
Introduction

The 2008 Symposium

In 2008 twenty-eight scholars offered presentations at the Eighth Symposium on the Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice, this time with support of the Collegium Europaeum – Research Group for the History of European Ideas, jointly sponsored by the Philosophical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the Philosophical Faculty of the Charles University. The Eighth Symposium was held in Prague at the Vila Lanna from 17–20 June 2008. Once again, David R. Holeton and Zdeněk V. David organised the symposium; once again they have also prepared and edited this volume, which contains twenty-two essays based on the presentations delivered at the 2008 symposium. The essays by scholars from the Czech Republic, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States concern the fields of art, ecclesiology, liturgy, music, philosophy, and theology.

Fifteen years have passed since the appearance of the first volume in this series in 1996. As the essays in the eighth volume demonstrate, its theme continues to attract new and challenging research on a broad range of topics. The Bohemian Reformation itself has drawn increasing attention in international scholarship over these years. Yet many of even its central figures and elements – several of which this volume's articles address – remain little known except to specialists. To the larger community of scholars interested in Europe between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Bohemian Reformation can still seem difficult to place. It fits uneasily into the standard historical narratives that continue to shape our understandings of these centuries. Certainly the old categories of medieval heresy and of generic, early modern Reformation are too small to encompass its complexities.

As an innovation the BRRP editors decided to include in this introduction to volume 8 the views of specialists – representing several of the fields belonging under the aegis of the BRRP symposia – on the future directions which they envisage for their disciplines in the area of the Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice. We are grateful to Milena Bartlová, Jan Bařa, and Pavel Kůrka, representing respectively the fields of art history, musicology, and ecclesiastical administration, for their contributions, which follow.

Art History

From the viewpoint of the academic discipline of art history, the symposia of the BRRP have succeeded in opening an entirely new chapter of research. It was only within their framework that the question was posed as to what role the visual arts of the late Gothic and Renaissance periods may have played in relation to the Reformational denominations existing in the Bohemian Kingdom. In the first place, it became apparent that a question – which was thus posed – could be of major significance for a more precise understanding of the history of the Bohemian visual arts of the fifteenth and the sixteenth century. In the second place, it became apparent that the visual culture of a country with a long tradition of practicing religious toleration would be likewise interesting from a Pan-European point of view. The biennial symposia and publications of the BRRP provided the platform for a multi-generational circle of scholars, whose studies, in turn, furnished the infrastructure for the exhibition, “The Art of the Bohemian Reformation, 1380–1620,” and the accompanying publication¹ (both arranged and edited by Kateřina Horníčková and Michal Šroněk).

Thanks to this project, it becomes possible to outline the direction of further research. First and foremost, art historians must adjust to the fact that recent historiography has been overcoming the traditional rupture of the Bohemian Reformation’s history into two segments: the brief eulogised period of Hussitism, and the lengthy era of Utraquism, viewed with a degree of embarrassment, if not outright negativity. Evidently, “Confessionalisation,” which clearly constituted the strongest social movement of sixteenth-century central Europe, will become a crucial category, allowing one to ask how this process affected the visual arts in the entirely peculiar religious situation of the Bohemian Kingdom. Undoubtedly, an important issue in the study of the art of the Bohemian Reformation will be the question of the denominational adherence of patrons and of the public. The issue of the specific denominational preference of the individual artist will most likely remain a matter of only marginal interest. In the fifteenth- and the sixteenth-century Transalpine area, one would not expect the artist to put his own denominational stamp on his work. In fact, an attitude of impartial craftsmanship unaffected by denominational considerations on the part of the artist characterised the fulfilment of the patrons’ wishes even in the seventeenth century.

The category of the “Bohemian Reformation,” as a methodological instrument of art history will make it possible to treat objects of art – created for the Utraquists, the Lutherans, or the Brethren – somewhat differently than the customary approach of the medievalists and the specialists in early modern history. In other words, it will be possible to advance beyond simply classifying these artefacts in the hiatus between Gothic and Baroque art, as has

¹ *Umění české reformace 1380–1620* (Prague, 2010).

been done hitherto, with the employment of concepts applicable to the study of the art of the Gothic and the Baroque periods. This matter is treated in detail in my study "Renaissance and Reformation in Czech Art History: Issues of Period and Interpretation," *Umění* 59 (2011) 2–19.

Milena Bartlová

Musicology

The uniqueness of the BRRP symposia rests in their consistently interdisciplinary character. In the area of musicology, however, this significant potential advantage has not been sufficiently utilised despite the fact that over the years, next to the middle-aged generation of musicologists (such as Hana Vlhová-Wörner), there was also the participation of young and beginning researchers (such as Jan Baťa, Eliška Baťová, and Jan Koláček). The hitherto relatively modest yield has its cause, above all, in the very character of musicological research which, for many specialists from other fields – if not consistently placed in the historical context of liturgy – appears too abstract, elusive and hence hardly communicable. Past research also shows that the narrow interlinkage of musical practice of the individual denominations forces musicology to pose questions in a somewhat different manner than is the case in other disciplines.

The usefulness and relevance of interdisciplinary cooperation was demonstrated – thanks to BRRP – during the preparation of the centre of excellence, "Central European Centre of Liturgical Musicology," which is to address questions of liturgical musicology in a broader context, that is, in the interaction of music, word, and image as the basic means of communication in the sacred space, geographically and chronologically in the Lands of Bohemian Crown in the years 1400–1650.

It is necessary to pose the question of what role musicology should play in the further interdisciplinary exploration of the religious culture in Lands of the Bohemian Crown in the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Of course, it covers music in the proper sense of the word (studying the individual types of liturgical music extant in the Czech lands) and examining the denominational influence on the character and style of individual musical genres. It also covers examining the musical repertoire, which involves the overall character of its principal liturgical and musical tendencies in the Bohemian lands in the period given, and its place in the context of Central Europe. The interdisciplinary exploration further involves deep probings into the liturgical and musical repertoire of select localities, such as the cathedral, a monastery, an urban parish church, and a private chapel. The prime task for this research, however, should be capturing all the relevant liturgical sources of the given period, and the creation of an interdisciplinary catalogue that would meet the highest standards of the individual disciplines.

BRRP can help all the participating disciplines to a consistent interpretation of the liturgical space as a whole, in which in a specific manner the visual and auditory components are interconnected. BRRP, therefore, plays a valuable role as a platform of interdisciplinary discussion, in which musicology finds a unique chance to demonstrate that – without at least the basic knowledge of the musical component – any consideration of the Bohemian religious culture in the given period stands simply on feet of clay.

Jan Baťa

Ecclesiastical Administration

Research in the history of Utraquist ecclesiastical administration has reached in recent past relatively significant results, yet it has also shown that many questions remain entirely unanswered.

In the first place, it needs to be mentioned that we lack critical editions of many series of sources, which are of importance. We can mention, for instance, the documents of the Utraquist Consistory, which are currently deposited in the National Archives (as a part of the collection of the Archive of the Prague Archbishopric) and partly in the Archive of Charles University. These documents have a similar structure as the already published Acts of the Utraquist Consistory (by Klement Borový for 1525–1562, and Julius Pažout for 1562–1570), namely next to matrimonial matters (probably of a lesser interest for most researchers) we find in them mainly matters concerning the appointments of clergy to particular benefices, and also occasionally matters of a broader concern.

Insofar as the actual study of ecclesiastical administration, gaps exist especially in the presentation of the second century of Utraquism. While church administration in the century after the beginning of the Bohemian Reformation – dating still to the Late Middle Ages – has been treated in several symposia devoted to this topic, the subsequent period lacks such a concentrated attention.² Likewise the collection, *Náboženský život a církevní poměry v zemích Koruny české ve 14.–17. století*, shows an imbalance between the themes treated for the fifteenth and those for the sixteenth century.³ This

² *Církevní správa a její písemnosti na přelomu středověku a novověku* [Church administration and its documents at the turn of the middle ages and modern times], Acta universitatis carolinae. Philosophica et historica 2 – 1999, z pomocných věd historických XV (Prague 2003); Jan Hrdina and Blanka Zylinská, eds., *Církevní topografie a farní síť pražské církevní provincie v pozdním středověku* [Ecclesiastical topography and the parish network in the Prague province at the end of the middle ages], [Colloquia mediaevalia Pragensia 8] (Prague 2007).

³ Lenka Bobková and Jana Konvičná, eds. *Náboženský život a církevní poměry v zemích Koruny české ve 14.–17. století* [Religious life and church relationships in the lands of the Czech crown during the 14th to 17th centuries], *Korunní země v dějinách českého státu* [The crown lands in the history of the Czech state] IV (Prague 2009).

is despite the fact that many interesting themes could be found for the latter period. At the same time, it is true, that such topics are more difficult to treat. This is caused by the fragmentary preservation of sources, as well as by the decline in the authority of the Utraquist Consistory and the disintegration of the middle layer of ecclesiastical administration. Moreover, these processes are not very attractive historiographically, and it is difficult to grasp them with positivist methods.

On the contrary, it would be more attractive to track the character of parishes in the intersection of Roman, traditional Utraquist, and Lutheran influences, focusing on the splits in the parish network, and on the assessment of the particular influences. It is a question of how confessionalisation was manifest at the lowest level, and to what extent the particular denominational influences were separable, and to what extent they were intermixed. A theme also worth exploring is the entrance of Lutheranism into the existing ecclesiastical framework established by law. We can ask to what extent the Lutherans attempted to adjust to the existing situation, and also how they tried to substitute for the higher levels of ecclesiastical administration, which they lacked.

From these points of departure, it would be possible to open new vistas on the delineation of the individual denominations, on their co-existence, and on their status at the country-wide level. Next to the recent studies distinguishing Utraquism and Lutheranism,⁴ there is space also for synthetic views of what the individual denominations had in common, and there is an opportunity for applying sociological methods in a comparative treatment of the individual denominational groups. In addition, we have not yet identified the theological starting points for shaping the images of the church community within the individual denominational groups.

Pavel Kůrka

The BRRP web page (www.brrp.org), on which all volumes of this journal are posted, appears to be well used and, from comments sent to the editors, regularly attracts the interest of those for whom access to specialist literature on the Bohemian Reformation is difficult. It also seems that the journal's availability on the internet has facilitated its use in the classroom as articles can be cited in course bibliographies with the assurance that students will have easy access to the material. Professor David Mengel of Xavier University in Cincinnati, who is responsible for the website, has assured that what appears

⁴ Zdeněk V. David, *Finding the Middle Way: The Utraquists' Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther* (Washington, D.C. 2003); Jiří Just, "Luteráni v našich zemích do Bílé hory [Lutherans in our country until the White Mountain]" in Jiří Just and others, *Luteráni v českých zemích v proměnách staletí* [Lutherans in the Czech lands through the ages] (Prague 2009).

on the internet is page accurate with the printed volumes so that bibliographical citations can safely be made from the web. As the web page is equipped with a search device for the entire series, it has been decided to discontinue indexing the journal since BRRP vol. 7.

As it was announced at the 2008 Business Meeting, the sponsorship of the Symposium has passed into the hands of Collegium Europaeum, Research Group for the History of European Ideas, jointly sponsored by the Philosophical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the Philosophical Faculty of the Charles University. The appearance of the present volume, as well as of its predecessor is a graphic sign of the transition. We are grateful to the Collegium's director, Petr Hlaváček, and to its Secretary, Ota Pavlíček, for seeing the present volume – like the preceding one – to publication.,

The ninth symposium the of BRRP was held in the Academic Conference Centre in Prague from 23–25 June 2010, with twenty-five scholars participating from Canada, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States. A selection of essays from that symposium is already in preparation and will appear in due course. We look forward to the tenth symposium of the BRRP which is scheduled to be held in Prague from 20–22 June 2012.

Zdeněk V. David
Woodrow Wilson Center
Washington, D.C.

David R. Holeton
Charles University
Hussite Theological Faculty
Prague

Co-Organisers of the Symposium

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