

fate was in store for Nicholas, whose theology actually pointed to the stake.

We see this particularly in *V*'s discussion of the second alleged error. (The first, attacked by *M* with a single passage from Gregory the Great, has been easily refuted by analysis of the passage and by the position that Scripture is to be preferred to the works of any posterior doctor.¹¹⁴) Here *M* has stated the key Romanist doctrine that while confession and penance can win absolution from every *culpa*, the obligation to discharge the *pena* will in most cases be unfulfilled in this life: hence the need for Purgatory, which is proven in this context by I Corinthians 3: 13, ". . . and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." *V*'s reply is that the fire in question is that of trial and tribulation here on earth: the true Christians will inevitably be tried by such fire as they seek to follow the path of Christ, and if they persevere their purgation by fire is behind them—"the elect are punished in this world that they may not be punished in the next."¹¹⁵ Again relying on the Pseudo-Chrysostom, *V* devotes several pages to an excursus on this theme, showing that the church is never free of tribulation, that life in this world is never free of sin, and that all adversity afflicting the just may be understood as a baptism of fire. As for the alleged residue of *pena* to be worked off by the *salvandus* after death, *V* insists that even though *pena* is not ordinarily remitted in full and at once, as is *culpa*, still it may happen so "because of the penitent's fervor or even through the pure generosity of God";¹¹⁶ and if it does not, then the man must pursue his repentance, always hoping for full remission of *pena*, either through his own merits or through God's grace and the merit of Christ's passion. But none of this implies future remission in Purgatory. And when *M* insists on the difficulties presented by cases of incomplete penance, *V* in turn insists on the position that the merits of the penitent are not a determining factor. "Sufficiency is based not only in our merits . . . , but in the merits of Christ and of God, who is merciful and capable of supplying all our defects [*cf.* II Cor. 3: 5]." As Nicholas of Lyra has pointed out, God favors one and not the other. It is not a matter of justice but of God's generosity and grace.¹¹⁷ Earlier *M* had argued that God would not be a just judge if at the end both the man who had been good all his life and the man who had been bad but repented at the last minute went

corde volebant deum diligere et ipsi soli servire. . . ." Jakoubek wrote similar passages at this time (Bartoš, p. 138 n. 75).

¹¹⁴ F. 48 sq. "Quis enim nesciat, sanctam scripturam canonicam tam novi quam veteris testamenti certis suis terminis contineri eamque posterioribus omnibus episcoporum literis ita preponi, ut de illa omnino dubitari et disceptari non possit, utrum verum vel utrum rectum sit quicquid in ea scriptum constiterit esse?"

¹¹⁵ F. 48' sq.; there follows a long passage from Pseudo-Chrysostom on f. 49-50.

¹¹⁶ F. 51 sq.

¹¹⁷ F. 52 sqq.

straight to Heaven.¹¹⁸ *V* had then answered by referring to the parable of the laborers in the vineyard—all got the same pay, although some had been working from the first, others only for a short time—and in observing that anyway there were different degrees of beatitude in Heaven, since some enjoyed the *summum bonum* more than others. Now *V* adds a more fully developed statement of the divine mystery: "Man cannot fully understand even the least of God's works, as for example the leaf of a tree—why is it of just such a size and shape, etc.?—and still less can he understand His greatest works, among which are election and reprobation."¹¹⁹ Indeed the trouble with the Romanists is that they want "to assimilate God and his works to human works and to creatures."¹²⁰ In any case, if *M* wishes to invent hypothetical examples, *V* can play the game too: what if a man who has been good all his life falls into mortal sin just before he dies, while a man who has been bad all his life repents just before he dies? If divine justice can be preserved only by postulating a middle place of temporary torment on the second man's way to Heaven, then must we not also postulate a middle place of temporary bliss for the first man, before he descends into eternal Hell? Or if it be said that differential retribution in Hell is provided for by different degrees of suffering, then the converse can be said about Heaven; if on the other hand it be urged that the sinner who has done some good is rewarded here on earth, then why not say that the *salvandus* who has sinned is punished here on earth?^{120a} These are rationalistic trivialities, necessitated by the actual argument; both text and context show that they are less important in Nicholas's concept of the issue than his basic understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ. Indeed a long digression pins this point down: Nicholas re-emphasizes the central place of Christ's teaching about the two paths, and the harsh corollary, that "more will perish than will be saved."¹²¹

Are prayers for the dead then of no use? Since the Roman Church includes everyone, and hence consists for the most part of those who will be damned, its prayers—that is, its institutional actions—are of du-

¹¹⁸ F. 46'.

¹¹⁹ F. 53.

¹²⁰ F. 58': "Contra illos enim volentes deum in factis suis assimilare operibus humanis et creaturis. . . ."

^{120a} F. 54 sq.

¹²¹ F. 54'-58. "Plures sunt qui pereunt quam qui salvabuntur" (f. 57'). The digression ends with a summary: "Ex quibus iam dictis considerare volenti plane potest patere de igne purgatorio et quomodo diversis modis purgantur salvandi, qui et valde pauci comparacione aliorum. Et de duabus viis et tristega domo, et de purgacione quarte partis terre. Ante hominem enim, bonum et malum, aqua et ignis, vita et mors, dextrum et sinistrum, album et nigrum—quod voluerit dabitur ei. Non ergo restat aliud nisi quod dicit beatus Bernhardus: Via tua est vita tua. . . ." The theory of the *imitatio Christi* here receives its most violent form, with an explicitly sectarian inspiration—there is no provision for the great majority.

bious value; *V* can here cite no less an authority than Innocent III.¹²² And the presupposition of such prayers, the existence of the *ecclesia dormiencium* in Purgatory, need not be accepted, as already shown. On the other hand, the true Church, the congregation of the faithful, does form a unity and the prayers of one part enrich the whole. Moreover the prayers of Jesus Christ, the sole mediator, are supremely effective.

The whole argument of Nicholas against Purgatory, with all of its "authorities," really rests on this concept of the Church as a spiritual body, the small band of those who follow the evangelical commandments in their full rigor, and whose whole life constitutes their purgation. Those outside this group may exhibit varying degrees of goodness and badness, but salvation is not for them; since the function of Purgatory was precisely to provide for those who were neither very good nor very bad, the middle class,¹²³ the evangelical ideologue naturally refused to believe in it. This attitude exactly corresponded to that of the Waldensians, who also held to the scheme of the two paths, one leading straight to Hell, the other straight to Heaven,¹²⁴ and it may be labeled a sectarian attitude, expressing the ideology of a small group within the large mass. Nicholas had first envisaged this group as the historical Primitive Church, and if he shared this idea with other Hussites, he nevertheless had a peculiarly lively awareness of it. In the *Tabule* he had provided for a pictorial actualization of the Primitive Church; in the *Apologia* he had gone so far as to summon up the image of that Church, led by Christ, coming into the Council of Constance to practice utraquist communion; in his sermon on the text, "Querite primum regnum dei," composed about the same time as the *De purgatorio*, he went even further: tracing the de-

¹²² F. 61'; the reference is to the decretal "Cum Marthae" (III, xli, 6), of which the last few lines are quoted: ". . . defunctorum alii sunt valde boni, alii sunt valde mali, alii mediocriter boni, alii mediocriter mali"; prayers for the first group are superfluous, for the second useless, and as for the last two, the addressee of the letter is to think about the matter—"tua discretio investiget." Nicholas then cites the gloss (*in verbum*, "investiget"), in which the problem of distinguishing between the *mediocriter boni* and the *mediocriter mali* is discussed, but not clearly resolved. He then comments: "Ecce quomodo dubitando et quasi in incertum loquuntur, quasi super arenam fundati. . ."

¹²³ Innocent III's distinction, cited in the previous note, was a modification of a simpler, tripartite distinction made by Augustine in his *Enchiridion*; the passage is included in the Sentences, IV, xlv, 2, and in the *Decretum*, XIII. q. ii, c. 23, whence (no doubt) Hus quotes it in his *Dixit Martha*, p. 164. Augustine talks of the very good and the very bad, and defines the third class as the "non valde mali"; Hus picks this up as defining "quibus defunctis prosunt suffragia ad celeriore liberacionem a penis"—"non valde boni nec valde mali, sed medii"—it is for these that Purgatory, a "statum [*sic*] medium," must be posited.

¹²⁴ See, e.g., the "Errores . . . Waldensium," Döllinger, II, 338: "Etiam negant purgatorium post hanc vitam, dicentes solum esse duas vias, scilicet immediate ad vitam aeternam, et malorum immediate ad mortem aeternam."

velopment from the frequent communion of the Primitive Church to the yearly communion of the modern one, he commented, "If then a man feels himself to be in the estate of the Primitive Church, he should take communion frequently."¹²⁵ We may reasonably regard the *De purgatorio*, as well as the other works composed in the second part of 1415, as formulations of the reformed faith of those few who felt themselves to be in the estate of the Primitive Church, and we may see in the doctrines of these works, with their emphasis on implementing the counsels of perfection—this is the gist above all of the "Querite"—and with their renunciation of the religiosity that sought to capture the workings of God with nets of human rationalization, the specific religious outlook of such a sect. Since, however, the sect would be a minority in Hussite Bohemia as well as in Romanist Europe, the effect of Nicholas's "Waldensianist" works was to face the whole movement with a crisis of its own being: would evangelical reform be limited by existing ecclesiastical and societal realities, or would it become the program of a sect, or, finally, would it become the point of departure for some sort of fundamental reconstruction of the existing order?

From 1415 on, the internal history of the Hussite movement can be read as a response to this problem, and we will not be far wrong if we understand Jakoubek of Stříbro's break with Nicholas of Dresden in 1415 as the first step on the road that would lead him to become the bitter opponent of the Taborites—whose teacher he had once been. On 29 November 1415, the anniversary of the death of Charles IV, Jakoubek preached a sermon on the question of Purgatory, in which he responded to Nicholas's arguments and defined his own, orthodox position; one has only to read this sermon to see how hard it must have been to write, and how weak in fact was its own argument.¹²⁶ Beginning with the authorities against Purgatory—most

¹²⁵ MS. IV G 15, f. 131: "Si igitur homo sentit in statu primitive ecclesie, communicet frequenter."

¹²⁶ The sermon is listed in Bartoš's *Činnost Jakoubka*, No. 63; I have used MS. Vienna Nationalbibliothek 4524, f. 39-45, and have compared 4749, f. 160-169', and 4937, f. 177-186. A treatise *De purgatorio* was also written by Jakoubek, according to Bartoš soon after the sermon (*Činnost*, No. 64); it has been published by C. Walch, *Monimenta mediæ ævi* (Göttingen, 1759) 3: pp. 3-25. Unfortunately there is no way to date it with precision, since it consists almost entirely of "authorities"; it differs from the sermon chiefly in taking a much less tentative line, citing a great many more authorities for Purgatory, and citing none for the other side. The opponents are indeed defined rather insultingly as those who "nec scriptura solida adiuti, nec ratione aliqua suffulti deductiva, rubore omni semoto, in contentum magnorum primitivæ ecclesie sanctorum. . . dicere audent et asserere, quod ignis purgatorius post hanc vitam non existat quodque pro animabus fidelium de mundo hoc exeuntium non sit orandum" (pp. 3-4). On the basis of these traits, I would guess that the tractate was written not against Nicholas but against the extremists of 1416-1417, some of whom indeed did not meet scholastic standards of erudition (see note 145 below).

of them the same as Nicholas's—and putting the negative case quite strongly, even to the point of noting that there are only two paths, and that Purgatory after death would seem superfluous for those who have followed the strait path of suffering on earth.¹²⁷ Jakoubek nevertheless rejects this case in favor of one built on the premise that some of the *salvandi* might not be fully purged before their death.¹²⁸ The authorities he cites are not particularly powerful—certainly not superior to those cited for the other side—and the real point is obviously that Jakoubek refused to agree with Nicholas, that the *salvandi* would be purged in this life, if not by their sufferings then by God's grace. In short, Jakoubek preferred to follow the Romanists in defining the body of the *salvandi* broadly enough to accommodate the mediocrities. But he then went on to say that even though Purgatory existed, the faithful should, so to speak, behave as if it did not, placing no emphasis on works for the dead, and trying themselves to lead the virtuous lives that would make it unnecessary for them to pass through Purgatory at all.¹²⁹ Thus although he, like Nicholas, believed in the evangelical principle of the strait way, he preferred to apply this principle within the framework of a sociology based on the existing order; for him the Primitive Church was a historical concept, not, as with Nicholas, a sociological one. Some years later, during the defense of Prague against the anti-Hussite crusade, Jakoubek told Peter Chelčický that he could not condemn all killing because such a condemnation would dishonor the knightly estate:¹³⁰ here we have another "Waldensianist" point, on which Nicholas had taken the "pure" position, and we may perhaps be justified in using this datum to illuminate the struggle of 1415. Jakoubek simply refused to take sectarian positions that would have made establishment of the reform in alliance with

¹²⁷ MS. 4524, f. 40: "Item secundum ewangelium, Mat. vii [13-14], tantum due ponuntur vie in hac vita, 'una arta et angusta, que ducit ad vitam, et pauci sunt qui inveniunt ea; alia est lata et spaciosa via que ducit ad perdicionem et multi sunt qui intrant per eam,' que quidem vie solum hic in hac vita ponuntur et non in futura. In futuro autem ponuntur solum duo termini illarum ante precedencium viarum; scilicet vita eterna et perdicio eterna. Cum ergo omnes qui pie volunt vivere in Cristo persecucionem patientur, per artam viam transeunt, hic ante terminum vie tribulacionibus purgantur, videtur superfluum talibus post hanc vitam igne aliquo purgatorii tribulari."

¹²⁸ The case against Purgatory occupies f. 39-40'; the case for it, f. 40'-42, and it consists of II Macc. xii, 42-44; Di. XXV, c. 4 (Gregory I); XIII. q. ii, c. 21 (Gregory I); XIII. q. ii, c. 23 (Augustine); Mat. v, 25-26; plus a few rational arguments, of which one is the familiar "stat per valde possibile quod aliquis salvandus tam graviter peccet contra deum, et ita diu, quod ante mortem non perfecte peniteat . . ." etc. (f. 42).

¹²⁹ This is the sense of the refutation of the opposing position (f. 42 sqq.) and of the concluding section, on how to help those in Purgatory (f. 44 sqq.).

¹³⁰ See the account in Peter Brock, *The Political and Social Doctrines of the Unity of Czech Brethren* (The Hague, Mouton, 1957), p. 32.

the existing powers impossible. We need not suppose that he always made conscious choices between the counsels of perfection and of prudence, but we can infer that his political program, looking towards establishment of the reform by the nobility and the burghers, functioned as a limiting factor in his thinking. And to wrap the matter up, we may observe that there is some evidence attesting the duplicity that would inevitably have stemmed from such an attitude. Peter Chelčický tells us that Jakoubek once admitted, under questioning, that a Christian was not bound by faith to believe in Purgatory as in other articles of faith; on another occasion, again under questioning, Jakoubek defined Purgatory not as palpable torment but as the soul's shame at recognition of its stains.¹³¹ The first position is identical with Nicholas's, the second is reconcilable with it, and yet Jakoubek insisted on defending Purgatory against both Nicholas and the Taborites who later took up the cause of the two paths. Finally, no less an authority than Master John Rokycana, Jakoubek's disciple and successor, revealed that when his master was on his death bed, he said to those attending him: "You should have two sets of books, one set for your own contemplation—and do not take these to the people—and another set for the information of the people."¹³² This is better advice for politicians than for evangelical reformers; but Jakoubek was neither the first nor the last to prove unequal to the task of reconciling the faith of the Gospels with an actual order of society.

Next to the *Dialogus de purgatorio* the most considerable work of Nicholas's last, Waldensian period was his set of sermons on the text, "Querite primum regnum dei," which picked up all the old themes of the earlier works and added others. Like the *Puncta* it ranged far and wide, with little pretense to thematic unity, but unlike the earlier work it argued for its author's positions instead of merely allowing them to emerge from the grouping of authorities. Thus on point after point—rejection of images, condemnation of all killing, refusal to swear oaths, condemnation of traditions, rituals, hierarchical authority, usury, various forms of simony, etc. etc.—we have both theory and documentation; as Sedlák has observed, it contains the whole reform program, presented in unrivaled depth and breadth.¹³³ Those who had learned their radicalism from Nicholas or who had been influenced by him were thus well provided for, against the master's absence, and, although it is not at present possible to trace a direct literary line from the "Querite" to the extremists of 1416/1419 who would advocate its doctrines, the linkage could hardly have been absent.

¹³¹ Bartoš, p. 140 n. 80.

¹³² *Liber diurnus Petri Žatecensis*, ed. F. Palacký, *Monumenta conciliorum generalium saec. decimi quinti* (Vienna, 1857) 1: p. 298; cf. Pekař's comments, *Žižka* 1: p. 111.

¹³³ Sedlák, p. 38 f.