

Abstract

After the Battle of White Mountain on 8 November 1620 the non-catholic-minded nobility and burghers left the country. It was not until the 1720s that common people started to go into exile in response to oppressive servitude. During the reign of Emperor Charles VI (1711–1740) the Czech lands saw another wave of recatholisation.¹ The non-catholic religious movement was born by the simplest people of the lowest social rank. These new exiles left especially for Slovakia, Silesia, and Saxony.

Many groups of exiles from the Czech lands merged in their new environment with local protestant churches. However, one particular group of emigrants from the region of Fulnek² (especially from Těšín and Suchdol nad Odrou), led by the carpenter Kristián David from Ženkla³, maintained some independence and inspired the founding of the congregation in Herrnhut (Ochranow) in Upper Lusatia, and later the establishment of an independent church known as the renewed Unity of the Brethren (Moravian Church).⁴

The congregation formed in Herrnhut between 1722 and 1727 was strongly influenced by Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. As a landowner on whose territory the said congregation arose, Zinzendorf became a sort of spiritual leader of the fraternity. He tried to keep the congregation within the Saxon Lutheran Church, but he ultimately failed. In 1749 the renewed Unity of the Brethren was established as an independent church, which combined some of the traditions of the “old” Czech Unity of the Brethren with German pietism, of which Zinzendorf was also a supporter. The original Confession of the Brethren and Catechism of the Brethren were not adopted in Herrnhut. New hymns were composed, very different from those of the original Brethren style.⁵ The continuity between the Moravian

¹ Srov. KŘÍŽOVÁ, Markéta. *Ideální město v divočině*. Misijní projekty Tovaryšstva Ježíšova a obnovené Jednoty bratrské v koloniální Americe, Praha: NLN 2007, s. 63.; „Karolinské rekatolizaci“ se věnoval především MIKULEC, Jiří. *Pobělohorská rekatolizace v českých zemích*, Praha 1992.

² Vzpomínka na bratrské dědictví se uchovala především na severní Moravě – v oblasti Kunína, na Kravaňsku, v okolí Fulneku, Těšína a Suchdola nad Odrou. Zajímavé je, že nositelé zdejší bratrské tradice byli převážně německy mluvící. Německé sbory Jednoty v této oblasti existovaly již v předbělohorské době. V letech 1616–1618 ve Fulneku působil Jan Amos Komenský, který také fulneckému sboru dedikoval katechismus a bratrský zpěvník, který vyšel v němčině roku 1661 v Amsterdamu. Po třicetileté válce se zde díky uherské šlechtě udrželo nekatolické smýšlení a situace se zhoršila až po roce 1703, kdy panství zdědili Lichtenštejnové. Srov. KŘÍŽOVÁ, Markéta. *Ideální město v divočině*, s. 62–63.

³ Kristiánem Davidem se v poslední době zabývá především ŠTĚŘÍKOVÁ, Edita. *Christian David*. Zakladatel obnovené Jednoty bratrské, Suchdol nad Odrou 2012.

⁴ Jako první z evropských panovníků uznal činnost Ochranovských bratří pruský král Fridrich II. roku 1742. Návaznost této církve na tradici původní Jednoty bratrské, tj. uznání samostatnosti církve, nyní označované jako obnovená Jednota bratrská, potvrdil roku 1749 i britský parlament. Viz KŘÍŽOVÁ, Markéta. *Ideální město v divočině*, s. 61–68.

⁵ Srov. ŘÍČAN, Rudolf. *Dějiny Jednoty bratrské*, Praha 1957, s. 397–406.

Church and the old Unity of the Brethren can be observed especially in the participation of the laity in church life, the emphasis on home worship, religious readings, and singing, as well as in opposition to the worship of Catholic saints, in the emphasis on the sacraments (especially the Lord's Supper), division of the members into groups in which they prayed, sang, and meditated together, and last but not least in the ordination of bishops.⁶ An important role in restoration of the fraternal episcopate was played by Daniel Arnošt Jablonský⁷, the grandson of Johann Amos Comenius. From 1699 to 1741 Jablonský was senior of the Polish Unity of the Brethren and also the court preacher in Berlin. In 1735 he ordained the first bishop, the carpenter David Nitschmann from Suchdol nad Odrou. Two years later Zinzendorf himself became senior of the fraternal association.⁸

Rather than restoring the original Unity, the aim of the movement was spiritual revival and return to true piety. The reference to the older church gave to the newly emerging association a sense of legitimacy, which was important for its acceptance by the community and especially by the Saxon Lutheran Church.

Dissemination of the ideas of the Moravian Church beyond the area of Herrnhut resulted mainly from population growth, which made it necessary to establish new congregations outside the said village.⁹ The first new settlements of the Herrnhut type were founded in northern Germany, Prussian Silesia, the Netherlands, Denmark, the Baltic countries, the British Isles, etc., followed by settlements and mission stations overseas (North America, Greenland, the Caribbean islands, South Africa, Australia, etc.).¹⁰

The Moravian Church spread to southern Africa around the beginning of 1737, i.e. at the time when the fraternity still lacked the status of an independent church. The first missionary in the Cape area was Jiří Schmidt of Kunín. In the first half of the eighteenth century there was still no permanent missionary station, and the systematic building of the African mission did not start until 1792. The real heyday of the African mission started only in 1806, when the area came under British rule after years of Dutch governance.

Early in the nineteenth century two missionaries were sent to the area from Herrnhut: Johann Gottlieb Bonatz and Johann Adolf Küster. Together with other missionaries they worked with the Khoikhoi tribe in the only missionary station, called Gnadenthal. Their

⁶ KŘÍŽOVÁ, Markéta. *Ideální město v divočině*, s. 62.

⁷ Postavou Daniela Arnošta Jablonského se zabýval ČAPEK, Jan Blahoslav. *Daniel Arnošt Jablonský, kulturní a politický pokračovatel Komenského*, Archiv Jana Amose Komenského 19, 1960, s. 102–117.

⁸ Srov. ŘÍČAN, Rudolf. *Dějiny Jednoty bratrské*, s. 397–406.

⁹ Více KŘÍŽOVÁ, Markéta. *Ideální město v divočině*, s. 61–68.

¹⁰ Srov. METTELE, Gisela. *Weltbürgertum oder Gottesreich*. Die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine als globale Gemeinschaft 1727–1857, Göttingen 2009, s. 277–279.

names are also inseparably connected with the spreading of the influence of the Moravian Church to a place called Grünekloof. Here, as a consequence of their exploratory trip, the second mission station of the renewed Unity of the Brethren in southern Africa was founded.

The success of the Moravian Church is evident mainly in the fact that their mission has survived to the present day, and it still enjoys considerable popularity in South Africa.¹¹

¹¹ Srov. BECK, Hartmut. *Brüder in vielen Völkern*. 250 Jahre Mission der Brüdergemeine, Erlangen 1981, s. 98–106, 227–238.; LASCH, Alexander (Hg.). *Mein Herz blieb in Afrika*. Eine kommentierte Anthologie Herrnhutscher Missionberichte von den Rändern der Welt am Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2009, s. 294–297.