

# From Oxford to Bohemia: reflections on the transmission of Wycliffite texts

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On this occasion I may perhaps be forgiven for starting from a personal viewpoint.<sup>1</sup> Why should I, a member of the faculty of English Language and Literature at Oxford University have found myself wanting, and indeed needing, to work on a fairly regular basis on manuscripts in the libraries in Prague and Vienna? Vienna should be taken out of that question immediately: the manuscripts in question there derive almost without exception from Bohemian sources, were loaned in the mid sixteenth century to a man, Caspar von Niedbruck who acted as a librarian to the Archduke, later Emperor Maximilian and, more significantly, wished to draw the Archduke into the reformed faith; von Niedbruck unexpectedly and prematurely died in 1557, and since he died intestate all his possessions, including those he had only borrowed, were forfeit to the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> Vienna is the accidental lodging of the manuscripts I am concerned with, Bohemia is their home; consequently in what follows I shall describe all the manuscripts as Bohemian. To revert to my own situation: my work on these Bohemian manuscripts has continued for more than 35 years; the number of books that I have been concerned with must number well over a hundred, and I am certain that more are to be found, and new details are to be uncovered in those

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1) The paper here was given on 26 March 2010, during a visit to Prague to receive an honorary doctorate of the Charles University and from the Czech Academy of Sciences the František Palacký medal for historical research: for these two honours, and for the immense generosity of friends and colleagues in Prague, I shall always remain profoundly grateful. References here are kept to a minimum.

2) This story, together with relevant evidence, is told more fully in my paper *The survival of Wyclif's works in England and Bohemia*, in: Anne Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wyclif's Writings*, Aldershot 2008 (henceforward STWW), no. XVI, pp. 29–41. The manuscripts are now in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (henceforward ÖNB).

I have already seen. Though Prague (and Vienna) has been my chief hunting ground, I have also worked in libraries in Brno and Olomouc, and on Bohemian manuscripts distributed more widely to libraries now in Poland such as Wrocław or Kraków, or in German libraries, famous repositories such as Wolfenbüttel or Munich, less familiar collections such as those at Bautzen and Herrnhut.

The answer to the question is, of course, that I have worked on the texts written by the English Oxford master John Wyclif, and on those produced in the 150 years following his death by his English followers. Wyclif fell foul of the ecclesiastical authorities in England by the second half of the 1370s. A letter from pope Gregory XI was sent in 1378 to England condemning eighteen views from his writings, largely on the subject of dominion, but the formal condemnation of his views in England only came in 1382, two and a half years before his death on 31 December 1384.<sup>3</sup> Attempts by the ecclesiastical and then the secular authorities to prevent the spread of his opinions, and to bring any who favoured them back into the orthodox fold, began before Wyclif's death, and accelerated in the thirty years after it; and until the 1530s the set of *Constitutions* produced first in 1407 by archbishop Arundel remained in force – they severely restricted the academic freedom of the English universities, limited the ability of any priest to preach outside his own parish and forbade the production or circulation of recent vernacular versions of Scripture without episcopal approval. In 1401 burning for heresy was formally introduced into England.<sup>4</sup> Already in 1382 copies of works by Wyclif or his followers were being confiscated: ownership of them could be dangerous – as a Buckinghamshire Wycliffite put it as late as 1523, he would “rather burn his books than that his books should burn him”.<sup>5</sup> Much earlier than that, in Oxford in the autumn of 1410 a bonfire was lit at the central crossroads in Oxford, before the chancellor of the university and the town's mayor; the fuel was copies of Wyclif's writings.<sup>6</sup>

But in this, of course, Oxford was some few months behind Prague: that same year, June 1410 saw a similar bonfire ordered by the archbishop in Prague, and again the fuel was the works of Wyclif. But here Prague masters mounted a defence of several of the works that had been condemned, with Hus himself defending *De trinitate*.<sup>7</sup>

## I

Put most simply, the reason behind my repeated visits to Prague is that a very considerable number of Wyclif's works only exist now in Bohemian manuscripts, and that many of them survive in a considerable number of copies of that origin.

3) A recent account of Wyclif's life, and the main topics of his thought, by myself and Anthony KENNY is to be found in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 60 Oxford 2004, pp. 616–650, and online version updated to 2010.

4) For the legislation see Alison K. MCHARDY, *De Heretico Comburendo, 1401*, in: Lollards and the Gentry in the Later Middle Ages, eds. Margaret Aston – Colin Richmond, Stroud 1997, pp. 112–126.

5) See Jeremy I. CATTO, *Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1356–1430*, in: The History of the University of Oxford. Vol. II. Late Medieval Oxford, eds. J. I. Catto – Ralph Evans, Oxford 1992, pp. 173–280, and for the wider impact of Wyclif my own *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*, Oxford 1988. The comment of John Phip is in *John Foxe, Acts and Monuments*, eds. Stephen Reed CATTLEY – Josiah PRATT, London 1853–1870, vol. IV, p. 237.

6) For the process see STWW no. XIII and references there given.

7) The details are conveniently collected in Johann LOSERTH, *Wiclif and Hus*, London 1884 (translated M. J. Evans), pp. 121, 307–336; more recent editions of some are detailed in František ŠMAHEL, *Die Hussitische Revolution*, vol. II, Hannover 2002 (= MGH Schriften 43/II), p. 846.

In addition, and in some ways (as I shall explain) more remarkably, a number of very important texts composed or compiled by Wyclif's followers also made their way to central Europe; in several cases, our only evidence for their existence is that Bohemian transmission. With the exception of only a single phrase (see below p. 13), all the material I have worked with here has been in Latin, not in English. What I want to do here is to lay out in a little more detail how remarkable the position is. I do not want to revisit the contentious debate about how influential or not Wyclif was on Hus, or on the Hussite movement; that is a debate where a firm conclusion is hard to draw and can only be drawn by experts on Czech history. I shall be concerned with more factual considerations, primarily with physical books that survive to the present day, and with the tools that were created in Bohemia to make the contents of those books the more accessible. I should stress that all the manuscripts now in Bohemia are written in Bohemian hands, none in an English script; this is in sharp contrast to the few Wyclif texts found now in Italy and Spain which are mostly 'exports' from England written by English scribes. With one exception to be mentioned later, there is no reason to doubt that the Bohemian copies were written in central Europe, many almost certainly in Prague.<sup>8</sup>

Williel Thomson in his completion of his father's catalogue of Wyclif's writings lists a total of 435 works; this number is considerably inflated by counting each sermon as a separate item, and likewise each prologue and book of the *Postilla in totam Bibliam*, parts of which even in Bohemia do not survive.<sup>9</sup> More realistic would be a total of around 150 works, to which an indeterminate number of entirely lost works can be added, postulated from references to them in medieval library catalogues and elsewhere.<sup>10</sup> Of these 150 less than a dozen do not survive today in Bohemian copies, surely a very tiny proportion. Of that small group two at least (T399 and T403) are brief conclusions that may well have been put together by Wyclif's opponents rather than himself. They and two others are very short. No copy of any part of the Old Testament section of the *Postilla* that I have mentioned is known in Bohemia (parts only survive in Oxford), but the makers of the Bohemian catalogue of Wyclif's writings (to which I will return) were well aware that they lacked this material.<sup>11</sup> Wyclif's debates with Keningham (T378–380), Uthred of Boldon (T381) and William Binham (T382–383), the first a Carmelite, the second and third Benedictines, are not found in Bohemian copies; the first at least occurred early in Wyclif's career. Only two works seem to me slightly surprising absentees: T4 *De actibus anime* is a substantial work probably (as Ivan Müller has

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8) For the books now in Italy and Spain see Jeremy I. CATTO, *Some English Manuscripts of Wyclif's Latin Works*, in: *From Ockham to Wyclif*, eds. Anne Hudson – Michael Wilks, Oxford 1987 (= *Studies in Church History, Subsidia* 5), pp. 353–359, with further additions STWW Appendix II. Only ÖNB 1294 was written in England but by Bohemian scribes: see below p. 6.

9) Williel R. THOMSON, *The Latin Writings of John Wyclif: An Annotated Catalog*, Toronto 1983 – texts here are, for ease of identification, cited with Thomson's number (as T...); some corrections and additions are in STWW Appendix II.

10) For some identifiable lost works see STWW no. XVI, pp. 15–16, 29.

11) The parts wholly lost covered Genesis-Esther and parts of the Wisdom literature; other parts of the Old Testament commentary are found in Oxford Magdalen College MSS lat. 55 and 117 and St. John's College MS 171, but in no case in more than two of these three, and in most only in one of them; see T301–371.

suggested) part of a lost commentary on the *Sentences* and thus of early date,<sup>12</sup> T405 *De servitute civili et dominio seculari*, a late and contentious polemic. The first of these could have been suppressed in Wyclif's last years when, it seems clear, he was concerned to bring his multiplicity of lecture materials into a more coherent state and order – the one English copy could derive from a student's notes on the lectures themselves. The second was certainly known in Bohemia, since it appears in the Hussite catalogue, as do also the debates with Uthred and Binham.<sup>13</sup> So of around 150 works, about 140 are attested in Bohemian copies.

Looking at the position from the opposite angle, 44 of Wyclif's works survive only in Bohemian copies – nearly a third of his output. All aspects of his writing can be found in this category: logical and philosophical texts from his early years, main stream theological writings, letters (including those to the bishop of Lincoln and another to the archbishop of Canterbury), responses to attacks such as the 44 conclusions against Rymington, and a multiplicity of polemical tracts.<sup>14</sup> Most important of the texts of which we would be ignorant without Bohemian copies is probably the *De eucharistia* (T38), whose title is self-explanatory of its subject. Equally, if not more, central is that without two manuscripts now in Vienna we would lack a coherent version of Wyclif's *De civili dominio* (T28–30): two short extracts survive in manuscripts of English origin, and a student's abbreviated transcription made in Paris also exists, but without the copy in Vienna ÖNB 1340–1341 the text would be impossible to assess intelligently. Part 8 of the 12-part *Summa theologie*, the *De officio regis* (T33), is also only to be found in Bohemian copies; this despite the probability that it was intended as a *speculum regis* for the young king Richard II of England; part 9 *De potestate pape* (T34) likewise is not found complete in England.<sup>15</sup>

There is not space here to go into detail about the difficult question of how these texts reached Bohemia. It seems quite clear that many people must have been involved in this traffic: there is too much material involved for these texts all to have been in the luggage of a single traveller on one journey, or even of the two best known Bohemian *colporteurs*, Mikuláš Faulfiš and Jiří z Kněhnic who noted their own efforts in England in 1406–1407 in the margins of the manuscript now Vienna ÖNB 1294, allowing us miraculously to see one book written by Bohemians in England, containing three of Wyclif's most important works, *De dominio divino*, *De veritate sacre scripture*, *De ecclesia*.<sup>16</sup> But, even if it is hard to produce further names of the carriers of the books, it is possible to see in at least some cases that more than a single copy must have been transported. *De veritate sacre scripture* unusually survives in several copies from England and several from Bohemia; in

12) Found only in Cambridge Corpus Christi College 103; see Ivan J. MÜLLER, A "Lost" *Summa* of John Wyclif, in: From Ockham to Wyclif, pp. 179–183.

13) For the catalogue see below pp. 9–10; the last is item 12 there, the Uthred debate is item 36, the papers against Binham items 78 and 48.

14) See, for examples of the first three categories, T1, T13, T50, the letters T395 and 396, the tract against Rymington T384, and other polemical works T407, T409, T411 etc.

15) Only a brief extract is found in Trinity College Dublin 115, pp. 176–179.

16) For this story see STWW no. XIV especially pp. 233–237 and references there given.

both traditions there is a split between the copies in the text at the end of chapter 7 – some copies have a long passage, extending to a new chapter, that is not found in others.<sup>17</sup> Since the split happens at exactly the same point, and the new material where present is precisely the same, it must be concluded that a copy of each version travelled to Prague and was there disseminated. A similar, though more complicated discrepancy affects manuscripts of the *Dialogus* (T408), again pointing to multiple transmission.<sup>18</sup> Such diversity should not surprise us, and it is likely that more examples will come to light as new editions of Wyclif texts are made. It seems probable also that further editorial work on the copies now known to survive would reveal that more than a single copy of both *De benedicta incarnatione* (T22) and *De statu innocencie* (T27) were brought from England – the Bohemian derivatives differ in some notable features.<sup>19</sup>

By no means all Bohemian copies of Wyclif's works are dated. Possibly the earliest surviving dated Bohemian manuscript is that now Prague National Library III G 10, dated to 14 May 1397 containing four philosophical texts;<sup>20</sup> the same four, but not in the same order, appear written by Jan Hus himself the following year 1398, and now in Stockholm.<sup>21</sup> It is, however, clear that more of Wyclif's works were available in Prague some time before 1400: as well as less controversial material, Wyclif's final views on the eucharist were known here by 1381, as work on Nicolas Biceps has set out.<sup>22</sup> Thereafter the dated copies are fairly evenly distributed through the years before and soon after the Council of Constance; a few cluster round the Council of Basel in the 1430s; a copy of the long *Triologus* (now ÖNB 4516) is dated 1440. Many of the Bohemian manuscripts that contain Wyclif works are entirely given over to that author – that is not remarkable when the single text is as long as *Triologus* but this is more interesting when a volume includes a very large number of items.<sup>23</sup> Most remarkable are a set of seven volumes of similar size and layout, all written on parchment rather than the normal paper of Bohemian books of this date, that are now in the Vienna library (ÖNB 1337–1343). These cover the majority of Wyclif's theological and polemical writings; there is an overlap of less than five folios between the seven books, and it seems clear that the set was intended to represent the 'complete works' of the English master. An eighth from the set, covering two series of sermons not found in those in Vienna, is now in Wolfenbüttel 565, having been sent to Flacius Illyricus by von Niedbruck and

17) The evidence is set out in STWW no. IV, pp. 202–206.

18) The issue is briefly outlined in STWW no. I, pp. 11–12; the text was evidently popular, but is often carelessly set out by the scribes. The only modern edition of the *Dialogus*, ed. Alfred W. POLLARD, London 1886, is a text conflated from the evidence of only a minority of the copies now known; it is often difficult to ascertain where Pollard's readings derive from.

19) In the first case see STWW no. I, pp. 8–9, in the second STWW no. III, p. 32 at no. 93.

20) T20, 12, 11, 18; the date is given fol. 139v.

21) Stockholm Kunglig Biblioteket Lat. A. 164; the manuscript was taken to Stockholm during the Thirty Years War. For this and a full description of the two manuscripts see the edition of *De universalibus*, ed. Ivan J. MÜLLER, Oxford 1985, pp. lv–lviii.

22) See most recently Włodzimierz ZEGA, *Filozofia Boga w „Quaestiones Sententiarum” Mikołaja Bicepsa*, Warsaw 2002.

23) See for instance Prague National Library (henceforward NKP) III B 5, III F 11, IV H 9 etc., ÖNB 4504, 4505, 4527 etc.

never returned.<sup>24</sup> Minutely written at the base of flyleaves on two of the eight (1337, 1339) is the word *Lymburg* suggesting that an earlier home of the set was Nymburk, about thirty miles east of Prague.<sup>25</sup> Another possible set, though less well written and less systematically ordered, is also in Vienna, ÖNB 3927–3932. At the other end of the spectrum in terms of informality of presentation and also of variety of content is the very large number of manuscripts which look like students' notebooks, where Wyclif works, both long works and more frequently short texts, appear alongside a very wide variety of material by other authors.<sup>26</sup> Wyclif and Hus texts are found in the same volume in several cases.<sup>27</sup> Most striking is the book now NKP III B 19 where Wyclif's Sunday epistle sermons are prefixed to Hus's Sunday gospel sermons of the *Leccionarium bipartitum* series between Easter and the end of the Trinity season: no indication is given within the manuscript of the diverse origins of the two sections of each Sunday's provision; Doctor Vidmanová told me that the manuscript is one of the most authoritative of the Hus material (the same cannot be said of the Wyclif sections, which are to some extent modified and abbreviated).<sup>28</sup>

This utilization of English material by Hussite modifiers leads to other indications of the interest shown by Bohemians in the works of Wyclif. There is some sign that attempts to index some long Wyclif works began in England. But much more persistent efforts are found in Bohemian manuscripts.<sup>29</sup> It is not surprising that some of the attempts were less successful than others: to index a manuscript in such a way that the index could be transferred along with the text to another copy is difficult – except with verse texts, even the slightest variation in the size of two scribes' hands will result in increasingly discrepant pagination/foitation between an exemplar and its copy. Various systems were tried: some, numbering folios, openings or columns, may have worked for the copy for which they were originally devised but do not for others; others just used chapter numbers but these helped little with Wyclif's often very extensive chapters. Most satisfactory was the supplementation of chapter numbers by a marginal alphabetical sequence of subdividing letters, a-z (or even beyond with doubling – *aa* and so forth); crucial to this method was that the marginal material should be copied precisely along with the text. Indexes of this kind survive in around twenty Bohemian manuscripts, covering most of Wyclif's longer works; the marginal letters in other copies even when the index itself is lacking testify to the value attached to such tools. Most

24) See STWW no. XVI, pp. 30–37.

25) In ÖNB 1337 fol. 2va and 1339 front pastedown bottom left; other manuscripts in ÖNB which appear to come from the same Bohemian town are 1387 (see front parchment flyleaf recto top left), 1647 (see fol. 1v) and 4522 (see leather pasted inside front cover bottom).

26) For instance NKP III G 16, IV H 7, V E 14 etc., and Prague Metropolitan Chapter Library (henceforward APH KMK) A 84, B 17/1, C 116 etc.; much work remains to be done on these complex manuscripts.

27) See APH KMK D 123, NKP VIII G 6, ÖNB 3930.

28) See STWW no. VI, pp. 225–226, and Appendix II nos. 176–234, 297, where the details are given. See Anežka VIDMANOVÁ, *K textové tradici letní části Husova Leccionaria bipartita*, *Listy filologické* 109, 1986, pp. 147–155; since her published section of the series covers only the *pars hiemalis* (*Magistri Iohannis Hus Leccionarium bipartitum. Pars hiemalis*, ed. Anežka VIDMANOVÁ, Praha 1988), this manuscript does not appear there.

29) A fuller account of these indexes, and of the analyses or summaries that accompany many of the longer works, is in STWW no. VII.

remarkable are four manuscripts, three still in Prague, the fourth in Vienna, that contain only indexes; the fullest is now NKP X E 11 with 15 indexes.<sup>30</sup> The index to *De civili dominio*, Wyclif's longest work, extends to over five hundred columns (there fol. 231ra–359ra) – around ten thousand entries, the entries normally being verbally quite extensive. The length of time that such an index must have taken to compile is indeed daunting.

Equally astonishing is an index found in two Bohemian copies (NKP IV G 27 and ÖNB 4522) that covers biblical passages discussed in nearly forty of Wyclif's works; this does not deal with either the sermons or the *Postilla in totam Bibliam* where the biblical location is the primary principle of textual arrangement. It aims rather to make accessible those biblical passages expounded incidentally in the major philosophical, theological and polemical texts. So far as I have been able to discover, there is no trace of this index, or work towards it, in England – this seems to be a Bohemian enterprise, and the index contains around five thousand entries. The organizing principle is the biblical order, by book and chapter and then within the chapter by text sequence; references to Wyclif's works are by book and chapter and subdividing letter.<sup>31</sup>

These various indexes were evidently made to render Wyclif's long and often digressive texts more accessible. A rather different purpose seems to lie behind the catalogue of those works found now in three medieval and one later copy, all now in Vienna but all of Bohemian origin.<sup>32</sup> 115 items are given, normally with title, incipit and explicit of the text, and for longer works the number of chapters and books; for the most part the material is alphabetized by the incipit, but a final section gives the three parts of *De dominio divino* and the twelve books of the *Summa theologie* in sequence order. Comparing this catalogue with Williel Thomson's listing made over 500 years later, a handful of items in the later work are missing, and conversely a very few entries have no counterpart there: for the most part identification of the text in question is easy, and the details correspond – where they do not, divergence of textual transmission can reasonably be suggested. To find a parallel to this catalogue at the end of the medieval period is, so far as I have been able to see, impossible; even sixteenth-century bibliographers such as John Bale do not regularly give the *explicit* of the texts they list – yet this is a regular feature of this case. In its comprehensiveness the catalogue surpasses the indexes for individual works: they required only a copy of the work in question, whereas the catalogue required simultaneous access to a large number of manuscripts – only the biblical index made comparable demands. What was it intended for? It cannot have been a library finding list, since no library is mentioned and no indication of whereabouts in a physical object provided. Unfortunately the catalogue

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30) Several of the indexes in this copy are dated between October 1432 and April 1433, but it is unclear whether these refer to the original completion of the index in question, the copying in the present manuscript, or has been inherited from an earlier scribal version. Some of the indexes are in this manuscript attributed to Peter Payne; for doubts about this see STWW no. VII, pp. 333–336, but note that František ŠMAHEL accepts the ascription (see his entry *Peter Payne*, in: Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 43, Oxford 2004, pp. 208–213 atp. 210).

31) See STWW no. VII, pp. 338–340.

32) Discussion and an edition of the catalogue are given in STWW no. III.

appears without explanation, or indeed informative heading, in all four surviving copies. Presumably it represents a reference tool against which the authenticity of unascribed copies of Wyclif's multifarious works could be checked, a tool that would work even if a copy lacked title or even the beginning of the text itself. Even on its own the catalogue represents enormous testimony to the interest taken in Wyclif's works.<sup>33</sup>

## II

So far I have been reviewing the availability and circulation of Wyclif's own works, together with the various efforts made to render those works both reliable and accessible. But I would like now to turn to further material which seems to me in many respects even more remarkable: that is the evidence that texts written by Wyclif's English followers were also valued, copied and disseminated in Bohemia. Wyclif himself was, after all, a major figure: whether praised as a major thinker and reformer, or condemned as a dangerous heretic, his writings were clearly of importance. Knowledge of the ideas he set out could be gained, as the Polish writer Andrzej Galka noted, from the long quotations in Netter's *Doctrinale*, cited under systematic headings before being refuted and ridiculed by the Carmelite opponent.<sup>34</sup> In the period from 1380 up to the Council of Basel Wyclif was hard to ignore. But Wyclif's followers were not similarly familiar beyond England. Even if it is possible to understand the interest to Bohemians of some of the texts I will review, that is certainly not true of many. The letters that passed in 1410 between the English priest Richard Wyche and Jan Hus, and between the English knight Sir John Oldcastle and the Bohemian Woksa of Waldstein are only known from Bohemian sources – no trace of that contact remains in England. Yet the content of the letters make it clear that much was known on either side of the other group: the English letters were not sent 'into the blue', but to known friends with a common purpose and shared acquaintances.<sup>35</sup> Unlike these letters are a group of four letters attributed to the Scot Quentin Folkhyrd: these again survive only in Bohemia, in two Latin copies and in one manuscript of a Czech translation – but, unlike the Wyche/Oldcastle letters, they show no acquaintance with Bohemian affairs. Folkhyrd can be faintly traced in English documents; perhaps his connections with Bohemia will eventually be similarly visible.<sup>36</sup> The anonymous letter

33) A query was raised about whether the catalogue could originate as a tool for those opposed to Wyclif and his ideas, and intent on eradicating his works. This, though an interesting suggestion, seems to me unlikely. The three medieval copies (ÖNB 3933, 3935, 4514) appear in manuscripts otherwise largely devoted to copies of Wyclif's works, and there is no sign of the hostile comments that such a use would encourage; the comment on the *Postilla super totam bibliam* that 'hocce (i.e. hodie) non habetur' seems more naturally read as a regretful and hence friendly observation.

34) See Paweł KRAS, *Hussitism and the Polish Nobility*, in: Lollardy and the Gentry, pp. 183–198, and IDEM, *Wyclif's Tradition in Fifteenth Century Poland: the Heresy of Andrzej Galka of Dobczyn*, in: *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice 5*, eds. Zdeněk V. David – David R. Holeton, Prague 2004, pp. 191–210. Netter's *Doctrinale*, though written in England, was widely disseminated on the continent, and particularly through the Council of Basel: see the papers in *Thomas Netter of Walden: Carmelite, Diplomat and Theologian (c. 1372–1430)*, eds. Johan BERGSTRÖM-ALLEN – Richard COPSEY, Faversham – Rome 2009.

35) See STWW no. XIV, pp. 226–230, and the recent suggestions of František ŠMAHEL in the introduction to his edition *Magistri Hieronymi de Praga Quaestiones, Polemica, Epistulae*, Turnhout 2010 (= *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* 222), pp. lxxviii–lxxii and references there.

36) Details about the letters are in STWW no. II, p. 655.



of some English *pauperculi sacerdotes*, found in a manuscript otherwise of Wyclif works, is similarly not overtly related to Bohemian affairs.<sup>37</sup>

A much more extensive document concerning the priest Richard Wyche is to be found in a single manuscript, now NKP III G 11 – it is not extant anywhere else, but it tells a story entirely of English location: it is a long letter of Wyche to his friends, describing how he was arrested and imprisoned by bishop Skirlaw of the northern diocese of Durham, and details at length his interrogation by the bishop.<sup>38</sup> Much of the detail is particular, precisely dateable to the first decade of the fifteenth century, and tracks the bishop's attempts to persuade him to recant and to entrap Wyche in his words. The rhetoric is at times conventional, Pauline in its sources and wording, but at others personal as friends are asked to send books and money. Individuals in the bishop's retinue are named, or in some cases alluded to in terms that the recipients could doubtless interpret more fully than we can. The *bonus Wicleff* is once mentioned – probably in implicit contrast to another man always described by his office, bishop Skirlaw's chancellor – this was Robert Wyclif, probably the nephew. Why should this long, local history interest the Bohemians? It seems hard to say. Wyche, unlike Peter Payne, did not end up in central Europe; his later history up to his burning as a relapsed heretic in 1440 at Tower Hill in London is traceable, and entirely within England.

The manuscript in which Wyche's testimony appears is a remarkable one for other reasons, and seems to be one with particularly English interests. It contains a number of Wyclif's own works, mostly short and including eight sermons from the late collection the *Sermones viginti*,<sup>39</sup> most not ascribed within the manuscript but often indicated in the list of contents at the start. There are also some short works by Hus, including his 1411 *Replicacio* (fol. 148v–153v) against the English John Stokes. Four letters of Peter of Blois are present (fol. 142r–148v), without attribution; these were obviously composed at a much earlier date than the writing of the manuscript. The contents of the manuscript seem randomly ordered, though the quiring suggests that, if significant, it may reflect an exemplar made up of diverse booklets. The Wyche letter, fol. 89v–99v, appears after twelve Wyclif items. But it is then followed by an anonymously presented sermon on the text *Unde ememus panes*, John 6:5, fol. 99v–109v; the text is also anonymous in the initial list of contents. In fact it is the Latin version of the sermon preached by another Lollard, William Taylor, at St Paul's Cross in London on 21 November 1406. Only a single copy of the sermon survives in England, in English (now Oxford Bodleian MS Douce 53).<sup>40</sup> But the sermon caused a scandal when it was first preached: deal-

37) ÖNB 3932, fol. 89vb, mentioned as TGDub.8; another fifteenth-century copy is found in London British Library MS Cotton Faustina CVII, fol. 133 whence it was printed by Herbert Edward SALTER, *Snappe's Formulary and other records*, Oxford 1924 (= Oxford Historical Society, Publications vol. 80), pp. 130–132.

38) The text was printed by Frederic David MATTHEW, *The Trial of Richard Wyche*, *English Historical Review* 5, 1890, pp. 530–544; the story is more fully described in STWW no. XIV especially pp. 226–232.

39) T237, 241–244, 247.

40) The English sermon is printed as the first in my edition *Two Wycliffite Texts*, New York – Oxford 1993 (= Early English Text Society, Original Series 301), where details about Taylor's career are given; at that point I had not identified the Prague Latin version – this is noted and examined in *William Taylor's 1406 Sermon: a Postscript*, *Medium Aevum* 64, 1995, pp. 100–106.

ing with various Wycliffite views, notably on clerical possessions, the following Sunday it was opposed by Richard Alkerton who in turn was abused by Sir Robert Waterton, a friend of the king Henry IV; this brought in archbishop Arundel, whose anger Henry sought to assuage. However notorious the exchanges may have been in England, again it seems hard to explain Bohemian interest – again Taylor’s career, culminating in his burning for heresy on 2 March 1423 after a long series of investigations, is traceable and entirely in England.

Evidence concerning a third English follower of Wyclif is also extant in Bohemia, though not in the same manuscript as that dealing with Wyche and Taylor. This is William Thorpe’s account of his investigation by archbishop Arundel in August 1407; this survives in one medieval English manuscript (now Oxford, Bodleian Library Rawlinson C. 208) in the vernacular (plus a linguistically updated version in a print of c. 1532), but in Latin in two Bohemian copies (now APH KMK O 29 and ÖNB 3936) and a third is known from a fifteenth-century catalogue of Prague manuscripts but the relevant section of the manuscript is now lost (NKP IV H 17 – cat. p. 162, item P22).<sup>41</sup> Up to 1407 Thorpe’s career is traceable in England: one detail that may be important is that the two Prague travellers Faulfiš and Kněhnic note in the margins of their surviving Wyclif manuscript events that seem to refer to Thorpe’s arrest.<sup>42</sup> Thorpe’s whereabouts after 1407 are less certain: he disappears entirely from the English records. Hints may indicate that he migrated eastwards, as did Peter Payne later. In APH KMK D 49, fol. 179r–181v, appears a list of *Opiniones Wylhelmi Torp cuius librum ego habeo*: the opinions are certainly Wycliffite and are compatible with what emerges of Thorpe’s views in his conversation with Arundel. And it is tempting to connect the contents of NKP III G 11 with Thorpe: one of Wyche’s friends mentioned there is said to have married the sister of William Torp.<sup>43</sup> Is that anthology, with its strong English interests a reflection of a book Thorpe took with him to Prague? (I say reflection because the Hus items must surely have been a continental addition, and the hand is not English).

But the list of Thorpe’s opinions need not necessarily reflect Thorpe’s physical journey: Wyche and Taylor, never travelled to Bohemia. Interest here in English affairs was remarkably strong, even if the marriage of Princess Anne, daughter of Charles IV, to Richard II of England doubtless explains the presence of poems concerning her in manuscripts here, as Michael Van Dussen has recently discussed.<sup>44</sup> The marriage might also be the reason why a brief tract dealing with the justification for royal correction of errant clergy should survive again only from Bohemia (three copies NKP X E 9, ÖNB 3928 and 3932, all Wyclif manuscripts).<sup>45</sup> The evidence used consists in the various clauses of the English coronation oath;

41) The English is edited as the second item *Two Wycliffite Texts*; for evidence that NKP IV H 17 originally contained the Latin text see there p. xxvii.

42) See STWW no. XIV, pp. 234–236, and Maureen JURKOWSKI, *The Arrest of William Thorpe in Shrewsbury and the Anti-Lollard Statute of 1406*, *Historical Research* 117, 2002, pp. 273–295.

43) See the edition of Wyche’s letter (above n. 38), p. 543–540.

44) Michael VAN DUSSEN, *Three Verse Eulogies of Anne of Bohemia*, *Medium Aevum* 78, 2009, pp. 231–260.

45) See STWW no. XII.

the text seems to date from the reign of Richard II. This is one of the very few texts that the Hussite catalogue of Wyclif's writings wrongly includes (as item 37 – wrongly since the incipit in all three copies describes it as written by '*Discipulus ... Doctoris Evangelici*'). A royal connection, however, cannot explain the interest in more recondite English matters and more insignificant figures like Taylor or Wyche. The one English phrase that appears in Bohemia is the refrain of a Latin poem that deals with the events of the Blackfriars Council in 1382 when Wyclif's views were first condemned in England.<sup>46</sup> As I have attempted to show elsewhere, the poem can be very precisely dated between 15 June and 14 July 1382; its details are exact but veiled – it was clearly an insider's account, friendly to Wyclif and his followers, hostile to his opponents, and meant to satirize the latter. Can this really have been of interest in Prague? Two Bohemian copies survive (now APH KMK D 12 and ÖNB 3929, the latter a collection of Wyclif texts).

More comprehensible was the interest taken in Bohemia in the Wycliffite set of *distinctiones* known as the *Floretum* and in its abbreviated form as the *Rosarium*. These texts, on which Doctor Kejř and I published independently and almost simultaneously, gained wide circulation both in England and in Bohemia.<sup>47</sup> It was an alphabetical set using subjects of moral, legal, theological and ecclesiological interest and quoting, always with precise reference, from a wide variety of sources, biblical, canon law, patristic, and a few medieval authors. Most strikingly, it also quoted from Wyclif's works: in the longest version there are some 180 quotations, in the shorter *Rosarium* fewer but still around 22.<sup>48</sup> The date of its compilation in England can be fixed by the fact that it quotes Wyclif's *Opus evangelicum*, finished as the colophon to three manuscripts specifies only at Wyclif's death 31 December 1384, whilst the writing of one English manuscript is dated by its scribe to 1396. In Bohemia about 19 copies of the *Floretum* and 23 of the *Rosarium* are known – and it still seems reasonable to think that more may be found. The dated copies come from 1413 to 1459; certain textual similarities of all Bohemian as against all English copies suggest that a single antecedent of each brought from England was the source of the majority here. The advantages of both forms was the ease of finding basic material on a variety of topics that might be discussed in sermons, tracts or academic exercises; despite the frequent quotation of Wyclif, for the most part the entries are not extreme. It is clear in England that these compilations

46) The poem was printed from an English manuscript by Thomas WRIGHT, *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. 1, London 1859, pp. 253–263; I have discussed it in *Peter Pateshull: One-Time Friar and Poet?*, in: *Interstices, Studies in Middle English and Anglo-Latin Texts in Honour of A. G. Rigg*, eds. Richard Firth Green – Linne R. Mooney, Toronto 2004, pp. 167–183. The non-Bohemian copies are London British Library Cotton Cleopatra B.II, fol. 60–63, Oxford Bodleian Library Digby 98, fol. 195r–v and Vatican Pal. lat. 994, fol. 159v–160v.

47) See Jiří KEJŘ, „*Rosarius*“ – *domnělé dílo slovenského husity*, *Studie o rukopisech* 14, 1975, pp. 83–110 and IDEM, *Ještě jednou o „Rosariu“*, *Studie o rukopisech* 15, 1976, pp. 103–106; my papers were *A Lollard Compilation and the Dissemination of Wycliffite Thought*, *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 23 1972, pp. 65–81 and *A Lollard Compilation in England and Bohemia*, *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 25, 1974, pp. 129–140, both reprinted in *Lollards and their Books*, London 1985, pp. 13–29 and 30–42. Since then important work has been done on the text; further Bohemian copies are identified in Stanislav PETR, *The new Floretum – Rosarium manuscripts founded in libraries of Czech and Moravian chateaux*, *Studie o rukopisech* 30, 1993–1994, pp. 29–50, and Thomas KRZENEC, *Die Bautzener Hussitica der ehemaligen Gersdorfschen Bibliothek*, *Studie o rukopisech* 31, 1995–1996, pp. 153–190.

48) They are listed by Christina VON NOLCKEN, *Notes on Lollard Citation of John Wyclif's Writings*, *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 39, 1988, pp. 411–437.

circulated in orthodox as well as radical circles: copies are, for instance, known to have been held by All Souls College in Oxford and four by the brothers' library at Syon Bridgettine house.<sup>49</sup>

Much more difficult to explain are many aspects of my last example of works from England now found in Bohemian copies – and this one is only found in Bohemia. It is a commentary on the Apocalypse known from its opening words as the *Opus arduum*, and thirteen Bohemian copies survive, a fragment of a Czech translation, and an abbreviated version made from it was put out in 1528 from Wittenberg with a preface suggested to be by Luther.<sup>50</sup> The commentary is strongly influenced by Wyclif's ideas, preoccupations and outlook, though it never quotes him by name, and mentions him only once. Within the text the author tells us a lot about himself, but not his name: he explains that he is writing in prison to which he has been assigned by the bishops because of his theological and ecclesiological views which they regard as heretical; he also specifies that the commentary was written between Christmas 1389 and Easter 1390 (7 April). The Bohemian copies are for the most part undated, but one (now Brno, Moravská zemská knihovna, Mk 28) was dictated in 1415, and the latest (now Karlsruhe, Landesbibliothek 346) seems paleographically to be attributable to the early sixteenth century. Here we have a much more outspoken text, and also one where the English interests are much more prominent: one of the most frequent subjects of polemic is the Despenser Crusade of 1383 – an English attempt to support the pope Urban VI against the antipope Clement VII that went badly wrong in Flanders.<sup>51</sup> Wyclif and his followers saw this enterprise, led by the bishop of Norwich and financed by offerings of the pious that had been vigorously solicited by the friars, as paradigmatic for all they regarded as corrupt in the contemporary church. The text remains unedited, but so far as a selective survey of the copies reveals, there is apparently no attempt to bring the text up to date by substituting later stories, nor to adapt it to its new homeland or the concerns that might be relevant there.

### III

My survey must stop there in some bafflement. It is easy to identify the issues I have deliberately not raised: I have not looked at the range or extent of Hus's quotation of or reference to Wyclif's works, let alone considered whether he used the *Floretum/Rosarium*. I have not gone on to examine whether later Hussite writers were influenced by the *Opus arduum* or allude to the stories of Wyche, Taylor

49) Neil Ripley KER, *Records of All Souls College Library 1437–1600*, Oxford 1971, p. 6, no. 78; *Syon Abbey*, ed. Vincent GILLESPIE, London 2001 (= Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 9), nos. 695, 717, 723–724, 1137.

50) I discussed the text briefly in *A neglected Wycliffite text*, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 29, 1978, pp. 257–279, reprinted in *Lollards and their Books*, pp. 43–66; its interest was explored further by Curtis V. BOSTICK, *The Antichrist and the Lollards: Apocalypticism in Late Medieval and Reformation England*, Leiden 1998, especially pp. 76–113.

51) For this crusade see my comments in the edition of *English Wycliffite Sermons*, 5 vols., Oxford 1983–1996, vol. IV, pp. 146–151 and references.

or Thorpe.<sup>52</sup> I have here failed to investigate the question of the early travellers to England who brought back the texts, and perhaps most strikingly I have not trespassed into the territories that Frantisek Šmahel has so closely analysed – the careers Jerome of Prague from Bohemia and of Peter Payne from England.<sup>53</sup> My survey has been long, and perhaps less than exciting in its relentless details. But I hope that its very length, and the scholarly interest demonstrated by the Bohemian use of originally English materials, is cumulatively significant. A comparably speedy migration of texts, texts of a wide variety of forms, over such a distance would, I think, be hard to parallel, as would the persistence and frequency of the copying of works so far from home, particularly when there is little to suggest interest by scholars on the long route from England to Prague.<sup>54</sup> What has, I hope, become clear is the necessity for any English academic seriously interested in Wyclif and Lollardy to come frequently to Bohemia, and particularly to Prague.

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52) Use of the *Opus arduum* is noted in Amedeo MOLNÁR, *Apocalypse XII dans l'interprétation hussite*, *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 45, 1965, pp. 212–231, and by Howard KAMINSKY, *Nicholas of Pelhřimov's Tabor: an Adventure into the Eschaton*, in: *Eschatologie und Hussitismus*, eds. Alexander Patschovsky – František Šmahel, Praha 1996, pp. 139–167.

53) See his biography (above n. 30) and most recently the magnificent account of Jerome in the introduction to his works (above n. 35).

54) Wyclif's logical and philosophical work was certainly of interest in Italy: see the papers in *English Logic in Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, ed. Alfonso MAIERÙ, Naples 1982, and amongst more recent studies notably Alessandro D. CONTI, *Esistenza e verità*, Rome 1996. Apart from that, the student's dated but abbreviated copy of *De civili dominio* in Paris Bibliothèque nationale ms. latin 15869 is evidence of discussion in Paris in 1381 of Wyclif's most challenging text.