
The Archbishops of Prague in Urban Struggles of the Confessional Age, 1561-1612¹

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Archbishops and bishops held precarious positions of power throughout Europe in the late Middle Ages and early modern period. The rise of civic institutions and urban autonomy and the spread of religious unrest forced many ecclesiastics to flee for their lives, or depart in protest. Conversely, sometimes they were denied entry to their cities. Nevertheless, bishops and archbishops strove to maintain their powers, privileges and functions that extended “from the confessional to the marriage bed, from the neighborhood parish to the market place.” Indeed they continued to be “involved in practically every aspect of city life.”²

The peculiarities of the Bohemian Reformation and the ascent of the Habsburgs to the Bohemian throne presented distinctive challenges to both ecclesiastical and secular authorities in the cities of the Bohemian crown, especially *Praga caput regni*. The renewal of the Prague archbishopric in 1561, which involved tense negotiations between the new Habsburg rulers of Bohemia, the Bohemian estates, the Popes and papal nuncia, was an act of major importance. One hundred and forty years earlier, the last archbishop, Konrad of Vechta, went over to the Utraquist cause, and his seat had been vacant ever since. Filling the seat of the central, or at least a central, religious leader of Bohemia, helped bring an end to the great revolution of the Middle Ages, the Hussite Revolution.³ To the people of Prague, the return of the archbishop represented a new force to contend with; at times to resist, but also to be called on for assistance in disputes with other authorities, religious and secular.

A number of works provide a detailed look at the archbishops and their activities: Klement Borový's studies of Antonín Brus and Martin Medek z Mohelice, the first two newly installed archbishops;⁴ František Kafka's and Anna Skýbová's 1969 seminal work, 'The Hussite Epilogue at the Council of Trent,' subtitled 'The Beginning of the Renewal of the Prague Archbishopric'; studies of the papal

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² J. Jeffrey Tyler, *Lord of the Sacred City. The 'Episcopus exclusus' in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Leiden, 1998) 21. See also 12-38.

³ František Kafka & Anna Skýbová, *Husitský epilog na koncilu tridentském a původní koncepcce habsburské rekatolizace Čech: Počátky obnoveného pražského arcibiskupství* (Prague, 1969).

⁴ Klement Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice. Arcibiskup Pražský* (Prague, 1873); *Martin Medek, Arcibiskup Pražský* (Prague, 1977); Josef Cvrček, “Antonín Brus z Mohelnice,” *Český časopis historický* II (1896) 30-39; Anton Frind, *Die Geschichte der Bischöfe und Erzbischöfe von Prag* (Prag, 1873).

nuncia;⁵ the Jesuits;⁶ the twelfth volume of Václav Vladivoj Tomek's 'History of Prague';⁷ and contributions in a recent commemorative volume, 'the Prague archbishopric 1344-1994.'⁸

In Borový's studies a picture emerges of the archbishops as men of high moral integrity, wisdom and piety, who were the central initiators and promoters of Catholic reform.⁹ This interpretation is not just representative of Catholic confessional historiography in general, but a quite particular one. For example, if one considers the work of Karel Stloukal and Jochen Köhler, also scholars writing out the Catholic tradition, ones sees, greater emphasis placed on the role of the papal nuncia.¹⁰ Still other scholars have written about the Jesuits and implicitly describe them as the initiators of or catalysts for Catholic reform through their use of open-air theatre games and other public performances.¹¹ Others have identified King Ferdinand and the other early Habsburg rulers of Bohemia I as the central figures of Catholic reform.¹²

The renewal of the archbishop, the founding of the Jesuits, and the arrival of Habsburg Catholic rulers are often viewed in Bohemian history and historiography within the context of 'recatholization,' the returning of Bohemia to Roman Catholicism. In a piece first published in Samizdat in 1980, Josef Hanzal pointed out that recatholization was important not just as a "filling" (*náplň*) to a two-hundred year history, but because it radically influenced the character, culture, thought and feeling of the Bohemian nation. It was a long-term process with distinct phases. Drawing on the work of the German historian Hubert Jedin, Hanzal pointed to the close relationship in Bohemia between Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation.¹³ Kafka and Skýbová have successfully placed the Bohemia question - the *Česká otázka* - of the sixteenth century, Bohemia's problematic relationship with the Holy Roman Empire and the Church, within the framework of larger European

⁵ Karel Stloukal, "Počátky nunciatury v Praze. Bonhomini v Čechách v letech 1581-1584," ČČH 24 (1928) 237-79; Jochen Köhler, "Der Beitrag der Prager Nunciatur zur Festigung des Katholizismus in Ostmitteleuropa." HJ 93 (1973) 336-46; G. Lutz, "Die Prager Nunciatur des Speciano (1592-1598). Quellenbestand und Edition seiner diplomatischen Korrespondenz," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 48 (1968) 369-81; Samuel Steinherz, *Nunziaturberichte aus Deutschland* (Wien, 1897).

⁶ Alois Kroess, *Geschichte der böhmischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu*, Band I (Prague, 1910); Ivana Čornejová, *Tovaryšstvo Ježíšovo. Jezuité v Čechách* (Prague, 1995).

⁷ Václav Vladivoj Tomek, *Dějepis města Prahy* 12 (Prague, 1901).

⁸ *Pražské arcibiskupství 1334-1994. Sborník statí a jeho působení a významu v české zemi* (Prague, 1994).

⁹ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* esp. 51ff; *Martin Medek* esp. 2-3.

¹⁰ Stloukal, "Počátky nunciatury v Praze"; Köhler, "Der Beitrag der Prager Nunciatur zur Festigung des Katholizismus in Ostmitteleuropa."

¹¹ Kroess, *Geschichte der böhmischen Provinz der Gesellschaft*; Čornejová, *Tovaryšstvo Ježíšovo*.

¹² *Ibid.* 45-55.

¹³ Josef Hanzal, "Rekatolizace v Čechách - Její historický smysl a význam," SH 37 (1990) 37-92; first published in *Studie z československých dějin* (Prague, 1980). See also Winfried Eberhard, "Entwicklungsphasen und Probleme der Gegenreformation und katholischen Erneuerung in Böhmen," *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 84, 1-4 (1989) 235-57; and Zdeněk Kalista, "Die katholische Reform von Hilarius bis zum Weissen Berg," *Bohemia Sacra. Das Christentum in Böhmen 973-1973* (Düsseldorf, 1974) 110-44.

developments.¹⁴ Especially noteworthy is their discussion of the tension that existed between Ferdinand and other Catholic figures, and the difference between the potential and actual success of various Catholic forces noted elsewhere by Jaroslav Pánek.¹⁵ All this raises a number of questions about differing motives and tensions within the Catholic camp in general.

In the last twenty years in Western Europe and North America and more recently in the Czech Republic, the Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation have experienced a revival of their own.¹⁶ We have come to view it -- "it" being the paradigm of "Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation" -- not as reactionary, but as a modernizing movement in its own right.¹⁷ It did not manifest itself as an isolated movement but in its relationships with other confessional groups. In this Confessional Age, international and global forces, such as activities of the papal nuncio, the missionary work of Catholic orders, and the supra-regional confessional politics of the Lutheran and Calvinist movements, intersected with local developments.¹⁸

If Bohemia is "the classic reformation and counter-reformation land," then Prague is a special place where a number of forces came together, local, national, regional and international.¹⁹ On the one hand, Prague was a place that the Roman curia chose as a special bastion to fight Protestantism;²⁰ but it was also a place that experienced a thriving Bohemian Reformation.²¹ We need more regional and local studies to provide a corrective to a monolithic national perspective: Prague

¹⁴ Kafka & Skýbová, *Husitský epilog na koncilu tridentském* 24 ff.

¹⁵ He mentions that "while the Jesuits could have been a catalyst of a new Catholic movement, they could not carry through a church revival. In the long term the decisive role was to be played by the archbishop." Jaroslav Pánek, *Štávková opozice a její zápas s Habsburky 1547-1577. K politické krizi feudální třídy v předbělohorském českém státě* (Prague, 1982) 62-3. See also 54-78.

¹⁶ Robert Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700* (Washington, D.C., 1999); Louis Châtellier, *The Europe of the Devout: The Catholic Reformation and the Formation of a New Society* (1989); Elisabeth Gleason, "Catholic Reformation, Counterreformation and Papal Reform in the Sixteenth Century," *Handbook of European History, 1400-1600*, eds. T.A. Brady, Jr., H.A. Oberman, J.D. Tracy (Leiden, 1995) 317-45. The newer Czech scholarship on the Catholic and Counter-Reformation has focused on the post-White Mountain period: Ivana Čornejová, "The Religious Situation in Rudolfine Prague," *Rudolf II and Prague*, ed. E. Fučíková *et al.*, 310-322; and *Tovaryštvo Ježíšovo*; Vít Vlnas, *Jan Nepomucký, česká legenda* (Prague, 1993); and Jiří Mikulec, *Poddanská otázka v barokních Čechách* (Prague, 1993).

¹⁷ Wolfgang Reinhard, "Gegenreformation als Modernisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *AR* 68 (1977) 226-52.

¹⁸ See R. Po-chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770* (Cambridge, 1998).

¹⁹ Hanzal, "Rekatolizace v Čechách - Její historický smysl a význam," 38. Most studies of religion in Bohemian concentrate on the national level; Ferdinand Hrejsa, *Dějiny křesťanství v Československu* 5 & 6 (Prague, 1948 & 1950); Zikmund Winter, *Život církevní v Čechách. Kulturně-historický obraz z XV. a XVI. století* 1 & 2 (Prague, 1895 & 1889). For a very general survey of religious developments in Prague see Ivana Čornejová, "The Religious Situation in Rudolfine Prague," *Rudolf II and Prague. The Imperial Court and Residential City as the Cultural and Spiritual Heart of Central Europe*, ed. E. Fučíková *et al.* (Prague, London & Milan, 1997) 310-22.

²⁰ Köhler, "Der Beitrag der Prager Nunciatur zur Festigung des Katholizismus in Ostmitteleuropa," 340-41.

²¹ On the Bohemian Reformation see contributions in *Husitství, Reformace, Renesance*, [Sborník k 60. narozeninám Františka Šmahela] 3 vv., edd. J. Pánek, M. Polívka, Noemi Rejchrtová (Prague, 1994); BRRP 1-3 (1996 - 2000).

represents an interesting social laboratory which can help us better understand the larger picture.

In this essay I explore the role of the Prague archbishops in the confessional-political struggle in Prague during the sixty year period before the Battle of White Mountain, 1561-1612. The goal is not to exhume or rebury the reputation of the archbishops, but to attempt to understand their role as important figures of their age vis-à-vis the roles of others. First, I will highlight the life and work of Antonín Brus z Mohelnice before he became Archbishop and then discuss some key features of the renewal of the Archbishopric, paying close attention to the role played by different participants. I will then move on to discuss Brus' activities in Prague, drawing particular attention to his role in the renewal of ecclesiastical property. I will continue by discussing the work of Martin Medek and, to a lesser extent, the lives and works of the other Pre-White Mountain Prague archbishops. Finally, I will end with some summary remarks and questions. I think that you will see that the picture of the role of the archbishops that emerges from a close look at their activities is more differentiated one than that appears in the literature.

Life and Work of Antonín Brus z Mohelnice Before Becoming Archbishop

Antonin Brus, the first newly installed Archbishop of Prague, was not a native of Prague, nor were his successors. He was born in 1518 in Mohelnice, a town in Moravia that belonged to the Bishop of Olomouc. At some point in his youth he came to Prague to continue his schooling and later entered the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star where, around 1540, he was ordained a priest. In 1542 he went back to Moravia to preach to soldiers on the Turkish front. Three years later he went to run his order's convent in Cheb. In 1552, he was named Grand Master of the order. When the War against the Turks started again King Ferdinand sent Antonin to Vienna and named him preacher to the imperial troops and an advisor (*tajnou raddou*). In addition to these posts as Grand Master, preacher to the troops and advisor, in 1558, Brus was given the administration of the Bishopric of Vienna. He continued to hold these posts even after being named Archbishop of Prague.²²

Before being named Archbishop, Brus played an important role in the foundation of the Jesuit College in Prague as a member of the commission formed to prepare for the arrival of the order. Other members of the commission were the Catholic administrator, an imperial advisor, and a member of the estates. In 1555 when Peter Canisius came to Prague to scout out a site for the college, he was a guest of Brus at the order's cloister and hospital on the bank of the Vltava River just across from where the future Jesuit College was later founded.

Brus' relationship with the Jesuits has always been described as very friendly. Seventeenth and eighteenth-century historians wrote that Brus was an avid supporter of the Jesuits and their work, which was shown in the respect given to Canisius and in his help in promoting the founding of other Jesuit colleges in Bohemia. There is also a story from 1574 of a small boy in the care of the Jesuits in Prague who disappeared. When the mother came to the cloister and started screaming outside the doors that the priests were responsible, Brus helped calm the

²² Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 14-16; Cvrček, "Antonín Brus z Mohelnice," 30-35.

situation by having the case investigated by the royal magistrate (*rychtář*) and mayor (*primas*) in the Old Town, who ultimately determined the innocence of the Jesuits. Klement Borový sees this as proof of “the fatherly protection” which Brus extended to the Jesuits.²³ However, despite these friendly, fatherly relations, while there is some evidence that Brus did support the Jesuits, he never really believed in their success, and he thought that schooling in Prague would be better off without them. Rather than the Jesuits, Brus placed his hopes on reforming the university, an institution that represented a major problem for Roman Catholics. For example, in 1562, right after becoming archbishop, Brus sent a memorandum (*dobrozdání*) to the king outlining his views on improving education. Ferdinand hoped that the Jesuits would hold the university in check. Brus wanted the university transformed into a state institution under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church.²⁴

The Role of Antonín Brus z Mohelnice in the Renewal of the Archbishopric of Prague (1560-1) and at the Council of Trent (1562-4)

Brus became archbishop in 1561 after a series of complex negotiations involving King Ferdinand, the papal nuncio, the Pope, the Bohemian estates, and Brus himself. The renewal of the Archbishopric was a complicated matter for a number of reasons, both foreign and domestic. Internally, there was fear among other confessional groups that it would upset the balance of power. Nevertheless, the Utraquists who supported “apostolic” (i.e. historic) succession and were faced with the same problem as Roman Catholics in not having someone to ordain priests, many of whom had to go elsewhere. The renewal of the archbishopric opened up, above all, the complicated issue of ecclesiastical property, which was a foreign as well as a domestic problem. The curia had never officially accepted the secularization of ecclesiastical property and it was feared they would not change their stance.²⁵

A number of times in the sixteenth century there had been requests to renew the archbishopric, but they never came to fruition. The plans for the Council of Trent served as a catalyst for it to actually take place. The literature gives a somewhat puzzling picture of the negotiations leading up to the renewal of the archbishopric. Whether one stresses the role of Ferdinand or the nuncia in initiating and carrying it through, the approval of the Bohemian estates was surely pivotal. Ferdinand worked to get the matter settled by reassuring the estates that the income of the archbishop would come from royal funds. Earlier, at the Diet of 1548, Ferdinand had promised that the Capital would no longer ask for restitution of ecclesiastical property under the condition that no further properties be secularized.

Ferdinand turned to Brus as Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star and personal confidante for his expert opinion on the renewal of the archbishopric and how to use it to bring unity of faith. In his response to Ferdinand, Brus stated that the issue of the renewal was as much a political as it was a religious question. He welcomed the imperial initiative but recommended that the emperor be careful in dealings with the curia, noting that the pope had never given permission for the archbishop to ordain priests. Also, the

²³ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 49.

²⁴ Kafka & Skýbová, *Husitský epilog na koncilu tridentském* 167-8.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 37ff.

emperor must remove the slightest doubt that the renewal came from royal money and not from the restitution of property. Kafka and Skýbová stated that Brus' expert opinion strongly influenced Ferdinand's further moves.²⁶ In July 1560 Ferdinand sent an official request to the pope to renew the archbishopric, mentioning the financial arrangements. For whatever reasons, perhaps because of the curia's planning for the upcoming Council, the plan did not go anywhere. Ferdinand continued through his speaker in Rome to deal with the matter.

Finally, in the summer of 1561, Brus was called via the papal nuncio to the imperial court to prepare responses to questions about the history and state of the Prague archdiocese. His responses were approved and on 5 September 1561 a papal bull was issued naming Brus archbishop. The official imperial announcement of the renewal came on 26 September 1562 stating that "he and his descendants should enjoy the obedience of all clergy *sub una* [e.g. Roman Catholic] and the churches and parishes attached to them. Brus was given an income of 3,000 Czech groschen from royal coffers to be paid in quarterly installments, and a house on the Castle Hill bought from a former estate official. (The earlier Archbishop's court on the Small Side had been destroyed by fire during the Hussite Wars.)

On Christmas Day 1561 the new archbishop celebrated mass in St. Vitus with appropriate ceremony and on 4 January 1562 left for the Council of Trent. Brus served as one of two leading representatives (*orator*) of the Emperor at the Council, and sought the acceptance of the distribution of communion to the laity under both kinds (*sub utraque specie*).²⁷ King Ferdinand and Brus hoped that if this was possible then it would bring both the Utraquists and perhaps the Lutherans back into the Roman Catholic Church.²⁸ On 16 July 1562 a general meeting of the Council decided against the proposal as well as the practice of infant communion. At the end of August, Brus returned to Prague for the coronation of Maximilian II as King of Bohemia. (This was an event which took place while Ferdinand was still king, years before Maximilian assumed the throne.) Brus placed the crown on Maximilian's head together with the bishops of Olomouc and Vratislav (Breslau) and the High Czech Purkrab. The next day, Maximilian's wife, Marie, was crowned queen. Afterward Brus went back to Trent.

The Activities of Antonín Brus z Mohelnice as Archbishop of Prague (1564-1580)

On returning to Prague in 1564 Brus was faced with the pope's decision to permit communion for the laity under both kinds for the Utraquists and his authorization for Brus to ordain Utraquist clergy. On 23 and 30 July 1564 Brus preached in St. Vitus in German and Czech, respectively, on the presence of Christ in the eucharist and the papal breve to "a few thousand believers who had gathered in the cathedral."²⁹ As Zdeněk David has explained, the attempts in 1564-66 at a symbiotic coexistence were uneasy, as the Utraquists and the curia understood

²⁶ *Ibid.* 46.

²⁷ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 17-43.

²⁸ See Alois Kroess, "Kaiser Ferdinand I. und seine Reformationsvorschläge auf dem Konzil von Trident," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 27 (1903).

²⁹ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 46.

issues relating to lay communion and ordination differently.³⁰ But Brus persevered with his reform efforts, always aware of his political and religious environment. One of Brus' important projects was to reform the clergy. The Council of Trent had called for synods of all clergy to be held yearly in all parts of Europe. Soon after returning to Bohemia, Brus summoned all the clergy (priests and deacons) to Prague to acquaint them with the articles of the Council of Trent.³¹ In 1568 Brus wrote to King Maximilian II asking him to call a synod. Maximilian wrote back that he should wait. Brus replied that he would follow the orders but asked the emperor to write the Pope to explain. The papal nuncio also wrote to Maximilian, not knowing of the exchange. Brus wrote back immediately to the nuncio stating that the religious situation would have to be very bad before he would go against an imperial order.³²

Brus took an active interest in the monastic orders and was successful in extending influence over them, even though they did not fall under his jurisdiction. For example, in 1561 the Capital had complained to Ferdinand that the monks were so few in number and so dispersed that they did not want to wear their habits. Even though they did not officially fall under his jurisdiction, Brus sought out these monks and, as long as they took his advice, he gave them a proportional punishment and did not hand them over to the authorities. If that did not work, he did not hesitate to go to the emperor or to the Holy See. In 1567 Brus requested and received from Pius V the right to visit cloisters.³³ In 1570 the Pope entrusted Brus to bring order to the convents in his diocese.

Brus also was actively involved in the renewal of ecclesiastical institutions in the city, many of which had been left destroyed and abandoned since the Hussite Revolution. In addition to his role in the establishment of the new Jesuit complex, Brus played an important role in the renewal of the Church and Cloister of St. Mary of the Snows in the New Town (which the Franciscans would later take over), and in St. James in the Old Town.

In 1541 Pope Pius IV had renewed earlier privileges of the Franciscans in Prague at the request of the General Minister of the Franciscans, exempting them from the power of ordinaries, legates, and inquisitors. However, it was not until 1561 that the first bold step in the reclaiming of St. Mary of the Snows took place. Brus successfully convinced King Ferdinand to grant permission for the sale of land near the abandoned church and cloister property for residential purposes, a practice that became more frequent in the decades which followed. In 1572, the archbishop wrote a letter to the Bohemian Chamber, supporting the request of the monks at St. James's monastery in the Old Town to found a glass works there. (Ten years earlier, the Emperor had granted the Dominicans control of St. James in addition to the St. Agnes Monastery.)

³⁰ Zdeněk V. David, "A Brief Honeymoon in 1564-1566: The Utraquist Consistory and the Archbishop of Prague," *Bohemia* 39 (1998) 265-84.

³¹ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 90.

³² *Ibid.* 86-88.

³³ *Ibid.* 150.

Brus' efforts at the reform of religious institutions were not limited to the renewal of privileges and immunities. Beginning mid-century and continuing into Brus' tenure as archbishop, King Ferdinand and Maximilian initiated a number of restoration projects on St. Vitus's Cathedral, including work on the roof, gallery, and St. Sigmund's Chapel. Between 1556-61 a new organ loft was constructed assimilating Italianate elements.³⁴ In 1560, Ferdinand approved the construction of a new tower.³⁵ Brus himself initiated the construction of a new chapel dedicated to St. Adalbert (*Sv. Vojtěch*), one of the patron saints of Bohemia.³⁶

Brus also engaged himself in the restoration of the sacred urban landscape in the broader sense. This can be seen in the funeral procession of King Ferdinand on 21 August 1565, of which the archbishop took personal control. A few days earlier, Brus traveled to Jindřichův Hradec along with some noblemen to meet the King's body and bring it back to the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star. On the day of the funeral the body was taken in ceremonial procession across the bridge to the cathedral, accompanied by the archbishop, Archduke Ferdinand, royal officials, members of the estate court and a large number of common people. This act underscored the place of the cathedral in the ritual landscape of the city and the kingdom. In the cathedral, Brus sang the funeral mass, and Ferdinand was put into a crypt along with his wife Anna Jagellon.³⁷ In 1576 when King Maximilian died, his body was likewise brought to Prague and a funeral procession was organised through the city, following a path across the bridge, followed by a service in the Cathedral presided over by Brus.³⁸ A few weeks later Maximilian's successor, Rudolf II, was crowned in St. Vitus's Cathedral by the archbishop.³⁹

Brus did not hesitate to engage secular authorities in reforming the laity. Brus took it on himself to remind the royal officials the city, the *hejtmans*, to do their job. Although the *hejtmans* were responsible for upholding the Roman Catholic faith, many seemed to be supporters of Lutheranism.⁴⁰ Brus was also entrusted with the supervision of all printing within Prague and to Prague. Brus was well informed with the task, because he had been head of the commission in Trent responsible for the revision of the Index. Brus got involved in disputes with a number of printers. However, he did not use his powers wildly but, rather, as a leverage to control certain situations.⁴¹

³⁴ Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister and City. The Art and Culture of Central Europe 1450-1800* (Chicago, 1995) 146; see also 138-65.

³⁵ *Katedrála sv. Víta v Praze* 136-8.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 143-4.

³⁷ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 63-64.

³⁸ The path is described by Mikuláš Dačický z Heslova in his *Paměti*, ed. Josef Janáček (Prague, 1996) 126. Klement Borový mentions that Brus performed the funeral service; Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 66.

³⁹ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 66.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 12; Kafka & Skýbová, *Husitský epilog na koncilu tridentském* 207.

⁴¹ Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 121-22; František Tischer, "Příspěvek k dějinám censury za arcibiskupa Antonína Brusa," *Listy filologické* 32 (1905) 258-71, 376-9.

Clearly, one could argue that Roman Catholics were small in number and Utraquists had their own administration and ignored many decrees from the Roman Catholic authorities. To a certain extent this is true. However, at the same time, the archbishop served as an important broker or mediator in disputes between forces, including the Utraquist Consistory, communal authorities, and individual city dwellers. In the case of marriages disputes, for example, the archbishop served as an authority of second appeal, be it official or unofficial, when a party disagreed with the finding of the Utraquist Consistory.⁴²

Brus got called in to mediate disputes between ecclesiastical and urban forces. In 1570, for example, a jurisdictional dispute arose when the Old Town Council complained to the king about the St. Agnes Monastery. Immediately after arriving at the abandoned cloister, the Dominicans began parceling out individual pieces of land and leasing or selling them for the building of houses. The buyers would be indebted to the cloister through yearly payment (just as was happening at the Cloister of St. Mary of the Snows in the New Town). Two years earlier the monastery had expanded its settlement by liquidating the men's convent, also parceling it out for lease or sale, and founding a brewery and glass manufacturing works on the river bank with the permission of the archbishop and papal nuncio. The King set up a commission to resolve the dispute, which was composed of the archbishop and the king's representatives (*hejtman*) in the three Prague towns. The commission brought together the various jurisdictional complaints and came to a somewhat ambivalent decision, acknowledging many of the Old Town's allegations, but allowing the cloister to continue its activities. In 1573, the archbishop helped out the monks at St. James's monastery in a financial dispute with the *hejtman*.

The Activities of Martin Medek as Archbishop of Prague (1580-1590)

Brus died on 28 August 1580 and was buried in St. Vitus's Cathedral. His successor was Martin Medek, who was also born in Mohelnice, twenty years after Brus and who also entered the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star. After his ordination to the priesthood, Medek first served as chaplain at Brus' court and later in a number of posts in Moravia, including as canon and deacon at the Collegiate Chapel in Brno na Petrově. When Brus died the order exercised its right to free election and chose Medek as Grand Master. King Rudolf was annoyed that the order did not wait until he had a chance to choose a new archbishop, since the rank of the Grand Master had been linked to that of the archbishop since Brus' time.⁴³

During Medek's administration a number of devastating waves of plague hit Prague, but that did not stop the archbishop from reforming in the same spirit of his predecessor. For example, Medek played a pivotal role in the introduction of the Gregorian calendar. Shortly after the pope's order for a correction in the calendar, Medek announced that it would be introduced in the Prague archdiocese in November 1582. At the beginning of November he sent to the archpriests and deans his mandate for the calendar change and suggestions for how the clergy could teach ordinary people about the changes. He also sent the mandate to the

⁴² Borový, *Antonín Brus z Mohelnice* 119-21.

⁴³ Borový, *Martin Medek* 2.

Utraquist Consistory who accepted it, agreeing that the changes would be useful. Only the Prague communes hesitated to accept it and complained to the Utraquist Consistory that they did not want Wednesday to become Sunday.⁴⁴ At the Diet of 1584 when the matter was next dealt with, Medek opened up the proceedings by recommending to the emperor and the estates that the calendar be introduced without delay, and worked diligently throughout to get final support.⁴⁵

Medek also sought to reform the clergy. In 1583, the Archbishop asked King Rudolf to establish a seminary for to train clergy in Prague, but was unsuccessful. To help alleviate the severe shortage of Catholic clergy in Prague, the Archbishop saw it fit to accept priests from Moravia, Silesia, Poland, and even Tyrol, but most of them could not preach in Czech and people could not understand them.

Medek also had a somewhat strained relationship with the *hejtmans*. When Rudolf asked the archbishop to visit cities and villages on royal estates in 1581, the archbishop had to have the king order his *hejtmans* not to get in his way and support him when necessary.⁴⁶

At numerous times during his administration Medek was called upon as a judge of second opinion. In addition to marriage cases, there are a number of reports of Utraquist priests appealing to the archbishop for help in cases when they were not happy with the decisions of the Utraquist Consistory.⁴⁷ The Utraquist Consistory itself made a request to the archbishop to serve as intermediary when their administrator Jan Dvorský z Helfenberka died in 1582. In addition to being administrator, Dvorský had been abbot of Emmaus Cloister and dean of St. Apollinarus. The Consistory had wanted to pass on the deanery to a new administration. The New Town objected to this, and they went to the archbishop for assistance.⁴⁸ In 1588, Medek got involved in an interesting case involving an archdeacon of the capital, named Felix, who was accused by a woman named Gertrud Hofman of slandering her honour. Gertrud complained to the emperor who turned over the complaint, in turn, to the archbishop. Felix disappeared and could not be found for a long time. When the archbishop got word that Felix was staying at the imperial bathhouse, he turned to authorities of the Old Town to examine the case and forbid the bathkeeper from allowing Felix to stay there.⁴⁹

Medek was also called into disputes with ecclesiastical institutions that he inherited from the previous administration. At some point in the 1580s someone by the name of Václav Robmhap ze Suché bought four gardens outside of the Poříčská Gate from the Order of the Knights of the Order of the Cross with the Red Star. The gardens were in horrible condition. Robmhap replanted them with new fruit trees, put wooden fences around them, and built a stone building on the property for four renters who began from there to sell fruit, bread, and to serve beer. The New Town issued complaints based not only on the right to break beer and sell, but also on some other peripheral issues, regarding safety. Robmhap turned to the archbishop

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 137ff.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 141.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 12 & 39.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 77 & 87.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 98-99.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 50-51.

for help and did the same again in 1588 when new complaints came.⁵⁰ In 1582, Medek gave permission for two councilors and a judge to be elected from the settlers on the property of St. Mary of the Snows in the New Town. In return, the New Town sent the magistrate on the property to make arrests. The New Town had begun to exert judicial sovereignty on the property two years earlier, before Medek was installed as archbishop, and the settlers appealed to the provosts at St. Vitus's Cathedral for their assistance in getting the New Town to recognize them as subjects of the cloister.

Medek cultivated strong ties to members of the Catholic nobility who increasingly migrated to Prague following the arrival of the imperial court in 1583. On 9 December 1584 the needs of Bohemian Catholicism were discussed at a luncheon meeting in the Palace of the Rosenbergs on Castle Hill which included Archbishop Medek, the papal nuncio, the rector of the Jesuit College, and leading members of the Bohemian Catholic nobility.⁵¹

During Medek's reign, the importance of the cathedral as a national shrine was strengthened. In 1585, Rudolf II decided to create a royal mausoleum in the central nave of St. Vitus Cathedral, bringing Maximilian's grave alongside that of King Ferdinand and his wife Anna, and commissioning the Dutch sculptor Alexander Colin to carve on the walls of the tomb the medallions of a long line of Bohemian kings.⁵²

The Activities of Zbyněk Berka z Dubé (1592-1606) and Karl von Lamberg (1607-1612) as Archbishops of Prague

Martin Medek died in 1590. Two years later, in 1592, Zbyněk Berka z Dubé was named by the emperor to be the new archbishop. Although a member of an old Bohemian noble family, Berka z Dubé was, unlike his immediate predecessors, not Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star before being named archbishop, but a provost in Regensburg and Litomeřice and canon in Prague, Salzburg and Olomouc. (Soon after becoming archbishop, he did become Grand Master and was given the benefices of the order for income.⁵³)

Berka z Dubé continued the activities of his predecessors, renovating St. Vitus's Cathedral, mediating disputes, and reforming the clergy. A year after being in office the archbishop commissioned Bartholomeus Spranger to paint the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, marked by the emblem of his family and the Prague capital, which was placed in the Chapel of St. Wenceslaus.⁵⁴ In 1598, his office was called on to help solve a dispute at the Cloister of St. Mary of the Snows over a piece of land. Jiřík Huml, a New Town burgher, who lived next to the settlement was actually on cloister properties and was required to pay dues. Huml did not agree that he was in their jurisdiction. The commission was formed to solve the dispute, which consisted of a secretary to Archbishop Berka z Dubé, the former prior of the cloister, the prelate of the Hospital of the Order of the Knights of the

⁵⁰ Borový, *Martin Medek* 62-63.

⁵¹ Stloukal, "Počátky nunciatury v Praze. Bonhomini v Čechách v letech 1581-1584," 270.

⁵² Borový, *Martin Medek* 34; *Katedrála Sv. Víta v Praze* 155-6.

⁵³ Frind, *Die Geschichte der Bischöfe und Erzbischöfe von Prag* (Prague, 1873).

⁵⁴ *Katedrála sv. Víta v Praze* 147.

Cross with the Red Star, and a member of the Catholic Consistory, decided in Huml's favor. However, Huml was later brought in front of the archbishop in the presence of the royal magistrate (*rychtář*) and informed that if he decided to build on his property, he would be required to pay the requisite dues.

Berka z Dubé called the first successful synod in 1605, which was attended by over 200 clergy, from provosts to parish priests. Berka z Dubé and his successor, Karl von Lamberg (1607-12) continued to cultivate strong ties to the Catholic nobility. The Diary of Adam mladší z Valdštejna notes numerous luncheon and dinner meetings at the residence of these two archbishops or at other noble residences in Prague in which the archbishops were present.⁵⁵ Lamberg's position and activities were curtailed for a number of reasons; including the fact that he was viewed as a foreigner, had an indecisive predisposition, suffered from serious health problems, and the worsening of the confessional-political situation. Nevertheless, he sought to create a state of order to the best of his abilities and situation, by calling for a census of the ecclesiastical institutions in the archdiocese soon after being installed, reasserting his authority to censure books, and attempting to block the issuance of the Majesty of 1609.⁵⁶

Conclusion

A survey of the activities of the newly installed archbishops of Prague shows that they played a central role in the Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation movement in their metropolitan city in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They ardently sought to reform the clergy (both parish and monastic) and the laity by reasserting their traditional episcopal authority and by new roles, some of which were given to them by the early Habsburg rulers of Bohemia, as was the case with control over printing and censureship, and others which they fashioned together themselves. Among these was the role of mediator in disputes between religious and secular institutions. Beyond these roles the newly installed archbishops of Prague served to reestablish the cathedral as an important centre in city and kingdom, and helped to renew the sacred landscape of the city through organising and supporting the renewal of privileges and immunities of other ecclesiastical institutions, the restoration of ecclesiastical properties and their aesthetic qualities, and through creative use of civic ritual, such as the funeral processions of the early Habsburg rulers of Bohemia. Although hampered by material limitations, they determinedly moved forward in their efforts. Rather than being held back by the religious pluralistic environment, they accepted the existence of the pluralistic environment and worked within it. In many ways, they played an even more important role than the nuncia and the Jesuits, who have taken precedence in the secondary literature.

But a few key questions remain. What about the archbishops' role in property disputes involving ecclesiastical institutions? There is much more happening here than simple spiritual reform. First of all, the archbishops in these

⁵⁵ See *Deník rudolfinského dvořana Adam mladší z Valdštejna 1602-1633*, eds. Marie Koldinská & Petr Maťa (Prague, 1997) 402, 414-415.

⁵⁶ Lamberg came from a Styrian family and suffered from bouts of epilepsy; Angelo Scarano, "Karel Lamberg (1607-1612) in *Pražské arcibiskupství 1334-1994* 315. See also V. Bartůněk, "Karel z Lamberka, Pražský Arcibiskup," *Časopis společnosti přátel starožitnosti* 51-53 (1943-45) 174-214.

cases appear to be acting independently, without orders from above. What are their motives? Kafka and Skýbová mention some events during the initial discussions for the renewal of the archbishopric that may shed light on these questions. At that time Brus had attempted to get Ferdinand to find royal funds for his income other than those earmarked by the king. Apparently the 3000 kop Czech groschen designated for the archbishop was from funds shifted from penalties and properties of the royal cities from the failed uprising of 1547. Brus thought that if he could succeed in getting funds from elsewhere, he could gain sympathy from the cities. Since he was not successful in gaining outside support, the royal cities were forced in a position of opposing Brus.

Related to the issues of property disputes and episcopal income are the connections of the newly installed archbishops to the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star, which had been great landholders in the city before the Hussite Revolution. The order appears to have continued to play an important role in Prague politics - to a certain extent more so than the Capital - throughout the sixteenth century. This importance is testified to through their privileged association with the person of the archbishop. One wonders to what extent the actions of the archbishops related to property renewal were shaped by the fact that these archbishops were connected with the Order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star which had property ambitions of its own. These are all questions for future research.