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Original publication:

Schäufele, Wolf-Friedrich

The *Opus arduum valde: Origin – Character – Tradition – Edition*

Opus arduum valde. A Wycliffite Commentary on the Book of Revelation, p. 1–83.

Leiden/Boston: Brill 2021 (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions 227, Texts & Sources 10)

URL: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004464360_002

Access to the published version may require subscription.

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Introduction

The Opus arduum valde: origin – character – tradition – edition

By Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele

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The so-called *Opus arduum valde* (short: *OAV*) is a Latin commentary on the Book of Revelation, which was written in England between 1389 and 1390. The unknown author had a close connection to the reform movement that originated with the Oxford Professor John Wyclif, called Wyclifism in its early academic period, Lollardy in its later popular period. The book had its biggest impact, however, not among the Lollards, but among the radical Hussites in Bohemia shortly after and even later in the Reformation in Wittenberg.

It has been only for half a century, that the text and the history of the *Opus arduum valde* have been known in its full extent. Following František Michálek and Margaret Aston, Anne Hudson described the commentary extensively.¹ In a study about perceptions of the Antichrist among Lollards Curtis V. Bostick dealt with it and Kathryn Kerby-Fulton did so examining the connection between Joachitism and the Lollards in late-medieval England.² English Studies examined the book in the context of research on prison writing.³ Due to his interest in the relationship between theology and historiography Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele commenced his work on the OAV⁴, whereas Romolo Cegna was mainly motivated through his research on the Hussites and Nicholas of Dresden⁵ and Pavlína Cermanová through her studies on Bohemian apocalypticism⁶.

¹ Frantisek M. Bartos, *Lollardský a husitský výklad Apokalypsy*, in: Reformacní sborník 6 (1937), 112-114; Margaret Aston, *Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival?*, in: History 49 (1964), 149-170; here: 156s.; Anne Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, in: Journal of Ecclesiastical History 29 (1978), 257-279 (again in: id., *Lollards and Their Books*, London 1985, 43-65). See also Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation. Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*, Oxford 1988, 265s., 348s.

² Curtis V. Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards. Apocalypticism in Late Medieval and Reformation England*, Leiden et al. 1998, esp. 76-113; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion. Censorship and Tolerance of Revelatory Writing in Late Medieval England*, Notre Dame/Indiana 2006, 205-228 and passim. Cf. further Amedeo Molnár, *Apocalypse xii dans l'interprétation hussite*, in: Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses 45 (1965), 121-131, here: 124-129; Gian Luca Potestà, *Radical Apocalyptic Movements in the Middle Ages*, in: Bernard McGinn/John J. Collins/Stephen J. Stein (eds.), *Continuum History of Apocalypticism*, New York et al 2003, 299-322; here: 309-313.

³ Rita Copeland, *Pedagogy, Intellectuals, and Dissent in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2001, 142, 156-161; Joanna Summers, *Late-Medieval Prison Writing and the Politics of Autobiography*, Oxford 2004, 117s., 127s. Kerby-Fulton also considered this question in her work.

⁴ Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele, *Der Antichrist bei Wyclif und Hus*, in: Mariano Delgado/Volker Leppin (eds.), *Der Antichrist. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte eines apokalyptischen Motivs in Judentum, Christentum und Islam*, Fribourg/Stuttgart 2008, 173-206, here: 188-191; Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele, „*Opus Arduum*“. *Apokalyptik und Ekklesiologie im europäischen Kulturtransfer zwischen Spätmittelalter und Reformation*, in: Friedrich Schweitzer (ed.), *Kommunikation über Grenzen*, Gütersloh 2009, 494-513.

⁵ Romolo Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde: da Gioacchino a Guglielmo predicatore evangelico*, in: Annali die Scienze Religiose 5 (2012), 199-220; Romolo Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva: Dall' Opus arduum valde a Nikolaus de Drazna (de Rosa Nigra)*, in: archa verbi. Yearbook for the Study of Medieval Theology 9 (2012), 64-85.

⁶ Pavlína Cermanová, *Constructing the Apocalypse: Connections Between English and Bohemian Apocalyptic Thinking*, in: J. Patrick Hornbeck/Michael van Dussen (eds.), *Europe After Wyclif*, New York 2017, 66-88.

1. Opus arduum valde: the title

The title by which this commentary on the Apocalypse is usually designated, consists of the first three words of the Incipit: *Opus arduum valde, Apokalipsim videlicet Domini nostri Ihesu Christi, ipsius gracia inspirante sumpsit explicandum* [...]. Therefore, the “very difficult work” means nothing else than the Apocalypse of John. Possibly the Incipit itself was influenced by examples from earlier literature. Cicero, for example, talks about a *magnum opus omnino et arduum* in his *Orator*⁷. More likely, Augustine was the model calling his work *De civitate Dei*, which is often cited in this commentary, also a *magnum opus et arduum*⁸. Another parallel is to be found with Dante, who introducing his *Monarchia*, called it similarly an *arduum quidem opus et ultra vires*.⁹

2. The author

The identity of the author is unknown. But there are numerous hints in the OAV concerning his person. After stating all these indications in a first step, we will continue with the historical situation, the time of composition, content and theological profile of the OAV as following thereafter. Concluding all this information we will state a possible identification of the author below (§9).

2.1 His name

The OAV was transmitted without the name of the author. The adscriptions in some manuscripts pointing to John Wyclif or Richard Wyche are of younger age and historically worthless. But the text itself gives an unusually detailed picture of the author as a person. He often speaks of himself in the first person and reveals a lot about himself and the situation he is in. He possibly even states his name at one point. This passage is only in the commentary on the penultimate chapter of the Apocalypse on the verse *et ego Iohannes vidi civitatem sanctam Ierusalem* (Rv 21:2). The comment in codex [B], which is mainly used as a guideline for our edition, says: *ego, ergo Iohannes et non ego Vilhelmus nisi secundarie, vidi civitatem*. Obviously, the author himself is the one talking at this point, who has already identified himself with John the Seer and his prophetic mission in the Prologue of his commentary (see below, §2.3).

The problem with this passage is one of textual criticism. Of all the manuscripts only codex [B] contains the fully written name “Vilhelmus”. Six other manuscripts only show the letter “W”, [A1] states a “Wi” and [A] “Wij”. The codices [G], [H], [K] and [Lut] leave out the sentence completely, as does manuscript [N], that terminates with Rv 14:2. Those divergencies have to be explained, if it is to be held true, that all the manuscripts are based on one original master copy (see below, §12). Anne Hudson concludes “W” to be the original reading, and that “Vilhelmus” is a result of a conjecture by the writer of codex [B]. Following this conclusion, she didn’t take this passage into account while identifying a possible author.¹⁰ We, in the contrary, assume “Vilhelmus” (William) to be the real name of the author. It is possible, that the master copy only contained the abbreviation, but the manuscript [B] is traced back to a so-called *pronuntiatio*, a dictation of the baccalaureus Matthew of Hnátnice (see below, §12), who spent some time in England a few years before and probably brought

⁷ *Magnum opus omnino et arduum, Brute, conamur, sed nihil difficile amanti putor* (Cicero, *Orator*, 10, 33).

⁸ *Aug. civ. I praef.* (CChr.SL 47, 1, 8 Dombart/Kalb).

⁹ Dante, *Monarchia*, 1, 1, 6.

¹⁰ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 269.

the OAV to Prague himself. Thus he might have had knowledge about the author that enabled him to cancel the abbreviation correctly.

2.2 His captivity

Remarkable about the OAV is the fact, that the author was being held captive whilst writing his opus. This was due to his religious beliefs and meant to keep him from preaching. In the Prologue he addresses this circumstance himself, feeling even closer connected to John the Seer because of his situation and exquisitely capable of commenting on his Revelation (see below, §2.3). Not only did his situation enforce him in his actions, it motivated him to write against the Antichrist and his disciples in the first place – the pope and the prelates, clerks and friars:

[...] *quia multi Papam Romanum declarabant Antichristum et prelatos inferiores, ut modo se habent, eius ministros et plures fratrum eius discipulos et precursores speciales, antequam ego scripsi vel cogitavi de materia, ymo quod mirabilius est, non est mihi verisimile quod unquam ista et consimilia scripsissem contra Antichristum et suos nisi ea occasione qua se putabant mihi excludere viam, scilicet me incarcerando ne unquam agerem aliquid contra eos* (OAV 10:4).

The irony is clearly visible: the captivity, meant to silence the author, helped him achieve his biggest masterpiece which would have an even bigger impact – quite similar to Joseph in Egypt or Paul, who both were in similar situations (ibid.).

The captivity is also mentioned in the colophon of the manuscripts [B] and [P], stating the opus was written *in carcere* (see below, §4). At that time the author had been in solitary confinement for more than three years (*vere solitarius mansi per triennium et ultra*, OAV Prol.). With both of his legs in chains (*duplici conpede cathenatus*, ebd.) to keep him from fleeing, he was not only bound with usual shackles of iron but of the even more secure steel:

[...] *quia bene scis quod nichil magis timent prelati et fratres quam quod hii qui in carceribus suis detinentur, donantur libertati, predicando contra eos sicut prius fecerunt, unde et securissimos [Lut sevissimos] conpedes, non modo ferreos sed calibeos mihi inter ceteros providerunt* (OAV 11:11).¹¹

Nonetheless, the author was in constant expectancy of his release. He might have even interpreted Rv 10:11 regarding himself:

[...] *'et dixit mihi: Oportet te iterum prophetare', quia ex his de carcere ad predicandum, 'populis' unius regni, 'et linguis' diversarum nacionum, 'et regibus multis' quia ista propheta sic declarata contra Antichristum dilatabitur et audietur fama illa apud omnes reges terre nec propter amaritudinem cuiuscumque persecucionis, eciam mortis, opus predicacionis contra Antichristum tibi iniunctum dimittere debes* (OAV 10:11).

This hopeful attitude is also visible in OAV 11:2:

Ex premissis habent eciam iam afflicti ab Antichristo duplicem consolacionem, unam corporalem scilicet quod exhibunt de carceribus in quibus per eum detinentur et liberabuntur ut respirent paulative post tribulaciones suas.

The repeated references to a captivity of the author have given rise to doubts. How could a captive heretic under these conditions possibly write a subversive book and even publish it? In addition, the author must have had access to various books or even a library. Otherwise, the many and often

¹¹ This message is probably to be held true; see Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 222s.

word-for-word references to the *Glossa ordinaria* and the *Expositio* by Pierre de Tarentaise (see below, §5) or to other exegetical and theological authorities could not be explained. The captive might have even welcomed visitors, from which he received news about current church politics (*ut de quibusdam iam accepi*, OAV 3:11).

But this phenomenon of “prison writing” is more frequently known about authors of the Middle Ages, who seemed to have access to literature and were able to welcome visitors.¹² This case was most likely, if the author was held captive by a bishop or in a monastery, to which he alludes in OAV 11:11 (*quod nichil magis timent prelati et fratres quam quod hii qui in carceribus suis detinentur, donantur libertati*).

There are many prominent examples of the possibility to write literature in prison.¹³ The Spiritual Franciscan Jacopone da Todi (approx. 1236-1306) wrote most of his impressive *Laudi* in the Umbrian language whilst being a captive in a monastery between 1298 and 1303.¹⁴ Another Spiritual Franciscan, John de Roquetaillade (approx. 1310-1366), who was equally held captive until his death between 1344 and 1365, wrote numerous apocalyptic and alchemistic books.¹⁵ Cola di Rienzo (1313-1354), who came to Prague in 1350 to seek the support of emperor Charles IV for his revolutionary ideas, ended up in the dungeon of Archbishop Ernest of Pardubice in Roudnice, where he composed letters and treatises.¹⁶

Only one year after the author of the OAV, the learned layman Walter Brut, a Lollard being held captive by the Bishop of Hereford, wrote two statements in defence of the charges raised against him.¹⁷ According to Thomas Netter of Walden, even John Purvey (approx. 1354-c. 1414), the former secretary of John Wyclif, wrote a book having access to different volumes of various authors in Archbishop Arundel’s prison in London or Oxford in 1401.¹⁸ Jan Hus, too, was able to compose some treatises in prison in Constance besides writing letters. Concluding, it is rather likely, that the OAV could have been written whilst its author was in captivity.

2.3 His self-understanding as a scriptural interpreter

Being in prison was not only an impetus for the author to deal with the papal Antichrist. It also enabled him to gain a new understanding of the Revelation of John, which influenced his interpretation. The stay in prison enabled him to remain in silence, to study the Scriptures and to meditate on this book of the Bible:

[...] *quia oportet omnem volentem apprehendere misteria huius prophetiae, deserere conversacionem suam carnalem, et sic tamquam in solitudine esset, vacare studio Scripturarum et spirituali contemplacioni, et tunc habebit gratiam intelligendi, veram esse interpretacionem eius* (OAV 6:1).

¹² Cf. e.g. Maria Luisa Meneghetti, *Scrivere in carcere nel Medioevo*, in: Pietro Frassica (ed.), *Studi di filologia e letteratura italiana in onore di Pietro Simonelli*, Alessandria 1992, 185-199; Summers, *Late-Medieval Prison Writing*.

¹³ Cegna, *L’Opus arduum valde*, 202.

¹⁴ George T. Peck, *The Fool of God, Jacopone da Todi*, University, Ala. 1980.

¹⁵ Leah De Vun, *Prophecy, Alchemy, and the End of Time: John of Rupescisa in the Late Middle Ages*, New York 2009.

¹⁶ Zdeňka Hledíková, *Arnošt z Pardubice: arcibiskup, zakladatel, rádce*, Praha 2008, 69-74.

¹⁷ Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 147-152.

¹⁸ Thomas Netter, *Doctrinale antiquitatum fidei ecclesiae catholicae*, Venice 1757, repr. Farnborough 1967, I 619, 637.

But as if that weren't enough, there is also a special accordance between John the Seer and its interpreter at the end of the 14th century, between the *scriptor* and the *interpres* of this book, made possible due to an *occulta dispositio* of God:

Multa sunt insuper nescio qua oclta dispositione que alliciunt et provocant ad onus exequendum, ut qualis fuerat huius prophecie scriptor, talis nunc in plurimis habeatur interpres. Ille namque relegatus in insulam que dicitur Pathmos hanc sanctam vidit et scripsit propheciam. Ego ergastulo carceris deputatus ac duplici conpede cathenatus ad ipsius tendo interpretationem. Ille a Domiciano tyranno, ego ab Antichristo tollero persecucionem. Ille exilium sortitus est propter verbum Dei et testimonium Ihesu Christi, ego quod tollero pacior propter predicacionem ewangelii. Ille librum suum edidit ad correccionem ecclesie Asyane, ego quod scripturus sum intendo ad reformationem universalis ecclesie. Et sicut dicitur in prologo quodam super hunc librum quod per hoc quod Iohannes omni humano eloquio et auxilio destitutus divinitus est visitatus, sic mihi innuitur, utinam peccata mea non obsistant, quod quanto a tumultu populari recesserim, quia iam vere solitarius mansi per triennium et ultra, tanto magis divina visitacione ad grata huius sancti libri misteria reseranda ydoneus iudicabor (OAV Prol.).

The author identifies himself in an astonishing way with John the Seer: both, John and William are prisoners because of the Gospel, one on Patmos, the other in an English dungeon. Both are deprived of any human contact but experience the graceful presence of God even more. With regard to his situation our author is not only on one level with the Seer but sees himself even above the apostle: John was prosecuted by emperor Domitian alone, whereas the Lollard commenter is being prosecuted by Antichrist himself. In addition, John wrote his book with the purpose of leading the Asian Church back on its right path whereas the commenter aims for a *refomacio universalis ecclesiae*, the reformation of the Church in total.

Still the author doesn't see himself spiritually on the step as John, who is the prophet, whilst he is only the interpreter: '*ego scripturus eram*', *Iohannes hanc propheciam, ego eius interpretationem* (OAV 10:4). Nonetheless, he, Vilhelmus, fills the role of the *alter ego* of John, by facing his own *ego* with the one of John in OAV 21:2 (cited above) but with the additional specification of *secundarie*. In a similar way, he is able to speak with the Seer's own words, as is seen at the end of the commentary: *nec Iohannes fuit venditor huius prophecie nec ego ero* (OAV 22:17); '*Eciam Amen*', *quod Iohannes inprecatur et ego quia non sum conscius quod quidquam falsi seminavi in toto libro isto* (OAV 22:20).

The author has a rather high opinion of himself as an interpreter, which gives the OAV a unique character. According to the usual humble self-perspective, he calls himself the biggest sinner (*maximus peccator*, OAV Prol.) and the lowest human being (*per quosdam deiectos homines infimos et infirmos quorum ego minimus*, OAV 22:21), but since he is ready to face martyrism, he is allowed to rely on God's grace and to become the champion against Antichrist in the now beginning eschaton:

Quia ergo ego non optimum me scencio sed maximum peccatorem, temeritatis videtur esse ut in hoc fine seculi pessimo campiductor fiam precipuus contra Antichristum. Sed quia nichil in sequentibus dicturus sum contra Antichristum et familiam suam, pro quo mori si oportuerit non ero paratus, confido in bonitate Dei mei quod quidquid scorie remanserit exuret et consumet tam voluntarium holocaustum mei ipsius in odorem suavitatis spiritualis (OAV, Prol.).

The author probably has one major role model in mind, concerning his self-understanding as a prison writer and empowered scriptural interpreter, even though he mentions him only once in his commentary and keeps silent about him for the rest of the opus: the Spiritual Franciscan John de Roquetaillade. Kerby-Fulton deems it possible, that the high missionary consciousness of our author

might be a literary plagiarism of John de Roquetaillade – if it was not the result of a self-experienced “trauma victimization”.¹⁹

2.4 The author as an academic and a preacher

The author of the OAV obviously has a comprehensive academic education in the fields of theology, canon law and philosophy, including natural philosophy.

Pagan authors of the antiquity like Aristotle and Seneca are well known to him, as well as the writings of the Church Fathers like Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom (resp. pseudo Chrysostom) and Gregory the Great, but also Origen, Eusebius, Orosius, and the *Vitae Patrum*, which he often refers to. He is also familiar with the works of medieval authors ranging from Isidore of Seville and Beda Venerabilis to Haymo of Auxerre, Richard of Saint-Victor, Bernard of Clairvaux and Bonaventure to Robert Grosseteste, William of Saint-Amour and Richard FitzRalph. The *Glossa ordinaria* is one of his major exegetical tools. He repeatedly refers to terms out of Canon law and the frequent references to various *cronice* and *ystorie*, especially by William of Malmesbury, Martinus Polonus and Ranulf Higden, give evidence of his historical interest. Remarkably, there are no quotations from the writings of Wyclif, who is mentioned only once at all.²⁰

Again and again the author’s familiarity with philosophical discourses becomes obvious, for instance when he rejects epistemological empiricism, supported e.g. by Roger Bacon (*heresis eorum qui dicunt, sequentes quosdam paganorum Philosophos, quod omnis cognitio humana ortum habet a sensu*, OAV 1:10). He shows special interest in natural philosophy, visible in his comment on Rv 21:1, where he discusses the number and specifications of the different celestial spheres, beyond which the heaven of the blessed is to be found and speculates about characteristics of the new heaven and the new earth, when all elements are purified in its original form, rivers run no more and the seas are salt-less.

Often the author of the OAV inserts scholastic digressions on theological questions into the ongoing interpretation. He thinks about why the Israeli tribes Ephraim and Dan are missing in the listing of Rv 7:9, comments in reference to Rv 9:9 on the theological differences in doctrine between different mendicant orders, concerning e.g. the immaculate conception of Mary and apostolic poverty, and introduces a full-length treatise about the ten commandments in the context of Rv 11:6. In the commentary on Rv 20 there are even four scholastic *Quaestiones* (*Queruntur hic aliqua [...]*): 1) if the worship of the blessed is really audible or solely of spiritual nature (*utrum erit laus vocalis in patria et quod sit*); 2) if and how sculptures of the saints should be worshipped (*utrum ymagines metalline, lignee seu lapidee, etc., que eriguntur in ecclesiis sint adorande*); 3) if it can be divine justice to punish someone eternally for a sin, that has been done at one point in time (*queritur quomodo Deus potest iuste penam infinitam infligere pro peccato solum finito*); 4) if Christ really had a right to the earthly throne of David and his reign (*utrum Christo iure hereditario pertinebat regnum David temporale*).

There is every reason to believe that our author was a university teacher or a lecturer at a monastic studium generale. He had been active as a writer before. Several times he mentions other works written by him, most likely in Latin, too. The titles of these works are *De abusivis* (OAV 11:2; 16:10), *Dialogus de Antichristo* (OAV 11:2) and *Pronosticon* (OAV 16:12). Sadly, all the manuscripts seem to have been lost. What we do know about these early works is, that the first two also extensively tried to prove the pope to be the Antichrist, since he did not only demand priestly authority but also

¹⁹ Kerby-Fulton, *Books Unders Suspicion*, 206-214, 223.

²⁰ OAV 9:8.

imperial power and fought the gospel (OAV 11:2). But if – as mentioned above about OAV 10:4 – the author only started to see the pope as the Antichrist while being in prison, these tractates must have been composed in captivity as well.

But our author is not only to be considered as an academic teacher but as a preacher as well, what may be the main cause for the clergy's mistrust against him. In the Prologue, he himself puts it in this way: *ego quod tollero pacior propter predicacionem ewangelii*. Holding him captive was mainly due to the wish of stopping him preaching (cf. OAV 11:11).

The author seems to have been a skilled orator with great impact, regarding his rhetoric abilities, which are profoundly demonstrated in the concluding paraenesis on Rv 22:20s. He saw himself as one of the so-called "evangelical preachers" (*predicadores ewangelici*, see below §7.10), who play the main role in fighting the Antichrist and his disciples: '*facta est grando et ignis mista in sanguine*', *a predictoribus ewangelicis, de quorum numero absit ut sim ultimus* (OAV 8:7). The repeated statements about the duties of evangelical preachers and their role in defeating the Antichrist can be explained by his own belonging to this group.

3. The historical situation

Commenting on the Revelation of John in the OAV is heavily influenced by the current situation of the Church. One might even say, the current situation is the real subject of the OAV, aiming at interpreting the present events with the means of biblical prophecies.

At this time, the loyal evangelical preachers (*ewangelici predicadores*) are widely prosecuted for calling for obedience against the *lex ewangelica* and openly addressing abuses in the Church. The author of the OAV is one of these preachers and the captivity he suffers is representative to the fate of his fellow believers. Through their preaching, they stirred the pope's fury, who turned out to be the Antichrist himself, the archenemy of Christ in the latter days. In his campaign against the evangelical preachers, the pope receives support by the prelates, the clergy and the mendicants. Just as Christ had his apostles, so the Antichrist has his pseudo-apostles, deputies (*vicarii*) and supporters (*fautores*). The mendicants play a particularly infamous role: once they were opponents of the bishops, now they are allied with them in their fight against the preachers.

It is not surprising that the most detailed description of the current prosecution is found in the comment on Rv 11:7-10, where the fate of the two witnesses killed by Antichrist is described.²¹ But

²¹ *'Et cum finierint testimonium suum' scilicet dicti predicadores sicut sub proprietatibus Enoch et Elie designati, scribendo, disputando, docendo, predicando contra transgressores legis ewangelice, 'bestia que ascendet de abisso', id est Antichristus qui profundis heresibus, diviciis et pugnibus tenebrosis quia peccato plenius tenet fastigium militantis ecclesie 'faciet adversus eos bellum' tam sophisticis disputacionibus de quibus superius est discussum et de quibus Apostolus prima Thimothei VI°, quam eiam persecucione manifesta [N scilicet corporale et spirituale sicut dicit Haymo: exhibebit cuncta tormentorum, conabitur doctrinis superare, exhibebit dona, promittit dulcia, exhibebit falsa miracula, unde faciet bellum conminando, blandiendo, disputando, promittendo, miracula faciendo], 'et vincet illos' in reputacione amicorum suorum, 'et occidet eos' nonnullos corporaliter vel comburendo vel gladiis iugulando et aliis generibus mortis, nonnullos civiliter perpetuis carceribus mancipando, et quos nec sic torquet, saltem sententia excomunicacionis mortalis fulminando ita quod nonnisi mortui quo ad spiritualem vitam in ecclesia reputabuntur, 'et iacebunt corpora eorum in plateis civitatis magne' id est in locis publicis Christianitatis ut quicumque viderint eos sic torqueri timeant eis conformari [...], 'et videbunt de populis' tam oculis corporalibus quam fama 'et tribubus et lingwis et gentibus corpora eorum' predictorum ut prefertur occisorum, 'per tres dies et dimidium' quia per tantum spacium id est momentum respective totus mundus mirabitur de istis predictoribus sic tortis et diversimode occisis ab Antichristo et conplicibus suis et iam de facto miratur quod Deus servos suos non adhuc liberat de manibus inimicorum suorum 'et non sient ea poni in monumentis' quia vel ad literam corpora occisorum per*

there are also other, sometimes more general, sometimes more concrete statements. It would be most pleasing for the Antichrist and his accomplices to have all the evangelical preachers killed.²² In fact, many of them have been executed with fire or sword and in other ways.²³ Others are punished by lifelong captivity to stop them from preaching or are being excommunicated by the Church.²⁴ A common pattern in the OAV is the triad of execution – captivity – excommunication, sometimes including banishment, too.²⁵

The most important goal of all these measures undertaken by the Antichrist and his accomplices – especially the prelates and the mendicants – is to prevent their opponents from preaching (OAV 10:4). They also suppress their writings. The mendicants even keep books of former critics like William of Saint-Amour (approx. 1200-1272), William of Ockham (approx. 1287-1347), John de Roquetaillade (approx. 1310-1366/70) and Peter John Olivi (1248-1298) under lock.²⁶

Last but not least, the evangelical preachers find themselves exposed to constant slander. Whoever preaches apostolic perfection to the prelates is called a heretic and a Lollard. Yes, they would even defame Christ himself and his apostles as such.²⁷ The so-called Lollards are falsely accused of polygyny²⁸ and of misconceptions of the Eucharist.²⁹ But the preachers are not the only ones being pressed on. Even English laymen, hearing the gospel in their mother tongue and wanting to read

Antichristum iacebunt per certum spacium insepulta vel quia non statim occidit quos persequitur sed detinet eos in carceribus ut gravius puniantur utrobique ut ceteri per eos terreantur et retrahantur a doctrinis suis, 'et inhabitantes terram', id est de celestibus non curantes vel ea terrenis postponentes, gaudebunt super illis et iocundabuntur putantes se finaliter prevaluisse contra inimicos suos sed isto modo contingit quia sicut afflicti per Antichristum et suos nunc studiosissime se preparant in carceribus detenti ut validissime post liberationem suam militent contra eos, 'et munera mittent invicem' sicut iam ad literam sit inter prelatos et fratres qui condam acerrimi nemici erant ad invicem, 'quoniam hii duo prophete cruciaverunt eos' quia si predicatorum ewangelici instetissent solum contra abusiones prelatorum, precipue in dilapidacione bonorum ecclesie que pauperibus deputantur, fratres, ut dicunt, iuissent eos, et si ipsi predicatorum contra solos Fratres egissent non plus, nunc eos iuissent prelati [...], sed 'hii duo prophete', id est omnes veri et ewangelici predicatorum iam indifferenter eos redarguunt, qui habitantes super terram, id est qui celestibus vilipensis terrenis incumbunt (OAV 11:7-10).

²² *ymmo vellent, si valerent, omnes inimicos suos patibulo affligere (OAV 4:4).*

²³ *nunc plures Ewangelici a Papa Romano et vicariis suis variis generibus mortis occiduntur, et multo plures occiduntur ab eis (OAV 8:7).*

²⁴ *et occidet eos nonnullos corporaliter vel comburendo vel gladii iugulando et aliis generibus mortis, nonnullos civiliter perpetuis carceribus mancipando, et quos nec sic torquet, saltem sententia excommunicacionis mortalis fulminando (OAV 11:7).*

²⁵ *See e.g. OAV 9:17: cogunt ceteros confiteri incarcerantes, occidentes, excommunicantes, fugantes quotquot resistunt eis veritatem ewangelicam defendentes [...] quia multi timentes sic tractari sicut vident quosdam tractari a Prelatis quia inpugnant facta sua antichristina et dicta, ipsis adherent per consensum et execucionem contra Precones ewangelicos ne forte occiderentur, incarcerarentur, excommunicarentur, sicut vident eos occidi, incarcerari, excommunicari.*

²⁶ OAV 12:5.

²⁷ *predicet namque aliquis prelatis nostris et pseudoprophetis perfeccionem quam prophitentur apostolicam et hereticum clamant et Lolardum merito conburendum [...] Patet quod prelati nostri Christum et apostolos, predicacionibus suis si adessent, tamquam hereticos et lolardos condempnarent [...] (OAV 7:1).*

²⁸ *Nam inter cetera inponunt mihi et aliis quod asserimus: licere unicuique cognoscere quascumque mulieres, cuiuscumque condicionis fuerint, propter multiplicacionem generis humani; et miror quod tam manifestum mendacium asserere non verentur, tum quia si hoc esset doctrina illorum qui ut Lolardi diffamantur, non est tam stolidus qui non advertat quin semetipsos maximo horrore et contemptui predicacionis sue omnibus exponerent, et nulli credibile apparet quod aliquis simul probare et reprobare velit tam manifeste quod docet (OAV 6:4).*

²⁹ OAV 2:17.

spiritual literature in English get harassed by the clergy³⁰ and pressured to dissociate themselves from the so-called Lollards.

The description of the prosecution and suppression measures in the OAV is impressive. However, it is questionable whether executions had really taken place at the time the OAV was composed (1389/90; see below, §4). The death penalty for Lollards was not introduced before 1401 by the statute *De haeretico comburendo* of King Henry IV³¹ and the first commonly known execution of a Lollard was the burning of William Sawtrey in March 1401.³² But the author might refer here to executions of heretics in the past and seems to have considered the possibility of martyrdom for himself.³³ Apparently, the *edictum publicum*, forbidding every evangelical preacher to sermonize, already existed at this point.³⁴

The author of the OAV takes possible consequences of the actions against the preachers into account. He speculates, that a lot of people will lose faith³⁵ and not only a few in his vicinity changed sides out of fear of prosecution and punishment. But the opposite occurred as well: disciples of Antichrist left his side.³⁶ In fact, the Antichrist and his associates will never be able to silence the preachers completely. On the contrary, captivity makes them only stronger and once they are released, they will fight even more ferociously against the Antichristian clergy.³⁷ The author says of himself, that being in prison opened his eyes so that he could identify the pope as Antichrist and the prelates and mendicants as his accomplices and start writing to fight them (see above, §2.2).

4. Date and place of writing

The date of origin of the OAV can be precisely determined. The text mentions three datable events from the recent past, from which a *terminus a quo* can be derived.

This is first of all the earthquake of the year 1382, mentioned in the comment on Rv 6:12.³⁸ It took place between the English peasants' revolt in the year 1381 and the Despenser Crusade of 1383 (see below). The author reports that the quake consisted of two clearly distinguishable earth tremors at intervals of less than one minute – apparently he had witnessed it himself. Without question, he talks about the earthquake on 21st May 1382, which shook all of England at about 3pm. The epicenter was in the Straits of Dover. Kent, most notably Canterbury, and London were hit the hardest. At that time a commission of bishops and doctors convened by Archbishop William Courtenay of Canterbury at

³⁰ OAV 9:5. – Reading the Bible in the vernacular was a matter of course at the time of the apostles and must also be permitted today (OAV 2:17).

³¹ Text: *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed By Command Of His Majesty King George The Third*, ed. Alexander Luders et al., London 1816, II 126-128.

³² Kenneth B. MacFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity*, London 1966. 150s.

³³ OAV Prol.

³⁴ *Cum ergo edicto publico iam prohibeantur sacerdotes ewangelizare [...]* (OAV 10:4).

³⁵ *magna porcio hominum cadet a fide in isto consultu inter Antichristum et precones ewangelicos* (OAV 11:13).

³⁶ *sicut aliqui amici Antichristi convertuntur contra eum, ita quidam qui prius tenuerunt contra eum et ipsum inpugnaverunt, vel timore pene vel tedio persecucionis affecti, vecorditer pervertuntur, ut de quibusdam iam accepi* (OAV 3:11).

³⁷ *nunc studiosissime se preparant in carceribus detenti ut validissime post liberacionem suam militent contra eos* (OAV 11:10).

³⁸ *constat quod anno Domini M^o CCC^o LXXXII^o post erreccionem wlgaris populi Canturiensis comitatus et aliorum et ante erreccionem cruciate papalis factus est motus terre supra modum prodigosus quia simul tremuit tota terra quod est contra naturam secundum omnes rerum naturalium inquisitores nec quispiam recolit aut scriptum invenit quod tantus terremotus unquam in se fuerat divisus; nam primo terra bene fortiter tremuit et statim modicum quieuit et deinde multo forcius et terribilius et tamen secundum comunem estimacionem tota ista comocio terminata est infra spacium unius Pater Noster* (OAV 6:12).

the Dominican monastery in London discussed the condemnation of twenty-four doctrines of John Wyclif. Wyclif, who understood the earthquake as a divine omen, named this meeting the earthquake synod (*concilium terraemotus*).³⁹ However, this conference is not mentioned in the OAV.

The Crusade of Bishop Henry le Despenser of Norwich (approx. 1341-1406) to Flanders in 1383, the second datable event, plays a big role in the OAV.⁴⁰ This military enterprise was undertaken in the context of the Western Schism of 1378 and the Hundred Years' War between England and France. Pope Urban VI, to whose obedience England belonged, called for a crusade against his antipope Clement VII and his supporters already on 6th November 1378 in his bull *Nuper cum vinea*⁴¹. He even declared a plenary indulgence in its support. In 1381, Pope Urban asked Bishop Henry le Despenser of Norwich to prepare everything for a crusade in England and gave him authority to give away indulgences for this cause and allow priests to participate in armored combat. With the help of the mendicant orders Despenser started a campaign of preaching and collecting tolls and made a crusade vow on 21st December 1382 in St. Paul's Cathedral. The destination of the crusade was Flanders. The city of Ghent had revolted against count Louis II of Flanders, a supporter of Clement VII, in 1382 and asked the English for help. The English parliament decided to support this crusade against the count of Flanders and delegated Despenser to lead this mission in October 1383. But the crusade lasted only from May to September 1383 and was a failure. Despenser had to take responsibility for his actions before king and parliament and was punished with a temporary withdrawal of his temporalities. John Wyclif and other Lollards severely criticized this enterprise, as does the OAV repeatedly (see below, §7.7).

The third hint is to be found in the commentary on Rv 13:13, where another earthquake is mentioned from the year 1389, which is said to have been predicted by Pope Urban VI (1378-1389). The author of the OAV, on the other hand, notes that, to his knowledge, there was no earthquake in this year at all.⁴² This leads to the conclusion that the commentary could not have been written before the end of 1389. Therefore, the *terminus a quo* for the OAV to be completed is the year 1390.

This dating finds support in the comment on Rv 20:2, where even an exact date can be found:

mille anni elapsi sunt a passione Christi et ultra trecenti quinquaginta septem, quia ipse passus est tricesimo III° etatis sue anno qui additi numero faciunt trecentos nonaginta annos, qui est presens data nostra quia sumus in anno ab incarnatione M° CCC° XC°.

According to Christian time reckoning, the author wrote in the year 1390, 1,357 years after the passion of Christ dated in the year 33. The same date is repeated shortly after (OAV 20:3).

³⁹ See: Dover Straits Earthquake 1382: Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=1382_Dover_Straits_earthquake&oldid=880194697 (2019-03-04); Andrew Cole, *Literature and Heresy in the Age of Chaucer*, Cambridge 2008 (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature), 3-22; Herbert B. Workman, *John Wyclif. A Study of the English Medieval Church*, Oxford 1926, II 266-268.

⁴⁰ See George M. Wrong, *The Crusade of 1383, known as that of the Bishop of Norwich*, Oxford 1892; Gerhard Skalweit, *Der Kreuzzug des Bischofs Heinrich von Norwich im Jahre 1383*, Königsberg 1898; Margaret Aston, *The Impeachment of Bishop Despenser*, in: Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research 38 (1965), 127-148; Richard Allington-Smith, *Henry Despenser. The Fighting Bishop*, Dereham 2003.

⁴¹ Odorico Rinaldi (ed.), *Annales ecclesiastici ab anno quo desinit Card. Caes. Baronius MCXCVIII usque ad annum MDXXXIV continuati*, vol. 17: Ab anno MCCCCLXXVIII usque ad annum MCCCCXVII, Cologne 1693, no. 105-114.

⁴² *imposuerunt eciam sibi quod ipse Urbanus habuisset spiritum prophecie predicendo unum terremotum qui factus fuisset proxima estate elapsa anno Domini M° CCCLXXXIX tam nocivus quod plurima edificia corruissent, quo tamen anno nullus terremotus quantum ad nostram noticiam attinet continebat* (OAV 13:13).

Concluding, at least the comments on the chapters 13 to 20 must have been composed in the year 1390.

Even more detailed information is found in the colophons of our manuscripts [B] and [P], that – apart from orthographic differences – have the same wording. Manuscript [A] depends on the same colophon, but abbreviates it with “etc.”. We can therefore assume that it was already contained in its long form in the lost master copy of all surviving manuscripts. It says (according to manuscript [B]):

Explicit quoddam opus breve et debile super Apokalipsim Iohannis inchoatum circa Natale Domini et aliquando mense interposito, aliquando quindena nonnunquam ebdomada et multis diebus interruptis completum feria quinta in ebdomada Pasce proximo sequentis Anno Domini M^o CCCLXXX^o in carcere.

So the author began working on the commentary around Christmas 1389. With minor and major interruptions he kept on working up until Thursday (*feria quinta*) of the week before Easter, which was 7th April 1390.

The place where the book was written cannot be determined just as precisely. The OAV was written in England for sure, hints like the English Peasant’s Revolt, the Dover Straits earthquake and the Despenser Crusade suggest this. The author is also familiar with writings from the libraries in Oxford and Salisbury (OAV 12:5). He talks about the *ecclesia Anglicana* (OAV 11:7), readers of English literature (*scripta evangelica in anglicis*, OAV 9:5) and about *nobis Anglicis*, including himself and his readers (OAV 12:4). He even converts guilders into English shillings (*solidi monete anglicane*; OAV 13:11).

5. Sources

There are two main sources the OAV relies on: the *Glossa ordinaria* and the *Expositio in Apocalypsim* by Pierre de Tarentaise.

The *Glossa ordinaria* was the most widely used commentary on the Bible in the Middle Ages but has only been called that since the 14th century.⁴³ It consists of a web of comments accompanying the Latin Bible text and written in the form of short word explanations between the lines (so-called *glossa interlinearis*) or in the form of long explanations next to the text (so-called *glossa marginalis*). Most of the comments in the *Glossa ordinaria* are directly taken from the Church Fathers, some from later interpreters, a few are altered in their formulation. Since the 15th century, the *Glossa ordinaria* was falsely attributed to Walafrid Strabo (808/09-849). In truth, it goes back to the exegetical studies of the cathedral school in Laon. Its founder was Anselm of Laon (d. 1117) and various of his disciples and colleagues continued his work. Halfway through the 12th century, the main corpus of the *Glossa* must have been completed, whereas the comment on the Book of Revelation is thought to be edited and modernized at the end of the 12th century once more.⁴⁴ The *Glossa* quickly became the most common commentary on the Bible in the 12th and 13th centuries and was integrated in many biblical manuscripts even though it was hard to use. Since the complete

⁴³ To the following see: Lesley Smith, *The Glossa Ordinaria: The Making of a Medieval Bible Commentary*, Leiden 2009; Lesley Smith, *The Glossed Bible*, in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible. Vol. 2: From 600 to 1450*, ed. by Richard Marsden, E. Ann Matter, Cambridge et al. 2012, 363-379.

⁴⁴ Guy Lobrichon, *Une nouveauté. Les gloses de la Bible*, in: Pierre Riché/Guy Lobrichon (eds.), *Le moyen âge et la Bible*, Paris 1984, 95-114; cf. Wilhelm Kamlah, *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie. Die mittelalterliche Auslegung der Apokalypse vor Joachim von Fiore*, Berlin 1935, repr. Vaduz 1965, 27-35, 48s.

commentary of the Bible by Hugh of Saint Cher in the 1230s, it lost its importance for scholarly exegesis. For the author of the OAV, however, it still was the most important reference work.

There is no critical edition of the *Glossa ordinaria*, it is mostly quoted from the old edition of Migne.⁴⁵ The reference text for our edition of the OAV was its first print in the Strasbourg Vulgata of 1480/81 printed by Adolph Rusch for Anton Koberger in 1480/81, also available as a facsimile.⁴⁶ This print also forms the basis of the online version *Glossae Scripturae Sacrae-electronicae (Gloss-e)*.⁴⁷ In 2015, Sarah van der Pas translated the *Glossa ordinaria* on the Revelation of John into English.⁴⁸

The second main reference for the author of the OAV is the commentary on the Apocalypse by Pierre de Tarentaise (1225-1276).⁴⁹ Pierre probably originated from Savoy and joined the Dominican order in Lyon in 1240. From 1259 to 1264 he taught theology and became a Magister Theologiae at the university of Paris sometime between 1267 and 1269. In between and thereafter, he was a provincial superior of the French province of the Dominicans. In 1272 Pierre was appointed Archbishop of Lyon and the following year Cardinal Bishop of Ostia. In January 1276 he was the first Dominican to be elected pope. But his reign as Innocent V did not last long, since he died only five months after ascending the papal throne on 22nd June 1276. In 1898 he was beatified by Pope Leo XIII.

Among other works Pierre wrote a commentary on the Revelation of John, the *Expositio in Apocalypsim*. The Incipit is a quotation from Matthew 11:25: *Confiteor (or: Confitebor) tibi, Pater, Domine coli et terrae [...]*. In most cases, the *Expositio* was handed down under the name of Pierre's fellow Dominican Albertus Magnus and was printed twice as part of his *Opera omnia*.⁵⁰ This commentary is related to three further commentaries on the Revelation of John written by theologians of the Dominican Order during the 13th century: *Aser pinguis* and *Vidit Iacob in somniis* (the latter often handed down under the name of Thomas Aquinas), both of which are thought to be written by Hugh of Saint Cher (c. 1200-1263), a teacher of Pierre de Tarentaise, or another scholar from his circle, and third commentary written by Nicholas of Gorran (1232-1295).⁵¹

The OAV is strongly dependent on the *Expositio* in terms of content and adopts many interpretations from there with little change. But every time, the Dominican Pierre finds a reference to his order, the *Ordo Praedicatorum*, in the biblical text, the author of the OAV seems to find those passages more suitable with the *evangelici praedicatores*, to whom he himself belongs. It is remarkable that the author – unlike in the case of the *Glossa ordinaria* – does not explicitly refer to the *Expositio* anywhere. The OAV's far-reaching dependence on this source has therefore long remained hidden

⁴⁵ PL 113-114 (on Rv: PL 114, col. 709-752).

⁴⁶ *Biblia Latina cum glossa ordinaria*. Facsimile Reprint of the Editio Princeps (Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480-1481), ed. K. Froehlich/M. T. Gibson, 4 vols. Turnhout 1992.

⁴⁷ <https://gloss-e.irht.cnrs.fr/php/livres-liste.php> (16-03-2019).

⁴⁸ Sarah Van Der Pas, *The "Glossa Ordinaria" on Revelation: an English Translation*, West Monroe, La. 2015.

⁴⁹ Joseph-Pie Mothon, *Vie du Bienheureux Innocent V (Pierre de Tarentaise)*, Rome 1896; *Beatus Innocentius PP. V. (Petrus de Tarentaise OP)*. *Studia et documenta*, Rome 1943.

⁵⁰ Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, vol. 2: *Commentaria: Auctores A-G*, Madrid ²1981, 46 (no. 1040), 203 (no. 1745); vol. 4: *Commentaria: Auctores N-Q*, Madrid ²1989, 47 (no. 5812), 83 (no. 5927), vol. 8: *Supplementum*, Madrid 1976, 253 (no. 1040); 353-355 (no. 1745). – Edited in: Divi Alberti Magni *Opera omnia*, vol. 11, ed. Pierre Jammy, Lyon 1651, 9-156; B. Alberti Magni *Opera omnia*, vol. 38, ed. Auguste and Émile Borgnet, Paris 1899, 465-796. – Both editions have the Incipit *Confiteor*, that matches the wording of the Vulgate, while Stegmüller reads *Confitebor*. – See Robert Lerner, *Poverty, Preaching and Eschatology in the Revelation Commentaries of "Hugh of St Cher"*, in: *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, ed. Katherine Walsh and Diana Wood, Oxford 1985, 157-189, esp. 160s.

⁵¹ David Burr, *Mendicant Readings of the Apocalypse*, in: Richard K. Emerson/Bernard McGinn (eds.), *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, Ithaca, NY/London 1992, 89-104, esp. 90s.; Lerner, *Poverty, Preaching and Eschatology*.

from scholarly research.⁵² Romolo Cegna was the first to make that point.⁵³ It is possible that the author of the OAV – as well as the editor, who filled in the gap in the tradition of the manuscripts on Rv 7 (see below, §12) – did not use Pierre de Tarentaise’s *Expositio* directly, but rather indirectly, through the *Glossa Confiteor*, probably written by the Dominican and later bishop of Orvieto Aldebrando Cavalcanti (1217-1279) and based on the *Expositio*.⁵⁴ But there are not only word-for-word parallels from the *Expositio*; many of the fundamental exegetical tenets of the OAV are rooted in Dominican doctrine of the 13th century. The frequent praises of the divine trinity, the humanity of Christ and their miraculous unification are solid proof for this dependency.⁵⁵

Since the author was able to cite word-for-word in his work out of the *Glossa ordinaria* and the *Expositio* by Pierre de Tarentaise, he must have had access to both sources all the time he was working on the OAV. Additionally, he might have had access to even more commentaries, but rather temporarily.⁵⁶

This is the case with the commentaries by Bede the Venerable and Haymo of Auxerre. However, these were also main references for the *Glossa ordinaria* on the Apocalypse, so that our author could have used them indirectly through the *Glossa*. Bede’s (672-735) commentary from the early 8th century⁵⁷ serves in the OAV above all in the explanation of the twelve gemstones of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rv 21:9ss. as a reference work, but is quoted very freely. In four other passages (Rv 5:13; 7:9; 9:3; 16;21), the author cites directly from a *glosa Bede*, but these citations are not from Bede’s commentary on the Revelation.

Many ideas in the OAV are inspired by the commentary on the Apocalypse (approx. 840-860) by Haymo of Auxerre, mistakenly attributed to Haymo of Halberstadt since Johannes Trithemius in the 15th century.⁵⁸ Like Bede, Haymo also serves as a permanent reference author in the commentary on the twelve gemstones. Haymo is cited word-for-word in three passages of the OAV (Rv 7:14; 7:17; 19:16). But even these citations like the other takeovers are apparently not the result of an independent reading of Haymo, but indirectly taken from the *Expositio* of Pierre de Tarentaise.

In several passages there are also parallels to the Apocalypse commentary of Martin of León (Martinus Legionensis, 1130-1203).⁵⁹ In the majority these can be explained by the common use of the *Glossa ordinaria*, but for instance in Rv 1:9 a direct dependence could exist.

It is probable that the author of the OAV knew the Apocalypse commentary by Joachim of Fiore (c. 1130/35-1202)⁶⁰, which was especially appreciated by the Spiritual Franciscans. He is familiar with

⁵² But cf. Curtis V. Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 80s., n. 23.

⁵³ Cegna, *L’Opus arduum valde*, 200; Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 66.

⁵⁴ A copy is currently found in the Library of the Metropolitan Chapter of St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague in an Italian manuscript amongst sermons of Cavalcanti (APH cod. A 115/4, fol. 1r-57r).

⁵⁵ Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 66s.

⁵⁶ Concerning commentaries on the Revelation of John from the Early and Medieval Christianity, see E. Ann Matter, *The Apocalypse in Early Medieval Exegesis*, in: Richard K. Emmerson/Bernard McGinn (eds.), *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, Ithaca, NY/London 1992, 38-50; Burr, *Mendicant Readings of the Apocalypse*; Nigel Morgan, *Latin and Vernacular Apocalypses*, in: *The New Cambridge History of the Bible. Vol. 2: From 600 to 1450*, ed. by Richard Marsden, E. Ann Matter, Cambridge et al. 2012, 404-426.

⁵⁷ Edition: Beda Venerabilis, *Opera exegetica. Vol. 5: Explanatio Apocalypseos*, ed. Roger Gryson (CChr.SL 121A), Turnhout 2001. Cf. Gerald Bonner, *Saint Bede in the Tradition of Western Apocalypse Commentary*, Newcastle upon Tyne 1966.

⁵⁸ Edition: PL 117, 937-1220.

⁵⁹ Martin of León, *Expositio Libri Apocalipsis*, PL 209, 299-420.

⁶⁰ Edition: Joachim of Fiore, *Enchiridion super Apocalypsim*, ed. Edward K. Burger, Toronto 1986. Cf. E. Randolph Daniel, *Joachim of Fiore: Patterns of History in the Apocalypse*, in: Richard K. Emmerson/Bernard McGinn (eds.), *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, Ithaca, NY/London 1992, 72-88.

Joachim's speculations on history, but he rejects the expectation of a future third age (*status*) of the Holy Spirit, in which the letter of the Old and New Testaments will be replaced by spiritual understanding (*intellectus spiritalis*).⁶¹ Our author also knows and rejects Joachim's interpretation of the two end-time witnesses of Rv 11:3 as Enoch and Elijah.⁶² On the other hand, he sees – similar to Joachim, who thought of the coming *virī spirituales* – in the protagonists of the outpouring of the seven bowls of wrath in Rv 16 the evangelical preachers.⁶³

With considerable certainty our author even knew the commentary on the Apocalypse by Peter John Olivi (1248-1298), which was condemned as heretic by Pope John XXII in 1326.⁶⁴ He knows that this commentary is kept under lock and key by the mendicants in Salisbury and Oxford (OAV 12:5). Like Olivi, he calls the pope *Antichristus Magnus* (see below, §7.2), and he is familiar with Olivi's radical ideal of poverty and his concept of the *usus pauper*. Perhaps he also adopted the Joachite term *status* for the periodization of church history from Olivi. However, the author of the OAV carefully avoids any explicit reference to Olivi, and a direct dependence on his commentary cannot be proven.

In two passages (Rv 3:22; 11:3) our author refers to the *Postilla* of the French Franciscan Nicolaus of Lyra (c. 1270/75-1349); however, he does not seem to have used his comments on the Apocalypse.⁶⁵ The other Franciscan and Dominican commentaries of the 13th and 14th centuries were apparently unknown to him. He also obviously did not know Wyclif's commentary on the Apocalypse, written in 1371.⁶⁶

6. The Prologues

Important information on the historical situation, the captivity of the author and his self-understanding as a scriptural interpreter is to be found in the author's Prologue (Incipit: *Opus arduum valde, Apokalipsim videlicet Domini nostril Ihesu Christi ipsius gracia inspirante sumpsit explicandum*; see below, §2.3) preceding the actual commentary. However, this prologue is only contained in the more extensive manuscripts (see below, §11), not in the shorter manuscripts [D], [G], [Lut] and [N].

Five manuscripts of the OAV contain additional prologues, often also found in other medieval commentaries on the Revelation or copies of the Revelation itself. The collection that has become "classical" can be found, for example, in the Bible print produced by Anton Koberger in Nuremberg in 1485, which also contains the *Postilla* of Nicholas of Lyra.⁶⁷ Here the so-called *Prologus Gilberti*, the so-called *Prologus Priscilliani* and the *Argumentum* of Jerome appear at the beginning of the Revelation of John. These three texts have also been secondarily included in the tradition of the OAV, with only [A] containing all three. In the more extensive versions, these three are put before the OAV's own prologue.

⁶¹ [...] *heresis illa Abbatis loachim quod videlicet lege ewangelica abolita nova lex quam Spiritus Sancti appellavit subintraret, quod tamquam nephandissimum ab omnibus catholicis inprobatur* (OAV 3:22).

⁶² Cf. Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 212.

⁶³ OAV 16. Cf. Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 216s.

⁶⁴ Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 80, 82f., 84 n. 41, 103s.; Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 217s., 420 n. 18. – Edition: Petrus Iohannis Olivi, *Lectura super Apokalipsim*, ed. Warren Lewis, Saint Bonaventure, NY 2015.

⁶⁵ See Philip D. Krey, *Nicholas of Lyra's Apocalypse Commentary*, Kalamazoo, MI 1997.

⁶⁶ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 264.

⁶⁷ *Biblia. Cum postillis Nicolai de Lyra et expositionibus Guillelmi Britonis in omnes prologos S. Hieronymi et additionibus Pauli Burgensis replicisque Matthiae Doering*, Nuremberg, 1485.

The so-called *Prologus Gilberti* is usually cited with its Incipit *Omnes qui pie volunt vivere*.⁶⁸ It is attributed to Gilbert de la Porrée (Gilbertus Porretanus, Gilbertus Pictaviensis, d. 1154), a student of Bernard of Chartres and Anselm of Laon, who was a professor of dialectics and theology in Paris since 1137 and bishop of Poitiers since 1142. Usually, the *Prologus Gilberti* was transcribed together with a comment of an anonymous author or with another comment by the French Minorite William the Breton (Guilelmus Brito, d. before 1285), who also commented on Jerome's prefaces on the biblical books.⁶⁹ Manuscripts [D] and [G] both include the *Prologus Gilberti* combined with the anonymous comment – only that [D] reproduces this prologue only after the OAV, which was written into the Bible text in the form of glosses here, while in [G] it stands before the OAV. Apparently the writers of these two manuscripts have taken the *Prologus Gilberti* together with the comment of the Anonymus from the *Expositio* of Pierre de Tarentaise,⁷⁰ also used to fill a gap in tradition on Rv 7 (see below, §12). Compared to the version in the *Expositio*, the anonymous comment has been shortened several times. The manuscript [A] and the print [Lut] contain the *Prologus Gilberti* without any comment.

The short prologue with the Incipit *Iohannes Apostolus et Evangelista a Christo electus atque dilectus* is sometimes called *Prologus Priscilliani*.⁷¹ The author, who cannot be identical with the heretic Priscillian of Ávila (ca. 340-385), is unknown. It is found in the manuscripts [A] and [D] – here it is, unlike the *Prologus Gilberti*, put before the text of the Apocalypse with the integrated glosses from the OAV – and in [Lut]. Manuscript [H] also contains the *Prologus Priscilliani*, but at the end, after the text of the OAV.

Manuscript [A] is the only one containing the famous short *Argumentum* by Jerome from a letter to Paulinus of Nola *De studio Scripturarum*, also cited by the author of the OAV.⁷²

The printing of the OAV from 1528 ([Lut], see below) contains an additional prologue by Martin Luther next to the *Prologus Gilberti* and the *Prologus Priscilliani*, also reproduced in this edition.

7. Content and main aspects

The author has set himself three goals, which he states in OAV 21:22: to explain the divine law in the Bible, the *lex evangelica*; to bring about a comprehensive reform of the Church; and to help destroy the Antichrist and his accomplices:

[...] *exile opus meum quod ipso Domino nostro Ihesu Christo teste ad sue legis ewangelice egi declaracionem, ecclesie sue sancte reformationem et adversarii Domini nostri Ihesu Christi Antichristi et omnium fautorum suorum confusionem finalem et destruccionem quod ipse prestare dignetur Ihesus Christus Dominus noster.*

⁶⁸ Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, vol. 1: *Initia biblica, apocrypha, prologi*, Madrid 1981, 306 (no. 839); vol. 9: *Supplementi altera pars. Glossa ordinaria*, Madrid 1977, 28 (no. 2529,1). Cf. Valentin Rose, *Verzeichnis der lateinischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, vol. 2, Berlin 1901, 250 (no. 412), 480 (no. 560).

⁶⁹ Lloyd W. Daly, *Guilelmus Brito and His Works*, in: *The Library Chronicle* 32 (1966), 1-17. The comments on prologues by Hieronymus et al. in the bible copy mentioned above. Cf. *Summa Britonis sive Guilelmi Britonis Expositiones vocabulorum Biblie*, ed. Lloyd William Daly/Bernardine A. Daly, 2 vols., Padova 1975.

⁷⁰ B. Alberti Magni Opera omnia, ed. Auguste Borgnet/Émile Borgnet, vol. 38, Paris 1890, 471-478: *Prologi Gilberti in Apocalypsim. B. Joannis Apostoli explanatio*.

⁷¹ On the *Prologus Priscilliani* and the tradition of prefaces on biblical books in the middle ages: John Chapman, *Notes on the early History of Vulgate Gospels*, Oxford 1908, 257. Cf. also Donatien de Bruyne (ed.), *Préfaces de la Bible latine*, Namur 1920, 261.

⁷² Jerome, ep. 53, 9, 6 (PL 22, 548s. = CSEL 54, 463, 9-12 Hilberg). Cf. OAV 7:8.

In the following we will systematically present the most important topics of the OAV.

7.1 The method of scriptural interpretation

The medieval interpretation of the Bible made generous use of the procedure of allegoresis, which was usually based on the scheme of the fourfold sense of the Scriptures. Especially the rich figurative language of the Apocalypse, with its powerful descriptions of spiritual visions provided much scope for very different interpretations. Jerome had already pointed out the difficulties in his *Argumentum* on this book, also quoted by the author of the OAV. The Apocalypse holds as many secrets as it has words, and sometimes there are many different meanings hidden in one word: *Apocalypsis Iohannis tot habet sacramenta quot verba [...]. In verbis singulis multiplices latent intelligentie.*⁷³

Therefore, exegetical work on the Revelation is so hard and makes it an *opus arduum valde*. Nearly every author before has failed this quest and the author of the OAV himself is aware of the insufficiency of his commentary:

hec propheta sublimior est omnibus aliis propheciis tam ratione materie sue sublimioris quam intellectus profundioris, unde a principio promulgacionis sue vix ab omnibus doctoribus qui fuerunt in ecclesia usque in hodiernum diem clare potuit explicari, et facta quod multa sunt eius misteria in dicta expositione mea rudi et exili aut obscure aut nullatenus explicate [...] (OAV 22:17).

The starting point of the proper prophetic interpretation must be the literal sense of the Apocalypse: [...] *non quod nullus sit eius sensus literalis, cum is sit ille quem iuxta gratiam mihi celitus ministratam interpretari conabor* (OAV, Prol.).

But this literal sense is not simply identical with the words (voces) of the biblical text. With Nicholas of Lyra, our author understands by it rather the prophetic meaning of the words, the truths about the Church and its opponents which they convey.⁷⁴ The literal sense is therefore both a spiritual and a mystical sense, and it is necessary to recognize what is meant beyond the prophetic and visionary images:

[...] *patet etiam quod superius premisi quod sensus mysticus qui et literalis ubique inquirendus est in libro isto unde sensus literalis Scripturarum sicut dicit Doctor de Lira super Librum Iudicum: 'non est ille qui per voces in mente significatur sed qui per res significatas intelligitur' [...], et ita in libro isto cum agitur de candelabris et equis sensus literalis non est de illis sed de ecclesia et variis fratribus ipsius et ita de aliis figurative et proprie dictis in ista propheta [...]* (OAV 11:3).

The author of the OAV sees himself enabled for this task in a special way. Not only does he endure the same fate as the Seer, he also happens to live, as we will see, at the end of the sixth age of world history, and the reign of the Antichrist is for him present reality. The current situation and the biblical text interpret one another.

The OAV stands in an old tradition, dating back to Tyconius, according to which the apocalypse is to be interpreted in terms of the Church and its earthly history. Since Primasius of Hadrumetum (d. 565) and Bede (672/73-735) the Apocalypse was often divided into different sections, which were sometimes understood as historical periods. Bede's division into seven sections corresponding to seven ages had an immense impact.⁷⁵ On the other hand, one could also associate the recurring

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 261.

⁷⁵ Matter, *The Apocalypse in Early Medieval Exegesis*, 47; Morgan, *Latin and Vernacular Apocalypses*, 413.

sevenfold schemes of the Apocalypse (seven Churches of Asia, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls) with the seven periods of world history.

Like all commentators of the 13th and 14th centuries, the OAV divides the Apocalypse into seven visions (*visiones principales, revelaciones principales*), which are further subdivided into smaller sections: 1) Rv 2:1-3:22 (the Seven Churches of Asia); 2) Rv 4:1-8:1 (the Seven Seals); 3) Rv 8:2-11:18 (the Seven Trumpets); 4) Rv 11:19-14:20 (i.a. the Woman and the Dragon and the two Beasts); 5) Rv 15:1-17:18 (the Seven Bowls and the great Harlot); 6) Rv 18:1-20:15 (Babylon's Fall, the Last Battle and Judgement Day); 7) Rv 21:1-22:21 (the heavenly Jerusalem).

However, for the author of the OAV these sections do not refer to successive historical periods. He finds the traditionally distinguished seven ages of church history⁷⁶ in the Seven Seals of Rv 4-7.⁷⁷ These stand for 1) the primitive church (*ecclesia primitiva*); 2) the *status martyrum*; 3) the *status haereticorum*; 4) the *status hypocritarum*; 5) a period of prosecution, not defined in detail; 6) the *status Antichristi*; 7) the period after the destruction of the Antichrist. The interpretation reaches the present time of the author already with the fourth seal, denoting the age of the hypocrites: *Et hec omnia inpleta novimus hiis diebus per ypocritas in ecclesia prevalentes* (OAV 6:8). As such he specifically mentions the organizers and participants of the Despenser Crusade to Flanders of 1383. But in the meantime the sixth seal has already been opened and the sixth age, the *status Antichristi*, has begun. For the earthquake mentioned in Rv 6:12 refers on the one hand to the Western Schism of 1378 and on the other hand to the Dover Straits Earthquake of 1382. As a matter of fact, the author is convinced that he lives in the sixth age under the rule of the Antichrist. And to this sixth age, his own present, he refers most of the prophecies of the Apocalypse. The OAV does not primarily intend to reveal the future (or to understand the past), but to interpret its own time and present experiences in the perspective of salvation history. Up to chapter 13 the already ruling Antichrist is in the focus, in chapters 14 to 20 the author turns to his followers and promoters. The interpretation of chapters 21-22, which speak of the future kingdom of the blessed after the Last Judgment, looks to the future.

Even though the author thinks of himself as exceptionably enabled to interpret the Apocalypse, he emphasizes not to have altered the biblical text itself. And he does not submit to the judgment of the ecclesiastical teaching authority, as would have been customary, but to the better judgment of the wise:

hec habent intelligi si fiant animo augendi aut truncandi propheciam istam ad falsificandum aliquam sententiam positam in ea quod Deum contestor et sanctum Iohannem huius libri auctores ego non feci et glosam quamcumque que mihi visa est inserenda iudicio relinquo discretorum (OAV 22:19).

7.2 The Antichrist

As was mentioned above, the author identifies the pope with the Antichrist, the end-time adversary of Christ prophesized in the Bible. He sees himself and the "evangelical preachers" in constant battle against this Antichrist and his disciples. Therefore, the pope and his Antichristian character is one of the main topics of the OAV.

⁷⁶ Burr, *Mendicant Readings of the Apocalypse*, 94.

⁷⁷ Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 80-86; Hans-Ulrich Hofmann, *Luther und die Johannes-Apokalypse*, Tübingen 1982, 486s.

To identify the pope as Antichrist means the ultimate escalation of church criticism and dissidence. In this, the author of the OAV follows John Wyclif.⁷⁸ On 22nd May 1377, Pope Gregory XI had condemned 18 sentences from Wyclif's opus *De civili dominio* and ordered his imprisonment and a judicial inquiry – a step from which Wyclif was saved thanks to protection by the Duke of Lancaster. One year later, he was even more severely struck by the outbreak of the Western Schism in September 1378. The irreconcilable hostility between the competing popes Urban VI (1378-1389) and Clement VII (1378-1394) and their respective obedience, which divided the entire Western Church, led him to suspect that in the papacy the Antichrist himself was at work. Wyclif developed his idea of the Antichrist further in the course of the disputes about his doctrine of the Lord's Supper since 1379. In addition to the papal Antichrist he now also focused on his 'disciples' or 'members', whom he saw above all in the mendicants. With the Despensers Crusade of the year 1383 (see §4 above) the last doubt about the Antichristian character not only of the then ruling popes but of all popes in general and of the papacy as an institution was removed for him. In the last two years of his life Wyclif gave his doctrine of the Antichrist its final form in two detailed writings: the treatise *De Christo et suo adversario Antichristo* written at the end of 1383 or beginning of 1384 and books 3 and 4 of his *Opus Evangelicum* written in 1384, which he put under the subtitle *De Antichristo*.⁷⁹

For Wyclif, the Antichrist was qualified by the fact that he was an opponent of Christ and his law.⁸⁰ The Antichrist in this sense can be a collective and consist of the leaders of the *ecclesia malignantium*, i.e. the totality of the people rejected by God (*presciti*) who go towards eternal damnation. But among the many rejected there is also one chief Antichrist, the *potissimus anticristus*, who is the strongest and most dangerous opponent of the *lex Christi*, meaning the pope himself, who claims to be Christ's representative on earth and yet deviates most from his example and commandments. According to Wyclif this applies not only to this or that bad pope as an individual, but without exception to all popes since the Donation of Constantine, by whose acceptance the Church betrayed the poverty and humility of Christ. So the pope as such, the papacy as institution is the obvious Antichrist. Together with the cardinals, bishops, mendicants and other helpers, all popes since the Donation of Constantine together form the monstrous collective person of the Antichrist, a kind of diabolical counter-image to the body of Christ. Thus Wyclif had abandoned the biographical Antichrist legend of the Middle Ages, which expected the adversary of Christ to be an individual, an end-time descendant of the tribe Dan and son of a mendicant and a nun, in favour of a radically subversive institutional view. He was followed by the English Lollards, Hus and his Bohemian followers as well as, a century and a half later, Martin Luther.⁸¹

We find similar ideas in the OAV. In his commentary on Rv 11:2, our author gives a formal definition of the term 'Antichrist'.⁸² In a broader sense, any transgressor of God's commandments can be called

⁷⁸ Schäufele, *Der Antichrist bei Wyclif und Hus*, 173-186.

⁷⁹ John Wyclif, *De Christo et adversario suo Antichristo*, in: Wyclif, *Polemical Works*, ed. Rudolf Buddensieg, London 1883. reprinted New York 1966, II 633-692; *Opus Evangelicum*, ed. Johann Loserth, vol. 2. London 1896, reprinted New York 1966.

⁸⁰ [...] *quelibet persona simplex vel aggregata que est notabiliter contra Christum secundum fidem scripture dicitur Antichristus*: Wyclif, *Opus Evangelicum*, II 107.20-22.

⁸¹ Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202), Peter John Olivi (1248-1298), Jean de Roquetaillade (Johannes de Rupescissa, c. 1310-c. 1365), and the pseudonymous Telesphorus of Cosenza (who announced the appearance of the *Antichristus Magnus* for the year 1378).

⁸² [...] *hoc quod est Antichristus tripliciter accipitur a doctoribus et sanctis. Uno modo accipitur communiter et large pro omni prevaricante quodcumque mandatorum Dei, et sic omnis extra caritatem existens potest dici Antichristus [...] Secundo accipitur Antichristus stricte et magis proprie pro tota congregacione dampnandorum qui fuerunt ab inicio mundi usque in finem [...] Tercio modo accipitur Antichristus propriissime pro aliquo uno homine summum principatum obtinente in ecclesia tam imperiali potestate quam sacerdotali, vacans variis cautelis et oppressionibus ad extincionem legis ewangelice, et hic solus de necessitate scripturarum, sicut in*

an Antichrist. In a narrower sense he can be understood as the totality of all the damned. In the narrowest and actual sense, however, the Antichrist is a single person who holds the highest position in the Church on the basis of imperial and priestly authority, and who is pursuing by all means the destruction of the *lex evangelica* – but that is none other than the Roman Pope, and this Antichrist rules now. However, the author of the OAV hastens to add that not every pope as such is an Antichrist, but only those who really fight the *lex evangelica*.

The OAV repeatedly emphasizes that the Antichrist really rules now and that he is identical with the Roman Pope.⁸³ All the seven signs predicted in Rv 12-16 to mark the beginning of the reign of the Antichrist are fulfilled. And this Antichrist who stands against Christ in life and doctrine is none other than the Roman Pope.⁸⁴ The fact that a preaching ban has been issued against the evangelical preachers is another sure sign of the reign of the Antichrist.⁸⁵ By refusing to proclaim the deeds of God like Christ, the pope rises above all that is called God and thus proves himself to be the Antichrist according to 2 Th 2:4.⁸⁶ Even the famous number 666 (Rv 13:18) can be interpreted as referring to the pope.⁸⁷

Like Wyclif, the author of the OAV rejects the traditional medieval legends on the Antichrist. He explicitly rejects the widespread anti-Jewish idea that the Antichrist would be a Jew from the tribe of Dan. In fact, 'Dan' is not to be understood literally, but, according to the meaning of the word ('judgement' = *iudicium*), to be referred allegorically to the pope's primacy of jurisdiction. Since the pope is the highest judge and his curia the origin of all legal disputes in the Church, he can rightly be called a descendant of the 'tribe of Dan'.⁸⁸

The OAV frequently calls the pope *Antichristus Magnus*.⁸⁹ Thus he distinguishes the actual papal Antichrist from other Antichrists in the broader sense according to the above-mentioned distinction. We find the same term in the writings of Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202), Peter John Olivi (1248-1298), Jean de Roquetaillade (Johannes de Rupescissa, c. 1310-c. 1365), and the pseudonymous

'De abusivis' ostendi, est Papa Romanus vel aliquis duplicem potestatem illam pretendens, sic se habens ad destruccionem ewangelii, non quod quilibet sit Papa Romanus vel potestatem illam pretendens sit Antichristus nisi una cum hoc legem contempnat, opprimat et extingwat quantum in se est ut prefertur. Et istum Antichristum iam dico regnare [...] (OAV 11:2).

⁸³ Cegna, L'Opus arduum valde, 207f.

⁸⁴ *Illa VII signa que predicta fuerunt a Iohanne manifestanda solummodo temporibus Antichristi iam inplentur secundum omnem intellectum catholicum ipsis possibilem ut in antecedentibus est ostensum, ergo tempus adest Antichristi, sed includit contradiccionem: tempus Antichristi veraciter adesse et non Antichristum, ergo Antichristus regnat, quod erat probandum. Et quis sit ille tam facile patet quod Antichristus ab anti dicitur quod est contra et Christus quia tam vita quam doctrina impugnat Christum, ergo precipuus talis est precipuus ille Antichristus, hic est Papa Romanus ut claret ex predictis. Ergo Antichristus ille Magnus iam regnat et Papa Romanus est ille* (OAV 7:1).

⁸⁵ *Cum ergo edicto publico iam prohibeantur sacerdotes ewangelizare omnes, generaliter preter eos qui ut superius patuit sunt Antichristi discipuli speciales, quod hic secundum propheciam est expressivum signum temporis regiminis Antichristi, patet hoc signo cum superius declaratis sine omni ambiguitatis scrupolo Antichristum iam regnare* (OAV 10:4).

⁸⁶ *[...] si autem non annuccio, inquit [sc. Christus], vobis opera patris mei nolite mihi credere, ergo Papa hoc renuens extollitur super omne quod dicitur Deus que est condicio soli Antichristo appropriata ex apostolo 2^e Thesalonicenses 2^o* (OAV 7:8).

⁸⁷ OAV 15:2.

⁸⁸ OAV 7:8.

⁸⁹ OAV 6:13; 7:1; 11:19; 13:14; 14:20; 16:10; 17:10; 20:3.

Telesphorus of Cosenza (who announced the appearance of the *Antichristus Magnus* for the year 1378).⁹⁰

Talking about the papal Antichrist, the OAV uses the term *Papa*, or – more often – *Papa Romanus*.⁹¹ This is neither a tautology, nor a necessary distinction between the two popes in Rome and Avignon. For the very fact that the papacy is inherently connected with Rome proves its Antichristian character. As Daniel had prophesied, the kingdom of the Antichrist would come into being in the same place as the kingdom of the eighth beast of Dn 7:8, which according to common belief is to be equated with the Roman Empire. And also the separation (*discessio*) preceding the reign of the Antichrist according to 2 Th 2:3 points to Rome as his seat, from which in the meantime a large part of his former secular and ecclesiastical followers has separated.⁹²

In concrete terms, our author, in his attacks on the Pope-Antichrist, thought above all of Urban VI (1378-1389), who resided in Rome and whose obedience included England. Perhaps it was the news of Urban's death on 15th October 1389 – he must have received it between the commentary of chapter 13 and that of chapter 14⁹³ – , that had temporarily given him hope for an early release.⁹⁴

However, with Urban one Antichrist had died, but the Antichristian office of the pope persisted, and Urban's successor Boniface IX (1389-1404) was just as much an Antichrist. And also the antipope Clement VII, reigning in Avignon, who is said to have also fought the *lex evangelica*, and all his future successors were such Antichrists.⁹⁵ In this sense also the antipope in Avignon is a *Papa Romanus* – and really already since the second half of the 12th century the canonists identified 'Rome' with the pope and his whereabouts: *ubi Papa, ibi Roma*.⁹⁶ Moreover, our author claims to have predicted several times that the Papal Schism would continue even after Urban's death.⁹⁷

The judgment about the Antichristian pope in the OAV is often expressed in the formula that the leader of the Church, who in his life and teaching should follow the example of the apostles and thus be *apostolicus*, is in truth a renegade, an *apostaticus*.⁹⁸ This play on words can already be found in Wyclif,⁹⁹ and it seems to have been popular among the Lollards and later among the Hussites. The deviation from his spiritual mission to proclaim and defend the *lex evangelica* is what makes the pope the Antichrist. In detail, this apostasy manifests itself in different ways: for example, in his claim

⁹⁰ See Bernard J. McGinn, *Antichrist: two thousand years of the human fascination with evil*, New York 2000, 160s., 170, 174s., 178.

⁹¹ OAV 2:17; 4:4.5; 7:1; 11:2.6.14; 13:1.4.11; 14:20; 15:2; 16:4.10.11; 17:8; 20:3.9.14; 21:4.

⁹² OAV 16:10.

⁹³ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 258.

⁹⁴ OAV 10:14; 11.2. See above §2.2.

⁹⁵ *Ex quo Urbanus Sextus iam mortuus est in quo omnia misteria Antichristi fuerunt inpleta, nunquid eciam mortuus sit Antichristus? Dico quod sic sed non minus adhuc vivit quia non est attendendus Antichristus penes personam sed penes officium et potestatem qua legem ewangelicam inpugnat et conculcat suam statuendo adversam ut habetur in predictis. Unde sic se habens Papa iam residens eque est Antichristus ille Magnus tenendus sicut et predecessor suus quicumque. Nec per hoc excluditur ille Robertus Clemens iam residens Avinione quia pari potestate, ut fertur, legem ewangelicam inpugnat sicut et Papa Romanus et sic tenendum est de successore suo, sic se habente post mortem suam quicumque fuerit. Unde ut comuniter Antichristus in isto libro designatur in similitudine bestie monstruose in signum quod non una persona aliqua sed plures tales colligati in unum ipsum Antichristum constituunt conversacionem ewangelicam et doctrinam penitus contemptentes* (OAV 14:20).

⁹⁶ Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, *The Pope's Body*, Chicago, IL/London 2000, 60-63.

⁹⁷ OAV 6:12

⁹⁸ OAV 7:8; 8:7; 13:2. See Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 67.

⁹⁹ John Wyclif, *De potestate pape*, ed. Johann Loserth, London 1907, reprint New York 1966, 214.13f.; John Wyclif, *Tractatus de simonia*, ed. Sigismund Herzberg-Fränkell/Michael Henry Dziewicki, London 1898, reprint New York 1966, 28.20-23. Cf. CIC dist. LXXIX c.9 (Friedberg I, 278).

to the highest spiritual and temporal power combined¹⁰⁰, in the assertion of his inerrancy¹⁰¹, in the shameless accumulation of worldly riches¹⁰² and, of course, in the persecution of evangelical preachers. If the Inquisitors were to take their task seriously, they would actually have to burn the pope at the stake.¹⁰³

In OAV 7:13 there is a characteristic enumeration of the pope's failings: he does not lead the apostolic life to which he is obliged, but together with his court wastes the goods destined for the poor. He claims for himself infallibility, *plenitudo potestatis* and the worldly dominion over Rome and the whole earth. He defends his primacy with the sword and allows priests to fight for worldly purposes and thus become murderers. He demands the revenues of all vacant bishoprics for himself. He claims the exclusive right to award all ecclesiastical offices and gives parishes to bishops, monasteries and colleges without these having to provide spiritual care there. For money he grants indulgences, releases religious from their vows and divorces marriages.¹⁰⁴

7.3 The release of Satan

The sixth period of history and with that, the reign of the Antichrist, has begun. According to the comment on Rv 6:12, the sixth age – the age of Antichrist – had begun with the Western Schism of 1378 or with the earthquake of 1382. Of course, the dominion of the Antichrist had already been established three and a half centuries earlier, in 1033. At that time the Millennium of Rv 20:1-3, the kingdom of a thousand years, had come to an end and Satan, who was bound until then, had been released again; since then he could regain his former power through his instrument, the Antichrist, and intensify his attacks on the faithful.

According to the interpretation customary since Augustine, the Millennial Kingdom was identical with the era of the Church. Christ had defeated Satan, and only immediately before the end of the world he would be released for a short time which was usually reckoned with three and a half years (see §7.12 below). End time calculations were not possible on this basis. According to Augustine the thousand years were not to be understood literally, but as a symbolic expression of perfection.

While the release of Satan was usually expected as a future event, for Wyclif it had already happened.¹⁰⁵ In his treatise *De apostasia* of late 1380, he associated it with the emergence of the

¹⁰⁰ [...] *ratione duplicis potestatis, imperialis et sacerdotalis supreme quas pretendit in ecclesia militante, quarum altera in tanto fastigio caret omnis princeps alius, tam secularis quam ecclesiasticus* (OAV 13:4) ; cf. OAV 11:14.

¹⁰¹ [...] *Papa hac doctrina sua quod non errat eo ipso quod Papa se efficaciter Antichristum ostendit* [...] (OAV 13:11). Cf. OAV 2:17.

¹⁰² [...] *Papa tantam symoniam et avariciam et sacrilegium committit in ecclesia quod sit supremus spoliator egenorum* (OAV 13:2). See Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 211.

¹⁰³ *Patet quod, si hii inquisitores eorum heretice pravitatis facerent debitam execucionem officii sui ad combustionem Pape agerent* [...] (OAV 13:11).

¹⁰⁴ [...] *fautores Antichristi [...] dicentes eum quidquid fecerit non errare, et quod iuste mandat sacerdotes ewangelicos fieri homicidas; quod potest facere illas indulgencias consuetas pro pecuniis; quod est eciam dominus civilis urbis Romane et orbis; quod non oportet eum servare statum apostolicum quem profitetur; quod non est sacrilegus consumendo in se et suis bona ecclesie pauperibus deputata, quod iuste vindicat omnium episcopatum vacantium primos fructus, quod licite appropriat ecclesias curatas episcopatibus, abbaciis et collegiis, eciam ad superfluum dotatis, onere reiecto cure pastoralis; quod licite tuetur principatum universalis ecclesie gladio materiali; quod legitime coniugatos iuste divorciat pro pecuniis; quod religiosos licite eximit ab observancia sue professionis eciam pro pecuniis; quod iuste licenciat sacerdotes ewangelicos litigare pro terrenis; quod ratione sui regiminis universalis habet distributionem omnium promocionum ecclesie; quod est paris iurisdictionis in ecclesia ad Christum cum erat in terris ratione sue plenitudinis potestatis* (OAV 7:13). Cf. OAV 13:11.

¹⁰⁵ See Schäufele, *Der Antichrist bei Wyclif und Hus*, 180-183.

mendicant orders in the early 13th century.¹⁰⁶ But also the concurrent pontificate of Pope Innocent III. (1198-1216) – the pope who dogmatized the doctrine of transubstantiation at the 4th Lateran Council and introduced the obligatory annual confession – was regarded by him as an expression of the *solutio Satanae*.¹⁰⁷ In 1383, the year before his death, Wyclif dedicated a whole small writing to the subject. Here he admitted that in the time between the ascension of Christ and the present many devils had been released. But the expiration of the thousand years of Rv 20:1-3 is to be related to that time when Satan “noticeably” (*notabiliter*) introduced his servants into the Church, which only happened with the emergence of the mendicant orders.¹⁰⁸

Also for the author of the OAV the release of Satan lies in the past. However, he does not date it to the emergence of the mendicant orders in the 13th century like Wyclif. Rather, he understands the thousand years quite literally. In his interpretation of Rv 17:10 he lets this period begin with the incarnation of Christ.¹⁰⁹ In OAV 20:2, however, he takes the Passion of Christ as his starting point and calculates the date of the *solucio Sathane* exactly to the year 1033, 357 years before the writing of the OAV:

‘per annos mille’, scilicet a tempore passionis Christi usque ad Antichristum, sed mille anni elapsi sunt a passione Christi et ultra trecenti quinquaginta septem, quia ipse passus est tricesimo III^o etatis sue anno qui additi dicto numero faciunt trecentos nonaginta annos qui est presens data nostra quia sumus in anno ab incarnatione M^o CCC^o XC^o. Ergo trecenti quinquaginta septem anni elapsi sunt postquam Antichristus primo regnavit ex ista propheta (OAV 20:2; cf. also OAV 20:3).

Up to that time the *doctrina evangelica* flourished and dominated the Church¹¹⁰, since then the Antichrist rules. However, the author of the OAV does not seem to have connected any specific events with the year 1033 and the release of Satan at that time.

7.4 Pseudo-apostles and supporters of the Antichrist

For the author of the OAV, the pope, as we saw, is the *Antichristus Magnus*. But beside him there are numerous other Antichristian forces and actors. The papal Antichrist rules the Church of the Evildoers, the *ecclesia malignantium*¹¹¹. This term goes back to Ps 25:5 Vg and has been used since the antiquity in the polemics against heretics. The Cathars and the Waldensians applied it to the established Church for the first time.¹¹² The entire ecclesiastical institution thus appears as a diabolical counter-church to the true Church of Christ. And just as Christ had his apostles, so also the Pope-Antichrist has his own apostles and supporters.

¹⁰⁶ John Wyclif, *Tractatus de apostasia*, ed. Michael Henry Dziewicki, London 1889, reprint New York 1966, 46.5-12; 76.4-78.28.

¹⁰⁷ John Wyclif, *Cruciata*, in: Wyclif, *Polemical Works*, II 577-632, here: 622.22-623.9; John Wyclif, *Sermones*, ed. Johann Loserth, London 1887-1890, reprint New York 1966, II 84.6-10; III 438.7-24, 507.2-8; IV 101.13-18, 500.9-12; Wyclif, *Tractatus de simonia*, 39.9-40.9; Wyclif, *Opus Evangelicum*, II 12.

¹⁰⁸ Wyclif, *De solucione Sathane*, in: Wyclif, *Polemical Works*, II 385-400, here: 392.19-393.8.

¹⁰⁹ [...] *ymmo non fuit ante Sathaneolucionem, que facta fuit mille annis post incarnationem, sicut in proxima visione patebit* (OAV 17:10).

¹¹⁰ OAV 20:4.

¹¹¹ *‘Et vidi mulierem sedentem super bestiam coccineam’, indifferenter per mulierem potest hic intelligi Antichristus residens super ecclesiam malignacium [...] (OAV 17:3).*

¹¹² Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele, *‘Defecit Ecclesia’*. *Die Verfalls-idee in der Kirchengeschichtsanschauung des Mittelalters*, Mainz 2005, 161s.

The topic of pseudo-apostles is found in the Book of Revelation itself (Rv 2:2), and the *Glossa ordinaria* also mentions *pseudoapostoli* of Antichrist.¹¹³ According to the author of the OAV the Beast of the Earth in Rv 13:11 embodies the totality of all false apostles¹¹⁴, dealt with thoroughly in the comment on this verse. They are *procuratores negociorum Antichristi*, without whom the pope could not exercise his power.¹¹⁵ In addition to the pseudo-apostles by whom our author means clergymen who should actually follow the example of the apostles, he also knows other supporters of the Antichrist, whom he calls with a more general name *fautores*. He likes to summarize the hostile powers in a group of three: the Antichrist, his *pseudoapostoli* and his *fautores*.¹¹⁶

The author of the OAV criticizes particularly harshly the papal curia. It is the actual seat and court of the Antichrist. The cardinals and curials are guilty of simony and the accumulation of worldly riches, they are afflicted with all mortal sins and have abandoned both the *vita activa* in the service of the Church and the *vita contemplativa*. Therefore the fifth bowl of wrath is poured out over them.¹¹⁷ As the place where the papal primacy of jurisdiction is exercised, the curia is the centre (*meta*) of all disputes.¹¹⁸ Above all, however, the Curia in Rome – and also the one in Avignon – is the scene of an unheard-of simonist haggling over ecclesiastical offices, which helped make the Lombard bankers and the Jews rich. Thus the stronghold of the teachings of Christ and the apostles has become the dwelling place of demons, and the curials are worse than pagans.¹¹⁹ Possibly, this harsh judgement is based on experiences made by the author himself or one of his friends on a trip to Rome.¹²⁰

The OAV's verdict on the bishops appointed by the pope and the curia is equally unfavourable. Most of them have reached their high offices simonistically and unworthily. Hardly anyone can show the necessary holiness of life, outstanding education and strict customs. Instead of cultivating a *conversatio evangelica*, they do secular business that clerics should not be involved in.¹²¹ Christ

¹¹³ e.g. on Rv 18:11; 20:1.

¹¹⁴ [...] *bestia ista id est collegium pseudoapostolorum Antichristi* [...] (OAV 13:11).

¹¹⁵ OAV 18.1; 19:20.

¹¹⁶ e.g. OAV 17:7; 18:13.

¹¹⁷ *'Et quintus angelus effudit phyalam suam super sedem bestie', id est super omnes illos in quibus specialius residet Antichristus qui sunt cardinales, officiales, advocati et vasalli curie sue 'Et factum est regnum eius tenebrosus', pre omnibus aliis tenebram symoniace pravitatis suscipientes et foventes, propter cumulationem terrenorum. Sunt etiam consciencie tenebrosae, pre cunctis aliis ecclesiasticis, avaricie, superbie, iactancie, luxurie, crapule, accidie insistentes, tam activitatem ecclesie quam contemplacionem deserentes [...]* (OAV 16:10).

¹¹⁸ [...] *curia Pape est meta omnium litigiorum ecclesie quorum omnium ipse iudex creatur principalis a quibusmodi [...]* (OAV 7:8.)

¹¹⁹ [...] *principalis intellectus litere est de curia Antichristi residente in Roma vel Avinione seu alibi quo secum trahit curiam suam et hec curia tam cecidit a spirituali conversacione olym vigente in ecclesia Romana quod nulli paganorum ipsa carnaliores et magis mundiales sunt effecti et ubi olym habitavit doctrina Christi et apostolorum facta est habitacio demoniorum quia in illis quiescunt demones qui eorum suggestionibus superbie, avaricie, lascivie et talium adquiescunt, 'et custodia omnis volucris inmundi et odibilis' quia omnes volentes pre ceteris exaltari illic symoniam continuant que eos Deo multum odibiles quia hereticos reddit et causam tante inmundicie in curia Pape continueate ponit, cum dicit quia 'de vino fornicacionis eius', sibi symoniace promociones ecclesie prostituendo, 'biberunt omnes gentes' quia nulla nacio est excepta inter Christianos quin plures eius ecclesiastici symoniace a curia illa promociones obtinuerint et indigne* (OAV 18:3). – Zur Kritik an der Vergabe kirchlicher Pfründen durch Papst und Kurie cf. also OAV 11:6 (*decimum mandatum*).

¹²⁰ [...] *si quisquam de nostris ad curiam Romanam intuitu peregrinacionis vel obtentu beneficii accesserit, propter pessima exempla ibidem sibi ostensa, licet ante conscienciam visus est ponderare in aliquo, illic rediens eam quasi in nullo ponderare vel pocius amisisse se ostendit [...]* (OAV 16:10).

¹²¹ *Quero enim ab episcopis nostris ydiosis et scripturarum ignaris quomodo ipsi devenerunt ad promociones suas non literatura quia tunc non essent tales. Si dicant racione ewangelice conversacionis, hanc nemo nactus est curiis dominorum intromittendo se de negociis secularibus contra professionem cleri sed hec ab hiis se segregando et Christum imitando per contemptum mundanorum. Cum ergo nemo digne promoveatur in*

demands from the bishops an impeccable life and a detachment from worldly matters¹²², but the bishops deal with nothing more than these, neglecting the apostolic teaching and life imposed upon them as followers of the Apostles.¹²³ But even among the lower clergy there are many who sell their souls out of arrogance and licentiousness for prestigious offices and wealth.¹²⁴

The religious (*religiosi*) also belong to the eager supporters of the Antichrist. Outwardly they profess the meritorious poverty of Christ and the Apostles, yet they lead a worldly life and their greatest aspiration is to accumulate earthly riches. And although the pope is obviously the greatest opponent of the law of Christ, they claim that he cannot err.¹²⁵ To a very special degree, however, the mendicants stand out as supporters of the Pope-Antichrist. (see below, §7.5).

But not only clerics and church dignitaries, but also worldly princes commit themselves to the service of the Antichrist. As *principes seculares fautores Antichristi*¹²⁶, they defend all heresies and all claims to power he makes¹²⁷ and they side with the curia and agree with all its abuses and heresies to obtain the promotion of unworthy applicants to high ecclesiastical functions.¹²⁸ And in doing so, they fight the protestant preachers representatively for Christ, by spreading lies and blasphemies about them and attacking them in every way possible, ordered by the pope.¹²⁹ And just as they promote and support the Antichrist, so they attack Christ by fighting evangelical preachers, about whom they spread lies and blasphemies on behalf of the pope and oppress them in every way.

Despite all criticism, however, our author is convinced that there are also opponents of the Antichrist in all ranks of the Church, and he also mentions some examples he himself knows of.¹³⁰

7.5 The mendicant orders

ecclesia nisi excellencia sanctitatis vite aut excellencia literature cum frugalitate morum quorum neutrum titulorum potest multitudo episcoporum nostrorum pro se allegare patet quod maior eorum porcio indigne ad fastigium dignitatis episcopalis est promotata (OAV 18:3).

¹²² [...] *episcopos omnium ecclesiarum qui stelle forent per supernam conversacionem et separacionem a terrenis pre ceteris sue cure comissis* (OAV 1:16).

¹²³ *Si per stellas hic intelligantur loca apostolorum tenentes id est episcopi qui ecclesiam doctrina et vita apostolica ornarent, sicut stelle ornant celum, tam nunc ceciderunt super terram quod nulli plus ipsis terrenis incumbunt, doctrinam apostolicam et conversacionem plus contempnunt* (OAV 6:13).

¹²⁴ *'et mercatores terre', id est ecclesiastici qui animas suas vendunt ambicione promocionum et diviciarum; 'de virtute deliciarum eius divites facti sunt' id est de peccatis superbie et lascivie que sunt deliciose malis per que acquiruntur divicie in ecclesia hiis diebus* (OAV 18:3).

¹²⁵ [...] *religiosi nostri qui terciam partem cleri constituunt ad paupertatem voluntariam voto solempni astricti, tam ceciderunt super terram circa cumulacionem terrenorum insudantes quod de paupertate Christi et apostolorum, que est illa meritoria quam profitentur, quasi nichil curant; et propterea dicitur quod stelle iste ceciderunt a celesti sua conversacione super terram per conversacionem terrenam et doctrinam, docentes Papam in nullo posse errare cum tamen ex prehabitis clareat quod sit summus adversarius legis Dei et ipse magnus et perversissimus Antichristus* (OAV 6:13).

¹²⁶ OAV 17:12.

¹²⁷ OAV 17:13.

¹²⁸ *'et reges terre', id est principes seculares, 'cum illa', scilicet dicta Babilone curie Antichristi, 'fornicati sunt', asenciendo abusionibus et heresibus suis, et eciam ab eo prece vel precio obtinendo promocionem indignorum [...]* (OAV 18:3).

¹²⁹ *'Hii cum agno' id est Christo in suis defensoribus ewangelicis, 'pugnabunt', realiter pugnant contra eos ad suggestionem Antichristi quia clamant contra errores et blasphemias suas, ipsos multipliciter persequendo* (OAV 17:14).

¹³⁰ [...] *presumendum est quod in omni statu ecclesie tam prelatorum quam clericorum quam eciam monachorum et fratrum sint aliqui boni Antichristo et actibus eius non consencientes sed adversantes ut audent et possunt [...]* (OAV 3:6).

Among the supporters of the Pope-Antichrist, the author of the OAV attaches special importance to the mendicants, i.e. the members of the four mendicant orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinian Hermits and Carmelites. In doing so, he deals above all and in detail with the Franciscans and Dominicans.

Already Wyclif had attacked the four “sects” of the mendicants extremely sharply.¹³¹ Initially there had been close relations between the Oxford professor and the Franciscans, who supported his ideal of evangelical poverty and his demand for expropriation of the Church. But already since 1379 critical statements of Wyclif about the Mendicants can be found, and in the dispute about his rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation since 1381 the conflict broke out with great vehemence. Wyclif used to summarize the four orders under the acronym *Caym*, the Latin name of the fratricide murderer Cain.¹³² They were “sects” and “private religions” that had separated themselves from the Church and the law of Christ and committed themselves to self-made rules. Their origin coincided with the release of Satan.

The OAV too is very critical of the mendicant friars. The author is convinced that many of them are among those rejected by God, and he suggests that if he did not intend to concentrate on the interpretation of the Bible text in his book, he could make a lot of contentions against them.¹³³ Above all, they are willing helpers and instruments of the Pope-Antichrist, who sends them all over the world, where they are the main supporters and defenders of all his abuses, heresies and blasphemies.¹³⁴ Thus they prove themselves to be disciples of the Antichrist through their deeds.¹³⁵ Above all through their support of the Despenser Crusade, they made themselves guilty:

[...] in isto capitulo reputo omnes doctores et magistratus quatuor Ordinum Mendicantium irretitos. Nec dubito de ista conclusione quin si omnes hii restitissent cruciate Papali in principio suo promulgantes, nunquam penitus fuisset executata [...] (OAV 3:22).

Apparently this failure of the mendicants was a severe personal disappointment for the author of the OAV:

O si quando audiam aliquem fratrem cruciatam Papalem blasphemantem et hereticam proclamantem et se pati offerentem prius quam tantam heresim ab Antichristo swasam regnare sinat in ecclesia Dei, profecto dicam: Ego hodie te fateor fratrem esse fidelem quia amor legis ewangelice quam propheteris te fecit esse contemptorem cruciate papalis (OAV 3:9).

¹³¹ Penn R. Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, Princeton, NJ 2014, 152-182.

¹³² *Carmelitae – Augustinenses – Iacobitae* (= Dominicans) – *Minoritae* (= Franciscans), see e.g. Wyclif, *Sermones*, II 85. Cf. Margaret Aston, “Caim’s castles”: *Poverty, Politics, and Disendowment*, in: R. B. Dobson (ed.), *The Church, Politics, and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, Gloucester, New York 1984, 45-81; again in: Margaret Aston, *Faith and Fire: Popular and Unpopular Religion, 1350-1600*, London/Rio Grande, OH 1993, 95-131.

¹³³ *[...] plures eorum sunt de numero dampnandorum: habundans hic contra eos est dicendi materia sed compendio artatus quod ubique in toto isto libro intendo redeo ad textus expositionem* (OAV 20:10).

¹³⁴ *Descripta tribulacione que facta est per Antichristum et suos principes subiungit aliam que iam fit per suos pseudoapostolos quos ipse in negociis suis procurandis et exsequendis per totum mundum dispersit et hii sunt fratres 4^{or} mendicantium sectarum, non quod omnes sint tales aut quales superius describuntur, sed quia dicti ipsi sunt abusio[n]um papalium, heresum et blasphemiarum procuratores et defensores pre ceteris speciales [...]* (OAV 13:11). Cf. OAV 9:3: the friars are *precipui defensores omnium heresum*.

¹³⁵ OAV 9:12.

The present persecution of the so-called Lollards is also their work, as some friars themselves have admitted to our author.¹³⁶

He repeatedly quotes the Parisian Magister William of Saint-Amour (d. 1272) and the Archbishop of Armagh Richard Fitz-Ralph (c. 1300-1360), both of whom had become known as critics of the mendicants. As a concrete measure to get the friars back on track, the author of the OAV proposed to punish them with contempt and to deprive them of all alms temporarily.¹³⁷ Moreover, he adds, every member of such an order is free to leave his “sect” and to live according to the simple rule of the apostles instead.¹³⁸

Nevertheless, there are also positive remarks about the mendicant orders. In general, our author seems to be well acquainted with the mendicants. Thus he is well informed about the differing theological views of the Franciscans and the Dominicans in mariology and in the conception of poverty, for example.¹³⁹ But he also knows that in the libraries of the mendicants – one must think here above all of the Franciscans – in Oxford and Salisbury the books of Peter John Olivi and of John de Roquetaillade are kept under lock and key (OAV 12:5). In fact, he seems to have had close personal contact with mendicants. The above-mentioned confidential admission of their co-authorship in the persecution of the Lollards speaks in favour of this. But he also knows (*quos novi*) Franciscans who rejected the Despenser Crusade and would rather have suffered martyrdom than promote it. He also knows of an Augustinian Hermit who refuses the papal indulgence.¹⁴⁰ Accordingly, he asserts that by no means all members of these orders are pseudo-apostles of the Antichrist.¹⁴¹ In some places our author even shows sympathy for the strict Franciscan ideal of poverty. It would be desirable if the Franciscans were to return to the ideals of their founding days and practice the *altissima paupertas* they had vowed.¹⁴²

7.6 The Donation of Constantine

For the dissidents of the High and Late Middle Ages, the Donation of Constantine was a crucial date in their criticism of the Church.¹⁴³ For them it was not a salvific act of the divine providence, but the beginning of the decline of the Church and its apostasy from the law of Christ. Also for Wyclif, as mentioned above, the Donation of Constantine was the most important cause for the aberration of the Church. By equipping the Church with wealth and secular power (*dominium civile*), Constantine, and later many other secular princes following his example, had led it away from the path of

¹³⁶ *Quidam tamen fratrum hoc oretenus fatebantur mihi quod tota afflictio eorum, qui scripta evangelica in anglis penes se detinent et legunt, ex procuracione eorum procedit, sicut et quorumcumque aliorum qui ut Lolardi diffamantur* (OAV 9:5).

¹³⁷ *Nichil tam durum quod duriori non cedat, quia et quo nullus invaluerit, eo mordacior medicina adhibenda, unde summe esset efficax ad fratrum correccionem pro premissis abusionibus suis et aliis quod ab omnibus Christi fidelibus contemptui haberentur, ad tempus ipsis suffragia consweta et consorcia subtrahendo donec discerent verecundari et abiurare cruciatam papalem cum tanta sollicitudine cum quanta eam nunquam defenderent* (OAV 3:22).

¹³⁸ *ego dixi quod liceret religiosum relinquere sectam suam et servare regulam apostolicam in sua puritate sicut servata erat ante fratrum institutionem* (OAV 2:17).

¹³⁹ OAV 9:9. Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 75.

¹⁴⁰ OAV 3:6

¹⁴¹ [...] *non quod omnes sint tales* [...] (OAV 13:11).

¹⁴² [...] *si Fratres servarent votum altissime paupertatis quam profitentur* [...] (OAV 20:10) ; cf. OAV 13:2; 17:4; 21:2. See Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 207; Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 75.

¹⁴³ Schäufele, *'Defecit Ecclesia'*.

following Christ in poverty and humility. The much-needed reform of the Church therefore had to begin with its disendowment by the secular lords.¹⁴⁴

The OAV shares Wyclif's criticism of the Donation of Constantine, even though the subject is not as prominent here. Like Wyclif, the author of the OAV quotes from the *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus* by William Perault (c. 1190-1271) and the chronicle by Ranulf Higden (Cestrensis, c. 1280-1364) the well-known legend, first documented in 1179, of the celestial voice which was heard during the donation and proclaimed that poison had been instilled in the Church on that day. Likewise, he also demands that the worldly rulers take back the earthly possessions of the Church.¹⁴⁵

All priests are obliged to *perfectio evangelica*. This includes, above all, not to fight for earthly goods.¹⁴⁶ But precisely this right is claimed by the pope and bishops with reference to the Donation of Constantine.¹⁴⁷ Also the defenders of the Despensers Crusade – a military enterprise led by a bishop in the name of the pope – referred to it.¹⁴⁸ The author of the OAV does not accept this justification. Interestingly, he does not only deny the legitimacy of the Donation with theological arguments. Rather, he fundamentally questions its historicity. For all chronicles expressly report that Constantine had reserved the rule over the Roman Empire and over the city of Rome for himself. And according to Peter of Poitiers, although Charlemagne left the dominion over Rome to Pope Adrian I (772-795), it is nowhere documented that any emperor ever transferred the dominion over the entire empire to the Pope.¹⁴⁹ Thus the author of the OAV in fact denies the authenticity of the famous *Constitutum Constantini*, which, as we know today, is really a fake from the late 8th century. The authenticity of this document had already been questioned by Emperor Otto III in 1001 and in a letter from the circle of Arnold of Brescia in 1152, but also by Marsilius of Padua (c. 1280-1342/43) and William of Ockham (c. 1288-1347). However, it was not until the first half of the 15th century that Nicholas of Kues (1401-1464), Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457) and Reginald Pecock (c. 1395-c. 1460)

¹⁴⁴ William Farr, *John Wyclif as Legal Reformer*, Leiden 1974.

¹⁴⁵ [...] *ut refert Cestrensis in sua cronica et Wylhelmus ibidem, ubi supra post eum, 'quod tempore dotacionis ecclesie' quando scilicet Constantinus donat Imperium Occidentale cum Roma Pape Silvestro, 'audita est vox in aere: hoc infusum est venenum in ecclesiam Dei'; futurum igitur est ut temporalia auferant seculares* (OAV 12:15). – The legend of the celestial voice was reported for the first time in the *Gemma Ecclesiastica* (c. 1179) of Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis, c. 1146-c. 1223); cf. Schäufele, *Defecit Ecclesia*, 77-80. For Wyclif's use of this legend see e.g. Wyclif, *De ecclesia*, l 317s.; *De potestate papae*, 198; *De civili dominio*, l 180, 396; *Opus Evangelicum*, l 187.

¹⁴⁶ [...] *eciam data occasione sacerdotibus litigandi pro terrenis nullo modo litigare debent* (OAV 3:21); *omnes sacerdotes evangelici tenentur ad unam et eandem perfeccionem ewangelicam, sed certum est quod sacerdocium est perfectissimus gradus et supremus in ecclesia militante, ergo hec precepta de non litigando pro terrenis omnes generaliter tangunt sacerdotes* (OAV 3:22).

¹⁴⁷ [...] *dicunt se racione regalie sui sacerdocii et dotacionis constantini habere gladios materiales pro defensione temporalium ecclesie per manus sacerdotum, ymmo et episcoporum extrahendos tamquam reges terreni in quo planissime menciuntur [...]* (OAV 17:4).

¹⁴⁸ [...] *quotquot credunt cruciatam Pape iuste procedentem aut sacerdotibus nowe legis in quacumque causa licere gladios extrahere materiales. Sed dicit quisquam amicus Antichristi quam prelati ecclesie licite occupant possessiones terrenas, tam licite possunt pro eis pugnare cum eas occupant titulo civili, eo videlicet titulo quo eas ante occupavit Constantinus et alii reges terreni ecclesiam dotantes; sed ipsi licite pro earum defensione poterant pugnare, ergo hoc idem pro eisdem possunt sacerdotes evangelici* (OAV 8:11).

¹⁴⁹ [...] *in cronicis et historiis ubi habetur de dotacione ecclesie per Constantinum expresse dicitur quod ipse Constantinus sibimet speciale dominium Imperii Romani et patriciatum Urbis reservavit, Carolus tamen Magnus, Imperium Romanum per Adrianum Papam adeptus, dicto Pape patriciatum Urbis concessit ut refert M<agister> P<etrus> Pectavensis [= Peter of Poitiers] in cronicis; sed quod quisquam imperatorum dominium Imperii Romani Pape contulerit nullus in cronica aliqua vel historia uspiam legit [...]* (OAV 8:11). – Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 72-74.

succeeded in proving the forgery.¹⁵⁰ The author of the OAV might have been influenced in his critique by Ockham, who in turn relied on the *Speculum historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais.

Moreover, in the opinion of the OAV it would be a gross misunderstanding to think that only the Donation of Constantine and the donations of other emperors and princes had given power to the Church. For that would be to deny in a blasphemous and heretical way the authority of the *ecclesia primitiva* and the authority of Christ, the apostles, the martyrs, the confessors and the holy virgins.¹⁵¹

7.7 The Despenser Crusade

The failed crusade to Flanders led by Bishop Henry le Despenser of Norwich (see above, §4) was of great concern to the author of the OAV.¹⁵² Already Wyclif had dealt with it and had dedicated an own writing to the crusade in the summer of 1383.¹⁵³ The OAV mentions this enterprise not less than 54 times. Our author criticizes above all the fact that the pope and prelates called for arms to defend secular possessions of the Church and took the sword themselves.¹⁵⁴ The plenary indulgence for the support of the crusade announced by Pope Urban VI is also criticized in the OAV (see §7.8 above). But most of all the author of the OAV is angry about the behaviour of the mendicants, who did not contradict the godless enterprise, but supported it by their preaching campaigns to the best of their ability, thus making common cause with the Antichrist (see §7.5 above).

7.8 Indulgences

In his bull *Nuper cum vinea* of 6th November 1378, Pope Urban VI had announced a plenary indulgence for the supporters of the crusade against the followers of his antipope Clement VII – the subsequent Despenser Crusade (see §4 above). It was therefore obvious that the author of the OAV, in connection with his criticism of the crusade, would also concern himself with the question of indulgences.

It was Wyclif who had already criticized the indulgences for the Despenser Crusade¹⁵⁵ and, in addition, rejected them in principle. They were not biblically justified and did not go back to Christ and the apostles. In fact, they were based on the pope's fictitious primacy of jurisdiction and were a result of the release of Satan.¹⁵⁶

The author of the OAV also rejects indulgences in principle, expressly mentioning the jubilee indulgences offered in Rome since 1300. In his interpretation of Rv 6:8, he develops an original new argumentation which testifies to his theological competence.¹⁵⁷ His most important argument is based on the article of the Creed of the *communio sanctorum*. Everyone who lives in love is thus a member of the *communio sanctorum* and receives according to the greatness of his love a share in

¹⁵⁰ Schäufele, *Defecit Ecclesia*, 66-72.

¹⁵¹ [...] *quod ecclesia non valeret absque dotacione Constantinia et aliorum imperatorum et dominorum terre, quod est summe blasphemum et hereticum, quia tunc ecclesia primitiva sanctissima ante dotacionem istam nullius fuit valoris et sic Christus nihil valuit et apostoli et martires, confessores et virgines illius ecclesie nichil valuerunt* (OAV 13:1).

¹⁵² Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 68, 70.

¹⁵³ John Wyclif, *De cruciata*, in: Wyclif, *Polemical Works*, II 577-632.

¹⁵⁴ OAV 3:22. See above, §7.6.

¹⁵⁵ Wyclif, *Opus Evangelicum*, I 434; Wyclif, *Opera minora*, 367s.

¹⁵⁶ See e.g. Wyclif, *Opus Evangelicum*, I 37-39; John Wyclif, *Dialogus sive Speculum Ecclesiae Militantis*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard, London 1886, reprint New York 1966, 25, 20.

¹⁵⁷ OAV 6:8. See Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 70s.

the intercessions of the Church (*suffragia ecclesie*), without the pope or subordinate prelates having to decide on it.

On the other hand also the doctrine of the Church treasure, according to which the pope can dispose of surplus merits (*merita supererogatoria*) of Christ and the saints by granting indulgences, is erroneous. For even the saints have not earned their bliss, but have been rewarded by God *ultra condignum* – this is even true of the human nature of Christ.

The third argument is based on the the nature of the repentance (*penitencia*), which is waived by the indulgence. If this repentance is demanded by God for the eradication of sin, then it would be reprehensible and heretical to abolish it. If, however, repentance is not demanded by God, then one can confidently refrain from it even without papal indulgence.

7.9 *Lex evangelica and Ecclesia primitiva*

As for Wyclif, for the author of the OAV the Bible is the supreme norm for the doctrine of faith and for the practice of the Church. He can call it the *lex Christi*, but usually he calls it the *lex evangelica*¹⁵⁸. Thus he first of all refers to the teaching of Christ in the gospel (*evangelium*), which in concrete terms means the four Gospel books of the New Testament. But in broader sense our author likes to use the adjective “evangelical” for everything that has to do with the inner renewal of man and the Church.¹⁵⁹ Thus besides the *lex evangelica* he also speaks of the *preceptum evangelicum*, the *doctrina evangelica* and the *veritas evangelica*. Whoever follows the evangelical law is an *evangelicus*, he leads a *conversatio* or *vita evangelica* and can reach the *perfectio evangelica* and enjoy the *pax evangelica*. Of particular importance for the Church is the right preaching of the *lex evangelica* by the *doctores evangelici*, the *sacerdotes evangelici* and the *praedicatores* or *praecones evangelici*.

The entire plight of the Church is due only to the fact that the pope, prelates, clerics and religious disregard the *lex evangelica*. Their misconduct consists essentially in having exchanged out of greed the divine *lex evangelica* for the *lex humana*.¹⁶⁰ In the erroneous, even blasphemous conviction that the *lex evangelica* is not sufficient for the direction of the Church, they cling to the decrees and decretalia of the popes, although these are sometimes in explicit contradiction to the *doctrina evangelica*.¹⁶¹ What distinguishes the *lex evangelica* is that it exhorts love more than any human law and therefore forbids any bloodshed for worldly interests, such as the Despensers Crusade.¹⁶² If it only were obeyed, there would be no more wars.

Because the *lex evangelica* is an expression of the eternally constant will of God, it is and remains a binding norm for the Church at all times. For this reason, the author of the OAV rejects the speculative historical theology of Joachim of Fiore with its expectation of a future age of the Holy

¹⁵⁸ In OAV 17:3, both terms appear in combination: *lege Christi ewangelica*.

¹⁵⁹ Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 203s.

¹⁶⁰ [...] *id est causam dampnacionis Antichristi que relicta lege ewangelica fornicatur cum lege humana propter avariciam executi, et ultra legem divinam culta propter lucrum et honorata ab omnibus fautoribus suis* (OAV 17:1).

¹⁶¹ [...] *'et super capita eius nomina blasphemie', dicendo legem ewangelicam non sufficere pro regimine ecclesie absque decretis Papparum et decretalibus epistolis, quorum nonnullam doctrinam ewangelicam impugnant expresse* [...] (OAV 13:1).

¹⁶² [...] *multo maiorem caritatem mandat lex ewangelica Christianis servandam quam ius aliquid humanum, ymmo reducit eius servatores ad legem nature qua generaliter servata includit contradiccionem sangwinem humanum effundendi pro quibuscumque terrenis* (OAV 16:2).

Spirit in which a new, purely spiritual law will replace the letter of the Old and New Testaments. In fact, it is not possible for the *lex evangelica* ever to be replaced or outbid by another law.¹⁶³

Accordingly, our author also equates the gospel aeternum, which the angel of the sixth seal brings in Rv 14:6, with the *lex evangelica* and not, as Gerardo of Borgo San Donnino (d. c. 1276) had done, with the writings of Joachim. The *lex evangelica* is eternally valid: it was valid at the time of the apostles in the *ecclesia primitiva*, and it is also obliging today for the *ecclesia moderna*, even if the papal Antichrist denies this with his followers. The figure of the angel in Rv 14:6 refers to all the evangelical preachers who to his day bring the *lex evangelica* to people and thus lead them to salvation.¹⁶⁴

It is no coincidence that at this point of the commentary the *lex evangelica* is closely related to the *ecclesia primitiva*. The early Church at the time of the apostles was exemplary and immaculate and, according to its divine mandate, followed the evangelical law. In contrast, the Church of his own time, which he calls the *ecclesia moderna*, deviated from the evangelical law and its divine calling and became the “synagogue of Satan” (Rv 2:9; 3:9).¹⁶⁵

Wherever the author of the OAV laments the Antichristian corruption of the Church of his time, he does not only counter it with the *lex evangelica*, but also with the normative model of the *ecclesia primitiva* – a total of 49 times.¹⁶⁶ The primitive church is the model for the fundamental reform of the entire Church that the author of the OAV is striving for. All the faithful, but especially the pope, bishops, priests and religious, must become spiritual people who are experienced in Holy Scripture, in prayer and contemplation, and who are willing to endure sacrifice and suffer. The hope for such a comprehensive church reform is prominent at the beginning and at the end of the OAV:¹⁶⁷

[...] *ego quod scripturus sum intendo ad reformationem universalis ecclesie* (OAV prol.)

[...] *hoc exile opus meum quod ipso Domino nostro Ihesu Christo teste ad sue legis ewangelice egi declaracionem, ecclesie sue sancte reformationem et adversarii Domini nostri Ihesu Christi Antichristi et omnium fautorum suorum confusionem finalem et destruccionem* (OAV 22:21).¹⁶⁸

7.10 The evangelical preachers

The proclamation of the *lex evangelica*, the fight against the Antichrist and the reform of the Church are primarily the responsibility of the evangelical preachers, the *praedicatores* or *praecones evangelici*. It is the group to which the author of the OAV himself belongs. It is remarkable that our author notes that many of these preachers have received an academic education in philosophy and

¹⁶³ [...] *lex ewangelica est eterna et per consequens [...] introducitur manifeste heresis illa Abbatis loachim quod videlicet lege ewangelica abolita nova lex quam Spiritus Sancti appellavit subintraret, quod tamquam nephandissimum ab omnibus catholicis inprobatur* (OAV 3:22). – Cegna, *L’Opus arduum valde*, 210; Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 69.

¹⁶⁴ ‘*habentem*’ ex iniuncto Christi ‘*ewangelium eternum*’, non in primitiva ecclesia servandum tantum, sed eciam moderna, cuius oppositum mentitur Antichristus cum apostolis suis dicendo quod alius fuit status ecclesie temporibus apostolorum et alius ecclesie moderne [...] (OAV 14:6).

¹⁶⁵ *Verum dicunt quia ecclesia primitiva servavit statum in quo posuit eam Deus per omnem differenciam graduum suorum, sed hec congregacio modernorum sinagoga Satane, statum vocacionis sue servare contempnit [...]* (OAV 14:6).

¹⁶⁶ Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 68 n. 27.

¹⁶⁷ Cegna, *Opus arduum valde*, 207; Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 78s.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. also OAV 4:8: *iugiter orant [doctores ecclesie] pro reformatione ecclesie et deplorant eius deformacionem*.

theology and are far superior to the mendicants as interpreters and preachers of the Scriptures.¹⁶⁹ Obviously we are in the milieu of the early Oxford Wyclifism. The evangelical preachers of the OAV remind of the “poor priests”, the itinerant preachers of the early Wyclifian movement¹⁷⁰, but also have traits of the *viri spirituales* of Joachim of Fiore.

Again and again the *evangelici praedicatores*, the faithful preachers of the Gospel of Christ, are called not to slacken in their fight against the papal Antichrist and his partisans. Like the angels of the Apocalypse with their trumpets and their bowls of wrath, they in the service of Christ are to bring the judgment of God upon the Antichristian enemies by preaching the Gospel.¹⁷¹

The *evangelical preachers* are first of all priests, more precisely: *sacerdotes evangelici*. As such they are at the same time called to preach. For the priesthood founded by Christ is inseparably connected with preaching.¹⁷² But in order to be able to carry out the ministry properly and to successfully confront the Antichrist, a special training is needed. The true evangelical preacher must study Scripture thoroughly. But he must also frequently devote himself to prayer and contemplation. His way of life must correspond to the Gospel. He must live a life of penance and mortify his flesh in the imitation of Christ crucified.¹⁷³ In the eyes of our author, these high demands also give meaning to the current persecution and imprisonment of many preachers – as an opportunity to prepare them for the task assigned to them.¹⁷⁴ And like the two witnesses of Rv 11, whom God brings back to life after three days, they too will soon be released again and will resume their preaching activities.¹⁷⁵

7.11 The laymen

The author of the OAV is himself a priest and leaves no doubt that the priesthood is the highest and most perfect state in the Church: *certum est quod sacerdotium est perfectissimus gradus et supremus in ecclesia militante* (OAV 3:22). It is the *sacerdotes* and *praedicatores evangelici* who are at the forefront of the fight against the Antichrist with their preaching, until in the end they will destroy him as well as his helpers and bring the Church back to evangelical perfection.

Nevertheless, our author grants the laity much more rights than were customary in the Church at the time. Inserted between the interpretation of Rv 2:17 and Rv 2:18 is a telling digression about the rights of the laity. The author deals here with the view held by some mendicants that even scholarly

¹⁶⁹ [...] *plures eorum non solum habent sufficientem noticiam scripturarum ad predicandum, sed etiam auctoritate divina mittuntur ad istud officium exequendum. [...] cum plurimi horum sunt homines graduati in scolis tam philosophicis quam theologicis sufficienter exercitati certo multo meliorem discrecionem habentes in sensibus scripturarum quam limitatores fratrum quorum maior porcio nondum novit unum sermonem formalem compilare* (OAV 10:4).

¹⁷⁰ Workman, *John Wyclif*, II 201-220.

¹⁷¹ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 261.

¹⁷² *omnis ordo sacerdotalis qui traditur in ecclesia aut est ex institucione Christi cum auctoritate predicandi aut Antichristi sive huiusmodi auctoritate* (OAV 10:4).

¹⁷³ [...] *nec solum armis Scripturarum muniunt se Predicatores contra Antichristum sed etiam armis penitencie que sunt cinis et cilicium spiritum ancillantans carnem suam [...] (OAV 11:3). – [...] carnem suam macerando, ewangelice conversando et profundissime in Scripturis studendo [...] (OAV 12:2). Cf. OAV 1:13: [...] non solum a concubitu carnali abstinendum est perfectis sed etiam ab inmundis cogitacionibus de actu carnis [...]. – Cegna, *Ecclesia Primitiva*, 66.*

¹⁷⁴ [...] *quia oportet adversarios Antichristi purgari per afflictiones suas et vexari in studio scripturarum antequam predicent contra eum ut modo faciunt omnes incarcerati ne predicent ad mandatum sui et ministrorum suorum quia fructificacionem doctrine ewangelice necessario precedit irrigacio contemplacionis (OAV 10:4). – [...] sicut afflicti per Antichristum et suos nunc studiosissime se preparant in carceribus detenti ut validissime post liberacionem suam militent contra eos (OAV 11:10).*

¹⁷⁵ OAV 11:11.

laymen are not permitted to study the Holy Scriptures, to possess them in vernacular translation, or to inform others about them.¹⁷⁶ All three assertions are easily refuted. Thus, in Dt 17:18s, Moses expressly obliged the king, who is a layman, to have a copy of Deuteronomy made after his accession to the throne and to study it all his life. The prohibition to let lay people study the Gospel in the vernacular would also turn not a few mendicants into heretics who translate Bible texts into the vernacular in their sermons and give lay people and even women treatises in English into their hands. Saint Jerome would also not have been allowed to write so many doctrinal letters to women. Even more: Originally, all biblical writings of the Old and New Testaments were written in the Hebrew or Greek vernacular. The fact that lay people are also allowed to teach others about the Bible can be proved by many historical examples; even at the General Chapter of the Franciscans in Naples a noble layman preached in the vernacular a short time ago. Indeed, Augustine made it the duty of every householder to educate his family in the faith.

7.12 Expectations for the future

The reign of the Antichrist, which began 357 years ago, will not last forever. The evangelical preachers will win the victory in the fight against him and his vassals.¹⁷⁷ It will be followed by the seventh and final *status ecclesiae*. This will cover the time between the defeat of the Antichrist and the Last Judgment and will be an inner-historical time of salvation and peace for the Church. The saints will then reign on earth in heavenly authority, the evangelical preachers will be able to preach freely, and those who have followed the Antichrist will have a last opportunity for repentance. This seventh *status ecclesiae* is symbolized by the opening of the seventh seal in Rv 8:1:

'Et cum aperuisset sigillum septimum', ostendendo mihi septimum statum ecclesie qui erit post mortem, id est destructionem et execrationem ipsius Antichristi a cordibus fidelium, 'factum est silentium' in celo id est in ecclesia, quasi media hora, qui secundum prophetiam Ezechielis XXXIX° continet VII annos, secundum prophetiam Danielis XII XLV dies, secundum Glosam huius continet XLII dies quia postquam fideles desierint obedire preceptis Pape antichristinis cuiusmodi in premissis tanguntur et plura infra tangentur habebunt spacium quamvis modicum penitendi qui sibi consenserunt donec fiet iudicium extremum. Per septem annos quos Ezechiel ponit inter mortem Antichristi et iudicium intelligitur universitas tunc penitentium de erroribus suis in quibus Antichristo consenserunt et de omnibus aliis peccatis suis; per XLV dies quos Daniel ponit inter mortem Antichristi et iudicium intelligitur etiam numerus penitentium qui mystice per quadraginta designatur in scripturis qui de hiis penitent que per illicitum usum quinque sensuum commiserunt; per XLII dies quos hic ponit Glosa inter mortem Antichristi et iudicium datur intelligi tempus penitendi per quod expectabit Deus conversionem eorum qui Antichristo consenserunt sicut Iudeos cum penitencia expectavit post passionem suam per XLII annos ut testatur Ieronimus in Epistola sua et omnes historie de illa materia; sed an illi VII anni Ezechielis sint usuales vel quod quilibet eorum plures contineat annos et sic de diebus Danielis et huius Glose ab omnibus Doctoribus penitus ignoratur, et hoc est quod dicitur hic in textu: 'Et factum est', inquit, 'silentium', scilicet a persecucione Antichristi 'quasi media hora' per quod datur intelligi quod bene tempus illud breve erit, sed per hoc quod dicitur

¹⁷⁶ *Docent etiam isti falsi fratres quod gradu laici; quamvis literati, non debent studere scripturam sacram nec eam habere in lingua materna nec alios informare (OAV 2:17).*

¹⁷⁷ *[...] quamvis diutine prevaleat Antichristus contra sanctos in potestate terrena, tamen in fine secundum prophetias sancti prevalebunt contra eum et regnabunt veritate ewangelica aperta in omni natione que est super terram, non potestate terrena quam ut stercora reputant, sed celesti qua sola se prevalere contra Antichristum intelligent (OAV 5:10).*

'quasi media hora', nichil certum ponendo ostendit quod quantitas determinata huius spacii non potest inveniri (OAV 8:1).

This expectation of a seventh *status ecclesiae* as an inner-historical time of salvation can be qualified as chiliastic. However, our author does not refer to the thousand years of Rv 20:2s, which are already in the past for him. Instead, his expectation is based on the interpretation of Dn 12:11s. by Jerome. For the first time, Jerome had indicated the period of 45 days, which is the difference between the two dates mentioned there, as a short earthly period of "silence" or "peace" between the death of the Antichrist and the Last Judgment.¹⁷⁸ According to our author, the same period is designated by the seven years of Ezk 39:9 and the 45 (according to OAV: 42) days mentioned in the *Glossa ordinaria* on Dn 12:12. All these periods are symbolic, so that it is not possible to determine the exact duration of the *seventh status*. However, it is certain that it will be short.

With the dawn of the seventh *status* the reign of the Antichrist will end. Is it already foreseeable when that will be? According to a belief widespread in the Middle Ages, the reign of the Antichrist should last three and a half years. This idea could be derived from Rv 11:3, where the time of the appearance of the two end-time prophets is given as 1,260 days. The same number is found in Rv 12:6 in connection with the persecution of the apocalyptic woman. In Rv 12:14, following the book of Daniel (Dn 7:25; 12:7), the formulation *one time, two times and half a time* is used.

Regarding, that the author of the OAV had calculated the Antichrist's reign to have already lasted for 357 years, he could not understand this information literally. At the time he commented on Rv 11:3, he seems to have taken it as a symbolic number corresponding to the three and a half years of Jesus' preaching. But in the spring of 1390, when he started commenting on Rv 20:3, he was able to present an amazingly precise calculation. According to this, Satan was bound,

'donec consummentur mille anni', id est donec veniat Antichristus, et post hec oportet illum solvi, ut habeat potestatem quam habuit ante adventum Christi, 'modico tempore' quia secundum computationem Orosii De Ormesta mundi a principio mundi usque modo fluxerunt sex millia annorum, sexcenti preter undecim; ergo si ultimus millenarius mundi in quo iam sumus non plus continebit quam aliquis millenariorum preteritorum, sequitur quod ab isto anno Domini MCCCXC usque in finem mundi restant tantum quadringentiundecim anni anni; ex quibus patet error eorum qui deputabant totum tempus regiminis Antichristi tribus annis solaribus sive usualibus cum dimidio, quia ex ista propheta manifeste patet quod ipse iam regnavit 357 annis. Unde potest probabiliter dici quod tres anni cum dimidio deputati regimini Antichristi sunt isti tres centenarii annorum et quinquaginta elapsi regiminis sui. Et isti septem anni ulteriores deputantur tempori illi in quo primo generaliter Papa Romanus wlgatus est a preconibus ewangelicis ille Magnus Antichristus a quo vix septem anni sunt elapse. Et sic iam sumus in illis quadraginta quinque diebus Danielis qui dantur electis ad penitenciam, si forte in aliquo Antichristo consenserunt; nec illi dies sunt universaliter interpretandi, sed sic iam videntur accipiendi ut cuilibet denario illius numeri corespondet unus centenarius annorum qui ex decem decalibus consurgit et illis quinque diebus residuis illi XI anni residui prius computati ubi a decalogo receditur per ea que quinque sensibus conmisimus ut sic tam secundum modum computandi Orrosii quam istius prophete Danielis restent in fine mundi tantum quadringenti undecim anni. De ista tamen computacione non sum securus quia non est nostrum nosse tempora vel momenta que Pater posuit in sua potestate; nescio eciam si in ista computacione sit sequendus Orrosius quia alii croniste variantur ab eo de computacione a principio mundi, sed hoc dico quod pro supposita computacione Orrosii nemo usquam legit computacionem verisimiliorem de fine

¹⁷⁸ Robert E. Lerner, *Refreshment of the Saints: The Time After Antichrist as a Station for Earthly Progress in Medieval Thought*, in: *Traditio* 32 (1976), 97-144; Robert E. Lerner, *The Medieval Return to the Thousand-Year Sabbath*, in: Emerson/McGinn, *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, 51-71, here: 53-57.

mundi et magis convenientem Scripturis, sed ex propheta ista hoc sine ambiguitate habetur quod trecenti quinquaginta VII anni elapsi sunt postquam Antichristus regnavit et quod tres anni cum dimidio suo regimini communiter deputati non sunt usualiter accipiendi et quod sumus in extrema parte duracionis mundi (OAV 20:3).

So the reign of the Antichrist began in 1033, after the end of the thousand-year bondage of Satan (see above, §7.3). In the year 1390, in which the author of the OAV writes, the Antichrist already ruled for 357 years. The three and a half years from the biblical prophecies are thus to be multiplied by the factor 100 and mean 350 years. The remaining seven years correspond to the time that has passed since the evangelical preachers first unmasked the pope as the Antichrist. Possibly the author thinks here of the protests against the Despensers Crusade.

In any case, seven years ago a historical turning-point occurred, even if the reign of the Antichrist continues. In fact, according to our author, we are currently in the last period of penance, marked by the 45 days of Daniel's prophecy, and *in etrema parte duracionis mundi*. If one combines this information with his earlier interpretation of Rv 8:1, then the *destruccio et execraccio ipsius Antichristi a cordibus fidelium* (OAV 8:1) would already have taken place and the time of peace of the seventh *status ecclesie* would have begun. How this can be reconciled with the previously expressed view that with the Western Schism of 1378 and the Dover Straits Earthquake of 1382 the sixth *status ecclesia* had just begun (OAV 6:12; see above §7.1) remains unclear, especially since the author no longer refers here to the scheme of the seven *status ecclesie*. Probably, however, our author expects that the sixth and seventh ages overlap or even run concurrently.¹⁷⁹

We do not know when the sixth status, the time of the Antichrist, will end. Here our author apparently did not want to fix an exact date. But he can say quite precisely how long the seventh status will last and when the end of the world will come. For this he relies on the chronology of Orosius (c. 385-c. 418), a disciple of Augustine. According to this, a total of 6,589 years passed between creation and 1390. Since the world will exist seven times a thousand years, there are still 411 years left; the Last Day should therefore occur in the year 1801. The calculation does not quite add up. Because actually the 45 days of Daniel should correspond to 450 years. But even the chronology of Orosius is not beyond all doubt. What is certain, however, is that the Antichrist has been ruling for 357 years.

8. The theological profile of the OAV

8.1 Common points with Wyclif and the Lollards

The convictions that brought the author of the OAV into conflict with the church hierarchy and into prison were essentially the same convictions that John Wyclif had held and that we find elsewhere among the Lollards. Wyclif is mentioned by name in the OAV only in one place (OAV 9:8). But the ideal image of a *verus doctor ewangelicus*, as the author sketches it in OAV 8:13, could well be a tribute to Wyclif, also revered by his followers as *Doctor Evangelicus*:

'audivi vocem unius aquile', cuiuslibet veri doctoris ewangelici qui sicut aquila corporaliter, ita mente conspicit a longinquo que iam dicta sunt mala et que adhuc futura sunt ecclesie; et circumvolat universalem ecclesiam scribendo aut docendo misteria huius prophete; et sicut aquila provocat

¹⁷⁹ Regarding the overlap of the seven *status ecclesie* by Joachim of Fiore see Marjorie E. Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future*, London 1976, 9.

pullos suos ad volandum, sic omnes tales predicatorum provocant filios ecclesie ut doctrine ewangelice adherentes respuant Antichristum.

Likewise the interpretation of the angel with the eternal gospel of Rv 14:6 on a preacher sent by Christ against the Antichrist¹⁸⁰ could be understood as an allusion to Wyclif.¹⁸¹

With Wyclif and the Lollards the OAV shares above all the Pope's identification with the Antichrist and the conviction that the release of Satan of Rv 20:3 has already taken place. Also the sharp polemic against the prelates and clerics is the same here as there. Instead of obeying the *lex ewangelica* and following the example of Christ, the apostles and the *ecclesia primitiva* in poverty and humility, the members of the church hierarchy have been corrupted by wealth and worldly power. The verdict on the mendicants, who in the OAV as in Wyclif are called the "four sects", is particularly harsh. And like Wyclif, the author of the OAV strongly criticizes the Western Schism and the Despensers' Crusade. He also shares several theological tenets of Wyclif, such as his predestinatory ecclesiology.¹⁸²

Wyclif's rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation, however, is not shared by the author of the OAV; he rejects it as heretical and affirms that the so-called Lollards agree with the Roman Church in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.¹⁸³ Also in some other points differences to Wyclif and the Lollards show up.¹⁸⁴ Thus the author of the OAV maintains the veneration of the Virgin Mary and is a supporter of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception (*immaculata conceptio*).¹⁸⁵ He rejects the papal canonization of saints and condemns with sharp words their adoration and the worship of their images,¹⁸⁶ but approves calling upon them in prayer.¹⁸⁷ In this context he acknowledges the fact that even in the *ecclesia moderna* saints such as Thomas Becket, Francis, Dominic or Robert Grosseteste have done miracles.¹⁸⁸

In this context, Romolo Cegna pointed out that the author of the OAV did not appear to have included himself among the Lollards. He presents himself as a member of the group of *ewangelici predicatorum*, but in his remarks about the Lollards consistently shows a certain distance.¹⁸⁹ However, it must be remembered that the term *Lolardi* was not a self-designation of this movement, but a

¹⁸⁰ [...] *predicatore aliquem missum a Christo ad ewangelisandum contra Antichristum, 'volantem', molem terrenorum a se remouentem, 'per medium celi', id est per mediam ecclesiam non particulariter uni ecclesie sed equaliter omnibus predicantem et docentem in circuitu quam ecclesiam uerbis et exemplis secum trahit ad conversacionem ewangelicam et doctrinam, 'habentem' ex iniuncto Christi 'ewangelium eternum', non in primitiva ecclesia seruandum tantum, sed eciam moderna [...]* (OAV 14:6).

¹⁸¹ Cf. Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 265s.; Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 77s.

¹⁸² e.g. OAV 14:6: *ecclesia catholica, id est numerus electorum*.

¹⁸³ [...] *secundum hereticos panis nullomodo fit corpus Christi quia sicut Deus cum proprie creat, effectum producit sine materia preiacente, ita cum quidquid annichillatur secundum eos ex eo non sit [M R fit] res aliqua; cum ergo panis iste annichillatur secundum eos ex eo non sit [M R fit] corpus Christi* (OAV 4:5). [...] *cum tamen diffinico Romane ecclesie et dictum eorum circa sacramentum altaris, qui Lolardi diffamantur, una sit et eadem* (OAV 2:17). Cf. OAV 4:5.

¹⁸⁴ To the following see Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 65 A. 11. Cf. Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 277.

¹⁸⁵ OAV 4:5.

¹⁸⁶ OAV 4:5.

¹⁸⁷ [...] *propterea oraciones coram huiusmodi ymaginibus fuse et alia coram eis exhibita causa deuocionis, si recte fuerint non illis exhibentur, quod absit, sed sanctis propter quos presentandos in ecclesiis statuuntur* (OAV 20:15).

¹⁸⁸ [...] *non habundant iam miracula ut in primitiva ecclesia quia fides satis confirmata est ob quam declarandam primitiva ecclesia miraculis habundabat, nec tamen omnino cessant in ecclesia nostra moderna* (OAV 4:5).

¹⁸⁹ Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 205.

derogatory nickname attached to it by its adversaries. It would even have been surprising if a Lollard had described himself as such.

8.2 Common points with the Spiritual Franciscans

In addition to the affinities with important views of Wyclif and the Lollards, the author of the OAV also shows a certain proximity to the radical members of the Franciscan Order. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton in particular drew attention to this, and Romolo Cegna also emphasized this special influence.¹⁹⁰ On the one hand the author seems to have maintained close personal relations with the Franciscans, on the other hand he appreciated their ideal of the *altissima paupertas* and wished a return of the order to its original ideal of poverty. At the same time he was obviously influenced by authors from the circle of Spiritual Franciscans such as John de Roquetaillade and Peter John Olivi, even if he did not explicitly admit this. In general, the apocalyptic interest of our author as such could speak for a proximity to the Spiritual Franciscans. While Wyclif and many later Lollards were remarkably uninterested in apocalyptic speculations and prognoses,¹⁹¹ the Revelation of John and apocalyptic ideas were, following Joachim of Fiore, very popular among the Spiritual Franciscans. On the other hand, there was also a strong apocalyptic current among the Lollards.¹⁹²

9. An attempt to identify the author

On the basis of the previous findings on the situation, topics and theological influences of the OAV we can now once again take up the question about the author. Is it possible to identify him with a known historical personality?¹⁹³ The mention of his name in OAV 21:2 (*W. resp. Vilhelmus*), the information about the circumstances of his imprisonment, and his proximity to the Oxford Wyclifites and early Lollards as well as to the Spiritual Franciscans offer clues for it.

In the manuscripts [W1], [W2] and [N] the work is attributed to John Wyclif himself. In fact, the mentioned theological differences clearly exclude Wyclif's authorship. In the 16th century John Bale (1495-1536), the author of a famous British catalogue of writers, was the first to think of John Purvey (ca. 1354-ca. 1428), who had served Wyclif in his last years as private secretary.¹⁹⁴ There are, however, no convincing reasons for this ascription, which for a long time remained undisputed and was also adopted by the important Pietist Bible interpreter Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752)¹⁹⁵. On the basis of the manuscript [M], in which the OAV is attributed to a *Magister Rychardus*, František M. Bartoš recently identified the author with Richard Wyche (d. 1440), a disciple of Wyclif, who exchanged letters with Hus in 1410/1411.¹⁹⁶ However, Wyche was not imprisoned until 1401 in

¹⁹⁰ Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, passim; Cegna, *L'Opus arduum*, 203; Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 75.

¹⁹¹ Anne Hudson, *Lollardy and Eschatology*, in: Alexander Patschovsky/František Šmahel (eds.), *Eschatologie und Hussitismus*, Prague 1996, 99-113.

¹⁹² Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 114-176.

¹⁹³ On the following Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 268-275.

¹⁹⁴ British Biographical Archive I 903, 371s. – On Bale see below, §13.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis*, 6th ed. Göttingen 1906, reprint Göttingen 1966, 82.

¹⁹⁶ Bartoš, *Lollardský a husitský výklad Apokalypsy*, 112-114. In the contrary Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 270. On Wyche cf. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, 160. On the correspondence between Wyche and Hus cf. Michael Van Dussen, *From England to Bohemia: Heresy and Communication in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2012, 78s. The letters are edited in: *M. Jana Husi Korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Václav Novotný, Prague 1920, 75-79 (no. 22), 85 (no. 24).

Northumberland, and it is also unlikely that he had already taken a leading position among the Wyclifites in 1390.

The attribution to Nicholas Hereford (Nicholas of Hereford, d. ca. 1420) made by Anne Hudson has met with most approval; Kathryn Kerby-Fulton has joined this thesis and substantiated it with further arguments.¹⁹⁷ Hereford had been a student of Wyclif in Oxford and had become doctor of Theology and *paginae sacrae professor* there in 1382; he had procured the first Wyclifite translation of the Bible into English. His sermons caused offence among the mendicants and in 1382 he had to answer to a synod in London which excommunicated him. Hereford appealed against this verdict to the Roman pope, to whose obedience England belonged, and travelled to Rome, where he was imprisoned. In 1385 he managed to obtain his freedom and returned to England, where he was re-arrested in January 1387. Here he was under the custody of the knights Sir William Neville and Sir John Montague, who sympathized with the Lollards, which could have given him the opportunity for literary activity. In 1391 Hereford revoked his errors and was, from then on a staunch opponent of the Lollards, appointed Chancellor of the Bishop of Hereford and Inquisitor. In 1417, towards the end of his life, he retired to the Charterhouse of Coventry. From the Lollards' point of view, since 1391 Hereford was a renegade. If the OAV was really his work, this could have contributed to the fact that it was hardly noticed in England.

As convincing as Hudson's attribution of the OAV to Hereford may seem, it is not compatible with the author's self-designation as *W.* or, if [B] has preserved the original text, as *Vilhelmus*. This would be different in the case of a person already considered by Hudson, but ultimately excluded¹⁹⁸: the Oxford magister William James (Jamys). Indeed, a lot would fit here: not only the first name, but also the fact that James was a university scholar and preacher and until 1420 a leading head of the Oxford Wyclifites.¹⁹⁹ By 1376 at the latest, he was a fellow at Merton College. Because he had defended Wyclif's heterodox doctrine of the Eucharist, James was suspended from office between 1384 and 1391. Arrest warrants were issued against him in 1394 and 1395, and he was in prison until 1399. He was then able to return to Merton College once more, but was finally removed from office in 1411. It was not until 1420 that he renounced his Wycliffe views and spent the last years of his life on his estate in Maidstone in Kent. If William James really was the author of the OAV, then his hope for early release would have been dashed; instead, he would have spent nine more years in prison.

But what about our author's above-mentioned proximity to the ideas of the Spiritual Franciscans? Romolo Cegna believed that, together with the mentioned differences to some of the Lollards' views, it suggested the conclusion that our author was not to be found among the Lollards, but among the English Franciscans. According to him, it must have been a hitherto unidentified Franciscan named William, perhaps imprisoned in the Franciscan monastery at Oxford.²⁰⁰

In fact, this conclusion is not compelling. Recent research has repeatedly pointed out that there were relations between Lollardy and an older English reform movement, inspired by Franciscan and Joachite ideas.²⁰¹ Wyclif himself seems to have been close to the Spiritual Franciscans in his early

¹⁹⁷ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 268-275; Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 225-228. – On Hereford: *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature*, New York 1907-1921, vol. 2, 29; Alfred B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, vol. 2, Oxford 1958, repr. Oxford 1989, 914f.

¹⁹⁸ Anne Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 272.

¹⁹⁹ See Emden, *Biographical Register*, vol. 2, 1012s.; Workman, *John Wyclif*, II 339s.

²⁰⁰ Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 75 n. 43.

²⁰¹ Lawrence Clopper, *Franciscans, Lollards and Reform*, in: Fiona Somerset/Jill C. Havens/Derrick G. Pitard (eds.), *Lollards and Their Influence in Late Medieval England*, Woodbridge 2003, 177-197; Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*.

days,²⁰² and there may have been some similar sympathies among his followers. Kerby-Fulton pointed out that early Wyclifism should not be conceived too monolithic. In truth within this movement there were different theological “dialects” side by side. The OAV would then be the representative of an older variety of Wyclifism, which was distinguished by a greater proximity to the concerns of the Spiritual Franciscans.²⁰³

10. The OAV in Bohemia

That the OAV was apparently hardly perceived in England is certainly due to the systematic destruction of Wyclifite and Lollard literature by the English crown and bishops. The above-mentioned statute *De haeretico comburendo* by King Henry IV of 1401 explicitly also punished the drafting and possession of church-critical books and demanded their delivery to the bishops:

*[...] nor that none from henceforth any Thing preach, hold, teach or instruct openly or privily, or make or write any book contrary to the Catholic Faith or Determination of the Holy Church, nor of such Sect and wicked Doctrines and Opinion shall make any Conventicles, or in any wise hold or exercise Schools; and also that none from henceforth in any wise favour such Preacher, or Maker of any such and like Conventicles, or holding or exercising Schools, or making or writing such Books, or so teaching, informing, or exciting the People, nor any of them maintain or in any wise sustain; and that all and singular having such Books or any Writings of such wicked Doctrine and Opinions, shall really with Effect deliver or cause to be delivered all such Books and Writings to the Diocesan of the same Place within xl. Days from the Time of the Proclamation of this Ordinance and Statute. And if any Person or Persons, or whatsoever Estate, or Condition that he or they be, from henceforth do or attempt against the said Royal Ordinance and Statute aforesaid in the Premises or any of them, or such Books in the Form aforesaid do not deliver, then the Diocesan of the same Place in his Diocese, such Person or Persons in this Behalf defamed or evidently suspected, and every of them, may by the authority of the said Ordinance and Statute cause to be arrested [...]*²⁰⁴

As a result of increasing oppression in England at the end of the 14th century, the readership for whom the author of the OAV had written was practically no longer existent there: educated followers of Wyclif’s reforming ideas with a particular interest in apocalypticism. But it was precisely this milieu that existed in Bohemia at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, and it was there that the OAV exerted its influence.²⁰⁵

The reform movement at the University of Prague, which later was to be called the Hussite after its most prominent protagonist, was inspired early on by writings of Wyclif and the Lollards. A favour for apocalyptic thinking came along since the very beginning of the Hussite movement; with this, it continued the native tradition of the great reform preachers Jan Milíč of Kroměříž (Jan Milíč z Kroměříže, Jan Militsch von Kremsier, 1320/25-1374) and Matthew of Janow (Matěj z Janova, Matthias von Janov, 1350/55-1393).

²⁰² Workman, *John Wyclif*, II 97-102; Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 62-70.

²⁰³ Kerby-Fulton, *Books Under Suspicion*, 222-225.

²⁰⁴ *The Statutes of the Realm* (see above n. 31), II 127.

²⁰⁵ To the following see Cermanová, *Constructing the Apocalypse*. Cf. further: Molnár, *Apocalypse*, 219-227 passim; Amedeo Molnár, *Die eschatologische Hoffnung der böhmischen Revolution*, in: Josef L. Hromádka (Hg.), *Von der Reformation zum Morgen*, Leipzig 1959, 59-188, here: 94 and 170 n. 91; Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 184f.; Gian Luca Potestà, *Radical Apocalyptic Movements in the Late Middle Ages*, in: Bernard McGinn (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*. Vol. 2: Apocalypticism in western history and culture. New York / London 2000, 110-142, here: 126-130.

We do not know exactly how the OAV came to Bohemia. After King Richard II of England (1367-1400) had married Anna of Luxembourg, the half-sister of King Wenceslas of Bohemia (1361-1419), in 1382, there were close connections between the two countries.²⁰⁶ There was also a lively exchange between the scholars of Prague University and the two English universities. In this way, several of Wyclif's works reached Bohemia.²⁰⁷ The OAV, which in the surviving manuscripts is largely preserved together with Wyclif's works, probably also came to Prague with them. Perhaps it was brought there in 1407 together with numerous writings of Wyclif by Mikuláš (Nicholas) Faulfiš and Jiří of Kněhnice from a study trip to England.²⁰⁸ But other intermediaries are also imaginable: The OAV could have reached Prague through Richard Wyche²⁰⁹, a disciple of Wyclif who wrote a letter to the circle around Hus in 1410 and apparently also sent writings of Wyclif. Or perhaps Peter Payne (c. 1380-1455) was the deliverer, a follower of Wyclif, who had to give up his position as rector of St. Edmund Hall in Oxford in 1413 and came to Prague at the latest in 1414.²¹⁰ Another possible candidate is Jerome of Prague (c. 1379-1416), who as a student in Oxford had met Wyclif's writings, copied them and brought them to Prague.²¹¹ Most likely, however, the first manuscript of the OAV was brought by Matthew of Hnátnice (see below, §12), a relative of Nicholas Faulfiš, mentioned in the colophon of the manuscript [B], from his trip to England in 1411.

The first indications that the OAV was known in Prague date from 1412 and 1413. In 1413 the oldest preserved copy, our manuscript [D], was made, if the dating is correct (see below, §11). But already in August 1412 the German Magister Friedrich Eppinge (d. 1412/13) participated with his *Posicio Credo communionem sanctorum (De excommunicatione)* in the defense of Wyclif's theses at Prague University. At the end of his speech he referred in a section dealing with the martyrs at the time of the Antichrist to an unnamed writing which could have been the OAV.²¹² In this case, we would also

²⁰⁶ Marek Suchy, *England and Bohemia in the Time of Anne of Luxemburg: Dynastic Marriage as a Precondition for Cultural Contact in the Late Middle Ages*, in: Zoë Opacic (ed.), *Prague and Bohemia: Medieval Art, Architecture and Cultural Exchange in Central Europe*, Leeds 2009, 8-21.

²⁰⁷ František Šmahel, 'Doctor Evangelicus Super Omnes Evangelistas': Wyclif's Fortune in Hussite Bohemia, in: Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research 43 (1970), 16-34; Anne Hudson, *From Oxford to Prague: The Writings of John Wyclif and his English Followers in Bohemia*, in: Anne Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wyclif's Writings*, vol. 2, Aldershot 2008, 642-657; Anne Hudson, *From Oxford to Bohemia: Reflections on the Transmission of Wycliffite Texts*, in: *Studia Mediaevalia Bohemica* 2 (2010), 25-37; Van Dussen, *From England to Bohemia*.

²⁰⁸ Van Dussen, *From England to Bohemia*, 70-72.

²⁰⁹ See above, §9.

²¹⁰ William Robert Cook, *Peter Payne: Theologian and Diplomat of the Hussite Revolution*, New York 1971; František Šmahel, *Magister Peter Payne: Curriculum vitae eines englischen Nonkonformisten*, in: Albert de Lange (ed.), *Friedrich Reiser und die ‚waldensisch-hussitische Internationale‘ im 15. Jahrhundert*, Heidelberg 2006, 241-260; Jan Novotný, *Peter Payne, ein englischer Flüchtling in Böhmen im 15. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zu dem theologischen Problem der Abhängigkeit Jan Hus' von Wycliff*, in: *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie* 20 (1950), 365-368; Luigi Campi, *Determinism between Oxford and Prague: The Late Wyclif's Retractions and Their Defense Ascribed to Peter Payne*, in: Hornbeck/van Dussen, *Europe after Wyclif*, 115-134.

²¹¹ František Šmahel, *Leben und Werk des Magisters Hieronymus von Prag. Forschung ohne Probleme und Perspektiven?*, in: *Historia* 13 (1966), 81-111; František Šmahel, *Johannes Hus und Hieronymus von Prag vor dem Gericht des Konzils und vor dem Gericht der Geschichte*, in: František Šmahel (ed.), *Konstanzer und Prager Begegnungen. Zwei Vorträge, Alexander Patschovsky gewidmet*, Konstanz 2007, 13-43; Thomas Fudge, *Jerome of Prague and the Foundations of the Hussite Movement*, New York 2016, esp. 34-72; Ota Pavlíček, *Wyclif's Early Reception in Bohemia and His Influence on the thought of Jerome of Prague*, in: Hornbeck/van Dussen, *Europe after Wyclif*, 89-114.

²¹² Federicus Eppinge, *Posicio de communione sanctorum*, in: Iohannes Hus (recte Jacobellus de Misa), *Tractatus responsivus*, ed. s. Harrison Thomson, Praha 1927, 103-133, here 133: *Similiter et de illis qui tempore Antichristi extra ecclesiam malignancium antichristicam sathane synagogam eiciuntur vel eicientur propter Christum et ipsius veritatem, quando et gloriosiores martires fiunt et fient prioribus, ut quidam scripserunt. Et in*

have a first indication of a connection between the OAV and the House of the Black Rose (Rosa Nigra), a college of the *Natio Bohemica* of Prague University, in which a group of mostly German magisters and preachers holding radical church-critical views gathered in the years 1412-1417. Besides Eppinge these were Peter of Dresden, John Drändorf, Peter Turnau and Bartholomew Rautenstock; Nicholas of Dresden (d. before 1419) became the leader. Apparently it was the members of this group who were the first to receive the OAV.²¹³ Especially Nicholas of Dresden seems to have been an avid reader of the OAV. Probably already in 1412 he had the famous *tabulae* attached to the wall of the large hall in the House of the Black Rose, which in eight scenes showed Christ and the Antichrist in antithetical juxtaposition. A description of these paintings under the title *Tabulae veteris et novi coloris* has been preserved in several manuscripts.²¹⁴ Among them is our manuscript [R] of the Badische Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe, in which the OAV and the *Tabulae*, which here bear the title *Antithesis Christi et Antichristi*, are directly linked to each other; also some further texts of this manuscript are related to Nicholas of Dresden. Perhaps the *Tabulae* also inspired the *Passional Christi and Antichristi* from 1521 conceived by Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon and illustrated with woodcuts by Lukas Cranach the Elder.²¹⁵

Besides Friedrich Eppinge and Nicholas of Dresden, numerous other Hussite preachers and authors used the OAV.²¹⁶ The radical Hussite Jan Želivský (c. 1380-1422) quoted in a sermon of the year 1419 literally a passage from the OAV concerning the apocalyptic woman of Rv 12:4, replacing *nobis Anglicis* by *vobis Bohemis*.²¹⁷ The Utraquist master Jakoubek of Stříbro (Jacob of Mies, 1372-1429) relied on the OAV at several points for his own interpretation of the Apocalypse in the form of popular sermons in 1420/21. Ten years later the Taborite Nicholas of Pelhřimov (ca. 1385-1460) used the OAV together with Jakoubek's sermons as a reference for his Latin commentary on the Apocalypse, written around 1430.²¹⁸ Probably one copy of the OAV – our handwriting [D] (see below, §11) – was in his possession, perhaps he had even written it himself. A free Czech translation of the OAV was also made by the Hussites, fragments of which were found in Strahov Monastery [SZ] (see below, §11).

With the Hussites, the OAV apparently also spread beyond Bohemia. Early on, members of the Hussite movement sought refuge in the neighbouring kingdom of Poland-Lithuania, namely Taborites after the Battle of Lipany in 1434 and after the destruction of Tábor in 1452, but also Bohemian Brothers being prosecuted by King George of Poděbrady (1420-1471) since 1461.²¹⁹ Conversely, Polish dissidents came to Bohemia in the 15th century. In this way the OAV, too, seems to have reached Poland-Lithuania, for which the manuscripts [R] and [M] contain clues. The manuscript on which Luther based the only print of the OAV also originated from this region.

Vitis patrum legitur quod quidam sanctus pater dixit posteriores sanctos futuros quasi patres priorum. Cf. Václav Novotný, *M. Jan Hus, Život a učení*, vol. 1, Prague 1921, 142s.

²¹³ Cegna, *Ecclesia Primitiva*, 76-78. – On the so-called Dresden School in Prague see Petra Mutlová, *Die Dresdner Schule in Prag – eine waldensische „Connection“?*, in: Albert de Lange/Kathrin Utz Tremp (eds.), *Friedrich Reiser und die „waldensisch-hussitische Internationale“ im 15. Jahrhundert*, Heidelberg et al. 2006, 261-276.

²¹⁴ Edition: *Master Nicholas of Dresden, The Old Color and the New*, ed. Howard Kaminsky, Philadelphia, PA 1965. Kaminsky has not collated our manuscript [R].

²¹⁵ Thomas Kaufmann, *Die Mitte der Reformation*, Tübingen 2019, 646-673. Cf. Johannes Jahn, *Lucas Cranach d. Ä. Das gesamte graphische Werk*, Munich 1972, 555-583.

²¹⁶ On the following cf. Cermanová, *Constructing the Apocalypse*, 69-72.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 83s. n. 19.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

²¹⁹ See in detail Ewa Maleczyńska, *Ruch Husicki w Czechach i w Polsce*, Praha 1959.

11. The manuscripts

The manuscripts of the OAV are listed in the *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi* under the numbers 4870 to 5118²²⁰ and are shortly described by Anne Hudson, Romolo Cegna and Pavlína Cermanová.²²¹ The list in the *Repertorium* needs to be corrected as the two manuscripts of the Moravian Library in Brno (cod. Mk 28 [B], cod. Mk 62 [M]) and the manuscript VI D 21 of the National Library in Prague [D] are missing. Manuscript A 108 of the Prague Metropolitan Chapter from the Archive of the Prague Castle on the other hand, is falsely listed as a witness of the OAV. In fact, the OAV is not found in one of the four volumes of A 108; only in A 108/4 there is a comment by John Peckham on the Revelation of John. Also with Hudson the manuscript [D] is not considered.

In total, the OAV has been handed down in 14 manuscripts, all of them dating from the 15th century. We do not know of a single manuscript from England, where it originated. Apparently the work was completely destroyed there in the course of the oppression of the Lollards by church authorities. All preserved manuscripts were written on the European continent – mostly in Bohemia, some perhaps also in Moravia, Silesia or Poland. Two are now in Vienna, one in Karlsruhe and one in Naples, the rest in Prague and Brno. Another manuscript, which also dated from the 15th century, but is missing today, was the basis for the first and so far only print of the OAV, which was made in Wittenberg in 1528. Fragments of a 15th century Czech translation of the OAV were found in a book cover in the library of the monastery of Strahov (see below, SZ).

We designate the single manuscripts in this edition with the sigles given by Romolo Cegna and will describe them here in their order.

[A] Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu [APH] – Kapitulní knihovna (The Archive of the Prague Castle – Library of the Metropolitan Chapter of St. Vitus Cathedral), cod. A 117, fol. 15r-146v

First half of the 15th century, paper, 323 fols., 30,5 x 21,5 cm, two columns, two writers

On fol. 1r owners mark from the 18th century: *Ex Bibl. S. Metrop. Ecclesiae Prag.*

fol. 1r-146v: *Expositio super Apocalypsim*

fol. 1r-2r: *Prologus Gilberti (Omnes qui pie volunt vivere [...] Visio Isaiae haec est, et Parabole Salomonis he sunt); Alius Prologus: Iohannes Apostolus et Evangelista a Christo electus [...] et querentibus laboris fructus et Deo magisterii doctrina servetur.*

fol. 2r [*Argumentum Hieronymi*] *Apocalipsis Iohannis tot habet sacramenta ...*

fol. 2v-13r: Text of the Apocalypse (*Apocalipsis Iesu Christi [...] et iam venio cito. Amen. Sic est finis textus Apocalipsis*).

fol. 14: vacant

fol. 15r-146v: *Opus arduum valde apocalypsim videlicet [...] Explicit quoddam opus breve et debile super Apocalypsim Iohannis, inchoatum circa natale et aliquando mense interposito etc. ...* [= text of the OAV]

²²⁰ Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, vol. 3: *Commentaria: Auctores H-M*, Madrid 1951, 407s. (no. 4870), 460 (no. 5118).

²²¹ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 259s.; Cegna, *L'Opus arduum valde*, 200s.; Cegna, *Ecclesia primitiva*, 65s. n. 12; Cermanová, *Constructing the Apocalypse*, 83 n. 12 and passim.

fol. 147r-323v: *Richardus a s. Victore, Exceptiones, pars secunda (Incipit prologus in parte secunda excepcionum [...] Explicit liber optimus magistri Ricardi canonici sancti Victoris Parisiacensis, heremite de Hampul, terminatus in vigilia corporis christi etc.)*

Lit.: Adolf Patera/Antonin Podlaha, *Soupis rukopisů knihovny metropolitní kapitoly Pražské. Vol. 1: A-E*, Prague 1910, 146, no. 219.

[A1] Prague, APH, cod. A 163, fol. 1r-128v

First half of the 15th century, paper, 263 fols., 21,5 x 15 cm, three writers

Owners mark in the binding: *Liber Nicolai de Hranicz et de Towaczow*; fol. 1r marg: *Ex Bibl. S. Metrop. Ecclesie Prag. 1713.* – Fragments of a Latin manuscript from the late 14th century in the cover.

fol. 1r-128v: *Doctoris cuiusdam de Anglia: Lectura super Apocalypsim [= OAV].*

fol. 129r-133r: *Quaestiones super summam Raymundi*

fol. 133v-173r: *Expositio Iohannis de Garlandia libri de poenitentia*

fol. 173r-176v: *Viginti dicta contra fornicarios*

fol. 177r-219r: [S. Bonaventurae] *Stimulus amoris*

fol. 219v-224v: [Henrici de Hassia] *De septem horis canonicis.*

225r-221v [Nicolaus de Rosa Nigra Dresdensis,] *Positio de communione sub utraque specie (Nisi manducaveritis carnem filii hominis [...] ut et ipse confiteatur nos coram patre suo et angelis dei in vitam eternam Amen. Explicit posicio de communione sub utraque specie.)*

fol. 231v-240r: [Nicolaus de Rosa Nigra Dresdensis,] *De communione sub utraque specie (Thomas 3^o parte summe sue [...] et ad coronam celestis glorie pervenire).* – At the end, in red ink: *Nec te conlaudes nec te culpaveris ipsum, hoc faciunt stulti, quos gloria vexat inanis.*

fol. 241r-255v: [Jacob of Mies,] *De communione sub utraque specie (Quia heu in templis christianorum [...] per nimiam implecionem. Domine dd. dd.)*

fol. 255r-256v: *Tredecim rationes de communione utriusque speciei.*

fol. 257r-263v: Latin-Czech vocabulary on Gen 1-3.

Lit.: Friedrich Schulte, *Die canonistischen Handschriften der Bibliotheken 1. der k. u. k. Universität, 2. des Böhmischem Museums, 3. des Fürsten Georg Lobkowitz, 4. des Metropolitankapitels von St. Veit in Prag*, Prag 1868, 69s., no. 163; Adolf Patera/Antonin Podlaha, *Soupis rukopisů knihovny metropolitní kapitoly Pražské. Vol. 1: A-E*, Prague 1910, 166s., no. 269.

[B] Brno, Moravská zemská knihovna [MZK] (Moravian Library), cod. Mk 28, fol. 126r- 216r

Former signature: Il. 206.

15th century (1415, 1419), paper, 259 fols., 31,5 x 21,5 cm

Carefully written in Gothic italic, two columns, very little corrections.

The manuscript belonged to the library of the Princes of Dietrichstein at Mikulov (Nikolsburg) Castle in Moravia. In 1933/34 it came into the possession of the Czechoslovak Republic together with 116 other codices and 208 incunables and was assigned to the Library of Brno.

fol. 1rv: vacat

fol. 2r-125v: [Matthias de Zvolen], *Rosarius (Absolutio dicitur tripliciter [...])*

fol. 126r-216r: OAV

fol. 216r-221v: *Apocalypsis* [Text of the Revelation of John up to chapter 17:4; the rest of the text is missing]

fol. 222r-259v: vacant

Lit.: Vladislav Dokoupil, *Soupis rukpisů Mikulovské Dietrichsteinské knihovny. Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Bibliothecae Dietrichsteinianae Nicolspurgensis*, Praha 1958 (= Soupisy rukopisný fondů Universitní knihovny v Brně – Catalogi codicum manu scriptorum in Biblioteca Universitatis Brunensis asservatorum, vol. 2), 60s.

[D] Prague, Národní knihovna České republiky [NK] (National Library of the Czech Republic), cod. VI D 21, fol. 579r-639r

15th century, paper, 769 fols. 31 x 22cm

fol. 2r-759r : Testamentum Novum cum expositione interlineari et marginali

fol. 759v-762v: Gilberti [de Hoylandia?] Prologus in Apocalypsin cum expositione interlineari et marginali.

fol. 762v-769r : Versus memoriales Novi Testamenti.

Dated in the year 1413 on the flyleaf. According to Souček and Cermanová from the possessions of Nicholas of Pelhřimov (c. 1385-1460) who could, according to Cermanová, also have been the writer.

The codex contains the whole text of the New Testament together with the commentary from the *Postilla* of Nicholas of Lyra. Only on the Revelation of John (fol. 57r-639r) he uses the OAV instead. The text of the OAV is dissolved into separate glosses and is written interlinearly and at the margin into the biblical text. To Rv 7 glosses from the *Expositio* of Pierre de Tarentaise were included. After the Bible text had been written first in large letters, the glosses were added in smaller letters. Sometimes the space available was not sufficient, so that additional sheets were added six times. The same kind of glossing is found in the manuscript [N]. In the manuscript [G] and the lost manuscript, on which Luther's [Lut] print was based, the single glosses were once again compiled into a continuous text.

Preceding the text of the Revelation and the glosses from the OAV is the so-called *Prologus Prisilliani* (Incipit: *Iohannes Apostolus et Ewangelista a Domino*), with the heading: *Incipit Prologus in Apocalipsim secundus; primum quere post, scilicet Omnes qui*. The *Prologus Gilberti* (Incipit: *Omnes qui pie volunt vivere in Christo*) succeeds the text of the Apocalypse.

In Rv 16.1 (*effundite septem phialas*) the old Czech translation for *philia*, *banec* (=báněk) is included interlinearly.

Lit.: Josef Truhlář, *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum Latinorum qui in C. R. Bibliotheca Publica atque Universitatis Pragensis asservantur*. Vol. 1: Codices 1-1665. Forulorum I-VIII, Prague 1905, 452, no. 1110.

Missing in: Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*; Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*; Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*.

[G] Prague, NK, cod. III G 17, fol. 1r-40(bis)r

Second half of the 15th century, paper, 207 fols. 22 x 16cm, various writers

fol. 1r-40v: *Gilberti [de Hoylandia ?] Commentarius in Apocalypsim (Omnes qui pie volunt vivere [...]) Hoc exile opus meum, quod ipso domino nostro J. Chr. teste ad sue legis evangelice peregrine declaracionem, ecclesie sue sancte reformationem ad adversarii ... antichristi et omnium fautorum suorum confusionem finalem et destruccionem, quod ipse prestare dignetur etc.)* [= OAV]

fol. 41r-207v: Collection from texts of moderate Utraquists (Jan Hus, John of Přebram, Jakoubek of Stříbro, a letter to John of Rokycana etc.)

Even though the pages are counted continuously, some of the folia of the text are missing. A part of fol. 17r is dedicated to a different topic, and fol. 17v is empty.

In [G] we find the glosses from the OAV and the *Expositio in Apocalypsim* known from [D] and [N] in the form of a continuous text. In contrast to [D] and [N], not the entire Bible text is offered, but only individual words or phrases from it, which are distinguished from the text of the commentary by underlining.

OAV 1-9 are not written with much care: in slacking italics, in two uneven columns with more than 50 lines per folio. From OAV 10 onwards the text is written in a different handwriting in a neat Gothic italic, in two neat columns and with always less than 50 lines per folio.

The text of the OAV is preceded by the prologue of Gilbert of Poitiers *Omnes qui pie volunt vivere*, with the same anonymous commentary as in the *Expositio in Apocalypsim Confiteor*.

Lit.: Josef Truhlář, *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum Latinorum qui in C. R. Bibliotheca Publica atque Universitatis Pragensis asservantur*. Vol. 1: Codices 1-1665. Forulorum I-VIII, Prague 1905, 220s., no. 452.

[H] Prague, APH, cod. B 82/2, fol. 1r-215r

15th century, paper, 236 fols., a tidy manuscript with few, corrected mistakes, but a large omission

fol. 1r-215r: OAV (with a repeatedly wrong counting of folia)

fol. 215v-216v: vacant

fol. 217r: *Prologus Prisciliani (Iohannes Apostolus et ewangelista [...]) magisterii doctrina servetur)*

fol. 217r-235v: *Textus Apocalipsis* (21 translations of Latin words into Czech beginning on fol. 221r, at the beginning of Rv 5, on the right margin and between the lines).

236r: Proverbs, ch. 8, in Czech.

Lit.: Adolf Patera/Antonin Podlaha, *Soupis rukopisů knihovny metropolitní kapitoly Pražské. Vol. 1: A-E*, Prague 1910, 251, no. 395.

[J] Prague, APH, cod. B 48/1, fol. 1r-161v

First half of the 15th century, paper, 163 fols., 21,5 x 15,5cm

Fragments of a manuscript from the 14th century in the cover.

fol. 1r-161v: *Expositio in Apocalypsim* [= OAV]

fol. 162r-163v: *Tomaskonis Ezelare* [?] *Scriptum de fratribus ad scolares Oxonienses (Subito aurugine previa [...] Explicit quoddam scriptum de fratribus ad scolares oxonienses Tomaskonis Ezelare alla)* [= John Wyclif, *De Fratibus ad Scholares*, ed. Iohan Loserth in: *Iohannis Wyclif Opera minora*, London 1913, repr. 1966, 15-18.]

Lit.: Adolf Patera/Antonin Podlaha, *Soupis rukopisů knihovny metropolitní kapitoly Pražské. Vol. 1: A-E*, Prague 1910, 210, no. 351.

[K] Prague, APH, cod. B 48/2, fol. 1r-137r

First half of the 15th century (1414/15), paper, 262 fols., 21,5 x 15cm

The copy of the *Expositio super Cantica Canticorum* by Bernard of Clairvaux, which follows the OAV and the *Scriptum ad scolares Oxonienses* by Wyclif, was completed on 18th October 1414, the feast of Saint Luke the Evangelist; the text of the OAV was copied between 1407 and 1414.

fol. 1r-137r: *Commentum super Apocalypsim* [= OAV]

fol. 137v-138v: *Scriptum ad scolares Oxonienses (Subito erugine previa [...] Explicit quoddam scriptum ad scolares Oxonienses, etc.)* [= John Wyclif, *De Fratibus ad Scholares*, ed. Iohan Loserth in: *Iohannis Wyclif Opera minora*, London 1913, repr. 1966, 15-18.]

fol. 139r-144v: vacant

fol. 145r-175v: *S. Bernhardi* [recte: *Cassiodori*] *Expositio super Cantica Canticorum*

fol. 175v-177v: *B. Hieronymi Tractatus de essentia divina*

fol. 178r-180v: vacant

fol. 181r-211r: *S. Bernhardi De consideratione*

fol. 212r-217v: vacant

fol. 218r-227v: *De VII mortalibus peccatis (Superbia est radix viciorum [...] mereamur tandem ad regnum celestem feliciter pervenire adiuvante Ihesu Christo domino in secula seculorum benedicto. Amen.)*

fol. 228r-229v: *Expositio orationis Dominicae*

fol. 230r-242r: *Mgri Iacobelli de Miza Positio de perceptione corporis et sanguinis Christi sub duplici specie omnibus Christi fidelibus ministranda (Quia heu in templis christianorum [...] per nimiam replecionem.)*

fol. 242v-246v: *Excerpta: S. Bernardi Sermo ad Petrum; De vita sacerdotali.*

fol. 247r-253v: vacant.

fol. 254r-257v: *Ioh. Hus De poenitentia*

fol. 257v-258r : *Ioh. Hus De matrimonio.*

fol. 257v-258v: [Iacobellus de Misa,] *De communione sub utraque ministranda (Utrum sacerdos nolens ministrare populo corpus Christi sub duplici specie est seductor et haereticus [...] usque modo non fecit mencionem [...])* [only the beginning]

fol. 259r-262v: vacant

Lit.: Adolf Patera/Antonin Podlaha, *Soupis rukopisů knihovny metropolitní kapitoly Pražské*. Vol. 1: A-E, Prague 1910, 210s., no. 352.

[Lut] [Martin Luther, ed.,] *Commentarius in Apocalypsin ante Centum Annos aeditus*, Wittenbergae: [Nickel Schirlentz], 1528

8°, eight not counted pages and 196 counted pages, with a preface by Martin Luther.

Only printed copy of the OAV (VD16 B 5252).

Currently (December 2019) copies from the following libraries are available online: Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Halle²²², Johannes a Lasco Bibliothek Emden²²³, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg²²⁴. Luther's preface is edited in: D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 26, Weimar 1909, vol. 26, (121) 123s.

The manuscript that Luther used as a template for the print, came into his possession in 1527, when Johann Briesmann and Paul Speratus sent it to him from Königsberg. They in turn, had received it from Thomas Sackheim from Lithuania (see below, §13).

Luther's edition contains the same body of text as [D] and [N] – not, however, together with the complete Bible text, but as a continuous text as in [G]. The text is printed in the orthography of the 16th century and contains a number of errors, partly caused by volatility, partly also by the incorrect resolution of abbreviations of the medieval manuscript. In addition, the editor's efforts to improve the text stylistically are noticeable, for instance by introducing hyperbata. The prologue of the author of the OAV is missing. For the background of the Wittenberg print edition see below §13.

Lit.: Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, vol. 3: *Commentaria: Auctores H-M*, Madrid 1951, 407s. (no. 4870); D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Vol. 26, Weimar 1909, 121-123.

[M] Brno, MZK, cod. Mk 62, fol. 85r-210r

²²² urn:nbn:de:gbv:3:1-483036.

²²³ http://hardenberg.jalb.de/display_dokument.php?elementId=9221.

²²⁴

https://books.google.de/books?id=F02EGibZhoUC&pg=PP11&dq=commentarius+ante+centum+annos&hl=de&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiXoeCp0_ngAhXsMewKHSbnAJwQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=commentarius%20ante%20centum%20annos&f=false

Former signature: II.44

15th century (1494/1444), paper and parchment, 276 fols., 22,5 x 15,5cm

Very careful Gothic italic, but many grammatical and syntactical mistakes; at the margins numerous notes on the topics dealt with.

fol. 1r-33v: *John Wyclif, Dialogus de ecclesia militante (Dyalogus. Cum ydemtitas sit mater fastidii et pulcra alternacio delectat [...] consenciant in hac parte. Finis leccionis Feria III in die S. Osvaldi regis, hora 23 Anno domini M° cd xciii° per Mathiam S. in Sstiepanow.)*

fol. 34r-80v: *Tractatus Universitatis Studii Cracoviensis de Concilio Basiliensi* [1441; editet in: César Egasse Du Bulay, *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 5, Paris 1670, reprint Frankfurt a.M. 1966, 479-517]

fol. 80v-84r: *Incipiunt Canones apostolorum una cum suis titulis qui per Clemtem Romanum Pontificem de greco in latinum sicut quidam asserunt dicuntur esse translati.*

fol. 84v: *Notetis expositores huius libri [= Rv] autenticos* (list of interpreters of the Revelation of John). The same list is found in cod. 1417 of the Jagiellonian Library Kraków, fol. 653r.

Notetis expositores huius Libri autenticos. Quorum primus est Augustinus qui tamen non exponit continue sed interpolatim verba aliqua pertractanda [Kraków BJ 1417: continue sed aliqua verba interpolata]. Secundus est Ieronimus qui exponit continue et succincte [cod. 1417: qui exponit Librum quasi continue, breviter tamen]. Tercius est Beda qui imitans Ieronimum aliquantulum prolixius explanavit. Quartus est Haymo qui exponit spiritualiter et diffuse. Quintus est Elymandus qui exponit ad literam quantum potest. Sextus est Albertus qui exponit ministerialiter et confuse [cod. 1417: Anthibertus qui similiter exponit ministerialiter]. Septimus est Enbertus qui Augustinum quasi in omnibus imitatur. Octavus est Ioachim qui exprimit pre ceteris eleganter [cod. 1417: qui exponit incontinue et diffuse]. Nonus est Berengarius [recte Berengaudus] qui exponit theologice et summatim [cod. 1417: Belengarius qui exponit tropoloyce magis sive moraliter]. Decimus est Qelitan [? Neclitan?]. Undecimus est Richardus qui presens Opus compilavit [cod. 1417: Richardus qui moraliter recollegit misteria bene et breviter].

Similar lists are found in the manuscripts AA VIII 19 of the Jagiellonian Library Kraków (at the end of the *Glossa super Apocalipsim ex dictis variorum formata: Expositores huius Libri fuerunt Augustinus, Iheronimus, Beda, Haymo, Helmarodus, Anthbertus, Gilbertus, Ioachim, Belegarius, Richardus [...] ex dictis ergo istorum expositorum colligitur hec compilacio, Summo Magistro Christo dirigente et illustrante*) and in I Q 16 of the Wrocław University Library (fol. 13v, before the *Glosa super Apokalipsim* by Prague Professor Hermannus de Winterswik: *Expositores huius Libri fuerunt: Sanctus Augustinus qui tamen non exponit Librum sed aliqua verba interpolatim; Iohannes [recte Iheronimus] qui exponit Librum breviter tamen et quidem incontinue; et Beda qui imitans Iohannem [recte Iheronimum] exponit aliquantulum prolixius; et Haymo qui exposuit spiritualiter et diffusius; et Ambertus qui similiter exponit ministerialiter; et Aribertus qui exponit eodem modo; et Ioachim qui exponit incontinue et diffuse; Beligarius qui exponit theologice magis sive moraliter; et Richardus qui recollegit misteria bene et breviter*).

fol. 85r-210r: *Glosa pulcra super apokalipsim Iohannis apostoli et ewangeliste exponitur per Magystrum Rychardum [= OAV]*. Usually, the 'Richardus' mentioned in the lists of interpreters is identical with Richard of Saint Victor (d. 1173). But the case here is different: it is likely that 'Richardus' means Richard Wyche, a student of Wyclif, who exchanged letters with Hus in 1410/1411 [Hudson, *The Premature Reformaion*, 160].

fol. 201v-211r: *Ad predictorum munimentum et solidiorem habendum intellectum de ipso Antichristo cognoscendo, testimonium ipsius sancti david [...]* *Sexta causa est* [the rest of the text is missing]

fol. 211v-216v: vacant

fol. 217r-233r: [Johannes Wyclif:] *Incipit tractatus de fundacione sectarum doctoris Ewangelici. Motus sum per quosdam veritatis amicos [...]* *de ecclesia sua sit ablata. Explicit de fundacione sectarum.* [edited in: John Wyclif, *Polemical Works in Latin*, ed. Rudolf Buddensieg, 2 vols., London 1883, reprint New York 1966, I 1-80]

fol. 233r-252v: [Johannes Wyclif:] *Incipit tractatus de perfectione statuum. Cum viantes et fratres specialiter contendant [...]* *confederacionem christi et dyaboli stabilire. Amen.* [edited in: Wylif, *Polemical Works*, II 440-482]

fol. 253r-276v: [Johannes Wyclif:] *Pastorale doctoris ewangelici. Cum duplex debet esse officium christiani [...]* *et cristi domini regis regum. Explicit pastorale cuiusdam.*

fol. 276v: *De salomone sententia, quid dicat catholicorum. Primus probat et dampnat [...]* *asserunt hunc omnes salutem promeruisse. Amen.*

The copy of the *Dialogus de ecclesia militante* by Wyclif is dated to the year 1494 in the colophon. But the colophon of the copy of the OAV written by the same writer states the Wednesday before the ninth Sunday after Pentecost 1444, being the 29th July 1444, as the date of its completion: *finitum feria quarta ante Dominicam Suscepimus Deus, Anno milesimo quadringentesimo quadragésimo quarto*. The copyist must have taken this date unchanged from his template (a similar case is described in Howard Kaminsky [ed.], *Master Nicholas of Dresden, The Old Color and the New*, Philadelphia 1965, 32s.).

Perhaps the copy of the OAV was made in a Polish-speaking milieu, since on fol. 185r on Rv 18:9 (*et flebunt dolentes*) a Polish gloss is inserted in the middle of the quote from 1 Tim 4:2: *cauteriatam conscientiam, v' [vulgariter] przyszonye samnyenye* (Polish *sumienie* = *conscience*).

Lit.: Vladislav Dokoupil, *Soupis rukpisů Mikulovské Dietrichsteinské knihovny. Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Bibliothecae Dietrichsteinianae Nicolspurgensis*, Praha 1958 (= *Soupisy rukopisný fondů Universitní knihovny v Brně – Catalogi codicum manu scriptorum in Biblioteca Universitatis Brunensis asservatorum*, vol. 2), 107-109.

[N] Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale [BN] (National Library), cod. VII A 34, fol. 70r-91v

15th century, probably from Moravia or Silesia, 1+93+1 fols., 15,5 x 11cm, different writers

From the property of John of Capistrano OFM.²²⁵

fol. 1r-22v: *Tractatus et Disputatio inter Vicarium et Fratrem Minorem de confessionibus audiendis*

fol. 22v-57r: *Regula et Dicta S. Basilii Cesariensis de institutione monachorum*

fol. 57r-60v: *An fratribus Minoribus liceat recipere oblaciones pecuniarias ad altare vel alibi per procuratores seculares [...]*

²²⁵ Letter by Cesare Cenci to Romolo Cegna on 5th December 2004: „In Convento francescano di Napoli soggiornò Fra Giovanni di Capistrano OFM che deve avervi portato [nel 1456] una copia del Codice della Famiglia di quello inviato a Lutero dalla Germania.”

fol. 61r-64v: *Matthias Döring, Informatio de regula fr. Minorum secundum diversas declarationes Sedis Apostolice* [edited: L. Oliger, *Matthias Dörings Gutachten über die Franziskanerregel (1431) und obvservantistische Gegenschrift*, in: *Franziskanische Studien* 9 (1922), 203-236, here 211-223]

fol. 65r-69r: *Informacio super quedam dubitabilia circa statum fr. Minorum, contraria priori* [edited: Oliger, *Matthias Dörings Gutachten*, 223-236]

fol. 69r-91v: *Hereticalis Postilla [Ioannis] Wyclif. Apocalipsis. Traditurus Iohannes misteria sibi per angelum [...] citharizantium in citharis suis.* [= OAV]

Just like in [D], the biblical text of the Revelation of John is written in big letters with marginal and interlinear glosses taken from the OAV and the *Expositio in Apocalypsin*. Negligent copy with irregular line distances and margins. Could be a copy of [D], according to Cermanová [N].

The manuscript is damaged and contains only the verses Rv 1:7-14:2. Parts of the comment on Rv 14:1 are unreadable due to stains.

There are three glosses in old Czech language (transcriptions by Pavel Soukup): Rv 7,15 (*dealbaverunt eas in sangwine agni*): *hussowske* („hussite“, with red ink); Rv 8,8 (*missus est in mare*): *swalena ē iest v morze* („has been tossed into the ocean“); Rv 8,9 (*tertia pars navium interiit*): *korabow stanula gest* („a third of the ships were destroyed“). According to Romolo Cegna, the glosses could be Polish.

Lit.: Cesare Cenci, *Manoscritti francescani della Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli*, vol. 1, Quaracchi 1971, 381s., no. 212.

[P] Prague, NK, cod. V E 3, fol. 13r-166r

End of 14th century/beginning of 15th century, paper, 235 fols., 21,5 x 15,5cm, different writers

fol. 1r-10r: Anonymus, *Summa confessionis (Confessor circa penitentem taliter se debet regere [...] remedium concupiscencie.)*

fol. 10r-12v: *Notae varie (de 7 virtutibus, de 7 operibus misericordiae, de 7 donis spiritus s.)*

fol. 13r- 166v: *Commentarius in Apocalypsin compilatus a quodam praedicatoro Lollardorum Anglico in carcere a. 1390. Opus arduum valde ...* (= OAV)

fol. 166r-167v : [John Wyclif], *Tractatulus de Fratribus Iacobitarum. Dubito [recte Subito] aurugine previa [...] Explicit quoddam scriptum ad Scholares Oxonienses de Fratribus* [= John Wyclif, *De Fratribus ad Scholares*, ed. Iohan Loserth in: *Iohannis Wyclif Opera minora*, London 1913, repr. 1966, 15-18.].

fol. 167v-171v: *B. Ieronimus de essencia divinitatis; Bernardus de miseria huius vite; Ambrosius de moribus ecclesiae*

fol. 172r-232v: *S. Augustini Sermones super canonicam S. Iohannis*

fol. 233r-245r: *Eiusdem Sermones XII.*

This codex contains several terms in old Czech language inserted between the lines or at the margins, especially in the excursus on the Ten Commandments in chapter 11 (transcriptions by Pavel Soukup): Rv 1:13 (*precinctum ad mamillas*): *traczem* („belt“); Rv 1:15 (*similes auricalco*): *k mosassy* („from brass“); Rv 11:6 (*facturus*): *vczynye* („going to make“); Rv 11:6 (*plasmacio nuditatis*): *czlovyeka obnazenye* („exposure“); Rv 11:6 (*exterminator*): *vyplanitel*; Rv 11,6 (*per promocionem*): *przymluv*; Rv 11:6 (*sex milia sexcenti sexaginta sex*): *tma czyslo* („dark number“).

Lit.: Josef Truhlář, *Catalogus Codicum Manu Scriptorum Latinorum qui in C. R. Bibliotheca Publica atque Universitatis Pragensis asservantur*. Vol. 1: Codices 1-1665. Forulorum I-VIII, Prague 1905, 366s., no. 895.

[R] Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek [BLB] (Baden State Library), cod. 346, fol. 3r-120r

Second decade in the 15th century, parchment, Bohemia

Parchment wrapper with Latin and Czech notes

fol. 2r: *Nunc explano necnon cano quod deus regem dabit* (sibyllic poem with indications of the danger posed by the Turks)

fol. 2v: *Matthias Flacius Illyricus*: Hint to M. Luther, *Commentarius in Apocalypsim ante centum annos editus Wittenberg 1528*

fol. 3r-120r: *Johannes Wiclif, Super Apocalypsin* (= OAV) (*Opus arduum valde [...] triumphabit. Amen.*)

fol. 120r-129r: Nicholas of Dresden, *Novus et antiquus color* (*Notandum quod materia subsequens ita est disposita [...] Expliciunt Novi et Antiqui Colores.*) [ed. Howard Kaminsky and others, *Master Nicholas of Dresden, The Old Color and the New*, Philadelphia 1965. – Kaminsky did not collate the codex R from Karlsruhe.]

fol. 129r-132v: *Contra pluralitatem beneficiorum* (collection of excerpts)

fol. 133r-137r: Iohannes Gerson, *Tractatus contra heresim de communicatione laicorum sub utraque specie* (*Oblaturo nuper seniorum huius Sacri Concilii [...] Constanciae Anno domini m° cccc° XVII° die XX Augusti*)

fol. 137r-145r: *Jacob of Mies*, hussite response to Gerson (*Quamvis magnifici et nobiles christianissimi Regni Bohemie et Marchionatus Morauie Magnates Barones [...]*)

fol. 145r-159r: *Excerpta et Collecta* (fol. 148r: *Quod fuit ab initio*; fol. 157r: *De sacerdote*; fol. 158r: *De libro Magistri ffrancisci de corpore christi*; fol. 158v: *Nota: septem sunt proprietates hostie Christi quas quilibet debet habere volens suscipere Corpus Christi*).

On the flyleaf in the back the Latin terms of the four allegorical senses of the Bible and their Czech translations are noted: *historice: tielesnie; allegorice: duchownie; tropologice: przykladnie neb podobnie; anagocice: swerchowenie* (transcription: Pavel Soukup). A verse from Rm 8:18 (*Non sunt condigne passiones huius seculi ad futuram gloriam*) is found on the last page (fol. 130r) in the last two lines together with its Polish translation (*Nya sou winie milosci tego swyata na prieziwo fale boszey*).

Lit.: Wilhelm Brambach, *Die Karlsruher Handschriften*, vol. 1: Nr. 1-1299 (The manuscripts of the Badische Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe IV,1) Newprint with bibliographic appendix, Wiesbaden 1970, 39s., 289.

[W1] Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek [ÖNB] (Austrian National Library), cod. 4526, fol. 1r-131r

Former signature in the court library: Theol 916.

15th century, Bohemia, parchment and paper, I+134.I fols., 215 x 155mm, different hands

Gothic minuscules, red décor linings, commas, underlining. Outer and (except for the last) inner double sheet of each sexternio out of parchment. Original numbering of the sexternios.

Accurate copy with notes on the margins, stating the topics dealt with. On fol. 40r (on Rv 6:12) six lines are left out to be added at the bottom of the same page. Besides only two other small omissions added afterwards (Rv 4:6, 20:20).

Leather binding over wood, 15th century; clasps.

Contemporary title: *Opus arduum 1.r A. o*; later title: *Wicelf in Apo.lyp.*; back title from the 17th century: *Wicelfii Opus in Apocalypsin*.

fol. 1r-131r: *Johannes Wiclif. Expositio in Apocalypsin*. [= OAV] (*Opus arduum valde Apocalypsin videlicet domini nostri ihesu christi ipsius gratia inspirante sumpsit explicandum [...] contra omnes adversarios ignominie crucis sue finaliter triumphabit. Amen.*)

fol. 131r-134v: *Expositio Capitis III Isaiae*, with several Czech glosses on rare Latin vocabulary (*Auferet ab Ierusalem et a iuda validum et fortem et omne robur panis [...] sponsus venio iam*).

Codex [W1] and (following) [W2] are part of the collection of Wyclifite and Hussite manuscripts counting 50 writings in total, that were lended out by the famous Lutheran humanist and bibliophile Kaspar of Niedbruck (approx. 1525-1557), who served the crown as a diplomat in Prague, to Matthias Flacius in 1556 and remained in Vienna after his death.²²⁶

Lit.: Michael Denis, *Codices Manuscripti Bibliothecae Palatinae Vindobonensis Latini Aliarumque Occidentis Linguarum*. Vol. I. Pars II. Vienna 1794, Sp. 1480-1482; *Tabulae codicum manuscriptorum praeter graecos et orientales in Bibliotheca Palatina Vindobonensi asservatorum*, vol. 3: Cod. 3501-Cod. 5000, Vienna 1869, 300; Karl Schwarzenberg, *Katalog der kroatischen, polnischen und tschechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, Vienna 1972, 215.

[W2] Vienna, ÖNB, cod. 4925, fol. 1r-134r

Former signature of the court library: Theol 933

15th century, Bohemia, paper, 304+XVIII* fols., 210 x 160mm, fleuronée initials.

Cover: brown leather over wooden plates, 15th century; binders and clasps removed, original title on the front: *De abhominacione*; back title (17th century): *Johannis Wicelf <...>*

A fragment of a manuscript of the *Paschale Carmen* by Coelius Sedulius (d. approx. 450) from the 14th century is glued into the front binding, a Czech letter by Martin of Turnau (Martin z Turnova) to Magister Gallus (Mistr Havel v Lúži) from the 15th century in the back.

fol. 1r-134v: *Expositio in Apocalypsin* [= OAV] (*Opus arduum valde Apokalippsim videlicet domini nostri ihesu christi [...] finaliter triumphabit*)

fol. 135r-304v: *Jan Hus* (John Wyclif), *Tractatus de abominatione* (*Audite hoc sacerdotes et attendite, Domus Israel et domus regis auscultate [...] Dicit hic Propheta sacerdotes esse laqueum factos speculationi id est custodie populi dei et ista est horrenda abhominacio in templo*).

Apparently, a dictate (*pronuntiatio*, see below §12); continuous corrections and added left out words on the margin, probably by the same hand, that wrote the text itself.

²²⁶ Van Dussen, *From England to Bohemia*, 49.

Lit.: Michael Denis, *Codices Manuscripti Bibliothecae Palatinae Vindobonensis Latini Aliarumque Occidentis Linguarum*. Vol. I. Pars II. Vienna 1794, Sp. 1482f.; *Tabulae codicum manu scriptorum praeter graecos et orientales in Bibliotheca Palatina Vindobonensi asservatorum*, vol. 3: Cod. 3501-Cod. 5000, Vienna 1869, 423; Karl Schwarzenberg, *Katalog der kroatischen, polnischen und tschechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, Vienna 1972, 266.

[SZ] Bohumil Ryba (ed.), *Strahovské Zjevení: Český husitský výklad na Apokalypsou a jeho latinská lollardská předloha Johna Purveye*, in: *Strahovská knihovna: Sborník Památníku národního písemnictví* [= Annual of the Museum of Czech Literature] 1 (1966), 7-29.

The Latin OAV has been translated into Czech language in whole or at least in parts in a Hussite environment. In the cover of an incunabulum from the year 1479 out of the library of the Premonstratensian monastery Strahov in Prague, two glued-in fragments of a big parchment page were found showing parts of a Czech commentary on the Book of Revelation which turned out to be a free translation of the Latin OAV. In detail, it contains the comments on Rv 11:19-12:3, 12:6-12:15; 12:15-12:18; 13:1-4; 13:7-15; 13:15-25. Bohumil Ryba edited these fragments in 1966 and contrasted them to the respective parts of the Latin OAV following the manuscript of Prague [P].

12. Reconstruction of the history of transmission and formation of a stemma codicum

The fifteen Latin manuscripts represent two different recensions of the OAV: a longer, more extensive and a shorter, abbreviated version of the text. The manuscripts [A], [A1], [B], [H], [J], [K], [M], [P], [R], [W1] and [W2] show the longer version. [D], [G], [Lut] and [N] represent the shorter one.

The reconstruction of the OAV's history of transmission is fraught with great uncertainty. Romolo Cegna has developed the following proposal on the basis of his many years of expertise in our manuscripts.

Probably all preserved manuscripts of the OAV were based on a single template no longer extant, which was perhaps brought from England to Prague in 1411 by Matthew of Hnátnice (see below) and which is referred to below as [OAV*]. If the dating of [D] to 1413 is correct, [OAV*] should have been known in Prague by this time at the latest. The most important argument for the assumption of a single template is the fact that in all manuscripts with the longer text the largest part of the commentary on Rev 7:5b-7:17 is missing. The manuscripts of the shorter recension fill in this same gap secondarily with the text of another commentary, the *Expositio in Apocalypsin* by Pierre de Tarentaise.

+ + +

Excursus: The transmission of OAV 7

In the manuscripts with the longer version of the OAV, the text breaks off at Rv 7:5b with the words *in istis CII tribubus intellegitur totus numerus electorum*, only to continue in chapter 8 (Rv 8:2 in today's numbering). In the manuscript [P] this omission is expressly pointed out (fol. 66r: *hic est defectus*). Of the missing text, only a short commentary on Rv 7:9, comprising about twenty lines, is preserved (*Et hoc est quod dicit Glosa Bede super textu qui sequitur [...] usque ad ultimum sigillum Iohanni reseratum*), followed by the *quaestio* on the absence of the tribe Dan in the enumeration of

Rv 7:5-8 (*Sed queritur quare tribus Dan non numeratur inter alias [...] que est condicio soli Antichristo appropriata ex Apostolo 2^e Thesalonicenses 2^o*). These pieces are also missing in the manuscript [P].

At this point, the manuscripts with the shorter text differ characteristically from the manuscripts with the longer version. Like these, they contain the *quaestio* on the missing tribe of Dan, but not the comment on Rv 7:9. Instead, in [D], [N] and [Lut] the gap in the text of the OAV is filled with the corresponding section from the *Expositio* of Pierre de Tarentaise.

In the case of the manuscript [G] there is the particular difficulty that several sheets were lost following fol. 13 (the continuous numbering was only added later). As a result, a larger piece of text comprising the Bible text and the comment on Rv 7:2-7:16a is missing ([...] *secunde partis [...] Ego sum panis vivus*). However, the remaining verses Rv 7:16b-17 suggest that [G] offered the same text here as [D], [N], and [Lut].

+ + +

The colophon of [B] contains, in addition to the information discussed above on the time and circumstances of the composition of the OAV, a reference to the further transmission of the text:

Pronuncciatum Prage per Mathiam Baccalarium dictum Engliss. Reportatum vero per Martinum de Verona sub anno Domini M^o CCCC^o XV^o. Finitum III^o feria post festum Egidii.

According to this, the OAV was presented or rather dictated (*pronuncciatum*) in Prague by the bachelor Matthias Anglicus and written down (*reportatum*) by Martin of Verona. The *pronuntiatio* was a common method of distributing texts, especially at German universities.²²⁷ The first known example can be found in 1367 at the Artist Faculty of the University of Prague, from where it spread to Vienna, Heidelberg and Erfurt. The academic teacher read the text in question, which had to be checked and corrected beforehand, sentence by sentence, with clear emphasis and under announcement of capital letters and punctuation marks (*pronuntiatio, lectio*). After his dictation, the text was written down by the listeners and then corrected and brought into its final form (*reportatio, recollectio*); this could also include copying the text all over again into a neat manuscript. Our manuscript [B] was the product of such a *pronuntiatio*. Other OAV manuscripts can be assumed to have been written in the same way.

Matthias Anglicus introduced in the colophon [B] was in fact Matthew of Hnátnice, a relative of Nicholas Faulfiš.²²⁸ He was sent to England by the Hussite party in Prague already in 1411, which gave him his epithet. In 1412 Matthias received his bachelor's degree in Prague. In 1424 he travelled on diplomatic mission for the Hussites to the court of the King of Poland-Lithuania, later he took part in the Council of Basel. In 1433 Matthias was headmaster, probably in Loun. The writer of [B], called Martin of Beroun (Martinus de Verona), was most likely a student. Martin finished his copy the Tuesday after Saint Giles Day (1st September), the 3rd September 1415. The date might have been chosen carefully, since on this day the nobility of Bohemia and Moravia gathered in Prague to protest against the burning of Jan Hus on 6th July.

²²⁷ See Gerhardt Powitz, "Modus scolipetarum et reportistarum", „Pronunciatio' and Fifteenth-Century University Hands, in: *Scrittura e civiltà* 12 (1988), 201-211; Gerhardt Powitz, 'Modus scolipetarum et reportistarum'. *Pronuntiatio und die Studienkursive des 15. Jahrhunderts*, in: Ders., *Handschriften und frühe Drucke. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur mittelalterlichen Buch- und Bibliotheksgeschichte*, Frankfurt a.M. 2005, 43-56. Cf. Edward Potkowski, *Schule und Bücher: Handschriftenproduktion in den spätmittelalterlichen Schulen Polens*, in: Herrad Spilling (ed.), *La collaboration dans la production de l'écrit médiéval*, Paris 2003, 57-68.

²²⁸ František M. Bartoš, *Husitský diplomat Matěj Engliš*, in: *Jihočeský sborník historický* 21 (1952), 114s.

Like [B], the manuscripts [R] and [W2] seem to depend directly on [OAV*] and could be the result of the same or another *pronuntiatio*. Each of these three manuscripts seems to have at least one other manuscript depending on them in turn, be it by copy, be it by recent *pronuntiatio*. According to the reconstruction of Romolo Cegna, three lines of transmission can be assumed:

- (1) [OAV*] > [B] > [P]. Entries in Czech language suggest that these manuscripts were used in Czech speaking surroundings.
- (2) [OAV*] > [R] > [M]. The text represented by these manuscripts is somewhat more extensive than that of our line of transmission no. (1). Frequently [R] and [M] agree against the other text witnesses.²²⁹ Similarities in orthography can also be found: thus [R] and [M] consistently write *Cristus* (*Anticristus*, *cristianus* etc.), *eclesia* and *implere* (instead of *inplere*). A Polish gloss in the text of [M] (see above, §11) suggests a Polish-speaking environment; the Bible saying translated into Polish at the end of [R] would also fit to this. If the assumption is true that [M] took the colophon from its template (see above, §11), this cannot have been [R]; there must have been at least one lost intermediate link.
- (3) [OAV*] > [W2] > [W1]. In these manuscripts there are no entries in languages other than Latin.

Most other manuscripts of the longer recension ([A1], [H], [J], [K]) are close to the witnesses of the line of transmission no. (1), from whom they differ in their intention of correcting mistakes and improving language. In contrast, [A] is more similar to the witnesses of the line of transmission no. (2); however, [A] refers to the same colophon as [B] and [P].

A special case are the three other manuscripts and the print of Luther. They represent a shortened version of the OAV produced in Bohemia.²³⁰ The original form of this shorter recension is found in [D] and [N]. They have the complete biblical text of the Revelation of John, written with large line spacing and wide margins. The text of the OAV was subsequently written in the form of glosses between the lines and to the margins – perhaps following a dictation in a *pronuntiatio* or in a lecture.²³¹ In this process, some sections were omitted.

[D] seems to have been written as early as 1413, as indicated on the flyleaf, perhaps by Nicholas of Pelhřimov. According to P. Cermanová, manuscript [N], which was written carelessly and with many mistakes, could depend on [D], probably via a lost intermediate copy.²³² It is also possible, however, that both manuscripts can be traced back to a common master copy that has not been preserved.

The manuscript [G] and the print [Lut] offer the same text as [D] and [N]. However, the continuous Bible text is missing here, and the commentary (abbreviated to glosses when the text was dissolved) is again merged into a continuous text. Obviously, [G] and [Lut] belong to the same textual family. But in [Lut] some omitted pieces from the long recension of the OAV have been inserted again. However, as mentioned above, a number of mistakes have crept in during printing.

Different from the manuscripts with the longer text, [D], [N] and [Lut] – and probably [G] too, but right here several sheets are missing – replaced the comments on Rv 7:5b-7:17 missing in [OAV*] (see above) by glosses from the *Expositio in Apocalypsin* of Pierre de Tarentaise, which had already served the author of the OAV as reference.

²²⁹ Cf. e.g. the long marginal note surpassing other manuscripts on Rv 3:22: *ut illud ewangelicum: 'ab eo qui aufert tua ne repetas' [...] Rapinam bonorum vestrarum cum gaudio suscepistis.*

²³⁰ Anne Hudson called it an *abbreviated edition* (*A Neglected Wycliffite Text*, 261), Pavlína Cermanová a *reduced version* (*Constructing the Apocalypse*, 73).

²³¹ Cermanová, *Constructing the Apocalypse*, 73.

²³² *Ibid.*, 74.

13. The edition by Martin Luther

The first and so far only printed version of the OAV was published in 1528 in Wittenberg at the instigation of Martin Luther.²³³ The original manuscript is lost, it probably dates from the 15th century. Luther received it from Königsberg from the Protestant theologians Johann Briesmann and Paul Speratus. Both had contributed substantially to the introduction of the Reformation in the Monastic State of the Teutonic Knights and its transformation into the secular Duchy of Prussia in 1525. Since then they were part of the administration of the former Grand Master and present Duke Albert of Prussia (1490-1568).

Johann Briesmann (Brießmann; 1488-1549)²³⁴, a former Franciscan friar from Cottbus, became a follower of Luther as a spectator in the Leipzig Debate (1519). Luther recommended him to Grand Master Albert already in 1523, who called him to Königsberg as a cathedral preacher. After the Monastic State had been secularized, Briesmann became a member of the new government. From 1527 to 1531 Briesmann worked as reformer and organizer of the Protestant Church in Riga, then returned to Königsberg as cathedral pastor. In 1546 he became president of the diocese of Samland and curator of the newly founded University of Königsberg.

Briesmann was friends with Paul Speratus (1484-1551)²³⁵, who was four years older. Speratus had joined the reformation in 1520 as cathedral preacher in Würzburg. From 1522 to 1523 he had worked as a Protestant preacher in Iglau in Moravia and then, condemned to death by fire by the Bishop of Olomouc, fled to Luther in Wittenberg. In 1524 Speratus became castle preacher in Königsberg at Luther's recommendation; as visitator he played a decisive role in the implementation of the reformation in the Duchy of Prussia. In 1530 he became Lutheran bishop of Pomesania in Marienwerder.

In 1527, in their last year together in Königsberg, Briesmann and Speratus became hold of a copy of the OAV from Lithuania, that was sent to them by Thomas Sackheim, a father or brother in law of Briesmann.²³⁶ This manuscript from the middle 15th century was apparently of poor quality. The text it offered was shorter than the more extensive recension, but longer than the abbreviated version of manuscripts [D], [G] and [N], which it was otherwise closest to in its textual form. How the OAV got to Lithuania is unknown, but there were documented connections between the Bohemian Hussites and the Baltic states in that time.²³⁷

Apparently it was also Sackheim who gave the two Königsbergers the idea of systematically collecting and publishing such medieval texts as the OAV, which could prove that the theological concerns of

²³³ Cf. on the following *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [WA], vol. 26, Weimar 1909, 121-123; Hofmann, *Luther und die Johannes-Apokalypse*, 329-332; Schäufele, *Opus Arduum*, 506-510.

²³⁴ David Erdmann, Art. *Briesmann*, in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 3 (1875), 329-331; Fritz Gause, Art. *Briesmann*, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 2 (1955), 612s.; Heinz Schilling, Art. *Briesmann*, in: *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 1 (4th edition 1998), 1764; Heinz Endermann, *Johannes Briesmann – ein Reformator aus Cottbus*, in: *Geschichte und Gegenwart des Bezirkes Cottbus (Niederlausitzer Studien)* 22 (1988), 78-86.

²³⁵ Paul Tschackert, *Paul Speratus von Rötlen, evangelischer Bischof von Pomesanien in Marienwerder*, Halle 1891; Ders., Art. *Speratus*, in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 35 (1893), 123-135; Ders., Art. *Speratus*, in: *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* 18 (3rd ed. 1906), 625-631; Martin Brecht, *Erinnerung an Paul Speratus (1484-1551), ein enger Anhänger Luthers in den Anfängen der Reformation*, in: *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 94 (2003), 105-133; Michael Beyer, Art. *Speratus*, in: *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 7 (4th ed. 2004), 1568.

²³⁶ Letter from Speratus to Sackheim of 4th January 1528: *nach dem Apokalypsi, wilchs wir durch dein huelleffte aus Littawen erlanget haben* (WA 26, 121, 14s.).

²³⁷ Molnár, *Apokalypse*, 215.

the Reformation were by no means new, but had already been upheld in the past. In a letter to Sackheim dated 4th January 1528 Speratus set out this plan programmatically.²³⁸ The OAV thus fits into the early attempts of a self-historification of the Reformation and the development of the concept of Protestant ‘witnesses of the truth’ in the Middle Ages.²³⁹

In the spring of 1527, Briesmann sent the OAV manuscript to Luther in Wittenberg. Luther was delighted by this discovery and immediately arranged for the printing of the manuscript in the print shop of Nickel Schirlentz.²⁴⁰ He left it to his secretary Georg Rörer (1492-1557) to produce a tidy copy to be used as printing template and to supervise the printing. Nevertheless, it took almost a year for the book to be completed; it was published in early 1528.²⁴¹

Luther himself added a remarkable preface to the edition²⁴², stating that he had received the OAV from the Baltic states (*e Sarmaticis Livonicisque regionibus*). For palaeographical reasons, he thought the manuscript had been written about seventy years ago – around the middle of the 15th century (*litteris et syllabis seculum suum proprie testantibus, deformatum, ut ipse negare non potuerim, esse eum annos circiter Septuaginta ante hos annos descriptum*). The original drafting of the text itself he correctly dated to the time of the Great Schism. The somewhat unwieldy title of the print *Commentarius in Apocalypsin ante Centum Annos aeditus* refers roughly to the middle between the two assumed dates. Contradicting that however, is an erroneous reading of this print with regard to OAV 20:2: instead of 1390, [Lut] shows the year 1357 (*sumus in anno, ab incarnatione Christi, millesimo trecentesimo quinquagesimo septimo*) – probably a contamination with the 1,357 years since the passion of Christ, stated shortly before. A marginal notice, probably by Rörer, therefore falsely dates the writing of the OAV to the year 1357.²⁴³ At the very end of the book, this remark is then made even worse without any comprehensible reason. Here it says: *Folio. 170. lege in margine sic. Ex hoc loco liquet, quod liber iste sit aeditus, Anno. 1338.*²⁴⁴

The evidence for the English origins of the OAV had escaped Luther. Instead, as the explicit mention of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague in his preface suggests, he thought of a Hussite provenance of the work. Undoubtedly, Luther said, the Western Schism had been a sign through which God indicated to his Church the imminent end of the Antichrist; the OAV, like other similar works, was the divine word of interpretation, the *verbum manifestarium*, explaining this sign. For God does not reject his Church and his people without having sent prophets beforehand.

Since 1519/20 Luther himself had identified the papacy with the Antichrist and had been confirmed in this by the reading of Hus’ treatise *De ecclesia*. One feels his personal satisfaction when he declares in his preface that with the publication of the OAV he will be able to announce to the whole world that he was not the first to expose the papacy as the empire of the Antichrist. Although the author of the OAV lived in a much darker time than the Reformers, he and many others had already clearly denounced the pope as Antichrist. Thus the author of the OAV is a witness of the truth whom

²³⁸ *Wie wol hinfurt niemand den betrug der Römischen Bestien (wilcher nu genungsam offenbar worden ist) so viel mal herwidder anzuzeigen fuer nutz achten wuerd, [...] Idoch was schadets, wie du auffs hoechste vermanest, die weil wir zu unsern zeiten itzt dafuer gehalden werden, als wolten wir allein klug sein, das man auch ettlicher alten fuer iaren zeugnis von dieser sach erfuer ans liecht bringe, auff das durch yhr vorgehende meinung unser, die hernach gefolget hat, bey den schwachen gleich als bestetiget werde [...]* (WA 26, 121, 3-12). cf. Tschackert, Paul Speratus von Rötlen, 40.

²³⁹ Wolf-Friedrich Schäufole, *Die Selbsthistorisierung der Reformation mittels der Konzeption evangelischer Wahrheitszeugen*, in: Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 128 (2017), 156-170.

²⁴⁰ See Luther’s letter to Briesmann of 6th May 1527, WA.B 4, 200s. (Nr. 1103), here: 201, 5s.: *Apocalypsis a te missa sub typis iam mittitur [...]*.

²⁴¹ *Commentarius in Apocalypsin ante Centum Annos aeditus*, Wittenberg 1528 (VD 16 B 5252); see above, §11.

²⁴² See this edition. The edition in WA 26, 123f. is not entirely true to the template.

²⁴³ *Ex hoc loc liquet, quod liber iste sit aeditus, Anno. 1357* ([Lut] fol. 170r).

²⁴⁴ [Lut] fol. 195v.

God had sent many years before to affirm the Reformation doctrine: *testis [...] a deo praeordinatus tot annis ante nos pro nostra doctrina confirmanda*.²⁴⁵ The rediscovery of this and other witnesses of truth was an eschatological event for Luther: as formerly in Jerusalem (Mt 27:52s.), so today, together with the gospel of Christ the bodies of the saints rise from their graves and instill faith and confidence in the Evangelicals.

In fact, the significance of the OAV for Luther and the Reformation was limited to its function as a so-called witness of truth. The medieval commentary only confirmed what they had already recognized – the Antichristian character of the papacy. Beyond that there was no further reception of the ideas of the OAV. It is therefore not surprising that Luther's edition of the OAV was not reprinted.

The OAV made known by Luther is mentioned prominently in the famous *Catalogus testium veritatis* by Matthias Flacius Illyricus (1520-1575).²⁴⁶ The quarrelsome student of Luther and Melanchthon had, in view of the Augsburg Interim and the ensuing fierce theological disputes among the Wittenberg Reformers, devoted himself to the study of church history and provided the decisive impetus for the monumental historical oeuvre of the *Magdeburg Centuries*. In the course of the preparatory work for this he collected historical testimonies from the Middle Ages which were to prove that even after the deviation of the Papal Church from its calling there had always been witnesses of the one, ancient truth of the gospel – or, biblically speaking: the flock of seven thousand who had not bowed their knees to Baal (cf. 1 K 19:18). Thus, Flacius contrasted the succession of the episcopal office in the Roman Church with a Protestant line of continuity, which led from the pure gospel of the early church through the supposedly dark Middle Ages to the renewed gospel of the reformers. The first edition of the *Catalogus testium veritatis*, published in 1556, contained about 400 personalities, communities, councils, but also individual books or texts from the beginning of church history to the recent past, all of which in their own way had contradicted the pope and his Antichristian tyranny.²⁴⁷ The second edition, published in 1562, contained about thirty additional entries. In both editions also the OAV found its place among the Protestant witnesses of truth. But Flacius falsely assumed the author to be a Waldensian from the Baltic states. His short description emphasized the fact that the author of the OAV identified the pope with the Antichrist, because he taught human traditions and inventions instead of God's Word and had appropriated the power of kings with reference to the Donation of Constantine.²⁴⁸

Among the readers of Luther's edition of the OAV was the English clergyman and playwright John Bale (1495-1563)²⁴⁹, who had fled to the continent from the persecution of Protestants towards the end of the reign of Henry VIII. From 1540-1548 he lived in exile in Flanders, where he got to know the OAV. Bale correctly recognised the Lollard origin of the work, which he was the first to attribute to Wyclif's secretary John Purvey in his famous catalogue of British writers – a kind of national British counterpart to Flacius' *Catalogus testium veritatis*. Bale took most of the OAV's presentation almost

²⁴⁵ WA 26, 124, 16s.

²⁴⁶ On Flacius: Oliver K. Olson, *Matthias Flacius and the Survival of Luther's Reform*, Minneapolis, MN 2011; Irene Dingel/Johannes Hund/Luka Ilić (eds.), *Matthias Flacius Illyricus. Biographische Kontexte, theologische Wirkungen, historische Rezeption*, Göttingen 2019.

²⁴⁷ Heinz Scheible, *Der Catalogus testium veritatis. Flacius als Schüler Melanchthons*, in: Eberburg-Hefte 30 (1996), 91-105 = *Blätter für pfälzische Kirchengeschichte und religiöse Volkskunde* 63 (1996), 343-357; Martina Hartmann, *Humanismus und Kirchenkritik. Matthias Flacius Illyricus als Erforscher des Mittelalters*, Stuttgart 2001, esp. 141-197; Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Flacius Illyricus' „Catalogus testium veritatis“ als kontroverstheologische Polemik*, in: Günter Frank/Friedrich Niewöhner (Ed.), *Reformer als Ketzer. Heterodoxe Bewegungen von Vorreformatoren*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2004, 263-291; Arno Mentzel-Reuters/Martina Hartmann (eds.), *Catalogus und Centurien. Interdisziplinäre Studien zu Matthias Flacius und den Magdeburger Centurien*, Tübingen 2008; Wolf-Friedrich Schäufele, *Matthias Flacius Illyricus und die Konzeption der Zeugenschaft im Catalogus testium veritatis*, in: Dingel/Hund/Ilić, *Matthias Flacius Illyricus*, 159-174.

²⁴⁸ Matthias Flacius, *Catalogus testium Veritatis, Qui ante nostram aetatem reclamarunt Papae [...]*, Basel 1556, 928-930.

²⁴⁹ Peter Happé, *John Bale*, New York 1996.

literally from Flacius. So the OAV became known again in its native England about 160 years after it was written.

Shortly thereafter Bale, motivated by his own persecution, also wrote a commentary on the Revelation of John, which reminds of the OAV with its historical interpretation as well as its sharp contrasting the Church of Christ and the followers of the Antichrist.²⁵⁰ Bale actually mentioned the OAV here in a list of older commentary on the Revelation,²⁵¹ but there is no significant dependency to be found.²⁵²

The OAV has not been included in other Protestant catalogues of witnesses, martyrs, and authors or historical accounts. This even applies to the large-scale church and martyr history of John Foxe,²⁵³ which otherwise pays particular attention to the Lollard “forerunners of the Reformation”. The same is true of the influential *Unparteiische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie* by Gottfried Arnold.²⁵⁴ Only occasionally was the OAV in Luther’s edition used by later Protestant Bible commentators in their commentaries on the Apocalypse. Matthias Hoë von Hoënegg (1580-1645), chief court preacher of the Elector of Saxony in Dresden, quoted the OAV frequently in his voluminous *Commentarii in Joannis Apocalypsin as Vetus quidam Anonymus interpres*.²⁵⁵ The renowned Pietist Bible interpreter Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752) in his commentary dealt with the interpretation of the millennium in the OAV.²⁵⁶

14. Editorial principles

For the present edition of the OAV, manuscript [B] was chosen as basic text. The same manuscript also served Anne Hudson and Curtis V. Bostick as reference text.²⁵⁷ Nevertheless, longer passages at the beginning (prologue) and at the end (colophon) of the OAV, which only appear in one or few manuscripts, are reproduced within the main text of the edition (specifying the sigla) even if they are missing in [B].

We reproduce the text of ms. [B] true to the original. Only where there are obvious transcription errors, differing from all or almost all other manuscripts, the majority-reading has been set into the text and the deviating variant of [B] has been listed in the apparatus. Capital and small letters were carefully normalized. New sentences and quotations begin with a capital letter. Otherwise, proper names or nouns used in the function of proper names are capitalized, as are the names of divine persons, the devil, and the Antichrist. We have decided not to reproduce the irregularly placed paragraph signs in red ink as well as the red underlining of the commented Bible text in [D] and [N]. Instead, the continuous quotations from the Apocalypse are printed in bold and italic type, other

²⁵⁰ Edition: John Bale, *The Image of bothe churches, after the Revelacion of Saynt Johan the Euangelyst*, in: Ders., *Select Works*, ed. Henry Christmas, Cambridge 1849, 249-640. Cf. Richard Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: from John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman*, Appleford 1978, 21-29; Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 191-194.

²⁵¹ Bale, *The Image of bothe churches*, 256.

²⁵² But cf. Margaret Aston, *Lollardy and the Reformation*, 157 n. 32; Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*, 55, 193s.

²⁵³ John Foxe, *Rerum in Ecclesia gestarum [...] commentarii*, Basel 1559; English edition: id., *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, touching Matters of the Church*, London 1563 – online edition: <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/> (2019-03-04).

²⁵⁴ Gottfried Arnold, *Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Historie*, 2 vols., Frankfurt a.M. 1699-1700.

²⁵⁵ Matthias Hoë von Hoënegg, *Commentarii in Apocalypsin B. Apostoli et Evangelistae Johannis*, 8 vols., Leipzig 1610-1640. Cf. Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis*, 85.

²⁵⁶ Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Erklärte Offenbarung Johannis oder vielmehr Jesu Christi*, Stuttgart 1740, new edition Stuttgart 1773, 1110s. Cf. Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis*, 82, 101.

²⁵⁷ Hudson, *A Neglected Wycliffite Text*; Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards*.

quotations appear in italic type. The modern verse numbers are given in brackets. For reasons of overview, the counting of biblical verses is noted in brackets. Additionally, the page numbers of [B] were added.

The variants of the text tradition are documented in a critical apparatus at the end of each chapter. Next to our reference manuscript [B], we collated manuscripts [A], [A1], [B], [D], [G], [K], [Lut], [M], [N], [P] and [R] continuously. [H], [J], [W1] and [W2] on the other hand, were consulted only occasionally: [H] for the prologue and the ending, [W1] and [W2] especially for chapters 1-2. The fragments of the Czech translation [SZ] were not systematically collated. In the running text, superscript index letters are set after individual words, to which a note in the critical apparatus refers, beginning anew with an *a* for the comment on every single verse of the Bible text. If annotations refer to a group of words or a longer passage, the index letter is placed both before the first and after the last word. If such a passage transcends the end of the chapter, in the concluding index letter the chapter of the beginning of the reference is indicated by a Roman number. In the entries of the critical apparatus, the readings are listed in the alphabetical order of the manuscript sigla. Only substantial variants are listed. Varying spellings are only noted in exceptional cases.

The explanatory apparatus is presented in footnotes below the ongoing text of the OAV. Here you will find explanations of words and subjects, references to quotations, parallel passages from the *Glossa ordinaria* (distinguished in marginal and interlinear glosses) and the *Expositio* of Pierre de Tarentaise, and references to literature.

Abbreviations used in the critical apparatus

add *addit, addunt* (addition)

del *delet, delent* (deletion)

emend *emendat, emendant* (correction)

exp Pierre de Tarentaise, *Expositio in Apocalypsin*: B. Albertig Magni *Opera omnia*, vol. 38, ed. Auguste and Émile Borgnet, Paris 1899, 465-796

fol *folium* (page)

Gl ord Glossa ordinaria (Glossa marginalis), in: *Biblia Latina cum glossa ordinaria*. Facsimile reprint of the Editio Princeps (Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480-1481), ed. K. Froehlich/M. T. Gibson, 4 vols. Turnhout 1992

Gl interl Glossa ordinaria (Glossa interlinearis), *ibid.*

marg *margo, in margine* (margin)

marg sup – *margo superior* (upper margin)

marg inf – *margo inferior* (lower margin)

marg sin – *margo sinistra* (left margin)

marg dex – *margo dextra* (right margin)

om *omittit, omittunt* (omission)

pon *ponit, ponunt* (insertion)

Other abbreviations

Fr. Corpus Iuris Canonici, ed. Emil Friedberg, 2 vol, Leipzig 1879.

D – C – q – c Decretum Gratiani: distinctio – causa – quaestio – caput

Clem Constitutiones Clementis V.

Extravag.com. Extravagantes communes

Extravag.lo.XXII Extravagantes Johannis XXII.

VI Liber Sextus Decretalium

X Liber Extra

Bibliography

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