

# Emperor Charles IV (1346–1378) as the Architect of Local Religion in Prague

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THE IDEA OF REFORM STILL SUPPLIES THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE for most accounts of late medieval religion in Bohemia. Like a brightly colored thread, reform marks a trail leading forward from Jan Hus (d. 1415) to the leaders of the sixteenth-century Reformation, as well as backward to a series of precursors in the fourteenth century. This essay takes a different path through the religious culture of fourteenth-century Bohemia and of Prague, in particular. Rather than following the traditional historiography in identifying a handful of fourteenth-century Prague preachers as revolutionary forerunners of Jan Hus, this essay situates these and other figures within a more complicated and multivalent local religious culture, a culture that was carefully molded by Central Europe's most powerful authority. No one shaped Prague's local religion more dramatically than the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV (r. 1346–1378), as three examples offered here will illustrate. Like an architect, Charles IV designed much of Prague's vibrant local religion. Nevertheless, neither he nor anyone else completely controlled it.

Imperious reform, however, cannot be cast aside so easily. In part this arises from the deep shadow the Hussites cast. Czech historians tellingly continue to label the fourteenth century "pre-Hussite." Moreover, the deepest roots of Protestant historiography identify the Hussites as a movement of religious reform. Matthias Flacius Illyricus and the martyrologist John Foxe have long offered Protestant church historians a clear orientation: Jan Hus fits neatly into a tale of beleaguered medieval reformers. Persecuted by an ecclesiastical hierarchy gone badly astray, these early reformers nevertheless blazed a path for Martin Luther and the sixteenth-century Reformers. This long-lived narrative has of course encountered rivals. Early modern Catholic historians preferred to number Hus and his followers among the heretics who sprouted like weeds in the turbulent age before Luther.<sup>1</sup> In the nineteenth century, this heresy-centered Catholic interpretation was eclipsed in scholarly literature and in Czech popular consciousness alike by František Palacký's profoundly nationalist version of

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<sup>1</sup>Zdeněk David, *Finding the Middle Way: The Utraquists' Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther* (Baltimore, 2003), 5–6.

the Protestant narrative.<sup>2</sup> Both historiographical strains nevertheless survive, at least in mutated forms: Hussites still appear in modern surveys as both late medieval heretics and Reformation forerunners.<sup>3</sup> Twentieth-century historians offered a new alternative to reform. Drawing a fuller and more complicated picture of the Hussites, they insisted that the Hussite movement was not exclusively or even predominately religious in nature. Accordingly, they substituted the language of revolution for that of reform or heresy.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, reform continues to inform even the most recent studies of medieval Bohemian religion, just as it does a strain of scholarship on medieval religion more broadly.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the idea of reform seems to be enjoying a resurgence. Those still interested in the religious aspects of the Hussite revolution now routinely describe their subject as the “Bohemian Reformation.”<sup>6</sup> Some Czech historians have preferred the “First Reformation,” emphasizing its temporal precedence to the better-known German one.<sup>7</sup> The leading Czech historian of the Hussites now writes of a “pre-mature Reformation,” borrowing a term Anne Hudson applied to the Lollards in medieval England.<sup>8</sup> These new applications of Reformation language claim for the Hussites (or Utraquists) independent value apart from the Lutheran Reformers—they are no longer mere forerunners—although they do so only by appropriating the terminology of the sixteenth century. This is Reform with a capital “R.”

Similarly, the study of “pre-Hussite” Bohemian religion has borrowed most of its terms and questions from a later era. Just as reform ties Hus to Luther, reform links a handful of fourteenth-century Prague preachers to Hus. Palacký had implied a fundamental continuity between these *Vorläufer* and the Hussites themselves. His influential formulation eclipsed claims by Bohuslav Balbín (d. 1688) and other Czech Catholic historians that the heretical Hus had represented a sharp break from Prague’s fourteenth-century orthodox

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<sup>2</sup>Palacký’s *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a na Moravě* [History of the Czech nation in Bohemia and Moravia] appeared from 1836 in German as *Geschichte von Böhmen*, the Czech volumes from 1848. By Palacký’s 1878 death, second and, in some cases, third editions of each Czech volume had been issued. See František Kutnar and Jaroslav Marek, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* [Synoptic history of Czech and Slovak historiography] (Prague, 1997), 213–30.

<sup>3</sup>For example, Malcom Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1992); Heiko Oberman, *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought* (New York, 1966).

<sup>4</sup>Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley, 1967); František Šmahel, *Husitská Revoluce*, 4 vols. (Prague, 1993), now translated by Thomas Krzenck as *Die Hussitische Revolution*, ed. Alexander Patschovsky, 3 vols. (Hannover, 2002).

<sup>5</sup>See, for example, Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250–1550* (New Haven, 1980); Phillip H. Stump, “The Influence of Gerhart Ladner’s *The Idea of Reform*,” in *Reform and Renewal in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Studies in Honor of Louis Pascoe, SJ*, ed. Thomas M. Izbicki and Christopher M. Bellitto (Leiden, 2000), 3–17.

<sup>6</sup>See, for example, the biennial Prague conference established in 1996, *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, with published proceedings appearing from 1998, edited by Zdeněk V. David and David R. Holeton, and now also available at <http://brrp.org>.

<sup>7</sup>Amedeo Molnár used this term to describe Hussites together with Waldensians, in distinction from the “second Reformation” of the sixteenth century. See Robert Kalivoda, “K otázkám myšlenkového modelu tzv. první a druhé reformace” [On the question of the conceptual model of the so-called first and second Reformation], in *Bratrský sborník: Soubor prací přednesených a symposiu konaném 26. a 27. září 1967 k pětistému výročí ustavení Jednoty Bratrské* [Symposium of the Brethren: Series of works presented at the symposium held on the 26 and 27 September 1967 for the five hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Unity of the Brethren], ed. Rudolf Řičan, Amedeo Molnár and Michal Flegl (Prague, 1967), 120–26, reprinted in Kalivoda, *Husitská epocha a J. A. Komenský* (Prague, 1992), 153–59.

<sup>8</sup>František Šmahel, ed., *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter* (Munich, 1998); Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford, 1988).

spiritual leaders.<sup>9</sup> Since the time of Palacký, these figures, all active in Bohemia's capital city, have been understood almost universally as the "forerunners" of the Hussites. To the extent that the names of Conrad Waldhauser and Milíč of Kroměříž are remembered at all beyond the historiography of Bohemia, they appear as precursors of Hus and indeed of the later Reformers.

This model has its merits. It brings into focus the Hussites' own appeals to the previous century's local religious figures for inspiration and justification. Emphasizing continuity, it also reveals how obscure Prague preachers can illuminate the well-known story of the Reformation. In short, this backward look helps to explain the origin of the Hussites by magnifying the signs of incipient reform present before Hus.<sup>10</sup> Yet the same Hussite lens, blind to elements that fall outside its teleological vision, also inevitably distorts. To see the broader field of religious culture in fourteenth-century Prague, it will be necessary to widen the aperture—to forget for a moment that Jan Hus lived and preached in the same city half a century later.

Rather than borrow loaded terms like "Reformation" from later eras, this essay instead focuses on the religious culture of Prague as an example of later medieval local religion.<sup>11</sup> Of the many recent approaches to medieval religion, "local religion" has the advantage of avoiding the dubious bifurcation of medieval culture into distinct popular and elite branches while remaining sensitive to the unique conditions of a particular place.<sup>12</sup> And what a place Prague was becoming in the later fourteenth century! Charles IV's 1346 election as King of the Romans (and his later coronation as emperor) raised Prague to new heights of privilege and power. Already the bishopric of Prague had been elevated to an archbishopric, a proud promotion that inspired the construction of a grand, new Gothic cathedral. Once crowned king of Bohemia, Charles IV dramatically increased Prague's urban area in 1348 by establishing New Town, a centerpiece of an ambitious vision for his capital city (*vnser hoepstat*).<sup>13</sup> His public participation underscored his commitment to the project: just as he had celebrated the start of the new cathedral's construction four years before, the emperor now personally laid the first stone of the new fortifications.<sup>14</sup> Together with another fortification effort a decade later, this new wall quadrupled the size of Prague and created the largest fortified urban area (seven hundred hectares) north of the Alps. The great medieval

<sup>9</sup>František Palacký [J. P. Jordan, pseud.], *Die Vorläufer des Husitentums in Böhmen* (Leipzig, 1846); Bohuslav Balbín, *Epitome historica rerum Bohemiarum* (Prague, 1677), 406–409.

<sup>10</sup>Now see Olivier Marin, *L'archevêque, le maître et le dévot: Genèses du mouvement réformateur pragois années 1360–1419* (Paris, 2005), e.g., 11.

<sup>11</sup>Howard Kaminsky, "The Problematics of 'Heresy' and 'the Reformation,'" in *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter*, ed. František Šmahel (Munich, 1998), 1–22.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, William A. Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, 1981). One of the most eloquent critiques of a two-tiered model of medieval religion remains Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981). See also John Van Engen, "The Christian Middle Ages as an Historiographical Problem," *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 519–52; and now, Van Engen, "The Future of Medieval Church History," *Church History* 71 (2002): 492–522. Also see the editors' introduction to part 4, "Religion and Society," of *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*, ed. Lester K. Little and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Oxford, 1998), 299–309; and Jean-Claude Schmitt, "Religion, Folklore, and Society in the Medieval West," in the same volume (376–87).

<sup>13</sup>*Privilegia civitatum Pragensium*, ed. Jaromír Čelakovský, *Codex juris municipalis regni Bohemiae 1* [Prague, 1886], 73 no. 48; 81 no. 49.

<sup>14</sup>Francis of Prague, *Chronicon Francisci Pragensi*, ed. Jana Zachová, *Fontes rerum bohemicarum* (Prameny dějin českých), Series Nova 1 (Prague, 1997), 202; Vilém Lorenc, *Nové město pražské* [Prague's New Town] (Prague, 1973), 75–81.

cities of London, Paris, and even Florence occupied smaller spaces.<sup>15</sup> Within these walls, a network of carefully planned new streets and two major marketplaces began to fill with churches, religious communities, and a burgeoning population. Tax incentives and detailed building regulations stimulated the rapid construction of stone houses, even if the special invitation Charles IV extended to Jewish settlers proved less successful.<sup>16</sup>

Yet Charles's plans for Prague encompassed more than wall-building and city planning. Tirelessly he sought to transform Bohemia's undisputed urban hub into an important political, cultural, economic, and religious center for the entire Holy Roman Empire. The frequent residence in Prague of his imperial court, and the permanent presence of certain elements of that court, did not escape the notice of a contemporary German chronicler.<sup>17</sup>

and from Nuremberg, Charles IV withdrew to Prague, which now is the seat of the archbishop (*metropolis*) of the kingdom of Bohemia; there one now finds the seat of the empire, which was formerly at Rome, later at Constantinople, but now exists at Prague.<sup>18</sup>

With these words, Henry of Diessenhofen (ca. 1300–1376) described the new identity of Prague: a second (or third) Rome. The emperor endeavored to mirror this lofty status in the physical reality of the city. In conjunction with the foundation of New Town, Charles IV also established the first university (*studium generale*) in Central Europe, which in subsequent decades drew masters and students from the entire region.<sup>19</sup> (Before 1348, the nearest university towns had been Italian, French, and English.) Likewise, though with somewhat less success, the emperor strove to reroute important long-distance trade through Prague. He encouraged merchants to pass through the Bohemian capital, for example, on their journeys

<sup>15</sup>Ferdinand Seibt, *Karl IV.: Ein Kaiser in Europa, 1346 bis 1378* (1978; reprint Munich, 1994), 177; Jiří Čárek, "Praha v období vlády Karla IV" [Prague in the time of the rule of Charles IV], in *Dějiny Prahy* [History of Prague], ed. Josef Janáček (Prague, 1964), 112, 123.

<sup>16</sup>*Privilegia civitatum Pragensium*, ed. Čelakovský, 79–85 nos. 49–50; Lorenc, *Nové město Pražské*, 97–104. For the long-established Jewish community in Old Town, see Alexandr Putík, "On the Topography and Demography of the Prague Jewish Town Prior to the Pogrom of 1389," *Judaica Bohemiae* 30–31 (1996): 7–46.

<sup>17</sup>Peter Moraw calculates from Charles IV's known itinerary that the emperor and his court spent approximately one-third of his reign (nine to ten years) in Prague or at one of the nearby castles like Karlstein ("Zur Mittelpunktstfunktion Prags in Zeitalter Karls IV," in *Europa Slavica—Europa Orientalis: Festschrift für Herbert Ludat zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Klaus-Detlev Grothusen and Klaus Zernack [Berlin, 1980], 455). See also Hans Patze, "Die Hofgesellschaft Kaiser Karls IV. und König Wenzels in Prag," in *Kaiser Karl IV. 1316–1378: Forschungen über Kaiser und Reich*, ed. Hans Patze (Neustadt an der Aisch, 1978), 733–74; Josef Macek, "Die Hofkultur Karls IV.," in *Kaiser Karl IV: Staatsmann und Mäzen*, ed. Ferdinand Seibt (Munich, 1978), 237–41, and František Kavka, "Die Hofgelehrten," in the same volume, 249–53.

<sup>18</sup>[*Chronicon*], in *Henricus de Diessenhofen und andere Geschichtsquellen Deutschlands im späteren Mittelalter*, edited by Alfons Huber from the *Nachlass* of Johann Friedrich Boehmer, *Fontes rerum Germanicarum, Geschichtsquellen Deutschlands* 4 (Stuttgart, 1868), 116. Peter Moraw argues persuasively that Henry of Diessenhofen is here attempting to justify the place of Prague on the emperor's itinerary after stops in Aachen, Mainz, and Nuremberg, cities whose impeccable imperial credentials did not need to be repeated ("Zur Mittelpunktstfunktion Prags," 457–58). Prague's inclusion among these cities was indeed remarkable, but one should not conclude that contemporaries generally considered Prague to be the empire's preeminent city.

<sup>19</sup>For an introduction to the substantial literature, see Michal Svatoš, ed., *Dějiny univerzity Karlovy I: 1347/48–1622* [History of Charles University] (Prague, 1995); recently scholars have debated how soon after its 1348 foundation charter the university in fact began to function: e.g., Peter Moraw, "Die Prager Universitäten des Mittelalters im europäischen Zusammenhang," *Schriften der Sudetendeutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften und Künste* 20 (1999): 97–129; František Šmahel, "Die Anfänge der Prager Universität: Kritische Reflexionen zum Jubiläum eines 'nationalen Monuments,'" *Historica* NS 3–4 (1996–1997): 7–50.

between Bruges and Venice.<sup>20</sup> Certainly his court, the new religious institutions, the university, and the countless construction projects drew scholars and stonemasons, artists and artisans, from throughout the region and beyond. From German university masters to Avignon craftsmen, they combined with immigrants from rural Bohemia to swell the population, even if parts of the expansive intramural area remained sparsely populated.

European, especially Czech, scholars have long noticed the remarkable effects of Charles IV's ambitious reign on the city of Prague. Indeed, this golden age forms the centerpiece of an alternative historiographical narrative. In this story, the later fourteenth-century witnesses the culmination of medieval Bohemia's power and culture. Signs of decline late in Charles's reign give way to serious crisis at the close of the fourteenth century, even before the Hussite revolution breaks out. The two narratives—golden age Prague and pre-Hussite Prague—at times coexist uneasily in the historiography. Especially problematic are attempts to characterize Charles IV's relation to the religious world of the Hussite forerunners. Was the pious ruler a powerful advocate of reform? Or did he instead represent the religious establishment against which the Hussites revolted? In other words, was imperial authority allied with or opposed to religious reform? The single monograph dedicated to Charles IV's religious character does not address this issue directly. Instead, the author prefers to forge connections between the learned ruler's Latin works and the writings of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and even Dante and Petrarch.<sup>21</sup> Other accounts have emphasized the political significance of the emperor's numerous religious foundations and public acts. In these studies, the emperor's extravagant patronage of the cult of saints at Prague's cathedral provides an outstanding example of what Ferdinand Seibt and now Paul Crossley have called Charles IV's "politics of presentation." Crossley, in particular, has persuasively argued that Charles self-consciously manipulated Prague's religious architecture for dynastic and other political ends.<sup>22</sup> This argument for the emperor's calculated political application of religion does not necessarily exclude recognition of Charles IV's personal piety: Franz Machilek's interprets the emperor's strong interest in relics as evidence of both *Privatfrömmigkeit* and *Staatsfrömmigkeit*.<sup>23</sup>

The magnificent monuments of Charles IV's reign continue to attract the interest of art historians in particular, as illustrated by the 2005–2006 exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and at Prague Castle.<sup>24</sup> The emperor left clear fingerprints on

<sup>20</sup>František Graus, "Die Handelsbeziehungen Böhmens zu Deutschland und Österreich im 14. und zu Beginn des 15. Jahrhunderts," *Historica* 2 (1960): 77–110, esp. 104–6; Jaroslav Mezník, "Der ökonomische Charakter Prags im 14. Jahrhundert," *Historica* 17 (1969): 43–91.

<sup>21</sup>Zdeněk Kalista, *Karel IV.: jeho duchovní tvář* [Charles IV: His spiritual character] (Prague, 1971). Cf. J. B. Čapek, "Karel IV. a nástup české reformace" [Charles IV and the start of the Bohemian Reformation], *Křesťanská revue* 45 (1978): 200–209.

<sup>22</sup>Crossley argues, for instance, that some of the oddest elements of Prague's cathedral must be attributed to Charles, rather than to the architect, Peter Parler. Crossley's important work builds upon (and provides convenient access to) the substantial German and especially Czech literature on the architecture of Charles IV: Paul Crossley, "The Politics of Presentation: The Architecture of Charles IV of Bohemia," in *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe*, ed. Sarah Rees Jones, Richard Marks, and A. J. Minnis (York, 2000), 99–172, esp. 101–6, 113. See also Crossley, "Bohemia Sacra: Liturgy and History in Prague Cathedral," in *Pierre, lumière, couleur: études d'histoire de l'art du Moyen Âge en l'honneur d'Anne Prache*, ed. Fabienne Joubert and Dany Sandron (Paris, 1999), 341–65. See also Iva Rosario, *Art and Propaganda: Charles IV of Bohemia, 1346–1378* (Woodbridge, UK, 2000); Ferdinand Seibt, "Probleme eines Profils," in *Kaiser Karl IV.: Staatsman und Mäzen*, ed. Seibt, 27–28; Seibt, *Karl IV.*, 384–97.

<sup>23</sup>"Privatfrömmigkeit und Staatsfrömmigkeit," in Seibt, *Karl IV.*, 87–101.

<sup>24</sup>Barbara Drake Boehm and Jiří Fajt, eds., *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia 1347–1437* (New York and New Haven, 2005); also see Rosario, *Art and Propaganda*.



Prague Cathedral, on the sacred treasures that filled it and other Prague churches, and on the various depictions of saints that became permanent inhabitants of his capital city. Much harder to discern is Charles IV's role in shaping the religious experience of the mortal inhabitants who walked Prague's streets during his reign. Charles IV enjoyed far less extensive control over Prague's multifaceted local religion than he did over, for instance, the *Last Judgment* mosaic that glitters over Prague Cathedral's south porch. Yet his powerful and regular intervention nevertheless qualifies him as the preeminent architect of Prague's local religion. His ambitious projects and targeted support fostered new religious energies that animated the city. Three examples in particular stand out. Each was associated with a single individual; each was anchored at a single urban location. Yet all three operated within the space of one city and were fueled by the patronage of one authority: Emperor Charles IV. Two will be familiar to those who know the story of Jan Hus's forerunners. The third, though contemporary, has until recently been almost entirely neglected.

Many scholars have noted Charles IV's obsession—that is not too strong a word—with relics and the cult of saints. The emperor tirelessly gathered relics from across Europe, amassing a hoard of holy bones that, proud Czech clerics later claimed, exceeded all relic-collections outside Rome.<sup>25</sup> Charles IV's outspoken personal devotion to the cult of saints and his ambitious plans for Prague together drove this activity. He attributed it to the “zeal of devotion and love with which we are consumed for the holy church of Prague, our venerable mother” and for the “glorious patron saints” of the Kingdom of Bohemia.<sup>26</sup> Prague's new cathedral soon housed a collection of saints worthy of its status. Gathered there, the emperor explained, the relics would benefit the entire domain.

As we have received these venerable relics by the inspiration of divine will, we have resolutely commanded them to be bestowed generously upon our holy mother church of Prague, the head and mistress of other churches, for the comfort of the entire realm and the crown lands of Bohemia and for the salvation of our subjects.<sup>27</sup>

The emperor also orchestrated publicity campaigns for his new acquisitions. To celebrate the presence of newly obtained relics, he called for city-wide processions, secured countless indulgences, and even gained papal approval for two new feast days: the feast of the Conveyance of the Relics and the feast of the Holy Lance and Nail (also known as the Presentation of the Relics).<sup>28</sup>

Prominent among the new relics were bones of Saint Sigismund, the sixth-century martyr-king of Burgundy. Although nearly unknown in Bohemia, Sigismund appealed to the emperor as a royal saint whose crown (like the crowns of Charlemagne and Wenceslas) Charles IV now

<sup>25</sup>Bohuslav Balbin, *Vita venerabilis Arnesti primi Archiepiscopi Pragensis* (Prague, 1664), quoted in Antonín Podlaha, *Catalogi ss. reliquiarum quae in sacra metropolitana ecclesia Pragensi asservantur*, Editiones archivii et bibliothecae s. f. metropolitani capituli pragensis 24 (Prague, 1931), 131. See chapter 5 of my doctoral dissertation, “Bones, Stones, and Brothels: Religion and Topography in Prague under Emperor Charles IV (1346–1378)” (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 2003).

<sup>26</sup>Antonín Podlaha and Eduard Šittler, eds., *Chrámový poklad u sv. Víta v Praze: jeho dějiny a popis* [The Cathedral Treasury of St. Vitus in Prague: History and Description] (Prague, 1903).

<sup>27</sup>Tomáš Jan Pešina z Čechorodu, *Phosphorus septicornis, stella alias matutina* (Prague, 1673), 436–37.

<sup>28</sup>*Pražské synody a koncily předhusitské doby* [Prague synods and councils of pre-Hussite times], ed. Jaroslav Polc and Zdeňka Hledíková (Prague, 2002), 176; Beneš Krabice of Weitmil, *Cronica ecclesie Pragensis*, ed. Josef Emler, *Fontes rerum bohemicarum* 4 (Prague 1884), 519, 522; *Monumenta Vaticana res gestas Bohemicas illustrantia*, ed. Ladislav Klicman et al., 7 vols. (Prague, 1903–1998), 2.84, no. 197; 1.672–673 nos. 1263, 1264; Francis of Prague, *Chronicon Francisci Pragensis*, 211.

claimed.<sup>29</sup> Art historians especially have discussed Charles IV's interest in the political significance of the imported cult of this martyr-king.<sup>30</sup> Yet Sigismund's bones served as far more than implements of imperial propaganda. His relics arrived in Prague in 1365, at a time when popular preachers were drawing large crowds in the Bohemian capital. On the vigil of Saint Wenceslas, when Prague was full of visitors for the feast and the accompanying market day, a procession ushered Sigismund's relics into the cathedral then under construction. Together with the castle that literally surrounded it, this cathedral served as the symbolic center of local religion and royal authority. The morning after the relic's translation to the newly consecrated chapel of Saint Sigismund, the new cult captured the city's attention. On the feast of Saint Wenceslas and every few days thereafter for at least the next several months, the new saint did what saints do best: he performed miracles. Of the hundreds of relics Charles IV brought to Prague's cathedral, only this one seems to have healed sickness, solved problems, freed prisoners, and even raised the dead.

Scholars have ignored or forgotten the rich record of these miracles, which numbered more than thirty over the next four months.<sup>31</sup> Pilgrims flocked to visit the tomb of Bohemia's newest patron saint. They came from all parts of the city, from across Bohemia, and occasionally from beyond. There can be no question that the emperor orchestrated the warm Bohemian welcome for the Burgundian martyr. The prominent new chapel and the strategically timed translation attest to this. Moreover, each parish priest in the region was ordered to announce the relic's arrival. Once the miracles began, Prague's archbishop added Sigismund's feast to the list of obligatory holy days. Within a few years, the foreign martyr had even joined the elite company of patron saints of Bohemia.<sup>32</sup> None of these official acts could have been achieved without at least the emperor's agreement.<sup>33</sup> With some help from his archbishop, Charles IV brought Sigismund to Prague and established the conditions necessary for a vibrant cult. The suggestion of a special bond between Sigismund and Wenceslas, the most revered of the native Bohemian saints, further eased the newcomer's acceptance.<sup>34</sup> The emperor reinforced and supported the veneration of the new wonder-worker, not least with a series of public images associating himself with the Burgundian king and other patron saints of Bohemia. Both the archbishop and the king claimed to have received healing from Sigismund.<sup>35</sup> In 1368, the emperor even christened his third son Sigismund.

<sup>29</sup>See Mengel, "A Holy and Faithful Fellowship: Royal Saints in Fourteenth-Century Prague," in *Evropa a Čechy na konci středověku. Sborník příspěvků věnovaných Františku Šmahelovi* [Europe and Bohemia at the end of the middle ages: Collection of papers presented to František Šmahel] (Prague, 2004), 145–58; Mengel, "Remembering Bohemia's Forgotten Patron Saint," in *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, vol. 6, ed. Zdeněk V. David and David R. Holec (Prague, 2007), 17–32.

<sup>30</sup>Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge, 2002), 327–31; Crossley, "The Politics of Presentation," esp. 159–60; Barbara Drake Boehm, "Charles IV: The Realm of Faith," in Boehm and Fajt, *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia*, esp. 30–31.

<sup>31</sup>The only surviving manuscript of this collection, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles acquisitions Latines, Cod. 1510, was printed by the Bollandists: "Miracula sancti Sigismundi martyris, per ipsum in sanctam Pragensem ecclesiam manifeste demonstrata," in *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum latinorum antiquorum saeculo XVI qui asservantur in Bibliotheca Nationali Parisiensi*, vol. 3 (Brussels, 1893), 462–69.

<sup>32</sup>Mengel, "A Holy and Faithful Fellowship," 149–52.

<sup>33</sup>According to the archbishop in a 1365 synodal statute, for example, Charles IV was responsible for the order that Sigismund's body be laid in the cathedral (Polc and Hledíková, *Pražské synody a koncily*, 192).

<sup>34</sup>This is my central argument in "A Holy and Faithful Fellowship."

<sup>35</sup>"Miracula sancti Sigismundi," 469; Beneš Krabice of Weitmil, *Cronica ecclesie Pragensis*, Fontes rerum bohemicarum 4.543–544; cf. Johann Friedrich Böhmer, *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter Kaiser Karl IV. 1346–1378*, ed. Alfons Huber, Regesta imperii 8 (1877, reprint Hildesheim, 1968), 412 no. 4972a.

Charles IV designed and constructed the Bohemian cult of Sigismund so well that it spread across and beyond his kingdom. The surviving record of miracles testifies to the success in his endeavors. Simultaneously, however, it delineates the limits of the emperor-architect's power. No cult can be successful without adherents. No miracles can be announced without the testimony of the beneficiaries. In this case, the identities of the miracle recipients emerge distinctly. The names so painstakingly entered in the cathedral sacristy's little book were no pious fictions; some can still be conclusively identified from other contemporary documents.<sup>36</sup>

Sigismund's Bohemian adherents were male and female, secular and clerical, from all strata of society: at one end was a lord, at the other a blind beggar woman. They brought with them to the cathedral all manner of troubles and joys. Some came seeking miracles, others came to thank the saint in person for miracles already granted. The blind, the crippled, and the injured received healing. Evil spirits were expelled, as were bugs infesting one petitioner's house. Those suffering from assorted bodily pains announced their restored health. Prisoners miraculously escaped and dead infants came back to life. The devout welcomed Sigismund as a wonder-working generalist rather than a specialist. They sought and received relief from suffering of all kinds.<sup>37</sup>

The single extant manuscript of the miracle collection is incomplete, so it does not reveal how long the miracles continued. It does, however, communicate the heart-pounding excitement of the first miraculous months. Word spread quickly, outstripping even official proclamation. One out-of-town pilgrim had prayed to the little-known saint "even though he did not know his name, for he had recently heard that his body had been brought and that he was performing many miracles."<sup>38</sup> The new cult of Sigismund, carefully designed and publicly authorized by the emperor himself, energized the local religion of Prague. The crowds of pilgrims and the record of the miracles they proclaimed reveal that Prague's inhabitants responded enthusiastically to the imperial religious propaganda.

Sigismund and the breathless reports of his miracles invigorated Prague's local religion, but the powerful new saint still did not dominate the urban religious culture of the day. Even as the shrine of Sigismund drew local and regional pilgrims, two charismatic priests were attracting local crowds and controversies: Milíč of Kroměříž and Conrad Waldhauser. Both have figured prominently in histories of Bohemian religious reform, and for good reason. Yet their significant contributions to Prague's local religion cannot be reduced to pre-Hussite reform. Each brought to Prague his own religious vision and energy, but the emperor's support proved just as crucial for them as for the cult of Sigismund. In these two cases, however, Charles IV cannot have been completely pleased with the results.

Two years before the arrival of Sigismund's relics, Milíč of Kroměříž, a Prague cathedral canon and former member of the imperial chancery, suddenly resigned his lucrative benefices. Yet rather than joining a religious order—the standard corollary to such medieval conversions—Milíč became a poor preacher, eventually going from church to church in Prague to deliver sermons in Latin, German, and Czech. For at least a century, Milíč has

<sup>36</sup>Beneš Krabice of Weitmil describes the "libellus" in which the Sigismund miracles were recorded (*Cronica ecclesie Pragensis*, *Fontes rerum bohemicarum* 4.533–34), evidently the origin for the surviving Paris manuscript. For the identification of some of the miracle recipients, see Mengel, "Remembering Bohemia's Forgotten Patron Saint."

<sup>37</sup>Robert Folz, who did not take this miracle collection into account, notices the same tendency among the posthumous miracles of other royal saints (*Les saints rois du moyen âge en occident (VIe–XIIIe siècles)*, *Subsidia Hagiographica* [Brussels, 1981], 129).

<sup>38</sup>"Miracula sancti Sigismondi," 465.



been known as the Father of the Bohemian Reformation.<sup>39</sup> Every school child in the Czech Republic learns his name and his story. That story, however, has been sharply refracted through the prism of the Hussites. The religious community Milíč eventually established is normally considered the direct predecessor to Bethlehem Chapel, where Jan Hus preached. Modern nationalist agendas also seem to have affected our understanding of him.<sup>40</sup> Part of the problem, in this case, comes from the sources. Two ostensibly medieval biographies survive, but the integrity of the longer and apparently more authoritative one is now in question. The text, known only from a seventeenth-century printed copy, was in fact compiled from various unrelated sources. For example, some oft-repeated passages describing Milíč's life were originally written about Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>41</sup> The implications of this new uncertainty surrounding the central source of Milíč's life have not yet been worked out in the scholarship. At the very least, though, this recent work confirms the apologetic and even hagiographic character of a vita that has too often been treated as a straightforward and reliable biography.

In keeping with Milíč's reputation as a Reformation forerunner, modern accounts uniformly characterize him primarily as a reform preacher. Scholars have emphasized his dedication to preaching, his advocacy of frequent communion, and his struggles with ecclesiastical authorities, precisely the traits that connect him with his fifteenth- and sixteenth-century successors. Yet other elements of his career—and arguably even the aforementioned elements—tie him even more closely to movements in late medieval religion. One scholar, for instance, recently studied Milíč's extremely popular Latin model sermons. He concluded that little or nothing distinguishes their content from the sermons of other charismatic preachers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>42</sup> In the first years after his conversion, for example, Milíč preached and wrote ominously about the arrival of Antichrist. His announced intention to preach on the same theme in Rome even earned him an enforced stay among that city's Dominican inquisitors. Yet Milíč was hardly alone during these centuries in his focus on Antichrist. One thinks of Birgitta of Sweden and John of Rupescissa, to name just two.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, one could argue that Milíč's support for frequent communion perfectly illustrates the broad and well-documented late medieval preoccupation with the Eucharist.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup>“Father of the Bohemian Reformation” is the subtitle of František Loskot's 1911 biography, *Milíč z Kroměříže: otec české reformace* (Prague, 1911), which was the second volume in the series, “Great Men of the Bohemian Reformation.”

<sup>40</sup>Mengel, “From Venice to Jerusalem and Beyond: Milíč of Kroměříž and the Topography of Prostitution in Fourteenth-Century Prague,” *Speculum* 79 (2004): 409–12.

<sup>41</sup>Mengel, “A Monk, a Preacher, and a Jesuit: Making the Life of Milíč,” in *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, vol. 5, ed. Zdeněk V. David and David R. Holeton (Prague, 2004), 33–47. I have also identified a previously unknown, seventeenth-century manuscript of the same text and am currently producing a new edition of the text.

<sup>42</sup>Peter Morée, *Preaching in Fourteenth-Century Bohemia: The Life and Ideas of Milicius de Chremsir (†1374) and His Significance in the Historiography of Bohemia* (Heršpice, Czech Republic, 1999), esp. 255–60.

<sup>43</sup>One could also include Pierre d'Ailly in this list. On the broader context, see Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco, 1994), esp. 173–99. On Milíč and Matthias of Janov, McGinn concludes that “[b]oth men were obsessed with Antichrist and the evidence of his presence in the world, although neither departed from the usual applied Antichrist views prevalent in the fourteenth century” (183).

<sup>44</sup>Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991). Arguably, the same general preoccupation with the Eucharist also later provides the context for the later Utraquist demand for communion in both kinds for the laity. See Marin, *L'archevêque, le maître et le dévot*, 457–508; David Holeton, “The Bohemian Eucharistic Movement in its European Context,” in *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, vol. 4, ed. Zdeněk David and David Holeton (Prague, 2002), 23–38, also available at <http://brrp.org/proceedings/brrp1/holeton.pdf>.

Milíč's more unique contribution, by far his most important for Prague's fourteenth-century local religion, was the experimental religious community he established near the end of his brief career. Here the emperor's support proved essential. After a number of Prague's prostitutes responded to Milíč's preaching, the former cathedral canon began to provide for both their physical and spiritual well-being. At that point Charles IV intervened, transferring to Milíč the ownership of Prague's most famous brothel, nicknamed Venice. Rechristened Jerusalem, this community of former prostitutes also came to include Milíč's male, clerical followers. With a chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene and two other prostitute saints, Jerusalem invoked an entire Christian tradition of holy harlots.<sup>45</sup> It also offered a respectable, even conventional response to a common urban phenomenon. Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Europe witnessed the foundation of many religious houses for former prostitutes, often with the support of municipal, royal, or even papal authority.<sup>46</sup> A contemporary foundation in Avignon, for instance, enjoyed the support of Pope Gregory XI.<sup>47</sup> Hence, Charles IV's provision of property for Milíč's community should come as no surprise. As I have suggested elsewhere, the emperor's motives may not have been exclusively charitable. Before the foundation of New Town, the brothel called Venice had occupied a marginal location, just inside the Prague walls. After 1348, and especially as a result of the official unification of the cities of Old Town and New Town in 1367, this notorious district now found itself literally in the middle of the emperor's capital city. So even if the idea to eradicate Prague's most famous brothel in 1372 came from Milíč, it must have immediately appealed to the emperor whose authority made the transformation possible. By substituting Jerusalem for Venice, Charles IV secured an honorable reputation for a street that his urban development had brought to the center of Prague.<sup>48</sup>

Whatever his motives, the emperor's support for Milíč soon stimulated unintended controversy. However conventional its attempt to convert prostitutes to religious women, Milíč's Jerusalem also challenged traditional models, not only because it included followers of both sexes. Milíč rejected the adoption of any approved religious rule, yet he demanded strict enclosure and apparently even a common habit for the women of the community. Even more controversially, he acquired numerous properties in the former brothel district and (unsuccessfully) sought legal recognition of his community both as a religious house and as a parish church. This turned both local mendicant friars and secular parish priests against him—an unusual instance of the two groups working together in Prague toward a common purpose. Their joint accusations brought Milíč to the papal curia, where he died while pleading his case.<sup>49</sup>

Seventeen years later, Bethlehem chapel was established nearby. Its innovative architectural space became a center for Czech-language preaching and eventually for Utraquism. Bethlehem's founders invoked Jerusalem as a model for their endeavor. But they also undoubtedly ignored

<sup>45</sup>Ruth Mazo Karras, "Holy Harlots: Prostitute Saints in Medieval Legend," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1 (1990), 3–32.

<sup>46</sup>Leah Lydia Otis, *Prostitution in Medieval Society: The History of an Urban Institution in Languedoc* (Chicago, 1985), 72–76; Iwan Bloch, *Die Prostitution*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1912), 820–21; James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago, 1987), 211–12, 395–96; František Graus, "Randgruppen der städtischen Gesellschaft im Spätmittelalter," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 8 (1981): 405–6.

<sup>47</sup>Joëlle Rollo-Koster, "From Prostitutes to Brides of Christ: The Avignonese *Repenties* in the Late Middle Ages," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32, no. 1 (2002): 110–44.

<sup>48</sup>Mengel, "From Venice to Jerusalem and Beyond," 439–40.

<sup>49</sup>Mengel, "From Venice to Jerusalem and Beyond," 434–38; Jiří Kejř, "Žalobní články proti Milíčovi z Kroměříž" [Articles of accusation against Milíč of Kroměříž] *Husitský Tabor* 10 (1988–1991): 181–89.

more aspects of Milíč's community than they emulated. If one sets aside the later Utraquist appropriation of its legacy, the extremely short-lived community of Jerusalem can be categorized far more convincingly as one more example of what Kaspar Elm has called the *vita semireligiosa*: an experimental, late medieval middle way between monastic and secular spirituality, in this case with reformed prostitutes providing the bulk of its membership.<sup>50</sup> The vision for this community belonged to Milíč, but Jerusalem came into being only after Charles IV ordered the destruction of Prague's most famous brothel and the transfer of its property to Milíč. That does not mean that the emperor embraced Jerusalem wholeheartedly. Nor does it unequivocally establish Charles IV as a patron of religious reform.<sup>51</sup> Certainly his support for this community proved fleeting once local accusations against Jerusalem led to charges of heresy before a papal court. Rather than defending the vulnerable institution after Milíč's death, the emperor instead quickly transferred its property to the Cistercians. Only two years after Jerusalem's foundation, a new college for Cistercian students of theology took its place. Perhaps Charles IV hoped that this dramatically different religious community would erase the unintended and embarrassing results of his support for the controversial Milíč.<sup>52</sup> The Cistercian college secured for this former center of prostitution the solidly respectable reputation that a traditional, uncontroversial religious community could provide. The emperor who painstakingly strove to make Prague a worthy capital city surely took some solace in that, at least.

Charles IV may have been the most influential architect of Prague's local religion, but even his power to control it remained limited. Not surprisingly, the results of his numerous projects and interventions varied. If his efforts to establish a Prague-centered cult of Saint Sigismund could hardly have hoped for better success and his deft transfer of Jerusalem's property to the Cistercians smoothed over an unfortunate local controversy, the emperor's patronage of another zealous preacher inadvertently rekindled a long-smoldering local tension that brought disorder and even violence to the emperor's city. The preacher was Conrad Waldhauser, a famously charismatic Augustinian canon whom Emperor Charles IV lured to Prague from Vienna, probably in 1363.<sup>53</sup> Before Milíč of Kroměříž embarked on his own preaching career in Prague, Waldhauser was drawing both crowds and controversies to the parish church of Saint Gall (Svatý Havel). The great flocks of faithful, Waldhauser claimed, forced him to preach outdoors on the square that today still houses a large market. Preaching in German, he chided Prague's wealthy women for dressing too luxuriously. He also targeted usury and especially simony—as had reforming preachers, prelates, and canon lawyers across Europe since the eleventh century.<sup>54</sup> Almost immediately, a coalition of Prague's mendicant friars began complaining to the archbishop that this newcomer, an Augustinian canon living apart from his community, was unjustly attacking them and their reputation among Prague's laity. The resulting controversial documents provide much of

<sup>50</sup>Kaspar Elm, "Vita regularis sine regula: Bedeutung, Rechtsstellung und Selbstverständnis des mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Semireligiosentums," in *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter*, ed. František Šmahel (Munich, 1998), 239–73.

<sup>51</sup>See Čapek, "Karel IV. a nástup české reformace," 200–209; cf. Zdeňka Hledíková, "Karel IV. a církev" [Charles IV and the church], in *Karolus Quartus*, ed. Václav Vaněček (Prague, 1984), 149–50.

<sup>52</sup>Mengel, "From Venice to Jerusalem," 439–40.

<sup>53</sup>The most extensive treatment of Waldhauser remains František Loskot, *Konrad Waldhauser: Řeholní kanovník sv. Augustina, Předchůdce Mistra Jana Husa* [Conrad Waldhauser: Augustinian Canon, Forerunner of Master Jan Hus], (Prague, 1909); see also Franz Machilek, "Konrad Von Waldhausen (Waldhauser)" in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, vol. 5 (Berlin, 1985), 259–68; Marin, *L'archevêque, le maître et le dévot*, 248–67.

<sup>54</sup>Beneš Krabice of Weitmil, *Cronica ecclesie Pragensis*, *Fontes rerum bohemicarum* 4, 540.

what we know about Waldhauser's impact on Prague. According to Waldhauser and his later admirers, the corrupt mendicants opposed him for one reason: they were guilty of the sins he sought to root out. No one, claimed Waldhauser, had preached the truth in Prague before his own arrival.<sup>55</sup>

Waldhauser's self-justifying version of events nicely anticipates tales of brave, sixteenth-century reformers standing up to the privileged power of corrupt priests and monks. Largely on the basis of his own account, Waldhauser has since the time of Palacký counted as the first of Jan Hus's local forerunners.<sup>56</sup> Yet when viewed in the context of the contemporary local religious culture, rather than of fifteenth- or sixteenth-century reform, the preacher's zeal begins to look not precocious but conventional, not to mention partisan. Waldhauser, for instance, brought with him to Prague a hearty animosity toward the friars who, in Prague and elsewhere, competed with parish clergy to provide pastoral care—and to receive the monetary gifts that traditionally acknowledged such care. This rivalry between friars and secular priests was a fixture of late medieval urban life across Europe, all the more in cities such as Prague where mendicant and secular masters had become rivals for university chairs and students as well. Throughout Europe, secular priests hurled accusations against mendicant friars, often in the language of the friars' most famous thirteenth-century critic, William of Saint-Amour.<sup>57</sup>

Prague was no exception. Thirty years before the arrival of Waldhauser and his fiercely antimendicant sermons, the same rivalry had erupted into street battles between the respective lay supporters of the friars and the parish priests. At that time, the hostile stalemate following this notorious "battle of the clergy" had been resolved only when Charles himself, then the young Margrave of Moravia, dragged the two parties to the negotiating table.<sup>58</sup> Far from championing the antimendicant Prague bishop and the secular priests against the friars, the emperor-to-be powerfully intervened in the interest of compromise and peace.<sup>59</sup>

Three decades later, Emperor Charles IV brought Conrad Waldhauser to Prague, just as the duke of Austria had previously called him to Vienna.<sup>60</sup> Reports of Waldhauser's preaching had apparently impressed Charles.<sup>61</sup> The renowned preacher would make a splendid addition to the city's religious culture. The thought of luring the Vienna fixture away from the Habsburg duke may also have brought the Luxemburg emperor some satisfaction. Supported by an out-of-town parish benefice controlled by Charles IV, Waldhauser quickly drew the expected crowds in Prague.<sup>62</sup> If one believes the friars' complaints and Waldhauser's boasts, the Austrian

<sup>55</sup>Conrad Waldhauser, "Apologia Konradi in Waldhausen," in *Geschichtschreiber der husitischen Bewegung in Böhmen*, ed. Konstantin Höfler, vol. 2, *Scriptores rerum Austriacarum* 1.6.2, (1865; reprint Graz, 1965), 18, 26.

<sup>56</sup>Palacký, *Die Vorläufer des Husitentums in Böhmen*; František Loskot, *Konrad Waldhauser*.

<sup>57</sup>For William of Saint-Amour and the antimendicant tradition, Penn Szittyá's study remains one of the best places to start: *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton, 1986).

<sup>58</sup>Peter of Zittau, *Chronicon Aulae Regiae*, ed. Josef Emler, *Fontes rerum bohemicarum* 4 (Prague, 1885), 321; Jaroslav Kadlec, *Das Augustinerkloster Sankt Thomas in Prag vom Gründungsjahr 1285 bis zu den Hussitenkriegen, mit Edition seines Urkundenbuches*, Cassiacum 36 (Würzburg, 1985), 38–39; 223–25 no. 71; 168–69 no. 35.

<sup>59</sup>Jaroslav Kadlec, *Das Augustinerkloster Sankt Thomas in Prag*, 36–39; see also Hledíková, *Biskup Jan IV. z Dražic*, 128–32; Marin, *L'archevêque, le maître et le dévot*, 235–47.

<sup>60</sup>Ferdinand Menčík, "Konrad Waldhauser, mnich řadu svatého Augustina" [Conrad Waldhauser, a monk of the Order of St. Augustine], *Pojednání královské české společnosti nauk* 6, řady díl 1. *Třída pro filosofii, dějepis a filologii* 1 (1881): 15 no. 2, 18 no. 4.

<sup>61</sup>Höfler, "Apologia," 37.

<sup>62</sup>*Libri confirmationum ad beneficia ecclesiastica Pragensem per archidiocesi*, vol. 1.2, ed. Joseph Emler (Prague, 1874), 16. Waldhauser held a benefice at the parish of All Saints in Litoměřice, where both the Dominicans and the Franciscans had communities.

preacher won the hearts of most of his Prague listeners in the 1360s. In doing so, however, he created a sensation that the emperor had almost certainly not intended. As the fiery newcomer gained supporters, mendicant preachers lost their audiences. When called to answer charges brought by a mendicant coalition to the archbishop's court, Waldhauser led an unruly mob to the hearing, an unmistakable display of his local power. As his agitated supporters crossed the city, they yelled insults and even spat at the frightened Dominicans whose house happened to lie along their path.<sup>63</sup> Eventually the resulting legal dispute even drew in the master general of the Dominican order himself.<sup>64</sup> In his own vigorous defense, the Austrian preacher did not hesitate to remind his opponents of his powerful patrons. When accused of serving a Prague parish church unconnected with his Austrian house of Augustinian canons, Waldhauser boldly reminded the Archbishop of Prague that letters from the Rosenberg (Rožmberk) lords of southern Bohemia and the emperor himself had already "fully informed" the prelate of the canon's status in Prague.<sup>65</sup> Waldhauser, the handpicked favorite of the emperor, spent the rest of his career in a series of struggles with local friars. He died in 1369 shortly after returning from Rome, where he had been litigating against Prague mendicants before the papal curia.

Waldhauser's own account of his Prague activities paints him as an unjustly accused reformer struggling against corrupt enemies. Modern historians have followed Palacký in interpreting Waldhauser's preaching in the context of the Bohemian Reformation, carefully noting that Hus and other reforming preachers in later centuries repeated some of Waldhauser's favorite themes.<sup>66</sup> They have generally not noticed, however, that Waldhauser himself tended to express these and similar themes in terms borrowed from William of Saint-Amour's widely copied thirteenth-century attacks on the friars. For example, when Waldhauser warned his listeners against those who "penetrate houses" to deceive women, he was invoking a Biblical label that William of Saint-Amour had made synonymous with the friars.<sup>67</sup> Waldhauser's controversial preaching had deep roots, in other words, in a widespread antimendicant tradition reaching back more than a century. For Waldhauser and other leading late medieval opponents of the friars like Richard FitzRalph, Nicholas of Jauer, and Conrad Megenberg, opposition to the mendicants and moral reform were two aspects of a single endeavor. Waldhauser believed that the moral condition of Prague's laity indicated a failure of pastoral care and that blame for that failure rested squarely on the shoulders of the friars. Even their preaching against sin, he charged, was compromised by their dependence on begging. Accordingly he accompanied every major message of his preaching with an antimendicant rant. For Waldhauser and his fellow antimendicant preachers, friars themselves were the central problem of late medieval religion.<sup>68</sup> Scholars who have situated

<sup>63</sup>Höfler, "Apologia," 19–20; 29–30.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 23–25.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 36; 21; 32–33.

<sup>66</sup>For example, Jana Nechutová, "Konrad Waldhauser a myšlenkové proudy doby Karla IV" [Conrad Waldhauser and the currents of thought in the time of Charles IV], *Sborník prací filosofické fakulty Brněnské Univerzity* B 26/27 (1979–1980): 51–57; Nechutová, "Rané reformní prvky v 'Apologii' Konráda Waldhausera" [Early reforming elements in the 'Apologia' of Conrad Waldhauser], *Sborník prací filosofické fakulty Brněnské Univerzity* E 25 (1980): 241–48. Cf. Nechutová, "Die charismatische Spiritualität in Böhmen in der vorreformatorischen Zeit," *Österreichische Osthefte* 39 (1997): 411–19. For a more detailed account of the historiography, see Mengel, "Bones, Stones, and Brothels," chapter 3.

<sup>67</sup>Höfler, "Apologia," 23; the Biblical warning against those who "penetrate houses" appears in 2 Timothy 3:6; Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition*, 58.

<sup>68</sup>For the struggles of Waldhauser and the other traditional pre-Hussite forerunners with Prague friars, now see Marin, *L'archevêque, le maître et le dévot*, 231–324.



Waldhauser's antimendicant struggle within a teleological narrative of pre-Reformation reform have at least implicitly agreed that late medieval opposition to the Franciscans, Dominicans, and other friars can be interpreted in itself as evidence of precocious reform.

Some of Waldhauser's fourteenth-century contemporaries offer another perspective. For them, Waldhauser's opposition to the mendicants threatened the success of his moral reform. The two were hardly synonymous. Despite praising Waldhauser as a preacher whose equal he had never encountered in "Germany, Bohemia, Bavaria, or France," one writer offered this criticism: "But he had one fault: namely, that he never wanted to stop his legal wrangling with the mendicants." The author considered this a serious failing, the sort that could undermine the effect of a preacher's labors in his parish.<sup>69</sup> Waldhauser's preaching could certainly be construed as self-righteous, perhaps even self-interested, troublemaking. Witness the synodal statute issued by the archbishop of Prague in October 1365, at the height of the controversy stimulated by Waldhauser's preaching:

As slander (*detrahtio*) is the step-mother of truth, the enemy of justice, the stuff of contention and scandal, and the mother of all iniquity . . . we urge, order, and beseech all you secular and religious clergy to abstain from slanderous words, which can give rise to scandal and spread error among the people. For we notice that there are some who in their sermons, when they ought to bring salubrious warnings that inspire people to devotion, instead pour forth words to disparage their enemy. This causes disgrace and damage to those being attacked and to other listeners.<sup>70</sup>

Not all secular clergy, it is clear, approved of the strife that Waldhauser had stirred up between secular priests and the friars, the clear target of the archbishop's harsh warnings.

There is no evidence that Conrad Waldhauser's notorious divisiveness caused Charles IV to turn against him.<sup>71</sup> Yet it would be preposterous to argue that the emperor brought Waldhauser to Prague in order to attack the local friars.<sup>72</sup> The seasoned ruler had a history of peacemaking instead of partisanship in this debate. Moreover, the emperor continued to support and to depend on the friars in Prague. Of the six new religious houses that Charles IV established in Prague's New Town, two belonged to mendicant orders (the Carmelites and Servites). Far from favoring a particular type of religious ideal in opposition to others, the emperor's foundations testify to his universal vision for Prague. He imported Benedictines from the Balkans who observed a Slavic rite, as well as Benedictines from Milan who used the Ambrosian liturgy.<sup>73</sup> Within Prague's local universe of religious communities, the friars enjoyed particular favor. Without the three preexisting mendicant *studia*, the university established on paper by Charles IV in 1348 could hardly have come into existence: the theology faculty's first five professors were all mendicants from these *studia*.<sup>74</sup> The emperor's

<sup>69</sup>"Sed unum etiam sibi defuit, scilicet quod cum religiosis ordinum mendicantium nunquam cessare voluit litigare. Et tu tibi ergo de talibus cave, etiam cum hiis predictis vivas pacificus et cum hiis etiam, qui pacem oderunt. Hoc tamen dico, si fieri potest, quia cum predictis litigando modicum fructum facies et in sermonibus tuis multos supervacuus labores tibi facies in plebe" (Jan Sedlák, *M. Jan Hus* [1915, reprint Olomouc, 1996], 2\*).

<sup>70</sup>Polc and Hledíková, *Pražské synody a koncily předhusitské doby*, 190.

<sup>71</sup>Charles IV seems to have had some role, for example, in securing for Waldhauser one of Prague's most important and wealthiest parishes, Saint Mary before Týn, probably around the time he resigned from his Litoměřice parish on 30 January 1365 (Menčík, "Konrad Waldhauser, mnich řadu svatého Augustina," 30 n. 14; *Libri confirmationum*, vol. 1.2, ed. Emler, 59).

<sup>72</sup>Josef Hemmerle, "Karl IV. und die Orden," in Seibt, *Karl IV.*, 301–5.

<sup>73</sup>Mengel, "Bones, Stones, and Brothels," chapter 1.

<sup>74</sup>Peter Moraw, "Die Universität Prag im Mittelalter: Grundzüge ihrer Geschichte im europäischen Zusammenhang," in *Die Universität zu Prag*, ed. Richard W. Eichler, Schriften der Sudetendeutschen Akademie

strong support for the Augustinian hermits—some of the most vocal mendicant opponents of Waldhauser—has even earned him accolades as a champion of reform and humanism! Finally, the emperor chose as his personal confessor a Dominican friar.<sup>75</sup> All of this evidence suggests that the renewed animosity and even street violence instigated by Conrad Waldhauser's antimendicant preaching would have met with the emperor's disappointment and disapproval.

The same people who heard the sermons of Conrad Waldhauser, the same people who witnessed Milíč's transformation of Prague's most famous brothel into an experimental religious community for priests and former prostitutes—these same people made their way across Prague's stone bridge and up the cobbled streets to the new Gothic cathedral on the castle hill overlooking the city. They brought their alms and their problems to Saint Sigismund, the new special friend of Saint Wenceslas himself. Many claimed to have experienced miracles. All three elements contributed to Prague's energetic and at times volatile local religion. None would have been possible without direct intervention by Emperor Charles IV. His ambitious vision for his capital included a transformation of the city's religious culture, yet only certain aspects of this transformation can be squeezed into the distorting mold of pre-Reformation reform. Charles IV's broad plans and direct actions resulted in a vibrant, perhaps even unique, combination of religious energies that severally typified late medieval urban religion. More than anyone else, Charles IV fashioned the particular synthesis of religious culture that emerged. Yet the results must have periodically surprised, and perhaps occasionally dismayed, the powerful architect of Prague's local religion.

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der Wissenschaften und Künste 7 (Munich, 1986), 35; Moraw, "Die Prager Universitäten des Mittelalters," 110–11; Šmahel "Die Anfänge der Prager Universität, 25–31.

<sup>75</sup>Vladimír J. Koudelka, "Zur Geschichte der böhmischen Dominikanerprovinz im Mittelalter: I: Provinzialprioren, Inquisitoren, Apost. Pönitentiare," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 25 (1955): 96–98.