

**THEO-POLITICS OF THE HUSSITE MOVEMENT:  
FROM REFORM TO REVOLUTION**

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## Abstract

This work represents an intellectual history of the first decade of the popular Hussite reform movement in early 15th century Bohemia. The goal of the work is to explain the process of theo-political radicalization, and eventually popular activism and revolutionary violence, by exploring the central discourses and symbols which were adapted and deployed by the movement's leaders during this time. This is achieved by thoroughly situating Hussite radicalism within an intellectual background which is more diverse and nuanced than usually appreciated by historiography. The topics of Hussite religious and political thought have long been central in modern research, but the durability of certain anachronistic assumptions and canonical narratives have still precluded certain important questions and comprehensive approaches. To challenge these limitations, this dissertation broadens the discussion diachronically and re-centers it on under-appreciated discourses and thinkers.

The work identifies Christian Platonism as an underlying intellectual tradition which provided the basis for a thorough Hussite political theology, an optimistic vision of theo-political and cosmic order, which human-divine cooperation could achieve in the world. In agreement with certain mystical convictions, Hussite leaders began to develop a highly individualist and activist identity which gave significant relevance to personal initiative. This allowed each believer to participate in a fantastic process of personal and collective rehabilitation from their current condition of corruption. I argue that, even in the context of more restrictive or traditionalist intellectual trends, the basic humanist confidence gradually had a subversive, mobilizing, and radicalizing effect on Hussite believers. In addition, I claim that their recourse to unorthodox and even revolutionary methods should be understood largely in continuity with the theology of Christian election and reform.

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## Abbreviations

AČ	Archiv Český
BRRP	<i>The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice</i> . Available from <a href="http://brrp.org/">http://brrp.org/</a>
FRB	Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum
Kapit.	Metropolitan Chapter Library, Prague
Migne, PG	Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeca</i> .
Migne, PL	Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina</i>
MIHO	Magistri Iohannis Hus Opera omnia
NK ČR	National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague
KNM	Library of the National Museum, Prague
ÖNB	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna

## INTRODUCTION

I used to say in preaching, that the power of the secular [rulers] is good and granted by God, and that it is permitted to be sometimes properly used, out of love as in the cause of God, with moderation and with humility and fear, when the enemies of the truth cannot be brought back by other means—even though this path is riddled with many traps .... Then, false priests and their followers took from this that it is permitted to plunder, kill, and perform other cruelties which are occurring these days, and they even say that I and my followers approve of it, and thus make me liable as the cause of all the murders, plunders, and wars.<sup>1</sup>

This is a quote from a short *Apologia* written by the Hussite leader Jakoubek of Stříbro in the 1420s, several years after the eruption of the Hussite wars.<sup>2</sup> In it, he tries hard to distance himself from the “false priests” of the Táborite community (*Thaboritarum sacerdotes pseudo*), his former Hussite disciples and colleagues who recently inspired a bloody, popular revolution against all their religio-political opponents across the Bohemian countryside. According to their prophecies, this violent massacre of God’s enemies would help inaugurate a millenarian condition of bliss on earth in the kingdom of Christ. For years after Church authorities executed their leader Jan Hus in 1415, a chasm had been widening within the reform movement he helped establish, between Jakoubek’s circle of Hussite intellectuals and the following attracted to the more radical priests and thinkers gaining popularity in various towns and villages. Despite Jakoubek’s best efforts, the split was crystallized by the provocative events of 1420, which included not only revolution but also the foundation of the radical city of

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<sup>1</sup> Jan Sedlák, *Studie a texty k náboženským dějinám českým II* (Olomouc: Nakl. Matice Cyrillo-Methodějské v Olomouci, 1915), 161.: “Item olim dixi predicando, quod secularibus legitime potestas concessa est in bona a domino deo, et licet aliquando ea bene uti, ut in causa dei cum moderamine et humilitate et timore et ex caritate, dum aliis viis inimici veritatis non possunt reduci, licet ibi currant multi laquei et ibi caritas periclitatur ... Tunc ex isto receperunt sibi [i.e. Thaboritarum] sacerdotes pseudo cum eis adherentibus, quod licet spoliare, occidere et alias crudelitates exercere nunc currentes, et dicunt adhuc, quod ego cum michi adherentibus approbarem et sic omnium homicidiorum, spoliorum, guerrarum dicunt me reum et causam esse.”

<sup>2</sup> An attempt at dating was made by František Michálek Bartoš, “Jakoubkův projev o táborech,” *Jihočeský sborník historický* 9 (1936): 29-34.



“Tábor”, and its election of its own bishop. However tense and polemical, Jakoubek’s continued relations with former comrades in Tábor earned him vicious reproach from Hussite elites shocked by their overthrow of certain religious and political norms. His *Apologia* can be read partially as a response to this outrage, an attempt to defend ecumenical reconciliation in the movement but also indicate clear opposition to Táborite extremism.

The purpose of this quotation here, however, is not merely anecdotal. Instead, it is meant to help introduce a powerful historiographic cliché which has found new life in recent decades. As is clear from Jakoubek’s *Apologia*, as well as from other polemical accounts of the period, for hostile Hussite observers the Táborites essentially represent a confused perversion from a normative origin of Hussite reformist ideas, in the realms of theology as well as political thought.<sup>3</sup> In their dubious motivations and incomplete commitment to Hussite principles, they have been led astray into schism by dangerous inventions and innovations. The afterlife of this dis-integrated narrative of the Táborite revolution cannot be treated in depth here, but at least in modern historiography its fate is not linear, because it largely disturbed the simplified, often politicized usage of the movement by the romantic-nationalists, Marxists, and their opponents of the time. Already in the nineteenth-century, the “Father of the Czech nation” František Palacký identified Táborite chiliasm with the democratic, Slavic principles at the core of Hussite dissent.<sup>4</sup> Upon his return from exile in 1918 as the president of the Czechoslovakian

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<sup>3</sup> For instance, on Lawrence of Březová’s description of the Táborite schism, see *FRB* V, 402 f. See also Peter Chelčický’s account in note 673 below.

<sup>4</sup> František Palacký, *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě* III.1 (Prague: Tempský, 1877), 308, 343, cit. Pavlína Cermanová, “V zajetí pojmu: Definice husitského chiliasmu,” in *Heresis seminaria. Pojmy a koncepty v bádání o husitství*, ed. Pavlína Cermanová and Pavel Soukup (Prague: Filosofia, 2013), 142. This work is used throughout this paragraph. See also Pavlína Cermanová, “The Apocalyptic Background of Hussite Radicalism,” in *A Companion to the Hussites*, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 212 f. Cf. Martin Pjecha, “Táborite Revolutionary Apocalypticism: Mapping Influences and Divergences,” in *Apocalypse Now: Eschatological Movements from Moscow to Cuzco*, ed. Damien Tricoire and Lionel Laborie (London: Routledge, n.d.), In press.

state, T. G. Masaryk followed Palacký and announced to the new republic that “Tábor is our program”.<sup>5</sup> Early Marxist authors generally agreed with this integral narrative of ethical progress, but shifted its focus into the historiography of class struggle. For historians like Zdeněk Nejedlý and Josef Macek, therefore, the Táborites were only the most extreme representatives of the Hussite ideology of social revolution.<sup>6</sup> Even opponents, in their polemics with this positive vision of Hussitism in history, generally did not challenge this account of Hussite-Táborite integration, but instead incorporated it into a more measured or pessimistic narrative. According to the Catholic historian Jan Sedlák, the “madness” (*blouznivost*) of Táborite chiliasm and violence was a linear result of Hussite dissent, and Josef Pekař characterized it similarly as only the most brutal and deranged chapter in the overall negative Hussite history.<sup>7</sup>

Such teleological assimilations of Táborite activism in the Hussite movement were only systematically compromised and complicated in the late 1950s and 1960s by authors like Howard Kaminsky and Robert Kalivoda, who tried in their own way to take seriously the religious discourse of the sources. The picture which emerges is basically one of Táborite divergence from Hussite norms, and influence from medieval counter-

<sup>5</sup> See Petr Čornej, “Tábor je náš program... (Masarykova návštěva v Táboře 25. března 1920),” *Táborský archiv* 15 (2011): 31–56.

<sup>6</sup> For instance, Josef Macek, *Tábor v husitském revolučním hnutí I* (Prague: Nakladatelství československé akad. věd, 1952), 258: “[Táborite] Chiliasm was the revolutionary ideology of the Hussite masses”; Josef Macek, *Tábor v husitském revolučním hnutí II* (Prague: Nakladatelství československé akad. věd, 1955), 69: “The [Táborite] chiliasts, even though they did not acknowledge a single learned authority to whom the Prague masters kneeled, adhered enthusiastically to master Jan Hus, because for them he was an example of a revolutionary fighter for the better life of the people (byl vzorem revolučního bojovníka za lepší život lidu).”; Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu IV* (Prague: ČSAV, 1955), 229; Cf. Peter Morée, “Not Preaching from the Pulpit, but Marching in the Streets: The Communist Use of Jan Hus,” *BRRP* 6 (2007): 283–296.

<sup>7</sup> Jan Sedlák, *M. Jan Hus* (Prague: Nákl. Děd. sv. Prokopa, 1915), 222: “Jakoubek preached further on the Antichrist in the same sense, but much more aggressively, and Hus now spoke and wrote of the Pope-Antichrist as a sure and known thing. ... The Pope-Antichrist, this is the end of the development of the Wycliffite anti-Church direction in Bohemia, and the beginning of a fragmented development in another. The introduction of utraquism, the break from the Apostolic seat, chiliastic madness and Táborite violence, these [all] are related to it.”; Josef Pekař, *Žižka a jeho doba I* (Prague, 1927), 48–51. For Pekař’s position on Hussitism more generally, see Thomas A. Fudge, “The State of Hussite Historiography,” *Mediaevistik* 7 (1994): 98 f.

cultures. Tábórite thinkers are still indebted to Hussite tradition, but the momentum of radicalization and revolution is located in a mixture of external intellectual and social forces. For Kaminsky, therefore, it is the influx of other heterodox elements, like Waldensiansism, Free Spirit, and Joachitism which pre-disposed or helped inspire the explosive violence of 1420. Kalivoda basically agrees with this, except as a Marxist he emphasizes the class-character of this radical undercurrent of “the people’s heresy” (*lidové kacérství*).<sup>8</sup> The legacy of this dis-integrated narrative of Tábórite revolution has not been without criticism, but has proven resilient and has endured in the historiographic mainstream in the decades since its articulation. To varying extents, prominent Czech historians like Jana Nechutová and Amedeo Molnár,<sup>9</sup> and important international contributors like Ernst Werner, Bernhard Töpfer, and Bernard McGinn have all emphasized the debt of Tábórite radicalism to external sectarian influences.<sup>10</sup> In more recent years, Thomas Fudge has accepted Howard Kaminsky’s appeal to Waldensianism for the “ideology of a revolutionary movement”.<sup>11</sup> An equally profound role for such influences appears in authors like Petr Čornej, who paints the picture of a kind of synchronization of heretical ideas (*jakási synkreze “kacířských” představ*)

<sup>8</sup> Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 336–60; Howard Kaminsky, “The Free Spirit in the Hussite Revolution,” in *Millennial Dreams in Actions. Essays in Comparative Study* (The Hague: Mouton, 1962), 166–86; Howard Kaminsky, “Hussite Radicalism and the Origins of Tabor 1415–1418,” *Medievalia et Humanistica* 10 (1956): 102–30; Robert Kalivoda, *Revolution und Ideologie. Der Hussitismus* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1976), 113 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Jana Nechutová, *Místo Mikuláše z Drážďan v Raném Reformačním Myšlení: Příspěvek k Výkladu Nauky* (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé Akad. Věd, 1967), 4 f.; Amedeo Molnár, *Valdenští: evropský rozměr jejich vzdoru* (Prague: Kalich, 1973), 201–19.

<sup>10</sup> Ernst Werner, “Popular Ideologies in Late Mediaeval Europe: Taborite Chiliasm and its Antecedents,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2 (1960): 344–63; Ernst Werner, *Der Kirchenbegriff bei Jan Hus, Jakoubek von Mies, Jan Zelivský und den linken Taboriten* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1967), 44–58; Bernhard Töpfer, “Fragen Der Hussitischen Revolutionären Bewegung,” *Zeitschrift Für Geschichtswissenschaft* 11 (1963): 146–68; Bernhard Töpfer, “Hoffnungen auf Erneuerung des paradiesischen Zustandes (status innocentiae): Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte des hussitischen Adamitentums,” in *Eschatologie und Hussitismus: Internationales Kolloquium, Prag 1.-4. September 1993*, ed. Alexander Patschovsky and František Šmahel (Prague: Historisches Institut, 1996), 169–84; Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End. Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 343, n. 29: “The Tábórites were not Joachite in their vocabulary ... but the content, as here, is frequently that of extreme Joachitism.”

<sup>11</sup> Thomas A. Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 41.

which convinced the simple minds of villagers toward fantasy, and in Krista Feigl-Prochazková, for whom the revolutionary mission of “authentic Taboritism” (authentische Taborismus) was identical to the mission of the Free Spirit sect.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, many scholars have shown more restraint with this thesis of sectarian influences, and have worked to integrate corroborating socio-economic and political factors, but not in challenge to its fundamental claims. Thus on top of Waldensian sectarianism, Amedeo Molnár cites class hatred as a radicalizing factor, and on top of Waldensian and Joachite elements, František Šmahel notes the same catalysing potential for the psychological results of regional plague epidemics.<sup>13</sup> Undeniably, not all historians subscribe to the dis-integration thesis, and important voices have either challenged aspects of it, or examined external influences more carefully. Scholars like Pavel Soukup, Alexander Patschovsky, František M. Bartoš, and Robert E. Lerner have at different times deconstructed the role of external sectarians on Taborite radicalization, and others like Pavlina Cermanová have explored the question with

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<sup>12</sup> Petr Čornej, “Potíže s adamity,” *Marginalia Historica* 2 (1997): 36 f.; Petr Čornej, *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české 1402-1437 V* (Prague: Paseka, 2000), 197 f.: “After 1415, all the heretical sects in Bohemia stepped out of illegality, and started to openly influence especially the provincial people in their environs. With this, their opinions began to intertwine, so that there emerged a kind of syncretism of ‘heretical’ ideas, which moreover mixed with traditional medieval superstitions, especially of village people, who were often unable to distinguish visions or inventions from reality, let alone judge the interpretation of matters of faith. It is not quite possible to specify exactly what in this melting-pot of thoughts and ideas from which radical Hussitism was born came from which individual sect, what echoed the impulses of Nicholas of Dresden and Jakoubek of Stříbro, and what was the original input of provincial thinkers.”; Krista Feigl-Procházková, “Frei sollen sie sein, die Söhne und die Töchter Gottes. Chiliastisches Gerüst und gnostisches Fundament des taboritischen Radikalismus,” *Husitský Tábor* 13 (2003): 26 f.: “Ich neige dazu, es für wahrscheinlich zu halten, dass die Mission des Freien Geistes nicht nur die nackte Wahrheit der chiliastischen Agitation, sonder des gesamten Phänomens radikalen und also authentischen Taborismus war. Es war eine Revolution, die so nicht stattgefunden hat, wie sie sollte; die niemals so stattfinden hätte können.”

<sup>13</sup> Amedeo Molnár, “Mezi revolucí a válkou,” *Křesťanská revue* 2 (1967): 20 f. For Šmahel’s appeal to heterodox influences, see František Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution I* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2002), 491 f. and František Šmahel, “Tábor a husitská revoluce: problémy interpretace,” *Jihočeský sborník historický* 40 (1971): 16. On the influence of plague, see Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution I*, 676; and František Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution II* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2002), 954. Similar observations come from Macek, *Tábor I*, 180-84.

careful scepticism to such connections.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, such objections and abstentions have still not contributed to a broader reconsideration of Tábórite and Hussite thought. Instead, controversy over the intellectual pedigree of Hussite or Tábórite revolution is today generally considered a debate of the past, and historians largely take for granted the resulting confusion of narratives.

The point here is not to reject the potential relevance of extraneous influences outright, nor to deny the importance of the socio-political environment on Tábórite thought. It is also certainly not to suggest a return to old meta-narratives of the past. Instead, the point is to highlight a significant trend in the mainstream of Hussite historiography which primarily emphasizes the explanatory value of discontinuities for the Tábórite case and, in doing so, inadvertently reproduces the kind of normative heresiological narrative first introduced by their Hussite opponents. According to this, the Tábórites may have built upon Hussite foundations, but ultimately what makes them radical is what makes them different. It is radical chiliasm or millenarianism, heterodox sectarian influences, and extreme socio-political circumstances which distinguish them from other Hussite intellectuals and explain their behaviour. There is certainly an element of truth here, but this only tells part of the story. This is because the approaches to Tábórite revolution discussed above, both integrated and dis-integrated, share one fundamentally-modern anachronistic assumption which was not taken for granted in the pre-modern period, namely that popular human agency can play a positive role in broad, even global political improvement. In other words, the approaches are incomplete because they take for granted the recourse to revolution in the medieval period. This is by no means unique to Hussite historiography, but is instead part of a broader trend to

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<sup>14</sup> For more detailed discussion with citations, see Pjecha, “Tábórite Revolutionary Apocalypticism.” Cf. Alexander Patschovsky, “Revolučnost husitské revoluce,” in *Bludiště pravé víry. Sektáři, kacíři a reformátoři ve středověkých Čechách*, by Alexander Patschovsky (Praha, 2018), 277–300.

psychologically and historically naturalize revolutionary action, especially for radical movements. Still in the background here are narratives like those of the classical work by Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (1957), which identifies “revolutionary millennialism” in virtually all premodern sects, not as the result of awakened national- or class-consciousness, but as a standard reaction to socio-economic alienation and oppression.<sup>15</sup> In agreement with this kind of view, probably the two most important historians of the Taborites, František Šmahel and Howard Kaminsky, both describe this community’s shift to revolution as an organic response to psycho-historical anxieties of social integration and self-preservation. For this community’s desperate leaders, “A new orientation had to be given immediately, otherwise all previous efforts would have been in vain”, Šmahel explains. In other words, their innovative behaviour can be explained by sheer necessity.<sup>16</sup> Particularly for movements with strong apocalyptic or millenarian expectations like the Taborites, however, the historical record overwhelmingly shows the opposite to be the case. As will be discussed later, even under the extremes of alienation and persecution, such believers share highly deterministic and apolitical attitudes which give hardly any role to human agency in history, let alone violent revolution. As a result, millenarian prophecies are primarily consolatory rather than activist, and virtually no historical

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<sup>15</sup> Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1957).

<sup>16</sup> On the shift to revolution, František Šmahel, *Die Hussitische Revolution III* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2002), 1056: “Eine neue Orientierung mußte umgehend gegeben werden, andernfalls wären alle vorangegangenen Bemühungen umsonst gewesen. ... An vorderster Front, gemeinsam mit Christus, der seinen Auserwählten geistig zu Hilfe eile, sei der hussitischen Gemeinde der Rechtgläubigen die Rolle der Racheengel zugefallen.”; Kaminsky, *A History*, 342: “at each point where the forces of disillusionment or despair threatened to bring the movement to a halt, the [Taborite] leaders provided new dynamic force in the shape of a further ideological development.”; Kalivoda, *Revolution und Ideologie*, 143. Cf. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 211 f.: “starting in November 1419, Taborites throughout Bohemia were isolated from the national movement and were exposed to a savage persecution aiming at their extermination. At the same time, as was to be expected, apocalyptic and millenarian phantasies took on a new dynamism. ... No longer content to await the destruction of the godless by a miracle, the [Taborite] preachers called upon the faithful to carry out the necessary purification of the earth themselves.”

evidence contradicts this before the Tábórite example, as Robert E. Lerner has shown.<sup>17</sup> The same is generally true for the supposed sectarian influences.<sup>18</sup> Such findings may seem counter-intuitive to the modern historian or sociologist, who is used to finding the symbolism of popular revolution in the news, in popular culture, and in literature describing virtually every radical historical change or upheaval, and has therefore accepted it uncritically into his explanatory toolkit. Nevertheless, such a presupposition finds little traction even more broadly in the Western medieval period, largely due to the basic intellectual foundations laid here by the Church Fathers and the Latin tradition built upon them. As will be shown, these are important because they create an enduring attitude of pessimism in political thought which teaches strict obedience to authorities and precludes the hope for meaningful improvement in history. The human condition is inherently corrupted by sin, meaning that humans in this temporal existence can hope for no better government than one which strictly controls the destructive urges of society. Even though popular revolts certainly erupt over the centuries, and sometimes these are even justified by religious demands or claims, it is according to such a pessimistic view that we do not find rebels challenging this basic attitude by optimistically articulating the attempt to overthrow an entire religio-political order.

As a result of these considerations, this project began as an examination focused on one central question: if we take seriously the novelty of popular revolution in the medieval period, how can we explain the radical shift of the Tábórites toward activist violence? From early on, it was clear that to answer this question I could not defer the problem of political agency to extraneous influences or conditions, but I needed to take

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Earl Lerner, "Medieval Millenarianism and Violence," in *Pace e Guerra Nel Basso Medioevo: Atti Del XL Convegno Storico Internazionale; Todi, 12 - 14 Ottobre 2003* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2004), 37–52; Matthias Riedl, "Terrorism as Apocalyptic Violence. On the Meaning and Validity of a New Analytical Category," *Social Imaginaries* 3, no. 2 (2017): esp. 85–93.

<sup>18</sup> See discussion in Pjecha, "Tábórite Revolutionary Apocalypticism."

it more seriously within the Hussite intellectual context which Tábórites emerged from, including its relation to the theological framework in which they learned to interpret their existence. A new question now arose: If Tábórite and even Hussite thought must be more complicated than it is presented in literature, how can this be accounted for? It is in this context that the broader corpus of the project began to take form, because I realized that the necessary groundwork for such an investigation, an examination of the political theology of the Hussite movement, is largely missing in historiography. Of course, this is not to say that the cooperation of religion and politics has been ignored by Hussite historians, but rather that existing research in this direction is generally only fragmentary, and its theological insights are limited. Apart from the specific topic of revolution, historiography has long been understandably preoccupied by Hussite attitudes to warfare and political legitimacy more broadly, but these discussions usually have revolved around the same canonical moments and figures. Since the foundational work of Karel Hoch, for example, the critical Hussite debates around just war and just rule have remained archetypal here, with intellectual contextualization provided mostly by traditional figures like Jan Hus, John Wyclif, and Augustine.<sup>19</sup> In more recent years, authors like František Šmahel and Pavel Soukup have worked to complicate such questions, broaden their chronological range, and populate the analysis with important actors.<sup>20</sup> In a similar spirit, an entire new generation of Hussite scholars in the Czech Republic, particularly at Prague's Centre for Medieval Studies and Brno's Masaryk

<sup>19</sup> Karel Hoch, "Husité a Válka," *Česká Mysl* 8 (1907): 131–43; 193–208; 285–300; 375–91; 439–453.

<sup>20</sup> František Šmahel, *Idea národa v husitských Čechách* (Prague: Argo, 2000), partially available in English as František Šmahel, "The Idea of the 'Nation' in Hussite Bohemia I," *Historica* 16 (1969): 143–247; František Šmahel, "The Idea of the 'Nation' in Hussite Bohemia II," *Historica* 17 (1969): 93–197; Pavel Soukup, "Religion and Violence in the Hussite Wars," in *The European Wars of Religion. An Interdisciplinary Reassessment*, ed. Wolfgang Palaver, Harriet Rudolph, and Dietmar Regensburger (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), 19–44; 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.



University, have sought a fresh return *ad fontes* with new questions and approaches.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, as regards intellectual history, a more profound and nuanced work on the background of Hussite thought is still needed. It is also important that religion is appreciated not only as a circumstantial but a constitutive factor. Specific political-theological connections have been attempted in the past by theologians and philosophers like Amedeo Molnár and Miloslav Ransdorf, but the effort given to synthesis and systematization is still marginal.<sup>22</sup> At any rate, these overviews provide only part of the picture, and not a holistic basis for the investigation of the problem of political agency, due to their emphasis on the tradition of Augustinian paternalism. As will be shown, thinkers like Hus and Wyclif certainly gave popular political engagement a positive role in the quest for socio-religious improvement, but this was highly restricted by the power of established authorities like kings and nobles.<sup>23</sup> As a result, although the position of this Augustinian legacy in Hussite thought is obvious, it cannot be treated as exhaustive of the options available for political coordination and action.

Therefore, what began as a discrete investigation into Taborite revolution gradually grew into a more extensive examination of reformist political theology in Bohemia, recognizing the shortcomings not only of established narratives, but also of the canonical pantheon of relevant thinkers and traditions. Of course, “political theology” here is not meant in the restricted usage of Carl Schmitt, but rather more generally as the appreciation of the transcendental relevance which historical actors give to mundane circumstances, the intense interpenetration of theological and political

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<sup>21</sup> For instance, see the current cooperative project “From Performativity to Institutionalization: Handling Conflict in the Late Middle Ages (Strategies, Agents, Communication)” here: <http://cms.flu.cas.cz/conflicts/2020/12/14/conflict-after-compromise/> [Accessed 23.3.2022]

<sup>22</sup> Amedeo Molnár, “Mír v Husitském Myšlení,” *Husitský Tábor* 4 (1981): 21–30; Amedeo Molnár, *Pohyb teologického myšlení: přehledné dějiny dogmatu*. (Prague: Kalich, 1982), 277–80; Miloslav Ransdorf, *Kapitoly z geneze husitské ideologie* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1986).

<sup>23</sup> This is why the important study of Howard Kaminsky, “Wyclifism as Ideology of Revolution,” *Church History* 32 (1963): 57–74, offers theoretical observations but stops short of empirical application of Wyclif’s thought to the Hussite revolution.

thought.<sup>24</sup> Early investigations began to show the potential importance of a broader tradition, which is described below as Christian Platonism. This finding was relatively unexpected, but not because the tradition is foreign to Hussite historiography. On the contrary, the theological importance of Platonism and mystical authors for the intellectual landscape of Hussite and pre-Hussite reformist thinkers has been relatively well explored by many historians, including Jana Nechutová, Stanislaus Sousedík, Vilém Herold, and his students Ota Pavlíček and Martin Dekarli.<sup>25</sup> Instead, the explanatory potential of Christian Platonism was surprising because historiography does not generally locate its relevance in the political, except discretely as in the case of Wyclif. Certain strides have been made against this generalization, but with varying success and effect. Thus historians like Vlastimil Kybal, Helena Mainušová, Bernhard Töpfer, Stephen Lahey, and others have highlighted the political implications of the important pre-Hussite Platonist reformer Matthias of Janov, but his relevance to Hussite

<sup>24</sup> William T. Cavanaugh and Peter Manley Scott, "Introduction to the Second Edition," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*, ed. William T. Cavanaugh and Peter Manley Scott (Malden: Blackwell, 2019), 1-11.

<sup>25</sup> Jana Nechutová, "K charakteru eucharistie v české reformaci," *Sborník prací Filosofické fakulty Brněnské university* B 18 (1971): 31-44; Jana Nechutová, "Povědomí Antiky u M. J. Husa a v Husitství," in *Antika a Česká kultura*, ed. Ladislav Varcl (Prague: Academia, 1978), 141-156; Vilém Herold, "How Wycliffite Was the Bohemian Reformation?," *BRRP* 2 (1998): 25-38; Vilém Herold, "Platonic Ideas and 'Hussite' Philosophy," *BRRP* 1 (1996): 13-17; Vilém Herold, "Magister Procopius von Pilsen, ein Schüler und Anhänger Hussens, und seine frühen philosophischen Schriften," in *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi. Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Kurt Flasch zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* I, ed. Burhard Mojsisch and Olaf Pluta, (Amsterdam: Grüner, 1991), 363-85; Vilém Herold, "Die Philosophie des Hussitismus. Zur Rolle der Ideenlehre Platons," in *Verdrängter Humanismus. Verzögerte Aufklärung* 1.1, ed. Michael Benedikt, Reinhold Knoll, and Josef Rupitz, (Klausen-Leopoldsdorf: Leben, 1996), 101-18; Vilém Herold, "The University of Paris and the Foundations of the Bohemian Reformation," *BRRP* 3 (2000): 15-24; Ota Pavlíček, "'Ipsa Dicit, Quod Sic Est, Ergo Verum.' Authority of Scripture, the Use and Sources of Biblical Citations in the Work of Jerome of Prague," *BRRP* 10 (2015): 70-89; Martin Dekarli, "Od pravidla (regula) k zákonu (lex), od nápravy k reformě: doktrinní analýza transformace principů myšlení rané české reformace (1392-1414)," in *O felix Bohemia! Studie k dějinám české reformace* 5, ed. Petr Hlaváček, Europaeana Pragensia (Prague: Filosofia, 2013), 39-58; Martin Dekarli, "The Law of Christ (Lex Christi) and the Law of God (Lex Dei) – Jan Hus's Concept of Reform," *BRRP* 10 (2015): 49-69; Stanislaus Sousedík, "M. Hieronymi Pragensis ex Iohanne Scoto Eriugena excerpta," *Listy Filologické* 98 (1975): 4-7; Zénon Kaluza, "Le chancelier Gerson et Jérôme de Prague," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 51 (1984): 81-126; Édouard Jeuneau, "Plato apud Bohemos," *Mediaeval Studies* 41 (1979): 161-215; David E. Luscombe, "Denis the Pseudo-Areopagite and Central Europe in the Later Middle Ages," in *Société et Église. Textes et discussions dans les universités d'Europe centrale pendant le moyen âge tardif*, ed. Sophie Wlodek (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 50-56.

political thought is still marginal in historiography.<sup>26</sup> Even the greatest champions of the Platonist political contribution, like Miloslav Ransdorf, Robert Kalivoda, or Vilém Herold, could offer only sparse or general observations in this direction.<sup>27</sup> More recently, Christine Blättler has taken the matter slightly further, but her primary interests lay elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

Despite its marginality in the research, however, I will attempt to show that there exists a deeper and more cosmological, religio-political relevance of Platonist thought which transcends the political implications of intellectual realism, and which has usually gone under-recognized in historiography. This bears not merely topical but also fundamental significance to the entire framework of the Hussite worldview, mission, and sense of identity, giving central relevance to assertions of individual activism, optimism in history, and confident human ability. Unfortunately for positivist research, however, this Platonist bedrock lies buried under layers of cultural sedimentation. Even if it underpins and gradually permeates elite and public discourse, this means that the

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<sup>26</sup> Vlastimil Kybal, “Étude sur les origines du mouvement hussite en Bohême. Matthias de Janov,” *Revue historique* 103 (1910): 1–31; Helena Mainušová, “Sociálne politické aspekty učení Mateje z Janova,” *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty Brněnské univerzity C* 17 (1970): 35–51; Bernhard Töpfer, “Chiliasische Elemente in der Eschatologie des Matthias von Janov,” in *Ost und West in der Geschichte des Denkens und der kulturellen Beziehungen: Festschrift für Eduard Winter zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Wolfgang Steinitz (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966), 59–79; Stephen E. Lahey, “Antichrist in Bohemia: A Theme in the Genesis of Hussite Theology,” *Essays in Medieval Studies* 35 (2021): 28–31; Emil Valasek, *Das Kirchenverständnis des Prager Magisters Matthias von Janow (1350/55–1393): ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte Böhmens im 14. Jahrhundert* (Rome: Facultas Theologica P. Universitatis Lateranensis, 1971), 114–19.

<sup>27</sup> See Herold, “Platonic Ideas,” 17: “Those drastic condemnations [i.e. of Hus and Jerome of Prague] evoked a surge of radicalism in Bohemia which became the direct cause of the wars of the Bohemian Reformation. On the one hand, in the excitement of that militant radicalism no major rôle can be played any longer by the subtle arguments of the metaphysics of realism, despite its transformation in the texts of the Hussite thinkers of Prague into a certain genre of *philosophia practica* (including, according to the mediæval paradigms, ethics and political philosophy). On the other hand, it is undeniable that a significant contribution was made to the radical denouement – of course in a broader context – by “Hussite” philosophy, including its concepts of the universals and the [Platonic] Ideas. The Czech masters developed that teaching at the Faculty of Arts of the Prague University, and made it accessible to the wider public through the *quodlibet* disputations.” See also the sparse comments in Vilém Herold, *Pražská univerzita a Wyclif: Wyclifovo učení o ideách a geneze husitského revolučního myšlení* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1985); Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*; Kalivoda, *Revolution und Ideologie*.

<sup>28</sup> Christine Blättler, *Delikt: extremer Realismus. Philosophie zwischen Politik und Theologie im vorrevolutionären Prag* (Sankt Augustin: Academia, 2002), esp. 179 ff.

search for literal quotations or explicit references is usually doomed to fail. Instead, the impact of Platonist concepts of cosmic order and dynamism on revolution can only be traced here through the careful archaeological work of discourse analysis, aiming to identify and decode specific symbols which are transmitted from learned texts and debates to popular language and vernacular preaching. This of course takes inspiration from the important work of Michel Foucault, but without accepting the “death of the author” and the elimination of personal agency from intellectual history.<sup>29</sup> One effect of this approach is to re-center historical attention upon the key mediators of this transmission. In agreement with the historicist approach of authors from the Cambridge School of intellectual history such as J.G.A Pocock, this argues to balance the search for “authorial intent” in discourse with recognition of the contributive agency of its secondary participants.<sup>30</sup> From this perspective, Jan Hus remains important in certain formative and emblematic ways, and his execution is certainly a catalysing experience, but he gradually becomes contextualized into a larger discursive setting which does not rely on him for its main theological input. Instead, other leaders begin to take the foreground in this capacity. Another effect of this approach is to appreciate the holistic value of the main symbols of Hussite discourse. Symbols like the primitive Church, the Antichrist, or the eucharist are therefore not only theological, and do not only inform the identity of the community. Instead, such symbols for Hussites represent key junctures available in cosmic history which articulate and awaken various potentials

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<sup>29</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Alan M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972). Cf. Matthias Riedl, “Apocalyptic Violence and Revolutionary Action: Thomas Müntzer’s Sermon to the Princes,” in *A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse*, ed. Michael A. Ryan (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 274 f.

<sup>30</sup> John Greville Agard Pocock, “The Reconstruction of Discourse,” in *Political Thought and History: Essays on Theory and Method*, by John Greville Agard Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 67-86; Idem, “Political Ideas as Historical Events,” in idem, 57-59.

and behaviours in man in his relationship to the divine and also to the community. In other words, properly understood, such symbols are also inherently political.

Without claiming comprehensiveness, the thesis nevertheless does seek to provide an intellectual panorama of Hussite religio-political thought which focuses attention on several new or under-emphasized points. Firstly, Hussite reformist thought represents a political theology which can only anachronistically be divided into neat categories of religion and politics. All their major religious symbols and norms bear clear or implicit relevance to a vision not only of the afterlife, but just as importantly of human community, behaviour, and order already in this world. For Hussites these realities are closely interpenetrated, a fact which must be appreciated by any modern examination. Secondly, the Christian Platonist mystical tradition and its carriers are central to the understanding of this. This vision of order and its symbols are all fundamentally supported and permeated not simply by the intellectual tradition of realism, but at its depths by Christian Platonist thought in broader terms. Moreover, its most significant sources of transmission into Hussite thought cannot be reduced to the traditional figures of Jan Hus and John Wyclif, meaning that the discussion needs to re-center secondary thinkers. Finally, developments toward political radicalization cannot be separated from this tradition. The influence of other historical circumstances, and other intellectual elements, are clearly important, but ultimately these do not change the optimistic vision of order, only the tactics of its achievement. Instead of competing with the Platonist framework, therefore, such alternative elements are eventually integrated into it to help reorient concerns of agency and history.

### **Thesis structure**

In summary, what follows below does aim to explore the original question of Taborite revolution but, in doing so, its ambition has also necessarily broadened and

deepened. To even address this question, other issues must first be approached and clarified which widen the background of the examination and take it back in time. Nevertheless, this aim must also be counter-balanced to avoid a teleological narrative of Hussite history. The development of Bohemian reformist thought is not primarily relevant for what it can say about later events, but it is worth study in itself as a unique field of inquiry in the religio-political landscape of the age. As a result, new guiding questions have been formulated to appreciate this balance: what is the intellectual context which Hussite radicals draw from, and what are the norms, symbols, and assumptions which they inherit? What are the experiences behind these intellectual resources, what is their relationship to the adaptation and development of thought in concrete conditions, and what innovations and meanings are imported along the way? What solutions do these offer to specific political questions of order, agency, and identity?; how do these relate to or challenge alternative solutions?; what kind of resolution is suggested for this confrontation? With these questions in mind, the thesis will proceed in a structure of four chapters. Each is introduced by a brief background of historical events and personalities before transitioning into the main body which involves a more intensive focus on intellectual history. Chapters are organized chronologically to trace certain important developments and highlight specific trends, yet a certain degree of intellectual overlap is unavoidable. The timeframes offered should be treated as general steps through an investigation, not strict beginning and endpoints in time.

The goal of Chapter 1 is to map the intellectual background to Hussite thought, present certain main thinkers of relevance, and introduce some central points of innovation and confrontation. This begins with two brief but fundamental overviews of political theology which orient the reader and situate later findings. Here, the summary

of Augustine helps establish the baseline of the Latin medieval tradition which reformers are both informed by and reacting to. Next, the comparative survey of the important Hussite predecessors John Wyclif and Matthias of Janov begins to articulate certain key symbols of later relevance, and identifies directions for their interpretation within the broader context of Christian Platonism. In continuity with what is presented here, this is followed by an introduction to early Hussite religiosity, including its implications for identity formation, its political relevance, and its points of contention with tradition and opponents. The chapter concludes with an overview of the hierarchical vision of Church reform and agency which Hussites adapted from Wyclif.

Chapter 2 builds upon these findings, highlighting the radicalization of Hussite thought and the implications of this under increasingly anxious historical circumstances. It begins by demonstrating the clear political integration of individual and communal symbols of transcendent identity, such as Christ and Antichrist, within an increasingly polarized climate. Here, the scriptural symbol of the primitive Church and reform more generally is unpacked in its holistic religio-political significance. In this context, the chapter begins to introduce the self-confidence of the subaltern Hussite followers and the popularization of agency, as well as the integration of Janov and apocalyptic thought.

Chapter 3 charts the explosive enthusiasm and innovation which accompanies the Hussite discovery of the lay chalice, situates this within both the larger Platonist tradition and the project of reform, and works to divulge its unappreciated political significance. An important repercussion of this is the re-centering of the discussion from Wyclif and Hus to Matthias of Janov, Jakoubek of Stříbro, and other figures. The chapter begins by locating the chalice within the broader points of controversy pushed by the Hussites, and continues by introducing the mystical background in thinkers like

Matthias of Janov and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, making sure to highlight certain key norms and attitudes of note. Building on this, the chapter then compares the political relevance of these concepts for Janov and Hussite leaders, an exercise which begins to show the further sophistication of popular agency and radicalization of Hussite challenges to medieval traditions and authorities. Finally, the chapter begins to show the emergence of clear tensions within Hussite thought, born from historical circumstances but also the schizophrenia of intellectual role models, all hinting at implications for future developments.

Finally, Chapter 4 introduces the radical community and activity of the Taborites, and argues for their general debt to Hussite thought and the Christian Platonic tradition more broadly. This is done by distinguishing three roughly discrete moments, where new historical experiences and intellectual developments overlap. Despite clear limitations in the source base, this narrative attempts to draw relatively clear lines of inspiration between Hussite populism, humanistic self-confidence, optimistic historiography, and the political theology of the Taborites. Without denying its importance, this works to balance the emphasis of literature on Taborite apocalypticism with an appreciation of more dynamic influences to explain the highly mobilizing agent identity and expectations in revolutionary activism. In the end, the complex intellectual influences which inform their political action are presented as highly innovative, but nevertheless born of general continuity with the pedigree of Hussite thought.



## CHAPTER 1: Veritas, Caritas, and Reform

### Historical background until 1412

From the mid-fourteenth century, the political and cultural ambitions of Bohemia's King Charles IV helped foster a confident atmosphere of growth and innovation, which included the sphere of the spiritual. As a result, religious reformist thinkers were promoted, attracted, and trained into newly-created institutions and positions of spiritual responsibility and intellectual performance. The strong influence of the *via antiqua* on these early figures, and particularly of thinkers who combined realist idealism with moralist individualism and Biblicism, clearly laid the foundations for conflict with conservative religious authorities, as well as the nominalist masters who dominated Prague's University. The controversy over the works of John Wyclif there in the early-fifteenth century represented the greatest of these, not only because it coincidentally offended both of the groups mentioned, but also because of its mass-popularization, and its successful alignment with both underlying ethnic tensions and royal political ambitions. This perfect storm exploded the significance of the Wyclif dispute on both sides, and came to encapsulate their mutual critiques. Gradually, with the protection of royal authority and growing popular support, the movement of reform around Jan Hus was able to win one victory after another against their intellectual and clerical opponents, culminating in the humiliation of Prague's hostile archbishop in 1411. By this time, the reformist dissidents could legitimately presume that their model of Wycliffite renewal was underway with the support of the secular arm.

Although the paradigm of Hussite precursors has been challenged in recent years, it is worth overviewing here the historical contours and main figures which inspired the unique phenomenon of early Bohemian reformism. From here, we are able to trace many of the trends which characterized later Hussitism, including vernacular

popular preaching, principled critique of authorities, and lay religiosity to name a few. The sharp tone against wealth and clerical abuses is a trait noticeable from the inception of the Prague-centric reformist preaching movement in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the rigorous reformist efforts of its early archbishops. This was likely inspired by lax clerical instruction, and a combination of actual moral decadence and exaggerated moral standards inherited by a militant campaign against Waldensianism.<sup>31</sup> In the early 1360s, emperor Charles IV invited the fiery Augustinian preacher Conrad Waldhauser (d. 1369) from Austria to the Bohemian capital, where he became greatly popular amongst the German burghers and patriciate he oriented himself toward. The charismatic, vernacular instruction that Conrad provided was brought to the Czech milieu by his close friend Jan Milíč of Kroměříž (d. 1374), the canon of St. Vitus Cathedral, who gave up his prestigious post to follow in Conrad's example. Milíč organized lay religiosity into experimental action and shocked contemporaries with the foundation of the Jerusalem community in 1372, a former brothel converted to house penitent prostitutes and train a new generation of reformist preachers.<sup>32</sup> This trend of moralistic and personal spirituality found parallel expression among the elites of Prague's University, and was simultaneously translated into a highly enhanced eucharistic devotion. The best representative of this was Milíč's adoring student Matthias of Janov (d. 1393), a Paris-trained intellectual who obsessively attended to the identification of Antichristian novelties in contemporary Christianity; his tractate

<sup>31</sup> Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 14-18; cf. Zdenka Hledíková, "C církev v českých zemích na přelomu 14. a 15. století," in *Jan Hus na přelomu tisíciletí*, ed. Miloš Drda and František J. Holeček (Ústí nad Labem: Albis International, 2001), 35-58. The typical picture of decadence has been challenged recently by Olivier Marin, "The Early Bohemian Reform," in *A Companion to the Hussites*, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 29-33.

<sup>32</sup> David Charles Mengel, "From Venice to Jerusalem and Beyond: Milíč of Kroměříž and the Topography of Prostitution in Fourteenth-Century Prague," *Speculum* 79 (2004): 407-42.

*Tractatus de Antichristo* is possibly the longest medieval treatment on the topic.<sup>33</sup> A final connection to later Hussitism may be observed in the constant clashes of early Bohemian reformers with ecclesiastic representatives. Long before Jan Hus was burned in Constance for heresy, for instance, Conrad Waldhauser defended himself against similar accusations, and the emperor himself was forced to intervene with the Papacy on his behalf. Milíč faced such backlash from his Jerusalem experiment that he was forced to defend himself at the papal curia in Avignon, where he died of the plague in 1374. Similarly, Janov's radical theology on the eucharist and critiques of image veneration aroused multiple censures against him from the archbishop's court, though he continued to polemicize the clergy until his death in 1393. Even after this, intellectual opponents continued to take issue with his realist metaphysics. While there might have been some general appreciation of reformist thought among clerics, therefore, it was clear that opening the entire ecclesiastic establishment to radical criticism in vernacular sermons to the laity already located the Bohemian reformers at the boundaries of acceptability in the decades which preceded the controversies of the early-fifteenth century.<sup>34</sup>

It was this context of both quantitative and qualitative growth of reformist critiques and lay religiosity that the works of the controversial Oxford theologian John Wyclif (d. 1384) were introduced into. Although these were not unknown in Bohemia during his lifetime, it was only in the 1390s that they received a more sympathetic

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<sup>33</sup> Janov's inspiration therefore seems to be the *Liber regularum* of the fourth-century Donatist theologian Tychonius. Cf. Lahey, "Antichrist in Bohemia"; Karel Skalický, "Církev Kristova a církev Antikristova v teologii Matěje z Janova," in *Mistr Matěj z Janova ve své a v naší době*, ed. Jan B. Lašek and Karel Skalický (Brno: Marek, 2002), 47 f. The *Liber* was copied and commented by Augustine in his *De doctrina christiana*, and is now translated: William S. Babcock, ed., *Tyconius, The Book of Rules* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1989).

<sup>34</sup> Marin, "The Early Bohemian Reform"; Vilém Herold, "The Spiritual Background of the Czech Reformation: Precursors of Jan Hus," in *A Companion to Jan Hus*, ed. František Šmahel and Ota Pavlíček (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 69–95. On John Arsen of Langenfeld's postmortem attack on Janov, cf. Herold, *Pražská univerzita a Wyclif*; Martin Dekarli, "Prague Nominalist Master John Arsen of Langenfeld and His Quaestio on Ideas from Around 1394/1399," *BRRP* 9 (2014): 35–53.

audience at the University of Prague, after the influence of the city's anti-Wycliffite Archbishop Jan of Jenštejn waned due to disputes with the Bohemian King Václav IV (d. 1419). The growing reception of Wyclif was also partially facilitated by the royal marriage connection between the kingdoms of England and Bohemia in 1381, and the expanded *peregrinacio academica* between Oxford and Prague. Wyclif's combination of realist metaphysics, radical critique of the modern Church, and empowerment of secular officials against its corruption had made him a highly controversial figure in his own kingdom and internationally, and after his death he became one of the rare heterodox intellectuals who combined a learned with a popular following. For the first generation of Wyclif's Czech followers in Prague University—including the recent university master Jan Hus (d. 1415), his friends Stephen of Pálec, the itinerant theological polemicist Jerome of Prague (d. 1416), and Hus's mentor Stanislav of Znojmo (d. 1414)—part of his attraction is explained by the philosophical foundation which his realism gave to the extant rivalry of Czech and German masters.<sup>35</sup> Very soon Wyclif became a polarizing force here, and the Oxford thinker simultaneously gained the reputation of *doctor ewangelicus* and arch-heretic. A main issue of contention early on was remanentism, Wyclif's controversial eucharistic theology which was condemned in England in 1382, though it was his critique of clerical wealth and abuses which most resonated with the local reform tradition and which featured most prominently in the popular sermons of Hus and his clerical followers, especially the university master Jakoubek of Stříbro (d. 1429). Almost daily from 1402 until his exile in 1412, Hus could be found charismatically bewailing clerical sins via vernacular sermons at the Bethlehem Chapel, founded in 1391 by enthusiastic lay reformers as a

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<sup>35</sup> Ota Pavlíček, "Wyclif's Early Reception in Bohemia and His Influence on the Thought of Jerome of Prague," in *Europe after Wyclif*, ed. Patrick J. Hornbeck and Michael Van Dussen (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 90-93; František Šmahel, "Wyclif's Fortune in Hussite Bohemia," in *Die Träger Universität im Mittelalter*, ed. František Šmahel (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 457-89.

sequel to Milíč's Jerusalem project. For years, Hus's movement could count on the support of Prague's Archbishop, Zbyněk of Házmburk, until the Wyclif controversy reached the papal curia and cooled the prelate's relationship to reform. In 1408, the rival masters of the university proclaimed a list of 45 erroneous Wycliffite articles to be prohibited, and Stanislav of Znojmo was summoned to the Council of Pisa to answer for his reputation as chief Wycliffite master.<sup>36</sup> Suddenly Hus found himself at the head of the reform movement, squarely opposed by archbishop and the anti-reformist clergy, but supported by King Václav, who was more concerned with pragmatic politics than the teachings of a dead theologian. Their allegiance to the king provided some protection to reformers, and helped their position secure greater influence at the university. In 1409, the king struck a major victory for Czech (and reformist) masters over their German rivals with the royal Decree of Kutná Hora, which resulted in the mass-exodus of intellectuals and students hostile to the new changes. This victory and the growing enmity of reform leaders with the archbishop, however, gradually drew the ire of ecclesiastic authorities abroad.<sup>37</sup>

After years of academic controversy and political manoeuvring, open conflict between ecclesiastic representatives and Bohemian reformers broke out in 1410. By this time, the debates over the works of John Wyclif in the University of Prague had become so heated that Archbishop Zbyněk was able to convince the new Pope Alexander V to issue a Bull ordering the seizure of these books. Additionally, to restrict the popularization of Wycliffite ideas from the pulpit, the Bull also banned preaching from places like Hus's Bethlehem Chapel. The document arrived in Prague around 9 March 1410, and was immediately opposed by reformist leaders fervently as a hindrance to the

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<sup>36</sup> Stephen E. Lahey, "Wyclif in Bohemia," in *A Companion to the Hussites*, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 63-73.

<sup>37</sup> Ota Pavlíček, "The Chronology of the Life and Work of Jan Hus," in *A Companion to Jan Hus*, ed. František Šmahel and Ota Pavlíček (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 22-36; Šmahel, "Wyclif's Fortune."

preaching of God's word, the fundamental method of Christian instruction and reform.<sup>38</sup> In his defiance, Hus's popularity seemed to grow. By contemporary standards, Bethlehem Chapel was a mega-church, and the size of Hus's audiences there were enormous: it could contain about three thousand listeners, roughly 10% of Prague's contemporary population, and more than any other church in the city.<sup>39</sup> Despite the ban, Hus preached even more often in 1410-11, both in the university and in Bethlehem, where he delivered 278 sermons that year.<sup>40</sup> As an ironic result of the ban, therefore, the message of reform was reaching a broader audience of enthusiastic sympathizers than ever.

In the summer of 1410, an early test of commitment demonstrated the devotion of both reform leaders and their popular following. In mid-June 1410, a commission appointed by the archbishop proclaimed the collected works of Wyclif were to be burned, and Zbyněk threatened even secular persecution to preachers disobeying the ban, specifically targeting Hus. Some days later, the university voiced their resistance to the archbishop, and wrote an appeal to his decision to the pope, which was read aloud by Hus from the pulpit as part of a fiery sermon where he equated resistance to the archbishop with obedience to God.<sup>41</sup> Despite the opposition of King Václav and the university, however, Zbyněk had hundreds of books burned in mid-July, in a closed event of clerics and prelates.<sup>42</sup> As Zbyněk urgently left Prague in the aftermath of the book-burnings, he excommunicated Hus and others opposed to the decision.<sup>43</sup> Together,

<sup>38</sup> Jan Hus, *MIHO* 2, 165 f.; Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 36-38.

<sup>39</sup> Pavel Soukup, "Jan Hus as a Preacher," in *A Companion to Jan Hus*, ed. František Šmahel and Ota Pavlíček (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 123.

<sup>40</sup> Soukup, 103, 105 f.

<sup>41</sup> Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 159\*-64\*; František Palacký, ed., *Documenta Mag. Joannis Hus, vitam, doctrinam, causam in Constantiensi consilio actam et controversias de religione in Bohemia annis 1403-1408 motas illustrantia, quae partim adhuc inedita, partim mendose vulgata, nunc ex ipsis fontibus hausta* (Prague: Tempsky, 1869), 405.

<sup>42</sup> The event was accompanied by the singing of *Te deum*: "we praise you God, to the ringing of bells as if for the dead, hoping now to have an end to all troubles". See *FRB* V, 571.

<sup>43</sup> Events reconstructed in Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 36-39.

these events sparked rioting and disorder by both reformist supporters and opponents in the streets: crowds chanted abusive songs, Catholic priests were threatened and expelled from churches by arms, and religious services were interrupted and intimidated.<sup>44</sup> The disorders were eventually quelled by King Václav,<sup>45</sup> but protest continued in an academic tone as Hus, Jakoubek, and other colleagues used the opportunity to publicly defend Wyclif's works and ridicule their opponents.<sup>46</sup>

As the conflict was protracted over the next year, the reformers came to increasingly rely on the agency of the king, whose personal political goals currently aligned with a conclusion of clerical tensions favouring Hus and his colleagues. Supported by the verdict of a papally-appointed council, Zbyněk placed Hus under aggravated anathema in late September. Hus' failure to appear personally before the papal curia also earned him a further anathema from them in February 1411. Hus ignored both of these and continued his preaching duties, explaining himself in a sermon: "wanting to obey God more than men, ... I appeal first to God, upon whom the authority of preaching principally rests".<sup>47</sup> He soon sent his friend Jan of Jesenice as legal representative to plead his case at the papal curia. In April, the controversy finally drew King Václav into taking firm action to pacify the clerical split, confiscating payments to the Roman clergy, seizing the treasure of St. Vitus cathedral, and

<sup>44</sup> FRB V, 572; Adalbert Horčíčka, "Chronicon breve Bohemiae ab anno 1402 usque ad annum 1411," *Mittheilungen des Vereines für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen* 37 (September 1898): 322; Bernhard Pez, ed., *Thesaurus anecdotorum novissimus* IV. (Augsburg, 1723), 417; Václav Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus, jeho život a učení* I (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1919), 414 f.; Karl Adolf Constantin Höfler, ed., *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* II: *Geschichtschreiber der hussitischen Bewegung in Böhmen* I (Wien: Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1855), 624; Jan Hus, *Mistra Jana Husi sebrané spisy české* II, ed. Karol J. Erben (Prague: Bedřich Tempský, 1865), 124; František Palacký, *Dílo Františka Palackého II: Staří letopisové čeští od roku 1378 do 1527*, ed. Jaroslav Charvát (Prague: L. Mazáč, 1941), 32 f. n\*\*\*.

<sup>45</sup> Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* I, 417.

<sup>46</sup> Lahey, "Wyclif in Bohemia," 73-77; Palacký, *Documenta*, 399 f.; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* I, 417 ff.

<sup>47</sup> Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 159\* f.: "Et quia nostri scribe hoc idem volunt, mandantes quod non predicetur in capellis, eciam apostolica auctoritate confirmatis, ideo ego, volens magis obedire deo quam hominibus et facto Christi conformari potius quam ipsorum, ab huiusmodi mandato iniquo appello primo ad deum, cuius est principaliter dare auctoritatem predicandi, demum ad sedem apostolicam, in qua maior auctoritas quam in nostris prelatis debet rutilare."

announcing royal visitations to all ecclesiastical facilities. Zbyněk responded by excommunicating the king's officials and placing an interdict on Prague in June 1411, albeit with limited effect.<sup>48</sup> Just as the royal officials seized the clergy's riches and attempted to correct their moral failings,<sup>49</sup> so the common laity also followed in step. In Prague, reformist laymen humiliated offensive clerics, parading some nude and filthy with their mistresses through the city, while robbing and assaulting others.<sup>50</sup> Zbyněk himself was eventually forced to accept the King's arbitration in early July, which included reconciliation with Hus, and the removal of all anathemas, accusations, and the interdict. The King was also to gain certain archiepiscopal powers, including religious discretionary powers. After lifting the interdict, Zbyněk defiantly fled Bohemia for Hungary but mysteriously died en route, leaving the charges of heresy against Hus an unresolved issue. Václav's personal doctor, Albík of Uničov, was elected archbishop of Prague, and he demonstrated his royal loyalties by dispersing Zbyněk's canons, removing his representative prosecutors against Hus from the curia, and retracting all the hostile accusations of his predecessor.<sup>51</sup>

Although it is an oversimplification to suppose a neatly linear progression from the earliest "forefathers" of Bohemian reform to the Hussite movement of the early 1410s, there is clear continuity in important messages, methods, and intellectual background which help account for their general appeal and direction. These included popular, individualized piety which was fostered by projects of preaching and popular engagement, in sharp critique especially of clerical degradation, and all informed by

<sup>48</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 40-43. The dating of the interdict is discussed by Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* I, 483, n. 2.

<sup>49</sup> Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* II, 73; Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, 391; František Palacký, *Über Formelbücher, zunächst in Bezug auf böhmischen Geschichte: Nebst Beilagen. Ein Quellenbetrag zur Geschichte Böhmens und der Nachbarländer im XIII., XIV. und XV. Jahrhunderte. Zweite Lieferung* (Prague: Kronberger und Řiwnač, 1847), 204 f.

<sup>50</sup> Palacký, *Documenta*, 735, 444; *ÁČ* 26, 225.

<sup>51</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology"; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 863-65.



sources of realist idealism which generally denigrated the status quo to varying degrees. As has been shown, these also help account for shared groups of opponents among the university masters and the ecclesiastic hierarchy. In the Hussite case, these controversies were amplified in significance by their discovery of the contentious Oxford thinker John Wyclif, by intense popular engagement, and by the correspondence of religious with ethnic and political contests. With the help of royal and popular support, Hussite reform leaders were able to gain authority in the university and defeat the opposition of the highest local Church representative, but at the cost of formal citation from the papal curia. As long as King Václav's pragmatic policies aligned with the cause of reform this could be ignored, but as the whole movement soon found, the end of this honeymoon with secular power would escalate the conflict to a new register, of life and death.

## **Intellectual precursors and the Christian Platonist tradition**

### Augustine

As the most important Church Father in the Western Middle Ages, it is unsurprising that Augustine of Hippo (d. 430) played an important role in intellectual history across the Latin world, but it may be more remarkable that the Augustinian renaissance was so crucial to non-conformist and inventive thinkers. Long before his central contributions to Martin Luther and the German Reformation, this prolific African figure was instrumental to reformers and radicals from England to Bohemia, at least from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Yet this seems counterintuitive when read alongside the highly deterministic and pessimistic tone of his great works. For Augustine, humankind has been permanently afflicted with the miserable diagnosis of psychological and social

infection and deterioration ever since the sin of the first man, for which no cure exists. The treatments he prescribed could ameliorate but not ultimately cure this punitive condition of mortal suffering, and Augustine emphasized instead passive endurance over impious interference in divine plans. By God's gratuitous grace, a select few humans could escape this condition to return to perfection upon death, but only as an undeserved and merciful gift. Nevertheless, most would forever suffer in hell without regard for their mundane identities or accomplishments. In short, Augustine compellingly deactivated any hope of affecting or enjoying any meaningful happiness or improvement of the human condition, postponing such expectations exclusively to the afterlife. Nevertheless, as will be made clear later, certain Augustinian positions within this general framework would prove highly provocative within new interpretative and historical contexts, and could be convincingly supplemented by more optimistic thinkers in the Christian Platonic tradition.

As for all Christian Platonists, man's pre-lapsarian existence represents for Augustine a distant ideal of perfection which humankind has tragically departed from. These thinkers generally agree that existence is fundamentally teleological and thus normative, and that pre-lapsarian mankind was in a state of perfect identity with the exemplary vision which God originally had for creation. This is the existential condition in Eden, however Platonist authors conceptualized it.<sup>52</sup> For Augustine, this primordial creation was essentially good, even if it did not share in the perfect immutability of spiritual being.<sup>53</sup> More optimistic thinkers, such as William of Conches (d. after 1154)

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<sup>52</sup> Thinkers like John Scotus Eriugena read the Eden narrative allegorically, and identified material creation only with the Fall. Cf. Donald F. Duclow, "The Sleep of Adam, the Making of Eve: Sin and Creation in Eriugena," in *Eriugena and Creation*, ed. Willemien Otten and Michael I. Allen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), esp. 242 f.; Dermot Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scottus Eriugena. A Study of Idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 157 f.

<sup>53</sup> Matthias Riedl, "Die Gnadenlehre in der politischen Philosophie des Augustinus" (MA thesis, Erlangen, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, 1998); William A. Christian, "The Creation of the World," in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. Roy W. Battenhouse (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 336 f.

of the famous intellectual community of Chartres, identified this primordial state with something akin to the immanentization of the world of exemplary ideas within the mind of God (*mundus archetypus / intelligibilis*) into the empirical world of created reality (*mundus sensibilis*). Glossing Plato's *Timaeus*, William explains:

He names [the forms]: one kind "that is born", namely the sensible world (*sensilis mundus*), "also another in which it is born", namely primordial matter (*primordialis materia*), "and in addition a third whose likeness it bears and obtains", namely the archetypal world (*archetypus mundus*) whose likeness that sensible [world] becomes.<sup>54</sup>

Here, the correspondence of archetype and reality meant that mankind shared as much as possible in God's maximal goodness and being.<sup>55</sup> Man was created in God's image, in harmony with God epistemologically and voluntarily, and thus existed together with him in a closely unified state which Platonists always associate with perfection. For Augustine, such unity is characterised above all by man's love of God (*caritas*), which ameliorates the distance between creator and creature, and by which man finds belonging, peace, and supreme happiness. By sharing this same love, all mankind was also mutually unified in love, as Augustine explained: "Their love toward God was unclouded, and their mutual affection was that of faithful and sincere marriage; and from this love flowed a wonderful delight".<sup>56</sup> As a result, man was in an ideal psychological and social state. Man's likeness to God means that man was ordered by reason which participates in divine being, and thus by divine law, with full awareness

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<sup>54</sup> Guillaume de Conches, *Glosae super Platonem*, ed. Édouard Jeuneau (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1965), 275 f.: "Et nominat ea: unum genus 'quod gignitur' id est sensilis mundus [sic], 'item aliud in quo gignitur', scilicet primordialis materia, 'preterea tercium ex quo similitudinem trahit mutuaturque quod gignitur', scilicet archetypus mundus, ad cuius similitudinem fit iste sensilis."

<sup>55</sup> Rudi A. te Velde, "Participation: Aquinas and His Neoplatonic Sources," in *Christian Platonism: A History*, ed. Alexander J. B. Hampton and John Peter Kenney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 122-139.

<sup>56</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 18-20; Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XIV, 10: "mor erat imperturbatus in Deum atque inter se coniugum fida et sincera societate viventium, et ex hoc amore grande gaudium", trans. New Advent, <https://www.newadvent.org/>. Alteration mine.

of the Golden rule and God's will. He thus perfectly and effortlessly knew himself as well as his purpose in the hierarchy of creation, and harmonized his internal self and his external actions accordingly. As a result, Augustine understands man's original state as pre-political and lacking all coercion, as the order of the world was fully rational following the divine plan. As such, mankind collectively shared in God's providential dominion (*dominium*) over all the world. In addition, man's body completely obeyed reason, and even the sexual act of reproduction lacked its current lustfulness as a fully rational deed. Had he not sinned, man could have expected to live happily, without pain or affliction, and then enter directly into the heavenly kingdom to replace the league of fallen angels.<sup>57</sup>

This idyllic state of united existence is ruined by the Fall and the expulsion of man from paradise, which begins a drastically new stage of alienation, diversity, and confusion. This represents a departure from divine unity, an aberration against the norms of existence, and thus the *exitus* in the Platonist framework. For Augustine, the Fall is simultaneously a psychological and a corporeal degeneration. Fundamentally, it is the site of original sin, which articulates the corruption of man's primordial voluntary and epistemological unity with divinity. This occurred through pride (*superbia*), the source of all sin and disorder, by which man rejects his natural subordination and attempts to become self-sufficient, imitating God and placing himself atop the hierarchy of being. For Augustine, this represents an overthrow of divine order, and man's participation in Satan's original rebellion against God. Here, man truly becomes an ego, external and alienated from divinity. Augustine explains: "All those imitate you [i.e.

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<sup>57</sup> Riedl, "Die Gnadenlehre"; Matthias Riedl, "Order," in *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, ed. Michael T. Gibbons (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 1 f.; Matthias Riedl, "Natur und Sünde - Augustinus über den Anfang der Politik," in *Die Menschen im Krieg, im Frieden mit der Natur - Humans at war, at peace with nature*, ed. Tilo Schabert and Matthias Riedl (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2006), 125 f.

God] perversely who distance themselves far from you and raise themselves up against you". As a result, man's love, which is the dynamic force of the psyche, is transformed from *caritas* into *cupiditas*. This means it is diverted away from God and toward the self and the world, and thus away from true being and life and toward non-being and death. For Augustine, this dreadful state forever shatters the perfect bond of creature to creator enjoyed in paradise. His pride and world-love mean that man finds a new but pathetic belonging in the mundane realm, and his very nature is transformed into a worldly being. The human mind is obscured from God's will and condemned to penal darkness (*poenae tenebrae*), and in this ignorance it no longer understands the divine law and man's role in the divine plan. As a result, the primordial unity of inner and outer man (body and soul) is fractured, the body oppresses the soul (*corpus aggravat animam*), meaning that man becomes pathologically sinful, and his rational control over his own body is lost. The worldly existence of all humans and their offspring thus becomes perpetually punitive: they lose their original free will (i.e. freedom to choose not to sin), retaining only the "freedom" to choose the next sin, and man becomes vulnerable to an anarchic new state of affairs, including all nature of illness, suffering, inadequacy, anxiety, and death.<sup>58</sup> In other words, original sin is responsible for the pathetic and confused state of contemporary humankind, including its relation to God and corporeal existence.

The ramifications of the Fall thus have a drastically pessimistic effect on human history. In his turn away from matters of spirit to obsessions of the flesh, man exists on

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<sup>58</sup> Herbert A. Deane, *The Political and Social Ideas of Saint Augustine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 16–21, 39–45; William MacAllen Green, *Initium omnis peccati superbia: Augustine on Pride as the First Sin* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1949), 407–31; Paul J. Weithman, "Augustine's Political Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. David V. Meconi and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 235–37; Riedl, "Natur und Sünde - Augustinus über den Anfang der Politik," 125 f.; Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 81 f. Quote in Augustine, *Confessions* II, vi, 14: "Perverse te imitantur omnes, qui longe se a te faciunt et extollunt se adversum te."

the level of beasts (*pecoribus comparatur*). For Augustine, man's new egoism and greed result in his unquenchable urge to possess and dominate the world, including other human beings (*libido dominandi*). According to him, this is the birth of politics, the origin of all manner of conflict, murder, and war between humans. Building upon Romans 13, Augustine argues that God's continued providential dominion over creation is now forced to establish the mundane political dominion of kings and rulers over men in order to merely restrain sin and limit man's ability to do evil.<sup>59</sup> The resulting worldly peace and order is thus founded in compromise with sin and subsequently is extraordinarily flawed and unnatural, marked by oppression, greed, fear, debauchery, and treachery, and only barely able to ensure man's bodily survival. Nevertheless, Augustine emphasizes that this is the best possible condition for postlapsarian humankind, which can expect nothing better while on the earth. He therefore gives little attention to different forms of government, and makes no clear distinction between politics and other relationships of subjection, even slavery; for him, political dominion is always merely a necessary evil and thus virtually indistinguishable, only assessable in a meaningful way by its disciplinary power. In this sense, Augustine clearly distinguishes sacred from profane history, where he establishes the *saeculum* as a concept independent and ultimately meaningless to soteriology. As a result, the personal qualities of the ruler are virtually irrelevant: the political role of the wicked tyrant is of equal legitimacy to that of the pious king, and should be obeyed accordingly.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Riedl, "Die Gnadenlehre"; Deane, *Political and Social Ideas*, 42; Wilfrid Parsons, "The Influence of Romans XIII on Christian Political Thought from Augustine to Hincmar," *Theological Studies* 2 (1941): 325-33. Augustine explicitly rejected man's dominion over man in God's original plan: "Rationalem factum ad imaginem suam noluit nisi irrationabilibus dominari; non hominem homini, sed hominem pecori. Inde primi iusti pastores pecorum magis quam reges hominum constituti sunt". See Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 15.

<sup>60</sup> Weithman, "Augustine's Political Philosophy"; Paul J. Weithman, "Augustine and Aquinas on Original Sin and the Function of Political Authority," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30 (1992): 355-60; Stephen E. Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics in the Thought of John Wyclif* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 26-32; Deane, *Political and Social Ideas*, 134; Matthias Riedl, "The Secular

Furthermore, even if rulers should try to achieve standards for peace, the achievement of this can only ever be partial at best. In short, the true, divine peace of Eden is a shattered impossibility in this world, and man's pathological corruption and sinfulness mean that it cannot be otherwise. Human history is thus at best an imperfect amelioration of evil.

Despite this essentially pessimistic view of human existence and history, however, God does not wholly abandon his creation, but maintains the hope of reconciliation, albeit exclusively in the afterlife. This hope mitigates the extreme pessimism with which Augustine diagnoses the postlapsarian condition, and represents the Platonic process of *reditus* in his thought, although it is radically deterministic in comparison to other thinkers. For him, the sheer magnitude and perpetuity of sin acts as an obstructing medium (*medium separans*) between man and divinity: mankind is a "mass of sin" (*massa peccati*) which is only worthy of damnation, meaning its eternal alienation from God in the realm of hell. It is therefore a purely gratuitous act of divine mercy that God sent the incarnated *logos* into history to allow man the hope of rehabilitation. For Augustine, the utter humility and love represented in Christ's human incarnation and the substitutionary atonement for mankind offers the cure for the *superbia* and *cupiditas* causing the miserable state of humanity, thus re-establishing the human bond to divinity. This is possible because even after sin, there remains a spark of God's image from creation, though it was "worn out and defaced by losing God's participation (*Dei participatio*)". Through Christ and his imitation, man is reminded of the norm of creation and his subordinate place within it, of his identity as an image of divinity, and thus of God himself. Christ is thus the reconciling Mediator (*mediator*

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Sphere in Western Theology: A Historical Reconsideration," in *The Future of Political Theology. Religious and Theological Perspectives*, ed. Péter Losonczi, Mika Luoma-aho, and Aakash Singh (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 13-17; Riedl, "Order," 2.

*reconcilians*) between God and man, which every Christian must substitute for the egoistic sin which divides him from divinity. As Augustine explains:

We are not reconciled unless that which is in the midst is taken away, and something else is put in its place. For there is a separating medium, and, on the other hand, there is a reconciling Mediator. The separating medium is sin, the reconciling Mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>61</sup>

The incarnation thus teaches man to conform his to the divine will, redirecting his love and hate appropriately (*ut diligamus et oderimus recte*) to the workmanship of God and man, respectively.<sup>62</sup> As will be shown, the most optimistic Christian Platonist thinkers take the significance of the incarnation even further, as the first step to man's corporeal salvation. Most relevant for Bohemian reformers here is the late-ancient thinker Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (d. cca. 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> c.), for whom Christ's advent fulfils but is inseparable from the process of creation itself, and thus allows human participation in perfect being via the perfect theophany of the incarnation as captured in the eucharist.<sup>63</sup> For Augustine, however, the durable power of sin still always mitigates any optimistic conclusions which may be drawn from the incarnation event. Therefore, any knowledge or happiness which fallen man experiences is imperfect at best, only to be enjoyed truly and fully in the afterlife, and the expectation of perfect communion with Christ in the

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<sup>61</sup> Deane, *Political and Social Ideas*, 18-23; Ronnie Rombs, "Augustine on Christ," in *The T&T Clark Companion to Augustine and Modern Theology*, ed. C. C. Pecknold and Tarmo Toom, 2013, 42. Cf. Augustine, In evangelium Ioannis, 41, v: "Quia ergo non reconciliamur nisi ablato quod in medio est, et posito quod in medio sit. Est enim medium separans, sed contra est mediator reconcilians; medium separans est peccatum, mediator reconcilians est Dominus Iesus Christus". On God's image in fallen man, cf. De Trinitate, XIV, viii: "Diximus enim eam etsi amissa Dei participatione obsoletam atque deformem, Dei tamen imaginem permanere."

<sup>62</sup> Augustine, In Evangelium Ioannis, 87, iv: "Ipsi sunt mundus qui nos odit. Ergo et prohibemur diligere in illo quod ipse diligit in seipso; et iubemur diligere in illo quod ipse odit in seipso, Dei scilicet opificium, et diversas bonitatis suae consolationes. Vitium quippe in illo diligere prohibemur, iubemurque diligere naturam, cum ipse in se diligit vitium, oderitque naturam: ut nos eum et diligamus et oderimus recte, cum se ipse diligit oderitque perverse." Cf. Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 30, 91-96, cit. at 96, n. 10.

<sup>63</sup> Eric D. Perl, "Symbol, Sacrament, and Hierarchy in Saint Dionysius the Areopagite," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 39 (1994): 331-44.



world is futile.<sup>64</sup> It is true that the community of those who are united with Christ are the members of the true Church, the body of Christ (or *civitas Dei*), pilgrims (*viatores*) in this world who will be corporeally resurrected with him at their head unto a perfect reunification with God in their heavenly homeland (*patria*). Nevertheless, because of sin, man is unable to merit or even perceive the membership of Christ's mystical body, which was predestined independently by God before creation. It is only by the gratuitous gift of divine grace that anyone may "earn" salvation from hell, but this cannot be detected in any human trait or good deed. Even the signs of sacramental membership in the institutional Church are ultimately empty signifiers, since it is only the invisible collection of the eternally elect which these meaningfully unite into Christ's mystical body. For Augustine, therefore, no human individual or community may claim a holy self-identity except out of sinful pride, including any Christian kingdom or even the institutional Church itself, which exists on earth as a mixed body (*corpus permixtus*) of the predestined and the damned (*civitas terrena*). In other words, the fundamental division of secular from sacred affairs means that the concept of truly good and evil as labels for polities or people disappears: the pious Christian may be among the damned, while even certain Jews, pagans, or tyrants may be included among the elect. Only at the Last Judgement will the communities of Augustine's heavenly and earthly cities be made perfectly visible.<sup>65</sup> As a result of all of this, Augustine leaves the Christian believer with a religiosity which is both radically uncertain yet deterministic and fatalistic. Humans are powerless to accept Christ's offer of divine reconciliation,

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<sup>64</sup> For instance, cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XV, 23.43-44, 24.44: "In qua utique non laborarent, et vix ad certum aliquid pervenirent, nisi poenalibus tenebris involuti et onerati corpore corruptibili quod aggravat animam."

<sup>65</sup> James Wetzel, "Predestination, Pelagianism, and Foreknowledge," in *Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Katzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 49-58; Deane, *Political and Social Ideas*, 20-29; Riedl, "The Secular Sphere in Western Theology," 15-17. On the eucharist, cf. Michael Root, "Augustine on the Church," in *The T&T Clark Companion to Augustine and Modern Theology*, ed. C. C. Pecknold and Tarmo Toom, 2013, esp. 66 f.

even if they are expected to maintain a lifelong struggle with sin, and membership in the small community of God's elect is ultimately eternal and invisible, impenetrable to all human efforts to affect or even know it.

As this brief reconstruction of Augustine's thought has shown, this most prolific of authors left a generally ambivalent intellectual legacy for those late-medieval reformers who directly or indirectly found inspiration in him. Although these later figures discovered within his texts explosive arguments and implications with which they could deploy a radical project of renewal and recreation, this was usually in spite, rather than because, of the apparent mood of the Church Father's works. Instead, Augustine's generally negative anthropology and radically sovereign theology suggests a drastically pessimistic and deterministic view of postlapsarian history which extinguishes all hope to affect meaningful change in the world. As has been shown, Augustine sees fallen man in a state of continuous struggle with sin and its ramifications, without any hope of real improvement. No true peace or happiness is possible in this life, except minimally insofar as the effects of sin are mitigated by a powerful ruler. The only hope for rehabilitation is in the afterlife thanks to the example and sacrifice of Christ, but even this is available only to the lucky few; for them, salvation from hell is gratuitously secured by the sovereign choice of God, immune to human interference. Any attempt to improve the human situation in this world or the next, or any resistance to tyranny, merely expresses a prideful rejection of humility, or bondage to worldliness. As a result of all this, there is no role for meaningful human agency or hope for positive innovation, a finding which seems to strictly preclude the optimistic expectation of religious and even socio-political improvement by certain deeply-Augustinian reformers. Nevertheless, as will be shown, their inheritance of

Augustinian thought was as selective as it was enthusiastic, and left ample space for innovation, reinterpretation, and importation.

### John Wyclif and Matthias of Janov

The most influential contributors to the Hussite intellectual pedigree, Matthias of Janov and John Wyclif, were both deeply indebted to the Christian Platonic tradition, and particularly to its interpretation by Augustine. Both these thinkers operate within a general intellectual framework of *exitus/reditus* which sharply distinguishes the temporal and spiritual, reviling the shift of humanity toward petty mundane distractions and guiding it back to eternal unity with the divine. Following Augustine, the corrupt world is merely an imperfect degradation of a normative, archetypal vision of God corrupted by human volition. Nevertheless, in concert or individually, it is clear that both thinkers make significant innovations upon the Augustinian tradition which will direct them and their Hussite successors to unorthodox and controversial conclusions. In opposition to Augustine, for instance, Janov and Wyclif emphasize that the central achievement of human-divine cooperation, as well as its betrayal, are both events within normal human history, and can be rehabilitated on earth pending the human effort of reform. Furthermore, both thinkers are confident in the immediate accessibility of God's will to man, a finding which undermines the authority of the institutional Church hierarchy and gives value to the spiritual agency of non-clerics. To varying extents, this knowledge even allows Christians to identify the community of Christ or his opponents according to new criteria. As will be shown later, such innovations will be important to their Hussite successors for their inspiration of an optimistic view of human capability and potential, a sectarian and exclusivist appreciation of Christian identity, and for immanentizing the membership of transcendent communities within politics.

Both Wyclif and Janov proceed their historiography from distinctly Christian Platonic origins, which gives the order of creation an intensively normative plan which human beings are required to replicate. For both thinkers, the act of creation is not an exercise in which God enacts something outside himself, but rather something through himself, via Christ the *logos*. Both thinkers thus use the *locus classicus* “omnia in omnibus” (1 Cor. 15:28) to refer to Christ as the archetype of all creation. For Wyclif this means he is the site of the principle category of universal through which creation subsists—Christ literally contains all the truths of being, which is why Wyclif interchangeably refers to him as Holy Scripture (*Scriptura Sacra*) and the Book of Life (*liber vitae*).<sup>66</sup> Janov identifies him with the immutable and eternal form of all creation, and uniquely calls him by the Avicennan term “form giver” (*dator formarum*) or simply the First Truth (*veritas prima*).<sup>67</sup> Both thinkers were here at the borders of orthodoxy, and immediately accused by opponents of flirting with pantheism.<sup>68</sup> At any rate, Christ’s role in creation means that the entire cosmos is divinely inscribed by a natural order of God’s will, what Wyclif calls the law of Christ/God (*lex Christi / Dei / domini*), and Janov calls the natural or first law or rule (*lex naturalis / prima regula*) which

<sup>66</sup> John Wyclif, *Triologus*, ed. Gotthard Victor Lechler (Oxford: E typographeo Clarendoniano, 1869), 238: “Primo enim scriptura sacra signat Jesum Christum librum vitae, in quo omnis veritas est inscripta, juxta illud Johannis X: ‘non potest solvi scriptura, quem Pater sanctificavit et misit in mundum.’” Cf. Ian Christopher Levy, “John Wyclif’s Neoplatonic View of Scripture in Its Christological Context,” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 11, no. 2 (2003): 227–40. The philosophical background to this is Wyclif’s propositional realism, which equates being with truth. See Alessandro D. Conti, “Wyclif’s Logic and Metaphysics,” in *A Companion to John Wyclif*, ed. Ian Christopher Levy (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2006), 78–82.

<sup>67</sup> Matthias de Janov, *Regulae veteris et Novi Testamenti* II, ed. Vlastimil Kybal (Oeniponte: Sumptibus Librariae Universitatis Wagnerianae, 1909), 4: “Et proinde filius est forma vel ydea immutabilis et eterna omni creature, aut in filio est supersubstantialiter et vitaliter similitudo vel forma omnium, que facta sunt.”; Matthias de Janov, *Regulae veteris et Novi Testamenti* VI, ed. Jana Nechutová and Helena Krmíčková (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1993), 153: “... lesus crucifixus, est dator formarum et una simplex ydea universalis omnium iuxta ymaginacionem magistri Platonis. Hoc Verbum vel Dei filius lesus Cristus animas vel spiritus racionales creans formavit easdem ad seipsum, ut essent ei similes”. Cf. Martin Dekarli, “Regula generalis, principalis, prima veritas: The Philosophical and Theological Principle of Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti of Matej of Janov,” *BRRP* 8 (2011): 39 f.; Herold, *Pražská univerzita a Wyclif*, 227; Valasek, *Das Kirchenverständnis*, 133.

<sup>68</sup> For Janov, see Herold, *Pražská univerzita a Wyclif*, 225 f.; Dekarli, “Regula generalis,” 39 f. For Wyclif, see Samuel Harrison Thomson, “The Philosophical Basis of Wyclif’s Theology,” *Journal of Religion* 11, no. 1 (1931): 97 f.

intrinsically inclined all creation to its final end (*ad suum finem ultimum*), the return into the One (*redeant ad unum*).<sup>69</sup> Human beings find existential meaning in realizing and inscribing this law in their lives, and both authors agree that this came naturally to the first, prelapsarian humans. According to Wyclif, primordial man was naturally ordered and in perfect concord with the order of the divine will. This allowed man to effortlessly participate in dominion (*dominium*), that paternal relation by which God creates, sustains, and governs the cosmos. Thus in the state of natural dominion (*dominium naturale*), man ruled over creation and held its goods in perfect equality, by common participation in divine or universal dominion (*dominium divinum / universale*).<sup>70</sup> Similarly, Janov describes that the inscription of the first rule into the human intellect allowed man to perfectly know and govern himself justly according to divine volition, and importantly adds that this also gave him the power of discernment (*discrecio, discernere*), to judge (*iudicare*) the justice of others.<sup>71</sup> Here we see, therefore, the agreement of both authors with Augustine and Christian Platonism in essentially identifying the state of prelapsarian creation as a perfect harmony between the two worlds, archetypal and perceivable. The ordering principle of the archetypal

<sup>69</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 18: “Nam inconcussum tenemus, quod puta ab uno solo omnis multiplicatas rerum et scienciarum est derivata. Igitur eadem via necesse est, ut ad idem unum omnia redeant et colligantur.” Cf. Dekarli, “Regula generalis,” 34 f., 40; Levy, “John Wyclif’s Neoplatonic View,” 235; Valasek, *Das Kirchenverständnis*, 62-65.

<sup>70</sup> John Wyclif, *Tractatus de Mandatis Divinis, Accedit Tractatus de Statu Innocencie*, ed. Frederic David Matthew and Johann Loserth (London: Wyclif Society by C.K. Paul, 1922), 505: “Quibus hic suppositis patet quod in statu innocencie forent cuncta cunctis communia, ut idem Deus foret omnibus creaturis, et cum omnis innocens naturaliter dominaretur omnibus sibi inferioribus in natura, patet quod omnes homines communicarent in omnibus que haberent.” Cf. Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics*, 68, 84-89; Stephen E. Lahey, *John Wyclif* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 210-12; Takashi Shogimen, “Wyclif’s Ecclesiology and Political Thought,” in *A Companion to John Wyclif*, ed. Ian Christopher Levy (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 228 f.

<sup>71</sup> For instance, Janov, *Regule* II, 12, 13 f.: “Dico itaque, quod veritas est regula inscripta cuilibet homini in intellectu naturaliter, secundum quam homo potuit se sufficienter gubernare et cognoscere, ipse solus seipsum regule inscripte comparatus, et dehinc secundum seipsum et alium iuste iudicare et metiri ...”. Ibid., 258: “illa unica regula propria, communis et immediata cuilibet hominum et in promptu semper et ubique existens, continet in se omnem regulam et omnia gubernacula parciaalia applicabilia proprie et adequate omni statui, omni condicioni hominum omnique cogitationi et proposito, omni actui et virtuti, que possunt dividere semper et discernere ubique sufficienter bonum a malo, equum ab iniurio, sanctum a non sancto ...”. Cf. Dekarli, “Regula generalis,” 35.

world was imprinted via Christ into creation, where it was perfectly obeyed and executed. As a result, mankind found itself here in a meaningful equilibrium with God and itself.

Although both Wyclif and Janov generally followed Augustine's historical reconstruction, they agreed in ameliorating the gravity of original sin upon postlapsarian mankind by reference to Christ's incarnation. Nevertheless, both thinkers followed the Church Father in ascribing to the Fall human degradation and a significant interruption of God's will. In Adam's sin, man diverts his will from God to himself, and thus obstructs (though not destroys) the immediate access he previously enjoyed intrinsically with divinity.<sup>72</sup> As a result, he devolves into a state of pathological corruption and strife, forgetting his role in creation, the divinely governing law or rule, and his divine likeness, which both thinkers associate with a turn toward beastliness.<sup>73</sup> In agreement with Augustine, Wyclif describes how this brings an end to the state of man's natural dominion and legitimizes the political age of civil dominion (*dominium civilis*): the new state of sin and rebellion to divine order necessitates the creation of political order and private property, which concentrates wealth and power in a ruling king set above other men to act as a steward of divine dominion and God's vicar (*dei vicarius*) on earth in temporal affairs. Although this new civil dominion is unnatural to creation and leaves rulers vulnerable to sin and greed, it is for the greater good and required for the arduous task of controlling and punishing sin and error.<sup>74</sup> Janov is more ambiguous on the role

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<sup>72</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 14 f.

<sup>73</sup> Matthias de Janov, *Regulae veteris et Novi Testamenti* IV, ed. Vlastimil Kybal (Oeniponte: Sumptibus librariae Universitatis Wagnerianae, 1913), 344; Wyclif, *De Statu Innocencie*, 488: "Unde quam naturale est quod medium opacitate indispositum vel aliunde dislocatum non recipit influxum luminis, sicut facit, quando manet plene dispositum et debite applicatum, sic est naturaliter de qualibet anima peccante, et sic de lege nature consequitur quod anima recedens a Deo, cui soli servire debuit, serviat creature cui serviendo Deo debuit dominari ...". Cf. note 112.

<sup>74</sup> John Wyclif, *Tractatus de officio regis*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard and Charles Sayle (London: publ. for the Wyclif Society, 1887), 4: "Rex enim est dei vicarius quem proximo dictum est esse timendum, ideo necesse est sibi servari honorificenciam in eius vicario, et per consequens, non obstante quod sit frater

of secular rule: he acknowledges its nominal authority and normative function in divine order, also drawing on Romans 13, but is generally more pessimistic about the role of these “punishments and avengers” (*penas et ultores*), as will be elaborated below.<sup>75</sup> Instead, he emphasizes the continued degradation of human history after the Fall, which necessitated ever greater acts of divine providence. Thus God reinscribed the natural law a second time more explicitly, upon the stone tablets given to Moses, and finally a third time, most perfectly and completely in Christ’s incarnation among humans.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, there is a real sense in which both thinkers move past Augustine and toward thinkers like Pseudo-Dionysius here, in agreement that the incarnation event is not merely an act of substitutionary atonement for sin, but actually in continuity or fulfilment of the creative process. Especially for Janov, Christ’s advent was capable of even redeeming human corporality in this life via the eucharist, and perfecting the two previous inscriptions of divine truth.<sup>77</sup> At the very least, the embodiment of the Word introduced the possibility of rehabilitation from sin, the revival of the prelapsarian state, and the restoration of human access to God, as represented in history by the Primitive Church of Christ and the early Christians. For Wyclif, Christ as the perfect human

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noster, differenter ab aliis fratribus honorari.” Cit. Shogimen, “Wyclif’s Ecclesiology,” 226. Wyclif, *De Statu Innocencie*, 506: “Consideret ergo philosophus quod appropriacio civilis solum inducitur ad refrenandum viciosos, qui aliter abuterentur temporalibus, si semper ad votum suppeterent ...”. Cf. Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics*, 112 f., 125.

<sup>75</sup> Janov, *Regule* IV, 207: “in veritate ad hoc solum sunt positi reges et principes christiani, ut promoveant in populo christiano Christi sanguine redempto non se ipsos, sed amorem et timorem Jhesu Christi. Et ideo quicumque rex vel dominus illud exequitur fideliter, beatus est in facto suo ...”. Cit. Vlastimil Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova. Jeho život: spisy a učení* (Prague: České společnosti nauk, 1905), 105. Cf. Dekarli, “Regula generalis,” 36.

<sup>76</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 14–16. Cf. Dekarli, “Regula generalis,” 35 f.; Jana Nechutová, “Kategorie zákona Božího a M. Matěj z Janova,” *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity* E 12 (1967): 212 f.

<sup>77</sup> For Wyclif, this is argued by Stephen E. Lahey, “Wyclif’s Trinitarian and Christological Theology,” in *A Companion to John Wyclif*, ed. Ian Christopher Levy (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 169 f.; Lahey, *John Wyclif*, 139 f. For Janov, cf. Janov, *Regule* II, 15 f.: “Hec itaque veritatis inscripcio [tertia] collegit in se ambas precedentes leges easque vivificavit et reformavit ... Continet autem hec regula solum unum preceptum ad modum prime legis, videlicet dileccionem, ut per hoc innuat, quod ipsa est plena reformatio prime legis. ... Adde igitur ei [legi naturali] dileccionem, puta, quatenus illud inpleatur ex dileccione, tunc plane erit lex perfecta et levis.”; Ole Fredrik Kullerud, “„Ipsum Est Omnia in Omnibus,“: Matej of Janov and the Redemption of Corporeal Man According to Regulae veteris et novi testamenti V:8,” *BRRP* 9 (2014): 19–34. On the opinion of Pseudo-Dionysius, cf. Perl, “Symbol,” 337.

reminds mankind how it lived sinlessly in Eden, in voluntary harmony with God without private property or hierarchy, and thus reintroduces the potential of natural dominion in the form of so-called Evangelical dominion (*dominium evangelicum*).<sup>78</sup> This potential is in fact a necessity for his apostles and their clerical successors who represent Christ's earthly vicars in spiritual matters, and are freed from the sins of civil dominion to practice and spread this existential message to all Christians via example and preaching. Janov accepts the existential transformation in the primitive Church, including its primitive communalism,<sup>79</sup> but adds that the incarnation event actually restores in the Christian that which was forgotten or obscured (*tenebrata*) by sin, the power of discernment and recognition of justice held by primordial mankind:

Thus only the last delivery of the law, or the third inscription of the truth (*inscriptio veritatis*), is that most perfect (*perfectissima*) and most satisfying rule for human life, through which all justice may be fully examined and known (*plene examinari et cognosci*), through which all iniquity may easily be recognized (*facile deprehendi*) and avoided, through which full discernment or acquaintance (*plena discrecio seu noticia*) may be maintained, not only of just and unjust men, or regarding faithful prophets and imposters, but also of spirits (*spirituum*)—whether they are of God or not—and of all virtues and vices in a Christian person...<sup>80</sup>

Here Janov refers to the well-known description of charismatic powers imparted upon the primitive Church by the Holy Spirit in 1 Cor. 12:10, which include among others

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<sup>78</sup> John Wyclif, *Tractatus de civili Dominio. Liber primus*, ed. Reginald Lane Poole (London: Trübner, 1885), 62: “homo in statu innocencie habuit dominium cuiuslibet partis mundi sensibilis ..., et virtute passionis Christi est iustis plena peccatorum remissio ac dominium restitutum; ergo iam tempore gracie habet iustus plenum universitatis dominium.” Cf. Lahey, *John Wyclif*, 213 f.; Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics*, 119-24.

<sup>79</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 174: “‘Erant eis, inquit, omnia communia nec aliquis suum quidquam esse dicebat.’ Et exinde semper et ubique usque in perpetuum, ubicumque spiritus Jhesu est in hominibus facitque unum eos in Christo Jhesu, mox ibi omnis similitudo, omnis unio iocunda et concordia et omnium rerum communio incipit fomari, restaurari et firmari, quamvis non ubique operatione hominum, id est voto, pacto et iuramento, ut in monachis, sed in operatione precise spiritus Jhesu, id est operatione mutue caritatis et elleccionis proprie christianorum. Et ita quanto ubicumque inter christianos fit unitas intrinseca dileccionis maior et firmior similitudo caritatis, tanto maior fit ad extra similitudo habituum et morum et tanto maior communicatio omnium rerum secundarum.” cit. Dušan Coufal, “Key Issues in Hussite Theology,” in *A Companion to the Hussites*, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 271.

<sup>80</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 16; Dekarli, “Regula generalis,” 37 f.



miracles, prophecy, and also the charismatic discernment of good from evil spirits (*discretio spirituum*).<sup>81</sup> By placing this into a decidedly ecclesiological context, however, he is able to draw important implications regarding the detection of God's own will on earth, as we will see below. Put briefly, then, it is clear that both Janov and Wyclif considered Christ's incarnation in history as a significant act of recollection within the Christian which rehabilitates the potential for his existential realignment with the divine norm of God's law or rule. As such, they diverge from Augustine's emphasis on original sin, which they instead characterize as a temporary interlude before the idyllic age of the primitive Church which renews the concord between archetypal and sensible worlds.

Instead, the real moment of divergence which both Janov and Wyclif emphasize, the *exitus* of the Platonic model, is thus not the primordial Fall but rather a "second Fall" represented by the perversion of the primitive Church and the confusion of Christ's principle with the secular and Antichristian one. This is also a historiographic construction which is enthusiastically employed by Hussite leaders. According to this, the primitive Church community established by Christ and his apostles survived as long as Christians considered all creation, including their own worldly existence, as merely a means to serving God, but otherwise meaningless. Both authors agree with Augustine in identifying this direction of the will toward God and away from the world as proper love (*caritas*) which governed the primitive Church, and both mutually agree that the collapse of this era coincided with the clear entrance of Antichrist into history. According to Wyclif, this was marked by the Constantinian Donation, the mythical gift of secular authority and riches to the clergy by emperor Constantine in the fourth

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<sup>81</sup> On the gifts of the Spirit in the early Church, 1 Cor. 12:10: "alii operatio virtutum, alii prophetia, alii discretio spirituum, alii genera linguarum, alii interpretatio sermonum." Cf. Wendy Love Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the Late Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 17-22.

century.<sup>82</sup> For Janov this decay was a more protracted process driven by the corruption of the human will by worldly desires, and further devolving with the more recent cooling of enthusiasm for the sacrament of the eucharist.<sup>83</sup> Regardless of its exact historical roots, both thinkers concurred in tracing the state of their contemporary Church institution—including the invention of human traditions, the careerism of clerics, and even the Papal Schism—back to the replacement of love by greed. Especially in the clergy, this became the governing principle of their efforts, by which they lost sight of their spiritual duty to lead and instruct mankind in divine concord. As will be shown, this is of central importance since it forms the starting point for their thought on the project of reform.

As a result of this corruption, it is clear that neither Wyclif nor Janov considered their contemporary institutional Church as the representation of Christ's mystical body on earth, but instead adapted the Augustinian concept of the invisible Church of God's elect. Wyclif's most basic relevance on this issue to thinkers like Hus was to nullify the claims of all ecclesiastic officeholders to divine authority. Based on his interpretation of Augustine, the Oxford theologian accepted a doctrine of absolute "double predestination". This meant that before creation, God had perfect foreknowledge of all those destined for heavenly paradise, as well as those destined for damnation. The former made up the elect, the mystical body of Christ and the true Church (*congregacio omnium predestinatorum*), whose head was not any human figure but only Christ

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<sup>82</sup> Shogimen, "Wyclif's Ecclesiology," 210 f.; Lahey, "Antichrist in Bohemia."

<sup>83</sup> Matthias de Janov, *Regulae veteris et Novi Testamenti V*, ed. Otakar Odložilík (Prague, 1926), 272 f.: "Quia igitur ille supradicte due opiniones, ... sunt que valde communioni crebre et cottidiane sacramenti divini in populo christiano colorate obviunt et multos ad obmissionem eius adduxerunt et adducunt et dant materiam inpeditoribus felicissime communionis sacramenti et nimis necessarie plebeis cottidie dissuadendi, retrahendi et secundum Antychristi voluntatem et spiritum eius iuge sacrificium auferendi ..."; Matthias de Janov, *Regulae veteris et Novi Testamenti III*, ed. Vlastimil Kybal (Oeniponte: Sumptibus Librariae Universitatis Wagnerianae, 1911), 18; Janov, *Regule V*, 355; cf. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 151-53; Coufal, "Key Issues," 272.

himself.<sup>84</sup> The latter constituted the “foreknown” (*praesciti*), and also represented a mystical body, which Wyclif eventually identified with Christ’s historical opponent, the Antichrist.<sup>85</sup> Since membership in these communities is atemporal, it is impossible for Wyclif that they could be determined by human will or action, or that they could be discerned in any individual or group such as the institutional Church—*nemo potest mereri suam predestinacionem*, he says. Membership in a Christian community still involves action, and all Christians should serve God in their capacity out of duty, hope, and fear, but not as a condition of salvation.<sup>86</sup> Wyclif agreed that human beings therefore could neither merit nor lose their eternal status (*predestinacio non potest perdi*), and generally held that this was invisible to human perception, even if the good have a better claim to salvation.<sup>87</sup> While on earth, the members of these two eternal communities are temporarily mixed within the mundane Church, but at the end of time they would be clearly separated. These assertions hold disastrous implications for the papacy and the entire institutional Church: no person, whether sinner or righteous, could know with certainty their final status, and thus none could claim a leading position among the predestined, let alone the status of Christ’s vicar on earth. For Wyclif, this means the entire authority of the ecclesiastic structure evaporates, and the Church is built on the rock of Christ alone, whose truth persists in scripture.<sup>88</sup> A true spiritual vicar of Christ would be the humblest and most virtuous of men, ignoring wealth and considering only celestial matters. In a telling divergence from Augustine’s teaching of

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<sup>84</sup> John Wyclif, *Tractatus de Ecclesia*, ed. Johann Loserth (London: publ. for the Wyclif Society, 1886), 2, 7.

<sup>85</sup> Alexander Patschovsky, “‘Antichrist’ bei Wyclif,” in *Eschatologie und Hussitismus: Internationales Kolloquium, Prag 1.-4. September 1993*, ed. Alexander Patschovsky and František Šmahel (Prague: Československá akademie věd Historický ústav, 1996), 83–98.

<sup>86</sup> Shogimen, “Wyclif’s Ecclesiology,” 223 f.; Beryl Smalley, “The Bible and Eternity: John Wyclif’s Dilemma,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 27 (1964): 88.

<sup>87</sup> Kaminsky, “Wyclifism,” 61 f.; Lahey, *John Wyclif*, 186–89.

<sup>88</sup> Ian Christopher Levy, *John Wyclif: Scriptural Logic, Real Presence, and the Parameters of Orthodoxy* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 2003), 109–12; Levy, “John Wyclif’s Neoplatonic View.”

invisible collectives, therefore, Wyclif instead locates in the papacy and the institutional Church the visible manifestation of opposition to Christ and his members:

according to the way of life of Christ and the way of life of the pope, it will appear to the knowledgeable faithful that the pope is the evident Antichrist (*patulus Antichristus*), not just the individual person who sets up more laws that are against Christ's law, but the multitude of popes from the time of the Church's endowment—and of cardinals, bishops, and their other accomplices. The person of Antichrist is a monstrous composite one.<sup>89</sup>

In a mimicry of Christ's ordering principle, this Antichristian community even has a mirroring law of Antichrist (*lex Antichristi*) which commands the infatuation of worldliness.<sup>90</sup> In sum, Wyclif's radical reading of Augustinian predestination generally precludes the possibility to identify the individual members of Christ's true Church, even if he is less reticent in locating its opponents. This means that the foundational authority of the ecclesiastic institution is almost entirely annihilated, and the claim to Church leadership by a rich and powerful pope is revealed as particularly vacuous. As a result, no human but only Christ alone, and his expression in scripture, is considered the constitutive arbiter of Christianity in faith and behaviour in the world.

For Janov, by contrast, the membership of the Church is always temporally determined, and thus voluntary and ethical, meaning that it depends on human effort and is theoretically empirical. A basic relevance of Janov's ecclesiology, especially to thinkers like Jakoubek, will thus be to highlight the active role of man in achieving salvation, challenging the determinism of both Wyclif and Augustine. Like Wyclif,

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<sup>89</sup> John Wyclif, *Opus Evangelicum* III, ed. Johann Loserth (London: publ. for the Wyclif Society, 1895), 172: "Ex isto supposito cum fide conversacionis Christi et conversacione pape videtur fidelibus cognoscentibus antecedens quod papa sit patulus Antichristus, et non solum illa simplex persona que plus stabilit plures leges contrarias legi Christi, sed multitudo paparum a tempore dotacionis ecclesie, cardinalium, episcoporum et suorum complicitum aliorum. Illa enim est Antichristi persona composita monstrosa." trans. Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 182. Alterations mine. Cf. Shogimen, "Wyclif's Ecclesiology," 215-24.

<sup>90</sup> For instance, John Wyclif, *Dialogus sive Speculum ecclesie militantis*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard (London: Trübner, 1886), 16: "lex antichristi plena veneno atque mortifera duret perpetuo ut excitet homines ad peccandum." Cf. Patschovsky, "'Antichrist' bei Wyclif," 85 f.

Janov agrees with Augustine that the institutional Church is an empty signifier of salvation: as a mixture of the good and the wicked, it is the lowest form of Church community, and it merely designates Christians nominally.<sup>91</sup> Rather than predestination—which is entirely lacking from his works<sup>92</sup>—Janov emphasizes Augustine’s dual loves (*caritas, cupiditas*) to characterize man’s true relationship to God. All humans will be ultimately defined by the direction of their love and desires in this life, either to Christ or the self and the world (*amatores Christi, amatores huius mundi / carnis*). For Janov, the true Church is the “community of saints” (*communio sanctorum*), meaning the community of the good, the mystical body of Christ, their head, whose members are united in love and each continually actualize (*vivificat*) his will.<sup>93</sup> In other words, every Christian is a saint (*omnis christianus est sanctus*), and Christian identity entails a life of grace-affirming action.<sup>94</sup> These are God’s elect, but only by their personal choice to negate their own will, pursue only God, and live as despised aliens in this world.<sup>95</sup> Everything said of this community can be applied

<sup>91</sup> Janov, *Regule* IV, 32: “Tercio modo capitur communio pro congregacione omnium credencium in Christum et fide formata caritate et fide informi, bonorum christianorum simul et malorum. Et hec est vulgaris accepcio communionis et minus propria ... Communio tercio modo accepta est dicta neque principaliter neque proprie, quia boni christiani cum malis non habent unitatem vite et spiritus in Christo”. Cf. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 93.

<sup>92</sup> Noticed by Jana Nechutová, “K předhusitské a Husově eklesiologii,” *Sborník prací Filosofické fakulty Brněnské university* B 19 (1972): 99.

<sup>93</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 31 f.: “dicitur enim communio corporis Christi societas ipsorum sanctorum secundum Augustinum, prout ecclesia sanctorum et solum talium est unum corpus Christi mysticum, cuius caput est Christus. ... [ista] communio est dicta principaliter et proprie et est solum bonorum.”; Janov, *Regule* III, 55, 72: “habet proprium Christus Jhesus et spiritus eius, scilicet dispersa colligere per caritatem veritatis”. Cf. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 91 f.; Valasek, *Das Kirchenverständnis*, 76-88.

<sup>94</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 51 f.: “Christianus enim signat hominem sanctificatum per primam gratiam spiritus sancti in baptismo ... Similiter sanctus homo dicitur eo, quod habet gratiam gratum facientem, quod fit per vitam meritoriam et virtutes. Gracia autem gratum faciens et gracia prima prorsus eadem est res, nec differt in alio, nisi quia gracia gratum faciens est bonus usus gratie gratis date seu gratie prime ... Et idcirco bene sequitur: omnis christianus est sanctus et omnis sanctus est christianus; et, sicut impossibile est habere usum gratie sine habitu gratie, sic impossibile est esse christianum et non esse sanctum. ... Fides mortua sine operibus et character inpressus sine gracia subsistente sunt signa christiani, sed non faciunt, licet menciuntur christianum.” Cf. Nechutová, “Kategorie zákona,” 215; Jana Nechutová, “Matej z Janova - M. Jan Hus?,” in *Jan Hus na prelomu tisíciletí*, ed. Miloš Drda and František J. Holeček (Ústí nad Labem: Albis international, 2001), 73.

<sup>95</sup> Matthias de Janov, *Regulae veteris et Novi Testamenti* I, ed. Vlastimil Kybal (Oeniponte: Sumptibus Librariae Universitatis Wagnerianae, 1908), 9: “Potest autem quilibet talis esse conscius sancte fidei, qui

inversely to the population of Antichristians (*Antichristi*). These are all those sinners who are seduced by glory and worldly comforts and collectively form the body of Antichrist (*corpus Antichristi*), united in Antichristianity (*antichristianitas*) to worship their head, the greatest Antichrist (*summus Antichristus*) which Janov agreed must be none other than the pope himself:

... every carnal Christian who freely and frequently speaks of this world and delights in those things in the world, has a sign on his forehead and right hand showing that he is a member of the Antichrist (*membrum Antychristi*). And whatever great position in the Church a Christian of this sort holds, or however high is his office, resonance, and dignity, so great is he an Antichrist and member [of Antichrist] nearer to his head. And if he is in this way in the highest position of the Church, and presides over all others with power and authority, then he is the greatest and last Antichrist ...<sup>96</sup>

Janov reports that the contemporary Church institution has been overrun by hypocrites who try to appear holy but are really Antichristians,<sup>97</sup> and he makes it his mission to inform his readers of the means to discover them. This he will find in the rehabilitation of primordial, charismatic discernment via the unity of man and Christ in the sacrament of the eucharist. In conclusion then, contrary to Augustine and Wyclif, Janov's conception of membership in the true Church is not invincible and invisible, but

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consciis est sibi ipsi, quod credit in filium dei ... et pro eo libenter abnegat semet ipsum, id est omnem voluntatem propriam, et eligit piissimum Jhesum pro unico bono summo et necessario, eligit quoque vitam eius in hoc mundo, id est advenam esse in presenti vita et peregrinum et expositum tribulacionibus et persecucionibus universis." Janov, *Regule* II, 290: "Omnes igitur christiani, qui habent spiritum Jhesu crucifixi ... non sunt de hoc mundo, sicut et Christus non est ex hoc mundo, et istos mundus ideo odit, quia et Christum, id est veritatem et virtutem dei, odit." Cf. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 91 f.

<sup>96</sup> Janov, *Regule* III, 10, 233: "Et omnis christianus carnalis, qui libenter et frequenter loquitur de hoc mundo et diligit ea, que sunt in mundo, habet in fronte sua et in dextra sua signum evidens, quod est membrum Antychristi. Et quanto est huiusmodi christianus in maiori statu ecclesie vel quanto est superior in ecclesia officio, personatu et dignitate, tanto est maior Antychristus et propinquius membrum suo capiti. Et dum huiusmodi est in supremo gradu ecclesie et presidet omnibus aliis potencia et auctoritate, tunc ille est summus et in summo Antichristus ...". Cf. Vlastimil Kybal, "M. Matej z Janova a M. Jakoubek ze Střibra (srovnávací kapitola o Antikristu)," *Český Časopis Historický* 11 (1905): 22–37. McGinn, *Antichrist*, 183. supposes that "Antichristianity" is a term of Janov's own provenance.

<sup>97</sup> For instance, Janov, *Regule* II, 290: "Et alii omnes desertati a spiritu Jhesu recesserunt post varios deos prescriptos, putativos, et hoc mystice et spiritualiter; et ita recesserunt ab unitate ecclesie sacrosancte. Et isti sunt omnes christiani, amatores huius mundi et eorum, que in mundo sunt, et itidem sunt Antichristi, et corpus Antichristi et meretrix fornicaria eius. Et isti sunt, qui in novissimis temporibus multiplicati nimis in ecclesia quasi locuste, ex quibus venit Antichristus, et per eos est in domo dei, id est in ecclesia et super ecclesiam sanctorum collocatus, factus rex super omnes filios superbie similes sibi".

conditional and manifest depending on the internal orientation of the believer, and thus reliant upon human choice and effort. In other words, ethical desires and moral choices will associate the believer with one of the two mystical communities of humans, Christ or Antichrist, an identity discernible to the true Christian.

Given the centrality of the “second Fall” for both Wyclif and Janov, their respective missions of Church reform will form part of a grander program to return humankind back to the idyllic state of perfect human-divine harmony enjoyed by the primitive Church of Christ and his apostles. As such, it represents an inner-worldly process of *reditus* in the Platonic schema, and thus a markedly optimistic deviation from the historical pessimism of Augustine. As a reversal of the ancient source of corruption, however, the details of the reform program appear remarkably distinct for our two thinkers. For Wyclif, this process of purification is essentially a top-down initiative to remove the distractions of civil dominion from the clergy and impose universal conformity to the scriptural law of God. According to the Oxford master, the clerical addiction to power and wealth meant that the Church had forfeit its claim to Evangelical dominion and thus spiritual leadership. The depth of clerical perversion precluded the efficacy of fraternal correction or self-reform. As a result the civil lord, responsible for the enforcement of divine law in his realm, is tasked with purging its impediments. This means a forced disendowment of the clergy—removing the overwhelming distraction of temporal affairs and temptations to return the clergy to attend to the preaching of God’s law and thus affecting more general reform.<sup>98</sup> Ultimately, Wyclif indicated that this disendowment would renovate the Church to its primitive form and, with the instruction of scripture, help return humanity to a kind of primordial state of innocence

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<sup>98</sup> Wyclif, *Trialogus*, 310 f. at 311: “Nos autem dicimus illis, quod nedum possunt auferre temporalia ab ecclesia habitualiter delinquente, nec solum quod licet illis hoc facere sed quod debent sub poena damnationis gehennae, cum debent de sua stultitia poenitere et satisfacere pro peccato, quo Christi ecclesiam macularunt.” Cf. Kaminsky, “Wyclifism,” 68 f.; Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics*, 141-46.

(*status innocencie*), although he is reticent about the details of this idyllic future.<sup>99</sup> The ideal ruler is wise, or has advisors learned in God's law, but Wyclif admits the possibility that neither is the case, and that the sins and heresies of the clergy thus escape detection from secular authorities. For this reason, Wyclif argued that Christian society should in fact be populated by theologians (*omnis christianus oportet esse theologus*), as the authority to identify heresy may indeed fall to the populace (*populus*).<sup>100</sup> This partially explains his central emphasis on scripture, including its vernacular accessibility, above all sources of human authority: especially in a world where Christ's own clergy was infested with pathological sin, the discernment of the salvific message could not reliably be located anywhere except by direct access to the eternal record of all truth, the Word of God.<sup>101</sup> Yet if a ruler refused even to heed the counsel of those informed in God's law, or actively worked against it, then he betrays the function of his office and forfeits the dominion granted him by God for its fulfilment—such a ruler legitimizes resistance and overthrow from the laity for the good of divine harmony.

[Heretics] assume ... that it is an exceedingly dangerous error ... to say that secular lords can seize the temporal goods from the erring Church according to their judgement, and that the people can chastise delinquent lords according to their judgement. ... God, I say, can command the people to do this, nor is the

<sup>99</sup> John Wyclif, *Tractatus de potestate pape*, ed. Johann Loserth (London: Trübner, 1907), 305: "Et prudens reputacio utilitatis Christi quod de facili contingeret de ablacione temporalium, non intencione puniendi vel deteriorandi ecclesiam vel aliquod eius membrum, sed intencione exonerandi vel prodessendi mundo oppressis et perfeccionem status, quem Christus instituit renovandi", cf. Michael J. Wilks, "Wyclif and the Wheel of Time," *Studies in Church History* 33 (1997): 188. John Wyclif, *Opera minora*, ed. Johann Loserth (London: C.K. Paul & Co, 1913), 400: "Lex tamen Christi foret optima ad reducendum genus humanum ad statum innocencie" cit. Kaminsky, "Wyclifism," 68. Cf. Smalley, "The Bible and Eternity," 87 f.

<sup>100</sup> Wyclif, *De officio regis*, 46: "Sed quia non omnes reges habent sic sapienciam infusam a domino, sed oportet eos habere sapientes tam in iudiciis quam a latere assistentes ..."; John Wyclif, *De veritate Sacrae Scripturae* III, ed. Rudolf Buddensieg (London: Trübner & Co., 1907), 15: "Et dum non deficit iudicium sacerdotum, ad quod iudicium debet populus signanter attendere, dum in eorum conversatione, ministracione et bono regimine stat salus populi ...". Cf. Shogimen, "Wyclif's Ecclesiology," 224-39; Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics*, 179.

<sup>101</sup> Levy, "John Wyclif's Neoplatonic View." For the position of Wyclif and his followers on Scriptural translation, see Mary Dove, "Wyclif and the English Bible," in *A Companion to John Wyclif*, ed. Ian Christopher Levy (Leiden: Brill, 2006), esp. 376-85.



authority of God exhausted even if he were to inspire the people to such a task; therefore, the people can do thusly.<sup>102</sup>

Nevertheless, it must be stressed that such considerations are rare for Wyclif, whose attention is squarely focused on the wicked clerical apparatus. In agreement with Augustine, he generally counsels obedience even to tyrants, and gives little attention to elaborating a systematic resistance theory against sinful rulers.<sup>103</sup> Put briefly then, Church reform for Wyclif is imagined as a process of recollection to the ideal of the primitive Church, using the joint methodologies of instruction and coercion. Based on the logic of mutual aid, any member of the Christian community is bound to correct an errant member of whatever estate.<sup>104</sup> Wyclif's reform project thus represents a rigorous attempt to reverse the corruption of the primitive Church introduced by clerical endowment and greed, and ultimately return Christendom to its archetypal state. Although his paternalistic method clearly prioritizes the seizure of ecclesiastic civil dominion by rulers and the instructive role of the clergy, it operates on a more general assumption of mutual Christian aid which encourages the joint participation of all estates, and thus gives at least some value to the reformatory agency of the people.

For Janov, the process of reform would be a similarly recollective task, but his particular historiography and ecclesiology meant it would be characterised much more

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<sup>102</sup> For instance, Wyclif, *Trialogus*, 377 f. at 377: "Assumunt [heretici] autem istud subdole pro medio ad hunc finem, quod error nimis periculosus est dicere quod domini temporales possunt ad arbitrium eorum auferre bona temporalia ab ecclesia delinquente, et quod populares possunt ad eorum arbitrium dominos delinquentes corrigere. Quamvis autem ista secunda particula sit iners pictata a fratribus adinventata, tamen fratres laborant assidue ad fundandum illam sophisticam. Deus, inquam, potest praecipere populo sic facere, nec est Dei potentia sic exhausta quin posset movere populum ad taliter faciendum; ergo populares possunt sic facere." Cf. Kaminsky, "Wyclifism," 65; Shogimen, "Wyclif's Ecclesiology," 233.

<sup>103</sup> Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics*, 168–70, 191–97.

<sup>104</sup> John Wyclif, *De veritate Sacrae Scripturae* I, ed. Rudolf Buddensieg (London: Trübner & Co., 1904), 156: "Ista lex, quaecunque fuerit, est scriptura sacra et lex domini immaculata, ... quam omnes homines tenentur cognoscere, defendere ac servare, cum secundum illam tenentur sub optentu eterni premii domino ministrare." Cit. Rudolf Buddensieg, *Johann Wiclif und seine Zeit* (Gotha: Berthes Verlag, 1885), 196. Cf. Fiona E. Somerset, "Before and After Wyclif: Consent to Another's Sin in Medieval Europe," in *Europe after Wyclif*, ed. Patrick J. Hornbeck and Michael Van Dussen (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 135–72; Shogimen, "Wyclif's Ecclesiology," 224 f.

by mystical and grassroots efforts. Following his mentor Milič, Janov was pessimistic of the role of the secular arm in reform; he denounced the violent seizure of Church property, and generally associated secular rulers with the apocalyptic beast.<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, instead of the Constantinian Donation, Janov blamed the corruption of human volition and the cooling of religiosity in the people as the source of degradation. This further devolved with the birth of the arch-sin of hypocrisy into the Church around 1200, and the abolishment of daily communion in 1290 (a date taken from Daniel 12:11).<sup>106</sup> In his own day, Janov noticed that his unique enthusiasm for the miraculous power of the eucharist was met with suspicion, and the sacramental reception of laymen was reduced to an annual and merely ocular experience.<sup>107</sup> In other words, the sinfulness of the clergy and the tyranny of rulers were merely expressions of a broader, popular corruption which was the focus of Janov's reform efforts.<sup>108</sup> The solution to this lay in a complete renewal of Christendom from the ground up, according to an enthusiastic rejuvenation of lay communion. It is therefore no coincidence that Janov, drawing on Pseudo-Dionysius, identified both the true Church, as well as the sacrament of the eucharist, as the *communio sanctorum*, since both mystical bodies shared their foundation in Christ's incarnation, and both represented at different scales the unity of Christians with Christ's body through the force of selfless love.<sup>109</sup> Thus for Janov the

<sup>105</sup> Reginald R. Betts, "Some Political Ideas of the Early Czech Reformers," in *Essays in Czech History* (London: Athlone Press, 1969), 70-72; Kaminsky, *A History*, 20 f.; Töpfer, "Chiliastische Elemente," 65; František Michálek Bartoš, *Husitství a cizina* (Prague: Čin, 1931), 37, sees the contrasting perspectives on the state as fundamental to the difference between the "English" (Wycliffite) and "Czech" or "Miličist" reform programs.

<sup>106</sup> Töpfer, "Chiliastische Elemente," 60-63; Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 140. The Constantinian Donation is lacking in Janov's description.

<sup>107</sup> David R. Holeton, "The Bohemian Eucharistic Movement in Its European Context," *BRRP* 1 (1996): 23-47.

<sup>108</sup> For instance, Janov, *Regule* II, 189: "Sicut itaque non populus christianus ex sacerdotibus est assumptus, sed sacerdotes assumpti sunt ex populo christiano, ita qualis est populus, tales convenit esse et sacerdotes, et per consequens si carnalis populus, carnales contigit esse ut plurimum et ipsius sacerdotes." Cf. Töpfer, "Chiliastische Elemente," 61; Mainušová, "Sociálne politické aspekty," 48.

<sup>109</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 355: "communis manducacio sacramenti habet virtutem christianos simul socialiter uniendi ..., unio plebis ad sacramentum Christi corporis et copulacio quedam pulcherrima, iocundissima

primitive Church was marked by regular and universal communion which maintained loving unity,<sup>110</sup> and the abandonment of frequent communion unsurprisingly coincided with division and sin, symptoms of mundane infatuation.<sup>111</sup> According to him, the opposed forces of Christ and Antichrist are currently trying to lead mankind to opposite fates, back to its restored nature, or toward its fallen beastliness.<sup>112</sup> As a result, reform clearly implies a restoration of daily communion for the whole Christian community, which would gradually return mankind to primitive perfection. This means not only the revival of the ancient Church's primitive love (*caritas primitiva*),<sup>113</sup> but also the rehabilitation of the accompanying power of charismatic discernment which had been lost again in the "second Fall". The self-negation involved in the vertical love of God returns the natural human ability to detect good and evil, and thus to act in accord with God's will and even distinguish the members of Christ's Church from sinners.<sup>114</sup> In other words, the power of discernment which Janov expects of true Christians collapses the Augustinian distinction between profane and sacred history. This is all part of a complete renewal of mankind from below, the birth of a new man created according to

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et socialis omnium ad mensam unius dei et domini in una domo communi, crebra et visibili, valde multum facit ad unionem plebis eciam in concordia spiritus et voluntatis". Cit. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 97. Cf. Janov, *Regule* VI, 262; Stephen E. Lahey, "Matěj of Janov: Corpus Mysticum, Communionem, and the Lost Treatise of His Regulae," *Religions* 9, no. 1 (2018): 10 f. On the role of Pseudo-Dionysius, cf. Nechutová, "Eucharistie," 33 and infra.

<sup>110</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 70: "in primitiva ecclesia communionem Cristi corporis et sanguinis cottidie frequentabant, faciebant hoc fervor intensus dilectionis ad Cristum Iesum, quem sequitur, ut dictum est, appetitus intensus uniri cum dilecto, quod maxime et propriissime fit in hoc mirabili sacramento."

<sup>111</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 355: "Et idcirco defectus istius frequentacionis sacramenti cottidiane singulorum in populo christiano illud maximum malum principale in christianis attulit, scilicet scismata et discessionem a Christo Jhesu et separacionem ab invicem hominum et destruccionem concordie et piarum affectionum." Cf. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 152 f., 267.

<sup>112</sup> Janov, *Regule* III, 71: "Nam sicut Christus non aliud [est] nisi restauracio nature humane ad suam gloriam et suum statum primitivum, in quo Adam, id est homo, iuste et honorabiliter homo erat, ob quam causam Christi equalissima esse humano digno corpori describitur, ita Antichristus, cuius caput dyabolus, non aliud est nisi destitutio nature humane in statum bestialem, qui accidit homini post culpam".

<sup>113</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 83: "ergo non introducitur nova consuetudo in populo christiano, cum cottidie manducatur a plebeis sacramentum, sed restauratur sancta consuetudo antiqua et saluberrima et redit fides viva ad Jhesum crucifixum et caritas primitiva." Cit. Kybal, *M. Matej z Janova*, 236.

<sup>114</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 181: "Quoniam autem pro eo dominus profecto dominus Iesus dedit hunc panem mirabilem suis in copia manducandum, ut per hoc poneret discrecionem, qui sunt illi, qui volunt eum timere et amare eiusque voluntatem perfect adimplere."

God (*novus homo secundum deum creatus est*) via the eucharist and voluntary conformity to the divine will.<sup>115</sup> Janov describes this in terms of a permanent mystical union of the greatest possible intensity between man and God, even uniting them into one substance and rehabilitating human corporality.<sup>116</sup> Eventually all will be renewed (*omnia fiant nova*) through this new people (*novus populus*), who will birth a new and perfect priesthood, as Janov explained: “a new people will arise, formed according to a new man who is created according to God, from whom a new clergy and new priests will arise and be received, who hate all avarice and glory of this life”.<sup>117</sup> This supremely optimistic vision thus represents the successful reconciliation of the sensible with the archetypal worlds in the worldly arena, and borders on the apocatastasis, as found in Christian Platonism. In sum, it is clear that like Wyclif, Janov diverges from the pessimism of Augustinian historiography to assert the retrieval of the primordial Christian condition in the world. For Janov, however, the return to primitive poverty and equality would not succeed a process of coercive purification from above, but a process of voluntary renewal from below. This encapsulated the complete internal

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<sup>115</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 27: “Manducare autem spiritualiter et sacramentaliter est sacramentum in ore ruminare et pasci vini et panis speciebus et rem sacramenti, id est gratiam, in spiritu et veritate degustare et verum corpus Christi et sanguinem ore novi hominis, qui secundum deum creatus est”. cf. Janov, *Regule* II, 52; *Ibid.*, 152: “Et ista duo [voluntate et gracia] simul iuncta unitaque faciunt intrinsece vel generant novum hominem interiorem, qui secundum deum creatus est, id est conformem verbo dei incarnato.”

<sup>116</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 177: “Isto igitur modo humanitas Christi, os nostrum et caro nostra, postquam assumpta est a divinitate et translata in naturam Verbi Dei, per quod et ipsa humanitas est omnia in omnibus, manens nobiscum in cibo panis et in potu vini semper usque ad consumacionem seculi, ut sic non tantum iuxta nos maneat, ut frater cum fratre vel amicus cum amico, sed, sicut est proprium solius Dei vel eciam cibi et potus, maneat in nobis et nos in illo similiter maneamus, ut summa unitate possibili simus unum cum nostro summo bono et dilecto, sicuti alimentum sumptum ab alito omnino transit in aliti unam substantiam indiscretam et indivisam.”; *Ibid.*, 179: “Tercia vita, puta spiritualis vel divina aut secundum novum hominem, qui secundum Deum creatus est, inchoatur a fide Iesu Christi vel a baptismo et terminatur in etatem plenitudinis Christi, seminatur in carne, augetur in Spiritum, seminatur in corumpcione hominis, surgit in incorruptionem Iesu Christi, seminatur in mortalitate, terminatur in immortalitatem, durat autem a suscepcione fidei usque in vitam eternam.” Cf. Janov, *Regule* II, 52; Kullerud, “Ipsa Est Omnia,” 26.

<sup>117</sup> Janov, *Regule* IV, 179: “dei ecclesia nequit ad pristinam suam dignitatem reduci vel reformari, nisi prius omnia fiant nova, puta sicut clerici et sacerdotes, ita populus et plebes ... iam iamque surget novus populus secundum novum hominem formatus, qui secundum deum creatus est, ex quo novi clerici et novi sacerdotes provenient et assumuntur, qui omnes odient avariciam et gloriam huius vite”. Cf. Kybal, “Étude,” 24; Töpfer, “Chiliasische Elemente,” 65.

reorientation of the Christian according to the divine will, which would revive flawless ethical awareness and perfect identification with Christ's mystical body.

To conclude, it is clear that the intellectual pedigree of pre-Hussite thought is rich in continuities from Christian Platonism, which both expounded and digressed enough from Augustinianism to make possible important innovations and challenges to the contemporary medieval tradition. For both Wyclif and Janov, it is crucial to emphasize that all creation is from the beginning imprinted with the normative order of the divine will, which is fully apparent to primordial man. Human existence in harmony with this norm represents the identity of the archetypal and sensible realms, and although this is interrupted by Adam's fall, it is revived by Christ's incarnation and the primitive Church of early Christianity. This will be important for Hussites, as it challenges the pessimistic Augustinian view of postlapsarian history, and assumes that God's will is ultimately knowable to mankind. The most important, unhealed transgression of God's plan is represented by the voluntary departure of man from the perfection of Christian poverty and equality toward the distractions and dissensions of the flesh and the world. Both thinkers interpret Augustine to empty the contemporary Church of intrinsic value, and even associate it with the community of Antichrist. With the institutional authority of the ecclesiastic hierarchy thus nullified, the task of the Christian becomes the retrieval of lost existential knowledge via the immediate access and unity with divinity provided respectively by scripture and the eucharist. This is important because it rejects the nominalist scepticism of human reason and access to the divine, as discussed below. The retrieval of this knowledge will not only reform the Church, but will return mankind into a blessed harmony or even unity with God in anticipation of eternity. According to Janov, it also rehabilitates the charismatic discernment of the Church community and its enemies. As will be shown, these

continuities and innovations will inform the Hussite opposition to contemporary authorities, will help populate the political field with agents of supramundane powers, and will shape their confidence in the potential of human effort in affecting a blissful future.

## **The Hussites**

In the first years of open and popular conflict with ecclesiastic authorities in 1410, Bohemian reformist intellectuals elaborated a position which would serve as a durable but adaptable foundation for Hussite thinkers until the Táborite experiment at the end of the decade. This position draws heavily from the philosophical and reformist tradition of realism and Christian Platonism more generally, particularly from Wyclif and Janov, to challenge certain basic assumptions of contemporary medieval order and authority and propose a solution to the corrupt state of the faith and the Church. The result is a radically alternative vision for the future of the community of the faithful. Building on the subversive assumption that God's will is accessible and normative for all Christians, Hus and his reformist colleagues introduced a plan for the ambitious transformation of society and the individual as a return into a state of primitive Christian perfection which sacrifices all worldly and selfish pretensions for a flawless unity with divinity. This borrows its methodology especially from Wyclif's reform program, and employs a highly voluntarist, individualist, and activist mode of Christian faith. While undermining core tenets of ecclesiastic hierarchy and even the traditional principles of Church membership as such, this program also inherits a tension which creates space for popular initiative within the movement.

## Truth and Being

To introduce the fundamental assumptions of Hussite political thought, it may be helpful to refer to the theoretical considerations of the political scientist, Eric Voegelin. For Voegelin, existential meaning is always political, or said otherwise, human politics is fundamentally an operation of meaning-creation, set against the background of existential chaos, fragmentary and senseless, which defines the primordial human condition.<sup>118</sup> For us, this usage of “the political” has the empirical benefit of closely concurring with its late-medieval usage, where the primary symbols of self-understanding—*societas Christiana*—articulate both temporal and Church hierarchies. As used below, therefore, the political is “the symbolic order by which a society expresses its self-interpretation”.<sup>119</sup> As Voegelin himself puts it:

To set up a government is an essay in world creation. Out of a shapeless vastness of conflicting human desires rises a little world of order, a cosmic analogy, a cosmion, leading a precarious life under the pressure of destructive forces from within and without.<sup>120</sup>

The sheltering function of this cosmion of order, therefore, is more than simply utilitarian, but at its core semantic, emotional, providing a meaning-structure which is more than subjective, but inter-subjective, “into which the single human being can fit the results of the biologically and spiritually [productive, procreative] energies of his personal life”, thus relieving the existential anxiety of meaninglessness. There are nevertheless bound to remain, within each individual, energies and relations—sexual, material, intellectual, social—which cannot be easily harmonized with this order, revealing the incompleteness of the political cosmion, and creating coexisting or

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<sup>118</sup> Eric Voegelin, *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin I. History of Political Ideas: Hellenism, Rome, and Early Christianity* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1997), 225.

<sup>119</sup> Matthias Riedl, “Joachim of Fiore as Political Thinker,” in *Joachim of Fiore and the Influence of Inspiration: Essays in Memory of Marjorie E. Reeves (1905 - 2003)*, ed. Julia Eva Wannenmacher (Ashgate: Taylor & Francis, 2013), 53-56; Riedl, “The Secular Sphere in Western Theology.”

<sup>120</sup> Voegelin, *Hellenism*, 225.

competing orders which, from the perspective of the political cosmion, are apolitical. The modern state, for instance, witnesses the growth of churches, unions, and associations which compete for the attention, energies, and even obedience of its citizens. The tension between the finity of the cosmion and its self-mandated, totalistic aims is only overcome in systems which are either able to harmonize the political and the apolitical (such as constitutional democracy), or eliminate the latter entirely (totalitarianism).<sup>121</sup>

These theoretical observations from Eric Voegelin bear several implications once applied to the Hussite case, existential and ontological central among them. To appreciate this, we must first recall the existential attitude of their nominalist Catholic opponents, wherein we find a toleration of coexistent meaning-structures: the truth of (accessible to) reason, and the unknowable and inaccessible divine truth which must be mediated to humans by the institution of the Church, which thus mediates also divine authority. Accordingly, nominalism provided a kind of “dual truth”,<sup>122</sup> one accessible and one conveyed. Each is relativized by the other, meaning that each discrete truth structure governs a discrete field of existence, theory and practice, which divorces the knowledge of philosophy and theology. The Roman Church draws its authority not from reason or moral quality, but from its claim to temporal, institutional continuity from Christ himself. This confirms it as the mundane representative of the divine, fully mediating God’s authority and his unknowable truth, and as a result there exists no transcendent point of reference from which to contest it.<sup>123</sup> As such, morality is reduced to simply a measure of submission to Church order and discipline which mediate

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 225-27.

<sup>122</sup> Jan B. Čapek, “Hus ve vztahu k realismu a nominalismu,” in *Husův sborník: Soubor prací k 550. výročí M. Jana Husa*, ed. Michal Flegl and Rudolf Řičan (Prague: Komenského evangelická fakulta bohoslovecká v Praze, 1966), 31.

<sup>123</sup> Pavel Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death of a Preacher* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2020), at n. 123-124.



revelation. Again, the flip side of this is that divine truth is immune to speculations from reason, which thus bears no necessary relation to human action and behaviour.<sup>124</sup> In other words, the political cosmion of Church authority permits the coexistence of the apolitical, permitting the Christian believer a pragmatic (even cynical) space between them.<sup>125</sup>

This dual structure of the nominalists is completely rejected by realists like Hus and his followers. For them, Truth is unitary and universal, meaning that the nominalist distinction between Christian identity and divine will is collapsed. This is achieved by supreme confidence in human knowledge, as Hus explains: “the pure pilgrim knows everything to be his [i.e. God’s], and thus he knows all things like God does.”<sup>126</sup> Likewise, Truth is God’s law (*lex Dei*), pre-existent in God’s mind, created in the human form of Jesus Christ (*Veritas, id est Cristus*), expressed subsequently in scripture, and thus accessible to the human mind.<sup>127</sup> With obvious Platonist foundations, Hussite leaders agree that all created things emerged through this Truth and its iterations, and

<sup>124</sup> Ivana Dolejšová, “Nominalist and Realist Approaches to the Problem of Authority: Pálec and Hus,” *BRRP* 2 (1998): 49-54.

<sup>125</sup> Jan Milíč Lochman, “K chápání pravdy u Husa,” in *Jan Hus mezi epochami, národy a konfesemi*, ed. Jan B. Lasek (Prague: Česká Křesťanská Akad.: Husistická Teologická Fakulta Univ. Karlovy, 1995), 176. In his work *Antihus*, Pálec charges his former pupil of deviating from the Christian faith for not distinguishing between truth of life (*veritas vite*) and truth of office (*veritas officii*).

<sup>126</sup> Jan Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Bursík, 1904), 202: “homo purus viator scit omne ens esse eius et sic quod scit omnia, sicut scit Deus”; cf. Jerome of Prague, *Magistri Hieronymi de Praga Quaestiones, polemica, epistulae*, ed. František Šmahel and Gabriel Silagi (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 135: “tota armonia rerum sensibilium et intelligibilium est comprehensibilis ab homine Christo ...”.

<sup>127</sup> Jan Hus, *MIHO* 7, 535: “... presbiteri et precipue predicatorum, qui cum esse debeant filii Veritatis, id est Cristi”. Cf. Jiří Kejř, “Husova Pravda,” *Theologická Revue* 77 (2006): 234 f.; Jan Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48: “Lex autem divina et sic lex Iesu Christi primo modo dicitur lex Dei, que in Scriptura sacra exprimitur. 2<sup>o</sup> modo lex Dei vocatur extensius quaecunque lex vera, que in Scriptura sacra quomodolibet implicatur. Et sic omnis lex vera est lex Dei.”; Jan Hus, *Questiones*, ed. Jiří Kejř (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 19: “Triplex est lex, divina, naturalis et humana seu positiva. Divina duplex: increata, hoc est dispositio eterna et preordinatio mentis divine, et illa est divina essentia et vocatur lex obiectiva. Alia est creata, que est formalis, et est descriptiva veritas directive hominis, ut debite serviat Deo suo.” Cf. Coufal, “Key Issues,” 264. These two modes of divine law do not divide the essential unity of Truth. Cf. Jan Hus, *MIHO* 22, 42. cit. Kejř, “Husova Pravda,” 240, n. 31.

will return through it into unity;<sup>128</sup> agreeing with the earlier thinkers of Chartres, many of them referred to this primordial realm of exemplary forms as the archetypal world (*mundus archetypus / intelligibilis*) which functioned not only as an ontological but also moral norm for creation.<sup>129</sup> Like Wyclif's *lex dei* or Janov's *regula principalis*, therefore, this Truth is the eternal normative ordering of creation, objectified via the *logos*. As a universal and accessible law, it is from the beginning not merely an ideal which is available only to a few heroic monastics, and mediated to the rest of the Christian community via obedience to an institution called the Church—instead, it is ethically normative for all Christians, and directs all their energies (*veritas directiva*). This is due not only to the uniformity of moral demands upon all mankind, but also the normative unity of man. Unlike Augustine, Hussites agree that the conquest of the soul or inner man over the outer, toward freedom of spirit (*libertas spiritus / animi*) and even deification (*deificacio*), is already possible and mandated in this life: “We are bound to have the soul dominate the body, because it is God’s command.”<sup>130</sup> In other words (as discussed below), God’s law is both the necessary and sufficient standard for Christian

<sup>128</sup> For example, Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 347: “bona voluntas omnium bonorum principaliter trahit dileccionem tantum ab uno et hinc est, quod tantum unus finis est bonorum voluntatum omnium, sed non sic malorum.”; Prague, *Quaestiones*, 31, 80: “omnia reducuntur in unum, sicut omnia facta sunt ex uno per unum.”; Jakoubek in Jan Sedlák, *Studie a texty k náboženským dějinám českým III* (Olomouc: Nakl. Matice Cyrillo-Methodějské v Olomouci, 1923), 47: “plures patres et magistros vel dominos ... sunt ex uno et tendunt directe ad unum et sunt sibi invicem subordinati legitime, consentanei et condependentes a primo uno patre, magistro et domino dominorum.”

<sup>129</sup> These especially include Jerome of Prague, Stanislav of Znojmo, Stephen of Pálec, and Prokop of Plzeň. See Blättler, *Delikt*, 144-50; Herold, “Magister Procopius von Pilsen”; Vilém Herold, “Štěpán of Pálec and the Archetypal World of Ideas,” *BRRP* 5 (2005): 77-88; Stephen Edmund Lahey, “Stanislaus of Znojmo and Prague Realism: First Principles of Theological Reasoning,” *Kosmas* 28 (2015): 9-26.

<sup>130</sup> Jan Hus, *M. Io. Hus sermones in Capella Bethlehem II*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Nákladem Královské České Společnosti Nauk, 1939), 228: “Anime debemus super corpus dominacionem, quia hoc Dei mandatum est, Genes. 4<sup>o</sup>: ‘Subter te sternetur appetitus tuus et tu dominaberis illius’.”; Jan Sedlák, *Studie a texty k náboženským dějinám českým I* (Olomouc: Nakl. Matice Cyrillo-Methodějské v Olomouci, 1914), 410: “Qui enim convertuntur ad dominum non quasi ad carnem sed quasi ad spiritum convertuntur, de carnalibus ad spiritualia veniunt et ad libertatem de servitute transeunt ... ad libertatem spiritus proveci ... Supereminet tam beate mentes omni indebite servituti peccati; omnem nempe mutabilitatem animi ad malum excedunt ... et ceteros quos possunt ad idem indesinenter perducunt et sursum agunt potenter, libere et benigne ad dei illuminationem, amorem et imitationem atque deificationem propter hanc libertatem introducendam in suum populum.” Cf. Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 205\*.

identity, political life, and salvation.<sup>131</sup> This is thus not the *sola fide* scripturalism of later reformers like Luther, which submits all hope of human comprehension to the letter of revelation, but rather a scripturalism of action where revelation has been made completely knowable and manifest by the record of Christ's life and his early Church, and continually demands re-actualization and ubiquitous imitation.<sup>132</sup> As a normative law demanding manifest obedience, therefore, Hussite Truth and the identity it creates is performative and dynamic rather than static; there is no true Christian "status" which is distinct from or prior to the imitation of Christ.<sup>133</sup> As Hus explained:

For it is not enough for a person to hear Christ's word with the ear, for even beasts and birds can hear; nor is it enough to speak [it], for this even the devil can do; nor is it enough to write, teach, or think of it: rather, he must fulfil it in deed (*musie se skutkem naplniti*)... as is commanded to everyone.<sup>134</sup>

In this performativity, Hussite Truth has been usefully distinguished from the Greek *aletheia*—truth, as an abstract process un-concealing "what is"—and rather likened to the Hebrew *emeth*—the active experience of truthfulness bound to trust, as the

<sup>131</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48: "Lex vere dicta est veritas directiva hominis ad beatitudinem attingendam." Cf. Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 90 f. At this point it is sufficient to note that Hussites saw Christ's law as a political program, see Coufal, "Key Issues," 264, 273, and the discussion in the next chapter.

<sup>132</sup> MS cited by Coufal, "Key Issues," 267, n. 27: "Vita enim Cristi, quam duxit a principio sui usque mortem, est verissima regula cristiani, secundum quam dirigi deberemus in vita nostra." Cf. Amedeo Molnár, *Na rozhraní věků: Cesty reformace* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1985), 14. Jakoubek repeatedly represented the primitive Church as God's will immanentized. See his postilla, NK ČR 54 A 46, 38<sup>r</sup>: "The Holy Church, which is the New Testament on Earth" ["Cýrkew Swatá, genž gest Nowým Zákonem na Zemi"]. Cf. Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 134-36; Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Výklad na Zjevení sv. Jana I*, ed. František Šimek (Prague: Česká akademii věd a umění, 1932), 592: "For there [in the primitive Church] the saints ... were the kingdom of God, which is like the ten virgins", cit. Coufal, "Key Issues," 273.

<sup>133</sup> From a very different context, the same finding has been argued to define gender by modern theorists. See for instance Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," in *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*, ed. Sue-Ellen Case (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 278: "Gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed". Cf. James Loxley, *Performativity* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 117-20.

<sup>134</sup> Jan Hus, *Postilla: vyloženie svatých čtení nedělních*, ed. Josef B. Jeschke (Prague: Spisy Komenského evangelické fakulty bohoslovecké, 1952), 235: "Neb nenie dosti člověku, uchem tělesným slyšeti slovo Kristovo, neb též mohou slyšeti i hovada, i ptáci; ani jest dosti mluvíti, neb též můž i ďábel učiniti; ani dosti jest psáti, učiti, aneb o něm mysliti: ale musie se skutkem naplniti; a to slove zachování slova božieho, to věz každého přikázanie." Cf. Jan Hus, *MIHO* 1, 143: "Every Christian who, having accepted Christ's name at baptism and swearing to imitate him (*přísáhl, aby jeho následoval*) in goodness, does not imitate him, thus takes the name Christian from Christ in vain."

fulfilment of a promise between God and the Israelites.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, as will be shown, Hussites agree that a true Christian is an active rather than a passive or mental state, real insofar as it is lived and in harmony with a norm untethered from empirical reality.<sup>136</sup> In conclusion, then, the realism of the Hussite thinkers precluded the possibility of parallel meaning structures, making their political cosmion totalistic. The will of God was not occultic but universally-accessible as the norm of all creation, and thus has the only claim to obedience upon the Christian. As we will see, any human allegiances not devoted to the actualization of God's law cannot be harmonized with it, and are thus sinful.

This is not to claim that the theoretical pragmatism permitted by nominalism necessarily encouraged ethical promiscuity, nor that the rigorism of realism necessarily discouraged it, but rather to highlight the radically contradictory attitudes of Hussites and their opponents on the practical relevance of divine Truth to human behaviour. These carried provocative implications which led to insoluble antagonism. For the representatives of ecclesiastic tradition, the Hussites assumed a naïve but also dangerous position which upset the careful hierarchical order sanctioned by God for human existence. To this extent opponents of Hussitism resemble Augustine, for whom any order which minimizes suffering is in harmony with "natural order" (*naturalis ordo*), where even abominable sinners like prostitutes may be tolerated to avoid the

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<sup>135</sup> Jan Polínský, "Pojetí pravdy u Jana Husa v dílech Betlémské poselství a Postilla," in *Interpretace a kritika díla Jana Husa*, ed. Martin Šimsa (Ústí nad Labem: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity J.E. Purkyně v Ústí n. Labem, 2016), 45 f.; Lochman, "K chápání," 176 f. Cf. Michael Fagenblat, *A Covenant of Creatures: Levinas's Philosophy of Judaism* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2010), 148; Gerhild Becker, Karin Jors, and Susan Block, "Discovering the Truth beyond the Truth," *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management* 49, no. 3 (2015): 246 f.

<sup>136</sup> Jan Heller, "Biblické pojetí pravdy," in *Veritas Vincit - Pravda vítězí* (Prague: KLP, 1995), 8 f. This is the background of the Hussite motto taken from 4 Esdras, "super omnia vincit veritas". Cf. Pavel Spunar, "Husovo pojetí pravdy," in *Veritas vincit - Pravda vítězí*, ed. Jiří K. Kroupa (Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 1995), 38; Joseph Seifert, "Pravda jako fundament svobody a svědomí (K etice Jana Husa)," in *Jan Hus na přelomu tisíciletí*, ed. Miloš Drda and František J. Holeček (Ústí nad Labem: Albis International, 2001), 287.

greater transgressions which they prevent. Unfortunately, this is the best situation possible for those in the miserable human condition.<sup>137</sup> For Augustine as for the Romanists facing Hussitism, the world is thus populated by offices—secular and religious—condoned by God and filled by imperfect humans, offices which are meant to maintain this order in the world and lead the elect to the far superior and perfect order in the next life. To a significant extent, this framework thus ignores the qualities of the officeholder and distinguishes his personal failings or misdeeds from the legitimacy offered him by his divinely-sanctioned office—a human in the office of pope or emperor is no-less vulnerable to sin than anyone else. Accordingly, a major threat of Hussite thinkers lay in their refusal to make this distinction, holding all authorities to the same or even greater standards as those which measured Christian identity whatsoever.<sup>138</sup> For them, true order is only that of peace between man and God, as will be discussed later; what is important here is to contrast the highly normative view of Hussites to the pragmatic or functionalist position of their opponents as they relate to ecclesiastic and secular authorities. This is well-illustrated by the record of one encounter at the Council of Constance which is worth quoting at length, where Jan Hus defended himself before his enemies, including his former friend Stephen of Pálec:

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<sup>137</sup> Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, xiii, 1: “Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio. ... Proinde miseri, quia, in quantum miseri sunt, utique in pace non sunt, tranquillitate quidem ordinis carent, ubi perturbatio nulla est; verumtamen quia merito iusteque sunt miseri, in ea quoque ipsa miseria sua praeter ordinem esse non possunt; non quidem coniuncti beatis, sed ab eis tamen ordinis lege seiuncti. Qui cum sine perturbatione sunt, rebus, in quibus sunt, quantacumque congruentia coaptantur; ac per hoc inest eis ordinis nonnulla tranquillitas, inest ergo nonnulla pax. Verum ideo miseri sunt, quia, etsi in aliqua securitate non dolent, non tamen ibi sunt, ubi securi esse ac dolere non debeant; miserieiores autem, si pax eis cum ipsa lege non est, qua naturalis ordo administratur. Cum autem dolent, ex qua parte dolent, pacis perturbatio facta est; in illa vero adhuc pax est, in qua nec dolor urit nec compago ipsa dissolvitur.” Cf. Riedl, “Order,” 2608 f.; Martin Pjecha, “Taborite Apocalyptic Violence and Its Intellectual Inspirations,” *BRRP* 11 (2018): 85 f.

<sup>138</sup> Stephen of Pálec, “Mgri Stephani de Pálec Antihus,” in *Miscellanea husitica*, ed. Jan Sedlák (Prague: KTF UK, 1996), 382 f.: “Huss errat graviter et sic se manifeste ostendit quidamistam grossum, negando simpliciter papam, episcopos, prelatos vel sacerdotes malos esse veros officiales Jesu Christi, nolens distingvere inter veritatem vite et veritatem officii, sed simpliciter asserens, quod papa, episcopus, prelatus vel sacerdos existens in peccato mortali non est verus papa, episcopus, prelatus vel sacerdos.” Cit. Kejř, “Husova Pravda,” 234.

Master [Hus] said: "Indeed, he who is in mortal sin is not a worthy king before God ...". Because of that, the presiding judges shouted to those who were near the king [Sigismund]: "Bring the king, that he may hear this, for it concerns him!" And they made Master John Hus repeat that statement. When he finished and qualified it, King Sigismund said: "John Hus, no one lives without sin." And the cardinal of Cambrai said to Master [Hus], wishing thereby to incite the secular authorities even more against him: "It was not enough for you to despise the spiritual order by attempting to overthrow it by your writings and teachings, and now you also wish to overthrow the status of the royal order and of kings?" ... And further, because Master [Hus] referred to St. Cyprian who says: "Vainly does he choose the name of Christianity who does not in the least imitate Christ in behaviour," Pálež exclaimed: "Yea! What fatuousness! What does it have to do with the matter to allege that if someone is not a good Christian he is therefore not a true pope, bishop, or prelate, or even king? For the learned know that the terms 'pope,' 'bishop,' 'king' are the names of office, while 'Christian' is in fact a name of merit. Thus it is proved that someone may be a true pope, king, or bishop, although he is not a true Christian."<sup>139</sup>

This passage clearly illustrates the issue of contention. For Hus's Romanist opponents, the ethical choices of a Christian king or pope were irrelevant to the legitimacy of his position, for Hus they were central to it. Here, he and his fellow reformers concurred with Wyclif, that all authority, laws, or traditions in disharmony with God's law were thus opposed to it, invalid, and to be resisted by true Christians.<sup>140</sup> All worthy of this identity must come to know scripture and align themselves to the divine will at all costs. In sum, the perfect theocracy ultimately conceived by Hussite thinkers was as unthinkable for their opponents as it would be for Augustine, due to the corrupt state of human nature. As we will see, however, the Bohemian reformers were unwilling to accept this corruption as permanent, and envisioned an improved humanity which was within the scope of historical possibility.

<sup>139</sup> *FRB* VIII, 95 f., trans. Matthew Spinka, *John Hus at the Council of Constance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), 202 f.

<sup>140</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48: "Lex autem humana potest sumi tripliciter: primo pro lege humanitus adinventata, sed in Scriptura sacra ab antiquo implicita; secundo pro lege vera, sive in lege Dei explicita fuerit sive implicita, dum sit hominis directiva; 3<sup>o</sup> pro lege humana explicita, dum tamen non sit in Scriptura sacra, sed ipsi contraria, et ista lex est iniqua." Jan Hus, *Tractatus de Ecclesia*, ed. Samuel Harrison Thomson (Prague: Praha Komenského Evangel. Fak. Bohoslovecké, 1958), 92 f.: "Unde veraces christicole illam potestatem [ad plene fruendum domino] volentes attingere debent cuilibet potestati pretense resistere, que nititur eos ab imitatione Christi violenter vel subdole remove." "

To summarize these findings, it may be useful to return to the theoretical observations offered by Eric Voegelin. To be sure, the views of the Hussites and their opponents are mappable onto the alternative models he presents. Anti-Hussite nominalists are ultimately content with the relativity of their semantic cosmion alongside alternative “apolitical” meaning-structures. For them, the mediation of supra-mundane meaning by the human institution of the Church creates a hierarchical but relatively tolerate atmosphere, in which parallel human endeavours may coexist if obedience is offered to the papal hierarchy within a proper sphere of relevance. As a result, Christian identity may maintain ethical behaviour and action as an ideal, but generally the Church is a sacramental community wherein the universal fallibility of mankind is normalized, including for the highest representatives of this order. The opposite is true for Hussite realists. For them, no human institution can claim to mediate divine meaning and authority, only individuals whose ethics participate in the existential mode imitating Christ. As a result, the attention and obedience of the Christian is not licitly divisible into spheres. Instead, all energies not directed toward a strictly Christian existence are seen as “apolitical” and as we will see, idolatrous. This means that ethical behaviour becomes universally normative, not as an ideal for the few but as a defining trait of Christian identity itself. The ambitions of such a semantic cosmion are thus monopolistic or, in Voegelin’s terms, self-deifying, absorbing the apolitical life energies and charging them with political meaning, substituting the finite cosmion for the infinite cosmos.<sup>141</sup> The significance of this description will become clearer in later chapters.

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<sup>141</sup> Voegelin, *Hellenism*, 225-27; Eric Voegelin, *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin IV: The Authoritarian State* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 60 f.

## Psychology and Ecclesiology

As has been shown, with the help of their intellectual predecessors, Hussite thinkers made several important steps which moved them away from Augustinian tradition and gradually put them at odds with both conservative and even reformist Catholics across Christendom. At the core of this is confidence in the common human capacity to know God's primordial plan, intolerance toward the human traditions which they thought were responsible for its corruption, and confidence that this plan could be revived in history. As we will see, this confidence extended to the anthropological transformation of the individual, to align himself with the divine will and participate in the improvement of the Christian condition. This highlights the performative character of Christian identity and elaborates it as an objective measure of the inner, voluntary unity with Christ and his plan for the revival of primitive Christianity.

The controversial confidence of Hus and his fellow-reformers in the universal ability of mankind to know God's will was rooted in a generally un-Augustinian anthropology which was dynamic and optimistic. One important Hussite point of departure from Augustine, in agreement with both Wyclif and Janov, was that the focus of their historical regret was not the Fall of primordial mankind in Adam, but rather the fall of the primordial primitive Church.<sup>142</sup> This means the responsibility of corruption is not focused in the pre-history of Eden, but rather within human history and upon normal human agents. This is important because it recalls a time of perfection within human history, making perfection optimistically re-attainable through a collaborative

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<sup>142</sup> For instance, see Hus, *MIHO* 22, 477: "Nam usque ad dotacionem Romani pontificis, que cepit anno Domini 301, nullus Romanus episcopus bellum instauravit vel in sui proteccionem populum concitavit, sed pacienter vel exilium vel martirium est perpessus. Postquam autem accessit dotacio et secularis dominacio Romano pontifici, pungna, pompa, avaricia, heresis et lis cum invidia sequebantur et pax, humilitas, paupertas, fides, concordia et caritativa dileccio et predicacio ewangelica in Romano pontifice, etsi non in quolibet, succreverunt et martirium, ut dicunt cronicantes, depost in Romanis pontificibus est extinctum."



effort of man and God. These assumptions at the very least mitigate the Augustinian pessimism concerning the postlapsarian state of mankind, and consequently, Hus and his colleagues prefer to address sin as an action and behaviour rather than a permanent state.<sup>143</sup> As a result, reform begins as a process recollecting divine origins, first within the individual, as Hussite leaders explained:

Remember *what* you are, *from whence* you are, and *where you will go*: *what*? A divine creation in spirit (*božie v duši stvořenie*), rational, renowned, and beautiful; *from whence*? Proceeded from God (*od boha poslý*); *where will you go*? To God in eternal joy, if you do not finally stain his image in sin.<sup>144</sup>

This inner process is mirrored by the collective recollection of the ancient apostolic faith (*fides antiqua apostolorum*), with the goal of returning into harmony with God.<sup>145</sup> Jakoubek therefore described this as the simultaneous reunification of Christ with the Christian and the Church: “Through the external being of [his] mandate, namely through the being of created grace, the highest prince Lord Jesus is united with the inner man who is faithful to him, just as with his bride the Church, so greatly that it becomes one person.”<sup>146</sup> Hus follows Platonist tradition rather than Augustine in blaming corporeality for complicating this task, and making this process of inner harmonization impossible for the independent investigation of human reason.<sup>147</sup> Agreeing with

<sup>143</sup> Jindřich Mánek, “Husův spor o autoritu,” in *Hus stále živý: sborník studií k 550. výročí Husova upálení*, ed. Miroslav Kaňák (Prague: Blahoslav v Ústředním církevním nakl., 1965), 27. The more protracted state of mortal sin is also a result of individual action, not inheritance. See note 168.

<sup>144</sup> Jan Hus, *Mistra Jana Husi sebrané spisy české* III, ed. Karol J. Erben (Prague: Bedřich Tempelský, 1868), 107, cit. Čapek, “Hus ve vztahu,” 28, with other examples. Emphasis mine. Cf. Jakoubek in Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 408: “Spiritus sanctus post illuminationem inmittit cognitionem mali proprii et iram contra ipsum, noticiam boni et virtutes et amorem ad ipsum et facit, quod primum fiat cognicio intima suiipsius [!], quando visitantur et illuminantur abscondita tenebrarum et revelantur consilia cordium: et tunc homo revertitur ad cor suum, reflectens se a lumine, quod figuratum est per visionem Is. V.”

<sup>145</sup> Čapek, “Hus ve vztahu,” 28: “Remember what you are, a renowned creation of God, with reason, and beautiful in spirit”; MS cited in Vlastimil Kybal, *M. Jan Hus: život a učení*. 2.1 (Prague: Laichter, 1923), 131: “quando illa fides antiqua apostolorum predicatur, dicunt, quod sit nova fides, et hinc appellant tales ‘nowowiercze’ [i.e. ‘new believers’]; ymmo antiquam fidem predicant, sed quia dilapsa est a memoria et iam ad memoriam reducitur, ideo apparet eis esse nova.”

<sup>146</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 340: “Summus princeps dominus Jesus per esse mandati extrinsecum, sc. per esse gracie create, unitur cum homine interiori sibi fideli, sicut cum ecclesia sua sponsa, in tantum quod fit una persona”.

<sup>147</sup> Molnár, *Na rozhraní věků*, 12.

Augustine, but more closely Thomas Aquinas, Hus recognizes within every human the natural ability of *synderesis* (Greek *syneidēsis*, “with-knowledge”)—also denoted as the “spark of reason” (*scintilla rationis*) or “higher conscience” (*consciencia superius*)—as a kind of uncorrupted capacity to know good from evil in abstract principle terms,<sup>148</sup> but he admits that humans are in a non-ideal state to employ this directly. Even though the impetus of this divine spark in the soul is good and cannot be extinguished,<sup>149</sup> man’s corporeal state requires that it be translated into concrete ethical choices in historical circumstances, and here he is bound to misinterpret the message of *synderesis*. In short, this is because human reason alone is unable to apply moral impulses into practical action as it is informed only by mundane concerns. It thus lacks access to the higher truths necessary for good choices, which are contained in scripture but not empirically verifiable, and thus remain hidden to naked reason, causing man to err.<sup>150</sup> As Hus puts it: “[reason] revolves around particular things (*particularia*), in which it often happens to err”.<sup>151</sup> Reason only gains the ability to perfectly interpret *synderesis* and understand “what we cannot currently fathom” when it is illuminated by the Holy Spirit, which is enabled *sui genesis*, allowing the proper reading of scripture.<sup>152</sup> A properly aligned reason is able, then, to interpret the impetus of *synderesis* and apply it into the world of particular circumstances. This is what Hus calls a unity of contemplation (*unio*

<sup>148</sup> Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 297. This is contrary to earlier exegetes like St. Jerome, who termed it rather “spark of conscience” (*scintilla conscientia*). See Angela C. Miceli, “Thinking Together about the Common Good: The Political Implications of Thomas Aquinas’s Theory of Conscience” (Ph.D. thesis, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University, 2013), 79-83. The type of knowledge it provides, for instance, Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 297: “‘nullum malum est faciendum’ vel ‘in omnibus est Deo obediendum’ vel ‘omne bonum est diligendum’ et horum habitus synderesis dicitur.”

<sup>149</sup> According to Aquinas, even the most wicked men like Cain still retain this ability, see Miceli, “Thinking Together,” 81.

<sup>150</sup> Stephen Edmund Lahey, “The Sentences Commentary of Jan Hus,” in *A Companion to Jan Hus*, ed. Ota Pavlíček and František Šmahel (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 136.

<sup>151</sup> Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 351: “nam ratio ... habet versari circa particularia, in quibus sepe contigit errare”.

<sup>152</sup> Ján Liguš, “Husovo pojetí Písma podle jeho kázání,” in *Jan Hus mezi epochami, národy a konfesemi*, ed. Jan B. Lasek (Prague: Česká křesťanská akademie: Husitská teologická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy, 1995), 186.

*intellectus*) between man and God, by which “man is lifted in dignity above all creatures, and becomes like God and the angels (*podoben bohu i angelóm*)”.<sup>153</sup> In sum, the Hussite confidence in the capacity of man to know and collaborate with the divine will is greatly aided by a Platonic tradition which already locates this ability independent of its corruption—in the Hussite case, in primitive human history. The quest for the divine will is thus brought into the scope of universal human competence since it is simultaneously a quest for ultimate self-recognition via scripture.

As already indicated, this confident familiarity with God’s will had potentially revolutionary implication vis-à-vis human traditions and institutions, and even the Church hierarchy. It is worth highlighting here the individualist assumptions behind this. According to Hus, the inner psychological structure of the Christian is a closed system with the sole exception of scripture. In general, reason informed by scripture interprets the impetus provided by *synderesis* via the conscience—or “lower conscience” (*consciencia inferius*)—to the will, where it is virtuously acted upon, or sinfully acted against. In the well-balanced individual, conscience is that part of reason which applies reason directly into action (*applicacio rationis ad actum*).<sup>154</sup> This point bears emphasis: in contrast to contemporary legal theory, Hussites considered the judgement rendered by the practical part of reason called the “conscience” to be axiomatic.<sup>155</sup> Given the chain of causality which instructs the human will (from *synderesis* to reason to the conscience to the will), acting against the conscience necessarily implies acting against reason, *synderesis*, and thus even one’s nature itself.

<sup>153</sup> Hus, *Postilla*, 150, cit. (incorrectly) by Liguš, “Husovo pojetí,” 187. See note 163.

<sup>154</sup> Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 353: “Consciencia enim in genere est dictamen rationis, i. e. applicacio quedam sciencie vel rationis ad actum”.

<sup>155</sup> For instance, Nicholas of Dresden contrasts the authority of conscience to the Decretals, which read: “Executor si sciat sententiam iniustam esse nichilominus exequi tenetur eandem”. See Howard Kaminsky, *Master Nicholas of Dresden: The Old Color and the New; Selected Works Contrasting the Primitive Church and the Roman Church* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Amer. Philos. Soc., 1965), 45.

This is even true in the case of deficient reason which has not been properly aligned with scripture; unless convinced otherwise, every believer must confide in their conscience as a sound interpretation of *synderesis* and their own nature.<sup>156</sup> The closed system of the individual is thus immune to all independent claims to authority made by human figures or collectives. Of course, this does not mean that the conscience should stubbornly maintain an erroneous stance, but rather it must continually reflect upon reason via scripture to affirm its position.<sup>157</sup> Once again, this is illustrated by record of Hus's experience at Constance, where he refused to condemn positions he felt were not opposed to scripture at the request of human authority:

Reverend father! As I said before, I still say that I do not wish to defend either Wyclif's or anyone else's errors. But because it seemed to me to be against my conscience simply to consent to their condemnation, there being no scripture to the contrary, therefore it did not seem to me [right] to consent immediately to their condemnations.<sup>158</sup>

In other words, the Christian should ultimately refer to scripture in decision-making, since it is by this measure alone that he may evaluate the coherence of his reason to Truth. Due to the normative unity of inner and outer man, scripture is the only battleground of ethical or doctrinal decisions, and every extra-scriptural law, custom, or authority is irrelevant.<sup>159</sup> Otherwise, the individual should maintain perfect self-

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<sup>156</sup> Seifert, "Pravda," 290 f.; Dušan Coufal, "From Oath to Confession and Back? Protestatio in the Late Middle Ages, and Its Transformation in the Thought of Wyclif and the Hussites," in *Wycliffism and Hussitism: Methods of Thinking, Writing, and Persuasion c. 1360 – c. 1460*, ed. Pavel Soukup and Kantik Ghosh (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 164. This position will bear negatively on Hus at Constance, where he refused to abjure the errors of others. See Hus's discussion on abjurement in a letter to his followers in Jan Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Václav Novotný (Prague: Nákl. Komise, 1920), 141, trans. Jan Hus, *The Letters of John Hus*, ed. R. Martin Pope and Herbert B Workman (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1904), 89: "Accordingly, be assured that if any of you abjure (odpřisáhl), as they suggest in their letters, he will abjure either the true faith and the truth, or heresy and error. Accordingly, either after abjuring he will hold heresy or error—or before doing so, he will be proved to have held what he abjures."

<sup>157</sup> Hus, *Sebrané spisy české* III, 108: "Thus in order to keep one's conscience correct [aby člověk pravil své svědomie] in past acts, current acts, and future acts, one must always observe Scripture."

<sup>158</sup> Spinka, *John Hus at the Council*, 209.

<sup>159</sup> Martin Wernisch, "Ratio voluntatis u M. Jana Husa," in *Jan Hus mezi epochami, národy a konfesemi* (Prague: Česká křesťanská akademie: Husitská teologická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy, 1995), 128 f.; Coufal, "From Oath to Confession."

confident righteousness even unto their personal destruction, as Hus's own case supremely exemplifies.

However, knowledge of God's will is only a necessary but ultimately insufficient quality for the Christian. As Hus put it himself, "no one has ever earned anything through the belief of human reason alone".<sup>160</sup> Reason makes a good advisor, but the Christian is always held accountable by God not for his thought but his choices and acts. As a result, Hus agrees with Augustine in ascribing free will the highest position among human faculties.<sup>161</sup> This primacy for Hussites of the will over reason hinges on what they identify as the central characteristic of the primitive Church, and thus the shortcoming of contemporary Christians, that is love of God. Love (*caritas*) understood in Augustinian terms is like a gravity which pulls the desirer to that desired, and it is therefore at its core a voluntary and not intellectual state.<sup>162</sup> Hus considers the "unity of contemplation" achievable with God via reason far inferior to the "voluntary unity (*unio per voluntatem*), like an embrace" uniting multiplicity into a oneness of heart and soul, uniting the lover with the loved, subject and object (*facit se idem esse cum amato*), as well as the members of Christ's mystical body.<sup>163</sup> It is this unity—between the multiplicity of believers and God—which Hussite thinkers always return to in descriptions of the Church's original perfection: "the primitive church was governed more excellently and perfectly by the evangelical law of Christ, when the

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<sup>160</sup> Martin Chadima, *Mistr Jan Hus: člověk, teolog, mučedník* (Prague: Česká biblická společnost, 2014), 50.

<sup>161</sup> Hus uses the common metaphor of counsellor and emperor to demonstrate the relation between reason and the will, Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 300: "Unde quamvis imperator regulator per consiliarium, non tamen conciliator est dignior imperatore". Cit. Seifert, "Pravda," 293.

<sup>162</sup> Jean-Luc Marion, "Resting, Moving, Loving: The Access to the Self According to Saint Augustine," *Journal of Religion* 91 (2011): 24–42.

<sup>163</sup> Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 300: "per voluntatem magis unitur homo cum optimo, quam per intellectum, cum voluntate facit se idem esse cum amato. Unde dicunt aliqui et bene, quod unio intellectus cum Deo est quasi unio ipsius visus cum visibili, sed unio per voluntatem est quasi per modum amplexus. Unde et sancti voluntati attribuunt vim unitivam et non intellectui; ex voluntate enim debet esse duorum vel plurium quasi unum cor et anima una", cit. Wernisch, "Ratio voluntatis," 131; Seifert, "Pravda," 294.

many believers were of one heart and one soul (*cor unum et anima una*)”.<sup>164</sup> In other words, this type of unification and reconciliation between man and God involves the individual choice to sacrifice the individual will, the ego, and self-love (*abnegare se ipsum*) to the enrapturing love of God.<sup>165</sup> This is not to diminish the importance of divine cooperation or the pedagogical role of the clergy, but to highlight that for Hussites, unity with God is irreducible to any intellectual knowledge or institutional membership, but only to a choice of individual responsibility. We will return to emphasize this point later.

Finally, this voluntary sacrifice of the individual for the divine will forms within the believer the true Christian faith which expresses his love of God into behaviour and action. Hus describes that this “living faith” formed by love (*fides viva, fides caritate formata*) is simultaneously an inner and outer experience, of both belief and action: “Two actions accompany faith, namely the interior—that is to believe—and the exterior—that is to work in good belief”. This is distinct from what he calls “dead faith” (*fides mortua*) which even demons may possess: the merely internal belief which is simply received (*acquisitus*) and unformed (*informis*), without salvific power.<sup>166</sup> Love of God is inalienably related to fulfilling his will, objectifying his Truth, as Hus argues:

<sup>164</sup> Jan Sedlák, “Počátkové Kalicha III,” *Časopis Katolického Duchovenstva* 55. (1914): 320–321, n. 220. Cf. similarly also in Kaminsky, *A History*, 118 f., n. 71. *Consuetudo et Ritus*, in Kaminsky, *The Old Color and the New*, 66.

<sup>165</sup> Jan Hus, *M. Io. Hus sermones in Capella Bethlehem V*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Nákladem Královské České Společnosti Nauk, 1942), 92: “Nam ad Gallat. 5<sup>o</sup> dicitur: ‘Qui Christi sunt, carnem suam crucifixerunt.’ 3<sup>o</sup> abnegare se ipsum et sic non habere voluntatem propriam: voluntas enim hominis est voluntas prava et perversa, que est voluntas dyaboli, qui vult utique Christo contraire. Voluntas vero bona est voluntas Dei, que sancta est, ducens ad vitam et aperiens paradisum.” The Augustinian background of this is explained in Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 91.

<sup>166</sup> *Historia et Monumenta Joannis Hus atque Hieronymi Pragensis II* (Nuremberg: J. Montanus and U. Neuberus, 1715), 205: “Fides sine operibus non dicit fides sine opere, quia credere est opus fidei, quod tamen non facit fidem vivam sine operibus, quia non fit ex charitate. Fidem enim sequuntur duo actus, sc. interior, qui est credere, et exterior, qui est bene operari credendo. Mortua est, quia ... opere non implet.” Cit. Kybal, *M. Jan Hus* 2.1, 28. *Historia et Monumenta II*, 205: “Quia fides, quae per dilectionem non operatur, mortua est, inefficax ad salutem. Mortua est, quia sensu caret et motu, non sentiens delectationem, quae est in charitate, nec motum boni operis.”; Hus, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, 455: “fides informis, que est habitus acquisitus, est in demonibus”. Cit. Kybal, *M. Jan Hus* 2.1, 24.

“whoever loves God fulfils all his commands; and also you see from this, that whoever loves God fulfils his whole law as is appropriate for his salvation”.<sup>167</sup> It is in this performative love that we also find the distinction from traditional *bona opera*; only lovers of God can perform a “good act” in harmony with their conscience.<sup>168</sup> However, this love is not a permanent state, but must be constantly maintained by the performance of God’s will;<sup>169</sup> it is dangerously easy to betray God by neglecting this or simply prioritizing the individual above the divine will.<sup>170</sup> This is all to highlight an observation here which will play an important role in Hussite political thought moving forward, namely that Christian faith is ideally an objectively-visible quality, and that the Christian faithful are thus a manifest identity within any community. The performative imperative of Christian identity clearly manifests to neighbours and subordinates the status of one’s internal orientation.

It is important to note, therefore, that already in these early years Hussite leaders were reviving confidence in the charismatic judgement of thinkers like Janov, the human ability to discern the elect from their outer behaviour via scripture.<sup>171</sup> As Hus explained, this is the meaning of the two keys given to Peter (Matt. 16:19): through this

<sup>167</sup> Jan Hus, *Mistra Jana Husi sebrané spisy* VI: *Postilla*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Bursík, 1908), 181: “proof of love is shown in action” (*důkaz lásky jest skutkem ukázání*); *Historia et Monumenta Joannis Hus atque Hieronymi Pragensis* I (Nuremberg: J. Montanus and U. Neuberus, 1715), 148: “And it is clear, that it is impossible for a created thing to love God unless it preserve his precepts in its time ...; also it is impossible to preserve [only] one of the necessary precepts without preserving all of the individual precepts ... Thus whoever maintains the first and greatest precept, which is to love God, maintains the precepts. Conversely it follows: Whoever maintains his precepts loves him.”

<sup>168</sup> Liguš, “Husovo pojetí,” 184-86. This is especially true of those in mortal sin, see Hus, *Postilla*, 150: “he who is in mortal sin is nothing in God’s grace, and God also has removed from him His grace, so that nothing he does is worth anything to his holy grace [*nic jeho svaté milosti nenie vzácné, což on činí*]”.

<sup>169</sup> *Historia et Monumenta* I, 147: “it is impossible for anyone to be in God’s love or grace, unless he maintain his [God’s] precepts and thus necessarily serve his God in his time. Or to put it conversely: For a creature to love God, it must maintain his precepts.”

<sup>170</sup> Seifert, “Pravda,” 285. Cf. Hus, *Sebrané spisy české* III, 155: “As long as that faith is great, it always engenders or bears auricular proclamation; but once that proclamation ceases, you can be sure that this faith is dissolved in the heart” cit. Kybal, *M. Jan Hus* 2.1, 28.

<sup>171</sup> This despite the scholarly consensus that Hus took almost no direct influence from Janov directly. See Nechutová, “Janov-Hus?”; Lahey, “Antichrist in Bohemia.” Influence is speculated in Jana Nechutová, “Hus a eschatologie,” *Sborník prací Filozofické Fakulty Brněnské Univerzity* E 13 (1968): 186, n. 48.

gift, every good cleric has the knowledge to discern (*sciencia discernendi*) and the power to judge (*potencia iudicandi*) the saved from the damned, just as God does.<sup>172</sup> In other words, this is not a prerogative monopolized by the pope, or even held by a bad pope.<sup>173</sup> The key of discrimination is attainable by laymen through the same means, to reveal the injustice of the wicked clergy.<sup>174</sup> True Christians manifest their inner, just will through their deeds (*manifestatur ex operibus*).<sup>175</sup> In the words of Janov, Jakoubek even praises the recent Church Schism as an event which made this division manifest to all: “Its first usefulness is that the evil formerly inside the Church thus appears in the open, and is recognized and displayed for its repentance.”<sup>176</sup> Despite the obvious implications of these findings for ecclesiology, however, Hus remained reluctant to embrace them throughout his life and instead, as historians have long observed, ostensibly continued to hold a version of the deterministic and invisible conception of Christ’s mystical body pioneered by Augustine and asserted by Wyclif. Hus accepts the definition of the true Church as the collection of all the predestined with Christ alone at their head,<sup>177</sup> and claims at times that its membership is inaccessible to human

<sup>172</sup> Jan Hus, *M. Io. Hus sermones in Capella Bethlehem* IV, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Nákladem Královské České Společnosti Nauk, 1941), 241: “Dicit ei [i.e. Petro] Christus: ‘Tibi dabo claves’ i.e. discernendi scienciam, que sint peccata vel virtutes, et que non. 2<sup>a</sup> clavis ponitur iudicandi, i. ut iudicet tamquam iudex, quis sit dignus, ut iuste iudicetur a sacerdote particeps regni celorum.”; cf. Hus, *MIHO* 22, 434 f.: “Sicut ergo Petrus ex dacione Cristi duas claves habuit, scilicet potestatem et scienciam, sic vicario Petri et cuilibet presbytero necessarie sunt ille claves”; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 412.

<sup>173</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 76: “‘Tibi dabo claves regni celorum’, id est potestatem ligandi solvendique peccata, in persona Petri dixit toti ecclesie militanti, non quod quelibet persona illius ecclesie indifferenter habeat illas claves, sed quod tota illa ecclesia secundum singulas eius partes ad hoc habiles habeat illas claves.”; Hus, *MIHO* 22, 435: “Si ergo Romanus pontifex nescit decalogum, sicut de multis patuit ignaris, ut dictum est in tractatu De ecclesia, similiter quivis alius episcopus vel presbyter si non scit articulos fidei cum decalogo, tunc caret clave sciencie et per consequens non videtur habere iuxta verbum Domini duas claves”.

<sup>174</sup> Hus, *Sermones* IV, 92: “Sed Deo dante aperientur oculi rationis simplicium, qui scient discernere inter iustam et fictam excommunicationem”; Hus, *Sermones* II, 250.

<sup>175</sup> Kybal, *M. Jan Hus* 2.1, 131, n.1: “illa vita [iusti] consistit in dillectione dei et eius sincera contemplatione et vivaci fide ..., et hec est vita invisibilis, que manifestatur ex operibus, quando homo contempnit mundum et adheret deo.” The correct MS is KNM XIV E 4, fol. 55<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>176</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 323: “Prima utilitas, quod malum dudum intestinum ecclesie sic prodiit in publicum et cognitum et est propositum ad penitendum”.

<sup>177</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 7: “sancta universalis ecclesia est numerus omnium predestinatorum et corpus Christi mysticum, cuius ipse est caput”.



perception, as he wrote in his *De Ecclesia*: “the ground of predestination or of charity ... distinguishing a member of the church from a member of the devil, we do not here by our senses discern”.<sup>178</sup> It is clear that he was generally uncomfortable speculating on divine foreknowledge,<sup>179</sup> since it is possible that a seemingly good person is among the reprobate.<sup>180</sup> Despite his commitment to the Augustinian position, however, we have already seen that Hus is also invested in the performativity of Christian identity, and this forces him to acknowledge the visibility of Christ’s human members to a significant extent. This is perhaps most clear in his later works, such as his *Great Exposition* (1412):

... every person must be either saved or damned, because every person must be either a disciple of God, or a disciple of the devil (*žák boží / d’áblův*). And he is a disciple of God, who hears God’s word and fulfils it in deed (*skutkem plní*); and he is a disciple of the devil, who does not hear God’s word, or hears it and does not fulfil it in deed, and thus is faithless (*nevěří*).<sup>181</sup>

Hus constantly recalls the association of good acts to salvation, even if they are theoretically only partially decisive.<sup>182</sup> In brief, Hus’s emphasis on the relationship between the Christian’s inner and outer faithfulness does not allow him to maintain a strictly invisible Church, and his followers are even less interested in doing so. Jakoubek, for instance, wholly takes over Janov’s ecclesiology, which allows him to

<sup>178</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 38, trans. Jan Hus, *De Ecclesia - The Church*, trans. David S. Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1915), 49; cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 33 f.; Vilém Herold, “Husovo ‘Pravda konečně vysvobodí’ a kostnický koncil,” in *Rozjímání vpřed i vzad. Karlu Kosíkovi k pětasedmdesátinám*, ed. Václav Vladivoj Tomek, Josef Zmr, and Irena Šnebergová (Prague: Filosofia, 2001), 153. On the similar position of Wyclif, see Shogimen, “Wyclif’s Ecclesiology,” 224.

<sup>179</sup> Lahey, “Sentences,” 147 f.; Molnár, *Na rozhraní věků*, 11.

<sup>180</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 16 f.

<sup>181</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 106.

<sup>182</sup> For instance in Hus, *MIHO* 2, 338, commenting on Matthew 7:21, he explains: “Not everyone who says to me: Lord, Lord! will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who enacts the will of my heavenly father will enter the kingdom of heaven”. Note here, that whoever says ‘Lord’ to Jesus the first time, believes in his heart that he is God; who says ‘Lord’ a second time to him acknowledges this with his lips. And these two are not sufficient for salvation; for insofar as everyone who desires salvation should be a servant of the holy Trinity, he should add a third ‘Lord’, finally fulfilling the will of the heavenly father in act. And the false prophets who say twice: ‘Lord, lord!’ and do not say a third ‘Lord’, that the will of the heavenly father is not finally fulfilled, will therefore not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

avoid the problematic terminology of predestination and define the proper Church—Christ’s mystical body—as an ethical and thus visible collective. As he argued through Janov in 1410: “just as the members of the Church and thus his Church is to be known according to the rule of the Lord Jesus from deduction (*a posteriori*), namely from the fruits, so the Church is the congregation of God’s saints, who live and are moved by the spirit and life of Jesus Christ.”<sup>183</sup> From a similarly voluntarist foundation, Hus rejects that the membership of the elect was determined *a priori*, and instead maintains their identification within history based on individual responsibility. At best, predestination is only a potential for salvation, but it is ultimately up to human perseverance (*perseverantia*) to accomplish it: “if anyone is predestined to eternal life, it necessarily follows that he is predestined unto righteousness and, if he follows life eternal, he has also followed righteousness.” Those who fail do not partake in blessedness.<sup>184</sup> In sum, it is clear that for Hus and his followers, the voluntarism and performativity of Christian identity precluded a strictly invisible and deterministic /Augustinian ecclesiology. Instead, they accepted a position which bound membership in the true Church to the free and individual decision of each potential Christian. To varying degrees, this led Hussite thinkers to diverge from Augustine and even Wyclif to claim that the identity of Christ’s mystical body is visible and discernible in the behaviour of community members.

To summarize thus far, it has been shown that the Hussite vision of reform broke with Augustinian tradition by assuming a more optimistic anthropology of postlapsarian

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<sup>183</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 322: “Nam iuxta regulam domini Jesu cognoscendo a posteriori sc. a fructibus membra ecclesie et sic ecclesiam suam, tunc ecclesia est congregatio sanctorum dei, qui vivunt et aguntur spiritu et vita Jesu Christi”. Cf. Paul De Vooght, *Jacobellus de Stříbro (†1429): premier théologien du hussitisme* (Louvain: Bureaux de la R.H.E., 1972), 17-21.

<sup>184</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 16, trans. Hus, *De Ecclesia - The Church*, 23. Cf. Zdeněk Kučera, “Ekklesiologický Výklad Posledního Soudu - Pokus o Porozumění Jana Husovi,” in *Jan Hus Mezi Epochami, Národy a Konfesemi*, ed. Jan B. Lášek (Prague: Česká křesťanská akademie: Husitská teologická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy, 1995), 152 f.

mankind as capable of improvement. This allows for a universal knowledge of God's will via a direct or indirect access to the Truth—scripture or preaching—which bypasses most of the institutional hierarchy and tradition of the contemporary Church. As a result, the process of reform begins or is founded in an internal effort of the Christian to align himself psychologically to divine knowledge and volition, and a great emphasis is thus placed on individual ethical responsibility. Christian faith, identity, and Church membership therefore cannot be taken for granted alongside membership in any community or institution, or even as internal belief; it must be actively and objectively performed at all possible instances in the world, before the eyes of God and man, whatever possible consequences this might entail. This inner conformity to God expressed in action is what it truly means to follow Christ, as exemplified by the perfect unity of the primitive Church, and is thus the final goal of reform.

### **Reform methodology**

Although the ambition of reform may thus be described as psychological, in terms of this internal alignment to the divine will which is subsequently re-produced in the world, it was also clear to Bohemian reformers from the degraded state of contemporary Christendom that this task required structural implementation. Worldliness and egoism were too entrenched to rely confidently on self-reform alone. For this reason they largely accepted the leadership of the clergy in this endeavour as proposed in Wyclif's reform theory. The task of the clergy is above all pedagogical and exemplary, to activate within the audience that process of psychological re-alignment which reform demanded. The central methodology in this early stage of Hussitism is undoubtedly preaching, which is understood as the principal mode of Christian performativity for the clergy from which nothing excused them, as both the medium

and the message of changing the world with God's Truth.<sup>185</sup> Preaching is the word of God made material (*materiale*), almost like a magical incantation;<sup>186</sup> as *Scriptura vocalis*, it has its own creative and re-creative power, and must be heard not only with the ears, but with the mind to illuminate reason, and with the heart to guide the will toward action—the living relationship with God.<sup>187</sup> For this reason preaching must be vernacular, to be comprehensible to the audience and awaken the person in every sense to a new identity, actually transforming the person into a “new creature” (*ad producendam novam creaturam*), as Jakoubek put it.<sup>188</sup> As Hus showed, the preacher should charismatically use emotion for this purpose: “[Christ] puts death to flight, and restores us to life: Feel this! (*Hoc sentite!*) He was killed that he might make whole, he died that he might live: Feel this! He is spotted that he might cleanse: Feel this!”<sup>189</sup> He emphasized the soteriological value of preaching above all sacraments, and innovated by even raising it to a sacramental status of its own given its ability to “plant God's grace in a person” (*božie milost' v člověku plodí*).<sup>190</sup> According to Hus, this is in continuity with the emphasis of preaching from Christ himself: “he [i.e. Christ] only

<sup>185</sup> Mánek, “Husův spor,” 28 f.; Pavel Soukup, “‘Ne verbum Dei in nobis suffocetur...’ Kommunikationstechniken von Predigern des frühen Hussitismus,” *Bohemia* 48 (2008): 56, 81. Cf. Loxley, *Performativity*, 2, 7-9.

<sup>186</sup> Pavel Soukup, *Reformní kazatelství a Jakoubek ze Stříbra* (Prague: Filosofia, 2011), 237, n. 55: “secundum magicos naturales verba sapienter incantantium habent suam efficaciam, quantumlibet distancia transmutandi sive hoc, quod transmutent, medium. Verbum itaque Dei capit ab ore predicantis esse materiale”.

<sup>187</sup> Hus, *Postilla*, 28, cit. Liguš, “Husovo pojetí,” 180 f. Rudolf Horský, “Kazatelské a Pastýřské Dílo Mistra Jana Husi,” in *Hus Stále Živý; Sborník Studií k 550. Výročí Husova Upálení*, ed. Miroslav Kaňák (Prague: Blahoslav v Ústředním církevním nakl., 1965), 55 f.; Josef B. Jeschke, “K teologickým předpokladům Husovy reformace,” in *Husův sborník: Soubor prací k 550. výročí M. Jana Husa*, ed. Michal Flegl and Rudolf Řičan (Prague: Komenského evangelická fakulta bohoslovecká v Praze, 1966), 22; Liguš, “Husovo pojetí,” 180 f.

<sup>188</sup> Soukup, *Reformní kazatelství*, 237, n. 55; Reid S. Weber, “„The Knowledge and Eloquence of the Priest Is a Gift from God, The Homiletic Self-Promotion of Jan Hus,” *BRRP* 10 (2015): 35.

<sup>189</sup> Thomas A. Fudge, “Feel This! Jan Hus and the Preaching of Reformation,” *BRRP* 4 (2002): 107.

<sup>190</sup> Hus, *Postilla*, 28, cit. Liguš, “Husovo pojetí,” 181.

rarely baptized, served [only] one mass when he wanted to finish his life; but he began preaching at age twelve ... until his death, and was crucified for preaching”.<sup>191</sup>

Though it was principal, however, preaching was only one mode of imitating Christ for a Christian cleric, whose entire existence is devoted to objectifying his Truth in the world. This office is only truly fulfilled (and its authority exercised) by those who demonstrate their awareness of the performativity of Truth, the need to manifest Truth in life, and thus follow Christ’s exemplarity to mankind by themselves living as Christ as an exemplary vanguard of universal reform.<sup>192</sup> This awareness will naturally guide such people to forsake worldly pleasures for poverty, and to discern other acts of Truth from sin (*uměnie rozeznánie hriecha*).<sup>193</sup> A cleric truly accepting 1) the relational moral ontology and 2) the monopolistic claim of God upon all his energies, will be not only a proper preacher, but will naturally comprehend and be at peace with the gravity of his duty. Just as Hus’s psychology places no intrinsic value in the subjective ego, so the Hussite political cosmion places no intrinsic meaning in the mundane realm. A cleric truly appreciating this will necessarily accept the potential necessity of universal martyrdom, as Hus explained via the three degrees of faith:

The third degree is to bend the mind to the rule or truth, which God as the first truth orders or shows ... In the third degree one believes in holy scripture, for this reveals the truth that every Christian should be ready to give his life and die for (*za niž každý křesťan má na smrt vydati hotově život svůj*).

Against this devotion, no threat holds any actual danger, a sentiment Hus exemplified on numerous occasions, as in his promise to a supportive public before the hostile book-

<sup>191</sup> Hus, *Postilla*, 92 and 111: “Christ maintains in his scripture, and teaches us, [that] he conquered all the devil’s attempts with scripture”.

<sup>192</sup> Jana Nechutová, “M. Jan Hus, farizeové a zákoníci: příspěvek k funkční typologii v Husově polemice,” in *Interpretace a kritika díla Jana Husa* (Ústí nad Labem: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity J.E. Purkyně v Ústí n. Labem, 2016), 34 f.; Horský, “Kazatelské a Pastýřské Dílo Mistra Jana Husi,” 65. Jakoubek called this state the “spirit of freedom”, brought by the Holy Spirit inhabiting the minds of modern “saints” unified with Christ. See Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 410–13, quote at 412; Werner, *Der Kirchenbegriff*, 34 f. does not note the clerical audience of the sermon.

<sup>193</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 93 f., 233. .

burnings of the archbishop: “I promised and promise, either to preach, or be expelled from the land, or to die in prison”.<sup>194</sup> With their power of charismatic discernment, clerics are therefore obligated to chastise and identify stubborn sinners to the secular authorities, whatever their status or office.<sup>195</sup> In sum, then, early Hussite thinkers borrowed heavily from Wyclif’s reform model which placed the Christian clergy in a position of leadership in universal reform. A cleric’s love of God is to be expressed performatively in the radical imitation of Christ which should direct his entire lifestyle as a constant manifestation of Christ’s law by example and preaching. This charismatic guidance is thus meant to awaken within the audience a similar psychological realignment and voluntary unification to the divine will.

It is from this intellectual landscape that Hus and his colleagues launched their intense campaign to identify and chastise clerics who did not fulfil the conditions of their office. This includes all those who relativize God’s Truth by drawing a sharp distinction between faith and the performance of God’s will in action. For instance, all those who retain their offices while also obeying the archiepiscopal interdict’s ban on preaching are obvious “traitors of the Truth” (*proditores veritatis*), parasites simply interested in the wealth of status. Similar are those who enrich themselves from their clerical offices by various means. Such priests should be despised by their flocks and will hang in hell.<sup>196</sup> These violent denunciations are encouraged by a confident appraisal of their otherness. In continuity with the realist position, Hus and his followers collapse

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<sup>194</sup> Palacký, *Documenta*, 405. Cf. Hus, *MIHO* 1, 68; Horský, “Kazatelské a Pastýřské Dílo Mistra Jana Husi,” 50.

<sup>195</sup> Jan Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, ed. Samuel Harrison Thomson (Prague, 1927), 160: “Clerici ergo docti a spiritu sancto in lege dei iudicent iudicio discrecionis et non coactivo de peccatis inter lepram et lepram spiritualem, de deordinacionibus maximis in ecclesia per omnes et singulos status, de abhominacione desolacionis, iamdudum stante in loco sancto ... Sic spiritualis sacerdos, spiritu Ihesu afflatus, omnia diiudicet secundum spiritum Ihesu, et aliis discernenda publicet.” See also note 199.

<sup>196</sup> Hus, *Sermones* IV, 78: “Sic spirituales multi sunt pastores, qui propter questus suos oves suas mori videntes letantur dicentes, quia bene cedet pro coquina ex offertorio. Numquid illi non sunt in inferno suspende[n]di?” cit. Fudge, “Feel This!,” 115. and passim; *Historia et Monumenta* I, 135; trans. Hus, *The Letters of John Hus*, 36 f.

the distinction between Christian faith and behaviour, which allows them to collapse the distinction between heresy and sin. In other words, this expands the Augustinian category of heresy from an internal belief to an external behaviour. As Hus explained, a mortal sinner is also a heretic and thus ejected from the Church community: “All these [mortal sinners] are banned and accursed by God and they are heretics if they stubbornly persist [in their deadly sins]: They are cut off (*odřezaní*) from God and his Church”.<sup>197</sup> In the context of the clergy, this meant Bohemian reformers could generalize their definition of the ideal priest into a normative one, and discern a priest’s allegiance and his identity relative to the true Christian community. As Hus summarized, dutiful preaching and exemplary lifestyle represent one extreme, while the attention to the mundane self represents the other:

Thus it is necessary to discern the followers of Christ—listeners and preachers—so that when someone preaches with a pure focus on people’s salvation, he can be sure that he is sent from God. But if he works to fill his bags with money, then he is sent by the devil Mammon.<sup>198</sup>

To summarize, early Hussite attacks against unfit clerics illustrate that voluntary disassociation from the divine will, especially for members of this office, is manifestly observable based on certain norms of behaviour which emphasize the ego over selfless

<sup>197</sup> Pavlína Rychterová, “Theology Goes to the Vernaculars: Jan Hus, ‘On Simony’, and the Practice of Translation in Fifteenth-Century Bohemia,” in *Religious Controversy in Europe 1378 - 1536*, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 237-39; cf. Jan Rokyta, *Podoby eklesiologie v českém reformním hnutí* (Hradec Králové: Královéhradecká diecéze Církve československé husitské, 2018), 106 f. This draws from Wyclif’s expansion of apostasy to include certain mortal sinners, cf. John Wyclif, *Tractatus de apostasia*, ed. Michael Henry Dziewicki (London: Trübner & Co., 1889), 19: “suppono quod apostasia comittitur, quandocunque quis in mortali peccato ceciderit; quia semper tunc dirumpens [*sic*] religionem domini retrocedit”.

<sup>198</sup> Cit. Pavel Soukup, “‘Jak mohou zvěstovat, nejsou-li posláni?’ Autorita a autorizace kazatele u Jana Husa a jeho současníků,” in *Amica Sponsa Mater. Bible v čase reformace*, ed. Pavel Soukup (Prague: Kalich, 2014), 111. Also see his citation of a relevant passage in Jan Hus, *Spisy M. Jana Husi I. Expositio Decalogi*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Bursík, 1903), 7: “whatever thing a person loves as much or more than God, that becomes his God ... this is shown by Jerome’s exposition on the words of Psalm 20: ‘And you will have no other God’: ‘to whom God’ is a matter of the stomach, he has another God ... I am angry—anger is my God; I desired women—passion is my God ... whatever someone may desire and value, that is his God.” Cit. Anežka Ebertová, “Sociálně teologická problematika v díle Husově,” in *Hus stále živý; sborník studií k 550. výročí Husova upálení*, ed. Miroslav Kaňák (Prague: Blahoslav v Ústředním církevním nakl., 1965), 97.

love of God. Obstinate hypocrisy of this kind challenges not only their priestly status but their Christian identity as such.

Therefore, the ideal methodology of reform is pedagogical and exemplary, implemented by the vanguard of the clerical status. As Hussite leaders are painfully aware, however, the state of the clergy is generally decrepit and unable to perform even self-reform. As a result, Hussite leaders generally adapted Wyclif's confidence in secular authorities to correct by coercion those elements within the clerical estate which upright priests identified as stubbornly corrupt, thus returning the estate to the service of societal reform.<sup>199</sup> As Hus made clear from Romans 13, the king wields the sword by God's grace, to protect the good but also to compel the wicked (*malos ad bonum compellendo*), whether lay or religious.<sup>200</sup> Especially during the interdict threatened and imposed on Prague, this took the form of forcing the priesthood to perform its specific duties: "Force them to enter!" (Luke 14:23), that is, to preach and perform the sacraments under pain of property seizure.<sup>201</sup> This explains the enthusiasm of Hussites for King Václav's policy of clerical disendowment in this period, whether it was inspired by reformist sympathies or not.<sup>202</sup> Yet Hussite leaders also agreed with Wyclif that clerical disendowment was not simply a punishment but the primary means to

<sup>199</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 160: "Seculares vero domini, informati fideliter a sacerdotibus per eorum spirituale iudicium discrecionis, non coactivum, iudicent iudicio coactivo malos obstinatos, nollentes voluntarie converti ad viam veritatis secundum sapienciam dei per sanctos sacerdotes eis donatam. Et per illud coactivum iudicium seculares domini et principes ... pro honestacione rei publice et Christi fidelium pauperum convertant pseudoprelatos et falsos predicatoros, plebanos et vicarios scandalosos ...". Cf. *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>200</sup> *Historia et Monumenta* II, 73: "Rex est minister Dei, habens ad hoc gladium, ut tam bonos quam malos regat, bonos protegendo, malos ad bonum compellendo, sive sint seculares, sive spirituales."

<sup>201</sup> Hus, *Sermones* IV, 193 f.: "Quis autem inducere debeat eos [i.e. sacerdotes], ut orent, predicent et missent? Certe brachium seculare, cui Christus dedit legem dicens: 'Compelle intrare eos!', qui vorant elemosinam et non orant nec predicant neque missant."

<sup>202</sup> For instance, see the popular Hussite chant in Thomas A. Fudge, *The Crusade Against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418 - 1437: Sources and Documents for the Hussite Crusades*, Crusade Texts in Translation 9. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 43 f.: "O God, let the lion [King Václav] rise up, tear to pieces the mischief of the clergy, promote the Law of Christ". Cf. Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 96 f., who doubts Václav's reformist allegiances.



reform this estate, to free it of secular concerns and return it to its exemplary status.

Jakoubek explained thusly:

If the clergy would not want to yield their secular domains to the secular power ... then the left hand, namely the secular arm or the more genuine (*verius*) whole mystical body of the Church according to that hand should and ought to remove those domains from them, which are exceedingly contrary to their estate ... so that the unburdened clergy (*clerus exoneratus*) shall be more free and conformed (*liberius et conformius*) to the ancient Church of the saints to perform what is appropriate of their office.<sup>203</sup>

In other words, Hussite leaders generally shared the assessment of Wyclif that the secular ambitions of the clergy are a poison which gradually diverted their attentions to mundane interests and debilitated the primitive Church, transforming it into a “synagogue of sins”.<sup>204</sup> As a minister of God (*minister Dei*), the king’s duty is to implement the divine law in his kingdom: “to defend God’s law with the power of his office, to compel those rebelling by force of strength, and destroy the enemies of God’s law”.<sup>205</sup> It is in this policing capacity that all secular authority finds its calling, and that all kings and princes find the primary outlet of their faith as Christians.

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To conclude, this chapter has traced the development of early Hussite reformism during the first years of its popularization. The basic assumptions and goals of Hussite thinkers have been found to contradict those of both past and contemporary authorities. In challenging extant assumptions like divine determinism, anthropological pessimism,

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<sup>203</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 455.

<sup>204</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 58 f.: “Nam tales [i.e. mali] ubique in ecclesia omnia gubernacula, omnia regimina, omnes kathedras et dignitates possident et occupant et dirigunt ipsi soli universa ... Olim enim in primordiis ecclesie facile erat parvulis in Christo evitare scandala ... . Sed postquam filius iniquitatis paulatim misterium suum operabatur i.e. occultissimum ac venenosum suum malum paulatim et successive in ecclesiam introduxit, tandem usque ad novissima tempora compago membrorum eius i.e. synagoge peccantium iam consolidata est ...”. On other formulations, see Pavlína Cermanová, *Čechy Na Konci Věků: Apokalyptické Myšlení a Vize Husitské Doby* (Prague, 2013), 207-11.

<sup>205</sup> *Historia et Monumenta* II, 74: “Rex debet ex vi sui officii defendere legem Dei, per potestatem coactivam compellere rebellantes, et in regno suo destruere legi Dei adversantes. Et qui resistunt in isto regibus, voluntati Domini resistunt, secundum Apostolum, Rom. 13.”

and scholastic intellectualism, Hus and his followers undermined the very foundations of medieval order. Instead, by reference to realist sources of inspiration, they confided in a future universal return into an idyllic perfection by means of an individualist, voluntarist, and ultimately activist unity with divinity. This strategy leaned heavily on spiritual and secular authorities, but also created space to harness even popular enthusiasm and initiative. By implication, this methodology also gave Hussite leaders and adherents a certain degree of confidence in their ability to distinguish the identity of Christ's true Church members from their mere imitators according to more discerning standards than mere sacramental or institutional membership. As the conflict between Hussites and their opponents heats up in the subsequent years, we shall see that this binarism is magnified and immanentized to fully unveil an elaborate enemy, both cosmic and political: the Antichrist.

## CHAPTER 2: Order, Peace, and the Antichrist

### Historical background: The Indulgence controversy until Hus's execution

After enjoying years of favour and protection from King Václav, the leaders of the Hussite reform movement were deeply unnerved by the violent breakdown of their relationship with the ruler as a result of the controversy over indulgences in 1412. Simultaneously, this crisis represented an escalation of their conflict with the Church, as the focus of dissent shifted from the local to the global representative of the ecclesiastic institution, Pope John XXIII himself. As a result of the intensified hostility, both sides witnessed the first losses of life as casualties to the reform project, and the struggle was raised to a noticeably-radicalized register. All this began a process of reshuffling in Hussite leadership which gradually continued until the birth of the Tábórites: veteran reformers abandoned the movement and became its fiercest opponents, and new leaders appeared to fill the gap. The trend toward polarization coincided with successful drives to grow support and enthusiasm for reformism across the social spectrum, and continued even despite the renewed conciliatory efforts of the king. Step by step, this is the path which mutually distanced the respective camps from the desire and possibility of compromise or rapprochement, and which led Jan Hus to the pyre at Constance. Rather than quenching Bohemian dissent, however, both sides would find that this act instead removed any hope of containing it.

The sudden removal of Archbishop Zbyněk from the conflict was a mixed blessing for the reform movement, and Hus in particular. Although the lifting of the interdict on Prague resumed some normalcy to religious life, the failure of the Bethlehem preacher's reconciliation with the late prelate meant that the conflict of the Hussites with the Church hierarchy was merely frozen rather than resolved. Thus, while their leaders were free to continue their preaching and academic defence of reform in

Prague, the case against Hus at the papal curia remained on the table. Continued pressure from several opponents in Rome gradually bore results. As the new pope appointed a more rigorous anti-Hussite judge to Hus's case, the defendant's Hussite attorney, Jan of Jesenice, was himself excommunicated for heresy. This weakened position of Hus at the curia would soon leave him vulnerable to his enemies, especially following the outbreak of intensified conflict in the summer of 1412.<sup>206</sup>

Subsequent events resonated with the intensified popularity and register of the reform movement. In mid-1412, the fallout of Pope John XXIII's crusade against King Ladislav of Naples reached Bohemia with the sale of crusade indulgences. Despite their general unpopularity in other kingdoms, King Václav of Bohemia enthusiastically supported the indulgence sales in the hope of financial and political gains.<sup>207</sup> As strongboxes were established and sermons were delivered across the kingdom to collect crusading revenues, however, reform leaders prepared an intense resistance. To them, commerce in indulgences reeked of simony and blasphemy, and rapidly became a symbol of the perverse authority and materialism which the Roman ecclesiastic hierarchy called Christianity. Reports of rampant clerical abuses and exaggerated promises linked to indulgence propagation only made the unbearable situation worse. Hussite opposition resembled the form it had taken during the previous years, but gradually expanded upon it in intensity.<sup>208</sup> Both in their academic and popular, riotous

<sup>206</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 40-44; Jiří Kejř, *Husův proces*, Historica (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2000), 72-76.

<sup>207</sup> Eva Doležalová, Jan Hrdina, and František Šmahel, "The Reception and Criticism of Indulgences in the Late Medieval Czech Lands," in *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits*, ed. Robert Norman Swanson (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 126 f.; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 105.

<sup>208</sup> Václav Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus, jeho život a učení II* (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1921), 79 f., 115; Jan Sedlák, "Husovy spisy proti bulle odpustkové," in *Miscellanea husitica Ioannis Sedlák*, ed. Stanislav Příbyl and Jaroslav V. Polc (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1996), 69-71. King Václav himself complained to the pope of the indulgence preachers: "ut in inferno positus redemptionem promitterent, et celeste regnum, quod non nisi promerentibus dari posse cognouimus ... non salutem procurarunt fidelibus, non fidem roborarunt catholicam, sed simplicium cordibus in errorem deductis maximam dicuntur pecuniam congregasse." See Franz Martin Pelcl, *Lebensgeschichte des Römischen und Böhmisches Königs*

forms, the anti-indulgence protests increasingly targeted Roman hierarchical and papal authority directly.<sup>209</sup> Demonstrators satirized the pontiff as Antichrist in all manner of visual, sung, and textual propaganda, an association which was already preached by Hussite leaders.<sup>210</sup> Similar turmoil also spread outside the capital, meaning that new provincial leaders and agitators were also taking enthusiastic initiative to hinder the overreach of papal authority.<sup>211</sup> Hussitism was thus becoming a truly Bohemian movement, at conflict with the top of the ecclesiastic hierarchy itself.

The most distressful moments of the indulgence affair demonstrated to Hussite leaders the fickleness of the learned and powerful in relation to the enduring popular support for reform under threat of persecution. In June, the movement for the first time found itself on the wrong side of the king's pragmatic politics. At this time, King Václav made public his support for the indulgence sales, effectively criminalizing their opposition. This sudden news shocked the reform leaders into taking sides in relation to the royal position. Most notably, the veteran reformist theologians Stanislav of Znojmo and Stephen of Páleč remained loyal to the king, which marked their digression from Wycliffite opinions and the beginning of their opposition to Hus and reformism. Conversely, Hus and other reformers escalated their opposition to indulgences with public disputations, literary productions, and aggressive mass-protests. Hus now

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*Wenceslaus II* (Prague: Schönfeld-Meißner, 1790), 151. On the dating of the complaint, cf. Doležalová, Hrdina, and Šmahel, "The Reception and Criticism," 128; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus II*, 83, and Václav Hadač, "Summa cancellariae regis Bohemiae," *Časopis Archivní Školy* 4 (July 1926): 31.

<sup>209</sup> Doležalová, Hrdina, and Šmahel, "The Reception and Criticism."

<sup>210</sup> For further discussion of the propaganda, see Petra Mutlová, "Communicating Texts through Images: Nicholas of Dresden's Tabule," in *Public Communication in European Reformation. Artistic and Other Media in Central Europe, 1380-1620*, ed. Milena Bartlová and Michal Šronek (Prague: Artefactum, 2007), 29-37. For examples, see also Karl Adolf Constantin Höfler, ed., *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum VI: Geschichtsschreiber der husitischen Bewegung in Böhmen II* (Wien: Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1865), 201-03; Bohuslav Havránek, Josef Hrabák, and Jiří Daňhelka, eds., *Výbor z české literatury doby husitské I*, (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé Akad., 1963), 270 f. See also just below. On Antichrist references, see next section.

<sup>211</sup> For instance, Hussite priests emphatically blocked indulgences in their parishes. Doležalová, Hrdina, and Šmahel, "The Reception and Criticism," 127 f.; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus II*, 78. See also note 217 below.

demanded a debate to the death against his learned opponents, and Jerome of Prague now repeatedly appears in tumultuous altercations with clerics and intellectuals.<sup>212</sup> By early July, the ongoing rioting attracted the frustrated attention of the king, who made heavy-handed moves to pacify unrest. After his attempts at reconciliation failed, Václav finally agreed to condemn the 45 articles of Wyclif, outlaw the slanderous anti-papal propaganda, and direct his counsellors to put down the anti-indulgence protests with force. On the same day, three young demonstrators were arrested and subsequently executed by the Old Town council. The Hussite master Jan Jičín lead a solemn procession with the deceased to Bethlehem Chapel, where they were laid to rest as saints and martyrs.<sup>213</sup> For the first time, the cause of reform cost the loss of life, as was ordered by the same secular leaders which Hussites called allies only months earlier.

The king's severe reaction to Hussite agitation shook the movement's leadership, and attracted a provocative response which contributed to an radicalizing polarization of affairs. The execution of the young followers suddenly raised the stakes of Hussite loyalties: no longer was reform a matter of dispute with underlings, but rather an open opposition to the heads of both spiritual and secular hierarchy, pope and king. After the shock had subsided, Hus and his colleagues found meaning in their persecution by closer association with primitive, persecuted Christians, which encouraged a policy of determined defiance. Thus in the following weeks, Hussite leaders made every effort to undermine the recent attempts of king and pontiff. Jerome

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<sup>212</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 48 f.; Doležalová, Hrdina, and Šmahel, "The Reception and Criticism," 133 f.; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 108 f. On vandalism, cf. Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 102. On intimidation and violence, cf. Reginald Robert Betts, "Jeroným Pražský," *Československý časopis historický* 5 (1957): 215 f.; Palacký, *Documenta*, 450 f.; Jaroslav Mezník, *Praha před husitskou revolucí*. (Prague: Academia, 1990), 161; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 85; Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 240.

<sup>213</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 49-51; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 103-05. The main source narrating the execution and surrounding events is Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, 34-37. For discussion and additional sources, see Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 115-19; Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 243 f. According to a hostile source, which blamed Jerome for the whole affair, the crowd sang "Isti sunt qui pro testament Dei sua corpora tradiderunt ad supplicia". Cf. Hermann von der Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis IV* (Frankfurt-Lepzig, 1699), 676.

continued his violent agitation against indulgences in Prague and the countryside.<sup>214</sup> In the capital, other leaders openly defended Wyclif's recently-condemned articles,<sup>215</sup> continued to propagate the pope as Antichrist,<sup>216</sup> and emphatically accepted and encouraged martyrdom for the reformist cause.<sup>217</sup> For their part, Hussite followers continued to protest in open acceptance of the threat they faced.<sup>218</sup> On the other side, Hussite radicalization may have contributed to the execution of several anti-reform clerics in two provincial towns.<sup>219</sup> The anxiety of the intensified situation is occasionally palpable among anti-Hussites, who worked to incite the king to a sterner response,<sup>220</sup> though he ordered no further executions.<sup>221</sup> Briefly put, an important lesson which Hussite leaders could agree upon in the aftermath of the indulgence affair was that they faced a much broader, more organized, and more powerful opposition than they previously anticipated, and that the stakes of their commitment were too high for all but the most dedicated and selfless of Christ's faithful.

The broadened and intensified participation of subaltern groups in Hussite agitation and resistance was not merely an organic result of the movement's intellectual appeal, however, but represents the concerted efforts of leaders to popularize core tenets

<sup>214</sup> Betts, "Jeroným Pražský," 217-19; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 160 f.

<sup>215</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 51; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 113.

<sup>216</sup> For instance, Jakoubek's polemical text *Tractatus responsivus*. Cf. the discussion in the following section.

<sup>217</sup> For instance, Hus's sermons in Hus, *Sermones* V, 81, 84, 138 f. See also discussion in next section.

<sup>218</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* IV, 676.

<sup>219</sup> The circumstances surrounding the events are unclear, cf. Jaroslav Eršil, *Acta summorum pontificum res gestas Bohemicas aevi praehussitici et hussitici illustrantia acta Innocentii VII., Gregorii XII., Alexandri V., Johannis XXIII. nec non acta concilii Constantiensis 1404-1417, acta Clementis VIII. et Benedicti XIII 1378-1417* (Prague: Prae Acad. Scientiarum Bohemoslovaca, 1980), 559-61; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 896. The dating is suggested by Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 291, n. 4.

<sup>220</sup> A Hussite propaganda pamphlet threatened Hussite revolution. Cf. František Michálek Bartoš, "Hus a jeho strana v osvětlení nepřátelského pamfletu z r. 1412," *Reformační sborník* 4 (1931): 273-289. It is partially translated and (erroneously) redated by Werner, "Popular Ideologies in Late Mediaeval Europe," 349. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 85-90. The anxiety of anti-Hussite masters is captured in Palacký, *Documenta*, 450 f.

<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, two Hussite clerics suffered death at the hands of a synod in Olomouc, cf. Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 896 f. A similar fate awaited two lay preachers there in June, 1415. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 141 f.

of reformism by innovative means. Aside from popular preaching already discussed, these involved various forms of visual, textual, and auricular propaganda alluded to above. With the identification of the Pope with the Antichrist, for instance, the work of the new German Hussite leader Nicholas of Dresden *Cortina de Antichristo* was translated into images which were carried in popular protests, portraying the opulent head of the modern Church in maximal contradiction with the poor and humble founder of the faith.<sup>222</sup> Such images may have been included in other popular Hussite meeting sites like Bethlehem Chapel. Here also, the text of Hus's work *De sex erroribus* were inscribed on the walls to clearly illustrate the perversion of the clergy compared to the collected quotations of ancient Church authorities. Hus himself wrote several vernacular religious songs to increase informed lay participation in services, and an entire host of popular Hussite songs combined pedagogical with polemical aims. These typically accompanied the lively and mocking Hussite protests, which were often theatrically staged with costumes and props for maximal effect.<sup>223</sup> In addition, Hus produced a great amount of instructive and moralizing vernacular texts for laymen and clerics without Latin. This is especially true in the period immediately preceding and during his exodus from Prague. Here, almost all of Hus's works were Czech, and the most popular of these, the *Expositions on the faith, the Decalogue, and the Paternoster* was indexed for ease of use for the "simple little people" (*sprostným lidičkóm*).<sup>224</sup> By the time of his departure to Constance, therefore, Hus and his colleagues had worked to

<sup>222</sup> Petra Mutlová, "The Case of the Other Hussites: Revisiting a Historiographical Construct of the Czech Reformation" (Habilitation Thesis, Brno, Masaryk University, 2018), 118-36. Cf. note 213 above.

<sup>223</sup> Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 84-89; Pavlína Rychterová, "The Vernacular Theology of Jan Hus," in *A Companion to Jan Hus* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 202-05; Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride*, 186-258 passim.

<sup>224</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 63. Cf. Rychterová, "Theology Goes to the Vernaculars"; Rychterová, "The Vernacular Theology," 183; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 135-44. Rychterová, "Theology goes to the Vernaculars"; idem, "Vernacular theology," 183; Soukup, *Jan Hus*, 135-44.



elaborate a culture of popular piety and mobilization with virtually all available means of pedagogy and propaganda.

In the meantime, as popular opposition to indulgences carried on, the leaders of the Roman Church also began to intensify their program to crush the Wycliffite dissidents in Bohemia. Unlike the toothless efforts of the late Archbishop Zbyněk, these now represented a coordinated effort which rattled the status quo and furthered the ongoing trend toward polarization. In July 1412, a major step was taken when the excommunication against Hus was pronounced aggravated for his failure to appear before the curial court, which also included all his supporters and neighbours. This meant an end to any hopes of a favourable legal result to his case. Anxiety now gripped the whole of Prague, which was threatened by another interdict, this time coordinated not by a hapless local prelate, but papal representatives. Violence erupted on both sides after the anathema was announced in the capital in October; Hussite crowds mocked and assaulted the accompanying ceremonies, and armed Germans tried to intimidate Hus's audience and interrupt his sermons. Similar disturbances and vandalism continued for months.<sup>225</sup> Prague's Old Town council tried to quell the tumult by prohibiting attendance of unruly sermons in Bethlehem Chapel, and there was even talk of the building's demolition.<sup>226</sup> Hus responded to the curial verdict from the pulpit with his infamous *Appeal to Christ*, which represented an unprecedented disavowal and radical alienation from ecclesiastical law and human judges to the heavenly judge alone. By November, Prague was placed under interdict, and Hus hesitantly agreed with the

<sup>225</sup> Marcela Klicova Perett, "Vernacular Songs as 'Oral Pamphlets': The Hussites and Their Propaganda Campaign," *Viator* 42 (2011): 371–91; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 190; Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* II, 624. For the mocking songs, cf. Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Počátky husitského zpěvu* (Prague: České Společnosti Nauk, 1907), 424 f. For the continuity of events, cf. Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 286 f.; Johann Loserth, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der husitischen Bewegung V," *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 82 (1895): 380.

<sup>226</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 883.

king and close advisors to pause his preaching activities, leave the capital, and go into exile for the sake of his flock.<sup>227</sup> Until his departure for Constance in October 1414, Hus continued his work under the protection of noble allies in rural Bohemia, with periodical correspondence with colleagues and supporters.

By mid-1413, it was clear that the exacerbated polarization and antipathy of the conflict had disillusioned Hussite leaders, and radicalized both sides, to the extent that reconciliation was untenable. This was despite the repeated arbitration efforts of secular powers to settle matters locally. With urban unrest compounded by international scandal, King Václav renewed his pragmatic strategy of enforcing *convivencia* between the embattled parties. In early 1413, he forced Prague's archbishop to convoke a series of synods, and then appointed a special commission, where representatives of reform (except for Hus himself) met with their opponents to discuss terms of accommodation. This plan backfired, and subsequent events articulate only deepened resentment. All meetings faltered over issues of ecclesiology and obedience, and the king exiled several important anti-reformist leaders, including Pálež and Znojmo, from the capital out of frustration. Rather than pressing the advantage forward, Hus decided to close any further debate during a visit to the capital, losing royal favour for the last time.<sup>228</sup> Instead of compromising his pure position, he now pronounced his preference to martyrdom: "I hope ... to oppose them [i.e. Pálež and Znojmo] until I am consumed by fire. If I cannot liberate the truth in all (*per omnia*), at least I will not be an enemy of the truth, and by my death refuse consent."<sup>229</sup> In defiance of royal authority, Hus now continued his preaching activity in itinerant style in southern Bohemia, a later focal point of Hussite

<sup>227</sup> Kejř, *Husův proces*, 97-101; Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 52-54; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 115-21. The *Appeal to Christ* in Matthew Spinka, ed., *The Letters of John Hus* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), 215-19.

<sup>228</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 54-58; Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 123-25; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 894-900; Kaminsky, *A History*, 90-96.

<sup>229</sup> Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 170, trans. Spinka, *The Letters*, 102. Alteration mine.

radicalism.<sup>230</sup> This situation also marks the historical context for several radical works by Hussite leaders, articulating severe alienation by their systematic distinction of human from divine reality, most notably Hus's *De ecclesia*.<sup>231</sup> Hus now summarized his position as one of uncompromising resoluteness:

and I was also in sin, not permitted to speak against obvious malice, foolishly fearing citations, anathemas, [and] scared of condemnations and death; but the merciful saviour, who permitted me to my office, now gives me courage not to be afraid, [and] rather now to speak truth against everyone who is contrary to the law of Jesus Christ.<sup>232</sup>

As events continued to inform the opinions of leaders on both sides of the conflict, then, they made the prospect of compromise and toleration more and more unappealing. For Hussites, this meant that the controversy over reform was decreasingly understood as an obstacle to cohabitation, but instead cohabitation was increasingly understood as an obstacle to reform, as will be shown.

It is in this defiant, missionizing mood that Hus agreed to publicly defend and argue his case, and by extension that of the whole reform movement, before the collection of ecclesiastic authorities which had recently convoked at the Council of Constance. It is likely that he was emboldened by the letter of safe passage promised by the secular protector of the Council, King Sigismund of Hungary (d. 1437), even if the Conciliarists understood Hus's participation in merely procedural terms, as a suspected heretic facing a legal verdict.<sup>233</sup> Nevertheless, Hus was fully aware of the potential fate which threatened him at Constance before his departure in October 1414, and this

<sup>230</sup> Palacký, *Starí letopisové čeští*, 391. Cf. Kaminsky, "Hussite Radicalism," 115.

<sup>231</sup> Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 58-61. Other works include Hus's *Sermo de Pace*, *De sufficiencia legis* divine. For others and discussion, see the following section.

<sup>232</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 291: "... i já pohřiechu byl sem, že nesměl sem proti zjevné zlosti mluvit, boje se nemůdře pónónv, kleteb, odsúzenie a smrti se lekaje; ale milosrdný spasitel, jenž mě připustil k svému úřadu, již mi dává smělost, abych se již nestrachoval, ale již pravdu mluvil proti každému, jenž by byl proti zákonu Jezukrista."

<sup>233</sup> Sebastián Provvidente, "Hus's Trial in Constance: Disputatio Aut Inquisitio," in *A Companion to Jan Hus*, ed. František Šmahel and Ota Pavlíček (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 260-65; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 909 f.

seemed to draw ever closer to reality after his arrival there in November. Thanks to the efforts of his Czech prosecutors, he was soon imprisoned and charged with dozens of heretical articles, including many taken from his controversial work *De ecclesia*, the 45 attributed to Wyclif, and some simply fabricated. For Hus's supporters, this was a clear betrayal by King Sigismund, who did little to rectify the situation, and caused an outcry from groups of sympathetic nobles at Constance and back home. In an ill-conceived plan, Jerome of Prague set out for Constance to aid his persecuted friend, where he was also arrested in May 1415. Ironically, Hus's situation only worsened with the deposition of Pope John XXIII by the insubordinate Council in Spring 1415: the radical reformer presented a manifest challenge to its own fledgling claim to *plenitudo potestatis*. Hus became badly ill under prolonged and worsened conditions of detainment, and all hope for a real contest of intellect was dashed by the Council's formal condemnation of John Wyclif as a heretic in May. Hus now was pressured not to defend individual ideas, but to renounce the whole corpus of Wyclif's thought, which he flatly refused.<sup>234</sup> As his case appeared increasingly dire, Hus's enthusiastically-received correspondences with friends and the masses of supporters in Bohemia assumed a more explicitly apocalyptic tone, as the leader clearly interpreted his own persecution in both eschatological and koinonic terms which united him to his community of followers:

That crown [of martyrdom], I firmly hope, the Lord will allow me to share along with you, most fervent lovers of the truth, and along with all who firmly and steadfastly love the Lord Jesus Christ, Who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. He had to suffer, as He Himself said; and it behoves us to suffer, so that the members would suffer along with the head (*ut compaciantur membra capiti*).<sup>235</sup>

<sup>234</sup> Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 145-57; Pavlíček, "The Chronology," 61-68; Provvidente, "Hus's Trial in Constance," 273-88.

<sup>235</sup> Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 302, trans. Spinka, *The Letters*, 187. Cf. Lucie Mazalová, *Eschatologie v díle Jana Husa* (Brno: Filosofická fakulta, Masarykova univerzita, 2015), 215-20. Hus's letters were often read out loud to crowds of followers.

After months of interrogations and open hearings, Hus's situation in Constance finally disintegrated. This was not only due to the divergent understandings of its very function—as debate or trial—but due to the fundamentally intractable understandings of authority: Hus would only submit his conscience to the correction of scripture, while the Council could not tolerate any depreciation to its own ultimate authority on earth. Unwilling to recant the errors ascribed to him, on 6 July 1415 the Council pronounced Hus a heretic and submitted him to the secular powers, who burned him at the stake at the bank of the Rhine.<sup>236</sup>

In hardly any time at all, therefore, it was clear that the position of the Bohemian reform movement fundamentally transformed in several respects. The previous three years had witnessed a deterioration in relations with the head of state, and direct confrontation with the highest representatives of Church authority. The radicalization of the conflict also splintered the unity of reformist leadership, though what the movement lost in veteran Wycliffite thinkers it gained in new enthusiasts from all social strata and throughout the countryside. In addition, gradual polarization coincided with a depreciation of compromise and toleration among parties. Thus, within three short years, the stance of the movement shifted from a community of moralist dissenters in the capital, confident in the king's support of their disputes with local ecclesiastic officials, to a condemned heresy, diverse in place and status, actively risking persecution and the loss of life. The movement was soon able to face this precarious situation with the intensified support, enthusiasm, and popularization it mobilized thanks to the reintroduction of an obscure liturgical practice. This was the innocuous discovery of the lay chalice.

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<sup>236</sup> Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 151 f. On Hus's appeal to conscience during his final weeks, see Spinka, *The Letters*, 183, 193 f., 198.

## Visions of Order and Peace

During this early stage of persecution and direct conflict with top ecclesiastic authorities, we therefore find Hussite thinkers articulating and elaborating intellectual developments within a significantly new, radically polarized and inimical climate. In agreement with their predecessors, this experience of alienation and hostility convinced them to increasingly deny the world and its norms of inherent value. Instead, the great and powerful figures opposing reform, especially represented by the Catholic clerical hierarchy, was increasingly dehumanized and identified with the immanent community of Antichrist, a theo-political order which kept mankind in a state of corruption and ignorance. Importantly, however, the Hussite reaction to such systemic sin significantly diverged from the options typically available to late medieval thinkers. Rather than tolerance or escapist apathy, earlier Hussite assumptions of individualism and activist performativity were mobilized alongside growing anxieties in the direction of rejection and resistance. As will be shown, this contributed to a general trend toward politicization and democratized agency, as the Hussite struggle was associated with the generally tumultuous but remedial project of Christ. Only by collective intolerance and disruption of the deranged status quo can the primordial Christian mission be rehabilitated, a state which is here fully articulated as a uniform theo-political order founded in divine law alone. Although certainly not yet encouraging popular revolution, I argue that this vision clearly illustrates the antinomian potential of Hussite thought, and that the trends of subaltern agency, immanent identities, and hierarchical depreciation already detectable to various degrees here will be critical to developments moving forward.

Before proceeding, it is worth elaborating some of the political implications of Hussite realism. As already mentioned, Hussite thinkers optimistically transgressed

Augustine by assuming the normative domination of the body by the soul, of the outer man by the inner, already in this life. Therefore Jakoubek, employing the 12<sup>th</sup> century mystic Isaac of Stella (d. cca. 1169), eulogized Jan Hus in 1415 by reference to the ideal state of man in the Saturnian age: “[Hus] within himself compelled the world to serve the flesh, the flesh to serve the spirit, and the spirit to serve the Lord”.<sup>237</sup> It is this normative domination of the outer by the inner man which allowed the entire man to be subject to the unific law of God. This was the state of affairs during the primitive Church, when this internal ordering according to divine will was accomplished unanimously, to the extent that the community represented a homogenous and tranquil political unit, as Hussites described via Acts 4:32: “‘the multitude of believers were of one heart and one soul’ according to the evangelical order (*ordinatio evangelica*)”.<sup>238</sup> What this means is that Hussite thinkers operated on the assumption that the ideal human condition is one of spiritual and political coordination according to the divine norm which governs the cosmos, and that the primitive Christian Church represented such a unific spiritual and political entity. This unity of spiritual and political is immediately evident from Hus’s definition of law, taken over from Wyclif: “Law in the true sense of the word is a truth leading a person to attaining salvation.”<sup>239</sup> The salvific law of Christ is indistinguishable from, and the measure of, the law governing human

<sup>237</sup> Palacký, *Documenta*, 558: “[Hus] totum mundum virili mente calcavit ... Et ideo nomen cum re, Hus, i. e. hauriens virtutes sanctorum, est digne sortitus, eo quod mundum carni, carnem spiritui et spiritum domino servire coëgit.” The reference is from Isaac de Stella, see Migne, *PL* 194, Sermo LIV, 1874D-1875A: “Ordinatus quippe, ac naturalis status hominis erat, cum spiritus Deo, caro spiritui, mundus carni subiectus fuerat, et in ipso spiritu affectio carni subiacuerat. Et hic erat primus naturalis mundus, aureum Saturni saeculum, aureaque catena poetarum”. I thank Matthias Riedl for the reference.

<sup>238</sup> Hus, *Sermones* II, 38: “et unanimes, i. unius mentis, gednomyslnij [i.e. single-minded], in fide, spe et caritate existentes, una confessio fidei christiane. Unde Act. 4<sup>o</sup>: ‘Multitudinis credencium erat cor unum’ et intencio unanimes quoad Deum ‘et anima una’, quia erant unius voluntatis et unius mentis; omnes volebant bonum et omne, quod Deus vult—ut sc. Id, quod Deus vult, et nos velimus—et nichil aliud preter ipsum, et mentem habebimus vicia fugiendi. Et sic erimus unanimes uno ore et uno opere. Honorificetis Deum, quia ex uno ore procedit unus sermos et una veritas, quicquid dixit os Christi, hoc idem dicat os cuiuslibet sacerdotis.” Cf. note 354 below.

<sup>239</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48: “Lex vere dicta est veritas directiva hominis ad beatitudinem attingendam.” Cf. Stephen Edmund Lahey, “Wyclif, the ‘Hussite Philosophy,’ and the Law of Christ,” *BRRP* 9 (2014): 66-69.

relations; civil law is only just insofar as it serves and finds grounding in God's law.<sup>240</sup> Put briefly, the Hussite thinker sees no distinction between religion and politics—Jakoubek's *Consilium ad pacificando regno* is conspicuously identical to the Hussite plan of Church reform.<sup>241</sup> For Hussites, this allows God's law to function as a unific religious and political norm which was already prefigured by the incarnation. Christ united in himself the status of king and priest (*simul est rex et sacerdos*), meaning he is the highest priest (*summus pontifex*) and best lawgiver (*legifer optimus*),<sup>242</sup> and his law contains every particular just and true law possible to order the whole individual (*tam corpus quam animam*), as well as the whole world (*regere totum mundum*).<sup>243</sup> There is no sphere of life in which appropriate existential meaning is found apart from Christ. As a result of these findings, it is clear that Hussite thinkers understood the primitive Church not as merely a community of worshippers otherwise subject to civil law, but rather as the identity of divine and human order on earth, the pinnacle of religious and political organization possible for mankind, founded on God's law alone. This they identified as the peace or order of Christ (*pax / ordinatio Christi*), closely agreeing with the unanimity (*unanimitas*) found in scriptural descriptions of the apostolic community.<sup>244</sup> This again challenges Augustinian pessimism regarding the

<sup>240</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 61: "iura humana iusta sunt inclusive in iure divino, ymmo sunt lex Cristi, de quanto sunt utilia deservencia legi Dei."

<sup>241</sup> For instance, Rudolf Holinka, "Nová betlémská postila M. Jakoubka ze Stříbra," *Věstník České akademie* 60 (1951): 14: "Nam iste leges civiles non prohibent scorta et prostibula, sed si ecclesia dei debuerit restaurari, oportet, quod lege divina ewangelica se dirigat et regat. Non enim iura humana sunt cum ewangelio domini consona, quia iurare permittunt, ewangelium tamen prohibet." See also Jan of Jesenic in Kaminsky, *A History*, 65.

<sup>242</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 3, 44f., 60.

<sup>243</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48: "... omnis lex vera est lex Dei."; Ibid, 74: "Universitas legum sufficit regere totum mundum. Sed lex Christi continet in se omnem legem particularem, ergo conclusio vera."; Ibid., 75: "reliquit legem [Christi] sufficientem ad regendum tam corpus quam animam"; Ibid., 78.

<sup>244</sup> Jan Hus, *Sermo de Pace - Řeč o míru*, ed. Amedeo Molnár, trans. František Dobiáš and Amedeo Molnár (Prague: Kalich, 1963), 30: "Ista autem pax [i.e. Dei] tripliciter variantur. Est enim pax hominis ad Deum, hominis ad seipsum, et hominis ad proximum. Et tota illa pax consistit in observancia mandatorum [i.e. legis Dei]."; Ibid., 32/34; Palacký, *Documenta*, 493: "pacem et concordiam secundo modo dictam, consistentem in ordinatione legis Christi, obligantur omnes fideles, reges et principes et domini et omnis populus observandam."



postlapsarian condition, where no true peace or happiness is possible. Thus Hussites describe this peace on the individual scale as the stable harmony and tranquillity of mind in the virtues (*concordia / tranquillitas mentis in virtutibus*) with God, which coincides with the voluntary union of man with divinity.<sup>245</sup> As such, this peace exploits the activist religiosity of Hussite Christianity, and represents a cooperative result of human and divine effort which is incompatible with sin. As Hus explained: “this peace [of God] depends only on unchanging God and the good volition of pacified man”.<sup>246</sup> On the political scale, this peace is described as unanimous and constant, as in Acts 4:32, and is thus the only meaningful foundation for horizontal, political peace among humans.<sup>247</sup> The deeds of true Christians universally benefit the Church community.<sup>248</sup> As the collection of the living elect, the members of the Church militant thus represent the surviving heirs of this order, directing their community toward comprehensive divine service.<sup>249</sup> Put simply, Hussite thinkers understood the primitive Church as a total religio-political order, coordinating the spiritual and political energies of the faithful. As the norm of Christian existence, we will see that this finding utterly

<sup>245</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 30: “Pax autem Dei est mentis tranquillitas in virtutibus stabilita. Ex quo patet, quod omnis homo existens in crimine caret ut sic ecclesie sancte pace.”; cf. Ibid., 38: “Empcio autem pacis Dei stat in bona voluntate hominis, ut in per se causa.”

<sup>246</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 38/40: “pax illa [i.e. Dei] solum dependet a Deo immobili et a pacificati hominis bona voluntate.” Ibid., 28/30: “quia pacem originalem hominis ad Deum, que solum solvitur per peccatum.” Cf. notes 246 and 250 below.

<sup>247</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 34: “‘Pax huic domui’ (Mt. 10:12), ut sit segura ad Deum, tranquilla in se, caritativa ad quemlibet. ‘Pax huic domui’, ut calcet superbos, humiles eleve, discordes sedet, inimicos concordet.”; Ibid., 40: “pax Dei differt secundo a pace mundi in hoc, quod pax Dei numquam amittitur ab homine, nisi velit, pax autem mundi amittitur ab invito. Tercio differt in hoc, quia pax Dei est per se bona et sufficiens, pax vero mundi est insufficiens, inquieta et instabilis. Insufficiens, quia non valet sine pace Dei. Instabilis, quia dependet a flexibilitate multarum voluntatum peccantium. Unde infinite paces seculi non equivalent minime paci Dei.” Cf. notes 241 and 354.

<sup>248</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 76: “omne meritum partis ecclesie fit ad Dei beneplacitum et profectum cuiuscumque partis ecclesie, ut patet ex vi communionis sanctorum.”; Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 32: “Debemus autem ex fide credere, quod ex vi communionis sanctorum quilibet electus bonus cristianus prodest cuilibet...”

<sup>249</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 49: “6° noto, quod regimen ecclesie militantis uno modo est id, quo regitur ipsa ecclesia militans, ut est divina inspiracio, lex Dei vel quecunque veritas dirigens ipsam ecclesiam, ut debite serviat Deo suo. 2° modo regimen militantis ecclesie est ipsam ecclesiam bene vivere iuxta regimen prius dictum. Unde patet, quod quandocunque militans ecclesia vel eius membrum aliquod regitur secundum legem Cristi Iesu, tunc bene regitur, ut debite serviat Deo suo. Et in illo regimine a principio legis Cristi ecclesia militans, que secundum beatum Augustinum, doctorem ecclesie precipuum, est numerus predestinatorum viancium, continue perseverat.”

collapses the distinction of religion and politics in the self-understanding of the Hussite mission. For the Hussite thinker, the Christian, his relationship to God, and Christian society are all perfectly and necessarily reconcilable with the same principle which coordinates the cosmos and offers eternal life, the divine law of God.

With this holistic elaboration of the normative Hussite spiritual and political order, it becomes possible to fully appreciate the significance of the Antichrist, which Hussite thinkers envision as a systematic inversion of Christ and his mystical body in virtually every way. For them, this means the creation of an alternate, hostile religio-political order, which is born from the internal, individual re-orientation toward the world as an independent source of meaning and pleasure. To a certain extent, it is clear that they follow here Augustine's characterisation of fallen man in the *civitas terrena*. According to Hussite voluntarism, unity and membership in the divine order cannot be lost by any external force or act of excommunication, but only by personal choice, the act of sin.<sup>250</sup> In agreement with their intellectual predecessors, Hussites generally characterise this "second Fall" as a dual event, both personal and historical. Firstly, the appearance of Antichrist coincided with the spiritual withdrawal (*discessio*) from the holy state of primordial order with the creator toward a purely secular union with creation. Here, the sinner's mind and soul are emptied of divinity (*desolata a spiritu Iesu*), which means a cooling of love to God (*refrigerium caritatis*) and its replacement by *cupiditas*: love of the self (*amor seipsum*) and of the mundane vanities and comforts (*amor seculi / mundi*).<sup>251</sup> This secular love represents a mental obstruction to man's

<sup>250</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 30: "Nichil enim dissolvit pacem cum Deo, nisi peccatum, quia solum ipsum dividit inter Deum et hominem". Cf. Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 40 at note 250 above; Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 84.

<sup>251</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty III*, 56: "Ecce quomodo hic amor seipsos amancium est radix et fons tenebrarum spiritualium! ... Nam postquam enim homines sunt seipsos amantes per talem corruptum et adulterinum amorem, omnia facientes respectu principali ex seipso et ad seipsum finaliter, tunc consequenter habent primum respectum et principalem in omnibus agendis suis, eciam in hiis que sunt religionis christiane,

divine origins and thus of his self-consciousness, reminiscent of Adam's Fall. As Jakoubek explains, sinners forget their likeness to God, and thus do not understand or realize their evil ways (*nesciunt neque intelligunt suum malum propositum*), because "the blind Antichrist does not recognize himself".<sup>252</sup> Like the first, this second Fall corresponds existentially to beastliness, or the domination of the soul by the body, which now means that the individual is misdirected by his new infatuation away from the arduous *via Christi* towards the base comforts and tranquillity offered by the world in the *via Antichristi*.<sup>253</sup> The full relevance of Janov's voluntaristic thought will be discussed only later, but it is already on display here in the contrasting of these transcendental communities. Through *amor seculi*, man comes to a state of inner peace with sin, and so compromises his spiritual purity with the demands and desires of the body.<sup>254</sup> Like Janov, Jakoubek identifies this with the existential mode of Antichristianity (*anticristineitas*), the utter contradiction of Christ in deed, but hidden under the guise of Christianity.<sup>255</sup> Indeed, part of the demonic deception of the individual involves the separation of the internal faith of the saints from external deeds, which essentially encourages the domination of the institutional Church by the

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ad aquirendum bona huius mundi sc. divicias principalius quam dei gloriam, et consequenter post hec primo et principali respectu hiis aquisitis nituntur querere honorem proprie excellencie, et tandem tercio consequenter quod deo est proprium quantum est in eis pro se vendicant et usurpant." Cf. Jitka Sedláčková, "Jakoubek ze Stříbra a jeho kvestie o Antikristu" (Ph.D. thesis, Brno, Masaryk University, 2001), 34, 36, 38, 42; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 44; Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 124. Together, *discessio* and *refrigerium caritatis* represented the gradual fulfilment of the prophecies of 2 Thess. 2:3 and Matt. 24:12.  
<sup>252</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 36: "Anticristus cecatus non cognoscit seipsum..."; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 60: "[antichristi] Christi servos ... hereticos appellant et eos tamquam antichristos persecuntur seipsos tamen nescientes esse antichristos."; Ibid., 72 f.: "Et quia diligentes magis tenebras quam lucem in omnibus agendis suis, prima et principalis est eorum intentio finalis ad tenebras et sic mala et tenebrosa, et per consequens tales nesciunt neque intelligunt suum malum propositum ultimum et principale in omnibus agendis...".

<sup>253</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 45: "Omnes contradicerent, quibus omnia erant pacata, omnia iocunda et quasi bene ordinata, quamvis contra omnem veram vitam sanctorum et contra omnem scripturam divinam, que spondet christianis nisi pressuram in hoc mundo, nisi gladium et bellum, nisi tribulationes et artam viam in planctum penitencie incessantem." Cf. Ibid., 58 f. See note 262.

<sup>254</sup> Hus, *Sermones* IV, 204: "Mala etenim pax est, qu[a] mali sine impedimento in malicia sunt pacificati, ut fornicarii in fornicacione."; Cf. note 266.

<sup>255</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 30: "anticristineitas, que est in summo contraria veritati vite et doctrine Cristi et est cum homo sciens malum facit ipsum et hoc facit cooperte sub similitudine boni, et inde honorificatur ut bonus ...". Cf. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 55.

wicked.<sup>256</sup> Thus although this inner corruption pervades society, Hussites agree that it is especially rampant in the clergy, and particularly perfected by monastics and those best at feigning piety at the top of the hierarchy.<sup>257</sup> As a result of this inner darkness and ignorance, the former Christian is dominated by bodily lusts, and populates his attention with mundane idols (*ydola huius seculi*)—riches, pleasures, and honours—which he worships to placate them.<sup>258</sup> In general, all of this breeds personal hostility to God’s truth as a demanding, supramundane alternative which fails to satisfy these inner-worldly longings.<sup>259</sup> Put briefly then, the introduction of Antichrist into the world articulates foremost the inner, voluntary digression from simple divine unity as expressed by primordial Christianity, toward the love of creation. This confuses man internally, causes him to seek meaning in creatureliness, and disturbs his place within the divine order. Notably, this means that the central disordering moment which Augustine delegates to mythical prehistory is importantly located by Hussite thinkers squarely within normal temporal existence.

Therefore, corresponding with this individual, existential expression of Antichrist is also its historical and collective inauguration. This Hussites associate with the institutional corruption of the primitive Church, along with its soteriological inversion. Following Wyclif, Hussites historically identify Antichrist’s introduction

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<sup>256</sup> KNM XIV E 4, fol. 34<sup>r</sup>: “Sed post dyabolus presciens se esse deceptum realiter, post modum sub eadem formam quam vidit in sanctis extrinseca illa induit in filios suos excepta sola caritate intrinseca fide, ut omnis mundus estimet illos esse filios dei, et hinc introduxit suos in officia in loca sancta ...”.

<sup>257</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 49: “Item omnis monachus claustrum regularium ingrediens aut alias religiosus ut vitam quietam habeat et sit securus de statu pacifico et necessitate corporali, est in via antichristi.” Cf. Rychterová, “Theology Goes to the Vernaculars,” 234; Hus, *Postilla*, 32 f., 415.

<sup>258</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 71: “clerus cupidus et vulgus ... diligunt magis tenebras quam lucem et sic recesserunt a suo domino Jesu Christo et a sua viva et formata fide i.e. a fideli observancia sue legis ... tamquam pessimi apostote, a religione munda et immaculata iam longe apostotantes, et abierunt post ydola huius seculi sc. post divicias, delicias et honores ... eos imitando plus quam vitam domini Jesu Christi.” Cf. Sedláčková, “Kvestie o Antikristu,” 43.

<sup>259</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 44: “qui sunt de via antichristi, propter eius falsitatem odire ex corde veritatem, non tamen quamlibet sed Christi Jesu i.e. salvantem”; Ibid., 57: “sunt inordinate amantes seipsos, sine benignitate subveniendi, proditores secretorum, protervi i.e. rebelles contra argumentum veritatem ...”.

especially with the moment of the Constantinian Donation. For them, the poisoning of the primitive Church with secular wealth and power coincided with its re-orientation to the world, meaning the invention of most of the Church hierarchy, including the office of the papacy (*antichristianum officium*).<sup>260</sup> Here, the individual's alienation (*alienacio*) from Christ concurs with the mutual alienation from God's love among Christians more generally, witnessing factionalism, heresies, and the overall disruption of the Church (*disturbacio ecclesie*).<sup>261</sup> As Jakoubek explained: "just as it is characteristic of the crucified Jesus to congregate the Church into unity, so it is especially characteristic of Antichrist to divide it."<sup>262</sup> Nevertheless, as they diverged from the true Church, these apostates were also reunited into a new, diabolical union which articulated their collective, re-oriented love of worldliness.<sup>263</sup> Along with their intellectual forebearers, Hussites agreed that this represented the corporate body of Antichrist (*corpus Antichristi*) which united its members (*membra Antichristi*) in their malicious

<sup>260</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 19: "sub istius pretextu latentissime et spiritualissime ac fradulentissime solum latitaret antichristianum officium, habilitas et potestas ac sufficiencia plena ad seducendum ecclesiam inserta corpori Antichristi mistico et simulato sub nomine ecclesie sancte Romane, et precipue principi et capiti illius corporis dominantem fere per totam ecclesiam, et est idem quoad formam continue, quamvis quoad ydemptitatem materie et individue persone sepe variatur." Ibid., 15. Cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 104: "Et patet notantibus cronicas, quomodo inolevit papalis dignitas. Nam Constantinus imperator circa annum domini hoc censuit et precepit, quod suus episcopus ab omnibus papa vocaretur, et cum dotacione suerevit illud nomen." Cf. Ibid., 146 f.; Nicholas of Dresden, *Consuetudo et ritus*, see Kaminsky, *The Old Color and the New*, 70 f.; cf. Jana Nechutová, "Ecclesia primitiva v husitských naukách," *Sborník prací Filozofické Fakulty Brněnské Univerzity* E 33 (1988): 90; Nicholas of Dresden, "Puncta," ed. Romolo Cegna, *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum*, 1996, 64; Cermanová, *Čechy Na Konci Věků*, 209 f.

<sup>261</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 44: "Et hec est primum discesio a Deo suo dehinc a se invicem, quoniam exinde venit multitudo diversa et multa diversitas congregacionum societatum frumentatum, sectarum per totam cristianitatem, de paribus studiis et simili affeccione compactarum et sibiipsis ...". Cf. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 47 f.

<sup>262</sup> Kybal, "M. Matej z Janova a M. Jakoubek ze Stríbra," 32: "sicut Jesu crucifixi est proprie proprium ecclesiam in unitatem congregare, ita antichristi est maxime proprium eandem digregare." Trans. Martin Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts (1412-1421): Introduction and Translations," in *Early Modern Prophecies in Transnational, National and Regional Contexts* I, ed. Lionel Laborie and Ariel Hessayon (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 40.

<sup>263</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 28: "Cum dyabolus, rex super omnes filios superbie, omnes peccatores illaqueat, qui sunt per Cristi humilitatem ante omnia separandi, carnales autem, per viciu voluptatis coniuncti, sunt per Cristi penitenciam seiungendi, sed mundo per avariciam nupti sunt per Cristi pauperiem separandi."; Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 57: "Isti enim videntur esse stelle erratice, coloratissima simulacione exterius in oculis hominum rutilantes et sic ecclesiam seducentes et corpus Antichristi componentes in unum et in unam magnam stellam, scilicet Antichristum, redigentes, cui data est clavis inferni ...".

volition.<sup>264</sup> This body was not just a senseless mass of sinners, however, but was steadily guided through history by its greater members toward its final goal, the completion of man's alienation from Christ: universal damnation.<sup>265</sup> Toward this end, *amor seculi* was disguised by the Antichristian clergy as ever-greater and more elaborate forms of Christian devotion. Under this guise, the sacraments were perverted and new traditions and customs (*adinventiones, consuetudines*)—extra-Biblical laws, embellishments, and powers—were introduced to support material gain and damnation, supported by the corruption of scripture.<sup>266</sup> As a result, virtually all purely mundane pursuits are synonymous with *via Antichristi* in Hussite vocabulary.<sup>267</sup> Without the discerning light of Christ's example at the forefront of their mind, Christians lost their ethical compass and were gradually fooled to accept sin as normative. In other words, many became members of Antichrist unconsciously.<sup>268</sup> As with Janov, this explains the true threat of

<sup>264</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 28 f.: "Unde ethimoloisatur Anticristus quasi Cristo contrarius Cristus et est ille, qui sub falso nomine Cristi vel sub specie contrariatur Cristo. Unde eciam Anticristus sicut Cristus conformiter capitur, ut patet pro quolibet falso cristiano divisim, qui sub specie religionis Cristi contrarius est Cristo, nunc capitur Anticristus per autonomasiam et excellenciam pro una simplici persona sub nomine et specie pletatis cristiane summe in malicia contraria Cristo Iesu, que est caput omnium suorum membrorum."; Ibid., 35 f.: "Cristus et Anticristus in summo sunt principaliter et maxime contrarii in proposito et voluntate et in operacionibus non quibuscumque, sed in hiis, que inmediate et per directum veniunt ex voluntate. ... Ecce quomodo beatus Iohannes, ut quod Anticristus est contrarius Cristo in proposito, maxime in voluntate et in actibus ac operacionibus, inmediate procedentibus a proposito et voluntate, ut est diligere mundum". Cf. note 339.

<sup>265</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 37: "Cristus pro salute humana totus seipsum exposuit, Anticristus autem pro salute sue inique vite, exponit ad mortem infinitos populos. Cristus iudicavit melius mori ipse unus, quam totus populus periret, Anticristus autem totum orbem ecclesia periculo dampnac[i]onis exponit, quam ipse pateretur mortem, vel confusionem."

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., 33 f.: "[Antichristus] pollens omnibus mundi et diviciis, auctoritate et honore, maxime autem et principaliter hiis bonis, que sunt Iesu Cristi, ut sunt Scripture, sacramenta et sub specie religionis, ad suam propriam gloriam et cupiditatem abutens, ea, que sunt spiritualia, ad carnem simulate retorquendo, et ea, que sunt ad salutem per Cristum posita et concessa, ad seduccionem a veritate et virtute Cristi Iesu subtiliter"; Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48 f.

<sup>267</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 60: "de quanto occulcior et coloracior atque insensibilior ista tribulacio et potestas tenebrarum, tanto nocivior .... Et non mirum, quia hoc est spiritus antichristi sive antichristus". Cf. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 394 f.: "Dico ergo primo, quod est in hominibus quos assumit spiritus mundane vanitatis, quem supponit esse spiritum huius mundi, qui accendit multitudinem cleri et populum ad amorem cupidum seculi et ad omnia ea que mundi sunt, que omnia sunt vana ... Et hii omnes faciunt unum misticum hominem, filium iniquitatis ... ad hoc clerum et reliquum populum inducebat, quod esset legi Christi contrarium et ad illud, per quod posset destruere Jesum humilem atque exuere et induere superbum antichristum..."; cf. notes 259 and 338.

<sup>268</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 60: "infiniti antichristi iam nunc communiter existentes ... ymmo humiles presentes Christi servos, qui perhibent testimonium de veritate Jesu Christi, hereticos appellant et eos tamquam antichristos persecuntur seipsos tamen necientes esse antichristos." Cf. Ibid., 72.

the Antichrist for Hussite thinkers, which was not merely the cruelty of its goals and persecutions, but its hypocrisy—the blurring of the boundaries of God’s law which allows sin to masquerade as custom, or evil as Truth. In other words, hypocrisy allowed Antichrist to wield Christianity as a weapon to subvert Christ himself.<sup>269</sup> In this way, Antichrist had gradually built his own secular religion under the guise of true religion, but as its categorical inversion: as Christ entered the world in Truth, Antichrist entered through the Lie (*per mendacium*) in secret subversion;<sup>270</sup> as Christ came to sacrifice himself for the sake of universal salvation, Antichrist came to deceive all into universal damnation; as Christ came to unify mankind into the Church, Antichrist came to divide them from it. Near the end of time, the highest and final Antichrist (*summus Antichristus*) would come personally (*in persona*) to assume his position of leadership, receive worship from his followers as God of the world, and accomplish his mission.<sup>271</sup> Contrary to medieval tradition, however, Hussites explained that this figure of *summus Antichristus* was not incarnated as any Jew, Saracen, or tyrant, but rather as an individual at the height of the pseudo-Christian religion.<sup>272</sup> In other words, the head of Antichrist was found at the head of the Roman Church, as Jakoubek summarized: “the Pope is the head, and the college of cardinals are the body of Antichrist, along with the other adherents in wickedness against Christ”.<sup>273</sup> In sum then, the Hussite Antichrist

<sup>269</sup> According to Hus, the etymology of “hypocrite” is from the combination of the Greek *ypos* (“under”), and *crisis* (“gold”), thus denoting one who “covers a sin with good custom” (*pokrycztwie, kdyss pokryge obyczegem dobrym hrzyech který*). Cf. Nechutová, “M. Jan Hus, farizeové a zákoníci,” 38, n. 18; Karel Novák, *Slovník k českým spisům Husovým* (Prague: Česká akademie věd a umění, 1934), 113. Cf. McGinn, *Antichrist*, 5.

<sup>270</sup> Sedláčková, “Kvestie o Antikristu,” 37: “Nam sicud Cristus fuit totus verax et venit per veritatem, sic Anticristus est totus mendax et venit *per mendacium*”, emphasis mine.

<sup>271</sup> Sedláčková, “Kvestie o Antikristu,” 40. Cf. Kaminsky, *The Old Color and the New*, 68. Cf. note 278 below.

<sup>272</sup> Sedláčková, “Kvestie o Antikristu,” 32 f., trans. Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 36-38. Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 44/46; *Historia et Monumenta* I, 185.

<sup>273</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 59: “videtur, quod huiusmodi clerici [simoniaci] et yppocrite non sint successores apostolorum, sed quod papa sit caput, et collegium cardinalium cum ceteris adherentibus in malicia contra Christum sunt corpus Antichristi”. Cf. Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 19, 25, 238 f., 146; Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 16; Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 105-10.

represents not only the lasting existential mode which divides mankind from divine unity, but also the entire community of sinners that are unified by *amor seculi*, and born from the infection of the primitive Church. As Christians sinned, they broke the binds of love which united them to God and each other, and simultaneously established new binds which united them to the worship of materiality. Over time, they mistook this for Christianity, and came to hold their traditions and leaders in the highest honour, while regarding the remaining true devotees of Christ as the most despicable heretics. With this, Antichrist successfully employed the symbol of the redeemer to undermine Christianity and perpetuate the damnation of humanity.

This description of the simultaneous personal and collective existential meaning of the Antichrist is significant, because it allows for the comprehensive appreciation of the Hussite Antichrist. For Hussite thinkers, this meant that this satanic community expressed not simply a shared, twisted belief-system, but also its external performance and establishment in the world. The Hussite Antichrist is a unique religio-political rival unit. This is possible because it represents an existential and structured religiosity which mirrors the primitive Church: it is a voluntary formation directed toward action by a shared love (*unum cor cupiditatis insaciabilis*),<sup>274</sup> the mystical body of a supermundane being with a god at its head (*deus huius mundi / zemský bůh*),<sup>275</sup> governed by its own ordering principles (*leges Antichristi*),<sup>276</sup> propagated and taught by its own clergy

<sup>274</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 64: “Puteus abissi est pravum cor et inscruta bile humanum et precipue novissimorum christianorum, et omnia corda sic terrena profundata in malicia simul omnia in unum sunt unum cor et unus puteus abissi i.e. cupiditatis insaciabilis.”

<sup>275</sup> Sedláčková, “Kvestie o Antikristu,” 31, 43 f.: “... recedere a Deo vero et sequi deos huius mundi vanos, quod, inquam, est eici a corpore Crisiti, veri Dei, et traici in corpus Antichristi, dei huius mundi, qui amator est huius mundi ...”; Hus, *Postilla*, 21.

<sup>276</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 7, 401. Cf. note 318 below.



(*clerum Antichristi*)<sup>277</sup> and sometimes also protected by secular rulers,<sup>278</sup> all in order to guide the whole of Christianity toward a shared eternal afterlife (*unus puteus abissi*).<sup>279</sup> Antichrist is thus a kind of anti-Church (*ecclesia Antichristi*),<sup>280</sup> internally coherent in its structure, methods, and goals as an inverted mimicry of Christ's mystical body. In other words, Antichrist represents a holistic theo-political order in hostile competition with Christ's. Here is where Hussite thinkers clearly break with the *contemptus mundi* of Augustine, whose delineation of sacred and profane history could never allow for the political immanentization of such supra-mundane identities. This new order is what Hussites call the order or kingdom of Antichrist (*ordo / regnum Antichristi*),<sup>281</sup> or more often simply the state of mundane or pagan peace (*pax mundi / gentilis*), which is described psychologically in terms inverting the true, primordial order discussed above, as we have seen. Politically, this collaboration with inner sin is articulated as a new horizontal toleration and concord among sinners, based merely on shared appreciation for material gain. As Jakoubek explained to the king, this represents a new order of purely secular peace which has no space for God, and thus is no different from the order found amongst the godless: "There is a certain worldly and pagan peace and concord (*pax et concordia mundana et gentilis*) which consists in mundane prosperity and the calm of a superabundance of goods .... It does not pertain to faithful Christians to seek

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<sup>277</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 129: "Hic oportet considerare sectam cleri duplicem, scilicet clerum Christi et clerum Antichristi. Clerus Christi quietatur in suo capite Christo ac suis legibus. Clerus vero Antichristi vel totaliter vel preponderanter innititur legibus humanis et legibus Antichristi et totum palliatur esse clerus Christi atque ecclesie, ut populus simulacius seducatur."

<sup>278</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 32: "Veniet autem Anticristus ... secundum triplex genus seducendi, specialiter electos, scilicet tirranide seu potestate seculari pro se usurpata ...". Cf. Nechutová, "Hus a eschatologie," 186.

<sup>279</sup> See notes 278 and 266 above.

<sup>280</sup> This is from an older sermon of Hus. Cit. Lucie Mazalová and Zuzana Lukšová, "Gradus Summus et Animus Infimus: The Contrast between Ideas of the Ideal Priest and the Real Priest in Prague Synodal Sermons," *Medieval Sermon Studies* 64 (2020): 58.

<sup>281</sup> Lucie Mazalová, "O Antikristově moci podle tzv. betlémských kázání," *Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 25, no. 1 (2020): 149; František Michálek Bartoš, "Dvě studie o husitských postilách," *Rozpravy Československé akademie věd - řada společenských věd* 65/4 (1955): 20. Cf. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 72.

principally after [this] peace, ... but to pagans”.<sup>282</sup> Here, God’s law is forgotten, sin is appeased and soon approved as the norm of interpersonal behaviour, and human efforts are redirected toward the enjoyment of this peace.<sup>283</sup> In addition, new justice and laws are contrived from invented customs to maximize the fulfilment of existential meaning, which is now found purely in the material comfort and prosperity of the individual and the community, at the expense of eternal salvation.<sup>284</sup> In other words, the peace of Antichristian, mundane order is mutually-exclusive to divine order, but shares its universalist ambition. Thus it altogether despises God (*Deus conculcatur*)<sup>285</sup> and existentially is committed to obstructing his law, destroying his unity with man (the

<sup>282</sup> Palacký, *Documenta*, 493: “Quod est quaedam pax et concordia mundana et gentilis, quae consistit in prosperitate mundana et quieta superabundantia temporalium; sic similiter honor regni dicitur esse bona fama quoad mundum, uno modo. ... Pacem ergo et concordiam primo modo dictam principaliter inquirere, obmittendo veram Christianam pacem, consistentem in observantia legis Christi, non est fidelium Christianorum sed gentilium; quia scriptum est: ‘haec enim omnia gentes inquirunt’ (Mat. 6:32).” Cf. Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 34-36.

<sup>283</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 59: “Olim enim in primordiis ecclesie facile erat parvulis in Christo evitare scandala ... quando filii dei Christum sequentes non ambulabant in tenebris, sed habebant lumen vite. Sed postquam filius iniquitatis paulatim misterium suum operabatur i.e. occultissimum ac venenosum suum malum paulatim et successive in ecclesiam introduxit, tandem usque ad novissima tempora compago membrorum eius i.e. synagoge peccantium iam consolidata est et tunc iam ... populus christianus carnalis et primum clerus cupidus sunt nimis involuti, ut peccatum non reputent peccatum, maximam heresim symoniacam ut dicant esse summam honestatem et virtutem, et ita dicant bonum malum et malum bonum.”

<sup>284</sup> Martin Kolář, “Hlídka rukopisů Táborských, které objevil Martin Kolář,” in *Sborník historických prací prof. Martina Koláře o dějinách Tábora* (Tábor: Tiskem Petra Franka v Táboře, 1924), 196: “... in pace enim illa [i.e. mundana] paulatim datur Christus cum sua lege in oblivionem, et hinc mundiales homines pro illa pace instant et laborant, et ergo hic est dies illorum, in quo ipsi gaudent et Christus flet, quondam etiam turbabatur supra Iuda in coena domini. Pax ergo ista mundi mirabiliter podrywa [is undermining], ut homo seducatur et in oblivionem det legem Christi; ibi enim homo obliviscitur futurorum futuri diei iudicii et vindictae, quae consequetur post hoc nos hic gaudentes, et hinc dixit alibus Christi.” The work is Jakoubek’s, see Pavel Spunar, *Repertorium auctorum Bohemorum provecum idearum post Universitatem Pragensem conditam illustrans I.* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1985), 239, no. 648. Cf. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 68: “constituunt ex multis suis adinventionibus et tradicionibus, que preferunt speciem pietatis et iusticie, unam iusticiam sibi atque legem ...”.

<sup>285</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 72: “Terra inquit sursum est et celum deorsum, ubi terrena celestibus preponuntur; pedes supra caput sunt, ubi Christus in suis membris despicitur, repuitur et deridetur, antichristus vero cum suis membris terrena sapiens tamquam a deo missus in regimen ecclesie eligitur existens contrarius Christo et tamen tamquam utilis ecclesie in honore habetur; facies est retro, cum in bonis operibus de genere et in hiis operibus que sunt religionis christiane potius utilitas terrena intenditur quam merces eterna. Interiora effusa sunt extra, cum interiora negliguntur et exteriora diliguntur. Deus vero conculcatur et terra deificatur, ubi deficit caritas et regnat cupiditas. Dyabolus honorifice recipitur in suis filiis superbie, cum in honore recipiuntur, deus autem in suis pauperibus repulsam patitur. Unde omnia ergo perversa sunt et patet in clero totali et in vulgo universo abhominabilis perversio divini ordinis.” Cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 24.

Church), and eradicating his elect.<sup>286</sup> As will be shown, its agents almost unconsciously infect an entire community with sin and jeopardize their salvation. From the Hussite perspective, then, the Antichrist expresses not merely an individual, nor the collective, existential departure from Christian unity, but also the full political implications of this. Its agents therefore not only worship sin but also perpetuate it in their structures. To return to the terminology of Eric Voegelin, Antichrist represents a comprehensive and competing meaning-structure to order human energies, and thus an entirely alternate, totalistic cosmion. As a result, its relationship to Christian order is endemically hostile.

### Visions of Identity and Disruption

This immanence of the community of Antichrist means that it is finally open to empirical detection. This represents the full rehabilitation of Janov's charismatic discernment. For Hussite thinkers, the urgency of the unified spiritual and political threat posed by the Antichrist is causing the polarization of the world into two camps of mutually distinct allegiances. Although this worldview of opposed eschatological identities resembles Augustine, it obviously challenges the limitations he had placed on human epistemology. Importantly, this is based on the basic rejection of the pessimistic Augustinian view of postlapsarian free will, which denies humankind's ability to choose and perform goodness without divine aid. To reiterate, the assumed existential unity of man in every meaningful, soteriological sense meant to Hussites that the inner and outer self is unifically subject to individual volition. Each Christian is thus freely capable and

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<sup>286</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 57: "Et quia iam tales observanciam legis Christi derisorie contempnunt, antichristive supra Christum se extollentes et sic secundum apostolum supra omne quod dicitur deus et supra Christi potestatem et auctoritatem, nequaquam volentes subesse domino Jesu Christo, sue legi et sue ordinacioni, se preter eius cionem magis sathagunt preesse et dominari"; Novotný, *Mistr Jan Hus* II, 233: "Et ergo, karissimi, cauti in subieccione sitis, quia iam Antichristus ita iam potestatem suam extenderit, quod propter mandata sua mandatum dei impediret, eo quod cum istis temporibus ei in malicia sua obedire nolunt, statim servicium dei impedit." Cf. Hermann von der Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III (Frankfurt-Lepzig, 1698), 517 f.; Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 23; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 340 f.

obliged to execute God's will (*perficere legem Cristi*).<sup>287</sup> In other words, man can know and choose the good under his own power, and thusly is responsible for his own salvation and inclusion in Christ's Church. As Hus explained: "Jesus Christ orders the militant Church to heed his law under pain of mortal sin ... but no creature is obliged to do anything which it cannot, in that such an obligation would be irrational, and thus the militant Church can execute God's law."<sup>288</sup> In the current context, this basic assumption leads Hussite leaders to conclude not only the empirical recognition of the Church but also of its opposite. Due to the existential unity of man, the deeds of the good and the wicked inevitably reproduce the inner will in all aspects of life.<sup>289</sup> This means that the corrupt volition immediately (*immediate*) affects sin, making the Antichristian recognizable by these obvious external signs (*manifestum indicium et characterem antichristi*).<sup>290</sup> In other words, as an achievement of human volition and the act of sin, the Hussite Antichrist is not an *a priori* identity but rather historical and

<sup>287</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 410: "Qui enim convertuntur ad dominum non quasi ad carnem sed quasi ad spiritum convertuntur, de carnalibus ad spiritualia veniunt et ad libertatem de servitute transeunt, quia ubi spiritus ibi libertas; et de carnali ad spiritualem intelligenciam provocantur et ita ad libertatem spiritus proventi ad divinam bonitatem immensam, sapienciam et pulcritudinem summe desiderabilem sursum libere aguntur et ab omni inhonesta et indecenti servitute animi liberati nulla possunt prorsus premi violencia variarum huius mundi miseriarum. Supereminet tam beate mentes omni indebite servituti peccati; omnem nempe mutabilitatem animi ad malum excedunt et per bonas gracias toto desiderio et contemplacione non ad ea que vane apparent bona, sed ad vere existens bonum convertuntur ...". Cf. Hus, *MIHO* 24, 57: "Cristus talem legem reliquit anime. Sed eo ipso, quod anima perfecte regitur, tunc et corpus ...". See note 246 above.

<sup>288</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 55: "Cristus Iesus precipit militanti ecclesie sub pena peccati mortalis observanciam legis sue, ut patet ex decursu ipsius legis, sed nullam creaturam obligat ad aliquid, quod non potest, eo quod talis obligacio foret irrationabilis, ergo ecclesia militans potest perficere legem Cristi."

<sup>289</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 176: "si homo est viciosus et agit quicquam, tunc agit viciose, et si est virtuosus et agit quicquam, tunc agit virtuose, quia sicut viciu, quod crimen dicitur sive mortale peccatum, inficit universaliter actus subiecti sive hominis, sic virtus vivificat omnes actus hominis virtuosus in tantum, quad existens in gracia dicitur mereri et orare dormiendo et quomodolibet operando, ut dicunt sancti Augustinus, Gregorius et alii."

<sup>290</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 42: "Et ita contrarietas viarum antichristi moderni evi debet attendi adversus Christum et ratione eciam effectuum, qui a voluntate immediate sunt producti." Cf. note 267; Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 129, 130: "Si ergo prelati superbit, luxuriatur, avariciam sequitur, in paciens est, oves non pascit, sed opprimit vel dispergit, quomodo non est Antichristus? Unde malos possunt homines faciliter cognoscere per extrinseca opera Christo contraria ...". Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 97: "dicit Sapiens: 'Omni spiritui ne credas, sed probandi sunt spiritus' ex fructibus, i.e. ex operibus, an ex deo sint vel ex dyabolo." Cf. Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 40. See next note also. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 62, 69: "Tales sunt omnes prelati, magistri et doctores et omnes religiosi et omnes sacerdotes et consequenter seculares domini et communis populus. ... Isti ergo deferunt manifestum indicium et characterem in fronte sua magni antichristi regis." Cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 124.

knowable from its effects (*a posteriori cognoscitur Antichristus*).<sup>291</sup> The Christian is able to see through the Antichristian disguise of hypocrisy, but only with close study of the primitive Church as comparison. The exercise of identifying Antichrist thus becomes identical to that of discovering the divine will and the true Church. As Jakoubek explains:

it is very hard for the faithful to discern which are the ways (*viae*) of the lord Jesus Christ and his saints, and which the evil ways of the serpent—the enemy or Antichrist ... let us therefore return to the beginnings (*ad primordia*), that is to the olden times of the church of Christ, ... so that the opposition between them may shine forth more clearly from the comparison. ... See how he brings us back to the beginnings of the church, to a consideration of the ancient ways of the Lord Jesus Christ and his saints!<sup>292</sup>

With the comparative example of Christ's simplicity and innocence, Christians are equipped to understand Antichristian matters.<sup>293</sup> This empirical identification of mystical communities is even democratised to the whole clergy and anyone familiar with scripture: "just as the approaching Christ came humbly, he was only recognized by his humble apostles, not the Pharisees and scribes, in the same way also now the deeds of the Antichrist are not recognized by great prelates, but only by the humble".<sup>294</sup> Not coincidentally, this period thus witnessed a proliferation of texts and images, from both established and rising Hussite leaders as well as followers, which confidently and

<sup>291</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 23: "Si ergo iuxta ewangelicas Christi regulas debent se fideles regere, a fructibus et operibus arguendo, patet, quod clerus tamquam corpus mysticum cum suo capite Antichristo militant in destruccione electorum."; Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 36: "Ex quibus extra prorumpit nimia sollicitudo ad divicias, delicias et honores seculi, tamquam malus fructus, sicut scriptum est: 'Arbor mala malos facit fructus.' Per quos fructus, velud a posteriori cognoscitur Anticristus, sicut scriptum est: 'A fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.'"

<sup>292</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty III*, 38 f., Kaminsky, *A History*, 78.

<sup>293</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 38-40, for instance at 39: "Patet ulterius per modum corelarii et fructuose informacionis, quod quelibet ex nobis volentem utiliter et bene intelligere istam materiam de Anticristo necesse est esse parvulum in Cristo, et stultum in oculis suis quasi primogenitum sine dolo, lac in Cristo concupiscencio, quia talibus suis datur manifestato spiritus ad utilitatem."

<sup>294</sup> Jan Hus, *M. Io. Hus sermones in Capella Bethlehem III*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Nákladem Královské České Společnosti Nauk, 1940), 41: "nam sicut Cristus veniens in mundum venit humiliter, qui solum fuit cognitus ab humilibus apostolis suis, non a phariseis et scribis, sicut eciam nunc facta Anticristi non cognoscuntur a magnis prelatibus, sed ab humilibus solum...". The manuscript likely only collects revised reportations of Hus's 1410-1412 sermons by a disciple of Hus after 1412. See Soukup, "Jan Hus as a Preacher," 116 f.; Mazalová, "O Antikristově," 141, 148.

obsessively uncovered the behaviour and identity of Antichristians.<sup>295</sup> Put briefly, the epistemological and voluntaristic confidence of Hussite thinkers within this threatening context and intensely-polarized worldview finally fulfilled the Janovian ambition of charismatic discernment. Not only is the identity of Christ's mystical community open to the investigation of informed Christians, but so too is that of Antichrist.

All of this shows that Hussite thinkers increasingly understood their struggle in apocalyptic terms. Less and less are the opponents of reform misinformed individuals who disagree on the state and cures of the Church, but instead they are increasingly associated with the cosmic enemy of Antichrist, who is treacherously collecting his forces in preparation for a final confrontation which will decide the fate of all humanity. Nevertheless, as will be discussed, the conclusions Hussites drew from this finding actually contradicted those of traditional apocalyptic thought, rejecting apathy and generally spreading the anxious urgency and even agency of reform throughout the community. For the apocalyptic thinker, the steady deterioration of human affairs into ever greater sin and perversion is evidence of a fundamentally pessimistic and deterministic view of history. Here, the corrupt world will inevitably continue to rot in vice, regardless of any human efforts of improvement, until it is destroyed at the final battle between the cosmic forces of good and evil. Afterwards, those who maintained purity and allegiance to God despite the Antichrist's temptations and violence will remain with him in a new, heavenly paradise, and the rest will be tormented in hell. The certainty of the apocalyptic thinker in this narrative, and his own place within it, gives

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<sup>295</sup> In addition to the texts already cited, see for instance the works of Nicholas of Dresden: *conversacio Cristi opposita conversacioni Anticristi*; *Consuetudo et ritus primitive ecclesie et moderne, seu derivative*. Cf. Kaminsky, *The Old Color and the New*, 38-85; Nicholas of Dresden, "De Christi Victoria," accessed February 23, 2022, <https://nicolausdrazna.xoom.it/>. For anonymous counterparts, cf. Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 201-203. See also the sermon on *Apokalypsis XI<sup>o</sup>* in Andrea Krúpová, "Příspěvek k dějinám husitství: Jakoubek ze Stříbra Kázání Venit Helias," *Sborník prací Filozofické Fakulty Ostravské Univerzity. Historie* 13 (2006): 191-94. The identification of its author with Jakoubek is generally rejected, *Ibid.*, 190, n. 11.

meaning to his alienation from the wicked world powers, and leads him to confide in an existential mode which may be called *proleptic* (anticipatory), with a highly individualistic ethics and an apolitical lifestyle towards the world. Human engagement to change and improve society are totally futile due to its fundamental corruption. Only divine forces can accomplish any meaningful change, through a holistic annihilation, and thus all that matters to the believer in the present is personal purity to ensure future emancipation.<sup>296</sup> As has been shown, Hussite leaders generally agreed with the apocalyptic's highly binary and pessimistic appraisal of the present, and also associated their own pursuit with the process dividing the eschatological allegiances of Christendom. The time of the Antichrist (*tempus Antichristi*) has already begun, and the final battle is imminent.<sup>297</sup> For Hussites, this means that there is simply no more conceptual space "outside" their struggle, whose battlelines now cut through all of human society. In agreement with typical apocalyptic thought, this definitively evaporates the status of the neutral Christian (*non datur medium in hac vita*). As Hus explained: "no one can be neutral (*neuter*) regarding virtue or vice, for it is necessary that one is either within or without God's grace, and thus no conduct of man can be neutral."<sup>298</sup> As an independent soteriological agent, membership in a sacramental institution like the Church is insufficient, and instead every Christian is responsible to

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<sup>296</sup> Riedl, "Joachim of Fiore," 29-37; Matthias Riedl, "Living in the Future - Proleptic Existence in Religion, Politics and Art," *International Political Anthropology* 3, no. 2 (2010): 117-22.

<sup>297</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," passim. For instance at p. 37: "evidenter ostendi ex Scripturis Anticristum venisse vel esse, vel fuisse tempus iam periculosissimum Anticristi." For Hus, cf. Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 154: "hortor vos in Christo Ihesu cum omnibus vestris commensalibus, ut sitis parati ad prelium, quia primo inceperunt Antichristi preludia, ad que primo consequetur pugna."; Sedlák, "Husovy spisy," 71: "superbia et avaricia modernorum prelatorum et sacerdotum talia introduxit in iam currentibus temporibus antichristi."

<sup>298</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 176: "Ex quo patet quod sicut nemo potest esse neuter quoad virtutem vel viciu, cum oportet, quod vel sit in gracia dei vel extra graciā, sic nulla conversatio hominis potest esse neutra". Cf. Hus, *Sermones* II, 89; Hus, *Sermones* IV, 100: "Videat ergo quilibet nostrum, cuius vult esse discipulus, an Christi, ut cum eo hic lugens gaudeat eternaliter, vel Antichristi, ut hic de malicia sua et aliorum gaudens lugeat in eternum, quia non datur medium in hac vita, quod vel per compassionem et bona opera simus cum Christo, vel cum Antichristo per oppositum illorum."

choose their allegiance and perform their membership in Christ. Nevertheless, in their emphasis on activism, Hussite leaders go one step further here than the apocalyptic thinker by refining the distinction and also rejecting the status of the apathetic Christian.<sup>299</sup> As has been shown, the intensified polarization along with the emphasis on the moral sovereignty of the individual makes each believer an agent advancing one or another religio-political order. This means that a Christian cannot be content to avoid sin personally. Following Wyclif, the reform program of mutual aid obliges the just Christian to both reject and correct sin. This reflects a basic existential symmetry between the behaviour of Christians and Antichristians: where the Antichristian accepts (and actively serves) wickedness, or rejects (and actively injures) God, so the Christian is expected to accept and serve God while rejecting and actively undermining the devil. Wyclif's ontological subtext for this cannot be elaborated here, but instead what is important for us is that this means that the Christian's reaction to sin, whether internal or foreign, is both constitutive of his identity and is inherently political. Toleration or apathy to sin in oneself or neighbours pollutes the whole believer and negates his allegiance to Christ, and as such is constitutive of demonic identity. In other words, no Christian of any status is able to ignore sin wherever he encounters it.<sup>300</sup> As one Lollard nobleman explained to the Hussites:

he who mingles with such [sinners] or receives one as a guest, and supports or eats or drinks with him, or points a gaze at him or salutes them in the street,

<sup>299</sup> Cf. Matthias Riedl, *Joachim von Fiore. Denker der vollendeten Menschheit* 361, Epistemata. Reihe Philosophie (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004), 32-34.

<sup>300</sup> Cf. Somerset, "Before and After Wyclif," for instance at 153: "Sextum genus consensus est quando quicumque prelati vel alius videns quod clamore vel reprehensione posset detegere vel destruere peccati maliciam et tacet vecorditer. Et licet prelati et regibus peccatum istud ut priora conveniant, tamen nimis realiter convenit cuilibet peccatori. Quilibet enim debet se ipsum reprehendere secundum illam partem qua sic peccat, et per consequens consentit peccato, correccionem dissimulans. Et sic si fidelis servus Domini ex integro non consensit dyabolo foveat partem suam, non multiplicarentur in ecclesia tot hereses, sed pars dyaboli habet maiores et plures pro parte sua contra Dominum procurantes." On an ontological level, Wyclif maintains that sin actually harms all creation due to the reciprocally-causative relationship he claims between universals and particulars. Cf. Conti, "Wyclif's Logic," 95-99; Stephen Edmund Lahey, "On Divine Ideas and Insolubles: Wyclif's Explanation of God's Understanding of Sin," *Modern Schoolman* 86 (2008-2009): 211-38.



unless this be for their correction, is a participant in their very same sins, and he who does not correct evils as pertains to him consents to them, and finally shares in their very same punishment.<sup>301</sup>

Hussite leaders generally appreciated this anxiety. For them, the sinner reproduces sin almost unconsciously and in every action. As Jakoubek explained: “the whole manner of all such [wicked priests and people] ... is corrupted in everything they do, whether they read or discuss or teach or preach, pray, or solemnly recite however many masses.”<sup>302</sup> The Antichristian cleric spreads his inner idolatry to the faithful as Christian idolatry (*ydolatria christiana*), seduces his flock away from God and to the distractions of superstition (*fabulae, ficciones*), jeopardizes his community with his corrupt lifestyle, and basically harms the whole body of the elect.<sup>303</sup> It is dangerous to commune with such a contagious sinner (*contagiosus*), excommunicated by God.<sup>304</sup> An entire community may be collectively punished by God for their toleration of sinfulness and

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<sup>301</sup> Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 187\*: “Et voluntas est domini, quod consimiliter vos agatis, cum in lege dei virtutum sit, quod qui talibus se miscet vel qui talem ut hospitem recipit talibusque favet aut cum tali comedit aut potat aut ei vultum exhibet aliqualem aut eos salutat in plateis, nisi ob eorum emendacionem, est eorundem particeps peccatorum et qui non quantum ad eum pertinet eorum mala corrigit, eis consentit et partem penarum eorundem est finaliter recepturus.” This idea appears frequently in Hussite correspondences with Lollards, cf. for instance Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 75: “Nam sicut sacerdos est debitor, ut veritatem, quam audivit a deo, libere predicet ... sic laicus debitor est, ut veritatem, quam audivit a sacerdotibus, probatam in scripturis, defendat fideliter; quod si non fecerit, prodidit veritatem.” Cf. Somerset, “Before and After Wyclif,” cit at 163: “non impediētes peccatam peccant equaliter cum commitentibus aut grauius”.

<sup>302</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty III*, 73: “propositum omnium talium [est] condensatam contagiosamque affectionem et libidinem ... per hoc totum est fermentatum quidquid fecerint, sive legant sive disputent vel informet vel predicent, orent vel quantumcunque solenniter missas decantent.” Cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 176: “‘Si autem oculus tuus’, id est intencio, ‘nequam fuerit’, curvata per vicium, totum ‘corpus tuum’, scilicet operum, ‘tenebrosum’, id est viciosum, ‘erit’.”

<sup>303</sup> Matthew Spinka, *Advocates of Reform, from Wyclif to Erasmus* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), 252: “no one should hear the Mass read by a priest concerning whom he has certain knowledge that he keeps a mistress or a prostitute ... the priest should not administer it unworthily, and the people should not share in his sin. ... For they themselves are leavened thereby [i.e. sin], that is, they are infected by this same sin, which is communicated to them because of their neglect to eradicate it.”; Hus, *Sermones IV*, 194: “Totam communitatem inficientes omnes ergo operibus suis Christo contrarii et peccatis suis virtutibus Christi, omnes illi sunt infideles coci et venenant misticum corpus ecclesie Jesu Christi.” Cf. Fudge, “Feel This!,” 125; Paul De Vooght, “Le sermon ‘Factum est ut moreretur mendicus’ de Jacobellus de Stříbro (nov. 1413),” *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 36 (1969): 205: “omnis prevaricator dei mandatorum, quantumcumque pretendat se esse spiritualem, nocet sibi ac ecclesie militancium et dormiencium, quidquid fecerit vel dixerit in agendis.”; Hus, *MIHO* 1, 208, 211. Cf. Sedláčková, “Kvestie o Antikristu,” 40-45; Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 23.

<sup>304</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 112.

for not installing God's order (*non curare introducere ordinem dei*) in the world.<sup>305</sup> As a result, any deficiency in Christian activism is considered personal consent and participation in all sin, betrayal of God, and allegiance to Antichrist.<sup>306</sup> The guilty parties are collaborators, made lazy, effeminate, and moderate (*ignavie, effeminati, remissi*) by a life of compromise with sin (*consensus peccati*) and tepid faith (*tepiditas fidei*), and thus incapable of the Christian struggle.<sup>307</sup> Hell awaits not only all those performing sin in deed (*actu*), but also the complicit (*tacent*) who avoid its disruption (*nolunt stawowati*).<sup>308</sup> Anyone who witnesses sin and does not correct it (*corrigere*), or any subordinate who obeys a superior in sin and does not resist it (*resistere*), shares gravely in its infection.<sup>309</sup> All this is to say that the rejection of apathy toward sin has a democratizing effect on the responsibility and agency against it. Although the context of radical individualism and exacerbated polarization encouraged Hussite thinkers to identify theirs with an apocalyptic struggle which is in the process of dividing society, their commitment to a confidently activist soteriology, and the threat of shared guilt,

<sup>305</sup> KNM XIV E 4, fol. 202r: "non curamus introducere ordinem dei, sed permittemus multa mala publica in communitate et dum convenimus consilium noscentes bene veritatem et videntes multa fieri contra veritatem nichil est nobis de illo, et ergo non est mirorum quod sic punimur."; Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 94: "quia tota communitas ex consensu propter consensum dampnatur coram deo propter tales publicos peccatores ...".

<sup>306</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 211: "Thus whoever takes that life force (*živost*) [of the soul] from someone kills him (*zabíjie ho*) in the same way as if he killed him corporeally without that life force, whether it be by counsel, instruction, hortation, slander, offense, bad example, and withholding aid, and any other means by which God's grace is extinguished in man and thus the soul's life." Cf. Hus, *Sermones* IV, 179: "Hec tria si in se habuerit, sc. potenciam, sapienciam, benivolenciam, tunc digne honoravit Trinitatem benedictam. Si vero potenciam suam oppressit et conculcavit, peccatis non resistendo, iam Deum Patrem dehonestavit." Ibid., 181.

<sup>307</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 318, 325 f.: "pensemus quod magnitudo fidei, continencia et abstinencia voluptatis ab omni indecenti consensu et servitute peccati et labor ac agonom certamina faciunt viros virtutis et victorie, sicut econtrario remissa vita et tepiditas fidei et amoris ac spei faciunt nos effeminatos et viros ignavie. Sed heu plures nostrum sunt remissi et effeminati quos dominus Jesus velut alter Gedeon abicit tamquam inhabiles ad prelia domini ...".

<sup>308</sup> NK ČR X G 11, fol. 77v: "non solum actu facientes sunt digni morte eterna infernali, sed omnes qui tacent et nolunt stawowati [to disrupt] nec contrari etc. Toti multitudini pragensi irascitur et quilibet debet timere, nam videntes mala ad huc ridet et consolaciam faciunt narrantes maliciam, ubi antiquitus malum pati ...".

<sup>309</sup> Spinka, *Advocates of Reform*, 252.; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 102; Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 179 f., 225; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 328; Hus, *MIHO* 1, 199. , cit. Marcela Klicova Perett, "Jan Hus's Productive Exile: Writing as Rabble-Rousing," *Husitský Tábor* 20 (2016): 97.

means they are unable to accept the pessimism of apocalyptic resignation. As a result, the anxiety of restorative purgation cannot be dispelled by its delegation to superhuman agents (as for the apocalyptic), nor is it comfortably borne exclusively by authorities (like Wyclif), but begins to be the concern of the whole Christian community.

Even with this being said, however, it is generally clear that the intent of Hussite thinkers here remained to exhort secular and religious leaders to action, and to create a popular religious movement, not a political one *per se*. Even with the threat of papal crusade looming against them years later, the political agency of common Christians remained for Hussite intellectual leaders only barely acceptable as an afterthought. Nevertheless, it is important to take note that already in these early years, the universal Hussite appreciation of this threat of sin pollution, and their rejection of Christian apathy, only contributed to the radicalization and politicization of Hussite activism which exploded in the Taborite revolution. At this point, this was reflected in the monopolistic claims of the movement upon the energies of its followers. In line both with Augustine and the apocalyptic thinker, Hussite leaders truly accepted the elect as foreigners in this world of the damned. Yet unlike this Church Father, the option to mitigate this alienation by virtue of the invisibility of these communities, or by anthropological pessimism, did not exist for Hussites, nor did the apocalyptic thinker's apathetic resignation to neighbouring sin. In other words, sin is not an inevitable constituent of human society, but must be uprooted. This means that the Hussite believer, confident in his salvation, is expected to engage in a total self-negation and become a pure divine agent in the world, transgressing both Augustinian and apocalyptic thought. For Hussites, each true Christian is in a constant state of battle against the ties to the mundane, meaning the anti-Trinity of the body, the devil, and the

world (*contra carnem, dyabolum, et mundum*).<sup>310</sup> In their absolutist obsession with purity and pollution, they see the whole of the Christian's energies and deeds of immediate relevance to the Hussite struggle, and even a single lapse may have disastrous effects.<sup>311</sup> This explains the simple measure which they often used to identify Antichrist, referring to Christ's words: "Whoever is not with me, is against me" (Matt. 12:30).<sup>312</sup> In symmetrical opposition to the sinner, every motivation, action, thought, and word (*omnis motus et actus, omnis cogitacio et sermo*) of the Christian is demanded to the service of God,<sup>313</sup> who ubiquitously animates his true children and keeps them resolute toward this end, without excuse of time, place, custom, or circumstance.<sup>314</sup> This is true even unto the extreme fates of suffering or martyrdom, which represent to Hussite leaders the signs of ultimate worldly alienation, and of divine community. In Augustinian language, the Christian is urged to assume a divine emotive state for self and communal purification, as Jakoubek explained:

<sup>310</sup> For instance, cf. Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 38: "Sic est de omni Cristi milite pugnante contra hostem triplicem, scilicet contra carnem, dyabolum et mundum."; Hus, *MIHO* 1, 218. Hus on Simony in Spinka, *Advocates of Reform*, 237: "Thus instead of serving God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit through their appointments, they [i.e. wicked monks] served the devil, the flesh, and the world."

<sup>310</sup> Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 275, 277.

<sup>311</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 72/4: "pastores personam Iesu Cristi induti, verbum Dei non anunciantes, etsi non superadderent malicias alias, sunt anticristi et Sathanas transfiguratus in angelum lucis, fures et latrones, mactatores ovium et proditores, facientes domum oracionis speluncam latronum." Cf. Jan Hus, *M. Io. Hus sermones in Capella Bethlehem* I, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague: Nákladem Královské České Společnosti Nauk, 1938), 89; Hus, *Postilla*, 235: "For it is not possible to heed one of God's commands without heeding the others; for he who does not hold one, holds none, and he who fulfills one, fulfills them all (ktož jednoho nedrží, nižádného nedrží, a ktož jedno plní, všechna přikázanie plní)."

<sup>312</sup> Sedláčková, "Kvestie o Antikristu," 28; Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 113; Hus, *MIHO* 22, 305.

<sup>313</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 326: "Tantum est, ut armis spiritualibus Christi semper simus armati et conversacio nostra in celis sit, omnis motus et actus nostri, omnis cogitacio et sermo celestis sit"; Hus, *Postilla*, 358: "Thus each act should praise (z každého skutka má býti chvála) the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ..." Cf. *Ibid.*, 403; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 66; Hus, *Sermones* V, 19: "Nam si mens tua est ad hoc, ut semper ad Deum tendas et eciam ut sibi placeas et omnia tua opera ducis in eum, tunc diligis eum."

<sup>314</sup> Pavel Soukup, "Dobývání hradu Skály v roce 1413 a husitská teorie války. Ke spisku Jakoubka ze Stříbra o duchovním boji," *Mediævalia historica Bohemica* 9 (2003): 206 f.: „dominus noster fortis et potens in prelio” clamat ad nos dicens: ‘Quis consurget mihi adversus malignantes aut quis stabit mecum adversus operantes iniquitatem?’ animatque nos exemplo sui, et augmenta meriti, et ex pena servata servo inutili, ut nemo se excuset de oportunitate loci et temporis de asistencia diurni innanimis et exemplacione multorum sanctorum precedenti.”; cf. Hus, *Postilla*, 29 f.; Spinka, *Advocates of Reform*, 240, 248-50. See note 547.

For it is a clear sign of true love, love of Jesus Christ, to want and be able to die for the destruction of the sins of neighbours, and in order to vanquish the abundance of iniquity. For this is why Christ came into the world ... to show his members the perfect love of Christ, the order of virtues, and the perfect hatred of vices. Therefore in fact, for the faithful Christian, it shall not be [sufficient] to do no evil, but he is obliged to perfectly hate evil itself, and to rage against sins from a perfect zeal of love, and to persecute with serpentine prudence the kingdom of the devil, for since antiquity it has already been introduced into the Christian populous.<sup>315</sup>

What is unique here, then, is that this personal struggle inevitably becomes political when it contacts sin. Jakoubek made this clear in his exhortation: “may we fight and destroy unto death the law of sin and of the Antichrist, [which are] contrary to the observance of Christ’s law, first in ourselves and then in others.”<sup>316</sup> This will be discussed further below, but what is important here is to emphasize that for Hussite thinkers, the elaboration of a strictly polarized and even apocalyptic discourse generally coincided with a radical view of Christian agency and activism. This is because the internal struggle and identity of the Christian believer has to be externalized due to his need to prove and perform the strict demands of membership, and avoid the infection of sin pollution. At the same time the urgency of this task is enhanced by the apocalyptic significance of Antichrist. As a result, the Hussite believer is radicalized to reject all forms of coexistence which compromises the purity of mission, even to the extent of personal annihilation. Whether intentional or not, the combination of such an

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<sup>315</sup> Soukup, “Dobývání hradu Skály,” 206: “Signum namque evidens dileccionis Ihesu Christi et vere caritatis est velle et posse mori pro destruendo malo proximorum et pro iniquitatis habundantia debellanda. Ad hoc enim Christus venit in mundum, qui solus perfecte dilexit iusticiam et odit iniquitatem, ut exhiberet suis membris perfectam dileccionem ad Christi et virtutum ordinationem et perfectum odium viciorum. Qua in re non sit fidei christiano non facere malum, sed oportet ipsum malum perfecte odire et ex perfeccione zelo caritatis irasci peccatis et serpentiana prudencia regnum diaboli persequi, iam enim dudum ab antiquo introductum in populum christianum.”; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 327: “Melius est nobis mori pro salute fratrum quam videre tot mala et non oppugnare.”; cf. Mazalová, “O Antikristově,” 150. This becomes a regular point especially for Hus during imprisonment in Constance, cf. Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 286, 326, 331; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 39: “Obsecro igitur inspice fideliter statum primevum ecclesie sancte et in ea effectualement ordinationem divinam et contemptum terrenorum et vanitatum seculi ...”. On appropriate hate, cf. Hus, *MIHO* 1, 208 f.

<sup>316</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 325: “Doleamus ergo omnes et singuli de tanta dei iniuria, dolentes inipugnemus ac destruamus in nobis primum et post in aliis legem peccati et antichristi contrariam observancie legis Christi usque ad mortem”; Hus, *Sermones* V, 21.

apocalyptic worldview with universal activism worked to encourage increasing popular engagement in the methodology of reform.

As a result of this, we find that the hortations of Hussite leaders now begin to bear witness to new enthusiasm and positive roles for subaltern participation, even common laypeople, in specific aspects of reform. Although their significance should not be exaggerated here,<sup>317</sup> this clearly aligns with the emergence of broadened agency, radicalized activism, and anxiety over pollution discussed above. Additionally important here are Wyclif's principle of mutual aid, and Janov's emphasis on grassroots renewal, even if Hussite reformers generally overstep the boundaries of these thinkers. A well-known example is Nicholas of Dresden's unique engagement of laymen in evangelization.<sup>318</sup> For him, the Hussite defiance of papal preaching bans and interdicts was drastically insufficient. Instead, in times of necessity, any knowledgeable layman in harmony with God's will is permitted and actually obliged to confidently assume the preaching task.<sup>319</sup> No Christian man may be excused to apathetic resignation when confronted by sin, but is instead called to confidently fulfil his human potential, as Nicholas shows:

he who saw his brother erring and oppressed by mortal sins and, learned in the word of doctrine, did not furnish him with it, is a killer and without love (*homicida et sine caritate est*). ... See! They are not excused who say: "How am I able against so great a number?", because God bestows growth (*incrementum*), like above, and knows the strengths that you are capable of. Gregory says: "If

<sup>317</sup> For instance, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 86-90, for his discussion of a forged revolutionary hortation.

<sup>318</sup> However, cf. Edith Wilks Dolnikowski, "The Encouragement of Lay Preaching as an Ecclesiastical Critique in Wyclif's Latin Sermons," in *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle et al. (Louvain-La-Neuve: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Etudes Médiévales, 1996), 193-209, which I find unconvincing. Matthias of Janov clearly looked upon the expansion of prophecy with enthusiasm, especially by women.

<sup>319</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty I*, 97, 102, 99: "quilibet confitens veritatem et faciens iusticiam, contempnens pecuniam ... talis habet testimonium, quod ipse sit missus a deo ... confiteri veritatem, facere iusticiam, mundum contempnare, gloriam spernere, obprobria sustinere: huiusmodi est testimonium sufficiens, ut habens legis dei noticiam predicet libere Jesu Christi ewangelium, quia ut sic est a deo missus et illa est missio ...". On Nicholas compared to Hus on this point, cf. Soukup, "Jak mohou," esp. 117 f.

he who is able, refuses to feed the sheep of omnipotent God, ... it is necessary for the willing shoulder to bear these burdens.”<sup>320</sup>

Although Nicholas does not extend preaching in church to women, he includes them as agents of other forms of spiritual admonition and exhortation.<sup>321</sup> Positions not entirely dissimilar to his were also voiced by Hus and Jakoubek,<sup>322</sup> and if we take seriously his accusers at Constance, the layman Jerome of Prague followed and spread such views himself, even embellishing the role of laypeople to the consecration of sacraments.<sup>323</sup> Yet even if the most radical of such infringements upon clerical authority were not widely accepted by Hussite leaders, we find that these did now consistently extend the tasks of spiritual pedagogy and correction to subaltern groups as part of the broader program of societal purification. Importantly, this was founded not only in theory but also historical experience, as central figures like Hus and Jakoubek reflected positively on the enthusiasm of the subaltern toward reform, which far exceeded that of authority

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<sup>320</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 102 f.: “qui viderit fratrem suum errantem et mortalibus oppressum criminibus et non ministraverit ei verbum doctrine, ille qui doctus est, homicida et sine caritate est. ... Ecce quod non excusantur qui dicunt: ‘Quomodo ego possem contra tot et tot’, quia deus incrementum dat, ut supra, et scit vires tuas, quantum potes. Dicit Gregorius ...: ‘Quis si is, qui valet omnipotentis dei renuit pascere oves, ostendit se pastorem summum minime diligere. ... si desit qui predicet, occupationes omnes libenti necesse est humero subire.’”

<sup>321</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty* I, 101, 113: “Et licet mulieribus non permittitur docere in ecclesia ... mulieribus sit licitum via ammonicionis et familiaris collacionis alios instruere, ammonere seu exhortari.”

<sup>322</sup> While in exile, Hus supported outdoor preaching and perhaps even liturgical innovations, see Soukup, *Jan Hus: The Life and Death*, 137. He also suggested that laymen could baptise in times of necessity, Cf. Hus, *Postilla*, 23. Jakoubek argued unconsecrated priests could preach, and suggested that the clerical gifts of ordination and teaching were often given invisibly by God. See Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 7 f.: “Aliquando autem ... sine applicatione sacramentorum et absque signo sensibili, deus inspirat suis parvulis gratiam gratum facientem, que est maxima potestas hic in via secundum speciem suam, et consequenter influit suis sic capacibus donum sapientie et sciencie et sic donum potestatis ordinis ad edificandum proximos, quemadmodum tales potestates Christus communicavit ex speciali privilegio suis apostolis et postea multis eorum successoribus.” Ibid., 11 f.

<sup>323</sup> Betts, “Jeroným Pražský,” 208 f., 216; Petr Čornej, “Radikalizace raného husitství (1408–1414),” in *Tabule staré a nové barvy Mikuláše*, ed. Milada Homolková and Michal Dragoun (Prague: Scriptorium, 2016), 24 f. If, as his accusers claimed, Jerome was influenced in this by Wyclif, it is from the latter’s argument concerning the consequences of dominion. Cf. for instance Wyclif, *De officio regis*, 133: “Omnes enim predestinati sunt reges et sacerdotes immediate subiecti capiti ...”. Also Hermann Fürstenau, *Johann von Wiclifs Lehren von der Einteilung der Kirche und von der Stellung der weltlichen Gewalt* (Berlin: R. Gaertner, 1900), 21–24.

figures.<sup>324</sup> Thus the agency of the poor and simple, of lowly priests and laymen, was increasingly associated with divinity and election and given a unique or at least significant place in reform: God has elected the poor (*bóh vyvolil jest chudé*) and fights through them (*dominus pugnat per simplices*),<sup>325</sup> meaning that they are even granted the authority to castigate superiors (*superiores aput mundum*), and laymen (*laici / populus*) are encouraged to supplement good priests in their pedagogical and transformative task in spirituality and society.<sup>326</sup> Meanwhile, obedience to spiritual authorities is increasingly conditioned by their performance, their “living sign of office” (*signum vivum officii*), and even if its scope should not be exaggerated here, secular rulers are not exempt from this subversive argument either.<sup>327</sup> For instance, Hus’s universal commandment of hatred against the wicked not only disregards Augustine’s ubiquitous aversion to *odium*, but also transgresses the Church father’s paternalist

<sup>324</sup> KNM XIV E 4, fol. 34<sup>r</sup>: “sicut quondam dominus operabatur opera sua per simplices abscondendo hoc a sapientibus huius mundi. Sic nunc dominus pugnat per simplices, quod latet superbos ...”; Jan Hus, *MIHO* 4, 252, trans. Rychterová, “Theology Goes to the Vernaculars,”; Ibid., 263: “I have found that ordinary poor priests and poor laymen—even women—defend the truth more zealously than the doctors of the Holy Scriptures, who out of fear run away from the truth and have not courage to defend it.” Cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 201.

<sup>325</sup> Hus, *Postilla*, 420: “For God has elected the poor of the world, who are rich in faith and are the inheritors of the kingdom which is promised to those who love him.”

<sup>326</sup> KNM XIV E 4, fol. 69<sup>r</sup>: „Quia dicit apostolus: ‘Seniorem ne increpaveris’. Ibi est videndum quod sunt aliqui aput mundum superiores et sunt valde infimi aput deum. Superiores ergo aput deum et qui sunt minores aput mundum possunt corrigere superiores aput mundum”; Nejedlý, *Dějiny* IV, 103, n. 50: “Ecce, dicit Augustinus, quod laici possunt predicare et corripere delinquentes, et quilibet paterfamilias corrigere debet suam familiam et quasi predicare eis. Istud ergo ewangelium non tantum tangit sacerdotes, sed et laicos ..., quia de gracia dei multi laici illuminaciores sunt quidam persbyteris.”; František Michálek Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele asi z r. 1415,” *Věstník České akademie věd a umění* 57 (1948): 31: “Non redarguimus et clamamus nos sacerdotes contra symoniam, avariciam cleri totiusque populi, contra czottas clientum et ornamenta quamplurima mulierum ... Et non tantum sacerdotes sunt obligati ad clamandum contra tales deordinaciones, sed et populus, qui visitat sermones.” Cf. Rychterová, “Theology Goes to the Vernaculars,” 251 f.

<sup>327</sup> For instance, a lord exacting payments from his subjects without protecting them from sin actually engages in theft (*krádež*), see Hus, *MIHO* 1, 262. Cf. *Historia et Monumenta* I, 167: “Jam patet ad quem sensum verum Scripturae, nullus est Dominus civilis dum est in peccato mortali, quia nullus pro tunc juste dominatur, ... peccatum mortale expellit omnem justitiam ab homine”. Cit. Kenneth G. Hagen, “Hus’ ‘Donatism,’” *Augustinianum* 11 (1971): 543; Hus, *MIHO* 1, 287 f.: “If a bishop is a fornicator, and a layman ... has no mortal sin, then that layman, whether a poor peasant or woman, is greater before the eyes of God ... And so the good little peasant is higher and more worthy than a bishop”. [jest-li biskup v smilství, a laik, jenž nevie do sebe nižádného hřícha smrtného ... tak že nemá hříchu smrtného, tehdy ten laik, buď to chudý sedláček neb žena chudá, již jest větčí před pánem bohem ... A tak sedláček ten dobrý jest vyšší a důstojnější než biskup]. Cf. Hus, *Postilla*, 421. On the “living sign of office”, see Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 10.



sociology. As Hus explains: “everyone who has a lord or servant, and knows definitively that he is unnobled (*nešlechtný*) by mortal sin, should not love him for material gain, but rather hate him (*v nenávisti mieti*), for otherwise he would love him improperly.”<sup>328</sup> Incidentally, this casual flirtation with Donatism became an important point of contention especially at Constance.<sup>329</sup> All this meant that for Hussite leaders, those lowest in the medieval hierarchy were proving a significant actor in reformation, and that this growing appreciation of the subaltern began to be reflected also in theory. This element may not be overwhelming at this point, but it matters for later developments. Periodically we find the people (*populus / obec*) appearing to Hussites as the ground of clerical legitimacy, suggesting that the power of the people (*moc lidu*) be restored for popular measures, like the revival of clerical election, the excommunication of heretics, or the embargo of clerical fees. These may be counted among the best options at reform.<sup>330</sup> On occasion, this active communal responsibility even extended to supplement secular authorities in their administrative duty. One role model here was the governor of Judah, Nehemiah, who violently coerced his people and priests from pollution and sin (Neh. 13):

Now, king, prince, lord, knight, and also the people (*i obcě*), you should learn from this holy prince [Nehemiah] and not suffer fornication and adultery from holy priests. You should not receive such priests, but the way this [prince] has chased away the fornicating priests can serve as your example ... Secondly, you

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<sup>328</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 209.

<sup>329</sup> Hagen, “Hus’ ‘Donatism.’”, calls Hus’s position one of “semi-Donatism”. Cf. Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 97-99, which is tempered in Bernhard Töpfer, “Die Wertung der weltlich-staatlichen Ordnung durch John Wyclif und Jan Hus,” in *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter*, ed. František Šmahel (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998), 66-76.

<sup>330</sup> Jindřich Marek, *Jakoubek ze Stríbra a počátky utrakvistického kazatelství v českých zemích. Studie o Jakoubkově postile z let 1413–1414*. (Prague: Národní knihovna České republiky, 2011), 199, n. 123: “quod sacerdotes populo veritatem non annunciantes, sed illam, ubi possunt, impediunt, tales certe, si volunt digne missare, debent cum populo concordare. Unde patet quod omnis qui consensurunt[?] morti sanctorum hominum communitati utilium ille non debent missare nisi cum communitate concordent ...”; Spinka, *Advocates of Reform*, 268-73, for instance 273: “Consequently, the third solution [to simony] is the most likely, namely, that the people withhold revenues from open simoniacs so that they could not traffick in them.” Alteration mine. On the popular role in excommunication, see Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 74 ff. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 190; Töpfer, “Die Wertung,” 71.

should learn to judicate (*řéditi*) the priests so that they respect their priesthood  
...<sup>331</sup>

In other words, the community can have a positive role even in coercion. In order to conclude, however, it bears repetition that none of this is revolutionary, at least not intentionally. As will be seen, Hussite leaders generally continued to follow Wyclif in emphasizing the normative role of secular rulers in accomplishing reform. Nevertheless, the growing confidence in and of subaltern groups at this time, even as an afterthought, cannot be discounted in light of later events. It is clear that already now, Wyclif's model of top-down reform was showing cracks, or at least was being stretched to accommodate some measure of grassroots agency. Indeed, it is significant that this phenomenon coincided with the more general trends of radicalized and politicized Hussite activism, and the anxieties of institutional stagnancy in reform. Soon we shall see that this tension will be crucial to the development of Hussite radicalism.

All of this feeds into the elaboration of an emerging Hussite resistance theory, of all Christians against Antichristians, which spares no effort to crush the total existential rupture represented by *pax mundi*. This fully coincides with the purpose of reform and identifies squarely with the revival of Christ's mission on earth, the pacification of mankind to God. In other words, we are now able to clearly detect that the Hussite reform project is truly religio-political. Just as the original peace of Christ in the primitive Church, as well as its perversion into the *pax mundi*, both represented religio-political orders, Hussite leaders clearly expected that their struggle with Antichrist would be both mystical and immanent, and that its conclusion would coincide with a radically-different religious and political arrangement, nothing less than the

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<sup>331</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 190, trans. Rychterová, "The Vernacular Theology," 193. Cf. Hus, *MIHO* 1, 189, trans. Rychterová, "The Vernacular Theology," 188: "In this way, princes, knights, noblemen *and citizens* (*měštěné*) should prevent their people from committing fornication and especially adultery. In case they do not abstain from that they should be beaten and whipped, but not executed (*mrskati, býti, ale nesmiem řéci zabiti*) ..." Alterations and emphasis mine.

return of divine peace on earth. This obviously contradicts both Augustinian and most apocalyptic thought, where no mundane political entity can ever hope to claim a divine status. For Hussites, true “peace”, even in man’s fallen state, is still primarily vertical, synonymous with submission to God, and thus they reject the Augustinian resignation to mitigate sin through horizontal compromise with it within an excusable “natural order”.<sup>332</sup> Instead, the best state of mankind is still possible on earth, the religio-political observance of God’s law which keeps man ordered by reason in divine love.<sup>333</sup> Thus no one may defend any sin as “natural” or commonly beneficial.<sup>334</sup> In this way, Hussites countered accusations of sedition: it is not they, but the servants of Antichrist who are in a state of true rebellion (*rebellio*).<sup>335</sup> This explains why Hussite vocabulary describing the Antichrist’s entry into history is consistently that of disruption, dissolution, and separation (*tribulacio, disruptio, discessio, recessio, alienacio—rumpere, dissolvere, turbare, inpacificare*). For them, the current laws which support this human-demonic insurrection are merely inventions of sin to secure the fragile state of horizontal peace among criminals (*inter latrones*), and inevitably cause war and strife while

<sup>332</sup> Sedlák, *Studie a texty III*, 60: “Ecce quod anticristus est spiritus i.e. quedam spiritualitas occultissima et zophistica in ecclesiam introducta omne malum tegens et excusans!”

<sup>333</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 76 f.: “Legis Cristi observancia, cum sit lex mandatorum Dei, est per se sufficiens ad manendum in eius dilectione, ut patet Mathei 19 et Iohannis 14. Sed quicquid mancipat hominem ad manendum in Dei dilectione, sufficit ad suum regimen, cum ille sit optimus status ecclesie, ergo conclusio vera.”

<sup>334</sup> Spinka, *Advocates of Reform*, 248 f.: “they now excuse fornication by affirming that it is natural. But they lie. For no sin, nor any vice contrary to virtue, is natural ... neither custom nor natural temperament nor inclination can serve as an excuse that sin be not sin ... For reason convinces us that truth should conquer custom.” Cf. Ibid., 240; Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 22: “Nunc, qui defendunt reges meretrices, dicentes hoc pro bono communitatis esse, sunt principes publicanorum.”

<sup>335</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 77: “lex [Cristi] non est nunc minus sufficiens, quam tunc fuit, nec debilitatur ex pluralitate vel rebellione conversorum ...”; Sedlák, *Studie a texty III*, 57: “sunt inordinate amantes seipsos, sine benignitate subveniendi, proditores secretorum, protervi i.e. rebelles contra arguentem veritatem ...”. Cf. note 205 above; Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis III*, 512: “Verum autem est, quod antichristi proprium est rumpere pacem divinam, non quam mundus, vel spiritus huius mundi dat, charitatem non fictam turbare, et unionem spiritus duplicare, quantum in eo est, et discordiam malam et multimodam inter notos et proximos in Christo conjunctos seminare, principali intentione et per se prima voluntate mala.”; Palacký, *Documenta*, 494: “Diruptio namque pacis et concordiae corporalis heu venit nobis in regno originaliter ex diruptione pacis et concordiae cum deo.” For similar accusations against Hussites, see for instance Sedlák, *Jan Hus*, 230, 248\*.

simultaneously maximizing divine alienation.<sup>336</sup> In other words, Hussites experienced the wicked condition of the world as a (even worse) likeness of that which Christ encountered and struggled against himself.<sup>337</sup> This meant that the self-perception of their project is identical to that of the thankless and tumultuous mission of the incarnation, to disrupt the fake unity and tranquillity treasured by a world of sinners (*confederacio ficta, pax simulata / malorum*).<sup>338</sup> Hus showed this via a favourite Hussite passage:

“I have not come to send peace, but the sword; for I have come to divide father from son and mother from daughter.” (Mat. 10:34 f.) And this is now happening, that in Prague father stands against son and daughter against father and mother. One rather hears God’s word and another hereticates and curses, as can clearly be seen.<sup>339</sup>

If the Hussites were agitating, it was for them only against the obedience to Antichrist (*obediencia Antichristi*), the sinful mandates and traditions of mundane superiors which transgress the limits of their authority. The Hussite self-understanding of their resistance

<sup>336</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 48: “3<sup>o</sup> pro lege humana explicita, dum tamen non sit in Scriptura sacra, sed ipsi contraria, et ista lex est iniqua. Et sic quidam concipiunt, quod lex divina et lex humana ex opposito distingwuntur.” Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 34: “propter illam [pacem] sunt omnia bella”; Ibid., 36: “Ymmo tantum est hominibus pax desiderabilis, quod eciam latrones inter se pacem appetunt ... Pax vero mundi fundatur in applause humano communiter sophistico inter paucos fragiles, confederatos debiliter seculi ligamento.”; Ibid., 40: “pax vero mundi est communiter involuta criminibus”; Ibid., 44/46. Cf. František Michálek Bartoš, “Studie o Žižkovi a jeho době,” *Časopis Národního muzea* 99 (1925): 19 f.; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 64: “Puteus abissi est pravum cor et inscruta bile humanum et precipue novissimorum christianorum, et omnia corda sic terrena profundata in malicia simul omnia in unum sunt unum cor et unus puteus abissi i.e. cupitiditatis insaciabilis.”; Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 24.

<sup>337</sup> Spinka, *The Letters*, 80 f. Martyrs are thus more glorious in this time than in the primitive Church, see Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 38; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 60: “hec est tribulacio ecclesie antea nunquam visa, tribulacio inquam non tam adhuc corporum quam animarum; et quanto maior est spiritus supra corpus, tanto maior est tribulacio animarum et percussio conscienciarum quam tribulacio olim corporalis in martiribus, specialiter in electis dei, et de quanta occulcior et coloracior atque insensibilior ista tribulacio et potestas tenebrarum, tanto nocivior, quia intima, fortissima, crudelissima et omni genere deceptionum contra electos dei coloratissime communita.”

<sup>338</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 28: “[after Matthew 10:34 f.] Venit enim Cristus rex pacificus ad dissolvendam confederacionem fictam inter homines mundanos per superbiam dyaboli, que viros forciores seculi fallit.”; Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 43: “Secundo quantum ad amorem nostre excellencie vel contemptus sic poterunt comparari vie contrarie Christi et antichristi. Scimus enim quod olim lege Christi stante in suo vigore longe et late per ecclesiam Christi fideles Christi habentes ignitum amorem ad dominum Jesum et ad eius veritatem vite et doctrine, communiter elegerunt fieri obprobrium hominum et despectio superbis et huic mundo esse abhominacio et quasi purgamenta eius et omnium peripsima pocius esse maluerunt quam splendide et gloriose in seculo prosperari et habitare in thabernaculis peccatorum ... Et hec sunt vie domini Jesu Christi humillimi, ignominiosi et crucifixi et sue fidelis familie. Sed nunc sunt vie valde contrarie hiis.”

<sup>339</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 1, 281.

is therefore actually of ancient, zealous obedience to God, and their disruption is really a step toward pacification.<sup>340</sup> As Hus explained:

an inferior, recognizing a superior's injudicious command ... ought to resist that superior. For such resistance is true obedience done not only to God in view of the law of fraternal correction but also to the superior himself, for no superior has the right to command anything except what is good.<sup>341</sup>

For Hussite leaders, all the controversy and unrest they inspire thus represents merely the necessary birthing pains of a community in sinful complacency reawakening into a Christian consciousness. Coincidentally, this is mirrored by the pains of rebirth occurring within the current Christian saints (*Christum in se parientes*).<sup>342</sup> Such a process is bound to disturb the world-lovers hoping to conserve the godless status quo,<sup>343</sup> but their outrage should only serve to reinforce the confidence of its Christian agents, especially discerning clerics who are instrumental to pacification.<sup>344</sup> These should identify sinners to be publicly punished, excommunicated, and expelled from

<sup>340</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 28: "Sed postquam ordinatio Christi abicitur et tradicio prelatorum supra Christum preponderatur, oportet pro ordinatione Christi restauranda, tradicionibus pape et episcoporum ... ab electis ut contradicatur usque ad eorum destruccionem et violacionem, quod zelatores paternarum tradicionum, sicut olym Saulus, reputant maximum inconueniens et errorem."

<sup>341</sup> Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 179: "subditus considerans indiscretum mandatum prepositi, quod est notum vel debet esse notum vergere ad detrimentum ecclesie, distrahendo a cultu dei et profectu salutis animarum, debet illi preposito resistere. Nam talis resistencia est vera obediencia, nedum deo facta quoad legem superne correpcionis, sed eciam ipsi preposito, quia nullus prepositus quicquam precipere debet nisi bonum. ... Ex isto patet quod subditus obediens suo preposito in malo non excusatur a peccato ...". Trans. Hus, *De Ecclesia - The Church*, 224. Cf. Hus, *De Ecclesia*, 225; Hus, *MIHO* 4, 279 f.; Rychterová, "Theology Goes to the Vernaculars," 217 f.; Bartoš, "Sborník husitského kazatele," 24.

<sup>342</sup> Hus, *Sermones* IV, 103: "Sic eciam sancti, nunc qui renascuntur per penitenciam, dolent et tristitiam habent, Christum in se parientes."

<sup>343</sup> Jakoubek in Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 512: "Sed observare sic legem evangelii ad salutem electorum et Dei beneplacitum, hoc in se non turbat charitatem, sed magis eam pacificat et auget. ... Sed aestimo, quod simulata pax in divitiis, deliciis et gloria seculi et mundana confoederatione, turbatur per hoc occasionaliter. ... Pacem malorum rumpendam dixit Salvator: 'Non veni pacem mittere sed gladium.'" Cf. Hus responding to a friend from his prison in Constance (Hus, *M. Jana Husa korespondence*, 331.): "percepi ex litera, quomodo iam inimici veritatis incipiunt turbare." Cf. note 257.

<sup>344</sup> Marek, *Jakoubek ze Stríbra*, 203, n. 165: "si enim consilia predicatorum tendunt ad confusionem et contemptum mundi, imitationem Cristi et sui ipsius sumpcionem, ex tunc illi sunt ex Deo et spiritu ipsius diriguntur"; Bartoš, "Sborník husitského kazatele," 28; Hus, *Sermones* IV, 204: "Et propterea bellum est bonum, ut rumpatur pax mala. ... Contra quam pacem gladius lingwe ewangelice predicationis eximi debet, ut tales in opere malicie sue confusi ad cor revertantur." Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 32: "caterva clericorum vivens iuxta Cristi ewangelium, ducens subditos in via Domini, pacificaret subiectos et per consequens populum tam Deo quam eciam sibi ipsis."

the community as sinful contagions (*contagiosi*).<sup>345</sup> Meanwhile, rulers and authorities should initiate an entire cultural transformation, not only eradicating heresy but also rooting-out potentially-harmful influences on the people, such as games and performances.<sup>346</sup> For the Wycliffite-Hussite religio-political order, sin is identical to crime, and must be treated thusly.<sup>347</sup> Only once this painful, transitive period is complete would there reign true peace and order, a revival of Christ's order on earth purely (*inpermixte*) under his law, in likeness with the state of primitive innocence (*status innocencie*). Only now could spiritual and political, internal and external wellbeing coincide: the unity of the Church, the rule of the kingdom, the prosperity of the people, and the tranquillity of the individual.<sup>348</sup> The pacified will recover the primordial inner order corresponding to reason.<sup>349</sup> This revived inner and vertical peace would thus coincide with a true horizontal peace, where humans are homogenized and united in their singular love of God.<sup>350</sup> Hussite leaders describe this ideal political future as the only alternative to sinful degeneration, and tellingly, in terms synonymous with the primitive Church. As Jakoubek explained to the king, his political pacification should institute "peace and concord itself, of Christians in Jesus Christ, so that there can

<sup>345</sup> Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 93 ff.

<sup>346</sup> De Vooght, *Jacobellus de Stríbro*, 360: "Item a rectoribus rei publice spiritualis et civilis multi contractus, multi hominum gestus, ludi, actus sunt prohibendi, quamvis secundum se illiciti probari non possunt, quia presidencium non est solum prohibere per se mala, sed eciam que de propinquo ad mala inducunt, sicut ipsorum est non solum virtutes introducere, sed dispositiones ad eas."; Palacký, *Documenta*, 493: "videtur quod D. Rex cum ceteris regnicolis diligentissime instent ad reformationem hujus pacis et concordiae, simoniacam haeresim, adulteria, fornicationes, concubinatus, superabundantiam temporalium et secularia dominia in clero destruendo ...".

<sup>347</sup> Cf. Kaminsky, "Wyclifism," 67.

<sup>348</sup> Hus, *MIHO* 24, 79: "impossibile est uniri ecclesiam, regi regnum, prosperari populum, pacificari personam, nisi hoc fiat principaliter per legem Domini nostri Iesu Christi."; Ibid., 55: "Et cum de quanto servatur purius, de tanto melius, quia statui innocencie, statui beatitudinis et Dei beneplacito conformius, sequitur, quod ecclesia potest istam legem perficere inpermixte."; Ibid., 101: "Acquiritur sequendo universaliter Cristum in moribus, sustentando legem eius, extingwendo leges contrarias et vicia, apropinquando ad statum innocencie fit pax militantis ecclesie stabilita ...".

<sup>349</sup> Hus, *Postilla*, 463: "The seventh gift, wisdom (múdrost), belongs to the peaceful (pokojný), whose wisdom ordered all those things, and none of their movements is against reason (rozum); for now their soul is fully subject to God, and their body to their soul ...".

<sup>350</sup> Hus, *Sermo de Pace*, 32/34: "Oportet enim quod fiat pax hominis ad Deum, pax hominis ad seipsum antequam fuerit facta pax ad proximum."; Ibid., 42.

be clearly one heart and one soul from a multitude of believers as according to the arrangement of the Gospel, outside of which there is no human salvation.”<sup>351</sup> In other words, the only political order distinct from Antichrist’s, a truly Christian order, is a theocracy. It is therefore this population of the Hussite worldview with the community of Antichrist which shows us most elaborately its revolutionary potential. In contempt of the predominant, pessimistic models of Augustine and apocalypticism, Hussites optimistically see the perverse condition of Christendom as a consistent but merely temporary subversion of the psychological, religious, and political norm tumultuously introduced by Christ and represented historically by the primitive Church. This means that the founding rules and traditions of this devolved condition are utterly empty, and no turbulence or upheaval should be spared to secure its total suppression. This achievement will represent the rehabilitation of Christ’s plan, the inner and outer uniformity of man in divine obedience, true peace on earth in ubiquitous anticipation of its fullest enjoyment in heaven.

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As we have seen, therefore, the Hussite elaboration of the holistic threat of the Antichrist during this period of direct confrontation with the ecclesiastic leadership, building upon the Hussite norms of activism and individualism, contributed to an emerging trend of democratized, radicalized, and politicized agency in reform. This borrowed extensively from the views and approaches of intellectual predecessors, while also transgressing the most common medieval attitudes toward apocalyptic anxiety. Antichrist is not merely an individual deceiver but also the entire community of the deceived and wilfully deranged, who can be generally identified with concrete people

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<sup>351</sup> Palacký, *Documenta*, 493 f. at 493: “Alia est pax et concordia propria Christianorum in Christo Jesu, ut videlicet sit multitudinis credentium cor unum et anima una, secundum ordinationem evangelicam, extra quam nullus est hominum de salvandis.”; cf. Sedlák, *Studie a texty* III, 43. Elsewhere, also called *status iustorum*, cf. Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 20.

and groups by knowledgeable, discerning Christians. What is more, the psychological and spiritual corruption of Antichristianity is so comprehensive that it inevitably directs the seduced Christian, as a spiritual and corporeal unit, into the production and enforcement of a political reality wholly devoted to mundane fetishism over divine communion. For the Hussite thinker, however, the strict and urgent demands of Christian activism and individual responsibility, radicalized within the context of apocalyptic polarization, precludes the possibility of apathy or compromise within this structure. Instead, the current world order is entirely emptied of independent value, and the eschatological fate of the individual is made significantly contingent upon his reaction to its perverted norms and behaviours. In coincidence with a growing confidence in subaltern groups, this generally pulls the activism of the Christian into the political arena, and broadens the agency of reformist methodology. Resistance and sacrifice is mandatory for all the faithful, in continuity with Christ's turbulent mission of world-pacification and re-subjugation into the divine order. Of course, this is all still generally set within a Wycliffite framework, and only rarely does it call upon popular, violent action. Nevertheless, the growing confidence in subaltern capability and agency that we already see here, along with the identification of a tangible nemesis, and the growing alienation and depreciation of mundane norms and authorities, will all be crucial developments in the years approaching the Tábórite revolution. It is probably not by coincidence, then, that all these were also heightened and foregrounded by the most important of Hussite socio-religious events: the re-discovery of the salvific lay chalice.



## CHAPTER 3: The Chalice

### **Historical background: from utraquism to the dawn of Tábor**

The condemnations made by the Council fathers in Constance had ambiguous consequences for Hussites in Bohemia, none of which could be anticipated by its prosecutors. Despite heightened anxieties, the shocked outrage which accompanied Hus's execution and the prohibition of the recently-discovered salvific chalice actually deepened reformist resolve. Followers were energetically mobilized to extraordinary action in defence and consolidation of their martyred leader's legacy in the face of growing threats from enemies. Yet the rapid domestic victories of Bohemian reform in the immediate aftermath of international heretication also exacerbated latent internal divisions and introduced new ones. Even before the rift caused by the forbidden chalice was fully healed among Hussite intellectuals in Prague, newly contentious positions and polemics began to mushroom which ultimately put heavy strain on the integrity of the movement as a whole. Many Hussite traditionalists and radicals alike found themselves disillusioned from the mediating position of authority which Jakoubek of Střibro was generally able to maintain in the university, but not necessarily bound by it. The expanded scope of Hussitism outside the capital allowed dissident and marginal Hussite thinkers a high degree of autonomy in the countryside, and even an opportunity at leadership, as alternative centers emerged independent of Prague's oversight. Therefore by the end of this period, at least to some extent, the Hussite reform movement had become a victim of its own success. With the central authority of Prague's top intellectuals virtually shattered, the support of important allies began to show its limits. In the short-term, theological and political divisions could still be negotiated or ignored, but very soon historical circumstances would preclude these options and force an uncomfortable reckoning for all claiming the inheritance of Jan Hus's legacy.

In the background of many of these heightened tensions is an experience which the martyred reform leader was still alive to appreciate. Perhaps still before Hus's departure to Constance in 1414, his close colleague and *de facto* successor Jakoubek of Stříbro received a controversial divine revelation (*habeo revelationem*) while examining scripture.<sup>352</sup> This new insight directed to him to urgently evangelize and renew an ignored yet ancient Christian precept of crucial salvific importance to every believer. The proof for this was innocuously hidden in plain sight in the descriptions of Christ's last moments of freedom before his crucifixion. On the night of his betrayal, as he fed his small group of followers, Christ inducted them into a special divine covenant which would outlast their shared mortal condition, as a comfort for them and their successors in the world until its promised accomplishment at his Second Coming. Paul explained the pact thusly:

the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. (1 Cor. 11: 23-6)

For Jakoubek and his colleague Nicholas of Dresden, detailed records of early Christian initiation like these now unveiled an overlooked but critical feature of the Antichrist's

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<sup>352</sup> In a response to an opponent, Jakoubek explained: "Hic Doctori dicitur, quod generaliter vocando revelationem, modum cognoscendi venientem ex scrutinio legis Domini, et ex solidis expositionibus et auctoritatibus antiquorum sanctorum, ut Augustini, Cypriani, Bernhardi, Chrysostomi, et aliorum, eos in eodem sensu sequentium, concedere possum, quod habeo revelationem. Quia habeo cognitionem ex lege et scriptis authenticis. Haec cognitio, noviter per illum modum acquisita, generealiter vocari potest revelatio." See Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 566, and also the discussion below. On dating, Helena Krmíčková suggests the first references to the lay chalice in the first half of 1414. See Helena Krmíčková, "Utraquism in 1414," *BRRP* 4 (2002): 99-105. She dates the earliest known utraquist text to August 1414. See Helena Krmíčková, "Articulus pro communione sub utraque specie Jakoubka ze Stříbra," *Studie o rukopisech* 39 (2009): 73-87. Yet scholars remain divided on this issue, also suggesting later dates in the year. See Marek, *Jakoubek ze Stříbra*, 70; Dušan Coufal, *Polemika o kalich mezi teologií a politikou 1414-1431: předpoklady basilejské disputace o prvním z pražských artikulů* (Prague: Kalich, 2012), 20-24; Dušan Coufal, "Sub utraque specie: Die Theologie des Laienkelchs bei Jacobell von Mies (1429) und den frühen Utraquisten," *Archa verbi* 14 (2017): 159.

conspiracy of mass deception located at the heart of Christian ceremony. By allowing the modern clergy to dictate access to the eucharist, and particularly to monopolize the sacramental chalice of Christ's blood (as had become customary in recent centuries), common believers were heinously being excluded from this ancient covenant and thus membership in Christ's heavenly community.<sup>353</sup> Scripture and the Church Fathers agreed that this unconditionally presupposed a close imitation of the original ceremony of initiation at the Last Supper. In other words, Christian identity, Church membership, and ultimately salvation in the beyond all assume intense personal devotion to the complete eucharist (*sacramentum integrum*) in both its sacramental forms of bread and wine (*sub utraque specie*, thus "utraquism"). This is the message which a small circle of intellectuals around Jakoubek enthusiastically evangelized from a handful of pulpits in the capital, and gradually spread throughout the movement.<sup>354</sup> The gravity and implications of this audacious finding cannot be taken for granted in the context of late-medieval practice, where it caused horror and bewilderment among contemporary observers. On 15 June 1415, the Council fathers formally condemned utraquism as a heretical innovation, only weeks before a similar judgement befell Hus himself. For its opponents, the admission of the basest rabble to the sacred chalice of Christ's salvific blood represented above all a blasphemous debasement of a hallowed gift, a subversive denigration of clerical privilege, and a gratuitous novelty defying the consensus and

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<sup>353</sup> On the development of medieval eucharistic practice in the High and Late middle ages, with a focus on communion *sub una specie*, see Dieter Girgensohn, *Peter von Pulkau und die Wiedereinführung des Laienkelches. Leben und Wirken eines Wiener Theologen in der Zeit des großen Schismas* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 95-120; Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 17-19; Holeton, "The Bohemian Eucharistic Movement," 24-28.

<sup>354</sup> Palacký, *Starí letopisové čeští*, 392 f.; cf. Marek, *Jakoubek ze Stříbra*, 69 f. Along with Jakoubek and Nicholas, this original circle included the priest Jan Čapek, master Jan Jičín, and the newly-arrived English refugee Peter Payne (cf. František Šmahel, "Curriculum vitae Magistri Petri Payne," in *In memoriam Josefa Macka*, ed. Miroslav Polívka and František Šmahel (Prague: Historický Ústav AV ČR, 1996), 141-160.). On early utraquist centers, see František Michálek Bartoš, "Do čtyř pražských artikulů z myšlenkových a ústavních zápasů let 1415-1420," *Sborník příspěvků k dějinám města Prahy* 5 (1932): 488.

tradition of Christ's Church.<sup>355</sup> As a result, the utraquist controversy over the lay chalice not only deepened the rift between Hussites and Catholics, but also created a new one within the reform party itself. For this internal schism, appeals to ancient authorities and scripture, and even the approval of Hus from his Constance dungeon, were ultimately less decisive than the choices taken by the Council itself. After its condemnation of utraquism and execution of their leader, dedicated Hussite opponents of the chalice were at a loss to reconcile this position with their loyalties to their martyred leader, and generally were forced into obscurity or compromised their convictions.<sup>356</sup> As a result, the zealous promoters of the new eucharistic devotion, and generations of its future adherents, were able to successfully harness his memory and legacy to a practice which came only as a late afterthought in his reform project.<sup>357</sup>

Despite the continuity of polemics and the polarized landscape between the Hussites and Church representatives, the condemnations of the Council represented an important escalation in relations with Bohemian reformers. As in the trial of Hus, the formal heretication of the chalice by the leaders of the ecclesiastical hierarchy carried implications of more systematic and intense persecution and alienation than experienced thus far. Whether or not the stakes could be raised any higher by this fact,

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<sup>355</sup> The practice was first condemned by a local synod in Prague before opponents in various universities brought it to the attention of the Council in 1415. Cf. Helena Krmíčková, *Studie a texty k počátkům kalicha v Čechách*, Opera Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Masarykianae (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1997), 17 f.; Jaroslav Kadlec, "Literární polemika mistrů Jakoubka ze Stříbra z Brodu o laický kalich," *Acta Universitatis Carolinae. Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 21 (1981): 72. For deeper theoretical discussion, see below.

<sup>356</sup> Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 126-36; Kadlec, "Literární polemika." In addition to the priest Havlík, Hus's successor at Bethlehem Chapel, one important early opponent of the chalice was Hus's friend Jan of Jesenice. See Josef Truhlář, "Paběrky z rukopisů Klementinských 5," *Věstník České akademie* 8 (1899): 288. On Hus's support of the chalice from jail, see his work *De sacramento corporis et sanguinis Domini in Hus*, *MIHO* 24, 183-210.

<sup>357</sup> Hus is frequently cited by utraquists among the authorities for the chalice. See for instance Jan Hus and Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Betlemské texty*, ed. Bohumil Ryba (Prague: Orbis, 1951), 136. Even when his previous ignorance to utraquism is acknowledged, it is excused as a temporary lack of judgement. See Romolo Cegna, "Poczatki Utrakwizmu w Czechach w Latach 1412-1415: W Związku z Odnalezieniem Dziela 'Plures Tractatuli Pullulant ... Omnibus Christi Fidelibus' Jakoubka Ze Stříbra," *Przegląd Historyczny* 69 (1978): 112 f.

they were certainly made clear to every Hussite leader, follower, or sympathizer by the developments which followed from it. After the condemnations of early summer 1415, Conciliar agents publicized the schism of the Bohemian reformers from the mother Church, and some of its top intellectuals, former Hussites among them, continued the literary offensive against Hus's allies and utraquism.<sup>358</sup> Official deputies were assigned extraordinary powers and instructions to weaken the networks of support for the heretics, prosecute their leaders, and intimidate disinterested authorities toward action in the same direction, like King Václav and Prague's current archbishop, Conrad of Vechta (d. 1431).<sup>359</sup> New citations and excommunications were announced, new interdicts were implemented, and new executions were carried out, most notably of Hus's imprisoned companion Jerome of Prague in May 1416.<sup>360</sup> Archbishop Conrad now became an energetic Conciliar agent, attempting to sever the movement from its intellectual and official resources. In 1417 he took steps to target the functions of the university as a Hussite institution, and refused to consecrate utraquist priests.<sup>361</sup> At the same time, spiritual anti-Hussite leaders were pledged support by their secular counterparts, emperor Sigismund foremost among them, but also high lords and officers of the Bohemian kingdom who formed a "Catholic league" in autumn 1415 in defence against heresy.<sup>362</sup> The end of the Great Schism, with the election of the zealous anti-

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<sup>358</sup> Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, chap. 5. See also discussion below.

<sup>359</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 141-43. An important agent was the militant anti-Hussite Moravian bishop, Jan Železný.

<sup>360</sup> The utraquist ban, and the first of the interdicts, were announced in Prague by mid-September 1415. This included a ban on itinerant preaching. See Kaminsky, 157-59; Václav Vladivoj Tomek, *Dějepis města Prahy III* (Prague: František Rivnáč, 1875), 591. On bishop Železný's citations, see František Michálek Bartoš, *Husitská Revoluce I* (Prague: nakl. Československé Akademie Věd, 1965), 19 f. On executions in Olomouc, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 141 f.

<sup>361</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 223-27; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 956-59; Jiří Kejř, "Deklarace pražské university z 10. března 1417 o přijímání pod obojí a její historické pozadí," *Sborník historický* 8 (1961): 141. The steps against the University included the prohibition of examinations granting the master's degree. Candidates to the priesthood were required to swear an oath against the chalice.

<sup>362</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 938-40; John Martin Klassen, "The Czech Nobility's Use of the Right of Patronage on Behalf of the Hussite Reform Movement," *Slavic Review* 34 (1975): 343; Petr Čornej, *Husitství a husité* (Prague: Karolinum, 2019), 71 f. The Council was initially misinformed of

Hussite Oddo Colonna to the papal post as Martin V (r. 1417-1431), only intensified these trends further.<sup>363</sup> In 1418, Pope Martin and the emperor both openly threatened crusade against the Hussites.<sup>364</sup> More than ever before, therefore, the joint power of ecclesiastic and secular forces of Christendom were beginning to coordinate a concerted response to the Bohemian dissidents.

It is against this foreboding background that the choices and reactions of Hussite leaders and agents appear truly remarkable. Rather than extinguishing Bohemian dissent, the intimidation from Roman Church officials and allies actually expanded and even martialized it. Through defiant ingenuity, Hussite leaders mobilized forceful responses to their disadvantageous circumstances which actually reshaped the country's spiritual landscape. In the countryside, this was especially directed by the initiative from the nobility, which became instrumental to Hussite advances in this period. In direct response to Hus's execution, 452 noblemen of the Czech lands in September 1415 signed a letter of mass-protest addressed to his prosecutors at Constance.<sup>365</sup> With this document, Hussite lords and barons formed a "Hussite League" which vowed to defend the reform on their lands, and to appeal exclusively to Prague's University on religious matters.<sup>366</sup> In practice, this often meant the noble divestment of Catholic clerics and the

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King Václav's allegiance to the Catholic League, see Jiří Kejř, *Husitský právník M. Jan z Jesenice* (Prague: NČSAV, 1965), 98.

<sup>363</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 970 f.; Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 99-101. Cf. Fudge, *Crusades*, 17-21.

<sup>364</sup> Johannes Cochlaeus, *Historia Hussitarum*. (Moguntia, 1549), 173 f., quote at 174. Cit. Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 100. For Sigismund's similar letter, see Palacký, *Documenta*, 659-63. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 266, n. 8. Sigismund still believed the noble protectors and other supporters could be easily separated from Hussite priests. See Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 986 f.

<sup>365</sup> Palacký, *Documenta*, 590-93. See August Sedláček, "Úvahy o osobách v stížných listech l. 1415 psaných," *Český časopis historický* 23 (1917): 85-109, 310-52, on its signatories.

<sup>366</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 143 f. Nevertheless, the confessional nature of both the Hussite and the later Catholic League should not be overstated, given their organization along contemporary feudal allegiances. Cf. Robert Novotný, "Organizace protestní akce proti Husovu upálení," *Husitský Tábor: Supplementum* 4 (2015): 153-164. Although the Hussite League pre-dated the widespread adoption of utraquism, similar if less-impressive gestures may be found in defense of the chalice. See John Martin Klassen, *The Nobility and the Making of the Hussite Revolution* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1978), Appendix 4; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 940-43.

installation of reformists and utraquists, which helped further spread and consolidate the chalice throughout the country, and even created certain pockets of Hussite control.<sup>367</sup> Drastic steps were also taken to meet the demand for utraquist clerics in the face of the restrictions of the archbishop. At his castle of Lipnic in spring 1417, the leader of the Hussite nobility and regent of the powerful southern house of Rosenberg, Čeněk of Vartenberk (d. 1425), kidnapped and forced a bishop to summarily mass-ordain utraquist priests, even many of dubious orthodoxy.<sup>368</sup> The more urban populations were not less bold in their responses to circumstances.<sup>369</sup> Through late 1415 and 1416, in concert with their clerics and officials, waves of tumultuous Hussite crowds in Prague used the pretext of repeated interdicts to expel Catholic clerics from their benefices, seizing and occupying emptied churches for the practice of the lay chalice.<sup>370</sup> Similar expulsions and flashpoints of anti-clerical violence were now also common events documented throughout the country's towns and villages by devotees

<sup>367</sup> Klassen, "Right of Patronage"; Klassen, *The Nobility*, 47: chs. 8 and 9; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 964–78, 985; Kaminsky, *A History*, 240–46.

<sup>368</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 240–43; František Šmahel, *Dějiny Tábora* I (České Budějovice: Jihočeské nakladatelství, 1988), 221 f. For a detailed overview of the Lipnic sources, cf. Kaminsky, "Hussite Radicalism," 122 f.

<sup>369</sup> The immediate response to Hus's execution in Prague coincides with a silence in the sources. It remains unclear how to interpret this. One documents an outbreak of popular armed violence against anti-Hussite priests and their properties, which the Archbishop Konrad himself barely survived (see Hermann von der Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* II (Frankfurt-Lepzig, 1697), 410.) thought its reliability has been questioned since its earliest consideration (see Palacký, *Dějiny* III.1, 205 f., and more recently, Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 930, n. 236.). Nevertheless, the vague acts of violence noted by the Hussite Chronicler immediately after Hus's execution could be read to corroborate such events: "Ipso ergo mortificato, clerus perversus precipue in regno Bohemie et marchionatu Moravie, qui condempnationem ipsius contribucione pecuniarum et modis aliis diversis procuravit et ad ipsius consensit interitum, iusto dei iudicio de die in diem notabiliter magisque ac magis in bonorum per seculares ... et corporum destruccionibus turbatur". Cf. *FRB* V, 338 f.

<sup>370</sup> For the expulsions, see *FRB* V, 341 f.; Tomek, *Dějepis* III, 593–95; Bartoš, *Husitská Revoluce* I, I:22. A second wave in February 1416 (if we accept it as such) was probably associated with the murder of the king's tax collector and agent of church secularization, Racek Kobyla, by a Catholic crowd in Kutná Hora. See Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, 391; Bartoš, *Husitská Revoluce* I, I:20; Mezník, *Praha*, 189 f.; Kaminsky, *A History*, 160 f. Jiří Kejř, *Právní Život v Husitské Kutné Hoře* 1, Právněhistorická Knihnice (Prague: Nakladatelství československé akad. věd, 1958), 11, interprets this attack as a distinctly anti-Hussite act.

of “St. Jan Hus.”<sup>371</sup> Subaltern priests and commoners, whether by invitation or initiative, were now clearly finding an active channel of participation in Hussite reform for themselves. In this riotous atmosphere, the exaggerated reports of Catholic observers can still provide the historian with a sense of the zealous enthusiasm on the ground: “they preach: ‘stand and fight for God’s law, and kill whoever does not want to stand with you!’”<sup>372</sup> In the capital and other pockets of the kingdom, the result was basically an utraquist coup. Thanks to the monarch’s detachment, the modest beginnings of the early utraquist circle in Prague spread in a short time to virtual freedom of the chalice throughout the city. Despite half-hearted attempts by the king to reverse the situation in 1416,<sup>373</sup> this was generally the advantageous position which reformers enjoyed until 1419. Hussite efforts also bore fruit in the countryside and towns, where aggressive strategies made their presence felt. By 1417 about a third of royal cities had councils with utraquist majorities, and noble allegiances even created a zone of Hussite domination in Southern Bohemia.<sup>374</sup> In short, even in the face of mounting anxieties,

<sup>371</sup> Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 155 f. In Moravia, see Loserth, “Beiträge V,” 386-91; Pez, *Thesaurus*, 517. In South Bohemia, see Josef Macek, “K počátkům táborství v Písku,” *Jihočeský sborník historický* 22, no. 4 (1953): 119-124; Macek, *Tábor* I, 216; Kaminsky, *A History*, 167-69. King Václav wrote to various towns to halt such unrest, see Palacký, *Documenta*, 642-45. In 1418, the expulsion and exile of certain priests and burghers apparently climaxed with in the rule of the radical Hussite priest Václav Koranda over the city, though details are vague. See note 380 below. Violence also extended to attacks against monasteries, see Havránek, Hrabák, and Daňhelka, *Výbor* I, 293-95; cf. Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 945, 946, n. 254. On more general accounts of anti-clerical violence, see František Michálek Bartoš, “Předvečer husitské revoluce v osvětlení pražského duchovního,” *Jihočeský sborník historický* 8, no. 2 (1935): 46; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 946 f. The tumultuous situation may have even disturbed travel and tax collection in some areas. See Klassen, *The Nobility*, 117. On the memory and veneration of Hus as martyr, see David R. Holeton and Hana Vlhová-Wörner, “A Remarkable Witness to the Feast of Saint Jan Hus,” *BRRP* 7 (2009): 156-84; Phillip Nelson Haberkern, *Patron Saint and Prophet: Jan Hus in the Bohemian and German Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 26-37; Ota Halama, *Svatý Jan Hus - Stručný přehled projevů domácí úcty k českému mučedníku v letech 1415 - 1620* (Prague: Kalich, 2015), 15-21.

<sup>372</sup> František Svejkský, *Veršované skladby doby husitské* (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé akademie, 1963), 112: “řkúc: ‘Nasad’te se pro boží zákon a bíte, a ktoý nechce s vámi držeti, zabíte!’”.

<sup>373</sup> Late that year, King Václav was pressured to take steps to reverse utraquist gains in Prague, but his reluctant efforts were opposed and generally ignored on the ground. See Kaminsky, *A History*, 223-26; Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 31-33.

<sup>374</sup> By 1417 in southern Bohemia, roughly 75% of parishes (25 of 35) with known affiliation were utraquist. See František Šmahel, “Dvanáct pramenných sond k sociálním poměrům na Tábořsku od poloviny 14. do konce 15. století,” *Husitský Tábor* 9 (1986-1987): 282 f. On royal cities, see Šmahel,



Hussite dissidence generally proved resilient and assertive. Throughout the country, haphazard initiatives and alliances spanning all social groups took drastic steps not just to survive, but to consolidate and extend the scope of reform beyond the urban or regional level. Therefore by the end of 1418, through cunning, conversion, and coercion, the Hussite heresy clearly achieved the status of a disseminated popular movement.

Nevertheless, the swift Hussite victories and advances over these years were not without cost. Rapid geographic dissemination and popularization relied heavily on noble support, but was accompanied by theological de-centralization and controversy which put these and other loyalties under strain. From 1415 on, the wave of enthusiastic religiosity behind the energetic spread of the chalice also began to seriously undermine the foundations of ubiquitous medieval devotional traditions and social order in other ways. Top Hussite intellectuals led campaigns to abandon the cults of holy relics and images, the doctrine of purgatory and funerary practice, and even socio-political foundations like oath-taking and capital punishment.<sup>375</sup> In addition, Jakoubek and his colleagues began to push devotion to the chalice beyond the limits of acceptability even for some utraquists with the practice of infant communion.<sup>376</sup> Meanwhile, a more non-conformist generation of Hussite priests (many the future leaders of Tábor) was

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*Hussitische Revolution* II, 976. Utraquist expansion, along with Catholic anxiety, can also be measured by the collapse of the material support for traditional religiosity (donations, benefices, altars) in certain areas. See Zdenka Hledíková, “Donace církevním institucím v Čechách v prvním dvacetiletí 15. století,” in *Husitství, reformace, renesance: Sborník k 60. narozeninám Františka Šmahela* I, (Prague: Historický ústav, 1994), 255 f.; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* III, 1700 f.; Jaroslav Čechura, “Sekularizace církevních statků v husitské revoluci a některé aspekty ekonomického a sociálního vývoje v Čechách v době pozdního středověku,” *Husitský Tábor* 9 (1986-1987): 91–100.

<sup>375</sup> On the cults, see discussion below. Rejection of purgatory and oaths was led by Nicholas of Dresden and Peter Payne, see Kaminsky, *The Old Color and the New*, 15, 18-23; Petra Mutlová, “Radicals and Heretics: Rethinking the Dresden School in Prague” (Ph.D. thesis, Budapest, Central European University, 2010), 95 f., cf. Palacký, *Documenta*, 634, 637.

<sup>376</sup> David R. Holeton, *La communion des tout-petits enfants: Étude du mouvement eucharistique en Bohême vers la fin du Moyen Âge* (Rome: C.L.V. - Edizioni Liturgiche, 1989), 106-42; David R. Holeton, “The Communion of Infants and Hussitism,” *Communio Viatorum* 27 (1984): 207–25.

congregating in the Hussite provinces, particularly Southern Bohemia.<sup>377</sup> Here, they freely adapted the teachings of certain leaders into an even more iconoclastic vision of reform with emphatic sociological implications: social divisions were minimized, clerical privilege doubted, and ceremonial customs abandoned, along with other novelties.<sup>378</sup> Much of this now began to transgress the reformist vision of certain Hussite thinkers, and also rattled the support of important noble allies. For them, Hus's original program of clerical reform was actually threatened by the subversive socio-religious experiment which the movement was becoming. Anxious of salvaging noble favour, heated theological polemics erupted between the more conservative and radical elements in the leadership, disillusioning important figures on both sides.<sup>379</sup> The interplay of these concerns is well summarized in the admonition of one Hussite master against a provincial extremist: religious novelties "not only fail to convince enemies of the truth to accept it, but also repel the strongest friends and promoters of the truth from

<sup>377</sup> Concrete examples include Sezimovo Ústí, Plzeň, and the group of radicals which formed around the radical master Pavel of Oleš, but unfortunately the details are vague. On Sezimovo Ústí, see Kaminsky, "Hussite Radicalism," 109 f.; Šmahel, *Tábor I*, 215-20; František Šmahel, "Husitské město „Slunce“. Plzeň na přelomu let 1419 - 1420," *Minulosti západočeského kraje* 19 (1983): 142; Jaroslav Douša et al., *Dějiny Plzně v datech. Od prvních stop osídlení až po současnost* (Prague: Nakl. Lidové Noviny, 2004), 30. On Oleš's circle, see Eduard Maur, "Pavel z Olešné a jeho družina," in *Husitství, reformace, renesance 2. Sborník k 60. narozeninám Františka Šmahela* (Prague: Historický ústav, 1994), 449-63. Although the scarcity of sources makes firm conclusions impossible, it is still arguable that of the 41 Táborite priests who appear as reformers before 1419, roughly 75% (31) of them are a product of this initial wave of utraquist enthusiasm (1414-17). See the chart in Šmahel, *Tábor I*, 314-22. The priests ordained at Lipnic were active in this region, if not formally installed there. See Kaminsky, *A History*, 247-52; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 978.

<sup>378</sup> On iconoclasm, see Palacký, *Documenta*, 634; Pez, *Thesaurus*, 539, 558; Bartoš, "Předvečer," 46. On radical minimalism, like disregarding vestments, liturgical instruments, and outdoor services, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 191-95; Macek, "K počátkům," 120; Loserth, "Beiträge V," 386; Palacký, *Documenta*, 634. On Donatism, see discussion below. Other novelties included lay and female preaching (see Pez, *Thesaurus*, 519; Loserth, "Beiträge V," 386; Kaminsky, "Hussite Radicalism," 122., n. 1; Kaminsky, *A History*, 141 f.), or adult baptism (*Ibid.*, 403 f., n. 60.).

<sup>379</sup> Lord Ceník of Vartenberk was particularly instrumental in pressuring for doctrinal unity as a condition of noble support. Kaminsky, *A History*, 228-40; Jiří Kejř, "Auctoritates contra communionem parvulorum" M. Jana z Jesenice," *Studie o rukopisech* 19 (1980): 5-21; Jiří Kejř, *Mistři pražské univerzity a kněží táborští* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1981), 7-18; Kejř, "Deklarace pražské university," 142-45; Kejř, *Husitský právník*, 97-112. As a matter of fact, even in the Hussite center of Southern Bohemia, between 1417-18 roughly 1/5 (6 of 25) parishes changed hands from utraquist to Catholic. See Šmahel, "Dvanáct pramenných," 282 f.

us.”<sup>380</sup> The situation which finally began to emerge was a tense and fragile affiliation of independent Hussite thinkers or groups, generally mediated politically and doctrinally by Jakoubek’s small circle in Prague. In 1417 this group finally defeated conservative resistance to enforce an utraquist consensus in the university, though at the cost of the institution’s reputation and pedagogical activity.<sup>381</sup> Jakoubek’s influence also enjoyed continuity outside the capital, as provincial reformers consulted with him regularly on concrete problems and disputes they faced on the ground.<sup>382</sup> Nevertheless, doctrinal orthodoxy was continually elusive, and noble protection remained unpredictable. The monopoly of authority which Prague’s masters once enjoyed within the movement was definitively shattered, and instead they could only hope to restrain the unwelcome enthusiasm and innovations of provincial radicals. Even the ostensible common ground agreed upon in 1418 at the first pan-Hussite synod was *pro forma* at best,<sup>383</sup> and simply papered over what had become irreconcilable socio-religious cleavages within the Hussite movement.

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The years immediately following the condemnations at Constance represented an anxious and turbulent period for the Hussite movement, but not exactly for the

<sup>380</sup> Master Christian of Prachatice to Václav Koranda in 1417, see Palacký, *Documenta*, 633-36.

<sup>381</sup> On the tactics of achieving unanimity, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 237-40. For discussion of the university’s statement on the chalice, see Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 57-59. A new wave of academic exiles from Prague accompanied this decision, and the pedagogical activities of the institution ground to a halt. The 1417 quodlibet was the last for generations, and in 1418 examinations and graduations virtually ceased in 1418. Masters outnumbered students. See Kejř, *Mistři a kněží*, 15., and n. 53; Jiří Kejř, *Kvodlibetní disputace na pražské universitě* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1971), 104; František Šmahel, *Pražské univerzitní studentstvo v předrevolučním období: 1399-1419* (Prague: Rozpravy ČSAV, 1967), 83, 85; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 964.

<sup>382</sup> See Jakoubek’s correspondences, catalogued in Spunar, *Repertorium I*, 241-43. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 187-204 passim.

<sup>383</sup> Published in Palacký, *Documenta*, 677-81. Cf. Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution I*, 619-23; Kaminsky, *A History*, 259-64. Given the synod’s conservative conclusions, there is some doubt concerning the participation of radicals there. The exact dating has also been a matter of debate, see Blanka Zilynská, *Husitské synody v Čechách 1418-1440. Příspěvek k úloze univerzitních mistrů v husitské církvi a revoluci* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1985), 31-39; Kaminsky, “Hussite Radicalism,” 126 f., n. 4. For various interpretations of the synod in historiography, see Kejř, *Mistři a kněží*, 16 f., esp. n. 65.

reasons which Council fathers had hoped. Despite the combined pressure from the emperor and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, concern over internal tensions now seemed to dominate the struggle for the future of the reform program. At a time which could have easily been defined by caution or retreat, enthusiastic allies and followers instead showed extraordinary cunning and ingenuity to entrench and spread their socio-religious ideals, but at the cost of fragile internal coherence. On the one hand, their rapid and forceful conquests expanded the scope of Hussite non-conformity past the bounds of centralized oversight possible by a group of academic elites in Prague. Meanwhile, the gradual erosion of certain foundations of medieval tradition of piety left other reformers feeling abandoned by their own colleagues. In the end, the informal authority of Jakoubek and the university generally survived and remained prominent, but not unchallenged. Gradually consolidating in the provinces were groups of zealous dissidents, free-thinking priests and intellectuals who were inspired by recent developments, but dissatisfied with the compromises that old leaders still made doctrinally and politically with the world of sin. Rather than the stagnating drive of university elites, they now looked directly to scripture to guide them through uncertainty. This characterizes the general constellation within the Bohemian reform movement which would endure until a vigorously new and different socio-religious arrangement erupted into the landscape: the community of Tábor.

### **The Utraquist Controversy: Foundations and Significance**

Given his recognized centrality to Jakoubek of Stříbro in the development of the lay chalice, it is nothing new to claim the distinct importance of Matthias of Janov to Hussite thought. Some of his contribution has already been made clear, but this is significantly enhanced by the intense theological and philosophical reliance of

utraquists on this early Bohemian reformer. What is still generally under-appreciated by historians, however, is the broader relevance of Janov and his intellectual pedigree to Hussite reformism. This should not be overstated here, since Hussite leaders maintained a strong adherence to the more top-down reform vision inherited from Wyclif. Nevertheless, Janov's influence remains noteworthy for its elaboration of earlier Hussite themes into an alternative, yet coexistent, path to Christian renovation which meaningfully shaped developments moving forward. In more concrete terms, Janov's central emphasis on voluntarism and anthropological optimism allowed Hussite leaders to define clear ethical conditions for authority and membership in the Christian community. In general, this had a democratizing effect which appreciated the relevance of popular agency in the political landscape, and also questioned certain paternalistic political assumptions from Augustine and the Oxford theologian. Good secular and spiritual leaders are valuable to reform but can only go so far in their efforts, since Christian renewal as a collective process is ultimately reducable to the autonomous will of each believer. As a result, Hussites now agree to varying extents that at least some degree of popular initiative is required in this endeavour.

Before moving forward, it is worth pausing to appreciate and overview the controversy surrounding the re-discovery of the lay chalice. As will be shown, this is relevant because it forms the background for most future developments in Hussite thought. Simultaneously, this summary will show how the liturgical issue came to dominate future debate by articulating virtually all major points of conflict between those disputing worldviews and self-interpretations of Roman and Hussite thinkers. This helps explain the central and lasting relevance of the chalice not only to Hussite leaders, but also to Church Councils, popes, and the greatest minds across Europe

throughout the fifteenth-century and beyond.<sup>384</sup> All this is to say that much more is at stake here than the practice of a sacrament. Instead, the lay chalice struck a nerve for both sides precisely because it was positioned at the center of the orbit of certain fundamental assumptions of Christian identity and orthodoxy. Put simply, what for utraquist thinkers represents the decisive point of entry for every Christian into the salvific Church community, is for their opponents only an outdated and dishonorable relic of the past. Therefore the key contests in this controversy were fought not only on the battleground of theology, but also historical authority and scriptural hermeneutics.<sup>385</sup> Drawing upon their realist background and the new incorporation of Janov, Hussite utraquists generally approached this issue with an absolutist appreciation of scriptural significance as authoritative and unchanging. For them, Christ instituted the chalice alongside the bread at communion as a matter of salvation for all faithful Christians, and this exhortation is as meaningful now as ever. In a clear subversion of institutional authority, this assumes that no human authority or custom, nor the passage of time, is able to relativize scriptural truth. As Jakoubek explains:

Because the Lord wanted his people to observe the essential or basic matter of the sacrament until the end of the world for their own salvation, and insofar as this sacrament in both kinds is itself its own end, namely of that to be eaten and drunk, the Church after this can never lay aside or in any way change this.<sup>386</sup>

Along with other scriptural accounts, Christ's own words at the Last Supper—"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up

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<sup>384</sup> Hardly any Hussite, and especially anti-Hussite text after 1414 does not mention the lay chalice. For an overview of the latter in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, see Pavel Soukup, *Repertorium operum antihussiticorum*, on-line database, <[www.antihus.eu/search.php](http://www.antihus.eu/search.php)> (accessed 29 Nov, 2021).

<sup>385</sup> Coufal, "Sub utraque specie," 167-70.

<sup>386</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 572: "Scilicet quoad essenziale sive substantiale sacramenti, et quoad per se finem illius sacramenti, scilicet manducandi et bibendi hoc sacramentum sub utraque specie, quia voluit Dominus plebem suam observare usque ad finem seculi sibi ad salutem, postea nunquam ecclesia hoc potuit deponere, vel quomodolibet immutare."; ÖNB 4937, fol. 199r: "Prima regula sit ista scriptura sacra est fidei regulam, contra quam bene intellectam non est admittenda auctoritas vel ratio hominis cuiuscumque, vel aliqua constitutio. Nec consuetudo nec observatio valet, si contra sacram scripturam militare conatur".

at the last day” (John 6:54)—constitute a divine mandate which was recognized by pure Christians during the first centuries of the primitive Church, when the lay chalice thrived and loyalty to the Holy Spirit was high. More will be said about this below. Nevertheless, with the gradual corruption of the Church, this salvific practice was eventually forgotten as modern religious authorities reinterpreted and perverted Christ’s message. According to utraquists, then, the modern return of the chalice is not the invention of a new practice as their opponents claimed, but rather the return to ancient purity, which will be elaborated later. As Jakoubek summarizes: “When this sacrament is received daily by the common people in both kinds, it is not a new custom that is introduced among the Christian people, but rather an ancient, holy, and most beneficial custom which is restored”.<sup>387</sup>

For their opponents, however, this utraquist return *ad fontes* can be nothing other than a dangerous, heretical rejection of God’s careful plan perfected through the course of history. As a point of reiteration, it can be recalled that the Council fathers at Constance generally took for granted the principal of parallel truths based on their pessimistic anthropology. Since fallen man cannot fully comprehend the divine truth of scripture, he relies on the mediation of the Church and its papal head to convey this to him. Put briefly, this is relevant in the Conciliar struggle against utraquism because it allows for the appreciation of natural progress and relativism in history. Even if the record of scripture and early Church fathers seem to suggest utraquism was a common practice among the first Christians, the modern significance of this finding cannot be taken for granted. Instead, this can only be discovered by mediation through the Church

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<sup>387</sup> Ibid., 585: “In quo non introduceretur nova consuetudo in populo Christiano, cum quotidie a plebibus hoc sacramentum sub utraque specie sumeretur, sed restauraretur antiqua sancta consuetudo et saluberrima, et sic rediret fides una ad Jesum crucifixum et charitas primitiva.”; Helena Krmíčková, “Cupio a te, o pater, edoceri (M. Matthias de Janov et M. Iacobellus de Misa),” in *Studie a texty k počátkům kalicha v Čechách*, ed. Helena Krmíčková (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1997), 104: “Et ergo per ista non introducitur nova consuetudo vel nova fides, sed antiqua Cristi institutio reformatur.”

institution. According to Council leaders, it was actually through divine supervision that the Church gradually progressed into a better form (*ad meliorem formam*), shedding the simpler and rougher (*simpliciori et grossiori*) practices like lay utraquism over the centuries.<sup>388</sup> The chalice was therefore never a divine mandate, but only a parochial and temporary anomaly (*accidens*) liable to change over time.<sup>389</sup> In the meantime, holy thinkers discovered the metaphysical truths which allowed the laity to receive the benefits of the sacramental blood elsewhere, without risking its desecration. According to transubstantiation, Christ's salvific blood is fully present in the bread of the eucharist, a fact which makes the lay chalice superfluous. In short, divine guidance through history led the Church to continual improvement up until today. As a result, only the modern eucharistic practice *sub una* should be considered a law (*lex*). As one anti-Hussite summarized: "All things in the modern [Church] are reduced to the better form, to one [eucharistic] kind (*una species*). Because those many things that the apostles and other followers disregarded, the modern Church has fulfilled."<sup>390</sup>

Another important battlefield of this controversy was represented by scriptural hermeneutics.<sup>391</sup> At stake here are fundamental assumptions of ecclesiology and clerical entitlement. At its core is the basic question: who did Christ's utraquist imperative (John 6: 53 f.) pertain to, and in what sense? The starting point here is common. For both Conciliar representatives and utraquists, Christ's words at the Last Supper were

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<sup>388</sup> Here and below I refer to Kaminsky, *A History*, 116-19., with references to sources.

<sup>389</sup> Cf. Andrew of Brod's polemics with Jakoubek in Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 572: "Ecclesia illas circumstantias extrinsecas per accidens, scilicet, ubi, et quando, etcetera quas Christus in institutione hujus sacramenti observavit, potuit et debuit immutare, vel aliter observare: Ergo quoad substantiale sacreamenti, et quoad per se finem immediatum illius sacramenti manducationem Dignam sub prima specie et bibitionem Dignam sub secunda, quam Dominus instituit, ecclesia sic potuit immutare." Jan Sedlák, "Počátkové kalicha I," *Časopis katolického duchovenstva* 52 (1911): 398; Kadlec, "Literární polemika," 75 f.

<sup>390</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 694: "In moderna [ecclesia] omnia sunt reducta ad meliorem formam, ad unam speciem. Quia multa apostoli et alii sequaces omiserunt, quae moderna ecclesia implevit." Kaminsky, *A History*, 495-99., identifies the author with the former Hussite Stephen of Pálež.

<sup>391</sup> Coufal, "Sub utraque specie," 170-74.



addressed primarily to his apostles who represented the whole Christian Church. However, what is important here is the significance of the apostles. For Conciliar thinkers, it is clear that these symbolized the future status of the clergy. Otherwise, the Last Supper would not have excluded Christ's mother and his seventy-two disciples. For the future status of the laity who were not present here, Christ's words could not pertain in their literal sense, otherwise all kinds of ridiculous implications follow. For instance, it would mean that Christ damned all children who did not survive to their first communion. This also generally minimizes Paul's account on the issue.<sup>392</sup> Instead, Christ addressed his imperative to the laity only in the spiritual sense. Therefore the laity receive the spiritual benefits of the full eucharist via spiritual communion (*communio spiritualis*) at every mass, through the communicating cleric and their own Christian qualities (*fide, spe et charitate*). As a result, it is unnecessary for them to receive it sacramentally except once annually.<sup>393</sup> As one apologist explains to Jakoubek: "the consumption [of the eucharist] is diverse for different people. For there are some who consume it while not consuming, like contemplative and tested men, innocent and baptised children, and others who die in faith, hope, and love like the Lord's martyrs".<sup>394</sup> When they do receive it sacramentally, it suffices for laymen to receive it in bread alone because, in agreement with Thomas Aquinas, both sacramental body and blood are fully present in each eucharistic form.<sup>395</sup> According to this reading, the exclusive clerical privilege of the chalice is completely justified, and their hierarchical distinction from the laity is upheld. When the priest in the modern Roman liturgy performs the mass and

<sup>392</sup> Ibid., 173; Bartoš, *Husitství a cizina*, 106.

<sup>393</sup> Girgensohn, *Peter von Pulkau*, 97-102.

<sup>394</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 363: "Ubi, frater mi, te scire volo, quod manducatio diversorum est diversa. Quia quidam sunt, qui non manducantes manducant, ut viri contemplativi, probati, et pueri innocentes baptisati, et alii qui decesserunt in fide, spe et charitate, ut martyres Domini ...". Cit. Kaminsky, *A History*, 111.

<sup>395</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 110 f.

takes communion in both kinds, he is fully imitating the circumstances of the Last Supper. Here, the sacramental communion of the laity bears the distinct mark of subordination, as a rare and asymmetrical ceremonial participation in divinity which is generally far beyond their qualification.

To utraquist leaders, however, this twisted exegesis of Christ's message of salvation is a clear sign of Antichrist's strength and his mission to deceive the faithful into eternal damnation, as will be shown later. Put briefly, this is because utraquists follow Janov in accepting only the sacrament of communion, not baptism, as the true point of entry into the Church community. At any rate, this emphasis on the eucharist makes the Last Supper for utraquists a constitutive event of ecclesiology, not only of ritual.<sup>396</sup> In other words, the community of apostles with Christ at this event represented the archetype of the future community of the saved in the beyond. For this reason, the apostles at the Last Supper cannot only represent the future clergy, but must paradigmatically encapsulate the totality of the future Christian community (*totus communitas futurae fidelium*), including the laity.<sup>397</sup> Otherwise, if the laity were not represented, there would be no reason for them to ever take communion in any form.<sup>398</sup> This finding generally has a democratizing effect on the self-interpretation of utraquist thinkers. According to this model, all true Christians, clerical or lay, are made equal in

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<sup>396</sup> Ibid., 110-15; Coufal, "Sub utraque specie," 170-73.

<sup>397</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 442: "discipuli in coena Domini, adhuc nimis fragiles ad peccandum existentes, tunc gesserunt vicem et figuram totius communitatis futurae fidelium usque ad consummationem seculi, in suscipiendo corporis et sanguinis Christi sacramentum sub utraque specie".

<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 430: "Unde discipuli in coena Domini ante Christi mortem, quia erant adhuc fragiles, gerentes vicem futurae communitatis fragilis in Ecclesia, susceperunt corpus Christi sub forma sensibili panis et sanguinem ejus sub forma sensibili vini. Ad designandum, quod futura communitas populi Christiani, degens adhuc in communi vita in observantia mandatorum ... debet sic manducare et bibere spiritualiter et sensibiliter sub utraque specie a Domino instituta." Ibid., 446: si in coena Domini laici non fuerunt, et sic nec tunc in coena laicis dedit Christus hoc venerabile sacramentum sub utraque specie ... : Tunc ex eadem ratione sequitur, quod usque in diem judicii hoc sacramentum nec sub prima specie deberet porrigi laicis, ob hoc, quia dum dabat Christus primum sub prima specie, illi laici non fuerunt, ut vult Doctor [i.e. Andrew of Brod], nec tunc Christus dedit laicis sub prima specie. Ergo non est fundatum in lege Christi, quod etiam laicis sub prima specie deberet postea unquam dari hoc divinissimum sacramentum." Cf. Ibid., 445.

the sacrament of the eucharist, just like they were at the Last Supper. If there is any hierarchy in the modern mass ceremony, it is not primarily of official but rather of ethical status, measured by adherence to the archetypal communion event. As Nicholas of Dresden explains: “In the matter of communion, the priest is not to be set higher than the layman, nor the other way around, but he is to be set higher whose devotion disposes him better (*qui se melius per devocionem disponit*).”<sup>399</sup> This does not mean the clergy is unimportant for utraquists, but at the constitution of the Church in the Last Supper this distinction did not exist among the disciples. Here, only Christ as the head of the Church monopolized the position of priest, the active agent, and the apostles collectively were the passive recipients in the event which prefigured the laity. Jakoubek explains this in traditional terms:

the Apostles then receiving the sacrament in both kinds understood themselves in the manner of a spiritual flock, and not in the manner of a pastor or priest. Indeed, that spiritual flock was then fed by the pastor and the highest priest, and it did not feed itself. Therefore that multitude of disciples at that time understood itself as the common people (*plebs*) which ought to be fed, and not as pastors (*pastores*) who ought to actively feed.<sup>400</sup>

It is through the same words of Christ’s consecration that the early Christian priesthood took over his task of inaugurating the faithful into the community of the beyond.<sup>401</sup> If Christ’s consecrating words at the Last Supper were not meant for his disciples as laymen, then the modern priest could not consecrate the sacrament to the common

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<sup>399</sup> Dresden, “Puncta,” 164: “Rogo, qua ratione sacerdos in sumendo non integrum committeret sacrilegium, et non laicus, cum ratione communicationis non est sacerdos preferendus nec e converso, sed qui se melius per devocionem disponit.” Trans. Kaminsky, *A History*, 114.

<sup>400</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 443: “Apostoli tunc suscipientes sacramentum sub utraque specie habuerunt se per modum gregis spiritualis, et non per modum pastoris sive sacerdotis. Qui quidem grex spiritualis tunc pascebatur a pastore et summo sacerdote, et non ipsemet grex tunc pascebat. Ergo tunc illa turba discipulorum habuit se per modum plebis, quae pasci debet, et non per modum pastorum, qui active pascere debent.”

<sup>401</sup> Ibid., 444: “eisdem verbis Domini Jesu Christi, quibus Dominus alloquendo discipulos confecit et instituit hoc divinissimum sacramentum utriusque speciei, postea primitiva Ecclesia auctoritate ejusdem Domini Jesu Christi confecit idem sacramentum, et ministravit plebibus. Juxta quem ritum adhuc haec confectio eucharistiae observatur eisdem verbis Domini Jesu Christi. Igitur Dominus Jesus per haec consecrationis verba alloquendo discipulos alloquebatur futuram plebem Christianorum.”

people today.<sup>402</sup> As a sidenote, all this helps explain the general democratization of Hussite religiosity which accompanies the introduction of the lay chalice. By all indications, the event of utraquist mass was a more engaged, inclusive, intense, and popular experience than any that was available to contemporaries. Rather than a primarily ocular and passive spectacle centred on the priest, Hussite services now involved active participation from all classes of men and women which must have dissolved a central, visible sign distinguishing clergy from laity.<sup>403</sup> Simplification in liturgical content and pomp likely had a similar effect. Vestments, ornate chalices, and other paraphernalia were often scrapped as unnecessary or even prohibitive to the maximal proliferation of new utraquistic worship.<sup>404</sup> Meanwhile, the vernacularisation of the liturgy and the adaptation of church music served the demands of a much larger and more active congregation.<sup>405</sup> While the previous Czech hymns authored by Hus and Jerome of Prague were probably only sung before the mass's sermon, the introduction of the chalice and the increased frequency of the mass attracted much larger numbers of laymen to the service, lengthening and repeating the usage of new hymns, often vernacular and polemical in content.<sup>406</sup> In short, the swelling enthusiasm surrounding the lay chalice expresses a democratized religiosity, but likewise fed and often articulated broader Hussite themes of Christian activism and politicization.

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<sup>402</sup> Ibid., 444: "alias sacerdotes in canone missae per verba sacramentalia Domini Jesu Christi non bene conficerent eucharistiam et plebi ministrarent, si verba Christi dicta ad discipulos non fuissent dicta ad futuras plebes in discipulis designatas."

<sup>403</sup> David R. Holeton, Pavel Kolář, and Eliška Bat'ová, "Liturgy, Sacramental Theology, and Music," in *A Companion to the Hussites*, ed. Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 3; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 915. Holeton, "The Bohemian Eucharistic Movement," 37 f., warns against overemphasizing this levelling effect.

<sup>404</sup> David R. Holeton, "The Role of Jakoubek of Stříbro in the Creation of a Czech Liturgy. Some Further Reflections," in *Jakoubek Ze Stříbra. Texty a Jejich Pusobení*, ed. Ota Halama and Pavel Soukup (Prague: Filosofia, 2006), 72-76.

<sup>405</sup> František Michálek Bartoš, "Z politické literatury doby husitské," *Sborník historický* 5 (1957): 34-36. For further literature on its origins, see Holeton, "The Role of Jakoubek," 65, n. 44-46. Hus's promotion of the vernacular was limited to preaching and some hymns, and Jakoubek was supportive but cautious about a completely vernacular liturgy. See Holeton, *passim*.

<sup>406</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* I, 22; Holeton, "The Role of Jakoubek," 62 f.

To conclude this overview, it is worth emphasizing the significance of the lay chalice as a focal point of contention in the self-understanding of the two main interpretations of Christianity presented here. For the Council fathers and their anti-utraquists allies, the chalice could only ever be viewed through the lens of contemporary norms due to their progressivist view of Church history. At least in liturgical terms, the modern Church is the result of centuries of careful divine guidance, and therefore is closer to perfection than it has ever been in the past. For them, this means that the lay chalice is an ancient relic which the Holy Spirit has directed the Church to abandon. The modern form of the eucharist dignifies Christ's instituted hierarchy. Here, the official servants of God are elevated to accept the sacramental blood on behalf of the whole community, in imitation of the privilege which Christ's highly exclusive group of apostles enjoyed at the Last Supper. From this perspective, the re-discovery of the lay chalice therefore can only be seen as a human novelty which subverts not only God's officers, but divine order and authority itself. However, where Conciliar thinkers see a teleology of improvement, their utraquist counterparts find only a teleology of deterioration and decay from an original paradigm, as in earlier Hussite thought. For them, Christ's specific words and actions constitute a divine law which is immune to time and space, era or context. If for nothing else, this must certainly apply to the definitive constitution of the Church as captured by the Last Supper, and re-captured in the sacrament of the eucharist. Where their Romanist opponents see the pinnacle of clerical distinction, however, utraquist thinkers here discover the paradigm of original equality. In this chief sacrament, status and hierarchy melt away in a most simple unity of flock with shepherd. To put this all in relief, it should be clear that the relevance of the lay chalice to the conflicting parties goes far beyond the scope of bizarre liturgical curiosity which it must appear to the modern observer. Instead, the form of the eucharist

for both sides of the controversy actually now comes to encapsulate a constitutive moment of history which grounds true Christian identity and existential meaning, and therefore also salvation.

### **Theology and Anthropology**

Even if the most explicit influence of Matthias of Janov to the Hussite movement is well-explored in the appreciation of eucharistic devotion to personal and collective improvement and salvation, the exact significance of this fact to the background of Hussite reform thought remains vague in historical literature. For this reason it is worth overviewing, as an introduction to Janov's political importance to the Hussites, and to highlight specific points of relevance. Put in broad terms, it may be said that Janov's significance here introduces a profoundly optimistic branch of mystical and Platonic thought. This generally agrees with the previous humanistic trends of Hussite leaders, in their optimistic anthropology and epistemology, but notably also expands upon these in meaningful directions. Although he is currently corrupted, man's affinity to the divine gives him a nature which is capable of transgressing many of his most serious impediments already in this life. If he truly desires it, no meaningful achievement remains beyond his reach: not only the divine will, but even semi-deification is available to him in this worldly existence. Such intense confidence in individual potential contributes to the important democratizing tendency in Hussite thought, and also centers the theme of voluntarism, with further implications which will be expounded later.

Like earlier Hussite assumptions more generally, utraquist thought is basically built upon the confident epistemological foundation inherited from before. This has already been mentioned, but it is worth reiterating here to introduce the significant novelty of revelation which now enters Hussite discourse. In short, man is naturally capable of apprehending the divine will, at least in the most meaningful points. The

record of Christ's empirical words and deeds represents a transparent, unambiguous articulation of the unchanging divine volition which is generally available to all believers.<sup>407</sup> This suggests a clarity and continuity of meaning which no hermeneutical, theological, or historical finding, nor any tradition or authority, nor even any angel can revise until the end of history (*non debuit inmutari usque ad diem iudicii*).<sup>408</sup> For utraquists, their recent rediscovery means that the lay chalice now represents a constitutive element of this plain and a permanent truth. Jakoubek showed this in opposition to spiritual communion:

Thus if Christ, God and man, had wanted for all his clerics to baptise only spiritually, without the sacramental baptism of water, he could have made it so, and yet he did not do this by virtue of his infinite wisdom ... if he had wanted to, he could have repeatedly given the people with their priests only the spiritual consumption of his body and the spiritual drinking of his blood without the sacramental, and yet he did not do this by virtue of his infinite wisdom, but placed the spiritual consumption of his body and the spiritual drinking of his blood within the sacramental eating and drinking in the form of bread, and thus ordered it to be observed by the community.<sup>409</sup>

As a result of the scriptural clarity on the issue, the integral eucharist in both its forms of bread and wine (*ex integro*) is identifiable as a divine *praeceptum*, an imperative

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<sup>407</sup> ÖNB 4937, fol. 199<sup>v</sup>: “vita practica Iesu Christi et suorum apostolorum, aliorumque sequantium suorum sanctorum in ecclesia approbatorum propinquissime, verissime, securissime et patentissime exponit et interpretatur sacram Scripturam, quantum sufficit ad salutem generis humani”.

<sup>408</sup> ÖNB 4937, fol. 200<sup>r</sup>: “communio sub utraque specie ad populum communem sepe dicta est veritas sacre scripture ... contra illam non est admittenda auctoritas, vel ratio hominis cuiuscumque, vel aliqua constitutio nec consuetudo nec observatio valet si contra sacram scripturam militare conatur.” NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 218<sup>v</sup>: “in nullo volumus obedire Ecclesie Romane aut Concilio aut eius presidentibus contra legem domini Ihesu Christi, et contra salutem animarum nostrarum, et contra honorem Regis nostri, dominorum nostrorum, et totius Regni nostri, eciam si angelus de celo descenderet ut dicit apostolus, at aliud nobis precipere vellet”. On the popularization of this in song, see Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Dějiny husitského zpěvu* VI (Prague: CSAV, 1956), 261: “we should not wander from his precept (což Kristus ustanovil), ... and no apostle nor angel sent from heaven can alter it”. See also note 389 above.

<sup>409</sup> Jakoubek of Stříbro, “Magna cena,” in *Studie a texty k počátkům kalicha v Čechách*, ed. Helena Krmíčková (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1997), 133: “Sicut ergo Cristus, Deus et homo, si voluisset, potuisset omnes suos clericos solum spiritualiter baptizare sine baptismo sacramentali aque, et tamen ex sua sapientia infinita hoc non fecit ... si voluisset, potuisset plebem suam cum sacerdotibus suis crebro dare manducacionem spiritualem tantum corporis sui et bibicionem spiritualem sanguinis sui sine sacramentali, et tamen ex infinita sua sapientia non sic fecit, sed posuit manducacionem spiritualem corporis sui et bibicionem sanguinis sui spiritualem in manducacione et bibicione sacramentalibus sub forma panis, et ita a communitatibus precepit observari.” See also Jakoubek at note 537, and Janov at note 480 below. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 111-13.

commandment universally required for salvation—*illud, quod homo tenetur facere, et si non facit, peccat et dampnum incurrit*.<sup>410</sup> The language here is purely legalistic and contractual, showing a continued confidence in human epistemology. Even setting aside all other considerations and benefits behind utraquism, the simple matter remains that for utraquists, the Church's foundation is comprised by Christ's eucharistic pact with his followers (*nobiscum pactum fecit*) which establishes the basis of the New Law and Covenant. Man entered this contract and remains fully capable of apprehending its meaning, and is thus bound to it as much now as ever before as a condition of salvation. According to this reasoning, the rejection of the chalice therefore constitutes theft of a sacred object (*sacrilegium*), which causes damnation by making the fulfilment of this pact impossible.<sup>411</sup>

Yet this basic epistemic confidence is now more innovative than before, because it helps account for the direct divine insight which recovered the practice of utraquist communion. As its modern reviver, Jakoubek describes his discovery in terms of a revelation: "I can admit that I have a revelation (*revelatio*), because I have knowledge (*cognitio*) coming from the law and authentic scriptures. This knowledge, newly

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<sup>410</sup> Stříbro, "Magna cena," 135: "Idem sanctus [Dominus] dedit cibum et potum sacramentales et per ipsos instituit dari sic omnibus, qui in eum credunt, 2o, quod hoc debet teneri ex omnipotenti eius precepto, 3o, quod non debuit inmutari usque ad diem iudicii."; Ibid., 136: "Item Luce 14 dicitur, quod Paterfamilias contra non venientes ad hanc cenam Dominicam, ex cibo et potu sacramentalibus factam, est iratus, ergo populus cristianus obligatur ad hanc cenam venire sub obtentu gratie, quod si non veniret, incurreret indignacionem omnipotentis Dei. Ergo hanc cenam manducare et bibere sacramentaliter secundum duplicem formam a Domino est institutum preceptum, sed non omnes obediunt ewangelio neque omnes credunt huic ewangelice veritati." The definition of necessity quoted is drawn via Janov from David de Augusta, see Helena Krmíčková, "Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu in templis a její vztah k regulím," *Sborník prací Filozofické Fakulty Brněnské Univerzity C* 41 (1994): 17.

<sup>411</sup> Kadlec, "Literární polemika," 80: "Pius Iesus diligens suos fideles in caritate perpetua, ex eadem, dilectione ordinavit et instituit ipsis, volens de hoc mundo transire, suum sacratissimum corpus in cibum, sub forma panis, et suum preciosissimum sangwinem in potum, sub forma vini, pro suo memoriali et ad ipsorum magnam utilitalem, et (h)oc ordinavit pro omnibus suis indifferenter tam secularibus quam spiritualibus, ... fecitque cum eis pactum, ut eo utentes vitam habeant et habundancius habeant, sicut scribitur ... Jo VI (54): 'Nisi manducaveritis carnem Filii hominis et biberitis eius sangwinem, non habebitis vitam in vobis', et sicut isto modo voluit esse cum suis usque in consumacionem seculi." Cf. Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 28 f.; Coufal, "Sub utraque specie," 181.



acquired in this way, can generally be called a revelation.”<sup>412</sup> Historians have devoted much attention over the years to the interpretation of this claim, with the modern consensus generally agreeing to neuter it of significance. According to this view, by *revelatio* Jakoubek did not mean privileged access to a divine message, but only exegetical knowledge by close reading.<sup>413</sup> This presupposes the visionary seer is distinct from the exegete and evangelist, since the former recognizes his insight as innovative or confidential. Jakoubek’s revelatory claim is therefore only an inconvenient misnomer, as one historian explains: “For Jakoubek, the fact of the *revelatio* is not important in itself, and thus he mentions it first only incidentally. Thus it is not a revelation, but a *modus cognoscendi*. ... The *revelatio* itself is not a proof, but only a means to one.”<sup>414</sup> The problem here is that this opinion ignores the self-understanding of the revelation-seer himself, which often recognizes no such distinction. Historically and scripturally speaking, the insight into God’s plan which revelation provides is always at least partially hermeneutic, and sometimes simply instructs a seer toward a new interpretation of the Biblical texts. The prophet Daniel asks God for a revelation to understand Jeremiah’s prophecies, John of Patmos interprets the book of Daniel through his own divine revelation, and later, God reveals to the seer Joachim of Fiore how to read the John’s Revelation. Put simply, authors claiming revelation offer not only

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<sup>412</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 566: “Hic Doctore dicitur, quod generaliter vocando revelationem, modum cognoscendi venientem ex scrutinio legis Domini, et ex solidis expositionibus et auctoritatibus antiquorum sanctorum, ut Augustini, Cypriani, Bernhardi, Chrysostomi, et aliorum, eos in eodem sensu sequentium, concedere possum, quod habeo revelationem. Quia habeo cognitionem ex lege et scriptis authenticis. Haec cognitio, noviter per illum modum acquisita, generaliter vocari potest *revelatio*.”

<sup>413</sup> Krmíčková, *K počátkům kalicha*, 16; De Vooght, *Jacobellus de Střibro*, 126; Girgensohn, *Peter von Pulkau*, 145-48; Ferdinand Seibt, “Die ‘*revelatio*’ des Jacobellus von Mies über die Kelchkommunion,” in *Hussitenstudien. Personen, Ereignisse, Ideen einer frühen Revolution*, ed. Ferdinand Seibt (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987), 113–20.

<sup>414</sup> Seibt, “Die ‘*revelatio*,’” 118 f.: “Es wird verständlich, daß eine *revelatio* dabei nur Enthüllung, Erleuchtung sein kann, die einen vorgegebenen Sachverhalt zur Gewißheit macht, die eine Entscheidung herbeiführt, nicht aber die Offenbarung von etwas Neuem. ... Für Jacobellus ist die Tatsache der *revelatio* nicht im selben Sinne wichtig, und deshalb erwähnt er sie zunächst auch nur nebenbei. Denn sie ist ja keine Offenbarung, sonder ein *modus cognoscendi*. ... Die *revelatio* selber ist also kein Beweis, sonder lediglich ein Weg dazu.”

innovation but simultaneously the exegesis or elaboration of old texts via new knowledge. As one historian has recently noticed: “the visionary exegesis can lead to an entirely new interpretation of the whole canon. The common distinction between revelation-bearer here and exegete there does not correspond to the self-understanding of the authors”.<sup>415</sup> In other words, the innovation of a professed seer like Jakoubek is not undone by virtue of the hermeneutic content of his revelation, nor its evangelical imperative. In this case, it instead fits alongside the generally confident epistemology and Biblicism which Hussite thinkers had already taken for granted, and employs this to uncover new insight from an intimately-familiar text. Already now, this finding helps explain the fragmentation of Hussite orthodoxy by certain radical thinkers, but this trend of confident ingenuity and personal, immediate relation to scripture only becomes most significant in the innovations of Taborite leaders to come.

In the background of their epistemic and also anthropological confidence, utraquist thinkers inherited from Janov an elaborated cosmology and natural theology generally transplanted from the late-ancient mystical thinker Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (d. 6<sup>th</sup> century), whose great authority at this time was still connected to his supposed biography, as an original disciple of Paul and first-hand participant in the primitive Church.<sup>416</sup> This cosmology appreciates the believer’s material condition as apart from the purely spiritual, but presents a confident anthropology and optimistically recognizes the power of the eucharist as a bridge between the two in this world.<sup>417</sup> For Dionysius, the symbolic nature of the cosmos does not assume a sharp distinction between God and creation, which is merely divine self-revelation. Instead, he takes for

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<sup>415</sup> Riedl, *Joachim von Fiore*, 115-17., quote at 116: “Am Beispiel von 4 Esra war zu sehen, daß die visionäre Exegese bis zu einer Neuinterpretation des gesamten kanonischen Bestandes führen konnte. Die beliebte Unterscheidung zwischen Offenbarungsträger hier und Exeget dort entspricht daher nicht dem Selbstverständnis der Autoren – *mihi revelatio facta est*, sagt Joachim von Fiore.”

<sup>416</sup> See Acts 17:34.

<sup>417</sup> I follow here and below Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 26-36; Coufal, “Sub utraque specie,” 174-184.

granted the Platonized notion that the world exists as an act of divine overflowing from a super-essential God (*supersubstantialis* / *supraessentialis*), ineffable and transcendent, into creation (*in ea quae sunt redundantem*), meaning that everything “is” by virtue of degrees of participation in divinity. This occurs through procession from the *logos* as the uncreated, invisible image of God which gives being to the cosmos and remains immanent throughout it. In other words, God as principle is “everything in all things” (*omnia in omnibus*).<sup>418</sup> All creation is thus symbolic images of divinity, either invisible like the angels, or corporeal and visible like man and all creatures on earth. This unific vision of creation leads Dionysius toward an apocatastatic conclusion. The overflowing love which leads God to creation cannot rest, and eventually leads to a return procession of all creation toward absolute unity.<sup>419</sup> This is what the Areopagite calls *synaxis* (= *communio*), the gathering of all creation back into divine union, achieved through the sacraments as the ultimate symbols of full being. Yet particularly important among them is the eucharist, as the incarnate and sacrificed flesh and blood of the *logos*, and thus the ultimate symbol of reunifying divine love. As Dionysius explains: “The rite of the divine *synaxis* (*communio*), having a single and simple and gathered-together principle, is multiplied in love for man into the sacred variety of the symbols, ... but uniformly from those things again gathers into its own singularity, and makes one those who are sacredly led up to it.”<sup>420</sup> This sacramental cosmology will be important for the optimistic anthropology which it implies, but more significant here is its emphasis on human dependency. The reverse procession back to God does not occur

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<sup>418</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De divinis nominibus I.7, 595CD: “Sic igitur ei qui omnium rerum causa est, et supra omnia, congruit carere nomine, et congruent rursus omnia rerum omnium nomina, ut sit perfecte regnum universitatis rerum, et circa ipsum sing omnia, ex ipso, tanquam ex causa, principio et fine cuncta pendeant, et ipse sit, ut ait Scriptura, omnia in omnibus, vereque laudetur, ut omnia procreans, inchoans, perficiens, continensque, custodia ac domicilium, eademque ad se convertens ...”. Cf. Perl, “Symbol,” 313-19.

<sup>419</sup> Charles M Stang, *Apophysis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: “No Longer I”* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 167 f.

<sup>420</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De ecclesiastica hierarchia , 429A, trans. Perl, “Symbol,” 343.

homogenously, but hierarchically according to ranks of gnostic participation. Here, even though man's position is naturally privileged due to his reason, human corporeality poses a disadvantage. Unlike spiritual beings like angels, man is unable to independently contemplate and participate in this spiritual reality. Instead, he needs to complete his journey of reunion through the material guidance (*materialis manuductio*) of the sacramental eucharist, which is the supreme symbol of divine incarnation. It is this sensory experience of the liturgy which Dionysius continually emphasizes, and which bridges the gap to divine return. As he explains: "For the one and simple and hidden most divine word of Jesus, by his humanification for us, has come without change into the composite and visible by goodness and love for man, and beneficently gained our unific communion with him." In other words, revelation and communion are one.<sup>421</sup>

Janov and utraqvist thinkers generally accept this cosmological model, but combine it with a more confident philosophical anthropology and downplay its apocatastatic conclusion. The *logos* for Janov imparts unity upon creation, but also creates all rational souls according itself, meaning they are supremely capable. For him, this implies a strength to human nature which transgresses even the limits placed on it by the Dionysian model. Man bears a unique likeness to the creator by nature. One remarkable explanation is worth citing at length:

... the Word of God is that which vitally contains the forms of all creatures, things, or potential creation immovably and eternally, as is written "that which was made, in whom there was life", ... And only he himself, who is Jesus crucified, is the giver of forms and the single simple prototype (*ydea*) of all things, as according to the thought of master Plato. This Word or son of God,

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<sup>421</sup> Perl, "Symbol," 313–24, 331–44., quote at 337, alterations mine; Eric D. Perl, *Theophany: The Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 29 f.; cf. Migne, *PG* 3, De coelesti hierarchia III.3, 122CD: "fieri non possit, ut mens nostra ad immaterialem illam coelestium hierarchiarum imitationem ac contemplationem intendatur, nisi e propinquo, materiali usa fuerit manuductione: cogitando scilicet, apparentes has pulchritudines, arcanorum esse decorum effigies ... ac Jesu participationis, divinissimae eucharistiae communionem ...".

Jesus Christ, creating rational souls or spirits, formed these according to himself, so they would be like him, just as is written in Genesis 5: “man is naturally made according to the image and likeness of God”. Indeed, just as the Word of God contains the forms of all things from eternity, and is itself everything in all things (*omnia in omnibus*), so he created rational soul, capable of all forms or kinds of creatures or possible creation, indeed one may know that the soul is capable of everything in all things (*capax omnium in omnibus*).<sup>422</sup>

Despite this profoundly confident vision, however, Janov accepts that man’s carnal condition means he is at a temporary disadvantage, which is the entry-point of the Pseudo-Dionysius. Divine ubiquity means grace is offered universally to creation, but it is received in distinct modes depending upon the recipient.<sup>423</sup> The saints already in heaven receive it only spiritually (*spiritualiter solum*), but this is cosmologically impossible for humans in their corporeal existence. For this reason, Christ is incarnated corporeally to serve as a bridge between the spiritual and material for his living saints. As a composite of flesh and rational soul, human nature is the most appropriate form for the incarnation event to serve this purpose.<sup>424</sup> As a result, all true Christians receive the body and blood in the eucharist, both in its sacramental and also spiritual forms. In other words, Christ retrieves man back into divinity through the medium of humanity.<sup>425</sup> Sinners who unworthily access the eucharist receive it only sacramentally (*sacramentalis tantum*), without any grace or spiritual benefit. Utraquists in turn

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<sup>422</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 153.

<sup>423</sup> Cf. Kullerud, “Ipsum Est Omnia,” 23-26.

<sup>424</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 158-160., at 158 f.: “quia anima sic rationalis est condita, apta nata ad suscipiendum Verbum Dei per id, quod Verbum Dei continet ydeas omnium et anima est capax omnium ydearum, quapropter Verbum Dei aptissime assumpsit hominem pro eo, quod est et fuit eius capacissimus, sicut aer luminis et omnium inpressionum, sic itaque adinplevit divinitas Verbi eterni et immensi unum hominem assumpsitque humanitatem illam sui valde capacem in unitatem subpositi, ut sicut anima rationalis et cara unus est homo, ita Deus et homo unus est Christus; et transformavit illam humanitatem Verbum in tam plenam similitudinem sui et unitatem, quod per communicationem ydiomatum illud, quod est divinitatis, transtulit in naturam humanitatis, quia eorum capax, et omne, quod erat humanitatis, in se assumpsit ...”.

<sup>425</sup> Ibid., 127: “Sed quia via vite nostre et vehiculum spiritus quodammodo a Deo Patre ad nos et a nobis in Deum Patrem est corpus et sanguis Christi Iesu, et ipsum est lignum vite, et quia Christus sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris secundum corpus veritatis, et similiter idem in nobis manet et nos in eo per manducationem corporis ipsius et sanguinis torrente voluptatis ex inpetu fluminose caritatis huius inde discurrense, puta a Patre ad nos per Filium et a nobis ad Patrem in Christo Iesu, ideoque de hoc sacrificio bene dictum est ‘et lignum vite ex utraque parte fluminis’.” Cf. Nechutová, “Eucharistie,” 33 ff.

generally accept Dionysius's symbolic cosmos along with Janov's adaptations. Jakoubek directly adopts Dionysius's terminology of Christ the *logos*, as the prime and super-essential image of God (*prima supersubstantialis ymago*). In agreement with other mystical thinkers, Jakoubek also describes Christ as the uncreated and invisible image (*Ymago invisibilis increata*) made flesh, and in his assumption of human nature, he becomes the uncreated and visible image of God (*increata ymago Dei facta visibilis*).<sup>426</sup> It is through the paramount sacrament of his incarnation, also the visible image Christ's body and blood, that the unity of creation proceeds and is maintained (*omnia operatur in omnibus*).<sup>427</sup> Like for Janov, however, man is basically a created likeness of Christ, which implies a significantly new confidence in human potential. Internal, archetypal man shares the nature of the angels as a created and invisible image of God (*ymago creata invisibilis*), while his outer, corporeal self shares the nature of the world as a created and visible image (*ymago visibilis creata*).<sup>428</sup> In other words, the distinction between Christ and the good Christian is not in visibility but only createdness. Jakoubek explains the likeness:

It also seems to follow from this: "One man is personally the same man according to inner and outer man," that the same man is a visible and invisible image of God, indeed from this: "God is made man. And the Word is made

<sup>426</sup> *Imago dei invisibilis* of course is set against the background of Col. 1:15, but Jakoubek's peculiar formulation here seems to implicate Bonaventura, see Rüdiger Feulner, *Christus Magister: gnoseologisch-didaktische Erlösungsparadigmen in der Kirchengeschichte der Frühzeit und des Mittelalters bis zum Beginn der Reformation mit einem theologiegeschichtlichen Ausblick in die Neuzeit* (Wien: Lit Verlag, 2016), 183-88., and ultimately Gregory of Nyssa, see Migne, PG 44, *De opificio hominis* XVI.12. I thank Matthias Riedl for his direction here.

<sup>427</sup> NK ČR V G 7, fol. 100<sup>v</sup>-101<sup>r</sup>: "supermirabilibus attributis huius sacramenti, quam omnia operator in omnibus. Ideo hoc sacramentum legitime ordinatum est sub formis et similitudinibus cibi et potus panis scilicet et vini. Ad quem omnia et ex quo omnia unienia in hoc mundo et inter cibos in forma panis et panis tritici et potus in formam vini, qui sunt cibi et potus communissimi et ex multis in unum, et communissimi multis et pene omnibus que omnia pulchre alludunt huic sapiencie incarnate in sacramento duplicis specie reponite."

<sup>428</sup> Blanka Bednářová, "De ymaginibus et adoracione illarum. Názory na uctívání obrazů v díle M. Jakoubka ze Stržbra" (MA thesis, Prague, Charles University Prague, 2002), 75: "Ex quo patet, Ex quo patet, quod cristianus fidelis et sanctus, quia secundum interiorem hominem est particeps alias paris quodammodo condicionis cum angelis, ideo sanctus homo secundum interiorem hominem est etiam ymago invisibilis. Ideo sancti sepe in scriptura angeli dicuntur et sic ymagines, tam quoad esse nature, quam quoad esse gracie. ... homo fidelis, tam quoad naturam corpoream, quam quoad suam conversacionem ewangelicam, imitando Cristum est ymago Dei et Cristi."

flesh”, it seems that the very same image of God is a created and uncreated, visible and invisible image.<sup>429</sup>

As a result of this, exemplary perfection in life is potentially ubiquitous. Even though it is temporarily obscured, living man still retains the venerable and honourable (*venerabilis sive honorabilis*) image of divinity in his nature (*in natura sua*) and capacity as a rational creature (*creatura rationalis*) capable of spiritual reality.<sup>430</sup> Even his physiology prefigures corporeally his other-worldly orientation.<sup>431</sup> Therefore, alongside the *logos*, any good men may serve as images or mirrors of truth and life, living saints (*vivi sancti*) to guide the direction of human life.<sup>432</sup> Conversely, utraquist thinkers posit a parallel principle as a strategy to explain enduring sin. Wicked sinners are formed in nature but against nature (*contra naturam*), reflecting the image of the devil (*ymago dyaboli*).<sup>433</sup> Despite these divergences, utraquists inherit from Dionysius

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<sup>429</sup> Ibid., 76: “Patet etiam ex quo: ‘Homo idem est personaliter secundum interiorem et exteriorem hominem,’ quod idem homo est ymago Dei visibilis et invisibilis, ymmo ex quo: ‘Deus homo factus est. Et Verbum caro factum est,’ patet, quod eadem ymago Dei viva est ymago creata et increata, visibilis et invisibilis.”

<sup>430</sup> Nicholas of Dresden, “De imaginibus,” ed. Jana Nechutová, *Sborník prací Filozofické Fakulty Brněnské Univerzity* E 15 (1970): 218: “Item, secundum quod dicunt philosophi et consequenter alii, quadruplex ponitur gradus vivencium sive vite: primus est vivere vita entis, sicut omnino inanimata, ut sunt lapides et ligna truncata sive eradicata et consimilia, solum esse habentia; et iste dicuntur gradus infimus vivencium. Secundus est vivere vita vegetativa, sicut vegetabilia ... Tercius est vivere vita sensitiva, sicut animalia bruta vivunt. Quartus est vivere vita intellectiva, sicut creatur rationalis vivit, sicut est homo, angelus. Et sic solet exponi illud Marci ultimo: “predicate ewangelium omni creature”, id est omni homini, qui habet convenienciam cum omni creatura.” Nicholas of Dresden, *Querite primum regnum Dei*, ed. Jana Nechutová (Brno: Universita J. E. Purkyně, 1967), 25: “homines aliquo modo generali sciunt et cognoscunt summum bonum et naturaliter inclinatur ad illud tanquam ad principium a quo processerunt”. Cf. Nicholas of Dresden, “Tractatus de simonia in ms. V E 21,” ed. Romolo Cegna, *Przegląd Tomistyczny* 11 (2005): 55; Bednářová, “Jakoubek: De ymaginibus,” 79.

<sup>431</sup> NK ČR Břevnov 187, fol. 114<sup>v</sup>: “Quare homo hoc facie elevatus ad celum est creatus? Insignum homo interior debet esse ad celestia elevatus.”

<sup>432</sup> Dresden, “De imaginibus,” 222: “Alia ymago sive speculum secundum in veritate adorantium est cuiuslibet boni hominis vita exemplaris, ad cuius exemplum corrigere possumus vitam nostram, mores nostros secundum mores eius, verba secundum verba, opera secundum opera regulemus ... Nostri enim temporis homines recte talium se filios exhibent, ‘serpentes’ scilicet et ‘genimina vipperarum’, qui valde honorant sanctos diu mortuos ceca eorum reputacione, et modernos sanctos conviventes omnibus obprobriis lacerant et persecuntur, ... vivos sanctos, ymages vite et proprias domini Iesu crucifixi conspuunt et blasfemant ...”; Bednářová, “Jakoubek: De ymaginibus,” 75: “homo fidelis, tam quoad naturam corpoream, quam quoad suam conversacionem ewangelicam, imitando Cristum est ymago Dei et Cristi.”

<sup>433</sup> Bednářová, “Jakoubek: De ymaginibus,” 75: “Mali autem et peccatores, in quibus est depicta desuper ymago dyaboli ...”; Ibid., 90: “Sed heu per contrarium in ecclesia omnis superbus Anticristus, avarus, cupidus, carnalis facti sunt contra naturam.” See Dresden, “De Christi Victoria,” 3., where he references the curia as *exemplar omnis mali*.

the diversity of *communio*, the return to divinity. Both the *ecclesia triumphans* and the *ecclesia militans* need to hold, cherish, and venerate the *logos*, but only the former can achieve this in an immaterial way.<sup>434</sup> For the saints on earth, this spiritual communion must coincide with the material, sacramental eucharist of bread and wine (*spiritualis et sacramentalis simul*).<sup>435</sup> Located in the eucharist is the concentration of all possible goodness (*omne bonum possibile*), to inspire and guide the believer through the material to the immaterial communion (*per sensibile moveamur ad insensibile*), and to unite him with the heavenly community already in this life.<sup>436</sup> Therefore it is through this sacrament that Christ's incarnation renews the divine image in man and reforms him.<sup>437</sup> As Jakoubek explains paraphrastically via Janov: "the acquisition of the most divine eucharist in this life is the image of full participation in Jesus, which is fulfilled in heaven".<sup>438</sup> To put it briefly, all this shows that utraquist thinkers are inheritors of a tradition which shows remarkable enthusiasm for the place of humanity in the cosmos. Some of this is already anticipated in earlier Hussite thought, but it is clearly most

<sup>434</sup> Bednářová, "Jakoubek: De ymaginibus," 78 f.: "Illi enim spiritus in celestibus, priores post Deum sunt, qui magis ad recipiendas eius influencias apti sunt, scilicet illuminationem et dilectionem supermundanam, quia mole et grossicie corruptibilis carnis non inpediuntur, sicut nos hic in corpore, quod corrumpitur, aggravante animam et deprimente sensum multa cogitantem."

<sup>435</sup> Krmíčková, "Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu," 18: "Tercio accipitur sumpcio corporis et sanguinis Cristi pro manducacione et bibicione spirituali simul et sacramentali corporis et sanguinis Cristi sic quodammodo una, sicut anima rationalis eciam caro unus est homo."; cf. NK ČR V G 7, fol. 99r.

<sup>436</sup> Coufal, "Sub utraque specie," 178 f. Cf. Krmíčková, "Articulus pro communione," 84-86; NK ČR X H 10, fol. 109v: "Magis autem iste modus spiritualis et sacramentalis enigmaticus est via ad modum spiritualem proprie dictum manducandi et bibendi corpus et sanguinem christum spiritum solum et veritate modo angelico celesti."; Bednářová, "Jakoubek: De ymaginibus," 80: "per formam sive figuram sacramenti velud per quandam ymaginem vident ibi intus ymaginem Dei increatam et per illam figuram Cristi plebes non inpediuntur, sed manuducuntur et eriguntur ibi ad colendam illam primam invisibilem ymaginem, sic quod illa forma sacramentalis ex Cristi institucione est magne efficacie ad excitandum in plebibus fidem et per eam ulterius ibi increatam ymaginem colendam in Spiritu et veritate, sine qua figura sacramentali non ita moverentur."

<sup>437</sup> Dresden, "Puncta," 188: "Die dominico audistis quomodo Christus Filius Dei est simillima ymago Trinitatis et quomodo ad similitudinem ymaginis illius creatus est homo et quomodo eciam homo deformavit illam ymaginem in se. Ideo Christus ad reformandum illam ymaginem incarnatus est et voluit ymaginem hominis in se sumere et formam servi; 2o ut renovet illam ymaginem et quomodo debemus reformari per manducacionem corporis Christi dignam ...".

<sup>438</sup> Krmíčková, "Cupio a te," 117-19., quote at 118 f.: "Et assumcionem divinissime eukaristie in vita ista esse ymaginem plene participacionis Iesu, que perficitur in patria." Cf. Migne, *PG* 3, De coelesti hierarchia I.3, 122D-123; Coufal, "Sub utraque specie," 176.



expanded only here. Man currently finds himself in a less than ideal state, but already now all the conditions are in place for him to challenge the barriers of his corporeality. He shares in his nature an inalienable divine likeness which is awakened through communion with Christ in the eucharist. The material sacrament is therefore not only a salvific necessity, but also imparts mystical benefits to the living Christian.

What begins to come into the picture now is that the sacramental eucharist, including the lay chalice, carries certain anthropological implications alongside the soteriological. In agreement with Janov and his intellectual ancestors, man's natural potential allows such a remarkable imitation of divinity that he begins to partake in the traits and benefits of transcendence already in this life. This confident semi-deification blurs the boundary between this world and the next. Nevertheless, this anthropological potential requires fulfilment through rigorous individual effort coinciding with sacramental devotion. God makes an offer to man, but it is the personal prerogative of each believer to accept this offer. As a result of this, individual human volition is given new centrality, not only decisive to future salvation but also to the anticipation of other-worldly benefits in the present. As before, the background here is largely set by the mystical thought of Pseudo-Dionysius, who shows that man becomes a significant agent in his own perfection, which is significantly objectified in the eucharist. This begins with a unique symbolic ontology. For him, the sacraments are located at the threshold of symbolic and pure being. As the ultimate symbols in the symbolic cosmos, they together represent the divine enterprise of *synaxis*, with the eucharist chief among them, through which the One (*unum*) lovingly reaches down into creation to pull back what previously flowed out of him (*érōs pronoētikós* = *amor per providentiam*). Here, the whole liturgy and other sacraments are important, but it is the eucharist which brings them all to their fulfilment, and which fallen man requires to and maximize his union

with divinity and assume his noble place within the cosmic hierarchy. For Dionysius, this threshold position actually collapses the distinction between sacramental symbol and effect. In other words, through the eucharist, the sacraments simultaneously “show” divine unity and already “cause” this deification together. As the Areopagite explains: “Each sacrament gathers our fragmented lives into unifying deification (*deificatio*), and by a deiform folding together (*coagmentatio*) of what is divided grants us communion and union (*communicet uniatque*) with the One.”<sup>439</sup> All of creation is God’s self-objectification, but the sacrament of the eucharist becomes the chief objectification of divinity in the cosmos. However, at the same time as he describes this gratuitous deification through the eucharist, Dionysius also indicates this as a process of active human effort and cooperation with God. Through God’s incarnation as Christ, he demonstrated the perfect cooperation of the human and divine, and thereby issued a loving call to lowly man to raise him up to himself.<sup>440</sup> Therefore, God grants the powers for deification (*virtutes ad deificatio*) gratuitously, but it remains the prerogative of man to actualize these faculties himself by responding to the call with his own returning love (*érōs epistreptikós = amor per conversionem*) via ascent.<sup>441</sup> This he does by divine contemplation and imitation appropriate to the place of humanity in the cosmic

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<sup>439</sup> Perl, “Symbol”; Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics. Vol. 2, Studies in Theological Style. Clerical Styles* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 181. Cf. Migne, *PG* 3, De coelesti hierarchia III.2, 166B; De divinis nominibus VI.2, 855D; De ecclesiastica hierarchia III, 423CD: “cum unumquodque sacramentum divisas quoque vitas nostras ad uniformem colligat deificationem, atque deiformi dissitorum coagmentatione cum illo uno communicet uniatque.”

<sup>440</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De divinis nominibus I.4, 591A: “singulari autem amore humanum genus complectentem, quod se nobis vere integre in una persona sua communicarit, revocans ad se sibique jungens humanam humilitatem; ex qua simplex Jesus ineffabili modo consistit, ac qui aeternus est, temporalem sumpsit accessionem, necnon ad intima naturae nostrae descendit”. Cit. Filip Ivanović, *Desiring the Beautiful: The Erotic-Aesthetic Dimension of Deification in Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 211.

<sup>441</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De divinis nominibus IV.13, 711A: “Est praeterea divinus amor exstaticus, qui non sinit esse suos eos qui sunt amatores, sed eorum quos amant. Atque hoc declarant quidem superiora, quae inferiorum fiunt, per eorundem providentiam; et quae ejusdem generis sunt, per mutuam cohaerentiam; et inferiora, per diviniorem ad superiora conversionem.”; De divinis nominibus, VIII.5, 894A: “indissolubilem totius universi tuetur mansionem, quin et ipsam quoque deificationem praestat, et virtutes ad eam requisitas iis qui deificandi sunt praebebat”. Cf. Ivanović, *Desiring the Beautiful*, 30, 34 f.

hierarchy—by negating his individuality embracing his nature, and thus raising himself to divine likeness to best absorb and radiate the light of God’s being. As he describes in his own words:

The purpose, then, of hierarchy is the assimilation and union, as far as is possible, with God ... by looking unflinchingly to his most divine comeliness, and copying, as far as possible, and by perfecting its own followers as divine images, mirrors most luminous and without flaw (*specula clarissima et immaculata*), receptive of the primal light and the supremely divine ray, and devoutly filled with the entrusted radiance, and again, spreading this radiance ungrudgingly to those after it ...<sup>442</sup>

By participating in this illumination of divine knowledge (*gnosis*) and imitation (*imitatio*), and mediating it to the subsequent lower order, each member of each order in the cosmic hierarchy works in divine synergy (*divina cooperatio*), revealing the activity of the divine in themselves (*divinam in semetipso demonstrat operationem*). For instance, the hierarch assimilates to Christ and mediates God’s self-impartation to the world in properly officiating the liturgy of the eucharist to the laity, or the initiated assimilates to Christ and mediates his light to the uninitiated by his reception of the sacrament and living a sinless life.<sup>443</sup> Accordingly, each thus becomes a divine co-agent (*cooperator Dei*) raising those below upwards to God, but through the divine synergy of the hierarchy, it can be said that each also directly communes with God.<sup>444</sup> In other words, man is raised not by human mediation, but directly by God through his operation in men. Interestingly, Dionysius accepts the Donatistic implications of this immediate

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<sup>442</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De coelesti hierarchia III.2, 166A, trans. John Parker, ed., *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite II* (Oxford: James Parker & Co, 1899), 14.

<sup>443</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De ecclesiastica hierarchia III.12.

<sup>444</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, De coelesti hierarchia III.2, 166B: “Etenim cujuslibet eorum qui sacrum ordinem sortiti sunt, in hoc sita perfectio est, ut ad divinam, pro captu quisque suo, promoveatur imitationem, quodque divinius est omnium, ipsius etiam Dei, ut Eloquia loquuntur, cooperator existat, divinamque in semetipso demonstrat operationem, quoad potest, elucentem”; De ecclesiastica hierarchia III.14, 445AB: “Quemadmodum enim in coruscationibus solaribus tenuiores limpidioresque substantiae, dum influenti in ipsas radio primae repletae sunt, omne lumen sibi superfusum in subsequentes solis vice transfundunt; pari ratione, nequaquam debet temere ducem sese aliis divini luminis offerre, qui non secundum omnem statum suum deiformis maxime evaserit, divinaque aspiratione atque sententia ad id idoneus sit comprobatus.”

relationship. In his terms, individual darkness and deformity are unable to reflect divine light. As he explains: “If the order of the priests has the power of illuminating, then surely whoever is devoid of this power is inconsistent with the order and aptitude of the clergy; and rather it is he who is not yet illuminated.”<sup>445</sup> More importantly, however, this aspect of synergistic cooperation between man and God thus adds the contingency of human agency to balance the determinism of the Areopagite’s sacramentology. The eucharist and the other sacraments might be vehicles of deification, but access to this gift still requires the effort of self-fashioning in the divine image.<sup>446</sup>

In many ways, Janov and his utraquist followers do not go as far as the mystical Platonism of Pseudo-Dionysius, but through him and via other supplementary sources, they do generally accept the optimistic anthropology imparted by the supreme confidence in the eucharist. Like for the Areopagite, this largely results from the collapsed distinction between sacramental symbol and effect, and from the cooperation of human and divine agents, with a particular emphasis on the voluntaristic element here. Janov agrees with Dionysius that the eucharist does not merely show future benefits, but also effects fantastic results already in this life, and actually increases divine grace (*auget gratiam*).<sup>447</sup> Paraphrasing a contemporary Bohemian moralist theologian, Janov summarized the benefits of this most holy sacrament:

It enflames love, it recalls, namely it leads the passion of Christ back into memory. It endures with the fallen provenance from individual weakness, it gives strength to good works, it grows the hope of salvation, it purges venial and sometimes even mortal sins, it repairs internal solace, it bestows a life of grace,

<sup>445</sup> Migne, *PG* 3, Epistula VIII.2, 1091B: “Quod si itaque sacerdotum ordo illustrandi vim habet, profecto penitus abhorret a sacerdotum ordine ac facultate, quisquis illustrandi vi caret; multoque magis is qui necdum illustratus est.”

<sup>446</sup> Perl, “Symbol,” 336–53, passim.; Ivanović, *Desiring the Beautiful*, 210 f.; Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 172 f.; Dimitrios A. Vasilakis, “On the Meaning of Hierarchy in Dionysius the Areopagite,” in *Platonism and Christian Thought in Late Antiquity*, ed. Panagiotis G. Pavlos et al. (London; New York: Routledge, 2021), 185, 189. On the kinds of love, see Ivanović, *Desiring the Beautiful*, 30–44.

<sup>447</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 30: “Dedit [Christus] insuper illud volumen plenum gracia et veritate intus et foris homini non tantum ad videndum et tractandum, sed ad comedendum et potandum, quatenus sic perfecte veritatem et gratiam homo sibi incorporaret et uniret essetque siccine totus homo restauratus et sanatus, intus puta a sua cecitate vel ignorancia, foris vero a sua inpotencia ad bonum”. Cf. Janov, *Regule* V, 28.

it unites with Christ and confirms faith, it fortifies the struggle and reduces the infection of carnal desire.<sup>448</sup>

Also like Dionysius, however, these marvellous effects are not merely gratuitous, but contingent especially upon personal volition and effort. This means that the approach of the believer to the sacrament must be an act of selfless love. Recall that for Janov, it is this love which indiscriminately distinguishes man's true relationship to God, his identity as a Christian, and his membership in the true Church. This is achieved individually by each believer, in appreciating the gravity of Christ's sacrifice and immanence within the sacrament, and simultaneously by a process of self-reform which purges the self of mundane desires and reorients it toward an activist imitation of Christ. All this ultimately arouses the desire and re-impassions the longing (*consurgit appetitus et refricatur desiderium*) for unity with Christ, unlocking the sacrament's koinonic powers.<sup>449</sup> In other words, all this shows that Janov follows Dionysius in assuming a high degree of discretion for the operation of the individual free will. God may call man to divine grace through the sacrament, but it remains the prerogative of the individual to respond to this call with genuine desire. Through this burning will and the eucharist, worthy Christians are collectively and indivisibly united with God, the saints in heaven, and each other, forming an identity which Janov calls the *communio sanctorum*, the transcendent and immanent body and Church of Christ. Here, the individual is awakened to a new identity as a new man (*novus homo*) with a new life fashioned on Christ. As agents of the divine will, the clergy but also each individual becomes a divine

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<sup>448</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 92: "Inflammat ad caritatem, memorat, id est ad memoriam reducit passionem Christi. Sustentat circa casum provenientem ex propria fragilitate, roborat ad operacionem boni, auget spem salutis, purgat veniale peccatum et quandoque eciam mortale, reficit interna consolacione, vitam dat gratiam, unit Christo confirmatque fidem, munit contradiccionis impulsum fomitemque remittit, scilicet carnalis concupiscencie." The quote is from Adalbertus Ranconis de Ericinio.

<sup>449</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 24: "Indeque mox consurgit appetitus et refricatur desiderium ad uniendum cum Cristo per manducacionem huius cibi". Ibid., 151: "sacramentum Cristi Iesu corporis et sanguinis sub sapore panis et vini cottidie plebeis ministratum et connestum ac potatum nunquam homini cristiano in fastidium veniunt, si tamen spiritu Iesu agitur, qui non sinit hunc plenum delectamento cibum fastidire, sed semper renovat in mente hominis appetitum".

co-agent (*dei cooperator*) working for the collection and unity of the family of Christ (*efficiens in / conferens ad familia Christi unitatem*).<sup>450</sup> Janov explains the consequences when the appropriate human volition meets God's grace:

with these two things are bound and united together, they make inwardly, or generate, a new interior man created according to God, namely in conformity to the incarnate word of God. And thus they make internally one spirit of Jesus and one body of the Church, namely the entire concordance of the multitude of souls to the same faith of the congregated, the internal unity of the Church, and also they make the unity of souls with their Lord God in Jesus Christ.<sup>451</sup>

Put simply, reform for Janov is at once an internal and collective process identical to proper eucharistic devotion. Here, Christ and the individual share agency in recreating mankind in accord with its true potential. This does not simply give access to the mystical community in heaven, but gives the community reality already in this world.

These views of confident anthropology and voluntarism find resonance among utraquist leaders, not least because they generally coincide with earlier Hussite trends. For them, however great the benefits of human and divine synergy, it is only achieved by free human choice to endure a strenuous process of self-annihilation which brings the natural potential of the believer to fulfilment. Qualification for the eucharist is no act of mere contrition. Already before its reception, the believer is supposed to be in the *communio sanctorum*,<sup>452</sup> which is achieved by the purgation of individuality, the very

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<sup>450</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 171 f.: “dei cooperator efficitur, sicut scriptum est: ‘Cooperatores dei sumus’. ... [deus] non facit aliquid in hominibus conferens ad salutem eternam sine hominibus, sed vult facere omnia ex pacto suo statuto ad profectum et salutem hominum privatam cum hominibus, per homines et ex hominibus.” Cf. Janov, *Regule* V, 28.

<sup>451</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 151 f.: “Tercius quoque modus unionis ex predictis, ut nuper ante dictum est, multum et magis proprie alludit unitati ecclesie Christi. Qui est, [cum] ex principiis intrinsicis nature vel ex materia et forma essentiali natura [concurrit] ad esse gratuitum, novum et celeste, vel [eum] cuilibet anime concurrunt duo principia intrinseca, id est essentialia vel necessaria, vel tria, duo dico, id est voluntatem hominis bonam, id est libere suscipientem verbum fidei Christi, et gratiam dei primam vel gratis datam, vel spiritum Jhesu Christi et animam rationalem et humilem et obedientem deo suo. Et ista duo simul iuncta unitaque faciunt intrinsece vel generant novum hominem interiorem, qui secundum deum creatus est, id est conformem verbo dei incarnato. Et sic unus spiritus Jhesu et unum corpus ecclesie, id est omnino concors multitudo animarum ad eandem fidem collectarum, faciunt intrinsece unitatem ecclesie, faciunt eciam unitatem anime cum domino deo suo in Christo Jhesu.”

<sup>452</sup> Střibro, “Magna cena,” 134: “Et qui vult digne manducare et bibere corpus et sanguinem Cristi, ante debet esse in comunione et societate sanctorum ...”.

possibility of sin (*occasiones ad peccandum*). It is only into a clean vessel that divine virtues may be imparted. As Jakoubek explains: “you must first be deprived of your life (*žlwota sweho zbawiti*), namely deprived completely of your little wills (*woličky*), if you want to be revived by Christ’s life via that sacrament.”<sup>453</sup> Alongside this superhuman feat of inner-purgation is the participation of divine agency via the sacraments, which both signify but also cause divine grace (*causant gratiam*).<sup>454</sup> This is especially true for the eucharist *ex integro*, which has special power (*vim*) and actually brings to fulfilment all other sacraments.<sup>455</sup> The influence of Pseudo-Dionysius is obvious. The objectification of divine grace is also manifest in the description of the sacrament’s efficacy. In utraquist parlance, the eucharist is a sanitary medicine (*medicina*) prescribed by the greatest doctor (*Medicus summus*) for man’s fallen condition, and both its forms contain unique benefits for the believer, though the wine is particularly important.<sup>456</sup> As the ultimate articulation of divine love, the sacrament of the divine

<sup>453</sup> František Dobiáš, “Dva rukopisy z počátku 15. století,” *Časopis historický* 1 (1881): 61 f.: “that dear sacrament revives the dead ... but it should be noted, that bodily nourishment cannot absorb the life of that which it eats, unless it first loses or is deprived of the life it once had ... Thus also you must first be deprived of your life, namely deprived completely of your little wills (*čisto woličky swe zbawiti*), if you want to be revived by Christ’s life via that sacrament”. Cf. NK ČR IV F 6, fol. 1<sup>r</sup>: “Nam si homo wult sapide corpus Christi recipere, debet peccata cavere et expurgare omnes delectationes carnales, et omnes occasiones ad peccandum”. Nicholas of Dresden shows the Platonic background of this, citing Boethius and Matthew of Vendôme. See Dresden, *Querite*, 28.

<sup>454</sup> Kapit. D 47, 117<sup>v</sup>: “calix i.e. sanguis Christi sub specie secunda augmentum gratie in animabus fidelium facit.”; 120<sup>r</sup>, and 120<sup>v</sup>: “Sacramenta nove legis simul sunt cause et signum. Et inde est quod sicut communiter dicitur: Efficiunt quod figurant.”; Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 32., and n. 41: “Adhuc et hoc notandum, quod ipsa sacramenta sensibilia ex redundancia graciaram, que in eis continentur, causant gratiam”; Nicholas of Dresden, “Contra Gallum,” in *Studie a texty k počátkum kalicha v Čechách*, ed. Helena Krmíčková (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1997), 171.

<sup>455</sup> Dresden, “Contra Gallum,” 175 f.: “Et ideo convenienter ex rei veritate eucaristia nominata est congregacio vel comunio, quia in ipsa et per ipsam fit omnium percipiencium sacramenta adunacio et perfectio. Hec illuminatus vir sanctus Dyonisius. Si ergo baptismus vel aliud sacramentum sine eucaristia preceptum sit imperfectum ...”; Krmíčková, “Articulus pro communione,” 86: “Et sic habetur, quomodo inter omnia dona spiritualia nullum donorum spiritualium maius nobis Dominus dereliquit quam hoc sacrosanctum corpus et sa[n]guinem suum, nam ex huius digna sumpcione sa[n]guinis Domini Iesu Christi semper speciale donum largitur in anima sumentis.” *Quia plurimi adversarii* in Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 93., n. 114: “Minor patet per multos effectus sacri calicis proprios, quos a proprietate facit ex vi sacramenti, quos sic nullum aliud sacramentum facit”. NK ČR V G 7, fol. 95<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>456</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 468: “Tunc ubicunque tanta infirmitas et fragilitas in hominibus fidelibus reperitur, rationale est et expediens hanc duplicem medicinam his duobus modis applicare, scilicet modum gustandi corpus Christi sub specie panis, et modum gustandi sanguinem Christi sub specie vini.” Stříbro, “Magna cena,” 131 f.; Krmíčková, “Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu,” 23 f. On

sacrifice returns lost spiritual gifts (*navracuge wiecy potracych*), cures and cleanses the body and soul from sin and guilt,<sup>457</sup> and even changes their constitution. With reference to John Chrysostom, Jakoubek explains that this mystically alters the corporeal composition to be more spiritually embodied (*plus incorporari spiritualiter*), brightens the soul (*činí světlejší duši*), and generally pulls man back up toward Christ (*nás k sobě přitahuje*) as it does so.<sup>458</sup> At the same time, in agreement with Janov, the Hussite eucharist also liberates man from his fallen self already in this life. As the most perfect sign, it recalls to memory the experience of Christ's passion, and thus purifies the mind and will, subduing them to God.<sup>459</sup> Therefore it immediately (*imediate, ihned*) unites and transforms the soul into Christ (*transformari in Cristum*).<sup>460</sup> In sharp contrast to contemporary norms of eucharist culture, this love and unity is continually

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the different qualities of the eucharistic kinds, see Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 551: modo supra mundano his duabus formis sacramentalibus a Deo sunt insitae speciales efficaciae distinctae. Eo quod prima species movet fideles mentes capaces ad sumendum Christum in se per modum cibi. Secunda autem species movet efficaciter mentes capaces ad sumendum in se Christum per modum potus. Et ista est utique alia efficacia quam prima." Jakoubek of Stříbro, "O boží krvi," in *Dvě staročeská utrakvistická díla Jakoubka ze Stříbra*, ed. Mirek Čejka and Helena Krmíčková (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2009), 72 f.

<sup>457</sup> Coufal, "Sub utraque specie"; Coufal, *Polemika o kalich*, 31 f.; KNM XVI G 1, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>-4<sup>r</sup>: "caro Cristi sub specie panis pro salute corporis, sanguis vero sub specie vini pro salute anime confertur". Cf. Čapek in Nejedlý, *Dějiny* VI, 259: "The body is taken separately for the salvation of our body, and his blood the holy drink for the cleansing of our soul". Dobiáš, "Dva rukopisy," 60 f.: "The first benefit [of the eucharist] is the curing and cleansing of the soul ... The second benefit is that it liberates from the torment due to guilt ... the fifth benefit is the return of lost things".

<sup>458</sup> Stříbro, "O boží krvi," 83: "(Chrysostom:) [The Lord Christ] himself feeds us with his blood and utterly pulls us toward himself (uplně nás k sobě přitahuje)"; Ibid., 86: "(via Chrysostom:) that blood [of Christ] makes souls and our reason brighter than fire, and more splendidous than gold."; Stříbro, "Magna cena," 134: "... post hanc manducacionem et bibicionem debet plus incorporari spiritualiter secundum maiorem spiritualem participacionem predictae communioni sanctorum."

<sup>459</sup> Dobiáš, "Dva rukopisy," 61: "[the chalice] cleanses [one] of wicked thoughts and desires ... those celebrating the desires of mundane things are elevated to spiritual things ..."; NK ČR VI E 23, fol. 101<sup>v</sup>: "Qui tamen venientes ad corpus [eciam ?] subdunt suam voluntatem voluntate dei". On the supreme recollective power of the chalice, cf. Nejedlý, *Dějiny* IV, 113 f. Here Jakoubek notably diverges from Dionysius, who maintains the necessity of visual aides like images and relics for this purpose.

<sup>460</sup> Krmíčková, "Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu," 17 f.: "Alio modo accipitur sumcio proprie pro manducacione spirituali tantum in se specialiter corporis Cristi et bibicione sanguinis eius, quod est quodam modo uniri animam cum Cristo immediate secundum spiritum et veritatem et quodam modo intime indui Cristum vel transformari et vegetari in Cristum"; Stříbro, "O boží krvi," 86: "just as when gold is melted—and if someone were to insert his arm or tongue into it they would immediately gild it—so these things in both forms, namely in the sacrament, enact remarkable things in the soul"; Dobiáš, "Dva rukopisy," 61: "[via Augustine's Confessions, 7.10.16], the seventh benefit [of the eucharist] is in the better transformation (v lepšie promieňanie), for just as bread, once eaten, turns into the body of the eater, so the eater of this bread turns into a member (obracuge se w ud) of the Lord Jesus Christ".



reconfirmed and expressed by regular or even daily reception of the sacrament.<sup>461</sup> Like Janov, it is this voluntarist emphasis, not pedagogical instruction, which utraquists now associate with the creation of the new man (*novus homo*).<sup>462</sup> At some point, the communicant becomes so deeply transfixed in divine union that he even participates in something like divine immutability. The eucharistic chalice fortifies the soul (*ohražuje duši*) against deception, secures the heart (*posylnuge srdcie*), and protects the will from fluctuations in thought to open the way to virtue. As Jakoubek explains this mystical transition:

that solemn sacrament makes it that man is not moved by his will (*aby nehybal wedle wuole swe*), or the corporeal will; because like the fleshly body moves and walks according to its own will while it is in the flesh, but once it is eaten by an eagle and is transformed into it (*když sie wñi obrati*), it is lifted high in flight. Also the human mind (*mysl*), once led to lowly matters by fleshly movement, will be turned spiritually to [Christ's] mandates by the powers of this sacrament, and will begin to move in Christ's will.<sup>463</sup>

<sup>461</sup> Dobiáš, "Dva rukopisy," 59: "approach your saviour, Father, and rejoicer as many times as that love moves you, do not wait a year or even the day"; NK ČR V G 7, fol. 100<sup>v</sup>-101<sup>r</sup>: "ut communiter et frequenter manducare et potare in cibo et potu valde familiari et communi ... et quanto communius et frequencius, tanto melius". Cf. Stříbro, "O boží krvi," 31, 32, 34, 80.

<sup>462</sup> FRB VIII, 241: "Quod patet ex hoc, quia nos, magistri et sacerdotes, fermento malicie fermentati, post sumpcionem sacratissime eukaristie non exsuimus vere hominem veterem nowumque non induimus, creatum secundum deum in iusticia et veritate, prefati vero quinque in domino fratres post crebram ac devotam divinissime eukaristie sumpcionem sine ypocrisi ..."; Krmíčková, "Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu," 18., paraphrasing Janov: "Et sic tunc sumere corpus et sanguinem Cristi spiritualiter et sacramentaliter est in ore corporaliter degustare et rem sacrementi eciam in spiritu et veritate simul degustare spiritualiter et verum corpus Cristi et sanguinem ore novi hominis, qui secundum Deum creatum est, spiritualiter ruminare." cf. FRB VIII, 242. Cf. Stříbro, "O boží krvi," 85 f. On the previous understanding of this, see Hus, *Tractatus responsivus*, 55 f.: "In tali enim fructuosa ewangelisacione in hominibus capacibus fit continue remissio, diminucio sive minoracio peccati tamquam morbi ex medici sanacione, et continue maior ac maior intensio divini amoris ac spiritualis vite. Et sic Paulus apostolus, Corinthios gignendo tamquam filios per ewangelium dei, et sic sancti, destruentes veterem hominem et facientes cooperative et instrumentaliter novum hominem secundum deum in Christo Ihesu, dicuntur quodammodo remittere vel indulgere et peccatum delere." See also note 188 above.

<sup>463</sup> Dobiáš, "Dva rukopisy," 60-62., quote at 62. Cf. Dobiáš, 61: "The sixth benefit is the strengthening in the good, for just as bodily food strengthens the body, so this bread strengthens the human heart so that it may overcome thought, and may progress to great virtue (*aby mohlo odolawaťi myšleňi*, a *k welikosťi čnost'i powstupiti*)". Stříbro, "O boží krvi," 50: "(via Cyprian:) those drinking [from God's chalice] are so inebriated that it makes them sober, that they be riveted in thought to spiritual graces, that they forego mundane desires to lift themselves in raptured reason to God ... by this salvific drink the memory will be riveted and committed to him". On the Augustinian background here, cf. Lee C. Barrett, *Eros and Self-Emptying: The Intersections of Augustine and Kierkegaard*, (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 81 f.

In concord with the sacrament then, such a fully humbled Christian is no longer oriented to human attachments of family or possessions, but instead is given privileged epistemic access to the divine which disposes him exclusively to God. Through this training in the *scola Christi*, the believer is purged by the pure fear of God (*timor castum*) which conquers worldliness (*vincit mundum*) by emptying it of meaning or value. Such perfected Christians (*perfecti*) have won the battle against their corporeality, and thus easily forego the world.<sup>464</sup> Jakoubek describes this thusly:

they refuse themselves and cast away their will, and subject and humble themselves to God, they cast off the world, riches, mundane glory, fields, possessions, mother, father, all things, and also subject their mind to every divine disposition and rule, wanting in no way to counteract God ...<sup>465</sup>

All mundane concerns are negated, and the ultimate freedom of the Holy Spirit is granted to the believer from all mundane anxieties,<sup>466</sup> meaning that the tricks and threats from the Antichrist and his tyrants, of torture or even death, are futile. Here, the mystical embodiment of God (*vtěliti v Boha*) disengages the individual from their own

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<sup>464</sup> Dresden, “Puncta,” 192 f.: “Qui ergo incipiunt esse sine peccato mortali et sunt sine peccato mortali, aliqui sunt circa initium profectus, aliqui circa finem: perfecti ergo qui sunt circa finem ... Sed quia incipientes oportet ut laborent diligenter resistendo suggestionibus; perfectis autem hoc est iam facile, ut facile est eis relinquere omnia, et facile devote orare, etc. Sed incipientes difficile est vincere affectiones suas, iram et cetera vicia et mundum et pugnare contra quodlibet peccatum.”

<sup>465</sup> Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 15: “[servi dei] sunt, qui se ipsos abnegant et suam voluntatem abiciunt et Deo se subiciunt et humiliant, qui mundum, divicias, gloriam mundi, agros, possessiones, patrem, matrem et omnia abiciunt, etiam qui mente sua se subiciunt omni divine dispositioni et permissioni et in nullo volunt Deo contraire ... O benedicta confidencia, que vincit mundum et vanitatem mundi!”; cf. note 505 below. See also the curious utraquist (?) manuscript describing a mythical legend of Joachim of Fiore’s contact with an angel in NK ČR VIII D 15, fol. 26v: “... angelus plenum callicem vini sibi porrexit, dicens ‘sitibunde, bibe’. Illeque gratanter bibens [i.e. Joachym], vidit in callice statum ecclesie multo tempore decursus, et cum plura grandia vidisset tremens reddit callicem in manu angeli, et angelus ait ad eum ‘O fatue, si totum bibisses, totum scivisses!’ ...”. Most recently discussed in Pavlína Cermanová, “Jiná Apokalypsa: prorocké texty v husitství,” in *Husitské re-formace: Proměna kulturního kódu v 15. století*, ed. Pavlína Cermanová and Pavel Soukup (Prague: NLN, 2019), 147 f.

<sup>466</sup> Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 30: “qui ab omnibus istis impedimentis [i.e. of the world] aversus fuerit toto corde sic, quod in omnibus appetit placere soli deo et d. Jesu Christo, qui ad proficiendum proximis non timet aliquod periculum, et si caro timet, non tamen spiritus dicitur, hic habet libertatem spiritus s.”; cf. Kybal, *M. Jan Hus* 2.1, 139 f., n. 3: “Hoc melius et utilius est cognoscere, quam noscere cursum mundi, quomodo stelle stant, herbe quam habent virtutem vel quamdiu est duratura res. Cognicio Spiritus sancti ducit ad timorem castum, istorum autem cognitio inflat”.

individuality.<sup>467</sup> In short, what all this shows is that Hussite utraquism absorbs the confident anthropology and voluntarist emphasis which generally defines Janov's eucharistic thought. Man exists in a fragile and fallen condition, but this need not be permanent. Already in this life, the unique powers of the eucharist are able to democratically liberate and purify any communicant from sinful servitude and infection, and elevate him to a semi-deified state, if he truly desires it. In agreement with Janov, therefore, the chalice already now accomplishes to a significant degree the Platonist goal of *reditus*, the separation of man from creaturely individualism and his reunification into primordial divine unity.

### Sacred Politics and Voluntarism

All this reinvigorated emphasis on individualism and voluntarism is relevant here for the alternative vision of politics and reform which it introduces. This significance of utraquist theology to Hussite political thought is largely overlooked in historiography. Put simply, the democratic recognition of the individual as the basic constitutive element of social reality roughly coincides with the establishment of highly ethical conditions for inclusion within the religio-political order of the Christian Church. This Donatist finding is important because it subverts the professional rule of officers which medieval thinkers adapted from Augustine. As a result, not only common believers but also clerics and rulers are disqualified from Christian membership and office for their corruption. Simultaneously, this humanistic emphasis appreciates a more

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<sup>467</sup> Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Betlemská kázání z roku 1416*, ed. Karel Sita (Prague: družstvo Blahoslav, 1951), 45: "The second type of dream is good, by which man is calmed in God, not caring what is happening in his body, whether he be tortured or killed, for he spiritually embodies God (neb se duchem vtělil v Boha)"; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 40<sup>r</sup>: "Sicut clavus clavum excutit, sic timor Domini debet excutere timorem mundanum, quia si est verus timor dei in christiano, omnem tyranidem excutit ... Istam doctrinam studuerunt sancti in scola Christi, qui non timebant perdere corpora sua et dare ea ad mortem et ergo si non timerent perdere corpora in mortem, non tim[er]ent eciam infamiam, incarcerationem a forciori"; Cf. Stříbro, "O boží krvi," 31, 55 f., 61; NK ČR V E 16, fol. 113<sup>v</sup>-114<sup>r</sup>; Helena Krmíčková, "Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu in templis a její vztah k regulím" 43, no. C41 (1994): 25.

popular, grassroots reform program which challenges the paternalism which utraquist thinkers inherited from Wyclif. The backgrounds of both of these themes generally come together in the thought of Matthias of Janov, and particularly from his rejection of the secular nature of politics. This calls for an elaboration of the description provided in Chapter 1. In short, a secularized view of politics teaches that human and divine affairs are semantically distinct. Here, thinkers like Augustine and Wyclif agree that even the best possible human order bears no direct relevance to the heavenly kingdom, since its membership is decided outside of time. Thus the holy king may be among the reprobate, and the heathen among the elect. In contrast to this, Janov's voluntarism teaches that the community of true Christians, like the individual Christian believer, simultaneously identifies and gives existential reality to the *communio sanctorum* already now, differing from the blissful kingdom only in its carnal existence. Christ's living members can (only) be identified with an ethical religio-political order of saints, initiated, maintained, and distinguished by the eucharist and its devotion.<sup>468</sup> For Janov, the resulting Christian order is proleptic, meaning that it anticipates the order of the beyond already now both in its unanimity,<sup>469</sup> but also in its socio-political structure. As he explains:

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<sup>468</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 371: "Nichil itaque est, quod amplius in ecclesia dei deo patri et filio eius unico et spiritui sancto complaceat in quo magis delectetur, quam in eo, quod a christianis plebibus communiter, concorditer hoc sacramentum frequentetur in sancta et amabili societate christiana et in unitate mense domus domini in splendidis nuptiis, quas fecit deus suo filio, nichilque graciosius dei angelis in celo, nichil acceptabilius ecclesie sancte triumphanti, nichil carius et dulcius ecclesie militanti, nichil utilius et efficacius ad societatem et dilectionem fraternam, christianam plebibus, nichil delectabilius et pulchrius omnibus plebeis, nichil honorabilius et conveniencius et salubrius sanctis sacerdotibus et ministris, nichil potencius et compendiosius incipientibus et infirmis, proficientibus et validis, perfectis et confirmatis, nichil horribilius demonibus, nichil terribilius inimicis ecclesie, nichil admirabilius infidelibus, nichil splendidius in dei operibus quam hoc nostrum iuge sacrificium unicum, quam hoc sacramentum divinum, quam ista conmanducacio et communio cottidiana omnium et singulorum christianorum volencium manducare corpus Christi et potare sanguinem ipsius preciosum in sacramento."

<sup>469</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 287 f.: "Illud vero tale unum faciens unitatem ecclesie est unus deus, unus dominus, unus pater, unus magister, una religio, una lex, unum preceptum commune et uniforme, una consuetudo, uniformis conversacio, uniformes actus. ... Primum igitur et principale, quod facit intrinsece et essencialiter ad unitatem populi, vel quod constituit et conservat universitatem, est unitas dei vivi et veri ...". Cf. Valasek, *Das Kirchenverständnis*, 78-88, cit. at 80.

the internal unity and likeness of the Church in the Holy Spirit and grace and truth, which the single crucified Jesus and his spirit performs, as is said, like the root and source of all likeness and human friendship, fashions one likeness and restores to unity to such an extent, that it makes all, even the great multitude of believers, to be of one heart and one soul ... then it hastens to return all like and common external things, such as customs, the worship of God, or various devotions in serving one God, food and clothing, deed and character, up to the latest temporal goods and riches ... And thus it is written of the primitive Church: “all things were common to them, nor did anyone call something his own.” And after that it is the same always and everywhere until eternity, wherever the spirit of Jesus is among men, and it makes them one in Jesus Christ, soon there begins to be formed, restored, and solidified a likeness of all, an agreeable union of all, a concord and communion of all things (*unio iocunda et concordia et omnium rerum communio*).<sup>470</sup>

This finding bears significant implications for reform, since it emphasizes inner disposition over official status in this endeavour. Like its original unity, so the corruption of the primitive Church according to Janov occurred communally from within. No wicked emperor or pope is responsible here, and likewise no one outside the Church community. Even clerical deception is of only secondary importance. Instead, modern corruption originates more generally from the cooling of collective Christian love to God vis-à-vis the eucharist.<sup>471</sup> For Janov, this emphasis on popular volition dilutes the agency of superiors in reform, especially those who are clearly outside the proleptic Church community. Secular power in particular appears here almost as an afterthought, since it bears the birthmark of paganism,<sup>472</sup> and in the reformed future it seems to wither away completely into superfluity, as it was to the first humans in

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<sup>470</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 173 f.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid., 37 f.: “quamdiu in ecclesia [!] Christi fuit fervor caritatis et habundancia virtutis, tam diu communitas christiana cottidie et sepe istud nostrum veritatis azima iterabat. Sed postquam multorum refriguit caritas et habundavit iniquitas, mox plebs christiana cessavit a frequenti communion huius panis.” Janov, *Regule* V, 355: “defectus istius frequentacionis sacramenti cottidiane singulorum in populo christiano illud maximum malum principale in christianis attulit, scilicet scismata et discessionem a Christo Jhesu et separacionem ab invicem hominum et destruccionem concordie et piarum affectionum.” Cf. Valasek, *Das Kirchenverständnis*, 88-91.

<sup>472</sup> Janov, *Regule* II, 227-33., for instance 229: “communiter totum wlgus tremit coram dominis suis et principibus secularibus et promptissime ipsis obedit, sacerdotes autem contempnit et obedienciam ipsorum conculcat et parvipendit, illud est destitutio et vindicta a deo atque antychrysteitas super populum christianum carnalem et indignum ingratumque domino Jhesu, deo suo.”

paradise.<sup>473</sup> More generally, instruction from superiors, especially good clerics, is doubtlessly important, but Church reform ultimately is a collective extension of self-reform through eucharistic devotion. As such, it is crucially decided at the most basic level by the private volition of the people, which Janov appreciates as significantly immune to external intervention.<sup>474</sup> In contrast to Wyclif, then, this explains why Janov's reform vision is primarily bottom-up. With the individual relationship to God at the foundation of religio-political order, impetus for purification and return cannot be predominantly paternalistic, but must ultimately come from below. Janov explains this in his own words:

If the revived faith of the most holy crucified Jesus, and the burning love in the hearts of Christians, is still to abound over the earth, it will also be necessary to return the great desire for frequent communion of the body and blood in the Christian people, whether its attendants wish it or not, and therefore the frequent and dauntless requirement and daily appeal of the people for their daily bread from their priests.<sup>475</sup>

Again, it is this communal return to eucharistic zeal which will birth the *novus populus* and recreate society. Here, Janov's clear methodological emphasis on eucharistic devotion over preaching makes sense. The Word of God as sermon and scripture is important as a guide and preparation (*preparacio*) for the believer, but it is ultimately

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<sup>473</sup> Ibid., 165: "ita necesse est quemlibet christianum formari ex Christo ad Christum et a Christo ad ymaginem omnino et similitudinem Jhesu Christi in tanta unitate Christi Jhesu et christiani sit unus spiritus et una vita et per consequens una mensura, una fortitudo, una sapientia et sciencia, una virtus, una potencia et pulchritudo, ergo et maxima unitas et similitudo, ita ut magis sit dictum de Christo Jhesu et christiano vel ecclesia collecta ex christianis: 'Et erunt duo in carne una', quam est dictum ad literam de primo Adam et pro eius Ewa."

<sup>474</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 356., for instance: "si celebriter et communiter fieret communicacio sacramentalis cottidiana vel frequens, tunc magis resurgeret in suum fervorem Christi caritas et cetera virtutes et omnis penitencia et christiane vite disciplina et habundancia iniquitatis nimis in sanctis deflueret et minueretur in toto orbe christiano. Item tunc rediret voluntas dei bona in Syon et edificarentur muri Jerusalem et tunc gratissime acceptaret sacrificium iusticie oblationes et holocausta." Cf. Janov, *Regule* VI, 24 f.

<sup>475</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 83: "si adhuc fides piissimi Jhesu crucifixi habundaverit super terram rediviva et caritas ardens in cordibus christianorum, necesse erit eciam, velint nolintve dispensatores, redire magna desideria in christiano populo ad crebram communionem corporis et sanguinis, et per consequens crebra et inportuna exaccio plebis peticioque sui panis a presbyteris suis cottidie ac cottidiana"; Ibid., 205: "licitum est sanctis plebeis communicare Christi corpori in novissima ecclesia ... pro eo, quod per hoc esset nunc renovate in christianis memoria passionis Christi iam pene mortua a corde hominum ...".

only by his personal effort and free choice that he may worthily achieve the goal of his faith, permanent unity with Christ via the Word of God as eucharist.<sup>476</sup> As a result, the preached Word disposes (*disponit*) man to unity with Christ, but it is transitory (*preterit*) compared to the lasting unity achieved by the consumption of the Word made flesh (*manet et habitat in nobis*).<sup>477</sup> In summary, what all this begins to show is the potential political relevance of the more humanistic trends which utraquist leaders inherited from the confident Platonist tradition. For Janov, Christ's heavenly kingdom is already prefigured by the ethical political community of Christians on earth. This emphasis on popular volition generally undermines the more paternalistic reform vision of thinkers like Wyclif, because it dilutes the centrality of officeholders in the constitution and maintenance of Christian order, and instead more broadly delegates these responsibilities to the collective of its individual members. Top-down instruction remains an important method for purification, but ultimately it is the personal choice of each believer to introduce and maintain divine unity into their lives.

Although Hussite thinkers do not go as far as Janov in all respects, they clearly agree with him regarding the sacred nature of politics. Ethical conduct already now defines a sacred and proleptic human community which shares divine love and anticipates its heavenly fate. In combination with the symbol of the chalice, this now allows them to assume a more empirical reality for the Christian order, which more fully subverts the Augustinian restraints to its charismatic discernment. The full relevance of

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<sup>476</sup> Janov, *Regule* VI, 139: "Cibus et potus aliter puero adhibetur, qui sugit lac de uberibus sue matris: similiter hominibus est preparatio in sacramento verbi divini, quia adhuc parvuli in comparacione angelorum sugunt mel de petra, id est spiritum lesu suavissimum, de sacramento oleumque caritatis de saxo durissimo. Viris autem solidus cibus apponitur—sic angelis hoc verbum divinum palam in sua proprietate administratur."

<sup>477</sup> Janov, *Regule* V, 362 f.: "Non enim dixit Christus: 'Qui credit in me vel qui orat me vel qui audit me aut qui est devotus michi, in me manet et ego in eo', sed principaliter et magis proprie hoc voluit dicere de manducacione sue carnis et sanguinis ad innuendum differentiam superius designatam, videlicet, quod verbum in voce, quamvis disponit hominem et efficit capacem eum unionis cum Christo, cum transit sic verbum in spiritu, licet sit degustatum, tamen aliquo modo preterit, sed verbum caro factum et manducatum et potatum digne in sacramento manet et habitat in nobis."

this finding is only located later in Tábórite chiliasm, but it is worth appreciating already here. As the site of human and divine unity, the manifest practice of utraquist communion becomes the chief ethical criterion of Christian identity, and thus a relatively clear boundary demarcating the Church community from those outside it.<sup>478</sup> Articulated in terms which are already familiar, the chalice is what introduces the peace of Christ into this world. On the one hand, this description captures its unifying power. Individually, the chalice coordinates inner and outer man into a religio-political unit founded in God's law.<sup>479</sup> On the communal scale, this sacrament collectively coordinates Christians into a direct theocracy under Christ. As Jakoubek explains:

sharing [the eucharist] in both kinds through the priests to the common people unites and confederates the people with the clergy in pious affection, and also the people with each other in mutual love, and Christ with the people, and vice versa. ... [This] is a manifest sign and sacred proof of immense divine goodness, of divine and infinite communicability, and of the sweetest and most loving partnership (*societas*) of God with men.<sup>480</sup>

In agreement with Janov, the resulting order is proleptic, reviving primordial unanimity and the integrity of man, and anticipating eternal peace as in Eden.<sup>481</sup> Even if utraquist

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<sup>478</sup> Somewhat ironically, Jakoubek often employs Augustine to support this Donatist vision of an intelligible Church community. For instance, see Střibro, "Magna cena," 134: "iste cibus et potus sacramentalis figurat et dat intelligere corporis mistici ecclesie et suorum membrorum, quod corpus secundum Augustinum 'est sancta ecclesia in predestinatis et vocatis et iustificatis et glorificatis sanctis et fidelibus eius'"; NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 95<sup>r</sup>: "Sic christiani diversa habent dona, singula tamen a christo et eodem spiritu procedencia qui spiritus eos in unum colligit et colligat. Dicit ergo Augustinus et alii, quod sacramentum eukaristie externis significat magnam unionem illorum de illa mensa participancium ut simul non litigent sibi mutuo non detrahant. Qui ergo sic non sunt uniti, signum est indigne communionis ...".

<sup>479</sup> Kapit. D 47, 119<sup>r</sup>: "Sic potus sanguinis Christi cibum verbi dei sive precepti ad corda defert ut vires anime et membra corpori uniat."

<sup>480</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 582: "Primus modus, scilicet plebem comunicari per sacerdotes sub utraque specie, uniret et confoederaret in affectione pia plebem cum sacerdotibus, et e converso plebes mutuo ad invicem in mutua dilectione, et Christum ad plebem, et e converso. ... Item primus modus est manifestum signum et solenne argumentum divinae immensae bonitatis, divinae et infinitae communicabilitatis, et Dei cum hominibus amicissimae et dulcissimae societatis."

<sup>481</sup> NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 94<sup>v</sup>: "qui ergo hanc ecclesiam voluerunt cognoscere, oportet quod oculos prospiciatissimos (!) sicut aquilla habeat. Et huius corporis membra non sunt loco coniuncta, sed veritate virtute, de quibus olyn dictum est, quod multitudinis credencium erat cor unum. ... Sicut enim amici naturales sunt ab eodem patre et matre, suntque eis similes in moribus et natura, eosdemque cibos in alimentum a suis accipiunt parentibus. Maior autem hic debet fieri unio, quia sunt ab eodem patre christo domino respectum cuius debent omnes eidem veritati adherere eandem mensam frequentantes et eundem



leaders maintain theoretical distance from the following conclusion, this basically collapses any remaining distinction between the Church and the community of utraquists.<sup>482</sup> The two may not always perfectly overlap, but in broad terms the zealous devotees of the chalice are treated as identical with the unique collection of the good, distinct from sinners and bound for paradise.<sup>483</sup> Only utraquists are dear (*vzácní*) to God, while those not communicating anger God and lose his grace.<sup>484</sup> Therefore, what is also

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calicem omnes bibentes”; Ibid., 212<sup>v</sup>: “Secunda virginitas consistit in fide vera ut est intencio recta, voluntas integra, non consensus ad peccata, et fides illa est observancia mandatorum dei ... sic hic presenti seculo nos sumus ut in paradiso Ewa intencio et consciencia munda, fides unia, voluntas integra, qui habet hoc est ut Ewa in paradiso, et qui hoc non habet est ut Ewa de paradiso expulsa ...”. Cf. Petrus of Benešov, “Utrum pro reformanda,” ed. Jana Nechutová, *Sborník prací Filosofické fakulty Brněnské university* B 20 (1973): 105-107.

<sup>482</sup> NK ČR XXIII F 204, fol. 48<sup>r</sup>: “Cum ergo multi uniuntur sic spiritum domini Ihesu Christi, uniuntur eciam inter se vinculo caritatis. Et hoc est fructus ipsius manducacionis corporis christi, quod fiet unum vinculum caritatis. Ideoque nomine retinuit eo quod dicitur communio. A ‘com’ quod est simul et ‘unio’ i.e. multorum simul unio videlicet hominis cum Christo. Et hominem ad invicem in fide et dilectione Ihesu Christi ... Bene idem Augustinus dicit: ‘O sacramentum unitatis, O vinculum caritatis.’ Si ergo fiet illa communio beatissimi sacramenti communiter astantibus in missa, tunc illam rem quam signis et forma sua figurat in hominibus efficeret, videlicet beatam multorum ad invicem unionem. Nam ut supradictum est nominandum dicitur communio, i.e. comedencium unio, vel communio simul omnium unio scilicet christianorum ad idem et ad idem. Ita ut sit omnium unus spiritus et una vita. Et per consequens multitudinis credencium cor unum et anima una, quod est maximum bonum in ecclesia. ... Et facit eos esse unum unanimiter consencientes sibi in concordia pacis et caritatis. Et sic frequentacio istius comunionis est maxima occasio et pulcerrimum exercicium alter utrum mutue dileccionis puta Christi Ihesu ad homines et homini ad christum.” Cegna, “Poczatki Utrakwizmu w Czechach w Latach 1412-1415,” 111: “fideles per Dignam sumcionem spiritualem et sacramentalem constituuntur in veritate mistici corporis Christi magis ac magis et maiori vinculi societatis—cibo et potu vult intelligi corporis et membrorum suorum quod est sancta ecclesia in predestinatis quia accedentibus digne ad sacramentum integrum tam beata societas inter eos in vinculo caritatis exuritur.”

<sup>483</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 427: “fideles in statu communitatis et in humanis viventes, manducantes corpus Christi in forma visibili panis, et bibentes ejus sanguinem sub forma vini, quodammodo magis incorporantur corpori Christi mystico, et magis ac magis uniuntur Christo et eo fruuntur”; cf. Ibid., 582; Krmíčková, *K počátkům kalicha*, 106: “In illis ergo, qui spiritu Dei aguntur et obtinent spiritualem sanam discrecionem, venerantur magis ac magis et non fastidiunt in accessu crebro. Sed hii, qui foris sunt etsi non numero, tamen merito, id est mortali peccato obsessi, qui sunt porci, canes timidi et venefici nuncupati a Scriptura, spiritum Iesu non habentes, huiusmodi nullum participium Spiritus abinde sorciuntur, sive semel in anno accedant sive raro.” Stříbro, *Betlemská kázání*, 47: “to fornicators, the communion in the body and blood of the Lord Christ is not aromatic (nevonie) ... because they are fermented by the love of this world and full of that old ferment ... On the other hand he who has not partaken in those sins, or ... repents of them, having firm intent not to relapse, to him it is aromatic and delectable (vonie a chutno jest) to hear God’s word ... and he communes that spiritual food and drink of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ frequently.” Cf. Dobiáš, “Dva rukopisy,” 58.

<sup>484</sup> Stříbro, “O boží krvi,” 41: “only those who properly eat God’s body and drink God’s blood are truly alive to God’s will (živi k Boží vůli) and dear to him (a jemu vzácní).”; Jakoubek of Stříbro, “Salvator noster,” in *Betlemské texty*, ed. Bohumil Ryba (Prague: Orbis, 1951), 116: “Ubi contra negligentes venire ad hanc cenam Dominicam irascitur Dominus, ut patet Luce XIII<sup>o</sup>. Si ergo Dominus irascitur nolentibus venire ad hanc cenam Dominicam magnam, tunc nolentes venire ad hanc cenam perdunt gratiam Domini Iesu Christi.”

implicit in this unifying description of the chalice is its converse potential to disrupt and divide. As the instrument of pacification to God's law, the chalice is likewise the divine force which empirically disturbs the wicked in the state of mundane peace, and distinguishes them from the faithful. Jakoubek explains this in familiar terms, which are worth citing at length:

... the observation of the law of the gospel for the salvation of the elect and the pleasure of God does not in itself disturb love, but rather pacifies and amplifies it. For the fruit of the reception of this sacrament in both kinds performs this in the elect itself. Yet I suppose that the fake peace and confederation in the riches, pleasures, and renown of the world happens to be disturbed by this. And just like other divine gifts (*charismata*), so also this sacrament stands as an obstacle of condemnation for some, and the accomplishment of salvation for others. The saviour called for the disruption of the peace of the wicked: "I did not come to send peace, but the sword." Like other truths, the gospel truth concerning communion in both kinds divides the elect from the reprobate according to their separate lives and wills. ... If therefore so many disturbances and so many divisions occurred due to the evangelization of so great a man as Paul, what can I possibly do, a living flea and a dead dog, if many happen to be divided and offended due to the evangelization of this truth?! Because of this, some are added to the side of truth, and others advance toward punishment.<sup>485</sup>

What is clear from this is the understanding that personal allegiances in the controversy over the chalice essentially manifest the inner allegiances to Christ or to sin, truth or hypocrisy, and thus divide wheat from tares.<sup>486</sup> This empirical sacrament simultaneously marks a person in the height of fellowship with Christ, and of alienation from Antichrist.<sup>487</sup> As a result, individual relation to the chalice also becomes a chief criterion to identify the Church's enemies. All schismatics throughout history share the basic desire to dissolve Christ's unity, which means that anti-utraquists are only the

<sup>485</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 512-14.

<sup>486</sup> František Michálek Bartoš, "Počátky kalicha v Čechách," *Časopis Musea království Českého* 96 (1922): 169: "Qui ergo hoc [i.e. calicem] negaverit propter favorem hominum vel propter consuetudinem antiquam, sciens esse solidam veritatem, ille diligit animam suam. Et per hoc separatur triticum a paleis et ibi hypocrisis manifestatur, quando debet se homo exponere contemptui."

<sup>487</sup> NK ČR V G 7, fol. 100<sup>v</sup>: "[Sacramentum est] summa unio hominis cum Christo, et summa alienatio antichristo, ... Summe delectabilis sanctis et timentibus deum, et ipsos valde replens; summe levissimus cibus reprobis, ipsosque inanes relinquens.

latest in a series of Antichrist's incarnations (*materiale esse Antichristi*).<sup>488</sup> Scepticism, obstruction, rejection, or persecution of utraquism are all therefore generally associated with sin and the community of Satan.<sup>489</sup> The anti-utraquist priest who maintains his error inflexibly is a plain heretic by personal choice.<sup>490</sup> As Jakoubek argues:

[a priest] who in no way wants to administer the whole sacrament to the people, in both forms, is a heretic, and the more manifestly and outwardly this is exposed in operation, the more easily he can be recognized in his obstinate heresy. For such a obstinate man is the Antichrist himself, against all the apostolic gospel information and the ordination and custom of the primitive Church, whether he likes it or not.<sup>491</sup>

Put briefly, although this is not yet fully actualized in Hussite thought, the immense significance which utraquists recognize in the integral eucharist offers the final

<sup>488</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 517 f.: "Secundum ergo hanc triplicem unitatem in Christo, posset aliquis in Christo triplicem solutionem facere, et tripliciter Christum solvere. ... Tercio modo, quando quidam illam unitatem, quae est inter Christum et sua membra, per dignam susceptionem sacramentorum et observationem legis Christi, solvunt per pravam doctrinam, per abominabilem vitam. ... Talem ergo unitatem sub specie pietatis in Christi fidelibus solvere et persequi non est esse ex Deo. Et hic est Antichristus. ... Rursum duplex est esse Antichristi, quantum ad propositum, quoddam esse materiale, aliud formale. Esse formale dicitur capitale et officiale, potentissimum in malitia, sub nomine Christi nomen suum magnificans. Materiale esse sunt personae succedentes in esse Antichristinum. Materiale ergo esse Antichristi, continue variatur, formale capitale longo tempore durat."

<sup>489</sup> A favourite utraquist reference was to Pope Leo's heresiological polemics against Manicheans. See Svejkský, *Veršované*, 173: "[Papa Leo:] 'Cumque ad tegendam infidelitatem suam nostris [Manichei] audent interesse conventibus, ita sacramentorum se communione temperant, ut interdum, ne penitus latere non possint, ore indigno Christi corpus accipiant, sanguinis autem nostre redemptionis calicem haurire, declinant. Quod ideo vestre notum facimus sanctitati, ut vobis huiusmodi homines et in suis manifestantur indiciis'; František Šimek, "Dvě anonymní postní postilly z 1. polovice XV. století," *Časopis Národního muzea* 105 (1931): 72; Stříbro, "Salvator noster"; Hus and Stříbro, *Betlémské texty*, 134/136. See also note 486 above. On Antichrist, see Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 517 f., at 517: "[unitas] est inter Christum et sua membra, per dignam suceptionem sacramentorum et observationem legis Christi, ... Talem ergo unitatem sub specie pietatis in Christi fidelibus solvere et persequi, non est esse ex Deo. Et hic est Antichristus."; Ibid., 582: "[communio sub una] est in pluribus negligentium sacerdotum, et signum, quod sunt sine affectione, et signum infidelium dispensatorum, pigrorumque servorum sui Domini." Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 121 f.; Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 133.

<sup>490</sup> Dresden, "Contra Gallum," 189: "Illud enim dicitur 'Heresis' secundum Ieronimum ibidem, scilicet: 'Heresis dicitur Grece ab eleccione, quod scilicet eam unusquisque eligat disciplinam, quam putat esse meliorem. Quicunque igitur Scripturam aliter intelligit, quam sensus Spiritus Sancti flagitat, a quo scripta est, licet ab ecclesia non recesserit, tamen hereticus appellari potest', ut ibi. Videant hic ad semetipsos recurrentes et dicentes in scriptis suis: 'Michi apparet pro nunc dicere', et sic de aliis, ut supra, an sibi non eligant disciplinam, quam putant meliorem. Deberet enim nobis sufficere illud, quod Cristo placeret cum apostolis et Sanctis suis..."

<sup>491</sup> NK ČR V G 7, fol. 97v: "[sacerdos] nequaquam vult plebeis integrorum sacramentum servum utrumque formam ministrare est hereticus, et de quanto hoc manifestius exterius in effectu ostendit tanto facilius potest in sua heresi cognosci pertinaci. Talis enim pertinax nolenter vel volenter propria contra omnem informacionem ewangelicam apostolicam ac ordinacionem et observanciam primitive ecclesie est propria antichristo".

ingredient to effectively dismantle the last remnants of Augustine's ecclesiastic teaching of invisible collectives. The worthy Christian cleric or layman participating in the utraquist sacrament at the public ceremony of mass simultaneously enters into but also gives empirical reality to a new religio-political community with Christ and the saints of earth and heaven. The proleptic identity of this community, as the exclusive anticipants of membership in the beyond, means that the Church and also its enemies now practically become clear inner-worldly entities in the human political landscape. The full implications of this finding are not yet emphasized by Hussite thinkers, but no further intellectual developments are necessary for their adaptation by Taborite radicals.

A further point of political relevance of the emphasis on voluntarism is located in its capacity to call attention to the darker implications of humanistic thought. As an independent, self-defined agent, the individual can ultimately prove highly resistant to the influence of outside forces. In the context of their zealous and chronic polemics with enemies of the chalice, this highlights to utraquist leaders the negative side of the correlation of ethics and anthropology. Man's free choice can decide to rise to the heights of semi-deification, but also to the depths of satanic beastliness. Thus the simplest of Christians reach the heights of divine awareness while the most learned and powerful of sinners is kept in the depth of ignorance even after years of guidance. This is most important now because it generally aligns with and reinforces latent Donatist assumptions which link Christian status to ethics rather than office. In addition, however, it also begins to show the limits of the Wycliffite reform program, as will be discussed later. The starting point here is the Hussite claim that the revelation and evangelization of utraquism has closed the period of innocuous ignorance to the value of the chalice, meaning that the main obstacle to human potential is no longer cognitive

but voluntary failure. God generally excuses involuntary blindness to his law,<sup>492</sup> but modern opponents of the chalice are fully culpable because they wittingly reject the truth. One Hussite radical explained the distinction: “if our ancestors, out of foolishness or simplicity, did not used to hold to it [i.e. utraquism], nor preserve that which Christ enacted, ... may Lord God give them his reprieve. But the Lord God will not forgive our sins for our malice and obstinance (*zlost a zapeklenie*), after giving us reminder and warning”.<sup>493</sup> This malice (*malicia / viciium, zlost*) describes the lowest possible character for the medieval thinker, because this is a person not wicked from weakness or innocuous ignorance, but rather confidently and voluntarily. This is because the malicious character chooses the ego over the greater good, meaning that unlike other sinners his will and judgement are in perfect harmony. As a result, he is (voluntarily) blind to his evil, and his moral ignorance is self-perpetuating.<sup>494</sup> In the hands of utraquist thinkers, this ethical category of malice explains the durable epistemic failure of sinners. As a result of moral deficiency, the medicine of the eucharist remains hidden to them. Malice binds their wills to self love, blinding their grasping minds to the divine

<sup>492</sup> Stříbro, “O boží krvi,” 53: “‘grace may readily be given due to ignorance’ namely, because they did not know, like Saint Paul found grace, ignorant of his opposition to the truth and precept of the Lord Jesus, because he did not act from malice, but because he did not know”; Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 428 f.: “fideles de communitatibus ecclesiae ... non eo ipso, quod non possunt, nec docentur sumere hoc divinissimum sacramentum utriusque speciei, sunt de damnandis.”; NK ČR V G 7, fol. 100<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>493</sup> Jan Čapek’s song “Such is the matter at hand”, in Nejedlý, *Dějiny* VI, 261: “A jesliže naši předci / z hlúposti aneb z sprostnosti / toho sú dřiev nedrželi / ani také zachovávali, / což jest Kristus učinil ... dáť jim pán buoh svú milost. Ale nám pán boh, kteréž jest / již napomínal a vystřiehl jest, / nebude viny odpušćenie / pro naši zlost a zapeklenie”.

<sup>494</sup> On the roots of the concept in Aristotle, see Audrey L. Anton, “Breaking the Habit: Aristotle on Recidivism and How a Thoroughly Vicious Person Might Begin to Improve,” *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 13, no. 2 (2006): 58–66; Audrey L. Anton, “Fixed and Flexible Characters: Aristotle on the Permanence and Mutability of Distinct Types of Character,” *Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy Newsletter* 2013, no. 14.2 (2013): 22–28. On the medieval continuity in Aquinas, see Jennifer A. Frey, “Aquinas on Sin, Self-Love, and Self-Transcendence,” in *Self-Transcendence and Virtue: Perspectives from Philosophy, Psychology, and Theology*, ed. Jennifer A. Frey and Candace Vogler (New York: Routledge, 2019), esp. 72–79.

revelation available to the holy.<sup>495</sup> Without firm ethical foundation, their cognition is tethered to the cravings of mundane knowledge (*sapientes mundi*), and their teachers are pagan philosophy and scholastic logic which only further misleads the will from salvation.<sup>496</sup> The decorations of their wisest doctors are the “shit of Antichrist” (*cecum antichristi*). Meanwhile, simple laymen surpass popes and university masters in awareness of this simple truth.<sup>497</sup> In short, the will and cognition of the malicious is in perfect harmony in ignorance: they neither know nor want to know (*non cognoscunt nec volunt cognoscere*) the truth of the lay chalice, and they neither believe nor want to believe its divine revelation (*nec credunt aut credere volunt*).<sup>498</sup> The moral failure of

<sup>495</sup> NK ČR VIII E 3, fol. 90<sup>v</sup>, esp.: “Sathan dicitur leviathan propter maliciam, quia cum dyabolus induxit ut homines multum mundum et seipsos amarent”; Stříbro, *Betlémská kázání*, 33: “whoever the king of all sons of pride leads to sin by consent, he kills all his good deeds and blinds him with malice (oslepí jej zlostí), and then wraps him in the chain of despair ...”; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 148<sup>v</sup>: “ipsi mali ... sunt scevo [?] voluptatum involuti, et illis qui tales sunt soli per se inquirentes causam curiositis, illis occulta legis sicut margarite non sunt revelande. Sed si abiecerunt intentios malas et vitam emendaverunt tunc veritates ille sunt eis propalande. ... Quia dum homines non sunt dispositi, tunc non sunt eis omnia misteria revelanda”; NK ČR V G 7, fol. 100<sup>v</sup>: “[Sacramentum est] summum meritum sanctorum et summus reatus impiorum, summa illuminacio piorum cum summa obduracione et excecacione impiorum ... Summe apprehensibilis et feliciter a simplicibus et piis christianis, ipsosque dulciter stabiliens et confirmans; et curiosis superbis et presumptuosis scrutatoribus summe incomprehensibilis, ipsosque sua magestate opprimens et obtundens”.

<sup>496</sup> Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 13: “Gentes igitur et eorum philosophi a curis huius mundi querebant semper aliquid novi scire. Sic enim legitur Actuum XVII, quia Athenis fuerunt multi philosophi naturas rerum indagantes, non aliud, nisi ut aliquid novi scirent, vacantes.” Cf. Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 26; Jakoubek of Stříbro, “Zpráva, jak sněm Konstantský o svátosti večere kristovy nařídil,” in *Dvě staročeská utrakvistická díla Jakoubka ze Stříbra*, ed. Mirek Cejka and Helena Krmíčková, Opera Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Masarykianae (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2009), 107; Nejedlý, *Dějiny* IV, 100., n. 36: “patet, quam necessarium sit nobis deum cognoscere et alias sciencias ethnicas preternecessarias, immo superfluas et tradiciones decretalium oligarticas, que claram dei noticiam summe necessariam impediunt, precavere”; Ibid., 101., n. 41: “In hac presenti vita valde brevi huius evi inmorari scienciis sive artibus secularibus et humanis tradicionibus, incertis et ambiguis, ad salutem preternecessariis, plus quam legi dei, est peccatum non mediocre et nocivum atque ineditivum salutis”. Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 12-14 passim. Cf. Kybal, *M. Jan Hus* 2.1, 139 f., n. 3. Cf. Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 26; Stříbro, “Zpráva,” 107.

<sup>497</sup> Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 25: “Redarguendi sunt magistri nostri, qui faciunt questiones inutiles, ymo unus laycus plus sentit de caritate Dei quam papa et magistri”; Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 13 f. passim., for instance at 13: “Sic fuerunt simplices piscatores vocati et humiles, sicut et hodie non multos philosophos gentiles vocat. Cur enim deus non vocavit cesares ut illi cogerent ad assumendam fidem? Sed non – ac si diceret: aliam habeo potestatem, que toti mundo resistet. Et dicit non multi sapientes, scilicet philosophi, nec divites, sicut reges et cesares, non multi nobiles, ... Sicut et hodie pauperes et simplices sunt proniores ad acceptandam veritatem, quam divites et huius mundi sapientes.” Cf. Želivský in Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 26; Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 546, 552.

<sup>498</sup> Kadlec, “Literární polemika,” 80: “non cognoscunt nec volunt cognoscere, quod tale bonum, id est sangwis Christi Iesu, deberet ministrari fidelibus laicis sub utraque specie; facta iam misericorditer divina

these malicious sinners is translated into an anthropological incapacity. They are doomed to a stagnant and demonic condition of animality (*animalitas*), both epistemically and ethically.<sup>499</sup> They may be part of nature, but they are inwardly disposed against it (*contra naturam*).<sup>500</sup> In this sense, it would be better if they had never learned truth, than to have known and rejected it.<sup>501</sup> Jakoubek explained this obstructed state his listeners in Dionysian terms: “just as physical waters by their nature do not flow upwards but downwards, so God’s wisdom does not flow upwards to proud hearts, but downwards to the depths of humble thought”.<sup>502</sup> What generally emerges from all this is an deepened acknowledgement of the contradictory implications of humanistic thought. Anti-utraquists are naturally capable, but through a deformity of volition are

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ex miseratione de hoc revelacione nec credunt aut credere volunt, quod hoc esset valde utile et necessarium Christi fidelibus laicis ... Patet secundo, quod illis non concedetur venia qui hoc scienter obmiserunt.”

<sup>499</sup> Stříbro, “O boží krvi,” 69: „Lo, every such person [not caring for the eucharist] is like an unclean animal and beast [jestit jako necisté zvíře a hovádo].“ Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 19: “Videns sathanas, quod homines sunt mortue fidei a caritate exorts, suntque nimis animales, quia ergo de facili cognoscere se forte possent homines in illa animalitate, disposuit ergo sathanas, ut sint in ecclesiis melodie multe et dulces organorum tactus et ut sit ornatus exterior ecclesie magnus, per quem populus carnalis aliquando usque ad fletum movetur et in illis se tunc subpodiat.”; Stříbro, *Betlémská kázání*, 39: “And thus no one will enter [hell], unless he is a devil, doing demonic acts and thus one of his members. Just as no one will arrive into the heavenly kingdom unless he is a son of God. For just as the wicked is a devil via his malice—according to the words of the Lord Christ spoken to his apostles: ‘For I have chosen twelve of you, and one of you is a devil’—so via virtue people become sons of God ... And also from humans they will become eternal gods, not by nature, but by election.”; NK ČR VIII E 3, fol. 90<sup>v</sup>: “*amor terrenorum facit hominem bestialem*”; Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 12 f., n. 1: „Et hoc est, Apok. 17, visum, quia mulier luxuriosa sedet in bestia, hoc est ille status apostaticus a lege domini, et mulier sedet super terram et dominatur toti mundo et populo bestiali“. Cf. Dresden, “Puncta,” 60 f.; Krmíčková, “Cupio a te,” 107; ÖNB 4937, fol. 16<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>500</sup> See note 436.

<sup>501</sup> NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 114<sup>v</sup>: “Melius enim dicit petrus in Canonica erat illis viam veritatis non cognoscere, quam post agnitam retroire.”; NK ČR V G 7, fol. 99<sup>v</sup>, where Jakoubek references Augustine on the issue: “‘Quia noverunt divina mandata, aufertur ab eis excusacio ... licet graves sic peccare hominem scientem quam nescientem, non tamen immo fugiendum est ad ignorancie tenebras ... Aliud est enim nescisse, aliud scire noluisse. Ignorantia quippe non est eorum qui scire nolunt, sed qui tamquam simpliciter nesciunt ... Qui sine lege peccaverunt, sine lege peribunt. Et quicumque in lege peccaverunt, per legem iudicabuntur’.”

<sup>502</sup> Stříbro, *Betlémská kázání*, 72 f.: “Neb jakožto vody tělesné od přirození svého neplynú nahoru ale dolův, též múdrosti božské neplynúť na horu pyšných srdcích, ale na doly pokorných myslí.”; Dresden, *Querite*, 57: “[via Jerome:] multo hiis difficilius eloquentes credunt Deo; obceatur enim cor eorum divitiis, opibus atque luxuria, et circumdati viciis non possunt videre virtutes sed nec audire veritatem simplicitatemque Scripture.”; Stříbro, *Betlémská kázání*, 72: “just as Aristotle writes in the first book of the Ethics: ‘Reason continuously draws itself to the best’ but, once a person has the intention to repent from sin, the devil discovers this, hoping to interrupt it, so that [the person] seek his salvation elsewhere than from God”.

kept in a perpetual state of miserable ignorance, and are surpassed even by those considered lowly by human standards. On the one hand, this will be important moving forward because it questions certain premises of Wycliffite reform by reiterating the relative autonomy of free will from external attempts of re-engineering, and thus the importance of individual agency in reform. Yet more important for the moment is the democratizing effect this has on assumptions of reform agency. In relation to God, knowledge and capacity are ultimately decided not by human offices but ethical disposition, a finding which seriously undermines the authority of superiors identified as malicious sinners, and appreciates moral achievement regardless of status.

### **Ethical Agency**

Therefore, taken together with the frustrating historical experience of utraquist thinkers, these findings generally contribute to a more serious depreciation of traditional medieval leaders than seen before. By their corrupt ethical disposition, sinful religious and secular officials not only clearly articulate their exclusion from the community of Christians, but also their inability to effectively perform their duties. To varying degrees of severity, this means that they are disqualified from their position. For Christians, such leaders are useless (*inutiles*) and dangerous in their obstruction of salvation.<sup>503</sup> These

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<sup>503</sup> NK ČR V G 7, fol. 99<sup>v</sup>, “Cum omnes [cleri negligentes] declinaverunt simul inutiles facti sunt. Quia etiam fuit injuria et violentia facta electis subditis a clero cupido quod ablatum fuit eis iuge sacrificium”; Ibid., 93<sup>r</sup>: “Nam omnis sacerdos nolens ex officio suo ministrare pertinens et requisitum ad salutem populo christiano inpedit, quantum est in eo, viam salutis in populo, et per consequens ut sic seducit populum a via veritatis et suam propriam animam, ergo est seductor et hereticus”; Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 22: “[Seculares] non possunt quidquam ordinare, cum timent perdere bona, diligunt mundum, Christum ore confitentur, factis autem negant ... sine quo nec reges nec barones possunt prodesse”. NK ČR Břevnov 187, fol. 36<sup>v</sup>: “Quare timendum est, quod homini verbi dei audicio communicacio est indigna non curancium ista [mala] sedare. Omne enim crimen est fermentum ... Quia autem officiales et ceteri presidentes communitati cum se gule et ebrietati exposuerunt, bonum commune non procurare, nec media congruentia sciunt tangere, et heu quasi quilibet quolibet est particeps in malo. ... Debent ergo omnes simul et unusquisque, quantum in eo est, de medio sui malum eicere. Hoc enim preceptum precipue domini et consules tenentur implere”; Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 23, n. 20: “Manifesta sunt opera carnis, fornicacio et talia inter se operantes peccata non paciebantur, sed de medio communitatis eiciebant. Nunc tamen non curant officiales hec inpedire, se bene virtuosi iam angariuntur.”; Ibid., 23, n.



doubts therefore significantly challenge the Augustinian religio-political model of dispassionate office-holders by directly relating ethical constitution to the authority of office, and instead suggest to various degrees a more morally-conditioned basis for priesthood and kingship. Although certain thinkers prefer to downplay the clearest Donatist implications of this, more radical colleagues and followers instead emphasize them and make them explicit:<sup>504</sup>

### 1. The Clergy

For the most radical Hussites, the crucial role of the clergy in a Christian order cannot be held as distinct from priest's internal orientation. As officials of the eucharist, priests act as gatekeepers between the zone of satanic perdition and unity in the eternal Church, and this position associates utmost relevance to personal spiritual capacity and relation to God. For these thinkers, therefore, personal moral incompetence due to malicious corruption actually voids clerical status. As one Hussite preacher explained:

... for the drunkenness in errors, pleasures, and riches, priests do not know the Lord nor the law, they do not know to follow Christ in life, they do not know the plantation of the father, and [yet] such is the nature of the priesthood to have [this] knowledge. On the other hand, who does not have knowledge is not a shepherd, and instead should be cast out.<sup>505</sup>

The leading representative of this Donatistic view is Nicholas of Dresden, who articulates his position by appeal to several metaphysical discourses. In agreement with

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20: "Secularis quidem potestas a deo est iniuncta, ut peccata impediat, sicut sunt reges et consules; hec non facientes sunt causa magni mali. Quante enim malicie propallantur et non est, quis impediat! Cum tamen consules iuraverunt primum honorem domini defendere non ergo prohibere maliciam est offensam proximis dare; et illi trangrediuntur preceptum illud divinum et juramenta non tenent. Sic sacerdotes, pastores, predicatorum, quia assidue non clamant contra peccata populi, et paciuntur in medio sui maliciam, cum tamen olim omnia illa in ecclesia non paciebantur ... ex taciturnitate sacerdotum oritur magna offensa subditorum. Non est enim quis clamet contra illa". Ibid., 23: "Et ad quid potestas secularis, quod malicias non impedit, ... ad quid potestas sacerdotalis, que tacet et se deordinacionibus non opponit?". Cf. Dresden, *Querite*, 54 f.

<sup>504</sup> On Jakoubek's position vis-à-vis Donatist Hussites, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 200 f.

<sup>505</sup> NK ČR VI E 23, fol. 148<sup>r</sup>: "... sacerdotes pro ebrietate errorum et voluptatum et diviciarum nesciunt dominum, nesciunt legem, nesciunt sequi christum in vita, nesciunt plantacionem patris, et ista est substantia sacerdotii habere scienciam. Qui autem non habet scienciam, non est pastor, immo eiciendus est".

the Pseudo-Dionysius, for instance, Nicholas explains the moral conditionality of the priest within the context of a cosmic hierarchy. Just like sun rays are reflected downward by the more capable materials (*materiae capaciores*), divine instruction is only possible by imitators of God. The office of divine instruction is therefore reserved only for those in the state of divine virtue and knowledge (*habitus divine virtutis et sciencie*), and the impure are excluded from this pedagogical role (*inmundi a docendi officio sunt extranei*).<sup>506</sup> For Nicholas and other radical Hussites, this logic also bears upon all clerical responsibilities and powers. Heretical clerics are merely thieves and brigands (*fures et latrones*) usurping the positions of divinely appointed authorities, and thus share none of their powers. This means not only that their teaching is false, but also that their consecrations, along with all associated titles and benefices, and even their sacraments, are void and worthless.<sup>507</sup> Here, Nicholas appeals to metaphysics. Aristotle distinguishes matter and form (*materia et forma*), which Nicholas understands as the cause (*efficientes*) and purpose (*finis*) of an object's completion (*perfeccio rei*). Essentially he uses these categories to reduce the human contribution to eucharistic consecration to the priest's utraquist intention. Christ provides the principal cause (*principale efficientes*) of this sacrament, his body and blood, as well as the form via the words of consecration, but this form also assumes the contribution of priest's magnanimous end, which is its complete distribution to believers (*ut sumant sic et dent ceteris*).<sup>508</sup> This purpose is not achieved by anti-utraquist priests, because they instead

<sup>506</sup> Dresden, *Querite*, 32: "Dionisius *De ecclesiastica ierarchia* c. III inquit: 'Prius oportet divina in se recipere, quam aliis distribuere.' Idcirco dico, quod qui presumunt docere divina adhuc imundi, a docendi officio sunt extranei. Sicut enim solares radii pruinas et propinquiores materias capaciores lucis clarius illustrent et per illas ad inferiores lumina deferuntur, sic officium docendi divina non presumant, nisi qui habitum divine virtutis et sciencie obtinent tanquam ex divina inspiracione ad hoc officium assumpti, ut de sua habundancia valeant aliis distribuere."

<sup>507</sup> Ibid., 47-54 passim; Dresden, "Puncta," 83-88, 165; František Michálek Bartoš, "Dvě husitské postily ze Stříbra," *Theologia evangelica* 2, no. 1 (1947): 73. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 200 f.

<sup>508</sup> Dresden, *Querite*, 48 f.: "Ad constitutionem enim sive perfectionem cuiuslibet rei duo requiruntur, scilicet materia et forma, comprehendendo sub materia efficientem et sub forma finem. Principale autem

obstruct the faithful from the sacrament. In other words, the form of the sacrament is incomplete and void because the personal volition of the priest is in disharmony with Christ's unifying motivation and the more general desire for this unity.<sup>509</sup> Even worse, such clerics are infectious. Through perfectly orthodox Church authors, Nicholas shows that even penitent sinners cannot be ordained priests, and the ordaining bishop in this case loses his status.<sup>510</sup> The sacraments of simoniacs are a pollution, and should not be accepted even in dire situations. It is better to abstain from the sacraments, even eucharist and baptism, than accept them from such contaminated hands.<sup>511</sup> As one radical cleric claimed: "Whoever discerns the life of [a wicked] priest and has him celebrate the sacrament for him becomes conscious of the very same sin and also shares in its punishment. And if God would want such a sacrifice as this, he would be deceitful and a companion to sinners."<sup>512</sup> Put simply, the term *clerus malus* for such radical thinkers is simply oxymoronic. A wicked man, even if given status in the priesthood, is still apart from the Church and incapable of clerical tasks, which all require the inner harmony of the cleric with divine volition. Thus the sinning cleric is disqualified from his office.

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efficiens confeccionem ewkaristie sive corporis et sanguinis Cristi est Cristus verus Deus et homo, ministeriale autem est sacerdos. ... Forma a Cristo instituta panis sunt hec verba necessaria tantum 'hoc est corpus meum'. ... Finis autem est, 'ut sumant sic et dent ceteris'."

<sup>509</sup> Ibid., 49: "Finis autem est, 'ut sumant sic et dent ceteris'. Ad hoc enim Cristus instituit – videant hic sacerdotes, celebrantes ex sola consuetudine vel propter necessitatem, quia oportet eos celebrare, ... vel ex alia causa sinistra, non ut Deum placarent, se et fideles Cristi cibarent, sed pocius adhuc repellunt maledicuntque communicare vollentes et sangwinem Cristi sub specie vini ipsis dare denegantes. Videant, an finis debitus iste dici potest, et quid valeat dici illud, quod non sortitur finem suum debitum. Frustrum enim dicitur calciamentum cuius non est calciacio, sic medicina dicitur frustra non inducens sanitatem." Ibid., 52.

<sup>510</sup> Dresden, *Querite*, 43 f.

<sup>511</sup> Ibid., 45, 47 f., 49 f., for instance at 50: "Allegat XXIII q. 1 c. ultimum, ubi vult Gregorius, quod 'pocius est mortem arripere quam de manu heretici communionem accipere'"; cf. Bartoš, "Dvě studie," 28., n. 43.

<sup>512</sup> The quote is from Jakoubek's response to a report of a radical Hussite priest, NK ČR IV H 17, fol. 188<sup>r-v</sup>: "Qui vitam sacerdotis agnoscit et eum pro se celebrare facit, fit eiusdem peccati conscius necnon et pene particeps. Et si Deus vellet hoc tale sacrificium, esset mendax et peccatorum socius." Cf. Palacký, *Documenta*, 636–38, 679; Svejkský, *Veršované*, 112; Kaminsky, *A History*, 199–201, 260 f.

## 2. Secular rulers

Also important now is that Hussite leaders more generally also extend this ethical qualification of authority to secular rulers. Unlike before, this means that wicked officials, kings, and emperors are not only secondary or peripheral to the reformers' denunciation of the contemporary world order, but instead thoroughly integrated into it. They are no longer just deceived bystanders to Antichristian corruption, but also voluntary and active participants in the persecution of the true Church. Jakoubek reflected on this from current historical experience: "Everywhere throughout the lands the clergy is confederated with kings and princes who threaten against the truth, exploit the faithful, [and] persecute the elect of God and the gospel truth."<sup>513</sup> Like selfish clerics, kings who ignore the divine law and their role in it are merely usurpers who show no visible signs (*signa exteriora*) of divine calling, thieves and brigands who govern for themselves.<sup>514</sup> In agreement with Janov, all such officers are part of Antichrist.<sup>515</sup> This is significant because, to varying extents, Hussite observers now conclude from this a moral basis to secular authority. Moral ignorance precludes

<sup>513</sup> Holinka, "Nová betlémská postila," 22: "Ubique clerus per terras est confederatus cum regibus et principibus, qui contra veritatem instant, qui spoliantes fideles persecuntur electos Dei et veritatem evangelicam"

<sup>514</sup> Bartoš, "Sborník husitského kazatele," 21: "modo multi eliguntur ab hominibus in episcopos, papas, reges et patriarchas, qui tamen non sunt a Christo electi et approbati; talesque omnes sunt fures et latrones"; Bartoš, "Dvě studie," 26: "Principes seculi, se lege domini non regentes, latrones occultissimos sub nomine pietatis et decencie foventes [sunt]"; NK ČR VI E 23, fol. 113<sup>v</sup>: "Si enim hominibus vota frangerentur, O quam multum curarent ea reformare si frangunt deo vota, tunc non curant ... Si intrant dignitates per iuramenta sicut in consulatum ita, ut faciant iusticiam equanimitur pauperi et diviti sine munere, si non faciunt, sunt voti fractores. Similiter et prelati suam gloriam querentes et cupiditatem frangu[n]t vota. ... qui nomen christianitatis asumit, et post non implet, qui nomen regis, principis, domini militis asumit et quilibet earum directe non regit et protegit tales, contaminant nomen domini."; Holinka, "Nová betlémská postila," 16: "Quia enim est circa curiam regis, quod nullus audit se ingerere de officio sibi non commisso, sic nemo deberet audere se intromittere de officio sacerdocii sive quocunque alio, nisi sit a deo vocatus; que vocacio per quedam signa exteriora cognoscitur ..."; Ibid., 23., n. 19.

<sup>515</sup> Dresden, *Querite*, 58: "Nam 'unus Dominus', unus Doctor, unus Magister, 'unus Pater omnium' ... 'Omnis igitur, qui in terra gloriatur se esse ducem, principem, doctorem, magistrum, patrem, et inde nomen suum in terra vocavit et dilatavit, hic blasphemavit Iesum Cristum et contradicit Iesu Cristo, et hic est Anticristi. Et ille, qui maxime est talis, pro tempore est maximus Anticristus.' Hec Parisiensis."; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 173<sup>v</sup>: "videamus de qua ecclesia sunt monachi, reges, principes et Concilium Constancien[sis], qui sunt multum dotati et beneficia multa habent. Si illi sunt ornati viro suo Christo. Non enim sunt ornati Christo Jesum, sed Anticristo". Cf. NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 214<sup>r</sup>.

governing capability (*non possunt aliquid boni ordinare*), which is the foundation of the ruler's position.<sup>516</sup> As a result, such kings and princes are deficiently rooted (*non bene radicati*) in their power, and can only govern wickedly.<sup>517</sup> Recall that for Augustine, even such a wicked despot retains his divine legitimacy as a bulwark to the basest anarchy, but for utraquist leaders, such sinful kings are themselves obstacles to perfect Christian society. As a result, their laws are made void, and they lose their divine right (*právo božský*) over their subjects.<sup>518</sup> Wicked kings are not kings at all (*non sunt reges*), but mere pretenders and tyrants, with no claim to authority. As one radical Hussite preached:

infirmity of faith is a certain illness which voids a man's status (*destituit hominem a statu suo*).... Such men are not kings and true bishops (*Tales non sunt reges et veri episcopi*), because it is assumed that these [officials] would have faith, and [yet] if they are examined, they are found to be in heresy on many counts, and that they are not true shepherds ...<sup>519</sup>

In other words, wicked rulers disqualify themselves from the conditions of membership in the Christian community and, as ethical foreigners to this order, they simultaneously

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<sup>516</sup> NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 32<sup>v</sup>: “unde seculares avari et sui honoris sui amatores in consiliis suis, quia non conveniunt in nomine Ihesu Christi, et ergo nichil possunt ordinare boni, quod esset edificationem legis Christi, et hoc quia sapiencia Christi non est in eis ... ‘per me reges regnant et principes et decreta iusta statuunt’. Et ergo sine illa sapiencia neque reges neque barones possunt aliquid boni ordinare.”; cf. František Michálek Bartoš, “Betlémská kázání Jakoubka ze Stříbra z let 1415-6,” *Theologická příloha Křesťanské revue* 20 (1953): 64: “fundamentum istorum [domini seculares] est in lege, ut nullum contemptant, 2<sup>o</sup> ut sua potestate et suo ordine Domino deserviant, communitatis bonum et non proprium querant.”; Jaroslav Prokeš, *M. Prokop z Plzně. Příspěvek k vývoji konservativní strany husitské* (Prague: Nakl. Společnosti Husova musea, 1927), 200, n. 133.

<sup>517</sup> Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 14., n. 2: “Unde nimium reges et principes fiunt ad mundum sapientes, sed non sapiencia divina ... Exhibent enim se, dum adhuc non sunt bene radicati in potestate ad facienda multa bona, sed dum fuerint potestate usi, tunc oppositum faciunt.”; Ibid., 23., n. 19.

<sup>518</sup> Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 24: “Christus liberavit nos a lege humana et papali, cui non debemus obedire, sed soli Deo ...”; Stříbro, *Betlémská kázání*, 69: “those in mortal sin have no divine right over those whom they rule” [kteří jsú v smrtných hříšcích, nemají žádného práva božského na tiem, jímž vládnú];

<sup>519</sup> VI.E.24, 214<sup>r</sup>: “infirmetas fidei est quedam infirmitas que destituit hominem a statu suo, sine qua impossibile est hominem salvare, ut si sunt quidam episcopi sacralegii nigromantici dicitur eis, quod non habent fidem bonam veram sed tacent et exercent illa extrinseca ut tollant pecuniam etc. Tales non sunt reges et veri episcopi quia ad tales presupponitur fides et si examinarentur in multis punctis, invenirentur heresis et quod non sunt veri pastores ... Tales externis se paliant et ad quantumcunque volunt converuntur. Et ergo tamen potestas potest confirmari qui nec reges nec reguli digni sunt nominari ...”; Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 25: “recesserunt a caritate dei etc, non sunt reges, sed tyranni et traditores legis divine”.

forfeit any authority they once held over its governance. Instead, as defenders and agents of sin, they accept authority within the alternate religio-political order as servants or “arms of Antichrist” (*servi / arma Antichristi*).<sup>520</sup> Today it is demons who are called princes, kings, and emperors, says Jakoubek.<sup>521</sup> Although hope for the purifying king is never completely lost anywhere in Hussite thought, the historical experience of malevolence in the secular hierarchy now distinctly challenges the role of royal paternalism in reform. Such conclusions are not totally foreign to Wyclif in his most radical mood, yet the Hussites now take a step even further, as newly articulated in a vision of religio-political order with a distinctly ambiguous role for royal power. Rather than the guide of reform, the secular leader now appears in the moment of frustration as a tragic failure to the Hussite thinker. Since the primitive age, rampant sin and negligence has continually eroded the power of evil rulers, and today’s kings are barely little kinglings (*reguli*). This deterioration will only continue as long as God’s will goes unfulfilled,<sup>522</sup> until secular rule completely withers away. Jakoubek’s description here is worth citing at length:

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<sup>520</sup> ÖNB 4937, fol. 12<sup>v</sup>: “omnes peccatores publici vel occulti sunt arma dyaboli, quibus Sathan contra fideles militat christianos. Omnes partes Sathan se suis armis roboravit. In omnes tirrani et legis Christi adversarii sunt arma dyaboli.” Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 19: „Christus aufert arma dyaboli, videlicet reges malos, prelatos superbos, consuetudines, mendacia, peccata, excusaciones peccatorum, sinistram interpretacionem scripture et falsos pseudofratries”; Dresden, *Querite*, 54 f.: “iam principes catholici seculares mutuis dissensionibus occupati, avaricia pregravati, luxuria excecati atque viciis aliis circumdati tantam corrupcionem ecclesie Cristi non advertunt, sed nichilominus symoniacos, hereticos avarosque sacerdotes Deo odibiles populo ipsisque inutiles protegent, promovent, nonnunquam et fovant.”; Cf. Dresden, “Puncta,” 60 f.; Dresden, *Querite*, 65. Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 29: “Isti, qui appellant sanctam ecclesiam Romanam in Spiritu s. congregatam ... sunt homicide et ypocrite manifesti”. Ibid., 18.

<sup>521</sup> Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 14, n. 2: “demonēs dicuntur principes, dicuntur eciam principes, reges et cesares. Ymmo eciam dicebantur principes sacerdotum, ut sint prelati, doctores, qui sciencia fuerunt elevati super communem populum, de qua congaudebant. Dicit (Paulus) igitur: ‘Non loquimur sapienciam principum huius mundi’, scilicet dyabolorum, qui infundunt astuciam suam in humana corda ....”.

<sup>522</sup> NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 214<sup>r</sup>: “potestas secularis propter peccata dividitur ... regnum romanorum semper deficit ... Rex Romanorum non meretur dici rex in comparacione primitive ecclesie”. Cf. note 547; Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 33: “Et inde potestas eorum, regum, principum maxime dirimitur propter peccata eorum et regna scinduntur propter peccata hominum. Sic potestas imperialis Romana a multis annis semper decrescit. Et hoc totum, quia eciam fides in regibus et principibus desit... potestas deficit sic, quod non possunt in subditis deordinaciones impedire et rempublicam gubernare. Ideo regna infirmantur et ipsi

In the coming state of blessedness, rule will be nullified (*evacuabitur principatus*) etc., namely in this world (*in hoc mundo*), because royal power [and] worldly domination will be destroyed. For although that power and office is from God, it will be destroyed. ... for he who does not want to be subject to God's goodness will thus have this worldly power nullified here in this world. Thus the power of Antichrist and wicked clerics, which is permitted by God for the salvation of the good and the damnation of the wicked, will be negated. Therefore the royal power of Bohemia will be nullified, as well as the judicial, sacerdotal, and preaching offices, because God's elect have encountered a great impediment to salvation from the secular power. It will be nullified by God. Thus already the power of the emperor is day by day receding and being emptied ...<sup>523</sup>

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In the broadest of terms, all this clearly shows a significant disillusionment with traditional leaders which assumes stronger ethical conditions for office, and a radicalization of previous Donatist themes. This generally agrees with the Hussite trend toward voluntarist determinism and sacralized politics. Officers who have ethically distanced themselves from the divine foundation of their office also experience a corresponding lapse of power and authority, at least over the Christian community. To varying degrees, this also begins to challenge the optimistic professionalism most characteristic of the Wycliffite discourse. What possible role is available in a Christian society for individuals who obstruct the most basic functions of their office? Such questions remain unanswered for now. More important for us is to observe the effect of all these destructive anxieties on Hussite reformist thought.

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extunc dicuntur reguli magis quam reges". Holinka, "Nová betlémská postila," 23, n. 19: "Unde reges et principes, prelatorum statuta et adinventiones pre evangelio comandantes, iam eis pro ydolis et sicut ad ydola muta ducuntur. Sed potius statum est rumpendum, quam Christi ewangelium non inplendum."; <sup>523</sup> Holinka, "Nová betlémská postila," 26: "Beatitudine veniente evacuabitur principatus etc, scilicet in hoc mundo, quia potestas regia, dominacio secularis destruetur, quia quamvis a deo est illa potestas et officium, ac tamen evacuabitur. ... qui deo bono subdi noluit, tunc ergo evacuabitur illa potestas huius mundi hic in mundo. Sic potestas Antichristi et cleri mali, que a deo est permissa bonis in salutem et malis in dampnationem, evacuabitur. Quare potestas regia Boemie evacuabitur et similiter officium iudicis, officium sacerdotale istud et predicatorum evacuabitur; quia igitur electi dei magnum impedimentum salutis habuerunt a potestate seculari, a deo evacuabitur. Unde iam potestas cesaris de die in diem minuitur et evacuatur ...".

In general, it may be said that such doubts help to open a path to a competing reform approach which coexists with, but likewise challenge, the predominant hierarchical and paternalistic view inherited from Wyclif. More specifically, the sacralization of the political landscape, along with its associated emphasis on individual will, introduces into Hussite thought a strong theoretical articulation of popular agency in religio-political processes. Although Hussite leaders do not go quite as far as Janov in this direction, and clearly maintain a general allegiance to the Wycliffite vision, this highlights a certain schizophrenia which both populists and royalists struggle to resolve within the movement for years to come. As a word of introduction, this alternative reform option draws significant inspiration from Janov's distinct historical narrative. The pathetic corruption of Christendom bears strongly on the wicked clergy, but this does not tell the whole story. At least as important is the popular disposition which allowed this corruption to be widespread. As with malice, this presupposes a generally independent psychology. Personal sin never finds its inspiration from the outside world, but rather originates from within.<sup>524</sup> In agreement with Janov, the rotten state of Christendom is thus not merely a result of priestly error, but also of a more general cooling of love (*refrigerium caritatis*) which coincided historically with eucharistic decline.<sup>525</sup> The Constantinian Donation is no longer predominant, or at least not alone, in describing this historical adulteration, because the clergy shares guilt for this process

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<sup>524</sup> Nicholas of Dresden, "Expositio super pater noster," ed. Romolo Cegna, *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 30 (1990): 117.

<sup>525</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 505: "Quando coepit videri abominatio desolationis, quae dicta est a Daniele Propheta, et quando coepit stare in loco sancto; Quando incepit superabundare iniquitas et refrigescere charitas longe et late per orbem ecclesiae; Quando impii impie agentes, neque intelligentes, ut prophetavit Daniel, coeperunt polluere sanctuarium fortitudinis; Quando per orbem ecclesiae impii coeperunt intestatum simulare fraudulenter: Tunc incepit auferri a plebium multitudine iuge sacrificium, secundum hunc modum communicandi, sacramentalem simul et spiritualem, sub utraque specie ...".



with the waning enthusiasm of the people.<sup>526</sup> As Jakoubek explains, the present decay is caused by popular eucharistic disenchantment:

I concede that, with malice growing in the Christian people, devotion dwindled and was altered, and religion was rid of all goodness, and iniquity prevailed and love cooled ... Therefore just as that cause, namely the dwindling of frequent and worthy communion in both kinds, had that effect [of disunity] in the people of the primitive Church, so in modern times that cause also diminishes the effect of unity and love in the Christian people.<sup>527</sup>

This shows that that the modern corruption of authorities is only one expression of a broader state of deterioration which must be appreciated by reform. Priestly corruption could not have succeeded if the people did not likewise abandon primitive simplicity for the material and ceremonial flair of modern religious tradition, impeding internal devotion to God.<sup>528</sup> Like Janov, utraquist leaders direct particular critique here against popular cults. Painted images and dubious relics attract more love and adoration than

<sup>526</sup> Paraphrasing Janov, Jakoubek explains this in NK ČR X H 10, fol. 118<sup>v</sup>-119<sup>r</sup>: “Et patet quod ex negligencia et cupiditate cleri magna facta est iniuria communitatibus et magnum dampnum ex hoc incurrerent. Venit enim ex hoc in populo resolutio vulgi ab amore et desiderio sui cibi et potus saluberrimi, desolacio a fervore devocionis et probacionis seipsum quottidie, retractacio magna plebis a memoria efficaci lesu Cristi et ab epulacione cum Domino lesu Cristo, recidivacio frequens ad pristinam malam vitam, inde infirmitatis anime et famis multitudo in populo cristiano, inde expositio parvulorum in Cristo demonibus ad devorandum et perdendum.” The parallel is shown in Jakoubek, Krmíčková, “Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu,” 27, but it omits the parallel introduction of this passage from Janov, *Regule* V, 319: “sed secundum, scilicet quod sacerdos tantum ipse comedat in missa sacramentum, est adempcio vel privacio infinitorum bonorum a plebeis, est desolacio a fervore devocionis et probacionis se ipsum cottidie, est retraccio ...”. Cf. Cegna, “Poczatki Utrakwizmu w Czechach w Latach 1412-1415,” 108 f.: “Sic enim Danielis XI prophetatum est quod novissimis temporibus periculosus propter peccata populi auferent iuge sacrificium et dabunt abhominacionem in desolacionem.”

<sup>527</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 557 f.: “Cui concedo, crescente malitia in populo Christiano, quod decrevit et immutata est devotio, et totius boni religio pejorata, et superabundavit iniquitas et refriguit charitas. ... Sicut ergo in primitiva ecclesia, posita illa causa, ponebatur ille effectus in plebibus, sic in novissimis deficiente illa causa, scilicet crebra et digna sumtione integri sacramenti sub utraque specie, deficit et effectus, scilicet unitatis et charitatis in populo Christiano.”; NK ČR XXIII F 204, fol. 49<sup>r</sup>: “Unde quanto magis obmiserunt christiani frequentare suum panem suumque robur contra omnem iniquitatem et suum incendium seu ignem ad caritatem, tanto magis super continue ac potenter maluit iniquitas et refriguit caritas multorum. Et sic dominus Jhesus venit christianis in oblivionem.”

<sup>528</sup> Dresden, *Querite*, 84 f.: “cristianus deberet credere firmiter, quod si viveret ut sanctus Petrus ceterique sancti in mandatis et lege Dei, quod salvaretur sicut isti, dimissis istis superfluis tradicionibus, que vel legi Dei contrariantur, vel adminus legem Dei impediunt vel onerant, quia interim, quod quis se occupat illis tradicionibus, vel impeditur in lege Dei vel semiplene se occupat in ea, et sic non potest esse toto corde, tota anima, tota mente, totis viribus occupatus in lege Dei propter istas superfluas tradiciones hominum.”

the incarnated flesh of God, and bear removal or destruction.<sup>529</sup> However, this is only one part of a more general popular infatuation with the world which ranges from the debaucheries of wealth and sex to fables, superstitions, and invented customs.<sup>530</sup> Such critiques could easily be multiplied, and apparently were instrumental in inspiring the destructive attitude of the later Taborite revolutionaries.<sup>531</sup> However, the point here is to show a growing appreciation of collective agency in the shifting historical fates of Christians. According to this, corruption bears a decidedly democratic imprint which differs from its hierarchical interpretation by Wyclif. The “second fall” which definitively derailed human history from its archetypal norm is not ultimately the organic result of infection by Christian leaders, but instead the repercussion of a collective choice of past Christians. Certain individuals had more to gain here, or could propagate this perversion more effectively, but its modern ubiquity cannot be explained without popular participation.

In agreement with Janov, this helps explain the complementary appreciation of collective agency in reform. Also important here is the moral qualification of authority, combined with the confident appraisal of individual potential, which further weaken the traditional Augustinian restraints to popular activism and advance the politicization of the subaltern. At the very least, all this means that secular and religious authorities cannot act alone in reform, but require some form of popular cooperation. In its most

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<sup>529</sup> De Vooght, *Jacobellus de Stríbro*, 142-49; Nejedlý, *Dějiny* IV, 103-16, for instance 112, n. 78: “Devocionem fervenciozem exhibent coram aliquibus imaginibus quam coram corpore Christi, et hoc ideo, quia estimant illas imagines habere aliquam virtutem ultra alias, et hoc ostenditur feria sexta magna, quando homines plus ructuant, dum crucifixus elevatur, quam dum corpus Christi elevatur.”; Zdeněk Mareš, “L’ecclesiologia calistina di Jacobello da Misa (1373-1429)” (Th.D. thesis, Rome, Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1997), 136 f.: “populus per hec seductus afficitur has splendidas ymaginum picturas deauratas, argentatas, et plus talia cum reliquiis carnalis populus appreciate, heu, timeo, et plus adoratur et veneratur, quam divinissimum et terribillissimum sacramentum corporis et sanguinis domini Iesu Christi. ... et omnia alia in ecclesia, istum principalem respectum imedientia et distrahencia a cordibus populi sunt de ecclesia semovenda.” Cf. Bednářová, “Jakoubek: De ymaginibus,” 81.

<sup>530</sup> Cf. Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 24 f.; Bartoš, “Betlémská kázání,” 120; Dresden, “De imaginibus,” 230.

<sup>531</sup> See Jakoubek’s later *Apologia* in Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 161-64.

radical articulation, however, this represents a fairly unique vision of Christian renewal which appreciates popular agency as an independent or even superior participant. This does not become centrally relevant until the revolutionary period, and certain aspects are already familiar to us from before, but it is worth overviewing its development in the Hussite discourse now. In the background here is the relative independence of private volition from extraneous intervention. Personal purity can be assisted from the outside, but it cannot be simply externally-implanted because it always ultimately requires the internal principle which only the individual provides.<sup>532</sup> As a result of this, reform agency can never be monopolized by Christian authorities, since any successful effort of correction or even coercion must be met with the acquiescence of the sinner. Preaching and evangelization, for instance, can only have an effect in the community if it is met by the popular will to improve. Jakoubek bewails this fact to his own audience: “How many good, useful, and salvific things has the city of Prague heard, and yet [the listeners] disturb God with their sins, not wanting to improve”.<sup>533</sup> In agreement with Janov, this begins to align with a clear preference for the eucharistic as a reform medium. Although preaching remains crucial to prepare the believer, the Word communicated in this way is transitory, and ultimately only the fervent, personal union with the *logos* in the sacrament is lasting for the Christian.<sup>534</sup> At least to a certain degree,

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<sup>532</sup> Dresden, *Querite*, 28 f.: “sanitas causatur quandoque a principio intrinseco tantum, sicut a corde, quandoque a principio extrinseco et interiori, puta a medico, sed nunquam causatur a principio exteriori sine interiori sic sciencia quandoque acquiritur a principio interiori, puta ab intellectu agente, sicut patet in habentibus scienciam per invencionem, quandoque a principio exteriori et interiori simul, puta ab intellectu agente et a doctore, nunquam autem acquiritur a principio exteriori sine interiori, ut declarat Boecius metro XI l. III.”

<sup>533</sup> ÖNB 4937, fol. 26<sup>r</sup>: “Quanta bona utilia salutaria audit civitas pragensis, et tamen [audientes] super comovent deum peccatis suis vitam nolentes in melius inmutare?”; NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 196<sup>r</sup>: “Non enim modicum esset gaudium si tota praga converteretur et penitentiam dignam ageret, sed nunc multa loquitur et nullam bonam in populo videmus.”

<sup>534</sup> Krmíčková, “Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu,” 18 f.: “Non enim dixit Cristus: ‘Qui credit in me vel quid audit met aut qui est devotus michi, in me manet et ego in eo’, sed principaliter et magis proprie hoc voluit dicere de manducatione corporis sui et bibicione sui sanguinis ad innuendum differentiam superius assignatam, ut quod verbum in voce, quamvis disponit hominem et efficit capacem eum nimis a longe, ut sit unum cum Cristo, tamen transit illud verbum vocis, sed Verbum caro factum est et manducatum et

then, corrective efforts from above must be supplemented from below. Reform cannot simply be identical to a top-down pedagogical program, since it must also mobilize a voluntary reorientation in the Christian people (*populus christianus*). All this means that communal volition is taken seriously as an agent in utraquist reformism. Jakoubek explains this vision by paraphrasing Janov:

if the holy Church should still be restored and reformed in the likeness of the primitive Church, then it will be communally necessary for the ruins and fences of the Church, namely the holy customs of the primitive Church, to return and be reformed. Therefore if the renewed faith of our Lord Jesus Christ ought to still abound over the earth, and the burning of love in the hearts of Christians return, it will be necessary to return the great desire in the Christian people for the frequent sacramental reception of the body and blood of Christ in both kinds, whether wicked and greedy priests want it or not.<sup>535</sup>

This appreciation of individual free will introduces a more optimistic role of the whole community in reform which also generally agrees with Janov's thought. Wicked leaders are a reflection of rampant societal sin and apathy, but it is within the collective capacity to change this via popular self-improvement. As Jakoubek explains: "when the audience [of sermons] are good and penitent, then he [God] gives them good secular and spiritual leaders, and does not allow any lie to plant tares ...".<sup>536</sup> Holy men are a product of the Bohemian people (*populus Boemicus*), but so are the kingdom's current wicked priests

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potatum digne sub duplici forma sacramentali manet et habitat in nobis."; NK ČR V G 7, fol. 101<sup>v</sup>-102<sup>r</sup>, for instance at 101<sup>v</sup>: "Si a sanctis verbum dei indidit virtutem ad influendum, quanto magis per verbum dei incarnatum et increatum indita est virtus integro sacramento toti ecclesie usque ad diem iudicii." Some thinkers therefore reduce the clerical duty chiefly to eucharistic administration. See NK ČR XXIII F 204, fol. 49<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>535</sup> Krmíčková, "Jakoubkova kvestie Quia heu," 27.: "Ideo si debet adhuc sancta ecclesia resurgere et reformari instar primitive ecclesie, tunc necesse erit communiter ecclesie ruinas et sepes, id est consuetudines sanctas primitive ecclesie, redire et reformari. Ergo si adhuc fides Domini nostri Iesu Christi debet habundare super terram rediviva et caritatis ardens in cordibus cristianorum resurget, necesse erit redire magna desideria in cristiano populo ad crebram sumcionem secundum utrumque modum sacramentalem corporis et sanguinis Christi, velint nolint mali et cupidi sacerdotes." Parallels with Janov are also shown here. Cf. Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 558, 584 f.; Dresden, "Puncta," 195.

<sup>536</sup> ÖNB 4937, fol. 26<sup>r</sup>: "dicitur Ezechielis iii<sup>o</sup>: 'Ego faciam lingwam tuam adherere palato tuo', et hec fit quandoque propter malam vitam predicatoris, quandoque propter malam vitam audiencium. ... Sed dum sunt boni auditores et agunt penetentiam, [deus] dat eis bonos rectores seculares et spirituales, et nec permittit aliqua falsa et zizaniā seminare ... Sicut et modernis temporibus, dum sunt eius veri servi, non dat eis pastorem malum yppocritam, sed bonum sanctum, et bona utilia predicantem."; Cf. note 555.

and rulers.<sup>537</sup> These findings further support the collective moral administration of society, and generally appreciate the anxiety of sin pollution and the individualism of Christian performativity. The toleration of sin leaves the whole community subject to divine punishment.<sup>538</sup> In addition, however, this realization now also coincides with the confident anthropological capacity in utraquist thought, and the denigration of wicked authorities. Ethical quality rather than status determines Christian identity, knowledge, and communion with the divine, and this fact often privileges subaltern groups over superiors in reformist potential. For Hussite leaders, this is again understood in terms of historical continuity. Since the days of the primitive Church, it has been the lowest of commoners (*plebes*), not emperors or philosophers, who comprehend the divine message and illuminate the world.<sup>539</sup> It is therefore unsurprising that today simple laymen similarly surpass the whole Roman hierarchy in cognitive capability.<sup>540</sup> Likewise, in their resistance to wicked clerics, the poor and weak are now the most

<sup>537</sup> Jindřich Marek, “Svatováclavské kázání Jakoubka ze Stříbra z roku 1413,” *Studie o rukopisech* 49 (2019): 47: “populus Boemicus possit bene laudari et eciam vituperari. In hoc laudari, quod Deus excitavit multos sanctos homines, sicut sanctum Venceslaum, Procopium, Vitum et eciam in multis sunt vituperandi, sicut mali principes et malus clerus et alia multa mala, que permittunt in regno suo”. In a slightly later work, Jakoubek notes in agreement with Janov that “*the priest takes after the people [Jakýž lid, takýž kněz]*”. See Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Výklad na Zjevení sv. Jana II*, ed. František Šimek (Prague: Česká akademii věd a umění, 1933), 113. Cf. Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 138, and n. 78, where the parallels to Janov are cited.

<sup>538</sup> Bartoš, “Betlemská kázání,” 119: “Quanti sunt manifesti hic in civitate malefici et tamen non impediuntur et habent libertatem in malicia sua! ... Quia tota communitas hec Pragensis non sedat talia, Deus punit illam civitatem propter talia maleficia tolerata.”; NK ČR Břevnov 187, fol. 36<sup>r-v</sup>: “Ille igitur peccator fuit fermentum inficiens totam communitatem per consensum que fuit particeps illius criminis. Unde et si quis non facit peccatum quia tamen non curat ut illud peccatum eiciatur, iam ipso inficitur et fit illius particeps criminis. O quantum de illo fermenta est in civitate hominesque sermones visitates, et hoc fieri scientes tacent et silent! Et hii omnes sunt infecti illo fermento, nam si ipsum deum diligerent de tali dolerent curarentque illud sedare. ... Nam sepe non curantibus talia sedare peccata ex dei iusto iudicio venit ignis et totam conburit plateam.”; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 112<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>539</sup> NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 114<sup>r</sup>: “Greci qui tunc fuerunt suprimi philosophi istos simplices audientes doctrina ab eis susceperunt quorum doctrina fuit super omnem sensum humanum, scilicet ... de sacramento eukaristie, que ratio hoc comprehendere potest, et tamen isti hoc predicaverunt piscatores.”; Ibid., 167<sup>r</sup>: “dominus fecit lumine noticie et cognicionis splendescere in cordibus apostolorum, homini simplicium, et quia non solum data est illa lux sed per eos toti mundo in quorum corde lex fuit scripta, sic quod apostoli aliis libris non multum indigebant, sed totum mundum illuminabant per cognicionem ignotorum, videntes quomodo totus mundus errat, et quomodo illi qui videbantur sapientes huius mundi errabant, quia in lumine eis infuso cognoscebant, ideo dicit ‘habemus thesaurorum’, vocat illam illuminationem et cognicionem thesaurorum.”

<sup>540</sup> See note 500.

effective agents of reform, as Jakoubek says: *abiectioni, pauperes, simplices magis perficiunt quam potentes et divites huius mundi*.<sup>541</sup> This trend will continue into the future.<sup>542</sup> In line with this optimism, Hussite leaders even reflect enthusiastically on the relative independence of their subaltern followers. The true sons of God are in a position to judge matters for themselves, since they can be autonomously inspired to divine truth and unity.<sup>543</sup> The sinless may abandon wicked priests and rulers, because they are pure from selfish desires and kept faithful directly by the Holy Spirit.<sup>544</sup> Such confidence combined with the apathy of rulers now means that moral administration cannot be the lone domain of superiors, but becomes a personal duty of the common people at the grassroots level—burghers, peasants, family heads, even servants.<sup>545</sup> The whole

<sup>541</sup> NK ČR VIII E 3, fol. 91<sup>r-v</sup>: “Ancilla significat fragilitatem, et per fragilitatem mulierem significantur simplices et infirmi huius mundi homines, per quos dicunt deus ligat ipsum sathan ...’et misit ancillas’, ie. apostolos et ceteros sanctos huius mundi abiectioni, pauperes, simplices, qui tamen sua simplicitate magis perficiunt quam potentes et divites huius mundi”; Dresden, “Puncta,” 195 f., esp. 196: “Nam boni non valentes tollerare instigationem Spiritus Sancti ad hunc panem anhelant acceptandum, licet a malis sacerdotibus prohibentibus repellantur.”

<sup>542</sup> Paul De Vooght, “Le dialogue De purgatorio (1415) de Nicolas de Dresde,” *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 42 (1975): 223: “Populus autem, sciens deum suum, obtinebit et faciet voluntatem eius, non solum in puncto isto evangelico, sed in qualibet veritate a spiritu dei cognita et intellecta usque ad minutissimum apicem ad honorem ipsius”.

<sup>543</sup> Hardt, *Rerum Concilii Constantiensis* III, 567: “Attendant ergo omnes Christifideles, et probent istos duos contrarios spiritus, quis horum est conformior ad legem Dei et sua praecepta, et ad observantiam primitivae ecclesiae, et ad dicta antiquorum approbatorum sanctorum. Et quis horum ad contrarium inducit et persuadet. Et videbunt plane, quod spiritus, prohibens, sub specie pietatis et apparentis persuasionis, Christi plebibus bibere et degustare sanguinem Christi sub forma vini, est angelus satanae transfigurans se in angelum lucis, quem fideles Christi debent fugere, ut toxicum venenosum.”; citing Janov, see Benešov, “Utrum pro reformanda,” 109: “Quinto sequitur, quod stante quacunque scissione et divisione sacerdotum, prudens et fidelis Cristo Ihesu populus cristianus, Spiritu sancto potenter unitus si esset, nullomodo ad invicem ad scissionem suorum graduatorum sacerdotum scinderetur, neque ita hostiliter contra se invicem insurgerent christiani pro eo, quod sacerdotes eorum ad invicem contendunt et disceptant, sed magis tenaciusque unico suo proprio capiti Cristo Ihesu immediato unirentur ...”. Cf. Dresden, “Puncta,” 184; NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 181<sup>v</sup>; Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 27.

<sup>544</sup> NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 230<sup>v</sup>: “Et qui sunt vere filii Dei, in gratiam ipsius et fidem uniam, non indigent tot directores ut papam et plebanum, quia ... Spiritus non permittit eos declinare, sed ille sufficit eis ad salutem, ut solum intendant ad evangelium, gubernantes se per eam”. Cit. Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 24; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 214<sup>v</sup>: „Omne quod est in mundo, non si est alias secundum rationem suam, debet esse rex sicut Adam in paradiso quondam fuit, fuit rex. Et sic propter peccatam diminuitur auctoritas, ergo homo quilibet quondam est sine peccato et duratur carni, tunc est rex ...“.

<sup>545</sup> NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 93<sup>r</sup>: “Ita etiam villani et mechanici secundum deum viventes debent communitati in bono ministrare et non proprium lucrum in illis querere.” Bartoš, “Betlémská kázání,” 119: „Si enim torporem [domini seculares] abicerent et sic Deum et suam veritatem diligenter, se exponerent ad sedandam talia mala. Sed quia plus timent favorem humanum vel temporalia perdere quam d. Deum, ideo modice fidei sunt et reprehensibiles ante Deum. Sic etiam hic domini consules potestate a Deo data deordinationes in domibus commissas debent destruere, sed inscios se faciunt omnium horum

community is collectively responsible to publicly identify and chastise errant laymen or clerics, and generally unite to jointly reject exploitation (*vox unius pauperis clamantis*).<sup>546</sup> Where such Hussite observers transgress both Janov and Wyclif, however, is in their permissiveness to the popular usurpation of secular agency. According to the former, the popular and even violent renovation of society has already begun with divine cooperation. Therefore, during the riotous utraquist conquest of Prague's parish churches, Jakoubek saw the sword of God's word at work (*verbum domini ut gladius ferens*), and other Hussite leaders also reflected positively on the radical initiative of the community.<sup>547</sup> In Plzeň, he saw the eruption of popular destructive violence as an imitation of Biblical role-models: "no one was a better king [than Hezekiah]. If only now the good would press against wicked kings. For this Hezekiah destroyed all the idols and groves. So even now some people moved by the Holy Spirit burnt down a cave of brigands (*spelunca latronum*) in Old Plzeň, which they

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dampnabiliter et culpabiliter. Sic etiam hospites et patres familias nunc debent videre ad familiam suam, servos et servas, si ordinate vivunt, si ancile claudunt commoda, si confitentur et Deum timent ... Et si hospes esset inutilis, fidelis servus se ordinate opponat talibus, sciens, quia mercedem a Deo reportabit."; NK ČR VIII E 3, fol. 92r: "Similiter et hospes quilibet debet fore dei amicus nullum malum in domo sua admittendo."; NK ČR Břevnov 187, fol. 36r.

<sup>546</sup> Bartoš, "Sborník husitského kazatele," 31: "Non redarguimus et clamamus nos sacerdotes contra symoniam, avariciam cleri tocusque populi, contra czottas clientum et ornamenta quamplurima mulierum ... Et non tantum sacerdotes sunt obligati ad clamandum contra tales deordinaciones, sed et populus, qui visitat sermones"; NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 218r: "moderni monachi et ceteri sacerdotes caperent integrum regnum si quis daret, et tamen patimini eos, qui vos seducunt et spoliunt pro temporalibus et thesauros multos servantur, et non serviunt communitati nec bene vivunt, et tamen communitas patitur eos ... spoliaverunt populum, et laute pascuntur in conviviis, et nullus aliquid dicit eis, et sic devorant sudorem vestrum et sanguinem bibunt, et tamen sustinetis eos, et sitim et esuriem patimini!"; Stříbro, *Betlemská kázání*, 74: "... if [a sinner] is so hardened in sin, that he does not even heed this chastisement, then one should tell the church, namely the Christian community (obci křesťanské). And if [the sinner] would not heed even the community, he will be to you as a pagan and a publican" Cf. Ibid., 114; Bartoš, "Dvě studie," 29.

<sup>547</sup> ÖNB 4937, fol. 24r: "Aliis autem est verbum domini ut gladius feriens, quia calix communionis calicis multos ferit et percutit, sic quod multi propter hoc fugiunt a plebaniis et censibus, et ideo verbum dei est et cibus sive panis et gladius."; NK ČR VI E 23, fol. 90r: "Tunc tribus levi accedet ad Christum. Ista tribus levi ut exponit Origines sunt omnes fideles Christi, qui non habent hereditatem in terris cum filiis hominum, cum ut frequenter sunt pauperes mundo ... hii assurgunt cum Christo ad vindictam contra adoratores ydolorum, precincti gladiis verbi Dei, et ultimo comminuent istum vitulum [i.e. avaricie, luxurie, et superbie], specialiter sacerdotum"; NK ČR XXIII F 204, fol. 47r: "Sic est adhuc in multis partibus quod quondam cito sacerdotes deprehenduntur in fornicacione, adulterio, sive in alio crimine, quod statim communitas eos reicit et expellit, et quandoque etiam punit."

called the church of Saint Blaise.”<sup>548</sup> Even if such examples are downplayed, they do speak to a more general rise in popular anti-clerical outbursts in this period, which have been noted already above. It is in this context that widespread reports of Hussite intimidation may be understood. One anti-Hussite denunciation records: “What they cannot achieve by speech, they want to force by violence: by fist, cudgel, club, flail, sword, lance, with these means they want to be right.”<sup>549</sup> At any rate, from all this it is clear to Hussite leaders that at least some form of popular agency will remain crucial to the goal of reform. The cooperation of God with the poor and simple people and priests (*pauperes, simplices*) will intensify until this is finally achieved.<sup>550</sup> Therefore the completion of the individual and communal sanitary process in the people (*populus*) coincides with the arrival of divine vengeance upon God’s remaining enemies, and the installation of new leaders to care for the elect in a renovated society.<sup>551</sup> Jakoubek

<sup>548</sup> NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 110<sup>r</sup>: “Utinam et nunc contra reges malos instarent boni. Hic enim Ezechias destruxit ydola omnia et lucos. Sicut et nunc quidam spiritu sancto moti in Antiqua Plzna combusserunt speluncam latronum, quam ecclesiam sancti Blasii nuncupabant”. Cf. Bartoš, “Sborník husitského kazatele,” 16, n. 4.

<sup>549</sup> Karol J. Erben, ed., *Výbor z literatury české II*, (Prague: V kommissi u Františka Řivnáče, 1868), 242: “Což nedovedú řečí, to chtějí přemoci sěčí: pěstí, trdlem, palicí, cepem, mečem, sudlicí, tiem chtějí právi býti.”

<sup>550</sup> NK ČR VIII E 3, fol. 91<sup>r</sup>-92<sup>r</sup>: “Ipse Sathan est ancillis ligatus ... Sic eciam sancte mulieres fragiles paciens diversa tormenta per hoc ipsi Sathan ligaverunt, in sua potestate. Ancilla significat fragilitatem et per fragilitatem mulierem significatur simplices et infirmi huius mundi homines, per quos dicunt deus ligat ipsum Sathan.... Sic enim contra antichristum potentem deus eligit simplices et pauperes qui maliciam illius destruent ... Quociens enim quidam volunt quod dominum potentes opponant se contra maliciam, et tamen se non [o]pponunt, et quod per ancillas notentur ita infirmi huius mundi ... qui suam fragilitatem cognoscentes se domino humiliant, et cum dominum auxilio sathanam vinctum. Quoniam est magna confusio demonis cum a fragili homine vincitur, et dum hominem temptat demonium legio [?] estimat se hominem non posse resistere. Si enim dominus sua divina potestate demonem vinceret, non tantam confusionem pateretur sicut dum ab hominem fragili vincitur. Quia ergo dominus in suos permittit fragilitates et ideo ancille dicuntur. Item dicuntur ancille, qui sunt incipientes et sunt illi quibus non est datum magna pericula subire, quia ex una parte peccatum fugiunt, et id timent, et ex alia parte timent mortem. Isti sunt sicut ancille fragiles quandoque autem ab eis ille timor auferetur et dei cum auxilio vincunt demonem.”; NK ČR VI E 23, fol. 104<sup>r</sup>: “Ultimo quod consurgunt boni et destruent draconem. Tunc apparebit malicia eius et oblationes pacium alborum, vel multiplicitas censuum sacerdotum, et videbunt quod in leviori possent contentari, si non haberent uxores et pueros. Et tunc destruent eos”; Bartoš, “Dvě husitské postily,” 72: “pauperes mundo ... assurgunt cum Christo ad vindictam contra adoratores ydolorum, precincti gladiis verbi Dei, et ultimo comminuent istum vitulum [i.e. avaricia in populo et dotacio in sacerdotibus], specialiter sacerdotum”.

<sup>551</sup> Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 20: “Sed credo, quia veniet tempus, quod Dominus retribuet vindictam in hostes suos et legis sue. Mirabilis Deus, quandocunque vidit populum dispositum et capacem sue gracie, tunc



explains the correspondence of this individual and political transition as a remarkable moment of Christian progress by reference to a favourite Hussite citation, Paul's hortation to the Corinthians—*Expurgate vetus fermentum ut sitis nova conspersio* (1 Cor. 5:7):

For once Christians do not want to endure sinners in their midst and [instead] throw them out, then on account of this Christ gives them a new gift and a new dew, and for that reason he says “so that you shall be a new dough”, that is when you will cast out such wicked people then you shall be like a new dough. If those doing this well shall come to communion, they will there take hold of new gifts (*nova dona*), and the priests shall recognize new mysteries (*nova misteria*) of the Lord; indeed also when any man casts out evil from his midst he is given a new gift that he becomes a new dough.<sup>552</sup>

As a word of conclusion, it is worth balancing such findings with caution. It would be anachronistic to conclude from these reflections a call to revolution. Most Hussite thinkers remain far too invested in the program of Wycliffite reform to abandon the structure of official leaders as such. Nevertheless, what all this demonstrates is that these authorities cannot achieve reform by fiat. Good priests and kings do not disappear from sight but at least become part of a more general, voluntary renewal of society. Alternatively, they are even confidently surpassed by the lowliest of God's agents, in continuity with earlier trends which appreciate subaltern sources of agency. Either way, what is clearly visible here is a conception of collective purification and improvement which takes seriously the incapacitation of Christian leaders by sin, as well as at least some degree of autonomy for popular potential and volition from medieval authorities. In broad terms, this represents a parallel vision of reform. Although it remains

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dedit eis reges, duces, predicatoros devotos et preclarissimos episcopos sanctos, ad quos confugiebat populus tamquam ad azillum refugii et montem proteccionis.”

<sup>552</sup> NK ČR Břevnov 187, fol. 37<sup>r</sup>: “Cum enim christiani in medio sui nolunt pati peccatores sed eiciunt eos, tunc Christus dat eis pro illo novum donum et novum ros, et ideo dicit ‘ut sitis nova conspersio’, i.e. dum eicietis tales malos tunc eritis sicut nova conspersio. Unde hoc facientes si ad communionem accederent illuc nova dona capescerent, et sacerdotes nova misteria agnoscerent; ymmo et dum homo quilibet de medio sui eicit malum, datur sibi novum donum quod fit nova conspersio.”; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 104<sup>r</sup>: “Si tamen communitas esset bona, tunc ad deum clamarent et pro bono postulantes patorem et deus eos exaudiret, sed populus non curat clamare ad deum. Non [!] dantur eis yppocrite et tyrani in officia episcopatus sive papatus.”; Cf. also note 539.

schizophrenically-entangled in Hussite discourse with more traditional assumptions inherited from Wyclif, this simultaneously questions the optimistic paternalism of the Oxford thinker. Hussite reform retains a place for top-down rehabilitation, but now also represents a personal and cooperative effort of all human estates with God. Even if Janov's *novus populus* is not explicitly mentioned here, the influence of his thought is evident.

One final observation should be made here in anticipation of later developments. Despite their divergences from the Oxford thinker, most of this shows that Hussite leaders still generally maintain Wyclif's optimistic vision of ecumenical reform. Whether by official or unofficial channels, through pedagogical or coercive action, all of society will be bent to conformity with the divine will. Apocalyptic polarization has already introduced a tension here, as has been shown, but this is now further exacerbated by the implications of voluntarist determinism. It would be an exaggeration to assign a significant role to chiliastic sectarianism already now, but certain indicative contours can nevertheless be detected and, in light of later developments at Tábor, these should not be overlooked. As already anticipated above concerning malice, the background here lay in the fatalistic, contradictory connotations of individualist thought which take seriously the problem of voluntary evil. No matter the efforts of good Christians as superiors or neighbours, there is no guarantee that most or even many people will choose salvation over sinful existence and worldly belonging. In fact, the opposite seems to be true. This is an unfortunate but significant ramification of free will, in that individual volition is to some extent impenetrable to politics. Similar findings now generally support a determinism characteristic of apocalyptic thought. Satanic servants

are internally inflexible except to further deformity toward worldly pleasures.<sup>553</sup> At a certain point, even divine efforts to improve determined sinners are bound to fail, since they reject God and condemn his truth.<sup>554</sup> This explains why true heretics are always comfortable in the world, since they are simply too corrupt to be purged by trials and tribulations. Nicholas of Dresden explains via Pseudo-Chrysostom:

“that person is cleansed in whom there is something good that can may be repaired”, for instance a good man, if he is sullied by carnal vices, is tried so that his goodness may be emended. But what is to be cleansed in someone where there is nothing good (*in quo nihil est boni*)? “This is why you will never see a perverse Christian grieved or threatened, why a heretic never suffers persecution ... but only the good.”<sup>555</sup>

Ultimately, this makes convivencia impossible. The wicked are pathologically bound not only to pollute the good, but to hate and persecute them.<sup>556</sup> All this has the effect of challenging the vision of ecumenical reform. If rehabilitation is as hopeless as coexistence of the good and the wicked in a Christian society, either the scope or the method of purification is bound to disappoint Wycliffite expectations. Both these

<sup>553</sup> Referencing Brigit of Sweden, Dresden, “De imaginibus,” 219: “Sic anima iniusti videtur sibi esse iusta, omnes diiudicat, omnibus prefert sua, inflexibilis ad opera humilitatis, difficilis ad revocandum a suis contemptibus, mirabilis mundo, contemptibilis Deo. Est quoque moneta dyaboli plumbea, quia diformis, quia mollis, quia flexibilis, quia ponderosa; sic anima iniusti deformis est in voluptuosis affectionibus, onerosa in cupiditate mundi, flexibilis quasi Arundo ad quecunque dyabolus aspirat menti.”

<sup>554</sup> Nicholas of Dresden, *Nicolai Dresdensis Apologia de conclusionibus doctorum in Constantia de materia sanguinis*, ed. Petra Mutlová (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2015), 171-75 passim: “Posito ergo pro possibili, ut veniat Christus cum sua ecclesia primitiva in medium concilii Constanciensis cum vita sua apostolica et praxi ewangelica ... Grave esset. Ymmo videtur, quod non abirent retro sicut isti in Capharnaum scandalizati abierunt, sed secundum condemnationem eorum hereticarent et condemnarent, dicentes non esse eorum consuetudinem. ... Tradunt demum curie seculari dantes brachiumulare ad invocandum illud contra omnes practicantes huiusmodi Christi institutionem et ecclesie primitive ritum, prout patebit infra in condemnatione eorum.” The argument here clearly draws the Council into continuity with Christ’s ancient persecutors. Cf. Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 18.

<sup>555</sup> De Vooght, “De purgatorio,” 189: “Ille enim mundatur in quo aliquid boni quod emendetur, utputa bonus homo, si carnalibus viciis erit sordidatus, temptatur ut bonum eius emendetur. In illo autem, quid mundandum est, in quo nihil est boni? ‘Secundum hoc, cum videris aliquem perversum christianum nunquam tristari aut periclitari, cum videris hereticum nunquam persecutionem pati, ... sed semper boni.’”

<sup>556</sup> Dresden, *Apologia*, 171 f.: “Hec est namque huius rei probacio, quod scilicet simulators perfidos et mendaces prophetas et Cristo contrarios susceperunt, verso autem et fidei plenos inpuerunt. Moysen enim maledicebant, quoniam Cristum annuntiabat, Dathan vero diligebant, quoniam Cristo contradicebat, Aaron repudiabant in sacerdocio, quoniam Christi similitudinem preferebat, Abiron constituebant, quoniam Cristo invidebat, [etc.] ... Videtis ergo, quomodo Cristum diligentes odiunt et quomodo Cristum odientes semper diligunt.”

options provoke some attention from Hussite thinkers already here, even if their full ramifications are realized only later. This clearly does not mean that hopes for universal moral rehabilitation are now abandoned, but historical experience has begun to put this into question. The image of the sinner which emerges from this is less a deviant Christian awaiting correction, and more the member of an alien infection awaiting purgation—"A crime ... is met with punishment; a vice can only be exterminated", as Hannah Arendt observes.<sup>557</sup> Thus the defiant heretic can only be identified and separated, or liquidated. In general, Hussite leaders agree here on a campaign of physical segregation and estrangement. The human ties of parish boundaries and even family relations should be confidently transgressed to guarantee access to the chalice for the good, and the alienation of the wicked.<sup>558</sup> All such ties are anyhow far weaker than Christ to his members.<sup>559</sup> Eventually, the process of division and expulsion should create a political landscape which represents the durable divisions manifest in the ethical landscape. Jakoubek explains by reference to Paul's advice to expel the sinners of Corinth:

"so that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you" (1 Cor. 5:2). Lo, that he reflected that for sin they be purged of him from their midst. Oh Prague, indeed how many fornicators, greedy, and adulterers, and

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<sup>557</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 87. For an interesting parallel in another context, see Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), chap. 3.

<sup>558</sup> NK ČR V G 7, fol. 97<sup>v</sup>: "Si tamen facti cuiuscunque sacerdotis vel episcopi vel alterius opera vel verba cuiuscunque docent manifeste, quod sit hereticus sacre scripture contrarius in verbo et specialiter in vita ipsius, conversacio est vitanda"; Ibid.: "Omnes enim tales sunt pertinaces eo quod nec post ternam correctionem emendantur, et ideo sunt fugiendi" idem, 98<sup>v</sup>: "nec aliquis debet eos in terra vel domo sua tenere vel fovere aut cum eis aliquid negociari, quod si quis fecerit mortuus in tali delicto, nec pro eodem debet oblatio fieri nec in cimiterio sepeliri". Bartoš, "Sborník husitského kazatele," 29: "manifeste malorum sacerdotum non debent audire missam, et melius est assistere misse boni sacerdotis quam mali. Sed cum non constat de malicia sacerdotis, confide d. Deo, quia ibi est corpus Domini ... Et si in casu homo non posset bonum sacerdotem habere, de Domino confide" On the separation from a spouse, see NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 153<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>559</sup> NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 94<sup>v</sup>: "In hoc corpore [ecclesie] maior debet esse unio quam patris ad filium, ... uxoris cum viro ... maior unio debet esse huius corporis membrorum ad invicem quam anime ad corpus ... et hec unio huius corporis facit ecclesiam sanctam."

others will be cast out when you eject the sinners from your midst with great mourning! For I estimate that half of Prague's population would not remain!<sup>560</sup>

Implicit in, or consummating this purgative process is the task of physical liquidation.

Insofar as this is envisioned as a human endeavour, it is worth noting that it transgresses even the limits of Wyclif, and apparently would have a mobilizing effect on the future revolutionary program of the Tábórites.<sup>561</sup> To maintain communal purity (*salus communi bono*), the secular leader is bound to execute stubborn heretics.<sup>562</sup> For more radical thinkers, divine aid will ensure this same fate will also apply to all wicked superiors. Elaborate fantasies of infernal tortures expose deep resentment, and appear with relative frequency.<sup>563</sup> As thieves and robbers, they deserve to be stoned and hanged (*debent lapidari et suspendi*).<sup>564</sup> Ultimately, this alternative process of segregation and

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<sup>560</sup> NK ČR Břevnov, fol. 35<sup>v</sup>: “‘Ut tollatur de medio vestrum qui hoc opus fecit’. Ecce, pro peccato reputat quod eum in sui medio purgabatur. O Praga, quando tu cum luctu magno de medio tui eicies peccatores, quanti enim eicerentur fornicatores, avari, adulteri, etc.! Ymmo estimo medietas hominum Prage non remaneret!”; cf. Holinka, “Nová betlémská postila,” 23, n. 20; De Vooght, “De purgatorio,” 172: “Christus Ihesus odit et destruxit, eos de templo eiciendo. In hoc semper opto ipse eidem Christo, sicut et esse debet quilibet fidelis coadiutor, pro omni posse, ut destruantur et eiciantur, quia non illi ecclesia sancta, sed congregatio babilonica et sathane sinagoga sunt.”; Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 14: “si autem tales aliqui in pertinacia [i.e. prohibicio sacramenti] durant, sancti non debent eorum errores fovere, sed a se repellere”. According to Jakoubek's later reflections, the Tábórites claimed inspiration from such ideas for their campaign of destruction and looting. See Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 162.

<sup>561</sup> For Wyclif, see Rory Cox, *John Wyclif on War and Peace* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), 124. On the influence on the Tábórites, see Sedlák, *Studie a texty* II, 161, quoted in note 1 above.

<sup>562</sup> Stříbro, *Betlémská kázání*, 117: “Indeed it is true, that if an entire community should have to suffer for one wicked person, it would be better if he died” [*lépe by bylo, by umřel*]; Palacký, *Documenta*, 679: “Nemo audeat dicere et tenere, quod malefici magni, si aliter mitius nec induci possunt nec corrigi, licite nullomodo possunt deo auctorisante per brachium seculare interdum occidi; ita tamen, ut ad salutem puniendi salus communi bono pro posse intendatur et ad legem dei causa cum occidendo conferatur.” cf. Jiří Kejř, “The Death Penalty during the Bohemian Wars of Religion,” *BRRP* 6 (2007): 146-50; Lahey, “Antichrist in Bohemia,” 28.

<sup>563</sup> See Nicholas of Dresden's use of Henry of Seuso in Dresden, *Apologia*, 219-23.

<sup>564</sup> Bartoš, “Dvě husitské postily,” 73: “kurevníci [whorers] sunt fures et nunc digni sunt suspendio. Item qui non cessant semper mendicare, iam habentes habundanciam temporalium, sunt fures magni. Item omnes, qui pro rebus spiritualibus temporalia accipiunt ... sunt fures et latrones. Item omnes, qui sub colore aliquo bono alios predantur. Item qui habent dona tam temporalia quam spiritualia, que debent ea convertere ad usum humanum et profectum et non convertit, est fur ... Item qui officia usurpat sibi ecclesiastica indigne, est fur. Item omnis peccator mortalis, qui non habet caritatem ad Deum et proximum, cuncta, que possidet, sive naturalia sive fortuita, male possidet et sic est fur. Isti debent lapidari et suspendi.”; NK ČR VI E 24, fol. 54<sup>r</sup>: “Quando rex vel prelatus non defendit suos subditos dum eis alienantur bona eorum et habens potestatem talia defendendi et removendi, etsi aliud peccatum non haberent, dampnaretur. Sicut habentur in libro Numeri, ubi mandatum est quod principes suspendantur in patibulo contra solem. Ubi dicit Origines: populus peccavit et principes suspenduntur.”; NK ČR VI E 23, fol. 150<sup>r</sup>.

annihilation of Antichristians should culminate in a cooperative effort with God to confront the wicked. “Oh if only [God] would also incarcerate them and even punish them to death, seizing and causing and driving a crusade (*cruciata*) against them!”, Jakoubek hopes.<sup>565</sup> The power and laws of the wicked are negated to allow the divine will to flourish.<sup>566</sup> In short, nothing can be allowed to stand against the immanentization of divine volition on earth. The point here is not to argue that chiliastic sectarianism represents a fully mature discourse within Hussite thought. As will be shown, this will only coincide with particular circumstances peculiar to the rise of Taborite radicalism. Nevertheless, what is already clear now is that the high appreciation of voluntarism among Hussite thinkers gives potential and credibility to an alternative view of the future which challenges the optimistic ecumenism generally predominant until now. Here, the reformed Christian society is not achieved only by cultivating the positive potential in all men, but also by recognizing the strength of self-imposed limitations in sinners. This should not be exaggerated here, but it should be recognized. Although naturally capable, man’s eternal belonging is ultimately self-determined by the individual will. Instead of education and coercion, this deep antimony in the will can only be solved by capitulation to fatalism. In other words, reformed society is promised only to the elect few and not the majority of a society, and is only achieved after a period of intense purgation and destruction, not gradual enlightenment and conversion. For now, this discourse is still undifferentiated in Hussite thought, but it will soon become more centrally relevant.

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<sup>565</sup> Bartoš, “Betlemská kázání,” 118: “Utinam eciam illos incarceret et ad mortem eciam puniat, captivans et exhibens et fulminans in illos cruciatam!”

<sup>566</sup> Ibid., 56: “Nisi Deus poneret in nares eorum [tyrranes seculares sive spirituales], tunc opprimerent omnes iustos et omnia impedirent bona sicut verbum Domini, communionem calicis et omnia alia bona.”; Bartoš, “Dvě studie,” 26: “In ecclesia circa finem seculi omnes leges discordes legi dei deberent destrui et solum secundum legem evangelicam deberent vivere”; Ibid., 19.

Apart from the matter of *utraquist* devotion itself, the relevance of Matthias of Janov and his school of confident Platonist thought is not always explicit or unambiguous for Hussite reformism. Nevertheless, it has been argued here that the importance of these influences is high, though largely under-recognized in historiography. Building and expanding upon earlier Hussite themes of individualism and activist religiosity, the strong emphasis on voluntarism and optimistic anthropology which comes through Janov and his intellectual pedigree carries with it a democratizing potential which challenges the highly professionalized political landscape based on Augustinian pessimism. Increasingly, this means the establishment or distinction of authorities, along with the Christian community at large, upon more defined ethical qualifications, a finding which has a levelling effect upon human hierarchies. This is significant because it introduces an alternative reform path to Hussite leaders which generally takes more seriously the gravity of popular action in salvation history, and also undermines the paternalistic emphasis in politics which they inherited from thinkers like Wyclif. Although this does not appear here as a discrete vision within Hussite thought as such, it clearly works to dissolve the monopoly of reform agency enjoyed by Christian officials and, to varying extents, articulates a more active role for communal participation therein. Good rulers and clerics retain an important role, but this requires at least some degree of augmentation from below, since the project of purification is ubiquitous and assumes the ultimate autonomy of the individual believer. Already here, however, the anxiety of willfull obstinance begins to corrode the optimistic reformist vision of ecumenical rehabilitation and build upon more fatalistic elements in Hussite thought. The political relevance of all this is not yet fully realized, but will bear significant implications moving into the developments surrounding the so-called Taborite revolution.

## CHAPTER 4: Tábor and Revolution

### Historical background: 1419-1420

For virtually the first decade of its existence as a popular movement, the increasingly diverse and provocative following behind Hussite reformism was able to significantly benefit from an ambivalent situation locally, and a disoriented situation internationally. Anxiety of repercussions from authorities was constant, and moments of intense oppression could hold dire or even fatal consequences for individuals, but the concurrent realities of a divided papacy, a distracted emperor, and a pragmatic monarch all meant that believers claiming a role in Jan Hus's legacy could generally avoid the experience of systematic persecution. This situation began to quickly change with the closure of the Great Schism and the shift of imperial attention to Bohemia, and finally with the death of King Václav. Suddenly, the communities of faithful utraquists found themselves within the direct purview of two of their most enthusiastic enemies, where they posed a fundamental challenge to religio-political integrity and authority on the largest possible scales of empire and Christendom. The result of this is a rapidly escalating program of violent subjugation and counter-reformation, eventually even climaxing in civil war and military invasion. In the midst of all this suffering and tribulation, the loyalties and abilities of individual leaders are put under extraordinary pressures, and several important failures and betrayals of veteran reformist figures give rise again to new leaders. Yet what is unique here is that these now shift radically dissident priests and the common people to the centre of political relevance. The Hussite revolution is soon underway, but this is not only a medieval insurrection in resistance to king and pope, but simultaneously a compellingly modern attempt to violently overthrow the entire medieval order by popular action.



The roots of these drastic shifts were already old, but the immediate spark was the drastic shift in royal policy. In early 1419, the Bohemian king relented to the demands of imperial and ecclesiastic authorities after a series of final ultimatums and threats. In an attempt to lift the protracted interdict and return to Catholic normalcy, King Václav agreed to support a significant reversal of Hussite gains made over the previous years.<sup>567</sup> In Prague, churches should now be returned to their Catholic beneficiaries, and Hussite practices such as evangelical preaching and infant communion should be prohibited. Even if utraquism was not banned outright, it was heavily restricted to the private sphere.<sup>568</sup> The imprisonment of dissidents soon followed, along with the appointment of new anti-Hussite councillors by the king.<sup>569</sup> Meanwhile, similar anxieties also began to undermine Hussite advances in the countryside. Along with their disillusionment with provincial radicalism, the pressure from pope and emperor now contributed to a considerable shift in the allegiances of the movement's noble allies, reluctant to oppose the policy of both their current king and his successor, Sigismund. A major blow was also struck by the reversal of the pro-utraquist policy in the vast southern domains of the country, where lord Čeněk of Vartenberk lost his regency with the maturation of its Rosenberg ruler. Within the context of such shifting allegiances of powers, all this began a violent backlash against utraquism in the capital and countryside. In various points across the kingdom, royal policy and aristocratic detachment became an excuse for severe reprisals, as Catholics

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<sup>567</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 986-89. For Sigismund's ultimatum, see Palacký, *Documenta*, 682-86. Čornej, *Velké dějiny* V, 203 f., doubts the sincerity of King Václav's anti-Hussitism.

<sup>568</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 989-91; Kaminsky, *A History*, 272 f.; Šmahel, *Tábor* I, 227-29. Nevertheless, David R. Holeton, "'Videtur quod, sicut baptismus, sic et communio sacramentalis infancium fundatur in Ewangelio quod consentire videtur'" (MS - Prague, NK VIII D 15 ff. 130<sup>v</sup>-136<sup>r</sup>). A New Test of the Communion of Infants," *Studie o rukopisech* 30 (1994 1993): 26, n.19, notes that infant communion may have been possible at the monastery *Na Slovanech*, which followed the Byzantine Rite. On the return of indulgence sales, see Evžen Stein, *Želivský jako náboženská osobnost* (Prague: Královská česká společnost nauk, 1948), 2 f.

<sup>569</sup> This targeted the New Town. See Kaminsky, *A History*, 289.

clashed with Hussite followers and priests, silencing and ejecting them from churches and parish communities.<sup>570</sup> The full-scale persecution which had long been threatened by Councils, popes, and rulers was finally showing signs of realization, just as its main targets were faced with dwindling prospects for protection.

The transition into this highly hostile environment proved a breaking point for the tenuous unity negotiated by the disparate Hussite parties. Doctrinal fragmentation now began to coincide with clear political disorientation as each searched for some ground of security in the threatening new conditions. In the background here is the impotent reaction of the established Hussite authorities to the mounting threats. Most of these, including the important utraquist baron Čeněk and the university's utraquist intellectuals, now fell into silent shock or agreed to capitulate doctrinally to the king's demands. Even Jakoubek's dissent was now careful here not to overstep royal authority.<sup>571</sup> As a result of this paralysis from Hussite elites, anxious Hussite believers and clerics increasingly looked elsewhere for orientation, and their attention quickly concentrated on several charismatic figures who steadily introduce wholly new visions of reform. From spring 1419, certain local radical Hussite leaders begin to organize and grow so-called "pilgrimages to the mountains" (*poutí na hory*), outdoor congregations of utraquist refugees and devotees on remote hilltops in the south Bohemian countryside. Here, congregants and their priests confidently recast themselves and their environs back into the hostile context of the primitive Church, even with the toponyms invented for their meeting points, like Mt. Tábor. Therefore, in open defiance of

<sup>570</sup> Bartoš, *Husitská Revoluce* I, 55 f.; Klassen, *The Nobility*, 122-24; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 993-95.

<sup>571</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 269 f. Only the lay chalice is upheld by the conservative Prague masters. See their statement in *AČ* 6, 37 f., and Kejř, *Husitský právník*, 121 f., for its dating. Jakoubek petitioned for royal permission of infant communion, see Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 508, n. 101. Lord Čenek's utraquist loyalties around this time are doubted by Ivana Raková, "Čeněk z Vartenberka 1400-1425: Příspěvek k úloze panstva v husitské revoluci," *Sborník historický* 28 (1982): 68 f.

religious and secular authorities, simple villagers mixed with burghers and even noblemen from far and wide in the tens of thousands to create a provocative alternative reformist path. Bypassing the traditional Hussite elites and channels, these islands of egalitarian and harmonious “Táborite” community were intent on violating the new religious prohibitions and inspiring a broader popular movement, along with collaborators in Prague, to return to the fold of purified Christianity.<sup>572</sup> Meanwhile in the capital, dissent took a significantly different form. From spring 1419, the loudest voice against the royal prohibitions quickly became the Hussite figure Jan Želivský (d. 1422), a former Premonstratensian monk from the countryside, whose radical and defiant sermons in Prague’s New Town began to attract popular fervour and attention, at the expense of the reformist university masters and even Jakoubek’s centre at Bethlehem Chapel.<sup>573</sup> Looking at the historical record, Želivský’s charisma must have been impressive: in the face of continual persecution, he was able not only to mobilize popular defiance and open protests against authorities, but even inspire civil upheaval.<sup>574</sup> On 30 July, he led an armed procession to engage in a violent coup at the headquarters of Prague’s New Town government and butchered its councillors.<sup>575</sup> As Catholic burghers were forced to flee, Želivský gradually positioned himself at the head

<sup>572</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 278-89; Čornej, *Velké dějiny* V, V:204-07. More recently, see Martin Nodl, “Počátky Tábora: dějiny, paměť a kronikářská konstrukce události,” *Listy filologické* 143 (2020): 439–66.

<sup>573</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* I, 625-35; Marek, *Jakoubek ze Stříbra*, 72-74; Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 223 f., n. 183. On his popularity, see Božena Auštická, *Jan Želivský jako politik* (Prague: Nákladem Společnosti Husova musea, 1925), 13. On the popular derision of the masters, see Hana Vlhová-Wörner and David Holton, eds., *Jistebnický kancionál: Praha, Knihovna Národního muzea, II C 7 2: Cationale* (Chomutov: L. Marek, 2019), 275 f.; Kaminsky, *A History*, 301.

<sup>574</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 271-78; Petr Čornej, *Jan Žižka: život a doba husitského válečníka* (Prague: Nakladatelství Paseka, 2019), 143–46, 149; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 997-1000; FRB V, 580; Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* II, 72 f. Cf. Pavlína Rychterová, “Jan Hus: der Führer, Märtyrer, und Prophet: Das Charisma im Prozeß der Kommunikation,” in *Das Charisma: Funktionen und symbolische Repräsentation*, ed. Pavlína Rychterová, Stefan Seit, and Raphaela Veit (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2008), 434–36.

<sup>575</sup> On a reconstruction of the events and context, see Howard Kaminsky, “The Prague Insurrection of 30 July 1419,” *Medievalia et Humanistica* 17 (1966): 106–26; Čornej, *Jan Žižka*, 150-160; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 1003-07; David R. Holton, “Revelation and Revolution in Late Medieval Bohemia,” *Communio Viatorum* 36 (1994): 29–45.

of a new Hussite dictatorship, eventually establishing demagogic new morality committees and regulations to police, punish, and censor detractors, even utraquists, “according to God’s law”.<sup>576</sup> To destabilize matters further, King Václav died of a stroke only weeks later. Around this time, all the growth and accomplishments of Hussite radicals began to present a new political opportunity. Improvement seems now to be coming at last, and it could finally be possible to unite the kingdom and even foreign lands under a revived vision of theo-political Christianity. As Jan Želivský reflected hopefully after his coup: “Oh, if only the city of Prague would now, in this time, become an example for all the faithful, not only in Moravia, but also in Hungary, Poland, Austria, and elsewhere. And that the word of God would be spread to the entire world!”<sup>577</sup> Táborites and other radicals built upon the momentum and organized massive collective summits to coordinate a joint Hussite front of all estates against opponents and persecutors. Meanwhile, in the capital and across the country, a spontaneous, riotous wave of popular enthusiasm targeted the persons, buildings, and paraphernalia associated with decadent Roman religiosity to reshape the spiritual environs.<sup>578</sup> From their perspective of measured optimism in summer and autumn 1419, religio-political reform is progressing on an unprecedented scale and pace, yet not from recognized authorities but, at least for the moment, as a popular and communal effort.

For many of the Hussite elites and their remaining allies, however, the events of the same period appeared in a much different light. The radical initiative of lowly priests, burghers, and peasants may have helped temporarily regain security for

<sup>576</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 374-80; Petr Čornej, “Pád Jana Želivského,” *Český časopis historický* 101 (2003): 261–305.

<sup>577</sup> Šmahel, “The Idea of the ‘Nation’ I,” 203 f., quote at 204: “O utinam nunc tempore isto Praga civitas esset forma omnibus credentibus, non solum in Moravia, sed in Ungaria, Polonia, Austria. Et quod sit diffamatus per totum mundum sermo Domini”; cf. Ransdorf, *Kapitoly*, 208 f.

<sup>578</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 1009-11; Čornej, *Jan Žižka*, 163-68; Mezník, *Praha*, 211-15; Václav Vladivoj Tomek, *Dějiny válek husitských* (Prague: Fr. Řivnáče, 1898), 2–6, 10.

utraquist devotion, but it also began to pose a serious challenge to certain fundamentals of the medieval order which powerful Hussite sympathizers and influential university intellectuals took for granted. What is more, it also meant that the country's devoted royalist forces began to threaten escalation with their own militarization following the cue of their new king, Sigismund of Luxembourg.<sup>579</sup> In the context of this highly uncertain landscape, several of the oldest and most important Hussite allies chose to end their support for reform and instead attach their fate to the monarch and his Catholic allies. This was a decision which reverberated drastic implications for all remaining Hussite dissidents. By submitting to royal program of re-Catholization, the Queen-regent and lord Čeněk agreed to pass the reins of political order to King Sigismund, and remove any hope of protection for the vast majority of the kingdom's utraquists. From now on, Hussitism was virtually identical to political rebellion, and all Hussite communities were forced into a position of self-preservation. More than ever during King Václav's reign, this now resulted in a systematic program of suppression and persecution against them.<sup>580</sup> In the countryside, zealous anti-Hussite leaders initiated a campaign of terror and mass-extermination against provincial utraquists and Táborige congregations, and in the capital, armed battle even erupted for control of the city.<sup>581</sup> The complexity of ensuing historical events cannot be traced in detail. Instead, what is important here is that all this re-configuration of goals and loyalties began to establish a political landscape where Hussite unification became increasingly unrealistic. Even

<sup>579</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 1020-23.

<sup>580</sup> Kaminsky, *A History*, 274-76, 301-06; Auštická, *Jan Želivský*, 23 f.; Božena Kopiczková, *Jan Želivský* (Prague: Melantrich, 1990), 64; Holeton, *La communion*, 157 f.

<sup>581</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 1023-25; Eduard Maur, "Od hory Tábor k svatoludmilskému srazu. K historii poutí na hory v roce 1419," *Táborský archiv* 11 (2002): 31-34; Čornej, *Jan Žižka*, 172-76. On the mass-executions of utraquists in Kutná Hora, see the account of the Hussite Chronicler in *FRB* V, 352, 355, cf. Kejř, *Právní Život v Husitské Kutné Hore*, 1:12-15; Ota Halama, "The Martyrs of Kutná Hora, 1419-1420," *BRRP* 5 (2005): 139-46. On other persecutions: in Klatovy, see also Vladimír Bystrický, *Západní Čechy v husitských válkách* (České Budějovice, 2013), 89; in Kouřim, see also Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* I, 419 f. On lord Švihovský's tortures, cf. František Šimek, ed., *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického* (Prague: Státní Nakl. krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1959), 59.

though most of the capital by November 1419 survived the military incursions of royalist forces and remained under Hussite control, its anxious leaders and allies now agreed to secure a temporary truce with Sigismund in the hope of avoiding full civil war. According to this, they should now demilitarize the city and accept the return of Catholic exiles, and the king would agree to consider some measure of toleration for the chalice in the future.<sup>582</sup> For uncompromising reformers like the Tábórites, this agreement represented nothing less than a disastrous act of betrayal. Not only did it abandon provincial Hussites to face the torments of their persecutors alone, but it also forsook the divine will and the vision of ecumenical reform and purification, all for a treaty of peace with the Antichrist. According to Tábórite sources, this drastic change crushed their optimistic attitude of ecumenical improvement and now introduced a dramatically different, sectarian vision of prophetic renewal. As a result, Christ's fantastic plan of perfection is now predetermined and its arrival is imminent, but this radical improvement will only occur for the few remaining faithful who will persevere against all of Satan's lies, seductions, and aggressions. The rest of humanity will be destroyed together with the forces of evil by God's apocalyptic cataclysms, inaugurating an age of harmonious bliss and plenty on earth. Put summarily, by the winter of 1419/20, the Hussite movement and vision had apparently reached the dire moment of reckoning anticipated by years of escalating threats and divisions. Imperilled by external eradication and internal dissolution, one side now submissively awaited the coronation of a Catholic monarch, and the other struggled for mere existence and awaited miraculous rescue.

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<sup>582</sup> Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution* II, 1028-40; Čornej, *Jan Žižka*, 177-83, 190-95; Kaminsky, *A History*, 308 f.

This moment, however, did not last long. In early 1420 it was dissolved, along with the final repudiation of king and pope, in what historians have called the “Hussite Revolution”. Already in the first months of this year, the credibility of the new monarch as a tolerant ruler over utraquists began to face serious doubt. Showing disregard for the conditions of truce, spontaneous executions and militaristic posturing by Sigismund began to force even the most devoted of royalist Hussites to reconsider their conciliatory position.<sup>583</sup> Any surviving illusions of accommodation were soon definitively crushed, when papal and imperial leniency to unrepentant heresy finally collapsed. In March at an imperial diet in Wrocław, the papal nuncio proclaimed Martin V’s Bull *Omnium plasmatoris domini*, formally announcing a military crusade against all “Wycliffites, Hussites and other heretics”, with King Sigismund at its head.<sup>584</sup> The Hussite reaction here is improvised and diverse, but now generally agreed on military opposition, mobilizing virtually all layers of Hussite society. In February, Jakoubek reluctantly gave explicit theological grounding to the popular armed resistance against religious persecutions already *de facto* underway. If secular lords stubbornly fail to defend God’s law, then the sword of their power is relinquished to the people and communities themselves.<sup>585</sup> In addition, new alliances were formed between Prague and its allies to prepare for military confrontation, and aristocratic forces were rallied against the

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<sup>583</sup> Mezník, *Praha*, 234-36; Kaminsky, *A History*, 363 f.; Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 1045 f.; Fudge, *Crusades*, 52-54.

<sup>584</sup> František Palacký, *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte des Hussitenkrieges I* (Prague: Tempsky, 1873), 17-20, trans. Fudge, *Crusades*, 49-52.

<sup>585</sup> In response to radical priests, Jakoubek and Christian of Prachatice wrote: „concedimus quod domini seculares possent tantum deo resistere et eius legi, quod per ipsum deum potestate eorum ablata, liceret communitatibus a deo ad hoc opus admissis realiter et non fantastice defendere ewangelicam veritatem—servato tamen semper ordine debito et consono legi Cristi, divino instinctu vel certa revelatione, sive evidenciam non fallente ad hoc movente.” See Kaminsky, *A History*, 545 f. Although most scholarship identifies the addressees with Václav Koranda and Nicholas of Pelhřimov (cf. Šmahel, *Hussitische Revolution II*, 1044 f.), this is doubted by Kaminsky, *A History*, 323 f.

unelected Hungarian usurper.<sup>586</sup> Yet even in comparison to all this, the response of the Taborite radicals is so remarkable that it has defied many historical attempts at explanation. Upon the failure of divine retribution against the wicked expected in February 1420, the priests of the Taborites apparently began to preach a new actualization of the prophetic time of vengeance. Christ's millennial kingdom on earth would now come only after its sinners and dissenters were purged in a violent bloodbath performed by his most faithful servants. This new mission imbued Taborite warfare with a cosmic significance, not only as an armed resistance against oppression but also as the revolutionary overthrow of the whole corrupt world order. Immediately, embattled Taborite communities recongregated and seized an old fortification to act as their headquarters, "Tábor", a new kind of permanent egalitarian theocracy of the elect, the vanguard society of the future age in the present. From here and other allied towns, peasant armies launched attacks against both military and religious targets to pacify the Bohemian countryside to this vision, butchering not only nobles, but also priests and monks, along with anyone without a place in the new paradisaic golden age. One alleged teaching of their leaders offers particular insight into their self-identity and motivation at this time: "[the Taborites] are the army sent from God through the whole world, to destroy all scandals from Christ's kingdom, which is the Church militant, and to expel the wicked from the midst of the just, and to enact vengeance and [inflict] blows onto the nations of the enemies of the law of Christ and their cities, villages, and castles."<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>586</sup> After returning his loyalties to the Hussites, Čeněk of Vartenberk wrote to the kingdom's nobles: "We remind each and every one of you of your obligations to the Czech Crown and Kingdom, and we request that none of you submit to the serene duke Sigismund, the Roman and Hungarian king, or be in subjection to him or obey him as the king of Bohemia and the same in terms of his officials. You must be aware that he has not been elected king by the Czech lords and he has not been crowned. He is the great and cruel enemy of the language and kingdom of Bohemia." See Fudge, *Crusades*, 61.

<sup>587</sup> *FRB* V, 414 (Ab 6), trans. Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 74.



A detailed account of ensuing events is not possible here. Suffice it to say, desperate anxiety over self-preservation was enough to bring reformist parties into a tenuous state of unity, making the Hussite movement a remarkable success-story among medieval heterodox communities. Under impending invasion from international crusading forces, Tábor and Prague were forced in summer 1420 to agree on a joint religio-political program of the Four Articles of Prague, which formed the basis of their mutual cooperation moving forward. With this fragile alliance in place, Hussite and Taborite forces successfully defended against a series of crusades launched against them over the next fourteen years, conquered most of Bohemia, and eventually even took the revolution to the offensive into neighbouring lands. Like at Constance, the Hussite question was a central concern at the next ecumenical Council of Basel in the 1430s, except instead of eradication the Roman Church was now forced for the first time in history to accept the relativity of its universal claims of authority by acknowledging Bohemian utraquism as a valid alternative devotion, a situation which persisted at least in practice for two centuries. Yet although the continual threat of destruction was capable of uniting factions of reformers in military and diplomatic efforts, it was unable to heal the deep divisions between them. Despite the Four Articles, internal polemics on key issues of theological and political dissonance endured as a highly corrosive force to Hussite solidarity. As a result, at the moment that the danger to survival dissipated, mutual fraternization went along with it. With détente secured at Basel in the mid-1430s, Hussite royalists now allied with Catholic forces to violently de-radicalize their country, gradually persecuting and destroying Taborites and other dissidents to the religio-political vision of Catholic-utraquist coexistence.

## Reformist Tábor

Despite its clear roots in Hussite thought, little of the Prague masters' program, vision, or symbols survived untouched through the newly-born Táborite movement, even in the brief period discussed below. Along with their highly diverse biographies, the intense experiences of independence, trauma, and schism which marked Táborite leaders in this short time meant a continual change of historical circumstances and a diversity of accompanying interpretations. Regardless of their radicalism and eclecticism, however, it would be a mistake to under-appreciate the important continuities that these figures bear to the long intellectual pedigree of Bohemian reformism, as is often the case in historical literature. The same themes of individualism, historical optimism, and activism which helped spread the Hussite movement out of the university and across the Bohemian countryside also now, to various extents, helped galvanize thousands of diverse believers to the hilltop congregations, to the fortified cities of refuge, and even to revolution. It is undeniable that these intellectual trends underwent considerable reconfigurations and embellishments, and even began to corrode certain basic assumptions of prominent Hussite leaders. Nevertheless, the basic claims of the Táborites find clear resonance with Hussite thought and the Christian Platonist tradition which underpins it: true believers are able to expect a theo-political reunification with divinity while in this world. To the extent that this had a hortatory impact on political agency, it mobilized familiar assumptions of humanistic potential and activist identity toward this end. No Christian is allowed to leave themselves or the world as they found it, and ultimately no human authority is able to stand against this. With the alignment of personal and collective participation in improvement, the arrival of perfection and bliss come closer to achievement in history.

One caveat should preface the following discussion: more than anywhere else, the sources for the period of early Taborite thought are particularly sparse and laconic. Of the few surviving documents, almost none are datable or ascribable with a high degree of certainty, most are compiled or copied by anti-Taborite opponents, and many employ an obtusely symbolic language which is highly antagonistic to the questions that the historian wants answered. As a result, important concerns of reliability, contextualization, and interpretation remain unresolved, presenting a central problem to any attempt at historical reconstruction.

Despite this source situation, however, I argue that a relatively consistent picture is traceable which articulates significant parallels between certain unique elements of Hussite thought and the early Taborite movement. Wyclif never disappears from relevance here, but the marked contribution and challenge represented by Janov's confident humanism is at least as prominent. For Taborite thinkers, this opens a path to a significantly alternative view of reform. The emphasis on individualist voluntarism they inherited from previous discourses now teaches them that reform need no longer be deferred to the agency of worldly superiors, nor even to prominent Hussite leaders. Instead, the community of truly willing Christians already possess the remarkable ability to re-create the experience of divine unity as a religio-political reality, whatever kings or popes may say. This finding clearly does not claim to abandon the hope for royal cooperation, but at least temporarily bypasses it in the grassroots establishment of an entirely separate and new type of order on earth.

The foundations of all this are laid by the same Donatistic assumptions of ethical qualification which are already familiar. Unfortunately, the source situation does not allow a close investigation here, but these are generally clear from the historical record. In their spontaneous mass-gatherings for forbidden religious services, congregants from

all social classes showed demonstrative disregard not only for established medieval religious superiors, but also for the explicit precepts of king and nobility at the risk of life and property.<sup>588</sup> Often more prominent than voiced rejection of authority here is the simple incredulity shown to hegemonic claims of unethical and antagonistic officers—“ignore the chastisements of the wicked” is the message of Tábórite exhortations.<sup>589</sup> On the one hand then, this new movement embraces those divisive and disruptive implications of sacralized politics to the human order. The good ought to segregate themselves from the usurpers of divine office (*pseudosacerdotes / fures et latrones*) as ethical aliens (*alieni*) preaching an entirely different message.<sup>590</sup> Yet this subversive anxiety also confirms and coincides with an explosion of popular enthusiasm in reformist cooperation and participation which captures the unifying power of the sacralized political landscape. The dislocated Tábórite believers are now invited to join and grow a wholly new society guided by Christ alone, the true teacher and reformer (*verus doctor et reformator*), qualified by no human loyalties or reputations, but only by divine conditions of ethics and the integral eucharist. Worldly status, divisions, and discrepancies wither away into egalitarian divine unity.<sup>591</sup> Certainly this new movement

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<sup>588</sup> *FRB* V, 400, 402: “Quapropter cum ita ex singulis partibus in Thabor confluerent, rex Wenceslaus cum quibusdam inimicis veritatis baronibus ceperunt graviter ferre timentes, ne tanta populi multitudo regem et archiepiscopum, prout famabatur, pro defensione legis dei eligerent et sic eorum bona velut adversariorum per potenciam, cui resistere non valerent, invaderent ac depopularent. Quidam ea de causa ex nobilibus districcius subditis suis sub pena colli et bonorum perdicionem precipiunt, ne per amplius ad montem Thabor audeant concurrere. Sed huiusmodi mandatum rustici cum suis uxoribus modicum aut nichil advertentes pocius dimissis omnibus, que possiderant, ad Thabor montem in certis festivitibus venire nullatenus negligebant allekti et attracti prout ferrum attrahit magnes.”

<sup>589</sup> Nejedlý, *Dějiny* VI, 186: “nedbajtež na zlých úkory.” Cf. Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 286: “Take no notice of the unfaithful”.

<sup>590</sup> Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 478 f., at 479: “fideles fugere debent fures et latrones notorios aliunde in ovile ovium, quam per Christum ascendentes et sequi debent pastorem verum et vocem ejus audire, alienos fugientes et ipsorum vocem non audientes”; Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 286, 303.

<sup>591</sup> *FRB* V, 401 f.: “Quibus omnibus taliter, ut premittitur, expeditis vadunt pro corporis refeccione ad loca ibidem in monte multipliciter preparata et simul in caritate fraterna convivantes non ad libidinem aut ebrietatem, non ad levitatem et dissolutionem, sed ad maiorem et forciolem dei servitutem. Ibidque omnes sese fratres et sorores appellantes, dicior cum paupere victualia, que erant preparata, dividebant. Ibid nichil, quo inebriari posset permissum fuerat propinari. Ibi eciam nulla chorea, nullus taxillorum,

does not disregard hope for collaboration with secular leaders,<sup>592</sup> but it does not look to them for political guidance. Instead, however early Tábórite thinkers evaluated such officers, they clearly assigned a political role to the whole Christian community (*wšie obce křesťanské*) which it did not hesitate to collectively exercise in diplomacy and even coercion, as shown above.<sup>593</sup> Therefore, whatever the reality was, the movement's immediate self-understanding was simply of ecumenical community (*obec*) and pacifistic brotherhood in imitation of the apostolic ideal, a union of the people and their dispossessed priests (*populus un[us] cum sacerdotibus*) directly under divine rule.<sup>594</sup> Here, evangelization, the chalice, and conspicuous confession bring the Christian into voluntary and cognitive conformity with God and the holy collective.<sup>595</sup> For Tábórites, this popular revival begins to fulfill the ancient prophecies of human progress and improvement on the mountaintops: "To find what has died, to return what has been lost, to strengthen what has been broken".<sup>596</sup> The spectacular achievement of all this is

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globorum aut alterius levitatis ludus non dico seniore, sed et parvulorum habebat indulgentie locum. Ibi denique nulle contenciones, nulla furta, nulle sonantium fistule aut cithararum melodie, ... potuit reperiri, sed omnium more apostolorum fuit unum cor et una voluntas, nichil aliud tractantes, nisi que forent de animarum salute ac de cleri ad pristinum, primitive scilicet ecclesie, statum reduccione."; Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 478 f., cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 284 f.

<sup>592</sup> *AČ* 3, 205 f., cf. Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 276: "let us shout to God so cheerfully that the Christian kings learn to lead their lives faithfully, so that, ruling in God and condemning public sinners, they might be with God."

<sup>593</sup> Fudge, *Crusades*, 26: "The blatant and divisive abuses, scandals and conflicts must be abolished and punished with the help of God, the king, the lords, knights, squires and the entire Christian community." Alteration mine.

<sup>594</sup> Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 479: "et pro tunc idem populus una [!] cum sacerdotibus cum eodem laborantibus propositum bellandi non habuit, sed pro illo tantum instabat, qualiter in bono et fide permanens catholica aliis, unitus fidelibus multiplicetur ...". As one Tábórite gathering identified: "We, the community (*obec*) gathered on Bzí mountain in hope of the spirit of Jesus Christ." See *AČ* 3, 205. Cf. Kaminsky, *A History*, 284 f. On ecumenicalism, see Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 303: "'Gather and come closer and everywhere call together and offer me a sacrifice'... Therefore, you evil ones, do not resist and go up the mountains; there you will learn the truth." On early pacifism, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 319, 449.

<sup>595</sup> *FRB* V, 401; Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 478. Nothing is known of the atonement, only that confession was heard in the open. Cf. Jiří Kejř, "Husitské učení o pokání a zpovědi," *Husitský Tábor* 15 (2006): 35–70.

<sup>596</sup> Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 303: "So Isaiah also says that God will arrange for all people and will prepare for them a feast on the mountain. / Then again Ezekiel, who had a divine revelation and spoke about evil shepherds, says that God commanded them to stop dominating their sheep and feeding on them / for he himself wishes to make them free, to tear them out of the evil shepherds' throats and graze them himself on the mountains, / To find what has died, to return what has been lost, to

articulated in the familiar language of theo-political reformation. Thus this collection of the reformed (*reformati*) now represents the optimistic regeneration of primordial unanimity (*unum cor et una voluntas*), realized in a truly Christian religio-political order (*verus ordo Christianus*).<sup>597</sup> This is all summarized by one Táborite tractate with reference to the apostolic role models:

[our congregation] is for nothing other than the free hearing of the faithful message set in God's law, and for the necessary reception of the most reverend sacrament of God's body and blood ... for the strengthening, preservation, and confirmation of a saved life. We all pray with one will to dear Lord God that from this we may be of one law, one faith, one heart, and one soul [cf. Acts 4:32]; that first, everything in us that is wicked and harmful to the soul be destroyed, and everything good be cultivated; and that we avoid and guard against the false and hypocritical prophets established by Antichrist against God's law ...<sup>598</sup>

What all this begins to show, therefore, is the political employment of Hussite concepts of humanistic confidence and voluntarism into an alternative plan of action. Wyclif's influence remains relevant, but only in concert with a parallel, alternative vision already discussed. Although certain details might vary, it is difficult to imagine that Janov could have actualized his project of grassroots reform without a close resemblance to the sublime, communal perfection sought on these southern Bohemian hilltops. For Táborite thinkers, inherited ideas of individual potential and ethical agency now convince them that the promise of reform as the return of the primordial order of the primitive Church is not a process which awaits the assent or guidance of worldly authorities. Instead, along with the poor clergy, every true believer already now has the collective access and all the tools necessary to initiate God's will as a polity on earth.

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strengthen what has been broken [Což zahynulo, shledati, / a což zašlo, to navésti, / a což zlámáno, ztvrđiti].” Alterations mine.

<sup>597</sup> *FRB* V, 402; Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 478.

<sup>598</sup> *AČ* 3, 205, emphasis mine; Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 478: “nolens in illa permanere seductione, ... fecerunt per montes ac districtus pia intentione ac catholica congregationes principaliter propter Dei laudem ac verbi illius liberam propalationem atque sacramenti eucharistiae antedicti communicationem, ut Dei veram agnoscentes legem pseudosacerdotes deserentes ad Christum verum iustitiae doctorem et reformatorem ad ejusque apostolos confugiant, quatenus per ipsos reformati in vero ordine christiano valeant permanere.”

Secular powers might be important to maintain and expand this order in the future, but of immediate concern is its sovereign foundation as a collective, popular effort in reformed Christian society.

### **Chiliastic Tábor**

In contrast to most extant literature, what is notable from this description of the early Táborites is the relative marginalization of eschatology. Apocalyptic imagery of Antichristian persecution is certainly not absent here, but its gravest implications are greatly mitigated by the optimistic participation in ecumenical renewal emphasized by its leaders. This picture fundamentally changes only with the experience of utter hopelessness coinciding with the events of late 1419, which decidedly shatters the confidence of Táborite reformism. What surfaces in its place appears as a frenzied desperation for survival in the shadow of imminent divine vengeance. Yet despite its complicated intellectual resonances with both, a close look at Táborite goals and expectations at this moment shows that they should be conflated neither with apocalypticism nor revolutionary thought, as is often done in literature. Instead, from vague origins but with certain reference to themes and tensions already observed in Hussite thinkers, what begins to emerge here is an imperfect experiment in the tradition of “secularization”, which implies a radical shift in behaviour. Rather than a collective realization of improvement, what becomes central now is segregation and self-preservation into a theocratic age of ultimate peace and joy. Although this experiment remains incomplete here, it sets the stage for the truly revolutionary to come.

To introduce this radical shift in Táborite thought requires a slightly more elaborate discussion of apocalypticism as an existential structure of symbols and experiences than has been provided thus far. What should be emphasized here is the

fatalistic pessimism of the apocalyptic which critically undermines any reformist program, and alienates the believer from participation or membership in socio-political life more generally. At the foundation of this is the experience of utter despair. For the apocalyptic believer, the hopeless corruption of the world, from politics down to human nature, shows that God's promised kingdom is simply impossible as a historical reality. Yet at the depth of this existential crisis, he finds consolation through a revelatory insight into the pre-ordained structure of history which gives meaning to his alienation and promises a just outcome. God's promise remains active, but not in this world. Here corruption will inevitably continue to grow, and the suffering of God's faithful will deepen, but in an imminent moment of saturation this will all be over. God will intervene and the cosmic forces of good and evil will make war, just before all creation is cataclysmically annihilated. From the ashes of the old reality is born a new and radically inverted higher order, where the lowly elect now reign blissfully with God and revel in the sadistic tortures of their former oppressors. Here the intermediary institutions of instruction and rule are totally missing, because the unanimity of this new theocracy is complete. As God tells Jeremiah:

I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.<sup>599</sup>

For the apocalyptic thinker, this highly deterministic insight, including the new discovery of the beyond, empties human politics of significance and totally subdues any reformist or activist energies. All human order is inevitably defective and bound to the infection of sin, meaning that no human effort can result in meaningful change in the world. The boulder of Nebuchadnezzar's dream which smashes the idol of human political organization is the heavenly kingdom, and it is not cut out by human hands

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<sup>599</sup> Jer. 31:33-4.



(Daniel 2:34 ff.). Improvement is guaranteed by the divine narrative, but only in a post-historical aeon of a different world, as John describes in Revelation:

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.<sup>600</sup>

The result of these findings is a highly individualistic and apolitical attitude to existence. For the apocalyptic, the pre-determined structure of history greatly limits the scope of human agency to the mere articulation of personal righteousness, meaning perseverance in faithfulness to God's promise. As the prophet Ezra emphasizes: "every one shall bear his own righteousness and unrighteousness".<sup>601</sup> This is true even against diverse sufferings and the temptations of the lower self, as well as the threats of the mundane order. Therefore only alienation is given positive meaning, because it proves the apocalyptic's true belonging in the imminent beyond. At its most extreme, this radical orientation to the afterlife can take the final form of self-sacrificial martyrdom, which seals the believer's place in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is here that we observe the apocalyptic's alienation most acutely, as one historian summarizes his observations:

The ethic of martyrdom more than anything else makes it clear how superfluous any form of earthly community-construction must seem to the apocalyptic thinker. It is equally just as unthinkable to unite in an active struggle against enemies as it is to establish a meaningful order of human coexistence within this corrupt world at the end of time.<sup>602</sup>

Put briefly, what all this shows is that the intensity of his other-worldly fixation effectively excludes the apocalyptic believer not only from the optimistic efforts of

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<sup>600</sup> Rev. 21: 1-2.

<sup>601</sup> 4 Ezra 7:105.

<sup>602</sup> Riedl, *Joachim von Fiore*, 29-37, quote at 35: "Die Ethik des Martyriums macht mehr als alles andere deutlich, wie überflüssig dem Apokalyptiker jede Form irdischer Gemeinschaftsbildung erscheinen muß. Weder gilt es, sich im aktiven Kampf gegen die Widersacher zu vereinigen, noch ist es auch nur im entferntesten denkbar, am Ende der Zeiten in einer korrupten Welt eine sinnvolle Ordnung menschlichen Zusammenlebens zu errichten." Cf. Riedl, "Living in the Future." As a sidenote, martyrdom is exactly one of the preferred responses to persecution which Jakoubek suggests to Taborite preachers at this time. See Kaminsky, *A History*, 521, 539.

reform, but from socio-political engagement or belonging more generally. A look at the script of history has revealed to him that the present reality is insignificant and now almost at its end, and the content of his ultimate decision is limited to self-positioning, either to prove his place among the saved in the next world or choose destruction with this one. As a result, his gaze must remain immovably focused on his destination, meaning an uncompromising perseverance in the law at all costs. Although the sufferings of the end times might be endured more easily among a cohort of like-minded believers, this must not endanger the apocalyptic believer's sacred alienation. In short, all human community and pursuits are irrelevant and marked by decadence, and the only stability is found in divine direction to the promised beyond.

As a result of their recent trauma and their miserable condition, it is clear that Taborite believers now find consolation in the determinism of such an apocalyptic worldview at the expense of their former goals and expectations. Facing the collapse of intra-Hussite negotiations, and abandoned at the peak of violent persecution from authorities, their optimism behind ecumenical reform is suffocated by despair. It is at this low-point that their leaders innovatively discover in the ancient prophets of scripture a comforting script of events which gives meaning to their community's chaotic alienation. According to this, their own sufferings and failures are not the result of senseless contingency but pre-determined by the structure of history. In the present "time of vengeance" immediately preceding the end times, the elect are bound to have their faith tested by the most excruciating oppression, deception, and anguish.<sup>603</sup> In

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<sup>603</sup> Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 286 f. "Take no notice of the unfaithful and do not imitate them in this that Satan, drawing them behind him, leads them away / from final endurance and from eternal life and from the kingdom of God. / This will be fulfilled with many that they will make excuses and take leave of the Supper: / Some to look after their villages, others to inspect oxen, another to marry to a wife ... / Therefore, fearing this, let us persevere to the very end with your eyes always on the reward, / which Christ will give to him who perseveres with him to the end and does not abandon him, / neither because of some sorrow nor on account of any delight nor any gain." Cf. *AC* 6, 41.

agreement with Jeremiah, the forces of God and Antichrist are taking their positions for the final battle.<sup>604</sup> All this fulfils Christ's prophecy: "'Do not be grieved, when you hear wars and strife, those thing must be, as the holy prophets prophesied'".<sup>605</sup> The collapse of reform is simply a part of this pre-written script, since the traitorous masters and lords affiliated with Prague are the signs of the false Christs of the apocalyptic narrative—"because they seemed to be something, and they are nothing."<sup>606</sup> As a result of this fatalistic reading of events, Tábórite leaders now generally accept a highly apolitical attitude to the world. Exhortations to reformist participation are completely missing from their sources from this period. The mood is well-captured by one of their popular prototypes to action, the situation of Lot in Sodom (Gen. 19). Here, no opportunity or provision is given for the conversion of the wicked, only to warn the few faithful, and above all to maintain personal perseverance in the divine command. Unlike before, Tábórite propaganda is therefore now overwhelmingly sectarian, addressing the cohort of the suffering but generally apathetic to the fate of all others.<sup>607</sup> Here we observe a significant continuity to the latent sectarian determinism already at tension within the ecumenical vision of Hussite reform. Some people, like the wicked priests and masters, are simply doomed to blind ignorance as a part of the malice (*zlost*) signifying the end times,<sup>608</sup> while God's willing of all ages and intellectual capacities are able to easily

<sup>604</sup> *AC* 6, 44: "Assemble and we shall enter into fortified [cities], raise the standard of Zion, strengthen yourselves and do not dally! For I will bring an evil thing from the north and great destruction. The lion has left his lair (Jer. 4:5-7), and the heathen looter has arisen, namely against God and his law, just as the Hungarian king, who has looted many heathens, has left his city, namely from Hungary, to lay your land to waste. Your cities will be destroyed, and will remain without inhabitant." Cf. *AC*, 41.

<sup>605</sup> Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 43. Cf. Luke 21:9 and synoptic parallels.

<sup>606</sup> Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 45.

<sup>607</sup> Their propaganda pamphlets open: "May the Lord God be with you and enlighten and bring joy to your hearts during your sorrows and grief and sorrows [!]. Most beloved brothers and sisters in God!"; "May the merciful Saviour be with you during your difficulties and sorrows, amen. Most dear brothers in God!". See Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 43, and *AC* 6, 43. respectively. Cf. Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 286 f.

<sup>608</sup> *FRB* V, 419: "Jam cum superbo oculo magistrali incipit non manducare sapiencie panem, quem convertit retrorsum faciens eius scienciam stultam, Ysaie XLIV, I Corinth I. Et cordi avarorum non saciato eciam recusat sua sacramenta. ... Jam, qui loquitur iniqua verba iniquitatis sue, auctoritatibus

recognize the divine plans.<sup>609</sup> One Tábórite prophet summarizes by reference to Paul: “whoever does not believe the prophets has Judaized faith. The prophecies are not for them, but only for the faithful (*Takowým nejsú prorocctwie, ale toliko wěrným*). As St. Paul says: ‘prophecies are not for the faithless’ (1 Cor. 14:22)”.<sup>610</sup> Instead, the new instructions of the Tábórite priests emphasize an individualist and escapist ethic. The elect should exit the world as much as possible and find solace in preserving their faith, God’s law, and their sacred alienation. This involves severing all ties to their former life, including those of place, property, and even family—a wife should abandon her husband and children to save her own soul.<sup>611</sup> According to them, this articulation of faith is one of the main purposes of the mass-evacuation to the five chosen cities. The elect should congregate here to atone, pray, and especially obey God in the utraquist sacrament.<sup>612</sup> In agreement with the apocalyptic thinker, this means that broader political agency is completely delegated to divine forces. Even if the elect have a role of their own, man’s contribution to the narrative of the end times is generally minimal, and the real actors now are cosmic. No kings or nobles have relevance here, only God and his angels are able to command the destructive blows of the last battle, and the elect

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scripture non potest dirigere. Quia vas, quod confictum fuerit contra te, non dirigitur, Ysaie LIV.” With some creative liberties, the author cites malice as the target of divine rage. See Ibid.: “‘Indignacio namque est domino super omnes gentes et furor super omnem maliciam eorum ...’” (cf. Isa. 34:2, which reads not ‘maliciam’ but ‘militiam eorum’). Cf. *AČ* 6, 41 f.

<sup>609</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 50: “And they [i.e. the saints] understand (*intelligunt*), because in the last days you will understand the plans of the Lord, Jeremiah 23 and 30.” Ibid., 51: “Already even children sing the psalms and some understand the hidden secrets.”

<sup>610</sup> *AČ* 6, 44: “Ktoť prorokóm newěřie, židowskát’ jest to wiera. Takowým nejsú prorocctwie, ale toliko wěrným. Jakož S. Pawel die w epištole k Korintským w XIV kapitule: ‘prorocctwie nejsú newěrným’.”

<sup>611</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 45 f.; Kaminsky, *A History*, 547; Articles D 6, 8, and 9. On the citation of the lists of Tábórite articles, I follow the rubric designed by Pavel Soukup, “The Masters and the End of the World: Exegesis in the Polemics with Chiliasm,” *BRRP* 7 (2009): 93, n. 9, which designates list with article number. For the lists used here: Aa 1-72 = *FRB* V, 454-62; Ab 1-20 = *FRB* V, 413-16; C 1-94 = *AČ* 3, 218-25; D 1-187 = Jan of Příbram, *Život kněží tábořských*, ed. Jaroslav Boubín (Příbram: Státní okresní archiv Příbram a Okresní muzeum Příbram, 2000), 39-87.

<sup>612</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 46: “Thus it is necessary to congregate without delay, so that they [i.e. the elect] shall pray day and night to the Lord God, calling that he may deign to save [them] in the time of the greatest persecution. And also that they may align themselves with God’s word, good examples and advice, and especially that they may fill themselves with the valuable feast and drink of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

can do nothing to influence this. In the words of one Tábórite prophet: “God wants and commands that his faithful should congregate into the fortified cities in that time and run, and it is assured that he will cleanse the evil in his own time.”<sup>613</sup> Put briefly, what all this shows is that with the disastrous events of winter 1419, Tábórite leaders were convinced to endorse a worldview and course of action which radically differs from the previous discourses within the Hussite tradition. Here, the confidence of religio-political reform, whether royal or popular, is crushed by a sense of general despair in politics rooted in recent experience. At least to some extent, this is found to agree with apocalyptic thought, as well as some of the more latent sectarian themes in Hussitism. New insight into the deterministic structure of history has revealed the irrelevance of the current worldly condition, as well as the attitude of missionary ecumenicalism hoping to improve it. Instead, the imminence of the cosmic battle and Christ’s victory means that the Tábórite elect have no hope or reason to change the scripted narrative. Rather than activist participation, this shows them that their salvation depends upon faithfulness to a new divine message of escapist individualism in anticipation of the final defeat of the forces of evil.

Yet despite these new convergences between apocalyptic and Tábórite thought, the correspondence of these discourses remains far from complete. Although the source situation here precludes a deep investigation, what clearly arises as a point of distinction between them is the attitude toward the world. The pessimistic dualism between the present and the beyond which encourages the apocalyptic toward self-sacrifice is all highly mitigated for the Tábórite believer by a fundamental point of Hussite inheritance, namely optimism in the future. Divine purgation may be imminent according to the

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<sup>613</sup> Ibid., 46; *AČ* 6, 44: “But where should the elect run to? To fortified cities ... so that in the time of greatest suffering his elect can hide there.”; *FRB* V, 419: “Quid igitur iam restat, nisi ut in matutino interficiat peccatores et de civitate dei disperdat omnes iniquitatem operantes (Ps. 100:8), et turbentur in vespere et in matutino non subsistant (Is. 44:17).”

forecasted historical narrative, but its significance is not homogenous for all mankind; for some it will bring not the *end* but the *new*. Although under-recognized in historiography, this represents a profound innovation which demands explanation. In the background of all this is a fundamental point of intellectual continuity which embeds the Taborite thinker within the Hussite tradition, the ultimate confidence in anthropological and historical potential. Mankind may currently be a failed corruption of a species, but this is a result of its choices, not its nature. Unlike the apocalyptic or even Augustine, this leads Taborites to describe perfection as a historical reality. On both the individual and collective scales, the greatest human condition is located not in a mythical paradise outside of time, but in a concrete era within the realm of empirical and political experience, generally identified with the age of fidelity among ancient Israel, and especially the primitive Church. As one Taborite prophet reminisced: “the apostles themselves were delivered to a miraculous condition of a new paradise (*novus paradisus*), in which Christ was the tree of life, and beyond doubt they were here more perfect (*perfecciores*) than the first man.”<sup>614</sup> The continuity of this basic conviction is relevant to Taborite thought because it significantly mitigates the reach and impact of apocalyptic despair in the present situation. The elect may be powerless to improve the world, but the recollection of the remarkable age of the prophets and apostles does not allow the frustrated Taborite thinker to pessimistically generalize his recent experience of sin and failure upon all of human history. Present sufferings are fierce, but God’s anger against his elect will abate, his contract with them will be kept, and they will be returned to former greatness—“they will be as they were, as if they were not scattered”, one prophet paraphrases.<sup>615</sup> In other words, the memory of human-divine unity as an

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<sup>614</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 67; *FRB* V, 423.

<sup>615</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 55. Cf. Zech. 10:6. *FRB* V, 422: “Habebunt pacem electi cum deo, quia eis amplius non irascetur. Sicut scriptum est: ... misericordia mea non recedet a te, fedus pacis mee non movebitur, pacem cum hominibus habebunt (Isa. 54:10).”

experience in history opens the opportunity to enjoy inner-worldly improvement, even within the deterministic historical narrative of the apocalyptic. As one Tábórite summarizes:

now at the consummation of the age, Christ will come, on the day which is called the day of the Lord, that he may subdue the rebellious house and cause the consummation in it, and that he may—restoring the Church—place that praise on the earth. He will come to receive the kingdom on this earth and to remove all scandals and all those “who make iniquity”, and he will not allow “anything lying nor abominable”.<sup>616</sup>

In itself, this promise of improvement is not completely new considering the optimistic Platonist background of the Hussite tradition discussed before, except that it is now furnished not with the symbolic content of reform, but apocalyptic thought. The return to purity is not a gradual process of human cooperation with God, but a sudden moment of divine violence. As such, current events anticipate the events expected at the end times. The time of the worst sufferings has begun, and the divine segregation of the saved and damned is already manifest in the consolidation of the Tábórite communities themselves.<sup>617</sup> Yet the more important novelty here in the Tábórite context is that this inner-worldly improvement now clearly assumes new, otherworldly qualities previously reserved to the privileged condition expected in the beyond. In other words, the *eschaton* is immanentized, and Tábórite leaders invite their followers to participate in an age of human progress and qualitative growth: “the age of human pilgrims, shining like the sun (*evum hominum viancium et fulgencium ut sol*)”.<sup>618</sup> On the personal scale, this age of progress describes a profoundly optimistic anthropological transformation.

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<sup>616</sup> *FRB* V, 417: “Jam nunc in consummacione seculi venit Christus, in die, que dies domini appellatur, ut debellata domo exasperante consummacionem in ea faciat et ut ecclesiam reparando ponat eam laudem in terra, venit regnum in hoc mundo assumere et omnia scandala de eo eicere et omnes, qui faciunt iniquitatem, nec quidquam coinquinatum ad illud admittere, nichil faciens mendacium aut abhominacionem.” Trans. Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 48. On the interpretation of the *saeculum*, see below.

<sup>617</sup> *AC* 6, 41 f.

<sup>618</sup> *FRB* V, 456 (Aa 17): “intelligere per consummacionem seculi finem et terminum presentis temporis seu anni presentis, post quod erit aliud seculum, id est tempus et evum hominum viancium et fulgencium ut sol ab omni prorsus macula in regno patris supradicto sic usque ad finem mundi duraturo”.

The congregated elect who survive into this future will be fulfilled in all things (*in collectis omnia implebuntur*), and will be given greater gifts (*dona maiora*) than they ever had before.<sup>619</sup> The punitive nature of their existence will cease, meaning that the pain of hunger, childbirth, and even death will be a relic of the past.<sup>620</sup> This anthropological transformation also coincides with a new religio-political constitution which mimics the inverted order of the beyond. Here, the lowly and oppressed will take their true position alongside Christ, and feast with him in divine banquets. They will finally achieve a state of peace with God (*pax cum Deo*) which gives them immediate access to his mind and will, making priests, kings, and even scripture redundant<sup>621</sup>—all shall be kings (*omnes essent reges*) and all shall be a royal priesthood (*regale sacerdocium*).<sup>622</sup> Even if traditional Hussite confidence in epistemology and human nature are clearly transgressed, they nevertheless survive here as points of origin. The willing enjoy a fantastic potential of personal and political enhancement, whatever their mundane status. Conversely, today's powerful oppressors will be brought low. Their powers and properties will all be removed and inherited by the elect,<sup>623</sup> and together

<sup>619</sup> Ibid. 421: "In quibus collectis omnia ad sensum bonum spiritus sancti implebuntur, que tacta sunt in auctoritate Jeremie, que in veritate est implenda, que ostendit, quod decedentibus patribus adhuc filii subintrabunt ...". Ibid. 423: "Hec cum precedentibus iuncta ostendunt gloriam domus novissime maiorem plus quam prime Aggei II et notum faciunt, quod maioribus donis donabuntur, quam ab inicio habuerunt Ezech. XXXVI."

<sup>620</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 589 f. See Příbram, *Život*, 50 f. (D 44, 46, 47.) Apparently they even concluded that the law of Grace will be consummated, see Kaminsky, *A History*, 525.

<sup>621</sup> FRB V, 423 f.; Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 591: "Universi filii ecclesie erunt docti a domino et erunt omnes docibiles dei. A maiore usque ad minorem omnes cognoscent me et non docebit ultra vir proximum suum (Jer. 31:34)." Kaminsky, *A History*, 524. See articles FRB V, 457 f. (Aa 26-27), FRB V, 416 (Ab 16), AČ 3, 221 (C 38), Příbram, *Život*, 50 (D 42): "in that corrected age and kingdom, Christ will step down corporeally and will sensibly and visually dwell with those elect, as every eye will see. And he will make them great feasts and a great supper on the corporeal mountains. And he will walk to procure the throne." See note 626 below.

<sup>622</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 591: "Eruntque connubia sancta et thoros immaculatus (cf. Heb. 13:4), erunt omnes populus adquisicionis et regale sacerdocium (1 Pet. 2:9), quia omnes vestientur duplicibus lana et lino (Deut. 22:11). Ecce sacerdotalis dignitas et regalis!"

<sup>623</sup> FRB V, 420: "Venit namque durus debellator et in mediam exterminii terram prosiliens et in momento uno preclara nacio peribit i.e. celestis status sacerdotum cito destruetur et subito Sapiencie XVIII"; Ibid., 421: "Ecce meritum tangit adhuc, quia cum mali male perdentur domino veniente, vinca reddentibus fructum committetur."; Ibid., 424: "Tamen hoc eciam intelligit de istis novissimis sanctis pedes eos appellando, qui eciam hanc terram recipiant in hereditatem, unde scriptum et: daboque terram tibi et



they shall be humiliated, enslaved, and butchered by these new rulers for their sadistic pleasure and vengeance. As one prophet describes:

those seeing the vengeance will rejoice, and indeed also those executing the vengeance (Luke 19). Now those who trampled the Church for 42 months (Rev. 11) will be a stumbling block to the feet, that is, to the last saints. ... Now their sadness will be turned to joy (John 16).<sup>624</sup>

In short, the renewed Church will possess greater glory than any before (*maioris glorie erit, quam fuit umquam*).<sup>625</sup> Such optimistic future visions clearly show the place of Tábórite thinkers within a long intellectual tradition of what the political scientist Eric Voegelin described as immanentization (*Immanentisierung*), or secularization of the spirit (*Säkularisation des Geistes*). This is not meant here in the naïve terms of the withering-away of religion, but rather the inscription of inner-worldly contents with spiritual meaning. Therefore the secularization of the eschaton describes a process whereby apocalyptic symbols and processes of spiritual significance are immanentized, pulled into mundane reality.<sup>626</sup> This concept is useful in the Tábórite case because it helps explain the novel worldview and conduct that this community now assumes. In

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semini tuo peregrinationis tue omnem terram Canaan in possessionem eternam ...". Kaminsky, *A History*, 524 f.: "in illo seculo et regno hominum supradicto, cessabit exactor et quiescet tributum. Ex quo sequitur quod nullus erit dominus secularis ...". See articles *FRB* V, 457 (Aa 22), *FRB* V, 415 (Ab 11), *AC* 3, 221 (C 40), Příbram, *Život*, 41 f., 49 (D 13-14, 38-39).

<sup>624</sup> *FRB* V, 423: "Jam letabuntur videntes vindictam, ymmo et vindictam facientes Luce XIX. Quoniam illi, qui calcaverunt ecclesiam mensibus XLII Apok. XI erunt pedibus, id est novissimis sanctis in scandalum. Quibus erant apostoli velud peripsema infames, tamquam morti destinati, horum filii venientes curvi adorabunt vestigia pedum Ysaie LX. ... Et hoc in terra confusionis sue Sapon. III. Jam tristitia eorum in gaudium vertetur Joh. XVI. ... Hoc declarat apostolus in exemplo ita dicens I Corinth. XIII: non potest dicere caput pedibus etc. usque ibi: si gloriatur unum membrorum, congaudeant alia. Cuius similitudinis non nego hanc esse eciam sententiam, quin intelligat de isto corpore, in quo sunt et statuum dignitates, in quo contemptibiliores sunt ad iudicium constituendi."; Ibid., 422: "Reges enim ministrabunt eis et gens, que non servierit illis, peribit Ysaie LX. Exactor cessabit, quiescet tributum Ysaie IV. Non inpedientur a sapientibus huius mundi sicut nunc, quia vasa fraudulentum pessima, qui cogitationes concinnat ad perdendos mites in sermone mendacii, cum loquetur pauper iudicium, de quibus Ysaie XXXII, non erunt, iam deinde omnem sibi linguam resistentem iudicabunt Ysaie LIV." Cf. Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 591. On the role of this sadism in apocalyptic thought, see Riedl, "Terrorism," 87.

<sup>625</sup> *FRB* V, 420: "Laudem ecclesie circa ista attendendo, primo quod congregabitur, secundo quod mundabitur, tercio multiplicabitur, quarto pacificabitur, quinto par in gloria primitivorum constituetur, sexto quod maioris glorie erit, quam fuit umquam."

<sup>626</sup> Cf. Matthias Riedl, "Thomas Müntzer's Prague Manifesto. A Case Study in the Secularization of the Apocalypse," *Éthique, politique, religions* 4, no. 1 (2014): 47–51, 67 f. The classic study remains Eric Voegelin, *Political Religions* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1986).

short, immanentization greatly mitigates the finality of the pending divine destruction by reinterpreting and re-spiritualizing the central symbol of the *saeculum*. Where the apocalyptic anticipates a cataclysmic global annihilation (*consummatio seculi*), the Tábórite finds only a transitory period of remedial purification which must be survived. One prophet carefully explains this progressivist reinterpretation:

I understand “age” (*seculum*) as the apostle receives it in Hebrews 9 ... where he marks that there is a plurality of ages (*pluritas seculorum*), saying that some have already been consummated. ... this also proves that there are more ages, making a distinction between “age” and “world” (*inter seculum et mundum*). For when there occurs a very notable change in people, then the age is consummated (*seculum consummatur*). Thus I address the “consummation of the age” (*consummatio seculi*) as the change of the good to the better and the extermination of the wicked ...<sup>627</sup>

The scale of suffering in this transition period will be great, but it will only be deadly for those unfaithful to God’s instructions. At some point these Tábórite leaders now become clear prophets of chiliasm, conspicuously anticipating the millennial kingdom of Christ on earth described in Revelation 20:4.<sup>628</sup> The reinterpretation of secular consummation is important because it alters the behaviour demanded, in comparison with the apocalyptic vision. This helps clarify the shift of the Tábórite community at this time toward a general focus on self-preservation. In the background here is again the popular Tábórite prototypical case, the evacuation of Lot from Sodom. According to this, it is not self-sacrifice but survival which is the mark of fidelity to God; after all, the fate of Lot’s wife and sons-in-law is ultimately identical to that of the Sodomites (Gen. 19:14,26).<sup>629</sup> As a result, the apocalyptic ethics of martyrdom are conspicuously

<sup>627</sup> *FRB* V, 418, trans. Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 49; *FRB* V, 455 (Aa 17): “intelligere per consummacionem seculi finem et terminum presentis temporis seu anni presentis, post quod erit aliud seculum, id est tempus et evum hominum viancium et fulgencium ut sol ab omni prorsus macula in regno patris supradicto sic usque ad finem mundi duraturo”.

<sup>628</sup> Příbram, *Život*, 41. (D 12): “Item, that those elect of God will visibly and tangibly reign with Christ the Lord on earth for a thousand years.” Cf. Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 591: “Quodsi post resurreccionem tantum omnes essent reges et scientes, tunc tantum ad mille annos esset et non plus.”

<sup>629</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 44 f.: “do not say, ‘why should we flee before God[?]; wherever a good man dies, he dies well.’ That is true sometimes, but not always. Just as it was good for

absent from Tábórite discourse. Instead, in full appreciation of the Hussite anxiety of sin pollution, one of the main aims is spatial segregation, for the elect to avoid both the onslaught of the Antichrist and the divine eradication of the damned (*ne accipiant plagas infidelium*).<sup>630</sup> In the words of one of their prophets:

In that time [of greatest sorrow] Christ gives a special command to his faithful (*zwastnie prikázanie swým wěrným*), that they run not only from sins, but also from the midst of the wicked, offensive and insincere people, and says: flee to the mountains (Matt. 24:16), namely to the faithful people ... so that they are not part of the wicked people; [and] so that they do not suffer [God's] blows with them.<sup>631</sup>

Put differently, the imminent divine violence which is about to destroy the house of Antichrist (*domus Antichristi*) will ultimately be vindicating for the elect.<sup>632</sup> Despite these important moves toward immanentization in Tábórite thought, however, it is not

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Lot to be in Sodom for a long time among the wicked, in the time of vengeance, when God commanded him to go and flee from there, it was no longer good for him to die there, like his two sons-in-law, who fell with the wicked, not wanting to leave. And also now honest people, though they may have lived and died well for a long time among the wicked, will not die well [among them] in the time of vengeance, because they will violate the special command of God issued in that time, which is the command to flee from the midst of the wicked (*z prostřed zých utéci*). Thus Lord Christ orders, saying: remember Lot's wife; he who will desire to save his soule, namely among the wicked, will lose it, like Lot's wife lost her life, not only [for] remaining among the wicked, but [for] not heeding the prohibition."

<sup>630</sup> Ibid., 46: "where the body of Christ is given with all the pieces of God's truth, collect yourselves here in the time of vengeance and of greatest sorrow. And those places in that time cannot be in villages or elsewhere, because of the strong and horrible Antichrist, but in fortified cities, of which the holy Isaiah names five, namely on that day of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ."; Kaminsky, *A History*, 538: "Et ideo, ne participes sint Cristi fideles delictorum eius, et de plagis eorum ne accipiant, mandat dominus exire eisdem in diebus ulcionis de illa, dicens: Exite de illa popule meus, ne participes, etc. Ex quo textu habetur quod non solum mandat dominus spiritualiter exire de Babilone, subdens causas aliquas, quarum prima est ne sint participes delictorum alienorum; secundo, ne accipiant plagas infidelium, cum eis habitantes tempore vindicte; tercio, ut salvet unusquisque animam suam ab ira furoris domini ...". The text is from Jakoubek's excerpt of a letter from the Tábórite Jan Jičín. Cf. the similar instructions in the Tábórite pamphlet in *AČ* 6, 41, trans. Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 44.

<sup>631</sup> Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 43 f. In one popular Tábórite song, the stationary apostate is clearly juxtaposed with the truly faithful. See Vlhová-Wörner and Holeton, *Jistebnický kancionál* 2, 287.

<sup>632</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 583: "Nam primus illorum tribulacionem illius diei venturam magnam predixit, ... alio [dixit] eam diem ire, calamitatis et miserie vocante, quia in hac die nulli parcur, sed in cunctos, diversimode tamen, ira dei deserviet et tormenta habundabunt. Quibus disponentur, ut dictum est, bene electi, sed malis i.e. domui Antichristi, tirannidem exercentibus, sine excusacione ulla veniet interitus iste. ... Et quamvis electis supervenit sua bestiarum ira et morsibus perversorum colubrorum exterminantur, non in perpetuum tamen ira illa permanebit, sed in brevi turbati signum habent salutis, cum ante sermonem dei examinantur sermone, qui omnia sanat." This community of the vindicated is cryptically identified with utraquists a couple of sentences later. See Ibid., 584: "Et quamvis ita in hac via mirabili paciantur, non sunt tamen sine misericordia derelicti, quia in omni loco montis Sion et ubicunque invocatur deus, creatam habent supra se nubem in velamento diei, i.e. carnem Christi, et per diem ad voluntatem non urit eos estu suo sol ...".

possible to interpret this process as already complete. God is still the transcendent agent of history, and the Tábórites do not assert for themselves any significant role in its outcome. As a result, even the spontaneous violence of the Tábórite community at this stage must be read in light of the ethic of self-preservation, not revolution. Historical evidence of their defensive warfare and looting at this time does not suggest cooperation in a divine mission of violent purgation, but only survival into the worldly paradise to come.<sup>633</sup> Where Tábórite prophets mention their physical struggle it is as a sign of the inevitable before the end times, not a hortation to participate in the apocalyptic battle itself.<sup>634</sup>

What becomes clear from all this is a radically new vision which bears the marks of a complex relationship to reformist and apocalyptic thought. Although the demoralizing experiences of recent history convince Tábórite leaders to appreciate a decidedly fatalistic outlook, the implications of this for personal behaviour are all highly mitigated by generally optimistic expectations. The condition of the elect is excruciating, and the battle of Christ and Antichrist is moments away, but the promise of historical perfection is not abandoned, only delegated to superhuman agents. As a result, the behaviour of believers is not oriented to the otherworldly beyond, but to the disjointed inner-worldly future. They must collect, fortify, and even struggle with arms with the goal of surviving the battle of good and evil, not resign themselves to the sacrifice of martyrdom. Nevertheless, even this call to violence is strictly pragmatic

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<sup>633</sup> See Jakoubek's vague accusations in Kaminsky, *A History*, 521, 543 f. Vague and undatable accounts of Tábórite destruction are also collected in *FRB V*, 356, 403-13. Some (p. 408, 413) can almost certainly be dated to a later period, while the enumeration of ecclesiastic property destruction (p. 409 f.) is either anachronous or mistakenly attributed to them. See Laurence of Březová, *Husitská kronika. Píseň o vítězství u Domažlic*, ed. František Hermanský, Marie Bláhová, and Jan B. Čapek (Prague: Svoboda, 1979), 348-350.

<sup>634</sup> Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 43: "For already many are grieved against Christ's commands, assuming that battles should not be undertaken with the physical sword against malice and abomination, against error and heresy. But Christ said: Do not be grieved, when you hear wars and strife, those things must be, as the holy prophets prophesied."

rather than normative. Defensive warfare is permissible for the self-preservation of the elect, but has no broader cosmological significance in the divine narrative of history. This would come only later, after a significant intellectual shift in the Taborite community which cannot be taken for granted.

## **Revolutionary Tabor**

In contrast with much of the literature on the topic, what is clearly missing from the overview presented so far is the concept which the Taborite community has become best known for: revolution. Popular warfare against political superiors was certainly already a part of its historical reality, but if we take seriously the self-understanding of its actors, this seems to comply more closely to a discourse of self-preservation than of violent participation in historical change. As has been emphasized, the most important feature behind this distinction is historical determinacy, which Taborite thinkers largely inherited from trauma and collapsed expectations. History proceeds according to a set itinerary and as a result, even if Taborite believers can prepare themselves for membership in a fantastic future age of progress and purity, they remain powerless to help actualize it. This basic picture only changes after the “failure” of prophecy in February 1420. Here, earlier trends of immanentization, anthropological confidence, and Hussite activism all play a role in amplifying the significance of the political and introducing the important element of contingency to the narrative of history. Man may expect participation in a progressive future age, but at least to some extent this depends on his own volition and radical political agency in the present. Such findings are relevant because they pave the way for the birth of popular revolutionary thought. With this, every Christian has a stake in the violent overthrow of the current religio-political order to attain membership in the next, and uncooperative dissidents of any status are merely obstructions to be eradicated. The Hussite political vision is clearly embellished

and sometimes even transgressed, but its basic assumptions remain central to the innovative intellectual shift underway.

The concrete existential experience which was in the background of this new attitude of re-politicization is that of re-socialization. As has been shown, the Tábórite chiliast, like the apocalyptic believer, until now showed no inherent interest in the establishment of a worldly community on this side of the historical transition to perfection, except minimally for purposes of self-preservation. The chiliastic vision of theocratic order is obviously a political one, but this does not belong to the present reality. It is by giving hope in the disjunctive future age that the crisis at the collapse of the Tábórite believer's former self-interpretation is psychologically overcome. By the time this attitude now suddenly shifts to radical activism in February 1420, however, it does so not anymore in the context of the individual's shattered and desperate existential crisis, but rather in the context of a new, communal existence which interprets itself in the symbolism of the chiliastic vision. Despite its polemic tone, one report of these shifts from an anti-Tábórite observer is worth citing here at length. This narrative picks up from the flight to the fortified cities:

... having been lead to this point, now seeing their deception clearly and how they [i.e. Tábórite followers] were thusly defrauded of their property, [and] seeing that the prophecies of the prophets [i.e. their priests] did not and will not come to pass, were gripped by sorrow and—suffering hunger, poverty, and destitution—[began] to grumble against and rebuke the prophets. Here the false deceivers, in order to somehow calm the people, invented themselves a new lie, saying that now the whole Christian Church was to be reformed in such a way that all sinners and the wicked shall entirely perish, and only God's elect (those, who had fled to the mountains) were to remain in the world ... [and] when that which they preached did not occur, nor did the Lord God cause it to happen, then they themselves knew how to bring it about, and again they invented themselves a new and the most malicious cruelty. And they were seized to preach cruelty unheard-of in the world, saying that now is the time of vengeance, that all the sinful shall be slain by the blows described in the books of Ecclesiasticus, namely with the sword, by fire, weapons sharp on both sides, the

teeth of beasts, scorpions and snakes, death, blood, assaults, hunger and floggings and hailstorms, by scourges, clubs, and other blows.<sup>635</sup>

Although the identification of these vague transitions with concrete historical moments is difficult, the picture that emerges here generally supports the argument of coinciding politicization and socialization. The promise of chiliasm is given to console disordered and traumatized refugees, but the call to political mobilization is made already to a community with parallel experiences and self-interpretations. In other words, however unwittingly, the apoliticism of the Tábórite chiliast becomes the basis for a new political order of its own. One historian has summarized a similar phenomenon among apocalyptic communities:

The apocalyptic believer has no interest in the formation of a community in this world. Nevertheless, as it were against his will, he becomes the creator of a political order as soon as he successfully communicates the state of his consciousness symbolically to the environment. In the language of philosophical anthropology: man's political nature is revealed even in man's resistance to this nature.<sup>636</sup>

This observation is significant because it provides an existential background to the origins of Tábórite revolution, which somewhat undermines the reactionary causality offered by the authors discussed in the Introduction. Although precarious and threatened, the Tábórite situation at the moment of revolution is not anymore the height of existential alienation and panic, but actually that of meaningful re-integration into communal experience. As will be shown, even if their collection was inspired primarily by lasting anxieties, their impulse to action was also now informed by evocative visions of identity-formation and enthusiastic plans of global re-engineering. Whatever else

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<sup>635</sup> Přibram, *Život*, 41, 42 (D 11, 17)

<sup>636</sup> Riedl, *Joachim von Fiore*, 37-39, quote at 38: "Der Apokalyptiker hat kein Interesse an einer diesseitigen Gemeinschaftsbildung. Dennoch wird er, gleichsam gegen seinen Willen, zum Schöpfer einer politischen Ordnung, sobald er erfolgreich den Zustand seines Bewußtseins symbolisch an die Umwelt vermittelt. In der Sprache der philosophischen Anthropologie ausgedrückt: die politische Natur des Menschen erweist sich sogar noch im Widerstand des Menschen gegen diese Natur."

may be said of the Táborite decision of revolution, it was clearly not one made from the perspective of desperate survivalists, but rather confident order.

In the immediate intellectual background of all this is the communally-shared experience of Christ's secret advent, which is relevant because it has the effect of reintegrating contemporary politics into the optimistic vision of Táborite transformation. According to Táborite leaders, this event has relocated man into a liminal stage which experiences the overlap of the Christian's former and new existence. Christ has already arrived clandestinely to inaugurate the consummation of this age,<sup>637</sup> but this advent will be still be fulfilled manifestly to begin the new.<sup>638</sup> The elect are now located at the threshold of ages, meaning that they experience the transformation as already underway. In other words, the Táborite believer has identified the beginning of the final events, the actualization of the *eschata*. As one prophet explains: "almost all other signs contained together in the Gospel, in the apostles, and in the prophets, which preceded and followed the day of the Lord, are being fulfilled (*adimplentur*)". This is important because it begins to load the present and the political with confidence and significance. The spiral of corruption which traditional apocalypticism treats indifferently as the unchangeable course of events now draws the full attention of Táborite thinkers. Therefore, the current "time of vengeance" is

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<sup>637</sup> *FRB* V, 456 (Aa 16): "iam nunc ecclesia militans longe ante adventum Christi novissimum ad finale iudicium duratura per alium adventum Christi, qui iam factus est, in regnum dei pro statu viacionis reparabitur et reparatur, sic videlicet quod in ea nullum erit peccatum, nullum scandalum, nulla abhominacio, nullum mendacium nec aliquid coinquinaturm."; *FRB* V, 413 (Ab 1); Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 584: "Iam Christus in hac die magna venit ad suam ecclesiam reparandam et ad generacionem adulteram consummandam." *Ibid.*, 585.

<sup>638</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 586: "Huius adventus quid a me queritur modus? Quem angeli sufficienter expresserunt, ad Apostolos cum dixerunt: 'viri Galilei, quid aspiciis in celum? hic Jesus, (qui assumptus est a vobis in celum), sic veniet, quemadmodum vidistis eum in celum euntem.' Qui quia in nube assumptus est, ergo in nube revertetur. Et ideo dicit Christus: 'et videbunt filium hominis venientem in nubibus celi cum virtute multa et maiestate.'" *FRB* V, 415 (Ab 10): "in fine istius consummacionis seculi Christus descendens de celo manifeste veniet in propria persona et videbitur oculis carnalibus, ut regnum in hoc mundo assumat, et faciet grande convivium et cenam agni veluti nupcias sponse sue ecclesie hic in montibus corporalibus."



simultaneously a “time of vision” (*tempus visionis*) where the elect witness the signs of transformation. The forces of good and evil are becoming clear, and the Antichrist has been revealed; divine judgement has already begun (*iudicium inceptum a domo dei*), and Christ is commanding his angelic forces and striking the wicked with the seven last plagues.<sup>639</sup> Yet the experience of transformation is not only negative, but also now initiates the optimistic improvements of the future. The elect have not yet reached the purity and perfection anticipated in the millennial kingdom, but the optimistic process has already begun.<sup>640</sup> Improvement is being manifested on both political and anthropological scales: the faithful are being congregated into the community of Christ’s kingdom, and some already experience the gift of new wisdom (*nova sapiencia*).<sup>641</sup> As one prophet explains, this represents an innovatively upward historical trajectory, which corrects not only the Church but the whole order of creation:

... they [i.e. the apostles] were expecting a future miraculous glory for themselves, furnished in the last age, revealed in us (*in nobis revelari*), to which the present sufferings cannot be worthily compared, in which all creatures (*omnes creature*) will be liberated from the servitude of corruption.<sup>642</sup>

<sup>639</sup> Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 585: “Que sumit signa? ... subintravit turbo dominice indignacionis, quam precessit per Apostolum predicta discessio et Antichristi revelacio, signi Christi apparicio et ydolorum inicialis omnimoda intericio et Israeliticorum parvulorum atque iumentorum appropinquat ad sacrificandum deo perduccio et infancium ante Christi victoriam decantacio. Egiptus vulneratur VII novissimis plagis ... et alia fere omnia signa, contenta in evangelio, in Apostolis et prophetis, que preventura et subsecutura erant diem domini, adimplentur. Quis igitur nisi infidelis visis istis diem hanc advenisse non crederet?” See note 647 below. Ibid., 587: “Item adventus iste quam diu durabit, ad illam questionem videtur angelus Danieli respondisse, quia usque in tempus et tempora et dimidium temporis. Tempus hoc significat tempus visionis, in quo compleri debent omnia signa, adventum Christi notificancia.” On divine judgement, see note 670 below.

<sup>640</sup> FRB V, 456 (Aa 16): “iam nunc ecclesia militans longe ante adventum Christi novissimum ad finale iudicium duratura per alium adventum Christi, qui iam factus est, in regnum dei pro statu viacionis reparabitur et reparatur, sic videlicet quod in ea nullum erit peccatum, nullum scandalum, nulla abhominacio, nullum mendacium nec aliquid coinquinatum.” Emphases mine. Cf. FRB V, 454 (Aa 1): “iam nunc in presenti anno, qui est MCCCCXX, fiet et est consummacio seculi, id est malorum omnium exterminacio.”

<sup>641</sup> Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 586: “Sed iam venit eos congregare et ad istum locum reducere. Qui et propter hoc passus est, ut dispersos filios in unum congregaret. ... Et ista congregacio et filiorum dei liberacio erit impiis in ruinam. ... Et super omnes de hoc adventu loquentes iam in verbo sue nove sapiencie dicunt Christum advenire.”; It may be possible to interpret the fading of Taborite sacramental attention to the confidence of present anthropological improvement. See Ibid., 591.

<sup>642</sup> Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 589: “ipsi apostoli erant ad statum mirabilem perducti novi paradisi, in quo fuit Christus lignum vite, et in hoc non dubium, quod erant hic primo homine perfecciores, ipsi tamen gloriam futuram mirabilem expectabant, paratam in novissimo tempore in nobis revelari, cui non possunt

In short, the actualization of the *eschata* initiated by the secret advent invites the elect to participate in something fantastic: historical and cosmic progress. What Tábórite leaders formerly anticipated only in a dislocated future is now transplanted into continuity with the present reality. Christ's immanent kingdom is not yet fulfilled, but the transition is already happening now. As a result, the sharp dualism between present and future which underpins the deeply pessimistic attitude of Tábórites to politics is dispelled. The present and future are not fundamentally opposed but rather located along a continuum of progress. Consequently, political engagement loses its stigma of decadence, and becomes a legitimate arena for human participation once again.

In addition to appreciating the political sphere in Tábórite thought, the experience of the secret advent is also important for introducing a degree of human choice and agency into the deterministic narrative of history. The itinerary of emancipative purgation is not anymore simplistically preordained, but at least partially depends on human participation. Together, these novelties significantly mitigate Tábórite passivism and instead introduce an attitude of activist fidelity. Christ's immanent kingdom is a calling, but it is the prerogative of human volition to meet that calling by reorienting itself to service in the realm of politics. For Tábórite prophets, the imperfection of Christ's advent cannot be the result of divine deception but actually of human deficiency—Christ came on his day, says one of them, but he found the elect sleeping a deadly sleep.<sup>643</sup> In the register of scriptural prophecy, he describes that due

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condigne presentes comparari passiones, in qua omnes creature a servitute liberabuntur corrupcionis ...". According to one interpretation, this progress may have been read back into the history of Tábórite persecution. See Ibid., 585: "Egipciorum aque in sanguinem sunt commutate, nam ad eas pueros, per quos incipiebat lumen dare seculi, combustos proiecerunt, eorum primogenita i.e. ista preclarior nacio ab angelo sacerdotum et cetera ab angelo percuciente per partes exterminantur ..."

<sup>643</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 585: "Que sumit signa? Venit in die sua, que more furis subintravit, nos omnes dormientes inveniēns, ut erat predictum per Isaiam ... Cum igitur sic sompno letali dormissemus, subintravit turbo dominice indignacionis ...". On similar historical parallels, see Gordon J. Melton, "Spiritualization and Reaffirmation: What Really Happens When Prophecy Fails," *American Studies* 26, no. 2 (1985): 17–29.

to their laziness and faithlessness, their cries for divine vengeance and liberation remained unfulfilled; Christ's retributive and purgative rage entered the world, but not the perfection of liberty which was its purpose. One passage is worth quoting at length, which parallels ancient symbols to contemporary events:

the widow of the gospel ... enduring the burden of her adversary ... repeatedly comes to the judge (Luke 18:2-5) begging to be avenged. For this reason, she takes off the gown of peace and, covered in the sackcloth of obstruction, she cries out to her final days, but also urged her children to cry out: "Be courageous", she said, and "cry out, children, to the Lord, and he will take you away from the hand" of the men of the Pharaoh (Bar. 4:20-21), i.e. the unjust leaders. ... Surely, [God] heard her and endured with his children, and he sent not a servant but his son, who began to liberate her from her great misery. But because he comes from a distance, not finding any faith, once he found her sleeping among the children against [his] command, he thus burned with his anger against her, and his torments rage against her, yet with these she will be cleansed and well-disposed. But his enemies are destroyed with his rival in turn, because the place of repentance is given to them, and they are being struck by the seven last plagues ...<sup>644</sup>

Admittedly, the symbolic language of such passages is difficult to decipher, and does not support firm conclusions. Nevertheless, what appears relatively clear from such statements is an important new assumption, that the divine narrative is at least partially dependant upon man. Christ comes prepared to fulfil his promise, but he finds his believers undeserving and deficient. This contractual thinking marks a clear departure from apocalyptic thought, where the structure of history is always already given. Along with the new appreciation of politics, this discovery of historical contingency is significant because it unwinds the apolitical soteriology of the apocalyptic and chiliastic

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<sup>644</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 583: "Scimus nempe viduam evangelicam in civitate degentem magni oneris suffere ad adversante molestiam (de qua Luce XVIII) in collectura palleorum et coctura laterum ad edificandum domum exasperantem Pharaonis, que crebra veniens ad iudicem, vindicari exposcit. Idcirco exuit se stola pacis sue et sacco obstruccionis cooperta clamavit ad altissimum diebus suis, sed et filios suos, ut clament adhortabatur: 'Animiquiores estote', inquiens, filii et clamate ad dominum et eripiet vos de manu viri Pharaonis i.e. principum iniquorum. ... Certe exaudivit eam et pacienciam habuit in filiis et misit non servum, sed filium, qui ex sua magna misericordia incipit eam liberare. Sed quia de longinco veniens fide quavis non reperta dormientem contra preceptum simul cum filiis invenit, ideo ardet furor eius contra illam et tormenta eius contra eam deseuiunt, quibus tamen mundabitur et bene disponetur. Sed inimici eius cum adversario per partes destruuntur, quia datur eis penitencie locus, et VII novissimis plagis affliguntur ...".

thinker, and introduces the importance of human agency. God has not pre-determined human fate, but has provided an opportunity of improvement which can be seized by fidelity to divine volition. The influence of optimistic Hussite anthropology and historiography is clear. Man might be called by God (*vocati*), but it remains his personal choice to accept this calling.<sup>645</sup> For Taborites, this means that indifference to the present political reality is no longer an option, because it is this reality which God has already loaded with soteriological value, and chosen as the location for the transition of ages. This finding marks a significant further step in immanentization which should be taken seriously. What is new is that it is not principally God but rather a cooperation of human and divine forces which drives history forward. Man's participation in politics is no longer pointless, nor merely the unfortunate reality of the postlapsarian condition, but actually a constructive channel to contribute to human progress.

Taken together, all this begins to show the radical potential of the experience of the secret advent. Christ has come to the world to bridge the transition between the decadent old age and the purified millennium of the future, and in doing so imposes profound existential implications for believers. Signs of transformation have already begun to appear, but these cannot be taken for granted, and instead the elect are bound to contribute to the transformation with political activism. However, according to the new norms of this transitory period, this engagement does not follow the program of gradual hierarchic reform, but urgent popular action. The time of entreating secular and religious authorities to renew Christian society is over, and instead Christ has mandated that only the retributive violence of his lowly faithful stands between the present and God's consummated kingdom. It is only in actualizing sacred vengeance that the elect genuinely earn their status as semi-divine agents, distinct from the damned. In other

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<sup>645</sup> Ibid., 591: "nemo virorum, qui vocati sunt et noluerunt venire, gustabit cenam". See note 665 below.

words, Taborite leaders shift from prophets of a divine transformation to preachers of self-redemptive revolution.

At the root of this shift toward activism is a new anxiety of soteriological identity caused by the transition into the midst eschatological events. Previously taken for granted, the Taborite confidence of election now is marked by uncertainty due to their deficient fidelity and the consequent imperfection of prophecy. As a result, Christ calls upon Taborite believers to prove their transcendent identity by a new demonstration of devotion. Christ does not come into the world to share dominion over mankind with demonic rulers, and his millennial kingdom does not take a relativized form alongside other political orders. Instead, it appears only in their absence, where there exists no more potential for conflict and dissent. One Taborite describes the transition via Daniel:

the power shall be removed and crushed and shall disappear until the end, but the kingdom and the power and the greatness of the kingdom, which is the heaven over all, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high ... whose kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and all kings will serve him and obey him.<sup>646</sup>

Consequently, the period which anticipates the kingdom's consummation always carries a central task of segregation and destruction.<sup>647</sup> Still on this side of perfection, the identities of the elect and the damned become an empirical reality, and once clear, this distinction is not one which can survive into the transformed future, at least not without subordination to divine plans. For Taborite prophets, this is the purpose of the present time of harvest (*messis*), the separation and eradication of the chaff or tares, a symbolic moment which is given a clear historical relevance in the historical narrative

<sup>646</sup> Pjecha, "Hussite Eschatological Texts," 66; Riedl, *Joachim von Fiore*, 36. Cf. Daniel 7:27.

<sup>647</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 586: "Qui et propter hoc passus est, ut dispersos filios in unum congregaret. Et tunc vere liberi erunt, cum a Christo liberabuntur. Et ista congregatio et filiorum dei liberatio erit impiis in ruinam, unde scriptum est: 'congregans congregabo omnia a facie terre, dicit Dominus, congregans hominem et pecus, congregans volatilia celi et pisces maris et ruine impiorum erunt' (Zeph. 1:2-3)."

according to Christ's prophecy, as found in Matthew 13. This is worth citing here at length:

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. ... The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. ... The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. ... Then shall the righteous (*iusti*) shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father ... So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.<sup>648</sup>

For Tábórite leaders, this characterization loads the present with revolutionary potential, which closely links political and individual identity. Christ now wills the harvest, but who are the angels? Tábórite leaders will want to say that they are the Tábórite community itself, or at least the willing among them, but this is not an equivocation which is taken for granted. Instead, it agrees with certain confident anthropological assumptions already familiar for us. The symbol of *novus homo* is missing, but the confident resonance is clear. The universalist ambition of Christ's kingdom demands the eradication of all pollution to introduce historical progress, but through intense suffering and eucharistic fidelity, only the elect are made perfect and wise (*dokonalý, múdry*), following the wondrous path (*via mirabilis*) of purgation from their former selves toward a semi-divine condition previously unknown to mankind.<sup>649</sup> For the

<sup>648</sup> Matt. 13:30, 38-9, 41, 43, 49-50. On the Tábórite usage of the symbols of the harvest and threshing floor, see notes 654 and 658 below.

<sup>649</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 583 f.: "alius dixit eam in igne revelari, alio eam diem ire, calamitatis et miserie vocante, quia in hac die nulli parcitur, sed in cunctos, diversimode tamen, ira dei deserviet et tormenta habundabunt. Quibus disponentur, ut dictum est, bene electi ... non in perpetuum tamen ira illa permanebit, sed in brevi turbati signum habent salutis, cum ante sermonem dei examinantur sermone, qui omnia sanat. Et hec est istorum via mirabilis, in qua tot et tantas habent difficultates, quibus omnes abominaciones egipciace, que eis adhererunt, veluti igne exurantur et eas in terra promissionis facient displicere. Et quamvis ita in hac via mirabili paciantur, non sunt tamen sine misericordia derelicti, quia in omni loco montis Sion et ubicunque invocatur deus, creatam habent supra se nubem in velamento diei, i.e. carnem Christi ..."; Ibid., 590: "Habitis igitur istis bonis spiritualiter et corporaliter quid iusto poterit deesse aut quid eum poterit perturbare, cum scriptum sit: 'non conturbabit iustum, quidquid acciderit

angelic agents which Táborites now identify with, violent purgation in this time of harvest is part of the self-justification of the righteous—“all should sanctify themselves in the murder of sinners, and bathe and wash their hands in their blood”, says one Táborite article.<sup>650</sup> According to them, the prophetic narrative of Matthew cited above does not describe two but only one identity—the angels, namely the righteous (*angeli erunt iusti*)—which will destroy pollution, because this activity helps define their position in the kingdom.<sup>651</sup> Put simply, the self-actualization of the elect in cooperative agency coincides with the political actualization of immanent salvation in Christ’s kingdom. The Hussite background of activist fidelity is clear, even if its content is radically embellished. Moral neutrality is not an option here, and only action matters; the elect are not allowed to leave themselves as they find themselves, so to speak, or the world as they find it. Identity with Christ is inherently performative, as the Táborite leader Martin Húska describes:

to eat Christ’s body is livingly to believe in him, and to drink his blood is to shed it with him for his Father (*vylévat ji s ním pro otce jeho*). He takes Christ’s body who disseminates his gifts, and he eats his body who livingly listens to his word. In this way we shall all be Christ’s body, his very limbs as St. Paul says. Through this eating the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father ....<sup>652</sup>

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illi’?” On constant eucharistic devotion, see *AC* 3, 222 (C 50). See the Táborite priest, Martin Húska’s manifesto in Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 577. McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 269, erroneously translates *dokonalý* as “adults”.

<sup>650</sup> Příbram, *Život*, 44 (D 24): “Item kázachu a voláchu, aby všichni v mordu hřešníkuv sebe posvětili a ruce své v krvi jich zkúpali a obmývali, a tak blahoslavení aby byli.”

<sup>651</sup> Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 588: “Nunc Christus in consummacione seculi in hostia sua apparuit nobis, quam consummacionem ipse messem appellat, in qua mittentur angeli, ut omnia scandala tollant et sic nullum dimittant non tollendum, quia neque dimittent in illud aliquid coinquinatum aut faciens abhominacionem, quia in rego illo qui fuerint erunt iusti, velud sol fulgebunt et velud scintille in arundinetu discurrunt et fulgebunt velud splendor firmamenti, de quo reprobi velud canes impudici et venefici expellentur.” The quote is a compilation of prophetic citations which confounds the identity of the *angeli* and *iusti*, which the scriptural prophets clearly distinguish. Cf. Matt. 13:41,43: “Mittet Filius hominis angelos suos, et colligent de regno ejus omnia scandala, et eos qui faciunt iniquitatem ... Tunc iusti fulgebunt sicut sol in regno Patris eorum.”

<sup>652</sup> McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 268. The attribution to Húska is Kaminsky’s hypothesis in Kaminsky, *A History*, 405, based on certain Pikart themes, but it is not central for my argument.

To segregate mankind, but also to prove the fidelity of the elect, and to progress history, Christ therefore gives each person a final choice: either actualize the purgative revolution he already started as one of his angelic agents, or face the wrath of divine vengeance as an agent of Satan.<sup>653</sup> The prehistory of charismatic discernment should not be obscured even despite all the discursive changes: the faithful are capable of distinguishing the divine and demonic forces already now in human communities and, in addition, there is nothing obstructing their segregation and destruction here and now. In other words, revolutionary action proves and identifies, as one Tábórite article makes clear: “everyone who holds back his sword from pouring out the blood of God’s enemies is damned. And everyone who repays the Babylonian daughter with vengeance, [the same] payment she used to pay them, is blessed.”<sup>654</sup> However, where Hussites generally agreed on a hierarchy of duties to participate in internal and collective improvement, Tábórites see only the immediate prerogative of every individual in the Christian community. The account of one moderate Hussite observer is worth citing here:

Thus the Tábórites rode and marched with their priests ... And those priests, along with other clergy, incited squires in arms and unarmoured peasants to joyous battle, saying that the Lord will give them every place upon which their feet step, for it is written in the Psalm: “a little while longer and there will not be any sinner; you will search for him, and you will not find him. But the meek

<sup>653</sup> *FRB* V, 455 f. (Aa 13): “quicumque dominus, cliens, civis vel villanus monitus fuerit a fidelibus supradictis in istis quator per eosdem decretis ... eis non adhererit sua presencia corporali, omnis talis ut sathanas et draco ab eis conteratur aut occidatur”; cf. *AČ* 3, 219 f. (C 19, 20); *FRB* V, 414 (Ab 6): “Item quod fratres Thaboriensis isto tempore ulcionis sunt angeli missi ad educendum fideles de omnibus civitatibus, villis et castellis ad montes sicut Loth de Sodomis et quod fratres cum suis adherentibus sunt illud corpus, ad quod, ubicunque fuerit, congregabuntur et aquile, de quibus eciam dictum est: omnis locus, quem calcaverit pes vester, vester est et erit. Sunt enim exercitus a deo per totum mundum missus ad tollendum omnia scandala de regno Christi, quod est ecclesia militans, et ad eiciendum malos de medio iustorum et ad faciendum vindictam et plagas in naciones adversariorum legis Christi et eorum civitates, villas et municiones.”

<sup>654</sup> Příbram, *Život*, 44 (D 23). Cf. *FRB* V, 414 (Ab 3), *FRB* V, 454 f. (Aa 5, 6). Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 591: “Sed iam letabuntur, videntes vindictam manusque suas lavantes in sanguine peccatorum.”; Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 79. According to one interrogated Tábórite, their priests urged soldiers to destroy with the words: “if you will not burn, you will be burned yourselves!”. See Adolf Kalný, *Popravčí kniha pánu z Rožmberka* (Třebon: Státní oblastní archiv, 1993), 60: “Najprv vyznal, že kněžíe – kněz Michal, kněz Prokop, kněz Petr – pudili je, aby pálili, řkúce: nebudete-li páliťi, ale sami budete pálení”.



shall inherit the world and shall delight in the abundance of peace”. They labelled their mild (*mansueti*) peasant brothers as crueller (*crudeliores*) than all the wild animals, as they gladly murdered people like dogs without any mercy, asserting that with this [extermination] from the world they are executing God’s will, and that they are God’s angels and true warriors of Christ sent to avenge the injury done to Christ and the holy martyrs. And thus the chaff must be separated from the wheat with tread and winnowing shovel and expelled and destroyed from the threshing floor, that is the Church of Christ.<sup>655</sup>

This close interpenetration of personal and political progress is important because it helps explain the popular character of Tábórite revolution. The segregation of the elect and damned, the retribution of Christ’s injuries, the pacification of man to God, and the conquest of the land for the lowly Tábórite brothers are conspicuously identical endeavours. All social estates are welcome to join as equal members of the Tábórite brotherhood, but the overthrow of the order of corruption is not a unique, but a universal duty. Instead, the offer of salvation depends on the individual prerogative of each believer in violence, even priests.<sup>656</sup> Any remnants of hope in royal agency have been neutralized, and access to divine dominion is ubiquitous to the elect without the mediation of human institutions. In other words, the great transfer of power to the oppressed, formerly expected in the disjunctive future, has already begun now. This is important because it radically appreciates certain earlier subversive themes, like

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<sup>655</sup> *FRB* V, 428 f.: „Thaborite siquidem equestres et pedestres cum eorum presbiteris per regnum girantes hinc inde adversarios eorum non consencientes sentenciis corpora cum rebus comburebant et castella ac municiones eorundem, quamvis quasi inexpugnabiles, cum impetu et brevi temporis spacio acquirebant, de quibus habetur plenitur inferius, procedente semper eos presbitero cum venerabili corporis Christi sacramento in monstrancia lignea supra baculo extenso. Qui quidem presbiteri cum ceteris sacerdotibus ad festivas pugnas clientes armatos et rusticos togatos incitabant dicentes, quia dominus tradet eis omnes locum, quem pes eorum calcaverit, nam scriptum est in psalmo: et adhuc pusillum, et non erit peccator; queres locum eius, et non invenies, mansueti autem hereditabunt terram et delectabuntur in multitudine pacis: notantes mansuetos fratres suos rusticos omni fera silvarum crudeliores, qui homines velut canes sine omni misericordia gaudent interficiebant asserentes, se in horum de terra delezione dei exequi voluntatem et esse angelos dei et veri Christi milites missi ad Christi iniuriam et sanctorum martirum vindicantam. Et sic paleam a tritico cum triture ventilabro fore separandam et ab area, scilicet Christi ecclesia, abiciendam et delendam.” On the symbol of the threshing floor, cf. Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 77, 79.

<sup>656</sup> *FRB* V, 414 (Ab 3): “in hoc tempore ulcionis quilibet fidelis, eciam presbiter, quantumcunque spiritualis, est maledictus, qui gladium suum corporalem prohibet a sanguine adversariorum legis Christi, sed debet manus suas lavare in eorum sanguine et sanctificare.”

Donatism and subaltern agency, which could never find full acceptance in Hussite thought. Even for more radical Hussite thinkers, there were clear (if flexible) limits to the participation of the subaltern in active reform based on traditional medieval institutional norms. For Tábórite leaders, these restraints are swept away by the gravity of the political transformation underway. The consummation of the age basically marks the rehabilitation of the sin which originally ruptured the order of man and God and initiated human political history.<sup>657</sup> Therefore the lowly people may be the feet (*pedes*) in medieval society, but at the transition of ages they are also the last saints (*novissimi sancti*) who are prophesied to sit at judgement and inherit the world.<sup>658</sup> From here on, human and divine history will progress in harmony again according to God's plan, as if the rift never occurred.<sup>659</sup> With this transition underway, the Tábórites claim to enter a remarkably new stage of Christian history. The political precepts of Christ's law of grace, meant to ameliorate the deficient human condition, are already withering away, and the theocratic principles of the future age are already taking root. The powers of deficient kings and clerics are being removed and transferred to the common people (*lid obecný*) and their lowly priests, and a new sovereign religio-political order is arising

<sup>657</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 590; Příbram, *Život*, 53 (D 63): "the written law of God, etched into the minds of that age, will be emptied in many parts, such as regarding patience, subordination to kings, taxes, and many other parts."

<sup>658</sup> *FRB* V, 423 f.: "[sancti] maioribus donis donabuntur, quam ab inicio habuerunt Ezech. XXXVI. ... Hoc declarat apostolus in exemplo ita dicens I Corinth. XIII: non potest dicere caput pedibus etc. usque ibi: si gloratur unum membrorum, congaudeant alia. Cuius similitudinis non nego hanc esse etiam sententiam, quia intelligat de isto corpore, in quo sunt et statuum dignitates, in quo contemptibiliores sunt ad iudicium constituendi. Et cui in tali corpore debetur honor, detur honor. Tamen hoc etiam intelligit de istis novissimis sanctis pedes eos appellando, qui etiam hanc terram recipiant in hereditatem, unde scriptum est: daboque terram tibi et semini tuo peregrinationis tue omnem terram Canaan in possessionem eternam, eroque dominus eorum Gen. XXVII et item Daniel VII: regnum, quod subter omne celum est, detur populo sanctorum." Cf. Kalivoda, *Revolution und Ideologie*, 138. See note 673 below.

<sup>659</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 589: "Quia hii erunt domus non secunda, sed novissima, maioris glorie quam prima, horum dies renovabuntur sicut a principio et sicut a principio hereditabuntur et erunt, sicut fuerunt, quando non erant proiecti, et premiabuntur maioribus bonis, quam habuerunt ab inicio."

based on the prototype of primitive perfection.<sup>660</sup> Under the clear influence of grassroots reformism, this is imagined in the spirit of unanimity: there is no papal office in Christ's kingdom; clerics and bishops are not appointed but popularly elected; and all property is held in common in clear imitation of the apostolic order. At Tábor "there is nothing mine and nothing yours, but rather they hold all things in the community equally: thus everything should always be public, and no one should hold anything privately. Whoever holds something privately is guilty of mortal sin (*ktož co má zvláště, ten hřeší smrtedlně*)."<sup>661</sup> In other words, the remedial institutions of the old world are crumbling down, and the chosen people represent a vanguard of the future order in the present. From this profoundly self-confident perspective, the officers of the corrupt human institutions can only appear as insubordinate remnants, protecting the crumbling relics of the ancient satanic rebellion, waiting to be forgotten like the former selves of the elect.<sup>662</sup> For them and their descendants, the future holds no place, except perhaps the promise of torture and humiliation suggested by prophecy.<sup>663</sup> They are offered repentance and membership in the ecumenical kingdom which fills the world, in the

<sup>660</sup> Příbram, *Život*, 49 (D 36): "they preached that it is improper to have a king or elect one for themselves, because the Lord God himself now wants to reign over the people, and rule should be given to the common people (*kralovanie má lidu obecniemu dáno býti*), drawing on the prophet Daniel (7:27)." On the rejection of sacramental efficacy of priests in mortal sin, see *AČ* 3, 222 (C 47, 48).

<sup>661</sup> See article *AČ* 3, 220 (C 24), cf. Acts 4:32. On religious sovereignty and popular episcopal elections, see Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 556-58; Příbram, *Život*, 59 f. (D 92-7).

<sup>662</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 589: "In quo regno existentibus peccatis propiciabitur et iniquitatum amplius non memorabitur, quia cum de diversis terris fuerint congregati, effundetur super eos aqua munda et ablato corde lapideo novum atque carneum cor dabitur illis. Et ipsi ambulantes in preceptis et iudicia custodientes in terra suorum patrum habitabunt et recordabuntur viarum pessimarum et displicebunt eis iniquitates ipsorum." Ibid., 591: "nemo virorum, qui vocati sunt et noluerunt venire, gustabit cenam; ad hanc nec fatue virgines admittentur nec illi, qui Christi noticia sunt indigui. Unum tantum comedent et bibent modo novo in exultatione, priorum immemores, que recedent, nec ultra illorum recordabuntur—unde: 'ne memineritis priorum et antiqua ne intuemini'—sed gaudebunt et exultabunt usque in sempiternum in hiis novis, que creantur."

<sup>663</sup> Bartoš, "Do čtyř," 589: "Et tunc filii eorum, qui sanctos humiliaverunt, venientes pedum eorum vestigia adorabunt omnes, qui detrahebant eis et vocabunt eos civitatem domini (Sion) sancti Israel." See note 657.

restored order of creation, but most refuse regardless of all efforts.<sup>664</sup> Perhaps already this sinful remnant has been split-off into its own ethically-deficient species, separate to the elect and immune to rehabilitation, as some Tábórites thought.<sup>665</sup> At any rate, the result is that along with their status and power, their very existence is disqualified and made intolerable to the vanguard of divine agents.<sup>666</sup> For Tábórite thinkers, this combination of self-confidence and the attitude of anti-institutionalism is important because it gives significant relevance to the experience of the individual within the context of cosmic regeneration. Here, the great purge of pollution underway is not merely a detached process of ethical sanitation from above, as some Hussites or Wyclif might describe coercive reform. Instead, Tábórites portray their process as a very personal program of judgement and just retribution (*iudicium, iusta retribucione*)—in its original sense: the settling of accounts, returning to an original state of equity—by one community to another, which they call respectively the house of God (*domus dei*)

<sup>664</sup> Ibid., 588: “Malus et scandalosus aliquis, non reputo, ut in hoc regno remaneat .... Sed et alie gentes innumerabiles, que eciam currentes et querentes dominum dicunt: ‘venite, ascendamus ad montem domini et docebit nos dominus vias suas.’ Ex quibus nullus regnum intrare poterit, nisi prius ab omni sorde purificatus. Et propter hos dicitur in Apokalypsi, quod porte huius civitatis non clauduntur nec in die nec in nocte. Patet igitur, quod malis ex hoc regno eiectis soli in eo permanebunt boni. Unde et de apostolis in figura in actibus apostolorum legitur: ‘alienus se illis coniungere non audebat.’” Offering surrender to willing converts or acceptable prisoners of war was accepted practice of Hussite warfare, though it was met with mixed success, and not always followed, particularly by Tábórites. See Petr Čornej, *Tajemství českých kronik: cesty ke kořenům husitské tradice* (Praha: Paseka, 2003), 154. On the agreement, see Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 581 f., at 581: “they [i.e. proper soldiers] should take care that they do not indiscriminately harm the guilty and the innocent, but they should ask if there is anyone faithful amongst the wicked (*věrný mezi zlými*), for they should do good to the faithful, not harm them but liberate them, as the sons of Israel used to do ...”. On Tábórite behaviour, see FRB V, 444.

<sup>665</sup> AČ 3, 221 (C 41-42): “Item children born from good parents are not obliged to be baptized by water, because they receive the Holy Spirit in the womb of the good mother, from the dignified reception by the mother of the body and blood of God. Item to the children born of wicked parents, neither baptism nor any other sacrament will benefit them toward salvation, because they inherit from them [i.e. their parents] malice and damnation (*zlost a zatracenie ot nich ztrhají*).”

<sup>666</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 77: “First he [Čapek] states and says: ‘The present time is called the day of vengeance and castigation to those who would not want to make true penance.’”; Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 583: “Sed inimici eius cum adversario per partes destruuntur, quia datur eis penitencie locus, et VII novissimis plagis affliguntur, quibus afflicti nisi correcti fuerint, uno momento simul omnes exterminabuntur.”

and the rebellious house of Antichrist (*domus exasperans / Antichristi*).<sup>667</sup> The time of ethical imbalance is over, so to speak—sin is overflowing, and “the people of Babylon are boiling over”, as the Táborite priest Jan Čapek says.<sup>668</sup> As far as God is concerned, this means the time of grace and mercy, where the elect articulate their faith by passive endurance of tyranny in imitation of Christ, is closed (*non est tempus gratie et miseracionis quoad deum*). Now, he issues a new command (*rozkázanie*) and initiates a new time, where the elect articulate their devotion not in suffering but in a radically new way: “now in the current time of vengeance (*tempus ulcionis*), Christ should no longer be imitated and followed in his mildness, gentleness, and compassion to enemies of his law, but rather in his zeal, fury, cruelty, and just retribution.”<sup>669</sup> The shift in self-identification with violent Old Testament role models is telling.<sup>670</sup> According to this

<sup>667</sup> Bartoš, “Do čtyř,” 583: “Et abs dubio in hac die tremenda eis ista die advenient, que quia in igne apparuit, mundans electos ut aurum et iudicio incepto a domo dei domum exasperantem illesam fieri non permittit.”; *AC* 3, 220 (C 27): “now in this time at the consummation of the age, which is called the day of vengeance, Christ came secretly like a thief, so that through himself or through the aforementioned angels [i.e. Táborite brothers] (*skrže se neb skrže angely již řečené*) he conquer and destroy that rebellious house (*dóm otporný*), a vengeful death by sword or fire, and especially fire ...”. cf. Ezek. 3:9.

<sup>668</sup> Books of Čapek, in Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 78. Cf. Příbram, *Život*, 48 (D 32): “[the Táborite] priesthood burned so much with demonic rage that they murdered people with their own hands ... And when they were told how Christ ordered the clergy not to strike with the sword, they excused themselves with scripture saying: ‘Christ said to them ‘leave it until now’, namely until this time. And thus we can strike and exterminate.’” See Luke 22:51.

<sup>669</sup> *FRB* V, 454 (Aa 3): “iam in presenti tempore ulcionis non est tempus gratie et miseracionis quoad deum et ideo hominibus malis et adversariis legis Christi nulla sunt miseracionis opera exhibenda.”; *FRB* V, 454 (Aa 4): “iam in presenti tempore ulcionis Christus in sua mititate, mansuetudine et miseracione adversariis legis Christi exhibenda non est imitandus et sequendus, se solum in zelo, furore, crudelitate et iusta retributione.” See also the account of the former Táborite Peter Chelčický, recollecting his conversation with the Táborite leader Martin Húška in a letter to the Táborite bishop Nicholas of Pelhřimov, in *Replika proti Biskupci*, (ed. Straka) 54: “Little Martin was not simple, and he in no way intended to suffer for Christ’s good will (*trpěti pro Krista dobrú vůli ovšem jest nemienil*), nor did you, for we spoke a great deal with him about this and other things. He admitted to us that there will be a new kingdom of the saints on earth, and that the good will no longer suffer, and that ‘if Christians were always meant to suffer thusly, I would not want to be a servant of God (*když by vždy měli tak křesťané trpěti, já bych nechtěl sluha boží býti*).’ He actually said this!”

<sup>670</sup> According to the testimony of the former Táborite Peter Chelčický in Howard Kaminsky, “Chiliasm and the Hussite Revolution,” *Church History* 26 (1957): 51: “When Satan first came to [our brethren] it was not with an open face, as the Devil, but in the shining garb of voluntary poverty, which Christ commanded priests to hold to, and in the zealous work of preaching to and serving the people and in giving them the Body and Holy Blood of God. And all this flourished to the point that a great many people flocked to them. Then the Devil came to them clothed in other garb, in the prophets of the Old Testament, and from these they sought to confect an imminent Day of Judgement, saying that they were

new methodology, the crushing of the ancient, demonic insurrection is conspicuously identical to the bloodbath necessary to avenge the highly personal grievances of the lowly Taborite brothers against the medieval socio-political order. Human rage must align to divine rage—"The enemies who did not want me to rule over them, bring them before me and kill them", Christ says via Čapek.<sup>671</sup> Social superiors should be cut down and butchered, and Taborite armies make a point to target their former oppressors for slaughter.<sup>672</sup> The persecution of God's chosen is repaid with murder and devastation, merciless blasphemy repaid without mercy; even utraquists are not to be spared.<sup>673</sup> God has chosen the willing Taborites as his representatives and the executors of his will, meaning that their enemies are Antichrist, and their resentments and actions are divine. To put all this in relief, what Taborites realize by their position in the transition of ages is the proximity and contingency of their elect identity upon the highly political agency required in this time. God has chosen the here and now to begin the global

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angels who had to eliminate all scandals from Christ's Kingdom, and that they were to judge the world (*oni súdie svět*).” This is evidenced by the prevalence of Old Testament citations, for instance in Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 77-80.

<sup>671</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 80. Cf. Luke 19:27.

<sup>672</sup> Příbram, *Život*, 47 f. (D 30): “assuming [it is] the time for vengeance, they [Taborites] lead and teach the simple people (*lid sprostný*) collected on the mountains to circle all the surrounding lands and murder all the sinners in the whole world without any mercy or compassion, destroy and burn all their houses and buildings, smash off all the horns of altars and crush them on the ground, and burn with fire all their estates and structures, and humble all those people of dignified status and cut them down like stumps, and burn all people like stubble in the furnace, so that neither root nor stem remain, and also crush them like sheaves, pour out their blood, kill them with death and exterminate them with scorpions and snakes and beasts.”; Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 77-80 passim. Taborite atrocities against oppressors is well documented down to gruesome detail, see for instance *FRB* V, 362 f. Cf. Čornej, *Jan Žižka*, 227-30.

<sup>673</sup> Pjecha, “Hussite Eschatological Texts,” 80: “He who despises the law of God, had no mercy. But when two or three testified against him, they caused his death without any mercy. He would be worthy of a greater penalty than anyone, who would suppress the Son of God and would befoul the blood of the covenant, in which man is sanctified, and caused the disgrace of the Holy Spirit.” The scriptural translation is original, cf. Heb. 10:27-8: “Irritam quis faciens legem Moysi, sine ulla miseratione duobus vel tribus testibus moritur: quanto magis putatis deteriora mereri supplicia qui Filium Dei conculcaverit, et sanguinem testamenti pollutum duxerit, in quo sanctificatus est, et spiritui gratiae contumeliam fecerit?”; Ibid.: “The king, having heard this, was angered, and sent his army, and killed the murderers and burned their city.” Cf. Matt. 22:7. Taborite violence against fellow-utraquists is also well documented, for instance the mass executions at Vodňany in 1420, see *FRB* V, 438; Čornej, *Jan Žižka*, 318. In January 1421, at a summit with utraquists, “a Thaboritis est proclamatum, quod quemcunque presbiterum reperirent in ornato missantem, quod eum volunt una cum ornato comburere.” See *FRB* V, 470. Clerical vestments were a key point of contention between Hussite parties. See Höfler, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* VI, 538.

transfiguration, but this cannot reach actualization if the faithful are in disharmony with his will, or if the faithless exist to challenge and relativize its achievement. As a result, the time of optimistic progress simultaneously incorporates the character of segregation and destruction, to empirically discern and qualify true believers and their world for the reality of Christ's kingdom. According to Taborite leaders, this calls for nothing short of popular revolution, where each Christian individually proves and realizes his own membership and purity by participation in the cosmic purgation willed by God. Former institutions, powers, and codes of conduct all wither away as the imitator of Christ is invited to share directly and personally in his rage and vengeance, as well as the divine peace and unity which sprouts from the ashes. The narrative of events is set, but it is up to the vanguard of the future to move history forward and validate their belonging there by overthrowing the satanic order of the present.

Historiography on the Taborite revolution has often treated this event in materialist terms, as a gradual but natural outcome of deteriorating historical conditions and desperation. The picture presented above has aimed to challenge this deterministic narrative by highlighting the intellectual hurdles which actually stood in the way of any medieval formation of revolutionary thought. Apocalyptic and chiliastic expectations, although often invoked to explain renovative violence, are found to be *per se* overwhelmingly consolatory rather than hortatory, and thus remarkably unsuitable to provoke such upheaval. Instead, it has been suggested here that the combination of such attitudes with radical political activism cannot be taken for granted but rather, in the Taborite case, must be read alongside the Hussite intellectual tradition available to them. Apocalyptic symbols and narratives do provide certain points of orientation, but for popular political engagement to make sense their determinism must be undermined by the potential for human achievement, and the final battle with evil must be

reinterpreted as one fought by humans of all social estates. This is where the humanistic background to Bohemian reformism enters the picture. From this perspective, human order and affairs can and must be bent to divine volition to introduce historical improvement, and it is the responsibility of every Christian to see this accomplished, both individually and politically. If spiritual or secular authorities will not cooperate, they are revealed as ethical outsiders bound for extermination from the Christian order, a fate which the faithful are bound to perform as part of their own self-actualization into it. The transformation and even subversion of certain Hussite political assumptions should not obscure their overall importance. Even if greatly embellished, the themes of ethical agency, individualist voluntarism, activist fidelity, and confident anthropology are all of fundamental relevance to make popular revolution conceivable. The transfiguration of the world has begun, but it is the prerogative of the faithful to achieve it and their belonging therein through personal, violent participation.

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The rapid pace of historical change and intellectual developments in the first years of the Tábórite community have left it open to widely divergent descriptions in historical literature. To a certain extent these assumptions of heterodox influence are justified, but they should not obstruct the recognition of fundamental continuities of this movement with Hussite thought, including the Christian Platonist tradition which framed it more broadly. Even at the depths of despair, Tábórite leaders never lost faith in the profoundly optimistic vision of anthropological and collective consolidation in a truly Christian theo-political order, based not on offices but personal accomplishment. Insofar as this translated into political participation at various stages of Tábórite history, it inspired a confidently activist identity of election which now put aside the hierarchies of worldly authority and instead confided in divine assistance and the individual's



capacity for improvement. The Taborite call to revolution is at its most basic level not opposed to this image of cooperative return to human-divine identity, but rather a radical elaboration upon it. God only shows his faithful the new and destructive path of his will, but this still ultimately relies on their participation through a rigorous humanistic trial of self-fashioning and actualization to bring it to achievement as a personal and collective reality. The role of apocalyptic symbolism, Wycliffite inheritance, and other influences cannot be rejected in the explanation of the Taborite thought, but continuities with its formative discourses and frameworks must be taken seriously.

## CONCLUSIONS

The topic of Hussite religious and political thought is one with deep roots in modern historiography. Despite all the great progress made, however, comparative examination has shown that certain fundamental concerns have remained resistant to satisfying explanation. Even taking into account the subversive role of important or suggested influences on Hussite radicalization, authors have struggled to present a convincing synthetic argument for the inspiration of popular, revolutionary violence as it took form in 1420. The combination of unique historical crises, even alongside the intellectual currents of Wycliffism, apocalypticism, and other heterodox traditions explored by historians, appear important but ultimately insufficient, particularly when we take seriously the novelty of popular political agency within the medieval context. For a movement like the Hussites, not interested in discrete changes and emendations, but instead a comprehensive socio-religious transformation, this is still an under-valued factor of innovation.

What began primarily as an investigation into this enigmatic problem, however, over time organically broadened into a more ambitious effort to lay the groundwork to appreciate such questions. What has been suggested above, therefore, is a panoramic reconsideration of the Hussite theo-political vision from the ground-up, hoping to more systematically contextualize it within broader intellectual traditions which help highlight the background to the problem, and propose directions toward its solution. As has been argued here, along with the traditions of Augustinianism-Wycliffism and apocalypticism which typically receive historiographic attention, the under-recognized tradition of Christian Platonism and mysticism is fundamental to this endeavour. This situates certain basic attitudes—toward sin, Christian identity, and politics—into a more elaborate narrative of meaning which charges them with new significance and seriously

undermines established assumptions of religio-political existence. In very general terms, this teaches a significantly different, optimistic vision of human existence and value. Put simply, life in the world is not only about patient suffering, because real and profound improvement is already a possibility here. In agreement with their main intellectual predecessors, Hussite thinkers appreciate this premise not only in a spiritual, but also in a historical context. The human species was not born into its present condition of pain, servitude, and ignorance, but rather into a noble state of cosmic harmony and unity of creator and creation. Importantly, this is a state which is not unique in time; it has been lost but also re-achieved in history, most notably at the birth of Christianity, even by those who were the lowest and most marginal to the social hierarchy of the day. This suggests the confident humanistic conclusion that every believer is not naturally corrupted but instead, regardless of whatever society and custom have to say, that every faithful individual retains a natural potential to return into divine peace and order, with God's help and personal volition and effort, already in this life.

As it has been argued above, these form background assumptions which not only buttress the theo-political projects of reformation inherited and adapted by Hussite leaders, but also bear far-reaching and sometimes unpredictable implications for issues of political agency. Generally, it has been found that these had a popular mobilizing effect which helps explain the subversion of established medieval order and hierarchies. For Hussites, the blueprint for collective transfiguration is accessible to all believers by the scriptural record of the primitive Church, and the route to transcendental salvation runs through this conspicuously political, theocratic order. As a result, the identity of the Christian elect is ubiquitously imbued with a high degree of activism and politicization. Personal participation actually matters in both the private and also

collective picture. Of course, the degree of democratized agency suggested is still significantly restricted by the privileged positions which Hussite leaders assigned to recognized spiritual and secular authorities, but over time this is also eroded by historical events and conditions. In other words, the same humanistic confidence which begins to weaken the political pessimism of medieval thought and encourage a sense of popular empowerment and responsibility also highlights for Hussites the inadequacy and even malicious intent of unsympathetic or hostile officials.

With the course of historical developments, it was shown that these trends supported by humanistic individualism increasingly incorporated apocalyptic imagery and cooperated in a process of radicalization. Not without relevance, this roughly coincides with the rise of secondary Hussite leaders, like Jakoubek and Nicholas of Dresden, to more central prominence in the movement. Put simplistically, this radicalization was articulated in terms of highly polarized ethical identities which participate in opposite and even clashing existential trajectories. As the great and mighty opponents of Hussite reform continue to refuse their potential for personal improvement and collective harmonization with the ground of existence, they sink deeper into deformed identity with Antichristian rebellion, the mirroring theo-political order of peace with man's basest appetites and drives. Conversely, it is as low and simple believers continue to participate in personal and collective ennoblement, especially in ultraquist devotion, that they return into divine unity and closer to theo-political identity in the reborn Church. In other words, the Platonist hierarchy of being begins to permeate the Hussite perception of political hierarchy, relationships, and loyalties. As has been argued, it is at some point along this path that the under-appreciated mystical thinker Matthias of Janov becomes politically relevant, as a counterbalance to the attitude of Wycliffite paternalism which dominated the Hussite program of reform. Here, Platonist

optimism conspired with the findings taken from historical experience to raise increasingly provocative doubts to authorities. In recognition of ethical norms of creation and the individualist foundations of religiosity, the question arises whether any status, especially hostile or impotent kings and priests, monopolize the agency necessary for progress. Where do such figures even fit into the vision of communal rehabilitation and theocratic order?

In general, the answers to such questions remained nebulous at least until the emergence of the Tábórites, a movement with clear continuities exactly to these concerns and the intellectual background which framed them. As has been shown, Tábórite thought underwent radical developments in the course of a relatively short period, but never lost contact with the Christian Platonist aspirations guiding its optimism. Especially important here was the enthusiastic vision of theo-political reunification of man with divinity as found in ancient history, especially in the primitive Church. For Tábórites, the articulation of this fantastic condition via apocalyptic symbolism raised its stature to an immanentization of the beyond, a true heaven on earth. In addition, what was crucial to the community's popular intervention into politics were the elaborated humanistic assumptions behind highly confident individualism and activist identity. Put simply, not only kings and priests, but every believer has a role to play in the big picture of historical progress, which is highly contingent on active participation. Eventually, with the course of certain unique events, it has been argued that this call to mobilization becomes a call to revolution. In short, God shows the elect his destructive will upon the wicked, but its final actualization depends significantly also upon their personal will and cooperative agency in violence. With this, the faithful reach the heights of human potential in semi-divine ennoblement, and return into cosmic harmony with the creator, at once helping to accomplish God's

kingdom and proving their membership in it. Without doubt, additional historical and intellectual contributions have helped bring us to this point, and the role of Wycliffism and apocalypticism in particular should not be discounted; but to appreciate the profound novelty of these developments toward popular, world-transforming agency, the optimism of cosmic unity and human potential found in Christian Platonism must also be placed at the center of analysis.

At the close of this investigation, certain points of broader methodological and chronological relevance should not escape consideration. The most basic asserts a deeper appreciation of the symbolic language which historical agents used to articulate meaning in the world. This suggests the value of academic de-compartmentalization. As this study has tried to show, distinctions between theological, philosophical, or political “realms” of thought in pre-modern cases are arbitrary and anachronistic. The same is true for the high degree of specialization in modern intellectual history, where scholars of symbolic modes of expression, such as apocalypticism and mysticism or Platonism, might never meet. Such boundaries and fragmentations might sometimes be useful, but generally they do not recognize the significant interpenetration of these traditions “in the wilds” of empirical history, nor do they align with the categories in which the actors of the past used to understand their environment and form plans of action. As a result, it is unfortunately the case that such modern assumptions and concentrations often bias classifications and research questions used in the examination of complicated historical thinkers and movements, and obstruct more synthetic examinations and the search for broader intellectual connections.

In this context, another point of note highlights the value of discourse analysis to compliment positivist approaches in such endeavours. As this work has shown, the search for explicit quotes from the champions of Neo-Platonism would have given only

a partial picture of its formative role in Hussite thought: Jakoubek was probably not reading Plotinus, nor were the Tábórites likely to know the work of Proclus. More methodologically important here was the recognition and investigation of a broader framework of symbols, communicated through heterodox but also innocuously by completely orthodox authors and convention, which help to furnish a discourse of interpretations and attitudes to concrete historical circumstances.

A last point which all this suggests is of relevance to further research. If we take seriously the value not only of discursive analysis, but also of the analytical defragmentation and deep contextualization outlined here, then a range of new opportunities might become available. Canonical thinkers and movements could be opened to new research questions and avenues of interrogation, peripheral figures might gain new relevance, and deeper diachronic relationships may show their contours in unpredictable places. More concretely significant to this investigation, the Platonist and mystical background of Hussite thought would surely reveal its important heritage to the tumultuous theo-political transformations of the late-medieval and early-modern periods more broadly with the growth of the complex processes of Renaissance and Reformation. Even far into modernity, we might hazard the hypothesis that more emic approaches to the phenomena of religio-political radicalism or violence would help valuably nuance the discourse of “fanaticism” by contributing significant insights into the meaning-structures of its agents. As has been shown, it is often the case that these are far more sophisticated than they may first appear.

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