The Concept of Original Sin in the Cultural and Social Context of Late Utraquism and the Reformation[1]

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The theory of original sin, introduced extensively into the thought of the pre-modern Christian world, can be considered as a very substantial component of the contemporary culture, which is repeatedly remembered in the most diverse sources of time. Using a mild hyperbole, it is possible to say that this part of Christian theology was of concern to all – from learned theologians to illiterate peasants.[2] Although the theological views of laypeople are determined from the pulpit, the religious needs and approaches to piety throughout Christendom do not always reflect the theological discourse.[3] It is so also in the issue of original sin, the concept of which was used in contemporary sources in the most diverse cultural contexts. Furthermore this traditional element of Christian theology was redefined and reformulated according to the needs of a specific text.[4]

One of the basic characteristic features of original sin is the breadth of context in which it is used. Theologians had very diverse interpretations about original sin's intensity in the world. With the beginnings of the Bohemian Reformation in the early fifteenth century and especially later, the geographic space of Europe began to be denominationally divided, which logically assisted the development of different concepts which, however, had common sources in the form of authoritative texts. They were, of course, purposefully utilised for the justification of the motives of specific denominations.[5] The further following spread of the Reformation, therefore, led to a departure

2 Jean Delumeau, *Le Péché et la peur, la culpabilisation en Occident (XIIIe-XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris, 1983) 273–279.
3 Anthony Levi, *Renaissance and Reformation: the Intellectual Genesis* (New Haven-London, 2002) 3, 9.
4 Stephen Greenblatt proposed the possibility of such re-definitions in texts and called this cultural mobility, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Cultural Mobility, A Manifesto* (Cambridge, 2010).
5 Nicholas Terpstra, *Religious Refugees in the Early Modern World, An Alternative History of the Reformation* (Cambridge, 2015) 14–15.

from the tradition and practice of the medieval Church.[6] The arrival of the German Reformation began to accentuate certain differences also in the problem of original sin. Martin Luther can be included among those theologians who experienced the perception of original sin very intensively. While medieval scholasticism saw the problem of original sin primarily in relation to human sensuality, for Luther, this sin involved a sinful distortion of man before God.[7] In Luther's interpretation, the influence of sin persists even after the administration of the sacrament of baptism, because human nature is stained by it, and led toward the devil. Only faith and the Holy Spirit can lead man to salvation.[8]

My study examines several sources from late Utraquism in order to determine the expressions of confessional culture of this social group.[9] An analysis of confessional culture is based on the study of different types of sources; representing different social strata, in other words, confessional culture is not represented only by official texts, such as the Augsburg Confession or the Bohemian Confession. I shall attempt to analyse the image of man and the influence of sin on him, by means of selected texts of Utraquist priests who not only dealt with the theological question concerning original sin, but, above all, also touched on the broader context in which the conception of original sin was depicted. It is especially important to follow what connections of meaning are ascribed to this concept, which enables an insight into the human thought in the pre-modern world. The themes connected with original sin were manifested in this thinking through several connections of meaning.[10] Thus the possibility is offered of gaining an insight into a denominational culture, which was reflected in specific aspects of a concrete movement (in this case Utraquism) or – to the contrary – in questions which various movements answered in a very similar way.

As shown by Cathleen Crowther, Reformation culture often utilised the story of Adam and Eve, which was consequently variously redefined and expanded, despite the fact that it occupies only several pages within the Bible.[11] On the symbolic level, the Biblical story depicts the fall of man and explains the importance and significance of original sin. Consequently, the

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6   Peter G. Wallace, *The Long European Reformation, Religion, Political Conflict, and the Search for Conformity, 1350–1750* (London, 2012) 2–5.

7   Karl Heinz zur Mühlen, "Sin," in Hans J. Hillebrand (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* (Oxford, 1996) 4:61–62.

8   Berndt Hamm interprets justification by faith alone as a fundamental point of the Reformation's parting with the medieval Church, Berndt Hamm, "Was ist reformatorische Rechtefertigungslehre?," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 83 (1986) 2–3.

9   Reformation is not only an intellectual movement, but it manifests itself distinctly also in the formation of social groups, Nicholas Terpstra, *Religious refugees*, 1–17.

10 Kathleen M. Crowther, *Adam and Eve in the Protestant Reformation* (Cambridge, 2010) 14.

11 Crowther, *Adam and Eve*, 16.

Fall is connected with the symbolism of the figure of the devil: a tempter to sin, which enjoyed a widespread diffusion, especially in early modern history .[12]

Besides the story of Adam and Eve, which is regularly utilised for the depiction of original sin as such, it is important to examine the character of the pessimistic culture which resulted from the excessive stress on the consequence of original sin. This culture derived from a wide-spread and frequently read motif *De contemptu mundi* – contempt for the world. From the late fifteenth century onward this motive, with increasing intensity, steadily fostered contempt for the human world, affected by physicality and perceived merely by the senses – especially in contrast to human spirituality. The arrival of the Reformation further intensified this negative image of man in the sixteenth century. Anything – except for pure faith and its effect of justification – was an action of original sin. This then results in the construction of a negative pessimistic evaluation of man and culture in the contemporary sources, because the Protestant interpretation does not offer any space for an excuse, nor an effort to improve this image.[13] Utraquist theology, however, preserved such a possibility because of its notable emphasis on repentance and good works. These aspects will be dealt with in the analysis of several Utraquist sources which reflect the Utraquist attempt to answer the problems of original sin among several specific and typical cultural images.

I. The Shadow of Augustine

The key authority, whose thoughts were utilised in early modern history for texts concerning the original sin, were those of Augustine. It was exactly the reception of his oeuvre that stood in the centre of interpreting original sin along with his influence and ideas about human nature. The Reformation utilised Augustine's ideas with fresh enthusiasm. Even the Reformers of Luther's generation did not consider themselves as original thinkers, but merely as biblical interpreters in Augustine's footsteps.[14] The revival of his ideas led to a deepening of the pessimistic culture during early modern history. Diarmaid MacCulloch calls this phenomenon "the shadow of Augustine," which was to overcast the anthropological optimism of the Humanists.[15] Pico della Mirandola may be considered the father of such an optimism in the history of philosophy. "Finally, it seemed to me that I understood why man is the

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12 Robert Muchembled, *A History of the Devil, From the Middle Ages to the Present* (Cambridge, 2003) 108–124.

13 Jean Delumeau, *Le Péché et la peur*, 27–29.

14 David Bagchi, "Germany and the Lutheran Reformation," in Alec Ryrie (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in the European Reformation* (New York, 2006) 18.

15 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation, Europe's House Divided 1490–1780* (London. 2003) 106.

animal that is most happy and is therefore worthy of all wonder; and lastly, what the state is that is allotted to man in the succession of things and that is capable of arousing envy not only in the brutes but also in the stars and even in minds beyond the world."[16]

It is remarkable that these ideas, probably following Pico, were elaborated by Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), in whose oeuvre – according to some authors – the Bohemian Reformation reached its culmination.[17] It is, however, rather a matter of exceptions, and scholarship largely agrees that contemporary literary culture did not offer many instances of anthropological optimism. Hana Bočková likewise speaks about a significant spreading of Humanistic pessimism in the Bohemian Lands against the exaggerated influence of the above-cited authors.[18] As a corrective, it may be pointed out that Comenius's optimism crops up only during the late phase of his literary activity.

According to Augustine, man is born as a sinner because of Adam's eroding from the tree of knowledge, and only divine mercy can rid him of this sin.[19] The Reformers adopted Augustine's doctrine of justification but left undisturbed his doctrine of the Church and, thus, Augustine remained an important authority also for their opponents from the Catholic camp.[20]

The story of the first people (Adam and Eve), was also a source of misogyny, which was prevalent in almost all traditional societies. The sin of Eve was emphasised since it was she who offered to Adam the apple from the tree of knowledge. This led to the widespread opinion about the inferior position of woman vis-à-vis man. Likewise this argumentation has its source in Augustine.[21]

Another question is the guilt of children. They are born without having committed sin. Consequently, the issue of the incidence of original sin becomes problematic. Theological interpretations vary, because this guilt was to be wiped out by baptism and, subsequently, the purification, provided by baptism, was to be renewable by the eucharistic sacrament. Augustine's conception, which above all the Reformation has diffused, considers also children guilty in consequence of original sin, as such a view corresponds

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16 Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man* (Indianapolis-Cambridge, 1998) 3.

17 Robert Kalivoda, *Husitská epocha a J. A. Komenský* [The Utraquist Era and J. A. Komenský] (Prague, 1992) 158. James R. Palmitessa, "The Reformation in Bohemia and Poland," in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World* (Oxford, 2004) 186. On inspirational possibilities in Komenský for Pica della Mirandola, see Jan Čížek, *The Conception of Man in the Works of John Amos Comenius* (Frankfurt am Main, 2016) 189.

18 This stress on pessimism was analysed especially by Jean Delumeau in his *Le Péché et la peur.* Hana Bočková has pointed out similar pessimistic traits in Czech literature, see Nathanaél Vodňanský z Uračova, *Theatrum mundi minoris,* ed. Hana Bočková and Jiří Mátl (Brno, 2001) 265, 283.

19 MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 107–109.

20 Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine* (Philadelphia, 1956) 332.

21 Delumeau, *Le Péché et la peur,* 289.

to the teaching of *sola fide.* Also they need mercy, about which only Christ decides.[22] In this context, an important question is the communion of infants, practicised in Utraquism.[23] The Utraquists' stress on the Eucharist was likewise motivated by an endeavour for a ritual purification from sin. This motivation could also support communion in both kinds from the moment of baptism.

Hence, the practice of Eucharist differentiated the Utraquists from other denominations, not only by practising communion in both kinds, but also by the frequency of communion and especially by giving the Eucharist to infants. This rite was, therefore, at the centre of polemics, not only with the Roman Church, but also with the reformed confessions.[24] This is demonstrated, for example, by notation about a priest wishing to convert from the party *sub utraque* to the party *sub una*:

> Priest Matthew, parson in Prosik … (1) he does not, according to our custom, want to give children communion sub utraque; (2) he does not respect our feast days sub utraque. (3) he does not want to distribute communion to old people; (4) though being sub utraque, he does not want to distribute communion other than sub una.[25]

Augustine was also a key authority in the Utraquists' treatises. This is true in the texts of Jan Václav Cykáda, Vavřinec Leander Rvačovský, and Václav Porcius Vodňanský, on whose examples this study illustrates the theses outlined above. Beside their reception of Augustine, I have selected these examples for several reasons. First, the three authors deal with the motive of original sin in several different contexts which, more or less, touch on their Utraquist identity. In the times of confessional inter-twinings, it is difficult to recognise unambiguously, the confessional background of every text.[26] Secondly, the selected texts date to the turn of the sixteenth century, thus this study also offers an insight into the form of Utraquism before the forcible termination of its existence by the victorious Roman Counter-Reformation

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22 Ibid., 294–5.
23 David R. Holeton, "Liturgical Life during the Bohemian Reformation," in Kateřina Horníčková and Michal Šroněk (ed.), *From Hus to Luther, Visual Culture in the Bohemian Reformation (1380–1620)* (Turnhout, 2016) 121–142.
24 David R. Holeton, "The Evolution of the Celebration of the Daily Office in Utraquism, An Overview," BRRP 8 (2011) 198–200, 219.
25 *Jednání a dopisy konsistoře pod obojí způsobou přijímajících a jiné listiny téže strany se týkající z let 1562–1570* [Proceedings and Letters of the Consistry for the Communicants Subutraque and Other Documents Concerning This Denomination from 1562–1570] ed. Julius Pažout (Prague, 1906) 43: "Kn. Matěj, farář z Prosiku … 1. Dítkám že podle spůsobu našeho pod obojí posluhovati nechce; 2. Že svátkův našich pod obojí s nemalů potú dotýká; 3. A starým lidem posluhovati svátostí nechce; 4 a posluhovati, jsa sub utraque, že nechce než sub una."
26 Pierre Chaunu, *L'Aventure de la Réforme, Le monde de Jean Calvin* (Paris, 1991) 161–167.

after 1620.[27] Lastly, the texts, treated here, were rarely utilised in recent historiography. One exception perhaps is Rvačovský's *Masopust* [Mardi Gras] which belongs to the basic literary works of the Pre-White Mountain era. Even though it was frequently mentioned, this rare print was rarely analysed from the methodological angle of intellectual history, as well as new cultural history.[28]

As a marginal fact, it may be noted that Cykáda, Porcius, and Rvačovský were married priests, which was a routine Utraquist practice, enjoying, however, only an unofficial endorsement by the Utraquist Consistory.

II. Jan Václav Cykáda and Traditional Utraquism at the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century

Jan Václav Cykáda was an Utraquist priest and also a member of the Utraquist Consistory. Hence, it is possible to consider him a representative of the priestly elite *sub utraque.* During his service in the Consistory, his writings were published in the form of printed sermons. Perhaps Cykáda's most famous work is his *Hody křesťanské na které Bůh Otec skrze Syna svého zuve* [Christian Feasts to which God the Father Invites through His Son].[29] This study deals with another homiletic text, namely, his *Bezpečné a pravé křesťanského člověka rozveselení a jisté očekávání neomylného spasení* [Safe and Right Rejoicing of a Christian Man in the Certain Expectation of an Infallible Salvation].[30] It is very important to understand the homiletic background of the text, since it was almost certainly diffused orally and thus its contents became comprehensible even to illiterate listeners. Such a text could be appreciated not only by the educated readers, but also by the laymen.[31]

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27 On the self-confident existence of the Utraquists under Rudolf's Letter of Majesty, see David, *Finding*, 349–350.

28 The summary of historiography is a part of the modern edition; see Vavřinec Leandr Rvačovský, *Massopust*, ed. Dušan Šlosar (Prague 2008) 543–560. For some details on *Masopust*, see Čeněk Zíbrt, "Vavřince Leandra Rvačovského Masopust [*Masopust* of Vavřinec Leandra Rvačovský]," *Český lid* 18 (1909) 181–189. Rvačovský is repeatedly mentioned as an exemplary Utraquist by Zdeněk V. David in *Finding the Middle Way*. I have previously discussed the employment of the concept of the seven mortal sins in *Masopust*, see Radim Červenka, "'Proti kněžskému neřádu, krve křesťanské vylévání, lakomství, svatokupectví, obžerství, smilství, pýše a neposluhování svátostmi,' Sedmero hříchů a utrakvisté v 16. století ['Against Priestly Filth, Shedding of Christian Blood, Avarice, Simony, Gluttony, Adultery, Pride, and Non-Distribution of the Sacraments,' Seven Deadly Sins and the Utraquists in the Sixteenth Century]," *Folia historica Bohemica* 30 (2015) 269–275.

29 Jan Václav Cykáda, *Hody křesťanské na které Bůh Otec skrze Syna svého zuve* (s. l. 1607).

30 Jan Václav Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé křesťanského člověka rozveselení a jisté očekávání neomylného spasení* (s. l. 1607).

31 Jane Davidson, *Early Modern Supernatural, The Dark Side of European Culture 1400–1700* (Santa Barbara, 2012) 12.

Unsurprisingly, at that time, preaching was generally recognised as the main means of the diffusion of ideas.[32]

In the introductory folio Cykáda in the subtitle of the text defines, what constitutes this Christian rejoicing, "it derives from Christ's glorious resurrection and the purification from our sins. Now explained in a new mode in sermons."[33] The problem of sin is solved on the title page by Christ's sacrifice, which would correspond to Protestant interpretation. However, the very core of the homiletic text, of course, does not derive simply from this presupposition but instead clings to the earlier Christian interpretation of the approach to sin as I shall attempt to demonstrate later.

Zdeněk V. David has shown that Cykáda is a perfect example of a mainstream Utraquist.[34] Therefore, we find in his sermon argumentation supporting communion in both kinds:

> So also priests after uttering four words (this is my body) and (this is my blood) consecrate Christ the Lord. The Virgin Mary after childbirth carried Christ the Lord in her arms. The priest likewise after consecration of the elements – which is an inexplicable mystery – has in his hands the true Body and the true Blood of Christ, whom he is to give for ingestion to those who come forth, and he himself is to ingest for a proper commemoration of the Lord's sacrifice.[35]

Communion in both kinds as such was widespread in the world of the Reformation. The Utraquist thus differed mainly by also administering communion *sub utraque* to children. In this context, however, it is important to understand the medieval roots of the movement. The principle of frequent communion *sub utraque* was motivated in medieval Bohemia by eucharistic deprivation.[36] The fear of sin in contemporary thought created a need to wrestle with this circumstance. Through the consumption of Christ's Body and Blood, Christ was present in man, which protected him from the effect of sin.[37] Cykáda's text provides evidence of a continuity of the non-institutionalised elements of Czech medieval Christianity, which was projected

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32 Anne T. Thayer, *Penitence, Preaching and the Coming of the Reformation* (Ashgate, 2002) 8–9.

33 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 60–61.

34 David, *Finding*, 204, 316, 321, 341, 484.

35 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 60–61: "Tak i kněží po vypovědění pěti slov (toto jest Tělo mé) a (toto jest Krev má) Krista pána posvěcují. Panna Maria po porodu Krista pána na rukou nosila. Kněz též posvěcení elementův, pravé Tělo a pravou Krev kristovu (což nestihlé tajemství jest) v rukou mívá a toho přistupujícím, k požívání podává, a podávati, i sám také pro náležité připomenutí umučení páně požívati má."

36 John Bossy, *Christianity in the West (1400–1700)* (Oxford, 1985) 6472.

37 Pavlína Cermanová, *Čechy na konci věků*, *Apokalyptické myšlení a vize husitské doby* [Bohemia and the End of Age, The Apocalyptic Thought and Visions of the Hussite Era] (Prague, 2013) 180.

into Utraquism even in its late existence at the opening of the seventeenth century. It just differed from the Roman conception, which – thanks to the Tridentine reforms – was becoming more individualised and thus more distant from Utraquist approaches.[38]

In the question of dealing with sin, Cykáda puts less emphasis on communion *sub utraque* than on the practice of repentance, which offers another way of a ritual purification from sin.[39] In the scholastic conception, the effect of original sin is washed away in baptism, and subsequently manifests itself only through sins committed. The approaches of the Reformation to the issue of original sin are, of course, diverse, but they may be summarised as follows. For Luther, and the later Gnosio-Lutherans, human nature was distorted by original sin and justification was possible only from Christ's hands. However, more moderate branches of Lutheranism forsook the idea of distorted human nature, and interpreted the effect of original sin as a constant presence of the devil tempting to sin. Of course, even they reject the idea of a personal contribution to one's own salvation.[40] The stress on justification by faith alone was the most distinct step, creating an impassable chasm between medieval and reformed christendom.[41] This doctrine likewise led to an intensification of the anxiety about the consequences of original sin in human life.

Cykáda, however, represents a typical approach to the justification from sin, as articulated in the learned milieu of the Bohemian Reformation. On the one hand, he spoke about the irreplaceability of the role of faith in Christ for justification (similar to the role of the Reformation's *sola fide*), but on the other hand, personal merits also played an important role. The Utraquists, as well as the Unity of Brethren, insisted on an active endeavour toward salvation.[42] They also emphasised good works, especially the practice of repentance. Cykáda writes in his homiletic text:

> First of all, that the Lord God grants to every Christian the grace to recognise himself and gives him the time for repentance, and grants to his priests the power to absolve the contrite ones, he grants them in his words the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven and through their administration of the venerable sacraments he wipes off the sins from the believers. No priest can remit sins by his own power, only by God and by him to whom the power was given by God. Who then wishes to attain the remission of sins, he must utilise the means which have been established for that purpose, namely recognise his transgressions,

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38 David R. Holeton, "Liturgical Life during the Bohemian Reformation," 121–142.
39 Thayer, *Penitence*, 4.
40 Mühlen, *Sin*, 63–64.
41 Hamm, "Was ist reformatorische Rechtefertigungslehre?," 2–3.
42 Frederick G. Heymann, "The Impact of Martin Luther upon Bohemia," *Central European History* 1 (1968) 129.

shamefully then confess them, stop committing them, and not trouble further the priests of the Lord.[43]

Cykáda reproduced the traditional medieval conception of the process of repentance which consisted of three main parts: the genuine contrition over sin, confession of sin, and a purpose of amendment – a process culminating in an absolution from the priest. During the late Middle Ages, it is possible to observe a regional variation among the preachers, in accenting the individual parts of the process.[44] Ann Thayer has hypothesised about the willingness to accept Protestant ideas in certain localities, dependent on what phases of the penitential process the key homiletical texts stressed in a given region. When the priest's sacramental role was prominent, Roman Catholicism was more likely to be preserved. In localities, on the other hand, where preachers focused on the individual parts of repentance, the ideas of the Lutheran Reformation found more fertile ground.[45] Of course, the consequent effort of the Reformers to be rid of ritual aspects of repentance in religious practice, clashed with laypeople's lack of understanding. This was because the communitarian medieval Christendom emphasised the social function of repentance as a collective ritual, purifying the social whole from sin.[46]

It is evident that Cykáda also emphasised the individual parts of repentance (contrition and confession): "So also no one will find a response, as long as he had not weeded out the sins from his heart."[47] Elsewhere he also says: "Because true piety should dwell not so much in speech, but in the heart, and it is proper to document true faith not by empty words but by works springing from love."[48] The emphasis on the heart explains that, for Cykáda, the basic presumption of true repentance rested in the individual phases. The auricular confession as such did not play a significant role for the Utraquists, for which they were criticised by the Roman party in Bohemia.[49]

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43 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 55: "Předně, že pán Bůh každému křesťanu milosti k poznání sebe samého, a času k pokání propujčuje, a služebníkům svým k rozhřešování kajícím moci uděluje, dává jim slova svá, klíče Království nebeské(ho), a v přisluhování jejich svátostmi velebnými shlazuje hříchy z věřících pro sebe samého. Žádný kněz odpustiti hříchův nemůže v své moci, kromě něho, a komuž dáno bývá od něho. Kdo pak chce odpuštění hříchův dojíti, musí k tomu prostředky ním vyměřenými jíti: totiž nepravosti své znáti, z nich s studem se vyznávaje, jich přestávati, a kněží páně v tom nepobíhati."
44 Thayer, *Penitence*, 11.
45 Ibid., 184–185.
46 Bruce Gordon, "The New Parish," in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World* (Oxford, 2004) 416.
47 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 148: "Tak také nebude žádný slyšán, dokavad hříchův z srdce nevyplení."
48 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, unpaged: "Nebo pobožnost pravá ne tak v řeči jako v srdci má obývati, a víry živé ne slovy jalovými, ale skutky z lásky pocházejícími sluší dokazovati."
49 David, *Finding*, 160–161.

In the Utraquist context, it is possible, through this example, to observe that Utraquism preserved the collectivist ritual in a certain form, which corresponded to the medieval communitarian Christendom. The main stream of the Bohemian Reformation thus avoided difficulties that ensued from the application of Luther's more radical ideas.[50] It is also possible to point out a degree of continuity in the course of the sixteenth century. Bohuslav Bílejovský, a key theologian of Utraquism in the first half of the sixteenth century, likewise embraced the classical three-phase scheme of repentance: "As the saints generally say that holy repentance includes three aspects, namely, a contrite heart, confession, and the purpose of amendment; the Diet wishes priests to remind the people of this."[51]

It was typical for medieval homiletic texts to emphasise the importance of repentance in order to foster interest in this sacrament.[52] Although we have seen Cykáda dealing with the practice of repentance in various ways, his main objective probably was to arouse interest among the readers, or – as the case may be – listeners:

> Sins frightened us, he calls us to repentance, and he will gladly show us his mercy, therefore, we should keep his mercy in mind. He himself, standing at the very door of our hearts, listens to us, and always – through the prophets, the Gospel writers and the Holy Apostles – insinuates to us that we should turn to him in repentance and that he would then turn to us with compassion."[53]

It remains a question whether this was a traditional homiletic motif, or whether one can discern here a hidden polemic with those currents of the Reformation whose attitude toward repentance was more sceptical. The question can be answered by declaring that this theological flexibility is a symptom of the Utraquist conservatism in the sacramental area.[54] Because Utraquism represented a continuously existing traditional medieval

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50 Research has shown many cases, when the reformers had to deal with the issue of penance, which subsequently led to the practice of repentance in Protestant parishes. See Katharine Jackson Lualdi and Anne T. Thayer, *Penitence in the Age of Reformations* (Aldershot, 2000) 4.

51 Bohuslav Bílejovský, *Bohuslava Bílejovského Kronika česká* [Bohuslav Bílejovský's Bohemian Chronicle], ed. Ota Halama (Prague, 2011) 89: "Item jakož svatí obecně praví, že pokání svaté tři stránky zavírá v sobě, totiž skrúšení srdce, zpověď a dosti učinění za hříchy, chválce, chce tomu sněm, aby kněží lid napomínali." See also, Červenka, Sedmero hříchů, 268.

52 Bohuslav Bílejovský, *Bohuslava Bílejovského Kronika česká*, 89. Further, see Červenka, Sedmero hříchů, 268.

53 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 86: "Děsili nás hříchové, on volá nás k pokání, a rád se chce smilovati nad námi, protož k milosti jeho zření míti máme. On sám stoje u dveří srdcí našich na nás poslouchá, a abychom se k němu obrátili v pokání, že se i on k nám obrátí v slitování, vždycky nás skrze proroky, evangelisty, a saté apoštoli své ponouká."

54 David, *Finding*, 378–379.

Christianity it, therefore, did not offer original solutions like the Lutheran or the Calvinist Reformations did.

The issue of original sin in Cykáda's text, however, could also be analysed, outside a theological framework in a broader and contemporary cultural context. This is because the traditional concept served in forming an image that combined both the world and society. This image included the devil, which was symbolically firmly intertwined, in contemporary culture, with an interpretation of original sin. We also find the devil, in a similar context, in Cykáda's sermons. This happens, for instance, in a part of the sermon, entitled *Druhé: Koho vlk znamená* [Second: Whom the Wolf Marks],[55] which is devoted to the wolf, as the conventional symbol of the sins of incontinence and avarice. Man is tempted by these sinful desires: "and they desire to dispatch his soul to hell."[56] These committed sins derive from original sin or, as the case may be, from the devil: "in all that they obey their father – the devil."[57] Similarly, in other sources, we also constantly encounter the devil in connection with the concept of original sin and its effect.

III. Porcius Vodňanský and the Pessimistic Culture of Original Sin

> Despite the one talent received from the Lord Christ, my dearest master, the devil in the time of his harvest does not hesitate to transport into his infernal barn the ignobilities of the priestly and secular authorities as well as the perversity of the common people.[58]

This passage is from an Utraquist manuscript from the early seventeenth century and describes the lifetime reality of Václav Porcius Vodňanský as "the devil's harvest" which can be considered a motif of contempt for the world. This contempt was widespread in contemporary literary production. In contrast to Cykáda, who was a member of the Utraquist Consistory, it would be difficult to include Porcius among the elite of the Utraquist ecclesiastical administration. At the time when this manuscript was written he was merely a parson in Katovice in Southern Bohemia. The rather peripheral character of Porcius' place of employment is also attested by his extant correspondence.[59]

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55 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 76.
56 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 80.
57 Cykáda, *Bezpečné a pravé*, 80.I: "Však podle té jedné hřivny od Krista pána, nejmilejšího mého mistra dané, neostejchaje se v času ďáblovy žně, jenž na mnoha vozích do pekelné stodoly z polí svzuje, nešlechetnosti kněžských a vrchnosti světské. I zvoli obecného lidu."
58 MS Prague, Knihovna Královské kanonie premonstrátů na Strahově [when used later: Strahov], DB II 4, f. 4.
59 The extant correspondence dates to 1610–1611. It survived thanks to its insertion into the binding of *Duchovní město*. C. A. Straka summarised part of the correspondence, but most of it he copied verbatim. The text can be found in the concluding part of his treatise about

Porcius' extensive knowledge of the Bible – a dictionary reworking of which, *Duchovní město* [The Spiritual City] is in the first place – however, enables us to include Porcius among the Utraquist savants.[60] Porcius' extant text almost certainly served for oral dissemination through sermons, just like the homiletic treatise of Cykáda.

After the biographical insertion, let us once more return to the initial citation. The symbolism of the devil is inter-related with the problems of original sin and with the traditional tripartite division of society. It not only refers to the extent of sin's effect in everyday reality but also within the social hierarchy. This is because original sin as a concept was considered a phenomenon which transcended social stratification. The wide spreading and the interconnection of sin with the social hierarchy is also demonstrated on the famous painting of Hieronymus Bosch *The Seven Mortal Sins and the Four Last Things*.[61] The criticism of social estates is then presented by Porcius in even greater detail in a brief poem, which he inserted into a larger text. Its title is *Hořekování zarmoucené a žalostné člověka, jdoucího cestou v tomto bídném životě tohoto světa převráceného* [The Sad and Plaintive Cry of a Man, Following the Way in This Miserable Life of This Perverted World].[62] It is essentially a critique of social estates in the form of verse, which underlines Porcius's pessimistic image of contemporary society.

The Spiritual City, however, is not merely a moralising text, criticising man's sinfulness and unhappy situation in which he has lived. It also offers an idealised anti-pole.[63] The perception of original sin in early modern history can be illustrated from one of two drawings which can be found in Porcius's *Spiritual City.* It is a rather primitive red-and-black depiction of city gates

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Duchovní město. See Cyril Antonín Straka, "Humanista český Václav Porcius Vodňanský, jeho spis Duchovní město a dochovaná korespondence", *Listy filologické* 43 (1916) 264–271.

60 Here it is necessary to recall the interpretation of Zdeněk David rejecting the intellectual backwardness of the neo-Utraquists. Rather he cites literary production and personalities which bear comparison with contemporary European scholarship. Zdeněk V. David, "Utraquism as a Commoners' Church" BRRP 8 (2008) 178–183.

61 This interpretation is highlighted by Laura D. Gelfland, "Social Status and Sin: Reading Bosch's Prado Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things Painting", in Richard Newhauser (ed.), *The Seven Deadly Sins* (Leiden-Boston, 2007) 229–231.

62 See also Radim Červenka, "Duchovní město a Labyrint světa – text, kontext a obraz lidové kultury, Komparativní studie a edice [The Spiritual Town and the Labyrinth of the World – Text, Context, and Image of Folk Culture, A Comparative Study and Edition]," *Aluze* 19 (2017) 180–181.

63 The conundrum of contrasting literary ideal and sinful reality crops up in several places in Porcius's treatise. It is comparable with the contrast between the aimless wandering in the labyrinth of the world and the discovery of Paradise within the heart in the work of Jan Amos Komenský. The comparison also fills in small narrative details of both treatises; see Radim Červenka, "Hříšný člověk v dílech utrakvistických autorů a Labyrintu Jana Amose Komenského [Sinful Man in the ouevre of Utraquist authors and in the *Labyrinth* of Jan Amos Komenský]," *Studia Comeniana et Historica* 93–94 (2015) 46–64.

with walls and an inscription *Zlatá brána* [The Golden Gate].[64] The image symbolises the idealised walled space of the *Spiritual City*, which is separated from the everyday world of torturous labour. The narrative features a man, who after a painful journey reaches the city. The following commentary accompanies the drawing:

> The Man:
> O I see the gate
> I shall go to its side
> in order to enter it
> to enter into the city
> a pretty city, it certainly is.[65]

The last verse expresses an idealisation of the enclosed urban space. Cities, which in the early modern age could hardly exist without their walls, were – thanks to this enclosure – an appropriate symbol for the representation of an ideal and thus were frequently utilised in the genre of contemporary utopias.[66] The segregated ideal drew especially on the imagination about Paradise, from which Adam and Eve originated, and from which they were expelled in consequence of original sin. Such nostalgic motifs – turning toward the idealised world – have been designated by Jean Delumeau as a literature of the golden dream. This became widespread in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries; of course, the idealised depictions of Paradise were not an optimistic search for an ideal, but justifications of the weight of original sin, manifest in everyday life. The pessimistic concept of man and the concept of redemption derived from a common idea of Paradise. In other words, the literary ideal is segregated from reality, in which man is burdened by sin.[67] A similar allegory is offered by the *Spiritual City*. The gate, as a symbol of enclosure, points to the enclosed Paradise, and the inscription, which is found on the gate, enables the redemption of man precisely in this segregated space:

> (A man) Entering says: I come in God's name
> and I will be nourished in the city,
> being tired from the journey,
> so that I can rest in the city,

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64 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 52.
65 Ibid.: "Člověk: Aj vidím bránu, již na tu stranu, Puojdu bych v ní všel, Do města vešel. Pěkné jest město, vskutku zajisto."
66 Jaroslav Miller, "Snový svět idejí a syrovost skutečnosti: městská historiografie raného novověku jako utopie? [The Dream World of Ideas and the Rawness of Reality, Urban Historiography of Early Modern History as a Utopia?]," *Český časopis historický* 106 (2008) 261–287.
67 Jean Delumeau, *History of Paradise, The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition* (Chicago, 1995) 117, 146–147.

let bad thoughts be banished,
when God gives his blessing.[68]

The enclosed area of *The Spiritual City* contrasts with the pessimistic tenor of a whole series of moralistic commentaries in the rest of the treatise. We should not neglect one of the commentaries, which illustrates the pessimistic contempt for the world in Porcius's oeuvre. This item is also mentioned by Hana Bočková, who states that for Porcius the evil and the corruption of the world is somehow given apriori, which likewise accounts for the frequency of this motif. During his entire life, man dwells for Porcius "in sin, as if locked up in prison."[69] It is notable that virtually the same formulation can be found in the contemporary translation of Luther's letter to the Utraquists of Prague, "ascribing such a prison to their sins."[70] The old print with a translation of Luther's message – in which he counsels the Utraquists what to change in order to approximate the Reformation – was written in 1523. Considering that Porcius's manuscripts dates to the first decade of the seventeenth century, there thus exists a large temporal gap between the two texts. Moreover, the translation of Luther's treatise aroused a major resentment in Bohemia and its propagation was prohibited. It is, of course, possible that Porcius might also have known Luther's Latin original, but there are no extant records of what Porcius actually studied. In any case, Porcius's pessimistic contempt for the world is comparable with Luther's whom Delumeau considers a culminating example in perceiving the intensity of the effect of original sin within society.

Aside from the already mentioned citation in the introduction, Porcius's conviction about the effect of original sin also includes his anxiety about the dominance of pride, as a motivation for committing the transgression in the garden of Paradise by humanity's first ancestors: "the people of the present age, do not let themselves be corrected … the first sin is pride, that sin is the master of all the other sins and sinners," because "God opposes the proud and shows his mercy to the humble."[71]

Original sin likewise leads in Porcius's mind to misogynic commentaries that occur relatively often in his oeuvre, e.g. "The sin (namely, adultery)

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68 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 52: "(Člověk) Vcházeje dí: ve jménu boží beru se a v městě postravuji se, ustály jsouce na cestě, abych odpočinul v městě, odejděte zlá myšlení, když bože své požehnání."

69 Hana Bočková "Několik poznámek k Duchovnímu městu jménem Rozkoš duše Václava Porcia Vodňanského. [Some notes on the *Duchovní město*, called *Delight of the Soul,* of Václav Porcius Vodňanský]," *Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské univerzity*, 43 (1996) 8.

70 Martin Luther, *O ustanovení služebníku církve* [On the Appointment of the Servants of the Church], ed. Ota Halama (Prague, 2012) 79.

71 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 105: "nedají se lidé nynějšího věku pejchou nakažení napraviti… první hřích jest pejcha ten hřích jest král všech jiných hříchů i hříšníků … bůh se pyšným protiví, ale pokorným dává svou milost."

commenced through a woman, and because of her, we all die."[72] He repeatedly submits a pessimistic image of contemporary culture, which is distant from the ideal separated from reality. "Present-day women are more inquisitive not only about a priest or a brother, but they pay no attention to their husbands, and contradict them."[73] He pays special attention to the effect of original sin on the female gender:

"Women, no matter how many of them there are in the world, because of one woman, all of them are being punished. A woman is turned into a pillar of salt because of disobeying God. Women occasionally are infertile so that they may not trust their youthfulness, but hope in the power of God. A pious woman, a friend of the poor, and serving them generously with alms – as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 9 – when she died, she was, through the prayers of the poor and of St. Paul, again resurrected."[74]

As it is notable, Porcius posits as a counterpart to the woman, who is the cause of original sin, [the image of] another woman, who in her piety helps the poor and the weak – specifically by means of alms. Namely, Porcius, just like Cykáda, puts emphasis on an active approach to salvation, as was typical for the Bohemian Reformation.[75]

The Utraquist method of dealing with sin is represented in Porcius's treatise in a relatively traditional manner. It emphasises faith in Christ, which is necessary to salvation: "Redemption is from Christ Jesus through faith, from his blood … justified is the one who is of the faith in Jesus Christ."[76]

This formulation, used by the Utraquists, to a certain degree corresponds to one of the key principles of Reformation thought. As an illustration, one can cite a paraphrase of a part of the Marburg Articles:[77] "Sin damns all people

72 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 138: "Skrze ženu stal se počátek hříchu (totiž nevěry) a skrze ni vsichni mřeme."
73 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 398: "Nynější ženy všetečnější jsou netoliko na kněze aneb na bratra, ale na svého muže nic nedbají, odmlouvají."
74 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 398: "Žen co jich na světě, pro jednu ženu všecky pokutu nesou. Žena v solný sloup pro neposlušnost bohu obrácena jest. Ženy časem bývají neplodné, aby ne v mladost svou doufaly, ale aby že to v samé moci boží jest. Žena pobožná, milovnice chudých, a jim štědře almužnou sloužící. Jakž napsáno v knize Skut(ů) Apoštol(ských) v ka(pitole) 9. Když umřela, skrze modlitby těch chudých a s. Pavla, mocí kristovou zase vzkříšena."
75 Heymann, "The Impact of Martin Luther," 129.
76 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 145: "Vykoupení jest v Kristu Ježíši skrze víru, v krvi jeho… spravedlivého činil toho který je z víry Ježíše Krista."
77 An agreement between the Lutherans and the Zwinglians. The most prominent disagreement involved the issue of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Lutherans endorsed it, while for the Zwinglians it was merely *memoria*. A similar dispute occurred between the Utraquists, who traditionally recognised Christ's presence in the eucharistic elements, and the Taborites, who rejected the real presence. The Zwinglians were influenced by the Taborite teachings.

without any distinction (4), while salvation is offered to them by faith in the redemptive effect of Christ's death that had occurred for our sake."[78]

Luther's theology considered man ambivalently as a sinner and at the same time as justified in the eyes of Christ. A different approach can be identified with the Utraquists who also relied on a ritual process of settling accounts with sin. Inasmuch as the ritual practice was – from the anthropological perspective – deeply rooted, even the Reformation in practise had to make compromises and preserve some of the initially problematic elements.[79] Utraquists, however, preserved the traditional mediaeval ritual practice in a specific – only partly reformed – shape. Consequently, Porcius' formula of salvation mediated by faith in Christ is followed by Utraquist elements of an active approach to salvation. Porcius's approach distinguishes between repentant and non-repentant sinners. The non-repentant sinner is especially one who does not himself admit his sin – he is beyond help: "Behold, so the struggle stops and the non-repentant sinners are overwhelmed – they fall all the way to hell. What they had to talk or discuss, for that you look in P Street, which covers Hell [in Old Czech: Peklo]."[80]

The opposite hope of dealing with sin characterises the repentant sinners:

> About repentant sinners: how they arrive at repentance. First of all, when sinful man recognises the devil's cruelty – that leads to sin. Second, he realises the corruption of his nature – that he inclines to evil. Third, he can identify terrible and mortal sins. Fourth, he recognises even venial ones … This is the first step of a contrite sinners' entering holy repentance.[81]

Hence, Porcius, just like Cykáda, stresses the initial part of the process of repentance that is especially the individual admission of personal sinfulness and contrition over sin.

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78 The passage quoted from Amedeo Molnár, *Na rozhraní věků, Cesty reformace* [On the Dividing Line of Ages, The Paths of the Bohemian Reformation] (Prague, 2007) 166: "Hřích všechen lidi bez rozdílu zatracuje (4), kdežto záchrana se jim nabízí pouze ve víře ve spasitelný dosah Kristovy smrti, k níž došlo pro nás."

79 Bent Flemming Nielsen, "Ritualization and the Church, Reflections on Protestant Mindset and Ritual Process," in Bent Flemming Nielsen (ed.), *Religion, Ritual, Theatre* (Oxford, 2009) 28.

80 Porcius employs mnemonic aids for sequencing the text, and the chapters of his book are, therefore, named after streets, MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 144: "Tak hle boj přestane a hříšníci nekající jsou přemoženi, padnou až do pekla. A co by tam za řeči neb mluvení své míti měli toho hledej v ulici P, kde stojí o Pekle." On the diffusion of the mnemonic devices in literary culture, see Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge*, *From Gutenberg to Diderot*, (Cambridge-Malden, 2000) 149–176.

81 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 144: "O hříšnících kajících: jakým způsobem k pokání přicházejí. Když člověk hříšný poznává nejprve. Ukrutnost ďábla, že vede k hříchuom. Druhé. Poznává skázu přirození svého, že jest k zlému nakloněn. Třetí. Umí znáti hříchy hrozné a smrtedlné. Čtvrté. Zná i všední … Tak jest ten první stupeň kajících hříšníkuov vstupující k svatému pokání."

He thus approaches the Reformation's concept of emphasis on the power of faith in Christ. Nevertheless, the stress on the active part of the process (required for absolution from sin) corresponds to the idiosyncratic concept of the Bohemian Reformation.

The mention of mortal sins refers to medieval teaching. The concept served to give a name to an evil, which was to be ritualistically engaged. This process occurred by the means of confession and contrition. David Myers, writing about the changing practice of repentance, distinguishes the medieval practice with a substantial communitarian aspect and non-sacramental repentance (such as a long Lenten abstinence), on the one hand, and the Post-Reformation (Tridentine) practise, on the other hand.[82] Tridentine piety individualised confession and repentance, and the sacrament of repentance was to symbolise a victory in the struggle against sin. Its main instrument was a sacramental absolution, offered by the priest, rather than a collective ritual or personal contrition and contrite heart, for which a priest's assistance was not necessary. Thus, Myers challenges the thesis of Jean Delumeau about the prevalence of pessimistic culture of the period in the Catholic ambiance, because the Roman Church offered by means of its own action the possibility of neutralising original sin's influence.[83] Inasmuch as the Utraquist sources, which I have analysed, are in this respect also proofs of the existence of a pessimistic culture (contempt for the world, moralising, critique of social strata, a negative image of man, the key role of sin, the ideal separated from sinful reality), it is impossible to insert them into the interpretative frame offered by Mayers who speaks about the existence of an institutional opposition.

Let me also add that for dealing with sin it was necessary to offer communion in both kinds. This fundamental Utraquist ritual is emphasised by Porcius as well. Or, as the case may be, its disregard would be a major flaw, incompatible with salvation: "Then those who would not consume the holy Blood of Christ for the remission of sins, and not even accept a purification by way of the holy Blood, it follows that they reject and offend the holy chalice of the Lord."[84]

IV. Mardigras [*Masopust*] as an Allegory of Sin and Contrition

In 1580, a notable piece of literature, entitled *Masopust* [Mardi Gras] by Vavřinec Leandr Rvačovský illustrated the utilisation of the concept of original sin. The text has several strata. However, the most extensive part is a list

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82 David Myers, *Poor Sinning Folk, Confession and Conscience in Counter Reformation Germany* (London, 1996) 192.

83 Myers, *Poor Sinning Folk*, 200–203.

84 MS Prague, Strahov, DB II 4, f. 145: "Tehdy ti jenž posvátné krve z kalichu Kristova nepožívají odpuštění hříchuov nevezmou. A ani skrze tu posvátnou krev očištění nepřijímají. Tak jest neb kalich páně posvátný zamítají a tupí."

of sermons arranged as a homiliary, which is in an original way structured as a description of *Masopust's* sons with each personifying a particular sin. Another stratum of the text is its introductory and concluding parts, which derive from the story about the genesis and extinction of *Mardi Gras.* This stratum, for its time, is a unique narrative conceptualisation of the theme.[85] However, on the whole, the text can be interpreted as allegories of sin and repentance, all of which are connected with the traditional character of the ecclesiastical year – a loosening of morals (*Mardi Gras* as a symbol of sin) followed by a lengthy Lenten fast (a symbol of repentance). Thus, Jaroslav Kolár situates *Masopust* among the typical contemporary moralistic tracts. In the eyes of Kolár, its pessimistic overtones are also a reflection of Luther's influence.[86] A further analysis of Rvačovský's teachings, however, does not permit us to consider him a Lutheran, because the pessimistic overtones of his treatise simply coincide with the trait, characteristic of all the various denominations. The concluding denouement, which plays out on the allegorical level of the text in a duel between *Mardi Gras* and Lent, culminating in the victory of the latter, is, however, another of the allegories highlighting repentance. In fact, the Lenten period was the time of ritualistic collective repentance. The priest's role consisted in the mediation of the ritual, not in providing solace on an individual basis. This essentially differed from the practice of repentance, whereby the Council of Trent, in a revolutionary way, altered the medieval non-institutionalised approach, which is reflected in Rvačovský's text.[87] As a result, the highlighting of ritualised repentance, which conflicts with Reformation teaching, offers an occasion to interpret this part of Rvačovský's allegory as a manifestation of Utraquist confessional culture within the parameters of *via media,* i.e. between Protestantism and early modern Roman Catholicism.

From the remarkable treatment of allegories, as well as touching on significant elements of folk culture, it is apparent that the treatise is not so much a high-level theological disputation as rather, a certain cultural transfer – simplifying not only theological dogmatics, but also ideas of ancient authorities for readers or listeners, who were Rvačovský's contemporaries.[88]

The subject matter of original sin plays a role especially in the introductory part of the text, where it is connected with the birth of a personified *Masopust* as the son of the Devil himself. The Satanic *Masopust* enters directly into

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85 Genre strata are discussed in Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 543–546. The quality of the narrative was already endorsed from the viewpoint of literary scholarship by Antonín Rybička, "Rvačovský Vavřinec Leander", *Časopis českého muzea* 45 (1871) 321–323.

86 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 544.

87 Myers, *Poor Sinning Folk*, 192.

88 The role of scholars was also a role of mediators of these findings. Anthony Grafton, *Bring out Your Dead, the Past as Revelation* (Harvard, 2001) 10. Aside from standard Patristic authorities used by the Utraquists, such as Augustine or John Chrysostom, we can encounter in Rvačovský, also Aristotle's legacy, for instance, Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 72.

the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise because of their commission of original sin. For the purposes of his story, Rvačovský adjusts the biblical text: "And who has taught you that, other than the avaricious *Masopust*, when you were rash, and your concealment will not suffice, your running away will be of no benefit, your sin is evident."[89] This part corresponding to the conversation of God the Father with the first man Adam continues as to the consequence of the consumption of the fruit of tree of knowledge: "Thus, Adam having abandoned the obedience to God, his creator, and having descended to satiate his physical urges, he falls among the three bandits who are the devil, sin, and death."[90] On the symbolic level of the story it is possible to interpret Adam's fall among the three specific thieves as a characteristic of the world, in which he was to dwell after the loss of the ideal in Paradise, and it was a rather pessimistic characteristic. Furthermore, the tale of the commission of original sin serves Rvačovský as a vehicle for a moralising critique of the loose worldly behaviour that was celebrated precisely in the period of Mardi Gras.[91]

Mardi Gras thus turned out to be a fitting allegory for Rvačovský's moralistic treatise. By its means, he portrayed his own time, which he interpreted in especially lurid tones: "especially during the current evil, pitiful, immoral, Godless, and careless times."[92] Thus, it is also a typical sample of the pessimistic culture à la *De contemptu mundi.* The allegory of *Masopust's* figure, however, is utilised in many-sided ways. As a symbol of human sinfulness, as well as symbol of original sin's effects, *Masopust* thus not only caused the downfall of man, but was himself born within it: "From their sinful eating undoubtedly *Masopust* was conceived and born."[93]

After the expulsion of Adam and Eve, as well as *Masopust* with them, Rvačovský launches a drama, or more precisely, a comedy. God himself assumes the role of *commoediae actor*.[94] In the culture of early modern history, drama was connected with secular affairs as well, which were often criticised by ecclesiastics.[95] In this play, Adam put on a mask and lost the appearance that he had had in Paradise. Only God could see under

89 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 61: "A kdo tě tomu naučil, než lakotný Massopust, když jsi se ukvapil a bez nic tobě tvé ukrývání nepostačí, nic tvé utíkání neprospěje, hřích tvůj na jevě jest."

90 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 62: "Tak Adam, jakž vystoupil z poslušenství Boha stvořitele svého, sstupuje k vykonání žádosti své tělesné, upadl mezi lotry, jenž jsou ďábel, hřích a smrt."

91 Henry Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (Abingdon, 2005) 54. The Carnival behaviour, however, need not have only religious connotations, but also secular ones, which might be motivated by an effort for some sort of protest. Lane M. Bruner, "Carnivalesque Protest and the Humorless State," *Text and Performance Quaterly* 25 (2005) 136–155.

92 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 24: "Zvláště těchto nynějších zlých, žalostivých, rozpustilých, bezbožných a bezsoudných časův."

93 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 52: "Z kterehožto jejich lakotneho pojedení bezpochyby počat i narozen Massopust."

94 Namely, that of a director of the play; Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 64.

95 Tamara Atkin, *The Drama of Reform, Theology and Theatricality* (Turnhout, 2013) 5–6.

the mask, which hid a "contrite heart."[96] Since that time, all people put on masks that do not correspond to their naturalness. In fact, the mask symbolises the social status of every individual, which one acquires during his lifetime. Of course, this status does not correspond to the naturalness beneath the mask: "Somebody is honoured as a king, although in reality he is a commoner; somebody as a beggar, although, in a way, he is rich enough."[97] Of course, at the end of time, God takes away man's mask, and will judge him. The only chance to please God, according to Rvačovský, is to practice repentance.[98]

Rvačovský in his narrative does not forget even *Masopust,* and his experience after the expulsion from Paradise. Inasmuch as he is a kind of embodiment of the devil,[99] he attempts to play his own comedy in the world, which is supposed to be the obverse of the divine plan:

> And to mutate from the image of God into the devil's ugly image, in their disgusting gluttony and drunkenness to transform themselves according to the devil's wish; to expel the fear of God from their hearts; not to shirk from anything shameful; not to be ashamed of any sin…to put on a disgusting performance for the people.[100]

The sins of gluttony and drunkenness are particularly symptomatic of Mardi Gras, and therefore are emphasised by Rvačovský. Of course, even after this perverse comedy, the inevitable ending follows in the form of God's judgement, which will impose a dire punishment "if there is no previous true repentance and turning to God."[101]

It is worth mentioning that in contrast to the discussed works of Cykáda and Porcius, we do not encounter in the *Masopust* an exploitation of the tale of original sin for arguments in support of misogynistic views. Rvačovský, in his description of the expulsion from the Garden of Eden speaks of Adam's efforts to talk himself out of his guilt and to transfer the transgression to Eve: "And when it did not work, he was driven to impute the guilt to God, because

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96 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 64

97 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 64: "Někdo tu ctín bývá za krále, ješto sic mendýkem bude: někdo žebrákem, ješto v svém způsobu dosti je bohatý.

98 Rvačovský, *Massopust*, 67.

99 As noted by Robert Muchembled, the conception of the devil was changing in the culture of the sixteenth century. The change was from a rather fairytale-like leprechaun to a transcendental personification of sin, which can constantly affect humans and can obsess them. Thus, in Rvačovský's version, *Masopust* is a kind of personified sprout of Satanic sin, see Robert Muchembled, *A History of the Devil*, 9–108.

100 Rvačovský, *Masopust*, 69: "A z obrazu Božího aby se v šeredný obraz ďáblův, z toho hanebného obžerství a ožralství, tobě k vůli přepotvořovali, bázeň boží z srdcí vyháněli, na žádný stud zření neměli, za žádný hřích se nestyděli…lidem za ohyzdné divadlo byli."

101 Rvačovský, *Masopust*, 69.

he had given him Eve for a companion."[102] In Rvačovský's interpretation, this was not just a white lie, because he repeats in a note: "Adam was sticking the guilt of sin on God."[103] Still more revealing is this passage:

> Altogether three were involved in this first human sin, namely, the snake, Eve, and Adam. And although the beginning of the sin stemmed from the devil, by whom Eve was misguided and sinned prior to Adam, and Adam was not, like Eve, misguided by the devil's words. Nevertheless, because he obeyed the voice of the woman and ate the fruit of the tree, against God's command, he became a transgressor of God's commandment, and by this sin he became guilty before God equally with Eve.[104]

It is difficult to judge, where to seek the author's motivation not to uphold the contemporary mysogynnic topoi; however, it should be noted that this topos did not derive from a literal interpretation of the Bible but rather from a cultural tradition.[105] It also should be noted that Rvačovský was a Utraquist priest, among whom celibacy was not enforced. He engaged in an active family life and sired twelve children. When he had served as a dean in the town of Slaný, he even petitioned the town council for a young wife.[106] It is, of course, an insoluble question whether this aspect of Rvačovský's biography can account for his unusually "tolerant" attitude.

Conclusion

The intent of this study was to analyse the concept of original sin by three Utraquist authorities from the sixteenth century. I tried to fit them into a broader frame of Reformation history and to stress certain specific aspects of Utraquism as a distinct religious denomination. It was important that Luther's Reformation newly stressed human guilt deriving from the commission of original sin. Using the texts, analysed above, as illustrations, I could note that even in Utraquism we can encounter pessimistic commentaries deriving from a stress on the influence of original sin in human lives. These

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102 Rvačovský, *Masopust*, 63: "A když to nespomohlo, opět hnalo ho k tomu, aby tu vinu na Boha vstrčil, tím že mu tu Evu za tovaryšku dal."
103 Rvačovský, *Masopust*, 70: "Adam vinu hříchu svého dcpal na Boha."
104 Rvačovský, *Masopust*, 51–52: "K kterémužto prvnímu lidskému hříchu zběhli se tří, totiž had, Eva a Adam. A ačkoli počátek hříchu stal se od ďábla, a od něho svedena jsouc Eva, před Adamem zhřešila a Adam není slovy hadovými sveden jako Eva. Však nic méně, poněvadž jest hlasu ženy uposlechl a ovoce z dřeva proti přikázání Božímu jedl, učiněn jest přikázání Božího přestupník a tím hříchem před Bohem vinen, rovně jako Eva."
105 Crowther, *Adam and Eve*, 50.
106 Josef Lacina, *Paměti královského města Slaného*, *Za svobody i v porobě* [Memorials of the Royal Town of Slaný, In Freedom and in Suppression] (Slaný 1885) 70.

pessimistic overtones found expressions in the frequent utilisation, in litera-
ture, of the motif *De contemptu mundi* – contempt for the world.

The medieval contempt for the world, according to Delumeau's interpre-
tation, contrasted with the enclosed ideal of Christian life, which was then
exemplified by monastic life. The decisive point for Protestant culture was the
justification by faith alone, which affirmed contempt for the world, because
one could not attain salvation by one's own efforts. Hence, where there was
no justification by pure faith, there existed only original sin with its negative
consequences. Monasticism, quite logically, could not play any positive role
in Utraquism. Regardless, however, the pessimistically oriented Utraquist
texts stress that the correct Christian life must be permeated by repentance.

Even though Delumeau distinguishes – with respect to the intensity
perception of the effect of the original sin – between the medieval and the
Protestant tradition, both traditions represent a single aspect of Europe's
culture. Christianity and its interpretation profiled pessimistically the as-
sessment of the world from the anthropological perspective. The dominance
of this approach had, for Delumeau, a long duration from the thirteenth to
the eighteenth centuries. The Utraquists' stress on justification and simul-
taneously on true repentance and good works appears – in the context of
Delumeau's theses about a pessimistic culture – as a symptom of the via
media approach. It does not fully coincide with either the Roman or the
Protestant camp but, of course, it does not appear that – because of this rea-
son – it would in principle differ from this distinctive aspect of pre-modern
Christianity.

Further this study also aimed to show how this Christian concept influ-
enced contemporary culture as well as texts from the late Utraquist authors.
Thus, the writings of Cykáda, Porcius Vodňanský, and Leandr Rvačovský –
hitherto little studied by cultural historians – form no exception. The
problems associated with original sin, deriving from the biblical story of
Adam and Eve, were widely known among the broad strata of population.
However, the problem was reinterpreted in various ways by literary sourc-
es in order to simplify the learned theory for the less educated populace.
Furthermore, the story was utilised as an authoritative criterion for elucidat-
ing various issues in contemporary society. The Utraquist sources offer an
image that – on one hand – fits the cultural context of the Reformation era
but – on the other hand – demonstrates certain Utraquist specificity. Despite
many details, it is possible even in the early seventeenth century to observe
manifestations of Utraquist religious culture, which differ from the more
radical Protestant churches; yet, it is not possible to identify these deviations
with Post-Tridentine Catholicism, which became remote from a whole se-
ries of forms of medieval un-institutionalised Christianity.[107] The Tridentine

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107 The reforms, required by the Council of Trent, aroused an immediate wave of dissenting
   letters to Rome from a whole series of bishops from numerous dioceses. The cause of this

reforms, likewise, rejected the principles of communitarian ritualised Christianity, just like the Protestant Reformation attempted to do. However, thanks to their administrative independence, the Utraquists were not forced to adopt those radical changes, and could preserve their conservative form of a local Christianity with its medieval roots. And also these circumstances made possible the appearance of the remarkable work of Vavřinec Leandr Rvačovský, which is distinctly anchored in the popular medieval culture even toward the end of the sixteenth century.

Translated from the Czech by Zdeněk V. David
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indignation was the suppresion of regional distintiveness which the Council challenged by attemting to enforce for the first time a uniformity within the entire framework of the Roman Church, for more details see Simon Ditchfield, "Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints," in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *Cambridge History of Christianity, Reform and Expansion* (Cambridge, 2008) 203.