

Abbot John-Jerome of Prague ((Preaching and Reform in Early Fifteenth- Century Poland

Preacher and Confessor at the Polish Court

John-Jerome's missionary work in Lithuania represents only one aspect of his activities in the Polish domains¹. As he himself noted in 1436 in the prologue of his collection of Lenten sermons known as *Quadragesa Salutis*:

Thirty years before while I was the confessor and preacher of the most serene King Wladislaus of Poland, at the request of friends and prelates of this same Polish kingdom I edited two books of sermons. The first, called *Linea Salutis* contains sermons for all the Sundays through the year, and the second book, entitled *Exemplar Salutis*, contains sermons on the saints and all notable feast-days of the whole year².

As royal confessor and court preacher, John-Jerome certainly had a prominent position in the Polish court at a momentous time in its history, witnessing the inception of the Jagiellonian dynasty, the political union of Poland and Lithuania, the re-foundation of the university of Cracow, and the climax of the military struggle between Poland and the Teutonic Knights. Before considering the content of his two major sermon collections, it is instructive to sketch out the personalities and the spiritual and theological atmosphere of the setting in which John-Jerome lived and worked.

The annulment of Queen Jadwiga's betrothal to her childhood friend Wilhelm Hapsburg, her marriage to the Lithuanian prince Jagiello and

¹ This article is a continuation of a treatment of the work of the Czech Premonstratensian John-Jerome of Prague in Poland. For the first article, see "John-Jerome of Prague (1368-1440): a Norbertine Missionary in Lithuania", *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 78 (2002) pp. 228-254.

² "... ut qui ante annos triginta dum essem confessorius et predicator serenissimi Wladislai Regis Polonie rogatu amicorum et prelatorum iam dicti regni polonie duos edideram sermonum libros primi qui vocantur *Linea salutis* continent per totum annum omnes sermones dominicales, libel(l)umque secundum qui vocatur *Exemplar salutis* continet sermones de Sanctis et sermones omnium festivitatum celebrium totius anni." *Quadragesa Salutis*, Cracow Cathedral Archive, Lat. Ms. 150, p. 240.

his subsequent coronation as King Wladislaus II of Poland, formed a series of celebrated events whose interpretation remains controversial down to the present day³. By all accounts the twelve year old Jadwiga had little say in the diplomatic maneuverings which resulted in her marriage to a recently-pagan man three times her age. Regardless of her own feelings in the matter, she seems to have risen to the occasion, and from 1386 until her death in 1399 came to play a strong and independent role in the internal and external affairs of the kingdom⁴. Her strong personal religiosity set the tone for life at the royal court⁵. She was a great benefactress of the poor, as well as a patroness of reform-minded clergy. In particular she sponsored communities of reformist Benedictines, Cistercians and Carmelites in her kingdom⁶. The Silesian Dominican reformer Henry of Bitterfeld dedicated his tract *De contemplatione et vita activa* to Jadwiga in 1396⁷. Her two successive chancellors and confidants were the scholarly bishops Piotr Wysz and Andrzej Łaskarz, both destined to play important roles in Polish and international intellectual and diplomatic life⁸. The eminent jurist and first rector of the university of Cracow, Stanislaw of Skarbimierz, was Jadwiga's confessor and eulogist at her

³ For a thorough treatment of these events see Andrezej Feliks GRABSKI, "Jadwiga — Wilhelm — Jagiełło w Opiniach Europejskich" in *Nasza Przyszłość* 23 (1966) pp. 117-166; and Oscar HALECKI, *Jadwiga of Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe* (New York: Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, 1991) pp. 77-172.

⁴ For Jadwiga's career, both before and after her marriage, see Anna STRZELECKA, "Jadwiga Andegaweńska, Anjou (1374-1399) królowa Polski" in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 10 (1962-64) pp. 291-297; Helena QUILLUS, *Königin Hedwig von Polen* (Leipzig: Otto Harrasowitz, 1938); Oscar HALECKI, *Jadwiga of Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe*, *op. cit.*, and HALECKI's remarks in Chapter X of *The Cambridge History of Poland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950) pp. 188-209; Charlotte KELLOGG in *Jadwiga: Poland's Great Queen* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1932) provides an evocative if romantic overview.

⁵ In addition to references above, see Karl GORSKI, "L'histoire de la spiritualité polonaise" in *Poland's Millennium of Catholicism* (Lublin: Lublin Catholic University Press, 1969) pp. 286-290; Tadeusz SILNICKI, "Jadwiga", in *Poland in Christian Civilization*, edited by Jerzy BRAUN (Veritas Foundation, 1985) pp. 238-244.

⁶ STRZELECKA, *loc. cit.*, p. 295.

⁷ See Anna STRZELECKA, "Henryk z Bitterfeld" in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 9 (1960-61) pp. 420-21; Mieczysław GEBAROWICZ, "Henryk Bitterfeld i jego 'Traktat'", in his *Psalterz Floriański i Jego Geneza* (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich, 1965) pp. 85-126.

⁸ On Piotr Wysz, see Stanisław TRAWKOWSKI, "Piotr z Radolina, Zwany Wyszem", in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 26 (1981) pp. 422-428; Mieczysław GEBAROWICZ, "Monogram-dewizy królowej Jadwigi i Piotr Wysz", in his *Psalterz Floriański i Jego Geneza*, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-84. On Andrzej Łaskarz (Lascarys), see Karol PIOTROWICZ, "Andrzej Łaskarz" in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 1 (1935) pp. 103-106.

funeral⁹. Perhaps the young queen's greatest legacy was her role in the re-foundation of the University of Cracow, which she envisioned as a training ground for native Lithuanian clergy for the purpose of evangelizing their homeland. In her will she left half of her personal fortune to be used for the establishment of the university, a task her husband made into a reality shortly after her death.

Although the extent of John-Jerome's personal relationship with Jadwiga is unknown, a more detailed picture emerges with regard to King Wladislaus Jagiello. Contemporary and modern opinions on the character of the king have greatly varied, and have usually depended upon the agenda and interests of the various commentators¹⁰. Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Jagiello's conversion to Christianity, his missionary efforts in his homeland, and his support for the development of church institutions in Poland. The king's personal abstemiousness, including his complete abstention from alcohol, was remarked upon even by his detractors¹¹. His great love seems to have been hunting and the forest, and it is possible that John-Jerome's presence with the king on these frequent excursions may have earned him the nickname "Silvanus".

The fact that John-Jerome was a Czech may have contributed to his influence with the king. Always perceived as an outsider by many Polish nobles and prelates, Jagiello's choice of the ascetic John-Jerome as a personal chaplain seems to fit in with his inclination to surround himself with Czechs, fellow Lithuanians, and other non-Poles. Jagiello's affection for John-Jerome is perhaps reflected in the remark of the fifteenth century Polish historian Jan Dlugosz on how happy the king was to receive his former confessor as part of the Council of Basel's embassy to Poland in 1433¹². Throughout his reign Wladislaus had welcomed many Czech clergy and supplied them with support and benefices. Dlugosz notes how for many years as the royal chaplain John-Jerome had once accompanied

⁹ Tadeusz SILNICKI, "Jadwiga", *loc. cit.*, pp. 227ff. See also Ludwik EHRLICH, "The Polish School of International Law in the Fifteenth Century", in *Poland and Christian Civilization*, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-268.

¹⁰ For a discussion, including quotations from indicative primary and secondary sources, see Vanda SRUOGIENE-SRUOGA, "Jogaila (1350-1434)", *Lituanus* 33 (1987) pp. 23-34.

¹¹ See Oscar HALECKI's summary of the king's character in *The Cambridge History of Poland*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 232ff.

¹² Jan DLUGOSZ, *Liber Beneficiorum diocesis Cracoviensis*, Tom. III, *Monasteria*, (in *Opera Omnia* IX, Cracow, 1864) p. 82. Jan Dlugosz was a canon of the cathedral church of Cracow, and lived from 1415-1480.

the king on his frequent journeys, and the respect and esteem in which John-Jerome was held in the court:

Having heard about his reputation for kindness, [John-Jerome] betook himself to King Wladislaus II of Poland. He was received by the king more kindly than he had even hoped, and both welcomed and provided for. Content with a single cartload, he constantly followed the court everywhere. He eagerly preached with great zeal and care in the royal presence, and possessed an agreeable and charming eloquence in the sight of the king and the Poles. Remarkably he abstained from eating flesh throughout the many years he spent in the royal court, and by his astonishing erudition and abstinence, and in general uncommon way of life, edified not only the king, but also his knights... King Wladislaus of Poland esteemed this man with a unique goodwill, keeping him as his own preacher and confessor for many years, and doing many things upon his recommendation¹³.

Dlugosz clearly indicates that for many years John-Jerome was a major advisor to the king, and undoubtedly had an important voice in ecclesiastical affairs. Although there is no evidence that John-Jerome himself was a member of the faculty of the restored University of Cracow, his presence at court represents another link between Polish intellectuals and the University of Prague at this time. These ties are best epitomized by Matthew of Cracow (1330-1410). Matthew received his early education in Cracow, and went on to pursue advanced studies at the Caroline University of Prague, where he received a bachelor of arts in 1355, a bachelor of theology in 1381, and a doctor of theology in 1387. Matthew was a professor and city preacher in Prague for several years after that, and John-Jerome may well have known him during this time. After spending time as a professor and rector at Heidelberg University and as confessor to the future Holy Roman Emperor Rupert, Matthew returned to Prague in 1397 at the request of King Wladislaus to help organize the Cracow University, where he remained until 1405. Matthew went on to become Bishop of Worms, a cardinal, and finally papal legate in Germany before

¹³ "... ad praefatum Vladislaum Secundum Poloniae regem fama clementiae eius audita, se contulit. A quo quum benignius quam speraverat et exceptus et provisus esset, curiam eius assidue una quadriga contentus, ubique sequebatur, praedicationi regiae magno studio, magnaeque cura, gratum enim habebat apud regem et polonos, blandumque eloquium, intentus; et tam regem, quam milites, mira eruditione et abstinentia, vitaeque non vulgari, cum per annos plures, quibus in curia regis conversabatur, abstinendo ab esu carnum, notabiliter aedificabat.... Hunc cum Vladislaus Poloniae rex praefatus, singulari favore diligeret, et illum pro praedicatore et confessore suo annis pluribus teneret, et audito eo multa faceret." *Ibid.*, p. 80.

his death in 1410¹⁴. John-Jerome certainly shared the reformist tendencies and conciliarist views of Matthew, a combination which would set the tone for intellectual life at the Cracow University throughout the fifteenth century¹⁵. The emphasis on legal studies in Polish intellectual circles, which would blossom in the emergence at the Council of Constance of the canon lawyer Paweł Włodkowic (Paulus Vladimiri)¹⁶, also fit in well with the training and mindset of John-Jerome.

John-Jerome's travels with the royal court provided him with a thorough acquaintance with ecclesiastical conditions throughout the kingdom, as well as the opportunity to establish personal contacts with bishops and heads of religious houses. His perceptions on the state of the clergy, combined with his reformist tendencies, led him to undertake the task of composing two important sermon collections for the use of clergy, known as *Linea Salutis* and *Exemplar Salutis*, respectively. Długosz remarks that these collections are marked by "a singular form" and "an admirable brevity", and their popularity is attested to by the large number of extant manuscripts¹⁷. An examination of these two collections provides us with insights into the importance John-Jerome placed on preaching, and the need to provide practical guidelines for the parish and religious clergy in this matter.

¹⁴ For a survey of Matthew's career with valuable bibliography, see Władysław SEŃKO, "Mateusz z Krakowa" in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 20 (1975) pp. 196-198; also B. B. SZCZESNIAK, "Matthew of Cracow" in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 9, Second Edition (New York: Gale Group, 2003), p. 361. On Matthew's conciliarist ideas and his subsequent influence, see Władysław SEŃKO, "Mathieu de Cracovie et son oeuvre *De Praxi Romanae Curiae*", *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 16 (1971) pp. 25-41.

¹⁵ For the most thorough treatment of Conciliar thought in Poland, see Thomas WÜNSCH, *Konziliarismus und Polen: Personen, Politik und Programme aus Polen zur Verfassungsfrage der Kirche in der Zeit der mittelalterlichen Reformkonzilien* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1998). Wunsch mentions John-Jerome briefly on p. 47.

¹⁶ See Stanislaus F. BELCH, *Paulus Vladimiri and His Doctrine Concerning International Law and Politics* (London: Mouton & Co, 1965); Ludwik EHRLICH, "The Polish School of International law in the Fifteenth Century", in *Poland and Christian Civilization*, op. cit., pp. 245-268; and Anton HILKMAN, "Paweł Włodkowic: a Forerunner of the Modern Doctrine of the State", in the same, pp. 269-276.

¹⁷ Jan Długosz, *Liber Beneficiorum diocesis Cracoviensis*, op. cit., p. 80. For a list of extant manuscripts, see William P. HYLAND, "John-Jerome of Prague: Portrait of a Fifteenth Century Camaldolese", *The American Benedictine Review* 46 (1995) p. 331.

Linea Salutis

As previously-mentioned, the collection entitled *Linea Salutis* (Line of Salvation) is composed of sermons for the Sundays throughout the ecclesiastical year (*per circulum anni*)¹⁸. John-Jerome begins with a prologue in which he explains his rationale for undertaking this project. Then follow the texts of fifty-four sermons. The first sermon discusses the humility of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and is probably intended as a model sermon for a subject very appropriate for Advent and Christmastide. The subsequent fifty-three sermons extend from the First Sunday of Advent through the Sundays after Pentecost according to the following arrangement:

- 5 Sermons for the first three Sundays in Advent
- 1 Sermon for Sunday within the octave of Christmas
- 1 Sermon for Sunday within the octave of Epiphany
- 4 Sermons for Sundays after Epiphany
- 1 Sermon for Septuagesima Sunday
- 1 Sermon for Sexagesima Sunday
- 1 Sermon for Quinquagesima Sunday
- 4 Sermons for Lenten Sundays, with the second Sunday of Lent being replaced by a sermon for Thursday of the first week of Lent.
- 1 Sermon for Passion Sunday
- 2 Sermons for Palm Sunday
- 6 Sermons for each Sunday in Eastertide
- 1 Sermon for Pentecost Sunday
- 1 Sermon for Monday within the Octave of Pentecost
- 1 Sermon based upon Luke 16:22 *Mortuus est dives et sepultus est* is found here in the collection, with no clear liturgical association.
- 23 Sermons for each of the Sundays following Trinity Sunday.

Each of the sermons is preceeded by a Scriptural passage containing the Gospel reading for the day, or on a few occasions, the Epistle. Occasionally the full scriptural passage is given, but more frequently an excerpt or a paraphrase. Such a synopsis is undoubtedly intended to suggest to the preacher an important theme for the day.

In the opening lines of his prologue, John-Jerome sets out very clearly his motivations for producing this sermon collection.

Woe to me because I have been silent. These words spoke the prophet Isaiah calling to mind a silence worthy of condemnation in himself and

¹⁸ For this article all citations of the *Linea Salutis* (henceforth abbreviated LS) are taken from Warsaw, Biblioteka Naradowa, Ms. 3019, fol. 35r-129v.

in others. For each person is obliged to the correction of his neighbor under divine precept, as can be proved by Ecclesiastus 17, where it is said the Lord has commanded each person concerning his own neighbor, namely that he should rescue him from every evil. If therefore the Lord has thus commanded every one in this matter, especially then he ought to have commanded priests, whom he calls to the sacerdotal office by grace alone, and to whom he has attached the ministry of preaching, saying *Go and preach the Gospel to every creature*¹⁹.

John-Jerome's opening with a quotation from the prophet Isaiah (6:5), whose words are taken to condemn all those who do not speak out to correct their neighbors, is a powerful rhetorical start to a tract emphasizing preaching and moral reform. He also makes it clear to his presumably clerical audience that the responsibility to preach is an inextricable part of the divine service to which priests have been called. This insistence on the need for clerics to edify their neighbors and the faithful by moral exhortation goes back to the earliest treatment of the subjects by Regular Canons in general and the Premonstratensians in particular. According to Caroline Walker Bynum, their treatment of the role of silence in the religious life characterized the spirituality of the regular canons in the twelfth century, and set them apart from the older monastic tradition. The monastic tradition portrayed silence as a good in itself and as a preparation for discourse with God, and tended to see speech as an opportunity to sin. The canons, while recognizing the importance silence played in contemplation and in life within the monastery, emphasized silence as a preparation for useful and edifying speech²⁰.

The most extended treatment of the role of clerical silence as a preparation for speech in the canon regular tradition was provided by the Premonstratensian Philip of Harvengt, abbot of Bonne-Esperance (d. 1183).

¹⁹ "*Ve michi quia tacui. Hec verba locutus est Isaias propheta comemorans in se et in aliis dampnabilem taciturnitatem. Omnis namque tenetur ad proximi correccionem sub precepto divino quod potest probari per illud Ecclesiasticus xvii ubi dicitur unicuique mandavit dominus de proximo suo ut eriperet eum ab omni malo. Si ergo dominus mandavit unicuique precipue tum sacerdotibus mandare debuit quos ad officium sacerdotale ex sola gratia vocat, quibus et predicandi ministerium iniunxit dicens *Ite et predicate evangelium omni creature.*" LS, fol. 35r. Italics are my own.*

²⁰ For a concise summary of this position, see Caroline WALKER BYNUM, "The Spirituality of Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century", in her *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), especially pp. 43-46; for a more detailed treatment of the subject see her *Docere verbo et exemplo: an Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*, Harvard Theological Studies XXXI (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1979).

In his great *Treatise on the Formation of the Clergy*, Philip treats in detail the different aspects of the priestly office and its responsibilities. Taking the teaching and work of the apostles as a touchstone and model, the purpose of the treatise is to provide spiritual formation for all clergy, not just regular canons. One of the longest sections of the treatise is entitled *De Silentio Clericorum* (On the Silence of Clerics)²¹. In this work Philip treats the different types of silence. He acknowledges that there is a beneficial silence which allows time for contemplation, and also allows priests to refrain from sinful and harmful words and deeds. But in addition to this, silence can be very harmful. Priests who refrain from speaking the truth because of fear of persecution, or those clergy who shun the examples of the apostles and refrain from correcting sin in their neighbors, are guilty of sinful silence and negligence²².

Philip supports his arguments with numerous citations from Sacred Scripture, including the prophet Isaiah. On two occasions he employs the verse (Isaiah 6:5) quoted by John-Jerome in the opening of his tract *Linea Salutis*. In the first instance, Philip cites this passage in the context of stressing how before priests can prophesy or offer moral correction to another, like the prophet Isaiah their lips and heart must be cleansed. Once due preparation is made and a cleric is ready to provide edifying speech to his neighbor, silence from idleness is wrong and must be avoided²³. Significantly, the second occasion Philip quotes Isaiah 6:5 is at the beginning of his discussion on culpable silence (*de culpabile silentio*)²⁴.

The brevity of John-Jerome's statements on this subject makes it difficult to determine whether he had a direct knowledge of Philip's *De Silentio Clericorum*. His remarks, however, are suggestive, and reflect a concern for the need not only to exhort priests to preach, but also that clerics need serious preparation before they can be expected to preach. John-Jerome certainly stands firmly in the Premonstratensian tradition represented by Philip of Harvengt, which in turn has its roots in patristic texts such as Gregory the Great's *Rule of Pastoral Care* and Ambrose's *On the*

²¹ The *De Silentio Clericorum* can be found in Migne, *Patrologia Latina* (henceforth PL, or PG for *Patrologia Graeca*) 203, cols. 944-1206.

²² See Bernard ARDURA, *The Order of Prémontré: History and Spirituality*, Translated by Edward HAGMA and Edited by Roman VANASSE (De Pere, Wisconsin: Paisa Publishing Co., 2003) p. 114; also see Caroline WALKER BYNUM, *Docere verbo et exemplo: an Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-75.

²³ PL 203, col. 980.

²⁴ PL 203, cols. 1102-1103.

Duties of Clerics. It is explicitly to this earlier patristic tradition that John-Jerome will turn as he elaborates his justification for this sermon collection. In particular, he cites patristic texts found in the *Decretum* of Gratian. He probably had several reasons for citing the texts found in the *Decretum* mandating clerics to preach. First of all, his intended audience is both the secular and religious clergy; the texts found in the *Decretum* are concerned with all priests, not only regular canons. Likewise, the *Decretum* represents authoritative canon law for all clergy. Finally, John-Jerome as a *doctor decretorum* would naturally draw his arguments from Gratian's *Decretum* throughout his whole career, particularly in writings that were designed to reach a wide audience. His first encounter with many of the Church Fathers may well have come from his studies of canon law.

There is a large amount of material on clerical behavior and duties in the *Decretum*, and John-Jerome clearly takes some care in making an efficient selection that is both substantive and direct. He begins with a quotation of Pope Gregory the Great's *Rule of Pastoral Care* found in the forty-third Distinction of the *Decretum*. In the introduction to the Distinction, not quoted by John-Jerome, Gratian had made the point that the cleric having the care of souls must show discretion in his preaching, knowing what to say and not to say at appropriate times²⁵. Gratian then provides a long quotation from Book II, Chapter 4 of Gregory's *Rule of Pastoral Care*, on how the ruler of souls must be discreet in keeping silence and profitable in speech. From this long passage John-Jerome chooses the following excerpt to quote in his own text:

For it is true that whosoever enters on the priesthood undertakes the office of a herald, so as to walk, himself crying aloud, before the coming of the judge who follows terribly²⁶.

John-Jerome then proceeds to provide an abbreviated quotation of Gregory's exegesis from the same chapter. The preaching duty of the

²⁵ "In ipsa autem doctrina discretum oportet esse rectorem, ne aut tacenda proferat, aut dicenda taceat." GRATIAN, *Decretum Magistri Gratiani* (henceforth abbreviated *Decretum*) Dist. xliii. In A. FRIEDBERG (ed.), *Corpus Iuris Canonici*. Vol. 1. (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1959), p. 153.

²⁶ "Preconis officium suscepit quisquis ad officium sacerdotale accedit ut ante adventum iudicis qui terribiliter sequitur, ipse clamando gradiatur." LS, fol. 35r. See Dist. xliii, Cap. i, *Decretum, op. cit.*, p. 154. English translation by James BARMBY, found in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), Second Series, Vol. 12, Section B, p. 12.

Christian priesthood was pre-figured by the garments worn by the Old Testament Levitical priesthood. Just as the bells the Hebrew priests wore into the sanctuary announced the presence of God, so the Christian priest must use his voice to announce the Gospel. Priests who neglect their duty in this regard will incur the judgment of God and perish²⁷.

John-Jerome proceeds to develop this thought with other patristic quotations drawn from the *Decretum*. Pope Leo the Great is cited to stress that the government of churches should not be given to uneducated and inexperienced men who are not adequately prepared for the task²⁸. Jerome is cited to stress that in order to avoid teaching error, before one can be a preacher, it is necessary to be a student and disciple²⁹. With regard to the responsibility to preach, John-Jerome quotes Pope Nicholas I to demonstrate that the priest who fails to discharge his duty in this regard will be damned³⁰.

After setting out this theoretical framework, John-Jerome goes on to criticize priests who draw a stipend from an ecclesiastical benefice but do not preach to those in their spiritual care. Undoubtedly he was aware of such clerics from his conversations with other clergy and his own experience gained from his travels throughout the kingdom in his capacity as royal chaplain. John-Jerome quotes Augustine, Isidore of Seville and Gratian himself to make the point that clerics who plead their own ignorance as an excuse for not preaching will not necessarily avoid eternal punishment. The ignorant will indeed be culpable if they have the opportunity to learn doctrine and the art of preaching and refuse to take advantage of it³¹. It is to aid those clerics who want to better themselves and learn to preach that John-Jerome has prepared this collection of model sermons:

²⁷ "Sacerdos enim ingrediens absque sonitu moritur quia iram contra se occulti iudicis exigit. hec Gregorius." LS, fol. 35r.

²⁸ See Dist. lxi, Cap. i, *Decretum*, op. cit. p. 230.

²⁹ "Si ergo clericatus titubat desiderium ex consilio beati Jeronimi ad rusticum monachum discas quid possis docere ne sis miles antequam tyro ne prius magister antequam discipulus ne doctor erroris inveniariis." LS, fol. 35r.

³⁰ See Dist. xliii, Cap. v, *Decretum*, op. cit. p. 156. Pope Nicholas' opening words in this quotation, "Dispensacio est nobis celestis seminis iniuncta. Ve si non sparserimus, ve si tacuerimus.", are reminiscent of John-Jerome's (see note 19 above) at the opening of the *Linea Salutis*.

³¹ "Non omnis ignorans est immunis a pena. Ille enim ignorans potest excusari a pena, qui quod disceret non invenit. Illis autem hoc ignosci non poterit, qui, habentes a quo discerent, operam non dederunt." Gratian in Dist. xxxvii, Cap. xvi, *Decretum*, op. cit. p. 140. Significantly, immediately following this capitulum in the *Decretum* is Dist. xxxviii, entitled "Cum itaque voluntaria ignorantia omnibus sit noxia sacerdotibus est periculosa."

Therefore turning my attention to these and similar matters, I proposed to dictate this book. Preferring not to draw upon my own resources on account of the fact that *I am rather awkward in understanding and slow of speech* (Exodus 4:10), I have chosen rather from the sayings of others as roses from among thorns. The name I have given as a title to this book is *The Line of Salvation* in the hope that it may be possible that a large number of the faithful, striving as they are for eternal salvation, may somehow be led by the words of this book as if I myself were leading them, as a royal road progresses neither deviating to the right nor to the left, directing a line by faith so that they might attain the haven of salvation³².

After some elaboration of this geometric image and a stylized expression of his own inadequacy for the task at hand³³, John-Jerome concludes his prologue and proceeds with the sermons. A typical example would be his sermon for the first Sunday of Advent, taking as his text the Epistle of the day, Romans 13: 11-14. Focusing on the phrase "Now it is the hour for us to rise from sleep" (*Hora est iam nos de sompno surgere*), John-Jerome begins with an allegorical interpretation of the story of the Canaanite general Sisara and the woman Jahel (Judges 4: 1-22). In this story, Sisara is threatening the Israelites with a large army, but during the battle the Lord strikes terror into Sisara, and he flees the battlefield and leaves his men to their destruction. Sisara takes refuge in the tent of Jahel, the wife of Haber, who welcomes Sisara into his tent, covers him with a cloak, and gives him milk to drink after he asks her for a drink of water. Sisara asks her to keep watch, but when he falls asleep, Jahel takes a tent peg and with a hammer drives it through his temples and brain, nailing his head to the earth and killing him.

³² "hec ergo et hiis similia attendens hunc librum dictare proposui non a memet ipso eo quod *impedioris sensus et tardioris linguae sum* Exodi iiiii. Sed ex aliorum collegi dictis tamquam rosas de spinis nomenque huic libro dedi tytilus linea salutis ut pote qui vis fidelium ad eternam tendens salutem ducatur per dicta huius libri tamquam per ducarem. Quatenus non declinando ad dextram neque ad sinistram via gradiatur regia intendens per fidem lineam ut salutis attingant portum." LS, f. 35v. Italics mine. The image of neither swerving to the right or left is reminiscent of the exhortation of Moses to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 28: 13-14: "Si tamen audieris mandata Domini Dei tui quae ego praecipio tibi hodie, et custodieris et feceris, ac non declinaveris ab eis nec ad dexteram, nec ad sinistram, nec secutus fueris deos alienos, neque colueris eos." The *via regia* image may come from Numbers 21:22, in the words of the messengers of Israel to King Sehon: "Obsecro ut transire mihi liceat per terram tuam: non declinabimus in agros et vineas, non bibemus aquas ex puteis, via regia gradiemur, donec transeamus terminos tuos."

³³ John-Jerome would later as a Camaldolese return to this "linear" imagery in his tract of 1425 entitled *Linea Salutis Heremitarum*. I am currently preparing a critical edition of this work.

In his interpretation of the passage, John-Jerome equates Jahel with the world, and Sisara with all sinners. Sisara for his sins is excluded from the joys of the Kingdom of Heaven. The milk which Jahel gave him instead of water, represents the many impurities which the sinner and heretic takes from the world, instead of the purity of sound teaching and truth. He then briefly brings up the examples of Holofernes, Saul, Jero-boam, and Samson as Old Testament examples of stories where sleep signifies how the world corrupts by offering the delights of the flesh³⁴.

John-Jerome's treatment of this story represents a combination of his own ideas with certain strands of traditional exegesis. This is revealed first of all in his treatment of Sisara. John-Jerome identifies the meaning of Sisara's name as "exclusion of joy" (*exclusio gaudii*)³⁵, a definition also found in St. Augustine and Rabanus Maurus³⁶. This interpretation of Sisara's name was chosen over another one present in the exegetical tradition. In the translation by Rufinus of Origen's *Homily on the Book of Judges* IV, Sisara is interpreted to mean "vision of a horse" (*visio equi*), with the idea being that Sisara represents the animalistic, rather than the spiritual man³⁷. This interpretation, supplemented by the idea of Sisara as *typus diaboli*, was carried on by Isidore of Seville, Rabanus Maurus and Rupert of Deutz³⁸. In his interpretation offered to the potential preacher, John-Jerome chose the authority, albeit without citation, of St. Augustine, and simplified the tradition by explaining how Sisara stands for the sinner (*peccator*).

In the case of his interpretation of the name Jahel, John-Jerome entirely departs from the exegetical tradition when he interprets her to represent the world (*mundus*), and also when he interprets the milk she gives to Sisara as the mixed and impure teaching which the world gives to sinners. In his long treatment of this story, Origen (known through the translation by Rufinus) had stated that Jahel should be interpreted as "ascension" (*ascensio*), and that she represents the Church in this story. In his detailed

³⁴ LS, fols. 37r-37v.

³⁵ "Sysara exclusio gaudii interpretatur." LS, fol. 37r.

³⁶ See AUGUSTINE, *Enarratio in Psalmum XXXII*, PL 37, col. 1053; and RABANUS MAURUS, *Commentaria in Librum Iudicum*, Liber I, PL 148, col. 1148.

³⁷ "Sisara autem interpretatur visio equi. Iste est enim animalis, non spiritalis, qui videt nisi ea quae animalis sunt. Ipse est eius visio, ipse semper intuitus." ORIGEN, *Homiliae super Librum Iudicum* IV, PG 12, col. 969.

³⁸ See ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *Allegoriae Quaedam Scriptura Sacrae*, PL 83, col. 111; RABANUS MAURUS, *De Universo*, Lib. III, PL 111, col. 56; RUPERT OF DEUTZ, *Liber Unus Commentariorum in librum Iudicum*, PL 167, cols. 1031-1032.

exegesis of this point, Origen also discusses milk in very positive terms as the nourishment given by the Church to the faithful. Jahel's triumph over Sisara is taken to be ultimately a triumph of the Church over sin and the devil³⁹. This interpretation was carried on by Isidore of Seville, Pseudo-Bede, Rabanus Maurus, the *Glossa Ordinaria*, Rupert of Deutz and Peter Damian⁴⁰. John-Jerome's exegesis seems to be original, and offers his reader a rather less convoluted and more straightforward example of Old Testament allegory than that passed down through the Latin tradition from Origen.

Following this discussion of the Old Testament and after quoting again the passage from the epistle of the day, John-Jerome commences with the main part of his sermon, namely the threefold way that St. Paul's exhortation to put off the works of darkness can be understood, specifically as indicated by the phrase "Now it is the hour for us to rise from sleep" (*Hora est iam nos de sompno surgere*):

Therefore I have chosen words of today's epistle from which three things can principally be considered: In the first place, brevity of our life is indicated by "the hour"; secondly, the danger of sin by "sleep"; thirdly, the necessity of our salvation by "to rise"⁴¹.

John-Jerome follows this threefold plan, and throughout his sermon draws upon brief examples from Old and New Testament writers, as well as Augustine, Gregory the Great, Jerome, and Bernard of Clairvaux. The main theme of his sermon is the need to maintain chastity and avoid mortal sin, particularly fornication and adultery. He exhorts the listener to implore the intercession of the saints for aid in the hope of remaining pure throughout life, and in the event of moral failure to make a full and heartfelt confession.

This sermon exemplifies how in the *Linea Salutis*, John-Jerome provides some fifty-seven useful model sermons in the contemporary style for use throughout the Sundays and certain other days of the ecclesiastical

³⁹ ORIGEN, *Homiliae super Librum Iudicum* V, PG 12, cols. 972ff.

⁴⁰ See ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *Allegoriae Quaedam Scripturae Sacrae*, PL 83, col. 111; RABANUS MAURUS, *Commentaria in Librum Iudicum*, Liber I, PL 148, col. 1150; RABANUS MAURUS, *De Universo*, Lib. III, PL 111, col. 56; PSEUDO-BEDE, *Quaestiones Super Librum Iudicum*, PL 93, col. 423; PETER DAMIAN, *Testimonia Libri Iudicum*, PL 145, col. 1081; *Glossa Ordinaria*, PL 113, col. 525; RUPERT OF DEUTZ, *Liber Unus Commentariorum in librum Iudicum*, PL 167, col. 1033.

⁴¹ "Ideo verba hodiernae epistulae accepi in quibus verbis tria principaliter possunt considerari: Primo brevitatis vite nostrae quia *hora*; Secundum periculum culpae quia *sompno*; Tercio necessitas salutis nostrae quia *surgere*." LS, fol. 37v. Italics mine.

year. But in addition he supplies, in relatively simple and intelligible Latin, the prospective preacher with a reservoir of various points drawn from traditional exegesis that address the most basic and important moral concerns of Christian society. In this sense, a whole spectrum of preachers, from those with only a basic Latin education to the more erudite, would have found much useful and beneficial material in John-Jerome's collection.

Exemplar Salutis

As he did with his first sermon collection, John-Jerome begins *The Pattern of Salvation* (*Exemplar Salutis*) with a biblical quotation, in this case Exodus 25:40: "Look and act according to the pattern, that was shown to you in the mount."⁴² After this biblical citation, John-Jerome goes on to discuss his motivation for producing a collection of sermons for the sanctoral cycle. He mentions how "my Lords and Reverend Fathers in Christ" (*reverendi in Christo patres et domini mei*) had demanded from him that he produce a collection of sermons for Sundays throughout the year, which he did in the *Linea Salutis*. And now they have compelled him "to add labor to labor" to produce a volume of sermons for saints' days⁴³. Despite protestations of his inadequacy for the task, clearly John-Jerome and his previous sermon collection were very highly regarded in ecclesiastical circles at the Polish court.

John-Jerome goes on to stress that he will compose these sermons, as he did in his previous collection, for "unlearned men and with a plain pen" (*viris rudibus et plano stilo hos sermones scribam*). He states how he will first provide a sermon on the Blessed Virgin Mary, followed by three on the holy martyr Stanislaus, St. Wenceslaus, and St. Michael the Archangel, respectively. After that he will progress through the sanctoral and greater festivals of the ecclesiastical year. In order to help the preacher, each sermon will be prefaced by the Gospel of the day's liturgy and a selection from the *Vita* of the particular saint. The structure and

⁴² "Inspice et fac secundum exemplar quod tibi in monte monstratum est. Exodus xxv." For this article all citations of the *Exemplar Salutis* (henceforth abbreviated ES) are taken from Lviv, Biblioteka Ossolineum (Microfilm in Warsaw, Biblioteka Naradowa), Ms. 1490, unless otherwise noted.

⁴³ "... me ipsum compellitus ut laborem adderem labori et iuxta vestigia libelli prioris pari studio conderem sermones de sanctis." ES, p. 216.

style of the sermons are thus designed to provide concise yet comprehensive guidance for the prospective preacher.

The rest of the Prologue is a justification, drawing briefly upon patristic and biblical examples, of why we ought to look devoutly toward the example of the saints in order to be saved. John-Jerome quotes Gregory the Great and St. Augustine that the way to celebrate the accomplishments of the saints is to imitate their lives, specifically their character and justice (*mores et iustitiam*). The first lesson to be learned from imitating the saints is that there is a price to pay for holiness and fidelity to the Lord, a point made again and again from the first martyrdom of innocent Abel, throughout biblical times down to the Apostles, early disciples and more recent confessors. It is indeed, John-Jerome argues, a frail Christian who thinks he can conquer without a fight, triumph without a struggle⁴⁴.

John-Jerome next argues that the lives of the saints serve to illuminate the path to God the true light. After citing the authority of Aristotle on the natural and spiritual senses, he comments:

As the eye of a bat is to the sun, how much more is the density of our mental eye ill-suited for so contemplating the clarity of the holy exemplar, if it will not have been raised by the mediation of steps through the ordaining stars⁴⁵.

To further illustrate this point, John-Jerome quotes a long passage from the Prologue of the first Book of *Morals on Job* of Pope Gregory the Great. Gregory argues that the Christian's pursuit of virtues in this present life is illuminated by the examples of the lives of holy men and women. Gregory proceeds to list many Old Testament figures from the book of Genesis, and the virtue each one exemplifies for our imitation⁴⁶.

According to John-Jerome, the lives of the saints teach by example just as the life of Christ does. In the twelfth chapter of John's Gospel, Christ tells his disciples that he has given them an example, and so should they do the same. John-Jerome argues that Christians must learn the humility of Christ, who, as St. Paul states in the second chapter of Philippians,

⁴⁴ "... et tu, cristiane, delicatus es miles, si putes te sine pugna vincere sine certamine triumphare." ES, p. 216.

⁴⁵ "Sicut oculus vespertilionis ad solem quanto magis inproporci(o)natur nostri mentalis oculi crassitudo ad contemplandam tam sancti exemplaris claritatem si non per disponenetes stellares mediatione graduum fuerit elevata." ES, p. 217.

⁴⁶ GREGORY THE GREAT, *Moralia*, PL 75, col. 524. The heading of the chapter quoted by John-Jerome: "Sancti omnes quasi stellae, noctem vitae praesentis illuminant."

although in the form of God did not judge himself equal to God. Nor, moreover, did Christ refuse to humble himself by being conceived in the womb of a maiden. If we wish to be exalted as Christ was, we must imitate his humility, specifically his meek and humble heart⁴⁷. Thus, John-Jerome's exhortation to imitate the saints is complemented by a direct appeal to begin with the imitation of Christ himself. Although he certainly does not deny the importance of the intercessory prayer of the saints, his emphasis is clearly on the importance of the saints as models of Christ-like virtue, as real people who can serve as an inspiration for every Christian in their own *imitatio Christi*.

The author finishes his prologue with a series of exhortations, rhetorically echoing his opening quotation from Exodus 25: 40. The Christian is to look (*inspice*) to the Virgin Mary as the model of chastity, to the most holy leader Stanislaus and his martyrdom as a model of love, to St. Michael the Archangel as an example of innocence, and to the holy apostles as examples of poverty⁴⁸. As he concludes:

... So look to each life of the saints and follow the example that has been shown to you. If you do so, without a doubt you will be saved. And for that reason this modest book is called *The Pattern of Salvation*⁴⁹.

There are fifty-one sermons in the collection. After beginning with the promised sermons on the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Stanislaus, John-Jerome follows the sanctoral and festal cycles from late September through a whole year, finishing again in September:

On the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 St. Stanislaus
 St. Wenceslaus
 St. Michael the Archangel
 St. Jerome
 St. Luke
 St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins
 SS. Simon and Jude
 All Saints Day
 All Souls Day
 St. Martin

⁴⁷ ES, p. 217.

⁴⁸ "Inspice ad virginem Mariam.... Inspice ad sanctum praesulem Stanislaum... etc." ES, p. 218.

⁴⁹ "Sic et omnem sanctorum vitam inspice et fac secundum exemplar illud feceris procul dubio salvus eris. Et ob hanc causam libellus iste vocatur *exemplar salutis*." ES, p. 218. Italics mine.

St. Katherine of Alexandria
St. Andrew
St. Nicholas
On the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
St. Thomas
On the Nativity of the Lord
St. Stephen
St. John
On the Circumcision of the Lord
Epiphany
On the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary
St. Matthias
St. Gregory the Great
On the Annunciation
On the Resurrection of the Lord (Easter)
Second Day of Easter (Easter Monday)
Third Day of Easter (Easter Tuesday)
St. Ambrose
St. George
St. Adalbert of Prague
St. Mark
SS. Philip and James
Finding of the Holy Cross
Ascension of the Lord
Pentecost Sunday
Second Day of Pentecost
Third Day of Pentecost
Trinity Sunday
Corpus Christi
Nativity of St. John the Baptist
SS. Peter and Paul
Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
St. Margaret
St. Mary Magdalene
St. James
St. Laurence
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
St. Bartholomew
Exaltation of the Holy Cross
St. Matthew

One notable feature of the list, from the point of view of John-Jerome's status as a Premonstratensian canon, is the omission of a sermon for the feast of St. Augustine. This is particularly striking, as there are included sermons for the feasts of the other traditional doctors of the Latin Church, namely Jerome, Ambrose and Gregory the Great. Later in life as a Camal-

dolose John-Jerome would return to writing hagiographical sermons. In addition to sermons on for him the new subjects Blaise, Romuald and Benedict, John-Jerome would produce new sermons on Jerome and George different than those included in the *Exemplar Salutis*.⁵⁰

One of the most revealing and significant features of the contents of this collection is the inclusion of sermons on three Slavic saints, namely Stanislaus, Wenceslaus, and Adalbert of Prague, also known by his given name Voytiekh. These three martyr saints enable John-Jerome to discuss role models for bishops, rulers, and missionaries, respectively. But perhaps more significantly, they enable him to discuss the common history and Catholic cultural heritage of Czechs, Poles and other Slavs. Before examining these three sermons and in order to understand John-Jerome's thoughts on this matter, it is important to place John-Jerome in the context of the Bohemian reform movement of the second half of the fourteenth century. John-Jerome's position as personal chaplain of the Polish king made him an important link between this Bohemian reformist tradition and later reform efforts in the Polish church, a role that has not been sufficiently recognized. Also, in order to more fully illuminate this aspect of John-Jerome's background, we will analyze his reform preaching at the Polish court in light of a later tract he will write about the Hussites.

For John-Jerome, the sacraments are the primary means by which the Church aids sinners in their personal process of *reformatio*, and the integrity of the administration of these sacraments is to be ensured by a vigorous enforcement of canonical discipline. In his deep confidence in sacramental grace as mediated by the priesthood, and his concomitant detestation of clerical laxity and corruption, John-Jerome was a true son of the Bohemian reform movement of the fourteenth century.

As a young scholar at the University of Prague in the 1380's and early 1390's, John-Jerome would have been exposed to currents of ecclesiastical reform that had been an important part of Bohemian Christianity for decades. The concern for moral reform in Bohemia in the second half of the fourteenth century is usually studied from the vantage point of leading up to the various Hussite programs, but this does not do full justice

⁵⁰ For editions of John-Jerome's later hagiographical sermons except for the sermon on St. Romuald, see Joannes-Benedictus MITTARELLI and Anselmus COSTADINI, *Annales Camaldulenses*, Volume IX, (Venice, 1773), pp. 802-843; an edition of his sermon on St. Romuald was supplied by the Bollandists in *Acta Sanctorum*, Februarius II, pp. 124-145.

to the pre-Hussite reform movement or to those who led it⁵¹. While it cannot be disputed that Jan Hus and his disciples considered themselves to be carrying forward the work of earlier reformers, it is also true that many Bohemians such as John-Jerome could be influenced by the same reformers without breaking with the Roman Church and Catholic orthodoxy.

A marked feature of mid-fourteenth century reform efforts in Bohemia was the support they received from the archbishops of Prague. Although the roots of reform date back to the beginning of the century⁵², it is really with the career of Archbishop Ernest Pardubice (1343-64) that concrete steps were taken to correct clerical abuses. Ernest had studied at the universities of Bologna and Padua, and there has been speculation that his experiences in Italian universities helped develop a nascent interest in ecclesiastical reform⁵³. Bishop of Prague when that see was elevated to metropolitan status in 1344, Ernest initiated a series of synods beginning in 1349 designed to attack the laxity of the higher clergy. The archbishop was also concerned with protecting the privileged position of the clergy against the encroachments of the nobility, and this brought him into a close working relationship with Charles IV. Although this alliance could be mutually beneficial, it made the archbishop very vulnerable to royal pressure. Thus Ernest was forced to accept the new law of 1352 which made it illegal for anyone to bequeath or give property to the Church without special royal permission⁵⁴.

⁵¹ For overviews of pre-Hussite reform in Bohemia, see František SMAHEL (tr. Thomas KRZENCK), *Die Hussitische Revolution* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2002), especially pp. 717-877; Heinz RIEDER, *Die Hussiten: Streiter für Glauben und Nation* (Gernsbach: Casimir Katz Verlag, 1998) pp. 6-55; Thomas A. FUDGE, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998) pp. 1-59; Ruben E. WELTSCH, *Archbishop John of Jenstein (1348-1400): Papalism, Humanism and Reform in Pre-Hussite Prague* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968); Matthew SPINKA, *John Hus' Concept of the Church* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966) pp. 3-41.

⁵² Eduard WINTER in his *Frühhumanismus: Seine Entwicklung in Böhmen und deren europäische Bedeutung für die Kirchenreformbestrebungen im 14. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964) traces the beginning of an interest in ecclesiastical reform in Bohemia to the long episcopate of John Drazitz of Prague (1301-43), with a particular emphasis on Bishop John's reaction to the Council of Vienne and his sojourn at the papal court in Avignon. See especially pp. 15ff.

⁵³ WINTER, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.

⁵⁴ Howard KAMINSKY, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967) p. 8; Kamil KROFTA, "Bohemia in the Fourteenth Century", *Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932) Vol. 7, pp. 166-171. For a discussion of Archbishop Ernest's attempts to implement measures to prevent lay patronage, see John Martin Klassen, *The Nobility and the Making of the Hussite Revolution* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1978) pp. 28-29.

The effects of Archbishop Ernest's accommodations to royal wishes were not lost upon the regular clergy of Prague, including the Premonstratensians. In a fascinating passage in *Exemplar Salutis* from the sermon for All Souls's Day, John-Jerome relates this story to demonstrate the existence of purgatorial punishment:

With respect to the death of Archbishop Ernest of Prague it was revealed to a certain religious that the soul of the archbishop ought to be punished, i.e. to be purged, up until the day of judgment. When this religious inquired for what fault, it was said to him that not for any other fault, except that the archbishop did not correct the emperor⁵⁵.

Archbishop Ernest's reputation as a reformer was undoubtedly tarnished in the minds of religious clergy because of his relationship to the king, and his synodal legislation went largely without any immediate effect. He did however create an atmosphere favorable to ecclesiastical reform, and gave the reform movement a very powerful impetus by the invitation and subsequent strong support he extended to the great reform preacher Conrad Waldhausen, who arrived in Prague at Ernest's behest in 1360. This fiery preacher criticized the morals of the wealthier citizens of Prague as well as the way of life of the higher clergy, and was protected from the wrath of the latter by the archbishop. Waldhausen directed his attacks also against the mendicant orders, making use of arguments developed a century before in the polemics of the secular clergy against the friars⁵⁶. Thus, it is not difficult to understand the resentment, reflected so well in the above-mentioned anecdote of John-Jerome, that was directed toward Ernest by at least some of the regular clergy of Prague.

The criticisms of the higher clergy were carried forward after the death of Waldhausen by the great Czech preacher John Milic de Kromeriz, and it is in his work that the focal points of Bohemian reform begin to take on their distinctive shape. Milic preached in both Czech and German, with his main theme being the imminence of the Last Judgment and the need for repentance. He abhorred greedy and simoniacal clerics, and emphasized the need for clerical poverty. Milic also denounced the study of scholastic philosophy and theology, and called for a return to the direct

⁵⁵ "... de Arnesto archiepiscopo pragensi quoad mortem ipsius cuidam religioso revelatum est quod anima prefati archiepiscopi debet puniri usque ad diem iudicii, igitur purgari. Qui dum requiret ob quam culpam, responsum est ei quod non ob aliam culpam nisi quod cesarem non correxerat." *Exemplar Salutis*, Budapest, Loránd Eötvös Central University Library, Ms. 50, fol. 337v.

⁵⁶ KAMINSKY, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

study of Sacred Scripture and the Church Fathers. Additionally he preached the need for frequent reception of communion by the laity, and was severely criticized for this by his opponents in Prague⁵⁷.

Milic had a powerful influence on reform-minded clerics in Prague, and one sees this influence in the thought of John-Jerome. John-Jerome's attacks on simony, his ambivalence toward scholastic theology, and his eschatological concerns are all reminiscent of Milic's thought. Most importantly, John-Jerome echoed Milic's institutional loyalty to the papacy, and his desire to pursue reform through the tightening of ecclesiastical discipline⁵⁸.

The career of Matthew of Janov in the 1370's and 80's reflects the growth of the Bohemian reform movement. Matthew attacked clerical greed, and felt that the cult of relics and the use of sacred images held an excessive place in the piety of his day. Matthew favored a piety centered on the frequent reception of the Eucharist, in which he felt the faithful found a perfect solidarity and identification with Christ. Although he criticized clerical abuses and tended to see canon law as something opposed to scriptural or "evangelical" law, Matthew did not oppose all canon law or the authority of the hierarchy⁵⁹. Matthew went so far as to identify the triumph of Anti-Christ in the Church with the pontificate of Innocent III, but saw himself as being completely loyal to the Roman See⁶⁰.

Although it cannot be disputed that the writings of Matthew of Janov served as an important inspiration for later heterodox Hussite theology, Matthew himself was an orthodox reformer⁶¹. John-Jerome certainly did not share Matthew's views on canon law, but there is much he did share with the reformer. Another figure at the university who may have influenced John-Jerome was Thomas of Stitny, who died in 1401. This

⁵⁷ Paul DE VOOGHT, *L'Hérésie de Jean Hus* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1960) pp. 9-20.

⁵⁸ As KAMINSKY, *op. cit.*, p. 11, says regarding Milic: "The church is laid waste by the negligence of her pastors" — that was his theme, and it implied not subversion but restoration of ecclesiastical authority."

⁵⁹ Paul DE VOOGT, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-32.

⁶⁰ KAMINSKY, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

⁶¹ R. R. BETTS in "English and Czech Influences on the Hussite Movement", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (Fourth Series) 21 (1939) p. 74, referred to Matthew's most important work, the *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, as "the monumental textbook of the Czech reform movement." KAMINSKY, *op. cit.*, p. 34, states well the distinction between Matthew of Janov's views and the Hussite doctrines John-Jerome would later be opposing.

eloquent theologian preached against many practices of late medieval piety, such as extensive fasting, masses for the dead, pilgrimages, and indulgences. While John-Jerome did not come to share any of Stitny's views on these matters, he did share Stitny's interest in mysticism. Concerning the Eucharist, Thomas rejected the remanence theory⁶² of Wycliffe, and also rejected Wycliffe's teaching that sacraments administered by evil priests had no efficacy⁶³.

Many other figures contributed to the reform atmosphere so prevalent at the University of Prague in the last two decades of the fourteenth century. Stephen of Kolina, for example, who was provost, dean of the arts faculty, and rector of the university while John-Jerome was a student there, consistently preached against clerical abuses while maintaining strict orthodoxy in his views on the Eucharist and ecclesiology⁶⁴.

In the last few years of the fourteenth century, the Bohemian reform movement began to express itself in explicitly Wycliffite language. Until that point, Bohemian reformers were overwhelmingly orthodox on the matters of the Eucharist, the right of clergy to own property, and the administrative structure of the Church. At the time John-Jerome left Bohemia for Poland ca. 1394, the ideas of Wycliffe had barely begun to cause a stir in Prague⁶⁵. As John-Jerome would remark later in 1433, when he had known John Hus and the future Hussite leaders personally years before in their student days, they were all orthodox Catholics⁶⁶. From John-Jerome's later point of view, therefore, the transformation of Bohemian reform ideas into Hussitism was an aberration, caused explic-

⁶² The theory of Remanence holds that the bread used in the Mass is not transubstantiated into the Body of Christ at the consecration, but rather remains in its full substance and accidents.

⁶³ Thomas was influenced by the mysticism of the Victorines, Bernard of Clairvaux, Bonaventure, Henry Suso, and Robert Holkot. With the exception of Holkot, John-Jerome refers to all of these thinkers in his own work. BETTS, *loc. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

⁶⁴ BETTS, *loc. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

⁶⁵ KAMINSKY, *op. cit.*, p. 34; Thomas A. FUDGE, *op. cit.*, pp. 42ff.

⁶⁶ In an unpublished version of his anti-Hussite work written in 1432 entitled *Tractatus Contra Haereticos Bohemos*, John-Jerome made the following statement about his university years: "Nos quoque bohemi iuvenes in Praga studentes cum Johanne Huss et Jeronymo, item cum jacobello et marco et aliis constudentibus morabamur in collegio Regis Wenceslai et quolibet anno circa festum pasche communicavimus omnes sub sola specie panis, sicut communicabant patres nostri bohemi." Cracow, Jagiellonian, Ms. 385, f. 270r; cited in Jaroslav BIDLO, "Čeští emigranti v Polsku v době husitské", *Casopis Musea Kralovstvi Ceskeho* 69 (1895) p. 246. For a discussion of university life at Prague during the student days of John Hus, see Matthew SPINKA, *John Hus: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) pp. 7-46.

itly by the introduction of foreign heresies and contentious scholastic theology into the University of Prague⁶⁷.

John-Jerome's ideas of Bohemia as part of an extensive Slavic cultural area are undoubtedly a product of the geo-political knowledge he must have gained at the Polish court. His views on the ties linking the various peoples of central and eastern Europe eventually led him to see the Hussites as ultimately aiming to subvert the Catholic faith in the Slavic and surrounding areas of Europe. Although these concerns are not yet expressed in the *Exemplar Salutis*, John-Jerome would voice them years later when summoned to the Council of Basel in 1432 because of his expertise on Bohemian matters. In preparation for the debates at Basel he produced a treatise entitled *Tractatus Contra Haereticos Bohemos* against the Four Articles of the Hussites. This work reflects a thorough understanding of the Hussite position, particularly in its most radical forms. John-Jerome is certainly concerned with refuting the Hussite positions in some detail, and seems to be even more preoccupied with the geo-political motives of the Hussites, and the threat they represent in his mind to the Catholic faith not merely in Bohemia, but throughout the entire Slavic world.

The lengthy tract contains a Prologue and an Epilogue, with the body of the work being essentially a refutation of the famous Four Articles held by the Hussites⁶⁸. The work displays the learning of John-Jerome, as well as his ability to sustain a complex argument using scholastic methodology and logic. John-Jerome's attempts to discredit the Hussites in this tract, however, move beyond a competent scholastic defense of Catholic orthodoxy. John-Jerome claims a particular and personal knowledge of his opponents. It is this special, personal understanding of the

⁶⁷ "Dicendum, quod sunt tres principes modernorum haereticorum. Primus est Johannes Vicleff Anglicus; Secundus est Johannes Hus Bohemus; Tertius est reprobus Hieronymus. Sed nec isti principes haereticorum, nec portae Inferni, id est haeretici, praevalerunt adversus Ecclesiam Christi." *Tractatus Contra Haereticos Bohemos*, (henceforth TCHB) edited in *Annales Camaldulenses*, op. cit., Vol. IX, p. 772. In a sermon given at the Council of Pavia-Siena in 1424, John-Jerome would write: "Nam in hac causa tamquam expertus loquor, quod pro majori parte non essent tot haereses in Ecclesia, si seculari philosophia non vociferant in scholis, neque disputarent in Ecclesiis. En ecce opulentissimum regnum Bohemiae et Moraviae nunquam perfidiae haereticorum subjectum fuisset, si libri Aristotelis et Platonis Pragae non venissent." *Annales Camaldulenses*, op. cit., vol. IX, p. 743.

⁶⁸ For the text of these articles as presented by the Hussite delegation at Basel, see E. F. JACOB, "The Bohemians at the Council of Basel", in R. W. SETON-WATSON, ed., *Prague Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949) p. 83.

Hussites which gives John-Jerome, in his own opinion, a right to speak out against the Hussites, and moves this tract beyond the impersonal scholastic style into the genre of personal polemic.

On several different occasions throughout the *Tractatus Contra Haereticos Bohemos*, John-Jerome establishes his Bohemian heritage and also stresses that the true Bohemian heritage is Catholic and not heterodox. In his defence of the right of clerics to own land, from which follows the merit to be gained through voluntary poverty, John-Jerome mentions how Adalbert of Prague, a missionary and martyr who is held in great esteem in Bohemia, agrees with the Catholic position⁶⁹. John-Jerome stresses that he himself is *Bohemus in natione, sed non in errore*⁷⁰, and it is clear that he wishes to discredit the Hussites as authentic representatives of Bohemia's Christian heritage and culture.

The iconoclasm of the radical Hussites was viewed with genuine horror by John-Jerome's audience, and the destruction was felt particularly deeply by John-Jerome himself. Among the Premonstratensian abbeys in Bohemia and Moravia, thirteen out of seventeen were either burned or torn down by the Hussite armies, with John-Jerome's old house of Strahov having been destroyed in 1420⁷¹. These actions certainly deepened his hatred of the Hussite party, and account for much of the bitterness he felt towards them. According to John-Jerome, their iconoclasm makes the Hussites comparable to the Saracens, and the Bohemians, like the Egyptians before them, will fall into infidelity when the clergy and images of Christ and the saints are destroyed. The Hussites are indeed worse than the Saracens, who at least attacked the Catholic faith out of ignorance⁷².

⁶⁹ "... quia majoris meriti est esse pauperem in divitiis, quam esse pauperem ex necessitate; Sicut fuerunt Sancti Patres & Doctores, Sancti Silvester, Gregorius, Ambrosius, Hilarius, Sanctus Adalbertus Episcopus Pragensis & Martyr." TCHB, pp. 782-783.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 796.

⁷¹ I have put these figures together using Norbert BACKMUND's *Monasticon Praemonstratense* (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1983). Bohemia and Moravia are treated in Vol. 1, pt. 2. On p. 379 of this volume we read of Strahov: "Anno 1420 ab haereticis omnino est subversa et diruta."

⁷² "... ut ex defectu Cleri & ecclesiarum ac imaginum fides Christi in Regno Bohemiae aboliretur, & totus populus Bohemorum paulatim transiret ad ritum Saracenorum. Sicut in Egypto & Thebaida Christiani, qui tunc erant, ex defectu Cleri, Ecclesiarum & imaginum iamdudum omnes facti sunt Saraceni." TCHB, p. 792. It is interesting that John-Jerome compares the Hussites to the Saracens, particularly since he had just returned from a trip to the Middle East, where he undoubtedly saw vestigial monuments of the once flourishing Christian civilization there.

John-Jerome is not content to point out the attempts of the Hussites to subvert the social order in Bohemia and Moravia. In his attack on the second article of the Hussites, that the word of God should be preached and announced everywhere and by anyone freely and without any impediment (*quod verbum Dei ubilibet & a quolibet libere & absque omni impedimento praedicetur & annuntietur*), John-Jerome maintains that the Hussites' goal is to proselytize throughout eastern and southeastern Europe, where their own language is easily understood:

I understand the origin of this article. For the Bohemian heretics by their own preaching have subverted from the Faith the noble kingdom of Bohemia and the whole March of Moravia. They desire to be at liberty to preach their heresy, so that they will be able to subvert from the Catholic faith also the kingdom of Poland, the kingdom of Hungary, and the kingdom of Bulgaria, because these kingdoms understand the Bohemian language. They desire to be able to preach everywhere, even in the wide provinces of Sclavonia and Dalmatia, Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Wallachia, *Rassianas provincias*, Albania, Samogitia, Lithuania, the lands of the *Jestiversi* and the Don provinces, Lusatia, Silesia, and the grand duchies of white and red Russia. The Bohemians wish to subvert all of these areas into heresy, because all of these kingdoms, provinces, and duchies understand the Bohemian language, and thus would best understand the preaching of the Bohemians⁷³.

This passage is interesting for several reasons. It is not incidental that John-Jerome uses the pronoun *Ego*, as he intends to stress the fact that his views on Hussite motivations are based upon personal experience with the Bohemians and his knowledge of eastern European affairs. As the account of Aeneas Sylvius shows, stories of John-Jerome's missionary journey to Lithuania were circulating in Basel at this time⁷⁴. Also, the Council Fathers were certainly acquainted with the fact that John-Jerome had significant contacts in Poland, since they included him in

⁷³ "Ego intelligo originem huius articuli. Bohemi namque haeretici sua praedicatione haeretica subverterunt a fide nobile Regnum Bohemiae, & totam Marchiam Moraviae. Vellent ergo libere posse haeresim praedicare, ut possent etiam Regnum Poloniae, Regnum Hungariae, & Regnum Bulgariae a fide catholica subvertere, quia praefata Regna Communicant Bohemorum linguae. Vellent etiam ubilibet posse praedicare, ut latissimas provincias Sclavoniae & Dalmatiae, Bosnae & Charvatiae, Sarbiae & Vallachiae, provincias Rassianas & Albania, provincias Samogitarum & Lituaniae, provincias Jestiversorum & Doniae, provincias Lussatiae & Slesiae, Ducatus latissimos Magnae Russiae, Albae & Rubeae; omnes has provincias & Ducatus vellent Bohemi in haeresim subvertere, quia omnes supradictae Provinciae, Regna & Ducatus communicant Bohemorum linguae, & optime intelligerent Bohemorum praedicationem." TCHB, p. 785.

⁷⁴ William P. HYLAND, "John-Jerome of Prague (1368-1440): a Norbertine Missionary in Lithuania", *loc. cit.*, pp. 228-253.

the delegation sent to that country in April 1433. Thus, John-Jerome uses his own considerable reputation as an expert on eastern Europe to support his portrayal of the Hussites as a potential threat to the Catholic establishment in lands beyond Bohemia.

It should be noted that John-Jerome's suspicions about Hussite ideas of expansion were not mere alarmist speculations. There certainly was cause to suspect sympathy for the Hussite cause in certain Polish circles. The Hussite attempt to secure the Polish-Lithuanian Prince Korybut as the new king of Bohemia eventually proved to be a dead end, but it pointed to the possibilities of an alliance of the various Slavic kingdoms against the German empire and the Teutonic Order⁷⁵.

In his analysis of Hussite motivations, John-Jerome not only betrays a knowledge of and preoccupation with international affairs, but also seems to conceptualize what must be called a Slavic cultural bloc in eastern Europe and the Balkans. This unity, which stretches from Albania to Russia, seems for John-Jerome to be based on linguistic grounds, and remarkably includes both Catholic and Eastern Orthodox areas⁷⁶. John-Jerome does not mention any German-controlled regions, although he does mention Hungary and the Baltic peoples, who of course were not Slavs. Perhaps John-Jerome has in mind a non-German Christian bloc, and not merely a Slavic one. However, John-Jerome's "slavophile" instincts are evident in other ways, such as when he claims both St. George and St. Blaise for *Sclavonia*. Blaise was Armenian, while George is purported to have originated either in Palestine or Libya⁷⁷. It is also fascinating to note that John-Jerome seems to think that religious ideas can be disseminated over such a wide area primarily through vernacular preaching, rather than

⁷⁵ Stanislaw BYLINA, "Les influences Hussites en Pologne et sur les territoires ethniquement Russiens du Grand-Duché de Lituanie", *Ricerche Slavistiche* 41 (1994) pp. 163-176. Frederick HEYMANN in *John Zizka and the Hussite Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1955) discusses *passim* and especially pp. 265ff the diplomatic intrigues between the Hussites and the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom. For Polish attitudes toward the Hussites, see Karl VÖLKER, *Kirchengeschichte Polens* (Berlin & Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1930) pp. 110-116.

⁷⁶ For John-Jerome's views on the Eastern Orthodox, including those expressed in the *Exemplar Salutis*, see William P. HYLAND, "John-Jerome of Prague (1368-1440) and the *Errores Graecorum*: anatomy of a polemic against Greek Christians". *Journal of Religious History* 21 (1997) pp. 249-267.

⁷⁷ See John-Jerome's *Sermo Modernus in Festo Sancti Blasii de Sclavonia Episcopi et Martyris Gloriosi*, and a *Sermo Modernus in Festo Sancti Georgii de Sclavonia*. *Annales Camaldulenses*, *op. cit.*, vol. IX, pp. 833ff.

by means of the Latin language. This would indicate that he sensed the potential mass appeal of Hussite ideals, and was impressed by (and fearful of) the ability of the Hussite preachers to reach people in all sectors of society. Although John-Jerome was probably aware that a Hussite spiritual "conquest" of all Slavic lands was unlikely, the threat of such an occurrence functions as a powerful rhetorical image, and a subtle support for his comparison of the Hussites with the Saracens.

John-Jerome goes on to say more about the problem of language and Hussite proselytism in his response to the following Hussite argument: Christ commanded his disciples to preach to every creature in the whole world, and therefore all priests and clerics ought to be able to preach freely anywhere and without any impediment. John-Jerome responds by arguing that this proposition is wrong, because it would oblige the impossible. It is impossible for the Bohemians to preach throughout the whole world, because they do not know the languages of all nations. Even the Apostles, who had been given the gift of tongues at Pentecost, limited themselves to preaching in particular provinces: Peter in Italy, Andrew in Achaia, Thomas in India, and Matthew in Ethiopia⁷⁸.

These remarks on language are interesting. The Hussites, on the one hand, pose a threat because their vernacular language is understood in many places, and presumably by both literate and non-literate alike. On the other hand, the Hussites are limited by the fact that their language is not understood everywhere. In seeking to preach in areas where they are not understood in the vernacular, and thus anywhere, the Hussites are prideful and contradictory, since they violate apostolic example in their apparent desire to imitate the apostolic era. The Church has established canonical norms for preaching in order to avoid confusion (*ad vitandam confusionem*), and the Hussites should heed them⁷⁹.

Finally, in the sadness John-Jerome expresses about the upheavals in his homeland, we get a rare glimpse of the personal side of this often highly contentious polemicist. After mentioning how Christ wept for Lazarus, John-Jerome goes on to say:

⁷⁸ "... cum nec Sancti Apostoli, ex dono Spiritus Sancti habentes scientiam omnium linguarum, tamen non praedicaverunt per universum mundum, sed quilibet in una provincia." TCHB, pp. 788-789.

⁷⁹ It is not incidental that in his conversations with Aeneas Sylvius, John-Jerome stressed that he had been given commendatory letters by the King and Duke empowering him to preach in Lithuania.

Who therefore, I ask, will be able to contain at least his inward tears, when he sees so many thousands of Bohemians perish in eternal death, and daily descend into hell to be burned with the Devil in perpetual fire?⁸⁰

There is undoubtedly a feeling of betrayal and grief at what he saw as the tragic misdirection of Bohemian ecclesiastical history. For John-Jerome, of course, the only end to Bohemia's troubles had to be found in reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church. An awareness of John-Jerome's sophisticated opposition to the Hussites, as well as his deep affection for his homeland, presents grave difficulties for those who would automatically equate the Bohemian reform tradition with Hussite theology.

Returning to the *Exemplar Salutis*, a brief analysis of the above-mentioned sermons on Stanislaus, Wenceslaus and Adalbert demonstrates how John-Jerome combined hagiography and reformist concerns. These three saints portray behavioral models of bishop, monarch and missionary, respectively, and thus represent a cross-section of ideals that were of particular relevance to many at the Polish court at this time.

Bishop Stanislaus (1030-1079) of Cracow was best known for his martyrdom at the hands of King Boleslav II. In his treatment of the revered saint, John-Jerome portrays him as an outstanding role model for contemporary bishops, drawing upon the writings of Bede, Augustine, Gregory the Great and Jerome, including citations from the *Decretum*. John-Jerome begins by stressing that a bishop's credibility and effectiveness depend upon his good reputation among the people. A good bishop grounds himself in love of God and neighbor, and *caritas* is the prerequisite for pastoral care. Excessive concern with temporal rather than spiritual matters will destroy pastoral zeal⁸¹.

Drawing upon various events from the life of St. Stanislaus, John-Jerome proceeds to set forth the duties of pastors to discipline and ultimately degrade from clerical rank those priests who fail to live up to moral standards, beginning with clerical concubinage. The three great sins a bishop must watch for in his clergy are licentiousness (*luxuria*), gluttony (*gula*) and drunkenness (*ebrietas*). Priests must be taught to counter these with fasting and abstinence: the good pastor must preach with his own body. Clerics are called to work worthily in their vocation,

⁸⁰ "Quis ergo rogo poterit lacrymas saltem interiores continere cum videt tot millia Bohemorum morte aeterna perire, & quotidie ad infernum cum Diabolo in igne aeterno arsueros descendere?" TCHB, p. 801.

⁸¹ ES, pp. 227-230.

and bishops must not hesitate, after the example of Stanislaus, to expell unworthy priests from their dioceses. It is the duty of a bishop, furthermore, to exercise his own teaching office to dispel ignorance among the clergy and laity. Echoing a point he had made in the prologue to the *Linea Salutis*, John-Jerome asserts that ignorance can only be considered an excuse up to a certain point: whoever accepts ordination and takes up the duties of the priesthood is responsible to take them seriously, most especially the duty to preach. The negligence of pastors who do not extend the hand of correction to those in their charge is a problem, John-Jerome adds, that he sees daily in the church. The sermon concludes with examples of St. Stanislaus' solicitude for his own flock, and the story of his martyrdom⁸².

John-Jerome's sermon on St. Wenceslaus provided him with the opportunity to extol the virtues of a prince who not only was the patron saint of his native Bohemia, but who also worked for the spread and development of the Church, suffering martyrdom at the hands of his brother Boleslav in 929 as part of a native reaction against his policies. Although the parallel is not exact, the story of Wenceslaus as a model king in a newly-Christian land certainly had echoes of the conversion of King Wladislaus-Jagiello to the Catholic faith and the problems involved in the evangelization of Lithuania under the king's cousin, Vytautas⁸³. Drawing upon quotations from Augustine, Gregory the Great, Ambrose, Jerome, the *Glossa Ordinaria* and the ancient Jewish historian Josephus, John-Jerome paints the picture of a model Christian prince.

John-Jerome takes the story of Cain and Abel as his starting point. Like Abel, Wenceslaus offered to God the fruits of his labor, and like Abel received the crown of martyrdom as a victim of fratricide. Wenceslaus followed Christ, and by practicing self-denial purged himself of evil motivations. Here, perhaps with his own recent experiences as a missionary in Lithuania in mind, John-Jerome stresses that there can be no real conversion of life and discipleship without an authentic concept of liberty (*libertas*). This involves freedom of will (*libertas arbitrii*), renunciation of all evil (*renuncciatio mali totius*), and finally the imitation of the passion of Christ (*imitacio passionis Christi*)⁸⁴. Freedom of will more-

⁸² ES, pp. 232-237.

⁸³ See William P. HYLAND, "John-Jerome of Prague (1368-1440): a Norbertine Missionary in Lithuania", *loc. cit.*, especially pp. 237-253.

⁸⁴ ES, pp. 237-238.

over is threefold, and involves a progression from natural liberty, to the Mosaic law, and finally to the true state of Christian freedom wherein a person becomes by faith and love an adopted child of God⁸⁵. Significantly, in his words to a royal court that was currently involved in organizing resistance, both militarily and intellectually, to the “crusading” activities of the Teutonic knights in the Baltic, John-Jerome stresses that no one must be compelled to come to Christ.

Continuing with his discussion of Wenceslaus, John-Jerome makes clear that the prince showed his humility and faith by his deeds (such as bringing firewood to the poor in the the forest) and by acts of good will. Excessive pride (*superbia*), always a temptation for a monarch, can lead to gluttony and extravagance. John-Jerome cites the example of Wenceslaus to urge his audience to observe modesty in matters of food and drink and to avoid marital infidelity, for unless a monarch avoids avarice, he may well forfeit his kingdom. Wenceslaus imitated the passion of Christ by wearing a hair shirt beneath his royal robes, and also by practicing penance, abstinence and compassion for his neighbor. Ultimately, as John-Jerome brings out in his final discussion of the last events of the saint’s life, Wenceslaus imitated Christ by avoiding the fratricidal killing of his rebellious brother Boleslav, and through the acceptance of his own betrayal and martyrdom⁸⁶.

In assessing these remarks on the life of St. Wenceslaus, it is particularly important to remember the context in which they were written. John-Jerome at this time was the personal chaplain and confessor of King Wladislaus-Jagiello, and undoubtedly these remarks reflect the private spiritual advice he offered to the king in his pastoral capacity. The remarks of the historian Jan Dlugosz about the high regard and affection with which the king and members of the court viewed the Premonstratensian canon, along with the previously-mentioned reputation of personal abstemiousness enjoyed by Jagiello, would seem to indicate that the king attempted to take these teachings of his confessor to heart.

St. Adalbert (Voytiekh) of Prague was a tenth century Czech monk and missionary who with some companions was martyred in Pomerania in 997. Highly venerated in both Bohemia and Poland, the life of this saint provided John-Jerome the opportunity to discuss both the work of a prominent Czech missionary and the saint’s commitment to apostolic

⁸⁵ “Triplex libertas scilicet naturalis, legalis, filialis.” ES, p. 238.

⁸⁶ ES, pp. 240-244.

poverty. After citing St. Augustine on how the pursuit of secular wealth leads to pride (*superbia*), John-Jerome divides riches (*divicie*) up into three types: temporal, spiritual and celestial⁸⁷. Concerning temporal riches, he asserts that any one who wickedly acquires wealth through usury should be denied ecclesiastical burial, and furthermore priests and clerics guilty of this should be suspended from their office and benefice. John-Jerome presents examples from Scripture, the Church Fathers and papal decretals on the duties of the rich to provide help for the poor and in general to benefit their neighbors. Riches must not be wasted in vain and idle pursuits, and the wealthy should give to those in need and eat by the labor of their own hands. John-Jerome reminds his audience that God chose paupers and fishermen, not princes and thieves, to spread the Gospel. Adalbert's poverty and hard work brought many lands to the Gospel. The missionary was rich in spiritual wisdom, and by taking on the imitation of Christ, became wealthy in celestial virtues, the only wealth that is permanent and really matters⁸⁸.

The sermon concludes with a narration of the life and martyrdom of Adalbert. He is described as being *nacione bohemus*, a phrase John-Jerome would often apply to himself in his later writings. Adalbert's dedication to apostolic poverty, his missionary work in Hungary, Poland and Prussia, seem to have made him a role model for the canon of Strahov, and John-Jerome would later discuss St. Adalbert in his writings as a Camaldolese⁸⁹.

These three sermons demonstrate John-Jerome's appreciation of the common Slavic heritage shared by so many peoples of central and eastern Europe, and are examples of how he saw it as the duty of the preacher to relate the celebration of a particular saint's feast with the cause of moral reform and the inculcation of particular virtues. His message was a clear one, and focused on the moral responsibilities of princes, noblemen, prelates and all clerics to fulfill their respective leadership roles in Christian society by living virtuous lives and enforcing ecclesiastical law and discipline. In these matters the canon of Strahov clearly was an important representative of the Bohemian reformist tradition at the Polish court.

⁸⁷ ES, p. 398.

⁸⁸ ES, pp. 399-401.

⁸⁹ See William P. HYLAND, "John-Jerome of Prague and Monastic Reform in the Fifteenth Century", *The American Benedictine Review* 47 (1996) pp. 58-98, especially pp. 95-97.

Abbot of Nowy Sącz

John-Jerome's days at court ended in 1410 when he became the first abbot of a new Premonstratensian foundation at Nowy Sącz, southeast of Cracow. Located in the Carpathians, Nowy Sącz had been founded in 1292 as a colony for Bohemians⁹⁰. Nowy Sącz was strategically located near a mountain border pass with the Kingdom of Hungary. In fact, it was the first stop in Poland for official visitors from Hungary, before they traveled on to Cracow. In 1402 an important meeting with delegates of the Hungarian king had taken place there. In 1410, King Wladislaus was in Nowy Sącz after Easter for a large congress with nobles and prelates of the kingdom, a meeting undoubtedly attended by Abbot John-Jerome. That same year, an Hungarian raiding party burned the suburbs of Nowy Sącz⁹¹. There were also Eastern Orthodox living in the area, such as in the nearby town of Krosno⁹². John-Jerome had commented extensively and unfavorably on the Orthodox in the *Exemplar Salutis*⁹³, but whether this played a role in the king's decision to place the new abbey in Nowy Sącz is impossible to determine. Jan Dlugosz states that King Wladislaus Jagiello founded the abbey at the request of John-Jerome⁹⁴, and the ethnic heritage and strategic importance of the town may well have played a part in the king's decision to place his former chaplain and trusted advisor there.

At the time of the foundation of Nowy Sącz in 1410, the Premonstratensian order had been present in Poland for over two centuries. By 1181 there were certainly two monasteries, and by the mid-thirteenth century twelve, nine of which were female houses. All of these monasteries were well-endowed with large estates. With the exception of St. Margaret's provostry of canons founded in Bytom in 1294, the foundation at

⁹⁰ Norman DAVIES, *God's Playground, A History of Poland* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) Volume One, p. 79.

⁹¹ For a narrative of these events, see Jan DLUGOSZ (Translated by Maurice MICHAEL), *The Annals of Jan Dlugosz (Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae)* (Chichester: IM Publications, 1997), pp. 323-404.

⁹² Norman Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁹³ See William P. HYLAND, "John-Jerome of Prague (1368-1440) and the *Errores Graecorum*: anatomy of a polemic against Greek Christians", *loc. cit.*, pp. 253-257.

⁹⁴ Speaking of how the king did many things John-Jerome advised, Dlugosz adds: "... etiam ad petitionem suam monasterium ordinis praemonstratensis anno Domini 1410 in oppido Nova Sandecz fundavit." Jan DLUGOSZ, *Liber Beneficiorum diocesis Cracoviensis*, Tom. III, *Monasteria*, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Nowy Sącz in 1410 was the first Premonstratensian abbey founded in Poland since the mid-thirteenth century. Most of the Polish abbeys traced their line of descent either through St. Vincent Abbey in Wrocław to Steinfeld Abbey, or through the Abbey of the Assumption and SS. Peter and Paul in Hebdów/Brzesko to Strahov. Given John-Jerome's connection to Strahov, not surprisingly the new abbey at Nowy Sącz was a daughter house of Hebdów/Brzesko⁹⁵. In his *Liber Beneficiorum diocesis Cracoviensis*, Jan Długosz mentions how the king amply endowed the new foundation with the temporal goods of six *villae*, and in addition placed under the new abbot's control a hospital for the indigent and infirm⁹⁶.

The letter issued by Abbot General Peter Hermi and the general chapter of the order in October 1410 confirming John-Jerome as first abbot of the new abbey of the Holy Spirit in Nowy has fortunately survived, and is very informative⁹⁷. The abbot general affirms that John-Jerome was a priest and canon of Strahov in good standing, who at the request of King Wladislaus had been chosen and canonically elected by Abbot Stanislaus of Brezko and his whole abbey⁹⁸. Accompanying John-Jerome in the new

⁹⁵ For a fine discussion with extensive bibliography on the medieval Norbertines in Poland, see Jerzy RAJMAN, "The Origins of the Polish Circary", *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 66 (1990) pp. 203-219; see also Norbert BACKMUND, *Monasticon Praemonstratense*, *op. cit.*, pp. 398-433; also BACKMUND's "Iter in Poloniam", *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 52 (1976) pp. 174-184. See Jan DŁUGOSZ, *Liber Beneficiorum diocesis Cracoviensis*, Tom. III, *Monasteria*, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-112, for the possessions held by the Norbertines in the diocese of Cracow in the fifteenth century. For an overview of the medieval canons regular in Poland, including the Premonstratensians, see Jerzy KŁOCZOWSKI, "Zakony na Ziemiach polskich w wiekach średnich", in *Kościoty w Polsce* (Kraków: Znak, 1968), edited by Jerzy Kłoczowski, Volume One, especially pp. 432-458.

⁹⁶ Concerning the new monastery, the king "in oppido Nova Sandecz fundavit, et ex regiis dotavit proventibus, praediis atque villis, quod etiam abbatiali honore et praeminentia infulae procuravit insigniri. Primusque dicti monasterii praefatus Magister Johannes de Praga fuit abbas, subiciens praefato monasterio et uniens hospitale infirmorum in Sandecz, et curam egenorum abbati pro tempore annectens, et bona in dotem monasterio a se data maximis praerogativis liberans." Jan DŁUGOSZ, *Liber Beneficiorum diocesis Cracoviensis*, Tom. III, *Monasteria*, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81. On pages 83-84 Długosz lists the following six *villae*: Dambrowa, Ilbramtowa Maior, Ilbramtowa Minor, Qwyeczyszowa, Bogusszowka, and Janusszowa.

⁹⁷ Printed in Charles HUGO, *Sacri et Canonici Ordinis Praemonstratensis Annales* (Nancy, 1734) pars 1, t. 2, col. 755. The document is also found in J. B. VALVEKENS, ed., "Acta et Decreta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Praemonstratensis", continued in *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 43 (1967), supplement pp. 92-93.

⁹⁸ "In quam quidem ecclesiam venerabiles et religiosi viri Stanislaus abbas, Godfridus prior, Stanislaus custos, Dominicus claviger, totusque conventus ecclesiae Bresnensis a praefato serenissimo domino requisti, ut aliquem bonum religiosum ordinis in abbatem dictae novae ecclesiae seu novi monasterii eligerent et eidem monasterii administrationem

foundation was one fellow canon of Strahov, as well as eight men whom John-Jerome had personally instructed in the Premonstratensian way of life. The new foundation is acknowledged to be a daughter house of the Premonstratensian abbey at Brzesko, and the confirmation of John-Jerome by the abbot Stanislaus is noted in the letter. Provisions are made for the supply of the new abbey with the appropriate liturgical books, as well as the abbatial ring and staff⁹⁹. The foundation date of 1410 may be of some significance. In the preceding decades of the Great Schism, the abbey of Prémontré in the kingdom of France was part of the Avignon obedience, while Poland adhered to the Roman obedience. However, both sides recognized the election of Alexander V by the Council of Pisa in 1409¹⁰⁰. This new situation may well have facilitated Polish communication with Prémontré and the confirmation of the new abbey.

John-Jerome remained abbot of Nowy Sącz until 1412¹⁰¹, at which time he left Poland and the Premonstratensian Order and went to Camaldoli in Tuscany, where he embraced the eremitical life. The reasons for this major life change are not clear, but there are several possibilities. It certainly was not unheard of for Premonstratensian abbots to retire in the fifteenth century, although John-Jerome's subsequent twenty seven years of activity hardly qualify as retirement¹⁰². The positive attitudes toward

omnimodam imponerent, ac deinde ipsum ad dictum monasterium, sicut oportebat et erat consuetum in nostra religione in talibus fieri, transmitterent, fratrem Iohannem Alberti filium, canonicum monasterii Montis Syon Pragensis, nostri Praemonstratensis ordinis, in ordine sacerdotii et aetate legitima constitutum, ordinem nostrum expresse professum." Charles HUGO, *op. cit.*, p. 755.

⁹⁹ The letter describes the confirmation of Abbot John (John-Jerome): "... in dictae ecclesiae seu monasterii S. Spiritus ac domus pauperum in Nova Sandecz abbatem et pastorem canonicis et concorditer, formaliter electum et per ipsum dominum abbatem Bresnensem confirmatum, cum libris scilicet: antiphonario, graduali, collectario, ordinario, statutis, annulo, baculo pastoralis una religiosi montis Syon et octo notabilibus viris per dictum fratrem Johannem in religione nostra instructis, ac postea per praefatum fratrem Johannem dictum, ut praemittitur, et confirmatum in dicto monasterio S. Spiritus receperunt ac ordinem nostrum expresse professis transmiserunt." The letter goes on to acknowledge the visitation rights of Abbot Stanislaus and his successors at Brzesko with regard to the new foundation. Charles HUGO, *op. cit.*, pp. 755ff.

¹⁰⁰ See Thomas WÜNSCH, *op. cit.*, pp. 47ff.

¹⁰¹ Norbert BACKMUND, *Monasticon Praemonstratense*, *op. cit.*, Tomus 1, Second edition, p. 418.

¹⁰² H. M. COLVIN, *The White Canons in England*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951) pp. 248-256, discusses, using English examples, the financial, disciplinary, and administrative factors involved in the resignation, voluntary or otherwise, of a Premonstratensian abbot. Colvin notes that the resignation of a Premonstratensian abbot, unlike among the Benedictines, was not uncommon.

the Hussites at the Polish court at this time, which were based upon political interests and culminated in the disputation held by the Hussite leader Jerome of Prague in Cracow in 1413, may have created an incongenial atmosphere for such a vocal anti-Hussite as John-Jerome¹⁰³.

Furthermore, it seems as if John-Jerome may have been drawn to the eremitical life because of his desire to lead a stricter life, and that the years 1410-1412 may have been a period of spiritual tension and even crisis in his life. It is interesting to note that in his sermon for All Saints' Day in the *Exemplar Salutis*, John-Jerome asserted that *paupertas* is the key to sanctity, and cites Alexis and Antony, both of whom lived in poverty as hermits, as ideals of sainthood¹⁰⁴. This perhaps indicates that John-Jerome may have already been tending in the eremitical direction. Camaldoli was known throughout Latin Christendom for its centuries-old eremitical tradition, and its distance from Poland and Bohemia and his previous life in the university and at court may have been an attraction to John-Jerome. As a Camaldolese John-Jerome took the name *Hieronymus*, another indication that the middle-aged canon turned hermit was seeking a new beginning. In a sermon for the feast of St. Jerome in the *Exemplar Salutis*, John-Jerome discusses how St. Jerome's life was marked by asceticism and a constant vigil against heresy, a combination that John-Jerome was to take as a model for his own career as a Camaldolese¹⁰⁵.

John-Jerome's tenure as a Premonstratensian abbot in Poland (1410-1412) attests to his ascetic zeal. The fifteenth-century Polish historian Jan Dlugosz noted that while John-Jerome was with the royal court, he had impressed King Wladislaus Jagiello and the court by his uncommon character, and in particular his complete abstinence from meat¹⁰⁶. When he became the first abbot of the new foundation at Nowy Sącz, he instituted a strict regime reflecting his own ascetic ideals. According to Jan Dlugosz, this strictness at Nowy Sącz did not long outlast his time as abbot:

¹⁰³ For Jerome of Prague's travels in Poland and Lithuania at this time, see R. R. BETTS, *Essays in Czech History* (London: Athlone Press, 1969) pp. 219ff.

¹⁰⁴ *Exemplar Salutis*, Budapest, Univ., Cod.Lat.Med. 50, fol. 335v.

¹⁰⁵ *Exemplar Salutis*, Budapest, Univ., Cod.Lat.Med. 50, fols. 322r-324v.

¹⁰⁶ As Dlugosz states about John-Jerome: "... et tam regem, quam milites, mira eruditione et abstinencia, vitaeque non vulgari, cum per annos plures, quibus in curia regis conversabatur, abstinendo ab esu carnum, notabiliter aedificabat." J. DLUGOSZ, *Liber Beneficiorum Dioecesis Cracoviensis*, Tom. III, *Monasteria*, op. cit., p. 80.

Under the regime of the previously-mentioned Master John of Prague, the rigor of the Premonstratensian life was observed and the brothers were not allowed the use of meat in the monastery of Nowy Sącz. When he withdrew, the rigor ceased as well. For desiring a stricter life, he went into a monastery of the Camaldolese and waged spiritual war there for many years¹⁰⁷.

Abstinence from meat was theoretically the norm for Premonstratensian houses according to thirteenth-century statutes of the Order¹⁰⁸. Chapter 10 of the first *Distinctio*, entitled *De Victu*, requires perpetual abstinence from meat and forbids the use of lard and meat in sauces except for the infirm, although eggs and dairy products are allowed at certain times of the year. The abbot is given some latitude if circumstances of labor seem to warrant it¹⁰⁹, but it is clear that John-Jerome was very strict in the interpretation of this clause. The fact that the rules on abstinence would be eased in 1505 seems to imply that John-Jerome's strictness was probably not the norm in the fifteenth century¹¹⁰. In the later Middle Ages the degree to which ascetical standards were upheld was probably very dependent on the attitude of the abbot and the particular traditions of an individual house. John-Jerome was very strict in these matters, and probably saw himself as trying to uphold the personal example of St. Norbert, as well as the canonical discipline theoretically in force in his own day. The fact that subsequent abbots abandoned his strict interpretation of the rule suggests that his tenure as abbot may have become a difficult one, with John-Jerome's own ideas becoming increasingly at odds with at least some of his canons. John-Jerome's penchant for asceticism may have been too much for the canons under his care, and his decision to leave

¹⁰⁷ "Observabatur autem sub regimine praefati magistri Johannis de Praga, in dicto Sandeczensi monasterio, religionis praemonstratensis districtio, nec licebat fratribus carnum usus. Quo recedente, etiam cessavit districtio; arctiorem enim desiderans vitam, in monasterium camaldulensium se et illic annis pluribus militavit." DŁUGOSZ, *ibid.*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁸ These statutes, a culmination of reforms of the Order's discipline undertaken throughout the thirteenth century, have been edited by P. LEFÈVRE, *Les Statuts de Prémontré, réformés sur les ordres de Grégoire IX et d'Innocent IV, au XIII^e siècle* (Louvain: 1946).

¹⁰⁹ "... poterit tamen abbas aliquid superaddere, prout facultas permiserit et viderit opus esse." *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹¹⁰ For the reform of the Order's statutes in 1505, see E. VALVEKENS, "Le chapitre général et les nouveaux statuts de 1505", and "Textes relatifs à la réforme des statuts prémontrés en 1505", in *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 14 (1938) pp. 53-94, and 15 (1939) pp. 25-41. R. J. CORNELL in his article "Premonstratensians" in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967) Vol. 11, p. 739, notes that even in Norbert's own lifetime abstinence had been mitigated, although perpetual abstinence was not officially relaxed until the sixteenth century.

may have been greeted with relief. It is also possible that he left unwillingly, but given his close relationship with the king and the remarks of Jan Dlugosz on the matter, this is unlikely. His successor Abbot Mathias in 1419 also resigned for reasons that are unclear, but may speak to some continuing tension in the house concerning ascetical standards¹¹¹. The efforts of Abbot John-Jerome at Nowy Sącz can be seen as an early example of the attempts, usually seen to be initiated during the tenure of the Abbot General John de la Fare (1436-1443), to revive the discipline and pristine asceticism of the Order¹¹².

Conclusion

When later as a Camaldolese he was active in the ecumenical councils held at Pavia-Siena and Basel, John-Jerome's experiences from Bohemia, Poland and Lithuania were recognized by his contemporaries as providing him with unique perspectives on questions then facing the universal Church. In his concerns for moral reform, both of the clergy and the laity, John-Jerome represents an important and until now insufficiently-understood link between Poland and the Bohemian reform tradition of the late fourteenth century. The two sermon collections produced by John-Jerome reflect the emphasis in his own Premonstratensian tradition on the duty of clerics to preach, and the necessity to base their preaching in knowledge of Sacred Scripture and the tradition of the Fathers. John-Jerome drew upon his own vast learning to produce sermon models in relatively simple Latin to aid clerics in this task. In doing so he made extensive use of quotations found in the canon law tradition in which he had been trained at Prague, and in particular the *Decretum* of Gratian.

It is important to keep in mind that the body of medieval canon law, and most especially the *Decretum*, was no mere code of laws, containing rules and penalties for those who broke them. The *Decretum* was rather a rich collection of patristic learning, certainly containing conciliar and papal legal judgments, but also a treasure house of moral exhortation

¹¹¹ Norbert BACKMUND, *Monasticon Praemonstratense*, *op. cit.*, Tomus 1, Second edition, p. 418.

¹¹² See Bernard ARDURA, *op. cit.*, pp. 152ff and 196ff; Norbert BACKMUND, *Geschichte des Prämonstratenserordens* (Grafenau: Morsak Verlag, 1986), pp. 56ff; the same, "Spätmittelalterliche Reformbestrebungen im Prämonstratenserorden", *Analecta Praemonstratensia* 56 (1980) pp. 194-204.

drawn from the Fathers of the Church and containing many examples of their biblical exegesis. Far from fitting some caricature of law as pharisaical, or as something static and opposed to the life of the Spirit, the *Decretum* was a helpful repository of ancient Christian wisdom on many subjects, including clerical conduct and the crucial duty of priests to preach. For reformers such as the Premonstratensian John-Jerome, it provided them with an authoritative and coherent ideal, clearly organized, from which they in turn could draw their own dynamic blueprints for reform. As confessor and preacher at the court of King Wladislaus II Jagiello, and then as abbot at Nowy Sącz, John-Jerome tried to instill in his audience the necessity of moral and institutional reform, a task he would continue to tirelessly pursue for many years to come after leaving Poland and the Premonstratensian Order for a new life among the hermits of Camaldoli.

Summary

This article concerns the reform work of the Premonstratensian canon John-Jerome of Prague (1368-1440) in Poland in the early fifteenth century. As the personal chaplain of King Wladislaus Jagiello, John-Jerome traveled throughout the kingdom and observed the current state of clerical learning. This article presents the first extended discussion of two unedited collections of model sermons produced by John-Jerome in order to aid clerics in the duty of preaching. The first, entitled *Linea Salutis*, covers all the Sundays and major feasts of the liturgical year. The second, entitled *Exemplar Salutis*, deals with the sanctoral cycle, including important Slavic saints. The article also treats John-Jerome's tenure as the first abbot of the new Premonstratensian foundation at Nowy Sącz. In all of his endeavors, Abbot John-Jerome emerges as an important figure in these crucial years of the formation of the Polish-Lithuanian state, and as a hitherto underappreciated link between Poland and the Bohemian reform tradition.

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