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Keynote Lectures Presented
at *The Eleventh Congress
of Czech Historians* (Olomouc,
13–15 September 2017)|

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Writing History Today: From Postmodern Challenge to Global History

Abstract | History as a field of study has been going through rapid mutations in the last decades. Post-modernism challenged the notion of a unitary self and even the notion of truth. Identity politics undermined national narratives by showing how many had been left out of the accounts. More recently, global history has shifted attention away from nation-states toward the international migration of peoples and goods. Historians need to lead the way in working through these issues in order to provide a history that is adequate to the challenges of citizenship in the twenty-first century. This is all the more true as lying about the past has moved from the margins to the centre of political life in many places.

Keywords | Historiography – Society – Politics – Media – Post-modernism – Global History

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History has become more important than ever, but for disconcerting reasons. Lying about history has become an urgent issue because it has permeated present day politics. At issue is not the practice of governments, which misrepresent the facts for reasons of national security, but rather lying for the sake of showing impunity about lying. Donald Trump repeatedly cast doubt, for example, on the veracity of President Obama's birth certificate and then claimed to have ended the controversy he helped create. President Duterte of the Philippines readily admitted that two out of five of his statements are untrue. When leaders do not lie for the sake of lying, they urge passage of laws criminalizing the pursuit of the truth.

At the same time, public interest in history has never been greater, not because of the lying, but rather because history has become crucial for asserting and therefore for struggling over a nation or group's identity. As a consequence, controversies over the content of history textbooks have broken out in many countries in the last decades. Historical re-enactments, heritage sites and history museums have never been as popular as they are now. The Czech Republic has a long list of castles, historical city centres, and churches among its more than 40,000 heritage sites. In addition to its other roles, history has also become a kind of refuge from the dizzyingly rapid pace of technological, political and cultural change.

The role of professional historians in these developments is far from certain or stable. We academics have tended to look down upon historical re-enactments, heritage sites and even history museums, being more concerned with their distortions of the past than with the now incontestable power of virtual reality, in both old and new forms. And although historians are essential to refuting lies about the past, it is less clear how our current methodological concerns fit into these broader public issues. Some might even argue that the postmodern challenge to historical truth helped undermine the notion of truth and make it more susceptible to manipulation. In this view Donald Trump would come out as Derridian or Foucaultian, simply offering his own regime of truth, his "alternative facts." To avoid this kind of erroneous conflation, historians

need to explain how concerns about method and even epistemology make history stronger and better able to meet the challenges of today.

Blatant lying about history has become more common because of the influence of social media such as Facebook. The world-wide web has enabled historical lies to flourish because on the Internet virtually anyone can post anything under any name, without prior scrutiny and with no possible sanction. The most outlandish claims circulate widely and gain a measure of credibility just because they are circulating. The long histories of censorship and libel laws that shaped print culture have influenced how people “read” the Internet, conferring the authority of print on a medium which is subject to no supervision or vetting in most countries.

A particularly striking instance of the insidious influence of social media is the case of Holocaust denial. Despite repeated refutations based on mountains of documentation, Holocaust denial still percolates across Europe and the rest of the world, often via Facebook. An international survey conducted in late 2013 and early 2014 showed that, of the people in the Middle East and North Africa who had heard of the Holocaust, only one in five believed historical accounts were accurate.¹

All kinds of conspiracy theories have become more prevalent with the expansion of access to the Internet, including even obviously outlandish ones such as the rumor in 2017 that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States had kidnapped children and set up a child slave colony on Mars. Participation in social networks is steadily increasing: in the Czech Republic, for example, 48 percent of the population used social media in 2017.² Greater connectivity has not facilitated the debunking of lying about history or current events; instead, it has had the opposite effect.

Insisting on historical truth has therefore become a necessary act of civic courage. Does this mean that historians have to step back from their debates over interpretations in order to emphasize historical facts? In other words, does history as a discipline have to go backward in order to confront the problems of today?

The answers to these questions are to be found, at least in part, in the history of history as a field of study in Europe and the United States. At its inception as a professionalized university field in the nineteenth century, history was taught by a male elite to the sons of elites and the subject was past politics; history was the school of statesmanship. Outside the universities, and perhaps especially in Central and Eastern Europe, history for the public was often about building a nation, especially in those places, like Bohemia, where a state based on a national ethnic identity did not yet exist. The extraordinary career of František Palacký is a prime example.³

Although only one percent of United States young people aged 18 to 24 went to postsecondary institutions in 1870, this figure is higher than for any other country. In England it was 0.3 percent and in France 0.5 percent. The numbers were no higher in Germany or Japan. In 1971, 100 years later, the figure for the Czech Republic, according to UNESCO, was 9 percent, rising to 65 percent in 2015.

¹ Carole Cadwalladr, “Antisemite, Holocaust Denier... yet David Irving Claims Fresh Support,” at *The Guardian*.com, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jan/15/david-irving-youtube-inspiring-holocaust-deniers>, accessed on 10 September 2017.

² The Statistical Portal, “Share of individuals in the Czech Republic participating in social networks from 2011 to 2017”, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/384334/social-network-penetration-in-the-czech-republic/>, accessed on 10 September 2017.

³ Tamás Berkes, “František Palacký, the Father Figure of Czech Historiography and Nation Building,” *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Vol. IV: *Types and Stereotypes*, eds. Marcel Comis-Pope and John Neubauer (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), 193–210.

The history taught in Britain and the United States in the late 1800s focused mainly on Greek and Roman history, medieval history and English constitutional history. Statesmen were not supposed to be trained in contemporary history, but were expected to learn the examples provided by a much more distant past. At Cambridge University in England, history only became a subject in its own right in 1873; before then it was taught as part of moral sciences or law. Students studied ancient Greece and Rome, medieval Europe, and English constitutional history. Modern Europe had little place and the rest of the world none at all. A professorship of British imperial history was established at Cambridge only in 1933. The first professorship of United States history followed in 1944.⁴

Looking across the Atlantic in 1873, every student at Harvard College (they were all men) had to take history in their second year, which consisted of a course on Roman history. History could then be pursued as one of many specializations: all who chose history studied Roman and early medieval history in the second year; Europe from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries and medieval institutions in the third year; and in the final year the history of England to 1600, modern history (i.e., history of western Europe) 1600–1750, and modern history from the middle of the eighteenth century. These were the required and only available courses of study. Colonial American history only appeared for the first time in 1875; United States history properly speaking the next year.⁵

A chair of history was set up at the University of Vienna in 1729, but history did not establish a separate presence from the Faculty of Philosophy until 1855 when the Institute for Austrian Historical Research was formed. The focus was clearly on the House of Habsburg, but extended far into the past. In the first year students studied medieval Latin, old and medieval German, Italian and French, and Roman, Celtic, German, and Slavic antiquities. In the second year, they continued to study medieval times. In the third year, they focused more distinctly on Austrian history.⁶ In other words, in the Habsburg lands, there was more emphasis on the medieval origins of the state and less on ancient Greece, but in other respects, the pattern was similar to Western Europe and the United States: intensive study of a distant past in order to link it to the present of state development.

As mass education, first at the secondary school level and then at universities, took off at the end of the 1800s and accelerated in the twentieth century, history took on an ever more national cast. When a task force of the American Historical Association offered recommendations for reforming the teaching of history in secondary schools in the United States in 1898, it tried to combine the elite focus on ancient, medieval and English history with the needs of educating citizens, many of them now from families who had immigrated from Europe. The task force recommended four years of historical study: a first year devoted to ancient history and the early Middle Ages; a second year focused on medieval and modern European history; a third year on English history; and a fourth year, finally, on United States history and civics. The rationale given in the report speaks to the concerns of the time: “The student of modern politics cannot afford to be ignorant of the problems, the strivings, the failures of the republics and democracies of the ancient world;” “the character of the forces of modern times cannot be understood by one who examines them without reference to their mediæval origins;” “English history until 1776 is our history;” and when all are taken together, “By a course of this sort, pupils will obtain a conspectus

⁴ George Kitson Clark, “A Hundred Years of the Teaching of History at Cambridge, 1873–1973,” *The Historical Journal* 16, no. 3 (1973): 535–553.

⁵ The Harvard college and university catalogues can be found at <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006923722>.

⁶ Dieter Anton Halbwidl, “The Teaching of History at the Habsburg Universities of Vienna, Graz and Innsbruck, Compared to Padova and Pavia between 1848 and 1855,” (PhD diss., McGill U., 1998).

of history which is fairly complete and satisfactory, will follow the forward march of events and will come to see the present as a product of the past.”⁷ This history would be “fairly complete and satisfactory,” in the words of the task force, without any mention of the world outside Western Europe and the United States.

Over the course of the twentieth century, teaching national history became ever more important, and the centre of gravity of the study of history shifted from the distant past of Greece and Rome toward the present. National history is still the leading field in university history faculties around the globe. In the United States, 39 percent of history faculties in colleges and universities teach United States history. The next largest category, European history, accounts for just over one fourth. The figures for French concentration on French history, British focus on British history, and German specialization in German history are even higher, reaching in the German case to nearly half. The obsession with the nation is not limited to Western Europe and the United States. At the University of Delhi, all of the thirteen history faculty listed as full professors specialise in Indian history. In the School of History at Australian National University, two-thirds of the faculty work on Australian history.⁸ (I could not find a list of faculty members of the Department of History at Palacký University to offer a comparison by fields of interest but the course catalogue of the history faculty seems to indicate a much broader conception of history than can be found in many countries.)

As more and more young people went to university (from 10 percent of young men and women world-wide in 1970 to 35 percent in 2015)⁹ and as national history became central to every nation’s identity, it was perhaps inevitable that history textbooks would become controversial both in relations between nations and in relations between competing groups within each nation. The Chinese and South Koreans have long denounced the ways Japanese history textbooks whitewash Japanese aggression, while the Japanese have complained about the ways they have been forced by the victors of World War II to portray their history in a negative light. The French have had high-profile national debates about the way children are taught about the French empire, and British historians have lamented the ways in which the history of their empire was used to bolster British national identity by ignoring all the negative aspects of imperial rule.

Nowhere has the debate been fiercer than in the United States, where the admission of the working classes, Jews, women, and minorities to the universities and eventually to professorial positions in history led to a series of challenges to the accepted national narrative. In 1980, women, for example, made up 14 percent of faculty in United States history departments; by 2007 the proportion had more than doubled to 35 percent.¹⁰ Social history – the history of

⁷ American Historical Association, <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/the-study-of-history-in-schools/four-years-course-consisting-of-four-blocks-or-periods>, accessed on 10 September 2017.

⁸ The figures for U.S. history faculty come from 2001–2002, Robert B. Townsend, “The State of the History Department: The 2001–2002 AHA Department Survey,” <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2004/0404/rbtfaculty0404.cfm>, accessed on 10 September 2017. The numbers for Europe has been declining steadily, the numbers for non-Western history have been rising, while the numbers for U.S. history have remained about the same, according to <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2011/1109/1109pro1.cfm>. I excluded post-doctoral and research fellows from the count. The figures for Europe can be found in Peter Baldwin, “Smug Britannia: The Dominance of (the) English in Current History Writing and Its Pathologies,” *Contemporary European History* 20, no. Special Issue 03 (2011): 351–366. For the Australian National University see <http://history.cass.anu.edu.au/people>.

⁹ The UNESCO statistics are provided on a graph by the World Bank at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR>.

¹⁰ Perspectives on History, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-2010/what-the-data-reveals-about-women-historians>, accessed on 10 September 2017.

workers, women, and minorities – rose to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s. Cultural history and cultural studies – feminist approaches, critical race studies, postcolonial studies – became increasingly prominent in the 1980s and 1990s. Despite the fury of right-wing reaction against these developments, many of these perspectives have now been incorporated into history textbooks in the United States.

No one would now teach about the United States without considering the impact of slavery or immigration. No one would now focus exclusively on the actions of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, or Franklin Delano Roosevelt and fail to discuss the role of workers, women, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Latinos in building the nation. These perspectives are rarely seen, now, as disparaging the nation, although they were seen that way two decades ago; most would now agree that incorporating workers, women, indigenous peoples, and minorities of all kinds offers a truer historical account of the nation's history and at the same time provides a narrative of inclusion that actually strengthens national identity rather than weakening it.

The postmodernist or poststructuralist perspective has been more controversial because it challenged the notion of a unitary self and even the notion of truth. This essay cannot possibly do justice to the complex subject of post-modernism. A rather bald summary will have to suffice for the purposes of this brief discussion: post-modernism holds that the self and the concepts of the human, reason, freedom, and therefore truth are themselves the product of language, not something standing outside of it.¹¹

In perhaps the most influential of the formulations for historians, Michel Foucault argued that the individual self was the product of a discourse that emerged between 1600 and 1850 and was therefore contingent, not eternal or universal. It could disappear as readily as it had appeared. In *The Order of Things* (1966) he concluded, "As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end."¹² No person, institution, or social group intentionally created or manipulated this discourse or "discursive formation," the term that Foucault discussed at length in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969). The discursive formation determines what can be said and not said. It shapes the "regime of truth," which is therefore itself contingent, a product of discourse, and at the same time also productive of knowledge.

The regime of truth, for Foucault, produces knowledge, rather than knowledge producing truth. Truth is not objective, outside power, not a product of a mind liberating itself from prejudice or superstition, as in the Enlightenment narrative. Foucault explained, "'Truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements."¹³ There is no truth in the usual sense for Foucault; there is only a politics of truth. Power determines truth, albeit not power in the vulgar sense of who holds office or controls the military, but power in the Nietzschean sense of who controls the meaning of language.

Perhaps idiosyncratically, I see these positions as part of a loosening up of our notions of truth, reason, freedom, the human, and the self rather than as nihilistic attacks on them. In other words, post-modernism participated in the more general Western unravelling of various forms of absolutism in politics, religion and epistemology. Consider the example of the self. Post-modernists undo the notion of a unitary self in different ways, while always seeing it as the product of language. For Jacques Lacan self-unity is a misrecognition based on the infant's

¹¹ A summary discussion can be found in Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014), 13–43.

¹² Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1989), 422.

¹³ Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Random House, 1984), 74.

perception of the body's apparent external unity. For Jacques Derrida it is a phantasm. For Foucault, it is an optical illusion.

It is possible that Foucault changed his view over time; he first emphasized the discursive and disciplinary creation of the individual but toward the end of his career, placed more emphasis on technologies of the self that could be deployed if not developed by individuals themselves. Yet even in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (1976), the self still comes off as an optical illusion created by the workings of discursive power. As Foucault explained in a lecture from around the same time as the publication of the first volume of his history of sexuality, the individual is not "a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom;" rather "the individual is an effect of power," not something existing outside of it.¹⁴

Rather than enter into a critique of these views – or a further development of them – I would like to suggest that they parallel recent developments in neuroscience. Neuroscientists no longer expect to locate the self in a specific place in the brain (such as Descartes' suggestion of the pituitary gland); the self, like the mind, is seen as an emergent property of the body, that is, as the ever-changing concatenation of several bodily systems, not just the brain, and certainly not just one part of the brain. In that sense, in neuroscience as well, the self is no longer viewed as unitary, always identical to itself. As Antonio Damasio puts it, the self is a perspective "rooted in a relatively stable, endlessly repeated biological state" that receives its core from the structure and operation of the organism and then develops through slowly evolving autobiographical data. The self depends on the continuous reactivation of memories of the past and memories of plans and projects for the possible future, in other words, a historical or narrative sense.¹⁵

Although neuroscientists would agree that the self is not unitary and is created and continuously modified through various forms of misrecognitions and phantasms, to take up Lacan's and Derrida's formulations, they would also say that the fiction that is the self is not an illusion, or, if it is an illusion, it is an illusion that does essential work in the world. Needless to say, here I am being incredibly schematic; in 2016 alone more than 3,700 articles were published under the topic heading neuroscience in the Web of Science while during that same year more than 8,800 articles were published that referred to schizophrenia.¹⁶ It is not surprising that the self remains the subject of much dispute.

The self is simultaneously stable, because it is biologically rooted in the body and brain, and open to history, because this biological state must be continually reactivated and updated with new autobiographical information. There is a core self whose elements are present at birth, but there can be no "extended" consciousness, in Damasio's terms, no consciousness of self without a sense of history, of memories as objects, and of time as a scale that transcends immediate experience, which means, I conclude, a self that depends on social interaction.¹⁷ There is no inevitable nature–nurture conflict; both are required. The self may not be unitary or precisely located but there is a consciousness of self that has an ongoing continuously updated core and without that core and some sense of continuity people become mentally ill. As much as the conception of madness might have changed – and we know a great deal about this history thanks in large measure to Foucault – the notion of madness, insanity, or mental illness is still with us and for good reason.

¹⁴ Michel Foucault and Colin Gordon, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 98.

¹⁵ Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1994), 238–239; Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010).

¹⁶ Web of Science, <https://apps.webofknowledge.com>, accessed on 10 September 2017.

¹⁷ Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind*, 191–222.

Similarly, I want to argue that although post-modernists have drawn attention to the ways in which truth is shaped by language and power, it is still possible to retain the notion of historical truth. Here again, I think that it is important to distinguish between the annihilation of an absolute notion of truth and the possibility of a provisional, continuously updated, but nonetheless verifiable and justifiable notion of historical truth. This is where global history comes in and also where the question of the role of historians today returns.

The emergence of new perspectives on history does not reveal the inherently untrustworthy nature of historical thinking even though those new perspectives draw attention to the provisional nature of all historical writing. In recent years, for example, global history has shifted attention away from nation-states toward the international migration of peoples and goods. Global history need not be the history of globalization itself, though it can be, and it is not limited to the history of immigration or trade. Global history has also opened new perspectives on the migration of pathogens, the spread of religions, and the diffusion of new concepts and ideologies such as nationalism, among other topics.

Global history does not expose the falseness of previous approaches based on nation-state boundaries so much as it demonstrates their limitations for answering certain kinds of questions. To pick an example from my own field of French history, who can study “French” Protestantism in the sixteenth century, for example, without considering the role of the Genevan Company of Pastors or the influence of refugees and those they met while abroad in England or Holland? Who can study the origins of the Enlightenment without considering Dutch publications in French or the constant goings and comings of intellectual figures between Great Britain, France, and Holland? Moreover, there would most likely not have been an Enlightenment if it had not been for the corrosive effect of travel literature and all the questions that literature raised about the role of religion, the variability of customs and the like. Europeans were transformed by their travels to other parts of the world and not just in their choice of beverages to drink, vessels from which to drink, clothes to wear, or condiments to put on their food. Their deepest habits of thought were transformed. National history has limited our purview, and it is all to the good that global history forces us to rethink our way of posing questions. Historians in the Czech Republic are especially well-placed to appreciate the emergence of global or transnational history since Czech history is so tied up with the history of other nations not to mention with international diplomacy and warfare. How else would a historian make sense of the Battle of White Mountain?

The new emphasis on the global does not mean, however, that national history is somehow false, any more than the history focused on elites was false. History, whether it is the history of a great leader or global history, is always provisional and therefore subject to revision in the light of new evidence. New evidence can be discovered, even about leading figures long dead. One of the most striking examples of this is Thomas Jefferson. Ever since Jefferson’s first term as President of the United States in the first years of the nineteenth century, debate has raged about whether he had fathered children by his one of his slaves, Sally Hemmings. At the end of the 1990s, new techniques of DNA analysis made it possible for the first time to conclude with great certainty that Jefferson had in fact been the father of Hemmings’ six children. Even the heritage site at Jefferson’s home now accepts this as true.

Global history will also need revision. Attempts to cover the entire world have too frequently had to rely on statistics gathered by nation-states, and all too often those states have their own agendas in gathering statistics. Moreover, the very endeavor of taking a world-wide view tends to favor technological or economic explanations because it is easiest to gather statistics on those developments. It is easier to determine the number of telephones or a nation’s gross national product than it is to follow the circulation of ideas or the permeation of religious beliefs. As a result, global history, conceptualized as the history of the entire world, has tended to favor

technological, economic, or diplomatic history over social and cultural history, that is, macro-history over microhistory. In the process, gender history, the history of minorities, and cultural history all threaten to disappear.

Attempts to tell the whole world's history have too often used Western Europe and the United States as the benchmark if only because global history is often reduced to the history of capitalism or the history of political hegemony. Even post-colonial critiques, such as Edward Saïd's *Orientalism*, have suffered from this problem.¹⁸ In *Orientalism* the West does all the defining and categorizing.

We have yet to see how a global history can be built from the ground up because the most compelling forms of global history have in fact been much more limited (though still wide-ranging) histories of particular commercial interactions between regions: Marcy Norton's study of the circulation of coffee and tobacco from the New World to the Spain and beyond, Francesca Trivellato's analysis of the interactions of Italian Jewish merchants with Indian diamond sellers, or the many fundamental studies of Armenian, South Asian, Russian, Greek, or African merchants.¹⁹ The focus thus far has been on commerce; we need much more on the circulation of culture and religion before global history can realize its potential. We also need much more effort on synthesizing the wonderful research that has already been published.

In order to maximize our influence on public discourse, historians need to explain why history writing is necessarily provisional and why that necessarily conditional nature of historical writing is an advantage rather than a disadvantage. The provisional nature of historical truth does not open the way to "alternative facts" or lying about history. Historical truth is the best possible account that we offer in good faith at this moment. It is based on verifiable evidence and subject to the test of interpretive discussion and debate. The debate is made possible by common standards of verifiability and coherent argument. Universities have faculties of history in order to teach these standards and methods and to provide places for generating discussion and debate about interpretations.

Democratic political life depends on having a notion of historical truth and on being able to modify it over time. Nations need a sense of the past but they also need the most accurate possible understandings of that past. For this they need historians trained in the best methods of research and writing. Historians also need to be alert, however, to the needs of the public, which means writing in ways that are accessible to the public and not just to fellow researchers. We who write history today need to retrieve that sense of mission felt so keenly by historians before us. A literary critic recently concluded about Palacký's career as an historian, "we cannot forget that scholarly insight and consciousness of a missionary calling are difficult to reconcile."²⁰ He thought that the missionary calling pushed Palacký on occasion to miss the truth, but it seems to me now that without some sense of calling, historians will lack the persuasiveness to make the truth matter. So even as we go forward to research in new domains, we would do well to remember the ways our predecessors made history relevant to their times and to ours.

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¹⁸ Edward W. Saïd, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

¹⁹ Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2014).

²⁰ Berkes, "František Palacký," 200.

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The Changing Face of Habsburg History: Truth or Consequences?

Abstract | Recent decades have witnessed a torrent of Anglo-American scholarship about the Habsburg monarchy. Beginning with R. J. W. Evans' classic *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700*, early modern historians have stressed both its eccentricities and its valuable contributions to the European modernization process. Meanwhile, nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars have stressed its emergence as a liberal constitutional monarchy with a dynamic economy, a vibrant, highly educated civil society, a fiercely professional bureaucracy, and an impartial judiciary that actually sustained the unfettered development of multiple national movements. Their findings and interpretations pose an existential challenge to the traditional proprietary "nationalist" narratives that still prevail in the successor states, particularly those that have sharpened the divisions within and between the democratic states of contemporary Central Europe.

Keywords | Historiography – Nationalism – Narratives – Identity – Habsburg Monarchy

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The Habsburg monarchy may have disappeared a century ago, but it has resurfaced amidst a mass of scholarship by a new generation of western European and North American scholars. Although much of the new research has appeared in several languages, the great bulk has been published in English, featuring not only North American and British scholars, but also many from the continent who have chosen to present their work in the profession's most widely read medium. This body of scholarship challenges on many fronts the creation narratives of most of the nation-states that emerged from the Habsburg monarchy, including the prevailing historical account offered by twentieth-century Czechoslovak scholars and by the current textbooks and popular media in the Czech Republic. With this in mind, this paper will combine an historiographical survey of the impressive body of English-language scholarship on the subject with a critical examination of the corrosive effect that proprietary nation-state narratives play in all modern democracies, not just those in Central Europe.

Although the bulk of my own scholarship focuses on the early modern Habsburg monarchy, it is the history of the modern period – especially the final century (1815–1918), that has been the most dynamic. Much of what we have learned over the past generation involves revisiting and revising the monarchy's heretofore poor reputation. It was actually condemned first by nineteenth-century liberals both within and outside the monarchy, then by nationalist elites – particularly by Hungarians and Czechs who objected, justifiably, to their kingdoms' political and cultural submersion into the greater empire. Then there were foreign observers at the end of the century, who visualized the Danubian empire as an anachronism, a cumbersome and decrepit multinational misfit that had outlived its useful life. Nor did its longstanding *raison d'être* as a vehicle for maintaining international stability and the European balance of power survive the outbreak of the Great War and its ill-fated alliance with Germany.

The Habsburg elites – even the regime itself – had great difficulty creating a narrative that was meaningful for its own subjects during an age of revolution and nationalism. Whatever success they had was quickly eradicated during and after World War I, when the ultimately victorious Western allies forged the image of the monarchy as a politically and culturally oppressive “prison of nations.” That image solidified further as the newly created successor states represented themselves as its victims. In the West, the trend intensified through successive stages of Fascism, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and the Cold War stalemate. Very little changed in this prevailing narrative across North America and Europe until a new generation, literally borne of the post-war “baby-boom,” came of age.

That image has, in fact, evolved remarkably throughout the West. I first noticed and participated in this shift in the 1970s and 1980s as early modernists revisited and partly rehabilitated such hopelessly “backward” states as the Holy Roman Empire, the Habsburg monarchy, and even the Asiatic despotism of the Ottoman Empire. R. J. W. Evans¹ shook the field with a fresh perspective of a Habsburg enterprise that was admittedly Byzantine and irrational, but nonetheless reasonably functional and successful in the Darwinian competition among the great powers and even greater clash of ideas of the age; nor was it a despotism, given the demand for consensus within its triangular power axis of crown, church and aristocracy. Whereas Evans focused on the seventeenth-century monarchy, a succession of monographs ensued extolling its achievements after 1740. James van Horn Melton² highlighted the revolution in education that Maria Theresa and Joseph II initiated in response to the existential threat posed after 1740 by that great international outlaw, Frederick II of Prussia.³ Franz Szabo⁴ followed with the first volume of his definitive biography of Prince Kaunitz, demonstrating beyond any doubt that the great chancellor had an absolute commitment to the European Enlightenment. Derek Beales⁵ magisterial two-volume biography of Joseph II accomplished much the same. The first volume appeared 20 years ago, covering Joseph’s role as co-regent with Maria Theresa, but the second, truly amazing installment covering Joseph’s sole rule, solidifies both volumes as the definitive work on Joseph II. It should be published in each of the languages of the Habsburg successor states. Whereas Beales gives due attention to the man’s personal foibles and failures, the sheer weight of evidence presented establishes Joseph II’s credentials as a truly “enlightened” ruler dedicated to human equality, freedom and the pursuit of happiness. He also devotes much of a chapter to debunking the sometimes outrageous myths about both Joseph II and his court composer Antonio Salieri that have been so widely disseminated by that otherwise wonderful Miloš Forman film *Amadeus*.⁶ Two other new books – the late Robert Bireley’s *Ferdinand II*,⁷

¹ Robert John Weston Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

² James Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of Compulsory Schooling in Prussia and Austria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

³ His reputation was undermined following by 2013 tercentennial by German scholars and, most recently, by Cambridge University’s Timothy Charles William Blanning, *Frederick the Great: King of Prussia* (London: Penguin Books, 2016).

⁴ Franz A. J. Szabo, *Kaunitz and Enlightened Absolutism: 1753–1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁵ Derek Beales, *Joseph II: Volume 1, In the Shadow of Maria Theresa, 1741–1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁶ Hence my account to the rector, just prior to my keynote, of a Prague tour guide who spoke confidently and at great length about everything she had learned about Joseph II from the film, unaware that almost all of it was untrue. (I didn’t bother to correct her.)

⁷ Robert Bireley, *Ferdinand II, Counter-Reformation Emperor, 1578–1637* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

and Howard Louthan's *Converting Bohemia* (which has been translated into Czech),⁸ have since added considerable nuance to the story of the Counter-Reformation in the Bohemian Lands. Admittedly, neither study breaks with a half-century of Anglo-American scholarship that portrays the Bohemian revolt as a religious conflict inspired solely by militant Catholicism, rather than as a contest between Germans and Czechs. Bireley, does, however, document how the Emperor formally justified the gruesome execution of the 27 ringleaders not because they were Czech (the great majority being German speakers), or even because they were heretics, but because they had negotiated a treasonous alliance with the Ottoman sultan. Meanwhile, Louthan explains why and how Bohemia's Utraquist majority quietly accommodated Papal orthodoxy. Taken together with the ground-breaking work of the late Markus Cerman, Petr Maťa, Eduard Maur, and a host of other Czech scholars – we also have a much richer picture of the rural economy and peasantry of the early modern monarchy's most productive and populous crown-lands. Finally, the past quarter century of scholarship has been incorporated in an updated and expanded third edition of my early modern synthesis, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1618–1815*;⁹ the volume takes special care to include the work of scholars from Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Serbia, especially the vital contributions that each made to their common early modern history.

Postwar Anglo-American scholarship had also begun to adopt a more positive approach toward the nineteenth-century monarchy, as evidenced by the massive syntheses by Arthur J. May,¹⁰ C. A. Macartney,¹¹ and Robert A. Kann.¹² These were followed by a succession of monographs, that pointed to the unheralded strengths of the monarchy and its institutions. David Good's *Economic Rise of the Habsburg Empire 1750–1914*,¹³ showed that it was economically prosperous and getting more so right up till 1914. Gary Cohen's *Education and Middle Class Society in Late Imperial Austria*¹⁴ demonstrated that the Empire had one of the highest literacy rates in Europe. And two positive studies of the imperial army by Gunther Rothenberg¹⁵ and István Déák¹⁶ stressed the supranational spirit within the very multi-ethnic military. William Godsey's¹⁷ study did much the same thing for the equally multi-ethnic Habsburg diplomatic service, while Alan Sked's¹⁸ rehabilitation of that ultimate diplomat, Klemens von Metternich, showed that his system was not only much less oppressive than previously thought, but was manned by liberal Josephinist officials – the *Gehorsame Rebellen* (loyal rebels) of Waltraud Heindl's acclaimed Austrian monograph.¹⁹ John Deak's *Forging a Multinational State*²⁰ goes a step further, demonstrating how civil officials throughout the nineteenth-century worked at all levels of the bureaucracy to

⁸ Howard Louthan, *Converting Bohemia: Force and Persuasion in the Catholic Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁹ Charles Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1618–1815*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

¹⁰ Arthur J. May, *The Hapsburg Empire, 1867–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1951).

¹¹ Carlile Aylmer Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire 1790–1918* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968).

¹² Robert Adolf Kann, *The Problem of Restoration. A Study in Comparative Political History* (Berkeley: California, 1968).

¹³ David F. Good, *The Economic Rise of the Habsburg Empire, 1750–1914* (Berkeley: California, 1984).

¹⁴ Gary Cohen, *Education and Middle Class Society in Late Imperial Austria* (West Lafayette: Purdue, 1996).

¹⁵ Gunther Erich Rothenberg, *The Army of Francis Joseph* (West Lafayette: Purdue, 1976).

¹⁶ István Déák, *Beyond Nationalism. A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (New York: Oxford, 1990).

¹⁷ William D. Godsey, *Aristocratic Redoubt. The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office on the Eve of the First World War* (West Lafayette: Purdue, 1999).

¹⁸ Alan Sked, *Metternich. An Evaluation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008).

¹⁹ Waltraud Heindl, *Gehorsame Rebellen: Bürokratie und Beamte in Österreich* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2013).

²⁰ John Deak, *Forging a Multinational State: State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War* (Palo Alto: Stanford, 2015).

simultaneously mitigate the less progressive instincts of the Emperors Ferdinand I (1835–1848) and Francis Joseph (1848–1916), while maximizing the realization of the Josephinist values that had been instilled in them. Of course, their job was never finished since the asymmetrical monarchy was always a work in progress; only with the existential struggle that began in World War I did they abandon the principles upon which the monarchy was built.

The final decade of the twentieth century witnessed two watershed developments that inspired an even more radical and positive reconceptualization of Modern Habsburg history. One reflected the immense influence of Benedict Anderson, whose *Imagined Communities*²¹ discredited perhaps for all time the notion that human beings are born with some primordial affinity to a particular national identity. Anderson instead posited the notion that national and other identities are molded, or “instrumentalized” by elites and their media platforms. Anderson’s book was published in 1983 and over the six or seven years that followed it simply took the world by storm, at least the western academic world in history and political science. And frankly, the reaction after that decade of consuming Anderson’s thesis reminded me of the reaction to Darwin when he finally came up with evolution and everybody said “Of course!!!” The other pervasive influence was the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1990s. Both the sheer destructiveness of populist nationalism and the tyranny of imperfectly formed democracies have inspired a plethora of scholarly studies in the West about the monarchy’s crown-lands, institutions, and policy makers, recasting it in a much more sympathetic light.

One immediate consequence was the publication of a plethora of monographs on Bosnia by British and American historians that stress the centuries-long coexistence of Orthodox and Catholic Christians, Muslims, and Jews before World War I. Robin Okey’s *Taming Balkan Nationalism*²² places ethnic nationalism at the centre of Bosnia’s instability, rather than the generally constructive agenda of its Habsburg governors. And in the middle, there is a biography of Sarajevo,²³ a multi-ethnic city that was at peace with itself except at the those moments in 1914 and 1991 when nationalism divided its people, cannibalizing those who adhered to supranational identities like the state, region, or the city itself, thereby compelling virtually everybody to make ethnic choices. It is a fitting bookend to another book that came out from the Turkish sphere, the Ottoman sphere, a book on Salonika. There is also a biography of a sort by Mark Mazower²⁴ of this gloriously multi-ethnic city that destroyed itself during the age of nationalism, with 60 percent of the population being murdered in the Holocaust.

Brian Porter’s *When Nationalism Began to Hate*²⁵ and Timothy Snyder’s *The Reconstruction of Nations*²⁶ level the same verdict on the jostling and contentious nationalisms of the peoples of the former Polish Commonwealth. Meanwhile, Larry Wolff’s *The Idea of Galicia*²⁷ and Tomasz Kamusella’s *Silesia and Central European Nationalisms*²⁸ highlight the resilience of regional identity.

²¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

²² Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford, 2009).

²³ Robert J. Donia, *Sarajevo. A Biography* (London: Hurst, 2009).

²⁴ Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006).

²⁵ Brian Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (Oxford: Oxford, 2002).

²⁶ Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven: Yale, 2005).

²⁷ Larry Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia. History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture*. (Palo Alto: Stanford, 2012).

²⁸ Tomasz Kamusella, *Silesia and Central European Nationalisms. The Emergence of National and Ethnic Groups in Prussian Silesia, 1848–1918* (West Lafayette: Purdue, 2007).

To this day those Jewish survivors of the Holocaust and their families, their children – especially those living in New York City – call themselves *Galicianer*; to them the Habsburg crown-land was something special, not just for them but for many non-Jews who stayed behind in what is now southern Poland. Whereas Wolff's book was received with acclaim, Kamusella himself was fired by the Polish university of Opole for stressing the regional identity of Silesia's Slunzaks and Szolnoks; he now has a tenured position at Scotland's prestigious University of St. Andrews.

Dominique Reill's *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation*²⁹ presents an even stronger example of regional identity across the monarchy's Adriatic littoral where the nation-state paradigm was either ignored or rejected outright in favour of a multinational regional identity. Jeremy King's *From Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*³⁰ was the first of two brilliant studies about the dynamism of ethnic identities in the Bohemian Lands, emphasizing how the *Budweiser* of České Budějovice gradually, but inevitably, abandoned their municipal and regional identity when compelled by their neighbours and the Austrian census to choose between Czech or German. Meanwhile, Tara Zahra's *Kidnapped Souls*³¹ argues that most Bohemians were simply indifferent before nationalist activists and media initiated the process of "instrumentalizing" their conversion into either Czechs or Germans. Her thesis echoes the findings of her mentor, Pieter Judson, whose prize-winning *Guardians of the Nation*³² argued that Habsburg people living along the monarchy's borderlands, including the German-Bohemian border, were sometimes subjected by nationalist activists to conversion campaigns that featured everything from tourism to colonization in order to promote their German identity.

Of course, the ethnic group that has attracted the greatest attention of American scholars has been the Habsburg Jews. There are simply too many books about the Habsburg Jews published by American scholars for me to cite here. The thrust of innumerable monographs such as David Rechter's *Becoming Habsburg: the Jews of Habsburg Bukovina*³³ and Marsha Rozenblit's acclaimed *Reconstructing National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I*,³⁴ not only document the Jews' absolute commitment to a supranational state that protected and fostered their careers and cultural life, but also their foreboding and anguish about what life would be like in post-war Poland and Romania. In the end, of all the Habsburg successor states, only Czechoslovakia would provide a permissive and protective environment comparable to what they had experienced in Austria-Hungary. Indeed, Rebekah Klein-Pejšova's *Mapping Jewish Loyalties*³⁵ credits Czechoslovakia's willingness to allow Slovakia's Magyar-speaking Jews to register as Jews, thereby avoiding the stigma of appearing disloyal, while simultaneously officially subtracting their numbers from the large number of Magyars in newly created Czechoslovakia.

²⁹ Dominique Kirchner Reill, *Nationalists who Feared the Nation. Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste, and Venice* (Palo Alto: Stanford, 2012).

³⁰ Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton: Princeton, 2005).

³¹ Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls. National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2011).

³² Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2006).

³³ David Rechter, *Becoming Habsburg. The Jews of Habsburg Bukovina, 1774–1918* (Oxford: Littman Library, 2013).

³⁴ Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity. The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I* (New York: Oxford, 2001).

³⁵ Rebekah Klein-Pejšova, *Mapping Jewish Loyalties in Interwar Slovakia* (Bloomington: Indiana, 2015).

Nor has World War I somehow escaped the attention of the current generation of British and American historians. To my mind, the 1991 monograph by Sam Williamson³⁶ on Austria-Hungary's role in the outbreak of the conflict is dead right in attributing the spread of the conflict to Vienna's determination that *Serbien muss sterbien!* ("Serbia must die!") despite Berlin's desperate efforts to avoid the consequences of a general conflict. Subsequent accounts have supported his verdict that, whereas Germany was the power everybody feared, it was Austria-Hungary's insistence on the military solution that was the decisive factor, not any German desire to fight. Nonetheless, Christopher Clark's massive *The Sleepwalkers* has become the bestseller of 2018's well-orchestrated centenary commemoration.³⁷ Clark's principal contribution is in shifting the blame from Vienna to Belgrade's original sin in fomenting and then covering up the plot by Serbia's Chief of Intelligence to assassinate Archduke Francis Ferdinand. No less significant – and much shorter – is Alon Rachamimov's widely acclaimed *POWs and the Great War*,³⁸ which suggests that Czech and other Habsburg soldiers deserted due to the devastating and demoralizing Russian offensives in 1914 and 1916, that stemmed in large part from inadequate equipment, training, and the sheer incompetence of their officers. At the same time, he uses the private correspondence of the POWs to argue that desertions and disavowals of the dual monarchy were greatly exaggerated both by British propaganda and the paranoia of Austrian officials. Nicole Phelps's *US-Habsburg Relations*³⁹ which ends at the Paris peace conference, is no less unsettling to American scholars amidst recent revelations that President Woodrow Wilson was a committed racist who used his office to systematically purge African-Americans from every professional post in the federal government. Her examination of Wilson's brain trust emphasizes his and his advisers' conviction that "racial" separation was the most ideal course, whether in segregating their own country's blacks and whites, or in granting independence to Austria-Hungary's constituent peoples. Although Wilson's role in the creation of Czechoslovakia remains intact, his racism and rejection of multiculturalism further undermines his reputation in his own country.

Most recently, two new syntheses of the modern period have appeared in print. Though hardly a comprehensive account, Peter Judson's most recent "new history" of the *Habsburg monarchy*⁴⁰ synthesizes many of the books reviewed here, placing a capstone on a generation of scholarship that has recast the monarchy in a more positive light. To Judson, the Dual Monarchy – or at least its Austrian half – offered its various nationalities the freedom to teach their own history, develop their own institutions, and articulate their political agenda with full legal protection. Steven Beller's *The Habsburg Monarchy 1815–1918* hews to a more conventional chronological narrative, but also extols the monarchy's contributions to its diverse peoples. Like virtually every scholarly work to appear in the English-speaking world over the last four decades, both volumes conclude that the multinational empire's demise was neither desirable nor inevitable, but was instead contingent on its losing a gruelling, polarizing struggle to countries like France that were determined to wholly eliminate a potential German ally in the continent's next war.⁴¹

³⁶ Samuel Williamson, *Austria-Hungary and the Origins of the First World War* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

³⁷ Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914* (New York: Harper, 2012).

³⁸ Alon Rachamimov, *POWs and the Great War. Captivity on the Eastern Front* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

³⁹ Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815 to the Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2015).

⁴⁰ Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire. A New History* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2016).

⁴¹ Steven Beller, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1815–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2018).

The Consequences

Of course, the history of Habsburg Central Europe did not end in 1918. Its constituent peoples have continued to “make” history for another century. Although they are too numerous to recount, much of the scholarly literature on the interwar period dwells on the “instrumentalization” of national identity by the successor states and the numerically preponderant national groups that controlled them. Most contradict the prevailing “creation narratives” in successor states such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia. This explains their rejection of the sanitized accounts that deny or deflect Croatian, Hungarian, Polish and Romanian collaboration with the Nazis during the Holocaust, or the postwar mass expulsions of German and Hungarian civilians from Czechoslovakia,⁴² or crimes committed by Serbian and Bosnian-Serb forces during the more recent Yugoslav conflicts.

Nonetheless the sanitation process continues to this day. In 2006, I was privileged to participate in a meeting in the former Dalmatian town of Herceg Novi, which had formally become part of Montenegro in 1943. An array of Montenegrin ministers and other public officials sat on a stage with Serbian Foreign Minister Goran Svilanović. Facing a large audience of EU diplomats and human right activists, they discussed the big question of whether Montenegro should seek full independence by withdrawing from its confederation with Serbia. After one participant implausibly compared the two South Slav republics to the relationship between France and Andorra, I walked to the microphone, offering that Montenegro’s current position *vis-à-vis* Serbia was best compared to Austria’s fluid relationship with Germany. Much as the majority of Montenegrins had identified with a Serbian fatherland in 1918, most Austrians saw themselves as a constituent part of greater Germany not only then but well into World War II. Austria’s transformation into a separate nation began only in 1943 on the road back from Stalingrad, much as many Montenegrins rediscovered their own discreet identity on the road back from Dubrovnik – which the Yugoslav Army’s Montenegrin corps had besieged and bombarded for four years (1991–1995), while looting every VCR and much more from private homes all along the Dalmatian coast. In the years following Serbia’s defeat and disgrace, many Montenegrins divorced themselves from the association with the war crimes committed by Serbian and Bosnian-Serb forces, even though Serbian President Milošević’s mother and both of Bosnian-Serb President Radovan Karadžić’s parents were themselves full-blooded Montenegrins. After recounting Austria’s parallel rejection of its own infamous native son Adolph Hitler and the multitude of Austrian war criminals who comprised fully half of the defendants at Nuremberg, I turned to the Serbian Prime Minister, pointing out how the Austrians had rediscovered their separate roots by establishing a new historical narrative that “proved” that they had always been different from Germans. Indeed, after a half-century of school instruction and media discourse, since Austria’s recreation in 1955, at least 90 percent of its citizens now self-identify as ethnically Austrian, not German.

⁴² Andrew Demshuk, *The Lost German East: Forced Migration and the Politics of Memory, 1945–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2012); R. M. Douglas, *Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans After the Second World War* (New Haven: Yale, 2012); Ulrich Merten, *Forgotten Voices: The Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern Europe after World War II* (New York: Palgrave, 2012); Ahonen Pertti, *After the Expulsion: West Germany and Eastern Europe, 1945–1990* (Oxford: Oxford, 2003); Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth White, eds., *The Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Postwar Europe, 1944–1949* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011); Philippe Ther and Ana Siljak, eds., *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001); Alfred de Zayas, *Nemesis at Potsdam: The Expulsion of the Germans*, rev. ed. (Lincoln: Nebraska, 1988) and Alfred de Zayas, *A Terrible Revenge: the Ethnic Cleansing of the East European Germans* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1966); Theodor Schieder, ed., *The Expulsion of the German Population from Czechoslovakia* (Bonn: Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees, and War Victims, 1960).

The message for Svilanović was clear: If his government did not want to lose Montenegro and its people, it had to dissociate itself from the war crimes committed in Serbia's name, turn over to The Hague Tribunal those fugitive war criminals hiding in Serbia, and thereby forestall the impulse for Montenegrins to rewrite their textbooks. Alas, Belgrade's government and media did precious little to change the prevailing narrative of denial. Barely two years later, Montenegro duly declared its independence and, today, educates its school children with a new set of textbooks with a rather different account of the Yugoslav conflict and its role in it. The latest polls indicate that half of the country's Slavs now identify as Montenegrin and regularly join the republic's Albanian, Bosniak, and Croatian minorities in seeking membership in the EU and NATO, rather than *rapprochement* and reunion with Serbia.

Today, Serbia's window of opportunity remains closed as its democratically elected leaders cling tightly to a two-century-old "creation narrative" that has pitted them against their former Austrian, Bulgarian, German, Hungarian, Turkish, and other unnamed Muslim oppressors. Together with the Third Reich, it symbolizes the very worst consequences of proprietary nationalist narratives based on the promotion of heroic myths and the simultaneous exclusion of inconvenient facts about their past. But what about other societies that base their own attitudes and policies on such "false facts" and mass amnesia? Is it too late for them to change proprietary narratives that still hold sway with the mass media not only across Central Europe, but all over the world? Certainly, all countries create an idealized account of their origins that justifies their existence, while invariably discounting the utility and legitimacy of whatever preceded it. Such "creation narratives" may foster patriotism and the willingness of its citizens to make sacrifices for the common good. History has also shown, however, that they contribute to tensions with other countries who do not share their collective memory of the past. Such narratives are also responsible for a cultural *malaise* that challenges the Enlightenment foundations of liberalism.

Certainly, the USA's current cultural crisis can be traced in part to a two-century old "creation narrative" that fortifies the fatuous notion of American exceptionalism with myths about its Founding Fathers and other national heroes, while carefully excluding inconvenient facts that undermine its lofty pretensions. American schoolchildren are taught that George Washington could throw a silver dollar across the mighty Potomac River, but could never bring himself to tell a lie, without ever being told that both stories were spun from whole cloth by an early nineteenth-century preacher. We Americans have many such myths, all sanctified by the simple fact that everyone born and schooled in the USA knows them to be "true." Nor are my countrymen aware of the plethora of inconvenient facts that have been routinely excluded from my country's national narrative. Americans celebrate the decisive battle of Yorktown (1781) that effectively ended the War of Independence, blissfully unaware that there were more French than American soldiers in the victorious army, or that the genius behind the campaign was the French General Rochambeau rather than General Washington (who had advocated an assault on New York City even though the British garrisons on Manhattan, Long Island, and Staten Island were all shielded by the British navy).

Nor is George Washington the only Founding Father whose reputation is spared the embarrassment of inconvenient facts. Americans know by heart the defiant words of the founder of the US Navy, John Paul Jones, who refused to surrender his sinking ship, exclaiming to his British opponent that "I have not yet begun to fight!" That and his subsequent capture of the British captain's ship are all we know about the man, whose heroism is dutifully recounted in every schoolbook across the USA. What is never divulged and nobody knows is that his real name was John Paul, a Scotsman who made a bundle of money exporting black slaves from the West Indies to the American colonies and that he had a temper so fierce that he beat one of his crew into a coma and mortally shot another on the deck of their ship. When the British government

in the West Indies sought his arrest for murder, John Paul fled to a relative's home in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Once there, he changed his name and identity from the Scotsman John Paul to the Welshman John Paul Jones, so that the British authorities would be unable to find, arrest, and prosecute him. Yet he resurfaces – and first enters America's history books – only in 1776, when he travels to Philadelphia, founds the navy, and launches his truly heroic career against the British. And this is the picture that has been portrayed in two centuries of American schoolbooks. They not only ignore John Paul the slave trader and murderer, but also say nothing about his last command when, after retiring from the US navy, he became an admiral in the imperial Russian navy, brilliantly leading a flotilla of warships against the Ottomans in the Black Sea before being expelled from the country by Catherine the Great after raping a 13-year-old girl while on shore leave. Surely that part will never appear in our textbooks, even though they could mention his defence that "I paid her first and she was willing."

Nor do my fellow Americans know anything about the fate of the estimated 100,000 British loyalists who fled the country after the Thirteen Colonies became independent. We have a word for them: "Canadians" because so many of them fled there that the new province of New Brunswick had to be created by the British government just to accommodate them. Of course, Canadian schoolbooks tell the story of the loyalist refugees and their 3 million living descendants, much as they recount how invading American troops burned down government buildings in the Canadian capital of York (Toronto) in 1813; by contrast American schoolbooks speak only of British invaders burning down the White House eight months later, without ever mentioning that they were merely retaliating on the Canadians' behalf.

The problem of competing narratives recently surfaced in the United States in public debates about the statues and other war memorials all over the South honouring the Civil War's Confederate military heroes. After the Civil War, the so-called Daughters of Confederacy erected memorials to their brave fathers and husbands who had fought to preserve slavery in the American South. Their menfolk in the state legislatures subsequently passed laws that mandated the purchase of only those history schoolbooks that portrayed the Civil War as a constitutional struggle between the northern and southern states, rather than as a struggle to preserve slavery in the South. That myth remains very much alive today for those Southerners who cannot accept the shame of their ancestors.

If I have dwelled at length on my own country's propriety narratives, it is because it is important to know we are all in the same boat on a course that is often set by myths and studied amnesia about the past. Such accounts undermine the moral foundation of society, especially in democracies such as ours, in which voters make decisions largely on what they deem to be objective reality. How, however, do we resolve problems like this, where people are given a false narrative that nonetheless persuades impressionable readers to embrace it as truth? Sadly, we cannot entrust this responsibility to politicians who face electoral suicide if they challenge the prevailing narrative that "even a school child" knows to be true. My experiences in former Yugoslavia tell me that the solution rests in the hands of scholars like you and me. We have not just the ability and resources to learn the full story, but the opportunity and obligation to present it to our fellow citizens. Most of us also enjoy tenure and value the respect of our colleagues both at home and abroad. That was my message to my Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, and Slovenian colleagues two decades ago when we came together to research and write a common narrative of the recent wars of Yugoslav Succession (1991–1999). As scholars we knew all too well that each of the federation's six republics and two autonomous provinces had created its own proprietary historical account through textbooks and other media; we also knew that Serbian President Slobodan Milošević had weaponized the two-century-long Serbian narrative of martial heroism and victimhood to split the federation into what has now become seven sovereign

states. The region's new political and cultural frontiers had been further entrenched by each newly independent country's rendition of what had happened in the 1990s.

Ultimately, our "Scholars' Initiative"⁴³ comprised over 300 historians, social scientists and legists from 30 countries. It was important that our consortium include large numbers of scholars from each of the former belligerents, because the individual members would be able to deflect personal attacks by pointing to the critical mass provided by their countrymen. The largest single group by far were the 80+ ethnic Serbs who faced the formidable task of discrediting the most myths and validating the greatest number of inconvenient facts. Indeed, every one of the original eleven (now twelve) Research Teams was co-chaired by a Serb scholar, so that his/her countrymen could not reject the research results by claiming that it had been authored without due Serbian input. Meanwhile, every team focused on those controversies that represented the greatest challenge to finding a transnational consensus. During the ensuing six years of research, we cultivated each of the republics' media outlets, as well as political leaders that ultimately included a dozen successor state presidents, prime ministers, and foreign ministers. Behind the scenes the project received enthusiastic support from the US Department of State, from which the most common response was "This is *exactly* what we need." On January 14, 2009 we published our common narrative, *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies*. Six days later, Barack Obama was inaugurated as US President. As one of his first acts he appointed Richard Holbrooke as a special ambassador. Alas, when Holbrooke read a report on the front page of *The New York Times* that our scholars had discovered that he had been lying for over a decade in denying that he had promised the twice-indicted Bosnian Serb President Radovan Karadžić that he would not be arrested so long as he withdrew from postwar politics, the ambassador demanded an immediate retraction from the *Times*. Although the *Times*' editors stood behind our sources, he then directed State Department officials to oppose the project. The irony was not lost on us that the same US government officials who had acclaimed our effort to get the warring sides to acknowledge their inconvenient facts, could not tolerate the exposure of one of its own skeletons. As another senior diplomat admitted, "the State Department cannot support a book that contradicts its own official narrative."

Nor should we overlook the sobering reality that the dynamics of democracy can complicate the search for an honest national narrative, whether in today's Habsburg successor states or the America of Donald Trump. In democratic societies it is more difficult to revise a country's creation narrative because elected politicians cannot dispute them without risking electoral suicide. Unlike other forms of government, democracies must confront what I have termed the "Frankenstein Effect" – a syndrome by which a country's founders construct an artificial account distorted by myths and conscious omissions to indoctrinate future generations of schoolchildren, who then as voters reflexively employ it to throttle any future politician who try to stop or tame it.⁴⁴ Authoritarian leaders face no such spectre. When Mustafa Kemal Atatürk decided to change Turkey's national narrative after World War I, the newly formed nation followed him into the secular Western world. When Tito decided that the people were fated to live their lives in "unity and brotherhood," they did so for over four decades until the very moment that Slobodan Milošević ran for public office. And when Mikhail Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping decided to abandon Marxist economics and introduce capitalistic ideas, they succeeded without compulsion. But in democratic Japan it has already taken eight decades to acknowledge fully the crimes committed

⁴³ The Scholar Initiative: Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies, <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/si>, accessed on 11 September 2017.

⁴⁴ Charles Ingrao, "Weapons of Mass Instruction: Schoolbooks and Democratization in Central Europe," *Contexts: The Journal of Educational Media, Memory, and Society*, 1 (2009): 180–189.

in China in the 1930s and across the western Pacific in World War II, because a majority of its parliament cannot bear the shame and public wrath of putting it in the country's school books. On the other hand, if Xi Jinping were to decide tomorrow to fully inform the Chinese people about Tiananmen Square, it would immediately appear in a new generation of schoolbooks. Although it is highly unlikely that Xi would take such a step right now, it remains a readily accessible option for him and any of his successors. Of course, the exception that proves the rule is today's German Federal Republic, a democracy that was able to thoroughly purge militarism, fascism, and Nazi racism from its schoolbooks, media and public discourse – solely because the Allied Powers imposed it on them; but look where they are now?

None of this is to say that authoritarianism is even remotely preferable to democracy, only that the imposition of self-serving national narratives places a greater burden on democratic societies that depend on the knowledge and wisdom of their own citizens, rather than the mindset of one omnipotent individual. But no scholar should abet the tyranny of false narratives that erect barriers both within society and beyond its borders – while undermining our professional commitment to academic honesty. The first half of this paper presented a generation of English-language scholarship that (together with comparable publications in French and German) challenges Czech and other successor state historians to critically examine their prevailing national narrative. Simply ignoring it might strike some as an act of independence, but it would also be one of self-exclusion from the scholarly community.

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Articles|

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“Our Dearest Uncle:” Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, and the Resumption of Richard II’s Personal Rule, 1389–1392¹

Abstract | The middle years of Richard II’s reign (1377–1399) have received a good deal of attention in the past twenty-five years. Yet, the resumption of Richard’s personal rule, one of the most important events from the late 1380s and early 1390s, has received only passing analysis. This article considers the politics surrounding Richard II’s resumption of personal rule in May 1389. It argues that Richard II did not have the political muscle to undertake this act alone and unaided. It also argues that the key player in the king’s return to power was his uncle, Edmund of Langley, Duke of York. The new Royal Council and high officers of state that were appointed in the weeks after May 3 were all “elder statesmen” and Edmund of Langley’s friends, not those of Richard II. As such the events of 1389 represent a shift back to a more moderate government and a government run by collaboration and consensus which lasted until politics again began to spin out of control in 1397.

Keywords | Medieval History – England – Richard II – Edmund of Langley – Royal Courts

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On May 3, 1389 during a Great Council held at Westminster, Richard II asked his youngest uncle and great political adversary Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, the rather unusual question of whether he knew the king’s age. The duke replied that his nephew was twenty-three. As such was indeed the case, the king declared that as an adult he should have control over the government of the kingdom. A number of magnates who were also present at the same Great Council assured him that such was his right and his duty and that he should therefore take up unfettered governance of the realm. The next day the King reordered the Council by removing the former Lords Appellant and their supporters and replacing them with men of his own choosing. Over the next two weeks the King systematically replaced the justices of both benches and the chief baron of the Exchequer with his own men, ordered the sheriffs to proclaim throughout the kingdom that the King had now taken up the governance of the realm, ordered the collection of the last portion of the subsidy voted by the Cambridge Parliament the preceding November cancelled,² and began negotiations for truces and eventually peace with Scotland and France.³

¹ A version of this article was presented at the International Medieval Congress at Leeds in July 2009. I am grateful for the comments of those who heard the paper.

² In fact, the collectors of the subsidy were instructed to repay any money already collected for the second installment, M. Jurkowski, C. L. Smith, and D. Crook, eds., *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188–1688* (London: Public Record Office, 1998), 66–67.

³ For a fuller discussion of this summary see: T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England*, 6 vols. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1928–1933), III: 454–456.

These events took place in the unsettled middle years of Richard II's reign. As Richard II grew to adulthood in the mid-1380s, he understood that continuing the Hundred Years War with France only wasted money with no result. Thus, he began to pursue a policy of peace with the French that rankled some of his more bellicose nobles including his youngest uncle, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester. The political divisions between the King and his opponents sharpened after 1385. There was a brief moment in 1386 when the moderate members of the political community (including Edmund of Langley, Duke of York) came together and tried to manage affairs between the two political forces, but the moderates could not hold and England erupted in armed rebellion in late 1387. After a brief and nearly bloodless series of military encounters the King's opponents led by the Duke of Gloucester seized the person of the King, called and dominated a Parliament in his name (the Merciless Parliament of 1388), in which they appealed cases of treason, and in essence judicially murdered, a number of Richard II's friends. The King's opponents, known collectively as the Lords Appellant because they had appealed treason against the King's friends for pursuing political policies with which they did not agree, then settled down to run the government. Their seizure of the political moment allowed Gloucester and his friends to continue their military expeditions and harness government resources to their ends. However, by the early months of 1389, after nearly a year of government, the Appellant's policies had proven completely bankrupt. Their military campaigns had all resulted in failure, and they had achieved none of their promised goals. This allowed the King to return to active governance of the realm.

Historians have made much of this moment. Stubbs saw it as a bold stroke on the part of the King but one that was as "strange" as it was sudden.⁴ Sidney Armitage-Smith argued that Richard's move was the first step in a process to recall the "peacemaker," John of Gaunt.⁵ James Henry Ramsay generally agreed with Armitage-Smith and argued that Gaunt, "had now come to be the king's best bulwark against Gloucester."⁶ Tout found a "spectacular element in all this,"⁷ but saw Richard's resumption of power as the culmination of a "long process" on which he did not fully elaborate.⁸ Anthony Steel saw the reordering of councilors and personnel as "mere eyewash," that were all part of the King's overall plan to return to autocratic rule,⁹ while Anthony Goodman agreed with both Armitage-Smith and Ramsay in arguing that the episode was a carefully orchestrated event to pave the way for John of Gaunt's return to dominate the political world and keep the peace.¹⁰

With characteristic wisdom, Nigel Saul argued that Gaunt's role in these events needs careful reexamining,¹¹ and suggested that the often-recited view of Gaunt's role as a pillar of the state after his return to England is nothing more than Lancastrian propaganda.¹² Most recently Chris Fletcher has noted that Richard's *coup* of May 1389 was not so much an assumption of personal

⁴ William Stubbs, *A Constitutional History of England*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), II: 506.

⁵ Sidney Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt* (London: Barnes and Noble, 1964), 341–344.

⁶ James Henry Ramsay, *The Genesis of Lancaster*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913), II: 267.

⁷ Tout, *Chapters*, III: 456.

⁸ *Ibid.*, III: 457.

⁹ Anthony Steel, *Richard II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), 180–184. Richard Jones argued something similar: Richard Jones, *The Royal Policy of Richard II* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1968), 64–67.

¹⁰ Anthony Goodman, *John of Gaunt* (London: Routledge, 1992), 144–146.

¹¹ Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1997), 239–240.

¹² Thomas Walsingham, *St. Alban's Chronicle*, eds. John Taylor, Wendy Childs, and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), I: 894–895.

rule but a continuation of Counciliar government.¹³ While I agree with Fletcher that Richard's *coup* of May 1389 was really a triumph for Counciliar government, I argue that he does not go far enough into understanding those members of the political community who undertook the task of governing the realm in 1389 and why they did so. This article will be an attempt to follow Nigel Saul's call to reexamine the resumption of power within the framework of Fletcher's continuation of Counciliar government as well as to reexamine Gaunt's position in these events.

I will argue that Richard could not have undertaken his declaration of May 3, 1389, along with the actions subsequent to his assumption of power, alone and unaided. The King's closest friends and confidants in the political community were either dead, discredited, or exiled in the wake of the Merciless Parliament of 1388. Those who aided the King in May 1389 were, as Tout noted, "men of moderation."¹⁴ Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, led this group of moderates. The composition of the Council in May 1389 reflected Edmund of Langley's friends and political associates, not those of Richard II, and certainly not those of John of Gaunt. Over the next several years the stable governance of the realm reflected York's moderate political leanings and both the Duke and the kingdom as a whole benefited from this good governance, both materially and economically. It is also quite possible that John of Gaunt's change of front following his return to England in November 1389, well after the resumption of Richard's personal rule, may have been due to York's influence.

This is not to argue that Edmund of Langley created and/or led some sort of "middle party" between 1389 and 1392. As an uncle of the King he never lost Richard's affection. York's success in holding a middle ground in these years after the Appellant crisis rested on a number of variable factors within a fluid political world. Perhaps the most important of these factors was York holding together a core of like-minded friends among the secular nobility and clergy. The influence of this group on the King and with each other waxed and waned as political and even personal events dictated. In addition to the interpersonal dynamic within the group of moderate nobles and churchmen, they also had varying degrees of influence on their real or potential political opponents, such as Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick on the one hand and the King on the other, whose ambitions Duke Edmund and his friends needed to accommodate. Along with these, York also had to contend with the political appetites of Henry of Derby, Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, and finally with those of John of Gaunt. Thus, Edmund of Langley's influence was cyclical, and it was greater, or at least more successful, between 1389 and 1392 than at any other point in the reign.

A new group of moderate politicians around the King in May 1389 were led by Edmund of Langley, Duke of York. He was forty-seven in the spring of 1389 and had spent his lifetime at court and thus, the very epicenter of governance. In spite of the often cited passage from Hardyng which claimed that York went hunting and hawking rather than attending parliament,¹⁵ it is clear from the documents that except for those occasions when he was out of the country, York served a trier of petitions in every parliament from the mid-1360s onwards, where, as Gwilym Dodd suggests, Edmund of Langley gained "significant experience serving on both English and foreign committees."¹⁶ In addition, Edmund appears to have been closer to Richard than either of his brothers John of Gaunt or Thomas of Gloucester which may have been instrumental in Richard trusting in his middle uncle and following his plan of governance. York was the only

¹³ Christopher Fletcher, *Richard II: Manhood, Youth and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 176–191.

¹⁴ Tout, *Chapters*, III: 459.

¹⁵ "When all [the] lordes to Councell and Parlyament [went] / He woulde to hunt and also to hawkeyng," John Hardyng, *The Chronicle of John Hardyng* (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1812), 340–341.

¹⁶ Gwilym Dodd, *Justice and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 99.

uncle for whom Richard had enough “affection” to actually “retain” him.¹⁷ The King and his uncle often shared retainers,¹⁸ and Edmund of Langley was usually referred to in official documents from Charter Rolls to Warrants for Issue by the formulary appellation: *annunclo carissimo nostro* – “Our Dearest Uncle.”

The Duke of York's moderate political stance was only strengthened in the political crises of the mid and late 1380s.¹⁹ Edmund, along with his fellow moderate, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland,²⁰ worked to diffuse the Appellant crisis. Not only did York serve on the Continual Council of 1386 he also led the King's commission to the Appellants after Radcot Bridge.²¹ Edmund of Langley undertook the unenviable task of serving as Richard's deputy in Parliament when many of the bills of attainder were passed on the King's friends.²² York tried to save the life of Sir Nicholas Brembre,²³ and rose to the defense of Sir Simon Burley in full parliament, nearly coming to blows with his younger brother, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester over the matter.²⁴ Although York failed in these efforts to save two of the King's two friends, it is doubtful that he could have done better. In spite of his standing as a royal prince, the political currents ran against him and his fellow moderates in the Merciless Parliament. The Appellants had seized the political moment and marginalized York and his fellow political moderates. Yet, the Appellant seizure of power did not punish Duke Edmund. He was still about Court as his presence as a charter witness demonstrates.²⁵ He gave advice to the Council on truce negotiations,²⁶ but largely withdrew from Council and held no significant office as he had before 1388. York seems to have withdrawn for the moment to this favorite residence at Langley in Hertfordshire just north of London.

Unlike Edmund of Langley, Northumberland's presence at court requires a bit of explaining – especially since the Percy family had so many interests on the Northern Marches and the Earl's son, Henry “Hotspur” Percy was in captivity in Scotland following the English defeat at Otterburn in August 1388.²⁷ But, in spite of these responsibilities about his own estates and whatever familiar concerns the Earl had over the captivity of his eldest son, there is no doubt that in the early months of 1389 he was around the King in London. His attendance at Council and presence at court is clearly attested by Richard's grant to him of the manor and park of Byfleet in Surrey on June 28, 1389 to serve as his residence because he owned no suitable accommodation in London.²⁸ The Earl's services were clearly appreciated by the King. Not only did the Monk of Westminster claim he was the King's chief Councilor in this period, but on July 15, 1389 Richard not only ensured that Percy received cash in the sum of £1,504 that he received in tallies from

¹⁷ CCR, 1388–1392, 218.

¹⁸ Ibid., 16.

¹⁹ Chris Given-Wilson, “Richard II and the Higher Nobility,” in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, eds. A. Goodman and James Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 112.

²⁰ Saul, *Richard II*, 208–209, 253; Geoffrey H. Martin, ed. and trans., *Knighton's Chronicle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 406–408.

²¹ L. C. Hector and Barbara Harvey, eds., *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381–1394* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 210–211, 226–227.

²² Hector and Harvey, *Westminster*, 284–285, 286–287, 292–293.

²³ Ibid., 310–311.

²⁴ Ibid., 328–329, 330–331.

²⁵ Chris Given-Wilson, “Royal Charter Witness Lists, 1327–1399,” *Medieval Prosopography*, 12 (1991): 35–95.

²⁶ CPR, 1385–1388, 502–503.

²⁷ “Hotspur” was not freed until October 1389 and was not back in the country until October 19; R. L. Storey, “The Wardens of the Marches of England Towards Scotland, 1377–1469,” *English Historical Review*, 72 (1957): 602.

²⁸ CPR, 1388–1392, 90.

the ports of Boston and Hull as partial payment for his son, Henry "Hotspur" Percy's, keeping of the Eastern March,²⁹ but also that the Earl received a further £500 in cash from London customs which Anthony Steel argued was, "a most unusual entry."³⁰

In addition to York and Northumberland, William Montague, Earl of Salisbury stood out in these years as a stalwart defender of the Crown and this new Counciliar government. By 1389 Montague was in his early sixties. He had been at Crecy in 1346, served with the Black Prince in France, was one of the founding members of the Garter,³¹ but had largely withdrawn from court before the death of Edward III.³² Salisbury, like Wykeham and Brantyngham, had close connections with Edmund of Langley as is evident from a trier of petitions in parliament for over twenty years, and on the parliamentary commission in the Merciless Parliament that decided Sir Nicholas Brembre's "treason" did not warrant death.³³ York's connections with the house of Montague ran deep. Salisbury's nephew and heir, Sir John Montague,³⁴ not only served with Edmund of Langley on campaign in France in 1370, but York knighted the young Montague in the field for his good service.³⁵ The aged Montague's return to government was marked not only by his return as a regular charter witness,³⁶ but he also served on embassies to France.³⁷

Although the Appellants had seized the political moment in late 1387 and used this to take control of the government in the spring of 1388, the bankruptcy of their policies was all too apparent by the autumn of that year when they were forced to call a parliament at Cambridge. The Cambridge Parliament met in October 1388 and was decidedly hostile to the Appellants and their governance of the realm.³⁸ The Appellants had failed to live up to their promise to restore the "traditional" right of the nobility to be consulted in the governance of the kingdom, if, indeed, they were truly interested in that anyway.³⁹ They openly bickered among themselves,⁴⁰ and opponents claimed that they only lined their own pockets with tax money, wasted a great amount of money on failed military expeditions,⁴¹ and could not defend the realm against the assault of the Scots that had laid waste to the northern counties before defeating and then capturing the Earl of Northumberland's son at Otterburn. Possibly this last point hit very close to home for

²⁹ Storey, "Wardens," 612.

³⁰ A. B. Steel, *The Receipt of the Exchequer* (Cambridge: University Press, 1954), 62. It may be that some of this money went to pay for "Hotspur's" ransom.

³¹ George F. Beltz, *Memorials of the Order of the Garter* (London: William Pickering, 1861), 36–40.

³² His presence as a charter witness declines sharply in the period after 1375. Except for a brief return to court following the Peasant's Revolt in 1381–1382 he was only an occasional charter witness until 1389: C. Given-Wilson, "Royal Charter Witness Lists," 70–75. The percentages of charters he witnessed were: 1377–1378: 3.7%; 1378–1397: 14.3%; 1379–1380: 0%; 1380–1381: 20%; 1381–1382: 54.5%; 1382–1383: 7.7%; 1383–1384: 26.1%; 1384–1385: 10%; 1385–1386: 26.3%; 1386–1387: 18.2%; 1387–1388: 0%.

³³ Hector and Harvey, *Westminster*, 310–311.

³⁴ He not only dabbled in Lollardy, but wrote poetry that even Christine de Pisan found pleasant, K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford: University Press, 1973), 46, 241–242.

³⁵ K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford: University Press, 1972), 167–168ff.

³⁶ C. Given-Wilson, "Royal Charter Witness Lists," 70–75. The percentages of charters he witnessed were: 1388–1389: 40%; 1389–1390: 84.6%; 1390–1391: 38.5%; 1391–1392: 38.5%; 1392–1393: 58.3%; 1393–1394: 15.4%; 1394–1397: 0%.

³⁷ TNA, E 101/319/39

³⁸ J. A. Tuck, "The Cambridge Parliament of 1388," *EHR* 84 (1969): 225–243.

³⁹ Tuck, "Cambridge Parliament," 226.

⁴⁰ Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, and William Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, disagreed over the Duke of Burgundy's peace proposal in 1388, *CPR, 1385–1389*, 502–503.

⁴¹ Richard Fitzalan's naval campaign was to have begun in early May 1388 and been four months in duration. However, Arundel did not put to sea until June 1, and returned on September 2, no more than twelve weeks. Yet, he demanded payment for four full months of service (Tuck, "Cambridge Parliament," 233.).

York and his fellow moderate Northumberland since their lands in Tyndale and Resdale had been especially hard hit by the marauding Scots in the aftermath of their victory.⁴²

As with most finer points of politics in this period, the particulars of events are unknown to us, but some idea of the political winds may be gauged by the fact that a number of the chief political moderates were physically with the King in the weeks and months before his assumption of power in May. Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland was with the King at Windsor in mid-March, which was unusual for him, especially since his son was a Scottish prisoner.⁴³ In addition, the King spent a great deal of time in King's Langley, the Duke of York's birthplace and favorite residence, in March and April. The fact that the King rarely visited King's Langley before or after suggests that the twenty days that he spent there in March and April 1389 before he summoned the Great Council to Westminster were of more than passing significance.⁴⁴

Nevertheless, a number of the moderates from the earlier 1380s were absent from this new group of men who had seized the political moment. Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, appeared initially at least to be a moderate. Arundel's moderate credentials included his service on the Continual Council of 1386,⁴⁵ and his work to occupy a middle ground to help defuse the crisis of 1387. But, his service as Chancellor during the Merciless Parliament and the Appellant period of government along with his natural connections to his rash and uncouth elder brother, Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, left him outside of this new realignment of centrist politicians. Another of the leading moderates from the mid-1380s who was absent from this new group was William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury. He had served on the Continual Council of 1386 and had vehemently protested the unfocused vindictive fury of the Merciless Parliament and its thirst for blood.⁴⁶ It is unknown if York and/or others sought the Primate's aid in early 1389, but it seems that the Archbishop was done with national politics and largely withdrew to Canterbury for the remainder of his life.

While York, Northumberland, and Salisbury did not hold high office, a number of Edmund of Langley's moderate friends among the clergy returned to take up high office after May 3. The new chancellor was William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester. Born in 1320, Wykeham was in his late sixties in 1389. He was one of the most talented and capable administrators of his age. Wykeham's talents were such that he was considered part of Edward III's innermost household,⁴⁷ and was called the "Master of the Chancery" by his contemporaries.⁴⁸ Wykeham had been chancellor in the late 1360s and 1370s with Bishop Brantingham of Exeter as his treasurer. But, his desire to make peace with the French earned him the enmity of John of Gaunt who moved to impeach Wykeham in the Good Parliament of 1376. Although Bishop Wykeham loathed Gaunt, he had worked closely with Edmund of Langley over the preceding decades where they had served together as triers of petitions in parliament. Their political paths were further intertwined by

⁴² Tuck, "Cambridge Parliament," 234.

⁴³ *CPR, 1388–1392*, 22. While "Hotspur" had been a captive since Otterburn in August 1388, it is doubtful that his life was ever in danger. He was back in England by August 19, 1389.

⁴⁴ Richard had spent a total of three days at King's Langley between 1385 and 1389. In 1389 he spent March 7–9 and April 5–20 (just before the Garter Feast on April 23) at the manor there: Saul, *Richard II*, 470–471.

⁴⁵ Hector and Harvey, *Westminster*, 169.

⁴⁶ Courtenay's biographer argued that Courtenay had simply had enough of politics after 1388 and retired to his archdiocese where he was remarkably active in visitations over the next decade of his life. See, Joseph Dahmus, *William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1381–1396* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966), 176–177. Also see, Joseph Dahmus, "The Metropolitan Visitations of William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1381–1396," *Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences* 31/2 (1950).

⁴⁷ Henry C. Maxwell-Lite, *Historical Notes on the Use of the Great Seal* (London: HMSO, 1926), 24.

⁴⁸ George H. Moberley, *The Life of William of Wykeham* (London: A. Millar, 1887), 114–143.

their service together on the Continual Council of 1386 and on the December 1387 commission with Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland that attempted to defuse the Appellant crisis. Age notwithstanding, Wykeham brought energy to his office and it occupied almost all of his time. In fact, between October 1389 and November 1390 he sought permission from the King to allow clerks to reform abuses at various hospitals and chapels under his jurisdiction because Wykeham – who was supposed to do this – was “too much engaged to attend in person.”⁴⁹

The new treasurer was Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter.⁵⁰ He was a close friend of Bishop Wykeham and had twice before served as Treasurer once when Wykeham held the Great Seal (1369–1371), and a second time during the first years of Richard's reign (1377–1381). Like Wykeham, Brantingham was well known to Edmund of Langley and had served with the Duke of York as a trier of petitions in parliament on a number of occasions in the 1380s. He had also served on the Continual Council of 1386 along with Duke Edmund and Wykeham to bring much needed economy and peace to the King's Household. Brantingham's last term as treasurer was a brief one and by August 12 he had left office. Although his time in the Exchequer was short, Brantingham clearly performed his duties with energy, as York, Northumberland and Wykeham pleaded with the King to grant a pardon for escapes from Brantingham's gaols on September 3, 1389 because he was involved in royal business.⁵¹ It is likely that declining health was responsible for Brantingham's withdrawal from office as on August 26, 1389 Richard excused the aged bishop from further office or attending Councils or parliaments.

His replacement as treasurer was John Gilbert, Bishop of Hereford, who was right in the middle of being translated to St. David's. He had served with Edmund of Langley, Wykeham, and Brantingham on the Continual Council of 1386 and also with York, Northumberland and Wykeham on the King's embassy to the Appellants in December 1387 after Radcot Bridge. By 1389 his connections with Duke Edmund stretched back over fifteen years through service together as triers of petitions in parliament.

Wykeham, Brantingham, and Gilbert represented the ecclesiastical side of the “old guard,” and a return to the sage counsel of older, wiser men, who could recall and had been part of successful governments in the past. The leading noble Councilors of the King were York, Northumberland, and William, Earl of Salisbury. Although neither York nor Northumberland held high office over the next three years their presence was clearly felt by the King and his inner circle. Over the next three years, where our records of Council are uncommonly complete, the most frequent comital attendees were Edmund, Duke of York and Henry, Earl of Northumberland.⁵² Duke Edmund's presence at court in these years may be easily attested. He was an invariable charter witness,⁵³ gave assent to various major grants coming from Council,⁵⁴ and served on a number of royal commissions – including heading the commission to try to solve the rather nasty dispute between the King and London that erupted in 1392. In addition, Richard was especially close to York in these years. As we have seen Richard spent much time at Langley with his uncle before the removal of the Appellants from government on May 3, 1389, and he was there again for two

⁴⁹ *CPR, 1388–1392*, 143, 215, 349–350.

⁵⁰ For his appointment as Treasurer, *CPR, 1388–1392*, 31.

⁵¹ *CPR, 1389–1392*, 103.

⁵² Baldwin, *King's Council*, Appendix II. Henry Percy also received £500 from the customs of London on July 15, 1389, *de dono Regis*, which Anthony Steel noted was (a most unusual entry), *The Receipt of the Exchequer, 1377–1485* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 61–62; N. H. Nicholas, *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, 7 vols. (London: Record Commission, 1834), I: 6–18.

⁵³ York witnessed, 70% of the royal charters given between 1389 and 1392, Given-Wilson, “Charter Witness Lists,” 77.

⁵⁴ *CPR, 1388–1392*, 79–81.

weeks over Christmas and Epiphany in 1391, and again in the Christmas season in 1392.⁵⁵ It is also clear that the King appreciated his uncle and his efforts in these years as royal preferment came in substantial amounts. The ducal honor that Richard had given Edmund of Langley in 1385 had carried with it a £1,000 annuity from the Exchequer until lands had been found to replace this amount. Richard had moved the payments to receipts from wool customs but these had not always been forthcoming.⁵⁶ First, the King saw to his uncle realizing the monies owed to him from London wool customs,⁵⁷ then Richard began to grant Duke Edmund lands to release him from his dependence on unpredictable annuities at the Exchequer.⁵⁸ Between 1390 and 1391 he granted York the manor of Sevenhampton together with the forest of Bradwarden in Wiltshire,⁵⁹ the manor of Wendover in Kent,⁶⁰ the manor of Hadleigh in Essex,⁶¹ and a host of manors in Essex and Wiltshire.⁶² Richard also raised York's eldest son, Edward of York to the peerage as Earl of Rutland and provided him with landed wealth,⁶³ in addition to several significant grants of land to Isabella, Duchess of York.⁶⁴ This return of the "old guard" finds Edmund of Langley as the common denominator. Of this group it was only York who possessed the connections and friendship with all of them. Their return to court and Council was due to their friendship with York as well as a desire among all of them to see a return to the days of competent government under Edward III.

Last, the role of John of Gaunt in all this needs to be discussed. Although many historians have perceived Gaunt as the one responsible for bringing stability back to the political community following his return from Iberia in November 1389, Walsingham's contentions that Gaunt was a hero of the kingdom who abandoned his own ambitions and returned to England to selflessly and single-handedly restore good governance to the realm is little more than Lancastrian fantasy.⁶⁵ As Tout quite rightly noted, after 1389 Gaunt was "not as active as he had been."⁶⁶ It is possible that Richard and perhaps the members of the new Council did not want Gaunt back in the country at all. The Duke had been in Bordeaux since early summer and if either Gaunt or Richard would have wished his return to England it would not have been a difficult thing to accomplish.

As we have seen, the Council had been providing that stability since May without him. The sitting chancellor, William Wykeham, loathed the Duke of Lancaster, and Gaunt's relations with the Earl of Northumberland can hardly be considered any better. The King's relations with Gaunt were never, it seems, particularly cordial but prior to the Duke's departure for Castile in

⁵⁵ Saul, *Richard II*, 472.

⁵⁶ J. S. Roskell, *Impeachment of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk in 1386 in the Context of the Reign of Richard II* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 145–146.

⁵⁷ TNA E 122/193/27.

⁵⁸ In addition to other preferment, the King granted Duke Edmund that he should be quit of all Chancery fees *CPR*, 1385–1389, 34.

⁵⁹ For the grant of the manor see, TNA SC 8/179/8930. For the grant of the forest see, *CPR*, 1388–1392, 362.

⁶⁰ *CPR*, 1388–1392, 300.

⁶¹ *CPR*, 1388–1392, 375.

⁶² In addition to the honor, town, fair and market of Raleigh in Essex went the manors of Tunderle, Eastwood, and Newport. York also received the hundreds of Heyworth and Kirkclade in Wiltshire with the manor of Sevenhampton, *CPR*, 1388–1392, 377.

⁶³ On May 12, 1390, Edward received the Lordship of Okham in Rutland (*CPR*, 1388–1392, 251), and on December 12, 1390, he received even more land to support the earldom (*CPR*, 1388–1392).

⁶⁴ She received a grant of 500 marks annuity if she should survive Duke Edmund in 1389 (*CPR*, 1388–1392, 104) and the manor of Braxstede in Essex to the value of £50 per annum the following year (*CPR*, 1388–1392, 207).

⁶⁵ Walsingham, *St. Alban's Chronicle*, I: 894–895.

⁶⁶ Tout, *Chapters*, III: 459.

1386 they became particularly strained. Saul argues that the relationship between the two was "cool" at best, while Goodman argues that in the five years between 1381 and 1386 the young King found Gaunt's role in governance particularly resentful.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Richard's letter to Gaunt asking him to return to England may have little to do with the politics of the realm.⁶⁸

In seeking Gaunt's return and convincing the Duke of Lancaster to change his policies and going forward become a solid supporter of the Crown, it is likely that Edmund of Langley's influence was paramount. There was no one else in the political community in 1389 whom John of Gaunt would have listened to save his brother Edmund with whom he had so much in common.⁶⁹ The two were only one year apart in age and had grown up together and supported each other in politics throughout their lives.⁷⁰ Like all brothers they did have their differences.⁷¹ Edmund and Isabella complained bitterly to the King about Gaunt ignoring their claims to the Castilian throne in his negotiations of 1385,⁷² and Gaunt possibly never forgave his brother for failing him in Portugal in 1381, although this latter issue may say more about Gaunt than Langley.⁷³ But, in spite of these differences they had fought on campaigns together as late as 1385,⁷⁴ and freely shared a number of estate officials and retainers.⁷⁵

In addition, it seems Gaunt needed some convincing to return and even to join in politics as it currently ran. Gaunt reached England in November but made no attempt to come directly to Court or to take up a position of influence with the Council. It seems likely that the extraordinary measures the King took to meet Gaunt two miles outside Reading, to put on the collar of Sts and the kiss of peace, was part of an orchestrated event to win over the Duke of Lancaster to Richard's position rather than Gaunt having arrived at the position of peacemaker on his own.⁷⁶

To return to Stubbs and Tout for a moment: both noted that the period from 1389 to 1392 was a period of peace, prosperity, and Counciliar government. What they both failed to recognize, however, was that the change in the political winds in May 1389 had to do with shifts within the political community rather than in unilateral actions undertaken by the King himself. The failures of Appellant policies by late 1388 allowed for a realignment within the upper levels of the political community, and for those men who I am defining as moderates to gain control of the

⁶⁷ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, 87–89.

⁶⁸ Richard wrote to Gaunt on October 1, 1389, while the Duke was in Bordeaux asking him to return, *Foedera*, VII: 648. The Monk of Westminster noted this as well, *West. Chron.*, 406–407.

⁶⁹ Professor Goodman argues that the two were often partners in politics, *John of Gaunt*, 44, 274–275.

⁷⁰ As Maude Clarke suggests, Edmund had supported Gaunt in the Wonderful Parliament, although perhaps as she saw it not as part of a "faction," "The Lancastrian Faction and the Wonderful Parliament," in *Fourteenth Century Studies*, eds. L. S. Sutherland and M. McKisack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937), 36–52.

⁷¹ As Simon Walker noted Gaunt could be capricious in his dealings, even with his brother, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 250f. and 63.

⁷² TNA SC 8/103/5145 for a transcript of this petition, see PRO 31/7/109.

⁷³ In Gaunt's will he promised to pay all of his brother's debts save those arising from the Portuguese campaign of 1381, for Gaunt's will, see Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, 420–436. For an argument regarding the issue of the campaign of 1381 and how it lay between the two brothers until the end of their lives, see Douglas Biggs, "Chasing the Chimera in Spain: Edmund of Langley in Iberia, 1381/82," *Journal of Medieval Military History* 15 (2016): 97–98.

⁷⁴ At the siege of St. Malo in 1379 the French would not fight because a tidal river separated the two sides. Froissart says that Edmund lost patience with the French and dashed into the river saying "Let him who love me follow me for I am going to engage!" John of Gaunt, watching on the bank, said to a Hainault esquire: "Gerard, see how my brother ventures; he shows the French by his example his willingness to fight but they show no such inclination!" Jean Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France and Spain*, trans. Thomas Jones (New York, 1847): 240.

⁷⁵ For a fuller discussion of this point, together with the names of shared estate officials and retainers, see my book, *Three Armies in Britain* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 133.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 406–409.

Council and thus to effect and influence policy. Regardless of John of Gaunt's great influence and political power, he had nothing to do with the preparations for the actual seizure of the Council on May 3, 1389. The men who made up the Council and who led the efforts of the Counciliar government over the next two years were friends and confidants of Edmund of Langley, not the titular King of Castile. Edmund of Langley was the natural leader of the moderates. His position as a royal prince and his wealth of experience in government, combined with his good relationship with the King and his own moderate political leanings led him to seek a pathway forward that was different from his younger brother's and the King's. Ironically, perhaps, the Appellant crisis brought the governmental choices facing the political community into sharper relief and actually made the political position of the moderates stronger and more sustainable in 1389 than it had been in 1386–1387.

Sustainable or not, the political associations that York painstakingly put together in late 1388 and 1389 were not destined to endure long. By 1392 this group of moderates began to once again recede into the political background as the King and his new group of favorites led by Richard's uncouth and dangerous half-brother, John Holand, Earl of Huntingdon, came to influence and finally to dominate politics. Nevertheless, these four years of moderate ascendancy were, all agree, a time of peace, prosperity, and moderation and as such bear the mark of their political maker; Edmund of Langley, Duke of York.

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Meeting the Emperor: Several Days in Ferrara in 1433¹

Abstract | The study is concerned with the history of diplomacy using the brief example of a meeting with Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg in Ferrara in September 1433. The main goal of the paper is to analyze briefly orations delivered by various envoys in the presence of the Emperor as well as to analyze the link between them defined by their Humanism and their love for arts and letters.

Keywords | Sigismund of Luxembourg – Ambrogio Traversari – Francesco Barbaro – Guarino Veronese – Leonello d’Este – Ferrara

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Formal diplomatic speeches have been traditionally seen as stereotypical and boring, often not revealing the actual political negotiations (which usually took place in other time and space). One admires the patience of the audience during such orations as they in some cases had to listen to several of them over a period of a few hours. There are not, however, all that many possibilities to reconstruct the full picture of the political and cultural context on such a small scale as was the brief stay of Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg in Ferrara in September 1433.

The Emperor stayed in Ferrara on his way back from an Imperial coronation, which took place in Rome in May 1433.² Ferrara was not chosen for his stay by chance, as the Emperor enjoyed the hospitality of Niccolò III d’Este, Marquess of Ferrara. Niccolò III d’Este was important in moderating peace between Milan and Venice in April 1433. This peace was one of the conditions leading to Sigismund’s peaceful coronation which followed in May. Niccolò III d’Este recognized that the only role Ferrara under his rule could play, was to establish long-term stable and peaceful relations between the interests of two major surrounding powers – the Venetians and Milanese under Giangaleazzo Visconti. Niccolò III d’Este, who was determined to build his own powerful state, decided not to intervene in the controversy between Venice and Milan directly on either side, skillfully increasing his own value for them (by not becoming their enemy). He occasionally played the role of mediator and potential peacemaker and, as in this case, host to the Emperor.

This paper does not intend to describe the complicated political situation in the Apennine peninsula where the Emperor (*in spe*) was in all probability a rather external (and minor) player. Its ambition is to instead reconstruct the functional milieu of the Imperial court “on the road”

¹ The text was created thanks to support of the Centre for Cross-Disciplinary Research into Cultural Phenomena in the Central European History: Image, Communication, Behaviour (GACR reg. number 14-36521g).

² For detailed information about Sigismund’s itineraries, see: “Itineraria regum et reginarum Hungariae (1382–1438), Itineraria Sigismundi regis imperatorisque (1382–1438), Mariae (1382–1395) et Barbarae (1405–1438) reginarum consortium eiusdem nec non reginae (1382–1386), relictæ Ludovici I regis,” in *Subsidia ad historiam mediæ ævi Hungariae inquirendam*, vol. I, eds. Pál Engel and Norbert C. Tóth (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi intézete, 2005).

and the ways of communication during the period of Humanism making use of diplomatic orations, diplomatic instructions – *mandata* and diary entries.

The Emperor arrived in Ferrara on September 9, 1433 via Ravenna on the road from Rome to Basel.³ He stayed in Ferrara less than a week, continuing his travels via Mantua to Basel. He entered the city from the east side (*Porta di Sotto*) dressed in a “crimson” colored fabric.⁴ The busy days in Ferrara were filled with numerous audiences, negotiations and also ceremonies. The Emperor’s stay was registered by Ambrogio Traversari in his unique diary called *Hodoeporicon*.⁵ Traversari decided to meet the Emperor in Ferrara because of his position. He was head of the Camaldolese order and as such wanted to secure his congregation using possible Imperial confirmation of old Camaldolese privileges. He explained the problem in his diary:

Our situation appeared to be worse than I expected. This is why I insisted on gonfalonieri to prevent further violation of our rights. Everyday negotiations appeared to be fruitless. They expected our order to pay certain amount of money to the city treasury, which substantially exceeded our modest abilities [...] the news began to circulate that the Emperor would arrive in Ferrara soon. Representatives of our order approved my proposal to request an audience with the Emperor which would relate to the benefices and privileges obtained from former Emperors by the Camaldolese order in the past [...] I left Florence on September 4, carrying a book containing the life of John Chrysostom which I had translated. I planned to honor the Emperor with that gift [...]⁶

I arrived in Bologna the next day. I was informed there that the Emperor was likely to arrive in Ferrara on September 10 at the earliest. I therefore decided to stay (in Bologna) to save some money.⁷

Traversari seems to have made a mistake for an unknown reason writing about the Emperor’s arrival on September 10, since it is confirmed that Sigismund arrived a day earlier, i.e., September 9.⁸ This mistake is not important, however, for the respective chronology of the Emperor’s stay, which is described by Traversari in a detailed way:

³ Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum scriptores. Raccolta degli Storici Italiani dal cinquecento al millecinqucento. Diario Ferrarese. Dall'anno 1409 sino al 1502, XXIV/VII*, ed. Giuseppe Pardi (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1900), col. 186, 20: MCCCXXXIII, a di viiii, vene a Ferrara lo Imperadore Sigismondo et entrò dentro per la Porta di Sotto, uno mercori, di sera a hore xiii, et era vestito di carmexino, et alloggiò in Corte con Messer Brunoro de la Scala. Et di xiii il dicto Imperadore fece cinque figlioli dello illustre marchexe Niccolò cavalieri [...], Et a di xviii del dicto mese se parti de Ferrara il predicto Imperadore et andò a Mantoa et lì ge fu facto grande honore.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ For details about Traversari, see Charles Stinger, *Humanism and the Church Fathers. Ambrogio Traversari (1386–1439) and Christian Antiquity in the Italian Renaissance* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1977); Costanzo Somigli and Tommaso Bargellini, *Ambrogio Traversari. Monaco Camaldolese* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane 1986); Salvatore Frigerio, *Ambrogio Traversari Un monaco e un monastero nell'umanesimo fiorentino* (Siena: Edizioni Camaldoli, 1988); Gian C. Garfagnini, ed., *Ambrogio Traversari nel VI centenario della nascita. Convegno internazionale di studi (Camaldoli–Firenze, 15–18 settembre 1986)* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1988); Marzia Pontone, *Ambrogio Traversari monaco e umanista fra scrittura latina e scrittura greca* (Firenze–Torino: N. Aragno, 2010).

⁶ Ambrogio Traversari, *Beati Ambrosii abbatis generalis Camaldulensis Hodoeporicon a Nicolao Bartholini Bergensi C.R. Congregationis Matris Dei publicae luci assertum, ex Bibliotheca Medicea ad... Dominum Antonium Magliabechi*, ed. Antonio Magliabechi (Firenze–Lucca: Marescanalos fratres, 1681), 38: “Offendimus negotia nostra opinione se habere deterius [...].”

⁷ Ibid., 39: “Ibi certiores facti Imperatorem non prius, quam post iv di. m [...]” For detailed commentaries to *Hodoeporicon* see: Jan Stejskal, ed., *Hodoeporicon Ambrogia Traversariho* (České Budějovice: Veduta, 2013).

⁸ Muratori, “*Rerum Italicarum scriptores. Raccolta degli Storici Italiani dal cinquecento al millecinqucento*,” *Diario Ferrarese*, col. 186, 20: “MCCCXXXIII, a di viiii, vene a Ferrara lo Imperadore Sigismondo [...].”

I left Bologna on September 10 in the company of priors from Camaldolino, St. Damian and Our Lady of the Angels. I arrived at Ferrara in the evening just half an hour after the Emperor. That very same day Guarino with his students came to visit me. I tried to meet with certain friends, especially with Uggucione, who held the most powerful position after the Marquess, but it was impossible at the time. I therefore went to his house the next day to explain the purpose of my presence and asking him to arrange my possible meeting with the King. He kindly listened to me and promised he would do his best to satisfy my request. Thanks to his intercession, I met the illustrious Lord Brunoro. There was no one as influential as Brunoro with the Emperor. He accompanied me to Sigismund himself. The Emperor graciously received me and generously agreed to see me the next morning. He wanted to talk to me in private. The Venetian ambassadors arrived at the same moment and their lengthy audience shortened my visit.⁹

Uggucione Contrari (1379–1447), an important friend of Traversari, was the most powerful counselor of Niccolò III d'Este. Contrari was even ruling over Ferrara during Niccolò III d'Este pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He was rewarded for his services to the Marquess with feudal grants and a number of benefices. Contrari received a lordship which was very rare in the Ferrarese territory due to its size and its position. Niccolò III gave the border area to his closest counselor and companion.¹⁰ Uggucione Contrari not only received property spread all over the Este state, but he was considered one of the very important politicians – almost a “separate prince.”¹¹ Niccolò III's relationship to Contrari was “less that of ruler to a subject and more that of one prince to another.”¹² The geographical location of the property was among the Ferrara and Modena territories. Contrari even followed Niccolò III d'Este on his last diplomatic trip to Milan in 1441, where the Marquess died under suspicious circumstances.¹³

Traversari successfully used the network of his friends (most of them from the circles of humanists) to gain prompt access to the monarch. He made detailed notes about his audience with the Emperor in his diary:

In the late afternoon of the following day, I went to the palace and waited for the Emperor by the gate. He received me and welcomed me very kindly. After a formal salutation, I explained the purpose of my journey from Florence. Of course, it was not only the purpose, but the audience (with the Emperor) itself was an honor for me. In such a perspective, I did not even deserve to be heard. I explained that the Camaldolese order had been under the protection of Emperors since the very beginnings of the congregation, as show by generous privileges and manifold rights granted by former rulers, especially by his Father Charles, holy and blessed be his memory. I submitted the charter of privileges to him. The Emperor promptly touched the charter and declared his will to confirm it. I gave the charter to the chancellor, who was present at the audience, and then added:

I am glad to have a chance to see the protector and benefactor in Italy, as it is a duty of my office. I would meet him even if he was in distant country. It is common to bring gifts to protectors, but I am poor, according the rule of my order. That is why I do not bring gold or silver. I have brought a poor gift appropriate to my order and your piety: a translation of the Life of John Chrysostom I have prepared. I showed him the book and put it into the Emperor's hands. I asked him to kindly accept the gift, and confirm the privileges granted by his father, as promised. Later I used the same words for an oration I composed [...]

⁹ Traversari, *Beati Ambrosii abbatis generalis Camaldulensis Hodoeporicon*, 39: “Bononia movimus con tantibus fratribus prioribus Camaldulini, S. Damiani [...] x. septembris, vespereque pervenimus Ferrariam, dimidia sere hora, postquam Imperator advenerat [...]”

¹⁰ Trevor Dean, *Land and Power in Late Medieval Ferrara. The Rule of the Este, 1350–1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 61–62.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Werner L. Gundersheimer, *Ferrara. The Style of a Renaissance Despotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 84–91.

The gracious ruler accepted the humble gift with pleasure. He declared his interest in anyone who would participate in the council¹⁴ (where he was going as well as I was) in a long and kind speech. Then he thanked me and finished the audience.¹⁵

The Life of John Chrysostom was one of the most celebrated translations by Traversari, he had already presented a copy to the Pope during his earlier visit to Rome.¹⁶ The description of the audience by Traversari mentions the oration he composed “using the same words.” It is probable that the oration was summarized shortly after the audience, as the diary suggests. We can therefore reconstruct the meeting in an even more detailed way. Traversari briefly introduced his order (i.e., the Camaldolese) explaining the circumstances of its foundation to the Emperor, and even his own career within the order.¹⁷ Traversari further mentioned former Emperors including Henry III, Otto III, Lothar III and others including Charles IV as previous protectors and supporters of the Camaldolese order.¹⁸ Apart from matters of his own congregation, i.e., confirmation of its privileges, Traversari in his oration highlighted the Emperor’s role in the matter of the reconciliation of the Church, mentioning explicitly Sigismund’s support of the Church council and the Emperor’s piety and political capability.¹⁹

As Traversari did in his *Hodoeporicon*, he also described his gift in his oration and mentioned that his translation of the Life of John Chrysostom was presented by him to the Pope the previous year during his stay in Rome.²⁰ Traversari underlined the Emperor’s role within the Church issues, addressing him “princeps christianissime”²¹ or “auguste sacratissime”²² – the Emperor’s role was also highlighted by Sigismund’s other visitors at Ferrara. As Traversari mentioned, his first brief audience with the Emperor was interrupted by the Venetian ambassadors and “their lengthy audience shortened (his) visit.”²³

The presence of Venetians at Ferrara signaled a new relationship between the Emperor and the Republic. Venetians had financed Sigismund’s May coronation ending many years of animosity, open war and even attempts to assassinate the monarch. Twelve Venetian ambassadors led by Andrea Mocenigo (probably the nephew of Tommaso Mocenigo, who used to be ambassador to King Sigismund in Hungary in 1410 and since 1414 the Doge of Venice) met the Emperor

¹⁴ In Basel.

¹⁵ Traversari, *Beati Ambrosii abbatis generalis Camaldulensis Hodoeporicon*, 40: “Mane summo profecti ad palatium [...]”

¹⁶ Lorenzo Mehus, ed., *Ambrosii Traversarii Generalis Camaldulensium aliorumque ad ipsum, et ad alios de eodem Ambrosio latinae epistolae a Domino Petro Canneto Abbate Camaldulensi in libros XXV tributae variorum opera distinctae, et observationibus illustratae. Adcedit eiusdem Ambrosii vita in qua historia litteraria Florentina ab anno MCXCII usque ad annum MCCCCXL ex monumentis potissimum nondum editis deducta est Laurentio Mehus*, vol. II, *Ambrosii Traversarii generalis Camaldulensium Epistolae et Orationes*, (Firenze 1759, [repr.]; Bologna: A. Forni, 1968), col. 1142: “essem ex graeco traduxeram pretiosissimi monilis instar tibi offero, princeps christianissime [...] quod Romano pontifici dedicatum opusculum dono attulerim tibi.”

¹⁷ Ibid., col. 1141: “[...] a puero sum enutritus, ibique triginta et unum annus sub regulari observatia et perpetua clausura [...] Ordo nostro post Beatum Benedictum antiquissimus est [...]”

¹⁸ Ibid.: “[...] augustae memoriae maiores tui Henricus Tertius [...]”

¹⁹ Ibid., col. 1142: “[...] Absit enim, Auguste sacratissime ut minus aliquid religionis et divini zeli in te quam in superioribus regibus inesse credamus, cuius ea fides et pietas est ut ecclesiae primum [...]”

²⁰ Ibid.: “Quippe vitam Sancti Ioannis Chrysostomi [...] quam anno praeterito, quum Romae essem ex graeco traduxeram pretiosissimi monilis instar tibi offero, princeps christianissime [...] quod Romano pontifici dedicatum opusculum dono attulerim tibi.”

²¹ Ibid., col. 1142.

²² Ibid.

²³ Traversari, *Beati Ambrosii abbatis generalis Camaldulensis Hodoeporicon*, 39: “[...] legati Venetorum, qui eodem fere momento supervenerant [...]”

probably on September 10, just after the first meeting of Traversari with Sigismund.²⁴ On that occasion, a member of the Venetian delegation Francesco Barbaro presented his speech which was (as in Traversari's case) later recorded.²⁵

Francesco Barbaro (1390–1454) was a renowned author and esteemed member of Humanist circles²⁶ with numerous public activities including the role of podestà in cities of terraferma as in Treviso, Vicenza but also in Bergamo and in Verona. Barbaro also belonged to the network of Traversari's friends, as their correspondence clearly shows.²⁷ Francesco Barbaro prepared his speech carefully, following the mandate containing instructions issued on September 1, by the senate of Serenissima.²⁸ The instructions mentioned Ferrara as the place of the meeting with the Emperor and the possible presence of Marquess Niccolò III d'Este or his eldest son Leonello, who was quoted as the regent in Ferrara. The importance of that indivisible couple for Venice was underlined.²⁹

The ambassadors were ordered to cordially congratulate the Emperor on the occasion of his coronation and accompany him on his way from Ferrara to Basel via Mantua through "totium territorium nostrum" up to Lago di Garda but no further – "non ultra."³⁰ The ambassadors were recommended to highlight Sigismund's role as a peacemaker who dedicated his life to unification of the Church during both councils in Constance and in Basel and a tireless foe of error within the Church (the instructions in all probability mentioned the Hussites in the Kingdom of Bohemia). The instructions also explicitly mentioned support to Pope Eugene IV – Gabriele Condulmer (who himself was Venetian).³¹ The mandate was approved by an absolute majority of the senate.³²

Barbaro's speech, presented on September 10, followed the instructions step by step. It was done in elaborate Latin with numerous quotations from classical authors, as Rothkamm's edition clearly reveals.³³ After the obligatory congratulation for the Emperor's coronation³⁴ Barbaro mentioned numerous current dangers to the Church including Turks, schismatics (i.e., Greeks) and heretics (i.e., Hussites) together with Sigismund's decisive role during the council of Con-

²⁴ For an edition of the speech, see Jan Rothkamm, ed., *Three Speeches by Venetian Ambassadors 1433–1486* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016), 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 5–6.

²⁶ For his vast correspondence, see the edition Francesco Barbaro, *Epistolario*, Carteggi umanistici (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1991–1999).

²⁷ For example, see Mehus, ed., *Ambrosii Traversarii Generalis Camaldulensium aliorumque ad ipsum, et ad alios de eodem Ambrosio latinae epistolae*, VI/9: "Ambrosius Monachus Francisco suo humanissimo salutem dicit [...]"

²⁸ Gustav Beckmann, ed., *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*, vol. 11 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck Ruprecht, 1898), 138: "Quod fiat commissio 12 oratoribus nostris ituris ad presentiam serenissimi imperatoris Romanorum ut infra."

²⁹ *Ibid.*: "[...] quantum dictus dominus marchio est filius noster carissimus [...] et quod nos pater et ipse filius simus unum et idem [...]"

³⁰ *Ibid.*: "[...] mandatum associando illum per Ferrariensem Mantuanum et per totum territorium nostrum [...] per lacum Garde, associabitis eum usque Rippam Tridenti in dicto lacu et non ultra."

³¹ *Ibid.*, 138–139: "[...] quod sua majestas accessura sit deo previo ad concilium Basiliense, ubi optamus quod sua imperialis majestas se reperiat pro pacifico et tranquillo statu Christianitatis, et pro bono statu summi pontificis, ne error et sisma sei oriatur[...] quod sua majestas in alio concilio Constantiensi fecit [...]"

³² *Ibid.*, 139: "De parte 118, de non 0, de non sinceri 0."

³³ Rothkamm, *Three Speeches*, 9–30.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 10: "Maximam laetitiam cepit universa respublica nostra, gloriosissime princeps, cum sacrosanctum Christiani nominis imperium tibi delatum est."

stance – as defender of the Church.³⁵ The instructions were also closely followed in the case of “the Venetian pope.” Barbaro explicitly reminded the Emperor about who was the person who specifically placed the Imperial crown on his head, mentioning that Pope Eugene was a Venetian citizen.³⁶ Barbaro also praised Sigismund for his peaceful approach to the Imperial dignity and his restful influence on a disordered and divided Italy, where the Emperor arrived with a minimal force.³⁷ Barbaro addressed Sigismund as “Caesar”³⁸ or “felicissime Caesar”³⁹ comparing him to his predecessors, to other “Caesars” surprisingly never using the common address “Augustus.” This is possibly the character of most of Barbaro’s text (mainly of his letters) using a rather classical vocabulary. Jan Rothkamm, the editor of Barbaro’s speech, referred to the classical sources Barbaro frequently used – mainly Cicero.⁴⁰

The audience of the Venetians was immediately reported to Venice by ambassadors the very same day i.e., September 10 and September 11, in three letters, which probably indicated the importance of the meeting and of the relations with the Emperor for Serenissima.⁴¹ The senate reacted on September 14 with additional instructions dealing with the issues of the council in Basel, the position of the Pope and other issues.⁴² Some of the ambassadors left from Ferrara to Florence because they had to report on the Florentine *coup d'état*, while the rest, including Francesco Barbaro, continued with the Emperor via Mantua towards Lago di Garda, following the instructions step by step.

Traversari and the Venetians were not the only ones who vied for the Emperor’s attention during his stay in Ferrara. The locals also wanted their share of Sigismund’s time and favor. Leonello d’Este made his oration to the Emperor on behalf of the d’Este family. It is not clear when exactly Leonello delivered his speech, but the Emperor knighted all the sons of Niccolò III d’Este on September 13, including the youngest son Sigismondo who was born at the very end of August 1433, just a few days before the Emperor’s arrival in Ferrara.⁴³ The Emperor also agreed to become the godfather of the newborn “Sigismondo” and held the baby during the service.⁴⁴

³⁵ Ibid., “[...] quitiens in perfidos Turcos, quitiens in schismaticos, quotiens in haereticos pro veritatis defensione arma sumpsisti? [...] Ad haec Constantiense illud concilium auctoritate tua convocatum, diligentia constitutum, praesentia decoratum [...]”

³⁶ Ibid., 11: “[...] sed quantam laetitiam suscepimus ostendere ex corona aurea, quae Romae more institutoque maiorum a sanctissimo cive nostro Eugenio Romano pontefice capiti tuo imposita est, cum tanta laude et gloria [...]”

³⁷ Ibid., 11–12: “[...] quod alii Romani pontifices et Caesares, et patrum memoria et nostra, vi et armis vix consecuti sunt, tu solus coronam imperii sine vis, sine armis, sine tumultu, sola auctoritate adeptus es [...] Fervebat tota Italia bellis, irruerant undique procellae, plena erant omnia tempestatis [...] Tu in huiusmodi perturbatione rerum, absque magnis copiis quas facile habere potuisses, incredibili animi magnitudine, auctoritate sola prudentiaque post Deum confisus cum quingentis tantum equitibus in Italiam venisti, paululumque in ea commoratus ex bello pacem, ex perturbatione tranquillitatem summam contulisti, et, quod mirabilius est, ita omnes Italiae principes ad cohaerendum maiestati tuae incitasti, ut cum tibi coniungi studerent, studia belli cuncta deposuerint.

³⁸ Ibid., 10, 12, 13.

³⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 15–30.

⁴¹ Beckmann, *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*, vol. 11, 140: “Tres litteras vestras recepimus, quarum una data est die 10 alie due 11 presentis, plurima continentes circa colloquia vobiscum habita per serenissimum dominum imperatorem [...]”

⁴² Ibid., 140–143.

⁴³ Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum scriptores. Raccolta degli Storici Italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento. Diario Ferrarese*, col. 186, 20: “[...] Et di xiii il dicto Imperadore fece cinque figlioli dello illustre marchexe Niccolò cavalieri [...]”

⁴⁴ Ibid.: “[...] Et a dì xiii il dicto Imperadore fece cinque figlioli dello illustre marchexe Nicolò cavalieri; cioè messer Lionelo, messer Borso, messer Hercole, messer Folcho, messer Sigismondo. Et questo lui lo tenete

The ceremony would have made a wonderful occasion for such an oration to be delivered by the eldest representative of the young generation of the d'Este family.

Leonello d'Este, born in 1407, was the legitimized son of Niccolò III and his designated successor. Leonello was not supposed, however, to succeed Niccolò III until the tragic death of his older brother Ugo d'Este in 1425. Ugo was convicted by his father Niccolò III and executed together with his stepmother (and the wife of Niccolò III) Parisina Malatesta for adultery and incest. Leonello spent his young years under the supervision of condottiero Braccio da Montone probably not holding all that important place in the plans of his father Niccolò III. The intensive preparation for the duties of the future ruler of Ferrara began just after the unexpected end of the oldest brother Ugo (i.e., after 1425).

Ambrogio Traversari mentioned in his *Hodoeporicon* that the first friend who paid a visit with him upon Traversari's arrival to Ferrara was "Guarino with his students."⁴⁵ Guarino Veronese (1374–1460)⁴⁶ belonged together with the (above-mentioned Uggocione Contrari) to the Humanist circles and solid network of Traversari's friends.⁴⁷ They been exchanging letters for more than 20 years.⁴⁸ Traversari's friend Guarino Veronese lived in Ferrara since 1429 and became the instructor of Leonello in 1431 (Leonello was 24 at that moment) in *studia humanitatis*.

Guarino's pedagogical approach could be defined as fully humanistic: to access real *virtus* through *litterae* in order to achieve *gloria* and *immortalitas* as Renate Schweyen pointed out.⁴⁹ Under Guarino, Leonello wrote sonnets and orations on ceremonial occasions such as the imperial visit in Ferrara in 1433. Leonello was soon surrounded by "[...] a fairly stable circle of poets and scholars [...]"⁵⁰ Guarino taught (among other classical works) Cicero's *Ad Herennium* as "[...] a privileged channel to a world worthy of imitation, a world that existed in time. A world we can illustrate with other similar texts [...]"⁵¹ Such an inspiration appears in Leonello's speech.

Leonello d'Este delivered his oration to the Emperor in all probability on September 13, on the occasion of the ceremony during which he (together with his younger brothers) was knighted. It is believed that the speech itself was conceived or even written by Leonello's instructor Guarino.⁵²

The oration itself was delivered with the purpose of the pure celebration of the Emperor. The secondary agenda, which is clearly recognizable in the speeches by Traversari and Barbaro is not present in Leonello's oration. The style itself, however, is comparable with the festive passages of Traversari's and Barbaro's. Leonello addressed (as did Barbaro) the Emperor as "Caesar" or "Serenissime, Invictissime, Fortissime Caesar."⁵³ Sigismund was compared to Alexander the Great and to Gaius Julius Caesar who once pacified Galia and other provinces. Sigismund was also presented as a ruler who restored peace among the various Italian provinces and who eradi-

a baptesimo. Et a dì xvi del dicto mese se partì de Ferrara il predicto Im'peradore et andò a Mantoa et lì gè fu facto grande honore."

⁴⁵ Traversari, *Beati Ambrosii abbatis generalis Camaldulensis Hodoeporicon*, 39: "Ea ipsa die adiit nos Guarinus noster cum plerique de suo ludo studiosis [...]"

⁴⁶ Remigio Sabbadini, *Vita di Guarino Veronese* (Genova: Istituto Sordo-Muti, 1891), 97.

⁴⁷ Remigio Sabbadini, ed., *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese*, vol. I–III (Venezia 1915–1919 [repr.]; Torino: Bottega d'Erasmio, 1959).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, 173, 382, 539–540, 568, 570, 704.

⁴⁹ Renate Schweyen, *Guarino Veronese. Philosophie und Humanistische Pädagogik* (München: Fink, 1973), 56–68, 121–122.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁵¹ John O Ward, "Ciceronian Rhetoric and Oratory from St. Augustine to Guarino da Verona," in *Cicero Refused to Die*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2013), 184.

⁵² Rothkamm, *Three Speeches*, 15.

⁵³ Giovanni Mittarelli, ed., *Bibliotheca codicum manuscriptorum monasterii S. Michaelis venetiarum prope Murianum una cum appendice librorum impressorum seculi XV* (Venice: Typographia Fentiana, 1779), col. 664–666.

cated various errors among Christian people.⁵⁴ Leonello mentioned his brothers and father as grateful subjects of the Emperor and made an elaborate compliment, expressing devotion to the entire d'Este family.⁵⁵

The fascination with the character of Alexander the Great and especially of Gaius Julius Caesar was not unusual at that time, but for Guarino Veronese, an instructor at the court of a monarch, it was quite typical. Guarino entered into a famous polemic related to Caesar not long after the imperial visit to Ferrara. Polemics concerning republican and imperial values had a long tradition, at least in Italy. The polemics between Guarino Veronese and Poggio Bracciolini had been ignited in 1435. The legacy of Gaius Julius Caesar was crucial for the polemic.⁵⁶ For Poggio Bracciolini, the most popular figure among classical politicians was Scipio Africanus as opposed to Caesar. Scipio, according to Poggio, despite his many military victories, always respected and protected Roman institutions, being a man of real virtues. Caesar in fact played a crucial role in bringing the Roman republic to its end, weakening its institutions and its laws. Guarino, on the other hand, preferred Caesar over Scipio because of the rise and prosperity of the arts and letters during the Imperial Roman period (in opposition to the republican one). Caesar, in Guarino's view, was not a tyrant. As Guarino pointed out, he not only extended the Empire, but also restored the old Roman liberties, which had been decaying already before Caesar. It is not surprising that behind the allegories of Poggio's Scipio and Guarino's Caesar were the figures of Cosimo Medici and Leonello d'Este. Poggio had an illusion of a virtuous Cosimo, carefully maintaining the republican values of the Florentine Republic and Guarino's hope that arts and letters and individual liberties would flourish under Leonello's rule in the Este state. In Leonello's (or Guarino's) oration, Sigismund merely played the role of an example of the living Caesar bringing peace to Italy, protecting smaller states and their rulers (such as the Este state) and allowing individual liberties, arts and the letters to prosper.

Traversari, shortly after his meeting with the Emperor, did not miss out on the opportunity to also meet members of the d'Este family before he left Ferrara. He mentioned that he was, despite the busy time of both hosts, accepted in the audience without major delay by both Niccolò III and Leonello d'Este. They welcomed him "very respectfully."⁵⁷

The meetings between all the characters mentioned – Ambroggio Traversari, Guarino Veronese, Francesco Barbaro, and Leonello d'Este – were hereby complete. Traversari labeled all these men in his notes as "close and dearest friends." Were these just "useful friendships" as Dale Kent defined such relationships based on clannish networks and patronage?⁵⁸ It seems, at least in the case of Traversari's Humanism, that there was something a little more than "usefulness."⁵⁹ Traversari, for example, used the help of his friend Guarino and his patron Uggocione Contrari to get to the Emperor as soon as possible, but the friendship that bound them was much older and

⁵⁴ Ibid., col. 665: "Tu autem, fortissime Caesar, tot per portus, tot provincias, tot nationes discurrens infractus ut Italicas seditiones sedare possis, Christiani populi commodis confusas et intestinas omnium discordias eradicare [...]"

⁵⁵ Ibid., col. 666: "Ut autem praefatus genitor meus illustris tuae majestatis servitor humilis, suam erga imperium, tuum observatiam subjectionem, obedientiam essetur, ecce tuae serenitati non modo rerum suarum, verum etiam cordis et animi claves suppliciter offert et in manibus collocat tuis."

⁵⁶ Davide Canfora, *La controversia di Poggio Bracciolini e Guarino Veronese su Cesare e Scipione* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2001), 9–19.

⁵⁷ Traversari, *Beati Ambrosii abbatis generalis Camaldulensis Hodoeporicon*, 41: "[...] Principem civitatis visitare institueramus [...]"

⁵⁸ Dale Kent, *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 6–7.

⁵⁹ Paul D. McLean, *The Art of the Network. Strategic Interactions and Patronage in Renaissance Florence* (Durham–London: Duke University Press, 2007), 5.

more solid. The friendship was filled with respect and mutual insight. Their most shared interest was the love of *studia humanitatis*. Humanists of that era created a kind of network, which could be (with the great respect to Early Modern studies) provisionally defined as the “proto-republic of letters,” a “proto-republic” which crossed the frontiers of states (in the Apennine peninsula), social boundaries, and even the borders of confessions (in the case of the literary friendships of Italian Humanists and their Greek orthodox counterparts on the eve of the Ferrara-Florence council). The busy week in Ferrara brought together several “citizens” of that “proto-republic.” The rich sources we have at our disposal can help us understand the close interaction of these men and their analysis can also represent a brief micro-study of diplomacy in Italy of the first half of the fifteenth century.

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The Conversion and Reconversion of Sacral Architecture in the Confessional Cultures of the Early Modern Era¹

Abstract | This text aims at introducing the specific conversions of sacral buildings in the Bohemian Lands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the context of the rivalry between denominations. The terms “conversion” and “reconversion” relates to logically different processes which accompanied the appropriation of sacral buildings by particular denominations. In the sixteenth century, members of new, reformed denominations usually moved into churches used previously by the general church. They often modified them for their purposes and thus the buildings and interiors underwent the process of a specific conversion (or “reformation”). Also the Catholics, esp. after 1620, regained these converted churches and adapted them back according to their needs – they reconverted them. The main issue of the study, apart from several case studies of converted and reconverted churches in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, proposes a question as to what really happens when a church undergoes conversion or re-conversion? The transformation naturally affects its material elements but it is the socio-religious context that primarily changes: the liturgy, rituals, prayers, chants, and various religious practices which the congregation performs. The converted sacral building was a centre of public life and had great symbolic potential. The phenomenological aspect of architecture reflects the fact that architecture is defined by not only its forms but above all by the social relations it contains and generates. In multi-denominational areas and transitional time periods, these relations are numerous and complex, often finding their expression in various “building strategies” as instruments of individual denominations’ identity politics.

Keywords | Early Modern Culture – Confessional Disputes – Conversions – Architecture – Sacred Space

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Today, the term conversion or reconversion of architecture is mostly used to describe adaptations and modifications of industrial architecture for new purposes, thus it usually connotes the revitalization of architectural heritage. Practically synonymous, both “conversion” and “reconversion” refer to the process of transforming a building’s function while fully or partially maintaining its structure.² These adaptations or transformations of older buildings are guided,

¹ This text was written as part of the GA ČR project “Idea and its Realization. Visual Culture of the Jesuit Order in the Bohemian Lands” (17-11912S).

² The large number of examples and publications on this theme include for example Wouter Davidts, “Purpose-built or Reconversion. Centre Pompidou, Temporary Contemporary and Tate Modern,” in *Triple Bound. Essays on Art, Architecture and the Museum*, ed. idem (Amsterdam: Valiz/Antennae Series, 2017), 131–150;

however, by general principles and occur throughout history. European examples include conversions of antique monuments to Christian churches,³ a pragmatic process which also had an important symbolic aspect and became particularly topical during the Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation in the early modern era. A specific example of this process, the sixteenth-century paleochristian revival movement, did not involve direct conversions but worked with the principle of fundamental adaptation of Early Christian buildings (especially the so-called titular basilicas) to incorporate the new, Counter-Reformation content. These “archaic renovations” made conscious references to the Early Christian church.⁴ The programmatic transformation of Rome during the pontificate of Gregory XIII and Sixtus V included, aside from erecting new buildings, numerous visually striking adaptations as old monuments, such as obelisks, were repurposed to serve Christian self-representation.⁵ As part of this ongoing transformation of Rome into a Christian city, Popes Pius V and Sixtus V christianized antique sculptures by modifying and relocating them.⁶

This text aims to introduce the specific conversions of sacral buildings in the Bohemian Lands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the context of rivalry between denominations. We hardly need reminding of the dramatic and confrontational situations that proliferated in the post-Reformation period, especially in confessionally mixed areas.⁷ There are, however, numerous examples of denominational coexistence which was manifested for example by sharing churches (e.g., in Levoča and Bautzen). However, even these so-called *Simultankirchen* were places of heightened interfaith conflict and stark politicization. In such churches, the individual congregations marked out their spiritual territory using spatial arrangement as an operational field for social and political actions in which various public and religious rituals were assigned

Émilie Pascal, Julien Kostrzewa, “Patrimoine de la santé. Vers une méthode de reconversion pour des sites historiques d’envergure urbaine,” *In situ. Revue de patrimoine* 31 (2017), doi: 10.4000/insitu.14469; Benjamin Fragner, *Industriální topografie – architektura konverzí: Česká republika 2005–2015. Industrial Topography – the Architecture of Conversion: Czech Republic 2005–2015* (Prague: Research Centre for Industrial Heritage FA CTU Prague, 2014).

³ For more about functional “conversions” of antique architectural heritage, see for example Guendalina Ajello Mahler, *Monumental Transformations. Reuse, Adaptation and the Evolution of Rome’s Theaters after Antiquity* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2016).

⁴ Frank Martin, “L’Emulazione della romana antika grandezza,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 61 (1998): 77–112; Alexandra Herz, “Cardinal Cesare Baronio’s Restoration of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo and S. Cesareo de’Appia,” *The Art Bulletin* 70 (Dec., 1988): 590–620; Nicola Courtright, *The Papacy and the Art of Reform in Sixteenth-Century Rome. Gregory XIII’s Tower of the Winds in the Vatican* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 19–27; Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque. Jesuit Art in Rome 1565–1610* (Toronto–Buffalo–London: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 122–152. For a more general account, see Giuseppe Antonio Guazzelli, “Cesare Baronio and the Roman Catholic Vision of the Early Church,” in *Sacred History. Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, eds. Katherine van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, Howard Louthan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 69–70.

⁵ Jack Freiberg, “The Lateran Patronage of Gregory XIII and the Holy Year 1575,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 57 (1991): 6–87; Peter Stephan, “Transformation und Transfiguration. Die bauliche und geistige Erneuerung Roms unter Sixtus V.,” in *Heilige Landschaft – heilige Berge*, ed. Werner Oechslin (Zurich: GTA Verlag, 2014), 84–129.

⁶ David Freedberg, *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago–London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 370–371.

⁷ Etienne François, *Die unsichtbare Grenze. Protestanten und Katholiken in Augsburg* (Sigmaringen: Wißner-Verlag, 1991); Frauke Volkland, “Konfessionelle Abgrenzung zwischen Gewalt, Stereotypenbildung und Symbolik. Gemischtkonfessionelle Gebiete der Ostschweiz und die Kurpfalz im Vergleich,” in *Religion und Gewalt. Konflikte, Rituale, Deutungen (1500–1800)*, eds. Kaspar von Greyerz and Kim Siebenhüner (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2006), 343–365.

a key role.⁸ It was precisely the public (mainly sacral) space and shared institutions that became the subject of struggle between the contending social (denominational) groups.⁹

Churches in the Post-Reformation Period – Spaces of Identity, Conflict, and Competition

As places of denominational identity and competition, churches can be studied from an art-historical perspective in the context of sacral architecture whose forms, typology and decoration may or may not bear features characteristic of particular denominations.¹⁰ Church spaces may have been arranged in an interesting and distinctive way but in the end they served above all as venues for diverse social interactions. The organization and quality of sacral space was subject to much theoretical debate, sometimes resulting in remarkable practical applications and interventions, a process in which both innovation and tradition played essential roles. The definition and use of sacral space during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation periods was the key theme running through these debates and one of the pillars of confessional identity in general. In their everyday implications, these debates also influenced the lives of individuals and communities.¹¹

In comparison with extensive conversions of modern architecture, the case of sacral architecture in the early modern era may not seem at all dramatic at first sight. When a church was taken over by adherents of another denomination, the building usually remained standing and, despite some adaptations, its purpose remained roughly the same. Contemporary conversions, such as adaptations of churches into restaurants and cafés common for example in Great Britain and the Netherlands, are certainly much more striking (compared to this approach, the church of the Union of Brethren in Mladá Boleslav, turned into a museum in the 1970s, is a cultivated example of such a conversion). In the pre-modern era, the confessional identity of a sacral building was defined by the liturgical and religious “life” taking place inside it rather than by its structure.¹² In confessionally divided communities, such functioning of a sacral building was

⁸ Daniela Hacke, “Der Kirchenraum als politischer Handlungsraum. Konflikte um die liturgische Ausstattung von Dorfkirchen in der Eidgenossenschaft,” in *Konfessionen im Kirchenraum. Dimensionen des Sakralraums in der Frühen Neuzeit*, eds. Susanne Wegmann and Gabriele Wimböck (Korb: Didymos-Verlag, 2007), 137–157; eadem, “Kommunikation über Räume. Religiöse Koexistenz in eidgenössischen Dorfkirchen der Frühen Neuzeit,” in *Topographien des Sakralen. Religion und Raumordnung in der Vormoderne*, eds. Susanne Rau and Gerd Schwerhoff (Munich–Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 2008), 280–305.

⁹ Andreas Holzem, “Kirche – Kirchhof – Gasthaus. Konflikte um öffentliche Kommunikationsräume in westfälischen Dörfern der Frühen Neuzeit,” in *Zwischen Gotteshaus und Taverne. Öffentliche Räume in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, eds. Susanne Rau and Gert Schwerhoff (Köln–Weimar–Wien: Böhlau, 2004), 447–460.

¹⁰ Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister, and City. The Art and Culture of Central Europe 1450–1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 219; Ondřej Jakubec, “Modalita a konfesionalita sakrálních staveb v českých zemích 16. a počátku 17. století,” in *In puncto religionis. Konfesní dimenze předbělohorské kultury Čech a Moravy*, eds. Kateřina Horníčková and Michal Šroněk (Prague: Artefactum, 2013), 49–72.

¹¹ Renate Dürr and Gerd Schwerhoff, eds., *Kirchen, Märkte und Tavernen. Erfahrungs- und Handlungsräume in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt an Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2005); Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, eds., *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton, eds., *Defining the Holy. Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2006); Susanne Wegmann and Gabriele Wimböck, eds., *Konfessionen im Kirchenraum. Dimensionen des Sakralraums in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Korb: Didymos-Verlag, 2007); Susanne Rau and Gerd Schwerhoff, eds., *Topographien des Sakralen. Religion und Raumordnung in der Vormoderne* (München–Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 2008); Jan Harasimowicz, ed., *Protestantischer Kirchenbau der Frühen Neuzeit in Europa. Grundlagen und neue Forschungskonzepte* (Regensburg: Schnell and Steiner, 2015).

¹² Kai Wenzel, “Abgrenzung durch Annäherung – Überlegungen zu Kirchenbau und Malerei in Prag im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung,” *Bohemia* 44 (2003): 29–66; idem, “Konfese a chrámová architektura. Dva luteránské

the main feature that distinguished the individual denominations. The church served not only as a place of personal devotion but particularly as a place of collective religious experience within one's denomination. As the following examples evince, conflicts and tension were not the only outcomes when a church was taken over by members of another confession. The space usually changed in a significant way – the new owners appropriated it and filled it with content of their own. This process aimed to entirely suppress any references to and memories of the previous denomination, often using ritual (magical) practices. In the Catholic milieu, a church used by non-Catholics was seen as adulterated and had to be purified through ritual practice.

Occurring across social strata, these ritualized responses to sacral space and its transformations proliferated in periods of dramatic social and religious change which helped establish the new social and cultural frame of religious “renewal.” The existing social order was often disrupted and a new one emerged with a different degree of radicalism or, alternatively, a consensual approach. As part of this process, new collective memory was constituted which suppressed the old and introduced new norms and patterns of behaviour. In the post-Reformation period, instruments of this “memory correction” included the infamous bouts of iconoclasm, but also modifications or conversion of monuments and buildings, occurring on both sides of the religious divide. The attitude to decoration of churches and sepulchral monuments is an indicator of this confessional animosity.¹³ The interventions were only in part physical, also comprising an array of social attitudes and reactions.¹⁴ These aimed to disrupt the existing identity of the opposing denomination using various symbolic strategies of suppression (*damnatio memoriae*).¹⁵

In this text, I do not use the term “conversion” and “reconversion” as synonyms but as expressions of logically different processes which accompanied appropriation of sacral buildings by particular denominations. In the sixteenth century, members of new, reformed denominations usually moved into churches used previously by the general church. This common and in fact organic process took a long time before the need arose for new, confessionally-specific, churches. In post-Reformation England, the Anglican church did not build any of its own reformed churches before the first half of the seventeenth century when Inigo Jones designed the Church of St Paul in Covent Garden in London. In general, attempts to build new structures featuring distinctive forms were exceptional (for example the above-mentioned church of the Unity of Brethren, the Huguenot temple in Lyon, and others). When non-Catholics took over formerly Catholic churches, they often modified them for their purposes and thus the buildings and interiors underwent the process of conversion. In different times and periods, Catholics regained some of these converted churches and adapted them back according to their needs – these churches were reconverted.

kostely v Praze v předvečer Třicetileté války I–II,” *Pražský sborník historický* 36 (2008): 31–103; *ibid.* 37 (2009): 7–66.

¹³ Ondřej Jakubec, *Kde jest, ó smrti osten tvůj? Renesanční epitafy v kultuře umírání a vzpomínání raného novověku* (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2015), 167–170.

¹⁴ Larry Silver, “The State of Research in Northern European Art of the Renaissance era,” *The Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 518–535.

¹⁵ Michal Šroněk, *De sacris imaginibus. Patroni, malíři a obrazy předbělohorské Prahy* (Prague: Artefactum, 2013), 57–70.

Non-Catholic Conversion (*Reformation*) of Sacral Architecture

When representatives of non-Catholic denominations adapted (converted) formerly Catholic churches for their liturgical purposes, the process was not always peaceful. Iconoclasm was sometimes spontaneous and violent, sometimes driven by a desire for profit, but mostly took the form of systematic purification. Non-Catholic authorities referred to the process as “reformation.” Before the mid sixteenth century, Martin Luther himself argued that Lutheran churches and reformed rituals should be purified from “popish abominations:” “Dem nach haben wir in unsern Kirchen die Bepstlichen Grewel [...] und alles ander Gauckelwerck, abgethan und rein ausgefegt.”¹⁶ In other reformed territories, such as England, numerous documents suggest that the purification of churches from attributes of Catholicism (candelabra, lamps, reliquaries, altars, and sepulchral monuments) was intended as “disinfection” and elimination of “popish profanity.”¹⁷ In some regions, and especially those with a Calvinist population, churches were converted (reformed) with particular zeal.¹⁸ This is also documented in the Bohemian milieu where the Cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague was “reformed” in December 1619, an adaptation which Catholic critics later describe as adulteration.¹⁹

Beginning as early as the 1520s, the first serious conflicts flared up, particularly in Germany. Protestant groups attacked churches in what were still formally Catholic cities with numerous well-established church institutions and loyal communities of believers. These attacks had diverse motives and expressions ranging from simple frustration and violence to interventions motivated by a certain “theological” awareness. The objects which came under attack included paintings, sculptures, crucifixes, but also candelabra and oil lamps, suggesting that iconoclasm was not a result of mere apprehension of anthropomorphic religious imagery. Attackers were also sensitive to objects associated with specific forms of liturgy which were part of a particular socio-economic frame (“chantry economics”). From the beginning of the Reformation, both individual buildings and the overall character of Catholic sacral space were not only unsuitable but also irritating for members of reformed denominations. In many areas, a compromise was found and Protestant communities adapted the formerly Catholic churches without significant difficulties. In some cases, however, churches underwent intensive and systematic “reformations.” The 1524 radical transformation/purification of churches in Zurich, for example, was initiated and supported by the city council. The liquidation of entire furnishings was systematic – a special committee of various craftsmen removed all the artistic objects from the interiors and covered the wall paintings.²⁰

This radical material transformation and visual adaptation was typically connected with the transformation of rituals and liturgy, all of which helped reformed communities distinguish themselves from Catholic liturgical practice. In 1550s Olomouc, two non-Catholic preachers

¹⁶ Martin Luther “Gedichte, Die Gesangbuchvorreden, 4. Die Vorrede zu der Sammlung der Begräbnislieder,” accessed Jan 14, 2017, <http://www.zeno.org/Literatur/M/Luther,+Martin/Gedichte/Die+Gesangbuchvorreden/4.+Die+Vorrede+zu+der+Sammlung+der+Begr%C3%A4bnislieder>.

¹⁷ Peter Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 117.

¹⁸ Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts. Laws against Images* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Christensen Wandel and Robert Scribner, eds., *Bilder und Bildersturm im Spätmittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990). For a general account, see Anne McClanan and Jeff Johnson, eds., *Negating the Image. Case Studies in Iconoclasm* (Aldershot: Blackwell, 2005) or Kristine Kolrud, ed., *Iconoclasm from Antiquity to Modernity* (Farnham: Routledge, 2015).

¹⁹ Vincenc Kramář, *Zpustošení Chrámu svatého Víta v roce 1619*, ed. Michal Šroněk (Prague: Artefactum, 1998).

²⁰ Carl C. Christensen, *Art and Reformation in Germany* (Detroit: Ohio University Press, 1979), 80–81. For a vivid account of the situation in these cities, see Lee Palmer Wandel, *Voracious Idols and Violent Hands. Iconoclasm in Reformation Zurich, Strasbourg, and Basel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

successfully radicalized a significant part of the city's population. In his letter to the Moravian sub-chamberlain in 1559, the Olomouc bishop Mark Kuen points to the populace's turning away from the proper Catholic rite and criticizes the fact that the communion under both kinds (*sub utraque specie*) is becoming an increasingly common practice and that in two of the city's churches (where these preachers were active), people sang Lutheran songs and ridiculed Catholic clergy and rites. Describing the change in the city's religious atmosphere, the bishop further complains that burghers "neglect masses and God's word in churches."²¹ In the same period, Olomouc also came close to direct iconoclasm and "physical reformation" of churches. During one of the altercations at the end of 1557, non-Catholic youth (journeymen) broke into the Cathedral of St. Wenceslaus and "exercised their will."²² Similar events took place in other towns and cities. At the end of the sixteenth century, for example, an Utraquist priest in Velké Meziříčí, Vavřinec Žandovský "followed the tracks of Calvinist preachers, rejecting the mass, private confession and all other rites and ceremonies."²³ Lutherans naturally had their own mass orders and other expressions of religious culture (songs, biblical theatre, etc.).²⁴ They saw their rites as the only true liturgy which follows the "Christian truth" in specific "pious ceremonies that do not contradict God's word" as stated in the Velké Meziříčí religious order from 1576.²⁵ When taken over by Lutherans, the formerly Catholic churches therefore did not need to change their appearance in terms of the interior arrangement because the conversion consisted of a new, living content, a different liturgy which signalled that the church was now a fundamentally altered, reformed place. The micro-historical studies of Anna Ohlidal and Kai Wenzel look into this functioning (and perception) of sacral buildings. Using Prague as an example, they show how sacral topography as an important part of public space was formed in the multi-denomination urban milieu. Their analysis reveals that rather than formal features, the confessional specificity of these buildings consisted of the social framework and religious rituals. "Denominational architecture" and art (visual self-representation) in general is thus defined by "living space" that fills it and forms it, rather than by artistic or iconographic elements.²⁶

This does not necessarily mean that the reformed churches were not changed (aside from the above-mentioned iconoclastic excesses). It is possible that side altars were removed, but they were soon replaced with large epitaphs. On the one hand, liturgical practice became more concentrated on the high altar, while on the other hand, the epitaphs with their artistic character, iconographic program and prominent location to a significant degree substituted for the previously removed side altars. Another example of a non-Catholic intervention into the existing organism of the church was the installation of a prominent object such as a new high altar, the iconography or form of which clearly demonstrated the congregation's denominational identity. Such installations could also occur in confessionally mixed cities where the church administra-

²¹ The bishop's letter dated Feb. 26, 1559, Moravský zemský archiv (MZA), fond G 83, Kop. I, 1559, card no. 35, inv. no. 159, f. 14v; MZA, fond G 83, Kop. III, 1561, card no. 37, inv. no. 161, f. 80.

²² Stanislav Zela, *Náboženské poměry v Olomouci za biskupa Marka Kuena (1553–1565)*, (Olomouc: selfpublishing 1931), 41.

²³ Testimony of a Catholic chronicler, see Roman Liška, ed., "Zlomek náboženské kroniky z doby 1554–1604," *Krajinské museum ve Velk. Meziříčí. Ročenka 1923* (1924): 8.

²⁴ Petr Hlaváček, "Otazníky nad luteránskou kulturou v předbřlohorských Čechách," in *Umění české reformace (1380–1620)*, eds. Kateřina Horníčková and Michal Šroněk (Prague: Academia, 2011), 270.

²⁵ Josef Hrdlička, Jiří Just, and Petr Zemek, eds., *Evangelické církevní řády pro šlechtická panství v Čechách a na Moravě 1520–1620* (České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita, 2017), 170.

²⁶ Anna Ohlidal, "Präsenz und Präsentation. Strategien konfessioneller Raumbesetzung in Prag um 1600 am Beispiel des Prozessionswesens," in *Formierungen des konfessionellen Raumes in Ostmitteleuropa*, ed. Evelyn Wetter (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008), 207–217; Štěpán Vácha, "Sub utraque, sub una. Eine Quelle zur sakralen Topographie des rudolfinschen Prag (zum Jahr 1618)," *Studia Rudolphina* 12–13 (2013): 116–133.

tion was formally Catholic, but the majority of the population adhered to Protestantism and was able to control or influence the way parish churches were furnished and decorated. The terrain of confessional identity and self-representation was extremely complex, with aspects of orthodoxy and orthopraxy often clashing. The diverse relationships that formed the character of a community were certainly not based solely on religious views but other factors were at play such as personal and political interests, as well as denominational tolerance or ambiguity. In this situation, conversions of churches could take very different forms. By placing a distinctive liturgical element in the existing arrangement, the new users could transform the church visually, symbolically and to some degree also functionally, creating what we can call “site specific installations,” as exemplified by the early Lutheran altarpieces by Cranach’s workshop in Schneeberg, Wittenberg and Dessau.

Two (not entirely successful) examples of such “partial conversions” have been documented in the Bohemian milieu. First, in 1579, a new altarpiece was made for the Church of St. Wenceslaus in Loket, an officially Catholic town. The church was administered by the Prague Knights of the Cross with the Red Star but the local Lutheran community was greatly interested in gaining access to it for holding their services. The “conversion” of this Catholic church consisted in commissioning a large wing altarpiece by the Saxon painter August Cord. The altarpiece is not in any way unusual but it has an anti-Catholic inscription on the reverse (the scene of the Last Judgment is accompanied by a Lutheran satirical poem whose initial lines say “Ibi nihil proderit dignitas papalis, sive sit Episcopus, sive cardinali” (“The ranks of pope, bishop or cardinal will not help here”).²⁷ Secondly, in 1557, the Brno Lutherans clearly attempted to transform their main parish church of St. James in a similar way by commissioning an altarpiece which was, according to the Olomouc Bishop Jan Mezon, “unprecedented and unusual in its novelty.” Its non-Catholic or even anti-Catholic iconography must have been apparent at first sight. Such subversive attempts to “appropriate” a church were typical in confessionally mixed environments where it was impossible for non-Catholics to become fully emancipated. In the Brno dispute, the bishop requested that the altarpiece be immediately removed and replaced with a “regular Catholic one,” entrusting the task to the local provost.²⁸ In his recent study, Kai Wenzel demonstrated how conversions and reconversions of churches could be a “floating phenomenon.” Studying several North-Lusatian cities (Bautzen, Görlitz, Kamenz, and Zittau), he mapped the different “confessional transformations” of church interiors and documented a number of approaches including both iconoclastic tendencies and politics of tolerance (for example, the Lutheran city council in Bautzen compensated the local Catholic community by financing a new Marian altarpiece). Lutherans often creatively included earlier (pre-Reformation) artworks with Catholic iconography which they “reformed” by, for example, adding an explanatory inscription, such as in the Bautzen Church of Our Lady where the old Marian sculpture was placed on the altar with an inscription “Maria veneranda non adoranda.”²⁹ The conversion of churches for the needs of Lutheran communities could therefore either take the form of total transformation (iconoclastic reformations) or could be very subtle, as the church was used by both denominations.³⁰ The essentialist notions that an (art) object is a sole bearer of its own meaning proves unfounded

²⁷ Olga Kotková, “Pro koho namaloval Augustus Cordus oltář s Ukřižováním z Lokte?,” in *Trans montes. Podoby středověkého umění v severozápadních Čechách*, eds. Jan Beránek et al. (Prague: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy v Praze – Halama, 2014), 256.

²⁸ Vladimír Burian, *Vývoj náboženských poměrů v Brně* (Brno: Ústřední národní výbor, 1948), 8.

²⁹ Maria Crăciun, Grażyna Jurkowlaniec, “Visual cultures,” in *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe*, eds. Howard Louthan and Graeme Murdock (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 329.

³⁰ Kai Wenzel, “Transformationen sakraler Räume im Zeitalter der Reformation. Programmatistische Ausstattungsstücke in den Stadtkirchen der Oberlausitz,” in *Korunní země v dějinách českého státu. Sv. IV. Náboženský život*

because the meaning arises precisely from the diversity and specificity of individual contexts – both the social milieu associated with the initiators of the work's creation or transformation and the expectations and reactions of its viewers/users.³¹

The term “reformation” of a church used in the sixteenth century for “conversion” is quite significant. It signals the belief that the church needs to be rehabilitated and its proper form restored, implying that its previous form had been flawed and corrupt. Graphic prints explicitly represent this “reformation” as a great cleaning, with Calvinists clutching their brooms. This feeling of foulness or contamination is important because it indicates that even though the “cleanings” may have seemed rational and pragmatic (churches were examined by a visitation committee of experts entrusted with their “reformation”), they were mostly dramatic and emotional events in which violence was the function of seeing the church as a perfectly pure space and a reflection of human spirituality. This corresponds with Calvin's dualist teaching which describes human spirituality as permanently threatened by the material world,³² the belief behind Calvinist iconophobia. Calvin claimed that when facing an image, man succumbs to spiritual weakness and that religious images obstruct his contact with God. Religious imagery is therefore the work of the Devil. The fierceness with which Calvinists reformed their churches results from the belief that all Christians are essentially weak and fragile and that a religious image can easily make them stray away from God. This fear of the material-spiritual power of images resembles, for example, the behaviour of diasporic Jewish communities in the Roman empire. Although Jews regarded the polytheistic idols that surrounded them as weak and “non-existent,” there is evidence of an effort to neutralize their power by chipping off pieces of sculptures, spitting on them or defiling them in other ways. The building or space where a religious cult takes place is never emotionally neutral – it brings about an array of emotional reactions and the need to bear up against the alien or even hostile environment. In the case of sixteenth and seventeenth-century churches, used alternately by adherents of different denominations, this need was particularly urgent.

Catholic (Re)conversions (Reconciliations) of Churches

The discussion of sacral architecture's “reformation” in the post-Reformation period also needs to take into account the situation on the Catholic side of the conflict. Following the Council of Trent, modernization, that is, liturgical adaptation of churches based on reforms within the Catholic church, became the subject of intensive discussion. Beginning in the mid-fifteenth century, theoretical treatises by Leon Battista Alberti, Sebastiano Serlio, Pietro Cattaneo, Andrea Palladio, and others emphasized that to build a Christian (Catholic) church was the most honourable and prominent task of architecture and that the result should correspond with its importance. Practical applications soon followed such as the unifying adaptations of the interiors of S. Maria Novella and S. Croce in Florence during the reign of Cosimo Medici in the 1570s. The paintings on the new, unified altars are sometimes considered a manifestation of so-called counter-maniera, a style with which the reformed Catholic church responded to the theatricality of contemporary Mannerist painting.³³ The most well-known program of the post-Tridentine era was formulated by the archbishop of Milan, Carlo Borromeo in his treatise *Instructiones Fabricae*

a církevní poměry v zemích Koruny české ve 14.–17. století, eds. Lenka Bobková and Jana Konvičná (Prague: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy v Praze – Casablanca, 2009), 332–354.

³¹ Milana Bartlová, *Pravda zvítězila. Výtvarné umění a husitství 1380–1490* (Prague: Academia, 2015), 12.

³² Giuseppe Scavizzi, *The Controversy on Images. From Calvin to Baronius* (New York: P. Lang, 1992), 9–29.

³³ Marcia B. Hall, *Renovation and Counter-Reformation. Vasari and Duke Cosimo in Sta Maria Novella and Sta Croce 1565–1577* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

Et Supellectilis Ecclesiasticae (1577) which provides detailed instructions on how to build and decorate churches.³⁴ All these theoretical discussions and activities aimed to purify the church by subordinating its form to the purposes of proper liturgy. Both denominations agreed on this general premise. The definition of sacred space was at the same time an argument for self-definition of the religious (denominational) congregation as an exclusive, chosen Christian community.³⁵

In regions where the Catholic Counter-Reformation prevailed, churches that were used for some time by non-Catholics returned to the “womb” of the Catholic church, a process that started as early as the sixteenth century. Their reconversion concerned not only the individual adaptations of church interiors for the purposes of Catholic liturgy but also comprised responses to the newly defined role of religious images. This discourse naturally drew on the rich pre-Reformation tradition,³⁶ but also led to constituting new aspects and characteristics of Christian visual culture.³⁷ In the Bohemian milieu, this situation occurred after the Battle of White Mountain, beginning in the 1620s, although competition, appropriation and (re)conversions or inter-denominational exchange of churches took place even before that. (Re)conversions or inter-denominational exchanges could have happened several times around and under quite confusing circumstances. In bi-denominational cities, the situation was sometimes unclear because both congregations felt entitled to the church, such as in the case of Chomutov at the turn of the seventeenth century. In 1588, the city with a Lutheran majority (and a Lutheran priest in the parish church) came under the rule of a zealous Catholic, Jiří Popel of Lobkovicz. As a result, the Lutheran priest was expelled, Catholic masses were re-established and in 1590, Lobkovicz founded a Jesuit college to strengthen the city’s Catholic transformation. As in other contemporary cases, non-Catholic burghers attempted to build their own hospital church where they would be able to congregate. In 1591, Lobkovicz’s rule brought about altercations and an uprising during which the Lutherans raided the church in an effort to gain it back. The uprising was suppressed but after Lobkovicz’s demission and imprisonment, Lutherans regained their dominant position and began to fight with the Jesuits and the city’s royal administration for the right to occupy the church. In what became an extraordinarily complicated situation, both Catholics and Lutherans claimed the church – it was entirely unclear who owned it and what its future would be.³⁸ Further changes ensued following a Letter of Majesty issued by Rudolf II in 1609, based on which the Lutherans took over the church, expelled the Catholic priest and also acquired the castle chapel. Archival sources indicate that both sacral spaces were “modified” – the Lutherans “reformed” them for the purposes of their liturgy.³⁹ The final twist came after 1620 in the form of a Catholic “reconquista” when the Lutheran denomination gradually lost ground. All the Chomutov churches were entrusted to the Jesuit administration and the conflict was finally concluded.

³⁴ For more about this, see for example Robert Sénécal, “Carlo Borromeo’s *Instructiones Fabricae et Supellectilis Ecclesiasticae* and Its Origins in the Rome of His Time,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 68 (2000): 241–267.

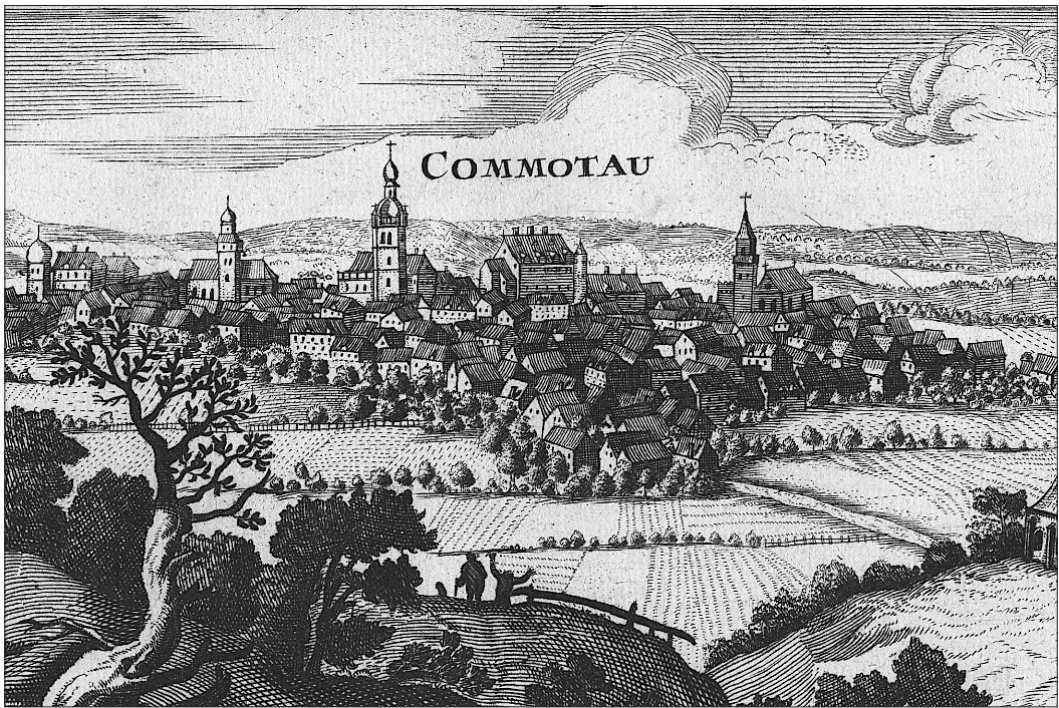
³⁵ Vera Isaiasz, “Lutherische Kirchweihen um 1600. Die Weihe des Raumes und die Grenzen des Sakralen,” in *Topographien des Sakralen. Religion und Raumordnung in der Vormoderne*, eds. Susanne Rau and Gerd Schwerhoff (München–Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 2008), 103–119.

³⁶ Robert Suckale, “Themen und Stil altgläubiger Bilder 1517–1547,” in *Kunst und Konfession. Katholische Auftragswerke im Zeitalter der Glaubensspaltung 1517–1563*, ed. Andreas Tacke (Regensburg: Schnell and Steiner, 2008), 34–70.

³⁷ Mia M. Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566–1672. Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2008).

³⁸ Alois Kroess, *Geschichte der böhmischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu I.* (Vienna: Mayer, 1910), 751.

³⁹ Zdena Binterová, ed., *Dějiny Chomutova* (Chomutov: Městský úřad, 1997), 31.



Gabriel Bodenehr, *The view of Chomutov*, detail, engraving, 1700

Several accounts written by non-Catholics in the first half of the seventeenth century describe how the Catholic reconversions were carried out (the official procedure consisted of a reconciliation ritual – purifying the church with so-called Gregorian water). Although certainly biased, these accounts document the idiosyncratic manner in which Catholic church authorities treated the reclaimed sacral space. In his *Historie o těžkých protivenstvích církve české* (“History of the Bohemian Church’s Ordeal”) penned at the beginning of the 1630s, John Amos Comenius, Bishop of the Unity of Brethren describes “violent acts” against the formerly non-Catholic churches and their furnishings as follows: “[the Catholic church] vented its anger on random inanimate objects, churches, books, ambons, images, graves, and frozen bones.”⁴⁰ Some of these purges involved almost magical practices, such as the curious activities in the originally non-Catholic churches in Prague or Jihlava, where Jesuits “lashed [ambons and altars] with birches and whips like madmen.” In the Prague Jesuit Church of the Holy Saviour, which was for some time used by the Unity of Brethren, Comenius reports a peculiar ritualistic process of altar re-consecration during which the Jesuits “in an effort to purify and reconsecrate, sprinkled the altars with gunpowder and, setting them on fire, exorcised the heresy with flame and smoke.”⁴¹

Comenius further mentions that witnesses saw smoke rising from the towers of the previously Utraquist Church of Our Lady before Týn in Prague, an event which the Jesuits interpreted as “shedding the hellish ghost of Utraquism.” The idea of “non-Catholic infection” was quite common among the Catholic authorities. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Jesuit historian

⁴⁰ Jan Amos Komenský, *Historie o těžkých protivenstvích církve české*, ed. Miloslav Kaňák (Prague: Blahoslav, 1952), 96, 216.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 216, 221.

Johannes Schmidl speaks about the “heretic contamination”⁴² requiring disinfection. Sometimes even the architecture of non-Catholic churches was perceived as hostile or at least problematic. When the Order of Minims took over the formerly Lutheran Church of the Holy Saviour in Prague’s Old Town, the local vicar wrote a commentary, dating to 1627, in which his objective assessment of the church’s technical condition blends with the fear of the building’s Lutheran infiltration: “the vaults which were earlier made by the Lutheran masons cannot serve or be of even the least benefit to the Catholics, and may soon collapse.”⁴³ Such reactions by Catholic authorities reveal that reconciliation (that is, formalized ritual purification) was motivated by an archetypal fear of contamination by a dangerous (non-Catholic) spiritual element: the fear that the church had been infiltrated by the Devil.⁴⁴

Reconciliation of Churches and (Re)conversion at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century

Conversions and reconciliations of churches were not limited to the period after the Battle of White Mountain. Even prior to that, Catholics practised reconversion in places where, for various different reasons, they had acquired sacral spaces previously belonging to Protestants. The registry of church consecrations in the Olomouc (Moravian) diocese, dating to the end of the sixteenth century illustrates this phenomenon:⁴⁵ it lists newly consecrated churches, chapels, and altars but also “reconciled” sacral buildings. A series of such rituals took place in 1582 in the Mikulov dominion in southern Moravia whose new Catholic owner, Adam of Dietrichstein, initiated the Catholic reconquista of a region with a significant Protestant population. In the summer of 1582, Olomouc Bishop Stanislav Pavlovský conducted several purification rituals in numerous places beginning with the town of Mikulov where he “reconciled” the parish Church of St Wenceslaus, the hospital church and the cemetery on June 23. He also consecrated the altars in these churches. On July 1, reconciliation of churches and cemeteries took place in several villages in the Mikulov region. The bishop consecrated new altars and placed relics in them. The choice of saints was strategic: the traditional patrons of the Bohemian Lands (St Wenceslaus, St Stanislaus, St Adalbert, St Procopius, St Ludmila) and popular saints such as St Christopher attest to the church’s efforts to capitalize on the symbolic potential of these “ancient” cults for the purposes of recatholization.

The Mikulov case is a typical example of Bishop Pavlovský’s Counter-Reformation strategy.⁴⁶ At the end of his episcopate, he recapitulated the campaign of building new churches and acquiring old churches from the Protestants as follows: “By the grace of God [...] Catholic churches and parishes are more numerous each year in this diocese” and elsewhere he writes: “Although hac tempore nostra the holy Catholic faith and its churches perish and crumble down in many places, in this land both the holy faith and the churches prosper and new ones are built.”⁴⁷ These

⁴² Johannes Schmidl, *Historiae Societatis Jesu provinciae Bohemiae. Authore Joanne Schmidl societatis ejusdem sacerdotē. Pars III. Ab anno Christi 1616 usque ad annum 1632* (Pragae, 1754), 523.

⁴³ Ferdinand Hrejsa, *U Salvatora. Z dějin evangelické církve v Praze (1609–1632)* (Prague: self publishing, 1930), 83.

⁴⁴ Ondřej Jakubec, “Těchto časův má Antichrist předchůdce své? Apokalyptika a konfesionalita v literatuře a výtvarném umění českých zemí kolem roku 1600,” *Opuscula historiae artium* 53, no. 1–2 (2009): 23–51.

⁴⁵ *Annotatio quot quando, et ubi idem Rmus et Illmus ac Dnus Dnus Stanislaus Pawlowsky Episcopus Olomucen: Regalis Capella Bohemiae Comes Ecclesias, Caemiteria, Altaria et Portalia consecravīt, aut reconciliauit*, ZAO–O. ACO, manuscript 109a, 487–517.

⁴⁶ Ondřej Jakubec, “Confessional Aspects of the Art Patronage of the Bishops of Olomouc in the Period before the Battle of White Mountain,” *Acta Historiae Artium* 47, no. 1 (2006): 121–127.

⁴⁷ MZA, G 83, Kop. Nesign., file no. 42, inv. no. 168, f. 279, 287.

new or “re-conquered” churches were not mere buildings. Above all, they became the sites of renewed or strengthened Catholic life and places of denominationally distinctive or directly propagandistic activities such as pilgrimages, confirmations, conversion, sermons, and various Jesuit productions.⁴⁸

The above-mentioned Jesuit historian, Johannes Schmidl writes admiringly about the Mikulov campaign, mentioning eight churches and a further nineteen places that were reconverted for Catholic purposes. For Schmidl this was not only a successful offensive on the part of the Catholic church authorities and nobility, but above all a means of spiritual healing for local believers who received the returned (reconverted) churches as an invaluable gift.⁴⁹ In this sense, the term “reconciliation” was used figuratively for a person, who, from a Catholic perspective had been infected by Lutheran heresy. Schmidl writes, for example, that in 1587, a Lutheran Olomouc citizen converted back to Catholicism, being “cum Deo et cum Ecclesia reconciliavit,” that is, purified.⁵⁰ The (re)conversion of churches by way of reconciliation is therefore not a mere physical act but also a fundamental spiritual conversion – the church is, in Schmidl’s words, established anew or restituted (“eodemque die id ipsum Templum Catholicis est restitutum” as he describes one such action).⁵¹ Converted churches are a gift because they bring the hope of salvation, necessary for the conversion of individuals and entire communities.

Schmidl further reports about how reconciliations were conducted around the year 1600. These activities corresponded with the way Catholics took over formerly Protestant churches after the Battle of White Mountain in the 1620s, a process in which the Jesuits played a significant role. In all the volumes of his *Historiae Societatis Jesu Provinciae Bohemicae*, Schmidl includes a chronological list of places converted back to the Catholic cult: “Elenchus locorum et paroeciarum in quibus excolendis, seu ab haeresi repurgandis, Societas Jesu ab Anno [...] in Bohemiam, Moraviam et Silesiam variis sectis exuberantem.” Apart from describing how each building was reconverted, he also cites the non-Catholic acts that had “contaminated” the said structure. It is hardly surprising that he perceives reconversions as not only structural modifications or placement of new altars but above all as a return to the Catholic liturgy. In the passage concerning the restitution of the castle church in Chomutov to the Catholics (represented by Jiří Popel of Lobkowitz) after 1588, Schmidl emphasizes that “eodem tempore ritu Catholico Arcis Templum reconciliatum est.” Later in the text, he criticizes non-Catholic activities in the church, bemoaning especially the fact that local believers had been subject to Protestant indoctrination during sermons delivered in the church. He mentions the Lutheran preacher, Wolff, whose name in itself, says Schmidl, betrays his blasphemous and perfidious nature through which he had led Chomutov’s citizens astray. In Schmidl’s account, the renewed proper liturgy was the actual sign that both the sacral building and the congregation gathered in it have returned to the true faith. At the end of his account of the Chomutov Protestant revolt, Schmidl expresses his appreciation of the rebellious Lutherans’ punishment and the restoration of the old order of things – the city council was able to gather in the parish church for Catholic mass which was performed with “proper festive chants in proper order.”⁵²

⁴⁸ Ondřej Jakubec, “Poutní místa, poutě a milostné obrazy v mecenátu a politice olomouckých biskupů raného novověku. Několik poznámek k poznání konfesionalizačních praktik na předbřlohorské Moravě,” in *Pielgrzymowanie i sztuka. Góra Świętej Anny i inne miejsca pielgrzymkowe na Śląsku*, ed. Joanna Lubos-Kozieł (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2005), 307–321.

⁴⁹ Johannes Schmidl, *Historiae Societatis Jesu provinciae Bohemiae. Ab anno Christi 1555 ad annum 1592. Pars I. Authore Joanne Schmidl societatis ejusdem sacerdote* (Prague: 1747), 477.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 553.

⁵¹ Ibid., 585.

⁵² Ibid., 585–586.

In other cases, Schmidl emphasizes the fundamental renewal of liturgy as the essence of a church's conversion. In the case of Dub in the Trutnov region, he informs the reader that when the Catholic priests returned in 1629, liturgical objects, such as liturgical vessels and tools, crucifixes (*crucifixi Domini simlucra*) and "pious images" (*imagines piae*), which had been hidden from the Protestants, were also returned.⁵³ He describes the previously Protestant churches as "desolate," that is unfurnished, suggesting their need to be once again filled with liturgical objects. Interestingly, he also says this about the Utraquist churches in Kutná Hora, which were richly furnished, albeit in a way that did not meet with the Catholic visual sensibility. It is not surprising that in his 1675 history of Kutná Hora, the Jesuit Jan Kořínek entirely omits the important Utraquist monuments (still extant at that time), clearly with the intention of suppressing the memory of the non-Catholic (Utraquist) history of the city.⁵⁴

Schmidl reports similarly that in the city of Kłodzko the "Lutheran plague" spread in the 1530s, infecting the local parish church and the chapel of St. James. The latter housed a revered Marian sculpture, donated to the church in the fourteenth century by Prague archbishop, Arnošt of Pardubice, the fact of which Schmidl uses as a pretext for describing the ancient Catholic cult that had flourished in Kłodzko and was then trampled upon by the Lutherans. He again laments the Lutheran disruption of the proper liturgy and the Marian cult introduced by Archbishop Arnošt, complaining that the church had thus been defiled.

Apart from the above examples, three other situations can be cited which illustrate particular approaches to Catholic conversions of sacral buildings and their interiors. First, in Dačice, all non-Catholic priests were expelled in 1624 upon the order of Lev Burian Berka of Dubé, and their property confiscated. At the same time, the non-Catholic churches and parishes were inventoried, aiming to purify them from elements that would evoke their previous Protestant owners. The Catholics clearly planned to make economic use of these furnishings and perhaps reuse them for their own liturgy; the churches were to be locked and guarded against looting.⁵⁵

The second example indicates how the new adaptations of older non-Catholic church equipment was clearly a common practice. Another example comes from Kutná Hora, a key centre of Utraquist culture, where in 1624, the local highest Münzmeister Vilém Vřesovec of Vřesovice ordered that images which "insult the Catholic religion and its order be effaced and obliterated."⁵⁶ Aside from being destroyed, some of these religious images, and particularly epitaphs, were modified. One of the contemporary witnesses, Mikuláš Dačický of Heslov, regards these modifications as "corruption,"⁵⁷ describing the conversion of non-Catholic epitaphs by the Kutná Hora Jesuits as follows: "they altered some of these epitaphs, which had been made beautifully to commemorate good people, and erased the signs, images, texts and people's titles, replacing them with their own scribble and pictures [...]. And this was happening in all the evangelical churches in order to disgrace the faith."⁵⁸ This "contextual transformation" as Michal Šroněk and Kateřina Horníčková aptly call it, occurred in many places in the period following the Battle of

⁵³ Schmidl, *Historiae Societatis Jesu, Pars III.*, 980.

⁵⁴ Michal Šroněk, *De sacris imaginibus. Patroni, malíři a obrazy předbřlohorské Prahy* (Prague: Artefactum, 2013), 67–68.

⁵⁵ Ferdinand Hrejsa, *Sborové Jednoty bratrské* (Prague: selfpublishing, 1935), 78–79; Jan Bistrický and Marie Kučerová, eds., *Dějiny Dačic* (Dačice: Městské museum a galerie, 2002), 125.

⁵⁶ Petr Miloslav Veselský, "Fresky v chrámu sv. Barbory v Kutné Hoře," *Památky archeologické a místopisné* 11 (1878–1881): col. 233.

⁵⁷ Mikuláš Dačický z Heslova, *Paměti*, ed. Jiří Mikulec (Prague: Akropolis, 1996), 280.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 289.

White Mountain.⁵⁹ The process was clearly very gradual. The bishop's visitation in the Church of St. James in Brno complained, for example, about the large and prominently placed epitaphs as late as 1679⁶⁰ and some of these artworks remained in the church until the nineteenth century. Non-Catholic artefacts were adapted, censored and, as in the Kutná Hora case, complemented with new elements (text, images) which made them suitable for the Catholic religious context. This practice aimed to suppress the memory of the non-Catholic past, appropriate these objects and charge them with Catholic content. The Prague Minim friars adjusted, for example, the liturgical vestments from the Lutheran Church of the Holy Saviour in Prague's Old Town by simply sewing crosses on them.⁶¹

The third example comes from the much more dramatic sequence of events in Velké Meziříčí where, during the Lutheran period, the furnishings of the parish church were "swept out, taken apart and burnt" and the "images of Lord Christ and the saints" destroyed.⁶² A later Catholic chronicle describes how an organized group of local burghers dismounted and cut into pieces the sculptures of the Crucified Christ, St John and the Virgin from the transversal beam in the chancel arch and gave them to the sacristan to burn. During the reign of Alena Meziříčská of Lomnice, a Lutheran, the castle church was "reformed" as well and, as the chronicle reports, the owner "cast off the altarpiece and other sacred things." Further on the chronicle notes that "the castle chapel bears many signs of her zealotry,"⁶³ pointing to a similar approach to "hostile" artefacts as that used by the Kutná Hora Jesuits who altered church furnishings to suit their ideology. In 1589, the Lutheran era in Velké Meziříčí ended as the new feudal lord arrived. An avid Catholic, Zdeněk Berka of Dubé embarked on an intensive Catholic restoration, one of the first of its kind and parallel with that in the Dietrichstein Mikulov manor.⁶⁴ The Catholic conversion was entrusted to the appointed priest, Mikuláš Sarkander, whose actions give us an idea of the previous, Lutheran changes to the church's structure and content. When describing the parish church's condition at the time of the priest's arrival, the author of the Catholic chronicle mentions that only the high altar had been preserved, corresponding with the Lutheran practice of eliminating side altars and the associated chantry practices. The chronicle further reports that Sarkander had the walled-in ciborium renovated, a sign that the Lutherans had systematically suppressed the previously flourishing cult of the Holy Eucharist. The activities of the Lutheran priest Václav Ledecký – the "image slayer" as the chronicle calls him – are summed up as follows: "all images, altarpieces, banners were swept away, taken apart, burnt, silver objects looted, vestments cut to pieces and burnt. [...] The church was so stripped of its fittings that no sign of Catholic faith remained."⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Kateřina Horníčková and Michal Šroněk, "The Bydžov Altarpiece and Its Denominational Transformations," *Umění* 60, no. 5 (2012): 363–383.

⁶⁰ Regional Archive in Opava, branch office Olomouc, Archbishopric consistory Olomouc, file no. 671, sign. B–12.

⁶¹ Hrejsa, *U Salvatora*, 81.

⁶² Roman Liška "Zlomek náboženské kroniky," 11.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁴ Tomáš Borovský, Martin Štindl, and Jaroslav Mrňa, "Dějiny duchovní správy," in *Chrám sv. Mikuláše ve Velkém Meziříčí*, eds. Martin Štindl et al. (Velké Meziříčí: Město Velké Meziříčí, 2017), 30.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 11–12.



Jan Stračanovský, *The view of Velké Meziříčí from the north-east, engraving, before 1700*,
Museum of Velké Meziříčí

At the end of the sixteenth century, Catholics reverted this Lutheran “purification,” resorting to a purge of their own: Sarkander “cast out” all the non-Catholic objects, and especially “had epitaphs and grave stones of the heretic preachers [...] and their bastard offspring smashed and knocked down.” Some of these sepulchral monuments were completely destroyed, while others were used as material for the stone steps in front of the newly constructed altars.⁶⁶ The new Catholic priest first carried out the ritual purification and conversion, that is, “reconciled” the church by blessing it with Gregorian water (*aqua Gregoriana reconciliavit*).⁶⁷ Apart from physical removal of Lutheran artefacts, the priest also furnished the church interior with new elements such as altarpieces and liturgical equipment (candelabra, tablecloths, vestments). The existing high altar was “embellished” and in 1620, a Gothic sculpture of the Virgin, previously damaged by the Lutherans, was placed upon it as a symbol of the renewed Catholic cult. Sarkander then began to officiate masses, supported by local Catholics who donated liturgical objects such as paraments and a chalice.⁶⁸ All this illustrates the essence of the local church’s conversion or reconversion – aside from the evident physical transformation, it consisted particularly in the transformation of religious practice and liturgy and in the actions of the community of believers who put these changes into life.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 11, 15.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 11.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 18; Zdeňka Míchalová and Tomáš Valeš, “Vybavení chrámu v proměnách času,” in *Chrám sv. Mikuláše ve Velkém Meziříčí*, eds. Martin Štindl et al. (Velké Meziříčí: Město Velké Meziříčí, 2017), 165–168.

Conclusion

What makes the set of questions concerning conversions and reconversions interesting for an (art)historian? This question could also have been asked at the beginning of this text. From a purely art-historical perspective, we may study the architectural forms of buildings and their furnishings – either destroyed, transformed or new. What really happens, however, when a church undergoes conversion or re-conversion? The transformation naturally affects its material elements but it is the socio-religious context that changes as the first priority – the liturgy, rituals, prayers, chants and various religious practices which the congregation performs or is forced to perform in the church. And thus historical and social situations and their transformations become the actual subject of inquiry. The converted sacral building is a centre of public life and has great symbolic potential. Its architecture, as part of the public space, is inseparable from the religious life that takes place in and around it. This phenomenological aspect of architecture has been the focus of, for example, Norbert Elias who emphasizes that architecture is defined by not only its forms but above all by the social relations it contains and generates.⁶⁹ In multi-denominational areas and transitional time periods, these relations are numerous and complex, often finding their expression in various “building strategies” as instruments of individual denominations’ identity politics. In the Czech context, this set of questions was systematically addressed by Kateřina Horníčková who draws on Heinz Schilling and his studies on architectural topography in a denominationally mixed urban environment.⁷⁰ Rather than being mere decoration, sacral buildings significantly helped constitute the character of this environment. They were multi-layered organisms, whose functioning involved numerous mental, physical and sensual interactions. Transformations/conversions, through which the respective denominations appropriated the space, may have taken different forms. Sometimes a church was radically rebuilt, as was the case of the originally Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Prague’s Lesser Town. When the Carmelites appropriated the church, the Spanish General Baltasar Marradas financed its radical renovation at the turn of 1740. The structure was turned around by 180°: a new chancel was built and the building received a large, spectacular facade facing the street. Beginning in the period before the Battle of White Mountain, and especially in the seventeenth century, Catholic buildings employed visually impressive forms. In urban environments, Jesuit colleges were particularly visually dominant, manifesting their confessional adherence far and wide. In other places, conversions had a more symbolical character – only the titular dedication was changed. The church of the Unity of Brethren in Brandýs nad Labem became, for example, the Church of the Conversion of St. Paul, an allusion to the conversion of the building itself. In Mladá Boleslav, the traditional titular dedication to the Bohemian patron saint, St Wenceslaus was used to “cover” the church’s original confessional identity, while in Hranice, the rebuilt former church of the Brethren was dedicated to All Saints.⁷¹ There are many more examples, all of which indicate that the process of adjusting non-Catholic sacral buildings to Catholic purposes was heterogeneous and gradual.

This text aims to outline the phenomenon of adaptation of sacral buildings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a period when the new reality of two or more denominations coexisting and competing for believers became increasingly problematic. Conversions were one of the

⁶⁹ Norbert Elias, *Die höfische Gesellschaft. Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Königtums und der höfischen Aristokratie mit einer Einleitung: Soziologie und Geschichtswissenschaft* (Berlin: Luchterhand, 1969), 78.

⁷⁰ Heinz Schilling, “Die konfessionelle Stadt – eine Problemskizze,” in *Historische Anstöße. Festschrift für Wolfgang Reinhard zum 65. Geburtstag am 10. April 2002*, eds. Peter Burschel et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 60–83.

⁷¹ Iveta Tůmová, “Chrámové stavby Jednoty bratrské v Čechách a na Moravě,” (MA thesis, Palacký University in Olomouc, 2013), 56.

ways denominations manifested their desire to transform human lives and souls. These conversions did not need to be material (visual) – a church’s “reformation” may have consisted in the change of liturgy as a frame within which people led their religious life. In his *Zrcadlo slavného Markrabí moravského* (“Mirror of the Glorious Moravian Margraviate”) from the end of the sixteenth century, the Polish Catholic historian, Bartholomeus Paprocky writes that Moravian cities are “adorned” with numerous churches. Paprocky does not mean by this mere physical beauty, but rather emphasizes that the churches are home to Catholic liturgy and thus the prayers for intercession performed within them ensure God’s grace and protect the cities from God’s wrath and damnation.⁷² When studying visual monuments of the past, art historians must bear in mind the social relations these buildings formed and contained as well as the ways in which the buildings’ existence and the emotions they evoked influenced peoples’ religious views. This does not mean that churches and their furnishings were mere backdrop – on the contrary, they functioned as active factors in the lives of the people who interacted with them, both rationally and emotionally, through rituals, physical manipulation and sensory perception.

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⁷² Bartoloměj Paprocký z Hlohol, *Zrcadlo slavného Markrabství moravského* (Olomouc: 1593), f. 384v, 390v.

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Representation of Motherhood Identity in the Ego-Documents from the Family of Sofie Podlipská

Abstract | The modernisation processes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a fundamental impact on the structure of society, on social and work relations, and on the roles that an individual played in the social space. Among other things, family concepts were transformed and social categories were redefined, with feminine and masculine identities also being reshaped in connection with this. The following text focuses on motherhood as one of the aspects of feminine identity and how it is represented in ego-documents. The aim of this paper is thus to analyse the discourses which reflect how reality as well as the subjectivity of motherhood identity is understood and constructed. More precisely, the paper will focus on the ways motherhood identity and its reflection in everyday practices are represented in personal talkings, in this case in the private diaries, correspondence, and memoirs written in the family of Sofie Podlipská. The reflections and standpoints of Podlipská are put into the framework of the period discourse of the cult of “new mother” and analyzed in the context of “mother’s burden” concept, as having been elaborated by Élisabeth Badinter.

Keywords | Gender History – Feminine Identity – Motherhood – Ego-Documents – Nineteenth-Century Society – Sofie Podlipská

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They keep me here, my strength, my skills lie in them. They are more than mere hope to me. I live in them, for them and because of them. I do not want to be here without them. I accept everything with them, I am young and healthy with them. Without them, I am just a bubble, an old woman.¹

In August 1872, Sofie Podlipská wrote these lines to Eliška Krásnohorská, her friend and fellow writer. Krásnohorská, who was 14 years younger than Podlipská, remained childless for health reasons and thus did not have personal experience with the emotion that Podlipská was trying to express and share in her letter, this being maternal love. In her statement, Podlipská is not only interested in declaring how much she loves her children. More importantly, she suggests that she derives her personal identity from them. By using the symbol of “a bubble” (she would only be a bubble without her children), Podlipská refers to ephemerality and at the same time opens the issue of its opposite, i.e., the notion of eternity. The eternity suggested in this metaphor is actually twofold. The first meaning refers to a physical aspect. She is more than a mortal person, for she

¹ “Ty mne tu drží, v nich je má síla, mé umění, víc než pouhá naděje. Žiju v nich, pro ně a kvůli nim. Bez nich nechci tu být, s nimi je mi všechno vhod, s nimi jsem mladistvá, zdravá, bez nich bublinka stará babička.” (Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Correspondence sent to Eliška Krásnohorská, August 25, 1872.)

will keep on living in the children as their biological mother. Second, Podlipská's formulation suggests that the children represent her crucial role. Thus, her eternity lies in her life mission, which is of highest importance, almost a sacred one – motherhood.

The modernisation processes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a fundamental impact on the structure of society, on social and work relations, on the roles that an individual played in the social space. Among other things, family concepts were transformed and social categories were redefined, with feminine and masculine identities also reshaped. Recent research in the field of gender history and gender studies has already demonstrated that construction of gender identities is a continuous and multidimensional process. Thus, if one aims to reconstruct social reality, keep its multifaceted character and understand better how feminine and masculine identities were constructed in the past, one should ask how the gender roles and identities were experienced and negotiated by the actors themselves, in other words, how the norms and ideals were authentically lived and perceived in everyday life. For this kind of research, ego-documents are an appropriate primary source, for they bear personal evidence of how reality was lived and understood by the contemporaries themselves, and therefore enable an analysis of how the categories of femininity and masculinity were represented.

The following text focuses on one aspect of feminine identity and how it is represented in ego-documents, this being motherhood. For historians and other scholars dealing with gender, motherhood seems to be an issue which cannot be overlooked, since motherhood is one of the crucial concepts connected with feminine identity, especially in what holds true for the period of modern history. Research on feminine identity, as constructed from the end of the eighteenth century on, is closely related to the theory of separate spheres and the idea that under the influence of modernisation processes, the household was transformed into “a home,” i.e., a private realm reserved only for the family members and their intimate life, divided from the world of work and public life. Obviously, a discussion on redefinition of gender roles within this separate spheres paradigm represents an integral part of this research. A woman is supposed to be connected to the private sphere, whereas a man is connected to the public sphere.²

This approach also played an important role in how the issue of motherhood was thematised in the research of the second half of the twentieth century. Already within the second wave of feminism, a woman's association with the private sphere and especially with the role of a mother became an object of criticism, and differed in this respect from the first-wave feminism standpoint. Whereas motherhood represented a means through which they wanted to penetrate into the public sphere for first-wave feminists from many countries, their followers from the second wave interpreted motherhood as an obstacle on the way to the public sphere.³ The philosopher Élisabeth Badinter published *L'Amour en plus* in 1980, a fundamental work which developed the ideas of Simone de Beauvoir and other feminists, questioned the notion of motherhood in western society and searched for the meanings that motherhood has been endowed with in modern history.⁴

² Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, eds., *A History of Private Life*, Vol. 4 (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1990), 170; Leonore Davidoff, “Gender and the ‘Great Divide’ Public and Private in British Gender History,” *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 11–27, Project MUSE; Marilyn J. Boxer and Jean H. Quataert, eds., *Connecting Spheres. European Women in a Globalizing World, 1500 to the Present* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Eleanor Gordon and Gwyneth Nair, *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

³ Anne Cova, “Où en est l'histoire de la maternité?,” *Clio. Femme, Genre, Histoire* 21 (Avril 2005): 2, <http://clio.revues.org/1465>.

⁴ Élisabeth Badinter, *L'Amour en plus. Histoire de l'amour maternel (XVII^e–XX^e siècle)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980).

Élisabeth Badinter called into question the notion of the naturalness of motherhood identity and searched for the roots of the motherhood discourse that dominated modern society. She did this by questioning the core concept of motherhood, that being maternal love and maternal instinct. In her point of view, maternal love is culturally defined – it does not exist in itself, it is something “on top.”

For such a long time we had spoken of maternal love in terms of an instinct that we came to believe such a behaviour is anchored in the nature of woman regardless of the actual time and space. From our point of view, every woman, when she becomes a mother, finds in herself all responses to her new situation.⁵

Going back to the mid-eighteenth century, Badinter analyses how a new discourse of motherhood was formulated, and became widely acquired and accepted by society in the following decades. The purpose of the deconstruction of this discourse is twofold in her view. The first goal is to liberate women from an ideology which considers their social role to be natural, while the second goal is to enable women to stop feeling guilty, this being a sentiment that society burdened them with when placing such a responsibility on them: “For who can think of herself as a good mother when facing all these demands? Who can get rid of a bad feeling when facing the risks of spoiling the happiness and progress of her children?”⁶

The research of other historians dealing with motherhood in the nineteenth century has also been concerned with the cultural basis of modern motherhood identity and the impact of the meanings assigned to motherhood on a woman's place in society.⁷ In this context, the character and mutual interconnections of the public and private spheres have been elaborated, while historians have been attempting to trace how this newly defined motherhood identity has tied women to the private sphere and at the same time how motherhood was made public, i.e., how motherhood identity was used as a means to cross the boundary between these two spheres.⁸ Much of this research has been based on an analysis of philosophical and intellectual works as well as on an analysis of normative literature (such as various conduct books and manuals) published at that time.⁹ Less attention has been paid, however, to the issue of how motherhood was experienced and perceived by women themselves, how women themselves were reflecting on their maternal everyday life. In accordance with western historiography, a recent Czech publication dealing with motherhood in the Czech society discusses the relationship between motherhood and feminine identity, and the nature of motherhood as a cultural construct. However, the majority of

⁵ “On a si longtemps évoqué l'amour maternel en terme d'instinct que nous croyons volontiers un tel comportement ancré dans la nature de la femme quel que soit le temps ou l'espace environnant. À nos yeux, chaque femme, en devenant mère, trouve en elle-même toutes les réponses à sa nouvelle condition.” – Badinter, *L'Amour en plus*, 20.

⁶ “Car que peut se dire une bonne mère au vu des exigences posées? Qui peut s'abstraire d'un malaise devant les risques de gâcher le bonheur et l'épanouissement de ses enfants?” – Paul Munier, *La Ressemblance des humains. L'œuvre d'Élisabeth Badinter* (Paris: Germina, 2013), 15.

⁷ For the results of such a research and a general overview, see e.g., Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, eds., *Histoire des femmes en Occident*, Vol. 4 (Paris: Plon, 1991); Gisela Bock, *Ženy v evropských dějinách. Od středověku po současnost* [*Frauen in der europäischen Geschichte. Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*] (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2007); Jack Goody, *Proměny rodiny v evropské historii* [*The European Family*] (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2006); Lynn Abrams, *Zrození moderní ženy. Evropa 1789–1918* [*The Making of Modern Woman: Europe 1789–1918*] (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2005).

⁸ Among others: Patricia Branca, *Women in Europe since 1750* (London: Croom Helm, 1978); Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood. “Woman's Sphere” in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977).

⁹ For a case study, see for instance Maria van Tilburg, “A Gendered Reading of Conduct Books,” in *Political Systems and Definitions of Gender Roles*, ed. Ann Katherine Isaacs (Pisa: Università di Pisa, 2001), 165–178.

scholarly studies explore normative literature, or the representation of motherhood in literary works, visual art and films at the end of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, therefore not dealing with the personal perception of the motherhood experience.¹⁰

The aim of this paper is thus to analyse discourses which reflect how the reality as well as the subjectivity of motherhood identity is understood and constructed. More precisely, the paper will focus on the ways motherhood identity and its reflection in everyday practices are represented in personal discourse, i.e., in this case in the private diaries, correspondence and memoirs written in the family of Sofie Podlipská. It should also be emphasized that the analysis of these discourses is important not only because they reflect and describe reality, but also because they play an important role in constituting reality.¹¹

Sofie Podlipská (1833–1897), born Rottová, is known as a Czech writer, active participant in the women's movement and also as the sister of the much more famous woman writer Karolina Světlá (1830–1899). Podlipská wrote social and historical fiction and is considered the founder of Czech literature for children. This professional interest brought her attention to educational issues, which she considered of the highest relevance in her professional career. She married Josef Podlipský (1816–1867), a 17-year older, respected Prague physician who was also active in the Czech public and political life, in 1858. Two children were born in the marriage – a son Prokop (1859) and a daughter Ludmila (1861). Josef Podlipský died only 9 years after the marriage and left Sofie on her own with two children and with no financial security. Sofie remained the only parent and educator of her two little children, and had to earn a living to pay for the household needs for the remainder of her life. She wrote many of her texts with the motivation of a financial reward for the publication. Her son Prokop later became a lawyer and (like his father) a deputy in the Czech Land Assembly. He married, had four children and died young at the age of 40 (in April 1900). Sofie's daughter Ludmila married one of the most prominent Czech authors – the poet and playwright Jaroslav Vrchlický (1853–1912). They brought up three children, Milada, Eva, and Jaroslav Jr. It came to light at the beginning of the 1890s that the two younger children were actually illegitimate and that their biological father was Jakub Seifert, an actor in the National Theatre in Prague. The affair, which was a public secret, had a severe impact on the marriage and although the spouses continued to live together, the distance between them grew, especially from the end of the 1890s.

Becoming a Mother

In his book *A World of Their Own Making. Myth, Ritual, and the Quest for Family Values*, John R. Gillis traces the roots of the modern phenomenon of “true motherhood,” which only appeared in the nineteenth century. He identifies the shift in understanding maternity, or rather in relating maternity to motherhood, as a crucial milestone. He comes to the conclusion that in

¹⁰ Petra Hanáková, Libuše Heczková, and Eva Kalivodová, eds., *V bludném kruhu: Mateřství a vychovatelství jako paradoxy modernity*. [A Vicious Circle: Motherhood and Education as Paradoxes of Modernity] (Praha: Slon, 2006). Motherhood in the society also appears in the publication by Milena Lenderová, which deals with Czech women in the nineteenth century: Milena Lenderová, *K hříchu i k modlitbě. Žena v minulém století* [On Sin and Prayer. Woman in the Last Century], second edition (Praha: Karolinum, 2016); or some aspects are also discussed in her book on childhood in Czech nineteenth century history: Milena Lenderová and Karel Rydl, *Radostné dětství? Dítě v Čechách devatenáctého století* [A Happy Childhood? The Child in Nineteenth Century Bohemia] (Praha a Litomyšl: Paseka, 2006).

¹¹ For more on the poststructuralist approaches and how they can be used for understanding parental identities, see Deborah Lupton and Lesley Barclay, *Constructing Fatherhood: Discourses and Experiences* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 1–5, 8–34.

pre-modern times it was not considered the norm that the person who gives birth to a child is also automatically the person who takes care of it and is responsible for raising it.

Our contemporary notion that individual mothers are wholly responsible for the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of their children had no place in earlier understanding of reproduction. [...] Maternity has no predetermined relationship to motherhood, and paternity no fixed relationship to fatherhood; both vary enormously across cultures and over time.¹²

Thus, the shift in understanding motherhood, which began in the eighteenth century and dominated society in the following century, introduced the ideal that the best mother is the biological mother. Gillis suggests that before the nineteenth century motherhood was subordinated to wifehood, because the demands on a wife and her time were such that it did not enable her to be a full-time mother. Motherhood was one of several woman's roles.¹³ As the meanings of motherhood are also reflected in symbols and rituals, the following part of the paper will discuss what the analysed ego-documents reveal about the rituals connected with giving birth, how these rituals were reflected on by Sofie Podlipská and what meanings she gave to them.

Podlipská reflects on the period of the late 1850s and the beginning of the 1860s in her intimate journal which she began writing as a single girl and which stopped just before her daughter was born. She also wrote two separate journals in which she attempted to depict the early years of both of her children and which she intended as a memoir of sorts for them. The purpose of these two journals is thus not strictly personal, however, here she also reflected on her personal feelings as a mother.¹⁴ Unfortunately, there is no entry in the journal written right after the birth of her son. In the journal, she announces her pregnancy on New Year's Eve 1858, reflects on it in two entries written on May 13 and July 16, 1859 and only on December 30, 1859 returns back to the moments when her son was born (August 9) and depicts her motherhood experience and feelings. In the entries preceding her son's birth, she does not speak about her physical condition and state of health, only once indicating that arranging the space and baby equipment were indispensable parts of the preparations for the baby.¹⁵ In the rest of her writing, she devotes the lines solely to the emotional aspect of her preparation for the role of a mother.

There are basically two significant aspects as to how Podlipská speaks about her pregnancy and future role. The first is that she does not think of childbearing as a dreadful moment in which a woman's life is at stake. Nevertheless, the idea of death comes to her mind at certain moments, and in the entry for July 16, she admits to herself that she might die. However, she remains extremely positive in her attitude. In case of her death, she only wishes her baby to survive as her legacy. She also states that she does not dwell on the idea of death and that she feels very lively.¹⁶ The fact that the delivery itself is not perceived as an event connected with death but as a joyful occasion corresponds to the second aspect of Podlipská's commentaries. She describes her pregnancy as a time full of positive expectations, planning what kind of mother she will be like. To her, "being a mother [...] is the most charming idea for a woman."¹⁷ Of even greater

¹² John R. Gillis, *A World of Their Own Making. Myth, Ritual, and the Quest for Family Values* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 156, 153.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 157–158.

¹⁴ Literární archiv Památníku národního písemnictví [LA PNP; Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts – Journals.

¹⁵ Podlipská mentions that the baby cot, clothes and all the "tiny things" are ready for the baby. LA PNP [Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts – Journals, Journal from the years 1858–1861, July 16, 1859.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ "Já budu matkou! To je myšlenka, která ženu nejvíce okouzluje [...]" *Ibid.*, New Year's Eve 1858.

importance, however, is that she interprets the role of mother as something coming from the very core of nature, and so in spite of her personal resolutions “to be a friend and a guide to the baby,” “to educate herself for the baby, to be a conscientious homemaker for it,”¹⁸ she declares that it is actually nature that assigned to woman what she must do for her baby.

Another issue that should be pointed out is how Podlipská interprets the moment of delivery itself. When remembering the day when her son was born, she does not mention the physical side and her description is not a naturalistic one, but rather a magical one. She depicts how calm she actually was and that the day went by like a dream, consisting of no thoughts, but of images that were changing. Then the storm came and Prokop was born.¹⁹ In her journal, she states several times how she perceives the moment when a woman becomes a mother. On July 16, she wrote: “Only now I will become something.”²⁰ A year after her son was born she concludes that “the day when he was born I was born too.”²¹ These two quotations suggest what meanings Podlipská actually gave to this rite of passage and her motherhood. She perceives herself as a full person only when her baby is born, only with the baby “she understands herself better.”²² The pregnancy is an integral part of the process of becoming a mother. Sofie was preparing mentally for the arrival of her child during the preceding months and the childbearing moment was deeply internalized, i.e., it did not occur as an event that simply happened.

The ego-documents of Sofie Podlipská – and not only her journals, but also family correspondence²³ – demonstrate that Podlipská reflected very much on the period of pregnancy and then on the arrival of her children. In her writings, she focused on everyday life with her children and emphasized the emotions mutually felt, while the home settings represented an integral part of the created image. The interconnection between the private sphere and woman's role is clearly reinforced in her writings. Almost no attention is paid, in contrast, to the rituals which played a crucial role in this rite of passage in the pre-modern period: baptism and the ritual of churching. Both of her children were baptized, but in her ego-documents Podlipská mentions very briefly only the baptism of Ludmila (four days after her birth). The ritual of churching is not mentioned at all. There is reason to even think that the ritual of churching was executed – Sofie Podlipská's entries in the diary, which she wrote in the last two decades of her life, may serve as evidence. Here one learns more details about the rituals connected with the birth of Ludmila's son Jaroslav, i.e., Podlipská's grandson. Podlipská describes preparing everything for the event of Jaroslav's baptism and depicts the atmosphere among the guests as cordial – there were seventeen adults

¹⁸ “Budu přítelkyní, kamarádkou a jak mohu vůdcem! [...] Chci se vzdělat pro ně, chci být pro ně pečlivou hospodyní [...]” Ibid., May 13, 1859.

¹⁹ In the open window, the wind was playing with the white curtain [...] A beautiful day was waking up [...] [The moment] was a holy one, so calm, full of beautiful expectations. The day arrived, the preparations were taking place, the day was passing by like a dream in which one is not thinking, only images are passing randomly in the soul. The storm broke out. [...] My Prokop was born. – “V otevřeném okně pohrával větrík bílou záclonou [...] Krásný den se probouzel [...] Byla [chvil] tak svatá, tak klidná, plna krásného tušení. Nastal den, přípravy se děly, den přecházel jako sen, v němž se nemyslí, obrazy bez ladu a skladu táhnou duši. Strhla se bouře. [...] Můj Prokop se narodil.”

Ibid., December 30, 1859.

²⁰ “Nyní teprve budu něčím.” Ibid., July 16, 1859.

²¹ “Den narození mého syna je dnem narození mého.” Ibid., August 1, 1860.

²² “Rozumím teď sobě lépe [...]” Ibid., May 13, 1859.

²³ For example the letters exchanged with her sister Karolina Světlá, stored in Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská.

and six children participating in the event.²⁴ About three weeks later Podlipská made a comment on the churching of her daughter: “The first walk of my dear daughter and her son – for the churching! Be healthy, both of you!”²⁵ The commentaries confirm, however, that the rituals were losing in significance, with only limited attention devoted to the ritual of churching, and only mentioning these rituals occasionally.

Thus, when focusing on how the act of becoming a mother is represented in the ego-documents of Sofie Podlipská, one necessarily comes to the conclusion that Podlipská interprets it as a very intimate experience, a personal transformation to a full woman who has just been endowed with a life task of the highest importance. The crucial aspects emphasized in the process are, first, finding a way to the very naturalness of herself, and, second, the awakening of her emotions to her offspring. This occurs behind the walls of the house and all the rituals which would “bring the public” into this transformation are diminished. John Gillis suggests that such a shift in the practices of rituals connected with the rite of becoming a mother reflects the sacralisation of motherhood. While the rituals connected with the incorporation of a mother back into society played an important role in pre-modern society, symbolizing that a woman was prepared to take up again other roles arising from her wifehood, in the nineteenth century the separation rituals were emphasized.²⁶ The act of childbirth brought woman to her full femininity, her life mission was begun and the re-incorporation into public life seemed secondary: “It was a redeeming experience [...] in which the mother was now the central actor.”²⁷

As can be seen in her journals, Podlipská's reflections on her own motherhood experience are in accordance with the period understanding of motherhood as the most natural woman's role. The new motherhood discourse began to be formulated in both scientific and philosophical texts of the Enlightenment period. A fundamental work was published in 1762 – Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Émile, ou De l'éducation*. In France, the population was declining and the new science of demography was seeking out solutions. In this context, Enlightenment philosophers came up with a new perspective – a child, perceived as an economic value and as a future member of the society, was put into the centre, therefore caring for the child became of high interest for society as such.²⁸ In one of her later texts, Badinter commented more on Rousseau's impact on the period's perception of motherhood. He was neither the first one, nor the only one to describe the new definitions of gender roles and new patterns of family and motherhood. His success resided in his ability to formulate these ideas in such a way that he was able to reach women. Middle-class women in particular found his views appealing. “They were mesmerized by the language of the heart, of virtue and of responsibility.”²⁹

A mother's care and a mother's love began to be considered a natural law, and thus a mother who would neglect her duties and who would not be affectionate to her child could not be considered a good mother, simply due to the fact that her behaviour was not natural. Podlipská's discourse should be understood within this context. As was already stated above, her rite of passage to motherhood is presented as a way to the very nature of her own self and at the same time as an awakening of her maternal love. Thus, her formulations are actually written demonstrations

²⁴ Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts, *Denník všedního života běhu* [Diary of Everyday Life], February 2, 1892.

²⁵ “První vycházka mé zlaté dcery s hošíkem, a sice k úvodu. Buďte mi zdraví!” Ibid., February 25, 1892.

²⁶ Gillis, *A World of Their Own Making*, 159–167.

²⁷ Ibid., 167.

²⁸ Munier, *La Ressemblance des humains*, 21–22.

²⁹ “Ce langage du coeur, de la vertu, et des responsabilité les enthousiasm.” – Élisabeth Badinter, *Condorcet, Prudhomme, Guyomar... Paroles d'hommes (1790–1793)* (Paris: P.O.L., 1989), 29, cited according to Munier, *La Ressemblance des humains*, 22.

of her true motherhood. She proved her motherhood identity by responding emotionally to her newborn and expressing it openly in her journals, correspondence and also (as there is no reason to think the opposite) in reality.

Motherhood Lived

Becoming a mother, however, was actually only an initial step to motherhood. As motherhood was a life mission, new tasks opened up in front of the woman. Obviously, within the new motherhood discourse, new forms of the role were formulated. The ideal of a mother was presented to women in various forms of normative literature, the numbers of which were multiplying with progress of society, technological advancements, growing literacy as well as rising living standards. This part of the paper will focus on how the role of a mother is represented in Podlipská's ego-documents, i.e., with what meanings she fulfils her motherhood and what she expects from herself.

From the very first moments of her motherhood, Podlipská connected her role of a mother with looking after her children and wanting to be able to take care of them as much as possible. In the letters to her sister, she even seems disturbed by the nanny they have hired for Prokop. She feels uneasy when the nanny is cradling Prokop and has to laugh when hearing the nanny singing in falsetto to him. Podlipská primarily perceives herself as the nanny of her son, and she enjoys the role: "Actually, Resi is the cook now, Pepička is the house maid and I am the happiest nanny and wet nurse."³⁰ Two years later, the same situation repeats itself. Right after Podlipská's second child, her daughter Ludmila, is born, Podlipská again emphasizes in her letters that she takes care of the little baby herself. She even feels the need to state that she lets Klavíková, the caretaker, come, but actually it is her, personally, who bathes the baby and prepares her for bed, while Klavíková can have her cup of coffee.³¹ In her letters and journals, Podlipská often manifests how keen she is about her new role and especially the fact that all the tasks connected with taking care of her children, are not perceived as duties, difficult to fulfil, but rather as a joy and pleasure. She feels proud of herself when bathing the babies and keeps repeating what a pleasure it is for her to breastfeed them. The language used by her seems to be even exalted: "I can't even describe how much I like breastfeeding. I even miss him when he sleeps a bit longer. And at night, I sometimes wake up earlier than him."³²

Obviously, looking after one's own children is an indispensable part of the role of a mother in Podlipská's point of view, and for this reason, she also declares not only that she is doing the tasks herself, but also the fact that she enjoys it. The ego-documents as such represent for her a tool for emphasizing the fulfilment of her new role, however, at the same time, the described situation with Ms Klavíková (who was actually invited to drink a cup of coffee and watch Podlipská who was taking care of the baby) clearly demonstrates that also in real life Podlipská sought out opportunities to "perform" the role in the public. The open manifestations of her attitudes should be thus understood as a way of confirmation of her motherhood identity. From this point of view, it is also less important to what extent she actually made use of the help of the nanny and to what extent she carried out the tasks herself. The simple fact that it is of importance to her to

³⁰ "Vlastně je teď Resi kuchařkou, Pepička panskou a já tou nejšťastnější chůvou a kojnou." Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, September 4, 1859.

³¹ Ibid., August 5, 1861.

³² "Nemohu ani povědít, jak ho ráda kojím, mne se zrovna stýská, když on trochu déle spí. A v noci se někdy dříve probudím než on sám [...]" Ibid., September 11, 1859.

describe it like this means that she considers these characteristics as appropriate for a mother, and therefore, in her statements as well as in her behaviour she wants to demonstrate that she is fulfilling them.

Another important aspect, which should not be overlooked and in which Podlipská is obviously influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau and the Enlightenment discourse, is the fact that this understanding of the role of mother is perceived as natural by her, and as such, is not viewed as a burden, which would be imposed on her and under which she suffers, but rather as something positive, as a gift. When reflecting on motherhood in her correspondence, she makes an explicit parallel to the world of nature. As the females of some insect species die after laying the eggs, so the human mother dies to herself and to the world after giving birth to her child:

Having become a mother, she belongs only to her child. Those who cannot or do not want to understand it this way, they are not real mothers – but it works like this naturally forever and ever.³³

This statement is a crucial one, for Podlipská actually says that a woman who does not make such a self-sacrifice for her child, is not a good mother. In this context, it is not all that surprising that Podlipská's ego-documents are full of open declarations that she lives only for her children and that the children represent happiness and the sense of her life. She also shares these attitudes with the children themselves, when expressing her infinite and unconditional love for them: "[...] I do not care about anything in this world but about you, my children, and I would do without anything rather than without you,"³⁴ or even stating that she is ready to make sacrifices for them: "After all, you are the goal of my life and my time is yours. Ask for as much of it as you want. If I work, it is again only for you."³⁵ Podlipská also confirmed her opinion that the children are "angels, the purposes of our lives"³⁶ several decades later, just a few years before her death, leading us to the conclusion that these ideas represent her life views and convictions.

Apart from child care and self-sacrificing, maternal love represents yet another of the significant meanings Podlipská endowed the role of mother with. As in the case of motherhood itself, maternal love is also considered something very natural by her. In the private journal meant for her daughter Ludmila, she writes that "the love for you was gushing together with the milk which I was feeding you with,"³⁷ suggesting that a mother's love for her baby is actually a natural law. The maternal love is treated by her as nearly sacred ("I can't imagine a greater, more real and more permanent love than love for a child."³⁸) and eternal emotion ("Maternal love is growing with the child and fades out only with the mother's death."³⁹), and the affection for the baby is perceived on the level of instincts, which is demonstrated for instance in the way she describes

³³ "Stavši se matkou, náleží je svému dítěti. Která své úloze nemůže neb nechce takto rozumět, není věru matkou; ale to se věku věkův samo sebou takto rozumí." Ibid., August 31, 1859.

³⁴ "[...] nedbám o nic na světě než o Vás, mé děti, a všechno bych oželela spíše než Vás." Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Correspondence sent to Prokop Podlipský, August 25, 1872.

³⁵ "Ostatně jsi Ty cílem mého života a můj čas je Tvůj. Vyžaduj si ho mnoho-li chceš. Pracuju-li, je to zas je pro Tebe." Ibid., August 12, 1873.

³⁶ Sofie Podlipská, "Z denníku. Podává Anežka Čermáková-Sluková," *Ženský svět* 24, no. 4 (1920): 53.

³⁷ "[...] prýštila láska k Tobě zároveň s mlékem, jímž jsem Tě občerstvila." LA PNP [Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts – Journals, Ludmila's journal, May 5, 1862.

³⁸ "Nemohu si představit mohutnější, opravdovější, stálejší lásky, jako je láska k dítěti." LA PNP [Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts – Journals, Journal from the years 1858–1861, December 30, 1859.

³⁹ "Mateřská láska roste s dítětem a zajde jen s matčinou smrtí." Ibid., August 25, 1860.

how the care for the newborn is organized at night. She “had to agree that the nanny would sleep with me in the same room,” but the nanny actually rarely heard the baby. On the contrary, Podlipská was always the one who woke up quickly and cradled him. The explanation lies just in the instinctive behaviour, for “[...] who else should hear the baby first than his own mother.”⁴⁰

Such an understanding of motherhood is then reflected in the language itself. Thus tenderness is associated with femininity and used in the form of the connotation of “maternal tenderness” – something which is considered at least surprising (if not uncommon) when noticed as the behaviour of a man. Podlipská, when watching her husband with their son, also comments on it, stating “[...] I can see the man bent over his child with a maternal tenderness.”⁴¹ In fact, the use of such a connotation not only reflects how motherhood was understood, but also contributes (and that might be even more important) to the reinforcement of the cultural models in society. Élisabeth Badinter points out that not only the fact that maternal love is considered a natural value, but also the association of the words “love” and “maternal” as such, enable the formation of a new concept of motherhood, for they, apart from promoting the emotion itself, give new meanings to a woman as mother.⁴² Accordingly, John Tosh notes in this context that the new concepts in understanding maternal love consequently led to a more general shift in understanding parental roles, when “[...] parental virtue had been displaced from the wise father on to the loving mother.”⁴³

When discussing the meanings Podlipská gave to motherhood, the role of mother as educator should not be omitted. In fact, the issue of children’s education represented one of her life themes, in private life as well as in her professional career as a writer. As for what concerns the reflections on a mother as an educator in her ego-documents, there are basically two crucial aspects which she emphasizes. First, it is the time devoted to the children. There has already been a mention of the fact that she considered her time to be primarily time for her children, and it is obvious from many of her letters that she considered time an important commodity and did her best to help her children profit from the time they were given. For this reason, she tried to provide as stimulating and enriching activities as possible.⁴⁴ She organized travel trips and summer stays in various parts of the Bohemian Lands, and she did not hesitate to spend money on Prokop’s own journeys in Bohemia as well as abroad when he grew older. She spent hours reading to the children and speaking with them about the world.⁴⁵

The second aspect she considers important in the education of her children can be described as freedom and independence. She emphasizes that children should be given time and opportunities to learn from their own experience: “And I am such an educator that I let my children

⁴⁰ “Kdo by jej také měl nejdříve slyšet, ne-li matka jeho.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, September 4, 1859.

⁴¹ “[...] vidím toho muže nad svým dítětem skloněného s mateřskou něžností.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, September 20, 1859.

⁴² Badinter, *L’Amour en plus*, 171–172.

⁴³ John Tosh, *A Man’s Place. Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2007), 90.

⁴⁴ “What better can I offer you, my dear children than the right use of your time.” – “Což Vám mohu, mé drahé děti, lepšího připravit, než pravého použití Vašeho času.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Correspondence sent to Prokop Podlipský, August 20, 1873.

⁴⁵ As reflected for instance in the correspondence with her son Prokop: Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Correspondence received from and sent to Prokop Podlipský.

go everywhere, into the light, into the dark. I am not afraid and I do not want them to be afraid either.”⁴⁶ Her life philosophy was to enable the children to develop their natural talents and gifts and in this respect she was even afraid that the educator might do them harm when trying to form them against their own naturalness. This attitude of hers is reflected in her own writings (e.g., in 1861 she wrote to her sister that she was afraid she might “not find the right tone with her children,” and thus to intervene into their natural development in a way which would cause harm to them)⁴⁷ as well as in a memoir written by her granddaughter Milada (remembering Podlipská’s “spirit of freedom” influenced by Enlightenment thinking and “her dread fear of violence, oppression, cruelty [...]”).⁴⁸ In the middle of the 1870s in a letter written to Eliška Krásnohorská, Podlipská developed this idea and put it into the context of women’s emancipation process. She explains that the idea of liberating women is needed and welcome and it is just if a reformer pleads for improving women’s status in society. It cannot be reached, however, without spreading the idea of liberation in the relationship between parents and children:

[...] for an enormous injustice and tyranny occurred to children due to unreasonable education and commanding, which is often destructive and going far beyond their full age. When I see the willful, brutish punishments of both uneducated and educated parents on their poor, defenseless children, I start shaking [...]⁴⁹

A Mother’s Burden

Although Sofie Podlipská perceived the role of a mother – in the framework of the period’s discourse – as very natural for woman and as the joy and sense of her life, her correspondence indicates how demanding the everyday duties resulting from her motherhood actually were and how difficult it was for her to live up to the expectations. When Karolina Světlá, her sister, asked her how she was doing, she replied:

The nanny is not able to do anything and she annoys me; and the cook’s finger has festered – so here you are [how I am doing]. On top of that, Milinka [the daughter Ludmila] is grumpy because of her teeth growing, she can’t sleep at night, always wants somebody to walk with her and it means I should; plus you know Prošek [the son Prokop] and his love for me. The day before yesterday I was crying the whole morning because I simply could not stand it any more. Now it’s a bit better.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ “A já jsem taková vychovatelka, že svoje děti všude pustím, do světla, do tmy. Nebojím se a nechci také, aby oni se báli.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Correspondence sent to Eliška Krásnohorská, May 1, 1871.

⁴⁷ Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, August 12, 1861.

⁴⁸ Literární archiv Památníku národního písemnictví [LA PNP; Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Other people’s manuscripts, Milada Čáповá-Vrchlická, *O Sofii Podlipské*, 4.

⁴⁹ “[...] neboť velké bezpráví a tyranie děje se dětem nerozumným vychováním a poručnictvím, často záhubným a vztahujícím se až za plnoletí. Vidím-li ty libovolné, surové tresty nevzdělaných i vzdělanějších rodičů na ubohých, bezbranných dětech, třesu se [...]” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Correspondence sent to Eliška Krásnohorská, August 28, 1873.

⁵⁰ “Chůva nic neumí a zlobí mne a kuchaře se podebral prst – tu to máš všechno. K tomu je Milinka k zoubkům nevrhlá, v noci nespí, ve dne nespí, pořád chce jen, aby ji někdo vodil, a sice já zejména to mám být, a Proška znáš v jeho šílené lásce ke mne. Předevčirem jsem celé dopoledne plakala, protože jsem už to nemohla vydržet. Nyní už je to trochu lepší zase.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, August 28, 1862.

Podlipská's ego-documents prove that throughout her adulthood she was actually negotiating her own role as a mother and searching for the true meaning of her motherhood.

The shift in self-perception as a mother is already apparent in the first years of her motherhood. Right after her son was born, she wrote down that she had full confidence in herself and her woman's skills: "I am on the right way and I know I will always find the right way. [...] I do not have any doubts as to where my home is now, what my duties are and how I will meet my obligations. I know I will meet them well enough."⁵¹ A year and a half later, she expresses her own doubts for the first time, and she does it in the journal written for her son Prokop. She explains the circumstances in the family when her daughter Ludmila was born: Prokop was a naughty boy and everyone (including her) was angry with him. She identifies the reason for his behaviour as jealousy of his baby sister and feels double sympathy for him – because of his loneliness and because of the fact that he is being scolded. "I feel now so uneasy as to whether I will be able to meet my great obligation to bring up a child."⁵²

In later journal entries Podlipská also returns to her doubts concerning her educational capacities. In her comments, she addresses Prokop and admits she is only learning her role, even though she is doing her best. "[...] I can't find my way, I am trying, but my efforts often come in vain."⁵³ At a certain moment, she even places on herself the responsibility for the future imperfections of her son. She states "I am not always satisfied with myself in terms of your upbringing,"⁵⁴ and says that she admits her faults because she wants him to know where he should search for the roots of his own faults which he will face when an adult. Such a reflection suggests what respect Podlipská had for her role as a mother and with what degree of responsibility she approached it. At the same time, it is apparent how she actively experiences the duty of bringing up her children and, what is even more important, that she feels responsible for the results of her efforts. While the father was supposed to earn a living for the family and fill the function of a breadwinner, otherwise he would risk the loss of respect from his family members as well as from society,⁵⁵ the mother's societal duty was to bring up the offspring. "If the mother failed in the task of raising healthy, seriously minded and well trained children, she sent forth 'damaged material.'"⁵⁶ The expectations imposed on a mother by society thus actually became her life burden. It is clearly apparent from the analysed ego-documents that already in the first years of her mother's role, Podlipská felt social pressure and imposed a burden on herself, even though at those times she could not have anticipated that she was about to experience a very painful future.

⁵¹ "Jsem na pravé cestě a vím, že ji vždy najdu. [...] Nepochybuji více o tom, kde můj je domov, jaké mé povinnosti, kterak jim dostojím. Víím, že jim dostojím dobře." LA PNP [Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts – Journals, Journal from the years 1858–1861, December 30, 1859.

⁵² "Jsem nyní tak úzkostliva, dostojím-li své velikánské úloze vychovávat člověka." LA PNP [Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Sofie Podlipská, Manuscripts – Journals, Prokop's journal, August 1, 1861.

⁵³ "[...] bloudím v tomto ohledu, zkouším [...] a často se minu účinkem." Ibid., August 8, 1862.

⁵⁴ "Nejsem vždy spokojena sama se sebou, co se týče tvého vychování." Ibid., November 26, 1861.

⁵⁵ For more on that e.g., Margaret Marsh, "Suburban Men And Masculine Domesticity, 1870–1915," *American Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (June 1988): 165–186; or for a Czech case study see Jitka Kohoutová, "Konstrukce otcovské identity v 19. století: aspekt otce-živitele v rodinách české intelektuální buržoazie [The Construction of Fatherhood Identity in the Nineteenth Century: The Aspect of Father-Breadwinner in the Families of Czech Intellectual Bourgeoisie]," in *Konstrukce maskulinní identity v minulosti a současnosti. Koncepty, metody, perspektivy* [The Construction of Masculine Identity in the Past and Present. Concepts, Methods, Perspectives], eds. Radmila Švaříčková Slabáková et al. (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2012), 174–183.

⁵⁶ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes. Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850*, second edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 335.

Already when her daughter was born, she faced criticism as to the way she treated her children. Her family members, but also other people from her social milieu, openly expressed their disagreement in front of her. The period's norm expected strictness and rules in education, required even through physical punishments,⁵⁷ whereas Podlipská placed an emphasis on the free development of children and their natural character. She was well aware of the aspects in which her standpoints differed, and the correspondence with her sister demonstrates how tough it was for her to defend her opinions, even before herself. She told her sister about a quarrel with her mother who had made a rod for punishing Prokop: "But I hate the rods so much that despite my leniency [...] I could not stay behind and told her that I did not want to do it this way. I am convinced not only that beating is of no use, but also that it harms the character."⁵⁸ She described how the county representative reproached her bad educational methods:

The other day Mr. Schmidt gave me you as a pedagogical example. To him, you would be a good educator, you should have children. He said I only spoil them and then started telling me, without any compassion, about damaged children – it made my hair stand on end. [...] With such passion people try to correct my mistakes [...] As if I did not know myself what it means to worry.⁵⁹

There are two important aspects of the nineteenth century motherhood experience which Podlipská's example demonstrates. The first is the norm which the middle-class social milieu expected mothers to follow. The educational patterns were shared in families (grandmothers were often engaged in helping young mothers with babies) and different models were immediately noticed. Motherhood as such was not only a private role, but also a responsibility and an obligation towards society, which rationalized the control over fulfilment of maternal tasks. The second aspect demonstrated by Podlipská's example is closely connected, and that is the burden of full responsibility for the results of one's children's upbringing. Podlipská experienced the heaviness of this burden as an elderly woman when her daughter's infidelity and the illegitimacy of the two younger children born in the marriage with Jaroslav Vrchlický were revealed. In this situation, Podlipská was often the first to be blamed by the people around her. She was presented as the one who did not know how to bring up her own daughter.⁶⁰ She was perceived, in other words, as the one who should actually bear the burden of culpability for the infidelity of her daughter.

Conclusion

The motherhood discourse of Sofie Podlipská corresponds in many aspects with the new period trends. She perceives motherhood as the purpose of a woman's life, as an almost sacred mission, viewing maternal love and maternal instincts as the most natural emotions and the fundamental basis of all love in the world, and within the concept of "a new mother" (promoted

⁵⁷ Lenderová and Rýdl, *Radostné dětství?*, 146–151.

⁵⁸ "Já ty metličky ale tak nenávidím, že jsem se vzdor své shovívavosti [...] nemohla zdržet a řekla jsem jí, že si to nepřeu. Jsem přesvědčena, že to bití nejen, že není nic platné, ale ono že je škodné charakteru." Podještětské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještětské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, August 12, 1861.

⁵⁹ "Hejtman Schmidt mi Tebe ondyno za příklad uvedl v pedagogice. Ty že bys byla vychovatelkou, ty že bys měla mít děti, já že je prý rozmazluju a tu mi tak surově a necitelně začal vypravovat příklady o zkažených dětech, až mi vlasy hrůzou vstávaly. [...] S pravou vášní mne lidé opravujou [...] jako kdybych sama nevěděla předobře, co je starost." Ibid.

⁶⁰ For instance: LA PNP [Literary Archive of the Institute of National Literature], Collection of Bedřich Frída, *Manuscripts, Memoirs of Bedřich Frída*, 52ff.

by Jean Jacques Rousseau) she also adopts the perception of the “right” upbringing of children as a woman’s key responsibility and, with it, also adopts unconsciously “the mother’s burden” concept. Her ego-documents provide evidence of how she represented herself as a mother, both in speech as well as in everyday behaviour, and how she actually, through open manifestations of the social expectations fulfilment, confirmed her own identity as a mother (and thus also the identity of woman). In other aspects, however, she did not hesitate to consciously break the norms and go against the social expectations of Czech middle-class society – especially when she felt these norms were outdated and when she grounded her personal convictions in a knowledge of Enlightenment thinking. In 1862 she wrote to her sister: “You know how ardent a defender of sacred nature and its laws I am, how I hate the narrow-minded prejudices and how I rejoice if someone dares to trample on them.”⁶¹

The attitudes in which she clashed with many of her contemporaries concern primarily her opinions on educational methods, for she emphasized the free development of children and their natural gifts. She did not approve of authoritative education and physical punishments, which still was common practice in Czech middle-class families.⁶² She justified these ideas of her with the need for the right development of liberal society and its independent and responsible members. She also put it into the context of the women’s emancipation issue, and by doing so, broke another of the contemporary norms and convictions – i.e., that a woman is the weak one, whereas a man is the strong one (once again promoted by Jean Jacques Rousseau). She insisted that girls should be brought up in such a way that they would be strong and would not need men to lead them, but would be able to be leaders for themselves.⁶³ These ideas were of such importance to her, that she also stuck to them in the education of her own children, even though she was denounced for this by many of her contemporaries. Moreover, she could not have known at that time, that as an elderly lady, she would have first-hand experience with what it means to be condemned for the poor education of one’s own children, and thus bear an especially heavy maternal burden.

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⁶¹ “Ty víš, jaká vášnivá jsem přívrženkyně svaté přírody a jejích práv, jak nenávidím ty úzkoprsé předsudky a jak se těším, osmělí-li se někdo po nich šlapat.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, August 21, 1862.

⁶² As demonstrated for instance in Marcin Filipowicz and Alena Zachová, *Rod v memoárech. Případ Hradec Králové* [Gender in Memoirs. The Case of the City of Hradec Králové] (Červený Kostelec: Pavel Mervart, 2009), 136–140.

⁶³ “We poor women! Why did they bring us up as if we were the weaker ones? If they would bring us up so that we would be stronger than men, then everything would be alright. Men cannot lead us, we have to lead ourselves!” – “My ubohé ženy! Ale proč nás vychovávají, jako kdybychom byli slabší pleti? Vychovávejte nás, abychom byli silnějšími nad muže, pak bude vše dobře. Muži nás neumějí vodit, my se musíme vésti sami.” Podještědské muzeum v Českém Dubu [Podještědské Museum in Český Dub], Collection of Karolina Světlá, Correspondence received from Sofie Podlipská, September 1, 1861.

Reviews|

Dana Dvořáčková Malá et al.

Dvůr a církev v českých zemích středověku

Praha: Historický ústav, 2017, 249. ISBN 978-80-7286-314-3

Reviewed by: Jiří Gregor

This collective publication edited by Dana Dvořáčková Malá follows a number of studies focused on the Bohemian royal court in the Middle Ages. The authorial collective consisted of Lenka Bobková, Kateřina Charvátová, Zdeňka Hledíková, Eva Doležalová, Božena Czwojdrak, Zdeněk Vašek, Robert Šimůnek, František Záruba, Jaroslav Boubín, and Josef Šrámek, each of whom published an approximate ten-page study. The book combines both analysed worlds: profane and sacred. Dana Dvořáčková Malá herself has contributed to the state of research with a number of studies and monographs.¹ This now consists of a unique monograph this being a set of studies by important historians who concisely discuss the issue of connecting (connection of) the royal court and the Church during the Middle Ages.

In the introduction (p. 7–10), Dvořáčková Malá presents the most important tasks of the Church in the royal court connected with diplomacy, baptism, and confession. Research on courts is currently popular, as evidenced by *Výzkumné centrum Dvory, dvorce a rezidence ve středověku* AV ČR. The author states that up until now the research has been mostly focused on the structure and everyday life at court. She states that her new monograph, dealing with the role of the clergy and the Church in the rulers' courts, is the first comprehensive research (p. 8). Subsequently, she chose the focus of the chapters and added some of their self-review ratings. There is also a description of the current state of research.

The first chapter *Liturgical Everyday Life at the Court and its Protagonists* (*Liturgická každodennost při dvoře a její nositelé*, p. 13–27) was written by Zdeňka Hledíková. She describes the combination between the royal and episcopal courts in Prague, together set on a strategic hill, as unique. Similar analogies can only be found in the examples of Meissen, Krakow, or Bamberg (p. 13). The author focuses on the movements and changes associated with the construction of the church, from its Romanesque appearance to the Gothic form from the fourteenth century, and analyzes the everyday and spiritual life of the clergy and the court in the context of the construction of the most prestigious building in Central Europe. The text was appropriately complemented by illustrations of the Romanesque basilica connected with the monastery, as well as the changes that led to the growth of the cathedral and the demise of the monastery in 1344. Additional illustrative examples are from the years 1356, 1397, and 1419 when there was almost a complete Gothic reconstruction (p. 15).

The following chapter, *Piety at the Castles of the Nobility* (*Zbožnost na šlechtických hradech*, p. 29–38) by František Záruba, highlights the fact that it was impossible to separate the sacral and the profane in the Middle Ages. Faith was omnipresent and existed in every person's life. The influence of faith on the kings and courts was evident in representation, as exemplified by the decoration of castle chapels by secular and representative motifs or the decoration of stoves. It is obvious to resort to foreign comparisons. The author introduces two exemplary analogies – the

¹ E.g., Dana Dvořáčková Malá and Jan Zelenka, *Curia ducis, curia regis: panovnický dvůr za vlády Přemyslovců* (Praha: Historický ústav, 2011).

decoration of the “winning arches” at the castles in the Italian Reifenstein and Eltz in Germany. The examples were chosen well. There was a similar environment in Bohemia and the masters who carried out the decoration had to work under similar climatic conditions, having to adapt the composition of lime plaster to keep the fresco as long as possible. The author also points out that the subject of personal piety offers an unsubstantiated question. The third chapter by Dana Dvořáčková Malá (*Dvůr a víra v literatuře*, p. 41–51), illustrates the variety of literary productions in the Middle Ages using the example of verses by Vilhelm von Wenden from the end of the thirteenth century.² Literature written in “ancient Czech” or the German language was often commissioned by the monarch. The author reflects on the epics associated with the Přemyslid court: Alexander, Tristan, Vilém of the Slavs, etc. She points out that ancient Czech and German written texts have not yet been fully integrated into the context of the history of Czech literature and historiography, and therefore contain topics that are still not monitored. The following is an enumeration and a comparison of a number of literary forms, their stories, and quotations by which the author verified the possibility of using literary sources for studying the history of everyday life and piety. She also mentioned the tendency of monarchs (e.g., Wenceslaus II) to use this Medieval medium to create the image of an ideal monarch, as discussed, for example, by Robert Antonin, and the ideal ruler (the identification of Queen Guth with the heroine of the epic Vilém from the land of the Slavs).

The Criticism of the Court in the Work of Petr Chelčický (Kritika dvora v díle Petra Chelčického, p. 51–57) by Jaroslav Boubín is based on systematic criticism of the court culture of Petr Chelčický, whose origins are covered by several theories. According to the historian F. M. Bartoš, it is possible to identify Chelčický with the yeoman Petr Záhorka from Záhoreč (p. 51). Boubín comments on this theory and praises Bartoš's argument. He does not accept the conclusions directly, but confirms that the theory could work: “[...] if Petr Záhorka really was Petr Chelčický [...] he knew the situation at the courts well” (p. 52). The analysis compares the work of P. Chelčický with the works of Jan Hus *Postil* and Jan Rokycana *Postil*. The conclusion is that Chelčický approached the courts more comprehensively and hypercritically stated that instead of the nobility being an example for the people, it was the opposite. A comparison of these sources is an excellent probe into the criticism of the environment.

Block III – *Faith as a Tool of Power* – was a shared work by the authors Zdeněk Vašek (p. 61–72) and Robert Šimůnek. In Vašek's chapter – *The King's Gifts to the Church (Královské dary církvi)*, he introduces the development of research on the subject of the King's donation to the Church. In order to present the changing relationship between the rulers and the Church, he chose two well-known figures – John of Bohemia and Elisabeth of Bohemia. Naturally, he concluded that predominantly at the end of life or in illness, the sovereigns and kings tended to make more frequent donations to the Church. The passage is readable and focuses on the character of the sovereigns and the variations in their relationships with the Church. The author gives the impression that almost everyone polluted through their government and whether they donated gifts to the Church solely on the basis of their personal piety.

The subsequent chapter is more problematic, and this not just in terms of the content, which is undoubtedly a high-quality study, but in terms of language and style. Long and demanding treatises are discussed in *Confession – an Element of the Ancestral Traditions of the Czech Nobility in the Middle Ages (Konfese – prvek rodových tradic české šlechty ve středověku*, p. 75–88), and the reader has to read the text several times. The author discusses the development of relations

² For a comparison, see e.g., Dana Dvořáčková Malá, “Angažované vyprávění. Narativní strategie literárně-historických děl na přelomu 13. a 14. století. [Engaged Narration. Narrative Strategies of Literary-Historical Works at the Turn of the Fourteenth Century.]” *Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica* 20, no 1 (2017): 23–38.

between the Brothers, Utraquists, and Catholics in the ranks of the noble families in the second half of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. An interesting point is the reflection on art objects in stately homes (e.g., *mázhaus in Pardubice*, p. 77), or the examples of families where the confession became hereditary.

Eva Doležalová describes the *Clergy in the Court of the Luxembourg Rulers in the Fourteenth Century* (*Klér na dvorech lucemburských panovníků ve 14. století*, p. 91–99). The main line of her study is the fact that the Luxembourg, Western-oriented kings, strongly bound to the French court and the north-Italian area, had a close and positive association with the clergy. Such a connection enabled a meaningful symbiosis beneficial to all parties (p. 91), notwithstanding the fact that the Papal Court moved to Avignon in the early fourteenth century. The most co-operative was the synergy of the highest representative of clerics with the ruler (e.g., Albrecht of Sternberk, or Jan Očko of Vlašim and Charles IV). The second line of the inferior nobility acquired the authorities by various ties to the court, or “heritage,” with Doležalová presenting a significant example of the ascension of the genus of Velhartic. With the third level, the role of chaplains and officials, she presents a brief analysis of this issue and invites historians to the topicality of research.

A very interesting part is the piece about the *Spiritual Advisors of Jan Žhořelecký* (*Duchovní rádci Jana Žhořeleckého*, p. 101–110) by Lenka Bobková. The author analyzes the court of the youngest son of Emperor Charles IV, which was notoriously interwoven with clergymen. An example is the good relationship between Jan Žhořelecký with church dignitaries, such as Olbram of Škvorce, who gave John a small monkey (p. 106). The entire chapter is based on an extensive analysis of sources, such as accounts that have verified the residence of some of the personalities at the supposed places (e.g., chaplain Mořic, p. 107). In the end, a hypothesis, dating back to the time of the death of Jan Žhořelecký, is introduced. John amounted to a strong opponent for a number of his relatives, so it was possible that someone eliminated him at the age of twenty-six. The disadvantage of the chapter is the description of the pictorial attachment with a typo (p. 104), and in some passages of the study, there is a list of names without a wider context (p. 105).

The following chapter is by the Polish historian Bożena Czwojdrak (p. 111–118). She provides a very interesting subject, but from the very beginning, the reader has to deal with a number of grammar mistakes and cumbersome sentences. It is unfortunate that such a quality study was not edited more thoroughly. Each part of the study was focused on one of Vladislav Jagiellon's wives and their connection with a personal office or humanists. In the case of Hedwig, the university and the queen's office were developing. In the text, we mostly find lists of scholars' names and their education, followed by Queen Anna and Elizabeth, who hire the Roman humanist Philip Kallimach who represent the first influence of the Renaissance in the Polish countries.

The penultimate chapter *The Status of Benedictines at the Přemyslid Courts* (*Postavení benediktinů na dvorech Přemyslovců*, p. 121–135) is by Josef Šrámek. The Benedictine Order did not have much competition in the tenth–eleventh centuries, so the members of the order held many high offices. Several abbots were very close to the Bohemian rulers and later to the kings. The author attempts to present as many sources as possible, but in the short form of his contribution, repeatedly resorted to merely enumerating personalities and their movements. The study shows the importance of “black monks” for the course and rise of the Bohemian kingdom. This chapter is followed by the final study *The Cistercians and the Courtyard Environment of the Twelfth to the Early Fifteenth Centuries* (*Cisterciáci a dvorské prostředí 12. až raného 15. století*, p. 137–147) by Kateřina Charvátová. Both contributions evaluate and point out the sense of the most important monastic orders in the policy of the Bohemian monarchs. The Benedictines enjoyed the favor of King Ottokar II, while the Cistercians were preferred by Wenceslaus II. Cistercian masters were involved in court cases, diplomacy or as advisors. After the demise of the Přemyslid kings, there

was tension between Henry of Bohemia and the abbots Konrád and Heidenreich. After the marriage of Elisabeth of Bohemia with John of Bohemia, which took place with the help of a former adviser of Wenceslaus II, Petr of Aspelt, the situation stabilized, and the Cistercians served again in the royal services until the time of the abolition of the Abbot of Zbraslav Petr of Zittau, probably in 1339 (p. 144). The author follows the subsequent development of the relations between the monarchs and the Cistercians. She states that Charles IV no longer tended to any order but only to concrete personalities. Last but not least, it is important to mention a fundamental act of this order of the Zbraslav Chronicle. In conclusion, the author comments a great deal on its contribution and problematic aspects, as well as the relevance of the chronicle. She mentions that a great deal of information in the Zbraslav Chronicle is possible to compare with the documents and charters of the royal offices which is important evidence of the reliability of the chronicle.

The collective monograph offers a number of notable studies. This is a comprehensive view of the issue. The great advantage of such a collective work is the space to contain as many historiography material and sources as possible. Also significant is the interdisciplinary process. The fruitful combination of political history, history of everyday life, economic history, art studies, and other fields provides a comprehensive view of the subject. The book is also a textbook of historical methods and practices, largely due to the diversity of the authors' collective. The only complaint is the processing of the content. On one page, the publication offers a list of the content and the titles, but on the second page the name of the author and pagination. Such a distribution is quite disturbing and non sequitur.

Joachim Bahlcke, Kateřina Bobková-Valentová,
and Jiří Mikulec, eds.

***Religiöse Gewalt, konfessionelle Konflikte
und Modelle von Gewaltprävention
in Mitteleuropa (15.–18. Jahrhundert)***
**[Religious Violence, Confessional Conflicts,
and Models for Violence Prevention
in Central Europe (Fifteenth–Eighteenth
Centuries)]**

Praha: Historický ústav, 2017; Stuttgart: Universität Stuttgart, 2017, 383. ISBN 978-80-7286-305-1 (Praha), ISBN 978-3-00-056765-0 (Stuttgart)

Reviewed by: Aneta Kubalová

The anthology edited by Joachim Bahlcke, Jiří Mikulec, and Kateřina Bobková-Valentová represents twenty one essays regarding the question of religious violence in the area of Central Europe in the Early Modern period. This anthology refers to the preceding symposium *Religious Conflicts and Confessional Violence in Central Europe in the Fifteenth–Eighteenth Centuries* held in the Academic Conference Centre in Prague in November 2014. The collective monograph divided into three parts introduces recent research related to the question of confessional violence. The first essay is written by Winfried Eberhard who introduces the possibilities and approaches of historical attitudes towards understanding the application of religious violence in a competitive denominational environment. Eberhard analyses monographs of Jan Assman¹ and Arnold Angenandt² and the relationship between monotheism and intolerance. He speculates about the thesis that intolerance and violence have a strong basis in monotheistic religions. Polytheistic cults and religions also have a link to religious hatred and acts of violence. Eberhard divides the forms of violence into three parts: 1. legitimate and illegitimate; 2. individual and state; 3. ritual and non-ritual, and displays these representations of religious violence on the background of the heretical sects and confessional conflicts after the Reformation. Eberhard's essay represents a bridge to the other parts of the anthology. The first part "Religious Violence: Types, Models,

¹ Jan Assmann, *Die Mosaistische Unterscheidung oder der Preis des Monotheismus* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2003).

² Arnold Angenandt, *Toleranz und Gewalt. Das Christentum zwischen Bibel und Schwert* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2007).

Possible Explanations” includes eight case studies which deal with different types of sources, for example sermons (Radmila Prchal Pavlíčková, Tomáš Havelka), legislation (Joachim Bahlcke), normative sources (Josef Kadeřábek, Veronika Mezerová, Karel Černý), pamphlets, etc. It is important to emphasize the difference and the need to distinguish between “*potestas*” which accounts for a legitimate use of violence, and “*violentia*” which stands for illegitimate acts of violence in particular denominations. The second part of the anthology contains seven investigations which are gathered under the title “Religion as a Cause of Conflict: Participants, Reasons, Media.” In these studies, the relations between religion and policy and the tensions between Latin and Byzantine form of Christianity are analysed. These specific prerequisites of the confessional conflicts and the use of violence are investigated in various territories such as the Netherlands, Hungary, Dalmatia, or the Silesian town of Cieszyn. It is possible to perceive regional specifics in these cases. The third part of the anthology “Models for Prevention of Violence: Discourses, Argumentation Patterns, De-Escalations Strategies” covers five case studies which deal with the question of religious polemics and violent or forcible religious argumentation. Among others, attention is devoted to the territory of the Bohemian Lands, especially in the analysis of Petr Chelčický’s writings or the treatise of Prokop of Jindřichův Hradec, a member of the Bohemian Brethren. It is apparent that the variability of the case studies enables the creation of a wide picture of the forms of religious violence which were used and applied in diverse ways. Each study operates with specific types of sources which can help not only to realize the width of the researched theme, but also to elaborate various specific forms of religious violence regarding territorial particularities, social stratification and the character of religious dissent and plurality.

Lukáš Fasora

Josef Hybeš (1850–1921). Život, dílo a mýtus

[Josef Hybeš (1850–1921): Life, Work, and Myth]

Praha: Lidové noviny, 2017. 232. ISBN 978-80-7422-580-2

Reviewed by: Kristýna Olszarová

In his book, Lukáš Fasora, professor of Czech history from Masaryk University in Brno studies the personal myth of Josef Hybeš, a leading figure of the socialist workers' movement at the turn of the twentieth century. Lukáš Fasora does not present Hybeš's life in the form of a terse political biography, but follows his mythical picture, which evolved mainly, but not solely, after the leader's death. The author views his life from four key parts with each of them having its own myths. Josef Hybeš as a simple worker: the weaver, the revolutionary, the internationalist, and the altruist.

In the introduction, the author defines the myth which he views from political perspectives and explains the importance of mythological narratives in the history of popular movements as well as in the history of workers' movements. The author views the myth in accordance with Jungian and Freudian psychology which claims that myths are the expression of a culture or society's goals, fears, ambitions and dreams. Fasora reminds us of the importance of the mythical image that was built around the figures of major Marxist leaders and proves their ideological function.

The book consists of twelve chapters, an introduction, a conclusion, bibliography, index and summary. It also contains iconographical materials. In the first chapter, Fasora pursues the developments in the field of the contemporary state of research of the myth, that is perceived as a part of political religion. He remarks that there are a great number of important political myths that have not been studied yet, and that other studies are characterised by insufficient methodological approaches and a lack of cooperation between collective memory studies and study of the myth. The author points out that only a few works in literature deal with regional myths and he sees it as a great deficit in the field of research, because on a regional basis the contact of leaders with the public was immediate. Another issue that the author deals with is the importance of media and other resources that shaped mythical narrative. The first chapter also contains a presentation of the most important works from the field and their contribution to the study of myth and the typology of the sources that Fasora used in his research.

In the five-page chapter "Kdo to byl Josef Hybeš?" the author describes Hybeš's life chronologically in order to summarize the highlights of his life, which simplifies the approach in the following chapters which do not strictly maintain this model of arrangement. In this chapter he works with Rüdiger Voigt's theory, and specifies Hybeš's possible self-stylization in the categories that Voigt presented in the publication *Mythen, Rituale und Symbole in der Politik* and in which he divided up political figures of the twentieth century.¹ Fasora proves that Hybeš's mythical and ideological picture fits, from the different perspectives, to all of the four groups: a divine leader, simple man, charming politician, and father. In the next four chapters the author examines these four images.

¹ Rüdiger Voigt, "Mythen, Rituale und Symbole in der Politik," in *Symbole der Politik. Politik der Symbole*, ed. Rüdiger Voigt (Opladen: Leske u. Budrich, 1989), 9–37.

In the chapter entitled “Tkadlec” (“The Weaver”), Fasora introduces Josef Hybeš as a worker that did not finish his primary education. He studies Hybeš’s image as a common man and explains how his image was constructed. Hybeš’s biographer Otakar Franěk for example, in accordance with building the myth of an unusually smart and bright child, introduced the story of a contemporary witness from Dašice, who remembered at the age of ninety how uncommonly clever a child Hybeš was. Fasora of course disproves this statement and writes that Hybeš always perceived himself as a worker who was in politics and not a politician who defended workmen’s interests.

An altruist is another word that characterised Josef Hybeš and Fasora uses it for the title of the next chapter that deals with another important aspect of Hybeš’s real and “mythical” life. His altruistic lifestyle is linked with the city of Brno and Fasora distinguishes three levels that formed his philanthropic personality. The author clarifies why and by what means Hybeš stood out from other men and women who sacrificed their lives to the idea of socialism. This chapter contains citations from many different sources that are used not only for illustration but are analysed as well.

In the next two chapters, Hybeš as an internationalist and revolutionary is constructed on the identical scheme. This method of arrangement allows the readers to view the personality of Hybeš from different angles and perspectives which are analysed and examined in the next chapters. The following part of the book contains the periodisation of the Hybeš myth. The author in chronological order deals with an analysis of the diverse methods the Communist party used in its propagation concerning Hybeš’s mythical figure.

In the seventh chapter, the author pursue the evolution of the propaganda that differs depending on the requirements of the political climate in Czechoslovakia. The first appearance of the narratives that could be considered mythical are dated by Fasora to the second decade of the twentieth century. He makes analogies between Josef Hybeš and other political figures of world importance such as Garibaldi or Marx and Engels and explains how the history of a minor or regional character can affect the big history. The author labels this kind of shift as a third phase (1970–1989) of the evolution of the Hybeš’s myth. In this chapter (“Periodizace Hybešova mýtu,” p. 101–109) Fasora divides the history of the creation of Hybeš’s myth into five phases but it is not clear what period he identifies as a fourth phase, because the third one is defined by the years 1970 and 1989 and the fifth by the years after the Velvet Revolution.

The next chapter deals with the territorial anchorage of Hybeš’s figure. He was considered an Oslavany man, but his thinking was affected by the youth he spent in Vienna. The third locality was Brno and its region. Fasora describes how this territorial point of view affected certain local events and how his life story was interpreted to support a regional political atmosphere. Hybeš’s foreign contacts and experiences are also contained in the chapter.

The chapter with the title “Proměny mýtu” incorporates an analysis of the texts that were published on the topic of Hybeš’s life. Fasora demonstrates how and by what means the manipulation occurred with the historical facts, so they supported the desired narration. The chapter also contains recent publications, so readers can see Hybeš’s entire myth in its complexity. How was the story of Hybeš institutionally supported and how this reality helped spread afterwards propaganda is discussed in the next, tenth chapter. The impact of the media revolution, other forms of communication and the film industry is examined in the last chapter. The author shows how the Communist Party tried to establish a different traditional celebration connected with Hybeš’s life but did not succeed as expected.

The monograph about Josef Hybeš is a comprehensive study that analyses the life of one person and presents him as a participant in regional, national, and European affairs. Methodologically, the work contributes to the study of myth, collective memory studies and operates with transdisciplinary methods.

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