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CONTEMPORARY PROTESTANT LITURGICAL SPACE

CZECH SITUATION IN THE WIDER CONTEXT - AN ECUMENICAL
POINT OF VIEW
Diploma Thesis

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I hereby declare that I have worked on a diploma thesis on my own and I have presented all used sources listed in the bibliography.

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1. Preface

Contemporary changes in Protestant liturgical space and its contribution to the ecumenical dialogue will be the author's main interest in this survey and master thesis. Not many studies have been written about the Protestant liturgical space in the Czech language.¹ This thesis was intended to fill a blank space in contemporary understanding of this particular liturgical environment which has not been extensively covered by Czech scholars.

The author of this thesis got a chance to study abroad in Ireland at the St. Patrick's Theological College of the Pontifical University in Maynooth for one year and made a decision to write his paper in English. The library of the university in Maynooth and of the National Liturgical Centre of Ireland nearby offered him a large quantity of studies published in the English speaking world. Therefore the Czech situation was studied in a much wider perspective.²

The ecumenical context of the contemporary Protestant liturgical space was chosen because of the author's warm attitude towards Christian dialogue and his own architectural professional interest which goes beyond the limits of any Protestant denomination. The presentation of this thesis on the Catholic Theological Faculty of the Charles University in Prague is another reason for the ecumenical angle of view on the Protestant environment.

The key questions for this paper were: What is an adequate contemporary liturgical environment for Protestant/Christian community? How do we understand symbols, art, mystical experience or sacral space in Protestantism? Should Protestant liturgical space just be a purpose - built space for gathering without any sacral meaning or can we find theological and sociological ground for a new synthesis and reflection?³ The aim of this thesis was to evaluate the main streams and tendencies of the contemporary development and historical consequences of the sacral and liturgical environment of the Protestant Church of Czech

¹ There was much less written about environment in Protestant circles than in the Catholic one.

² This wider view of the problem is not of any harm. The main Czech Protestant church, the Protestant church of Czech Brethren, whose liturgical environment was presented and compared with that of other traditions in this study, was established as a united Reformed and Lutheran church in 1918 with particular emphasis towards the Czech Reformation. Czech Brethren have deep ecumenical and friendly relations with a number of home and foreign churches including the Roman Catholic Church. The active liturgical movement can be also found within this church.

³ Robin Gibbons, *House of God: House of the People of God*. (London: Ashford Colour Press, 2006), 106.

Brethren in the context of these questions. The representative foreign examples were chosen to enrich and supplement the Czech situation.

The orientation in English and the few Czech written studies is the main method used in the first six theoretical chapters as is common for a master thesis written in Ireland. The study on a master level offers a limited scope. Hence the historical progress of the development of the liturgical environment was considered briefly at the beginning. The main aim of this paper was focused on development in recent history, starting with the beginning of the twentieth century and particularly in its second half until the present. The term “Protestant” is very broad, so this means that only the primary works and secondary studies of the “fathers” of mainstream Protestant denominations of the World and The Czech Reformation and its theology of a liturgical space were taken into account in this thesis.

Two excursions of this study were to evaluate the liturgical movement during the twentieth century and the Protestant reflection of the *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution of the Sacred liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. The theoretical part was summarized and reflected in the chapter evaluating a sacral space, liturgical symbols, art and mystics in Protestantism.

The comparison is the main scientific method used in the second practical part. Compared there, were various opinions of theologians regarding the liturgical space and representative samples of the Protestant liturgical environment. Particular buildings were described according to a few selected criteria in the final chapter of this thesis with a number of pictures. Two examples well know to the author were studied in more detail.

2. A Biblical approach towards a liturgical space

2.1 Introduction

The sufficiency of the authority of the Scripture (*Sola scriptura*) in each area of the life of an individual, society or church is one of the main principles of the Reformation. For that reason a short biblical vision of sacral and liturgical space in the texts of the Old and New Testament will be presented in first chapter. Biblical quotations are often used by Reformation Christians to explain how unimportant the emphases on particular liturgical spaces are. Kevin Seasoltz picks up those significant biblical examples:

Jesus was the one who proclaimed that he would destroy the temple, the most sacred place for the Israelites, and would build it up again in three days; he told the Samaritan woman that the days are coming when God would not be worshiped on Mount Gerazim or in the Jerusalem but rather in spirit and truth. He affirmed that wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, he would be in their midst.⁴

How important was the Jerusalem temple or congregation in the synagogues? What does it mean to worship in spirit and in truth? Is a place of worship really unimportant, when two or three are gathered together in God's name? All these questions will be considered.

Not everything regarding the liturgical space in ancient times can be found in the Scripture. Historical sciences and biblical archaeology are the other relevant sources of information of this chapter.⁵

2.2 Divine presence in the Old Testament

Israelites did not meet for cultic celebration in the Temple during the period of the patriarchs, nevertheless, Genesis notes that in several places Abraham built an altar to the Lord not only in his heart but also visibly (Gen. 12,7; 13, 4).⁶ At the very beginning we can find mountains and heights as significant religious places where people pointed to God.⁷

⁴ Kevin Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*. (New York: Continuum, 2005), 71.

⁵ For instance about the history of the synagogue, in. Seen, 71.

⁶ Kevin Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*. 75

⁷ Not just at the beginning but throughout all the history of people of Israel and Christian church too.

Mountains were seen as the gateways to God heaven as was the ladder in Jacobs dream.⁸ Other outdoor meetings and site monuments were also other places of worship.

2.2.1 The Altar

Outdoor sacral gatherings usually took places around sacred stones in many pagan societies. Jewish culture was not an exception, as is first presented in the legend of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4, 3-4). In Noah's story the stone used for sacrifice is named "an altar" (Gen. 8, 20) a place for offering sacrifice to the Lord.⁹ How this altar "made of earth or of rough stones", should look like is described in a book of Exodus (Ex. 20, 24-25). The Altar which Moses is commanded to build is not be approached by steps (Ex. 20, 26).¹⁰ Later the Book of Exodus gives precise instructions (Ex. 24-31) for the construction of the altar. It is important to remark that the altar is to be built as a non-static element, so that people on their journey may carry it. At the place where they stopped the altar was protected by a tent.

2.2.2 The Ark and a tent

More important even than the altar in the sanctuary described in Exodus is the Ark of the Covenant (Ex 25-29)¹¹. The Ark developed during the time of Moses. The ark was a living symbol of God's presence. The Lord, then, was present everywhere the ark was moved. Over the ark was built the "Meeting tent" to signify that God would pitch his tent among his people. This experience of journey was very important for understanding of sacral space for Jewish people.¹² This mobility lasted until time of David, who put the ark in the tent and laid plans for the erection of a temple.¹³

⁸ Jacob saw angels going up and down a ladder (Gen 28, 16-17).

⁹ Richard Giles, *Re - Pitching the Tent*. (Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1995), 11.

¹⁰ It is to be on the earth on a God's provision for his people and man's nakedness should not be exposed on it (Ex 20, 26). In current trends church altars should not be designed on the steps, but for quite different reasons - Giles, 13.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹² *Ibid.*, 11.

¹³ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 76.

2.2.3 The Temple

David's intentions to build a temple lead him into a conflict with the prophet Nathan and this issue revealed a religious dilemma in Israel. "Why not to enshrine the ark in a permanent structure, alongside the king's palace to make the world marvel at the majesty and might of God and of his anointed king?"¹⁴ God did not accurately dwell in the temple, since God could not be restricted within the enclosed space of the sanctuary. The temple on the one hand was only a privileged place for prayer, a special meeting place between God and the people (1Kgs. 8, 27).¹⁵ But on the other hand the Temple¹⁶ very soon became the only place in which sacrifices could be made and a new rigidly hierarchical system was enforced as the only way how to approach God. "No longer did God pitch his tent among people."¹⁷

The Temple played a mayor rule in Jewish history. Firstly the invading Babylonians destroyed the temple in 587 BC.¹⁸ When the Jews returned from exile and reconstructed the demolished building, just as Nathan had warned David against building the original temple, so also a prophetic voice was raised against the restoration project (Is 66,1-2).¹⁹ Prophetic opposition should be understood as fear of syncretism and influence of Baal's religion. This danger was not always avoided.²⁰

The Temple became the primary place of pilgrimage and worship again but the limited Exile period led to non-sacrificial gatherings in synagogues (and permanently after final destruction of a Temple by the Romans in AD 70). Giles understand this period as an astonishing mutation in which Judaism showed its incredible capacity to adapt and survive by going back to its roots.²¹ "This transformation could only have taken place if the concept of divine presence within the community had in some sense already evolved."²²

¹⁴ Giles, 24.

¹⁵ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 76.

¹⁶ In First Book of Kings we can found very detailed description of the Temple (1Kgs. 6, 1- 8, 10-13).

¹⁷ Giles, 24.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁹ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 76.

²⁰ Robin Gibbons, *House of God: House of the People of God*. (London: Ashford Colour Press, 2006), 19

²¹ Giles, 26.

²² The concept of community becoming the dwelling place of God is part of a "spiritualization" of worship, but not in any individual sense that may lead into the dualism, body versus soul, such like," In. Gibbons, 20.

2.2.4 The Synagogue

Synagogues²³ were not mentioned in the Old Testament, but were one of the most important religious institutions in the centuries preceding the coming of Christ. They developed as a substitute for the temple during the Exile or for the benefit of those who could not get to Jerusalem frequently after the exile period. Seasoltz noted that there was no offering of sacrifice after the solemn reading. People found God's presence especially in the Torah. However, the ritual in the synagogue was in no way opposed to the cult in the temple.²⁴ By the time of Jesus, a synagogue was to be found in practically every settlement where Jews lived.²⁵

2.2.5 The Home

The home was also a special place of worship. The Sabbath celebration really began there; Jews celebrate the paschal meal in the home.²⁶ Some of the early prayer forms, such as the Shema or "Hear O Israel." had originated in the home although they were later used in the Synagogue.²⁷

In the Hellenistic world the house (*oikos*) was understood as a hierarchically organized unit in a broader sense of the word including members of a large family²⁸ (slaves, friends and even business partners and travellers).²⁹ Pagan houses had private sanctuaries and altars, while Jewish ones did not. All members of a household were understood to be "holy" and Kunetka puts this meaning above all on later Christian understanding of holiness.³⁰

²³ Meaning "gathering place"

²⁴ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 78.

²⁵ Giles, 26.

²⁶ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 79.

²⁷ Giles, 27.

²⁸ It is interesting that in Greek there is not an equivalent of a word family. Latin term *familia* is used more in a juridical sense of a word. In. František Kunetka, *Eucharistie v křesťanské antice*. (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého, 2004), 18.

²⁹ František Kunetka, *Eucharistie v křesťanské antice*. (Olomouc, Univerzita Palackého, 2004), 18-20.

³⁰ Kunetka adds that Origen had recommended reserving a special place for prayer in a house. Household chapels are therefore thought to exist since the third century, at least in Egypt. – In. Kunetka, 20.

2.3 *Change of a moulds of divine presence in the New Testament*

Both Jesus and his disciples worshiped in the tradition of Israelites. Jesus taught in the synagogues of Galilee and made the required pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem for the feasts. He taught in the entry of Solomon's temple (J 10, 23) and family dwellings also played a significant role in the religious life of Jesus.³¹ On the other hand, Jesus is portrayed as having an ambivalent attitude to sacred buildings. But the only "violent" action against sacral temple is reserved for those he found desecrating the Temple with their cash registers, and on the occasion when disciples became a little over-excited by the magnificence of the Temple.³²

We can find also in the New Testament a continuity of prophetic opposition to the Temple. Stephen quotes the prophet to justify his criticism. "The Most High does not dwell in buildings made with human hands" (Act 7: 48).³³

Paul developed the image of the church as a body, and as he speaks about community as a temple – building – House of God (1Cor 3:16-17, Eph 2: 20-22). In the first letter of Peter the community of the faithful is also described as a temple. This communal understanding was not completely new as was outlined in previous chapters.

The New Testament writers were loyal to the Temple³⁴, but they spoke also about the Temple of the Lord.³⁵ The true temple of God is the Body of Christ.³⁶ For instance the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb 9:11-12), provides a comprehensive re-statement of such concepts as "temple", "sanctuary" , "sacrifice" and priesthood radically redefined in terms of Jesus own ministry and sacrificial death. "In other words, there is no longer any need for sanctuary, altar, sacrifice or human priesthood", as Richard Giles explains.³⁷

³¹ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 79.

³²Giles, 47.

³³Gibbons, 20.

³⁴ Kevin Seasoltz supposes this in those New Testament texts which were written before the destruction of the Temple. The authors did not expect the fall of the Temple. This is important to note. Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 80-1

³⁵ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 80-1.

³⁶ J.J. von Allmen, *Worship: Its theology and practice*, 2nd ed.,(London: Lutterworth Press, 1968), 241.

³⁷Giles, 49.

2.4 Liturgical place as an encounter with living God on the journey

In the Old Testament the revelation of God is related to certain places, whereas in the New Testament revelation is related to a person and his action. Kevin Seasoltz has described the difference between both attitudes and explains it: “The promises that were tied to the land and certain places in the Old Testament were fulfilled in Jesus.”³⁸ The Kingdom of God was not identified with a place but involved an encounter with the living God. On the other hand we can argue with this strict distinction. Both the Old and New Testaments had in common a dynamic concept of sacral space. God came to his people where they went with the ark and the temporary pitched tent. The static temple fell many times and Jewish people always recovered from this. We can also understand the desires and hopes of a nomadic people to settle down and worship God in one place in peace.

However, the revelation of God in Christ is crucial for a new attitude. “The church is wholly of Christ“. Never before had God dwelt in this way among the people – neither in the ark nor in the temple. First of all, the temple of God is the body of Jesus Christ.³⁹ “In Him the eternal Word of God has dwelt among us.”(John 1, 14).

³⁸ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 71.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

3. A short history of the development of a liturgical space from the Apostolic period to the Reformation

The history of church architecture has not started with the Reformation as a number of Protestant Christians proudly presume. Many centuries of development preceded it. A short history of the development of liturgical space from the apostolic period to the Reformation will therefore be introduced in following chapter.

3.1. *Establishing of a liturgical space in the Apostolic period*

“Followers of Jesus simply made use of buildings of the Jewish religious community of which they still formed part.” They gathered in synagogues and in the Jerusalem temple before its destruction. In private homes they met for teaching and breaking bread. The household was the basic organizational structure. The split with the Jewish official structures and various suppressions by the Roman authorities led to meetings being held by Christians into prevailing meetings in the houses, usually of its more wealthy members.⁴⁰

The buildings used for Christian worship differ remarkably from the pagan temples (*naos*, *templum*) and from the Jewish temple (*ieron*). The pagan temple was primary regarded as the dwelling of the god, as was the temple of Jerusalem. The Christian temple is the house of the assembly (*domus ecclesiae*) before being the house of God (*domus Dei*).⁴¹

Temporary house-meeting places, *domus ecclesiae* become permanent later.⁴² “This was the era of the domestic church”⁴³ and before the year 200 we cannot speak about any Christian Architecture.⁴⁴ In a work entitled *The Apostolic Tradition*,⁴⁵ there is mention of a liturgy celebrated in a place where the assembly gathered, rather than in someone’s home.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Giles, 31-32.

⁴¹ L. Della Torre, *Understanding the Liturgy*. (Athlone: St. Paul Publications, 1967), 38-39.

⁴² The earliest surviving example of a house converted to a church, is the one found at Dura Europos in Syria.

⁴³ Giles, 31-32.

⁴⁴ František Kunetka, *Eucharistie v křesťanské antice*. (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého, 2004), 198.

⁴⁵ A.T. the work with a great intrinsic interest for the early history of church order and worship. It derives from the Rome in the first half of the third century. It was attributed to Hippolytus, one of the most enigmatic figures in the history of the early Church living in the third Century. This attribution was later rejected. Ronald Heine E., “Hyppolitus, Ps. – Hippolytus and the early canons,” In: *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*. Young, Frances, (ed.), 142-151. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

House - meeting places in Rome were called *tituli* (individual property “titles”). Remains of many of them were found under later constructions.⁴⁷ The term for the worshipping Christian community (*ecclesia*)⁴⁸ also came to mean the building that they used. The sacred quality of the community is transferred to the building.⁴⁹ The gathering of a community at one place (*epi to auto*) was understood as the congregation in unity. “There can be no worship without an assembly of the faithful, but worship can take place even without suitable sacred premises”, notes L. Della Torre⁵⁰. Place was not important especially during the times of persecution.⁵¹

The use of underground burial complexes (*catacombs*) was much less common than is usually romantically thought⁵² mainly because of lack of space and short periods of persecutions. Richard Giles sees a more lasting effect of catacombs on the development of the cult of the martyrs, which influenced both worship and architecture.⁵³

3.1.1 Early progress of Christian liturgical furniture

As early as the Didache⁵⁴, there was a special concern towards inclusion and exclusion within the assembly. The unbaptized were prohibited from sharing in the Eucharist and therefore its

⁴⁶ Gibbons, 40.

⁴⁷ Gibbons, 43.

⁴⁸ The Greek expression *ecclesia* was primary understood in a sense of profane gathering (See Acts. 19, 32.39.41) usually of men with a right to vote, members of *polis* – community, city, state. Polis was understood as a big house. In. Kunetka, 18.

⁴⁹ Della Torre, 39.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 38-39.

⁵¹ Gathering in every possible place is confirmed by Justin Martyr: In his *Acta Justini et Septem Sodalium* he has answered on a question of Judge Rustic “Where do you gather?”, “Where anybody wants and is able.”-Kunetka, 193.

⁵² For instance African theologian and Bishop Cyprian has mentioned celebration of Eucharist on the tombs of martyrs and in prisons as just an occasional practise. - Kunetka, 193.

⁵³ Giles, 33.

⁵⁴ A Greek handbook of instruction in morals and church order, of which the full title is “*The Teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles through the Twelve Apostles.*”, The author, date and place of origin are unknown. Many scholars have assigned the Didache to the first century. In. J.D. Douglas (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1974, 297 and In. F.L. Cross and E.A.Lingstone *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (2.^{ed.}), London: Oxford University Press, 1974, 401.

space (Didache 9.5). This is much more evident in writings of Justin Martyrs.⁵⁵ The separation of Eucharist and agape meal was clearly described in the so-called Apostolic Tradition. Both examples of these liturgical divisions had a direct impact on the ordering of the assembly place. The Gathering room was divided between the ministers and others. Gibson found it possible that the leader was seated in a chair. We have an indication for such a place in the only surviving site at Dura Europos. Other furniture would be simple. “The main elements were an altar table and tables for gifts other than the bread and wine and one for the Eucharist.” In Cyprian’s⁵⁶ writings we have evidence for “*pulpitum*” an elevated place in order to be seen by whole assembly.⁵⁷ This elevated place was also called *bema*.⁵⁸

Christian meetinghouses could be decorated like the walls of the house church in Dura Europos or paintings in catacombs. In Dura Europos was found a large assembly room for about 50 to 60 people. A nearby door went to a „vestry” room and another large room was used as an instruction room for catechumens. In the baptistry was a font basin with a canopy overhead. This room was highly decorated too.⁵⁹

3.2. The key points of development of a liturgical space after the Constantine turnover and during the middle Ages

Christianity became a tolerated religion in the Roman Empire by the Edict of Milan in 313. It was time for Christian Church to “*go public*”. Domestic places of assembly could no longer accommodate increasing community of believers. The Church as a new official organisation had no architectural tradition of its own. They choose neither temple⁶⁰ nor synagogue but a secular and civil building “*basilica*”, as it was particularly practical for

⁵⁵ Justin Martyr (c.100-165) Christian apologist; The first Christian thinker after Paul to grasp the universality of Christianity, In. Douglas, 558

⁵⁶ Cyprian bishop of Carthago was executed in September 258, he wrote number of letters and treatises. In. Heine, Cyprian and Novatian, 152

⁵⁷ Gibbons, 40 -5.

⁵⁸ Bema was the earliest form of ambo (from the fourth century) in Syria and Mesopotamia, comprised a dais in the centre of the nave with an apsidal bench for the clergy. In. Paul Bradshaw, *The New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*. London, SCM Press, 2002, 10

⁵⁹ Gibbons, 41- 42.

⁶⁰ Few pagan temples were used as Christian churches, Christians did not take over pagan temples as churches because this would have been impractical. The temples were not places of assembly that could shelter a large congregation. In. Frank C. Senn, *The People`s Work*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 84-5.

assembly of large number of people.⁶¹ Nevertheless they started to use basilicas in a synagogal way.⁶²

3.2.1. The Basilica

The Christians basilica was traditionally a rectangular building with an apse at the end and new basilicas were renovated on the plans of old Roman *tituli*.⁶³ In the apse was placed the bishop's seat and benches on each side for presbyters. There was an altar in front of the apse. The ambo or reading desk, stood in the middle of the assembly. The baptismal font was in separate room called a baptistery. The longitudinal plan of the building enabled liturgical processions, which expressed very well the imperial character of the worship of a church as a new established religion. Adaptation to structure familiar to surrounding culture did not on the other hand meant total capitulation to the ways of the surrounding cultural world, but Giles points out that "the church remained a house into which the basilica had intruded."⁶⁴

3.2.2. Later development

Since the time of Constantine a lot of new churches were built on holy places connected with Christ, the tombs of martyrs or with Old Testament theophanies. The altar was associated with the tomb more than a table. By the 5th century the table for the Eucharist was often stationed above the grave of a saint and was constructed of stone on holy places with the tombs.⁶⁵

Through the centuries the sacred buildings have taken diverse forms according to the dominant architectural styles of the age, but they also keep in common some basic characteristics. There has always been space for the assembly of the people (nave) and space for the sacred ministers (chancel).⁶⁶ The chancel had been extended and separated by a rood

⁶¹ Giles, 35-36, 39.

⁶² For instance decoration of the house church in Dura Europos is almost the same as a nearby synagogue. The decorator was of the same school or perhaps even the same person as the decorator of a synagogue. Gibbons, 41.

⁶³ For example the basilica of San Clemente in Rome after 400 CE, Gibbons, 47.

⁶⁴ Giles, 36-37.

⁶⁵ Gibbons, 58.

⁶⁶ Della Torre, 39.

screen⁶⁷ during the Middle Ages. The high altar was actually obscured from the view of the laity and the only action of the mass that they might see was the Elevation of the Host at the Eucharistic consecration, accompanied by the ringing of bells. Frank Senn see two simultaneous tendencies in medieval liturgical evolution in these developments: on the one hand the tendency to exclude people from the central action of the liturgy, and, on the other hand, the pastoral desire to draw people into the liturgy by dramatic gestures.⁶⁸

3.2.3. Conclusion

Except for prayer in the synagogue, the first Christians had gathered in private houses in a way that is typical of many Protestant churches. When Christianity became an official state religion of the Roman Empire large public spaces like basilicas were turned into Christian Churches.

The latter development was seen to be in decline during the Middle Ages, but phases of flourishing art, music and architecture can also be observed and particularly in the Gothic Age⁶⁹. Although the liturgical life of a church became static, we can also find periods when Christian Church has been most faithful to its dynamic nomadic tradition it went through a period of growth and liveliness.

We can conclude with Giles that “the experience of *“re-pitching of Christian tent”* has revitalized the community.”⁷⁰ The Reformation was one of the most dynamic, revitalized and destructive events in church history. A study concerning this dramatic development will be brought in a following chapter.

⁶⁷ Rood screen, are so called because the crucifix or a rood adorned the top of the screen In. Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 217.

⁶⁸ Senn, *Christian Liturgy; Catholic and Evangelical*, 217-8.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 218.

⁷⁰ Giles, 20.

4. An influence of the Reformation on liturgical space

4.1. *The Experience of Various Reformation Movements*

When we speak about the Reformation we usually have in mind the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century but the Reformation process was constantly presents in church history. For example Czech⁷¹ Christians would use the term Second Reformation for the movement that started mostly in the German-speaking World. The First Reformation in Central Europe was connected with the Hussite movement, which led into the establishing of the Ultraquist church and the Brethrens Unity (*Unitas Fratrum*) a century ago before the World Reformation.⁷² We can find reasons for the serious and honest consideration of the case of the Bohemians in Martin Luther's *Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* in the year 1520.⁷³

We have to keep in mind that the Protestant movement contributed to Tridentine Catholic reform too. Modern scholars do not speak about the Counter-Reformation, but describe it as

⁷¹ The author of this thesis is Czech; therefore he will bring his local experiences into the wider context of the World Reformation.

⁷² The Hussite Revolution of 1419-36 transformed the religious situation in Bohemia. The vast majority of Bohemians had been drafted into the Hussite Utraquist Church (more accurately into The Side under both kinds.- we can't speak about the independent denomination, at least at the beginning). The Catholic Church (the Side under one kind) meanwhile had become a minority. It has often been claimed that no country was as predispositioned as Bohemia to accept Luther's teaching, meaning of course that the 'first' Hussite Reformation had paved the way. In: Winfried Eberhard, "Bohemia, Moravia and Austria", in *The Early Reformation in Europe*, ed. Andrew Pettegree (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 23-25.

⁷³ It is high time that we seriously and honestly consider the case of the Bohemians, and come into union with them so that the terrible slander, hatred and envy on both sides may cease. First, We must honestly confess the truth, stop justifying ourselves, and grant the Bohemians that John Hus and Jerome of Prague were burned at Constance in violation of the papal, Christian, imperial safe-conduct and oath;

I have no desire to pass judgment at this time upon John Hus's articles or to defend his errors, though I have not yet found any errors in his writings, and I am quite prepared to believe that it was neither fair judgment nor honest condemnation which was passed by those who, in their faithless dealing, violated a Christian safe-conduct and a commandment of God. It is also quite evident that such a promise was made to John Hus and the Bohemians and was not kept, but that he was burned in spite of it. I do not wish, however, to make John Hus a saint or a martyr, as do some of the Bohemians, though I confess that injustice was done him, and that his books and doctrines were unjustly condemned. Martin Luther, *An Open Letter to The Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate*, 1520 In C. M. Jacobs Works of Martin Luther: With Introductions and Notes Volume II (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Company, 1915), <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/web/nblty-06.html>

the Catholic Reformation of the Middle Ages Church⁷⁴. Although both Catholics and Protestants acknowledged the need to improve aspects of the liturgy, they responded in different ways to the problem of the relation of the Word and images in Christian worship⁷⁵.

4.1.1. The Liturgical Practise of the First Czech Reformation

The Czech Ultraquists kept Mass and maintained the Catholic sacraments. (But contrary to Catholics, the Communion was distributed in both species -*sub utraque, Calixtines*).⁷⁶ They used Catholic churches and made only some cautious changes to the liturgical space. We have evidence of advice given by Hussites for reforming changes: “altars should be closed off and images should be covered with sheets, and then taken out of the main body of the church to less public places”. They also practised turning around church images to the walls, thus depriving them of their power.⁷⁷

The Czech and Moravian Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*) in complete contrast both to Rome and the Ultraquists rejected the priesthood and understood the sacraments in a spiritual sense.⁷⁸ They congregated in simple houses or barns at the beginning. Later when they went under the noble protectors, they built churches which were simple, but decoration was not always missing, e.g. the most important Brethren church in the city of Northern Bohemia Mladá Boleslav.

They divided issues into three categories regarding the human salvation: The most important category included faith, love and hope and divine characteristics were to the first category added later: (e.g. God’s grace, redemption through Jesus Christ, and gifts of the Holy Spirit). The second category of issues was those that were not considered absolutely necessary, but that were helpful for salvation, e.g. the servicing issues were for instance the

⁷⁴ Prof. Liam Tracey of the Pontifical University, St Patrick’s College in Maynooth, Ireland used this terminology (Lecture: Introduction to liturgy, autumn 2008) and Frank C. Sean named such a chapter in his book *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 383-392.

⁷⁵ Kevin Seasoltz, “*Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*,” <http://www.cccdub.ie/heritage/archive/cyber-archive/conference/2000-ceiliuradh/ceiliuradh2000-papers/ceiliuradh-2000-seasoltz.html#49#49> (accessed October 20th., 2008)

⁷⁶ Eberhard, “*Bohemia, Moravia and Austria*“, 23-25.

⁷⁷ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation, Europe’s House divided, 1490-1700*. (London: Penguin Group, 2003.), 558-9

⁷⁸ Eberhard, “*Bohemia, Moravia and Austria*“, 23-25.

Sacrament or the Holy Scripture. Things with a freedom of a choice were in the last category of non-important issues,⁷⁹ e.g. design and decoration of liturgical space. This is important for attitude towards future design of liturgical space in the Churches following old *Unitas Fratrum*.⁸⁰

4.1.2. The Middle position of the Lutheran tradition

The Lutheran tradition and its theology are usually described as being central or in the middle position between the Roman Catholic and the Reformed tradition⁸¹. In Lutheranism visual arts were not removed out of the (domain) church, as they were in other Protestant churches.⁸² Luther himself was certainly not a violent iconoclast; not personally hostile to the arts in a liturgical space. He saw images not so much as dangerous as simply ineffectual. The art did not have a central role in his thoughts.⁸³

Luther was a man of a conservative and traditional disposition, comfortable with large parts of the Catholic tradition. He had no sympathy for deep reforms that involved destruction. Nevertheless, for Luther the question of much of religious imagery and art was a theological rather than an aesthetic one. He moved in a more conservative direction in his lifetime. He was sceptical of the value of religious images. He urged that Christians should

⁷⁹ Jakoubek ze Stříbra provedl roku 1420 rozlišení věcí podstatných a vedlejších v liturgii, v mešních řádech. Na tuto myšlenku navázalo ve druhé polovině 15. století starobratrské bohosloví. Bratr Řehoř rozšířil Jakoubkovo rozlišení do dalších oblastí církevních řádů a k oběma zmíněným kategoriím přidal ještě třetí, věci případné. Podle Řehoře jsou podstatnými věcmi „víra, láska a naděje a z toho skutky dobré a život ctnostný“, služebními pak svátosti, případnými obřady, které „mohou být i nebýti“. Lukáš Pražský ve svém věroučném systému rozpracoval a nově interpretoval zejména pojem věc podstatná. Podle něho jsou věci podstatné (nebo také základní či bytné) dvoje: Boží a lidské. Mezi první patří milost Boží, zásluha Ježíše Krista a dary Ducha svatého. K druhým: víra, láska a naděje, chápané jako dary Boží milosti. Služebné věci jsou Lukášovi potřebné k spasení, ale nikoliv bezpodmínečně. Klíčové postavení mezi nimi zaujímá Písmo svaté, jako nejpotřebnější služebnost. Věci případné (obřady) v Lukášově věroučném systému zůstávají stranou. In. Michal Flegr, “Evangelické rodinné stříbro, Věci podstatné, služebné a případné v Jednotě bratrské”, *Český Bratr* 1(2008), 12

⁸⁰ The Unity of Brethren was also known for refusing any force including political compulsion (the death penalty, military service and the swearing of oaths), In. Eberhard, “*Bohemia, Moravia and Austria*“, 24.

⁸¹ Especially in the Central Europe where is not a historical experience with the Anglican tradition. Anglicanism is understood as having a centrist theology too, particularly in the English speaking world.

⁸² There are some exceptions like Karlstadt’s action in Wittenberg and his pamphlet against images written in January 1522, John Dillenberger, *A Theology of Artistic Sensibilities*. (London: SCM press, 1986), 67.

⁸³ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

spend money on church buildings only after the poor were taken care of. However in his *Sermon Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments* (1525) he argued against the removal of existing art after the attack on religious images in Wittenberg church led by his more radical colleague Andreas Karlstadt.⁸⁴

“I have myself seen and heard the iconoclasts read out of my German Bible...Now there are a great many pictures in those books both of God, the angels, men and animals, especially in the Revelation of John and in Moses and Joshua... Pictures contained in these books we would paint on walls for the sake of remembrance and better understanding, since they do no more harm on walls than in books. „It is to be sure better to paint pictures on walls how God created the world, how Noah built the ark, and whatever other good stories there may be, than to paint shameless worldly things.”⁸⁵

Since Luther claimed that salvation is totally dependent on God, he put emphasis on the pedagogic value of art to present biblical message.⁸⁶ He encouraged the inclusion of illustration in evangelical works and we can see the development of new Protestant iconographic tradition. His sympathy created a large space in the new Lutheran tradition for visual arts. Luther’s reform started a period of vital artistic development in Germany.⁸⁷ Nevertheless there was a possibility for more than one view of the impact of the arts on believers.

Criticism of images by Karlstadt and Thomas Muntzer was supported by other influential person outside Germany, e.g. Zwingli and Calvin. “With its warm attitude to Reformation art, Lutheran Germany proved to be rather the exception within the Protestant World.”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Andrew Pettegree, “Art“, In. Andrew Pettegree (ed.), *The Reformation World*, (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), 461.

⁸⁵ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, vol. 40, Conrad Bergendoff, ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 99.

⁸⁶ Nevertheless the importance of Bible is recognised. Saints are for Luther examples and models of faith too: “Next to the Holy Scripture there certainly is no more useful book of Christendom that of the lives of the saints. For in these stories one is greatly pleased to find how they sincerely believed God’s Word, confessed it with their lips, praised in by their living and honoured and confirmed it by their suffering and dying”, wrote Luther in *Weimarer Ausgabe* 38:313. A similar passage is found in the *Augsburg Confession* (art. 21) written by Melanchton. Both Luther and Melanchton honoured the saints, but rejected invoking the saints to seek their help. In. Dillenberger, 65-66.

⁸⁷ Particularly in the northern part of Germany; in the later part of the sixteenth century, more new painted altar pieces were put in place in the churches of the Lutheran north rather than in the traditionalist south influenced by Swiss Reformation. It was the time of artists - Durer, Cranach and Grunewald. In. MacCulloch, 558.

⁸⁸ Pettegree, “Art“, 462.

4.1.3. The Reformed “attack” on religious art

Not all the great artists and scholars had support for their work during the Reformation. The painter Holbein and humanist writer Erasmus was forced to leave city of Basel, a city in whose greatest churches were devastated.⁸⁹ Karlstadt’s actions even in Luther’s Wittenberg were already mentioned.

“These acts of destruction or iconoclasm reflect the negative consideration of a very ambiguous Protestant attitude to visual representation of sacred things especially in Zwinglian or Calvinist towns in Switzerland and Southern Germany.”⁹⁰

Zwingli

In Zurich Huldreich Zwingli put emphasises on the spiritual, and not the visual dimension of Christianity. He clearly encouraged and supported iconoclasm. “In 1524 all the art from the church in Zurich, where he was a pastor, was removed and destroyed; likewise walls were whitewashed so that no traces of the old furnishing and decoration could be seen”⁹¹. Here are his remarks on how Organs were removed out of the Zurich Minster:

At this time also the magisterial at Zurich ordered that there should be no more playing of organs (the organs were broken into pieces on December 9, 1527) in the city and in the churches no ringing for the dead, and for and against weather, salt, water and candles, and no more bringing to any one of the last baptism, but that all such superstitions should be cease and be clean put away, inasmuch as they are all at variance with clear word of God.⁹²

“Zwingli was led by what he considered to be the dictates of scripture. He saw a direct step between transformations of desires of human hearts into idols. He was against both visual images and music too.”⁹³ All decisions had to be approved by the City Council. There was a similar situation in the cities of Bern and Basel, both of which were united in the Christian

⁸⁹ Zwingli applied to Catholic decorative tradition the same logic he used in his Eucharistic theology in.. Pettegree, “Art“, 484.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 484.

⁹¹ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

⁹² Huldreich Zwingli, *Removal of Relics and Organs*, in Lindberg (ed.), *European Reformation Sourcebook*, (Blackwell: Oxford, Maiden, 2000), 111.

⁹³ Dillenberger, 67-8.

Civic Alliance. But the population did not always wait for the decisions of the authority. In Basel people invaded the Minster and other churches and destroyed everything in sight.⁹⁴

Calvin

Calvin himself was a second – generation reformer, and he shared the general Reformed rejection of images. In his home city Geneva he took a strong line on the issue of images, to which he denied any merit, and which he thought could have considerable capacity to harm the weaker Christian consciences.⁹⁵ In his *Institutes* he wrote: “It is unlawful to attribute a visible form to God and generally whoever sets up idols revolts against the true God”.⁹⁶ He writes against those who justify images as “the books of the uneducated”:

Supposed we grant them this. I still cannot see what benefit such images can provide for the unlearned except to make them into anthropomorphites.... This is not the method of teaching the people of God whom the Lord wills to be instructed with a far different doctrine than this trash. He has set forth the preaching of his Word as a common doctrine for all. What purpose did it serve for so many crosses – of wood, stone, even of silver and gold – to be erected, if this fact had been duly and faithfully taught: that Christ was offered on account of our sins that he might bear our curse and cleanse our trespasses? From this one word they have learned more than from a thousand crosses of either wood or stone. And whom, pray, do they call the “unlearned”? Those, indeed, whom the Lord recognises as “God –instructed (J, 6:45).” Here is the incomparable boon of images, beyond price!⁹⁷

Images and pictures were contrary to the Scripture and he criticized the false, perverted images of the papists in one of his most violent tracts *Against Relicts* (1544) (and according to Andrew Pettegree the funniest also). He called for due order in the removal of sacral imageries from churches. However members of Calvinist churches were more impressed by the violence of Calvin’s polemic and they quite often destroyed a lot of sacred art in countries influenced by Calvinism (France, Netherlands, England and Scotland).⁹⁸

Calvinism was not hostile to all cultural expressions, most notably music. Calvinist cultures were also not hostile to new art. For instance England and the Netherlands adopted

⁹⁴ Dillenberger, 69.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (London: Collins Sons&Co, 1986), 21.

⁹⁸ Pettegree, “Art“, 484-5.

the Renaissance tradition.⁹⁹ Images also found a place in educational programs and in homes. It was felt that painted images in churches distracted from the spoken word, but the Reformers sensed that the new techniques of woodcutting and engraving could enable printed images to be mass-produced and so used to mediate religious and social formation.¹⁰⁰

“In the place of images came words. The church interiors of Reformed Protestant Europe were covered in painted biblical text, plus big boards bearing the text which all Protestant should know. A church became a giant scrapbook of the Bible.”¹⁰¹

4.1.4. The Anglican position

The religious situation in England was very different from what it was on the Continent and the Reformation came later here than to the countries of Central Europe. There were no barriers in England between the religion of the elite and religion of the masses. Kevin Seasoltz claims that in England the nobility¹⁰² imposed the Reformation from above in order to satisfy their need and desires. There was also a close relation between the crown and the church hierarchy. Although Henry VIII initiated his divorce with Catherine of Aragon he was not in a position to commence the more radical ideas of the Reformation because majority of English people were not disaffected from the church.¹⁰³

Although there were Puritans and Lollards¹⁰⁴ who stood against the images¹⁰⁵ and who were responsible for the destruction of art object inside of liturgical space of churches, the main destruction occurred under Henry mostly because of political not theological reasons.¹⁰⁶ This

⁹⁹ Pettegree, “Art“, 484-5.

¹⁰⁰ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹⁰¹ Nicene or Apostles Creed, Ten Commandments and Lord’s Prayer. In. MacCulloch, 559.

¹⁰² Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 165.

¹⁰³ Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 370.

¹⁰⁴ The public had been influenced for many centuries by the Lollards movement. This movement was known for its negative view of images. , In. Dillenberger, 72-3.

¹⁰⁵ A large amount of medieval art has survived in fragmentary state in England. Faces on rood screens were carefully scraped out, heads removed out of the stained glass windows or inscription of prayers for the soul on tombs chiselled off, In. MacCulloch, 559.

¹⁰⁶ Moormann, 167.

explanation is simplified.¹⁰⁷ There is not space in this paper for the revue of the more recent studies of the English Reformation.

4.1.5. Characteristics of furnishing in the post -Reformation Protestant churches

The Lutheran tradition

When Lutherans reordered church buildings, the side altars were abandoned. They were demolished or no longer used. Medieval side chapels were turned into burial chambers. Although Luther did not express any clear guidelines about church architecture; some insights come from his comments on the introduction of his reformed service. He recommended in his *Deutsche Messe* of 1526 that the altar should not remain where it is, and that the priest should always face the people as Christ did in the Last Supper.¹⁰⁸ This recommendation was not largely accepted and Lutheran priests celebrate the liturgy largely with their back towards the people, but facing to God together with the gathered community.

Newly built Lutheran churches were characterized by a close relationship between the altar and pulpit. For instance in Germany the pulpit was placed behind and above the altar. The altar was still covered with candles and crucifix. A conservative longitudinal layout design prevailed with the altar at the end. More conservative Scandinavian churches traditionally placed the altar in the apse.

The baptismal font was relocated from the baptistery and placed near the entrance. Galleries often encircled an elevated pulpit. On an opposite gallery from the altar was a place for the organ and choir.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Read more of the English Reformation in Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 370-381.

¹⁰⁸ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 529.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 531.



The Reformed tradition

The Reformed Christians do not often call a building used for the worship a church, but a “meeting” or “prayer house” or even “public place.”¹¹⁰

The Meetinghouse of the Free Presbyterian Church in Belfast

The “church” is the congregation of the people of God themselves. Worship in the Reformed tradition is usually simple and meetinghouses are plain in style and functional in furnishings, being almost devoid of ornamentation apart from stained-glass windows.¹¹¹ Dunlop notes that a worshipper could be blind and very little would be missed in a Presbyterian worship service.¹¹² The Calvinists re-arranged the interior of inherited churches during the Reformation.¹¹³ Rood screens and choirs were dismantled. Since preaching dominated, the pulpit was quite often placed in the centre of the long wall in a nave.¹¹⁴

A table was brought in on days when Communion was celebrated”.¹¹⁵ The altar – Lord’s Table¹¹⁶ was not a principal item of furniture because communion was celebrated only four times a year. The altar could be moved out or in when needed.

¹¹⁰ The term *meeting house* is used by Irish Presbyterians. In. John Dunlop, *A Precarious Belonging, Presbyterians and the Conflict in Ireland*. (Belfast: The BlackStaff Press, 1995), 86; The term *prayer house* by Czech reformed Christians. Bristol Baptists emphasized their separation by calling the city’s medieval parish church “Nicholas, the public place”. In. MacCulloch, 560

¹¹¹ A Presbyterian Church with stained glass can be found in May Street, Belfast. The window has a portrait of the Reformer John Calvin! There are also stained glass windows or more simple sanded ones as a decoration in some churches of the Czech Brothers Church in the Czech Republic.

¹¹² Dunlop, 86.

¹¹³ Wars at the time of the Reformation generally did not allow for any large-scale building programs among Protestants. They usually re-ordered the existing medieval churches they had taken over. In. Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹¹⁴ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 531.

¹¹⁵ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*, <http://www.cccdub.ie/heritage/archive/cyber-archive/conference/2000-ceiliuradh/ceiliuradh2000-papers/ceiliuradh-2000-seasoltz.html#49#49> (accessed October 20th. 2008).

¹¹⁶ The Lord’s Table is preferred. The word altar is not used in the Reformed tradition

Galleries in Reformed church buildings were mostly without organs and other instruments.¹¹⁷ They were built to accommodate people who came to hear sermons. Quite often in Reformed churches were placed adjacent tables for people, except the head table, where the presiding minister was sitting. Bread and wine were distributed around these tables.¹¹⁸ Another practise was to receiving communion while sitting in pews.¹¹⁹

The Anglican tradition

In the Church of England the decision was made to use the two rooms of the traditional medieval church for different functions. The nave became the place for the liturgy of the



Word and the sanctuary for the celebration of the Eucharist.¹²⁰

A distant sanctuary is in many Anglican churches used just for celebration of Holy Communion even today. Pulpit, lectern and presider's chair are situated in front of the communion table – St. Mary's church of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland

In newly built churches, particularly by those of Christopher Wren¹²¹ the space was designed as a one-roomed hall but with different liturgical centres for baptism, the prayer office, and the liturgy of the Word and the celebration of Holy Communion. The Baptismal font remained at the entryway.

¹¹⁷Later during the century's organs were built in various reformation churches, but we can still find minority non-instrumental churches.

¹¹⁸Senn quotes John Cotton, a pastor in Boston. He provided a description of Puritan worship in New England in 17th century. Communion was received around the table by Scottish Presbyterians too. Communion was distributed by deacons or people themselves In. Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 513-5.

¹¹⁹Communion "about the table" - in pews was a concession to the English independents. In. Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 515.

¹²⁰Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹²¹Christopher Wren (1632-1723) one of the greatest church architects of all times. Instead of stressing the auditory over the visual, he drew attention to the liturgical service as a whole. Besides his greatest work, Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, Wren was responsible for building fifty-two other churches. In. Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

4.2. Conclusion

Easy generalizations of a Post-Reformation development or simple conclusion must be avoided because in the Protestant World a variety of local practices were introduced. New Protestant liturgical space was quite often very simple. Many historical church buildings were destroyed or furniture removed in iconoclastic movement of the radical reformation. New churches were built and planned on different principles. Its civil and secular character was accented and sacredness steps back. On the one hand a Protestant liturgical space is historically evolved from the archetype of "congregation in the house;" particularly in countries where Protestants were forbidden and pushed into an underground.¹²² On the other hand new ostentatious public buildings of the basilica type were built in countries where Protestantism became an established cult.¹²³ Richard Giles argues that "Post-Reformation polarisation also led to the building, not of houses for the people of God, but of throne rooms for the shrivelled fruits of division and separation, i.e. shrines either the Host or the Book."¹²⁴

The basic problem with the late medieval church building from the point of view of the Reformation liturgists was that it did not gather the congregation, it scattered it. The typical medieval church had several "rooms" in which different activities were carried on.¹²⁵ In the seventeenth century following the Thirty Years War new church buildings were erected. The interior of churches simply reflected the liturgical tradition firmly established in Roman Catholic and Protestant churches after the Reformation and the Council of Trent. For Catholics this generally meant a spectator church, for Protestants an auditorium.¹²⁶ Lutheran architecture reflected the non-iconoclastic character of the conservative Reformation. Experiments in Reformed churches were more radical.¹²⁷

Finally when we consider the art, there was a place for artistic expression in different ways (music, bible, illustrative books etc.) even in the most iconophobic of the Reformation churches. But in many Protestant countries artistic energies were increasingly directed away from pure church art.¹²⁸

¹²² For instance Cardinal Eneas Silvio Piccolomini (later Pope Pius II.) had described temples of Czech "heretics" as barns In. Norbert Schmidt, "Kostel jako stodola", *Teologie a společnost* 5 (2006), 3.

¹²³ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹²⁴ Giles, 43.

¹²⁵ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 529.

¹²⁶ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹²⁷ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 529-530.

¹²⁸ Pettegree, "Art", 484-5.

Excursus I. - Liturgical renewal and reforms during the Twentieth Century

Introduction

The Second Vatican Council of 1962-65 started the most active period of liturgical reform in the churches of Western Europe. It was a great impulse for ecumenical liturgical renewal, but it would not have been possible except for the liturgical experiments and theological works presented in the earlier years of the twentieth and even nineteenth century and the development of previous ecumenical activities.

The appearing of the ecumenical movement at the beginning of the twentieth century also influenced liturgical renewal process.¹²⁹ The secularization of culture was also one of the most distinct features for changing relations between Christianity and art in the twentieth century.¹³⁰ Secondly traditional church art kept in churches lost its liturgical function. Churches were now used as museums.¹³¹

The Liturgical Renewal in the Twentieth Century

The Roman Catholic movement

Before we move into the Protestant world the Roman Catholic movement should be mentioned regarding its pioneering attempt which is important for all western Christians. Benedictine Monasteries in France, Belgium and Germany pushed the Catholic liturgical movement forward. At the 1909 Conference in Malines it was stated that the Roman Catholic

¹²⁹Scholars usually understand the World Missionary Conference convened in Edinburgh in 1910 as a starting point for the Ecumenical movement. "Out of the conference emerged a concern for Christian unity. Divisions that seemed so heated in Christendom did not seem as important in the mission field, and indeed these divisions were viewed as a scandal and stumbling block for evangelization." Robert Bruce Mullin, *A Short History of Christianity*, 1st ed., (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 227.

¹³⁰ "Nothing destroyed the old Christian order at the beginning of Twentieth century so much as the destructiveness of the First World War and following new world order. The massive destruction was shocking and bloody battles peeled away old idealism." This terrible experience was one of the most important causes for a process of secularization. Secularization meant a change of patronage: while modern art claims autonomy, churches play a diminished role in commissioning new art. In. Mullin, 231.

¹³¹Vinzent, 600.

Mass had become divorced from the worship of the local community¹³². One of the most important theologians of the movement was Odo Casel (1886-1948) who brought a concept that became absolutely crucial to liturgical theology with ecumenical convergence.¹³³ Casel taught that Salvation consists of participating in the mystery of Christ death and resurrection. The Eucharist was to be understood as the renewal by the church of the mysteries of Christ.¹³⁴ Crucial for him was a biblical and patristic understanding of anamnesis.

“In the liturgical commemoration the unique saving mystery of Christ is represented not just in the body and blood of Christ but in the whole liturgical celebration. The passion and death, resurrection and ascension of Christ are made present for us, and we participate in them, not only in the sacramental celebration. This idea of liturgical representation had profound implication for the doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice and great possibilities for ecumenical development”¹³⁵.

An important centre in the struggle for closer unity with the community was the German abbey of Maria Laach. The most important principles of the modern liturgical movement and pastoral initiatives of the monks of Maria Laach and Romano Guardini were harnessed by architect Rudolf Schwarz in book, *The Church Incarnate* publicized in 1938.¹³⁶

The Anglican tradition

The Anglican tradition was marked by the official Book of Common Prayer authorized in 1662. In practice it was very rarely used literally. In particular Anglican higher churchmen were seeking the revision of the Common Prayer book. This led to a struggle with the Evangelicals in the Anglican Church who were opposed to revision.¹³⁷

¹³² Nigel Yates, *Liturgical Space, Christian Worship and Church Buildings in Western Europe 1500-2000*, (Aldershot (UK), Burlington (USA): Ashgate, 2008), 144.

¹³³ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 617.

¹³⁴ Mullin, 237.

¹³⁵ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 618.

¹³⁶ Seasoltz pointed this book as an “epoch-breaking” - Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*.

¹³⁷ The Evangelicals were happy with the Book of Common Prayer and were fearful that revision would make concessions to Anglo-Catholics. Nevertheless the Church was tolerant toward the changes even though they were not approved by the House of Commons. There is an old unusual tradition that decisions made by the Church of England’s National Assembly must be approved by the Parliament (the House of Commons and the House of Lords). This was not the case in Ireland and Scotland where some minor changes to its liturgy were officially accepted. In. Yates, 140-1.

Anglican liturgical celebration on Sundays was split into various services. Usually early morning said celebration of Holy Communion followed later by the main service of Morning Prayer. The intention of the movement later called Parish Communion was to establish just a single Holy Communion service. These reforms were quite successful and in the 1960s were even officially approved by the Church of England. Nevertheless as Yates adds: “It was only in the 1980s, with the rise of charismatic Evangelicalism, that some parishes began to abandon the Parish morning Communion as too exclusive and they focused for mission. In these parishes Holy Communion was more likely celebrated on Sunday evenings.”¹³⁸

The Protestant side

On the Protestant side one of the most influential theologians was Karl Barth (1886-1968). He criticized the liberal agenda which argued that Christian faith should be based upon the historical Jesus.¹³⁹ “Theology must begin with the otherness of God. “The Bible has only one theological interest in God himself,” claimed Barth.¹⁴⁰

Barthian theology influenced the Reformed churches and their liturgy significantly during the last century particularly in the Central Europe. A major impact on the liturgical movement not just within the Reformed tradition was that of Taizé in France. This movement has very quickly become fully ecumenical and spread outside the Reformed tradition.¹⁴¹ Less is known about a similar Reformed monastery in the Swiss village of Grandchamp. This women’s movement has even influenced Brother Roger of Taizé and is still a very powerful liturgical centre today.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Ibid., 141-2.

¹³⁹ Mullin, 236.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 236.

¹⁴¹ Yates, 142-3.

¹⁴² The Author of this thesis has visited Grandchamp twice, firstly for celebration of Easter and secondly for Pentecost. His experience can be found in articles written for the Czech independent On-line Magazine: www.christnet.cz . To see more about the community go to www.grandchamp.org

The Liturgical Reforms after the Second Vatican Council

No other single event has influenced liturgical development for most of the Churches of Western Europe as this assembly.¹⁴³

“Today it is possible to see remarkably minimal variants on an agreed Eucharistic order and text across Europe in churches which previously had very different Eucharistic rites. Even issues such as vestments and ceremonial, that once provided major liturgical differences between Catholics and Protestants, are becoming increasingly irrelevant.”¹⁴⁴

But we can say that this statement by Yates is too enthusiastic. We have already mentioned Anglican Evangelicals abandoning Sunday morning Eucharistic service. Not everywhere Reformed minister is prepared to exchange his or her traditional chasuble (talar) with Geneva gown for an alb and coloured stole.¹⁴⁵

Nevertheless liturgical changes were ever present, and particularly rapid in the Roman Catholic Church, when we consider that there was very little progress in previous years and even centuries in this church. The Reformation churches were also challenged to take seriously their own reforming heritages.¹⁴⁶

The Anglican liturgical revision

The Anglican liturgical revision was independent of that in the Roman Catholic Church even though it was strongly influenced by it. The liturgical revisions in the Church of England were paralleled by revisions in Ireland and Scotland and Wales. Some quite strange historical bans were lifted, e.g. the forbidding of placing of a cross on the communion table. Other

¹⁴³ Yates, 147.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 147.

¹⁴⁵ For example the Synod of the Czech Brethren Protestants church allowed its pastors and ministers to wear an alb and coloured stole instead of the black talar at its meeting in 2005. However, only a few ministers were willing to wear the new vestments. (In. Jan Kirschner, *Farář již nemusí být jen černokabátník* <http://www.christnet.cz/magazin/clanek.asp?clanek=2408> (accessed 10.th. February 2009). Those ministers who do wear the alb and stole often see themselves as a “white crow among wild black ones”. Nevertheless the freedom to wear liturgical vestments more common in the very early years of Christianity, was a positive development, e.g. An Eucharistic vestments were for the first time officially made legal in Anglican church as late as 1964 even though that unofficial practice was present a hundred years ago. – In. Yates, 151.

¹⁴⁶ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 632.

restrictive canons designed to prevent any “Romanising” ceremonials, such as lighted candles or Eucharistic vestments remained in Church of Ireland rules¹⁴⁷ and were allowed later.¹⁴⁸

Other Protestant streams

Other Protestant streams have responded to the liturgical challenge of the Second Vatican Council in a different way. German and Scandinavian Lutherans have been deeply influenced and according to Yates¹⁴⁹ they have even abandoned their traditional manner of celebrating with their backs to the people. Response in Reformed churches was much more reserved regardless of the already noted Taizé experience. Some Reformed churches adapted new liturgical books with various liturgical forms, which were open to different ecumenical experiences.¹⁵⁰ In many Calvinist, Presbyterian or Pentecostals churches the liturgical developments had almost no impact.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

We saw that the concept of theological methods reflected the pluralism of approaches in recent history. According to Nigel Yates the liturgical reformers of the last fifty years have had to confront precisely the same type of opposition that confronted the sixteenth-century reformers.¹⁵² We have noted liturgical and ecumenical movements as two important sources, which have influenced changes of liturgical space. Third one was a process of secularization.

Many liturgists, then, also glance for a clear apostolic models on which the all liturgical celebrations were based. They have looked on the participation by the whole community in a liturgical celebration too. These focus on community lead to questions about the buildings in which the liturgy was celebrated.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ Yates, 152.

¹⁴⁸ Lighted candles are common during a liturgy in the Church of Ireland today (e.g. in St. Mary’s C of I in Maynooth. This may just be a local practice and it was not significant enough to study in this paper.)

¹⁴⁹ Yates, 154.

¹⁵⁰ For instance The Czech Brothers Protestant church in its agenda from 1970’s or mainly Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1994.

¹⁵¹ Yates, 154.

¹⁵² Ibid., 135-6.

¹⁵³ Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred*, 222.

5. The influence of the liturgical movement on liturgical space

In the first excursus we have seen that the main purpose of the liturgical movement of the twentieth century has been to recover a sense of the Church as the mystical body of Christ presented in an assembly for word and sacrament. The liturgical movement has also called for a greater sense of community in worship and active participation. These aims have had an impact on church architecture.¹⁵⁴

5.1. *Reordering of liturgical space before the Second Vatican Council*

During the inter-war period some church circles have seen that the prevailing style of church buildings with long naves and chancels, crammed with pews and stalls, was liturgically impractical.¹⁵⁵



Rudolf Schwarz Church in Aachen

“The principal representatives in that revolution in Europe both immediately before and after the Second World War were all German architects: Rudolf Schwarz¹⁵⁶ and Emil Steffan. Their work is deeply rooted in liturgical principles”, points out Seasoltz.¹⁵⁷

Peter Hammond notes that one of the most regrettable features of the English church architecture since the middle of the nineteenth century has been its lack of variety, particularly in

¹⁵⁴ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 672-3.

¹⁵⁵ Yates, 144-5.

¹⁵⁶ Kevin Seasoltz describes Schwarz as “revolutionary” who linked a reformed liturgy with new methods of building and technology. Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*.

¹⁵⁷ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

England.¹⁵⁸ New churches were designed with much broader naves and chancels or even more radically in a cruciform style, with a central altar placed under the crossing. Nevertheless churches that adopted at least some new principles were beginning to be built by the 1920s and 30s, but these remained in the minority.¹⁵⁹ More radical church plans contributed towards liturgical architecture in the Roman Catholic world than in the Protestant one during the inter-war period.¹⁶⁰

5.1.1. Liturgical space after the Second World War

After the War a lot of churches were closed because of secularization and the displacement of population. But on the other hand a lot of new churches were opened, because many churches



had been destroyed during the Second World War. In the years after the 1945 pre-war patterns of church building remained popular. Later churches began to be built in more ostentatious architecture.¹⁶¹

Emil Stiefann Church of St. Katherine in Bonn

It is necessary to add that many churches, which were built in 1950s, and 60s particularly in Germany, quite often from simple materials as bricks from demolished buildings, are appreciated

¹⁵⁸ Peter Hammond, *Liturgy and Architecture*, 2nd ed. (London: William Cloves & Sons Ltd., 1960), 82.

¹⁵⁹ Yates, 144-5.

¹⁶⁰ Yates has picked two examples: Christ the King, Turner's Cross Church in Cork Ireland designed in 1927, by Barry Byrne former, pupil of architect Frank Lloyd Wright; and Rudolf Schwarz's church in Ringensberg in Germany (1935). Although the altar was still at the east end, Cork's church architecture abandoned traditional neo-Celtic or neo-Classical design. Meanwhile Schwarz placed the altar in the centre in his church in Ringensberg and produced a T- plan interior in a cruciform building. In. Yates, 145-7.

¹⁶¹ For instance the Cathedral of Saint Michael in Coventry represented a real break with the Gothic revival, which was very popular on British Isles. The new Cathedral in Coventry was built near the historical one, which was completely bombed by Germans during World War II. The ruins of the old cathedral were left as monument. William Whyte and col. of ed., *Redefining Christian Britain*. (London: SCM Press, 2007), 193-4.

today by liturgists and architects, but not so often by ordinary believers. Some churches have been abandoned.¹⁶²

On the other hand, Kevin Seasoltz does not speak very positively about Le Corbusier's famous Chapel of Notre Dame du Haut at Ronchamp (1955). He appreciates its fascinating plasticity and modern European architecture, but the Chapel is for him disappointing from a liturgical point of view because of its traditional preconiliar arrangement.¹⁶³ Seasoltz considers the Abbey Church of Saint John the Baptist at Colleville to be a good example of church architecture consecrated before the Second Vatican Council. This American church was built in the Bauhaus tradition, and managed to incorporate many of the best principles of the modern liturgical movement and to anticipate at least some of the reforms proposed later by the Second Vatican Council.¹⁶⁴

5.2. *Changes in Liturgical space after the Second Vatican Council*

Since the Second Vatican Council many different plans for church buildings have emerged. Kevin Seasoltz classifies their types into four general categories:

- 1) **Longitudinal shape** based on the traditional division of nave and sanctuary.
- 2) **Transverse emphasis**, in which there is a careful planning of the relationship between assembly and altar.
- 3) **Centralized layout**, giving rise to more or less circular buildings, but rarely if ever concentric to the altar.
- 4) **Antiphonal plan**, in which the assembly is gathered on two opposite sides of an axial space containing the altar, ambo, and presider's chair¹⁶⁵. These plans reflect an understanding of liturgical celebration ranging from that of silent spectator worship (longitudinal plan) to full, active, and conscious participation by the whole assembly (antiphonal plan).¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² For instance Emil Stefan's Church of St. Katherine which is used as a cultural centre today and not in local parish worship.

¹⁶³ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Liturgical space was organized in this way in several British nonconformist churches even before Second World War - (For instance the Anglican church of the Epiphany in Gipon, Leeds of 1938). Recently the altar and the ambo were also reoriented on opposite side of a space in the Saint Mary Oratory at St. Patrick's College in Maynooth, Ireland.

¹⁶⁶ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

In the decades after the Second Vatican Council many Roman Catholic churches were "purified," with emphasis on the community that celebrates the liturgy and not just the ordained ministers.¹⁶⁷ New churches were often built in a centralized layout than in traditional longitudinal one. To establish a freestanding altar permitting the priest to face the rest of the assembly, and a gathering of the assembly around the table of the word as well as the Eucharistic table was the priority for liturgists.¹⁶⁸

This led to the placement of a basilica – style presidential chair behind the altar, the removal of the tabernacle from the former high altar, the use of a simple ambo for the reading of scripture, the closure of side chapels, and the cessation of private masses with the emphasis on the community mass.¹⁶⁹

Protestant churches particularly Evangelical and Pentecostal churches; continue to build auditorium style buildings.¹⁷⁰ Yet in spite of the reluctance of the Protestant Reformed tradition to adopt modern ideals of church architecture and liturgical arrangements, there were a few interesting experiments influenced by the Catholic and Anglican movements. In many churches both the pulpit and communion table were emphasised.¹⁷¹ There have also been experiments with the Protestant churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and awareness of the ideals of the modern liturgical movement since the twentieth century.¹⁷²

Above all developments in the modern liturgical movement have influenced the interior design of both Protestant and Catholic churches and the placement of the various liturgical *foci* within the buildings. Roman Catholics have rediscovered the importance of the Word of God. On the other hand main line Protestants have found again the centrality of the Eucharist and have adjusted their spaces so as to bring altar and pulpit or even baptismal font into appropriate relationship with one another.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 673.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 673.

¹⁷¹ Yates, 611.

¹⁷² For instance Edward A. Sovik designed multipurpose buildings called a Centrum. The Centrum is not a sanctuary, or a nave, or even a Eucharistic hall but a meeting place for people. In. Senn, *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*, 673.

¹⁷³ Seasoltz, *Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture*

Excursus II. – Re-reading of the liturgical constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium with particular concern on the Protestant Evaluation

Preface

As was already mentioned in chapter “*Liturgical Reforms after the Second Vatican Council*” this Council has started the most active period of liturgical reforms and gave a new impulse for an ecumenical liturgical renewal in most of the churches of Western Europe.

In this chapter will be consider the document *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution of the Sacred liturgy of the Council. Particular concern will be given to Protestant reflection.

Re-reading of the liturgical constitution

Commentators warn readers that the Constitution presents special difficulties for study. Much of this document has the condensed character of a code of law. At the same time it is not purely legislative. Besides a great many practical resolutions it also presents a very rich theology of the liturgy.¹⁷⁴ The Constitution consists of a Preamble and seven chapters. It is based upon Biblical foundations and the presence of the Lord. ...”The liturgy daily builds up those who are within into a holy temple of the Lord, into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ”...¹⁷⁵

An Italian Protestant scholar Valdo Vinay comments: “It reveals (the Constitution) a notable shift of emphasis in the sense of an evangelical comprehension of worship. It concentrates attention on the presence of the Lord and gives to it rightly the greatest importance”.¹⁷⁶

Massey Shepherd points out that text is positive. Issues that were hotly debated at the Reformation are not argued and are left open for constructive dialogue and discussion. For

¹⁷⁴ Adrian Hastings, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, vol. 1, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., 1968), 109.

¹⁷⁵ Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, <http://www.vatican.va/archive> (accessed, 15th. January 2009), 2.

¹⁷⁶ Valdo Vinay, *Il Concilio Vaticano II in una visuale protestante italiana*, in *A Protestant Looks at the New Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, Ed. Briner A Lewis. (Torino: Piccola collana moderna, Claudiana Editrice, 1964), 13.

instance The Real Presence of the Christ in the Eucharistic species is affirmed but there is no reference to Transubstantiation.

Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, "the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered him on the cross", but especially under the Eucharistic species.¹⁷⁷

But on the other hand for Protestants the formulation "perpetuate the sacrifice" would still be a problem, because for them Jesus Christ sacrificed himself once for all and forever. Another formulation "a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten" would sound for many like cannibalism.

At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.¹⁷⁸

The Term "Paschal Mystery (106)" which is used by the Constitution¹⁷⁹ would be better accepted in Protestant circles. This understanding opens creative perspectives of Christian worship.¹⁸⁰ "By a tradition handed down from the apostles, who took its origin from the very day of Christ's resurrection, the Church celebrates the paschal mystery every eighth day; with good reason this, then, bears the name of the Lord's Day or Sunday."¹⁸¹

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy concerns the responsible participation by the whole liturgical assembly. This emphasis characterizes the modern liturgical renewal in all Churches. All participants have their own ministry and function to perform, each according to his or her spiritual gift and calling. There are no passive spectators.¹⁸² This is close to the

¹⁷⁷ Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 7, <http://www.vatican.va/archive> (accessed, 15th. January 2009).

¹⁷⁸ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 47.

¹⁷⁹ The key phrase "Paschal Mystery" may be taken from so called Mystery theology developed, by the Benedictine school of Maria Laach and Odo Casel, Massey H. Shepherd jr, The liturgy, in Bernard C. Pawley, (ed.), *The Second Vatican Council, Studies by eight Anglican Observers*. (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967), 161.

¹⁸⁰ Shepherd, 159.

¹⁸¹ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 106.

¹⁸² Shepherd, 162-3.

Protestant principle of general priesthood. However, in a number of mainstream Protestant churches roles are given and there is less space for amateur actions.¹⁸³

In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts, which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy.¹⁸⁴

The Constitution has given norms for adapting the Liturgy to the culture and traditions of people. Mass should also be celebrated entirely in the vernacular. From them it is clear, that Roman Church has abandoned the principle of strict uniformity. Decentralization of authority in liturgical matters, which is so typical in the Protestant World, is given to national or regional groups led by bishops.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless the authority of the Bishop is still important in Catholic and other Episcopal churches while in many non-conformist Protestant churches the final authority is at a much lower level due to congregational or Presbyterian system of leadership.

Even in the liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters, which do not implicate the faith or the good of the whole community; rather does she respect and foster the genius and talents of the various races and peoples. Anything in these peoples' way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, so long as they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.¹⁸⁶

The Constitution puts great importance on the Word of God in the liturgy, and this is also a major emphasis in the Reformation churches.¹⁶⁶ (SC 35; 51-52).

Because the sermon is part of the liturgical service... the ministry of preaching is to be fulfilled with exactitude and fidelity. The sermon, moreover, should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources, and its character should be that of a proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ, ever made present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy.¹⁸⁷

Among other major changes introduced by the Constitution were the extension of communion in both kinds to the laity and the introduction of vernacular congregational

¹⁸³ The worships are ironically even called “*One man show*” sometimes.

¹⁸⁴ *Sacrosactum Concilium*, 28.

¹⁸⁵ Shepherd Massey H. jr., 164.

¹⁸⁶ *Sacrosactum Concilium*, 37.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 35, 2.

hymnody as part of the liturgy rather than an extra- liturgical addition. Both of these are very important part of Protestant liturgy.¹⁸⁸

The last chapter, dedicated to the sacred art and furnishing is not a mere appendix, but an integral part of the whole programme of renewal. Fine art especially religious one is considered among the noblest activities of man. But the Church always claims its right to decide what should be part of a decoration of sacral space.

Holy Mother Church has therefore always been the friend of the fine arts and has ever sought their noble help, with the special aim that all things set apart for use in divine worship should be truly worthy, becoming, and beautiful, signs and symbols of the supernatural world, and for this purpose she has trained artists. In fact, the Church has, with good reason, always reserved to herself the right to pass judgment upon the arts.¹⁸⁹

It is important to note that the Church does not claim any particular art as an official church style.¹⁹⁰

The Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites. Thus, in the course of the centuries, she has brought into being a treasury of art, which must be very carefully preserved. The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it adorns the sacred buildings and holy rites with due reverence and honour.¹⁹¹

When passing judgment on works of art, the Constitution encouraged local ordinaries to give a hearing to the diocesan commission on sacred art and to experts. “It is also desirable that schools or academies of sacred art should be founded in those parts of the world where they would be useful, so that artists may be trained.”¹⁹²

Education and responsible decisions of authorities is very important. The Roman Catholic has the advantage of a unified authority compared to a split Protestant world. On the other hand such authority can lead to remote bureaucratic decision making.

¹⁸⁸ For instance Communion in both kinds was a crucial question for the Czech Reformation.

¹⁸⁹ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 122.

¹⁹⁰ For instance on the British Isles some people expect a church to be a neo-gothic building or in the Czech Republic people expect church to be in Baroque style. Therefore many new churches are quite often designed as copies of old historical churches.

¹⁹¹ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 123.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 127.

Conclusion

When we look closer on the text *Sacrosanctum Concilium* we can say together with Lewis Bruner a Protestant commentator.“

It is no exaggeration to say that if the Council had produced nothing else, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy would have made it all worthwhile. This document is ... one of the finest achievements in the long history of Church councils, and...ranks as the most significant statement the Roman Church has made since the Council of Trent.”¹⁹³

One of the Anglican Observers of the Council, Massey H. Shepherd, classifies the Constitution among a group of only four comparable revisions of the Latin rite in the history of Western Catholicism:

The sixth century revisions of Sacramentaries and other liturgical books that culminated in the work of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604), the ninth century Romano-Frankish revisions initiated and sponsored by Charlemagne, and the reforms inaugurated by Pius V in the Missal of 1570, in response to the Reformation and Counter – Reformation movement.¹⁹⁴

Liturgical changes were ever present since *Sacrosanctum Concilium* became the first approved document of Second Vatican Council.¹⁹⁵ Particularly in the Roman Catholic Church, changes occurred very rapidly, when we consider, that there was little progress in previous years and even centuries in this church. Changes were even so sudden and extent, that Tim Grass found that many of the faithful were disorientated; therefore since 2006 a wider use of the Latin Mass was authorized.¹⁹⁶

The Constitution enables the voice of believers who are part of a church community to be heard, but on the other hand personal opinions on liturgy can be also of very poor and amateur quality. There must be a balance with the attitude of professional theologians.

Above all developments in the modern liturgical movement after the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy have influenced Protestant churches. Although the Protestant world has developed in its own way, it was influenced by the results of the Second Vatican Council.

¹⁹³ Lewis A Briner., *A Protestant Looks at the New Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, Yearbook of Liturgical Studies 5 (1964), (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1964), 7-8.

¹⁹⁴ Shepherd, 151.

¹⁹⁵ Liturgical constitution of the Second Vatican Council *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was published in 1963.

¹⁹⁶ Tim Grass, *Modern Church History*, (London: SCM Press, 2008), 342.

6. A Sacral space, liturgical symbols, art and mystics in the Protestantism

How is sacral space understood in Protestantism? Is it living space for everyday meditation and prayer or just an hour a week open space for gathering a community or for use as museum of the Reformation? We have to ask ourselves the relatively primitive but rather fundamental question: should a Protestant church create an environment for private prayer and mediation? Should this space enable a person - Christian or even a seeking agonistic - to find an experience of God's presence and love? Is the aesthetic quality of a space of any importance or is J.J. von Almen's statement sufficient? "Every time the Lord's Supper is celebrated, even in the privacy of the bedroom of a sick person, its very celebration hallows the place."¹⁹⁷ Another crucial aspect how a Christian community expresses itself is its use of symbols and signs. Are symbols, art and mystical experiences treated in hostile way in Protestantism so that the only allowed symbol is the Word of God itself? The answers to these questions will be sought in following chapter.

6.1. *Sacral or profane space?*

The Reformed branch of Christianity is particularly resistant to modern liturgical changes. Some Reformed Christians also have a very different view on the value of church buildings and symbols. It depends on the understanding of sacral space.¹⁹⁸ For the first Lutherans a church was not a sacred space it was just a necessary shelter for worship. But to define a church simply as a place for worship to the exclusion of other activities will lead to an understanding of church as just a holy shrine.

Calvinism reached the same position and by the same path. For instance according to Presbyterian theology, the church could be used for anything, in practice it was restricted to

¹⁹⁷ Allmen, 243.

¹⁹⁸ For example a large number of ministers of the Free Church in Scotland rejected the concept of redundant church after the unification of two protestant bodies, where a lot of churches had become redundant. If the building was not needed it should be disposed of, they claimed – William Whyte and col. ed., *Redefining Christian Britain*, (London: SCM Press, 2007), 191.

worship, and this practise was stronger than theory. So separation of the Protestant churches from the secular was inevitable.¹⁹⁹

The common situation and understanding of the Protestant temple is described by the Czech Protestant architect Emil Edgar. He quotes the Reformed minister B. Jerie.

“The Protestant temple is a place of common gathering. The Service in the Protestant church is possible just in common gathering. It is impossible for the Protestant Christian to worship alone on his knees in an empty church as Catholics do. This is absurd in Protestant thinking. The lonely Protestant is not closer to God in an empty church than in his room.”²⁰⁰

A number of Protestant liturgical environments and particularly these of the reformed tradition are created for clearly defined groups. The minister of the Czech Brethren Protestant church Lukas Ondra makes the criticism that these spaces do not count with individual and his (her) need for private prayer and meditation. “Ugly environment also excludes groups of people who are not satisfied by passive listening and sitting.”²⁰¹ For Ondra “The Churchy” liturgical space should have three signs: the shape of gathering for worship of the Word, the shape of agape hall for Eucharist and the sense of privacy for meditation.”²⁰²

6.1.1 Primacy of the assembly as an icon of Christ.

It is necessary to add in this context that Ondra comes from a tradition where aesthetic decoration and church furnishing inside the church is often missing and the church is usually open just for a Sunday service. The modern preference is for simplicity of church spaces. According to Richard Giles this is a result of a return to the primacy of the assembly as an icon of Christ no matter how beautifully and carefully designed a worship space may be. Nevertheless even an empty space could be very sacral.

“The worship space is understood as the empty board on which the Christian assembly will paint the face of Christ for the word today. For this reason many of the most splendid new places of liturgical assembly appear to us a bare shell awaiting the entrance of the community. Such buildings demonstrate powerfully the drastic clarity demanded of Christians as we seek to give architectural and liturgical expression to our

¹⁹⁹ J.G. Davies, *The Secular use of Church buildings*. (London: SCM press, 1968), 135-137.

²⁰⁰ Emil Edgar, *Předpoklady stavebně-umělecké budoucnosti reformačních církví*, (Prague: Kalich, 1947), 50.

²⁰¹ Lukáš Ondra, *Význam bohoslužebného prostoru pro zvěstování církve*, (Manuscript, vikářská práce, Mšeno: 2002), 7.

²⁰² Ondra, 7.

identity and our journey. Such drastic clarity is not a fashion of the moment concerned with aesthetics, but an essential and universal prerequisite of authentic liturgy. ²⁰³

The solution that would provide for private prayer would be to establish a separate space or chapel for private prayer of an individual or small group. The space could have low-level lighting, with a spotlight centred on the visual focus of devotion. ²⁰⁴ In a Catholic church such a place would be the tabernacle or space for reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.

6.2. *Symbols as a crucial expression of denominational identity*

Protestantism is ambivalent regarding the symbolical or the mystical understanding of the liturgical environment and interior furniture. The decoration of churches, individual



furnishings (e.g. altar/Lord's Table, ambo, pulpit, cross and chalice, etc.) have their specific function in contrast to other Christian traditions. Quite often these items are even absent from a liturgical space as was explained in the last chapter. Some symbols or mystical experiences are forbidden or understood to be alien. In some circles alien is equal to Catholic.

A chalice on the top of the church tower as a new symbol for Czech reformation

Although the Reformation churches tried to purify Christian life paradoxically they created their own symbols, rituals and even heroes which they exalted in a similar fashion to how Catholics treat their saints. Symbols can easily become a superficial sign and could lose their deep meaning. (E.g. a cross or a chalice on the top of a church tower could then be reduced to the same meaning as that of a traffic sign.) This is a result of the enmity that existed within Christianity. Therefore it is so important to look closer on how symbols and signs are understood in society and Christian history.

²⁰³ Giles, 7.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 190.

“Some symbols²⁰⁵ seem to be nearly universal, while others are particular to some societies, countries or religious groups. Some signs always have a potential to become symbols and even the most powerful symbols can lose their force as time passes and society changes. One person’s sign²⁰⁶ might also be another person’s symbol.”²⁰⁷ This is true in Christian history and particularly in the Protestant world. The gathering Christian communities promote various rituals, which legitimize them. Rituals and symbols constantly create and re-create power structures. Symbols are also polyvalent: that is, they carry several meanings at the same time. They are also “ambiguous.”²⁰⁸ Christian rituals are more amorphous, more slippery and human.²⁰⁹

6.3. *The “Mystics” as “the Catholic anachronism”?*

Is the so called “Mystic” really “the Catholic anachronism”? For instance Lukas Ondra criticised the fact that Czech Protestant built their identity in opposition to the Catholics before the Second World War on what they called the “Catholic mystic.” He quotes the Protestant theologian Josef L. Hromádka: “The Reformed worship as a service in simplicity,

205 A **symbol** is a transaction in which the apparent “actors” become the acted upon; the possessors become the “possessed”. Take, for example the symbolic action of eating and drinking in the Eucharist. Participants symbolically become what they consume. A symbol is thus neither “thing” nor “object” but new unanticipated outcome. For Aquinas symbol is a movement from the “known” to “unknown”. The word’s Greek root suggests to putting together two halves that have been separated. Symbols are not “things” we invent or invest with power and significance; they are realities that discover us. - Nathan Mitchell, “*Sign, Symbol*” In. *The New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, Paul Bradshaw ed. (London: SCM Press, 2002), 440.

²⁰⁶ A chief function of a **sign** is to provide information, accumulate fact and assemble accurate data. Signs stand for or point to specific objects, events, persons, conditions or circumstances. Signs are especially sensitive to the culture that creates them. They must be recognizable. Signs (whether in Christian liturgy or human life) may be visual or acoustic without being verbal. Similarly symbols cannot be confined to words, objects or things, they are transactions of processes. Mitchell, 438. (E.g. contrast a symbol which *stands for* another thing, as a flag may be a symbol of a nation.) In. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sign> (accessed 16th. April 2009.)

²⁰⁷ Bernard Cooke & Gary Macy, *Christian Symbols and Ritual*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 13

²⁰⁸ Cooke & Macy, 21, 23.

²⁰⁹ For instance is the risen Christ present in the community only in the reading of scripture or only in the consecrated bread and wine or within Christian community, *Ibid.*, 23.

severity and certainty of faith is much more valuable than a Catholic Mass. The Mystic has brought too much emotions, instinctive expressions and outbursts in religion”.²¹⁰

Martin Henry explains that historically, the use of the word *mystical* described a special religious experience peculiar to Christianity. The Christian tradition popularized the use of the term ‘mystical’ to cover a particular kind of religious experience:²¹¹

“Early Christian writers frequently describe their liturgical rites as being liturgical rites as being mysteries. Latin writers also adopt the term *sacramentum* for the same purpose. For early Christian this word refers to any thing or action or person that mediated the presence of God to humans. “For centuries the language of sacraments reminds fluid and was applied to variety of liturgical rites as well as being used in other ways. But eventually the notion of sacrament grew more restricted in the medieval West, as the Scholastic theologians developed a sacramental theology that was a reflection, using many Aristotelian categories.”²¹²

For Louis Bouyer Christian mysticism is the experience of an invisible objective world: “The world who’s coming the Scriptures reveal to us in Jesus Christ, the world into which we enter, ontologically, though the liturgy, through the same Jesus Christ ever present in the Church.”²¹³

However in more recent times, the term ‘mystical’ has been allowed to transfer from what we shall see was its original context. “It appears to have ended up covering a multitude of outlooks fairly remote from what its first meaning was within Christianity. It has come to serve, for instance, as a way of registering belief in ‘the realm of “what cannot be said.”²¹⁴ Martin Henry further supports his comments by passages from the Wittgenstein *Tractatus*:

‘It is not *how* things are in the world that is mystical, but *that* it exists [6.44]. To view the world sub specie aeterni is to view it as a whole—a limited whole. Feeling the world as a limited whole—it is this that is mystical [6.45]. . . . There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical [6.522]’²¹⁵

210 V mystice náboženství hledá v “přemíře citů, v pudových vznětech a výbuších, naturalistických, matných projevech náboženských, mravně i noeticky lhostejných.” In. Ondra, 9.

²¹¹ Martin Henry, *The History of the Christian Mystical Tradition - General introduction*, notes for students of St. Patrick’s college, Maynooth, Ireland, 2009, 1-2.

²¹² Bradshaw, 413.

²¹³ Harvey D. Egan, *An Anthology of Christian Mysticism*. (Collegeville: The Liturgical press, 1991) ,xxiii

²¹⁴ Henry, 2.

²¹⁵ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, tr. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 149-50 in Henry, 2.

Harvey D. Egan adds that mysticism has been reduced to the psychological level and dissociated from its biblical, liturgical and sacramental level. Mysticism has also been reduced to moments of ecstatic rapture triggered by anything from artistic inspiration to psychedelic drugs. A common mistake is also to equate mysticism with the supernatural suspension of the laws of nature. To many, mysticism denotes the miraculous. Stigmata and visions are seen as real mystical signs. Mystics are also identified with various Pentecostal movements.²¹⁶ According to Egan influential theologians including Protestants like Karl Barth, Emil Brunner or Adolf Harnack contributed to current misunderstandings. They sharply distinguish biblical, prophetic religions from Oriental mystical religions. Moreover, these authors reject the longstanding Christian mystical tradition as a pagan, neo-Platonic infection, or as Roman Catholic piety in an extreme form.²¹⁷

According to these thinkers, genuine Christian faith should reject mysticism. Barth considers mysticism as more pernicious than even self-righteous Pharisaism.²¹⁸ However, other commentators reject this separation of mysticism with biblical, prophetic religion and that Christian mysticism is a neo-Platonic distortion of genuine biblical Christianity.²¹⁹

On the other hand Protestant theologians often show the characteristics of false mystics. Louis Bouyer thought that for Protestants of good faith who have retained the great Trinitarian and Christological dogmas, it must suffice to avouch the possibility of experiences which differ in no way from those of Catholic or Orthodox mystics.²²⁰ Nevertheless the understanding of religion of the Word is quite different to that of Catholic or Orthodox understanding of mystics. This is going to be discussed in following chapter.

²¹⁶ Harvey D. Egan, *An Anthology of Christian Mysticism*. (Collegeville: The Liturgical press, 1991), xxi-xxiii.

²¹⁷ Egan, xxv.

²¹⁸ Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 109-110.

²¹⁹ Egan, xxv.

²²⁰ Louis Bouyer, *The Christian Mystery*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 274-5.

6.4. People of the Word

The most important symbol for Protestant Christians is the Word of God itself. It plays a central role in Reformed thinking, which is very rational and quite often in opposition to mystical experiences. The temple²²¹ is just the place or area where God's Word is announced.²²² For Barth the only mason for the liturgical space is the Word, announced from the centre of the room if possible. A building does not have any meaning of its own and cannot disturb listeners focused on the preached Word.²²³



The pulpit which is given a central and dominating place in many Reformed church buildings reflects this. In some churches the communion table will seldom be as visible as the pulpit and the baptismal font is very often missing. The boards with a biblical quotation are frequently part of the decoration inside Protestant churches. In the majority of the Reformed churches the reading and preaching of the scriptures probably occupies between one third and one half of the service.

The boards with a biblical quotation are often of a very poor aesthetic quality. The banner “Christ our life” with polystyrene lettering from the 1970s in the Czech Brothers church in Bošín reminds one of school or factory boards with propagandist quotations made also with the polystyrene letters (e.g. “With the Soviet Union forever”)

“The word “*Announcing*” is limited to the preaching of the God's Word. Worship in a Reformation church is a service of God's Word. The announcing of God's Word is at its heart. From which are all other parts refreshed.... The Word of God is given to all church members' united view of faith and creates a real fellowship of believers.” writes J.L. Hromádka, an influential Czech theologian of the twentieth century.²²⁴

²²¹ A Word *temple* is not used in a sense as was common in a classical time for pagan sanctuary. A meaning was transformed for building where Christian community meets.

²²² Ondra, 3, 21.

²²³ Ibid., 21.

²²⁴ “Služby Boží v církvi reformační mají být opravdu službami Slova Božího. Zvěstování Slova Božího je jejich srdcem, ze kterého jsou obživovány všechny ostatní části bohoslužebné. ... Slovo Boží dává údům církve jednotný pohled víry, tvoří z nich tak skutečné obcenství věřících.” In. Ondra, 6.

It is interesting in this context that in a number of Reformed Catechisms God is described without any mention of Love.²²⁵ According to Dunlop this can be a reason why a number of people who worship in Presbyterian churches stay away from communion.²²⁶ And it is necessary to add, that this practise exists not only in Presbyterian churches.

On the other hand the dimension of revealed “Word” is much broader. “It is not limited to written or spoken experience. Reformed Christians need to beware of bibliolatry, remembering that the “Word” became flesh in ways in which it never became a book,” wrote the Presbyterian moderator John Dunlop.²²⁷ “It is a shame, that the temple is just a “secondary appendix”, the servant of the Word”, adds Lukas Ondra minister of the Czech Brothers Protestant church.²²⁸ Service of the Word is only one part of Christian liturgy.

6.5. *Symbolical understanding of the Christian Cross*

Together with Scripture, the Cross is a very significant symbol for Christians. For Protestant Christians, however it is quite frequently controversial. There is no doubt that understanding of Spirituality of the cross varies very significantly in Christian traditions. Historically the cult of the cross burst into life from the time of Constantine. Christians began to display what they believed since they were no longer afraid of persecution²²⁹. The cross was also a symbol of suffering and an instrument for capital punishment: Death was for the first Christians ever - present. Death on a cross was also a very shameful. Therefore first Christians did not use the symbol of the Cross-for religious purposes.²³⁰

The Cross or Sculpture of the Body of Christ (*Corpus Christi*) is often not acceptable from a historical point of view for many Protestant Christians in Central Europe. In this context the cross is understood as a symbol of re-Catholicization and oppression.

²²⁵ The Shorter Presbyterian Catechism of Northern Ireland Presbyterians quoted In. Dunlop, 89.

²²⁶ “They take the warnings given in 1Co. 11,28-9 about eating and drinking without self examination and thereby eating and drinking judgment on themselves as warnings against imperfection, rather than as warnings against dividing the body of Christ, the original context of the warnings”, Ibid., 89.

²²⁷ Dunlop, 83.

²²⁸ Ondra, 3.

²²⁹ Hilary Richardson, & John Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses*, Cork: The Mercier press, 1990, 11

²³⁰ Liam Tracey, “*The introduction to the liturgy*“, (Lecture, Pontifical University, St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, autumn 2008)

The Cross and symbols in general are more problematic for Christians coming from the Reformed – Calvinist and Zwinglian tradition from a theological point of view. This distance had even led to calculated acts of destruction, or iconoclasm, against visual representation of sacred things.²³¹ Zwingli saw a direct step between images and transformations of desires of human hearts into idols; therefore he was against all visual images.²³² Calvin himself as a second – generation reformer shared the general Reformed rejection of images.²³³ The cross as a symbol is usually very common in a Lutheran tradition. Luther wrote about a sculpture of the crucified Christ as follows:

“Of this I am certain, that God desires to have his works heard and read, especially the passion of our Lord. But it is impossible for me to hear and bear it in mind without forming mental images of it in my heart. For whether I will or not, when I hear of Christ, an image of a man hanging on a cross takes form in my heart, just as the reflection of my face naturally appears in the water when I look into it. If it is not a sin but good to have the image of Christ in my heart, why should it be a sin to have it in my eyes?”²³⁴



How can the depiction or memorial of a negative historical experience bring healing to people and cause prejudices to be overcome? It is often good to look at it in a more widely worldwide and ecumenical context. The Lutheran warm attitude towards the spirituality of the cross has already been mentioned.

The Celtic cross (on the cemetery in Kells, Ireland) combines the great circle of the world, of creation, (old pagan symbol for the sun) with the cross of Jesus Christ.

The cross is usually a non-problematic symbol for Protestant Christians in Ireland and Scotland where among them Calvinists – Presbyterians are in majority²³⁵. Most of them accept the common history of ancient Celtic Christian

²³¹ See chapter The Reformed “attack” on religious art

²³² Dillenberger, 67-68.

²³³ Ibid., 71.

²³⁴ Luther, *Luther's Works*, vol. 40, 99.

²³⁵ A similar situation exists among Protestants in the Czech Republic, where the Reformed-Helvetian tradition is in a majority among Protestant Christians (not in the population as a whole. There are just 3% of Protestants. The majority of the inhabitants are non-believers, approximately 70%; Roman Catholic 30%. See results of the census in the year 2001.

missions and their famous symbol - the Celtic cross.²³⁶ Many Irish Presbyterians feel a strong kinship with St. Patrick and early Irish Christianity.²³⁷

The Irish crosses are important in the whole perspective of Christian art. Ireland is fortunate that so many of its early crosses are well preserved. They have inspired a number of contemporary artists in Ireland and abroad. These crosses encourage an ecumenical dialogue reflected in the architecture and theology of sacral and liturgical space. It is not surprising that during the nineteenth century the Celtic cross became one of the emblems of Irish nationalism. For instance thousands examples have appeared as tombstones throughout the land since then.²³⁸

This connection with the Irish nationalism confirmed that the cross like any other symbol could easily lose its spiritual meaning and become a political hammer against possible opponents. The forbidding of candles, chasubles and the sign of the cross by the Reformed King Friedrich Wilhelm in 1733 is similar example of political influence on a church in another part of Europe: “If any... wish to make it a matter of conscience... they can be relieved by dismissal from their parishes.”²³⁹ On the other hand the cross, as a symbol of re-catholization, and the fear of this symbol as mentioned above, is in the Protestant’s mind, even nowadays. This fear has suppressed a more biblical understanding of this important symbol.

²³⁶ The high crosses are the most arresting and attractive of all the monuments which stud the Irish countryside. Indeed the very shape of the Celtic or fringed cross, silhouetted against the sky, has come to be identified with Ireland. The Celtic cross combines the great circle of the world, of creation, with the cross of Jesus Christ. The usual form is a tall, ringed cross set in a shapely base. Crosses were erected near monasteries, where they had a protective significance and probably served as points of assembly for religious ceremonies. Choice of the biblical scenes in their carved panels suggests that in some cases they had a special place in the liturgy of the early Church particularly on Good Friday. Others were crosses, which marked a boundary. Stone crosses also had a commemorative function, associating places with miracles or major events. The monks of Iona, for example, erected a cross on the millstone where St. Columba was accustomed to rest. Although burials were made near high crosses, there is no evidence that they were designed as funerary monuments. Crosses often served as places for prayer and penance. In: Richardson & Scarry, 9-13 and Stalley, 40.

²³⁷ Seasoltz, 131

²³⁸ Stalley, 45

²³⁹ Senn, 485

6.5. *Contemporary Protestant sense of the Arts*

“Christians, whatever their background, no longer seem afraid of art. Art provides character and colour to liturgical space. Art should complement the liturgy itself, entering into dialogue between God and his people.”²⁴⁰

Is not this statement by Giles too enthusiastic? Firstly the division between church and modern art is still in the mind of people, due to the exclusion of modern art by many official church statements in recent history.²⁴¹ Secondly as this essay has already mentioned, the Reformation experience of iconoclasm and its fear of symbolical expression and mystics is widely noted. For influential Reformed theologian Karl Barth images and symbols do not have any place at all in a building designed for Protestant worship.”²⁴² But this is not the only opinion which appeared during the twentieth century. This will be addressed more closely in following chapter.

6.5.1. **The development of the relationship of theologians to the arts in the twentieth century**

Theological thinking on art brought about a plurality of opinions in the twentieth century. John Dillenberger classifies theologians and their methods in relation to the arts into three types. In the first type, no relation is seen between the arts and theological work (for example Protestant theologian Rudolf Bultmann and as already mentioned Karl Barth).

In the second type a positive relation is articulated (for example Langdon Gilkey and Paul Tillich), and in the third type, the arts provide paradigms influencing the nature of the theological method (for example Roman Catholic theologians Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner).²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Giles, 111-3.

²⁴¹ For example Roman Catholic Church denounced modern art in an instruction for the ordinary of 1952. Jutta Vizont, *Christianity and Art*, In. Hugh McLeod, (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity. Vol. 9 – World Christianities c. 1914 – c. 2000*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 600.

²⁴² Karl Barth, “*The architectural problem of Protestant places of worship in Architecture in Worship: The Christian Place of Worship*, (ed.) Andre Bieler, (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), 272

²⁴³ Dillenberger, 217- 227.

For Bultmann the Word of God was not identical with the verbal, but no other area was suggested as an arena in which the Word might be conveyed.²⁴⁴ Dillenberger summarized distinctions between Bultmann and Barth in relation to the branch of Protestantism, which they belong to. Barth's negativity was theological, a part of his Reformed heritage, through as a human being he was interested in the arts. Bultmann's negativity was mainly personal and philosophical and his Lutheran heritage would not have made him opposed to the visual.²⁴⁵

For Paul Tillich, who belongs in the second category of relation of theological methods towards art, the visual played a more significant role – for Tillich more than for any other theologian in his time. Tillich has believed that art could delineate the human condition of estrangement.²⁴⁶

The third approach is those theologians who understood the arts as essential to proper theological understanding and method. For instance Karl Rahner asked himself if human self-expressions realized in nonverbal arts have the same value and significance as the verbal art.

“If and insofar as theology is man's reflexive self-expression about himself in the light of divine revelation, we could propose the thesis that theology cannot be complete until it appropriates these arts as an integral moment of itself and its own life, until the arts become an intrinsic moment of theology itself.”²⁴⁷

For Rahner nonverbal art cannot be totally translated into verbal theology. They belong to each other. Lukas Ondra went even further in his thoughts against Barth's exclusion of visual. He strongly opposed dictate of blabbing preacher and supported the independent activity of man to interpret symbols and art, which can lift up and support the mind of the believer.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ Dillenberger, 217.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 218.

²⁴⁶ Tillich was very influenced by his service as a chaplain in World War I where he experienced a major change of his religious orientation. In. Dillenberger, 223.

²⁴⁷ Rahner, *Theology and the Arts, Thought*, 57 .

²⁴⁸ Poslední bod jasně ukazuje, že Barthova theologie slova nestrpí ve svém poli působnosti žádnou otevřenost symbolu. Symbol, probouzející u myslícího člověka aktivitu nikdy nekončící interpretační práce, se neslučuje s vizí kostela podrobeného kazatelně. Proti obrazům a symbolům zde stojí společenství v bohoslužbě a v každodennosti. Opakující se argument rozptylování pozornosti a vytváření zmatků je v této souvislosti naprosto chabý. Do jakého zmatku nás uvrhává kříž či obraz poslední večeře? Vždyť přece mají naopak mysl věřícího pozvednout a pomoci mu v soustředění. Nehledě na to, že se těž mohou stát záchranou před vodopádem slov žvanivého kazatele. Ale o to přece Barthovi jde: křesťan nemá nalézt útočiště před diktátem řečnickova monologu. Obrazy a symboly, jež naopak svým mlčením vyzývají člověka k tomu, aby sám promluvil, je třeba z kostela odstranit. In. Ondra, 23.

6.6. *Is the rational Word in the opposition to the symbols, the arts, private meditation and mystical experience?*

The Reformation was not everywhere hostile to expression of spirituality above or beyond the Announcing of God's Word. Other arts made their way back into Reformed Protestantism in a way in which painting and sculpture did not or just into particular churches.²⁴⁹ "Perhaps they were considered safer than the visual", assumes John Dillenberger.²⁵⁰ Art such as music or dance do not remain present in the way that paintings or sculpture do. For instance a dance is gone once the dance is over. Music, once also excluded from Reformed tradition, has become the dominant Protestant art form.²⁵¹ Nevertheless they can satisfy the human desire for spiritual or so called "mystical" experience.

We have already said that Protestant understanding of the mystic is different that of the Catholic or the Orthodox one. We have also discussed the impediments of the surrounding environment in Protestant churches and meeting houses, for the development of private meditation and prayer. Nevertheless we can even find deep mystical experience in the life of Martin Luther, one of the founders of the Reformation.

6.6.1. **Tower as the space for mystical experience**

While Luther had an antipathy to mystics, it is also true that there is the foundation of mystical life in his theology of the heart, particularly in his early thought.²⁵² We have already mentioned his warm attitude towards the sculpture of the crucified Christ. "Christ is in my heart, why should it be a sin to have it in my eyes?"²⁵³

Famous is his Tower Experience in which he is, still as a monk, troubled by conscience, recognized through meditation God's love and grace:

But I, blameless monk that I was, felt that before God I was a sinner with an extremely troubled conscience. I couldn't be sure that God was appeased by my

²⁴⁹ "For instance into a Czech brothers protestant church in the Czech Republic, but this church is unified with Lutherans and there are congregations having problems with visual art too.

²⁵⁰ Dillenberger, 245.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 245.

²⁵² Bruce B. Janz, *Who's Who in the History of Western Mysticism*, <http://www.religiousworlds.com/mystic/whoswho.html> (accessed June 4th. 2009).

²⁵³ Luther, *Luther's Works*, vol. 40, 99.

satisfaction. I did not love, no; rather I hated the just God who punishes sinners. In silence, if I did not blaspheme, then certainly I grumbled vehemently and got angry at God. I said, "Isn't it enough that we miserable sinners, lost for all eternity because of original sin, are oppressed by every kind of calamity through the Ten Commandments? Why does God heap sorrow upon sorrow through the Gospel and through the Gospel..."

Further Luther describes long periods of private meditations and God's revelation to him. This experience can be recognised as mystical one:

I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context: "The justice of God is revealed in it, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice of God is revealed through the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. that by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." All at once I felt that I had been born again and entered into paradise it self through open gates. Immediately I saw the whole of Scripture in a different light.²⁵⁴

After his experience he expresses his feelings in very exalted and expressive words. Finally Martin Luther tried to connect his personal mystical experience with the Christian tradition by quoting Augustine's work.

I exalted this sweetest word of mine, "the justice of God," with as much love as before I had hated it with hate. This phrase of Paul was for me the very gate of paradise. Afterward I read Augustine's "On the Spirit and the Letter," in which I found what I had not dared hope for. I discovered that he too interpreted "the justice of God" in a similar way, namely, as that with which God clothes us when he justifies us. Although Augustine had said it imperfectly and did not explain in detail how God imputes justice to us, still it pleased me that he taught the justice of God by which we are justified.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ Martin Ether, *Discovers the True Meaning of Righteousness*. Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Works in vol. 4 of Luther's Werke in Auswahl, ed. Otto Clemen, 6th. ed., (Berlin: de Gruyter. 1967), 421-428, <http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/tower.txt> (accessed June 4th. 2009)

²⁵⁵ Luther, *Discovers the True Meaning of Righteousness*.

6.7. Conclusion



In this chapter we have discussed the reduction of *mystical* experience to the realm of *what cannot be said by words*. The suspicions of Protestant theology to the rational Word have also the positive affect acting as a barrier against the false mystics. We have also discussed the impediments in a Protestant churches and meeting houses environments for the development of private meditation and prayer.

“The Jacob’s Ladder: The tower of the Czech Brethren Protestant church in Prague – Kobylišy.

It was mentioned that the arts other than the visual ones, made their way back into Reformed Protestantism because they were considered safer than the visual arts. So, the desire for spiritual and mystic experience found its way even to the rational Protestant world.²⁵⁶ We can even find deep mystical experience in the life of Martin Luther in his ecstatic vision in the Tower. Regarding this experience we can repeat Louis Boyeur statement that Protestants of good faith rooted in Trinitarian and Christological dogmas, should have experiences which differ in no way from those of Catholic or Orthodox mystics.²⁵⁷ It is of any reason to live in old negative stereotypes (e.g. build church identity in the opposition to so called “catholic mystic”).²⁵⁸

Nevertheless we have to keep in mind that Protestant Christians, particularly from the Reformed tradition tend to glorify the Word as the only way to announce the good news of the Gospel. All other ways that bring Good news about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are not considered to be important. Protagonists of liturgical re-ordering must therefore keep this in mind and work on this basis and study theology and its reflections based on inherited habits and tradition.

²⁵⁶ E.g.: The Biblical mystical experience of Jacob (Jacob saw angels going up and down a ladder (Gen 28, 16-17)) was represented in the construction of the tower of the Czech Brethren Protestant church in Prague – Kobylišy. The church and tower bear the name “The Jacob’s Ladder.”

²⁵⁷ Bouyer, 274-5.

²⁵⁸ Pokud bude naše církev i nadále definovat svou identitu odporem ke katolictví, jak tomu bylo například v Hromádkových *Zásadách ČCE* či *Ústředních principech protestantismu*, nemá cenu o kostele jako prostoru meditace vůbec mluvit. Vše se odbude demagogickým poukazem na “katolickou mystiku”, k níž máme jako protestanti přirozeně odpor. In Ondra, 33.

7. Re - ordering the Protestant “tent” *(The Contribution to the Formulation of the design principles of a Contemporary Liturgical Space)*

The aim of this practical chapter” is to contribute to the formulation of the main principles for design of a contemporary Christian/Protestant liturgical space.²⁵⁹ The influential book by Richard Giles *Re-Pitching the Tent* has inspired this guide and was the source of the information for this comparative study about the liturgical environment.²⁶⁰ The work of another scholar Lukas Ondra coming from the “Low” Czech Presbyterian tradition is a second major source of inspiration for compartment for reordering of Protestant liturgical space. For Ondra the environment for private prayer is the most lacking inside the Reformed liturgical space. Both authors are very critical of their own tradition and present various inspiring viewpoints. Their points of view are supplemented by opinions of other theologians and by my own conclusions. A few theoretical notes and questions for better recognition of a problem connected with the re-ordering of the liturgical space are presented at the very beginning of this chapter. Secondly the advantages and disadvantages of various ground plans of liturgical environments are presented. Finally the contribution to the formulation of the main principles of the design of various *foci* of liturgical furniture will be discussed in this chapter.

7.1. Recognising the problem

Why re-ordering liturgical space common concerns, which must be taken into account, have been presented by Richard Giles at the beginning of his liturgical design guide:²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ The principles of church arrangements that are presented were not to be used to defend a confessional position. On the other hand were considered in this chapter divergent tendencies caused by the heritage of division of Western Christianity which is still going on and specific encounters of various traditions.

²⁶⁰ Richard Giles background is in the Anglican tradition where both poles of the “High” and the “Low” Church liturgical attitude are strongly present. When considering the re-ordering liturgical space Giles, is far more critical of development in the “High” stream of Anglicanism. (For instance Giles is very critical to all post – Constantine development. - Giles, 39-44). But he argues against any “refined squalor” in a liturgical space whether “low” or “high”.

²⁶¹ Giles, 6-7, 53.

- 1) Marginalization: at the time of change and modernization in all spheres, the Church is content to be removed from the mainstream. This stagnation is often dressed up as a virtue. The Church has become little more than a living exhibit in a museum.²⁶²
- 2) Unfaithfulness: for Giles a Christian community, which seeks to create an island of no-change in a sea of change, is unfaithful at the deepest level to the Good News of Jesus Christ, who proclaimed new life through total change (*metanoia*).
- 3) Spiritualization: In too many church communities, indifference to the environment of worship is a vice dressed up as a “spiritual virtue”. Church buildings are described as existing in a state of “refined squalor”. Buildings don’t matter as long as our hearts are in the right place.

The last point is particularly important in Protestant tradition where so-called theology of the non-visible Word and its uniqueness dominates. Often it is just lack of connection between the theology and life. It is all too easy for a minority to browbeat whole community into perpetuating the status quo. This is usually achieved by appealing to the fear of change. Alternatively, a community committed to change may consider that the re-ordering of its building is of relative unimportance beside the urgent priorities of teaching and spiritual formation or feeding the poor. “But the poor need beauty as well as food”, points out Giles.

The church is a space for gathering community and the environment for private prayer too. We have seen that church is regarded less in the Protestant world as place for contemplation than as a space for worship.²⁶³ Nevertheless if a community owns any church building there is a general experience among all denomination that a church is essentially a place set apart for worship. Even reformed meeting houses are usually used just for Sunday worship. On the other hand various protestant denominations do not have any problem with celebrating liturgy in the rented space (e.g. school class or sports hall). Tradition of Protestant multifunctional centres and meeting houses with good facilities for community is given also a better answer for a question: if we can spend large amount of money on a liturgical space that will only be in use for a few hours a week? In spite of this even in such centres should be a

²⁶² “We proclaim one thing in our preaching and our prayers, and quite another in our weekly polishing of the long-abandoned pulpit. The tragedy is that, among leaders today some of our best evangelists are some of our worst hosts. They bring their new friends home to a building which has no facilities for hospitality, which is full of unused and antiquated furniture” In. Giles, 6-7, 53.

²⁶³ Výraz “bohoslužebný prostor” neadekvátně zužuje prostor chrámu na časově vymezený okamžik, v němž *koinónia* věřících slaví bohoslužbu. Mimo tuto dobu (jež v našich souřadnicích zaujímá pouze hodinu týdně) je kostel uzavřen a stává se z něj mrtvý prostor. Podaří-li se nám do něj přesto vstoupit, neubráníme se dojmu jakési nepatřičnosti. Prázdná schrána, ničím nepoukazující na to, že má být domem Božím”. In Ondra, 31

space separated for private prayer and meditation. Hence the question which has arisen out of the previous quotation is: “How do the followers of Jesus of Nazareth organize themselves today and how they can best use buildings to express their life together and the message they long to share?”²⁶⁴ All these notes are part of the problem of any re-ordering of a space.

7.2. *Central, frontal or other disposition?*

The design for a ground plan is very variable nowadays. The cathedral cross layout with a tower in the crossing is past. Usually basic geometrical shapes - circle, square, and rectangle - prevail. Ground planes can be classified as rectangular (mostly longitudinal and rarely transverse²⁶⁵), central (circle or square) or special shape (cross, star etc.). Each one has its own theological interpretation.

1.1.1 The central and transverse space



For Barth the central space is more suitable for the central role of the sermon and the minister. “The principle of a “central focus” seems to be correct because it indicates that the church building is intended to be the site of the preaching of the Word of God and of the prayers of the assembled congregation.”²⁶⁶

The transverse layout of a ground plan was very common for Czech protestant “toleration” churches built at the end of the eighteenth century (Neratovice, Libiř)

²⁶⁴ Giles, 8.

²⁶⁵ Transverse layout of a ground plan was very common for Czech protestant “toleration” churches built at the end of 18th century after edition of the Toleration Patent. The circular shape and transverse ground plane very well symbolise the gathering community around the table. Not so advantageous is the very close and elevated pulpit just in front of the entrance, which controls space like a “main-gun nest” Ondra criticize the centrality of the pulpit. – Ondra, 26.

²⁶⁶ Barth, “The architectural problem of Protestant places of worship in *Architecture in Worship*, 272.

The circular or triangular shape focuses on the community gathered around the table or pulpit. The round space around and behind the Lord's Table is also very practical for circular celebration of the Lord's Supper – Eucharist. This is common in the Czech Brother's tradition.

The central space symbolizes a round table and better represents unity and equality, but for some also the uniformity of a community. "Believers are gathered in a circle which should evoke closeness and definiteness," Lukas Ondra criticizes this principle and prefers the classical longitudinal shape.²⁶⁷



In a modern central space an aesthetic environment for common gathering and meditation should be also created (The newly refurbished Protestant space in Prague Kobylisy with new pieces of religious art and liturgical furniture (Arch. Schaufer-Roskovec)

1.1.2 The longitudinal shape

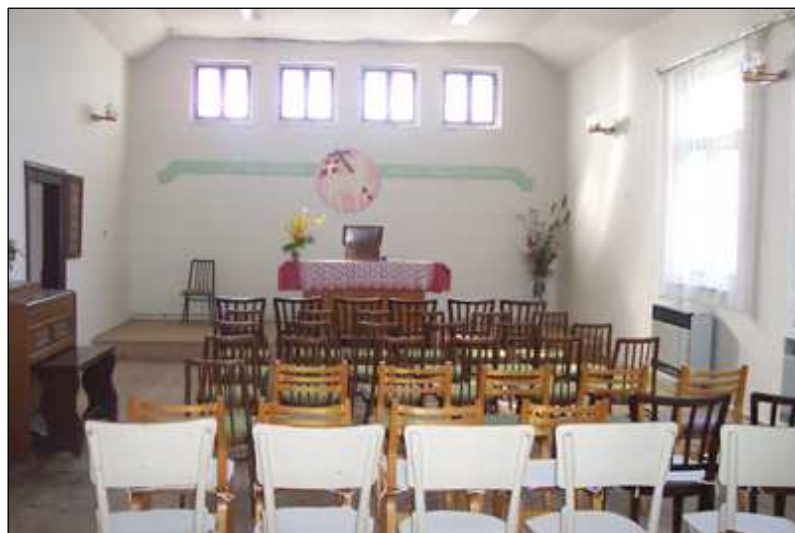
"The longitudinal shape underlines the spiritual journey of a man towards God and sacral space at the end of a temple in the apse."²⁶⁸ The problem of longitudinal layout is connected with the relationship of the nave and the sanctuary or the chancel.²⁶⁹ In previous chapters we have seen the development of a division between the place for believers and clergy during the post - Constantine times and later in the Middle Ages. This was criticized

²⁶⁷ Ondra, 24.

²⁶⁸ The apse is for Ondra a space of a glory and he complains that this part of a space is usually completely missing in the Czech protestant churches. "Sacral space is without a clear orientation.", In. Ondra, 24.

²⁶⁹ In most Protestant Churches, the term *sanctuary* denotes the entire worship area while the term *chancel* is used to refer to the area around the altar-table. In many traditions, such as the Anglican Church, Roman Catholic Church, and United Methodist Church, altar rails sometimes mark the edge of the sanctuary or chancel. The area around the altar came to be called the "sanctuary." Sanctuary, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanctuary>, (accessed 16th April 2009). Information from Wikipedia was checked according to Marchita B. Mauck, In. Bradshaw, 423. Mauck adds that the sanctuary is no longer a place reserved exclusively for the clergy after the Second Vatican Council, but rather the holy place where a holy people with its Presider celebrates its liturgy.

during the Reformation. The twentieth century liturgical movement tried to change this division particularly in the “High” church denominations. We can also find in some “Low” churches the opposite tendency to “sacralize” the secular space of a Protestant prayer house. Ondra argues in favour of the separation of sanctuary and nave: “We have to celebrate the Eucharist in divided places to remember God’s duality of divinity and humanity. People have to be invited to the Lord’s Table. Anyhow this space should be elevated.”²⁷⁰ This does not necessarily mean the return to the strong separation of sanctuary and nave. Ondra’s opinion



should be influenced by the very poor aesthetic and non-“meditative” character of the liturgical environment in his church. In a modern central space an aesthetic environment for meditation should also be created with a sense of sacrality and transcendence.

Prayer house in Bukovka is one of the typical examples of a very poor aesthetic character of a liturgical environment of the Czech Brethren church (e.g. the decoration is of a very low artistic quality, three types of chairs, lamps or laces on the windows do not represent this community in a very good light).

The question of the elevation of the sanctuary or chancel is debatable. From a practical point of view the elevation of the sanctuary or chancel enables better visibility especially



when the church layout is frontal and longitudinal. If the space of the congregation is elevated above the central sanctuary that enables even better visibility.²⁷¹

Modern longitudinal space of an aesthetic design in Czech Brother’s prayer house in Prague –Modřany. Chancel with the Lord’s Table is two steps elevated. The question is, is this important in such a small space?

²⁷⁰ Ondra, 24.

²⁷¹ For instance in the Czech Brothers church of the Jacob’s ladder in Prague Kobylisy: see the picture in a previous chapter.

1.1.3 The antiphonal (bifocal or communal)²⁷² plan

An **antiphonal plan** of ellipsoid layout with opposite focus for Ambo – pulpit and altar (the Lord’s Table) is more common in the Roman Catholic contemporary realisation of churches and is very rare in the Protestant church environment. This disposition very well symbolised the duality of worship of the Word and Eucharist and probably the best orientation for celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. This arrangement is not an invention of the last decades but a restitution of one of the oldest archetypes of Christian liturgical space - the choir in the monastery or in the basilica or even the return of the oldest synagogue or the temple tradition.²⁷³



Antiphonal plan in St. Mary's Oratory in St. Patrick's College in Maynooth (Ireland): The flexible chairs and placement of ambo into both foci of ellipse creates a very comfortable space for celebration of liturgy. For private meditation the space can be easily changed into a frontal meditative environment, e.g. on Good Friday.

On the other hand the antiphonal plan is not so good for private prayer and is not at all suitable for the celebration of a liturgy when the ambo and altar are placed

traditionally at the very front in the sanctuary. When this orientation of a space is designed it



is very practical to place chairs in the interior. This enables variability of a space much better than fixed pews.

Fixed uncomfortable choir stalls in Nineteenth Century College chapel in Maynooth and ambo and altar placed at the very front in the sanctuary leads to the very passive role of people while celebrating Eucharist. People in the very back can hardly see from the sharp angle what is going on in front. The space was probably very good for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours when full of seminarians a century ago.

²⁷² The word communal is the better terminology in German or Czech language.

²⁷³ Vlastně jde o pozůstatek synagogální bémy, na níž ve starověku seděli starší obce rozdělení do dvou skupin kolem posvátného svitku a katedry rabína. Také modlitby v jeruzalémském chrámu počítaly s dvěma zpěváckými chóry, které se střídaly v přednesu a navzájem si odpovídaly. Je to tedy starobylé uspořádání hodné velké pozornosti. /pozn. supervisora této práce Dr. Lic Jana Kotase- osobní e-mail z .24. července 2009/

1.1.4 The double room plan

The movement of two liturgical rooms is often common in a liturgical re-ordering of a space in Anglican Churches where an existing rood screen already provides this possibility. It is also common in The Protestant churches in The Netherlands's.²⁷⁴



Traditional disposition of a typical Anglican church with a nave, chancel and sanctuary was rearranged into the double room liturgical environment.

The liturgy begins in the nave or another separate space. In this room, the community hears the call to repentance, prepares itself to approach the Lord and listen to the Word of God. Then the community stands and moves into the second liturgical space, after the prayers of the faithful. Here there is only one item of furniture – the altar table – around which the community stands. It is a paradigm of the liturgical journey.²⁷⁵



The double liturgical rooming of the Reformed Thomas Kerk in Amsterdam built in concrete purist design in the 1960's (The room for the listening of the Word is on the left, the Eucharistic room on the right).

²⁷⁴ This is an official title for three recently united Dutch protestant churches (reformed, rereformed and Lutherans).

²⁷⁵ Giles, 122.

7.2. Contemporary understanding of church furnishing

7.2.1 The Lord's Table, the altar or table of the Word?

Various ground plans were discussed in the previous chapter. The shape of a church interior is connected with a question of the position of the altar – the Lord's Table. For centuries, the Lord's Table was missing in a number of Protestant liturgical environments and the pulpit for preaching dominated in it. Even today we can find spaces where no table is present and bread and wine is distributed in pews. Nevertheless the central placement of the Lord's Table is present in contemporary Protestant theology. According to Karl Barth a slightly elevated, simple wooden table, but strictly differentiated from an altar should be placed in the centre of a liturgical space. This table should be used as a pulpit (with movable lectern) and place for baptism too. "The separation of the pulpit, the communion table, and the baptismal font only serves to distract attention and create confusion; it is not justified theologically." wrote Barth.²⁷⁶



The connection of the Lord's Table and the Pulpit can be designed also in an aesthetic and symbolic way (e.g. with the shape of the cross on the table - Czech Brother's prayer house in Prague – Dejvice.

This is contrary to the Catholic understanding where the split of altar, ambo and sedes accentuate the dynamic of graduation of God's presence. Ondra comments about Barth's conception: "Barth's conception is very static and stresses too much on a speaker and theology of the Word."²⁷⁷ Yet this understanding of liturgical foci is still very common. A number of newly designed

²⁷⁶ Barth, "The architectural problem of Protestant places of worship in *Architecture in Worship*, 272.

²⁷⁷ Ondra, 22.

Protestant and particularly Reformed churches have been built according to this conception. The Lord's Table is connected with the pulpit in a very bizarre fashion in some places.

It is very unusual to find an ambo in a Reformed church. Disorder of various papers, books, flowers and pottery for Eucharistic elements may be the result of this centralized conception. Ondra found the idea of conception of a table reserved just for the Eucharist²⁷⁸ much better. A theological consequence of this idea is a more frequent celebration of Holy Communion.²⁷⁹



It is not a common practice in the Reformed churches to use the colours of the liturgical year. We can usually find them in circles connected with the liturgical movement. (ČCE - Česká Lípa)

The table should be covered with a linen cloth. White is the best covered with a strip of cloth in the colour of the liturgical season. The approach to the table should be without obstruction. So flowers, candles or cross should be placed on it with aesthetic sensitivity. Some liturgists prefer to have the Lord's Table empty before the presentation of the gifts²⁸⁰, but this is less important in Protestant understanding. Hence no plastic flower pots indeed!

²⁷⁸ An independent Lord's Table is also very common in Anglican, Lutheran and various reformed churches, not just in the Catholic tradition.

²⁷⁹ The drastic reduction of celebration of the Lords Supper to a few occasions during the year was understood to be a temporary solution, e.g. by Jean Calvin. For instance Calvin wrote: "It (the Sacrament) was not ordained to be received only once year as now is the public custom. Rather it was ordained to be frequently used among all Christians in order that they might frequently return in memory to Christ's Passion... the Lord's Table should have been spread at least once a week for the assembly of Christians, and the promises should have been declared to feed us in it spirituality."- In. Pavel Filipi, Hostina chudých. (Prague: Kalich, 1991), 144.

²⁸⁰ Ondra, 27; Giles, 183.

We have mentioned in the very beginning that the Altar described in the Book of Exodus was wooden and portable. This should be the inspiration for today's pilgrim community. "The Altar table could be carried wherever the liturgical assembly wished to gather – for example out of the doors on a suitable festival." The opposite idea is represented by a static and solid stone table. Nevertheless, the Altar – Lord's Table whether it is built in wood or stone should be of the highest quality and design.²⁸¹



In the Protestant tradition, the wooden table is preferable because wood as a material shows a better understanding of a community sharing a meal around the Lord's Table, rather than sacrificing at an altar.²⁸²

Wooden Lord's Table covered with a nice clean white cloth and distinctive traditional symbol of the Czech Reformation - the chalice - and the candlestick are of an interesting design. (Šonov)



A number of the Lord's Tables in the Czech brother's churches are covered by antique but not very attractive cloths. Symbols are placed on them (the chalice in this picture) and they are also often used on the wall behind them. (Neratovice-Libiš)

²⁸¹ Giles, 183.

²⁸² Nevertheless we can find a number of Lord's tables made of stone in Protestant churches. The Roman Catholic rules for the design of the Altar prefer, stone to be used in making altars. "It should be constructed of solid and beautiful materials". In. Paul Brandshaw,, *The New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*. London, SCM Press, 2002, 8.

7.2.2. Pulpit or Ambo?



The place of the Word is the place where the liturgical assembly spends most of its time. The central feature of this area is the pulpit or ambo. “In the first Christian basilicas, the ambo was a single piece of liturgical furniture which combined the functions of both lectern and pulpit.²⁸³ The separated lectern and pulpit is common in Protestant churches coming out of the Anglican reformation (e.g. various Anglican churches, Methodist, Presbyterians). The liturgical movement in these churches favours a single place for the reading and proclamation of the Word. Therefore the lectern should be moved out and only one pulpit or an Ambo remains.²⁸⁴

An elevated pulpit is common in Central European Protestant churches (Děčín)

A jointly connected Lord’s Table and pulpit, or a separated and elevated pulpit is common in Central European Protestant churches. Readings are performed behind the Lords table or next to it. When an elevated pulpit is present the sermon and biblical text for preaching²⁸⁵ is preached from it.

²⁸³ Giles, 173, 116.

²⁸⁴ For instance this was done in the Druid Hills Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia, Cader Howard, “Journey to the Table: Reflections on Sacramental Life at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church”, *Liturgy (Journal of The Liturgical Conference)*, vol.24, n.2/2009, 16.

²⁸⁵ The Gospel is not always read during the Protestant service and the Minister might preach on various biblical texts.



Elevated pulpits for preaching were replaced by the ambo placed next to the altar in Roman Catholic Churches after the Second Vatican Council.²⁸⁶

The typical jointly connected Lord's Table and pulpit in the Czech Brothers church (Jeseník)

At the same time this Council gave much more attention to the proclamation of the Word and the study of the Scripture. Hence this should inspire the Protestant tradition. The elevated pulpit could be replaced by the ancient focal point of the ambo for proclamation of Scripture and preaching too.²⁸⁷

The central location of the elevated pulpit is typical for the liturgical space in a Protestant church. “The pulpit is often highly elevated and it suggests an impression of a “watch tower” from which the minister controls (with his /her voice) the whole assembly. The Lord’s Table is suppressed under it and its importance is diminished.”²⁸⁸

The ambo should be placed in the nave or next to the Lord’s Table in a chancel. In the Early Church, the ambo was a structure standing on a raised platform in the middle of the nave, with the community gathered around it.

The position of the ambo in the chancel is more common nowadays. Nevertheless regarding the heritage of traditional buildings with a bema or ambo in the nave, there is plenty of scope to create a Place of the Word in the nave. An ambo would then be installed in the midst of the assembly. “Furthermore, an eastwards facing ambo gets us away once and for all

²⁸⁶ This was the case in the first years after the Council. This did away with the dignified procession with the book of the Gospel from the Altar towards the ambo and vice versa.

²⁸⁷ In the Catholic tradition a sermon or homily is given from the sedes and preaching out of the ambo is restricted to churches with a limited space.

²⁸⁸ Ondra, 22.

from the suggestion of a line-up of important people doing important things on a stage at the east end, entertaining an audience seated before them”²⁸⁹



Finally the ambo should be designed not only for reading and preaching the Word, but also for the display of the open Book of the Gospel. A constantly burning lamp or a candle should stand next to it.²⁹⁰

A separated ambo and the Lord's Table is still not very common in contemporary Reformed church design (The Czech Brethren church in Prague – Jižní Město)

The Protestants claim to be people of the Word but respect for the presentation of Scripture is very poor. Quite often, we can see lectors read from a creased piece of paper. The acclamation of Gospel deserves to be read from a specially designed Bible, rather than just a lectionary with a nice cover and design.

²⁸⁹ Giles, 173.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 174.

7.2.3 The place for the Initiation - Baptistry

The place for initiation should be a place of permanent significance and should not consist of a font in the corner. It is not only a place for baptism but also a place for the renewal of baptismal vows. In the Early Church the place of initiation was in a separate room or even a separate building. Later the baptismal font was placed at the entrance of the gathering room or in the middle of the assembly.” One thing is certain; the font should never be in the sanctuary. The place for the baptistry needs to be in a position which helps us understand better our Christian life as journey”.²⁹¹



In a prayer house or a church at least a mobile baptistry should be used instead of little pots.

However, in reality the baptismal font is very often missing and baptism takes place in the sanctuary next to the Lord’s Table. The water used for a baptism is in this case stored in the baptismal pot, placed on the Lord’s Table. This leads us to question the method of baptism. Baptismal pools are made by denominations which practice baptism, by immersion. This enables architects to highlight the baptismal pool as a permanent architectural

feature, and to express the importance of water as a dynamic element.²⁹²

If the particular denomination does not practise baptism by submersion, the font should contain a sufficient volume of water.

²⁹¹ Giles, 167-8.

²⁹² It is ironic that those communities most anxious to reassert the importance of Baptism by installing a baptismal pool in their building will often show no interest in expressing it as a permanent architectural feature. – Ibid., 168.

7.2.4. The empty space and place for seating (pews or chairs?)

The worshippers stood for prayer and indeed throughout the services²⁹³ in the early Christian basilicas and in the East until today. Seating places were provided just for the aged and infirm.²⁹⁴ Fixed pews have been placed in the churches since the time of the Reformation.



There is common in the various Protestant traditions to distribute the Eucharist to the people while they are standing or kneeling around the Lord's Table. Hence it is important to create enough space around it.

To force the people to stand during the liturgy would be very difficult in contemporary western society. Hence, when designing a liturgical environment a variety of uses for a space must be a

priority. For this flexible use of church building, chairs or light benches are much better, than heavy and fixed pews.²⁹⁵ The light and movable furniture can be arranged according to the needs for common liturgy, private prayer or other purposes. Some architects and Protestant liturgists even advocate portable platforms, altar-tables and an ambo.²⁹⁶ Flexibility enables various liturgical celebrations during the liturgical seasons or dual – purpose use of church buildings. This is very common in Protestantism and not as problematic as in the Catholic tradition.

²⁹³ Reclining during the liturgical meals in early Christian gatherings is even more ancient tradition.

²⁹⁴ Davies, 138.

²⁹⁵ Historical experience of closed private family pews where people have even their own cushions and name plates is not recommended nowadays. The noise of moving chairs, which is often an argument against use of chairs should be easy solved by the textile pads. - "Pozornost posluchačů nesmí být rozptylována šramotem židlí, kázání naslouchá se v sedě v lavicích, staří lidé nosí si do lavic i podušky. S místy k stání vůbec nepočítáme je to hrubě neprotestantské." In: Edgar, *Předpoklady stavebně-umělecké budoucnosti reformačních církví*, 30

²⁹⁶ For instance Edward A. Sowik; the only permanent fixtures in his churches are large baptismal pools with flowing water and pipe organs. In: Senn, 674.

It is good to move out pews, chairs or other furniture from part of the space (e.g. to create missing narthex²⁹⁷ in the back of the nave, space for alternative worship services or for distribution of the Communion).²⁹⁸

It is really liberating to move out every single piece of furniture out of a church. A completely empty space allows the architecture to speak with powerful clarity. “It is bad enough that every square inch of the floor area of our buildings must be occupied with furniture, chiefly acres by pews. Much hysterical effort is devoted to filling in as rapidly as possible, space in our liturgical room and silence in our liturgies,” points out Giles.²⁹⁹



The reality of decline in membership must also be taken into account. It is depressing when a small number of people are spread around in a church full of pews even if someone would advocate it in a sense of right for privacy. Hence the space should be filled just with a reasonable number of seating places for the number of expected worshippers. Spare chairs can be store in the stock and placed in the church just for large assemblies during the year.

St. Peter's Church in Köln (Germany) is used as a gallery and meditative space. Chairs are stored in the stock and used only for Sunday liturgy.

²⁹⁷ The **narthex** of a church is the entrance or lobby area, located at the end of the nave, at the far end from the church's main altar. This area is important for welcoming people. Traditionally the narthex was a part of the church building, but was not considered part of the church proper. It was either an indoor area separated from the nave by a screen or rail, or an external structure such as a porch. The purpose of the narthex was to allow those not eligible for admittance into the general congregation (particularly catechumens and penitents) to hear and partake in the service. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narthex> (accessed 16th April 2009). Information from Wikipedia was checked according to Marchita B. Mauck, In. Bradshaw, 332. Mauck is given another purpose for the narthex (it serves as a gathering place for processions, as a funerary wake space or as a place for introductory rites).

²⁹⁸ “Many churches are full of furniture, which we would have discarded from our own homes years ago. A very useful exercise for a community to undertake is to wait for a very sunny Saturday and to move out of the church every single piece of furniture. The effect is liberating, especially if the nave can be cleared for the first time and all its spaciousness is seen”. In. Giles, 106, 114-5.

²⁹⁹ Giles, 113.

7.2.5. The Place for the Presidency - sedes

The place to seat the presiding minister at liturgy (sedes) is not considered as highly in Protestant traditions as in the Catholic one.³⁰⁰ Catholic regulations in the wake of Vatican II lead to the practice in the first Christian basilicas of placing the presider's chair at the east end with seating for concelebrants.³⁰¹ The chair should be the work of an artist, and such as to underline its significance. At the same time it is forbidden to design the sedes in a form of a throne.³⁰²

For Protestants the presiding celebrant's chair is usually the same type of chair or pew as that of the ordinary worshipper, but it is usually separated from the others. The presider of a liturgy should be easily recognised by his (her) vestments and other signs of ordination. The sedes should be placed in front or by the side of a space, but not as a special seat.³⁰³ The placement of a presider's seat behind the Lord's Table as if it were in a pub is one of the bad habits resulting from a non sacramental understanding of the Eucharistic table which is underlined as a presiding minister is hardly visible behind the pulpit placed on the Lords table.³⁰⁴ To put the presider behind the table is justifiable on some occasions when taking alternative services, when the entire congregation is sitting round the one big table.



The presiding celebrant usually sits in the same type of a chair or a pew as that of the ordinary worshipper. Czech brothers ministers are usually dressed in a traditional black chasuble (talar) with Geneva gown and minority of them wear an alb and coloured stole.

³⁰⁰ Particularly in the Reformed tradition.

³⁰¹ Giles, 185-8.

³⁰² Irish Episcopal commission for Liturgy, *The Place of Worship*, (third.ed.), Ireland: Veritas, 1991, 26.

³⁰³ For instance in Presbyterian tradition other non-ordained presbyters should sit next to the presider.

³⁰⁴ This is a common practise in number of congregations of The Czech Brothers protestant church.

In the Catholic tradition the entrance and final parts of liturgy are celebrated and a homily preached from the sedes by the priest. That enables better visual separation of various parts of the liturgy. Some Protestant theologians appreciate this and write in favour of this.³⁰⁵



It is the whole community which is celebrating but Christians very early on recognised the importance of the ordained as the sole guarantor of order and stability.³⁰⁶ However the sedes should be modest and maybe even uncomfortable³⁰⁷ for ministers.³⁰⁸

It is liturgically wrong when the presider is sitting behind the Lord's Table. The Presider is not a lecturer but a liturgist!

A humble understanding of the presider's role should be underlined by placing his (her) seat alongside rather than above or beyond of the liturgical space. "Although this approach can pose problems of visibility and practical convenience, it has much to commend it as a powerful symbol of the shared priesthood of the whole community."³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵Ondra, 22, Allmen 257-60

³⁰⁶The Didache – probably the earliest Christian document outside the New Testament – makes no mention whatsoever of who is to preside. But very soon afterwards, Ignatius of Antioch (martyred AD 107) wrote of ordained members of Christian community. – In. Giles, 185.

³⁰⁷John Paul II asked that an uncomfortable chair for him, when the pope's private chapel was renovated. – Information from the lecture of the liturgy (Patrick Jones, The Liturgical Centre, Maynooth, spring 2009)

³⁰⁸The word minister means the one who is serving. Czech Brethren tradition underlines this during the distribution of Lord's Supper, by having the Minister receive last; sometimes from the hands of one of the presbyters.

³⁰⁹Giles, 188.

7.2.6. Place for agape, diaconical service and gathering

So far we have been dealing almost exclusively with the re-ordering of the place of liturgical assembly. We now need to examine therefore the potential of buildings as aids to the Christian community in implementing the social teaching of Jesus and communal life of



Christians. "This is not an alternative to a strong liturgical life, but a fruit of it", write Giles and he adds: "A long way from installation of a loo to the opening of a night shelter for the homeless. The simple desire to be hospitable is a good starting point."³¹⁰

*New Refectory of Norwich Cathedral in England is used as a Restaurant and Coffee Shop, and the Visitor and Education Centre. It has received particular acclaim for the way in which old and new are sympathetically combined, and for the use of traditional materials in a contemporary style.*³¹¹

Various Protestant church buildings were built as community centres or rectories with a room for worship services with relatively good background for hospitality and refreshment after services. For some people the Czech brother's protestant church is "Kirchen kafe"³¹² almost more important than liturgical service. Nevertheless not all particularly historical church buildings have got good facilities for hospitality and diaconal service. These buildings are often listed as part of cultural heritage and are so almost impossible to be refurbished or extended.³¹³ Experience from Britain of modernisation of church buildings showed that old and new can be sympathetically combined and church building can be change from a museum in the living environment.³¹⁴

³¹⁰Giles, 129.

³¹¹<http://www.cathedral.org.uk/hospitality/the-refectory-restaurant-and-coffee-shop--introduction-.aspx>. (Accessed 26th June 2009).

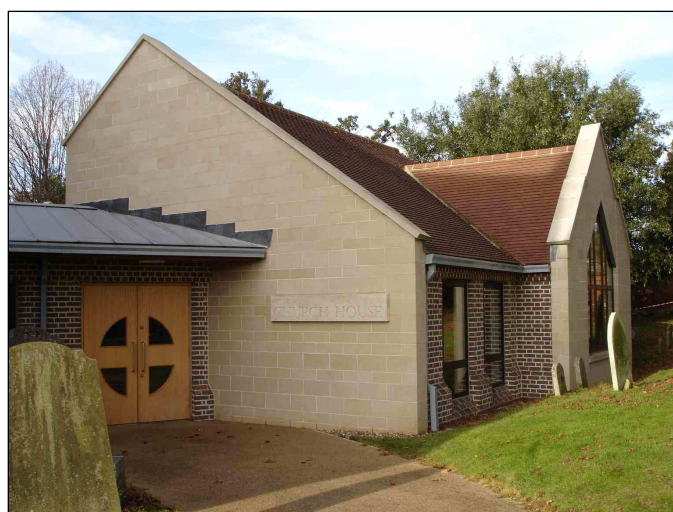
³¹²Even in Czech language is often used German term for after service "agape" with coffee, tee and sweets.

³¹³Common reality in the Czech Republic.

³¹⁴See number of modern extension and re- furbishing of church buildings in British Magazine *Church Buildings*.



*The Garden Hall built close to Anglican St. Mary's church in Wimbledon is a spacious, modern hall, with a lobby, kitchen and toilets for variety of function, both secular and religious.*³¹⁵



The extension of Gothic 14th. Century St Mary's church in Welwyn has been built in more traditional way



The Cemetery in the church, Aachen, Germany: This re-ordering brought a new life to the church which was not of any use to the local parish

³¹⁵<http://www.stmaryswimbledon.org/halls/gardenhall.html> (accessed 26th June 2009).

8. Selection of contemporary Protestant /Christian/ churches

A variety of the various Protestant church buildings (or Catholic if this would be really a significant and comprehensive example) in The Czech Republic, Ireland, United Kingdom, Germany or Switzerland, will be presented in this part of this paper with a number of the pictures³¹⁶. Because of the limits of space, only typical and representative samples will be presented. The first two Czech examples well known to the author (Prague –Horní Počernice and Česká Lípa) were studied and compared more deeply in detail. The author of this study participated in the design of these two Czech liturgical environments. The first two examples are characterized by the criteria given below and the others are characterized briefly enabling the reader to make his own point of view. These examples were chosen for presentation of positive and also negative characteristics of various criteria of evaluation of the liturgical space.

Particular buildings will be described according to these criteria:³¹⁷

1. Exterior appearance and interaction with surrounding environment and buildings.
2. Contribution of an interior layout.
3. Description of liturgical furniture. What is the dominant focus point? Is it pulpit or the Lords table?
4. Benefit of a space for various part of a liturgical celebration (preaching of the Gods Word, celebration of a Lords supper –Eucharist, baptism or other liturgical communal activities
5. Possibilities for the variability of a space (e.g. for the alternative services, non-liturgical use or private meditation).
6. Presence of symbols and art.
7. The use of light
8. Final conclusion.

³¹⁶The selected pictures were taken by the author himself, and some were found on various web pages. The author has collected them for a number of years; therefore it would not be possible to footnote all of them. For public publishing of this thesis, it would be necessary to establish authorship and footnote all the pictures.

³¹⁷ Lukáš Ondra inspired the choice of the Criteria.

8.1. Selection of the Czech Brethren Protestant church buildings and liturgical environments

8.1.1 Refurbishing of the facade of Praying house in Prague - Horní Počernice

1. A very ugly communist era built villa (1978) before reconstruction did not look like a sacral building at all. Trees which surround the building make it less monstrous and help it to interact better with surrounding buildings.

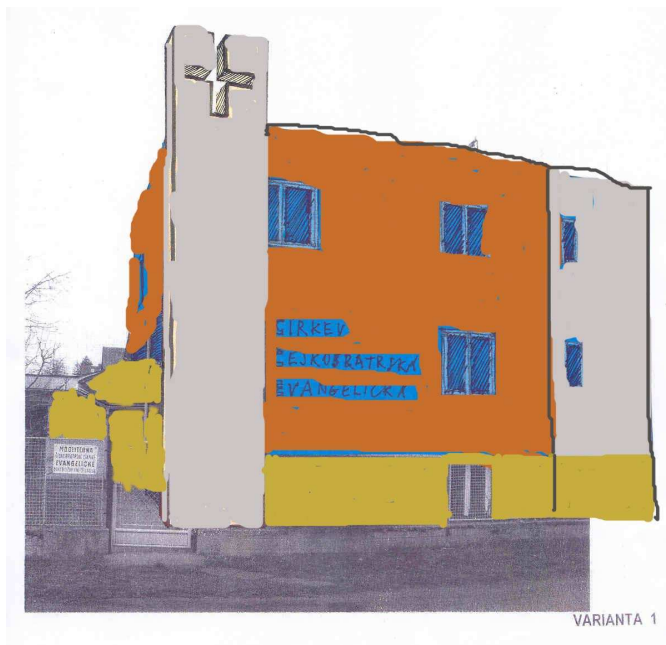


Prayer house before refurbishing



A coloured facade was done. A simple solution was chosen out of the more extraordinary variants

The aim of the project was to make a new facade and insulate the building, not to create a more sacral or “churchy” appearance. Nevertheless very interesting proposals were presented.



One of the proposed but unrealized projects: Even than a symbol of a cross was designed in a modern way and non-traditional /non-catholic/ approach (an open cross as symbol of – the cross of victory of the resurrection over death), opposition was raised against it. A tower was also considered to be too expensive to build and nobody (except the author Karel Koutský and several of his friends) were in favour of this. Change was found to be too shocking.

2. The congregation meeting room is in the basement and flats are situated in the ground and first floor. The disposition of the meeting room is the central half in the shape of the letter L.

3. The dominant liturgical furniture is slightly elevated to jointly connect the pulpit with the Lord's Table. A mobile baptismal font was used just once.³¹⁸ During other baptismal services little pots placed on the Table are used.



Another unrealized project of the refurbishing of the facade (O. Rada).

4. The space is small but so is the gathering congregation. Although the space is very limited there could be a divided Table and simple Ambo. The presbyters have to stand just next to the Table usually while praying, reading the Scripture or

announcing.³¹⁹



5. The Table with the pulpit is fixed but the chairs can move to make the space more versatile. The prayer room is also used for the service of the Last Supper around the long table on Green Thursday (Holy Thursday) and for non-liturgical purposes (concerts or banquets).

The interior of the prayer room is shown with the mobile baptismal font on the left of the picture.

In spite of relatively aesthetic modernisation, the space is not used at all for private meditation. There is hardly any call and interest for meditation or private prayer by parishioners. The meeting hall is also usually locked during the week.

³¹⁸ Perhaps they find the pulpit as an exclusive place just for the minister.

³¹⁹ It was used for the baptism of daughter of author of this thesis. The service was unusual too because a Catholic priest led the service in the Protestant church. It was done on the wish of the parents. They are an ecumenical couple.

6 The project of refurbishing included the placement of Christian symbols. Traditional symbols of the Czech Reformation were placed inside the prayer room (the chalice and the biblical quotation on the wall). The boards with the letters are disproportionate in relation to the size of the wall.³²⁰ A much bigger piece of religious art or a cross would suit this front and exposed wall better.



A sign of the Czech Reformation as symbol of Czech Brethren (O. Rada)

A metal model of the Bible and chalice /symbol of the Czech Reformation/ with a little cross as a symbol for universal Christianity was put on the facade in the final stage of the reconstruction. This relatively progressive design was found as a compromise to please everyone.

7. New aesthetic lamps were hung on the ceiling and coloured sanded glass attached on to half of the window. The lace curtains were taken down. There are no spotlights focused on the Table, this should change the feeling of the space.



A sanded glass attached onto the window (M. Štědra).

8. The refurbishment of this space was relatively well done, but more could have been done if there had been a will to do it by the community. Compromises were often the result of the discussions about the proposal. This brought a relative peace into the community. The marginalization and the spiritualization have deeply influenced the process of decision making. The whole community was often brought by the minority into perpetuating status quo.

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³²⁰ It would be better to place these boards on the side or back wall.

³²¹ See common concerns, which must be taken into account while re-ordering liturgical space, presented by Richard Giles and quoted in the chapter “*Recognising the problem*”.

8.1.2 Refurbishing of the interior environment of the prayer house in Česká Lípa

1. The prayer house used to be a pub. The house is not of any interest from a liturgical point of view and refurbishment of the exterior was not part of the proposal.



2. The meeting hall of the congregation is of a central disposition with light and movable pews on three sides of a space (before the refurbishment they were just on one side).

The central disposition of the interior

3. The dominant liturgical furniture is the Lord's Table and the ambo.



The Lord's Table and the ambo

4. The separation of the Table and the ambo enables easy recognition of the liturgy of the Word and of the Eucharist. The presbyters and other readers use the ambo without problems.

5. The light pews enable the variability of the space. The prayer room is used for the alternative service but seating arrangements are always the same. Part of the



An "agape" or "kirchen kafe" in a dining hall

reconstruction was the extension of the dining facilities behind the "sacral space" where the community has gathered for "agape" or "kirchen kafe".



The procession of the gifts is an alternative part of a liturgy for some Protestants. This can bring another dynamic dimension into the space.

The procession of the gifts leads by the children

6. The dominant symbol in the space is the green plastic art of crucified Jesus hanged on the frontal wall.³²² Ondřej Rada is its creator and this central piece of art is supplemented by careful design of colours on the walls.

7. New aesthetic lamps were hung on the ceiling and coloured sanded glass attached to one half of each window. These were done by the same person as in Horní Počenic. There are no lace curtains on the windows, there are no spotlights focusing on the Table or on the dominant plastic art, which gives the space a different atmosphere.

8. The refurbishment of this space was successful because of strong support for the proposal by the minister and the majority of the congregation.



³²² The green colour of the Crucified is very unusual. A number of people were very surprised by this expression of Christ's body and expressed negative feelings initially. They have found it a little bit depressing, but the soothing feature of the green colour and the calm expression of the face of Christ advocates this modern piece of art in spite of the subjective and sometimes even superficial evaluation. The hunger of Ethiopian children during the great famine in that African country inspired the slim and the hungry proportions of the body of the Crucified one.

8.1.3 Reconstruction of the church of the „Jacob Ladder” in Prague –Kobylisy



The reconstructed church with a new tower the “Jacob Ladder”

The church by night



The optimal central liturgical environment



The “altar” painting (O. Rada)



The space is used for secular purposes too (lectures)

8.1.4 Newly built church (the congregation house) in Domažlice



The proposed model of a new church



The real shape of the church



The central disposition of the meeting hall is movable chairs on the three sides of a space. In reality the central orientation is just a fiction. The Lord's Table with a seat for the presider is pushed towards the frontal wall and the majority of the congregation is seated longitudinally in front of the Table. The one row on the left

side is reserved (just for an exclusive?) and seats in number of the rows on the right offer an uncomfortable view with a focus orientated on the central seats instead of the Table and pulpit. The ideal disposition would be similar to the church in Prague Kobylisy as was presented above. (The Table in the centre, and the ambo in the back)



The jointly connected Lord's Table and the pulpit is of a shape and proportion more suitable for a lecture hall than for a liturgical space

The "altar cross" behind is hardly visible. At least slightly different shade of a colour would be appreciated.

Conclusion:

The exterior appearance is very good and the church deserves the building of the West-Bohemian Region award for 2009. On the other hand interior liturgical disposition is very poor.

8.1.5. Refurbishing of the interior environment of the church in Kutná Hora



The exterior of the church with a chalice on the top



The Lord's Table with a cross and chalice (M. Rada)



The interior of a church with religious paintings – The Old Testament on the left, The New Testament on the right (M. Rada)



The New Testament (M. Rada)

8.1.6. Refurbishing of the interior environment of the Praying house in Prague – Modřany



A “neutral” symbol of a fish in the window mosaic)



The window mosaic by night



The modern longitudinal liturgical space

8.1.7. Refurbishing of the interior environment of the praying house in Benešov



The previous liturgical arrangement



The contemporary liturgical arrangement



Dominant "foci" of the space (the Lord's Table with preaching pulpit and baptismal font)

8.1.8. Newly built church (the congregation house) in Letohrad



Newly built church



The church by night



The longitudinal liturgical environment with seats on the sides; not situated for comfortable participation



The Lord's Table covered by the white cloth and chalice. The tapestry of the Last Supper behind



8.1.9. Newly built church (the congregation house) in Prague – Jižní město



Newly built church



The central liturgical environment



The dominant liturgical furniture is the Lord's Table and the ambo. Spotlights focused on the Table

8.3. Selection of Irish and Northern Irish Protestant churches

8.3.1. The Presbyterian Church in Donaghmore, co.Donegal



The only Protestant church design by famous architect Liam McCormick



The Presbyterian's main symbol - the burning bush



The longitudinal liturgical arrangement



The Presbyterians don't use the cross as a symbol; this stained glass window with a cross is a rare in the Presbyterian tradition

8.3.2. Bethany Baptist Belfast



Typical auditorium disposition is still common design of a space in new churches of “non-liturgical” denominations



Traditional arrangement of liturgical furniture with a pulpit, lectern, the Lord's Table with a presider's seat behind in a proposed design

8.4. Selection of contemporary British Protestant churches



Traditional disposition of a typical Anglican church with pews



The nave, chancel and sanctuary were rearranged into the double room liturgical environment with new chairs.

8.5. Selection of significant Protestant churches in Germany and Switzerland

8.5.1 Lutheran church of the Reconciliation near the formal Berlin Wall



The church of the Reconciliation near the formal Berlin Wall



Two exterior walls: the first one is wooden, the second wall made of clay. These materials were chosen to symbolise a contrast with the concrete and steel of the formal Wall.



An antiphonal disposition of a church interior



8.5.2 The Arch in the Protestant monastery in Grandchamp, Switzerland



The central liturgical environment



The refurbished barn (L Arch) as a church in the monastery



The Lord's Table with the icon behind it

8.6. Selection of significant Roman Catholic churches

8.6.1. The Pilgrimage Brother Klaus Field Chapel in Rhineland, Germany



*The field chapel dedicated to Swiss Saint Nicholas von der Flüe (1417–1487), known as Brother Klaus, was commissioned by local farmer Hermann-Josef Scheidtweiler and his wife Trudel and largely constructed by them, with the help of friends, acquaintances and craftsmen on one of their fields above the village.*³²³



The interior of the chapel room was formed out of 112 tree trunks, which were configured like a tent layer after layer of concrete was poured and rammed around the tent-like structure.

*In the autumn of 2006, a special smouldering fire was kept burning for three weeks inside the log tent, after which time the tree trunks were dry and could easily be removed from the concrete shell.*³²⁴

³²³ The Pilgrimage Brother Klaus Field Chapel in Rhineland,

<http://www.archiweb.cz/buildings.php?type=20&action=show&id=2008>. (accessed 12.th. July 2009)

³²⁴ Ibid.

8.6.2. St. Colman's, Belfast - Lisburn



The exterior of the church



The antiphonal liturgical environment



The detail of the mosaic in the window

8.6.3. Our Lady Queen of Peace, Belfast - Dunmurry



The exterior of the church



The baptistery



The central liturgical environment



This stained glass window illustrates peace and reconciliation (the window was damaged during the Troubles)



The liturgical environment

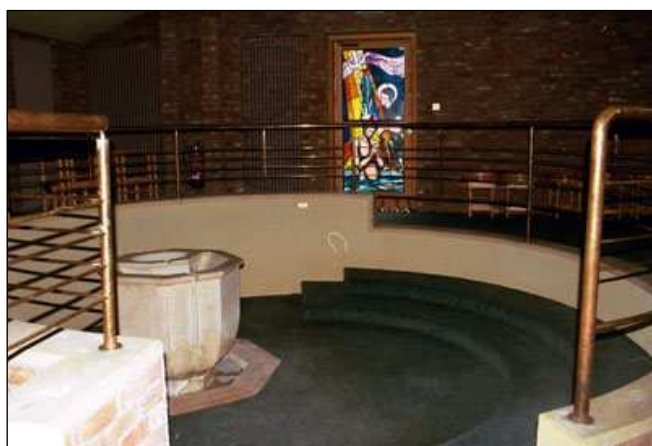
8.6.4. St. Brigit's, Belfast



The exterior of the church



The longitudinal liturgical environment



The baptistery

9. Final Conclusion

In the first part of this thesis I have discussed the historical and theological development of Protestant/Christian liturgical space. I made an attempt to orient myself in huge amount of secondary studies and primary sources regarding the researched topic. It was not easy at all to choose representative studies and in a number of chapters I have just touched upon the broadness of the topic. I have discovered also that to write in English and draw my own conclusions is more difficult than I had thought at the beginning.

When searching for the answers on the main question of this paper I have confirmed that different liturgical space and architecture of Protestant churches and specific understanding of symbols, art, or of mystical expression of sacral space is one of the most visible marks of these church communities. This is a result of unstable historical development.

On the other hand the convergence of theological thoughts regarding a design of sacral space has emerged in a number of churches in Western Christian Society during the twentieth century. This duality is very visible on evaluation of mainstream tendencies of contemporary development of sacral and liturgical environment as was presented in the first theoretical chapters and in the second practical chapter “*Re-pitching the Protestant tent*”. Two chosen examples of the liturgical environment of the Protestant Church of Czech Brethren offered in the second practical part support this duality quite clearly.

The refurbishment of the prayer house in Prague Horní Počernice was kept along traditional lines (e.g. jointly connected pulpit with the Lord’s Table, the boards with the biblical quotations, the traditional use of symbols of the Czech Reformation in a decoration or of any need for representation of the prayer house as a more “churchy” or sacral space.) Nevertheless few examples of more sacral expression of faith and use of the universal Christian symbols found their way to this space (e.g. sanded glass windows, or small cross rooted in the sign of a Church). In contrast, the refurbishment of the prayer house in Česká Lípa is an example of the deep influence of liturgical movement on the expression of the liturgical environment and the orientation of its furniture (e.g. the separation of the ambo and the Lord’s Table, or even the iconic expression of “the altar sculpture of the Crucified”³²⁵).

³²⁵ In the West churches have been even drawn from the treasures of the tradition of Easter spirituality due to liturgical and ecumenical renewal. Rich icons have traditionally played an important role in the liturgy of Eastern Christian churches; today they are appreciated by many Western Christians and in fact have found a place in

This polarisation is present when evaluating other presented Czech examples too. A liturgical environment is often built for a purpose - space for gathering without a deep sacral meaning. When an attempt is made to design central liturgical environment it is usually hindered by the remaining tradition of the longitudinal concept (e.g. the interior of the recently built new church in Domažlice with number of errors in a design of the liturgical environment). On the other hand some sensitively built central liturgical spaces with a sense of the sacredness were recently built too. They can be also used for both secular events and for the every day life of the community as is very common in Czech Protestant tradition (e.g. The Community centre of the Jacob 's Ladder in Prague-Kobylisy).

I had a chance to evaluate the Czech situation from a wider perspective while studying in Ireland and during my previous visits to a number of churches in Germany and Switzerland. Therefore a number of foreign examples were added. These examples – Protestant and Catholic one³²⁶ – were chosen for presentation of successfully designed liturgical environments on the base of the theoretical information which I have gathered during my research (e.g. churches with an antiphonal disposition of a space. Successful refurbishments and modern extensions of churches in Britain and Ireland are very inspiring and challenging for the contemporary Czech Protestant communities).

It is a pity that there was not room to interview ministers and other members of the congregations who gather and serve in these church buildings or for the evaluation of the Directory books.³²⁷ This methodology could have enriched my chosen method and led to interesting insights. Nevertheless I hope that this paper will be found as a contribution to dialogue regarding contemporary Protestant/Christian liturgical environment and sacral space for gathering of any kind.

some churches and chapels in the West. (E.g. in the church in the Grandchamp monastery in Switzerland. – www.grandchamp.com)

³²⁶ When travelling around churches in Ireland I had a chance to see more Catholic Church interiors, simply because Protestant churches are usually closed during the week. Nevertheless Catholic Churches which I have seen are inspiring for Protestant circles too. The best churches which I have seen were in Belfast (e.g. St. Colman's) where a number of new churches were built because of high migration of the population during the time of the Troubles.

³²⁷ I have succeeded to find only Catholic Pastoral Directories on the building and reordering of churches. There is not such a guide published by the Protestant church of Czech brethren.

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Resume

The changes in Protestant liturgical space and its contribution to the ecumenical dialogue is the main interest in this survey and master thesis. The most important streams and tendencies of contemporary development and historical consequences of the sacral and liturgical environment of the Protestant Church of Czech Brethren are evaluated in the broader context. In the first part of this thesis were discussed the historical and theological development of Protestant /Christian/ liturgical space. Two excursions of this study were to evaluate the liturgical movement during the twentieth century and the Protestant reflection of the *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution of the Sacred liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. The theoretical part was summarized and reflected in the chapter evaluating a sacral space, liturgical symbols, art and mystics in Protestantism.

In the second more practical were compared various opinions of theologians regarding the liturgical space and representative samples of the Protestant liturgical environment. Particular buildings were described according to a few selected criteria in the final chapter of this thesis with a number of pictures. Two examples well know to the author were studied in more detail. (Prague Horní Počernice and Česká Lípa) The representative foreign examples and ideals were chosen to enrich, supplement and challenge the Czech situation.

Presented examples of the liturgical environment of the Protestant Church of Czech Brethren support duality and polarization of contemporary development: A liturgical environments built for a purpose - space for gathering without a deep sacral meaning or newly built central liturgical environments hindered by the remaining tradition of the longitudinal concept. In the same time there are presented sensitively built liturgical spaces with a sense of the sacredness. They can be also used for both secular events and for the every day life of the community as is very common in Czech Protestant tradition.

Annotation

Surname and Name of author: Kirschner Jan, Ing. Bc. Ph.D.

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Title: **Contemporary Protestant Liturgical space
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This diploma work deals with a sacral place of worship. This thesis evaluates the main streams and tendencies of contemporary development and historical consequences of sacral and liturgical environment of the Protestant Church of Czech Brethren in the wider context of the Reformation and the contemporary Christianity. In the first part there is a short survey of the historical development of sacral space up to the Reformation, following by a development in recent history until the present. Theoretical part was summarized and reflected in the chapter evaluating a sacral space, liturgical symbols, art and mystics in the Protestantism.

Various opinions of theologians regarding the liturgical space and representative samples of Protestant liturgical environment were compared in the second practical part. Two examples well know to the author were studied more in details in the final catalogue.