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**“Že sou ti mezi jinými nejpravější”  
[That They Are the Most Righteous Ones  
Among the Others]: Confessional rapprochement  
at the Diet of 1575 as portrayed in the *Diarium*  
of the Bohemian Brethren<sup>1</sup>**

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The Diet of 1575 has been recognised as a high point in rapprochement between the Utraquists, Lutherans, and the Unity of the Brethren and an important moment in the political history of Bohemia.<sup>2</sup> Since 1436, the Bohemian estates had insisted that the Crown acknowledge the *Compactata*, the compromise agreement reached that year between the Council of Basel and the Utraquists. Beginning in 1567 the estates no longer insisted on this and instead issued general statements calling for the protection of the religious order and the upholding of earlier agreements. In 1571 the estates proposed the approval of the Augsburg Confession, but King Maximilian II closed down discussions. In 1575 the estates saw an opportunity to re-open the discussions at the upcoming diet since the king was eager to get approval for a tax reform and have his son Rudolf II chosen as his successor. Although the Augsburg Confession was raised at the beginning of the Diet of 1575, the call soon changed for the drafting and approval of a Bohemian Confession. For some scholars, the Diet of 1575 represents a step towards the break-up of the Bohemian Reformation into groups and the absorption of some Bohemian religious groups into the Lutheran movement.<sup>3</sup> For others,

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers of the original version of this paper that was presented at the BRRP 9 Symposium. This revised version has integrated many of the suggestions of the reviewers. Some additional suggestions, including more comparison with Sixt of Ottersdorf's *Diarium* and further explication of the motives and positions of individuals and groups in the difficult text of the *Diarium* of the Brethren, would have required a significant expansion of this paper beyond the scope of a published conference presentation. The author intends to further develop these issues in the future.

<sup>2</sup> Ferdinand Hrejsa, *Česká konfese, její vznik, podstata a dějiny* [The Bohemian Confession: Its Origin, Substance, and History] (Prague, 1912); Hrejsa, VI, 266–333; Anton Gindely, *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*, v. 2 (Prague, 1861; new printing Osnabrück, 1968) 109–229; Josef Janáček, *Rudolf II. A jeho doba* [Rudolph II and His Time] (Prague, 1987) 98–113; Jaroslav Pánek, *Stavovská opozice a její zápas s Habsburky 1547–1577, k politické krizi feudální třídy v předbělohorském českém státě* [Opposition of the Estates and Their Struggle with the Habsburgs, 1547–1577: A Political Crisis of the Feudal Class in the Bohemian State during the Pre-White Mountain Era] (Prague, 1982); David, *Finding*, 168–197.

<sup>3</sup> František Kutnar and Jaroslav Marek, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepiscetví* [A Survey of History of Czech and Slovak Historiography] (First published in 1973 and 1978; Prague, 1997) 293.

these developments represent an example of the affirmation of the Bohemian Reformation.<sup>4</sup>

Two fairly extensive accounts exist of negotiations surrounding the Diet: the *Diarium* (a sort of daily log of events and negotiations) of Sixt of Ottersdorf, the spokesmen of the estate of royal cities at the Diet, who had close ties to Utraquist circles, examined at the last symposium;<sup>5</sup> and another *Diarium* written by individuals associated with the Brethren, which is the subject of this contribution.<sup>6</sup> Having two accounts puts us in a fortunate position to be able to study critically the interplay between confession and estate politics in 1575 at a level which we cannot do for many other segments of the sixteenth century. Sixt of Ottersdorf presents an objective, even distant tone in his *Diarium*, even though he was a major participant in the negotiations.<sup>7</sup> What are we to expect from a *Diarium* of the Brethren? Something just as seemingly objective or partisan? It seems that the scholarship is somewhat divided on the Brethren. On the one hand, Anton Gindely, Peter Brock, and other scholars tell us that the Brethren were “the true representatives of Hussitism” and a progressive social and political group.<sup>8</sup> A similar view of the Brethren exists for the early seventeenth century, which is reflected in the persona and work of Jan Amos Comenius.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, a different, more critical, and sometimes less flattering view of the Brethren can be found in the work of other scholars such as Zdeněk David.<sup>10</sup>

The objective of this contribution is to examine in one key text how the Brethren portray themselves, other religious groups, and confessional boundaries and relations at one particular moment. It will be shown that in the *Diarium*, entries, and correspondence, the authors present a strong partisan position and tone, and portray themselves as the ‘truest’ (*nejpravější*) descendants of the Hussite tradition and all contemporary religious groups. While the strong partisan tone makes one pause and question the usefulness of these sources, it will be argued that the *Diarium*, entries, and correspondence of

<sup>4</sup> David, *Finding*, 1–17; Hrejsa provides a somewhat different view, VI, 53–359.

<sup>5</sup> “Diarium Sixta z Ottersdorfu o sněmu 1575, jenž zahájen byl 21. února a zavřin dne 27. září,” [The *Diarium* of Sixt of Ottersdorf on the Diet of 1575 Which Began on 21 February and Closed on 27 September] *Sněmy české od léta 1526 až po naši dobu*, [Czech Diets from the Year 1526 to Our Time] IV (Prague 1886) 318–392; James Palmitessa, “Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium* of the Diet of 1575,” *BRRP* 8:262–281.

<sup>6</sup> “Diarium, zápisy o sněmování a listové o událostech za času sněmu r. 1575 zběhlých, napsané od Bratří českých,” [Diarium, Records of Diet Sessions and Documents Concerning the Events Occurring during the Diet of 1575, Written by the Bohemian Brethren] *SČ* IV, 392–464.

<sup>7</sup> Palmitessa, “Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium* of the Diet of 1575,” 277–281.

<sup>8</sup> Gindely, *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*; Peter Brock, *The Political and Social Doctrines of the Unity of the Brethren in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries* (S-Gravenhage, 1957) 11–24.

<sup>9</sup> Jaroslav Pánek, ed., *Comenius in world Science and Culture* (Prague, 1991).

<sup>10</sup> David, *Finding the Middle Way*, 10–11.

the Brethren provide some valuable information on the activities of groups, such as the royal cities, in the negotiations, which are not found in other sources, including the *Diarium* of Sixt of Ottersdorf, and corroborate and expand on other information found in Sixt of Ottersdorf's *Diarium* and other sources on the character of the negotiations and the religious climate in Bohemia at the beginning of the fourth quarter of the sixteenth century, indicating a widespread fear among Bohemian Protestants of Jesuits activities.

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The *Diarium* is published in volume IV of the *Sněmy české* (from 1886) based on a version of the *Diarium* which the editors of *Sněmy české* state was located in what is now the National Museum.<sup>11</sup> The printed edition comprises seventy-two pages in small font and is collectively titled by the editors as "*Diarium* and entries of the Diet and correspondence that took place around the Diet of 1575, written by the Bohemian Brethren."<sup>12</sup> An examination of the text itself confirms that within these pages are, in fact, three separate sources or collections of sources related to each other in subject: a *diarium*, a number of entries or reports, and correspondence. With twenty-two pages the *Diarium per se* is a relatively short document. However, by counting the entries and correspondence, the total is just two pages shorter than Sixt of Ottersdorf's *Diarium*.

Sixt of Ottersdorf's *Diarium* contains a large, sequential list of entries spanning from 21 February to 28 September 1575.<sup>13</sup> The dating in the *Diarium* of the Brethren is less clear; the first entry is dated 21 February 1575 but some of the others refer to "the next day" or "that evening" without a clear reference point to a certain date. However, the entries and correspondence are clearly dated with the last one on the "Friday after the Feast of St. Matthew [i.e. 23 September]" which ends with the statement "and with that, after the conclusion of the Diet, they drove away."<sup>14</sup>

Authorship is also less clear. The authors of all or almost all of the entries and correspondence are named, such as Brother Štefan and Jan Žerotín the Elder. However, the author of the *Diarium* itself is not named, but refers to himself/herself simply in the first person. He or she clearly identifies with the Brethren by referring a few times to "we" and "our people." (*naši, naši páni*); as opposed to the other times when the terms the "party-in-two kinds" and "party-in-one kind" are used to refer to Utraquist and Roman Catholic estate factions, and Calixtines (*Calixtini*) and Romans (*Římani*) are used to refer

<sup>11</sup> Listed as "Souč. MS. Bratrský sign. 2. G. 20 v museu království Českého," SČ IV, 392.

<sup>12</sup> See "Diarium napsané od Bratří českých."

<sup>13</sup> The first entry is for "the Monday after the Sunday *Invocavit*" [First Sunday of Lent] [i.e. 2 March that year] and the last for "Wednesday, St. Wenceslaus's Day [28 September]" SČ IV, 318, 391.

<sup>14</sup> "A s tĕm po snĕmu rozjeli." SČ IV, 464.

specifically to the Utraquists and Roman Catholics, respectively, as confessional communities. It is clear that the author is not just a member of the Brethren but a member with close connections to Brethren leaders throughout the kingdom and to those participating in the negotiations in Prague, and who served as a liaison between these two groups. This is illustrated, for example, in a particularly tense meeting, when the author writes, “I went downstairs as lunch was being served and stopped by Dr. Crato and had lunch with him.”<sup>15</sup> This was probably Johann Crato von Krafftheim, Emperor Maximilian II’s personal physician, who later personally submitted the Bohemian Confession to the emperor.<sup>16</sup> The author continues “I told him that the Bohemian lords have asked the emperor for some kind of reformation... he then asked if our people from the Brethren were among those who asked. After dinner he wrote out some instructions which I translated into Czech for our lords.”<sup>17</sup> The next day, pointing to a more active role of the Brethren, the author writes: “I then went upstairs with Lord Slavata and asked him how it [the negotiations]...were going with the emperor?”<sup>18</sup>

The style of the *Diarium* is informal, at times like that of a modern society reporter who reports on a few occasions how, for example, the group went into pubs (*hospody*) after a negotiation and continued discussions that, in one case, turned into commotion (*rumrejš*).<sup>19</sup> Nothing like that appears in Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*. The structure is also informal with no attempt at uniformity or regularity. There could be reports for three days and then nothing for a longer period. One entry may discuss one theme and then switch to another. Also noteworthy is the unabashed lack of objectivity of the *Diarium*, a feature which is also related to the informal style and structure. While the author discusses the roles and views of other individuals and groups, the clear focus –at times the foreground and other times in the background – is on how negotiations impacted the Brethren, what role the Brethren play, should play, and should not play.

These issues of structure, authorship, style, and objectivity make it difficult to classify the genre of the work. Like Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*, the *Diarium* of the Brethren does not neatly fall into any of the clearly delineated genres of early modern historical scholarship, described by Zdeněk Beneš – namely histories, chronicles, historical calendars, registers, and annals – but rather to what Beneš calls a *silva rerum*, a composite genre containing a collection of documents, collected or commented on by a single author for a stated purpose.<sup>20</sup> However, while there is a sharp demarcation in Sixt of

<sup>15</sup> SČ IV, 396.

<sup>16</sup> David, *Finding*, 178, who quotes Hrejsa, VI:277, 300; and Tomek, *Dějepis* 12:236.

<sup>17</sup> SČ IV, 396.

<sup>18</sup> SČ IV, 398.

<sup>19</sup> SČ IV, 399.

<sup>20</sup> The argument for viewing Sixt of Ottersdorf’s work as a *silva rerum* can be found in Palmitessa, “Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*,” 267; Zdeněk Beneš, *Historický text a historická*

Ottersdorf's work between those entries which seem merely to report events and those in which he provides subjective commentary, no such clear demarcation exists in the *Diarium* of the Brethren.<sup>21</sup> So-called objective reporting and subjective commentary switch back and forth between sentences and within sentences.

Zdeněk David has pointed to the *Diarium* as an example of the idiosyncratic character of the historical writings of the Brethren.<sup>22</sup> The *Diarium* is indeed an idiosyncratic document for all the reasons of style, structure, and objectivity explained above. However, it is not a disorganised ideologically ridden diatribe either. This becomes clear when one realises that the author of *Diarium* was not attempting to create something like an historical chronicle, but to lay out a partisan position, intended primarily for internal purposes of the Brethren.

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This section will now describe some of the key elements of the programme of this in-group. In the descriptions in the *Diarium* of the negotiations and discussions surrounding negotiations, which admittedly are not comprehensive, there is a conscious effort to paint clearly a picture of the broader historical context and importance of the key issues surrounding the negotiations, and the place of the Brethren and other confessional groups within this context. The picture is a coherent one.

In describing one of the opening sessions of the Diet, the author recounts a meeting of the estates sub utraque in the Green Chamber of the Castle in which the Chief Justice (*Nejvyšší Súdí*) stepped forward and announced that "it would be good to begin with those things that touch our soul and relate to the salvation of every individual... in order that we, the party sub utraque, of the real body and blood, ask above all for that true and old religion that sustains us which was given us by Jesus and which was taught by the apostles, our holy fathers, which also went into bordering lands, especially the German lands, from which we Bohemians received and expanded it."<sup>23</sup> For those who are familiar with texts coming out of the Bohemian religious milieu, this may sound pretty formulaic and it probably is. However, in comparing the speeches in the *Diarium* of the Brethren with those in Sixt of Ottersdorf's work, even in those cases when you can match up negotiations, the speeches are never the same, so one needs to consider that through style, omission or addition, one encounters the voice of the diarist as much as the person

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*skutečnost. Studie o principech českého humanistického dějepisectví* [Historical Text and Historical Reality. A Study of the Principles of Czech Humanistic Historiography] [Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Philosophia et Historica, Monographia CXXI] (Prague, 1992) 18–22.

<sup>21</sup> See Palmitessa, "Sixt of Ottersdorf *Diarium* of the Diet of 1575," 267.

<sup>22</sup> David, *Finding*, 169.

<sup>23</sup> SČ IV, 392.

giving the speech. For example, this is the case with the segment of the passage cited above, namely to “begin with those things that touch our soul and relate to the salvation of every individual.” While the speech at hand is addressed to the broader Utraquist confessional political faction, the language here is reminiscent of the writing of Brethren leaders in the correspondence section, which calls us to read all the more critically. The Chief Justice goes on to say that “all the estates had submitted to Emperor Charles V in the Augsburg Confession the sum of this teaching and religion. First we must see the need to call to and unite ourselves in the true and Christian religion and then go to the estates-in-one-kind in all love and good friendship, which we want to remain according to old agreements.”<sup>24</sup> In other places, Jan Hus is also mentioned as the person who had “renewed the true and old religion which has continued up until now.”<sup>25</sup> This has likely been noted by others, but I find it interesting that the Utraquists (or the Brethren describing Utraquist tradition?) seek to create historical connection between themselves and the Lutherans in a way similar to how Luther invoked Hus in the Leipzig Dispute by talking about how he [Luther] stood on the shoulders of giants. Here, the Bohemians are not strictly identifying themselves with Lutheran teaching but presenting themselves as part of an historical tradition of renewal, rather than just recipients of a religion and innovation from elsewhere.

In his discussion with Dr. Crato the author tells him that “most [of the Bohemian estate members] tend towards the Augsburg Confession.”<sup>26</sup> In a later discussion, the High Burgrave (*Purkrabí*) Lord of Rožmberk, a member of the Catholic party said to Jindřich Kurcpach, a member of the Utraquist party, that “the brothers agree to the Augsburg Confession, but do not come to terms with it...and he also complained that they do not bow when the name of God is said but just go on with their preaching. With that [the author reports that] Karel Krajčír stepped forward and denied it and said that is not true [that they don’t bow when God’s name is said],” but avoided responding to the question about their stance towards the Augsburg Confession.<sup>27</sup> In a letter dated 17 March in the section of miscellaneous sources, Brother Štefan writes that enough was not said at the meeting “It should have been [repeated]...that the purity of God’s teaching took place not just in bordering lands but also in this kingdom until Hus and after him and [only actually] began in the German lands through Luther with which our ancestors agreed in the leading articles.” Brother Štefan goes on to say that because the Brethren are closest to the Lutherans, they have had to suffer greatly and accept evil until now. “However, “they accepted this with patience, did not stop loving their nation (*národ*), and cleansed themselves from slander.” In another letter,

<sup>24</sup> SČ IV, 392.

<sup>25</sup> SČ IV, 393.

<sup>26</sup> SČ IV, 396.

<sup>27</sup> SČ IV, 393–394.

Brother Štefan writes that “our affairs are older than the Lutheran’s, our congregation (*shromáždění*) came together first, we suffered first, we preached against well-established custom, and produced larger numbers. They submitted to Charles in the year [15]30 the Augsburg Confession, we presented ours to Vladislav in 1503 and again in 1507 and to Ludvík in [15]24.”<sup>28</sup>

Brother Štefan makes an odd, but interesting remark at the end of first letter that “the Calixtines (*Calixtini*) want to come to an agreement with the Jesuits. Oh, they are leaders of even greater perverts; those should enjoy them who are administered by them.”<sup>29</sup> On these last items, Brother Kalek responds to Štefan: “strange are the ways which our Lord does not speak. Amen. In short, everyone wants to harm us. But our Lord will slowly destroy those who have pulled away and mixed themselves up... etc.”<sup>30</sup>

Some of the words are quite strong, but one should be reminded that most of these words come from the private correspondence between Brethren, not from the author of the *Diarium* of the Brethren, who, while being partisan, does not engage in such ideologically inflammatory remarks. In fact, the author of the *Diarium* presents a view of hopeful expectations at the outset of the negotiations that a Bohemian Confession can be approved and the Brethren’s situation improved. In addition, rather than talking of “us” versus “them”, which resonates in the private correspondence, there are reports of some praise of the Brethren by others.

On the Tuesday of the second week of the first meeting of the estates, the author reports that Emperor Maximilian II invited the party of the estates-in-two-kinds to a discussion and gave them “the reply in the most dearest way that they should come together around religion and create a certain order (*řad*). Afterwards the estates returned to the Green Room and the Chief Justice in reporting back to those who were not in the meeting with the emperor... stated that we have waited a long time, and never before have we been able to negotiate in such a free way about religion as now.” With that, they decided to go into the Justice Chamber and meet with the Romans.”<sup>31</sup> “I then went upstairs with Lord Slavata and asked him how they [negotiations] were going with the emperor... He [Lord Slavata] said that he opened up to Lord Rožmberk that he was a Brother and told him not to say so to the emperor that it is not time for that and he took that advice. In following Lord Slavata to the house of the Lord of Neuhaus (*z Hradce*), I stopped by alone at the house of Dr. Crato to tell him what had happened. He then said that after the Bohemians left, there was much talk from the emperor that there are major differences between all those sub utraque, however the truest (*nejpravější*) are the Brethren” to which Lord Šenkfeldt, an imperial secretary, said: “Dear

<sup>28</sup> SČ IV, 416.

<sup>29</sup> SČ IV, 415.

<sup>30</sup> SČ IV, 416.

<sup>31</sup> SČ IV, 397–398.

Emperor, I hold to that too!”<sup>32</sup> The emperor’s statement is reported again at a later place in the *Diarium*.<sup>33</sup>

The author goes on to talk about the Brethren’s strategy. “While our people were still up there [with the emperor] it was told to them that there would be a meeting at twenty o’clock at Lord Sluzský’s house which did take place and to which many of our people in the Old City came, except those who were on the Castle Hill and Small Side... And when we gathered, after first praying... we discussed what should happen the next day... Everyone was told what Brother Jan Kalef had said the previous Friday. First, in order to hinder any rift (*roztržka*) between the Lutherans and members of the Consistory, it was ordered that religious matters not be disturbed... and then they agreed that our lords would communicate carefully with the Lutherans to prevent the Romans from going to the emperor...”<sup>34</sup> After discussions about future articles, “they all went to pubs.”<sup>35</sup>

At negotiations a few days later any earlier hopes the Brethren may have had were discouraged. According to the diarist, the Chief Justice began negotiations even though some participants such as the Praguers and masters of the university were at another meeting. The Chief Justice noted that the emperor had requested that they consider reading and accepting the Augsburg Confession and that other sects, such as the Calvinists, Zwinglians, Arians, Tridentines, and Anabaptists would also read and join in the mix and no longer be persecuted in this kingdom. Karel Krajř spoke up and asked for a reading of the Confession of the Brethren which, he reminded them, was older than the Augsburg Confession. The Chief Justice responded that it would be dangerous to accept something other than that which had been presented. The author continues that “a commotion took place and everyone spoke up... so that they could not hear each other speak and then the Chief Justice cried out and ordered that the Augsburg Confession would be read first and then it would be discussed.”<sup>36</sup> “And then someone began to read it aloud from the lectern... After it was read Lord Slavata spoke up and asked that the Confession of the Brethren also be read... [The diarist writes that] the Chief Justice responded to the opposition and said: ‘My dear... I will never permit that because the emperor did not request it’... Then a few others spoke up and asked nicely... but the response was the same...” The diarist then reports that another commotion developed and finally everyone went home not knowing what to do next. “Some suggested we seek the advice of scholars (*doktory*), while others suggested that we appeal to the emperor and that we have the right to do that since they pushed us away and refused to hear us.”<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> SČ IV, 397–398.

<sup>33</sup> SČ IV, 405.

<sup>34</sup> SČ IV, 399.

<sup>35</sup> SČ IV, 399.

<sup>36</sup> SČ IV, 400.

<sup>37</sup> SČ IV, 401.



The author writes that in a subsequent communication Jindřich Kurcpach told the Brethren: “You brothers should be quiet (*Vy Bratři mějte pokoj*) or we will leave you and leave you with your own confession.”<sup>38</sup> The same evening as the *rumrejch*, the author reports that a dinner took place at the Rožmberk Palace, attended mostly by Romans, and talk turned to the Brethren. Lord Pernštejn is reported to have said: “Those Pikharts have always hurt this kingdom, they always had unlawful assemblies and rioted and years ago many lords lost their properties and lives because of riots which they started and which they are starting again. It would be best if they would be expelled from the land, otherwise no one else would have any peace.”<sup>39</sup>

Clearly, by this point, not only the hopes of the Brethren, but also any rapprochement which might have been possible between the confessional communities of Bohemia were destroyed. The author captures the emotions in the encounters at the Diet and in the views of others towards the Brethren, supporting recent scholarship that has pointed to the use of emotions in the construction of social and political relations.<sup>40</sup> It is surprising that the author does not comment at all on the hateful and incendiary remarks by members of the Catholic party. Perhaps this speaks to a certain level of objectivity of the author or perhaps this is just a case where reporting is just not enough to capture the interactions completely.

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The views of the Brethren and their objectives are what one would expect to find in the *Diarium* of the Brethren. Noteworthy, however, is the attention devoted in the *Diarium* to the royal cities, which is somewhat more extensive than their description of other estates and groups and in some ways presented more directly and clearly than even does Sixt of Ottersdorf, the spokesman of the royal cities! This is surprising, at least at first, considering that one does not view the royal cities as being the centre of politics at this time or supporters of the Brethren. On closer examination, it is perhaps not as surprising, and the fact that attention is devoted to the cities shows how contemporaries were aware of the pivotal role that the royal cities could play in the negotiations. For the author of the *Diarium* and the Brethren in particular, hope for legitimisation hinged on the royal cities.

The first mention of the royal cities in the *Diarium* occurs at the first meeting on 21 February “when at last the Praguers and representatives of the cities were asked what they have to say.” The author reports that they

<sup>38</sup> SČ IV, 402.

<sup>39</sup> SČ IV, 403.

<sup>40</sup> Barbara Rosenwein, “Worrying about Emotions in History,” *The American Historical Review* 107,3 (June 2002) 821–845; Rosenwein, ed., *Angers Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London, 1998).

first talked things out among themselves and gave a hesitant answer through Sixt of Ottersdorf. "Sixt said: since the lords and knights are to speak on this, they [the royal cities] should not talk about it separately, especially since in fundamentals of religion they are one, but there are also differences, and it will be clear if all love can be agreed upon." Then the Lord Justice summed up by asking all to consider what they could ask the party *sub una*, to what they could agree. Then they all went into the Justice Chamber, where the party *sub una* was already present.<sup>41</sup>

When they had all gathered, the Chamberlain (*komorník*), who had not been in the Green Room with the others, took his place. The Chamberlain questioned if one should be involved in such discussion and forbade the reading of articles calling for a renewal of the Consistory.<sup>42</sup> Lord Rožmberk then asked the Chief Justice if everyone in the party *sub utraque* were in agreement so the party in-two-kinds went off to discuss the matter by themselves. When they returned the Chief Justice said that all three estates acknowledge that they had knowledge of the writing. After the Chief Justice finished speaking, the Chamberlain turned to the Praguers and asked: "What do the Praguers have to say about this?" The Praguers discussed among themselves and then replied that they agree with the lords and knights regarding this writing and the *komorník* should be excused. To which the *komorník* responded, shaking with anger, "there is no reason to excuse me, I know what I said and speak from the gift of God... I do not need excusing for what I spoke in the Diet where everyone has the right of free speech."<sup>43</sup>

The author goes on to explain that some wanted the Augsburg Confession, while others did not – especially the royal cities. In this discussion, Sixt expressed that "religion should stay according to the old agreement in the kingdom." When the Chamberlain heard this "it touched him immediately and he said: 'I've always feared that... it would come to this.' However, the estates of the lords and knights... asked the emperor for reformation without them. Then they broke up with a strange cry (*divný křik*) towards Sixt such that he had to hide from the cry and the cities set themselves apart and spoke to him; since they separated from the estates, it will happen to them as happened in Austria, where the cities do not have freedom of religion like the lords and knights."<sup>44</sup> In the preceding passage it is interesting that the author is describing divisions not between confessional groups, but within estates, paying particular attention to the anger voiced at the cities. Here, as in earlier negotiations, the author captures the role of emotions in political negotiations.

At another point in the negotiations the author describes how the representatives of the royal cities complained about some new taxes (*berní*

<sup>41</sup> SČ IV, 393.

<sup>42</sup> SČ IV, 393.

<sup>43</sup> SČ IV, 394.

<sup>44</sup> SČ IV, 395.

*domovní*) which were putting them in debt, forcing them into usury and to give up their homes and leaving them without anything to eat. They asked that another path be sought.<sup>45</sup> An angry exchange followed between the representatives of the royal cities and Lord Rožmberk who asked the cities: “Who are you standing against? The emperor or us? Do you want some special deal that we lords and knights don’t have?”<sup>46</sup>

Two of the entries which appear as appended documents to the *Diarium* describe a meeting at the city hall of the New Town on the Monday after the feast of St. Vitus [i.e. 20 June]. The author of the first entry states that this was the third meeting which had been called by Zdeněk of Vatmberk, the *hejtman* of the New Town on the recommendation of the emperor in order for the community to give feedback on religious articles which the estates had recently presented to him.<sup>47</sup> At this meeting, according to the author of this entry, the *hejtman* definitely took an authoritative and controlling posture. He tells the burghers that the articles were composed by Lutherans, Calvinists, “Brothers of Boleslav” and followers of Pecinovský and encourages them to stay with the “old customary order and religion” (*starobýlch pořádcích a náboženství*) since the emperor has no intentions of making any changes in religion. At the beginning of the meeting an individual working for the estates, described simply as an official (*ouřad*), stepped forward and stated that “we should not consider any article which had not been submitted by the estates,” suggesting perhaps that the articles that were read were not the same as the ones originally submitted; to which the *hejtman* responded that “this meeting was not called for him [meaning the estates] since you hear it all up there [i.e. the castle].” And with that, according to the author, “the *ouřad* left city hall.”<sup>48</sup> This episode would support the view, gained from the entry in the *Diarium* of the Brethren on the altercation between the *komorník* and Sixt of Ottersdorf, that in specific instances different versions of the articles were circulated or fabricated, a common tactic in political and diplomatic negotiations.

In the earlier meeting of the community, described by Sixt of Ottersdorf, some of the burghers were hesitant to take a stance on the articles.<sup>49</sup> In the description of the later meeting, the community seemed to take a stronger stand. As the *hejtman* continued to encourage the community to distance itself from these articles and make some threats, a commotion developed and all of a sudden “everyone was against the *hejtman*.” The *hejtman* responded:

<sup>45</sup> SČ IV, 413.

<sup>46</sup> SČ IV, 414.

<sup>47</sup> The meeting is Sixt of Ottersdorf’s work is dated “Tuesday after the Feast of the Holy Trinity [9 June that year]” and appears before a following entry dated “Friday after the Feast of the St. Vitus [17 June that year]”; “*Diarium Sixta z Ottersdorfu o sněmu 1575, 349–351*; Palmitessa, “Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*.”

<sup>48</sup> SČ IV, 436.

<sup>49</sup> *Diarium Sixta z Ottersdorfu o sněmu 1575*; Palmitessa, “Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*.”

“Don’t you want to remain with God’s Law?’ and they cried out (*zkříkli*): ‘Nothing other than God’s Law and the submitted articles.’ And with that they went their merry way (*A v tom se pěkně rozešli*).” The author then recorded everything that happened today, as during the previous meetings, and reported that “the Chief Justice... went to the emperor with a report. And many could not believe what happened.”<sup>50</sup> The author then adds an interesting comment that begins with: “You know the methods of the *vlašské*... Don’t believe in princes.”<sup>51</sup> The author goes on to report that “at the same time strong voices came from the papists (*papenženců*) and especially the Jesuits, threatening a Parisian-style bloodbath (*kravavou lázní pařížskou*, [an interesting reference to the St. Bartholomew’s Massacre] which caused a strange feeling (*divná domnění zo způsobuje*).”<sup>52</sup>

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## Conclusion

The *Diarium* of the Brethren and attached entries and correspondence differ considerably from that of Sixt of Ottersdorf *Diarium* in scope, language, style, and content. Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium* presents itself, at first reading at least, as an historical chronicle with entries for almost every day, with neutral, objective-like reporting of events, interspersed with subjective commentary. The usually apparent division between objective-like reports and subjective comments has contributed to the *Diarium*’s reputation as a reliable source, in line with the broader genre of historical sources of the period. The *Diarium* of the Brethren, rather short, though augmented by additional sources, narrow scope focusing on just some of the negotiations, informal style, and partisan tone, make it more difficult to place and is indeed idiosyncratic. However, it is no less objective and valuable as Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*. Its very existence supports many of the statements of Sixt of Ottersdorf and also highlights many of Sixt’s omissions and calls into question the view that it is less objective because the split between objective-like reporting and commentary is not always apparent. On the contrary, the unabashed partisan approach and informal style allow in some ways for more open and transparent comments than the veiled distance that is evident in part of Sixt of Ottersdorf’s *Diarium*. Unlike Sixt of Ottersdorf, however, the author of the *Diarium* of the Brethren was not primarily attempting to write

<sup>50</sup> SČ IV, 436.

<sup>51</sup> SČ IV, 436–437. *Vlaši* is a term used during the period to refer to Italians, who started immigrating in large numbers to Prague in the 1560s, and which sometimes is used and takes on the connotation of an international Roman Catholic conspiracy.

<sup>52</sup> SČ IV, 437.

an historical chronicle, but to create a position paper for internal purposes of the Brethren that affirms the Brethren and what they saw as a central role in the creation of a Bohemian Confession. What the differences suggest, which deserves further study, is the use of different rhetorical strategies by different confessional groups within the long duration of confessional historiography. The year 1575 is an interesting vantage point and marker in that story, in addition to being an important turning point in estate politics.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> See Norbert Kersten, "Reformation and the writing of national history in East-Central and Northern Europe," *The Reformation in Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Kartin Maag (Aldershot, 1997) 51–71; and Matthias Pohlig, *Zwischen Gelehrsamkeit und konfessionelle Identitätsstiftung: Lutherische Kirchen- und Universalgeschichtsschreibung 1546–1617* (Tübingen, 2007).