

the use of chronological descriptions is due at least partially to the pursuit of the development of the embargo's premises, ideas, and practices throughout the Middle Ages.

As the author himself states, Chapter I<sup>st</sup> can be perceived, together with the introduction, as a part of the "introductory section" of the book. It presents the origins of the use of economic restrictions from the late Bronze Age, through the export control in the *Corpus iuris civilis* and Venetian politics, up to the papal embargo in the time of the active defense of Christian values against Muslims and of the early crusades. Situated at the end of the twelfth and the first half of the thirteenth century, Chapter II presents not only the embargo's emergence during this period, but also the time's main aspect: the centralization of ecclesiastical power around the Holy See. This at least partially passed through the fight against Muslims and the imposition of certain trade restrictions by Rome, especially after 1179, when the Third Lateran Council adopted the tool of embargo in the political practice of the Church. Chapter III shows how during the same period (up to the mid-thirteenth century) the papal embargo covered not only Muslims, but also Heretics, Orthodox and some other Christian communities and demonstrates its consequences within Christendom, especially its Western part. Thus the embargo became a type of a pastoral rod of the "supreme terrestrial shepherd" used to steer the flock and keep away the beasts. The last two chapters (the fourth and the fifth) continue this line of research into the later mediaeval times (from the last decades of the thirteenth to the early sixteenth centuries). Chapter IV is dedicated to the papal embargo in the fourteenth century. It has a thematic accent on the relations between the Papacy and the *Serenissima Res Publica* in relation with the pontifical embargoes. Chapter V deals with the restrictions, imposed by the Holy See in the new context of Renaissance Europe: it covers the discourse of trade restrictions, cases of enforcement, and the diffusion of the related moral ideas into the realm of practical affairs.

The aim of my review cannot be to present the entire content of Stefan Stantchev's *Spiritual Rationality*. The volume is already in the hands of its readers and can expose its ideas, topics, and theses by itself better than any review. I believe that it is methodologically exemplary by way of its blending of different disciplines and approaches. My goal is to express my high appreciation of the manner of choosing a topic, of raising a question, and of pursuing it. Certainly, this is a very mature study. Albeit a part of a long tradition, it has managed to prove its originality. I strongly believe that mediaevalists of different fields will expect with interest the future studies of the author.

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Jeanne E. GRANT, *For the Common Good. The Bohemian Land Law and the Beginning of the Hussite Revolution* (East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, vol. 28), Leiden – Boston, Brill, 2014, 150 p.

In her recently published book on the Czech land law and the Hussite movement, Jeanne E. Grant, an Associate Professor of History who has authored several studies on late medieval Bohemia and world history, explores the relation between the old land laws, as reflected in Ondřej z Dubé's writing *Práva zemská česká*. Ondřej z Dubé (1320–1412) had a good knowledge of the traditional Czech land law and was the first to put down his legal experience in a "book of laws" at the end of the 14. century (1394–1395).

In the first chapter of her book, *King, Land, Law, and Authority*, the author describes the political situation in Bohemia immediately after the beginning of the powerful Hussite movement, when the Czech lands, represented by the Diet of Čáslav (1421) refused to recognize Sigismund of Luxemburg, Emperor-elect and King of Hungary as King of Bohemia, although he was the legitimate heir. Ondřej's Land Law provides arguments for understanding the Hussite texts and the repudiation of Sigismund. Nobles have always been fighting against kings for the authority in the kingdom and both the Hussite movement and the traditional land law offered them the necessary arguments.

The second chapter, *Law, Revolution, and Representation* tries to define the relation between land, the mother of everyone, the community seen as everyone's fenced-in yard and the royal power, as the medieval writers understood pretty well that "who has power, has justice". We are further on presented with the legal tradition and systems of the Czech rule and both their abstract and concrete aspects, as people understood law in the medieval time. The development of Bohemian law is not a random process, but the evolution of a legal awareness which can be traced during the entire evolution of the legal system. The situation seems to be complicated because, as in most medieval communities, different laws had jurisdiction in different cases in the Czech Kingdom and their inhabitants lived "in a web of jurisdictions". The Hussite revolution interrupted the enforcement of the land law and the keeping of the land records in Bohemia, because the rejected king, Sigismund of Luxemburg, left the kingdom and took with him the imperial Czech crown and jewels, as well as the land records, which were returned only in 1436, when the king finally received the consent of the landlords. Thus one of the consequences of the Hussite movement was the disruption of the land record keeping, which was resumed in 1437. Precious information is given about Prague's legal culture, showing that Czech masters were not isolated from the political and legal practice of Europe. The University of Prague had a well-reputed law school, to which the monasteries libraries should be added to demonstrate the richness and availability of legal texts, books and resources.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to a thorough analysis of the relation between the Common Law and the insurrection against the king. In the author's opinion, "The nobles' insurrections against Václav IV at the turn of the century and against Sigismund after Václav's death tie together Ondřej's book, *The Bohemian Land Law (Práva zemská česká)*, written between 1394 and 1412, and the Hussite Revolution". The nobles acquired more power in the Bohemian lands, the king lost part of his privileges to the Union of Nobility and his position weakened seriously after 1400. All these events are mirrored in Ondřej z Dubé's Bohemian Land Law, the first comprehensive Czech law book, which had several potential models in previous Czech writings (*Rosenberg Book – Rožmberská kniha; Ordo iudicii terrae – Řád práva zemského; Officium circa tabulas terrae*), may be also in *Majestas Carolina* by King Charles IV. As the author points out, Ondřej's writing "is an important source not only for understanding how the land worked in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries but also what authority the nobility expected and could expect to have, and how power relations functioned before the Hussite Revolution" (p. 56). Ondřej had a clear motivation for his effort, he wanted to record the laws and regulations of the land court in order to make lords act in accordance "with the common good rather than their own wills and intentions" (p. 63). The stress is on the idea that laws are very old, that they exist from immemorial times and are now only discovered, not created, which make them stronger, because they were assumed to reflect a tradition and were meant for the "common good". The reasons Ondřej gives for writing the law book is maintaining order in the kingdom, according to the old rules. As a matter of fact, his book enjoyed great respect even after his death, was copied several times and used during the first half of the XV century, when the Hussite wars occurred, as a large disruption of order in late medieval Bohemia. Ondřej's intention was obviously to counter this tremendously powerful movement directed against the king.

Chapter 4 deals with *The Hussite Revolution: The Confluence of Religious, Political, and Legal Beliefs*. It briefly describes the beginning of the uproar in Prague, triggered by Hus's writings and preaching against the commerce with indulgences; the movement escalated after the first Hussite martyrs were executed in July 1412. Three years later, Hus was burned as a heretic, although the emperor-elect Sigismund had guaranteed him safe-conduct. The crusades against the Hussites than began and they shook Central Europe for more than half a century. This is the confluence of the religious thought, state politics and legal tradition. The hereditary principle collided with the will of the Hussite nobility, who asserted their leading role in the Czech kingdom and refused to obey Sigismund. A general diet of Czech nobles was convened and they demanded from Sigismund that "freedom" be granted to "God's law", namely communion also with wine from "chalice", not only bread, or utraquism. In total contradiction with Ondřej's law book, the Diet of Čáslav (1421) issues several articles in the name of the kingdom, the priests, the capital city, the lords, the squires

(*zemané*), and the community at large (*obec*). They did not call for independence and did not want to take out Bohemia from the Empire, but asked Sigismund not to breach the rules laid down in Ondřej's book but at the same time advocated the "God's law", which went against it. Later on, the Hussites published several manifestos in Czech, Latin and German to explain the reasons of their actions and try to find allies. Among the most important is the Bautzen Manuscript (*Budyšinský rukopis*) which tries to justify Hussites' behavior and complains about the crusades declared against "the heretics in Bohemia". In many of their manifestos, the consent of the communities is required for the king to be recognized as a legitimate ruler: "For not the coronation but the rank of the person and cities', lords', and communities' of the land and orderly election properly establishes the rightful king" (p. 102). The author comes to the conclusion that Hussite texts emphasize the "confluence of religious, political, and legal beliefs that gave the pro-Hussite Czechs the justification and legitimation to reject Sigismund formally" (p. 107).

The 5<sup>th</sup> (and last) chapter: *In Search of Continuity: Czech Nobles' Conceptions* of the book highlights the relationship between Czech nobility and the new religions. Religious issues divided the Czech society at the beginning of the XV century, and the situation was often very complicated, because the most powerful and influential nobles switched sides several times for reasons which had to do more with financial matters than religious belief. We should note that the beginning of the Hussitism preaching coincided with the political unrest caused by the Czech nobility who rebelled against King Václav IV at the end of the XIV century. This is why the Hussite reforms are closely associated with the political leaders and the most powerful families. And the noblemen's rebellion against the power of the king continued. As the author points out, the rejection of Sigismund's claim to the Bohemian throne was in close relation with the Hussite victories on the battlefield "but it also reflected an ability to articulate and swear to uphold an established, unified program of ideology, as expressed in the Four Articles of Prague" (p. 119). So, according to one of the most competent and reputed specialists in Czech medieval history, František Šmahel, quoted by the author the "Four Articles became the basis for Hussite unity because they merged the religious directive with the land order, membership in the land community with the Hussite conception of Christianity, and secular power with spiritual power". While comparing the language of the Four Articles, Ondřej's law book and Hussite manifestos clear similarities can be found, which have lead the author to the conclusion that the Hussite revolution was a national movement with a clear ethnic characteristic.

In the last sub-chapter – *Connections, Ramifications, and Implications* – the author tries to establish the larger context in which the documents in her study were produced: The Bohemian Land Law, the Hussite manifestos of 1419–1420 and the formal repudiation of King Sigismund. "The claim and duty to act in the name of common good of the land" connects all these texts together. "The ruler has to keep the law, because the law is for "the common good". Another connection is the crown and what it symbolizes, as a political and legal entity in medieval Europe. We find the crown in Ondřej's text as well as in the Hussite manifestos, and the Diet of Čáslav. But there are also essential differences between the texts under study, because a new ideology and a new conception of land and community were developed during the Hussite revolution. The older community included the king, the nobles and the land community; to them Hussites added the need to be faithful Christians, to be members of the Czech people ("language"), thus the ethnic belonging is emphasized. A faithful Czech should have good knowledge of the Gospels, the law of God (*boží zákon*). Based on the ideas that connect the texts she examined the author came to the conclusion that there was "a confluence of ideas just at the moment when Czech nobles and communities were beginning to split along religious lines".

A very rich and complete Bibliography, divided in several thematic sub-chapters – *The Late Middle Ages and History and Theory; Medieval and late Medieval; Europe and Bohemia; Medieval and Late Medieval Law: Europe and Bohemia; The Hussite Revolution; Primary Sources and Reference Books* –, concludes this competent and impressive research of a most important moment in the history of both the Czech lands and Central Europe.

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