



Now, you shoemakers of the new faith | Nuž, vy ševci viery nové

Text Information

Author | Anonymous

Language | Czech

Period | 15th Century

Genre | Parody, Poem

Source | Prague, Castle Archives MS E43

Collection |

URL |

Transcription, translation and introduction by Lucie Doležalová.

Introduction to the Text

The song *Nuž, vy ševci viery nové* (Now, you shoemakers of the new faith) was composed in 1421. It is a Catholic parody of the most famous Medieval Czech Decalogue paraphrase *Nuž, křesťané viery pravé* (Now, you Christians of the true faith), a Hussite song from ca. 1415 written by Jan Čapek, a priest and one of the co-founders of Tábor (d. 1445?). This Hussite song survives in various manuscripts, among them the so-called Jistebnický kancionál (Jistebnice Hymn Book, Prague, Library of the National Museum, MS II C 7 [ca. 1420], pp. 51–52, fol. 32rv).

The first reference to the song *Now, you shoemakers of the new faith* was by Václav Flajšhans (see Flajšhans 1902, section Further reading), who published it in an amended version (see Flajšhans 1904, section Existing editions). The text has been edited several times, on the last occasion together with an English translation (see Existing editions).

Introduction to the Source

Written probably in the second quarter of the 15th century, it survives in a sole exemplar on the front inside cover of a Latin manuscript from the Library of the Metropolitan Chapter at St Vitus' Cathedral, and is now housed in the Archives of Prague Castle under shelfmark E 43. As the exemplar contains many corrections, erasures and errors, it is likely to have been copied by an inexperienced scribe.

About this Edition

The translation by Lucie Doležalová is based on the more thorough of the previous editions, that by Kateřina Voleková which contains notes on the differences between itself and the previous edition, and on emendations and scribal corrections. Due to the frequent occurrence of inappropriate iotation in the manuscript, Voleková left cases of appropriate iotation in short syllables (e.g. kuože – in MS kwozye, cepy – in MS cyepy) without comment.

Further Reading

Doležalová, Lucie. "‘Upon the posts and the doors of thy house’: The Ten Commandments in Late Medieval Bohemia". *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, vol. 18, 2018, pp. 211–40.

- This is a detailed study focusing on the transmission of texts dealing with the Decalogue in Late Medieval Bohemia, with special attention to the Shoemakers' Song.

Flajšhans, Václav. Paběrky z rukopisů kapitulních [Manuscript Snippets from the Chapter Library]. *Věstník České akademie císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění*, vol. 11, 1902, p. 308, note.

- This publication discusses a mention of the song among other Old Czech manuscripts that are stored in the Library of the Metropolitan Chapter at St Vitus Cathedral.



Now, you shoemakers of the new faith | Nuž, vy ševci viery nové

Nuž, vy ševci viery nové,
vámťe přikázáno,
aby kuože zuby táhli
nechajíce sváru.

Toť jest prvé.

Jiné budem spravovati,
sami sebe nechámy:
toť jest písmo nalezeno
za masnými krámy.

Toť jest druhé.

V pátek budem maso jiesti
a v sobotu také,
v neděli chodiec páliťi,
toť jest dielo svaté.

Toť jest třetí.

Vezmúc cepy a palice
budem lidi bít:
nebesa nám připravena
v satanový řiti.

Toť jest čtvrté.

Zabím occe nebo bratra,
umyji se v krvi;
pakliť mi co máti přídí,
za vrch babu zvikli.

Toť jest páté

Pobeřme se k dobrým mistróm,
tu bude co bráti;
ve dne i v noci bez přestánie
vždy budem žráti.

Toť jest šesté.

Požádajme všickni toho,
bychom mohli vzíti
mocí, kvaltem i násilím,
leda my mohli míti.

Toť jest sedmé.

Now, you shoemakers of the new faith,
You are ordered
To pull the leather with your teeth
Stopping discord.

5 That is the first one.

We will correct the others
Leaving ourselves as we are
That is the scripture found
Behind the meat shops.

10 That is the second one.

On Friday we will eat meat
And on Saturday as well
On Sunday going to burn.
That is the holy work.

15 That is the third one.

Taking flails and sledgehammers
We will beat **people**
The heavens are prepared for us
In Satan's arse.

That is the fourth one.

20 I will kill father or brother

I will wash in **blood**

If [my] mother says something
I will grasp her hair and fling the old hag.

That is the fifth one.

Let us join the good masters

25 There will be enough **to take**

During the day and at night without stop
We will devour.

That is the sixth one.

Let us all covet

30 What we can have

By might, force, and violence
So that only we can own it.

That is the seventh one.



Pobeřme jim ovce, koně
a zajmem jim krávy;
tuť nás budú poklínati
mužie, ženy, báby.

Toť jest osmé.

Již nebudem víc orati
ani budem žieti,
jedno vždyckny den ode dne
spolu budem přieti.

Toť jest deváté.

Bópomozi, milá bratři
z té dobré múdrosti,
opustíce všecko dobré,
přidržíme se zlosti.

Toť jest desáté.

Již sme všecko dokonali
řečemež spolu: Amen
srdce sú v nás zkameňala
jakžto pravý kámen,
kámen, amen.

Let us take their sheep, horses,
And capture their cows
Then they will curse us:
Men, women, old hags.

40 hat is the eighth one.

We will not plough any more
And we will not mow,
Always, day by day we will only
Enjoy ourselves together.

45 That is the ninth one.

With God's help, dear brother,
Out of this good wisdom
Leaving all the good things,
Let us stick to sin.

50 That is the tenth one.

Having finished everything
Let us say together: Amen
Our hearts petrified in our chest
Just as real stone

55 Stone, amen

Critical Notes

Line 13 i.e. to distill hard liquor.

Line 55 The word for "stone" – kámen rhymes with amen in Czech.