator. They made considerable concessions, however, in matters of ritual practice. For instance, they retained the rituals of penance and recommended it prior to the reception of communion; they also preserved ecclesiastical vestments, liturgical songs during the Mass, and many of the fasts and feasts that marked the liturgical year.<sup>116</sup> This second Interim, then, sought to preserve the *substance* of the Lutheran reform while accepting the *accidents* of traditional worship. This distinction was central to Melanchthon's conception of adiaphora.

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<sup>114</sup> –Derhalben können wir nicht rathen, dass jemand das Buch in diesem Stück annehme... wir durch Gottes Gnade auch forthin die Lehr vom Glauben und guten Werken treulich lehren, wie wir sie nun viel Jahr in diesen Kirchen gepredigt unde erkläret haben; denn also ist sie in göttlicher Schrift klar ausgedrückt." *PMOO* 6, 930.

<sup>115</sup> Melanchthon's and his colleagues' proposal was never named the "Leipzig Interim." Rather, for the initial version of this Interim (dated October 19), and the final revision of the text (dated December 24), see: *PMOO* 7, 178-182 and 258-264.

<sup>116</sup> *PMOO* 7, 262-263. The article from the October 19 draft allowed for the observance of the feasts associated with Jesus' life, the feasts of biblical saints, the observances during Holy Week, Epiphany, the feasts of the apostles. In the article on the Mass, however, the Interim dictated that the legends of the saints be excluded from these observances, and replaced with readings from Scripture. See: *PMOO* 7, 179-180.

Melanchthon was willing to sacrifice the non-essentials of the gospel for the sake of peace, and he permitted compromise with secular authorities in seeking this peace.<sup>117</sup> Melanchthon sought to justify his acceptance of old ritual forms, and his doctrine of adiaphora, in a number of letters he wrote in early 1549. In late January, Melanchthon wrote the pastors of Frankfurt and argued that the Leipzig Interim's compromises in no way endangered "Christian freedom," as long as pastors taught and preached correctly. He argued that food, vestments, and rites were not essential, but that "other greater works: true faith, prayer, love, hope, patience, the confession of the truth, chastity, and righteousness," represented the true "cultus Dei."<sup>118</sup> In a later response to questions posed to him by the pastors of Hamburg, Melanchthon elaborated on this position. He noted that the category of adiaphora did not include "magical consecrations [or] the adoration of statues...which are openly damned in our speeches and writings." Rather, adiaphora comprised those practices instituted by the earliest church for the education of the laity and for the ordering of the church's sacramental rites.<sup>119</sup> Regarding these practices, Melanchthon trusted that secular powers could

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<sup>117</sup> Melanchthon accepted that magistrates and princes were the foremost members of the Christian community and polity, and that their office gave them a unique concern for, and power over, the direction of that community. Thus, working with the princes to ensure peace and the teaching of doctrine after the Schmalkaldic War was a natural outgrowth of Melanchthon's beliefs concerning the role of godly magistrates. See: Estes, "The Role of Godly Magistrates," 466ff.

<sup>118</sup> "Nec propterea amittitur libertas Christiana, si recte docebimus. Nam corda scient tales ritus non esse cultus Dei, sed alia maiora opera, veram fidem, invocationem, dilectionem, spem, patientiam, veritatis confessionem, castitatem, iustitiam erga proximos, et alias virtutes veros cultus Dei esse." This letter was written on January 29, 1549, to the pastors of Frankfurt. See: *PMOO* 7, 322-326; this quotation 325.

<sup>119</sup> "Vocamus Adiaphora, non magicas consecrationes, non statuorum adorationes, non circumstationes panis aut similia, quae aperte damnantur voce nostra et scriptis...Alia multa sunt Adiaphora, quae et antiquissima Ecclesia instituit, et ad concinnum ordinem, et ad docendos seu commonefaciendos rudiores conducunt." This letter was written April 16, 1548, in response to a long attack on the Leipzig Interim by Hamburg's clergy. For the full text, see: *PMOO* 7, 382-386; this quotation, 383.



maintain peace as the pastors of the church maintained true doctrine, no matter the ritual framework in which it was included.

Ultimately, the difference between the Wittenberg and Magdeburg responses to the Interim concerned the two cities' acceptance of secular leaders' competence in matters of religion. The events of the years following the promulgation of the Interim made the consequences of this difference very clear. On the one hand, Melancthon and the Wittenberg theologians stayed in the good graces of Elector Moritz, and they experienced little persecution. Conversely, Magdeburg suffered for its active resistance to imperial efforts to dictate religious affairs. Magdeburg had been under the imperial ban since May of 1547, and in the summer of 1548 the city began to suffer the consequences of an economic embargo and attacks on the city's commercial interests throughout Germany.<sup>120</sup> Moritz was actually tasked to bring the city to heel, and in 1550 he besieged the city with the help of George of Mecklenburg.<sup>121</sup> Magdeburg would not surrender, and a year-long military conflict ensued between Moritz and Magdeburg, the "Chancery of God."<sup>122</sup> This localized war ended only in late 1551, when

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<sup>120</sup> On the political developments concerning Magdeburg after Mühlberg, see: Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 127-156; and Thomas Nicklas, *Um Macht und Einheit des Reichs: Konzeption und Wirklichkeit der Politik bei Lazarus von Schwendi (1522-1583)* (Husum: Matthiesen, 1995), 62-79.

<sup>121</sup> Prior to 1550, attacking Magdeburg remained an unattractive action to Moritz and Charles because it would be terribly unpopular and prohibitively expensive, and could have potentially sparked more widespread rebellion. In the fall of 1550, though, the stalemate was broken when Magdeburg sent troops out to engage a band of soldiers under George of Mecklenburg in their territory. On September 22, 1550, the Magdeburgers were soundly defeated, and George pursued them to the city. Moritz, upon hearing of Magdeburg's defeat, rushed to the city to either receive its capitulation or to aid in the preparations for a long-term siege. On Magdeburg's defeat and the military origins of the siege, see: Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 155ff.

<sup>122</sup> The image of Magdeburg as the "Hergotts Kanzlei" is central to both Kaufmann's and Rein's books. For both authors, the association of Magdeburg with Jerusalem or Judith's Bethulia legitimized their stance against the Interim and the emperor. See, e.g.: Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 103ff.; and Rein, *The Chancery of God*, 166ff.

Magdeburg's magistrates surrendered after receiving guarantees of the city's religious independence. In the wake of the siege, the Lutheran publicists and preachers who had helped to justify and sustain the city's resistance became the core of the Gnesio-Lutheran party. The Gnesio-Lutherans were staunchly opposed to Trent, the emperor, and the accommodationist "Philippists" who had bowed to political pressure. Primarily based at the Saxon university in Jena, this band of hardliners continued to attack the Catholic Church in their publications and sought to retain their ideological independence from Wittenberg.<sup>123</sup>

The need for distinction – between Jena and Wittenberg, and between both of these cities and Rome – resulted in an explosion of historical research by Lutheran scholars. These authors turned to the past in order to contextualize their own debates and struggles within the broad sweep of church history. One man in particular, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, mined church history to the greatest extent. His goal was to demonstrate the catholicity of the Lutheran reform, and to prove that he and his fellow Gnesio-Lutherans were the true heirs of that tradition and of Luther's true teachings as well.<sup>124</sup> By tracking Flacius's historical endeavors, then, I believe that we can chart the Lutheran intellectual and ideological responses to the crises of 1546-1551. These years of death, discord, and military defeat certainly took their toll on Luther's successors, but this period also gave

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<sup>123</sup> This division between the Gnesio-Lutherans and the Philippists was the major issue in Lutheranism until the drafting of the Formula of Concord in 1577, which was largely conceived as a solution to the intra-confessional schism that arose in the wake of the Augsburg Interim. On the formation of these parties and their ongoing conflict, see: Kolb, "Dynamics of Party Conflict," 1296ff.; and Oliver Olson, "Theology of Revolution: Magdeburg, 1550-1551," *SCJ* 3 (1972), 56-79, especially 74ff.

<sup>124</sup> On Flacius's goals as a historiographer, see: Olson, "Matthias Flacius Illyricus," 13-14.

them with an historical outlook and interpretive lens through which they could perceive their place within God's plan for his church on earth.

### Flacius's Lutheranism: Towards a New Historical Orientation

In the decade following the publication of the Augsburg Interim, no one did more to maintain the boundaries between the nascent Lutheran confession and the other churches than Matthias Flacius Illyricus, who became a professor at Jena and the superintendent of the Ernestine Saxon churches after his time at Magdeburg. He wrote voluminously and vituperatively against any compromise with the papacy throughout the 1550s.<sup>125</sup> In these writings, Flacius articulated a sophisticated understanding of the history of the true church, which was not identical to the visible, papal church. Rather, Flacius, following Luther, defined the church as a persecuted minority of all nominal Christians who proclaimed God's word and teachings. Doctrine played the lead role in Flacius's ecclesiastical history, as correct teaching was the essential possession of the church, but he also allowed no compromise on issues of ritual practice. Indeed, he famously wrote that ~~in~~ "in an emergency of confession and scandal, nothing is an *adiaphoron*."<sup>126</sup>

Flacius's uncompromising attitude stemmed from his belief that negotiation would obscure the need for credal clarity that was central in his

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<sup>125</sup> Flacius joined the Magdeburgers around Easter of 1549, after leaving his post as a professor at Wittenberg. He stayed in the city throughout the siege, and moved to Jena after the successful Princes' Revolt in 1552. Jena quickly became the main intellectual center of the Gnesio-Lutheran party, and Flacius used his position there to work against rapprochement in 1555 at Augsburg and in 1557 at Worms. The best short summary of Flacius's activity in these years is in: Olson, ~~Matthias Flacius Illyricus~~.

<sup>126</sup> ~~In~~ "in casu confessionis et scandali nihil est adiaphoron." This quotation came from Flacius's pamphlet *Quod hoc tempore nulla penitus mutatio in religione sit in gratiam impiorum facienda* (n.p., n.d.), and is cited in: Olson, ~~Matthias Flacius Illyricus~~, 3.

concept of the church. And in the aftermath of the Schmalkaldic War, Flacius's take on Luther's conception of an oppressed minority church gained new significance. Thus, Flacius argued repeatedly to his readers and opponents that God had always provided aid to those who maintained their faith in him during times of persecution, so the beliefs of his —poor people” had survived and even thrived.<sup>127</sup> Just such a bold confession was mandated by the Lutherans' situation after their leader's death, so Flacius determined to publicize and popularize the stories of past —witnesses to the truth” in order to strengthen his co-religionists and encourage them to maintain a constant witness to their faith, despite the very real danger that confronted them. Over the course of the late 1540s and 1550s, Flacius developed an increasingly comprehensive and theologically significant reading of history that read the past typologically in order to gain insight into the present and future struggles of the church. He began with biblical narratives to find situations that were analogous to those that the Lutherans had faced in their first thirty years. He subsequently expanded his analysis and examined the entire history of the post-biblical church so he could create a complete dossier of God's actions on behalf of his people. Flacius also began to compile a roster of those who had worked for God in this, and who had suffered and died on account of their faith. This progression, which began in the immediate wake of the Interim's

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<sup>127</sup> Flacius often used the term —arme Leut” or the adjective —betrüben” to describe the true church of his own time. Both of these emphasized the disestablishment of the church, and its inability to defend itself; thus its survival was miraculous and due only to the intervention of God. For this terminology, see, e.g.: Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Ein geistlicher trost dieser betrüben Magdeburgischen Kirchen Christi, das sie diese Verfolgung umb Gottes worts und kerner andern ursach halben leidet* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1551), B2r.

promulgation, eventually led Flacius towards the organization and execution of a comprehensive, doctrinal history of the entire church.

Flacius had begun to explore how biblical and church history could shed light on the contemporary situation of the Lutheran church by 1548. In one pamphlet, *A Common Protestation and Complaint by all Pure Christians against the Interim*, Flacius established a strong typological parallel between the Lutherans' opponents and those who had oppressed the Israelites and early church.<sup>128</sup> Flacius compared Catholic priests, for example, to —thē Jewish priests [who] were so obdurate in their wickedness that they would not believe in Jesus or the truth that he spoke.”<sup>129</sup> Just as the Jews had rejected Jesus, so too did early modern Pharisees deny his followers and the truth that they taught. For Flacius, this conflict was eternal; it had begun with Cain and Abel, and he noted that —both the histories of Holy Scripture and other histories as well” have shown that the —godless liar” will always kill the —true servant of God” up until the end of the world.<sup>130</sup> Flacius considered himself and the other Lutheran opponents of the Interim to be the true servants of his time. Indeed, he proclaimed that —we are the children of the holy God,” who must resist these opponents and their master, the devil: —Er whoever will not take up the cross, must follow after the devil and

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<sup>128</sup> Flacius published this pamphlet under a pseudonym, Johannes Waremundum. The full title of the pamphlet was: *Ein gemeine protestation und Klagschrift aller frommen Christen wieder das Interim unnd andere geschwinde anschlege und grausame verfolgung der widersacher des Evangelii allen Gotfürchtigen gewissen zu dieser betrübtten zeit uberaus sehr nützlich unnd tröstlich zu lesen* (n.p., 1548).

<sup>129</sup> —Die Jüdischen Pfaffen waren so verstockt in ihrer bossheit das sie ihm nicht gleuben wolten, ob er gleich die warheit redete.” Flacius, *Ein gemeine protestation*, A2r.

<sup>130</sup> —Ob gleich derselbigen sach unnd unschuldt öffentlich für gebracht und erkandt ward wie beides die Hystorien der Heiligen Schrifft unnd auch andere geschicht die sich hernachmals inn der Kirchen zugetragen solches überflüssig bezeugen unnd bleibt für unnd für biss an der welt ende. Das der Gottlose gleissner Cain den warhafftigen Gottes diener Abel on alle gerechtigkeit auff's jemmerlichst zu todt schlecht.” Flacius, *Ein gemeine protestation*, F4v.-G1r.

seek after good days here [on earth]. But it is 100,000 times better to suffer with Christ than to rule with the devil.”<sup>131</sup>

In another pamphlet of 1548, *A Short Account of the Interim*, Flacius attacked the union of the papacy and the emperor in order to attack the totality of those who sought to rule with the devil.”<sup>132</sup> In *A Short Account*, Flacius’s main focus was on the idea that a council could serve as the ultimate arbiter in matters of faith. Flacius rhetorically asked, “For how long have the German lands craved a free Christian council? How often have the pope and emperor promised such a thing?”<sup>133</sup> Instead of such a council, however, the Germans were given Trent, which has been assembled and is ruled, not by the Holy Spirit, but by the most holy spirit of the Devil!”<sup>134</sup> Trent’s authority derived only from the successful war waged by the Emperor Charles, and the Lutherans were forced to acknowledge it only because they had first been impelled by the sword.”<sup>135</sup> Indeed, for Flacius the combination of *–Krieg und Concilium*” proved only that papal and imperial tyranny had taken over the world. Given this situation, Flacius proclaimed the necessity of boldly confessing the faith, and he based his conclusion on a number

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<sup>131</sup> “Wer aber das Creutz nicht tragen wil der mag dem Teuffel nachfolgen und hie gute tage suchen. Aber hundert tausent mal besser ist mit Christo leiden als mit dem Teuffel regieren.” Flacius, *Ein gemeine protestation*, H1r.

<sup>132</sup> Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Ein kurtzer Bericht vom Interim darauss man leichtlich kan die leer und Geist desselbigen Buchs erkennen, Durch Theodorum Henetum allen fromen Christen zu dieser zeit nützlich und tröstlich* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1548). This pamphlet, which was printed four times in 1548, included an attack on the Interim’s terms very similar to that of Amsdorf discussed above; the attack on Trent here, though, was novel in Flacius’s work. For information on the editions, see: Kaufmann, *Das Ende der Reformation*, 498.

<sup>133</sup> “Wie lang hat doch gantz Deutsch landt ein freies Christlich Concilium begert? Wie oft haben wol keyser und Babst solches verheisen?” Flacius, *Ein kurtzer Bericht*, B3v.

<sup>134</sup> “Das selbige Concilium versamlet und regirt worden ist nicht von dem Heyligen, sondern von des Allerheiligsten Geis dem Teuffel.” Flacius, *Ein kurtzer Bericht*, A3r.

<sup>135</sup> “Wir haben sie denn hernachmals das Concilium angefangen? Also das sie erstlichen unsere Kirchen mit dem schwerdt davon getrieben und als denn erst uber unser leer ein urteyl gefellet haben.” Flacius, *Ein kurtzer Bericht*, A2v.-A3r.

of biblical verses that commended suffering for Christ. The key verse here was Matthew 10:32, “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.” Flacius used this verse, along with others from Acts 14, Hebrews 12, 2 Timothy 2 and 3, and 1 Peter 4 to construct a persuasive argument that :

All of God’s holy ones must be conformed to the Lord Christ through the cross, and also enter into eternal life [through it], as the whole Holy Scripture makes abundantly clear, as in Acts 14: “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”<sup>136</sup>

Flacius’s description here of how a true Christian must live and suffer was very similar to arguments that Luther had made while he was alive. It is not surprising, then, that Flacius edited a collection of Luther’s sayings from the year 1530, during the first Reformation diet of Augsburg, that were relevant to the context of the Interim. Flacius’s collection, *Certain Letters of the Reverend Father of Pious Memory, Doctor Martin Luther*, had a twofold ideological purpose.<sup>137</sup> On the one hand, it expressed Luther’s beliefs on the nature of the church and the necessity of suffering; the assembled sayings decried imperial tyranny and the pope’s satanic inspiration, and valorized the suffering of true Christians who opposed them. On the other hand, the invocation of Luther’s authority served an intra-Lutheran polemical purpose, as Flacius claimed the

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<sup>136</sup> “Es müssen alle Gottseeligen dem Herren Christo durch das Creutz gleichformig weden, und also eingehen inn das ewige leben wie sulchs die gantze Heylige Schrifft reichlichen seigt, asl Acto 14. “Durch viel trübfäl müssen wir in das Reich Gots gehen.” Flacius, *Ein kurtzer Bericht*, C1r.

<sup>137</sup> This text was originally printed in Latin, under the title: *Aliquot Epistolae Reverendi Patris Piae Memoriae D. Martini Lutheri quibusdam Theologis ad Augustana Comitia. Anno 1530* (n.p., 1549); in the following year, the text appeared in a more extensive German translation as: *Etliche tröstliche vermanungen in sache das heilige Gottliche Wort betreffend, zu dieser betrübten zeit sehr nützlich und tröstlich zu lesen. D. Martinus Luther, Anno MDXXX* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1550). The German version of this text has been edited in: *WA* 30/II, 697-710.

status of Luther's heir through the use of the great reformer's words as evidence for the correctness of Flacius's positions vis-à-vis the Philippists. Indeed, this pamphlet's emphasis on suffering and opposition was a tacit attack on Melancthon and his compromise with the secular authorities in Saxony.<sup>138</sup>

The invocation of Luther's authority and sanction became one of the main polemical weapons in the ongoing debate between the Philippists and the Gnesio-Lutherans. In this particular pamphlet, however, Flacius also borrowed heavily from Luther's historical and exegetical method. At the very beginning of the text, Flacius included statements by Luther that cited several of the biblical passages (2 Timothy 3:12 and Acts 14:22) that Flacius himself had used in *A Short Account*. Flacius also included examples of how Luther used biblical history to demonstrate that whenever Israel seemed to be defeated, God preserved them by raising up new and greater leaders:

King Saul miserably stabbed himself, because his people were defeated and his three sons were slain in the same battle (I Samuel 31). What else could one think, except that it was all over for the Jewish kingdom? But afterwards, in David's and Solomon's time, it [the kingdom] first came to its highest power and holiness.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> It was during these years that the first collected editions of Luther's works were published. The publication of the great reformer's work functioned as a form of polemics, as the Philippists and Gnesio-Lutherans both sought to publish the definitive version of Luther's works and thus publicly present themselves as the possessors of his literary and pedagogical legacy. On the efforts to publish Luther's works after his death, see: Matthias Pohlig, *Zwischen Gelehrsamkeit und konfessioneller Identitätsstiftung: lutherische Kirchen- und Universalgeschichtsschreibung 1546-1617* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 116; and Kolb, *For All the Saints*, 127ff.

<sup>139</sup> "Der König Saull sich selbs jemerlich erstach, da sein volck erlegt ward und seiner Söne drei in der selben schlacht bleiben i. Sam. xxxi., Was künde man anders gedencken, denn es were nu gar aus mit der Jüden Königreich? Aber hernach zu Davids und Salomonis zeiten kam erst zu seiner höchsten krafft und herligkeit." Flacius, *Etliche tröstliche Vermanungen*, 706.



Even more interesting than this biblical example of God's holy people being preserved from a foreign military oppressor, however, was the more recent example that followed after it:

Thus when the papists burned Jan Hus at the Council of Constance in 1416 [sic], they triumphed and considered it assured that they had rightfully elevated the papacy. But the pope had also never before been more despised than at that time.<sup>140</sup>

These two passages suggested that the patterns of history that emerged from a reading of the Bible held true for the history of the church after Christ and the apostles. Here, the typological understanding of history gained a new dimension, as Luther and Flacius perceived that the past fifteen hundred years had as much to teach the contemporary church as the history of Israel and the apostolic church did. This pamphlet amplified this message as well by using different events in the history of the church to explain and amplify each other's meaning. As a reflection on the necessity of suffering and the reality of imperial injustice towards the church, Flacius included this statement by Luther:

And so it was under the Emperors Maximinianus, Diocletian, and others, that Christendom was horribly persecuted and the emperors attempted to eradicate the Christians entirely. And so it was also in the time of Jan Hus and of many other greater and more solemn men in our time.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> –Da die Papisten Johannem Huss zu Costnitz im Concilio Anno 1416 verbrant hatten, triumphirten sie und hielten es für gewiss, sie hetten das Bapstumb nu erst recht rehöhet, Aber der Babst ist vor nie verechter gewesen denn eben von der selbigen zeit an." *Ibid.* The mistake here in dating Hus's death was unusual, as Flacius's later works corrected this error. It is possible that Flacius here used Richental's chronicle to date Hus's death, or that it represented an error in printing, but there is no immediate explanation for this mistake.

<sup>141</sup> –So ist diese sache unter dem Römischen Keiser Maximiniano, Diocletiano, und andern, so die Christenheit greulich verfolgten und sie gar auszurotten sich unterstunden, auch zur zeit Johannis Huss und anderer mehr viel grösser und fehrlicher gewesen denn bei unser zeit." Flacius, *Etliche tröstliche Vermanungen*, 703. The reference to Maximinianus and Diocletian recalls the co-emperors efforts to suppress orthodox Christianity and promote Arianism in the early fourth century.

Here, the suffering of Hus under an emperor who was beholden to Rome linked him both to fourth-century Christians in the Roman Empire and sixteenth-century Protestants who had been persecuted by Charles V. The repetition of persecution over the course of church history demonstrated the cyclical and static nature of the political and religious conflict that had dogged the biblical and post-apostolic church from its very inception.<sup>142</sup>

The generic characteristics of the *Certain Letters* as a florilegium militated against Flacius's forming any general conclusions based on Luther's individual insights. 1549 did witness, however, a much more systematic attempt by Flacius to explicate the general contours of church history in his *Clearest Marks of True and False Religion*.<sup>143</sup> The preface to the text itself sought to explain Flacius's understanding of church history in a general sense. He began by asserting that the earliest church had maintained its purity until seventy years after the death of Christ, when the last evangelist, John, died. According to Flacius, after that point the history of the church was one long decline, as hypocrisy, theological errors, novel cultic practices, and various sins of the flesh crept into the formerly pristine church.<sup>144</sup> This decline had been reversed, however, by Martin Luther and his

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<sup>142</sup> The notion of the cyclical or repetitive nature of the conflicts between the true and false churches was present in Luther's thought, and also characterized his followers' understanding of the periodic escalations of the ongoing struggle between the two. On this repetitive view, see: Backus, *Historical Method*, 390; and Pohlig, *Zwischen Gelehrsamkeit*, 79ff.

<sup>143</sup> This text comprised two parts. The first was a list of fifty "marks" of the true and false religions; the second was a list of the "marks of the Antichrist." This text was originally printed in Latin, as: *Clarissimae Quaedam Note Vere ac False Religioinis atque adeo ipsius Antichristi...* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1549). In the same year, an abridged version was printed in German as: *Etliche greiffliche gewisse unnd scheinbarliche warzeichen...* (Magdeburg: Christian Rödinger, 1549). This vernacular translation (the title page mentions that it was "aus einer lateinischen schrift M. Matthie Flacii Illyrici verdeutschet") cut or shortened Flacius's discussion of the fifty marks, but maintained the second section on the Antichrist.

<sup>144</sup> Flacius described the church of the first seventy years as a "virgo munda et immaculata," but noted that after the death of John "ad haec tempora acciderit in tanta spiritualium non solum

teaching of the pure gospel, —the man of God, our father, teacher, and third Elijah, sent before the final and terrible advent of the Lord for the restoration of the truth.”<sup>145</sup> Like many of Luther’s earlier memorialists, Flacius foresaw a time of trouble following the death of this great man. In spite of this, Flacius hoped that some Christians would be willing to suffer for the truth that Luther had restored and resist the —ministers of Antichrist” and the errors with which they hoped to seduce to elect. For Flacius, these errors represented —the wisdom of the old Adam, that judges it to be better to become a persecutor than a confessor of Christ.”<sup>146</sup>

After this preface, Flacius included an address —For the Christian Reader, to Persevere up until the End.” This extended apostrophe assured its audience that they were members of the true church, and thus the recipients of a heavenly reward, no matter what the pope decreed. Indeed, Flacius denied that the papal church could rightfully claim the title of —*Ecclesia*,” and asserted that no one should be fooled by its religious trappings, as the devil could take —the form of an angel of light.”<sup>147</sup> Flacius therefore asserted that there were two churches in the world, the true and the false, and that the true church could be known because it comprised —those whom the impious excommunicate and eject from their

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inscitia, negligentia, et epicurca divini verbi despectione, sed etiam cupiditate per hypocrisia, errore, novos culturs et quaestus males artes crescendi.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, A2r-A2v.

<sup>145</sup> Luther was described in the text as: —iste est vir Dei, tertius Elias, pater et praeceptor noster, ante ultimum ac horribilem adventum Domini ad instaurandam veritatem missus.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, A2v.

<sup>146</sup> —Fanta est veteris Adami sapientia, ut iudicet satius esse, persecutorem Christi fieri, quam confessorem.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, A3v.

<sup>147</sup> —Verum immerito quaerunter, ut diximus, nam et viae Domini per se sunt planae, et sunt larvae istae ac forma angeli lucis ita diabolo hoc tempore detractae, ut nullo negotio a quovis veritatis quaerendae studioso cognosci queat.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, A6r.

synagogues.”<sup>148</sup> Not surprisingly, Flacius traced the origins of these two churches to Cain and Abel, and even referred to the “*Cainica Ecclesia*,” as he traced the true church through Noah, Abraham and Lot, the Hebrew prophets, Christ, and the apostles.<sup>149</sup> Flacius considered Luther to be the heir of all these biblical figures, and was therefore unsurprised that the pope and his political allies calumniated him as a terrible heretic. Concerning the condemnation of Luther and his followers, Flacius ultimately asserted: “Therefore it must be firmly concluded, that we who suffer on account of Christ’s truth, have always remained in the church, and that this is especially true, when we are falsely called heretics or schismatics by the adversaries of Christ’s truth.”<sup>150</sup>

This text offered a clear and simple key for the interpretation of ecclesiastical history: those who had opposed the institutional church and had been cast out of it had actually been members of the true church. These churches were locked in an eternal war with each other, and this conflict would only be resolved with the “final and terrible” coming of Christ. For Flacius, as for many Lutherans before him, the internecine struggle between the churches stemmed from the fact that the visible church had been corrupted and taken over by the Antichrist, who resided on the papal throne. Thus, Flacius ended his text with a

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<sup>148</sup> “In primis Dei populus sint, cum eos impii eiiciunt ex suis synagogis et excommunicant.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, A7r.

<sup>149</sup> This analysis of the origins of the conflict between the two churches was very similar to that espoused by Melanchthon in his church-historical writings. Ironically, Flacius owed much of his historiographical method to Melanchthon, despite the conflict between the two men that sharpened after the Interim. On the problematic relationship between the two, see: Robert Kolb, “Philipp’s Foes, but Followers Nonetheless: Late Humanism among the Gnesio-Lutherans,” in M. Fleischer, ed., *The Harvest of Humanism in Central Europe: Essays in Honor of Lewis W. Spitz* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1992), 159-176.

<sup>150</sup> “Concluditur igitur firmissime, nos, qui propter veritatem Christi patimur, semper in Ecclesia mansisse, et tunc vel maxime esse, cum haeretici schismaticisque falso ab adversariis ob Christi veritatem vocantur.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, A8v.

comprehensive analysis of the scriptural evidence that the pope was the Antichrist.<sup>151</sup> Nothing in this was particularly novel, but in this final section Flacius again hinted at the historical grounding for his attack on the papacy. Just before his own unequivocal assertion that the pope was the Antichrist, Flacius noted: “Jan Hus, Savonarola, Luther of pious memory, and many other men excelling in piety and erudition did not doubt that this very man [the pope] was the man of sin and the Antichrist, and they concluded this for the strongest reasons.”<sup>152</sup> Here, the conclusions of two men burned at the stake in the fifteenth century served as the specific foundations of a tradition of critique that had culminated in Luther (and Flacius). In the years of the Magdeburg siege and after, the quest for a more comprehensive understanding of these foundations would drive Flacius to new degrees and methods of historiographical research.

These early writings also bore, however, more topical and timely polemical offspring. Especially as Magdeburg’s cold war with the emperor heated up in 1550, Flacius applied his conclusions about the nature of the church(es) to the struggles that defined Magdeburg Lutheranism. In a number of publications from 1550 and 1551, he picked up on themes he had begun to develop in 1548-

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<sup>151</sup> In particular, Flacius surveyed 1 John 2, Daniel 12, 2 Thessalonians 2, 1 Timothy 4, and 2 Timothy 4. In his analysis, these texts showed that the Antichrist would be the binary opposite of Christ in all things (his kingship, his priesthood, and his messianic status); that the Antichrist would elevate himself above Christ; that he would reside in the holy temple of God; and that his coming would be signalled by the decline of good doctrine and the unwillingness of the people to hear the truth of God. On these passages as prophecies of Antichrist more generally, see: Rusconi, “Antichrist and Antichrists.”

<sup>152</sup> “Joannes Huss, Savonarola, Lutherus piae memoriae, et alii quam plurimi viri pietate ac eruditione praecellentes non dubitant, quin sit iste ipse homo peccati, et Antichristus, probantque id validissimis rationibus.” Flacius, *Clarissimae Quaedam Note*, G4r.

1549 and applied them pointedly and specifically to Magdeburg's opponents.<sup>153</sup> Johannes Agricola, the Lutheran contributor to the Interim, became "the shit-eater, *Scheisleben*," and was compared to Judas.<sup>154</sup> The German lands in general, and Magdeburg specifically, also became the privileged site of the final conflict between God's poor, afflicted people and the papal Antichrist who was trying to destroy the true church.<sup>155</sup> This struggle presaged the imminent return of Christ; basing himself on an extensive exegesis of Revelation 13, Flacius ultimately concluded that "now is the time, after the revelation of Antichrist, in which he asserts himself through the council, Interim, adiaphora, war, and persecution of all Christians."<sup>156</sup>

The Council of Trent, the Schmalkaldic War, and the Augsburg and Leipzig Interims: these were the vehicles of seduction and oppression against which Flacius railed. Flacius knew that the religious settlements in particular might seem legitimate, as they appealed to the logic of the "old Adam" who was

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<sup>153</sup> The following analysis is in no way intended to be exhaustive or complete. Indeed, Olson lists over fifty publications by Flacius for the years 1550-1551. Rather, this section merely hopes to show how Flacius deployed the historical ideas he had begun to develop in the context of the siege of Magdeburg and the aftermath of the Interim's publication. For an extensive analysis and bibliography of Flacius's publications in these years, see: Olson, *Matthias Flacius*, 168-210 and 337-351.

<sup>154</sup> These nicknames for Agricola derived from his time in Eisleben, and were included in: Flacius, *Erklärung der schendlichen Sünden derjenigen die durch das Concilium, Interim und Adiaphora von Christo zum Antichrist fallen* (n.p., 1550), B1r. The comparison to Judas came from: idem., *Ein Christliche vermanung M. Matthie Flacii Illyrici zur bestendigkeit inn der waren reinen Religion Jhesu Christi* (Magdeburg: Michael Lotter, 1550), D3r.

<sup>155</sup> In several pamphlets, Flacius valorized Germany as the first land gifted with the renewed gospel. He contrasted Germany's appreciation for "Evangelische Oberkeit" with the "frembde Nation," whom the pope sent "inn Deudtschlandt gefürdt werden die Christliche Religion auszureuten." On this idea, see: Flacius, *Das alle verfolger der Kirchen Christi zu Magdeburgk Christi des Herrn selbs verfolger sindt* (Magdeburg, Michael Lotter, 1551), A3r.; and *Ein geistlicher trost*, A2v.

<sup>156</sup> "Denn itzt ist nu die zeit nach der offenbarung des Antichrists inn welcher er sich durch Concilium, Interim, Adiaphora, kriege, und verfolgung der Christen...bemühet." Flacius, *Ein geistlicher trost*, B1r.

in every person and preferred peace and concord to truth.<sup>157</sup> The false church also had imperial authority at its disposal, and the power of the papal and imperial “tyrants” and “wolves” could be frightening to those who resisted them.<sup>158</sup> Against these threats, however, Flacius held up the biblical examples of Judith and Esther, as well as the historical example of the Christians of Edessa, who resisted the Emperor Valens with their confession of faith and were thus saved from death.<sup>159</sup> These individuals and their communities had been delivered because of their faith in God and perseverance, and Flacius contended that many nominal Lutherans had lost that faith. The only people who had remained faithful to it, and to Luther, were “the assembly of Christians in Magdeburg, who hear and confess God’s word.”<sup>160</sup> It was only in that city, and in its ongoing conflict with the “godless priests of Baal” who supported the Interim, that true Christians continued to battle against the powerful representatives of the false church.

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<sup>157</sup> Flacius contrasted the “idiot” of the true Christian and his willingness to bear his cross to “ursen alten Adam,” who cannot see the world “mit geistlichen augen” and seeks comfort and peace rather than divinely sanctioned suffering. See: Flacius, *Ein geistlicher trost*, B1v.-B2r.

<sup>158</sup> Flacius developed an extensive metaphor in which the pope and emperor, with their “Tyranischen Oberkeyt,” were like wolves who attacked the flock of the church. Flacius contended that “Also solten die Schaffe mit dem hirten widder den Wolff streiten,” and thus argued that the church, led by its preachers, had to resist this tyranny alongside Jesus Christ. Flacius made the contrast here between the Magdeburg preachers and the submissive Saxon clergy in Leipzig explicit. See: *Ein Christliche Vermanung*, E4r. and G1r.-G1v.

<sup>159</sup> Edessa was the site of an ongoing struggle between Arian and Orthodox Christians. Around 370 CE, the Emperor Valens empowered his agents in Edessa to assemble all Christians and strangle them. The soldiers who were given this assignment were confronted by a group of women and children who confessed their willingness to die; this profession of faith moved the soldiers so that they refused to execute the local Christian congregation. For this story, see: Flacius, *Ein Christliche Vermanung*, G2r.

<sup>160</sup> “So sind ja dieselben güter nicht etlicher Gottlosen Baalspaffen sonder der Kirche zu Magdeburgk. Die Kirch aber zu Magdeburgk ist nicht Holtz und Steine viel weniger etliche Gottlose diener des Antichrists welche die ware Religion verfolgen, sonder sie ist eine versammlung der Christen zu Magdeburgk die Gottes wort hören und bekennen.” See: Flacius, *Das alle verfolger*, B1r.

Oliver Olson has noted that it was during the siege of Magdeburg that Flacius first began to investigate the Hussite movement.<sup>161</sup> Perhaps in a time of military trouble, the overwhelming success of the Bohemians appealed to Flacius and his co-religionists. Perhaps his initial historical research and his awareness that Luther had appreciated the Hussites' accomplishment had sparked his interest in the Lutherans' predecessors in reform. Either way, by 1552 Flacius had begun to seriously pursue the acquisition of primary sources pertaining to the history of the Hussite church. Hussite history had a two-fold appeal to Flacius. It could, after all, be interpreted as either an inspirational or a cautionary tale. Initially, the Hussites had heroically resisted the pope and emperor in order to maintain the reform begun by Jan Hus in 1415. Subsequently, though, the Hussites had preferred peace to resistance, and had surrendered their sacred opposition to the papal Antichrist for the sake of negotiation and even papal recognition. It was in the years following the siege of Magdeburg, then, that Flacius pursued the full revelation of the Bohemians' ambiguous legacy, as the experiences of this most recent and spectacular model for the Lutheran reform became increasingly relevant in an era of expanding negotiation.

#### Jan Hus and the Construction of Church History

Matthias Flacius Illyricus may have taken an interest in Hussite history around 1550 for another reason. He very likely also began his research in order to pick up a literary gauntlet thrown down by Johannes Cochlaeus in 1549. In that year, Cochlaeus published two books, his *Commentary on the Life of Luther* and

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<sup>161</sup> Olson, *Matthias Flacius*, 182.



*Twelve Books on the History of the Hussites*.<sup>162</sup> According to Ralph Keen, these two books can be read –as the twin panels of a diptych, together forming a thousand-page brief to the authorities against the dangers of Protestantism.”<sup>163</sup> Besides attempting to provoke political authorities to further action against the Lutherans in the wake of the Schmalkaldic War, these two books served a unified ideological and intellectual purpose as well: they set out to exhaustively and authoritatively define Luther’s relationship to the heretics that had come before him, and to undercut Luther and his followers’ efforts to create an ecclesiastical counter-history that understood the German reformation as the culmination of those individuals’ and movements’ protests against the papacy. Writing in 1554, Flacius even acknowledged the impact of Cochlaeus’s texts, noting that Cochlaeus’s –prolix” writings concerning the –life, actions, and religious struggles of Hus and Luther” required that –we who embrace the truth create a history of those men and pious doctors, and join together a history of those matters with a devotion to preserving the truth.”<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> The *Commentary* was composed in two parts; the first part was written in 1534, but never published. In 1549, Cochlaeus completed the text and it was published by Francis Behem in Mainz. It is available in a critical edition and translation as: R. Keen and E. Vandiver, ed. and trans., *The deeds and writings of Martin Luther from the year of the Lord 1517 to the year 1546 related chronologically to all posterity*, in T. Frazel et al., eds., *Luther’s Lives*, 53-351. All citations will be to the *Commentary*. The *Twelve Books* were published as: Johannes Cochlaeus, *Historiae Hussitarum Libri Duodecim* (Mainz: Francis Behem, 1549).

<sup>163</sup> Keen, —Cochlaeus: An Introduction,” 51. The *Commentary* in particular was massively influential on later Catholic perceptions of Luther, and served as the basis for almost five hundred years of hostile biography. The definitive study of the *Commentary*’s influence in Catholic historiography and polemics remains: Adolf Herte, *Das katolische Lutherbild im Bann der Lutherkommentare des Cochläus*, 3 vols. (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1943).

<sup>164</sup> –Turpe et plane pudendum est nobis Lutheranis et Hussitis non tamen coram hominibus sed er coram Deo papistas, ut praeter alios etiam Cochleum, vitam, actiones, et religionis certamina Hussi et Lutheri prolixè admodum descripsisse cum magno veritatis incommodo, nostrum autem neminem, qui veritatem amplectimur eosque viros tanquam pios doctores magni facimus, tuendae veritatis studio tantarum rerum historiam contexuisse.” This is from a letter written by Flacius in March 1554 to the Elector Palatine, Otto Heinrich, seeking financial support for the writing of a

Cochlaeus's books were certainly polemical, but this Catholic apologist was nothing if not a careful scholar. He cited his opponents' writings extensively, and often exposed the contradictions and suppositions that underlay their conclusions. He also cited papal texts, chronicles, other authors' historical works, and imperial pronouncements to contextualize theological debates within the events that surrounded them.<sup>165</sup> The results of his research were two massive, learned, and insightful works that ultimately aimed to demonstrate the falsity of Luther's claims to have discovered the roots of his reform in heretics who had come before him.<sup>166</sup> In describing Luther's heresy, Cochlaeus acknowledged the Wittenberg professor's efforts to link himself to medieval heretics, saying that Luther thrust forward, hawked about, and inculcated the errors of the Waldensians, the Wycliffites, and the Hussites, and persuaded many Germans."<sup>167</sup>

Indeed, Cochlaeus noted that:

Luther's hatred was so great, not only toward the Pope, but also toward the universal Catholic Church, that he preferred to be united with those who were manifestly excommunicates, such as the Pighards and the Hussites, than return to the Catholics, with whom he had earlier received communion for so many years.<sup>168</sup>

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new church history. The text of the letter is in: Karl Schottenloher, *Pfalzgraf Ottheinrich und das Buch: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der evangelischen Publizistik* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1927), 147-157; this quotation, 156-157.

<sup>165</sup> Irena Backus has noted a certain paradox in the *Commentary*; while Cochlaeus was very careful with his historical scholarship and his recreation of events, he also uncritically accepted legends and myths about Luther's character. On this paradox, see: Backus, *Life Writing*, 20-22.

<sup>166</sup> On the relationship between Luther and his forerunners in the *Commentary*, see: Herbert Immenkötter, "Von Engeln und Teufeln: Über Luther-Biographen des 16. Jahrhunderts," in A. Buck, ed., *Biographie und Autobiographie in der Renaissance* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983), 91-102, especially 99-101.

<sup>167</sup> The *Commentary* is structured as a year-by-year chronicle of Luther's writings and deeds, as well as accounts of the political and religious events in Germany that occurred in a given year. This quotation is from the account of 1521; see: Cochlaeus, *Commentary*, 90.

<sup>168</sup> This citation is to the year 1523; see Cochlaeus, *Commentary*, 130.

Despite Luther's efforts to tie himself to the Bohemians and other dissidents, however, Cochlaeus was not fooled. After surveying the texts that had defined his conflict with Luther and Agricola in the 1530s, Cochlaeus ultimately concluded that even the Lutherans' own books revealed the immense distance between themselves and their supposed forerunners. Concerning Agricola's publication of Mladoňovice's "~~h~~istory" in 1529, Cochlaeus derisively stated that "~~in~~ that history Johannes Hus is said to have denied publicly, before everyone, those articles which the Lutherans most affirm."<sup>169</sup> Referring to his own publications of 1538, Cochlaeus also noted that he had set Hus's and Luther's sermons beside one another, so that all could see that "~~L~~uther's were much more repulsive than Hus's were," and that Luther's heresy had led to much worse suffering in the German lands.<sup>170</sup> While these conclusions were not new to Cochlaeus's work, the thoroughness of his *Commentary* and the sheer number of sources it cited lent them a new weight. Published in the aftermath of the Schmalkaldic War, Cochlaeus's final words regarding Luther's death in 1546 must have seemed obnoxiously prescient to the reformer's followers:

Let the pious consider what Luther accomplished through so many labors, troubles, and efforts of his depraved intention, by whose rebellions and seditious urging so many thousands of people have perished eternally, in both body and soul, and still continually will perish; and through whom all Germany was confused and disturbed, and let go all its ancient glory, to the great perturbation of the Empire, and now trembles, looking upon wars both internal and external, and shrinking away from the peaceful General Council and from the Pope, from whom it received Christ's faith, as if from the Antichrist, because of Luther's sinful teachings.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> This quotation is from the account of 1529; Cochlaeus himself referred dismissively to the anonymous "~~h~~istory" that Agricola had published. Cochlaeus, *Commentary*, 242.

<sup>170</sup> Cochlaeus here referred specifically to his *De Immensa Misericordia Dei*, written in 1538; see Cochlaeus, *Commentary*, 325-326.

<sup>171</sup> This is from the account of Luther's death in 1546. Cochlaeus, *Commentary*, 350.

Beyond this lengthy reconsideration of Luther's legacy, Cochlaeus also attacked the reformer's former students and colleagues. Cochlaeus aimed multiple attacks at Melanchthon, claiming that his rejection of the Augsburg Interim constituted both heresy against the church and sedition against the emperor.<sup>172</sup> Thus, the relatively moderate Melanchthon was attacked from both sides, by Flacius and Cochlaeus, for either conceding too much or taking too strong a stance against the imperial settlement. For Cochlaeus, Melanchthon had become the face of Lutheranism after 1546, so any attack on him had to emphasize the political danger posed by the Lutheran movement in general. Another way of emphasizing this danger was to construct an analogy between the German Lutherans and earlier heretics, most notably the Bohemian Hussites.<sup>173</sup> Thus, in 1549 Cochlaeus also published his massive work, the *Twelve Books on Hussite History*.

The *Twelve Books* was actually a collection of four texts. The first, and longest, was a narrative history of the Hussite movement and Utraquist church up until the election of King Vladislav in 1471. This historical narrative drew heavily on both primary sources and the work of previous historians such as Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, Albert Krantz, Richental, Mladoňovice, and even Agricola.

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<sup>172</sup> I refer here to the seven different *Philippics* that Cochlaeus wrote against Melanchthon from 1534 until 1549. The seventh of these tracts in particular was an analysis of, and attack on, Melanchthon's *Bedencken auff's Interim* (1548), and was printed as part of Cochlaeus's *Historiae Hussitarum*. Throughout this polemical work, Cochlaeus attempted to show that Melanchthon's considered rejection of the Interim constituted an act of sedition against the emperor. See: Keen, "The Arguments and Audiences," 384ff.

<sup>173</sup> Keen emphasizes the direct comparison of the Hussites to the Lutherans in Cochlaeus's work. Keen misses, though, the theological qualifications that mark Cochlaeus's work, as well as his consistent emphasis on the amplification of the threat posed by Luther and his followers. See: Keen, "Arguments and Audiences," 388-390.

Cochlaeus's book also included two fifteenth-century texts: a tract on the seven sacraments by Jan Rokycana, and a profession of faith by Jan Příbram in which he renounced any and all Wycliffite errors.<sup>174</sup> The book ended with Cochlaeus's seventh *Philippic*, and a brief summary of the work. This assemblage of texts had two essential points. The first was to point out that the Bohemians had been very close to Catholicism in terms of sacramental theology, but the second was to elucidate the threat posed to the Holy Roman Empire by the "new Hussites" (*novis Hussitis*).<sup>175</sup>

Cochlaeus had argued both of these things before, but never with the depth or erudition of this text. It seems that he had read everything related to the Hussite movement, and openly attributed his information to sources that were both hostile and sympathetic to the Bohemians.<sup>176</sup> Rhetorically speaking, his arguments against the links between the Lutherans and Hussites gained credibility through repetition. The sheer number of citations, quotations, and explanations of their key differences made Cochlaeus's conclusions very difficult to refute. In

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<sup>174</sup> Rokycana's text, called the: "Tractatus Magistri Iohannis Rokyzanae Bohemi, de Septem Sacramentis Ecclesia," was included on folios 442-500 of the *Historiae Hussitarum*. Příbram's text followed, and was entitled: "Liber Magistri Ioannis de Przibram Bohemi, de Professione Fidei Catholicae, et errorum Revocatione. Scriptus Pragae Anno Domini MCDXXVII." It was on pages 501-547.

<sup>175</sup> For example, in referring to the veneration of Hus as a "Martyrem et Patronum," Cochlaeus noted: "Certe Hussitis novis apud nos in Germania, tanto minus hac de re credo, quanto magis ardent impio in Romanam Ecclesiam et Apostolicam sedem odio, quam Hussitae veteres: et quanto minus novi, quam veteres, illarum rerum cognitionem habent." Cochlaeus, *Historiae Hussitarum*, 103.

<sup>176</sup> As an example of Cochlaeus's method, it is worth considering his account of the 1412 execution of the three youths during the controversy over indulgences in Prague. In discussing this incident, Cochlaeus cited: Bishop Jan of Litomyšl's decree that Hus should stop preaching publicly, the pope's bull of indulgences, Piccolomini's history of Bohemia, Hus's response to Bishop Jan and his *De Ecclesia*, and two writings by Hilarius and Ambrose against heresy. Thus, Cochlaeus combined primary sources, narrative sources, and theological works to create a historical and theological context for his presentation of events. On the events of 1412, see: Cochlaeus, *Historiae Hussitarum*, 35ff.

particular, Cochlaeus used his editions of Rokycana and Přibram to good effect, noting that these Hussite writings revealed the vast distance between the Lutherans and their “predecessors” in terms of sacramental and liturgical beliefs.<sup>177</sup> Cochlaeus also maintained a measured tone in his rhetoric, and affirmed that he wrote not out of hatred for his opponents, but only out of concern for his fellow Germans, “that they might consider how much danger threatens all of Germany, if in their arrogance they do not cease pertinaciously resisting and contradicting our most powerful and victorious emperor.”<sup>178</sup>

Cochlaeus’s two works from 1549 created a distinctively Catholic account of the past that both tarred Luther with the brush of heresy and severed his ties to any previous dissidents and heretics. The method of these books also posed a significant problem for Lutherans, as it systematically mined the past for primary and secondary sources that could be woven together to form a persuasive account of how events had *really* occurred. It seems that Cochlaeus’s encyclopedic account of the Hussite heresy required a response in kind, and that Flacius bore this in mind when he began his own research into fifteenth-century history and heresy. Here, Flacius’s efforts can be understood as a defensive reaction against Cochlaeus’s intellectual complement to the military, political, and religious

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<sup>177</sup> “Sum vero praecipuit Duo Hussitae, M. Io. Rokyane et M. Io. De Przibram, in suis contra Thaboritas libellis, quos Historiae adiunxi: Operae precium sane videtur, hunc quoque libellum meum adiicere, ut videas, quam longa sit distantia Lutheranorum et Zuinglianorum, circa Sacramenta et Caeremonias, in quibus plurimum dissident, non solum ab Hussitarum et Catholicarum traditionibus, verumetiam ab Universis aliis Christianae fidei professoribus.” Cochlaeus, *Historiae Hussitarum*, 548.

<sup>178</sup> “Proposita et ex variis Bohemorum scriptis bona fide et pia intentione laboriose collecta sunt: Ut nostri a pertinacia hac sua deterreantur, aliorum saltem exemplis, et consyderent, quantam periculorum immineat toti Germaniae, si in superbia sua potentissimo ac victoriosissimo Imperatori nostro pertinaciter contradicere ac resistere non cessaverint.” Cochlaeus, *Historiae Hussitarum*, 599.

threats that faced the Lutheran reform. We can understand Flacius's subsequent histories as a form of resistance to Cochlaeus's chosen epitaph for the radical Hussite movement, which was Rokycana's acceptance of the *Compactata* at Basel:

Since we are thus consoled, we are able to return to our own [country], to comfort those who are at all oppressed and anxious, or gravely threatened by war in these most dangerous years and days... Thus we will return with exultation, bearing bundles of joy, unity, peace, and tranquility.<sup>179</sup>

Partially in response to Cochlaeus's writings, then, Flacius undertook to gather materials for a new, Lutheran church history in 1552. To begin this process, he established contact with Caspar von Nidbruck, a member of King Maximilian's court in Vienna. From 1552 until 1557, Nidbruck and Flacius exchanged over forty letters, many of them written under pseudonyms to protect Nidbruck at the Catholic Viennese court.<sup>180</sup> In these letters, Flacius outlined his plans for a two-part church history and sought Nidbruck's help in finding and retrieving the sources that would make the history's composition possible. Flacius planned first to compose a book detailing the lives and teachings of ~~the~~ 7,000

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<sup>179</sup> —Quatenus nos ipsi sic consolati, possimus ad propria remeantes, consolari et eos qui sunt in omni pressura et anxietate, atque gravi oppresione per bella his in annis et diebus periculosis... Ut sic reveniamus cum exultatione, afferentes manipulos gaudii, unionis, pacis, et quietis." Cochlaeus cited this quotation to —*Verba* Ioannis Rokyzanae, in Concilio Basiliensi, ad Iulianum Card. Hist. Lib. 6. Pag. 249." *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> Nidbruck was from a Lotharingian noble family, and had studied with Melanchthon and Flacius in Wittenberg. In the late nineteenth century, Victor Bibl edited and published forty-one letters between Flacius and Nidbruck that were written in the years 1552-1557. These letters detailed Nidbruck's efforts on Flacius's behalf to find and gather medieval manuscripts in Vienna, Bohemia, and Italy. The letters reveal how personal networks and epistolary relationships enabled the production of massive works of scholarship without substantial institutional support. For the editions of the letters, see: Victor Bibl, —Der Briefwechsel zwischen Flacius und Nidbruck," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für die Geschichte der Protestantismus in Österreich* 17 (1896), 1-24; 18 (1897), 201-238; 19 (1898), 96-110; 20 (1899), 83-116.

pious men, who, purely loving Christ, detested the Roman Baal.”<sup>181</sup> Flacius drew this number from the words of Elijah in I Kings 19:18, “~~Reserve~~ seven thousand in Israel – all whose knees have not bent to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him,” but ultimately determined to detail the lives and confessions of 400 of these witnesses.<sup>182</sup>

In compiling this roster of men who resisted the pope, Flacius’s goal was to demonstrate the orthodoxy of the Lutheran reformers as their heirs, and to show that true doctrine had been taught throughout human history by a series of individuals who were willing to accept death as the price of truth.<sup>183</sup> Thus, in the so-called “*Scheda*” that Flacius included with his first letter to Nidbruck, Flacius described the decline of the church “~~from~~ the initial purity and simplicity” of apostolic times, “~~partly~~ from negligence and ignorance, and partly from the malice of the impious.”<sup>184</sup> Despite this overall decline, Flacius argued that in all times there were individuals who hated Antichrist and loved the true religion of Christ. These individuals had never managed to entirely purify the fallen church; their lives had temporarily allowed “~~the~~ light of truth to shine forth more clearly, but then the darkness of impiety had increased and it [the light] would be more

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<sup>181</sup> “~~V~~ideo enim illos potissimum fuisse hisce 400 annis illa 7000 piorum, qui pure Christum adorantes Romanum Baal detestati sunt.” This quotation comes from a letter by Flacius, dated November 10, 1552. See: Bibl, “~~D~~er Breifwechsel,” vol. 17, 7.

<sup>182</sup> Hartmann, *Humanismus und Kirchenkritik*, 17.

<sup>183</sup> On Flacius’s emphasis on the “~~d~~octrinal character” of the church, see: Anthony Grafton, “~~W~~here Was Salomon’s House? Ecclesiastical History and the Intellectual Origins of Bacon’s *New Atlantis*,” in H. Jaumann, ed., *Die Europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter der Konfessionalismus* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2001), 21-38, 35.

<sup>184</sup> “~~V~~era ecclesia eiusque religio ab illa prima puritate et simplicitate, quam apostolorum tempore habuit, paulatim successione temporum et hominum crescentibus falsitate et erroribus declinavit in peius, partim ob negligentiam et inscitiam, partim etiam ob malitiam impiorum.” See: Bibl, “~~D~~er Breifwechsel,” vol. 17, 8.



obscured.”<sup>185</sup> Flacius did believe, however, that in “these last times” the Lutheran church had discovered the truth that these witnesses confessed and even persuaded many to accept this truth. In another text, the *Consultation on the Accurate Composition of Church History*, Flacius repeated and expanded on his reasons for writing a history of this nature.<sup>186</sup> In the *Consultation*, he was more explicit about wanting to highlight the emergence and preservation of true doctrine, “for doctrine is the very thing that God brought forth for eternal life and upon which our whole spiritual life depends.”<sup>187</sup> Flacius still emphasized the utility of recounting the histories of the pious, and their opposition to the “pseudo-apostles perverting true piety with their depraved desire.”<sup>188</sup> His main purpose, though, was to look past the “form” of religion in order to discover the doctrine that formed the essence of the church.

In order to fully explain these dynamics of church history, Flacius proposed to gather and analyze ancient sources of ritual practice; inquisition records and trial proceedings against heretics; the writings of pious people against the pope, and papal writings against these pious men; and local chronicles and annals describing the struggles between pious men and local church authorities

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<sup>185</sup> “Per aliquos vere pios nonnihil instaurata sit, atque ita veritatis lux iam clarius fulserit, iam tenebris impietatis augescentibus obscurata plus minusve sit, quoad tandem hisce postremis temporibus, cum deletus ferme penitus veritas esset.” *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> This *Consultatio de conscribenda accurata historia ecclesiae* was the letter written by Flacius to the Elector Palatine in 1554. In this letter, Flacius sought financial support for his historical endeavors, and also sought to explicate his understanding of ecclesiastical history in general. For a full citation, see above: n. 163.

<sup>187</sup> “Enim doctrina ea ipsa res est, qua nos Deus ad vitam aeternam gignit undeque omnis nostra spiritualis vita dependet.” Flacius, *Consultatio*, 148.

<sup>188</sup> Flacius contrasted the “pseudoapostoli pravo studio veram pietatem depraverint” with “priorum millia, qui sincerius de religione quam commune vulgus senserint ac alias liberius quam alias veritati testimonium praebuerint.” See: Flacius, *Consultatio*, 148-149.

(i.e. inquisitors, bishops, and preachers).<sup>189</sup> Later, he added the writings of ancient theologians and the earliest historical writings of the church to his *desiderata*, as well as all writings concerning the Waldensians.<sup>190</sup> Flacius considered the Waldensians to have held “a more pure religion for nearly 400 years,” and he thus desired as many sources concerning their beliefs as possible.<sup>191</sup> Flacius also proposed to establish an institute to process these sources and write the actual history, as the work was too much for one person. In a letter from October, 1553, Flacius suggested that four people would be ideal for the composition of the history; eventually, Flacius did establish an “*Institutum Historicum*” at Magdeburg, and this collection of scholars was responsible for much of the actual writing of the *Magdeburg Centuries*.<sup>192</sup> Before beginning this massive undertaking, Flacius himself issued his *Catalogue of Witnesses to the Truth*, which took the ideas he had been developing and gave them a definite form.

The *Catalogue*, which was published in Basel in 1556, was a prosopography of all those who “sincerely acknowledged, clearly confessed, and resolutely suffered for Christ.”<sup>193</sup> The text was dedicated to the sons of the Saxon

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<sup>189</sup> Flacius described these five classes of sources in the “*Scheda*.” See: Bibl, “Der Briefwechsel,” vol. 17, 8-9.

<sup>190</sup> Flacius included these additional types of sources in: *Consultatio*, 153.

<sup>191</sup> Flacius called the Waldensians: “qui ferme soli hisce 400 annis puriorem doctrinam habuerunt.” He used these terms identically in the *Consultatio* and in a letter to Nidbruck from November 28, 1553. See: Bibl, vol. 17, 19-20; and Flacius, *Consultatio*, 153.

<sup>192</sup> Initially, Flacius envisioned four scholars working on different parts of the overall project. Two would evaluate ancient sources and summarize or excerpt relevant material; one would be responsible for the actual writing of the text; and a final scholar would oversee the process. For Flacius’s organizational plan, see: Bibl, “Der Briefwechsel,” vol. 17, 10. Flacius explained his plan again in his: *Consultatio*, 155. On this plan for the division of labor as the origin of collaborative scholarly work in Europe, see: Grafton, “Where was Salomon’s House?” 25-28; and Lyon, “Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan.”

<sup>193</sup> This text was published as: Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Catalogus Testium Veritatis, qui ante nostram aetatem reclamatione Papae* (Basel: Johannes Oporinus, 1556). The dedicatory letter described the text’s purpose as offering solace by relating the history of “homines, qui et

Duke John Frederick, who had been captured at Mühlberg, and the dedicatory letter asked these men to protect and defend the Lutherans who had done these three things in the wake of Schmalkaldic War.<sup>194</sup> According to Flacius, if a prince –is able to boldly confess that he has acknowledged Christ, and will suffer resolutely for him, then truly the gifts of God are heaped up [for him].”<sup>195</sup> The *Catalogue* was also, however, a virtual tour of medieval literature and history writing. Flacius had taken full advantage of the sources that he and Nidbruck had gathered, and the result was a nearly comprehensive guidebook to the polemical, inquisitorial, and narrative sources that described the interactions between the church’s hierarchy and all those who had opposed it.<sup>196</sup> Oliver Olson has observed that the individuals in the *Catalogue* were of less importance to Flacius than the continuity of their collective witness against the papal Antichrist; this continuity ultimately allowed Flacius’s witnesses to serve as an alternative to the Catholic –*consensus patrum*” that equated unanimity with authority in the church.<sup>197</sup>

In a prefatory address to the reader, Flacius described his witnesses as the heirs of Elijah and all the prophets who had given solace to God’s people during

agnoverunt sincere Christum, et diserte confessi, pro eoque constanter passi sunt.” See: Flacius, *Catalogus*, a3r.

<sup>194</sup> The dedication was to –Illustrissibus et Pientissibus Principibus, D. D. Iohanni Friderico maiori, Iohanni Wilhelmo et Iohanni Friderico minori.” The dedication ends with Flacius’s plea that these two sons will emulate their father and his resistance to the emperor. See: Flacius, *Catalogus*, a7v.

<sup>195</sup> –Quod si ad hoc insuper accedat, ut et confiteri agnitum Christum alacriter possit, et pro eo constanter pati: tum vero Dei dona cumulantur.” Flacius, *Catalogus*, a2v.

<sup>196</sup> On the *Catalogue* and its use of medieval sources, see: Hartmann, *Humanismus und Kirchenkritik*, chapter 6; and Thomas Haye, –Der *Catalogus testium veritatis* des Matthias Flacius Illyricus – eine Einführung in die Literatur des Mittelalters?” *ARG* 83 (1992), 31-47.

<sup>197</sup> See Olson, Matthias Flacius, 233. On the idea of the the witnesses forming a counter-tradition that could be opposed to the Roman notion of the –consensus of the fathers” in valorizing Catholic tradition, see: Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, –Flacius Illyricus’ ‘*Catalogus testium veritatis*’ als kontroverstheologische Polemik, in G. Frank and F. Niewöhner, eds., *Reformer als Ketzer: Heterodoxe Bewegungen von Vorreformatoren* (Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 2004), 263-291, 270ff.

times of struggle and strife. Their inheritance was the doctrine that the prophets had taught, and the possession of these teachings meant that the Lutherans were effectively united with believers from every age of the church. Thus, Flacius's church was not thirty years old, as the papists would have it, but truly ancient. According to Flacius, it was the Catholic Church that was new, because it had transformed and perverted the teachings of Christ. Thus, "The true church and religion are perpetual, but false churches and religions are constantly changed and transformed."<sup>198</sup> Flacius further asserted that both the contemporary Lutherans and the witnesses in the *Catalogue* conformed to the practice and doctrine of the apostolic church, while the papal church had irrevocably diverged from the teachings of Christ at the time of Gregory.<sup>199</sup> Interestingly, at the end of this preface Flacius asserted that:

Where there was one doctor who perceived correctly, there were also many listeners... Therefore from historical testimonies it can be abundantly demonstrated, that there were no few thousands of pious people, and an upright multitude with a common way of thinking.<sup>200</sup>

I would suggest that this acknowledgement of the unsung audience was a deliberate rhetorical move by Flacius to bring his audience into the eternal battle between the true and false churches that his text described. They could become the avatars of those who had heard and accepted the words of faithful confessors,

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<sup>198</sup> "Vera Ecclesia ac religio sunt perpetua, falsae vero ecclesiae et religiones subinde varie mutantur et transformantur." Flacius, *Catalogus*, a1r.

<sup>199</sup> Concerning the early church, Flacius stated, "Hud certe propalam manifestum est, primitivam Ecclesiam circiter CC a nativitate Domini annis, prorsus nostrae conformem in religione fuisse, et plane ex diametro ab adversariis nostris dissensisse." Flacius, *Catalogus*, a3r.

<sup>200</sup> "Ubi unus doctor rectius sentiens fuerit, ibi quoque plurimos auditores... Ex hisce ergo ipsis historicis testimoniis abunde probari potest, semper fuisse non pauca millia piorum, rectiusque communi turba sentientium." Flacius, *Catalogus*, a4r.

just as Flacius himself had become the functional equivalent to the witnesses themselves.

The formation of a textual community around the literary witness of the *Catalogue* established a sort of sociological continuity between the Lutherans and the earlier exemplars of the true church. Flacius also worked to establish a doctrinal continuity, especially between the Lutherans and their Bohemian predecessors. The Bohemian reformation was well-represented among the four-hundred witnesses that Flacius included in his text. The *Catalogue* included Hus and Jerome of Prague, Peter of Dresden, Jakoubek of Stříbro, Jan Třtka, Peter Payne, and the fourteenth-century reformers Matěj of Janov and Jan Milíč.

Flacius was also well aware of Rokycana's role in the Utraquist church, although Flacius thought he had negotiated inappropriately with the representatives of the Council of Basel.<sup>201</sup> In his evaluation of these witnesses, Flacius emphasized that Hussite theology was dependent on that of the Waldensians, whose teachings Flacius considered the most pure of all medieval heretics.<sup>202</sup>

If anything, this misunderstanding of Hussite theology saw the Bohemians as linking figures between Luther and the Waldensians, who had survived oppression and promoted pure doctrine for 400 years. Within the Bohemian witnesses, Flacius further emphasized continuity; Milíč had taught Matěj, whose

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<sup>201</sup> In the entry for Hus and Jerome, Flacius sadly reported that many of Hus's followers had given up the purity of doctrine that he represented: "Pars longe maxima et florentissima, cuius velut caput fuit Rochenzana, rediit (desertis ferme plerisque piis dogmatibus, tanquam adiaphoris: retentaque sola communione sub utraque specie) ad papisticam religionem, facta etiam postea cum Antichristianis publice concordia in concilio Basiliensis." Flacius, *Catalogus*, 851.

<sup>202</sup> Flacius drew this conclusion from Piccolomini's assessment of Hussite theology. At the beginning of the article on Hus, Flacius noted: "Waldensium doctrinam, vel potius Christi Evangelium, instauravit postea Ioannes Hus, et Hieronymus de Praga, Bohemi, anno 1400. Sylvius enim clare affirmat, eos Vwaldensium dogma amplexus esse." Flacius, *Catalogus*, 849. On Piccolomini's assessment of Hussite theology, see: Kaminsky, "Pius Aeneas."

work had influenced Jakoubek. Jakoubek and Peter of Dresden were also students of Hus and Jerome, and their teaching had helped spawn the Taborite movement, —who adhered more closely to the doctrine of the Waldensians; indeed, they had a more pure religion even than Hus.”<sup>203</sup> Flacius also identified a number of German followers of Hus as well, most of whom were burned for their adherence to Hussite dogmas.<sup>204</sup> Flacius specifically named five Germans killed between 1420 and 1456, and he linked the Italian Fraticelli to the Hussites as well.<sup>205</sup> With the establishment of these interpersonal links between the Bohemians and other fifteenth-century witnesses, Flacius sought to demonstrate the continuity of ideas and relationships among all those who opposed the papacy. Flacius also included Hus’s prophecy of Luther in his sketch of Hus’s life, so as to provide one more piece of evidence for the linkages between these men.<sup>206</sup> The reiteration of this prophecy, as well as Flacius’s emphasis on the connections between the Waldensians, Hussites, and Lutherans, all served to contradict Cochlaeus’s denial of any substantial linkages between Luther and those who had come before him. The *Catalogue* as a whole sought to make this argument across the whole history of the church, and to present irrefutable evidence that individual people and groups had professed the truth for which the Lutherans now suffered. The survival of these individuals’ doctrines, despite persecution and death, was a powerful

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<sup>203</sup> —Faboritaeque, appellati sunt, doctrinae Vualdensium etiam magis adhaeserunt; quare et puriorem ipso Hus religionem habuerunt.” Flacius, *Catalogus*, 851.

<sup>204</sup> —Habuit et in Germania Hus etiam post mortem multos sectatores. Quod inde quoque probari postest, quia eius dogmatis causa non pauci exusti sunt.” Flacius, *Catalogus*, 853.

<sup>205</sup> Flacius named: Iohannes Draendorff, killed in 1424; Peter Tornau, killed in 1426; Henricus Grunfelder, killed in 1420; Henricus Radtgeber, killed in 1423; and Matthias Hager, killed in 1456. *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> After repeating the swan/goose prophecy, Flacius concluded: —Quae potest videri, prophetia de amplissimis Lutheri donis, deque parrhesia ac foelici usque ad mortem in instauranda Ecclesia et affligendo Antichristo successu.” Flacius, *Catalogus*, 850.

testament to how God would preserve his people in times of suffering. Thus, the history of the church, and particularly of the witnesses who personified its doctrines, could serve as a mandate for continued perseverance and a promise of an eternal reward for those who acknowledged and emulated the witnesses to the truth.

### Martyrologies and the *Monuments*: Flacius's Hussite History

There is a great irony in Flacius's biographical sketch of Jan Hus. After analyzing Hus's prophecy of Luther, Flacius commented: —Many writings of the most holy man Jan Hus are extant, some published and some in manuscript, so it is not necessary for me to discuss his teachings at length."<sup>207</sup> But, in 1558 Flacius merely published two volumes and 866 folio pages of writings by and about Hus in order to finally and definitively describe his legacy in the German reformation. This massive collection, the *History and Monuments of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague, Confessors of Christ*, which included forty-five sources that had never been published before, represented the culmination of the Lutherans' engagement with Hussitica.<sup>208</sup> It also typified, and magnified, the 1550s obsession with history and martyrology. Cochlaeus and Flacius were not alone in their turn to history as the foundation for contemporary religious debates in the second generation of the Reformation. Indeed, the 1550s witnessed a massive outpouring of historiography as a variety of individuals sought to contextualize their own experiences within the broader sweep of church history.

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<sup>207</sup> —Sed extant ipsius sanctissimi viri Ioannis Hus scripta multa, partim impressa partim scripta, ut me de eius dogmate disserere prolixius necesse non sit." *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> Hartmann, *Humanismus und Kirchenkritik*, 131.

This historiographical burst primarily took the form of martyrologies, as four major martyr books appeared alongside the *Catalogue* between the years 1552 and 1559. These books' authors came from England, the Low Countries, and the German lands, and their works struck a balance between specific national and confessional interests on the one hand, and trans-Protestant and trans-historical universalism on the other.<sup>209</sup> Brad Gregory has persuasively argued that these mid-century martyrologies shared important ideological goals that allow us to view them as representatives of a unified genre.<sup>210</sup> Their first purpose was to console the author's fellow believers and encourage them to stand firm in their confessions of faith. This anti-Nicodemite impulse was linked to a second, proselytizing goal, because "what edified believers might make open supporters of the sympathetic or the curious, just as martyrs' dying behavior sometimes converted spectators."<sup>211</sup> The final goal of these martyrologies was to paint the Protestants' Catholic opponents as diabolically inspired. These works, then, had something for everyone – consolation for the believers, condemnation for the oppressors, and the possibility of conversion for those who were uncommitted.

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<sup>209</sup> Brad Gregory, who has written the definitive account of the mid-century martyrologies, highlights the work of Ludwig Rabus, a German Lutheran; Jean Crespin, a Dutch, francophone Calvinist; Adrian van Haemstede, a Calvinist pastor in Antwerp; and John Foxe, an English Protestant. All four shared a number of mutual friends and acquaintances, and borrowed from each others' knowledge and sources. On these four men, and the links between them, see: Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 165ff.; Andrew Pettegree, "Haemstede and Foxe," in D. Loades, ed., *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1997), 278-294; T. Freeman and M. Greengrass, "The Acts and Monuments and the Protestant Continental Martyrologies," available on: *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs Online Variorum Edition – Introductory Essays*, <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/apparatus/printgreengrassessay.html>; and David Watson, "Jean Crespin and the First English Martyrology of the Reformation," in *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, 192-209.

<sup>210</sup> For an overview of these polemical purposes, see: Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 171-187.

<sup>211</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 176.



These martyrologies were also united by the experiences of their authors, and by the increasing internationalization of Protestantism in the 1550s. Particularly as political persecution sharpened in England under the Catholic Queen Mary, and in France and the Low Countries, cities such as Strasbourg, Geneva, and Basel became important sites where refugees and exiles could gather and exchange ideas. In particular, the print shop of Johannes Oporinus in Basel became a clearinghouse for historical arguments and ideas during the 1550s; John Foxe and John Bale worked there during the time that Oporinus printed Flacius's *Catalogue*, and the polymathic physician Heinrich Pantaleon (who wrote his own martyrology in 1563) befriended Foxe while the Englishman worked there.<sup>212</sup> It is also likely that while in Strasbourg in 1554 Foxe met Ludwig Rabus, the Lutheran martyrologist, and Johann Sleidan, the historiographer of Charles V's reign and the early Reformation. Sleidan was also in correspondence with Jean Crespin, who wrote his French martyrology in that same year.<sup>213</sup> Many of these individuals had experienced exile and persecution at first hand, so their interest in the history of Christian suffering was more than academic. The points of personal contact between them also helped to create a network of authors, publishers, distributors, and primary source providers (like Nidbruck) that enabled this massive output of historical scholarship. The multiple editions of these martyrologies, as well as

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<sup>212</sup> Oporinus was the most prolific printer in Basel, and his network of correspondence spanned Europe. Foxe began work at Oporinus's shop in 1555 alongside Bale, and while there they would have seen the proofs (or even helped edit) the *Catalogue* in 1556. On Oporinus as a center of trans-European Protestant networks, see: Martin Steinmann, *Johannes Oporinus: Ein Basler Buchdrucker um die Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Basel: Helbing und Lichtenhahn, 1967). On Foxe's contacts in Basel, see: Freeman and Greengrass, "The Acts and Monuments."

<sup>213</sup> On Crespin's links to other continental martyrologists and Foxe, see: Donald Kelley, "Martyrs, Myths, and the Massacre: the Background of St. Bartholomew," *The American Historical Review* 77 (1972), 1323-1342; and Watson, "Crespin and the First English Martyrology."

their lasting influence in their respective national contexts, attested to the desirability of martyrologies from a consumer standpoint. Thus, while Flacius certainly helped to create an interest in Protestant history and martyrology, he was also taking advantage of an international trend in publishing and riding a widespread wave of demand.

These other martyrologists all paid considerable attention to Hus in their works. Foxe began his Latin martyrology with Hus, and Crespin also included a lengthy section on Hus's trial and death.<sup>214</sup> Hus was the first post-biblical martyr in Rabus's account as well, a presentation that broke with the Lutheran notion of an unbroken chain of witnesses, but emphasized Hus's primacy as a proto-Lutheran witness. Robert Kolb, in his study of Rabus's martyrology, has emphasized that Rabus did not really differentiate among his pre-Lutheran martyrs. These figures were all distinguished by their resistance to the pope and the violent response they engendered, so –all their stories would provide examples and encouragement for self-sacrifice and bold confession in troubled times.”<sup>215</sup> Rabus therefore laid out six reasons (–*Ursache*”) for relating the histories of God's martyrs in the prologue to the second volume of his work. First and foremost, Rabus considered that martyrs' stories revealed that human nature was sinful, and that men would always tend towards sin and destroy holiness wherever they found it.<sup>216</sup> The study of martyrs' lives also showed the hatred that the devil

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<sup>214</sup> On Hus's place in these martyrologies, see: Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 171.

<sup>215</sup> Kolb, *For All the Saints*, 60-61.

<sup>216</sup> –In menschlichen Naturen so lang sie hie auff Erden umbgehet ymmer für unnd für Sünd bleybe und stecke umb welcher willen dann auch endlich der Todt.” Ludwig Rabus, *Historien der Heyligen Ausserwölten Gottes Zeügen Bekennern und Martyrern so zum theyl in angehender Ersten Kirchen Altes und Neüwes Testaments gewesen zum theyl aber zu disen unsern letsten zeytten* (Strasbourg: Samuel Emmel, 1556), iiiir.

had for the world, and especially the church of Christ, —which inflamed and enraged him.”<sup>217</sup> This hatred manifested itself in persecution, and Rabus took pains to show that not only the church, but also its political protectors, could be overthrown by the devil’s machinations; this revealed that God’s church was not sustained —by any human intellect, reason, power, or might, etc., but only by the almighty, eternal God.”<sup>218</sup>

For Rabus, the martyrs’ deaths also functioned as a vehicle through which the gospel was made known to the whole world, as their suffering was a form of mimetic identification with Christ. Rabus called the martyrs Christ’s —counterparts,” (*—Ebenbild*”) who —on this earth should and must be conformed to his cross and suffering.”<sup>219</sup> The last reason, then, for giving an account of the martyrs’ lives and deaths was that they revealed the mercy of God to those who kept their faith in him, and God’s promise to grant his faithful followers another, eternal life. This positive judgment of the martyrs also presaged the condemnation of the wicked, —for what has been concealed in the children of unbelief will be mightily revealed and laid bare before all the world.”<sup>220</sup> In Rabus’s account, the

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<sup>217</sup> —Die ander ursach ist des schandlichen Satans unersetzlicher neyd und hass in welchem er gleichwol wider die gantze Welt, Inbesonders aber und fürnemlich wider die Kirch Jesu Christi ergrimmet unnd entzündet ist.” Rabus, *Historien der Heyligen*, iiiiv.

<sup>218</sup> Rabus asserted that the church was sustained —durch kein menschliche Klügheyte Verstandt Krafft oder Macht etc. Sonder allein von dem Allmechtigen Ewigen Gott.” Rabus, *Historien der Heyligen*, iiiir.

<sup>219</sup> The fourth —Ursache” concerned the revelation of God’s word to the whole world, while the fifth dealt with the imitation of Christ by his followers: Wir dem Ebenbild seines Süns wie in der glory nach disem leben also auch im Creütz unnd leyden hie auff erden sollen unnd müssen gleichförmig werden.” Rabus, *Historien der Heyligen*, iiiiv.

<sup>220</sup> —Seine Heyligen umb seinet willen getödtet werden den gantzen tag und geachtet wie die Schlachtschaff. Aller welt auch den Tyrannen selbers hiemit zubezeugen das nach disem jetzigen Leben noch vorhanden seye und gewisslich folgen werde ein anders Leben und Gericht da sich dann die Barmhertzigkeit Jesu Christi die in seinem Glidern hie zeytlich verborgen gelegen ist sampt seiner strengen Gerechtigkeyt sie sich ein zeytlang in den Kindern des Unglaubens

agonistic relationship between the true and false churches was clarified by the deaths of the martyrs. The execution of God's chosen witnesses was the privileged site for the revelation of the central reality of church history: that Satan and his minions wanted to destroy the true church, but the witness of God's saints would prevent the devil's victory and anticipate Christ's ultimate conquest of evil in eschatological judgment.

History writing in the 1550s was not limited to martyrology and its polemics. In 1555, Johann Sleidan published his *Commentaries on the State and Religion under Emperor Charles V*, which was both a political history of Charles's reign and an insider's history of the German reformation.<sup>221</sup> The *Commentaries* depended on a massive number of primary sources from the period, and Sleidan used a cool and measured tone throughout the text. Although Sleidan worked for Strasbourg, and had been the official historiographer of the Schmalkaldic League, he avoided an overtly polemical tone against the Catholic Church. Rather, he documented the struggle between the emperor and pope for control of the Holy Roman Empire, and saw Luther and his followers as playing a decisive role in weakening the pope and allowing the restoration of a proper political and religious balance in the German lands.<sup>222</sup> Alexandra Kess has shown that Sleidan came under fire from both Catholics and German Protestants for this work; his attempts at neutrality offended the former as a false veneer covering his

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verborgen hatt gantz gewaltig sehen lassen und vor aller Welt offenbaren würt." Rabus, *Historien der Heyligen*, vr.

<sup>221</sup> On the historical methodology and reception of Sleidan's *Commentaries*, see most recently: Kess, *The Protestant Vision*; and Donald Kelley, "Johann Sleidan and the Origins of History as a Profession," *Journal of Modern History* 32 (1980), 573-598.

<sup>222</sup> Kess, *The Protestant Vision*, 113-116.

pro-Protestant sensibilities, while the latter argued that his account did not present a positive enough image of the Reformation and its political supporters. This dismay and distaste did not, however, prevent Sleidan's work from being a best-seller.<sup>223</sup>

The *Commentaries* had the misfortune of being printed just as the Emperor and Protestant princes were negotiating the Peace of Augsburg throughout the summer of 1555. Many felt that this work was potentially divisive, and that it could hinder the peace process then underway. The stakes were increased because the inter-confessional peace process had really begun in 1552, when Charles had been forced to recognize the legality of Lutheranism in the Peace of Passau. This treaty was the result of the so-called "Princes' Revolt," which took place when Elector Moritz of Saxony and the French King Henry II formed an alliance in January, 1552 and drove Charles's forces from the German lands.<sup>224</sup> The Peace of Augsburg, then, made the terms of the Passau treaty permanent. The ratification of this treaty also reversed every political and religious gain that Charles had made in the Schmalkaldic War, and thus attested to the utter failure of the emperor's policies and actions vis-à-vis the German princes

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<sup>223</sup> Sleidan's correspondence revealed both his shock at the negative response to his work, and the overwhelming commercial success of the book. It sold out in just over a month at the Frankfurt book fair in 1555, and by 1560 over forty editions of the work in Latin or vernacular translations had been printed. See: Kess, *The Protestant Vision*, 71ff.

<sup>224</sup> Moritz and Henry concluded the Treaty of Chambord in January, after which Moritz and other German princes attacked Charles's troops throughout the eastern and southern parts of the Empire. Henry's troops rampaged throughout Alsace, and drove imperial forces from those territories. On the conduct of the Revolt, see: Seibt, *Karl V.*, 187-193. On the settlement of this conflict at Passau, see: Armin Kohnle, "Nürnberg – Passau – Augsburg: Der lange Weg zum Religionsfrieden," in H. Schilling and H. Smolinsky, eds., *Der Augsburger Religionsfrieden 1555* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2007), 5-15.

and the Lutheran reform.<sup>225</sup> In the wake of the diet of Augsburg, then, Charles retired from his imperial office and ceded control of the Empire to his brother Ferdinand and his son, Philip II of Spain.<sup>226</sup> By 1555, then, the threat to the Lutheran church posed by the Schmalkaldic War and the Interims seemed to have passed.

It is possible, I think, to understand the Peace of Augsburg and its impact on German Lutheranism as an analogue to the Peace of Kutná Hora that was ratified in 1485.<sup>227</sup> Both established legal toleration for a minority religion, and both signaled the end of long-term military struggles between a sovereign and recalcitrant, religiously dissident nobles. Both treaties also represented the failure of militant Catholic rulers to reverse the gains made by alternate churches within their realms, and the rulers' recognition of those churches' legal right to existence. In both cases, though, these treaties also represented a new sort of threat to the dissident churches of Bohemia and the German lands. Kutná Hora and Augsburg both offered the opportunity for assimilation, and invited a relaxation of one's guard against the papacy. It was this possibility that prompted Flacius to invoke the history of the Hussites in 1557, when he wrote to Gnesio-Lutheran delegates

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<sup>225</sup> On these developments in imperial policy, see: Volker Press, "The Habsburg Lands: the Holy Roman Empire," in T. Brady et al., eds., *The Handbook of European History, 1400-1600*, vol. 1 (New York: Brill, 1994), 437-466, 455-456.

<sup>226</sup> For an exhaustive overview of the background, events, and outcomes of the Diet of Augsburg in 1555, with a complete bibliography of recent and classical scholarship, see: Axel Gotthard, *Der Aubsburger Religionsfrieden* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2004).

<sup>227</sup> On the Peace of Kutná Hora, signed by the Bohemian King Vladislav in 1485, see above, chapter four, fn. 222 and following.

at a colloquy between the Empire's Catholics, Lutherans, and other Protestants at Worms.<sup>228</sup> In a letter of admonition, he expressed his concern:

The sad example of the extinct[!] doctrine of the Hussite churches, similar to our situation, really frightens me. It was not erudition, not even the strength of their enemies that was able to destroy them, since the Lord was mercifully protecting them, but their own inconstancy and faithless domestic vanity... For by that time they had been divided partly by long wars and unparalleled destruction, and partly they were weary of truth and because of the controversies about it that had arisen. Nor were there few, the lowest, who whispered together secretly with the enemies, hoping or seeking something different... Not much different, our church and religion also began to change for the worse after the death of Luther of pious memory. May God prevent a similar end and ruin as the Bohemians!<sup>229</sup>

Considering his knowledge of, and attention to, the perceived decline of the Hussite churches, it is not entirely surprising that Flacius would try to publicize the heroic beginnings of the Hussites as a reminder to himself and his co-religionists of Hus's dynamic, original vision of reform. The *History and Monuments of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague*, then, can be understood as an attempt to fully document that vision and to establish definitively its relevance for the Lutheran reform. The primary sources that made up the *History and Monuments* resulted from the efforts of Caspar Nidbruck to procure Bohemian manuscripts over the course of five years.<sup>230</sup> When published, Flacius's collection

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<sup>228</sup> The Colloquy of Worms in 1557 was the last major attempt by a group of Catholic theologians (including Pflug and Helling, the authors of the Augsburg Interim) and diverse Protestant leaders to formulate a policy for religious unity in the Holy Roman Empire. The Colloquy failed to achieve its aim, and after 1557 there were no major efforts to overcome the religious splintering of the Empire according to the "eius regio, eius religio" formulation of the Peace of Augsburg. On the Colloquy of Worms, and especially Flacius's role as an advisor to some Lutheran delegates, see: Benno von Bundschuh, *Das Wormser Religionsgespräch von 1557: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der kaiserlichen Religionspolitik* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1988), especially 272ff.

<sup>229</sup> This letter from Flacius is quoted at length in: Olson, *Matthias Flacius*, 331-332.

<sup>230</sup> In November of 1553, Flacius wrote to Nidbruck, noting that "in animo habeo, ut nuper scripsi, omnia Bohemica seu Hussitica scripta in certos tomos redacta imprimi curare." On March 13-14 1554, Nidbruck replied, counselling Flacius to avoid high printing costs of his "libris Bohemicis," so his work might be published sooner. Nidbruck gave Flacius consistent updates about his efforts

contained several of Hus's biblical commentaries, over thirty of Hus's sermons, a series of Hus's polemical writings against his Bohemian opponents from 1411-1414, Hus's *quodlibet* debate over indulgences and his appeal to the pope against the archbishop of Prague, and even the Antichrist writings that had first been published by Brunfels. Flacius also published a number of Hus's letters, and several fragmentary writings attributed to Hus concerning human traditions, the idea of evangelical perfection, and the nature and revelation of Antichrist. In short, the *History and Monuments* presented a complete image of Hus as a theologian, preacher, and pastor; Flacius's book also maintained a focus on Hus's martyrdom, which was recounted in Mladoňovice's longer account and his shorter, liturgical version, as the ultimate validation of his writings as authentically evangelical.<sup>231</sup>

Flacius also made ample use of prefatory materials to establish Hus's evangelical credibility. Before the actual texts that made up the body of the *History and Monuments*, he included four different documents written by Luther that affirmed Hus's Protestant orthodoxy. The first two were Luther's prefaces to the 1536 and 1537 editions of Hus's letters.<sup>232</sup> Flacius also included Luther's afterword to the 1537 collection of letters, and he finished off this assemblage of Luther's thoughts concerning Hus by citing the thirty-third article of Luther's

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to procure Hussitica for this project, and by July, 1555, the work had been given to the printer. For these letters, see: Bibl, "Der Briefwechsel," vol. 17, 24; vol. 18, 203; and vol. 20, 97, 105, and 110. On Nidbruck and Flacius's relationship more generally, see: Hartmann, *Humanismus and Kirchenkritik*, 57-62.

<sup>231</sup> The first text that Flacius included in the *History and Monuments* was a version of Mladoňovice's longer narrative of Hus's martyrdom; the second volume of the work included the shorter *passio* that was printed as part of the 1495 Czech *Legenda Aurea*. On these two texts, see above, chapter 1, fn. 1ff. and fn. 155ff.

<sup>232</sup> On these collections of letters, see above, chapter 6, fn. 95.



reply to Pope Leo X's bull of excommunication, which began: "Burning heretics is against the divine will..."<sup>233</sup> Flacius later included the correspondence between Brunfels and Luther that had served as a preface to Brunfels's collection of Hussitica of 1523 and 1524,<sup>234</sup> so the *History and Monuments* functioned as a sort of encyclopedia of the Lutheran reception of Hus, as well as a complete catalogue of Hus's own works. The interweaving of Lutheran testimonies to Hus's sanctity and Hus's actual words created a powerful image of Hus as an integral part of the Lutheran tradition. Here, Flacius's framing of primary sources with later commentaries on them established and drew attention to the continuity between the two types of text.

Flacius also used his own words to emphasize Hus's links to the Lutheran reforms. In his own address to the reader, Flacius drew attention to the underlying continuities in church history. He began this preface by stating: "In all times, the church of God has been visited by, and has then celebrated, the memory of those who, despite danger to their voice and life, have professed heavenly doctrine and been a witness to all posterity."<sup>235</sup> Flacius also added a forward looking perspective to this understanding of how the veneration of the pious had characterized the church's past, assuring his reader that "the divine voice also promises that this celebration will be valid and perpetual in the future."<sup>236</sup> For Flacius, the recognition and commemoration of holy men was simply one way of

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<sup>233</sup> On Luther's response to this bull, written in 1520, see above, chapter 5, fn. 61 and following.

<sup>234</sup> On Brunfels's publication of many Hussite texts in the 1520s, see above, chapter 5, fn. 175ff.

<sup>235</sup> "Visitatum fuit omnibus temporibus, in Ecclesia Dei retineri et celebrari memoriam eorum, qui et voce et vitae periculo doctrinam coelestem professi, atque ad omnem posteritatem testati sunt." Flacius, *Historia et Monumenta*, a2r.

<sup>236</sup> "Et promisit vox divina firmam et perpetuam hanc celebrationem futuram esse." *Ibid.*

recognizing that God had sent these individuals as a means of sustaining the church on earth. This notion was common to the *Catalogue* and the *History and Monuments*, and it reached its clearest expression in this address:

For it is a remarkable benefit, and an infallible argument for the presence of God in the church, that Doctors have repeatedly been awakened, who understand and refute errors, preserve the purity of doctrine, and persevere in the footsteps of our teacher and Lord, Jesus Christ.<sup>237</sup>

While this address restated Flacius's understanding of confessors' role in the history of the church, he also included material that considered Hus's specific place in the chain of witnesses. For instance, after the collection of Luther's reflections on Hus, Flacius included his own brief oration (*Epitaphium*) for the Bohemian martyr. In this poem, Flacius referred to Hus as "the faithful man of the nascent word," and he also asserted that the Bohemian priest was "worthy of the title, apostolic pastor."<sup>238</sup> Flacius concluded this verse with a brief prayer for Bohemia, perhaps as an admonition to that nation to recall its "extinct doctrine:"

Burned by the Council of Constance,  
He approached Olympus in his mind  
As the Rhine kept his ashes and bones.  
O Christ, grant to the land of Bohemia, that with zeal  
It might eternally love the song of its goose.<sup>239</sup>

Here, Flacius hinted at the swan/goose identification that had long been a staple of Lutheran understandings of Hus. And on the following page of the *History and Monuments*, Flacius included a woodcut and poem that further

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<sup>237</sup> "Magnus enim beneficium est, et Argumentum infallibile praesentiae Dei in Ecclesia, quod subinde excitati sunt Doctores, qui errores intelligerent, refutarent, puritatem doctrinae adsererent, denique vestigiis Magistri et Domini nostri Ihesu Christi insisterent." *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> Flacius began his poem by calling Hus: "Hic renascentis verbi sine labe fidelis | Praeco, bonus vita, dogmatibus bonus, | Hussius aeterni servus syncerus Iesu, | Nomine pastoris dignus Apostolici." Flacius, *Historia et Monumenta*, 8r.

<sup>239</sup> "Constantensi Synodo combustus, Olympum | Mente adiit, cineres, ossaque Rhenus habet. | Christe, Bohemorum genti concede, perenni | Ut studio cantus anseris huius amet." *Ibid.*

emphasized this connection. The image itself depicted a familiar Hus-figure. (see figure 2) He was bound at neck and waist to a vertical pole, wearing an unadorned robe and his heretic's hat. Above the woodcut, two lines stated: "This was the likeness of the venerable Hus, as he gave his body to be burned for Christ."<sup>240</sup> The poem below the image used an extended ornithological metaphor to emphasize Hus's worthiness as an object of pious commemoration:

Conquering the white hawks with snowy purity  
 Save your Bohemians, o beloved goose!  
 Eternal glory enfolds you and your memorable name,  
 That neither fury nor time is able to destroy.  
 Although the black raven, with furtive feathers has obscured your splendor  
 And crowed with its filthy mouth.  
 But there is no Bohemian, nor will there be a more glorious bird,  
 That will be able to oppose you with living voice.  
 For a flock of birds may delight the ears with vain songs,  
 But you delight the pious with your pure heart and words.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> "Haec fuit effigies quondam venerabilis Hussi,| Dum sua pro Christo membra cremanda dedit."  
 Flacius, *Historia et Monumenta*, 8v.

<sup>241</sup> "Bicolos niveo vincens candore volucres| Salve Boioemis, anser amande, tuis!| Te manet  
 aeternum decus, et memorabile nomen,| Quod furor, aut aetas tollere nulla potest.| Atra licet cornix  
 furtivis abdita pennis,| Candorem spurco vellicet ore tuum.| Nulla sed est Boemis, nec erit  
 praestantior ales,| Conferri viva quae tibi voce queat.| Grex avium vanis oblectat cantibus aures,|  
 Tu mentes niveo pectore, et ore pias."

Hæc fuit effigies quondam uenerabilis Hufsi,  
Dum sua pro Christo membra cremanda dedit,



In Icona Ioannis Hufsi S. Martyris.

Albicolas niueo uincens candore uolucres  
Salue Boicemis, anser amande, tuis:  
Te manet æternum decus, & memorabile nomen,  
Quod furor, aut ætas tollere nulla potest.  
Atra licet cornix furtiuus abdita pennis,  
Candorem spurco uellicet ore tuum.  
Nulla sed est Boemis, nec erit præstantior ales,  
Conferri uiua quæ tibi uoce queat.  
Grex auium uanis oblectat cantibus aures,  
Tu mentes niueo pectore, & ore pius.

14. The Martyrdom of John Huss

See remarks for no. 13. [240 x 140] London (1877-10-13-1021).

Figure 2:  
*Ioannis Hus, et Hieronymi Pragensis Confessorum Christi Historia et Monumenta* (Nuremberg, 1558), vol. 1, f. 8v.

–*Eternal glory enfolds you and your memorable name, that neither fury nor time is able to destroy.*” With these words, Flacius capped his historical considerations of Jan Hus. For Flacius, Hus was notable on one level for being typical – one of the 7,000 who had opposed Antichrist, and whose collective witness attested to God’s constant intervention and protection of his hidden, suffering church. On a second level, though, Hus was individually worthy of attention for many reasons: for his prophecy of Luther’s ministry, for the object lesson his followers and their weakened faith provided, for the wealth of materials he had left behind, and for his contested place in Catholic and Protestant polemics and ecclesiastical historiography. All of these factors contributed to Flacius’s intense interest in Hus. The Bohemian priest’s words, deeds, and legacy in both the Czech and German lands had marked him as an essential and exemplary link in the Lutheran chain of witnesses, and as such Flacius decisively affirmed Hus’s centrality in his overall history of the true church on earth.

### Conclusion

One year after the publication of the *History and Monuments*, the first volume of the mammoth *Magdeburg Centuries* was published.<sup>242</sup> This church history, which represented the culmination of nearly a decade of planning and research by Flacius and his compatriots at the *Institutum Historicum*, eventually spanned over a millennium, from the origins of the church in the first century to the thirteenth century, detailing the doctrines, heresies, councils, institutions,

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<sup>242</sup> On the publication history of the *Centuries*, and the historical methodology that informed its composition, see: Hartmann, *Humanismus und Kirchenkritik*, 198ff. and 259ff.; and Backus, *Historical Method*, 358-364.

geographical missions, political events, and people that had characterized and demarcated the church at any one time.<sup>243</sup> Although most scholars would now agree that Flacius himself contributed little to the actual writing of the *Centuries*, he did help write the preface to the first volume, which explained the *raison d'être* for the entire project. In an address to King Christian III of Denmark, Flacius rhetorically asked: —How will God be able to be praised for the sake of the miraculous favors, which he has bestowed on all humankind, if not from history, which makes plain the essence, will, works, and favors of God?”<sup>244</sup> As an answer to his own question about the value of history, Flacius then went on to explain the benefits of sacred history, which was contained in the historical books in the Bible. This history showed how God had preserved his people Israel, sent his Messiah to redeem them, and acted to build up his church while punishing the impious, hypocrites, and those who persecuted the church.<sup>245</sup> The study of sacred history did more than teach one about the past, for it could also determine the shape of the future:

Sacred history forcibly reminds [us] about the end of the world and the future glory, joy, and life of the pious, and also about the eternal dejection

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<sup>243</sup> There has been no small historiographical debate over the role played by the various members of the Institutum. Ronald Diener, in particular, has argued for a low view of Flacius's actual role, and has put forth Wigand and Judex as the true —authors” of the text. On the debates over the authorship of the *Centuries*, see: Diener, *A Bibliothecal and Historiographical Analysis*, especially the Introduction; Scheible, *Die Entstehung*; and Grafton, —Were was Salomon's House?” 28-29.

<sup>244</sup> —Quomodo enim vel Deus ob miranda beneficia, quae toti contulit humano generi, celebrari posset, si non ex historia constaret de essentia, voluntate, operibus et beneficiis Dei?” This quotation comes from the: —Epistola dedicatoria” of the *Centuries*' first volume, which was dedicated to King Christian III of Denmark and his son and signed by Flacius, Johannes Wigand, Matthaeus Judex, and Basilius Faber. The text is reprinted in: H. Scheible, ed., *Die Anfänge der reformatorischen Geschichtschreibung: Melancthon, Sleidan, Flacius und die Magdeburger Zenturien* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1966), 55-70, 55.

<sup>245</sup> —Ponunt quasi ob oculos praemia bonorum et poenas impiorum tam hypocritarum ac contemptorum quam persecutorum omnibus aetatibus.” Flacius et al., —Epistola dedicatoria,” 56.

and damnation of the impious, even though many of them have seemed to prosper for a great while in this miserable and calamitous world.<sup>246</sup>

This statement about the necessity of knowing history casts light backwards on Flacius's earlier efforts at collecting and relating the stories of the 7,000 faithful witnesses from the history of the church. Their stories humanized the larger dynamics of Lutheran church history, and each of them personified the values of bold confession and constant faith in the face of Antichrist's opposition that became the hallmarks of Reformation historiography. Given this larger project, it makes sense that Hus assumed a primary place in the construction of a Lutheran church history that was inextricably linked to the church's present and future. His story, and the history of the movement that bore his name, was an ideal laboratory for seeing how God sustained his witnesses during their suffering, and for analyzing how persecution and the tricks of the devil could obscure or impede the confessors' efforts to reform the church. The martyrologies and histories that emerged from the crises that followed hard on Luther's death sought to use stories from the past as a means of understanding the conflicts and struggles of the contemporary age, and to draw consolation from the tales of suffering that were the stock-in-trade of Reformation histories. Thus, the fulfillment of Hus's prophecies of reform – not among his Bohemian followers, but in the person of Martin Luther – provided a powerful example of how God could work through outstanding individuals in order to sustain the larger body of those who remained faithful to him.

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<sup>246</sup> –Historia sacra commonefacit de fine mundi deque futura piorum vita ac laetitia et gloria et vicissim de impiorum aeterna abiectioe et damnatione, etiamsi multi eorum in hoc misero et calamitoso mundo aliquandiu videantur florere. Flacius et al., –Epistola dedicatoria,” 57.

The use of Hus's story in the 1540s and 1550s demonstrated the multifaceted ways in which history could be used in the religious polemics of the Reformation. On the one hand, Hus-as-martyr served as a reminder of the powerful witness given by God's martyrs, and as an exemplar of God's true, suffering, and often hidden church. On the other hand, the history of the Hussites gave witness to the ways in which conciliation could obscure or defeat the work of ecclesiastical reform. Depending on the circumstances of the Lutheran reform, the story of the Bohemian reform could therefore serve as either an inspirational story of the generative qualities of martyrdom or a cautionary take on the derailment of religious reform. In the wake of Luther's death, and as a consequence of the crises that accompanied it on political, military, and ideological fronts, this ambiguous history became one lens through which the Lutherans could see themselves as the inheritors of the timeless, but vulnerable, *→vera Ecclesia.*"



## Conclusion

### **“*Velud Alter Elyas:*” Prophetic Authority and Religious Reform**

At the heart of this dissertation has stood one man, Jan Hus. Venerated and alternately demonized for over one hundred and fifty years, his image stood at the center of the dissident Czech national church, became an important prophet and forerunner of the Lutheran church, and was continually attacked for his heresy, sedition, and diabolical inspiration by the Catholic church. In all of these interpretations of Hus, he stood for something much larger than himself. He was the personification of Czech suffering and perseverance, the embodiment of the new Israel that had arisen in Bohemia. He was the last and greatest link on a chain of witnesses that stretched from Abel to Martin Luther, an evangelical confessor and opponent of the papal Antichrist. He was a new Arrius and Mani (or an old Luther!), a satanically inspired oppressor of Christian truth whose teachings brought only chaos and violence. These disparate understandings of Hus shared the central component that the appearance of Hus signaled that something *more* was coming after him; he was an instigator of great things, a prophet of revolution reformation.

Within a year of Hus's death, Jakoubek of Střibro referred to him as ~~another~~ “another Elijah,” and this image bore significant connotations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, Elijah was one of the apocalyptic witnesses

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<sup>1</sup> *—Qui velud alter Elyas zelanter invexit contra suberhabuntem iniquitatem Antichristi et symoniaci sui cleri.*” Jakoubek, *—Sermo habitus,*” 238. See above, chapter 1, fn. 205.

whose preaching and death would precede the second coming of Christ. On the other, Elijah had not died, but was brought to paradise in a chariot of fire. Hus had also ascended to heaven in flames, so the characterization of Hus as Elijah suggested that he would live on, prepared to return in order to announce the end of times. Of course, we have seen that Luther was also considered to be the “third Elijah” by many of his followers, both the subject of prophecy and the final witness against the abomination of desolation who occupied the papal see.<sup>2</sup> This understanding of Luther certainly relegated Hus to a subordinate position, but it still tied the Bohemian reformer to Luther as the one who had foreseen his coming. Both of these men were therefore considered to have the “spirit and power of Elijah,” and to be able “to restore, by their persuasion and concern, the totality of the elect.”<sup>3</sup> The followers of both men, including Jan Tělivský and Luther’s memorialist Johannes Bugenhagen, also explicitly hoped that they would receive a “double portion” of Hus’s and Luther’s gifts, just as Elisha had.<sup>4</sup> This hope for, and expectation of, the inheritance of prophetic power, then, was at the foundation of both the Hussite movement and the Lutheran church.

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<sup>2</sup> “Denn wie Elias zu seiner Zeit die Abgötterei angegriffen und niedergelegt, also hat D. Martin Luther auch den gewaltigen Abgott des papstischen Ablass angetastet und zu Boden geschlagen, und wie Elias die Pfaffen des Baals getödtet, also hat der Mann Gottes mit dem Schwert göttliches Wortes die Messpfaffen und ihren Abgott umgestossen.” See: Förstemann, *Denkmale*, 58-59. For this quotation, see above, chapter 7, fn. 244.

<sup>3</sup> Matěj of Janov referred to: “[p]redicatores corporaliter] posset sua sollicitudine et suasione restaurare universitatem electorum.” *Regulae Veteris*, vol. 3, 355-356. See above, chapter 1, fn. 43.

<sup>4</sup> “Sicut Helizeus habuit duplum spiritum ex meritis Helie, sicut spero moderni predicatorum forte ex meritis magistri Ioh[annis] Huss.” Tělivský, “Oktave Pasche,” 57. See above, chapter 2, fn. 151; and “Gebe Gott das auch auff die nachkommen der Geyst Gottes zweymal mehr zu reden sei denn der hohe theure Man geredt hat... Wie denn der Prophet Elisa von dem Elia bittet da er von dem Elia in eim wetter hinweg genommen ward.” Bugenhagen, *Ein Christliche Predig*, H2v. See above, chapter 7, fn. 245.

Unpacking the prophetic and sacred power that underwrote the development of these two dissident churches, and seeing how that power was vested in the figure of Jan Hus, has been the ultimate purpose of this dissertation. I have sought to trace the ways in which myriad actors used a variety of media and commemorative practices in order to link themselves decisively to Hus, whose perseverance, suffering, and martyrdom had marked him as a true saint. It was in historical moments of particular political, religious, and even military strife that these links became most meaningful, so these moments therefore witnessed increased numbers of commemorations of Jan Hus. Ultimately, it was the specific causes and dynamics of these tensions that dictated how Hus was commemorated at a given time, but underlying these variations was a consistent hearkening back to Jan Hus and his moral authority as a martyred prophet as a justification for deviance from, and opposition to, the Catholic Church. Whether through the celebration of Hus's *memoria* in the Týn Church in 1490, or the publication of the *History and Monuments* of Jan Hus in the turbulent years following Luther's death, these commemorations both sought to return Hus to a central place in the consciousness of their audience or participants. Hus's martyrdom had occurred in the past, but through the vehicles of ritual and the printed word he could become present as either an example of perseverance or an intercessor with God whose prophetic authority guaranteed the justification of those who recognized him for what he had been, —a counterpart of Elijah, whose spirit, so we piously believe, ascended through fire into heaven and the fellowship of the angels.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> —Euius spiritus in igne instar Helie, ut pie credimus, ascendit in celum ad consortium angelorum.” Jakoubek, —Sano habitus,” 240. See above, chapter 1, fn. 206.

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