

## The “Leipzig libellus” in Zwickau<sup>1</sup>

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In their 2009 study *A Remarkable Witness to the Feast of Saint Jan Hus*,<sup>2</sup> David HOLETON and Hana VLHOVÁ-WÖRNER analyze a precious manuscript that contained a liturgy to the feast of John Hus (July 6), including several hitherto unknown items. They edit the whole contents in an appendix, using photographs of the manuscript which František Michálek Bartoš had made for himself.<sup>3</sup> They do not date the manuscript, only note that it is “written in a typical Bohemian Semihybridica Currens”. They also observe that the hand and the size suggest that the manuscript was not used in liturgy. They call the manuscript “Leipzig libellus” because the photographs Bartoš had made have the stamps of the photographic workshop of the Leipzig University Library, and because, as they state, Bartoš refers to the manuscript as Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, XI B 1. Nevertheless, they could not locate the manuscript, and the university library in Leipzig reported that it never

1) Research leading to this study was supported by the Czech Science Foundation through the project “Creative Copying: Miscellanies of Ulricus Crux de Telcz (d. 1504)”, no. 17-06326S, which was carried out at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Prague. Although Crux of Telč is never mentioned in this study, I made the finding presented here while searching for other extant copies of a song on John Hus (inc. *Rex regum, Ihesu Christe*) that Crux copied in his miscellany (State Regional Archives in Třeboň, ms. A 16, fol. 43rv). I am grateful to Ota Halama for all the information on the manuscript photographs and the notes kept in the library of the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Prague, as well as to Gregor Hermann from the Ratsschulbibliothek in Zwickau for sending me the manuscript copies.

2) David R. HOLETON – Hana VLHOVÁ-WÖRNER, *A Remarkable Witness to the Feast of Saint Jan Hus*, *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* 7, 2009 (= *Filosofický časopis*, Supplement 1), pp. 156–184c.

3) If indeed made for Bartoš, the photographs must have been made before 1972, when he died.

owned a manuscript with such shelf mark. The valuable conclusions of HOLETON and VLHOVÁ-WÖRNER have been taken over by Ota Halama,<sup>4</sup> Phillip Haberkern<sup>5</sup> and others, all referring to the manuscript as unfortunately lost.

Nevertheless, the manuscript is extant: it is kept in Zwickau, in the Ratsschulbibliothek, under the shelf mark Cod. Mus. 118.2. The manuscript was surely in Zwickau already in the year 1896, when a catalogue of the musical manuscripts from this library was published, which includes its description.<sup>6</sup> In my opinion, the most likely possibility is that it was never held by the Leipzig University Library, it was only temporarily transferred there in order to be photographed.

But where would the shelf mark XI B 1 associated with the “Leipzig libellus” have its origin then? As Ota Halama notes, the folder which contains the “Leipzig libellus” photographs also contains a transcription of a notation (in a handwriting different than that of František Michálek Bartoš, according to Ota Halama) labeled “Univ. XI B 1”. The link between the photographs and the shelf mark is thus actually weaker than HOLETON and VLHOVÁ-WÖRNER claimed. Ondřej Dobisík noticed that the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague, formerly referred to as the National and University Library, keeps graduals from the year 1578 under the shelf mark XI B 1a-d containing, among other items, the *Officium super Vias tuas, Domine* for the veneration of John Hus and Jerome of Prague. It thus seems most likely that the label “Univ. XI B 1” referred to the shelf mark of the National Library in Prague,<sup>7</sup> not the university library in Leipzig (where there never was such a shelf mark).

The Ratsschulbibliothek codex Mus. 118.2 today consists of three originally separate parts in octavo format. They all contain chants, texts, and orders for the liturgical service. The office for the feast of John Hus is the third part, on fol. 33r–53r.<sup>8</sup> Its very specific manuscript title, *Historia Ioannis Huss maximi patroni<sup>9</sup> Bohemie*, suggests, because it has the double “s” in “Huss”, which in fact looks very much like

4) Ota HALAMA, *Svatý Jan Hus*, Praha 2015.

5) Most recently in Phillip HABERKERN, *Patron Saint and Prophet: Jan Hus in the Bohemian and German Reformations*, Oxford 2016, pp. 132–134. See also IDEM, *Iron and Fire: The Vehicles of Memory in Fifteenth-Century Bohemia*, *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* 9, 2014 (= *Filosofický časopis*, Special Issue 1/2014), pp. 138–151.

6) The manuscript description is very brief here: Reinhard VOLLHARDT, *Bibliographie der Musik-Werke in der Ratsschulbibliothek zu Zwickau*, Leipzig 1896 (= Beilage zu den Monatsheften für Musikgeschichte 1893–1896), p. 114, no. 191 (118,2).

7) The manuscripts of the National Library in Prague were originally the manuscripts of the University library in Prague, and they are referred to in this way in the catalogue by Josef Truhlář that is still in use – thus, the shelf mark “Univ.” is in place here.

8) The first two parts are: *Prefatio quotidiana solemniter (In nativitate, Epiphania, Pasche, Ascensione etc.)*, i. e. tropes for Kyrie etc., further prefaces, *Forma consecrandi in missa ex institutione Christi* (all in square notation, fol. 1r–22r) and *Officii misse memoria pro [...] Episcopum Wratislaviensis*, copy of parts of the Missale Numburgense, *Memoria vivorum in missa* (text only, fol. 23r–32r).

9) HOLETON and VLHOVÁ-WÖRNER correct *maximi patroni* into *maximus patronus*, but that is wrong, as the genitive case is used here (D. R. HOLETON – H. VLHOVÁ-WÖRNER, *A Remarkable Witness*, p. 160, note 22).

an “ß” in the manuscript, that the scribe was German rather than Czech.<sup>10</sup> In fact, already the catalogue from 1896 describes the notation as “deutsche Choralnote”. The catalogue even identifies the hand – a single person copied all three parts of the current manuscript: Stephan Roth (1492–1546) in 1520s.

Stephan Roth was a curious and important figure – he was a city scribe and later councilor in Zwickau, a corrector, translator, and editor, famous especially for his huge library (over 6,000 volumes, left to the Ratsschulbibliothek), as well as for his contacts and rich correspondence with a number of important contemporary personalities, including Martin Luther (over 4,000 extant letters).<sup>11</sup> At the beginning of his career, after his studies at the University of Leipzig, he also worked as a schoolmaster in Zwickau and in Czech Jáchymov (St. Joachimsthal, where he was in 1521–1522).<sup>12</sup> In 1523–1527, he studied theology by Melancton and Luther in Wittenberg. Further research will hopefully establish more precisely where and when exactly Roth might have encountered his model for his “Leipzig libellus”.

This new finding does not diminish the analysis of Holeton and Vlhová-Wörner in any way, it only provides a more accurate context for Hus’s office and the reception of the Czech reform in early modern Germany – a topic that has been dealt with so far without considering this piece of the puzzle.<sup>13</sup> In addition, it provides a rare occasion to rejoice the recovery of a manuscript that was supposed to be lost.

10) Holeton and Vlhová-Wörner transcribe *Huss* as *Hus*, silently correcting the scribe (Ibidem, pp. 160 and 167).

11) For the most recent biography and further references, see *Stephan Roth 1492–1546. Stadtschreiber in Zwickau und Bildungsbürger der Reformationszeit*, ed. Regine METZLER, Leipzig 2008. Our manuscript is not mentioned in this book.

12) About Roth in Jáchymov, see Dietmar SCHUBERT, *Ein Humanist aus Berufung – Stephan Roth im “Thal”*, in: *St. Joachimsthal in der Zeit Georgius Agricola. Zur Geschichte einer Bergstadt im 16. Jahrhundert / Jáchymov v době Georgius Agricolus. K dějinám horního města v 16. století*, Schneeberg – Karlovy Vary 1994, pp. 21–22 (Czech version on pp. 72–73).

13) Cf. e. g. Zdeněk DAVID, *The Strange Fate of Czech Utraquism: The Second Century, 1517–1621*, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, 1995, pp. 641–668, or Petr HLAVÁČEK, *Die Eliten Nordwestböhmens in der kirchenpolitischen und theologischen Interaktion mit sächsischen Universitäten der Reformationszeit*, *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 49/2, 2009, pp. 151–154.