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Jonatan Vinkler

The Czech Brethren – 560 years

**I: Between the incomplete Hussite break with Rome
and the Lutheran Reformation**

This year 560 years have passed since the beginning of organized activity by a particular branch of the Reformation in the Czech kingdom, known as the Unity of the Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum / Jednota bratská*/the Czech/Bohemian Brethren), which can be considered in their activity as well as their theology as an original European Reformation preceding Martin Luther. The referential framework for the birth of the Czech Brethren, historically and in terms of church organization, differed considerably from the origin and establishment of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany. The basic difference, apart from the noticeably greater age of the Czech religious reform, is that in the lands of St Václav (Wenceslaus) the concept of church reform is closely linked with the pre-Reformation *striving for a good spiritual pastor* and the idea that *church reform is primarily a matter of practical everyday morality*, and not (necessarily) of theology. The call for church reform means primarily the correction of the individual and that applies first of all to the head of medieval society, i.e. the preacher or priest. The Czech Reformation (the Utraquist Church and after that the Czech Brethren) was above all a broad folk movement “from the bottom up”, which gains through its own development a theological articulation and reflection, while with Luther it was first of all an intellectual current “from the top down”, a dissemination of the insights and reflections (including intuitive ones) of a highly educated professor, a member of a learned culture, which at a certain moment – on the question of church authority – becomes the subject of debate and identification in the vernacular folk culture, and then develops into a movement and finally into a new church.

After accepting the Compactata of Jihlava (1436), the Hussite party spoke with a single, unified political voice, which was not the case in practical religious life. For although the Taborites with their radical anti-Rome theology were also pressed into a subordinate position and the Utraquist Church at least outwardly acted in a unified way, there re-

mained *groups and circles* that were not satisfied either with adjusting with Catholics or with the situation in which the Church, including the Hussite Church, actually found itself. Consequently they clustered around individual preachers and tried, at least within a narrow circle of fellow thinkers, to practise a Christianity which would be as similar as possible – in its morals and Christian life – to the early apostolic church. The first such circles and groups began to form in Prague around 1450.

At the very beginning, the Czech Brethren were beyond the law, for in their theology and their behaviour they were far away from the dogmas of the Roman Church, which was true also of the Utraquist Church in the Czech kingdom: 1) they repudiated the dogma of the Roman Church concerning the transubstantiation of the bread and wine at the Lord's supper; 2) they did not wish to bow before the host; 3) they did not believe that a priest living in sin, merely through handing out the sacrament (*ex opere operato*), would be consecrated; 4) because of their literal understanding of the Sermon on the Mount they did not wish to give oaths. Most of all, they were far from agreement with the Utraquist and Catholic Churches, and thus outside the rights granted by the Compactata of Jihlava on the question of the investiture of priests. Here, it seems, they broke with the tradition of apostolic succession and the consecration of priests in the Roman Church, since they thought there could not be true priests in that church. The Czech Brethren therefore wanted to separate from such a type of priesthood. Since they did not find a model for their own manner of consecration either in the Orthodox Church or the Waldensian Church, they finally decided on the consecration of priests who were selected by lot from among the believers, although taking into account their functions, knowledge, gifts, and especially their exemplary Christian life, all of which ought to indicate the capability of these people for priestly service.

Even before Luther, the Christian Renaissance influenced the Czech Brethren; this developed in Italy as a part of humanism and then easily spread through Europe. The Czech Brethren were not unknown to Luther even before 1517, since their writings were published from 1511 in the German-speaking region, either as independent books or as parts of larger volumes, but in most cases such editions represented a considerable theological sensation, which increasingly turned the attention of German theologians to theology and the defence of the small, persecuted, but independent and persevering Czech Reformed Church. Luther's direct contacts with the Czech Brethren came about through the role of Jan Hus's key text in Luther's historical appearance as a reformer. This was because Hus's crowning work *De Ecclesia* became the handbook for all those in the German lands who, after the Leipzig dispute between Luther and Eck (1519), took part in the heated debates about papal authority and stood up against the worldly power of the Holy Father; it became a real Noah's ark of anti-papal arguments, which Luther as well as his fellow thinkers drew from Hus's work. Hus thus became an intellectual patron, a saint and protector, the leading intellectual authority of critics of the dealings of the pope, the Roman Curia and the Roman Church, and especially the predecessor of Martin Luther's similar kind of writings.

Key words: Reformation, the Czech kingdom, the Czech Brethren, Luther, Hus

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Tomaž Jurca

**The Reformation in Italy – Protestant currents on the Peninsula
 in the 16th century – a brief overview**

In the light of the diversity of Protestant currents in Italy a systematic definition of a phenomenon sometimes referred to as the “Italian Reformation” is a problematic task. In the first years after Luther’s announcement, Protestant ideas reached Italy mainly through Venice, its printers and merchants, and merged with the well-documented legacy of Church critique already present on the Peninsula. New religious ideas were well received not only by the lower and middle classes but also by numerous distinguished clerics, who strove to find common ground with Protestants and thus avoid the schism of western Christianity. Their hopes were crushed by the foundation of the Holy Office, the Roman Inquisition, with which Gian Pietro Carafa, later elected Pope Paul IV, cleansed the Roman Curia and eliminated the possibility of papal election from the circle of *spirituali*. Only with the elimination of this inner conflict could the Catholic Church fully focus on the campaign against external heresy. In this endeavour it received decisive support from Italian secular authorities and local rulers, who were often themselves church dignitaries. These factors contributed to the fact that the Reformation in Italy was not as successful as in northern Europe and that after a few decades of repression and strict enforcement of the Tridentine creed, Protestant activity on the Peninsula disappeared almost without a trace.

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 26:27

Gorazd Andrejč

Philosophical-theological perspectives on Judaism: Schleiermacher and Tillich

It has been argued that German Liberal Protestant theologians of the 19th and the early 20th Century, despite their affirmation of the freedom of religion and their support for the emancipation of the Jews, remained strongly anti-Jewish which, in turn, contributed to the development of anti-Semitism and ultimately – by the early 20th Century – Nazism. In this essay, I want to examine this perception by exploring Schleiermacher’s and Tillich’s role in the above story and comparing their respective views of Judaism. Both theologians were politically engaged in connection with Christian and general public attitudes towards Jews in Germany, but their theologies of Judaism differ substantially.

Schleiermacher's de-emphasis on *theological* continuity between Judaism and Christianity stands in contrast to Tillich's renewed emphasis on such continuity. That does not mean, however, that Schleiermacher's *theology* is 'more anti-Jewish' compared to Tillich's. While Schleiermacher clearly inherited anti-Jewish attitudes from the pervasive anti-Jewish sentiment of his time which Tillich recognizes and rejects, Schleiermacher's view that each religion is a unique outworking of a different and original "religious" awakening holds promise for a Christian theological affirmation of Judaism in today's more pluralist times. Tillich, on the other hand, reminds us that without a heavy reliance on Jewish narratives and symbols, Christianity, including the doctrine of Christ, is impossible to understand.

Key words: Schleiermacher, Tillich, Jewish-Christian relations, Liberal Protestantism, Philosophical Theology

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929Dalmatin J.

Jedert Vodopivec Tomažič

The material appearance of the Dalmatin Bible

The article aims to present the less known material appearance of the Dalmatin Bible and the background of its origin connected with this through the help of archive sources, the literature and examinations carried out during the conservation-restoration work on the copy held at present by the Kranj Municipal Library. In the light of the importance of this book and the damage it had sustained, the conservation-restoration work was certainly a considerable logistic and professional challenge. The main purpose of this intervention, which is described in more detail elsewhere, was to preserve as much as possible of the original state of the book and at the same time to investigate its structure and materials. After obtaining and checking this badly damaged copy, we decided to examine also 21 copies available to us, the archive sources, the literature and to carry out non-invasive analyses made possible by conservation-restoration work. The archive sources provided only one detail about the paper on which the Bible was printed, stated in the contract with the printer, where the size of the edition and the some data concerning the paper are recorded. From the data in the literature and an examination of the leaves of the dismantled damaged copy concerning the placement of the watermarks and the laid and chain lines we can be certain that the paper leaves were printed in folio placement and that the quires were composed of ternions. The the laid and chain lines are visible on each leaf and a watermark on a good fifth of them. We noticed at least four different forms of the watermarks. From an inspection of 21 copies we established that all of

them, except the copy in Olomouc, which is bound in a green coloured limp parchment binding, and those which were re-bound, basically have a structurally similar binding. The copy from the Kranj Municipal Library was also similarly bound. The text block was sewn on four double hemp cords, which were positioned in the wood block through tunnels and channels. The cover was overlaid with alum-tawed pigskin, and decorated with blind imprints of cylindrical, linear and flat metal seals. On the upper cover only two stiff parts of the German-type brass clasps are preserved.

Keywords: Dalmatin Bible, book, paper, structure, binding

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Božidar Debenjak

Martin Luthers Kritik des Wuchers und der Gier

In einer analytischen Darstellung werden vier Texte Luthers präsentiert: *Von Kauffshandlung vnd wucher, Vom Wucher, Eyn Sermon auff das Euangelion von dem Reychen man vnd armen Lasaro, An die Pfarrherrn Wider den Wucher zu predigen. Vermanung.* Luthers Ausgangspunkt ist die auf dem Evangelium fußende soziale Verantwortung; der rücksichtslose Wucher und finanzielle Spekulationen des frühen Kapitalismus seien unzulässig. Der Pfarrherr bzw. der Prediger haben da große Pflichten, sehr bedeutend sind aber auch die Aufgaben der Rechtspfleger und der Obrigkeit. Die Luthersche Kritik wird erneut aktuell in der Epoche des Neoliberalismus und seiner Exzesse.

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27-5:394

Marko Kerševan

What is/is not Christian? What do public holidays tell us/not tell us?

Concerning the holidays that signify the major folk/religious/church holidays of western civilization (Christmas, New Year, Easter) the author deals with the following questions: Are these holidays a confirmation, denial or re-evaluation of Christian belief? Did the Christian faith conceive of them, complement or critique them? Where does Christianity stand between the old (and new) paganism on the one hand and atheism on the other? In explaining the content and form of these celebrations, the author relies on Levi-Strauss and Mircea Eliade.

We are familiar with two directions from the history of Christianity. In the Catholic and Orthodox traditions the stronger direction was that which in a religious and magic way sacralized the world – and along with this came the temptation of sliding into paganism, polytheism, cosmotheism, whereas in Protestantism, the other direction was stronger, oriented towards secularism and “disenchantment” the world – and along with this the danger of sliding into atheism. The former facilitated the spread of Christianity, its “inculturation” in other societies and cultures, its renewal in space and time. The latter made possible the preservation and ratification of its specific character and contributed to the specific nature of the western development of secularized politics, economics, science, art, law. Both historically and nowadays Christianity seems to slide inevitably first in one direction, then in the other (back and forth). The strength of Christianity – one might say its *modus vivendi* – lies in the fact that it can prevent finally sliding and ending up in simply one of these polarities.

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Peter Kovačič Peršin

The Turn to the Individual

The pontificate of Pope Francis is marked most of all by the fact that he has re-directed his attention from the institution to the individual person. For a large part of the conservative clergy, especially those in leading positions, but also of lay believers, this turnabout arouses uncertainty and even causes offence. His measures are destroying the clergy's privileges and the rigid framework of dogma and pastoral practice. But his real priority is the social question and here he has hit even harder. World politics is disturbed by his direct critique of the mistaken neoliberal economic and financial order. So it was to be expected that the fundamental documents of his pontificate would arouse an even stronger resistance than his speeches. So far these are in particular the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *The Joy of Love (Amoris laetitia)*, which brings contemporary views on family problems and new principles of family pastoral care, and the ecological encyclical *Praise be to you (Laudato si')*, which depicts a new social and economic vision: the pope's condensed social teaching, his theologically reinforced argumentation, his sharp criticism of current conditions in the world and proposals for their resolution. This opens the question whether the pontificate of Pope Francis was permitted only as a manoeuvre, to improve the Catholic Church's image, since he cannot carry out his reforms, but can only point to them. But in any case, the churches of the third world, where the Catholic faith is spreading and also seeing renewal as “the church of the poor”, have gained self-confidence thanks to Pope Francis.

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Mihael Glavan

**Paul Wiener (1495–1554) – an eminent European reformer
and the first “Slovenian” Lutheran bishop**

Wiener's theological thought was derived from the theological basis of the Bible, but constantly returned to man, believing in the human tendency towards the good and right. In the centre is his understanding of the divine mystery, which can be reached only with faith, which is an irreplaceable truth. His creativity belongs equally to the Slovenian as to the Transylvanian Lutheran Church, of which he was the president after he was exiled from Ljubljana. He was born in Kranj, educated in the German-speaking region, but worked in his native Slovenian provinces, so that he was well acquainted with and understood the local cultural and religious conditions.

As Trubar's co-worker and advocate of Lutheran theology and an exceptionally talented preacher, he stimulated a real movement of repentance in Carniola. After he was called to Ljubljana, he became the initiator of a completely new understanding of the gospel, which he experienced as a great inward liberation. In his theological discourse he also wrote about the way in which, especially in Carniola, the people are really superstitious, they forsake the Lord God, and when in danger and trouble resort only to the saints, calling only upon them in their distress, and moreover they set out on pilgrimages, falling on their knees in front of images, beseeching and praying not only to the saints but even to these images as if to God, not knowing or caring about any difference between God and the saints. Precisely for this reason we have chosen this chapter, which is presented in this periodical in translation.

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