
Polish-Czech Relations in the Hussite Period – Religious Aspects

Paweł Kras

(Lublin)

In my paper I wish to deal with the problem of religious aspects of Polish-Czech relations in the Hussite period. The problem itself is not a new one. On the one hand, various Polish and Czech historians, to mention here Antoni Prochaska,¹ Roman Heck,² Ewa Maleczyńska,³ and Jaromir Mikulka,⁴ have already drawn attention to the significant participation of Poles in the Hussite movement in Bohemia. On the other hand the studies of Jaroslav Bidlo⁵ or Jaroslav Kadlec⁶ presented the scale of the Roman Catholic emigration from Bohemia to Poland during the Hussite wars. The impact of Hussite doctrine upon Poland has also been discussed in numerous works⁷. But in the light of the latest findings, it seems worth reflecting once again on the scale and forms of these mutual contacts between Poland and Bohemia in the turbulent period of the Hussite revolution, which contributed to the growth of Hussitism both in Bohemia and in Poland. In my paper I do not intend to cover or even sketch all problems related to the vast area of Polish-Czech relations, which obviously merit a separate book. What I wish to do is to look at the personal contacts between Polish and Czech Hussites which facilitated the transmission of religious ideas from Bohemia to Poland and attracted a number of Poles to Utraquism.

¹ A. Prochaska, "Polska a Czechy w czasach husyckich" [Poland and Bohemia in Hussite Times], *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności, Wydział Historyczno-Filozoficzny* 7-8 (Kraków, 1877-1878) 147-283; *idem*, "W czasach husyckich" [In the Hussite Times], *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności, Wydział Historyczno-Filozoficzny* 13 (1897) 166-288.

² R. Heck, *Tabor a kandydatura jagiellońska w Czechach (1438-1444)* [Tabor and the Jagiellonian Candidate in Bohemia (1438-1444)] (Wrocław, 1964); *idem*, "Walka ideologiczno-propagandowa o kandydaturę Jagiellońską w Czechach w roku 1438" [Ideological and Propagandist Struggle for the Jagiellonian Candidate in 1438], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 18,2 (1963) 96-119.

³ E. Maleczyńska, *Ruch husycki w Czechach i w Polsce* [The Hussite Movement in Bohemia and Poland] (Warszawa, 1959).

⁴ J. Mikulka, "Mistr Jan Hus a Polsko," *Slovanské historické studie* 2 (1957) 119-99; *idem*, "Polští kněží-husité v Čechách," *Slezský sborník* 57 (1959) 473-5; *idem*, "Polacy w Czechach i ich rola w rozwoju husytyzmu," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 11 (1966) 5-27.

⁵ J. Bidlo, "Čeští emigranti v Polsku v době husitské a mnich Jeronym Pražský," *ČČM* 69 (1895) 118-128, 232-265, 424-452.

⁶ J. Kadlec, "Czeska katolicka emigracja okresu husytyzmu na ziemiach polskich i na Śląsku" [Czech Catholic Emigration in Poland and Silesia in the Hussite Period], *Zeszyty Naukowe KUL* 19 (1976) 27-36.

⁷ See the earlier studies: J. Macek, *Husité na Baltu a ve Velkopolsku* (Praha, 1952) [later published in Polish as *Husyci na Pomorzu i w Wielkopolsce*, ed. E. Maleczyńska (Warszawa, 1955)]; E. Maleczyńska, *Ruch husycki*; J. Mikulka, *Polské země a hereze v době před reformaci* (Praha, 1969).

Among the latest works on Polish Hussites see: S. Bylina, "Problém ohlasu husitství v Polském království," *Jihlava a basilejská kompaktata* (Jihlava, 1992) 135-149; W. Iwańczak, "Husytyzm w Polsce - fakty i mity" [Hussitism in Poland - Facts and Myths], *Kieleckie Studia Historyczne* 11 (1993) 41-52; P. Kras, *Husyci w piętnastowiecznej Polsce* [Hussites in Fifteenth Century Poland], (Lublin, 1998); *idem*, "Hussites in Fifteenth Century Poland," in: Geist, Gesellschaft, Kirche im 13.-16. Jahrhundert, *Colloquia mediaevalia Pragensia* 1 (1999) 177-89.

The movement for a deep religious reform of the church initiated by Jan Hus and his Bohemian followers was carefully watched in Poland arousing wide discussion and various comments. Polish visitors in Prague witnessed the sequence of events which led to the outbreak of the Hussite revolution and provided details about the religious upheaval in the neighbouring country. The emergence and growth of the Bohemian Reformation became fast the matter of growing concern for the Polish clergy.

Close links which bound Polish intellectual elites with the University of Prague in the pre-Hussite period facilitated the exchange of persons, ideas and books. It is worth reminding here that about 300 Poles studied in Prague at the turn of the fifteenth century. Before the University of Cracow was refounded by Władysław Jagiełło in 1400 (its foundation in 1364 was followed by a period of serious decline), Prague had been a main centre of learning for most Polish students. Among the first eleven rectors of Cracow University, nine studied and obtained their degrees in Prague.⁸ *Peregrinatio academica* from Poland to Bohemia created favourable opportunities to participate in a fierce discussion on the crisis in Christianity and the programme of church reform propagated by Prague academics and religious preachers. Some of the Polish students in Prague became familiar with the teaching of pre-Hussite reformers like Conrad Waldhausen and Jan Milič, and brought collections of their sermons to Poland. In the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow there is still a copy of Jan Milič's postilla *A Pascha usque ad Adventum Domini*, which was copied in 1403 by Piotr Strasz.⁹ An unknown Polish student brought Waldhausen's postilla to Cracow in the first decade of the fifteenth century and another copy belonged to the collection of the collegiate church in Wiślica.¹⁰ Polish students in Prague had a unique chance to meet Jan Hus and other leaders of Bohemian reformation. They could listen to the preaching of Jan Hus and other Hussite leaders, and after their return to Poland they spread the information about the ideas of the Bohemian reformation among their compatriots.¹¹ Some of them, who later became eminent Cracow professors, studied under their supervision. For example Jan Hus examined Andrew of Kokorzyno for his MA degree and Jerome of Prague examined Nicholas Kozłowski for his bachelor degree.¹²

Some Polish students while in Prague became ardent advocates of the moral reform of the church which was widely proclaimed in Bohemia. They engaged in preaching and publicly criticized the negligence of the clergy in their performance of

⁸ H. Barycz, "Dziejowe związki Polski z Uniwersytetem Karola w Pradze" [Historical Relations of Poland with Charles' University in Prague], *Przegląd Zachodni* 3 (1948) 7-18; J. Krzyżaniakowa, "Profesorowie krakowscy na Uniwersytecie w Pradze - ich mistrzowie i koledzy" [Cracow Professors at the University of Prague - their Masters and Collegues], in: *Cracovia, Polonia, Europa. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane Jerzemu Wyrozumskiemu w sześćdziesiątą piątą rocznicę urodzin i czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej*, ed. W. Bukowski et al, (Kraków, 1995) 505-27.

⁹ B. Leszczyńska, "Jan Milicz z Kromierza i jego kontakty z ziemiami polskimi" [Jan Milicz of Kromieriz and His Contacts with the Polish Lands], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny. Sobótka* 15 (1960) 19-22.

¹⁰ S. Bylina, *Wpływy Konrada Waldhausena na ziemiach polskich w drugiej połowie XIV i pierwszej połowie XV wieku* [The Influence of Conrad Waldhausen on the Polish Lands in the Second half of the 14th Century and the First Half of the 16th Century], (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1966) 104-111. For further discussion see P. Kras, *Husyci* 34-5.

¹¹ H. Barycz, *Z dziejów polskich wędrówek naukowych zagranicę* [On the History of Polish Scholarly Journeys Abroad] (Wrocław, 1969) 21-3; J. Garbacik, A. Strzelecka, "Uniwersytet Jagielloński wobec problemów husyckich w XV wieku" [The Jagiellonian University and the Hussite Problems in the 15th Century], *Acta Universitatis Carolinae. Historia* 5 (1964) fasc. 1-2, 8-12.

¹² H. Barycz, "Dziejowe związki" 27.

the sacraments and ministry. After his return from Prague, Łukasz of Wielki Koźmin continued his studies at Cracow University and simultaneously acted as a parish priest in a little village of Beszowa. In his parish church he frequently preached and explained the Bible in the Polish vernacular, encouraging the faithful to follow Christ in His poverty. His sermons became so widely popular that on every feast when he was preaching, crowds of men and women marched to Beszowa from near and far.¹³ Another Polish preacher Bartłomiej of Jasło violently attacked moral decline of the clergy denouncing their avarice, ignorance, and desire for wealth. He did not hesitate to publicly criticize solemn processions with the Eucharist and a Jubilee indulgence, calling such practices abuse of the clergy.¹⁴ There is no doubt that as far as the forms and contents of their teaching are concerned, both preachers were inspired by the ideas of the Bohemian reformation. Though critical towards the negligent and immoral clergy, they remained firmly Catholic and loyal to the Church authorities.

Before Hus was condemned and burnt at Constance, his religious teaching in Bohemia had not aroused much fear among the Polish clergy. Moreover, Hus's ideas gained some interest among Polish clergy and at the university of Cracow.¹⁵ There is some evidence to argue that in the beginning Polish king Władysław Jagiełło (1386-1434) looked with some sympathy at the activity of Jan Hus. The growing interest of the royal court in the Bohemian reformation was stimulated by the friendly political relations with the Bohemian Crown in the first decade of the fifteenth century. In search for allies in the conflict with the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, Władysław Jagiełło counted on the support of the Bohemian King Wenceslas IV. But disappointed by the unfavourable mediation of the Czech king, Jagiełło decided to establish direct contacts with the Prague University.¹⁶ After the battle of Grunwald in 1410 he wrote a letter to the Prague masters informing them about his victory over the Teutonic Knights. At the end of February 1411 Jan Hus answered this letter on behalf of the University of Prague and congratulated the Polish king on - what he called - the great victory of the Slavs over the Germans.¹⁷ The letter itself was nothing but a formal, though very kind reply. Nevertheless, it initiated further contacts between the Polish king and the reforming circles in Prague. A year later Hus wrote another letter to the Polish king (11 June 1412), at that time on his own initiative. The open conflict between the Prague clergy and the papacy as well as the loss of Wenceslas's support, after his protest against the papal indulgences in 1412, moved Hus to look for powerful advocates of his reform outside his country. Facing papal excommunication, Hus needed more publicity for his teaching throughout the Christian world. That is why his second letter to Jagiełło should be analyzed in a broader perspective. For Hus the Polish king was one of the European monarchs who could support his reform programme in a wider European forum. Therefore, he called the Polish king to back ecclesiastical reform and, together with other European rulers, suppress the heresy of simony (*simoniaca haeresis*) which, in his opinion, was the root of all evil in the church.

¹³ M. Kowalczyk, "Łukasz z Wielkiego Koźmina," in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 18:536-7.

¹⁴ M. Kowalczyk, "Odnowienie Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w świetle mów Bartłomieja z Jasła" [The Refoundation of the Jagiellonian University in the Light of Bartłomiej of Jasło], *Małopolskie Studia Historyczne* 6 (1964) nn. 3-4, 27-8.

¹⁵ P. Kras, *Husyci* 36-37; J. Krzyżaniakowa, "Stanowisko polskiej elity intelektualnej wobec Jana Husa i husytyzmu - do roku 1420" [The Attitude of the Polish Intellectual Elite to Jan Hus and Hussitism until 1420], in: *Polskie echa husytyzmu*, ed. S. Bylina, R. Gładkiewicz (Warszawa, 1990) 32-53.

¹⁶ P. Kras, *Husyci* 38-40.

¹⁷ Novotný 86.

Trying to explain the pitiful effects of simony in the church, Hus complained about ecclesiastical dignities which became trading goods and were sold to dishonest men. Such practice fostered abuse and resulted in the negligence of the service of God. Priests who had bought their parish livings took care neither of the liturgy nor of preaching. Hus presented himself as a victim of the corrupted clergy whose vices he publicly denounced. At the end of his letter Hus declared his determination to fight against simony to his death.¹⁸

A careful analysis of Hus's letter reveals that his intention was first to explain the reasons for his teaching and rebut the charges of heresy spread by his enemies. It seems that this letter was one of the attempts undertaken by Bohemian reformers to gain support of the Polish monarch for their reform. Probably the same goals gave rise to the mission of Jerome of Prague, who came to Cracow in the early spring of 1413. Jerome's visit in Cracow belongs to the most obscure episodes in his life.¹⁹ According to Jerome, he had been invited to Poland by the Polish king and the grand duke of Lithuania. On the other hand, however, Wojciech Jastrzębiec, bishop of Cracow and a member of the royal council denied any role of Jagiełło and his court. Whatever reasons inspired Jerome's mission he was warmly welcomed by the king and his entourage. On the day after his arrival to Cracow, Jerome was granted an official audience at the royal castle. He appeared there, cleanly shaven and dressed in a rich purple tunic with a fur lining. His solemn robes contrasted with his untidy appearance of the previous day and may reveal that he had come to the Polish king as an academic, a man of learning, probably a representative of the Prague University. Unfortunately, the details of his meeting with Jagiełło remain unknown. We may assume that he informed the king about the aims of the Hussite movement in Bohemia and in particular about Hus's conflict with the Prague clergy. On the following days he started preaching in Cracow, criticizing abuses of the clergy and propagating ideas of the Bohemian reformation. His anticlerical sermons incited townspeople and aroused popular unrest. As a consequence, he was brought to the court of the bishop of Cracow under a charge of spreading Wyclif's doctrine. The bishop, however, decided to release Jerome because his teaching seemed to him to be too sophisticated to be understood by the simple Polish folk.²⁰ To avoid further unrest Jerome was forced to leave Cracow immediately, though at Constance the Polish clergy claimed that had escaped from Cracow secretly.²¹ Invited by Grand Duke Vitold he went to Lithuania, where his friendly comments on the Orthodox Church caused much confusion among the Catholics. His activity in Lithuania was closely observed by the Polish clergy, who later, during his trial at Constance, provided evidence about his preaching.²²

Jerome's visit in Cracow provoked hostile reactions abroad in the circles ill-disposed towards the Hussite reform. Professor John Sybart of Vienna, a well-known opponent of the Bohemian reformation, charged Jerome with spreading heretical ideas in Poland and seducing Jagiełło and Witold into heresy. His accusations were at once refuted by Jan Hus, who called Sybart a liar.²³

¹⁸ Novotný 122.

¹⁹ F. Šmahel, *Mistr Jeroným Pražský* (Praha, 1966) 137-9.

²⁰ "Terra nostra ad semen suum videtur esse arida capiendum et fructum afferendum, eo quod simplex plebiculus philosophi [i.e. of John Wyclif] dogmata comprehendere non valet et multaminus terrae Lituanorum et Russiae." *Documenta* 506.

²¹ Mansi 27:846; for further discussion see P. Kras, *Husyci* 40-44.

²² Mansi 27:793-4, 846; F. Šmahel, *Mistr Jeroným* 141-3.

²³ *Documenta* 63-4; P.P. Bernard, "Jerome of Prague, Austria and the Hussites," *Church History*, 27

This neutral or, on occasion, favourable attitude towards Hus shifted during the Council of Constance. Polish participants at the council were interested in the course taken by Hus's trial and some of them visited with Hus. In Constance, Polish knights protested against the breach of the safe conduct granted Hus by Sigismund Luxembourg and his ensuing imprisonment. At the beginning of March 1415, two representatives of the Polish king, Zawisza Czarny and Janusz of Tuliszkowo together with other Polish knights, visited Hus in a prison. Two months later the same group signed a petition to Sigismund Luxembourg. Acting together with the Czech nobles, they wanted Hus to be released and put on a trial.²⁴ Thanks to these protests Hus's trial started earlier. In his letters written in Constance a month before his execution, Hus expressed his gratitude to the Polish knights for their support.²⁵ He also thanked a certain Polish doctor, commonly identified as Paweł Włodkowic, the rector of Cracow, who had visited him in prison.²⁶

The representatives of the Polish Church took part in the trial of Hus. The Bishop Poznań, Andrew Łaskarz, was a member of the conciliar commission which judged Hus.²⁷ In addition, on 6 July 1415 Nicolas Trąba, the Primate of Poland and Archbishop of Gniezno, celebrated the mass which preceded the announcement of the Council's verdict against Hus and his subsequent burning at the stake.²⁸ A group of Polish clergy attended the burning of Hus's treatise *De ecclesia* and his other writings.²⁹

Hus's trial at Constance became a matter under discussion among the Polish clergy and the laity. In April 1415 the parish-priest Jan of Trląg defended Hus's doctrine in the debate with a parish-priest from the neighbouring village of Strzelce. He called Hus a good Catholic and a saint. In his admiration of Hus he went so far to wish that his soul would find a resting place close the soul of Hus.³⁰

The condemnation and burning of Hus was accepted with dismay and confusion by the adherents of the Bohemian Reformation in Poland. In 1417 the Czech knight Nicholas openly criticized the council and glorified Hus at the Lithuanian court of Vitold.³¹ At the same time another Polish advocate of Hus had to accept the council's verdict in the ecclesiastical court lest he himself should be charged with heresy. To prevent further hostile comments on the burning of Hus, the Andrzej Łaskarz, the Bishop of Poznań, inserted into his diocesan statutes a separate article threatening with excommunication those who contested the council's decisions.³²

At the University of Cracow, fear of heresy and loyalty to the Council proved stronger than its previous sympathy for Hus's teaching. The university soon became a

(1958) 10; S. Garbacik, A. Strzelecka, "Uniwersytet Jagielloński," 21.

²⁴ *Documenta* 99 and 256-8; Petrus de Mladenovice, "Relatio," FRB 8:44-5; A. Prochaska, *Sobór w Konstancji* (Kraków, 1996²) 23-6.

²⁵ Novotný, 140, 153, 160.

²⁶ Novotný, 24.

²⁷ S. Silnicki, *Arcybiskup Mikołaj Trąba* (Warszawa, 1954) 142; M. Frontczyk, "Andrzej Łaskarz, biskup poznański," *Nasza Przeszłość* 30 (1969) 153.

²⁸ Mansi 27:747.

²⁹ Mansi 27:768.

³⁰ *Acta capitulorum necnon iudiciorum ecclesiasticorum selecta*, ed. B. Ulanowski, ii (Cracoviae, 1902) 15-6; P. Kras, *Husyci* 48.

³¹ *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi, magni ducis Lithuaniae*, ed. A. Prochaska (Cracoviae, 1882) 382.

³² J. Sawicki, *Concilia Poloniae. Źródło i studia historyczne*, vii (Poznań, 1952) 157.

centre of anti-Hussite polemic and produced a number of theological writings against communion *sub utraque* for the laity and the concept of the Church as the community of the predestined.³³ In order to protect the university from the influence of Hussite teaching, after 1423 each student had to swear a matriculation oath that he had nothing in common with Hussite ideas.³⁴

Geographical proximity, cognation of language and strong mutual contacts facilitated the transmission of Hussite ideas from Bohemia to Poland. Poles travelling to or through Bohemia had a good opportunity to learn Hussite teaching and to participate in Hussite religious practices. They also provided and circulated current news about political, social and religious changes which took place in Hussite Bohemia. Direct contacts between Poles and Czechs were regarded as a great danger for the Polish Church. After Hus's condemnation at Constance, the clergy took steps to reduce the penetration of Hussite teaching in Poland.³⁵ In 1420 the provincial synod of Wieluń issued complex anti-Hussite regulations, the *Remedia contra haereticos*, which forbade Poles to go to Bohemia on pain of being summoned before inquisitorial courts under charges of heresy. Simultaneously, special ecclesiastical commissions were established to interrogate Poles returning from Bohemia.³⁶ In the synodal statutes Bohemia was presented as a country where all inhabitants adhered to heresy and chaos prevailed. Catholic preachers popularised an apocalyptic image of Hussite Bohemia, where heretics overthrew the legal successor to the Bohemian crown, Sigismund Luxembourg, persecuted Catholics, murdered Catholic priests, burnt down churches and robbed ecclesiastical treasuries.³⁷ There is no doubt that anti-Hussite propaganda was one of the means adopted by the clergy to discourage Polish Catholics from travelling to Bohemia or having any contacts with Czechs.

The burning of Hus at Constance was a turning point in the approach of the royal court towards the Bohemian Reformation. Polish kings firmly opposed the penetration of Hussite doctrine into Poland.³⁸ After the council of Constance king

³³ M. Rechowicz, "Po założeniu Wydziału Teologicznego w Krakowie" [After the Foundation of the Theological Faculty in Cracow], in: *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce* [A History of Catholic Theology in Poland], i (Lublin, 1975) 135-8; M. Markowski, *Dzieje Wydziału Teologii Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego* [A History of the Theological Faculty of Cracow University] (Kraków, 1996) 86-9.

³⁴ *Album studiosorum Universitatis Cracoviensis*, ed. Z. Pauli, i (Kraków, 1887) 11; S. Garbacik, A. Strzelecka, "Uniwersytet Krakowski," 32.

³⁵ P. Kras, *Husyci* 209-42; J. Drabina, "Episkopat polski wobec husytyzmu" [The Polish Episcopate Towards Hussitism], in: *Echa husytyzmu* 62-81.

³⁶ *Statuty wieluńsko-kaliskie Mikołaja Trąby z 1420 roku* [The Provincial Statute of Wieluń and Kalisz issued by Mikołaj Trąba in 1420], ed. J. Fijałek, A. Vetulani (Kraków, 1951) 94-6.

³⁷ P. Kras, "*Furor Hussitarum* - husytyzm w wybranych relacjach dziejopisarskich z XV wieku" [Furor Hussitarum - Hussitism in the Selected Historiographical Reports from the 15th Century], in: *Uniwersalizm i regionalizm w kronikarstwie Europy środkowo-wschodniej. Średniowiecze-początek czasów nowożytnych* [Universal and Regional Ideas in the Chronicles of East Central Europe. Middle Ages-Early Modern Times], ed. U. Borkowska (Lublin, 1996) 84-108; S. Bylina, "Wizerunek heretyka w Polsce późnośredniowiecznej" [The Image of a Heretic in Late Medieval Poland], *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 30 (1985) 11-23; see also my article on "Wizerunek Czecha-husyty w Polsce za panowania Władysława Jagiełły" [The Image of Czech-Hussite in Poland during the reign of Władysław Jagiełło], in: *Polaków i Czechów wizerunek wzajemny (XII-XVII w.)* [The Mutual Images of Czechs and Poles in the 12th-17th Centuries], ed. S. Bylina, R. Gładkiewicz (Warszawa 2001, forthcoming).

A detailed study on Jan Długosz' attitude to Hussites is presented in U. Borkowska, *Treści ideowe w dziełach Jana Długosza. Kościół i świat poza Kościołem* [Ideological Contents in the Writings of Jan Długosz. The Church and the World outside the Church] (Lublin, 1983) 145-70.

³⁸ I have discussed that problem in my *Husyci* 231-41.

Władysław Jagiełło introduced anti-Hussite laws and supported the Polish Church in the persecution of Polish Hussites. In August 1416 the Polish king accepted the council's verdict against Hus and declared it his will to defend the Church against the Czech heresy.³⁹ In 1424 he issued the anti-Hussite edict, calling all Poles staying in Bohemia to return immediately to Poland or else they would be declared heretics and their estates confiscated.⁴⁰

Despite these harsh measures against Polish Hussites, the Polish policy towards Hussite Bohemia was ambiguous. On the one hand king Jagiełło tried to maintain friendly relations with Czech Hussites and acted as a mediator between Hussites, the papacy, and Sigismund Luxembourg.⁴¹ Twice, in 1421 and 1431, he organized and patronized public debates with Hussites.⁴² The public debate organised on 19 April 1431 took place at the royal castle in Cracow in the presence of the king and his court. The Czech delegation consisted of leading figures in the Hussite movement: Prokop the Bald, Peter Payne, Willem Kostka z Postupíc and Bedřich of Stražnice. Their opponents were the most prominent professors of Cracow university, famous for their learning in theology and widely known for their polemic with Hussite tenets: Stanislaw of Skarbimierz, Jakub of Paradyż, Jan Elgot, Andrzej of Kokorzyno, Franciszek z Brzegu and Benedykt Hesse. King Władysław Jagiełło hoped that the debate would pave the way for the return of the Czech Hussites to the Roman Church and therefore its purpose was to discuss theological and liturgical differences between the Utraquist doctrine and the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.⁴³ However, while the debates failed to overcome the theological controversies between the two parties, they played an important role in promoting the policy of dialogue and negotiations with the Utraquists which was later adopted by Sigismund Luxembourg and the council of Basel.⁴⁴

On the other hand, on various occasions king Władysław Jagiełło declared his solidarity with the Roman Church and the western countries in fighting against Hussite Bohemia and supported all attempts to suppress the Hussite revolution by military force. As a newcomer among Christian rulers, Jagiełło was vulnerable to charges of heresy and had to tend to his image abroad. His policy towards Czech Hussites was widely regarded as a test of his conversion to Christianity and his loyalty to the Roman Church. Therefore, as far as the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church was concerned, the king stood firmly in the vanguard of Christian monarchs complaining

³⁹ Hardt 4:868.

⁴⁰ *Volumina legum*, ed. J. Ohryzko, (Sankt Petersburg, 1859) 38; see also my analysis of the edict in a broader political perspective "Edykt wieluński z 1424 i udział brachium saeculare w walce z husytyzmem w XV-wiecznej Polsce" [The Edict of Wieluń and the Participation of brachium saeculare in the Persecution of Hussitism in Fifteenth Century Poland], *Summarium* 26-27 (1997-1998) 63-77.

⁴¹ J. Grygiel, *Życie i działalność Zygmunta Korybutowicza. Studium z dziejów stosunków polsko-czeskich w pierwszej połowie XV wieku* [The Life and Activity of Sigismund Korybut. A Study in the History of Polish-Czech Relations in the First Half of the 15th Century] (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź, 1988).

⁴² S. Garbacik, A. Strzelecka, "Uniwersytet Krakowski," 27-38.

⁴³ Details about the debate are provided by king Władysław Jagiełło in his letter to Sigismund Luxembourg. During the debate, Hussite delegates had proposed conditions for their participation in the council of Basel, which were later discussed at the meeting with Sigismund Luxembourg in Cheb. *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte des Hussitenkrieges vom Jahre 1419 an 1436 ii* (Praha, 1873) 205-8. More information about the Hussite delegates and their stay in Cracow in 1431 are presented by Jan Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae Libri XII*, ed. A. Przezdziecki, iv (Cracoviae, 1887) 437-41.

⁴⁴ *Husitská revoluce* 3:231-2

about Hussite ferocity and their ravages in Bohemia.⁴⁵ But to achieve his political goals, the king was ready to co-operate with Czech Hussites whenever this served the purposes of state. He successfully managed to check Sigismund Luxembourg with a prospect of his pro-Hussite policy, and thus kept him away from the Polish-Teutonic conflict in Prussia. Despite many protests from Poland and abroad, in 1432 he signed a military alliance with the Orphan army of Jan Čapek of Sán to campaign together against the Teutonic Knights. The following year the Polish army fought side by side with the Hussites in Teutonic Prussia.⁴⁶ On the one hand, the Teutonic chronicler Conrad Bitchin, in his report on the joint Czech-Polish expedition to Prussia, called the Poles heretics who, regardless of their Catholic faith, had committed the same atrocities as their Hussite allies.⁴⁷ The Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, whose anti-Hussite opinions are widely-known, could hardly explain the reasons for an alliance between the Catholic king and the “Czech heretics”. In his *Annals of the Polish kingdom* he did his best to stress the military goals of the Polish-Czech expedition to Prussia and maintained that the Czech Hussites had no impact on the religious practice of Polish knights. Moreover, he argued that such close contacts with heretics brought some good results and discouraged even those Poles who had been earlier interested in Hussite doctrine from supporting heresy.⁴⁸

Despite bans and harsh penalties Poles continued to go to Bohemia throughout the fifteenth century. Ecclesiastical registers record dozens of Poles who were interrogated under charges of heresy after their return from Bohemia. According to the testimonies delivered before ecclesiastical courts, most of them participated in Hussite religious ceremonies, listened to Hussite preachers and received communion *sub utraque*. But only a few remained faithful to Hussite teaching after their return to Poland or had enough courage to declare their support for Hussite doctrine during the ecclesiastical interrogation.⁴⁹

Individual experience and contacts with Hussite preachers often stimulated interests in the Bohemian reformation. The sermons of Jan Hus attracted Poles staying in Prague. One of them, Vincent, probably as a student in Prague, listened to and copied Hus's sermons. More than twenty years later as a parish priest in Żydowo he acknowledged his interest in Hus's teaching and had to get exemption from punishment at the papal court in Rome.⁵⁰ In the later period the sermons of Jan Rokycana gained much popularity among Poles coming to Prague. Attendance at Rokycana's sermons seems to have been a real attraction to Polish visitors in Prague who wanted to see and hear the famous head of the Utraquist Church.⁵¹ Two priests:

⁴⁵ J. Krzyżaniakowa, J. Ochmański, *Władysław II Jagiełło* (Wrocław, 1990) 261-76; For detailed analysis of Jagiełło's correspondence see P. Kras, “Wizerunek Czecha-husyty.”

⁴⁶ J. Macek, *Husyci na Pomorzu i w Wielkopolsce* [Hussites in Pomerania and Great Poland] (Warszawa, 1955) 66-82; *Husitská revoluce* 3:267-9.

⁴⁷ *Fortsetzung zu Peter von Dusburgs. Chronik von Conrad Bitschin*, ed. M. Toeppen, *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, iii (Leipzig, 1866) 513; see also P. Kras, “*Furor Hussitarum*,” 106.

⁴⁸ “Nihil enim bello hoc de moribus Bohemorum hauserant: quinimo Deo corda eorum dirigente, detestari eorum haeresim, sectam et more vehementius ab eo tempore coeperunt, etiam hi, qui illis clandestine favere consuerunt, postquam spurcitas eorum viderent, multum distantes et abhorrentes a cultu catholicae puritatis.” J. Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae* 4:511.

⁴⁹ P. Kras, *Husyci* 50-62.

⁵⁰ *Bullarium Poloniae*, ed. S. Kuraś, I. Sułkowska-Kuraś, (Lublin-Rome, 1995) 139.

⁵¹ P. Kras, *Husyci* 60-1.

Stanisław of Pakość (1455)⁵² and Adam of Radziejów (1499) acknowledged that they had listened to Rokycana's preaching in Prague. The latter highly estimated Rokycana's knowledge, piety and morality.⁵³ Similar opinions were expressed by two lay inhabitants of Poznań who, after their return from Bohemia, called Rokycana a good Christian and even a saint. The popularity of Rokycana's sermons became a matter of deep concern for the Polish clergy who used to ask Poles coming from Bohemia about their attendance at his sermons.⁵⁴

Poles who lived among Czech Hussites provided direct information about the Bohemian reformation and Hussite religious practice. Sometimes they vigorously discussed the Hussite doctrine with their relatives, friends and neighbours. In 1455 Andrzej, priest in Trzemeszno, who had just come back from Bohemia, presented Hussite ideas during dinner, advocating poverty of the church and secularization of the clergy. His opinions were violently opposed by another participant Jan, the parish priest at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Gniezno, who called him a heretic and his opinions anticlerical.⁵⁵

There is some evidence that the Hussite groups in Great Poland and Cuyavia established direct contacts with Czech Hussites. Probably, the noble founder of the Hussite community in the Zbąszyń area, Abraham Zbąski, became familiar with Hussite doctrine during his diplomatic mission to Bohemia in 1431. At that time he was dispatched as a royal envoy to take part in the Czech diet in Prague.⁵⁶ However, it is impossible to find any coincidence between his mission and the subsequent activity of Hussite priests in his lands, Zbąski's interest in the Bohemian Reformation might originate from the time of his stay in Bohemia. Polish advocates of the lay chalice from the areas of Zbąszyń, Pakość and Nieszawa travelled to Bohemia and lived there among Czech Hussites. After their return they were interrogated in ecclesiastical courts about their contacts with Czech Hussites, had to abjure Hussite heresy and swear never again to go to Bohemia without the consent of their bishop.⁵⁷

The outbreak of the Hussite revolution in 1419 only slightly reduced the number of Polish students in Prague. The drop of Polish students at the Charles University took place at the beginning of the fifteenth century and resulted mainly from the swift development of Cracow University.⁵⁸ During the Hussite revolution Poles studied at Prague University, receiving academic degrees and pursuing their academic career. Here, it is worth mentioning at least two Polish professors: the mathematician and physician Martin of Łęczyca and the philosopher Stanislas of Gniezno both of whom achieved the highest university offices. While there is no evidence that they adhered to

⁵² *Acta capitulorum* 2:199.

⁵³ *Acta capitulorum* 3:266.

⁵⁴ In 1450 Klemens, priest at St. Michael's Church in Gniezno, had to take an oath that he had not listened to the preaching of Jan Rokycana during his stay in Bohemia. "Gnesner Hussitenverhöre 1450-1452," ed. A. Kunkel, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichte* 38 (1920) 323.

⁵⁵ *Acta capitulorum* 2:196.

⁵⁶ A. Gašiorowski, "Husyty Abrahama Zbąskiego działalność publiczna" [Public Activity of the Hussite Abraham Zbąski], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 36 (1981) 139-140; P. Kras, "Hussitism and the Polish Nobility," in: *Lollardy and the Gentry in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. M. Aston, R. Collins (Stroud-New York, 1997) 188-191.

⁵⁷ For more details see P. Kras, *Husyci* 53-6.

⁵⁸ *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego* [A History of the Jagiellonian University], ed. K. Lepszy, (Kraków, 1964) 55-6; F. Šmahel, *Pražské universitní studenstvo v předrevolučním období 1399-1419*, Rozpravy ČSAV, ČSV 77-3 (Praha, 1967) 17-8, 74-7.

Hussite ideas, they were working and pursuing their career at the university which accepted communion *sub utraque* for the laity, supported the Four Articles of Prague and became an intellectual centre of the Hussite movement.⁵⁹

Ecclesiastical registers reveal that some families, in particular from Cuyavia, sent their children to study in Prague. Such a practice is confirmed by the testimony of an unknown Cracow student from the Dobrzyń region, an area notorious for the Hussite practice of communion *sub utraque*. He admitted that as a young boy he had been dispatched by his parents to Prague to "broaden his knowledge of God's truth, which was taught in Bohemia." He studied in Prague for two years and then, contrary to his parents' will, left Prague for Cracow and rejected Hussite doctrine.⁶⁰ It is hard to estimate the scale of such academic journeys from Poland to Prague in the Hussite period. Jaromir Mikulka, who had carefully examined the registers of the Prague university, found a dozen Poles who studied and obtained their degrees in Prague during the Hussite revolution.⁶¹ The number of Polish students in Prague dropped primarily as a result of the decline of the Charles University and, simultaneously, the growing fame of Cracow University. Religious reasons came second.

Polish clergy were anxious about these academic journeys to Prague and tried to put an end to unauthorized studies in Utraquist Bohemia. In 1449 Paweł Giżycki, Bishop of Płock, issued new statutes which forbade young clerics to study in Prague. Moreover, parish priests were forbidden to entrust any parish duties to clerics returning from Bohemia.⁶² These measures were to strengthen the control over the preaching in parish churches and to prevent the dissemination of Hussite ideas from parish pulpits.⁶³

Polish merchants and artisans constituted another group who, despite ecclesiastical and royal precautions, travelled to Bohemia on a regular basis. Trade routes which developed in the fourteenth century established firm connections between the two countries.⁶⁴ The Hussite revolution did not stop the trade on the two routes, but even stimulated new forms of exchange. The political isolation of Hussite Bohemia and the breach of direct contacts with German countries made Poland an important trading partner, which supplied Bohemia with such needed goods as arms, horses, and raw materials such as lead and foodstuffs. On various occasions Sigismund Luxembourg complained about Polish merchants selling their goods to the Hussites and exerted heavy pressure on the Polish king to suppress the exchange between the two countries.

This intensive exchange of trade played an important part in establishing regular contacts between Polish and Czech Hussites. Some merchants acted as Hussite agents and brought news about the fate of Polish refugees in Bohemia and

⁵⁹ J. Mikulka, "Polacy" 9-11.

⁶⁰ *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, ed. A. Sokołowski, J. Szujski, (Cracow, 1876) 347.

⁶¹ J. Mikulka, "Polacy" 9-11; see also H. Barycz, *Z dziejów polskich wędrówek naukowych zagranicę* [On the History of Polish Academic Journeys Abroad] (Wrocław, 1969) 24-6.

⁶² *Acta capitulorum Plocensis selecta (1438-1523)*, ed. B. Ulanowski, in: *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej*, vi (Cracoviae, 1891) 98.

⁶³ P. Kras, *Husyci* 50-1.

⁶⁴ K. Myśliński, "Rola miast Polski środkowej w handlu z krajami na południe od Karpat do końca XV wieku" [The Role of Towns in Middle Poland in the Trade south of the Carpathian Mountains till the End of the 15th Century], *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego* no. 494 (1977), *Prace Historyczne* no. 56:19-31.

supplied Hussite groups with books. For example Gąska, an Utraquist priest and leader of Hussite group in Inowrocław (in Cuyavia), once travelled to Wrocław in Silesia disguised as a merchant.⁶⁵ In 1479 facing persecution, Gąska left Cuyavia for Silesia. Soon after his escape an unknown Bohemian coachman met in Bydgoszcz another Hussite priest Maciej of Szelejewo and assured him that Gąska was doing well in the Silesian town Kłodzko.⁶⁶

The migration of Polish priests to Bohemia is another fascinating phenomenon which deserves comment. The studies of R. Heck⁶⁷, J. Mikulka⁶⁸ and A. Mařík⁶⁹ have revealed dozens of Polish priests who adhered to Hussite doctrine and worked in Utraquist parishes all around Bohemia. The shortage of ordained priests caused serious problems for the Utraquist Church and, therefore, foreign priests were warmly welcome in Bohemia. Among them Polish priests constituted majority. The scale of this phenomenon was surprising even to the contemporaries. In 1468 the papal legate, Rudolf, reported that one out of twenty "heretical priests" in Bohemia was of Polish origin.⁷⁰ Reasons of this migration varied. Some Polish priests, who supported Hussite ideas, left Poland for Bohemia to avoid ecclesiastical persecution and join the Utraquist Church. In 1430 Szymon, the parish priest in Koneck, was interrogated about seven priests who fled from Cuyavia to Bohemia.⁷¹ In 1440 a group of Hussite priests from the Zbąszyń area followed into their footsteps after their protector Abraham Zbąski had abjured heresy.⁷²

In the fifteenth century Bohemia became a natural asylum for any Pole persecuted by the Catholic clergy. The Cracow, Professor Andrew Gałka of Dobczyn found refuge among the Taborites, after the Cracow clergy had denounced his interests in Wyclif's teaching. In 1449, facing trial before the inquisition, Gałka fled to Silesia, but in 1451 he was among the Taborite priests, who discussed Hussite doctrine with Čneas Silvius Piccolomini. Later, Gałka probably became a parish priest in Podvěki.⁷³

Numerous Polish priests sought their fortune in Bohemia and accepted Hussite doctrine to get any available ecclesiastical living. According to Čneas Silvius Piccolomini, a certain Polish priest became a Utraquist priest because he needed to earn his living and did not wish to dig or beg.⁷⁴ Some priests did not hesitate to lie and forge documents. For instance, on 6 December 1466, Mikołaj, a Polish Augustinian friar, appeared before the court of Hilary of Lutomerzyce, administrator of the Prague

⁶⁵ *Acta capitulorum* 3:534.

⁶⁶ *Acta capitulorum* 3:236. For more details about Gąska see P. Kras, *Husyci* 147-50 and J. Szweda, A. Szweda, "Z dziejów husytyzmu na Kujawach i w ziemi dobrzyńskiej" [On the History of Hussitism in Cuyavia and in the Dobrzyń Region], *Zapiski Kujawsko-Dobrzyńskie* 14 (2000) 49-51.

⁶⁷ R. Heck, "Z dziejów Polaków heretyków w Czechach w drugiej połowie XV wieku" [On a History of Poles-Heretics in Bohemia in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 14 (1959) 445-456.

⁶⁸ J. Mikulka, "Polští kněží-husité v Čechách," *Slezský sborník* 57 (1959) 473-475; *idem*, "Polacy" *passim*.

⁶⁹ A. Mařík, "K postavení katolické církve v Čechách v době poděbradské," *FHB* 7 (1984) 127-9.

⁷⁰ *Codex diplomaticus Brandenburgiae*, ed. Riedel, 3:456.

⁷¹ *Acta capitulorum* 3:230; see also my comments in *Husyci* 133-5.

⁷² J. Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae* 4:610.

⁷³ F.M. Bartoš, "Dílo a osud polského husity Ondřeje Galky," *Slavia* 37 (1967) 63-74; *idem*, "Osudy polského husity v Táboře a v Čechách," *Jihočeský sborník historický* 41 (1972) 111-4; P. Kras *Husyci* 75-82 and 193-201.

⁷⁴ Quoted after J. Mikulka, "Polacy" 14.

diocese, and acknowledged that he had forged documents and the seal of his general in order to get a better living in the Utraquist Church.⁷⁵ The behaviour and manners of some Polish priests working in Bohemia also became a matter of concern and bitter comment for Hussite nobility. In 1447 Czech nobles complained to Zbigniew Oleśnicki, the Bishop of Cracow, about the deplorable moral conduct of Polish priests working in Czech parishes. In his answer, Oleśnicki blamed the Czech Hussites for attracting such unworthy priests (*latrones et fures*) who were already severely persecuted in Poland.⁷⁶

Among Polish priests there are at least two prominent names: Mikołaj Zacheusz and Michał Polak, who played an important role in the Utraquist Church. In the 1440s and 1450s Zacheusz belonged to the most radical Utraquists and opposed any further concessions in the negotiations with the papacy. In 1447 he was a member of the Utraquist delegation which went to Rome to obtain papal confirmation of the Compactata and the election of Jan Rokycana as Archbishop of Prague.⁷⁷ Michał Polak came to Prague from Czeszewo in Great Poland, and in 1470s became priest vicar in the Tyn Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the parish priest of St. Giles the Old Town. After the death of Archbishop Jan Rokycana, he was one of the most zealous advocates of the Utraquist teaching under the reign of Ladislas the Jagiellon. Michał Polak became an Utraquist martyr when he died in prison for his uncompromising defence of the lay chalice.⁷⁸

In the turbulent period of the Hussite wars a number of Polish knights went to Bohemia and fought in the Hussite army. Most of them found it a good occasion to train their military skills and to seek their fortune. In the 1420s hundreds of Polish knights went to Bohemia in the retinue of Sigismund Korybut, nephew of the Polish king Władysław Jagiełło. They first accompanied Korybut in 1422, when he was invited to Bohemia as the representative of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Vitold. Later, in 1424, they supported the Lithuanian prince in his unsuccessful attempt to obtain the Bohemian crown.⁷⁹ The large participation of Poles in Korybut's expeditions gave rise to hostile comments in European courts. Pope Martin V and European monarchs, in particular Sigismund Luxembourg, protested against Korybut's expeditions and the activity of Polish knights in Hussite Bohemia.⁸⁰ While in Bohemia, Polish knights observed and participated in Hussite religious ceremonies. As early as 1422, at the Diet in Uničov their commander Sigismund Korybut himself received the eucharist *sub utraque* and swore to defend the chalice and "the Law of God".⁸¹ While he did so in order to gain more popularity among the Hussite nobles, some Polish knights followed his footsteps, for example Dobek Puchała.⁸² The chronicler Jan Długosz, while describing the second expedition in 1424, had no doubts that Korybut and his Polish mercenaries adhered to "Czech doctrine" and received communion *sub utraque* for

⁷⁵ R. Heck, "Z dziejów" 452-3; A. Mařík, "K postavení" 141.

⁷⁶ *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti* 1:20.

⁷⁷ J. Mikulka, "Polacy" 20-1.

⁷⁸ F.M. Bartoš, *Dvě studie o husitských postilách*, Rozpravy Československé Akademie Věd. RŠV 65-4 (Praha, 1955) 68-82; W. Iwańczak, "Ksiądz Michał Polak - święty czy kat poznański?" [Priest Michał Polak - a Saint or an Executioner from Poznań?], *Kronika Miasta Poznania* 61 (1993) 29-47.

⁷⁹ J. Grygiel, *Życie i działalność* 53-104.

⁸⁰ *Urkundliche Beiträge* 1:348-62; J. Grygiel, *Życie i działalność* 88-9.

⁸¹ *Staré letopisy české*, ed. F. Šimek (Praha, 1937) 52.

⁸² J. Jurok, "Moravští husité. Slezsko a Slovensko," in *Jihlava a basilejská kompaktata* (Jihlava, 1992) 41.

political reasons.⁸³ A group of Poles who accompanied Korybut settled in Prague and established there a separate Polish district.⁸⁴ This community was later joined by other refugees from Poland.

Most Polish participants in Korybut's expeditions remained Roman Catholic. In the spring of 1423, the knights who had returned from Bohemia were interrogated in the ecclesiastical court and had to refute Hussite teaching and swear never to return to Bohemia.⁸⁵ The well-known career of Peter Polak of Lychwin, once a Taborite commander, seems to have been typical of a young Polish noble whose service in the Hussite army promoted his military career and brought him prestige and wealth. Peter came to Bohemia probably in 1424 in the retinue of Korybut. His career in the Hussite army developed in the years 1428-1430 when he acted as the commander of the strategically important Silesian strongholds. His adherence to Hussite doctrine, if any, was weak and transient. After his return to Poland he lost all interest in the Bohemian Reformation. It is worth noting that his Hussite past did not interfere with his political career in Poland and he smoothly moved from lower to higher offices in the royal administration.⁸⁶

Church registers record only one knight among Polish Hussites who adhered to Hussite doctrine while in Hussite Bohemia and remained faithful to it after returning home. In his testimony, delivered in 1480, a Cuyavian noble, Frydan of Lubsino, described the circumstances of his adherence to the lay chalice. The first time he received communion *sub utraque* was in Moravia where he was working as a chamberlain to Anne, an Utraquist and later the wife of the Polish noble Mszczuj of Skrzynno. After her marriage to Mszczuj, he remained of Anne's service in Poland and continued to attend Utraquist services. In 1474 he took part in the expedition of the Polish king Casimir the Jagellon to Silesia, where he received communion *sub utraque* in the tent of a Czech knight, Samuel. He was an active member of Hussite groups in Cuyavia and received communion under both kinds from four Utraquist priests.⁸⁷

In addition, the Polish higher clergy looked with suspicion on Czechs who came to Poland. In the period of the Hussite wars Poland became an asylum for Czech Roman Catholics who did not want to accept Hussite religious practice and remained faithful to the papacy. Polish clergy attempted to control the inflow of people from Bohemia in search of Hussite preachers. There were, in fact, there were some Hussites among the Czech emigrants who came to Poland. The register of Poznań diocese records the trial against the Czech Jan, who settled with his wife in a small village Byszewo, in Great Poland. In 1445 his wife Margery denounced him as an Hussite, who forced her to accept Hussite teaching. In the court Jan acknowledged his adherence to Hussite doctrine and declared that he would remain Hussite to his death.⁸⁸

⁸³ J. Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae* 4:328.

⁸⁴ Tomek, *Dějepis* 10:15.

⁸⁵ See also my findings in the Polish episcopal registers in *Husyci* 54-5.

⁸⁶ A Marxist view on Piotr Polak's activity in Hussite Bohemia was presented by M. Wierzejska, "Piotr Polak 'defensor Regni Poloniae' w dobie walk husyckich" [Piotr Polak 'defensor Regni Poloniae' in the Period of Hussite Wars], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 8 (1953) 131-135; for a more accurate and critical analysis of Piotr's career see A. Gašiorowski, "Kariiera Piotra Polaka z Lychwina" [The Career of Piotr Polak of Lychwin], *Studia i Materiały do Dziejów Wielkopolski i Pomorza* 27 (1980) 31-45.

⁸⁷ *Acta capitulorum* 3:245-6; P. Kras, *Husyci* 153-7; A. Szweda, J. Szweda, "Z dziejów" 55-6.

⁸⁸ *Acta capitulorum* 3:551.

It is hard to define the scale of that phenomenon, however the ecclesiastical sources inform us about other similar cases. I have already mentioned the Moravian noblewoman Anne who married Mszczuj of Skrzynno, and continued to receive communion *sub utraque* in her husband's house.⁸⁹

Czech Hussites were found even in the household of king Władysław Jagiełło. One of them, Henry the Czech was a court astrologer who cast the king's horoscopes. He gained much favour of Jagiełło and his wife queen Sophia after he had foretold the birth of their two sons. During his stay in Cracow, Henry maintained regular contacts with his homeland and received Czech books. Twice he was put on a trial under charges of magic and heresy and was finally declared a relapsed heretic⁹⁰. Thanks only to the protection of the royal couple Henry avoided capital punishment and was released after a period of imprisonment.⁹¹

Another Czech Hussite, Pavel Kravař, arrived in Cracow around 1421 and became a court physician. At the end of 1431, after ten-years' service to the king, he left Poland under obscure circumstances.⁹² In his letter to the king, written in January 1432, he complained about the hatred and hostility he had suffered from other royal courtiers and blamed them for his decision to leave.⁹³ Unfortunately, we do not know the reasons behind these tensions. They may have resulted from Kravař's adherence to Hussite teaching. But owing to the lack of sources such an assumption must remain only a tempting speculation. From Cracow Kravař went to Prussia where, without success, he attempted to prevent the outbreak of war between the Polish King and the Teutonic Knights. In 1434, after a short stay in Prague, he was dispatched to Scotland probably to establish contacts with local Lollards. But soon after his landing at St Andrews he was captured while popularising Hussite doctrine and was burnt at the stake.⁹⁴

There is scant evidence that Czech Hussites attempted to popularise their doctrine in Poland. Polish ecclesiastical registers remain silent on Czech preachers involved in the activity of Polish Hussites. Probably Nicholas of Gniezno, a lay preacher acting among the Hussites in the Zbąszyń area, was of Czech origin.⁹⁵ He was an eager advocate of the lay chalice and was twice interrogated under the charge of popularising Hussite teaching. In the obscure circumstances two Czech Hussites: Osieczek and Maticzka were captured by the officials of king Władysław Jagiełło and imprisoned in the royal castle of Chęciny. They were accused of breaking church crosses.⁹⁶ Details of their further activity are missing and there is not trace of their preaching.

Czech preachers also accompanied the Hussite delegations which were

⁸⁹ *Acta capitulorum* 3:245.

⁹⁰ A. Birkenmajer, "Sprawa magistra Henryka Czecha," *Collectanea Theologica* 17 (1936) 207-34; S. Wielgus, "Consilia de Stanislas de Scarbimiria contre l'astrologue Henri Bohemus," *Studia Mediewistyczne* 25 (1988) 145-72.

⁹¹ M. Kowalczyk, "Przyczynki do biografii Henryka Czecha i Marcina z Żurawicy," *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej* 21 (1971) 87-9.

⁹² M. Spinka, "Paul Kravař and the Lollard-Hussite Relations," *Church History* 25 (1956) 16-26.

⁹³ *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti* 3:513-4.

⁹⁴ M. Spinka, "Paul Kravař" 24-6.

⁹⁵ This tempting speculation is based upon the transcription of his name in the episcopal register. It appears there as "Miklasz" = "Mikulaš" - P. Kras, *Husyci* 63-4, 123-4 and n. 137.

⁹⁶ *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti* 1:148-9.

granted audience at the royal court. According to the chronicler Jan Długosz, unknown Hussites preached in the presence of the Polish king first in May 1424 and, later, in 1432. The protests of Zbigniew Oleśnicki, the Bishop of Cracow, interrupted their preaching and the Czech preachers had to leave the royal court.⁹⁷ Both preachers probably belonged to the Czech official delegations and it seems impossible that they could preach outside the royal castle. Nevertheless, in 1431 the Polish king permitted members of the Hussite delegation to attend the Catholic ceremonies in Cracow. His decision aroused the violent protests of the Bishop of Cracow who imposed an interdict on the town.⁹⁸

The first inflow of Hussite books was possibly due to the close scholarly links established between the two countries in the second half of the fourteenth century. As I have already mentioned that the works of Jan Hus, Jerome of Prague and other Czech theologians first came to Cracow but, later, circulated all over Poland. In the ecclesiastical registers there are several notes on suspect Czech books and booklets in private collections.⁹⁹ Even if an Hussite book did not become an instrument of wider Hussite propaganda it played an important role in the spread of anticlerical ideas among more educated circles of Polish society, especially the pro-Hussite clergy. There is some evidence of a wide geographical circulation of Hussite writings, which were found even in the peripheral villages in Cuyavia and Great Poland. Owing to patchy records it is difficult to establish if Czech books were used only privately or also to support Hussite preaching.

Ecclesiastical registers record various "heretical" writings which belonged to priests and the laity. Unfortunately, we know neither the titles nor the contents of these books which were labelled heretical. Some of them were brought from Bohemia and contained certain anticlerical ideas.¹⁰⁰ Suspect writings which circulated in the Dobrzyń region, in northern Poland, and were confiscated by inquisitors propagated communion *sub utraque* for the laity.¹⁰¹ In Pakość, vicar Stanisław carefully collected religious writings which were bought in Bohemia. Polish translation of the Bible was probably based upon his well-equipped library. Moreover, Stanisław was visited in Pakość by an unknown Czech scholar, who could be involved in the translation work. Fragments of the Polish translation of the Bible circulated among the Utraquists in Cuyavia. The noble lady Agnieszka Janowska from Pakość wanted to buy a copy of the Polish New Testament from Stanisław. The transaction failed because she refused to pay the price demanded.¹⁰²

In Cracow a couple of students read, commented on, and copied Hussite books, later distributing them among their fellow students.¹⁰³ The testimony of Andrew Gałka of Dobczyn, a Polish Wyclifte, makes it clear that students and academics in Cracow had an easy access to the writings of John Wyclif. Gałka himself got hold of Wyclif's works during his twenty year teaching at the university. In his private collection he had Wyclif's treatises *De apostasia*, *De blasphemia*, *De ideis*, *De universalibus* and

⁹⁷ J. Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae* 4:323 and 471.

⁹⁸ J. Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae* 4:472-4; *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti* 1:76.

⁹⁹ E. Potkowski, *Książka rękopiśmienna w kulturze Polski średniowiecznej* [Handwritten Book in the Culture of Medieval Poland] (Warszawa, 1984) 66-72.

¹⁰⁰ P. Kras, *Husyci* 86-95.

¹⁰¹ *Acta capitulorum Plocensis* 92, 98, 106.

¹⁰² *Acta capitulorum* 2:198-200; see P. Kras, *Husyci* 88-92.

¹⁰³ *Bullarium Poloniae* 5:139

probably the Hussite abstracts of Wyclif's works edited by Peter Payne¹⁰⁴. In his letter to Zbigniew Oleśnicki, Bishop of Cracow, Gałka admitted that he had received some heretical books from an unknown noble, identified by F.M. Bartoš as Bedřich of Stražnice, a frequent visitor in Poland. Complaining about the outrageous confiscation of his library, Gałka threatened the Bishop of Cracow with an intervention by the Czech owner of the confiscated books.¹⁰⁵ In the private libraries of professors in Cracow there were also writings of Jan Hus, Jerome of Prague, Jakoubek of Stříbro and other leaders of the Hussite movement. They were carefully studied and provided Roman Catholic polemicists with direct information about Hussite tenets.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

We can conclude that Polish-Czech relations remained very close throughout the Hussite period. The close links which bound the two countries in the pre-Hussite period were in some aspects even strengthened during the period of the Hussite revolution. Due to these manifold contacts, the political, economic and intellectual ideas of the Bohemian reformation were swiftly transmitted to Poland. Despite royal and ecclesiastical bans, numerous Poles representing various social groups travelled to Hussite Bohemia. During their visits to the neighbouring country they had good opportunity to become familiar with Hussite doctrine and its religious practice. Some of them, living among the Hussites, were inspired by their religious fervour and became advocates of the Bohemian reformation. On their return to Poland, however, only a small group of them, mainly priests, remained Hussites and publicly propagated ideas of the Bohemian Reformation. However, most Polish visitors regarded their stay among the Bohemian Utraquists Hussites as a sort of "religious tourism" and their Roman Catholic faith did not suffer any serious harm.

¹⁰⁴ Andrzej Gałka in his letters written after his escape to Silesia acknowledged his knowledge of the aforementioned works of Wyclif - *Codex diplomaticus Universitatis studii generalis Cracoviensis*, ed. J. Stenzel, ii (Cracoviae, 1873) 111;

In the spring 1449, Jan Elgot, vicar general of the bishop of Cracow, confiscated Gałka's books and found among them "opera eiusdem Wykleph et illius Anglici complicitis eiusdem" (*Codex epistolaris*, 1:69). It is only a tempting hypothesis to identify this friend of Wyclif with Peter Payne, who visited Cracow at least three times during the years 1421, 1424 and 1431. More details on his contacts with Poland see E. Maleczyńska, "Piotr Payne a Polska," *Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Historia* 3,1 (1957) 49-64 and F. Šmahel, "Curriculum vitae Magistri Petri Payne," in: *In memoriam Josefa Macka (1922-1991)*, ed. M. Polívka, F. Šmahel (Praha, 1996) 144-147, 151. For further discussion on Gałka's access to Wyclifite writings see P. Kras, *Husyci* 75-82.

¹⁰⁵ *Codex diplomaticus Universitatis*, ii (Cracoviae, 1873) 112; F.M. Bartoš, "Poslání M. Ondřeje Galky králi Vladislavu Varnenčikovi," *Věstník Královské České Společnosti Nauk* 1 (1934) 8-9. For more details on Bedřich ze Stražnice and his contacts with Poland see A. Molnar, *Na rozhraní věku. Cesty reformace* (Praha, 1985) 25-112.

¹⁰⁶ U. Szelińska, *Biblioteki profesorów Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego w XV i początkach XVI wieku* [Libraries of Professors of Cracow University in the 15th and at the Beginning of the 16th Century] (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1966) 184-5. On the writings of Jan Hus in the Library of the University of Cracow see Z. Kozłowska-Budkowa, "Review of F.M. Bartoš, Literární činnost M. J. Husi," *Przegląd Historyczny* 43 (1952) 361-3. A list of Hussite writings in Polish libraries has been published by P. Spunar, *Repertorium auctorum Bohemorum proventum idearum post universitatem illustrans i* (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź, 1985).