
Depiction of the Last Supper under Utraquism

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The topic of art and iconography in the Utraquist Church has been traditionally neglected and under-appreciated. Only in the last twenty years or so has it begun to attract attention and become the focus of interdisciplinary research.¹ On the basis of the extant art, we can conclude that the characteristic themes according to which Utraquist art differed from contemporary Roman iconography were the depictions of Jan Hus, Jerome of Prague and the other martyrs of the Bohemian Reformation, as well as depictions of the chalice in certain contexts, including the distribution of communion in both kinds and to small children.

I will concentrate on discussing and evaluating the iconography of the Last Supper and related Utraquist themes. I have selected depictions, which date to the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries and that are definitely or with high degree of probability representative of Utraquist art.

Because of the Utraquist deviation from the Roman Church, it is apropos to pay special attention to the presence of chalice, to its location in the overall composition of the image, and to human figures that are in distinct relation to it.

The subject of the Last Supper appears fairly often in Utraquist art, as in altar decorations and even more in the liturgical books of Bohemian towns.² Both Czech and Latin Utraquist graduals treat this theme as a rule in miniatures, relating to the feast of Corpus Christi or to Maundy Thursday, which is also the case in Roman Catholic graduals. Other frequent subjects of depiction for the feast of Corpus Christi are Old Testament thematic parallels and – only in Latin graduals – also Christ in a winepress.³

Iconography of Last Supper Through the Ages

There are two distinctly different depictions of the Last Supper, with each type traceable to early iconography.⁴ In the first type, the rite is conceived as a concrete historical event in the history of salvation, occurring on Maundy Thursday. Christ sits in the company of the Apostles around a table during their last common supper, as the event is described in the Gospels.

The other type is the liturgical Last Supper, which is based in a different manner on the Biblical text. During the liturgy all of time is intersected and sanctified: the anamnetic and epicletic character of the Eucharist was expressed in the fifteenth and sixteenth century by the symbolic repetition and reenactment of Christ's action

¹ See Milena Bartlová, *Poctivé obrazy. Deskové malířství v Čechách a na Moravě 1400-1460* (Prague, 2001) 44.

² Jan Royt, "Utrakvistická ikonografie v Čechách 15. a první poloviny 16. století." in: *Sborník k poctě Ivo Hlobila*, ed. D. Prix (Prague, 2002) 194.

³ Concerning this iconographic theme, see G. Schiller, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst, Band II – Die Passion Jesu Christi* (Gütersloh, 1968) 242.

⁴ *Ibid.* 38.

during the Last Supper. The priest celebrating mass represented the celebrating congregation in a consecrated church.

Company Around a Table

The New Testament's reports of the Last Supper usually include three events that are also captured in art: the institution of the sacrament as a remembrance of Christ, the revelation of betrayal and impending death, and the marking of the betrayer.

The synoptic Gospels record the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper,⁵ but depictions of the institution by itself are fairly rare in Western art, being usually connected with the marking of the betrayer.⁶ The iconography of the Last Supper also reflected the teaching about transubstantiation, declared by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, which altered the significance of the chalice; like the host, it had become a symbol of Christ's real presence in the eucharistic elements.⁷ Thus in the Late Middle Ages, as a major development in the iconography of the topic, the depiction of the sacrament's institution by itself gained favour. A milestone work in monumental art that reflected this change was the altar in Louvain by Dierik Bouts (1464-1467). The central panel of the main altar for the first time depicts such a limited scene; four typological parallels to the Last Supper from the Old Testament adorn the internal wings of the altar.⁸ The eucharistic accent is unambiguous in the image on the central panel. Seated in the middle, Christ holds a host above the chalice and blesses both. Receiving the Eucharist, the faithful thus saw with their own eyes the very institution of the sacrament by Jesus himself. In the Roman Church, the motif of the sacrament's institution undoubtedly emphasized the belief in Christ's real presence in both eucharistic elements.

The revelation of betrayal by itself (Lk 22:21-23) or the revelation together with the marking of the betrayer (Mk 14:18-19)⁹ is the most frequent type of Last Supper imagery in the West that also emphasises the figure of Judas. In the marking of the betrayer, Judas either reaches into a single dish with Jesus, or Jesus is handing him the morsel, both according to biblical texts. In the Late Middle Ages, the marking of the betrayer often was a part of the Passion or Christological cycles, inasmuch as the events of the Last Supper – above all the betrayal by one of the Twelve – were parts of Christ's suffering. The vessel for the washing of feet figured among the Passion requisites, and it frequently appeared in the forefront of the supping company.

As a digression, we may note that in the portrayal of Last Supper in the German Reformation, the figures of the Apostles were replaced by those of prominent Reformers. The image on the altar in Jáchymov by Lucas Cranach the

⁵ Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:14-20; 1Cor 11:23; and (the washing of feet) Jn 13:1-20.

⁶ Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst* 43.

⁷ *Ibid.* 37.

⁸ *Ibid.* 48.

⁹ "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me... It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me." Similarly, Mt 26:23: "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me." A somewhat different version is offered in Jn 13:26: "'It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.' So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot."

Younger is no longer extant and is only known from earlier descriptions.¹⁰ The Reformers, as the Apostles' surrogates, appear in Cranach's other works, such as the altar in Wittenberg (1547), or the painting in Schlosskirche of Dessau (1565).¹¹ Each of the latter two pictures contains the marking of the betrayer, but their purpose is not primarily eucharistic. Rather they aim to portray the Reformers, in place of the Apostles, as messengers of the true faith.

The Late Middle Ages also favoured the depiction of typological parallels to the Last Supper in a tradition that dated to Christian antiquity. The Bohemian Reformation continued this tradition in line with its general cherishing of Biblical themes. Among the several Old Testament prefigurations of the Last Supper were the following: the Israelites eating the Passover lamb (Ex 12), Melchizedek passing bread and wine to Abraham (Gen 14:18-20), the gathering of manna in the desert (Ex 16; Jn 6:22-59; 1 Cor 10:3), Moses striking a spring out of the rock (Ex 17:6; 1 Cor 10:4), Elijah served in the desert by an angel who brings him bread and water (1 Kings 19:5-8), and Israelites carrying an enormous bunch of grapes from the Promised Land (Num 13:23). Other themes may also appear, such as Christ in a wine press (Is 63:3), or – among those from the New Testament – most often the washing of feet (Jn 13:3 ff), and the wedding in Cana of Galilee (Jn 2). In addition, the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22:6), or Abel sacrificing the lamb (Gen 4) appear in the eucharistic imagery as prefigurations of Christ's immolation.

Distribution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

The rationale of the liturgical Last Supper, as we know it also from the Utraquist milieu of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, is evidently the so-called *Communio apostolorum*, the depiction of the Apostles' first communion. The Eastern Church in its art depicted the Last Supper as a liturgical celebration as early as the sixth century, with Christ in the priest's role distributing communion to the Apostles; this depiction came to the West somewhat later. In the Late Middle Ages, an important shift in the iconographic art involved the substitution of a regular eucharistic liturgy for the *Communio apostolorum*, and the replacement of Christ by the presiding bishop or priest at the altar.¹² The Utraquist imagery characteristically showed the distribution of both bread and wine, usually with the priest giving out the host, and a deacon administering the chalice. At times, for the sake of the Utraquist emphasis, only a priest with the chalice was shown.

The German Reformation also continued the mediaeval tradition. Its innovation was an updated type of depiction, replacing the *Communio apostolorum* with communion *sub utraque* for the faithful. Once more, important Reformers are

¹⁰ R. Schmidt, *Soupis památek historických a uměleckých v politickém okrese Jáchymovském* (Prague, 1913) 44-45. See: Jan Royt, "The Mining Town of Jáchymov: Reformation and Art," *infra*.

¹¹ Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst* 50-51.

¹² Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst* 48-50. A notable exception to this was fourteenth century depiction of Christ as celebrant of the Eucharist in historiated initials for the feast of Corpus Christi. François Avril, "Une curieuse illustration de la Fête-Dieu: l'iconographie du Christ prêtre élevant l'hostie, et sa diffusion," in: *Rituels: Mélanges offerts à Pierre-Marie Gy, o.p.* edd. Paul De Clerck and Éric Palazzo (Paris, 1990) 39-54.

recruited, this time to distribute the eucharistic elements and thus to underwrite the correctness of the Lutheran sacramental teaching.¹³

On the whole, the changes that the iconography of the Last Supper underwent did not deviate from the biblical message, but rather they reflected the acquisition of new meanings based on the theological intentions of altered situations. We shall further focus on the two types of depiction: (1) the institution of the sacrament, involving a blessing of the chalice; and (2) the distribution of communion *sub utraque*, from which – by definition – the chalice could not be absent.

Utraquist Last Supper Emphasizing the Chalice

The Bohemian Reformation perpetuated all the three hallmarks of the depiction of the Last Supper that were discussed earlier: revelation of betrayal, marking the betrayer, and the institution of the sacrament with an optional emphasis on the chalice. Let us first turn to the depiction of Last Supper emphasizing the chalice.

Monumental Art

Several Utraquist winged altars have been preserved with the tabernacle forming their centre. In assessing them, a relevant consideration is Matěj of Janov's critique of religious art, namely that images distracted the faithful from an adoration of the Eucharist. In my opinion, in conscious or subconscious response to the still ingrained critique, these altars sited the Eucharist at the centre of the artistic décor, and thereby at the centre of religious adoration.

The winged altar, dating to 1531, originally from the church of St James the Great in Slavětín near Louny is one the few Utraquist specimens with significant iconography.¹⁴ The central carved portion of the altar consists of a tabernacle with two adoring angels.¹⁵ The side wings are painted with scenes of the Passion that are in an obvious thematic relationship to the sacrament in the central part. Like in the altar of Nový Bydžov, the main theme of the altar is the Eucharist *sub utraque* that a carved predella with the Last Supper emphasizes in addition to the central portion with tabernacle. It is this predella that is iconographically most remarkable and without any known parallels. While the seating of Christ and the Apostles is conventional, the chalice is not held by Jesus, but by one of his disciples seated in front of the table. Furthermore, only the gaze of this Apostle is directed into the space in front of the altar, and his hand extends in the same direction, holding an abnormally large golden liturgical chalice. Moreover the chalice is sited in the centre of the entire pictorial composition.¹⁶ This particular emphasis on the chalice and its virtual protrusion from the image into the liturgical space before the altar might be interpreted as a flaunting of the communion *sub utraque*. It seems evident that an assertion of Utraquist legitimacy is the main ideological message of the image: the

¹³ An example is a German woodcut from the Cranach school (c. 1551) with Hus and Luther distributing communion *sub utraque* to the family of the Elector of Saxony. For an illustration and description see K. Hiob, "Die sächsischen Reformationsfürsten," in: *Reformation in Nürnberg: Umbruch und Bewahrung*, ed. G. Falkner (Nuremberg, 1978) 76.

¹⁴ J. Pešina, *Česká malba pozdní gotiky a renesance* (Prague, 1950) 91-92, 134.

¹⁵ The tabernacle was located also in the centre of the Libiš winged altar; see *ibid.* 115.

¹⁶ The disciple does not bear any characteristic mark of identification. It might be the patron of the church, St. James the Great, whose statue stands on an extension of the altar.

chalice blessed and offered by Christ himself travels from the hands of an Apostle to a Utraquist priest authenticated by Christ and to its final destination among the Utraquist faithful.

Another monumental carved winged altar with the theme of the Last Supper is only known from a description. It was destined for the church of St. Barbara in Kutná Hora.¹⁷ The extant description does not specify the precise aspect of the Last Supper that was depicted. It refers to Christ eating the paschal lamb and, therefore, the motif of the blessing of the chalice is excluded. Eating the Lamb, however, is also a prefiguration of the Eucharist: Christ as a Lamb offers his death on the cross for the life of the world, and his sacrifice symbolizes and realises the sacrament of the altar. The Jesuits removed the altar because its Utraquist theme was distasteful to them.¹⁸

A major Utraquist piece of art is also the late Gothic altar on panels from Nový Bydžov, dating c. 1530. An image of the Last Supper occupies the central panel; Christ seated at the centre is portrayed blessing the chalice at the moment of the sacrament's institution. Portraits of Utraquist priests on the two side panels have an immediate relationship to the central image; one priest blesses the chalice, while the other holds a ciborium with hosts. Although both figures are represented as statues standing on sills, each has distinctive features, and their names are given as the Horažďovský brothers.¹⁹ Thus living faithful appear in places, which the mediaeval tradition had hitherto reserved for "dead" saints. Their exaltation is undoubtedly explicable by their priestly status, and by their contact with the sacrament in their hands. The priests' portraits anticipate the subsequent Lutheran depiction of famous Reformers distributing communion *sub utraque*.²⁰ The altar décor as a whole clearly celebrates the Eucharist *sub utraque* and endorses its practice.

A fresco in the church of St. Gothard in Slaný also has a relationship to the Last Supper. Christ, blessing a large chalice, is depicted in the vault of the presbytery. According to Zuzana Všečeková,²¹ the figure of Christ is lifted from the ensemble of a scene of Last Supper. The half-figure of Christ is surrounded by the Evangelists' symbols that refer to the sacrament's institution.

Miniature Paintings

As noted earlier, the Last Supper appears in liturgical books, as a rule, in the ornamentation for the feast of Corpus Christi, at which we may encounter other eucharistic themes as well.

An illumination on f. 204^b in the Smíškov Gradual,²² dating to the late fifteenth century, depicts the institution of the sacrament: Christ amidst the Apostles blesses

¹⁷ Jan Kořínek, *Staré paměti kutnohorské*, eds. Alexandr Stich and R. Lunga (Prague, 2000) 214-16.

¹⁸ Royt, "Utrakvistická ikonografie v Čechách," 194-195.

¹⁹ Pešina, *Česká malba pozdní gotiky* 134.

²⁰ Pešina suggests a possible connection between the discontinuous character of the altar's décor and its Utraquist character; *ibid.* 134.

²¹ Zuzana Všečeková, "Pozdně gotické nástěnné malby v kostele sv. Gotharda ve Slaném," in: *Slaný - české město ve středověku* (Kladno and Slaný, 1997) 22-24.

²² MS. Vienna, _NB Musiksammlung Mus. Hs. 15501 Graham no.131.

a large liturgical chalice.²³ The lower border strip contains the scene of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane with a procession of armed men in the background. This miniature does not depict the usual typological parallels, but instead the Passion scenes relate chronologically to the Last Supper, as we know them from the Passion cycles.

An illumination of the Last Supper with the institution of the sacrament can be also found in the lower border strip on f. 305^a (318^a) of a Bohemian gradual, dating to c. 1570, and now deposited in the British Library in London.²⁴ The company of the Apostles is seated at a long rectangular table and Jesus blesses the chalice, which he holds in his left hand, and bread, which lies on the table. A typological parallel appears in the initial on the same folio: the gathering of manna.

An illumination in the border on f.180^a of the Kutná Hora Gradual (Kuttenberg Kancional)²⁵ can be interpreted as an extract from the ensemble of the Last Supper scene. Relating to the feast of Corpus Christi, the painting contains a sole chalice with a host which – featured as the centre-point of the New Testament message – is surrounded by the symbols of the Evangelists and, for good measure, provided with an inscription of the institution: *hoc facite in meam memoriam*.²⁶

An isolated chalice also appears in a painting of very low quality (done by a scribe) in the Jistebnice Kancional, dating to the 1420s.²⁷ It is on f. 10^a (p.11) together with the text of the introit for the feast of Corpus Christ. The chalice forms a part of the verdant décor next to the outer stem of the initial *Nakrmil jest*. The eucharistic significance of the chalice is indicated by the décor of the initial itself that the chalice is supposed to complement. Furthermore, this initial is the only remaining one in the entire manuscript with a figural adornment, which points to an intentional accentuation of the eucharistic motif. It bears the scene of the gathering of manna that is the most common typological parallel with the Last Supper.²⁸

The Franus Kancional (Gradual),²⁹ dating to 1505 and donated to the Utraquist church of the Holy Spirit in Hradec Králové, contains a large square-shaped miniature of the Last Supper in the initial (*Cibavit*) on f. 65^v. Christ is portrayed amidst the Apostles blessing the chalice, i.e., at the institution of the sacrament. Once more, symbols of the evangelists – the heralds of the good news – adorn the miniature's corners. Inasmuch as – also in 1505 – the church was decorated by an altar dedicated to Corpus Christi, it is legitimate to view the

²³ Milada Studničková, "Die Kuttenberger Gradualien. In: Die Länder der Böhmisches Krone und Ihre Nachbarn zur Zeit der Jagiellonenkönige (1471-1526)," in: Evelin Wetter ed., *Kunst – Kultur – Geschichte* [Studia Jagellonica Lipsiensia 2] (Ostfildern, 2004) 125-142.

²⁴ MS. London, British Library add. 16,175. Graham no.39.

²⁵ MS. Vienna, ÖNB Musiksammlung Mus. Hs. 15501 Graham no.131.

²⁶ For a description see Studničková, "Die Kuttenberger Gradualien". See also Všetečková, *Pozdně gotické nástěnné malby v kostele sv. Gotharda ve Slaném*, 22-24.

²⁷ MS. Prague, Knihovna Národního muzea II C 7.

²⁸ See Pavel Brodský, "The Decoration of the Jistebnice Kancional," in: *Jistebnický kancional: MS. Praha, Knihovna Národního muzea, II C 7, I: Graduale*, edd. Jaroslav Kolár, Anežka Vidmanová, and Hana Vihová-Wörner [Monumenta Liturgica Bohemica II] (Brno, 2005) 77-9. The drawing is reproduced on the front cover of the volume as well as on p. 78.

²⁹ MS. Hradec Králové, Muzeum východních Čech Hr 6 (*olim* II A 6) Graham no. 15.

depiction of the Last Supper with the institution of the sacrament as an intentional theological gesture to accentuate the eucharistic aspect: communion *sub utraque*.³⁰

An illumination of the Last Supper appears also in a manuscript with the New Testament and apocryphal texts dating to before 1440³¹ held by the Austrian National Library in Vienna. On f. 55^a, Christ holds a host above the chalice standing on the table, and blesses both.³²

Utraquist Last Supper Without Emphasis on the Chalice

There are numerous examples of clearly Utraquist manuscripts that do not emphasize the chalice, but rather depict the revelation of betrayal, or the marking of the betrayer. In other cases, if not noted otherwise, the imagery refers to texts for the feast of Corpus Christi.

Returning to the Viennese manuscript, another illumination on f. 54^b depicts the Last Supper, this time with standing Apostles.³³ Jesus lifts his right arm, apparently announcing the betrayal or the events to follow, because his left arm points to the lamb. A chalice also stands on the table next to the platter with the lamb. In addition, the folio depicts one of the New Testament parallels: the washing of feet.

The famous Latin Litoměřice Gradual of 1517,³⁴ contains on the double-folio 182^b-183^a a richly elaborated typology of the Last Supper. The Last Supper itself is located on f. 183^a in the initial *Cibavit*. Jesus is seated with his disciple at the table with a large golden chalice. The border strip depicts the encounter of Abraham with Melchizedek, who holds a host, a chalice, and a harvest of grapes, all having distinctly eucharistic connotations. Other common typological parallels are found in the border strip of f. 182^b: eating the paschal Lamb, and Moses striking the rock with his staff to elicit a spring.

In the Czech Utraquist Sedlčany Gradual,³⁵ the décor on p. 425 is once more based on typological parallels. The Last Supper is located on the left side of the lower border, and the celebration of Passover on the right side. The two images are similar in composition: a company assembled around a table that holds, in both instances, a lamb and a liturgical chalice. Both scenes are dynamic with lively gesticulating figures. The image of the Last Supper contains the revelation of betrayal. The initial *Dnes* contains the gathering of manna, and its border a scene with two Israelites carrying on a rod a huge bunch of grapes from the Promised Land. The latter can be also interpreted topologically: the grapes suggest Christ's blood and his sacrifice. [Fig. 1]

The Last Supper appears in the initial (*Dnes*) on f. 327^a of the Malostranský Gradual.³⁶ Christ stands behind a table with the lamb on a salver and an

³⁰ Another eucharistic theme in the décor of the gradual, the Mass of St. Gregory on f. 28^a (*Sanctus*), commonly appears also in Roman liturgical books. It is more apt to accentuate transubstantiation than utraquism despite the presence of a prominent chalice on the altar.

³¹ MS. Vienna, ÖNB 485.

³² K. Stejskal, "Problematika datování a původu iluminovaných rukopisů z let 1420-1450," in: *Podzim středověku* (Brno, 2000) 40.

³³ *Ibid.* 40.

³⁴ MS. Litoměřice, Okresní vlastivědné muzeum IV C 1, Graham no. 35.

³⁵ MS. Sedlčany, Městské muzeum M1, Graham no. 120.

³⁶ MS. Prague, Národní knihovna XVII A 3, Graham no. 70.

inconspicuous chalice. The Apostles' consternation indicates the moment of the revelation of betrayal. The lower third of the folio is occupied by the gathering of manna and the lower third of the opposite folio (326^b) by the encounter of Abraham with Melchizedek (both of which refer to the liturgical texts).

The image of the Last Supper (the initial *Pan* on f. I xiiii^a) in the Czech Staroměstský Gradual³⁷ depicts Christ with widespread arms, apparently announcing his betrayal. The placement of his arms might even indicate the Crucifixion. On the table, the lamb lies on a salver. The significance of the drinking vessel is evidently downplayed, inasmuch as one of the disciples partly covers it with his arm. The lower border depicts the gathering of manna and, for good measure in the background, Moses eliciting a spring by striking a rock with his staff. The right border strip contains two more typological parallels: Abraham with Melchizedek, and Elijah attended by the angel in the desert. [Fig. 2]

The Latin Gradual made for the Church of the Mother of God in Mladá Boleslav³⁸ c. 1509 depicts, in the initial *Cibavit* on f. 335^f, the revelation of betrayal and the marking of the betrayer, although a chalice also stands on the table next a the lamb on a salver.

The first part of the Latin Utraquist Gradual prepared for the *literati* of the Church of St. Nicholas in Louny³⁹ and dated 1530, shows the Last Supper on f. 222^b in the initial *Cibavit*. Sitting in the background on a podium, Christ lifts his arm in a gesture of blessing. The disciples converse in several groups. The lower border strip depicts the gathering of manna.

The Latin Kutná Hora Gradual (Kuttenberg Kancional),⁴⁰ dated to c. 1490⁴¹ or, more likely 1509-10⁴² and probably prepared for the Consistorial church of St. James in Kutná Hora, captures in the initial *Cibavit* on f. 86^v the marking of the betrayer. It is an exact copy of an etching by Master AG. The only difference involves the chalice, which is missing in the etching, but was added by the illuminator on the right side of the table.⁴³ Although the chalice does not occupy the centre of the image, its relatively conspicuous size indicates that its addition was not accidental. The border contains a scene with Elijah, who awakens in the desert to find next to himself bread and a pitcher of water brought by an angel. The lower border shows Christ stepping on grapes in a wine press. The décor of the initial on f. 124^a depicts the encounter of Abraham with Melchizedek equipped with priestly insignia. The lower border strip contains the sacrifice of Isaac as a prefiguration of Christ's sacrifice and consequently also a eucharistic motif. The lower border of the following f. 125^a depicts the gathering of manna.

Numerous Utraquist depictions of the Last Supper with the marking of the betrayer omit the chalice altogether. A carved Late Gothic relief, dating to c. 1520

³⁷ MS. Prague, Národní knihovna XVII A 40, Graham no. 74.

³⁸ MS. Mladá Boleslav, Okresní muzeum II A 1, Graham no. 44.

³⁹ MS. Louny, Státní okresní archiv I G 8a, Graham no. 40.

⁴⁰ MS. Vienna, ÖNB Musiksammlung Mus. Hs. 15501 Graham no.131.

⁴¹ Dating according to Studničková, "Die Kuttenberger Gradualien"

⁴² Emanuel Leminger, *Umělecké řemeslo v Kutné Hoře* (Prague, 1926) 266 and Graham no. 131, "History." See also Barry F.H. Graham, "Quandries in Dating Utraquist Mass Books of the Period 1470-1537," *BRRP* 3 (2000) 147-159.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

and probably originating from a winged altar in the Bethlehem Chapel,⁴⁴ represents Christ who stretches his hand with a morsel toward Judas, while the gestures and expressions of the other Apostles indicate the consternation, evoked by Christ's words. The relief was probably architecturally and ideologically the focal point of the chapel, as might be expected from the central portion of the main altar. Yet, an intent to highlight the chalice as the symbol of Utraquism is absent here. [Fig. 3]

Christ is portrayed at the moment of the marking of the betrayer on the carved predella of the winged altar in Štětí, dating to 1530,⁴⁵ and on a panel painting in Rokycany, dating to 1510-1520.⁴⁶ Both artefacts were presumably earmarked for Utraquist use. Jesus also is handing a morsel to Judas on the painted predella of the altar in Kutná Hora by Hanuš Elfeldar, dating to 1515,⁴⁷ which belonged to the now-vanished Utraquist altar for the church of St. James.

A relief of the Last Supper can be found in the rich plastic décor of the pastoforium, dating to c. 1560, in the church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Most. The pastoforium was originally placed by the main altar in the presbytery. The décor of the church interior is connected with the German Reformation, and archival records inform us that the church served both the Lutherans and the *sub una*.⁴⁸ The ornamentation of the pastoforium corresponds to its function as a depository for the chalice and the monstrance. Two flying angels carry a monstrance above the door, and a scene of the last supper is placed above them on an extension above the sill. Its standard iconography depicts the revelation of the betrayer, and the chalice is absent. A neighbouring extension bears the image of the washing of feet as a New Testament parallel to the Last Supper. Another scene on the left side of the pastoforium is the common typological parallel: the gathering of manna.

A miniature painting captures the revelation of betrayal and the marking of the betrayer, for instance, on f. 68^b (p. 146) of the largely Czech-language Jena Codex,⁴⁹ dating to the late fifteenth century. This illumination follows as its model a Nuremberg wood cut.⁵⁰ Inasmuch as the chalice appears neither in the Jena Codex, nor in its Nuremberg model, this important Utraquist manuscript did not intend to use the Last Supper to make a theological statement in support of Utraquism. [Fig. 4]

The second part of a Czech Gradual made in 1585/6 for the Church of the Holy Spirit in Hradec Králové⁵¹ contains on f. 65^b a full page illumination of the Last Supper, in which – after the repast – Christ announces by an expressive gesture of his right arm the impending betrayal. The image does not contain the liturgical chalice. The scene is located in a Gothic/Renaissance interior, and two monochrome figures, conceived as statues, are reclining in the half-moons above the curvature of the vault, which serve as the upper enclosure of the image's space. One of the

⁴⁴ J. Kropáček, "Pozdně gotický reliéf Poslední večeře z Betlémské kaple v Praze," ČNM 129 (1960) 57-64.

⁴⁵ The North Bohemian Gallery of Plastic Arts [Severočeská galerie výtvarného umění] in Litoměřice.

⁴⁶ Originally in the church of Our Lady of the Snows in Rakovník, now in the District Museum [Okresní museum] in Rokycany.

⁴⁷ Pešina, *Česká malba pozdní gotiky* 126.

⁴⁸ H. Mannlová - Raková, *Kulturní památka Most, Děkanský kostel a jeho stavitelé* (Prague, 1989) 62.

⁴⁹ MS. Prague, Knihovna Národního muzea IV B 24.

⁵⁰ P. Brodský, *Katalog iluminovaných rukopisů Knihovny Národního muzea* (Prague, 2000) 52-54.

⁵¹ MS. Hradec Králové, Muzeum východních Čech Hr-14 Graham no. 18.

figures, the allegory of faith, holds a cross and a liturgical chalice that, however, functions as a mere accessory without any clear liturgical relevance. The initial [*Dnes*] on the opposite folio (66^a) depicts the eating of the Paschal lamb within the frame of Renaissance architecture. The Israelites stand with staves around a table laden with a lamb and pieces of bread. The central figure, portrayed frontally, bears Christ-like features: a red garment, long hair, beard, and a narrow face; it is Moses, who is traditionally considered an Old Testament prototype of Christ. The customary scene of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek occupies the lower third of the folio.

Imaging of Last Supper by the *sub una*

The theme of the Last Supper has been common in the religious art of the Roman Catholic Church, both during the period of the Bohemian Reformation, and much earlier.⁵² The Latin Breviary of Benedikt of Valdštejn⁵³ (the décor mainly from 1410-1430) contains an illumination of the Last Supper that refers to the biblical text.⁵⁴ The miniature is designed very economically, showing only seven disciples. A lamb and the bread lie on the table, but the chalice is lacking. Christ with a raised arm apparently reveals the betrayal. A fragment of the Last Supper (dating to mid-sixteenth century) has been preserved as a part of the Christological cycle in frescos in the castle chapel of Horšovský Týn.⁵⁵ The disciples sit at a table with a visible liturgical chalice that was originally on the left side of the now missing figure of Christ. Judas sits in the forefront extending an arm in Christ's direction, as usual in the scene of marking the betrayer. A Last Supper with the marking of the betrayer also forms a part of a series of frescos, dating from after 1425, in the presbytery of the church of St. Nicholas in Znojmo.⁵⁶ The table holds a lamb and a liturgical chalice that is small and not particularly conspicuous. The altar of Rajhrad, dating c. 1450, has the Last Supper with the marking of the betrayer as part of a Passion cycle. One of the disciples, to the right of Christ, holds a chalice, which however is not particularly emphasized. The marking of the betrayer is also captured in the initial [*Cibavit*] on f. 5^v in the first volume of the Latin Šternberk Gradual,⁵⁷ dating to 1499-1500. In this instance, the chalice is missing altogether.

An Assessment

A relatively small number of Utraquist artefacts emphasise the chalice, which indicate a theological *derrière pensée* of the donor or the artist. On the one hand, certain works of art depicting the institution of the sacrament can be viewed as intentionally emphasizing the Eucharist *sub utraque*; the same is true of the depictions of the chalice alone. On the other hand, the major part of the artistic depictions of the Last Supper from the Utraquist milieu, whether in monumental

⁵² For instance, the fresco in the presbytery of the Church of the Holy Cross in Veselí nad Lužnicí, dating to c. 1330. See: Jarmila Krčálová, "Veselí nad Lužnicí – Kostel Sv. Kříže," *Gotická nástěnná malba v zemích českých I: 1300-1350* ed. J. Pešina (Prague, 1958) 193, ill. 53-54. Also the church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary in Starý Plzeňec holds in the presbytery a depiction of the marking of the betrayer, as part of a Christological cycle (dating after 1351). See Zuzana Všetečková, "Nástěnná malba," in *Gotika v západních Čechách, 1230-1530*, (Prague, 1996), 2:453.

⁵³ MS Prague, Národní knihovna VI G 6.

⁵⁴ K. Stejskal and P. Vojt, *Iluminované rukopisy doby husitské* (Prague, 1991) 43-44, fig. 14 p. 84.

⁵⁵ Všetečková, "Nástěnná malba," 455.

⁵⁶ J. Vítovský, Monumentální malířství a sgrafito, in: *Od gotiky k renesanci*, II. Brno (Brno, 1999) 199.

⁵⁷ MS. Vienna, ÖNB, Musiksammlung Mus. Hs. 15493, Graham no. 129.

works or in miniatures, record the revelation of betrayal or the marking of the betrayer. In these instances, the chalice either plays a secondary rôle, or does not appear at all. The eucharistic dimension of the Last Supper is viewed here through the traumatic event of betrayal, raising the curtain on the drama of Passion.

It is evident that the Last Supper, without dwelling on the chalice, was favoured in many important Utraquist art works. The Utraquists apparently did not need to bolster their self-confidence by systematically flaunting their beliefs in an ecclesiastical décor. The typological parallels with eucharistic subtexts were favoured regardless of whether the Last Supper portrayed the sacrament's institution, or the revelation of betrayal and marking of the betrayer.

The milieu of the *sub una* also cherished the artistic motif of the Last Supper. In the Bohemian lands, the institution of the sacrament with the blessing of the chalice was commonly portrayed. Because of its eucharistic symbolism, the Last Supper became a favourite part of the fresco décor of presbyteries, and made its appearance on altars and in the miniatures of graduals with reference to the feast of Corpus Christi. The theme of the Last Supper also customarily formed a part of the narrative Passion cycles.

Utraquist Distribution of the Eucharist

Depictions of a liturgy with communion *sub utraque* have come down to us in several Utraquist liturgical books. One of them is the Czech-language manuscript of *Písně chval božských* [Songs of Divine Praises],⁵⁸ dating to 1587 and designed for the choir brotherhood (*literáti*) at the church of St. Michael in the Old Town of Prague. Folio 218^b contains a full-page illumination of communion *sub utraque*. Although not of high quality artistically, the image is extremely important for its content; it presents the interior of an Utraquist church and captures the crux of the Utraquist mass. Inside the church of St. Michael, two priests distribute the Eucharist to a large group of kneeling faithful. One priest, standing before the altar, administers the bread, while another in the foreground distributes the chalice to the faithful. Significantly from the Utraquist viewpoint, the kneeling faithful include not only adults, but also children. Another large chalice stands in the middle of the altar, to which a large polyptych is attached. On the Gospel side, next to the altar, a sacrament house or aumbry is visible with an angel on each side.⁵⁹

The Czech-language Utraquist gradual made between 1542-4 by Jan Taborský for the Church of All Saints' in Litoměřice,⁶⁰ contains a miniature with a priest distributing the eucharist *sub utraque* in the lower border strip on f. 70^b (in *Sanctus*). Furthermore, the priest is identified by a ribbon with the inscription *kněz Jakub Trzcka kněz v Žitenicích*. The decoration was apparently produced with the aid of a stencil, because an almost identical illumination appears in another place in the gradual.

The Czech-language Utraquist Gradual made for the Church of St. Katherine in Chrudim⁶¹ the illuminated initial for the feast of Corpus Christi (*Krystus*) on f. 181^b contains a depiction of communion *sub utraque*. In the church choir in front of the

⁵⁸ MS. Prague, Knihovna Národního muzea I A 15.

⁵⁹ Brodský, *Katalog iluminovaných rukopisů*, 337.

⁶⁰ MS. Prague, Knihovna Strahovského kláštera DA I 6; Graham no. 104.

⁶¹ MS. Chrudim, Okresní museum inv. č. 12579; Graham no. 8.

altar, a priest, clad in an alb and a golden chasuble, administers the chalice to a kneeling man behind whom a woman awaits her turn for communion. [Fig. 5]

The distribution of the eucharist *sub utraque*, including the important motif of the communion of infants, can be found on f. 56^b (p. 122) in the Jena Codex. The upper part of the picture depicts moment in the liturgy when the priest prays the eucharistic prayer: three chalices, standing on the altar, clearly point to communion *sub utraque*. The lower part of the picture depicts the moment of communion during which two infants, held in their mothers' arms, receive communion – one the host, the other the chalice.⁶² [Fig. 6]

The famous altar wing from Vlíněves, dating to 1520, is iconographically extraordinary, offering several levels of meaning. The panel painting depicts St. Vojtěch (Adalbert) who, standing at the altar, is assisted at mass by Master Jan Hus. St. Vojtěch, about whom it was believed that he had distributed communion *sub utraque*, holds a large chalice. Since St. Vojtěch was the patron of the Prague Archdiocese, his depiction may be also interpreted as a challenge to the Roman Curia to implement the promised legitimization of the Utraquist Church with an Archbishop at its head.⁶³

On rare occasions, Hus himself is represented as a priest blessing the chalice. On f. 285^a of the Smíškov Gradual,⁶⁴ Hus stands between the proto-martyrs Lawrence and Stephen. In addition to the stereotypical attribute – the heretic's cap, Hus holds in his left hand a book with a chalice on top, and he blesses the chalice with his right hand.

Likewise, the predella of a vanished altar from Chrudim depicts the half-figure of a beardless man with a tonsure, holding a large chalice. The saint is considered to be Hus, although he lacks the two customary attributes – a pyre and the heretic's cap. In this case, Hus is placed side by side with the Bohemian patron saints and, as in the Smíškov Gradual, he blesses a chalice.

The chalice as Hus's attribute is to proclaim his true priesthood, of which the Council of Constance pretended to deprive him, and simultaneously the gesture of blessing the chalice accentuates the communion *sub utraque* that Hus approved toward the end of his life. The depiction of Hus without the two customary attributes, however, cannot be considered an unicum simply because it is only known from the one isolated instance of the predella from Chrudim.⁶⁵

Utraquist Art and the Last Supper

On the basis of our discussion concerning the iconography of the Last Supper in the Utraquist milieu, we can conclude the following:

⁶² See: David R. HOLETON, "Les enfants et l'eucharistie dans l'art," in *La Communion des tout-petits endants : Étude du mouvement en Bohême vers la fin du Moyen-Age* (Rome, 1989) 225 f.

⁶³ ROYT, "Utravistická ikonografie v Čechách," 198-199.

⁶⁴ MS. Vienna, ÖNB Musiksammlung Mus. Hs. 15501 Graham no.131.

⁶⁵ It is well known that a mere fragment of Hus's depictions has come down to us, and that is particularly true of monumental art. See also F. Zoubek, "Památky strany podobojí v Čechách" PA 6 (1864) 179 ff.

Utraquist Specificity

Iconography of the scene of the Last Supper only rarely deviates from the customary Roman iconography. The deviations concern, above all, highlighting the chalice as, for instance, the wing of the altar Slavětín does conspicuously.

A Shift in the Meaning of the Sacrament's Institution

The depiction of the sacrament at the moment of its institution with Christ blessing the chalice is common to Utraquist and Roman iconography, but has a somewhat different meaning for each. Within the Roman milieu, the intense eucharistic adoration was moreover amplified by the teaching on transubstantiation, hence the host and the wine in a chalice stood for the real body and blood of Christ. This symbolism had not lost its validity in the Utraquist milieu, inasmuch as mainline Utraquism – despite assertions to the contrary – had not abandoned transubstantiation and substituted for it the doctrine of remanence. Yet, the imagery sent an additional and more important message to the Utraquists with reference to communion *sub utraque*. The pictorial representation defended the righteousness of the Utraquist liturgical practice, rooted directly in the Gospel accounts.

On the one hand, the traditional presentation of the Last Supper offers evidence that Utraquism, not only in theology, but also in art continued the older mediaeval tradition. On the other, Utraquism embraced certain targeted augmentations of meaning in its artistic creations. A similar iconography of the Last Supper – the institution of the sacrament – did allow for a deviation of its message depending on the origin and destination of the artefact.

Emphasis on the Chalice Omitted

A frequent leitmotif of the Utraquist (as well as Roman) depiction of the Last Supper is the Passion theme of a revelation of the betrayer, or a marking of the betrayer, rather than the blatantly eucharistic motive of the institution of the sacrament that would permit a focus on the chalice.

Thus, many clearly Utraquist portrayals of the Last Supper turn attention to the interaction between Jesus and Judas. In these instances, the chalice may stand on the table without being conspicuous, or it may be entirely absent. Such is also the case with the initial of the highly significant Utraquist document – the Jena Codex.

In exceptional cases the mere presence of the chalice on the table (common also in Roman depictions) can be taken for certain as a reference to communion *sub utraque*. This requires special detective work, based on the knowledge of particular germane circumstances. Thus, the illumination in the gradual of Kutná Hora manifestly differs from its graphic model in one and only one aspect: it is the (undoubtedly) intentional addition on the tabletop of a conspicuous chalice.

In sum, although the lay chalice represented the most notable theological distinction of Utraquism, the preponderance of extant depictions of the Last Supper that were destined for the Utraquists – whether on altars or in liturgical books – was not, despite our expectations, used to highlight the chalice. The major part of the art works did not differ from the run-of-the-mill Roman iconography.

[Translated from the Czech by Zdeněk V. David]



Fig. 1. Feast of Corpus Christi:

Clockwise from initial: Gathering manna, grapes from the Promised Land, the Passover, the Last Supper.

Sedlčany Gradual: MS. Sedlčany, Městské muzeum M1 f. 425^a



Fig. 2. Feast of Corpus Christi:

Clockwise from initial: The Last Supper, the offering of Melchisedech, Elijah attended by the angel, Coat of Arms, Gathering manna with Moses striking water from the rock in the background (far right).

Staroměstský Gradual: MS. Prague, Národní knihovna XVII A 40 f. I xiiii^a



Fig. 3. The Last Supper "Marking the Betrayer."
Relief from the Bethlehem Chapel c. 1520.

Prague: National Museum



Fig. 4. The Last Supper

Jena Codex: MS. Prague, Knihovna Národního muzea, IV B 24, fol. 68^b
(p. 146).



Fig. 5. Communion *Sub Utraque*.
Gradual of Church of St. Katherine in Chrudim
MS. Chrudim, Okresní museum inv. č. 12579 f. 181^b.



Fig. 6. The Utraquist Eucharist:
(above) the eucharistic prayer, (below) the communion of infants.
Jena Codex: MS. Prague, Knihovna Národního muzea, IV B 24, fol. 56^b
(p. 122).