Renaissance and Reformation in Czech art History: Issues of Period and Interpretation

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THE EXHIBITION PROJECT 'The Art of the Bohemian Reformation', which was presented at Prague Castle in the winter of 2009–2010 under the direction of Kateřina Horničková and Michal Šroněk, used for the first time a new framework for Bohemian Late Gothic and Renaissance art, which defined it in terms of confession: Reformation art.[1] When reading the exhibition catalogue and the papers presented at the accompanying academic colloquium it appears that one of the results of the project might be a reflection on this new framework. The exhibition was a pleasant surprise in that the impression it gave was a unified one, something that a knowledge of previous ways of dealing with art historical material would by no means have led us to expect. The question needs to be asked whether two previously disparate entities – Late Gothic and Renaissance – were linked here simply by 'external' circumstances, in other words the construction of a framework based on religious history, as is frequently the case when the conception for exhibitions or publication projects is based on different perspectives than simply art historical ones in the narrow sense. Or whether it is not the case that here we can start to distinguish a new category which is genuinely and inherently an art historical category and which could have a special intrinsic significance for our field in the future?

The fact that the connection between Bohemian art and the Reformation has only now appeared as a theme of interest is the consequence of a number of inter-related complexes of attitudes and stereotypes that have not always been consciously reflected on. The conviction that Bohemian figural art in the 16th century (outside the court of the Emperor Rudolf II) was of inferior artistic quality is a strong one. It is indeed clear at first glance that there is simply no point in comparing, say, Matouš Radouš with Caravaggio, in spite of the fact that they were contemporaries and painted some subjects that were comparable. But does this mean that Radouš's epitaphs are only of informative cultural and historical significance, and that we cannot evaluate them as art at all? An additional cause of the neglect of Bohemian Reformation art is a lack of interest on the part of the Czech historical memory – which, as a kind of social consensus, is instructively epitomised by the school curricula – in the Bohemian Reformation (with the exception of the Hussite movement) and especially in the visual art it gave rise to. In the remarks that follow I shall first of all attempt to outline the theme of the relationship between Late Gothic and Renaissance in Czech art history writing, and then to examine the extent to which Czech art history has dealt with the Bohemian Reformation up till now, and also to consider the state of the national identity of this segment of the Czech cultural heritage. I shall go on to propose seven theses, on the basis of which we could start to incorporate the art of the Bohemian Reformation into the overall story of our art history. I envisage that this model would make it possible to take a slightly different approach to the works of visual art created for the Utraquists, Lutherans, and Bohemian Brethren in 15th- and 16th-century Bohemia than that normally adopted by medievalists and specialists in the early modern age. In other words, we could move beyond classifying them simply in the period of time between the end of Gothic and the rise of Baroque, achieved with the help of tools developed for the study of the art of both of these prominent epochs. In the case of Renaissance art, this proposed model could at least to some extent help to provide a firm basis for basic research, which has so far *not recieved the appropriate theoretical articulation, and thus tends to "float" outside any kind of theoretical framework*.[2]

Between Late Gothic and Renaissance

From the viewpoint of the state of academic knowledge up till now and of the way art is usually received, the exhibition 'The Art of the Bohemian Reformation' was made up of two different parts. The first was the art of what, in the way scholars divide up periods of Czech art, is termed Late Gothic (that is, works from the last third of the 15th century and the first quarter of the 16th), and the second the art of the 'Bohemian Renaissance', that is from the mid-16th century up to the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620.[3] The missing link in the chronological series, in other words the second quarter of the 16th century, has mostly (speaking mathematically) been neglected in the standard interpretations. Bohemian Late Gothic art has been well studied and works on it are frequently published.[4] The fact that it is necessary to start dating it from the second third of the 15th century, because we have to include works of art produced throughout the region, especially in Prague, from the 1430s onward, and because even during the Hussite wars (not even in Prague) the creation of works of art did not come to a complete stop – this fact emerged some time ago in specialised research, particularly in the study of illuminated manuscripts. Together with the conviction of the distinctive, positive content of the artistic representation of early Utraquism, it was presented at the world congress of art history in 1992 by Robert Suckale. Thanks to the research that has been carried out since then, it is now clear that when Karel Stejskal was the first person to draw attention to the existence of 'Hussite art' half a century ago, he was far less mistaken than it may have appeared at the time. Or to put it more precisely, the reality itself existed; it was only necessary to find a more appropriate framework for describing and interpreting it than the Marxist-Leninist method allowed Stejskal in the 1950s.[5] For example, František Šmahel was able to throw light on the exceptionally original pictorial character of the polemical iconography of the Hussites in the early 15th century thanks to a cultural-historical approach that was informed by the study of communication.[6] A new feature of the current project, in terms of Late Gothic art, is the inclusion of those well-known and extensively discussed works of art within a new interpretational framework, which may be termed the question of the confessional profile of Bohemian Late Gothic art.[7]

The second part of the artistic heritage included in the exhibition 'The Art of the Bohemian Reformation' consists of works of art that, from the scholarly and institutional viewpoints, belong to a different category – art that is classified under the term 'Bohemian Renaissance'. Perhaps the phrase 'shifted 16th century' could be used to describe the period from the accession of the Habsburgs to the Bohemian throne in 1527 to the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620, or perhaps to the enactment of the Renewed Constitutional Rules seven years later. With the term 'Bohemian Renaissance' we sense an implied contrast to the phrase 'German Renaissance', which German art historians, with a greater or lesser nationalist orientation, coined in the first half of the 20th century to convey the allegedly distinctive character of the ethnic variant of the style, which was not supposed to be seen as simply the application of general stylistic features to a particular territory, but as their specific transformation

1/ Matouš Radouš, Epitaph for the Mayor of Chrudim, Samuel Fontin Klatovský († 1620)
1614
wood, polychromy, Chrudim, church of the Assumption of Our Lady
Reproduction: Ondřej Jakubec (ed.), Ku věčné památce, Olomouc 2007

2/ *The resurrection of the dead at the Last Judgement, detail from the Epitaph for Samuel Fontin Klatovský († 1620)*
1614
wood, polychromy, Chrudim, church of the Assumption of Our Lady
Reproduction: Ondřej Jakubec (ed.), Ku věčné památce, Olomouc 2007

through the prism of the national character.[8] In Czech art history, the Renaissance style in the Czech lands was in fact studied systematically primarily in terms of architecture.[9] The painting and sculpture of the shifted 16th century, on the other hand, was easily liable to be marginalised, due to its poor artistic quality. The situation was aptly described by Jiřina Vacková when she wrote about Bohemian figural art (with the exception of the court of Rudolf II), '*It should be said that its defining characteristic was stagnation, a quality which means that the label "Renaissance" can be applied to these artefacts primarily just for orientation. For the work of poor standard that was produced in Bohemia and Moravia between Gothic and Baroque tenaciously preserved the Late Gothic tradition [...].*'[10] The amalgamation of the two entities into a single whole is surprising because the relationship between Late Gothic and Renaissance art in the Czech lands has by no means been free of problems in the art history discourse. As is shown by the assessment by Vacková that has just been quoted, difficulties were caused by the 'impurity' of Bohemian Renaissance, its confused and permanent 'contamination' by elements that were seen as stylistic remnants left over from the Late Gothic era, and were therefore evaluated in a negative way by the modernist evolutionary model. Although Viktor Kotrba was already writing

about the phenomenon of '*Nachgotik*' forty years ago, a recent re-evaluation of his study, accompanied by a re-assessment of this phenomenon in architecture, is only slowly meeting with any response in Czech research.[11] The question of where the 'continued existence' of Late Gothic features should be situated between 'survival' and 'revival' in our context is likewise still to be re-addressed in the figural disciplines.[12]

A by no means insignificant element in the construction of a relationship between Late Gothic and Renaissance is the fact that these two themes are usually dealt with by different authors and different volumes of historical surveys. In Czech art history this approach is due to the well-known convention of dividing Czech history and art history into various periods, according to which the watershed between these two periods is the change of dynasty in 1526. But from research into cultural, economic and social history it appears that a more appropriate watershed denoting the 'end of the Middle Ages' in the Czech lands would be the period of the 1490s.[13] The boundary between the art of the Middle Ages and that of the Renaissance is generally considered to be so clear-cut and fundamental that it forms a turning-point that is perceived to be 'natural'. The more the major stylistic categories cease to be convincing and applicable in art history practice, the more obvious

become the problems of division into periods, closely linked to a territorial demarcation of the subject studied and its interpretation. In practical terms, however, it is only the editors of large-scale series of historical surveys who have to deal with these problems. Difficulties in conceptualising the boundary between Late Gothic and Renaissance are also being encountered by art historians in other Central European countries. The history of the visual arts in Austria resolved the problem by devoting its third volume jointly to the art of 'the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance'.[14] The volume devoted to Gothic in the history of Slovak art concludes with a methodologically conceived study on the theme of 'transitional' expressions of style and the relationship between Renaissance, humanism and civic culture. In the following volume, which covers Renaissance, not only do we find paintings and sculptures by the same artists and workshops that were already represented in the volume on the Gothic period, but also articles written by its editor which examine this intermediate terrain.[15] Hungarian art history was for a long time proud of the very early reception of 'pure' Renaissance at the court of Matthias Corvinus, but today it appears that here, too, we should speak more precisely only of specific, evidently politically motivated, choices by a few figures at the court in Buda, who were influenced by

the presence of Italians in the retinue of Queen Beatrix of Aragon. Renaissance forms in Hungary appear to have been consciously contrasted with contemporary Late Gothic conventions.[16]

The problems with revisions of the traditional sequencing of art history periods come, as is generally known, from the quantitative development of the field: more and more publications and exhibitions are devoted to works of art which, at the time the basic concepts and categories of modern art history were taking shape, could still be left to one side. The standard structure of stylistic definitions was created in the second half of the 19th century on the basis of the seemingly clear-cut material from the central artistic areas – in the case of Renaissance with the focus in Italy – and at the same time using the rough criteria of a grand historical detached viewpoint in the style of the Hegelian 'history of the mind'. A far from peripheral role is played here by the fact that Renaissance is an art history category which in a certain sense still has a key, paradigmatic character to this day. The very positive appreciation of the quality of Renaissance art and its study as part of European humanism and neo-Platonism acquired an added ethical significance during the time of the Second World War.[17] But the identification of Renaissance art forms with humanism has functioned

since the time of Jakob Burckhardt within a broader framework of values, which through the glorification of the culture of the cities of the Italian trecento and quattrocento presented the basic claim to legitimacy of modern capitalism and the bourgeoisie. It was most aptly interpreted by the Marxist work by Frederick Antal, member of the third generation of the Vienna School of Art History and a pupil of Max Dvořák, on the social background to Florentine painting, which came out in a Czech translation only six years after its publication in English.[18] To put it in somewhat over-simple, and yet apt terms, every European nation needed to show that it had its own Renaissance in order to legitimise its entry into modern bourgeois Europe.[19] But if the political notion of the bourgeoisie no longer strikes a chord in our contemporary world, we should not be surprised if, in the division of art history into periods, the Renaissance concept has also lost its stable form of a comprehensible and vivid watershed and criterion.

A possibility of finding some orientation in this complex of cultural-history and art-history problems is offered by a clarification of the terminology used, which was called for by studies from the viewpoint of the tension between the centre and the periphery. This was proposed in the 1970s by Jan Białostocki, who not surprisingly came from 'peripheral' Poland. He distinguished between the use of the term Renaissance, firstly to indicate a historical epoch, secondly to describe the forms of art connected with humanism (in the sense of the historical literary movement of the 14th-16th centuries, not the general recognition of the values of humanity[20]), and thirdly to describe the architectural and ornamental forms *all'antica* or specific figural conceptions for paintings.[21] A reaction to Białostocki from Czech art history circles was soon forthcoming with Jaromír Neumann's introduction to the book *Renaissance Art in Bohemia*.[22] As editor, Neumann was consistent in including in this book about Renaissance art a chapter by Jiřina Vacková and Jiřina

Hořejší, devoted to the art of the Jagiellonian era.[23] In the same year a work was published in which Frederico Zeri proposed a similar distinction, with an internal differentiation within Italian Renaissance itself, indeed even within Florentine Renaissance; Jiří Kroupa currently suggests the use of the term 'shadow Renaissance' rather than Zeri's 'unauthentic, false'.[24] A more precise terminology allowed Neumann to 'target' individual works of art displaying to a greater or lesser degree elements of the *all'antica* form and to study them as Renaissance art, without it being necessary to resolve in greater detail the question of to what extent and in what sense Renaissance is present in the given place and time in the sense of a historical epoch. The only other systematic discussion of the theoretical definition of Bohemian Renaissance is an article by Jiří Kropáček. He leaves the question of epoch open, and comes to the conclusion that there is justification for assuming that Renaissance developed from Late Gothic around the 1520s. If we wish to apply the term Bohemian Renaissance to figural and decorative art as well, then in Kropáček's view it would be better to use the term Mannerism.[25]

The current research, publication and possibly also exhibition projects devoted to the Jagiellon era in the Bohemian lands (one of them headed by Jiří Fajt in Leipzig, the other by Jiří Kuthan in Prague) include within the scope of the works of art studied those with both Late Gothic and Renaissance characteristics, without feeling any need to go into methodological justification of this. The framework that defines the projects remains political, or more precisely dynastic.[26] They can thus follow the pragmatic solution that has predominated in recent decades and which does not raise questions of detailed classification according to style at all. The standard time at which Renaissance (which is however usually identified with Mannerism or Northern Renaissance) is usually considered to start in the Czech lands is the mid-16th century. From the Moravian
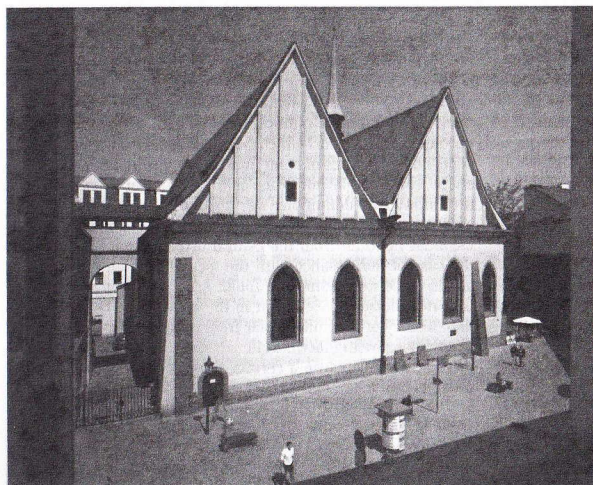
3/ Jaroslav Frágner, Bethlehem Chapel
1952
reconstruction of its appearance in the years 1394-1548, Prague, Old Town, house no. 255/I
Photo: Institute for Art History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, v. v. i., Prague - Daniela Vokounová

viewpoint, however, this is already 'Late Renaissance'.[27] Moravia, thanks to its geographical openness to the Danube Basin, is more important for the reception of artistic inspiration from Italy via Hungary than is Bohemia (or Silesia), and it has been systematically studied by Ivo Hlobil, one of the few Czech historians to systematically and consistently deal to the same extent with both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. He explains the existence of an independent phase of 'Early Renaissance' in Moravia before the mid-16th century by the specific nature of the political situation there at the end of the 15th century and above all by the activity of Roman Catholic circles in the Olomouc diocese. Hlobil also played a major part in the conception of the exhibition with the indicative title 'From Gothic to Renaissance' (1999), which for the first time incorporated into a coherent whole Late Gothic and 'Early' Renaissance works of art before the mid-16th century in Moravia (and what is today Czech Silesia). Just like Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann,[28] the creators of the Moravian-Silesian project worked from the assumption that in the Bohemian lands Reformation and Renaissance were in mutually exclusive contradiction to each other. They regarded Bohemian Utraquism as a source of active resistance to the reception of the Renaissance style, a resistance that did not subside until the second half of the 16th century. In Kaufmann's view, the situation was the same in the German territories that had adopted Lutheranism. Hlobil assumes that the humanist milieu of the Olomouc diocese constituted the sole exception in its stronger reception of Renaissance forms before 1550, followed only by the 'influence' of the court milieu in Buda on the court of the Catholic Jagiellonian king in Prague. The confessional profile of this model of Renaissance art in the Bohemian lands thus appears to be Roman Catholic: explicitly up till the mid-16th century, but without any examination of the question as to what then changed in the cultural, historical, religious, and political spheres in the course of the subsequent decades. In recent works, a reflection on the methodological nature of what is expressed by the metaphor of targeted movement in the 'space' between Gothic and Renaissance is to be found primarily in Pavel Kalina's book on Benedikt Ried.[29] Although the author referred to the current debate on this theme in international art history, he himself did not venture much beyond a critique of the older Czech concepts, which are today no longer appropriate, and did not offer his own alternative art historical interpretation. Kalina also pointed out the need for a better definition of the category 'realism' in Renaissance art.[30] The carefully elaborated proposal by Jiří Kroupa, who suggests characterising Central European 'shadow Renaissance' art as '*the application of a significant detail [all'antica] as an elevated and memorial form*' applies specifically to the study of architecture.[31]

The model of the Bohemian Reformation

The exhibition and publication project 'The Art of the Bohemian Reformation' did of course also bring some little-known works of art to the attention of a broader public, but its main contribution was in introducing a

new theme, or more specifically a new framework, into the field whose nature and extent I have just extremely briefly sketched out. For the establishment of this framework to have any point, we need first of all to formulate in theoretical terms a conceptual model of the 'art of the Bohemian Reformation'. Only once we have such a model can the results of studies of artworks and topics become genuine art historical interpretations. In a recent article, in which I considered the model of Late Gothic in Czech art history, I have already briefly described this academic tool, which was discussed in Czech art history by Václav Richter.[32] Perhaps it is worthwhile considering this here in greater detail. Conceptual models or idea models play an analogous role in the humanities to that of testable hypotheses in the system of the natural sciences. At the same time they also have the character of a scientific paradigm, in the sense of a significant example rather than of a set of rules.[33] Just like a paradigm, a model often functions in an unreflected way. It is hermeneutic in the sense that it is not an idea formulated in a clear-cut way, which could be verified with specific data, '*but it describes comprehension as the interplay of movement of presentation and interpretation. The anticipation of the meaning that guides our comprehension of a text is not a subjective function, but is determined by the reciprocity that connects us with the presentation. But this reciprocity is continually being shaped through our relationship with the presentation. It is not simply a precondition which we are then always subject to; we establish it ourselves, if we understand, if we participate in what goes on in the presentation, and in so doing we ourselves continue to determine it.*'[34] Within the framework of the episteme and of the current scientific paradigm we are evidently going to ask the question 'What is Renaissance about the Renaissance style?'[35] less and less frequently today. More often in our work we will need answers to questions like: What are we saying when we use the term Renaissance or Renaissance art? What do these words denote, in which semantic framework do they function? What is their relationship to other words denoting similar, borderline, or dissimilar concepts? If the individual characteristics of Renaissance forms remain, metaphorically speaking, individual elements - words in a certain system of discourse and statements - then neither the language which we reconstruct from them, nor the way in which we are able to understand it, need to be strictly delimited by a concept defined in terms of essence. As with the model, it is possible to work with these elements or with the explanatory structure as a whole within a dynamic framework, reacting sensitively to the specific historical circumstances. A major advantage is the possibility of adapting the model to the situation in different countries, without losing the unifying idea - which is a quite essential requirement if we want to talk about Renaissance art outside Italy. It is on this methodological basis that research is now developing on art in Germany in the 16th century, with the key models being *post-Gothicism*,[36] which was mentioned above (from the viewpoint of formal criticism and meaning), and *confessionalisation* (from the viewpoint of cultural and political history). We can follow this up by asking whether the visual arts in the Bohemian lands played a part in the process of confes-

sionalisation, which was evidently the strongest social movement in 16th-century Central Europe? And how would it be possible to monitor this in the quite specific situation of the Czech lands? When studying the art of the Bohemian Reformation, the question of the confessional allegiance of those commissioning the work and of the public will undoubtedly be a central issue. By contrast, trying to establish which denomination specific individual artists belonged to will probably be of minor importance, because in the Transalpine lands in the 15th and 16th centuries we still cannot expect artistic autonomy to the extent that it would impinge on the question of confession. Indeed, it was still quite normal for craftsmen to carry out commissions impartially across the confessional divide in the following century.[37]

The limited interest in our theme on the part of art historians forms part of the overall attitude of the Czech historical memory to the theme of the Bohemian Reformation and its culture. It is probably due to integration of the text into the German discourse that in art history literature until recently we come across the theme of the Reformation and confessional distinctions, so far as I am aware, only in the chapter on sacred architecture in the tome *Renaissance in Böhmen*, published by the Collegium Carolinum in Munich in 1985.[38] On the other hand, for example, only ten years ago Jiří Kropáček could provide an overview of Renaissance art in the region of north-western Bohemia without a single reference to the Reformation.[39] More systematic attention was devoted to our theme particularly by Jan Royt when writing on Cranach's iconography of the Divine Law and Grace.[40] In his study on Jáchymov/Joachimsthal he placed events from economic and religious history in parallel with works of art, without attempting any deeper art historical conclusions.[41] A number of individual articles on the theme of the visual culture of the Bohemian Reformation were written in connection with the eight interdisciplinary symposia in the series *Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, organised bi-annually by David Holeton and Zdenek David.[42] Recently Ondřej Jakubec, in particular, has used the confessional identification of the time to structure his systematic study; he specialises in the Bishopric of Olomouc and not long ago organised a groundbreaking exhibition and, with a collective of co-workers, published a catalogue, devoted to 16th- and early 17th-century epitaphs.[43] I myself have been involved in another project, which approached visual art as an important communication medium of the Reformation movement.[44] However, the question that I am attempting to examine in this article is a different one: how the Reformation can be understood as a determining element in the art historical interpretative structure and the evaluation of the extant works of art.

The Bohemian Reformation is a category derived from church and religious history. Its central point of reference is the Bohemian Confession, the *Confession of the holy Christian faith of all three estates of the Kingdom of Bohemia that receive the Body and Blood of the Lord Christ under both kinds*.[45] This treatise, typical of its time, defined the dogmatic basis on which representatives of part of the Czech Utraquists, the Unity of Brethren, and the Lutherans (of the Augsburg

Confession) agreed as an acceptable compromise, and which they submitted to the land diet and the Habsburg Emperor Maximilian II in 1575. Although the Emperor, the Catholics, and some of the Utraquists rejected the Bohemian Confession, it nevertheless became the basis for negotiations on legalising the Reformation churches, which was achieved a generation later with the *Letter of Majesty on Religious Freedom*, issued by Rudolf II in 1609. This integrating approach to the Reformation in the Kingdom of Bohemia surprisingly differs from the exclusive strategies that dominated in Europe at the time. It was part of a specific strategy for legalising Protestants in a country which was the only one in Europe to be able to look back on nearly a century and a half of a practical policy of religious tolerance. While the Utraquists had been functioning legally as a church since the Compacts of Basel had been signed in 1436, the Lutherans and the Unity of Brethren were obliged to resort to confessional compromises, as exemplified by the Bohemian Confession, in order to be able to apply this legality to their own communities. From this outline, even without any detailed theological analysis, it is clear that the category of the Bohemian Reformation includes a considerable degree of internal variation.[46] It covers a relatively long period, starting with the Bohemian critics of the crisis of the church in the late 14th century, such as Milič of Kroměříž and in particular Matěj of Janov; and continuing with Jan Hus and his followers around the year 1420; the period of the Compacts of Basel and the establishment of a (relatively) independent church institution in the mid-15th century, known as Utraquism; the Unity of Brethren as a radical Bohemian church; and also the Reformation churches with Lutheran and Calvinist orientations, and their interaction with the older Bohemian church landscape. All this occupied a period of 250 years, from the 1380s to the official ban on the non-Catholic churches as a result of the political defeat of the Bohemian estates after the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620. The study of the Bohemian Reformation as a subject of scholarly historical interest became topical particularly in the situation following the creation of the Czechoslovak state after the end of the First World War, when in December 1918 the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren was officially established, with reference to the foundations laid by the Bohemian Confession in 1575. This historical and national legitimisation was essential for this new Protestant church in order to establish a profile that was distinct from both the Roman Catholic Church and another new church that was in the process of formation, the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (which officially declared its existence in January 1920). In comparison with the enormous interest in the Hussite movement, however, the theme of Bohemian religious life during the nearly 200-year period between the battles of Lipany in 1434 and the White Mountain in 1620 has until recently received relatively little attention.[47] The revival of interest in the Bohemian Reformation and its cultural dimension during the last decade has been largely due to the activity of the project *Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* which was mentioned earlier.[48] In spite of this, Czech research has so far had little impact in the context of European or Central European research

4/ Monogrammist IP, Altarpiece of
St John the Baptist in the church
of Our Lady before Týn
ca. 1520?
wood, Prague, church of Lour Lady before Týn
Photo: Jan Gloc
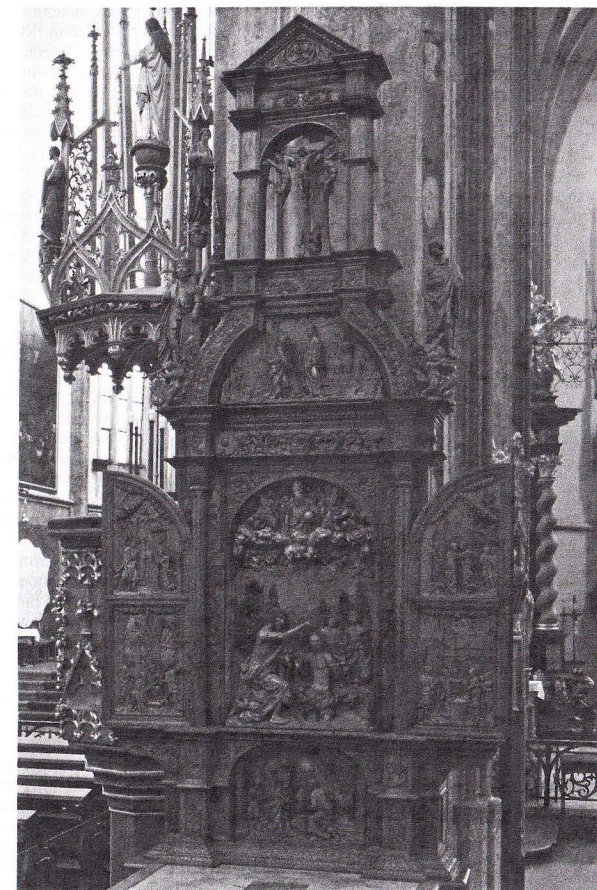
into the culture of the Reformation churches, with the result that there is still virtually no awareness in that context of the remarkable specific features of the situation in Bohemia, arising from the fact that in the 15th century Bohemian Utraquism was the first and, until Luther made his appearance, the only institutional and dogmatic Christian alternative to the Roman Catholic Church (apart from the Eastern churches) to function successfully over a long period.

I will attempt to identify the main reasons for this limited interest, in the awareness that lack of interest is not something 'non-existent', but on the contrary is a quite definite activity, whose aim, not always a conscious one, is displacement and forgetting.[49] A not insignificant role was evidently played by the poor artistic quality of the work produced (which has already been referred to), if we compare it with the best works of European (especially Italian) Late Renaissance, Mannerist, and Early Baroque art. As long as art history

was conceived as the story of artists of genius or of development of the World Spirit reflected in canonical styles, then Bohemian religious art in the 16th century – and indeed secular art during this period, with the exception of the Late Mannerist work of a few outstanding artists at the court of Rudolf II – would be merely an uninteresting Cinderella. It is only when we approach art history as a social history of images that the surviving epitaphs and illuminated graduals start to deserve serious attention and take on significance. Their absolute artistic quality, however, is not increased by doing this – that is, if our normative definition of artistic quality is relative closeness to the canonical creations of the *grand story of the fine arts*. But this is not the only possibility in the post-modern world. If we do not compare a work with the ideal of a single, absolute standard situated somewhere outside the world, but allow for the fact that a component of quality that cannot be ignored is the work's histori-

cally situated social significance, then we can concede that the art produced by the Bohemian Reformation in the 16th century is not only charmingly naïve and historically eloquent, but also visually attractive and emotionally impressive. There is still no point in comparing Matouš Radouš with Caravaggio – but there is some point in attributing to the painter-entrepreneur from Chrudim the qualities that his work genuinely

5/ *Bohemian Confession*, title page,
printed by Michal Španovský of Lisov
and Pacov
1620
Library of the Premonstratensian monastery in Strahov
Photo: Jan Gloc

has: it points to a dimension of the spiritual world and the intellectual horizon of the townspeople of the Bohemian Reformation, and it is also possible to see in it something which we as Czechs can consider to be a factor in our own identity – attention to the themes of the larger world and the transcendent depths, which, however, manifests itself cautiously and soberly, with its feet on the ground, so to speak.

The 'Czech' character of the Bohemian Reformation presents a no less prominent issue when studying it. There is certainly no point in trying to identify it by adding together the features that have functioned as signs of a Slav ethnic identity since the 19th century. Here we are dealing with 'Bohemian' in a territorial,

not an ethnic sense. It appears as if the Bohemian Reformation, which is undoubtedly territorial in nature, stood in contrast to the Czech Renaissance, which is ethnic or linguistic. I emphasise the '*appears*', because the term the Czech Renaissance was also coined in the 19th century – to be precise, it was formulated by Karel Chytil – and in reality we are not yet able to determine reliably the ethnic affiliation of the patrons, public, and artists of that time. The use of both Czech and German languages, and the choice between the two, were motivated in the 16th century by other considerations than expressing a modern national identity. It can be assumed that the inhabitants of those areas that were linguistically mixed (which included most towns) understood both languages.[50] Researchers in the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, following the lead of the founding father of modern Czech art history Vojtěch Birnbaum, developed a patriotic vision of the 16th century as the golden age of Czech history, which they transferred from the linguistic field and applied to art history, as well, in particular to architecture.[51] In doing so, they were able to follow on from the generally shared communication setup of the second half of the 19th century, when neo-Renaissance architectural forms were used as a self-identifying sign of Czech emancipatory politics. After the crisis of Nazism and the expatriation of the German population from Czechoslovakia in 1945/46, however, the situation altered substantially. The Lutheran component of the Bohemian Reformation began to be more sharply perceived as something that did not belong to the Czech history of culture and art, but to another category, namely German cultural and art history.[52] At the same time, as a result of the same expatriation, a substantial number of the relevant works of art found themselves in areas affected by social and cultural degradation, and many of them suffered irreversible damage – a sobering example of the consequences, fatally threatening the material substance of the cultural heritage, can be seen today in the town of Jáchymov. Late Gothic was without difficulty claimed for Czech speakers, and, through the simple, though sophisticated, semantic operation of identifying 'Bohemian' ['český'] with 'Czech' [also 'český'], it was designated as 'Czech art' in a now ethnically cleansed sense.[53] By contrast, the art of the period from the accession of the Habsburgs to the Bohemian crown till the Battle of the White Mountain no longer, in the post-Second World War situation, received its traditional patriotic appreciation, the most prominent results of which in art history circles were Birnbuam's texts on architecture referred to above, and, from the opposite end of the methodological scale, Chytil's studies on painting.[54] It is true that this elevation of the national significance of the Bohemian culture of the 16th century consisted in a high level of appreciation for the role of the language, referred to as Humanist Czech, and that this was not, in fact, relevant for the visual arts. However, the reason for the change in approach after the Second World War was not methodological reflection and self-criticism, but the new political situation. The current change in position on this question is likewise due to the political situation, specifically to the need to deal with the overlooked or neglected aspects of our

own history as a member state of the European Union. In keeping with the results of the targeted historical research of the last twenty years, it is today possible to see the history of the Bohemian Germans as an integral part of the common history of the inhabitants of the Czech lands. We are now leaving behind us the strategy of appropriation, whereby either the Germans laid claim to Czech cultural artefacts, or the Czechs without comment absorbed those that had been created by the German-speaking population of the country before their forced resettlement in 1945–46. If we construct a history of the coexistence of the German- and Czech-speaking inhabitants of the Czech lands as an unbiased description of two historical memories, then we can also acknowledge the proper place of artefacts connected with the Lutheran Reformation.[55]
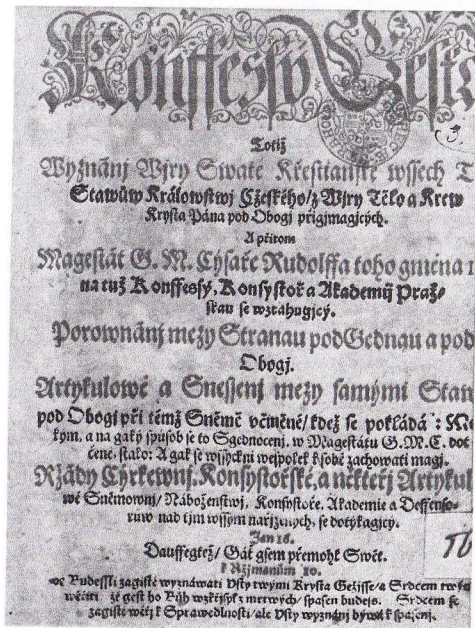
As I have already mentioned, Renaissance art and the Hussite movement were an important theme for Marxist historiography. Under the new political regime after 1948, Czech Marxist scholars reinforced their emphasis on the revolutionary phase of the Bohemian Reformation, which the communist regime claimed as their own historical legitimisation, while at the same time it served as a dialectical addition to the study of the role played by this period in the establishment of bourgeois society.[56] In the situation after the Second World War, there was a clear increase in the tendency to split up the history of the first Reformation into its revolutionary part, in other words the story of the Hussite movement before the signing of the Compacts of Basel, and the 'remaining' period (which lasted for nearly two centuries), which was conventionally condemned as a time of unheroic compromise, if not of lack of principle. It is only in the last few years that some consideration has started to be given to the possibilities of more accurate terminology, for example introducing the term 'Hussitism', which would cover the period up to the rise of Lutheranism at least. Without the need for it in the patriotic discourse legitimising bourgeois society, interest in 16th-cntury Bohemian art gradually petered out. All that remained was an interest in architecture, supported on the one hand by Birnbaum's canonical studies (a line continued in particular by Eva Šamánková and Jarmila Krčálová), and nourished on the other by social practice, whereby after the mass expropriation (so-called nationalisation) of historical monuments in the 1950s it became a popular national custom to visit castles and chateaux, whose architecture represented the main focus of the Bohemian Renaissance style.

The German connotations of Lutheranism, the contempt for the spirit of compromise of later Utraquism, the embarrassment at the bourgeois patriotic interpretation of the art of the time, and, after the fall of communism in 1989, the disregard for the Hussite movement – all of this combined to create an attitude which without too much exaggeration can be described as one of forgetting the art of the Bohemian Reformation. It is therefore not surprising that until recently modern art history did not know much about it, and that a basic study of the extensive material still lies before us. Its iconography is at first glance obscure, because it intentionally differs from traditional medieval iconography and of course from that of contem-

porary Catholic art. Often, however, it makes use of extremely refined methods to achieve this. It is difficult to pin down the style of the figural and ornamental art using the categories of influence and development and the yardstick of absolute quality within the framework of the fine arts. The national identity of the works of art can only be established with difficulty amidst the numerous demonstrable imports on the one hand and the conviction mentioned earlier that Lutheranism was a foreign element, on the other. Even an approach based on historical social functions is not without its difficulties: graduals, hymnals, and epitaphs represent, from the viewpoint of the general study of both the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, something of a strange marginal category – whereas in the Czech context they form a majority of the artefacts that have been preserved.[57] And last but by no means least, indeed perhaps the most important factor: so far we have insufficient knowledge of the self-identification of the individual non-Catholic groupings in Bohemia at the time (Lutheran, Utraquist, and Unity of Brethren) in terms of their doctrine, liturgy and religious practice. Here a significant role is played – and unfortunately will always be played – by the fact that it was not possible to officially register as an adherent of the Augsburg Confession or of the Unity of Brethren until 1609. Another major factor is that the study of both chronological sections is made difficult by the fate that understandably befell works of Reformation art during the re-Catholicisation campaign in the 17th and 18th centuries, when they were deliberately consigned to oblivion by destroying them. The feeling of shame that some representatives of the Roman Catholic Church evidently experience in relation to this approach, and which they displayed in their opposition to the conception of the exhibition (paradoxically referring to the supposedly Marxist-Leninist character of anything connected with the Hussite movement) is out of place and unnecessary – because it is profoundly ahistorical. If images were at that time primarily means of communication, then it was quite natural and in its way logical and justified if the victorious side needed to destroy them, and relating this to today's standards of cultural development and conservation of monuments would be quite inappropriate.

Theses on a possible future model for 16th-century Bohemian art

It will thus evidently be necessary to systematically reconsider the relationship between the Bohemian Reformation and not only Late Gothic art, but also and in particular 'Bohemian Renaissance' art. From the start it is clear that the relationship between Renaissance and Reformation is not one between 'form' and 'content'. In my view, the collection displayed at the exhibition undermined Hlobil and Kaufman's notion of an exclusive opposition between Renaissance and Reformation (before the mid-16th century).[58] A probe into Hungarian art history would seem to indicate that a distinction between a Renaissance nobility and court and Late Gothic towns is not tenable either – although in any case this has not been proposed in the Bohe-

mian context.[59] It seems likely that it will be extremely difficult to separate representation of the religious and social identities among the burghers in the town setting.[60] I think a better starting-point for future study might be one of the last articles by Josef Macek, published in 1988 under the title *Hlavní problémy renesance v Čechách a na Moravě* [The principal issues relating to Renaissance in Bohemia and Moravia], which unfortunately has received little attention.[61] Macek rejects the identification of the Renaissance with the Reformation, and comes to the conclusion that the dominant feature in 16th-century Bohemian culture was in fact the Reformation. In his view, the term Renaissance cannot be correctly used in the Bohemian context in the sense of the designation for an epoch, but only to characterise the form of a certain part of the art produced at the time. (It is not without interest that he refers to the study by Zeri mentioned above, which was topical at the time he was writing.) However, it is necessary to correct Macek's overly essentialist understanding of the term Renaissance style, which is today no longer appropriate, on the basis of more recent approaches. One of them, referred to above, shifts the focus to the significance of stylistic forms within the framework of social communication. Another important tool will be an understanding of the inherent character of Reformation, and specifically Lutheran art, as a distinctive value in its own right, not simply the absence of the features that we are used to considering as standard, or perhaps it would be better to say as the default setting, for visual art in the 15th to 17th centuries. This applies not only to iconography, but also to form, as is indicated by the quotations further on in the present article from the pioneering work by Joseph L. Koerner on Reformation images. It will also be interesting to see new alternative ways of defining the typical characteristics of Renaissance art, which will no longer be restricted simply to seeking out the forms of *all'antica*. One such alternative is the recognition that Renaissance art works bring to the fore an instability in terms of time (something which is an intrinsic characteristic of works of art as such) by deliberately combining references to the past with the anachronism of radical continuity.[62] An assessment like this resolves the problem mentioned earlier, whereby the 'survival' of Late Gothic 'contaminates' Renaissance. A further significant trait of Renaissance works can be recognised in the rational, systematic way in which they employ the individual expressive elements of their 'language', and in which can be seen the emerging awareness of our independence from nature.[63] Today, too, it is possible to re-assess in retrospect a little-known book by Otto Benesch, who attempted a definition of the nature of Transalpine Renaissance art by suggesting that it shared with Italy, not the forms of *all'antica*, but new occult and natural science paradigms, represented in particular by Paracelsus.[64] Its further development is presented by the perspective, which is evidently for Czech art history the most interesting one, which recognises behind the Late Gothic and post-Gothic forms the same intellectual paradigms of discovering nature that we are familiar with from Italian Renaissance and humanist culture.[65] On the basis of these sources of inspiration I would like to put forward for discussion

and as a possible basis for future study seven theses, relating primarily to the art history of the 16th century in Bohemia and Moravia.[66]

1. First and foremost we should be aware that the *major, general style* that forms the framework for the 'shifted 16th century' is not Renaissance but Mannerism and Early Baroque.[67] Burckhardt's original notion, adopted and re-worked by Marxism, of the essentially mutual interdependence between Renaissance forms and the rise and establishment of the bourgeoisie, can no longer pass muster today in the face of a number of new historical insights. The view associated with this notion, that individual styles somehow 'grow up organically' from the socio-economic situation, which their forms reflect or illustrate, can no longer be applied today either, and the same goes for the concept of styles as ideal entities which of their own accord, but with differing degrees of intensity and success, embody themselves in individual works.[68] Today we understand the transfer of the form and content of an artistic style in terms of communication, representation, and symbolic forms. Thus in the Czech lands in the 16th century various patrons for various reasons gave priority to certain artistic forms when commissioning works, forms which, as a fashionable system or language, they encountered most often in Italy, the Alpine lands, or the Danube Basin. It was therefore natural that these were the forms that were current and contemporary at that time, in other words Mannerism and Early Baroque, and, if Renaissance forms were used at all, then they were only the 'Late' ones. They commissioned artefacts from artists who were capable of creating a visually communicative – or by contrast, where required, provocatively new – expressive whole. This had to resonate with the needs and aims of Bohemian society, including the religious needs and functions. One of the consequences of this is logically that a 'pure' form of Italian Renaissance outside Italy was the exception rather than the rule and should not be seen as an objective or a yardstick of a developed society. Indeed, adaptation to local conditions evidently had to be a condition for a new style to be able to communicate something and to be accepted.

2. Evidently of central importance in an art historical assessment is the fact that the period from the first half of the 15th century to the beginning of the 17th includes a key turning-point – the establishment of the category of the aesthetically functioning image, in other words a shift in the nature of the image towards a more 'artistic' character. The fact that around the year 1500 at the papal and Medici courts and in Venice artists started to regard themselves as creative individuals inspired 'from heaven', and that Dürer brought this notion of the emancipated artist to Nürnberg, does not mean that the artisan character of artistic production that had existed up till then suddenly and automatically vanished. On the contrary, during the 16th century we can observe a growth in the guild system among artists in Bohemia.[69] The transformation applied rather to what was expected of images, including religious ones, and this occurred equally in the Mannerism of the cinquecento and in Reformation Germany. Images ceased to be lines of communication to the transcendental, and became windows opened to the reality of the terrestrial
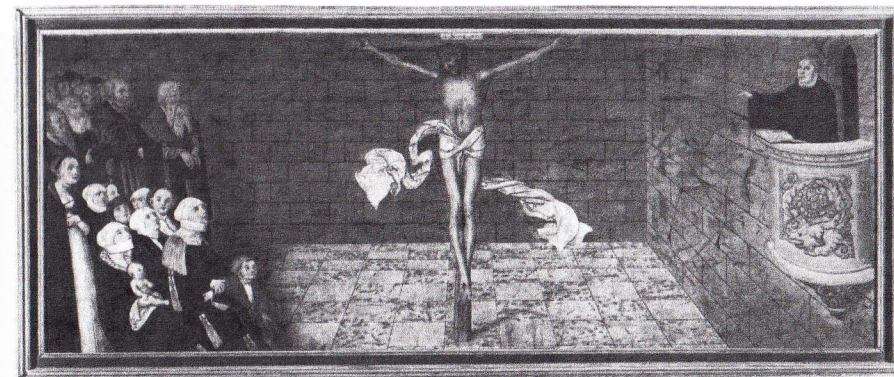
world or presenters of a didactic message. The genuine Reformation religious image, '*manifesting all we need to know about it,* [...] *seems to do our exegetical work for us. And having done with us, it resists re-entry by other means.* [...] *Shaped less as a picture to be interpreted than as the interpretation of a picture, the Reformation image mirrors the interpretative enterprise in which it here stands.*'[70]

3. Modern state borders are irrelevant for an understanding of works of art created in the 16th century. The very fact that in the 16th century it is still only possible to talk about a state as we understand it with reservations indicates that the political borders of that time cannot be significant factors in an interpretation of the art of the Bohemian Reformation. The ethnic borders of the time cannot as yet be determined either; we only know the borders of specific communication entities, those delimited by written records in the Czech and German languages. This, however, tells us little about the use of mother tongues. Communication entities defined in economic or political terms would be represented by differently drawn borders. It is probable that the success with which Lutheranism spread in the Czech lands was due not only to the favourable conditions created by the existence and activities of the two domestic Reformation churches (the Utraquists and the Unity) over the previous century, but also to the fact that the inhabitants of Bohemia and Moravia understood German very well. However, identifying the border for the spread of Lutheranism with that of the German settlement in the Kingdom of Bohemia would mean, for the period we are studying, applying two misleading modern approaches at once.

4. The watershed between the different art history periods in the Czech lands, as I have already mentioned, did not occur with the accession of the Habsburgs to the Bohemian throne in 1526, as political, or rather dynastic, history would have us believe. The boundary should rather be situated over the lifetime of one generation between the 1490s and the start of the spread of Lutheranism. The latter can be dated from the first responses as early as 1520 (in relation to images this manifested itself in a revival of the so-called 'Picard' movement, i.e. either harking back to radical Hussitism or emphasising the qualities particular to the Unity of Brethren, and paradoxically, according to the testimony of the *Staré letopisy české* [Old Czech Chronicles], in the destruction of Utraquist images, something not normally typical of Lutheranism),[71] and from the predominance of Lutheranism in Jihlava, the first of the royal towns, in 1522. Both processes, the accession of the Habsburgs and the spread of Lutheranism, occurred around the same time, but it is important which of the two we take as marking the change of period, because it is on this basis that we will assess the ensuing situation. In my view, a number of features of the art produced during this period can be better understood if we study them in connection with the attempt to promote Lutheran theology and religious practice. Two further transformation processes that are relevant for an evaluation of works of art are likewise directly connected with Lutheranism in the broad sense: the promotion of the idea of works of art as primarily aesthetic objects, which was mentioned earlier, and the re-structuring of memory as history.[72] Both contributed to a greater awareness of the differences, the cracks that were opening out between 'old' and 'new', which in the case of images led to a conscious reflection on the style used for the form, which started to be perceived as a specific statement. Later, but in the opposite direction, the same thing is reflected in the process of the spread of Baroque in visual art that occurred in Bohemia from the mid-17th century.

5. The difficulty we have in understanding the extent to which different types of painting and sculpture are to be found in Bohemia and Moravia in the 16th century can be resolved to some extent when we

consider that the main representative objects to be found in the Lutheran church communities – painted altarpieces and relief decorations of pulpits – were deliberately removed during the period of re-Catholicisation, and thus vanished without trace. This would appear to have applied in some sense to Utraquist artefacts as well, at least to those whose iconography did not satisfy Catholic requirements. The funeral memorial works that today constitute the vast majority of artefacts to have been preserved from that period, in other words epitaphs of a number of types and all sorts of sizes, from simple gravestones to the Redern family monument in Frýdlant/Friedland, evidently only made up one part of the non-Catholic visual art produced at the time and intended for sacral settings, in other words churches, chapels and cemeteries.

6. The end of the Late Gothic style in the Czech lands manifested itself in sculpture in a marked reduction in the number of works produced. This evidently led to a decline in sculptors' workshops. When works of sculpture are found, they are of a simple, workmanlike standard, they are decorative, and frequently they are the work of foreign sculptors – either they are invited to Bohemia to create the work, or their artefacts are imported ready-made. The suddenness and extent of this change is concealed by the fact that it runs parallel in time with the border that has been constructed between different art history specialisations – it is easier to overlook radical changes if we study the periods before and after them in different volumes of an overall history. A typical example is that of the sculptures by the Monogrammist IP, which are classified at the end of the Late Gothic period, while the altar in Zbraslav that is attributed to Adolf Daucher opens the chapter on Renaissance sculpture, although the two in fact more properly belong alongside one another.[73] Indeed, what is known as the 'Zlíchov epitaph' by the Monogrammist IP was recently identified by Jiří Fajt as the epitaph of Stephan Schlick, and thus as a work from the initial stage of Lutheran iconography.[74] When we look at the 16th century as a whole, however, the decline that occurs around 1530 in the quality and quantity of sculptures produced can probably best be explained by the relatively sudden and radical change in the demand for religious art on the part of Lutherans. The move away from three-dimensional religious images, which were too close to the notion of idols, was typical of this change. This undermined the tradition of local sculptors, and so for more demanding commissions, now required in marble, alabaster, or bronze – or, if in wood, then without the vivid polychrome – it was necessary to invite a foreign sculptor or to import the work ready-made.

7. In painting, too, the end of Late Gothic manifested itself in a fairly radical way. Here, however, it was not the quantity that was affected, but the artistic and developmental quality of the works produced in Bohemia. Painters continued to work in all the usual media of the preceding decades – panel painting, book illustration, wall painting, textile design, prints and glass painting. It is therefore all the more striking that from around the middle of the 16th century their style is not a continuation of the style of the high-quality workshops of the preceding period – what we refer to

as the Danube school. Instead, it is a style that can be described as a simplified, rather poor-quality derivative of the painting of the Northern Renaissance and Mannerism of Western Europe. In my opinion, we also need to consider the possibility that, for the purpose of demonstrating the visual identity of the Reformation confessions, it may have been considered desirable to use a painterly style derived from prints that were imported, mainly from Nürnberg and Augsburg, from the middle of the century onwards. If it was possible to adopt the iconography and composition from prints without any great detriment to the resultant work, and this was routinely done from the 1470s onwards, then it is obvious that painters who learned to paint using prints as models would lag behind in the essential requirements of their medium. Might not this be the reason for that strange lack of sophistication that characterises a substantial proportion of the paintings that were made in Bohemia and Moravia at that time? Significantly, the situation is similar for the better preserved and more thoroughly researched works produced in Silesia.

But it was not just a question of a lack of specific skills and abilities. As Joseph L. Koerner has recently shown, the 'Reformation of the image' consisted among other things in the requirement that images should not be primarily beautiful and aesthetically sophisticated. The conception of paintings concentrated on specific techniques of visual rhetoric, whose aim was to incorporate into the painting the basic principles of Lutheran teaching: *sole fide, sola gratia, sola scriptura*. The preferred approach of Lutheran art – didactic, communicating a message, and non-aesthetic – was displayed in features such as the clear organisation of the surface of the painting, with little ambition to create a convincing impression of three-dimensional depth; the relative move away from bright colours, decorative features, and dynamic form and structure; the absence of references to the culture of antiquity; and, above all, the dominance of text over image. The frequent presence of texts written on paintings is not only a didactic tool for manipulating the way the picture is seen (in other words creating the desired dispositive),[75] but also a reference to the sole source of religious legitimacy, the Word of God; human words being its credible representation. At the same time, an inscription, like the quasi-architectural way the surface of the painting is divided up, underlines the fact that an image is simply a two-dimensional object created by human hands. *'Framing and framed by inscription, the Reformation altarpiece is a scaffold for writing. Its images stand, as it were, between quotation marks. Twice removed, they picture words, and behind these what words, when read, would picture.'*[76]

These few theses cannot claim to be more than the first rough outline of a possible interpretative model. They also raise many questions, some of which are very obvious: why are epitaphs in Bohemia preserved only from the 16th century onwards and only occasionally from before then? And where is the Utraquist art of the period from 1540 to 1620? We are aware of only two components of it, illuminated graduals and hymnals, and in some areas epitaphs. Once again we have to ask whether the fault lies with us, whether

7/ Epitaph for the son of Jan Jetřich of Žerotín
1575
oil, wood, Opočno chateau
Photo: Jan Gloc

we are looking at this issue from the wrong point of view, or whether the relevant artefacts have not been preserved, or whether they simply never existed in the first place. It is likewise not until the present time that we have been able to appreciate the exceptional importance of 16th-century Bohemian illuminated codices in a European context. We are no longer concerned by the fact that judged by absolute standards of artistic progress they are hopelessly outdated artefacts. An analysis of the iconography of some illustrations in graduals has shown that here the Utraquists attempted to come to terms with the Lutheran teaching.[77] It is difficult to believe that this was not the case elsewhere. An analysis of the relationship between Lutheranism and Utraquism, a start on which has been made by Zdenek David in the book mentioned earlier, will evidently be one of the key tasks for future research, and will require cooperation between a number of different historical specialisations.

In conclusion, however, I would like to address some remarks at the art history discipline. As I have already said, it is only once we have an idea of the overall sense or nature of a stylistic period that we are able to create a true art historical interpretation from the relevant analyses of artworks. Our appreciation of the active and formative role played by the Bohemian Reformation will take on a slightly different form for the Late Gothic and Renaissance stages. The study of Hussitism up to the 1520s will address issues relating to the role of visual images in the unique setting of a medieval Reformation. The main elements of this quite unusual situation consist of the absence of printing in the formative phase, and the fact that the art of this part of the Bohemian Reformation functioned before the fundamental turning-point of the establishment of the Early modern category of art.[78] Both these factors come together in the specific role of the Late Gothic Utraquist image as a medium of information and a representative object. What will evidently be more important will be taking into account the Bohemian Reformation when interpreting the art of the following century. For it may well be that it is the one coordinate that has so far been missing in our attempts to understand the art of the 'shifted 16th century' in Bohemia and Moravia, in other words the art of the Renaissance in the sense of an epoch.

Translated by Peter Stephens

Notes

1. Kateřina Horníčková – Michal Šroněk (eds.), *Umění české renesance*, Praha 2010. – Iidem (eds.), *Umění reformace v Čechách a na Moravě* (working title; in preparation). This text is based on my paper at the accompanying colloquium referred to in the text, but it has been modified to a considerable extent and substantially expanded. It is part of the research project MSM 0021622426 of the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University in Brno. – I think it is worth pointing out here that the research project that prepared and presented the exhibition did not receive any targeted funding, and is proof that innovative projects of scholarly value can come into being in an unplanned way, in the uncontrolled arena of 'academic freedom', inspired solely by the personal commitment of the researchers (on this see also note 42).

2. Lubomír Konečný, The State of Renaissance Art History: Tradition in Distress, in: James Elkins (ed.), *Renaissance Theory*, New York 2008, pp. 304–309, quote from p. 308. – Cf. idem, Studium renesančního umění včera a dnes, in: Ivo Hlobil – Marek Perůtka (eds.), *Úsvit renesance na Moravě. Historická Olomouc XVII*, Olomouc 2009, pp. 9–14.

3. Because of limits on preparation time and on space, the exhibition was restricted to exhibits from Bohemia. The research background to the project, however, is working with artefacts from both Bohemia and Moravia.

4. The standard surveys are Rudolf Chadraba (ed.), *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění*, part 1, Praha 1984, and Jaromír Homolka et al., *Pozdně gotické umění v Čechách*, Praha 1978. These two works have now been dated to some extent by the publication of Jiří Kuthan, *Královské dílo za Jiřího z Poděbrad a dynastie Jagellonců. Díl I: Král a šlechta*, Praha 2010. – Cf. also Jiří Fajt, Das Zeitalter der Jagiellonen in den Ländern der Böhmischen Krone und die tschechische Historiographie, in: Evelin Wetter (ed.), *Die Länder der Böhmischen Krone und ihre Nachbarn zur Zeit der Jagiellonenkönige (1471–1526). Kunst - Kultur – Geschichte*, Ostfildern 2004, pp. 15–31.

5. Robert Suckale, Die Bedeutung des Hussitismus für die bildende Kunst, vor allem in den Nachbarländern Böhmens, in: Tho-

mas Gaethgens (ed.), *Künstlerischer Austausch - Artistic Exchange. Akten des 28. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte in Berlin 1992*, Berlin 1994, pp. 65–70. – Cf. too idem, Die Buchmalerwerkstatt des Prager Exameron. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Prager Buchmalerei um 1400–1440, *Umění XXXVIII*, 1990, pp. 401–418. – Karel Stejskal, Podoba císaře Zikmunda - prostředkem husitského umění proti feudální reakci, *Acta universitatis Carolinae VII – Philosophica et historica*, Praha 1954, pp. 67–75. – Idem, Archa rajhradská a její místo ve vývoji českého umění první poloviny 15. století, *Universitas Carolina – Philosophica I*, No. 1, Praha 1955, pp. 61–94. – Idem, Funkce obrazu v husitství, *Husitský Tábor VIII*, Tábor 1985, pp. 19–29. The category of 'Hussite art' was introduced by Karel Stejskal in the relevant entries in the *Encyklopedie českého výtvarného umění*, Praha 1975, Praha 1995. On further research see Milena Bartlová, *Poctivé obrazy. Deskové malířství v Čechách a na Moravě 1400–1460*, Praha 2001. – Eadem, *Mistr Týnské kalvárie, český sochař doby husitské*, Praha 2004. In both books there are extensive references to the older literature that was published in particular around 1960 thanks to the anniversary in 1958 of the accession of George of Poděbrady to the throne of Bohemia, which was promoted for political reasons.

6. František Šmahel, Audiovizuální média husitské agitace, in: idem, *Mezi středověkem a renesancí*, Praha 2002, pp. 231–238.

7. This question was formulated in 2000 by Ivo Hlobil, and at the same time, independently of his text, I sketched the first outlines of the answer to it, cf. Ivo Hlobil, K výtvarné kultuře Moravy a Slezska od gotiky k renesanci, in: Ivo Hlobil – Marek Perůtka (eds.), *Od gotiky k renesanci. Výtvarná kultura Moravy a Slezska 1400–1550. I. Úvodní svazek*, Olomouc 2002, pp. 88–110; the same text in German: Ivo Hlobil, Wendepunkt zur Synthese: Ausstellung Von der Gotik zur Renaissance – die bildkünstlerische Kultur in Mähren und Schlesien von 1400–1550, *Umění XLVIII*, 2000, pp. 315–334. – Milena Bartlová, Conflict, Tolerance, Representation and Competition: A Confessional Profile of Bohemian Late Gothic Art, in: David Holeton – Zdeněk V. David

(eds.), *Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice VI*, Praha 2005, pp. 255–266.

8. For a succinct characterisation and a proposal for an alternative interpretation see Robert Suckale, *Kunst in Deutschland von Karl dem Grossen bis Heute*, Köln am Rhein 1998, pp. 8–10, 254–300.

9. The standard overview, listing the older literature, is given by Jarmila Krčálová, in: Jiří Dvorský (ed.), *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění*, part 2, Praha 1989, pp. 6–62, 160–181.

10. Jiřina Vacková, Závěsné malířství a knižní malba v letech 1526–1620, in: Dvorský (see note 9), pp. 93–105, quote from p. 93; for criticism cf. Martina Šárovcová-Kratochvílová, Modus legendi: Illuminated Utraquist Choir Books of the Bohemian Reformation, in: Milena Bartlová – Michal Šroněk (eds.), *Public Communication in European Reformation*, Praha 2007, pp. 133–142.

11. Viktor Kotrba, Die nachgotische Baukunst Böhmens zur Zeit Rudolfs II, *Umění XVIII*, 1970, pp. 298–332. For the current situation see Ondřej Jakubec, Norma, forma a dialekty architektonického jazyka v sakrálním stavitelství na Moravě kolem roku 1600, in: Milena Bartlová – Hynek Látal (eds.), *Tvaru jste si sami? Sborník příspěvků z 3. sjezdu historiků umění*, Praha 2011, pp. 172–190. In addition to the literature referred to there, cf. also Norbert Nussbaum – Claudia Euskirchen – Stephen Hoppe (eds.), *Wege zur Renaissance*, Köln 2003. – Norbert Nussbaum – Matthias Mueller – Stephen Hoppe (eds.), *Stil als Bedeutung in der nordalpinen Renaissance*, Regensburg 2009.

12. Jakubec, ibidem. An interesting example of revival was noticed by Ivo Hobil when he analysed the 'neo-Mannerist' forms of a group of statues in Olomouc from around 1600, see Hlobil – Perůtka (see note 7), part 3, pp. 396–400, exh. cat. Nos. 318–322.

13. Thanks to cooperation with a historian, I was able to draw attention to this insight at least briefly in a text written for a general historical survey, cf. Petr Čornej – Milena Bartlová, *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české VI, 1437–1526*, Praha – Litomyšl 2007, pp. 631–670.

14. Arthur Rosenauer (ed.), *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich, Bd. III, Spätmittelalter und Renaissance*, München 2001. – The same approach had already been taken by Jan Białostocki, *Spätmittelalter und Renaissance. Propyläen Kunstgeschichte*, München 1997. – Cf. also idem, Późny gotyk: rozwój pojęcia i terminu, in: *Późny gotyk - studia nad sztuką przełomu średniowiecza i czasów nowych*, Warszawa 1965, pp. 17–82.

15. Dušan Buran et al. (eds), *Dejiny slovenského výtvarného umenia. Gotika*, Bratislava 2003. – Ivan Rusina et al. (eds), *Dejiny slovenského výtvarného umenia. Renesancia*, Bratislava 2009.

16. Ernő Marosi, Matthias Corvinus, the Medieval Man. Gothic and Renaissance, in: Péter Farbaky et al. (eds.), *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and Renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court 1458–1490* (exh. cat), Budapest Történeti Múzeum, Budapest 2008, pp. 113–128. – On Late Gothic cf. other texts in this catalogue. – On the evaluation of the Hungarian 'court Renaissance' in Czech art history cf. Ivo Hlobil – Eduard Petrů, *Humanism and Early Renaissance in Moravia*, Olomouc 1999, pp. 129–136 (a revised and expanded translation of the book Ivo Hlobil – Eduard Petrů, *Humanismus a raná renesance na Moravě*, Praha 1992). – Most recently Jiří Kroupa, 'Rinascimento oscuro' a vznešený detail, in: Ivo Hlobil – Marek Perůtka (eds.), *Úsvit renesance na Moravě. Historická Olomouc XVII*, Olomouc 2009, pp. 25–38.

17. Konečný, Studium (see note 2).

18. Frederick Antal, *Florentské malířství a jeho společenské pozadí*, Praha 1954.

19. Cf. Roy Porter – Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *The Renaissance in National Context*, Cambridge 1992. – Winfried Eberhard – Alfred A. Strnad (eds.), *Humanismus und Renaissance in Ostmitteleuropa vor der Reformation*, Köln – Weimar – Wien 1996.

20. On the necessity for a critical definition of the category of humanism, cf. e.g. Jaroslav Kudrna, Několik poznámek k vymezení pojmu humanismu, in: *Historická Olomouc a její současné problémy III*, 1980, pp. 127–136. In the more recent standard surveys, the older assumption of a direct relationship between art and humanism has been subjected to critical revision, cf. e.g. Charles G. Naubert (eds.), *Humanism as the Culture of Renaissance Europe*, Cambridge 1996, pp. 72–89. A theoretical critique of this relationship is provided by Keith Moxey, *The Practice of Theory. Poststructuralism, Cultural Politics, and Art History*, Ithaca 1994. I will not go into a more detailed discussion of humanism and its Bohemian form here.

21. Jan Białostocki, *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe – Hungary – Bohemia – Poland*, Oxford 1976. – Cf. also idem, *Późny gotik* (see note 14).

22. As in many other cases, Moravian art is here - objectively incorrectly - included under the heading of Bohemia. By contrast, until recently no account was taken of the art of the other lands of the Bohemian crown, Silesia and Lusatia. Cf. on this the critique by Hlobil, K výtvarné kultuře (see note 7), p. 89. Bohemian Silesia was first treated systematically in the exhibition project of the National Gallery in Prague and the Art History Institute of Wrocław University, cf. Andrzej Niedzelenko – Vít Vlnas (eds.), *Slezsko, perla v České koruně* (exh. cat), Národní galerie v Praze 2006. – Mateusz Kapustka – Andrzej Kozieł – Piotr Oszczanowski (eds.), *Śląsk i Czechy. Wspólne drogi sztuki*, Wrocław 2007. – Helena Dáňová – Jan Klípa – Lenka Stolárová (eds.), *Slezsko, země Koruny české. Historie a kultura 1300–1740*, Praha 2008.

23. Jaromír Neumann, Introduction, in: *Renaissance Art in Bohemia*, Praha 1979, pp. 7–13. The book was published only in English and distributed abroad. The editor's name does not appear in the book, because Neumann was not politically acceptable to the communist regime of the time.

24. Federico Zeri, Renaissance and Pseudo-Renaissance, in: Enrico Castelnuovo – Carlo Ginzburg (eds.), *History of Italian Art*, Cambridge – Oxford 1994, part 2, pp. 326–372. – Cf. Kroupa (see note 16). An original cultural-historical study on the Italian Renaissance with reference to works of art can be found in Nikolaj Savický, *Renesance jako změna kódu. O komunikaci slovem a obrazem v italském rinascimentu*, Praha 1998.

25. Jiří Kropáček, K výměru pojmu české renesance, in: Jaromír Homolka (ed.), *Itálie, Čechy a střední Evropa*, Praha 1986, pp. 182–191. In the early 1980s the author followed up the debate on the theme of Renaissance and humanism that was current in Czech historiography, cf. Jiří Pešek, Některé otázky dějin university pražské jagellonského období, *Historia Unviersitatis Carolinae Pragensis XVIII*, 1978, No. 1, and the review of this by Petr Čornej, *Česká literatura XXVIII*, 1980, p. 83.

26. For a critical reflection on the dynastic conception, cf. Ján Bakoš, From National to Dynastic History of Art, in: Jiří Kuthan – Markéta Jarošová – Stefan Scholz (eds.), *Prag und die grossen Kulturzentren Europas in der Zeit der Luxemburger (1310–1437)*, Praha 2008, pp. 763–783.

27. Hlobil – Petrů (see note 16). – Kroupa (see note 16).

28. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister and City. The Art and Culture of Central Europe 1450–1800*, Chicago 1995, pp. 117–137.

29. Pavel Kalina, *Benedikt Ried a počátky záalpské renesance*, Praha 2009. – Cf. also the preliminary study by the same author in the exhibition catalogue Iva Kyzourová (ed.), *Básník a král. Bohuslav Hasištejnský z Lobkovic v zrcadle jagellonské doby*, Praha 2007.

30. Pavel Kalina, Renesance nebo „renesance" ve střední Evropě?, in: Hlobil – Perůtka (see note 16), pp. 15–25.

31. Kroupa (see note 16), p. 32.

32. Václav Richter, *Správný předsudek (model) o začátcích moravské architektury*, in: idem, *Umění a svět. Studie z teorie a dějin umění*, Praha 2001, pp. 120–123. – Cf. Milena Bartlová, *Pasivní a aktivní model pozdní gotiky v Čechách a na Moravě*, *Opuscula historiae artium* SPFFBU F 50, 2006, pp. 11–22. On Richter's concept of *'správný předsudek [correct preconception]'* it should be noted that a better term might be *'oprávněný předsudek [justified preconception]'*. For the preconception may be distorted and turn out to be incorrect, something which incidentally happened, from the viewpoint of the state of our knowledge today, to Richter himself with his conception of early medieval architecture in Moravia.

33. Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of All Things. On Method*, New York 2009. – Cf. Thomas Kuhn, *Struktura vědeckých revolucí*, Praha 1997. On the application to art history, Cf. Milena Bartlová, *Jaká věda jsou dějiny umění? Umění* LIV, 2006, pp. 218–228.

34. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Pravda a metoda I. Nárys filosofické hermeneutiky*, Praha 2010, pp. 258–259.

35. Some of the issues raised by this type of essentialist question of a style are considered by Martin Mádl, *Co je barokního na barokním skle? K problému metafory ve stylové analyse*, in: Petra Nevímová – Jan Royt (eds.), *Album amicorum. Sborník k poctě prof. Mojmíra Horyny*, Praha 2005, pp. 149–155.

36. I consider the Czech term *postgotika* [post-Gothicism], formed in the same way as *postmoderna* [postmodernism], to be more appropriate than Kotrba's rendering *pogotický* [after-Gothic, post-Gothic], as used, for example, by Jakubec (see note 11).

37. Pavel Preiss, *'Sola est invicto Caesare digna'. Úvahy o Sandrartově Nalezení sv. Kříže v brněnském kapucínském kostele*, *Opuscula historiae artium* SPFFBU, ř. F 40, 45, 1996, pp. 59–73.

38. Klaus Merten, *Sakralarchitektur*, in: Ferdinand Seibt (ed.), *Renaissance in Böhmen*, München 1985, pp. 168–195.

39. Jiří Kropáček, *K renesančnímu umění v regionu severozápadních Čech*, in: Michaela Hrubá – Petr Hrubý (ed.), *Renesanční malířství a sochařství v severozápadních Čechách. Opitzův sborník*, Ústí nad Labem 2001, pp. 13–32.

40. Jan Royt – Vladimír Hrubý, *Nástěnná malba s námětem Zákon a Milost na zámku v Pardubicích*, *Umění* XL, 1992, pp. 124–137. – On the role of Cranach in Bohemian art cf. Kaliopi Chamonikola (ed.), *Pod znamením okřídleného hada. Lucas Cranach a české země*, Praha 2006. (This catalogue did not devote any special attention to the theme of confession and Reformation.)

41. Jan Royt, *Horní město Jáchymov, reformace a umění*, in: Jaromír Homolka (ed.) et al., *Gotické umění a jeho historické souvislosti I. Ústecký sborník historický 2001*, Ústí nad Labem 2001, pp. 351–360; English translation idem, *The Mining Town of Jáchymov: Reformation and Art*, in: *Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* Vol. 5, part 1, Praha 2005, pp. 305–312.

42. A bibliography is included in the publication accompanying the exhibition (see note 1). See also www.brrp.org; since 2009 the colloquia have been organised and the proceedings published by Collegium Europaeum. In the seven volumes of proceedings to have appeared so far are to be found most of the recent art historical studies devoted to specific themes in the field of the Bohemian Reformation, which effectively form the preliminary research material for the Art of the Bohemian Reformation project.

43. Ondřej Jakubec (ed.), *Ku věčné památce. Malované renesanční epitafy v Českých zemích* (exh. cat.), Muzeum umění Olomouc – Arcidiecézní muzeum Olomouc 2007. – Idem – Radka Miltová, Elias Hauptner and Matouš Radouš – *malíři umírajícího času. Manýristické epitafy v českých zemích kolem roku 1600*, *Umění* LVII, 2009, pp. 148–171. – Idem – Tomáš Malý, *Konfesijnost – (nad)konfesijnost: diskuse o renesančním epitafu a umění jako zdroji konfesijní identifikace*, *Dějiny – teorie – kritika* VII, 2010, No. 1, pp. 79–112.

44. Milena Bartlová – Michal Šroněk (eds.), *Public Communication in European Reformation*, Praha 2007. – Cf. Jan Harasimowicz, *Sztuka jako medium nowozytnej konfesionalizacji*, in: idem (ed.), *Sztuka i dialog wyznań w XVI i XVII wieku*, Wrócław 2005, pp. 51–76.

45. Rudolf Říčan (ed.) et al., *Čtyři vyznání. Vyznání augsburské, bratrské, helvetské a české se čtyřmi vyznáními staré církve a se čtyřmi články pražskými*, Praha 1951, pp. 273–306.

46. This is particularly evident from assessments of the Bohemian Confession written from the viewpoint of the (revived) Czech Lutheran church, cf. Petr Hlaváček, *Luteránství jako skrytý fenomén českých duchovních a kulturních dějin*, in: Jiří Just (ed.), *Luteráni v českých zemích v proměnách staletí*, Praha 2009, pp. 9–126. – Jiří Just, *Luteráni v našich zemích do Bílé hory*, in: idem, ibidem. In the second of these studies there is a brief discussion of the visual art of the Bohemian Lutherans in the period before the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620, seen from the historical point of view.

47. From the art historical viewpoint, Jiří Pešek, *Výtvarná díla s náboženskou tematikou v pražských předbělohorských interiérech*, *Umění* XXX, 1982, pp. 263–267. – Idem, *Obrazy a grafiky a jejich majitelé v předbělohorské Praze*, *Umění* XXXIX, 1991, pp. 369–383. From the viewpoint of religious history, Ota Halama, *Otázka svatých v české reformaci*, Brno 2002. – Zdenek V. David, *Finding the Middle Way. The Utraquist's Liberal Challenge to Rome and Luther*, Washington – Baltimore 2003.

48. See note 42.

49. Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, München 1999.

50. For more detail, with references to further literature, see Milena Bartlová, *Naše, národní umění. Studie z dějin dějepisu umění*, Brno 2009.

51. For more detail cf. Bartlová (see note 32).

52. The volume of articles on Lutherans in the Czech lands (see note 46) attempts to change this stereotype.

53. This operation was well described by Ivo Hlobil, *K výtvarné kultuře* (see note 7), p. 89.

54. For more detail cf. Bartlová (see note 32).

55. On this, cf. the academic concept and material preparations for the museum of the German-speaking inhabitants of the Czech lands in Ústí nad Labem (opening planned for 2012) at www.collegiumbohemicum.cz.

56. On this, cf. the reflections and memories passim in František Šmahel, *Nalézání, setkávání a míjení v životě jednoho medievisty*, Praha 2009.

57. Martina Šárovcová (Kratochvílová) is preparing her dissertation on these illuminated manuscripts, individual studies from which she has already published, cf. the bibliographies in the exhibition publications cited in note 1, and also notes 10 and 77.

58. Objections to this notion are based on facts such as the Utraquist affiliation of Ctibor Tovačovský of Cimburk, who commissioned one of the very first Renaissance artefacts, the portal of the chateau in Tovačov. (My thanks go to Jiří Kroupa for pointing this out, and also for other inspiring conversations on the study of Renaissance art.) Cf. Kroupa (see note 16).

59. Marosi (see note 16).

60. Pešek, *Obrazy a grafiky* (see note 47). – Michal Šroněk, *Sculpture and Painting in Prague, 1550–1650*, in: Eliška Fučíková et al. (eds.), *Rudolf II and Prague*, Prague – London – Milan 1997, pp. 353–375. – Jakubec, *Ku věčné památce* (see note. 43). – Idem – Malý (see note 43).

61. Josef Macek, *Hlavní problémy renesance v Čechách a na Moravě*. *Studia Comeniana et historica* XVIII, 1988, No. 35, pp. 8–43; for the contemporary discussion referred to by Macek, cf. the articles by Pešek and by Čornej (see note 25).

62. Alexander Nagel – Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, New York 2010. Preliminary publication, discussion on it, and reactions by the authors to criticism: iidem, *Interventions: Toward a new Model of Renaissance Anachronism*, *The Art Bulletin* LXXXVII, 2005, pp. 403–432.

63. Robert Williams, *Italian Renaissance Art and the Systematicity of Representation*, in: Elkins (see note 2), pp. 159–184.

64. Otto Benesch, *The Art of Renaissance in Northern Europe. Its Relation to the Contemporary Spiritual and Intellectual Movements*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1945.

65. Ethan Matt Kavaler, *Nature and the Chapel Vaults at Ingolstadt: Structuralist and Other Perspectives. The Art Bulletin* LXXXVII, 2005, pp. 230–248. – Idem, *Gothic as Renaissance: Ornament, Excess, Identity*, in: Elkins (see note 2), pp. 115–158.

66. In Silesia, thanks to its close contacts with Germany and the specific emphases of Polish historiography, art historical study takes on a quite independent form. Cf. the literature cited in note 22 and the collection of articles cited in note 44.

67. For more detail on this cf. Milena Bartlová, *Gothic? Renaissance? Mannerism? Interpretation Models for Central European Sculpture after 1500*, in: *Wokół Wita Stwosza. Materiały z konferencji naukowej*, Kraków 2006, pp. 341–347.

68. For a cogent critique: Arpád Mikó, *Na prahu renesancie?*, in: Buran (see note 15), pp. 562–571.

69. Karel Chytil, *Malířstvo pražské XV. a XVI. věku a jeho cechovní kniha staroměstská z let 1490–1582*, Praha 1906.

70. Joseph L. Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image*, Chicago 2004, p. 14.

71. Jaroslav Porák – Jaroslav Kašpar (eds.), *Staré letopisy české*, Praha 1980, p. 433.

72. Petr Hrachovec, *Maria honoranda, non adoranda. Příspěvek k poznání role obrazů a umělecké výzdoby v luteránském kostele*, in: Horníčková – Šroněk, *Umění reformace* (see note 1, in the process of preparation).

73. By contrast, the two were also discussed together as belonging to the 'Bohemian proto-Renaissance' by Chytil (see note 69) p. 171.

74. Jiří Fajt, *'Na paměť statečného a zbožného Štěpána Schlicka (†1526), zakladatele Jáchymova.' Monogramista I. P. a dvorská reprezentace za Ludvíka Jagellonského, krále uherského a českého*, in: Viktor Kubík (ed.), *Doba Jagellonská v zemích České koruny (1471–1526)*, Praha 2005, pp. 133–166. I hope to provide a more detailed analysis of the iconography of the epitaph on another occasion.

75. On manipulating the way the picture is seen, cf. Hrachovec (see note 72).

76. Koerner (see note 70), p. 20.

77. Martina Kratochvílová-Šárovcová, *Recepce a transformace protestantské ikonografie: lounský graduál Jana Táborského*, *Umění* LIII, 2005, pp. 444–464. – On this cf. the critique by Jakubec – Malý (see note 43).

78. On this see Milena Bartlová, *Reformace před knihtiskem. Veřejná komunikační úloha nápisu a obrazu v husitismu* (currently being prepared for *Studia medievalia bohemica*).