

pinge's work seems to be his own.¹⁶ Furthermore, although defending a Wyclifite position, and perhaps inspired by Wyclifism, Eppinge advanced a concept of the *communio sanctorum* that differed sharply from Wyclif's—and Hus's—equivalent concept of the community of the predestined. The former was, like the latter, the invisible body constituting the true communion, but it was defined merely as a society of holy men, enjoying the communal property of spiritual goods by virtue of love (*caritas*), and individually participating in that property according to their individual spiritual qualifications, these depending on the strength of their moral characters. "One participates more than another according to the extent that he disposes himself more fully to the capacity of participating, by applying his strength with greater fervor, desire, and work."¹⁷ Each must indeed strive to increase his own capacity for good, not only in order to share more fully, but also in order to bring something more of the good to the whole. Naturally enough, in this view, a man could fall away from the communion of the saints simply by ceasing to be good: that is, by losing the grace of *caritas* and sinning; according to predestinarian ecclesiology, however, no amount of sinning could deprive one of the predestinate of his happy status, just as no amount of "present righteousness" could change the fate of the man foreknown to damnation.¹⁸ The differences did not matter in the case at hand, but they are sharp enough to show that Eppinge's Wyclifism was by no means unreserved; neither, for that matter, was Hus's or Jakoubek's. Each had his own mode of appropriating the common fund. Soon after Eppinge's death, which occurred at the end of 1412, John Hus wrote that he had been "a pious Christian, a great student and protagonist of the Law of Christ,"¹⁹ and Jakoubek of Stříbro wrote of him as of a "god-fearing and humble man,"²⁰ but in 1425, testifying before the inquisition, with no reason to fear for his dead master or to hope for himself, John Drändorf said that Eppinge—"humble and devout"—"was not nor had ever been of the sect of Hussites."²¹ Looking back on the matter we may say that Eppinge was as much of a Hussite as anyone could have been in 1412, that in a period when ideas were in the process of jelling into ideology

¹⁶ Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. xiii f., points to the inclusion of Hus's authorities in Eppinge's position, and suggests that Hus may have offered additional material and guidance. But this is a speculation, and nothing in Eppinge's text confirms it, nor is there the slightest reason to suppose that Eppinge, a canonist who had been accustomed to using his learning in the service of anti-Romanism, would not have produced a largely original work.

¹⁷ Thomson's edition, p. 105.

¹⁸ See, e.g., John Hus, *Tractatus de ecclesia*, ed. S. H. Thomson (Boulder, Colorado, 1956), pp. 17 f., 35 f.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

²⁰ *Tractatus responsivus*, ed. Thomson, p. 103 (I follow Bartoš in supposing Jakoubek to have been the author).

²¹ Kapp, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 f.

he made his specific contribution to the nascent movement. Those who survived him in the Dresden school would have to find their own way of continuing his tradition.

It is precisely here that we may see the nub of the Dresdeners' problem, which has also become a problem for modern scholarship. On the one side was the world of the Czech reform movement, dominating the University, increasingly influential among the people of Prague, and very closely connected with leading members of the feudality and with the royal court.²² It was in this world that reform, in the sense of a societal reformation, could be achieved, but at the same time the passage of reform to the sphere of political action meant its contraction, from a body of ideas to a pattern of reality, from universal formulations to concrete action. And while the Dresdeners could and did hold ideas identical to those of the Czech Hussites, they could hardly look to the same future; their mission was to preach their brand of sectarian reform to their own people, the Germans, and to continue their school as the seed-bed of such missionary activity. Peter of Dresden, as far as we know, functioned only within the school, no doubt as an inspiring teacher of evangelical reform, but not as a polemicist in the wider world: his known written work consisted chiefly of grammatical treatises.²³ John Drändorf continued his studies in Prague and later worked among the Bohemian Germans, but in time he left Bohemia for Germany and found his way to a martyr's death, in Worms.²⁴ Asked at his inquisition whether he believed John Hus and Jerome of Prague had been justly condemned, he replied "that he believed nothing except what Scripture taught, and that God knew if they had been justly or unjustly condemned."²⁵ Why did he not say that they, like Eppinge, had been humble and devout men? Quite possibly because, in 1425, he wished to make it clear that his own religious path, though parallel to theirs, was distinct: he was a Hussite in doctrine but was not a member of the Hussite movement. Such

²² For a convenient discussion, with references to the literature, see H. Kaminsky, "Hussite Radicalism and the Origins of Tabor," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 10 (1956): *passim*.

²³ Bartoš, "Počátky kalicha," *Husitství a cizina*, p. 75. In his "Nové spisy Petra a Mikuláše z Drážďan," *Reformační sborník* 8 (1946): pp. 66 f., Bartoš has drawn attention to Peter's authorship of a short extract from Albertus Magnus's "Philosophia pauperum" ("Summa naturalium"); one manuscript names him as "M. Petrus Gerticz, quondam rector scolarum in Dresden"; a fifteenth-century catalogue of another manuscript reads: "Autor istius tractatuli mag. Petrus Gerit, mag. schole in Dresen scil. in Missna. Et sicut dicitur, tunc in ultimis suis diebus pervenit ad Boemicam pravitatem et Constancie incineratus." Bartoš observes that we must reject the last item of information in favor of the report that Peter was burned in Regensburg, 1421/1426 (Böhmer, *op. cit.*, p. 224); it should also be noted that Drändorf told his inquisitors that Peter had died in Prague (Kapp, p. 38).

²⁴ Kapp, *op. cit.*, pp. 3 ff. See also below.

²⁵ Kapp, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

indeed was the case in the 1420's. In 1412, however, it was not obviously inevitable that the Czech and German reformers should grow apart; the movement still lived for the most part in the world of ideas, and intellectuals might suppose that the ample opportunities for common action in that world constituted a sufficient basis for integration. This was in fact the belief of one leading member of the Dresden circle, Master Nicholas of Dresden, who spent the four years from 1412 through 1415 playing the double role of schoolmaster among the Germans, leading ideologue among the Czechs, and who had no hesitation in declaring his attachment to Hus's cause and, in 1415, to Hus's memory. That he too had to leave Prague and find a new career as missionary among his own people, a career that quickly ended in his martyrdom, adds the dimension of genuine tragedy to a life that more than any other embodied the hopes and failures of Hussite universalism.

Thanks to Nicholas's popularity among the Czech Hussites, his works were copied often enough to insure their survival, and it will not be too difficult to reconstruct his ideas. His biography is another matter. It is impossible to say with certainty where he was born and educated or where he spent the years before 1412, except that by his own account eleven of his adolescent years were spent in a cathedral town. This would not have been Prague, where he wrote the paragraph in question, nor Dresden, which did not have a cathedral. Perhaps it was Meissen, where Nicholas later went to preach.²⁶ In any case, the most important questions cannot be answered: Was Nicholas a student at the University of Prague before 1409?²⁷ If so, did he then leave Prague for Dresden, and if he was part of the Dresden School in that city, was it as teacher or as student?²⁸ Or was he rather, as F. M. Bartoš has suggested, the scion of a Prague German family, who received his epithet, "of Dresden," because of the origin of his family or because of his own association with

²⁶ Sedlák, p. 1 f.; Bartoš, p. 129 f.

²⁷ For references to scholarly opinion on this question, see Bartoš, p. 127, n. 47; Sedlák, p. 2. The problem is whether the "Petrus Drozna" and "Nicolaus Drossen" mentioned in the *Liber decanorum universitatis Pragensis*—Peter received his B.A. in 1379, M.A. in 1386; Nicholas was promoted to B.A. in 1396 under Peter—are identical with our Peter and Nicholas of Dresden. Bartoš argues that the men came not from Dresden but from Drozno in the diocese of Lubusz (Lebus), in what was then Brandenburg; for the record of Peter's ordination refers to him as "Petrus Kerszner de Drosna, can. eccl. Lubuc." We are, of course, immediately struck by the possibility that "Kerszner" might have been only a variant or corruption of "Gerticz/Gerit" (above, n. 23), a hypothesis that would open the door to several others, all of them requiring much exploratory work in the manuscript sources for their verification; the possibility is mentioned here only to show that our knowledge of the Dresdeners is still in a primitive stage.

²⁸ The sources here are not in agreement; Sedlák, p. 2 f., examines them and concludes that Nicholas probably did not leave Prague in 1409.

the Dresden School in Prague?²⁹ If, as seems most likely, Nicholas's earliest known works date from 1412, the first year in which the Dresdeners were active in Prague,³⁰ the easiest inference would be that he came with the School; Bartoš, on the other hand, has explained the coincidence by conjecturing that Nicholas, as a German, could not play an active role in Hussite doctrinal development until the advent of the Dresden School made such interethnic collaboration a reality.³¹ He is called a "Master," presumably of arts, and a "baccalareus decretorum": it would seem likely that he acquired these degrees at Prague's University and her Law Faculty;³² on the other hand, he is also called a priest, but the *Libri ordinationum* of the Prague diocese do not mention him, and he may have been ordained elsewhere.³³ It is not impossible that manuscript material as yet unknown will turn up to settle some of these questions; meanwhile they must be left open, with the single conjecture, based on Nicholas's familiarity with Wyclifite ideas and with the works of the Czech reformer Matthew of Janov, that he, like other leading members of the Dresden School, had probably studied at the University of Prague before he emerged as a Hussite theoretician.³⁴

Turning now to his works, we may regard the two here edited as his earliest: the "Tables of the Old and New Color" and the "Customs and Rites of the Primitive Church and of the Modern Church." The latter seems to have been a kind of sequel to the former,

²⁹ Bartoš, p. 125 ff. See the contrary arguments of Josef Pekař, "Nový Bartoš," *Český časopis historický* 32 (1926): pp. 364 f.; Bartoš's reply, *ibid.*, p. 680.

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³¹ Bartoš, p. 130 (note 54 on this page has evidently been omitted by mistake; what is now numbered 54 should be numbered 55, and so on through what is now 59).

³² Sedlák, p. 2, n. 1, gives some of the references; Bartoš, p. 127, n. 47, doubts that Nicholas was ever an M.A.

³³ Bartoš, p. 130, n. 53.

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