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The Eclipse of Lutheranism in 17th-Century Czechoslovakia

MARIANKA SASHA FOUSEK

THE AREA

This article is concerned with the fate of Lutheranism in "Czechoslovakia" in the 17th century. I am using the somewhat anachronistic name "Czechoslovakia" for this area as a convenient symbol for both the Czech lands, that is, the crown lands of Bohemia, and the Slovak territory under Hungary. The Czech lands, often referred to also as the crown lands of St. Wenceslas, included Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia. Slovakia on the other hand belonged to the Hungarian crown of St. Stephen ever since the Magyar invasion of the Danube valley in the 11th century. Thus in spite of the close cultural and ethnic ties, there was no political tie between the Czech lands and Slovakia except when a Bohemian king happened to wear the crown of St. Stephen also.

Such unity as did exist among the Czech lands was rather loose. Bohemia is, of course, the center, but there was also much going on in Moravia, and events in Bohemia did not always involve Moravia. Moravia was a semiautonomous land. Closely tied to Bohemia historically and politically, Moravia nevertheless had its own diet or assembly of estates, and its own laws, and at times Moravia and Bohemia took independent courses of action, each at cross-purposes with the other. Nonetheless, the destinies of the two lands and of the Lutheran Church in them were closely tied together. Ultimately they always shared the same fate. Silesia had a status something

like that of an annexed province. It also had its own diet and laws and its own way of life. Nevertheless, Silesia was politically much more dependent on Bohemia than was Moravia; the relations between the Silesians and the Bohemian Czechs were not very cordial, since the Silesians resented the Czech sovereignty over their land. Lusatia had a somewhat similar status and was even worse off in its relationship of dependence on Bohemia than was Moravia or Silesia.

Ethnically most of the population of the Czechoslovak territory was Slavic, with the Czechs living in Bohemia and Moravia and the Slovaks in Slovakia. The Lusatians and the Silesians were by and large also Slavic, but the cities of Silesia were mainly German. Moravia and Bohemia also had their strong German minorities. German colonies were especially strong in Moravian cities and in the cities of Slovakia. Naturally Slovakia had also a strong Hungarian minority, since the ruling class there was largely Hungarian. The area of Czechoslovakia therefore presents a rather complicated and heterogeneous political and ethnic picture. Yet it so happens that all of the lands of Czechoslovakia were under the same ruling house since the election of the Hapsburg Ferdinand I as king of Bohemia in 1526. However, he ruled each land as a separate entity, simply accumulating in his person the title to all these lands. And there were even short periods

when the Hapsburg yoke would be thrown off in one part of Czechoslovakia while it was still borne by the rest of the area.

The formal defeat of the Reformation in the Czech lands came, of course, with the defeat of the insurgent Bohemian estates at the battle on the White Hill, or Mountain, in November 1620. The defeat was sealed when all religious nonconformity was outlawed by the new constitution the Hapsburgs gave Bohemia and Moravia in 1627. The eclipse of the Reformation in Slovakia came somewhat later. The downfall of Lutherans in Czechoslovakia was long in the making. It was caused by a complex of factors, and we shall have to examine its total historical-political-social setting in order to understand this tragedy.

THE POLITICAL SETTING

The central government in the period preceding the defeat of the Protestant estates in 1620 was weak. (The term "Protestant" is used in this article as a general designation for all the non-Roman Catholic parties — Lutheran, Reformed, Utraquist, and the Unitas Fratrum.) In his day, Ferdinand I had tried rather hard to centralize the government and to attain more power for the crown. The estates resisted him as much as they could, however, and he succeeded in subduing the autonomy of the cities but not of the nobility. Ferdinand took advantage of the defeat of the Smalcald League in 1547, a war in which the Czech estates had been involved on the side of the Lutherans. As the Smalcald War was regarded in its Czech aspects as a rebellion against the king, the king could legitimately punish the estates, once the imperial armies had defeated the Protestant armies. Ferdinand very cleverly revenged himself only against

the cities and "graciously" pardoned the nobility. Thus he divided the opposition, creating hatred between the now powerless cities and the higher nobility, which came out of the defeat unscathed. Ferdinand took away the privileges of the cities and thus broke the backbone of the people, because the cities represented the more democratic element in the nation. The cleavage between the cities and the feudal magnates had already been great before. The widening of the breach contributed heavily to the defeat of the Lutherans in 1620. Although sharing the same faith, the cities were not eager to defend the cause of the nobles, which is what they considered the rebellion of the Czech estates against the Hapsburgs in 1618 to be.

THE SOCIAL SITUATION

The defeat of the Czech cities also had disastrous economic consequences for the nation. The punitive tax burdens imposed on the cities by Ferdinand and the restrictive laws and government he imposed on the cities crippled the economic life of the cities and thus blighted the economy of the whole country. A lack of financial resources was an important reason for the defeat of the Lutheran cause in 1620.

The peasants were in an even worse plight. This, too, was an important reason for the defeat of Lutheranism in 1620. In the 15th century, the Hussite armies were able to ward off an army much superior to theirs, but in the 17th century the defeat of the Reformation camp was almost effortless. What caused the difference? One of the reasons for this is the social transformation of the Czech nation from the 15th to the 17th century. In the 15th century the peasants were free; in the 17th century they were serfs. The 15th-century Hussite wars

had so decimated the population that the small farmer had become forcibly tied to the land in order to provide a work force for the feudal lord. The serfs not only were economically destitute but also had no legal privileges, no rights, no possibility of appeal beyond their local feudal lords. In the 16th and 17th centuries the feudal lords failed to identify themselves with their people, and thus the people had little sense of a common cause with the nobility and of involvement in the life of the nation. In the 15th century when the peasants were fighting for the faith, they were fighting for their own cause; in the 17th century the fight seemed to be less for the faith and much more for the cause of the nobles. Naturally the peasants did not feel personally involved, and they had no enthusiasm or interest for the battle.

THE SITUATION IN SLOVAKIA

In Slovakia the situation was somewhat different. In one way it was almost worse, but in another way it was better than in the Czech lands. The feudal magnates had even greater power in Slovakia than they had in the Czech territories to the west. Hungary was almost an oligarchy. Because of the constant threat of the Turks in Slovakia, the king had to compromise with the estates even more than in Bohemia and Moravia. The Protestant estates in Slovakia could use the threat of the Turks as a lever against the king and thus gain concessions from him. He needed their support in the fight against the Turks. There was no such immediate danger in Bohemia or Moravia. The independence of the feudal magnates in Slovakia made it possible for them to protect their respective Protestant faiths against the king much more effectively than was possible in Bohemia or Moravia. The

prince of Transylvania, for example, was almost an independent power vis-à-vis the king. He became a Calvinist and a strong protector of all Protestants in Slovakia. Thus there was more religious freedom in Slovakia than in Bohemia or Moravia, in spite of the fact that all three lands were governed by the same king. From this point of view the situation in Slovakia was better than in the Czech lands. For this reason, too, Protestants, including Lutherans, were never as effectively wiped out in Slovakia as they were in Bohemia or Moravia. A strong Lutheran minority survived among the Slovaks, whereas the defeat of Lutheranism among the Czechs was overwhelming.

On the other hand, the Slovaks had the terrible problem of a constant decimation of the population and an ongoing pillaging resulting from the never ending warfare against the Turks. Damage came not only from the Turks but also from the ever present imperial army stationed in Slovakia. In addition to this, there were the constant local uprisings among the feudal magnates, uprisings in which the common people were compelled to take part. The continuous warfare was in a sense both a disadvantage and an advantage to the people of Slovakia. The Czechs had a long period of peace. There had really been no war on Czech soil since the Hussite wars. This means that there had been about 150 years of peace for the Czechs when the Thirty Years' War broke out in 1618. As a consequence of this long period of peace, the people had lost all military force, and there was no draft to call for military skills or for military leaders. There was simply no Czech army and no presuppositions for it. When Ferdinand called the people to

arms in the Smalcald War, the footsoldiers, the serfs, were in such poor physical shape and so lacking in morale that there was no point in bothering with them. The king simply sent them home. The military preparedness of the Slovaks was, by contrast, more favorable to the defense and survival of the Reformation.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

The great majority of the Czechs and Slovaks were Protestant. Although accurate statistics are unavailable, it is thought that about 90 percent of the population was Protestant. Eighty percent of the nation probably was Lutheran, perhaps 10 percent Reformed or Czech Brethren, and the remainder Roman Catholic.

Utraquism

In the 15th century the majority of the Czech population was Hussite. Hussitism was a very heterogeneous classification in the 15th century. What survived of it into the 16th century was, on the one hand, the very conservative attempt at an uneasy *modus vivendi* with Rome, the so-called Utraquist party, and on the other hand, the more radical but very small Unitas Fratrum. There was really very little that distinguished the life and beliefs of the early-16th-century Utraquist from the Roman Catholic. The distinguishing mark of Utraquism was, of course, the chalice for the laity. According to Utraquist theologians, Communion "under both kinds" was not merely a more apostolic practice, but it belonged to the essence of Communion: the communicant who did not receive the cup did not receive the blood of Christ. The chalice acquired a great emotional, symbolic, and almost mystical significance for the Czech people. It was the primary

symbol of their heroic fight for obedience to the Word of God following Huss' condemnation by hierarchy and empire.

The Bohemian Brethren

The Bohemian Brethren, or the Unitas Fratrum, originated as a protest group within Utraquism, from which they split off in 1467 by setting up their own schismatic ministry. The Brethren were considered heretical by the Hussites and were frequently persecuted by them. It was only the influence of the central European Reformation on both Utraquists and the Bohemian Brethren that finally brought the two groups somewhat together.

The Lutheran Influence

Lutheran influence in Czechoslovakia was very strong. It transformed the greater part of Utraquism, exerted a deep influence on the Bohemian Brethren, and in Slovakia, Lusatia, and Silesia it appears to have won over the majority of the population.

Under the impact of the Reformation from neighboring Germany, Czech Utraquism split into two groups, the Neutraquists and the Old Utraquists. Neutraquism became, in effect, Czech Lutheranism, while Old Utraquism stuck to the minimal differences between itself and Rome and was eager for reconciliation with Rome. The Old Utraquists retained the loyalty of only a very small part of the population. If they had not received the active support of the king, they would have disappeared altogether. The king was very eager to preserve the Old Utraquists because to him they were not heretical. He wanted to use the constitutional freedoms guaranteed to the Utraquists as a means of crushing the Neutraquists by insisting that the freedoms had been meant only for

the Old Utraquists. The king naturally did not consider the Neoutraquists *bona fide* Utraquists but Lutherans. The Neoutraquists defended themselves, insisting that they were the true successors and heirs of the old Hussites. They were convinced not only that Hussitism and Lutheranism were related but that Lutheranism was really the daughter of Hussitism. They were quite sure that the Lutheran Reformation was a result of Hussite influence on Luther and his disciples. Thus when Lutheranism came from Germany to Bohemia, it was simply returning to its original home, they claimed. The Neoutraquists were convinced that they were continuing, or rather reviving, the old tradition of the fathers that had been forgotten for a while. Now, although Lutheranism and Hussitism differed doctrinally in many very important aspects, the Neoutraquists were perhaps not quite so far off in their insistence on the tie between the two reformations. They sensed that Luther and his followers were carrying the spirit of Hussite reform, which after all called for a radical reformation of the life of the church according to the Gospel and not for mere changes in the ritual.

The Bohemian Brethren were also influenced by Luther. The Reformer himself approved of the confession of the Brethren published under his auspices in Germany in 1535, and there was a period when the Unitas was under the influence of real Lutheranism. The Bohemian Brethren, however, did not long remain very truly Lutheran. One of the characteristics of the Bohemian Brethren was their stress on church discipline and order. This was one of the principal reasons, if not *the* reason, for their original split from the Hussite

camp. They had felt that the lack of discipline in the Roman communion, including the Utraquist segment, was dangerous to salvation because an impenitent communicant was eating damnation to himself at Communion. The easy way in which the priests were giving people absolution, the Brethren felt, was a way of pushing people right into hell, because the false security this gave to them prevented them from ever arriving at true repentance. They therefore started their communion, or their Unitas, as a community of brotherly discipline, a discipline carried out with great consistence. They retained their concern when everyone around them was captured by enthusiasm for the Saxon reformers. They were profoundly disturbed by the evident lack of discipline in the Lutheran churches. Luther had voiced admiration for the discipline of the Brethren and had expressed the hope that one day he would be able to introduce a similar discipline into the churches in Germany. When Calvinism emerged, the Bohemian Brethren were attracted to it, not so much because of its doctrine as because of its discipline. The Unitas, like the Utraquists, sent their students to study in Germany at the various evangelical universities there. At first most of the Czech students were sent to Wittenberg. When Wittenberg was taken over by the Philippists, the more radical followers of Philip Melancthon, "Philippist" Lutheranism was imported into the Czech churches and became the dominant theology both among the Bohemian Brethren and the Utraquists. It took greater hold among the Bohemian Brethren, and when the University of Wittenberg came under the control of the Gnesio-Lutherans, the Bohemian Brethren stopped sending their

students to Wittenberg and started sending them to Heidelberg and to Basel. From then on, the most gifted theological students of the Unitas were trained in Calvinist universities.

The Neoutraquists remained Lutheran, but the situation within Utraquism was very fluid, somewhat like that in Germany prior to the great theological unification brought about by the Formula of Concord. Since there was no universally accepted definition or formulation of what was Lutheran and orthodox and no Lutheran or Utraquist theological faculty at the university in Prague to give theological direction to the clergy, the Utraquist church was full of different currents of thought and practice. This, combined with a lack of any overall church administration prior to 1609, produced within Utraquism a chaotic situation fraught with disastrous consequences. The absence of organization dates back to the old attempt of the Utraquists to receive recognition from Rome and to maintain the episcopal succession unbroken. Until the impact of Lutheranism made itself fully felt in Utraquist circles, the Utraquists believed in the necessity of a regular episcopal ordination for a valid ministry. But the pope was not willing to authorize an archbishop for the Hussites. So the priests of Bohemia and Moravia were without supervision, and the young candidates had to go abroad for their ordination. There was no effective oversight, no training, no administrative authority in the Utraquist church. The body that governed the Utraquist church was the so-called Lower Consistory of Prague, headed by an administrator, in lieu of an archbishop, and appointed by the king. As the king favored the Old Utraquists in his

appointments, the authority of the consistory was not recognized by the Neoutraquists in the country. The administrator was often a man of poor character and little theological knowledge, just a politician. Thus the situation of the Lutherans in Bohemia and Moravia was rather disastrous in terms of leadership, training, morale, or even theological understanding. The cities and most of the nobility had turned Lutheran, but it seems that most of them did not understand what this really involved or demanded of them, and the lack of any church discipline among the Lutherans did not help the moral chaos in the land. The almost limitless power of the feudal magnates and the corruption resulting from its misuse also contributed heavily to the spiritual anarchy in the land. Thus the defeat of Czech Lutheranism in the 17th century was caused not so much by external as by internal factors. The old saying that a nation cannot be defeated from without if it is not defeated from within is particularly appropriate here.

The Jesuits

The Jesuits, the only dynamic Roman Catholic force in the country, started a counteroffensive against the Reformation in the second half of the 16th century in Czechoslovakia, using schools, pageantry, politics, and the other means of the Counter-Reformation, just as in the rest of central Europe. The Jesuits were extremely active and were supported by the king. They did not gain a great following, but they gained many sons of the aristocracy through their schools. Since the king consistently supported Roman Catholic members of the aristocracy and usually put only Roman Catholics in charge of the administration of the royal cities, it was profitable

to become a Roman Catholic. For this reason many nobles of lesser character turned Roman Catholic not because of conviction but because of vested interests, just as they and their forbears may often have turned Lutheran originally, thinking there would be a political advantage to it.

THE BOHEMIAN CONFESSION AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE

In order to receive legal recognition from the king, the Protestant estates of Bohemia presented to Maximilian II in 1575 a joint confession of faith, the so-called *Confessio Bohemica*, for which they requested constitutional guarantees. The Confession was an expression of an agreement between the Neutraquists and the Bohemian Brethren. It is largely patterned on the Augsburg Confession, but it contains certain characteristics of its own that are usually attributed to the influence of the Bohemian Brethren. The Bohemian Brethren were a small, yet very active and alert, minority in the nation, with good leadership even among the estates, and thus had an influence far out of proportion to their numbers.

Apart from special additional emphases that are characteristic of the Bohemian Brethren, the Confession seems to be Lutheran. There is a great stress in it on good works, yet not as a condition for winning God's grace. There is no doubt in the Confession that salvation is an undeserved and unconditioned gift from God, to be received simply by faith. There is no synergism involved. Yet it stresses that the new life God gives through the Holy Spirit necessarily produces fruit. According to the Bohemian Confession, if there is something that looks like faith but does not bring forth fruit, it simply isn't faith.

The Confession also contains an interesting enumeration of the "marks of the church." In addition to the chief marks of the church, the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments, the Confession also names brotherly love, the bearing of the cross, and the exercise of church discipline. The Confession names these as marks that help to identify the true church with greater security. It does not say that the church cannot exist without these works or that a person cannot be saved in a community that lacks them, but rather insists that one cannot be *sure* that the church is there in such a case. The additional marks were intended to give a Christian greater assurance of his membership in the true church. As far as the sacraments are concerned, the Confession is soundly Lutheran. It betrays no Calvinistic tendencies.

Maximilian did not give the estates the written guarantee of religious freedom that they requested. He made only oral promises of the freedoms. But in 1609 his successor Rudolph gave a written guarantee of freedom to those who adhered to the Bohemian Confession, and the guarantee became a part of the constitution of the kingdom. This religious freedom also involved the serfs, which was rather revolutionary, including those living on ecclesiastical, that is, Roman Catholic, property. This occurred because the traditional law considered ecclesiastical property to be royal property that was only *lent*, so to speak, to the church. This was the legal reason or pretext for the uprising in 1618. The estates proclaimed an insurrection against the king-elect, Ferdinand II, because two Protestant churches built on Roman Catholic ecclesiastical property were

torn down *in spite of the constitutional right* of the local peasants to have such churches there. The violation of this principle in these two incidents proved to be the "straw that broke the camel's back," culminating a series of breaches of faith on the part of the king. The churches were actually torn down by the Roman Catholic owners of the land and not by the king, but the king refused to rectify the situation or punish the offenders. This incident and the king's inaction became the spark that helped kindle the Thirty Years' War. The king had consistently pursued a Counter-Reformation policy, pushing appointments and regulations unfavorable to Protestants. Thus there was only one Protestant on the royal council, and although the majority of the city population was Protestant, all the royal city councils were dominated by Roman Catholics. There was further a general oppression of Protestants in the kingdom.

There was a strong political motivation behind the uprising too. The estates did not like the absolutizing tendencies of the Hapsburgs. The great nobles were especially displeased with Ferdinand. It is a moot position whether the more important element in the 1618 revolution was political or religious.

THE UPRISING

In 1618 the Bohemian estates, assembled at the Hradčany Castle in Prague, defenestrated the two regents who were the representatives of the king, thereby declaring themselves in insurrection against the king. The act of defenestration was chosen in imitation of the defenestration incident that started the Hussite wars. The estates wanted in this way to link their protest with the Hussite tradition. Unfortunately

for the cause of the revolutionaries, the defenestration was not successful. The two men were not killed because the castle moat was not deep enough, and the result was that things were made worse for the estates.

The freedoms guaranteed in 1609 had given the Protestant estates a false security. The royal decree of that year gave the nation not only religious liberties but also a great number of constitutional guarantees and safeguards against arbitrary action on the part of the king. These royal concessions, however, were mainly for the benefit of the feudal lords. Having won such guarantees, the feudal magnates did not feel in any great danger from the Hapsburgs, and, strangely enough, the Protestant estates elected another Hapsburg to succeed the aging Maximilian, Ferdinand II of Styria. The election is especially strange in the light of the record Ferdinand had in the suppression of Protestantism in Styria. The estates were not alert enough to realize the suicidal nature of the election at that time. They realized their mistake very soon, however, and within a few months of the election rose in an insurrection against the king and proclaimed war against the Hapsburgs.

The 1618 uprising was ill-fated inasmuch as there had been no real preparations for it. There was no soil for a successful uprising in Bohemia. First of all, there was the general situation of the country as described above: The cities were alienated from the nobility, and the peasants felt they had no stake in the life of the nation. Even within the cities the situation was not good; the patricians were exploiting the common townspeople, and the sense of responsibility of the latter was

very low. The Silesians supported the Czech uprising only halfheartedly, and Upper Lusatia and even Moravia at first remained loyal to the emperor. The economic situation was bad because of the heavy taxation, the oppressive regulations imposed on the cities, and the irresponsible feudal administration of the greater portion of the wealth and resources of the country. There were no military leaders, and there was no single political leader or administrator of the uprising. When the estates deposed the king, they elected 30 of their number to govern the country. The council was unable to govern effectively, much less direct the uprising. But no member of the council was willing to abdicate his powers and prerogatives in favor of anyone else. The moral fiber of the nation was thin, and a sense of political unity was nonexistent.

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Further, the international situation afforded little opportunity for help from abroad. The estates had not bothered to find out in advance whether they would receive outside aid. Why did they elect Frederick of the Palatinate for their new king? The Protestant estates at first had wanted to choose George, the Elector of Saxony, but he had not been interested. Besides, the estates had not gained a favorable impression of George during his recent visit in Prague. He seemed to them to be addicted to drink and unable to strike up any cordial relationships with the Czech leaders. The estates had also tried to secure James, King of England, for their king; he, too, was not interested in the office for himself but supported the candidacy of Frederick, his son-in-law. The Protestant estates therefore elected Frederick, who was

head of the predominantly Reformed Evangelical Union and was also supported by King James, the real leader of the Protestant camp.

Frederick's election served to alienate the elector of Saxony from the Bohemian estates completely. He not only felt slighted by it, even though he himself did not want the crown, but it also increased his distrust of the Lutheran orthodoxy of the Czechs. In this he was supported by his chaplain, Matthias Hoe von Hoenegg, who strongly disliked the Bohemians, especially the Bohemian Brethren, whom he suspected of crypto-Calvinism. Most of the other Lutheran princes of Germany naturally sided with Saxony. The Reformed elector of Brandenburg would have come to Frederick's assistance, but could not afford alienating his Lutheran subjects any further. The interconfessional situation in Germany being what it was, the election of Frederick was the least expedient thing the Bohemian estates could have done if they wanted to receive German Lutheran support for their cause. No monarch, it seems, particularly favored the election of Frederick except James.

Gustavus Adolphus disliked Frederick and the Union because they had refused his application for membership in the Union. France, after the death of Henry IV, reversed its old anti-Hapsburg policy and started to support Ferdinand. It was France who pushed the Evangelical Union into peace with the Catholic League. This peace of Ulm (July 1620) made it possible for Bavaria to send troops against the insurgents in Bohemia. Thus France really helped in the defeat of Bohemia, although afterwards she soon returned to her anti-Hapsburg policy. The Turks had just con-

cluded a peace with the emperor, and there was now no threat from them. Even James of England, although a Protestant, was not enthusiastic about supporting the Protestant rebellion in Bohemia. He was on principle opposed to any act of insubordination to royalty, and every form of insurrection was repugnant to him. He was also in the process of negotiating a marriage with Spain and shied away from getting involved in the fight against the Hapsburgs.

The tragedy was that apparently no one realized the critical nature of the situation. There was, it seems, little awareness that this was a battle of life and death between the supporters and the opponents of the Reformation. Even the Protestant estates of Bohemia or Moravia were not aware of it. Much less, of course, were the German Lutheran princes or the Protestant estates of Upper and Lower Austria aware of it. No one dreamt that this was a matter that would eventually involve all of Europe. And so nobody came to the help of Frederick of the Palatinate. Even his own Union was not interested because of the great jealousies existing in the Union itself. Thus the Bohemians received no appreciable help in support of this cause.

THE DOMESTIC SITUATION

The domestic situation was chaotic. The royal government had been abrogated, and nothing was put in its place. The imperial troops were devastating the land, and there was no possibility of restraining them, since there was no military leadership at home. The Protestant estates at first tried to recruit a voluntary military force, but the soldiers who appeared were not worth hiring because of the lack of any military tradition in the land. The estates finally engaged a mercenary army. The merce-

naries, soldiers from abroad, behaved just as ruthlessly toward the Protestant population as did the imperial army. The estates were not able to collect enough money for the support of their army, and the generals kept much of what had been collected for themselves. This drove the mercenaries to looting. Now the general populace, beset by the marauding imperial army and the army of the estates, wanted only to get behind safe walls and hide. There was no feeling in the country that the war was a national cause, especially because it was mercenaries from abroad who were representing the estates. The common people thought of the insurrection as a cause of the nobles that involved no one else. The cause of the Protestant insurgents, whether considered from the international or the domestic angle, was doomed from the start. The lack of leadership, of morale, and of finances combined to make the defeat inevitable.

THE OUTCOME

The small battle that finally finished the 2-year war, the battle on the White Hill in November 1620, was really just a skirmish, and yet it was here that the war was decided. The nation had already been defeated prior to this battle. The "Winter King" simply ran away, the leaders ran away with him, and the emperor had no difficulty in subjugating the land. The nation was not aware of the tragedy that was forthcoming. The people were afraid but did not anticipate the extent to which the king would now go in his Counter-Reformation effort. In 1627 the emperor abrogated all religious liberties and all the constitutional privileges of the estates. The only recognized church in Bohemia and Moravia now was Roman Catholic. This law was strictly and systematically en-

forced. The free citizens, that is, everyone but the serfs, could move out of the country if they wished and could take their property with them. But, of course, one could not take real estate, and it was hard to sell it when so many landowners seemed to be moving out. Many serfs fled secretly.

The depopulation of Bohemia and Moravia during the Thirty Years' War is almost unbelievable. This was due partly to the decimation caused by the war and partly to the great exodus of Protestants. It is strange that people who were not heroic enough to fight for their faith were now heroic enough to leave everything behind and face the uncertain future of exiles for the sake of that faith. They were received in the foreign lands to which they fled with some suspicion and faced political, economic, and even religious insecurity abroad. Exiles from Moravia went largely to neighboring Slovakia, and refugees from Bohemia usually went to Silesia, Poland, and Prussia. In many instances Lutheran lands looked at the exiles with suspicion because they did not trust the orthodoxy of the Czechs. Most of the Neoutraquist immigrants eventually merged with Lutherans and most of the Bohemian Brethren with the Reformed community. In Slovakia and Poland the Bohemian Brethren maintained separate churches for a while, but the Unitas had really lost its *raison d'être* as a separate community once it had become heavily influenced by Calvinism by the beginning of the 17th century.

In Slovakia Protestantism was never completely outlawed, and it was only gradually that severe religious restrictions were imposed there. There was persecution for Protestants in Slovakia, but there was no

overall pattern for it. Each region had its own rules and the cities, too, differed in their regulations concerning religious non-conformity. In Hungary the king was never really master, and the estates were able to fight more effectively for their rights. There were always a few cities in which Protestant public worship was permitted. Moreover, in Hungary it was never illegal to have Protestant worship in the home. Nor were Protestant books burned as systematically as in Bohemia and Moravia.

In Silesia the Lutheran Church was tolerated in certain regions and cities, depending on the local feudal magnates or city governments, who were able to buy religious freedom for themselves and their subjects with heavy financial payments.

Lusatia was given to Saxony as a reward for the help the Lutheran Elector of Saxony gave the Roman Catholic Ferdinand in his conquest of Lutheran Bohemia. Lusatia's Lutheranism was thus preserved, though its population was gradually deprived of its ethnic and cultural identity by its German rulers.

CONCLUSION

The eclipse of Lutheranism in Czechoslovakia was caused both by political-social factors and by the internal weakness of Czech Lutheranism in the 16th century. Had the Neoutraquists possessed some of the leadership and spiritual vigor, as well as the organization and discipline, of the Bohemian Brethren and had they been able to instill a new spirit into the demoralized nation in the 16th century, as the Hussite movement was able to do in the 15th century, it is doubtful that the Lutheran Church could have been so effectively wiped out in Bohemia and Moravia as it was. Furthermore, the situation would un-

doubtedly have been different if the aristocracy had assumed a different role in the life of the nation than that of simply insisting on its privileges, with no ties or responsibilities to the common people. As it was, the cause of the Czech Lutherans was too weak to survive any concerted attack from without.

THE POSTLUDE

This, then, is the end of the Lutheran Church in Bohemia and Moravia in the 17th century. Many Protestants maintained the faith in secret for generations, both in the Czech lands and in Slovakia. Preachers from abroad, especially from neighboring Saxony, would come in secret and try to strengthen the faithful remnant by services held at night in outlying places or even in some homes and by distributing Protestant literature to the faithful. In the late 17th and early 18th centuries it was especially through Pietist preachers and literature that some awareness of the evangelical heritage was preserved among the descendants of the Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren who

remained in the old homeland. Protestant "pockets" were preserved in certain rural regions, and they were totally destroyed in others; but in the Czech cities the Counter-Reformation was 100 percent successful. The "hidden seed" in the country provided the basis for the restoration of the Lutheran and Reformed churches during the Enlightenment, when the Toleration Act of 1781 gave legal toleration to the Augsburg and Helvetian Confessions in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Small groups of people here and there in the country were able to reconstitute congregations, especially with the help of pastors coming from abroad to help in the resurrection of the Reformation heritage in the Czech lands. In Slovakia, that is, in Hungary, the effect of the toleration edict was not so dramatic, since it meant only a partial betterment and not a revolutionary improvement in the status of the Protestants there. In 1742 the greater part of Silesia was lost by Empress Maria Theresa to Frederick II of Prussia and was thus linked to Prussian development until the modern period.