

Huss – The Hussite Movement – Tradition – Prague. From Reality to Myth and Back.

International Conference

Organizers: Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and Prague City Archives

Duration: 27–29 May 2015

Place: Lecture Hall, Clam-Gallas Palace, Prague

In 2015, 600 years will have passed since the unfortunate death of John Huss – a priest, Church critic and reformer, dean and chancellor of Prague University and representative of the arising national awareness. Huss has been known and widely accepted in all these roles up to today and in the form which was largely developed by modern tradition, especially during the 19th and 20th centuries. Huss' "second life" has lasted till nowadays and continues to shape the Czech national historical consciousness. The features prevailing in the final picture are those of a national hero fighting against the wealth of the Church and for free dispersion of truth. These elements have been jointly accentuated in the media, textbooks and countless speeches, almost having turned into a cliché, a stereotype view on the verge of sterility.

Although Huss is a well-known figure throughout Europe, as well as on other continents, his legacy lives on in various forms in various places. Being preached as the predecessor of Luther and Calvin by reformed Churches elsewhere (and mainly in the Anglo-Saxon milieu), there survives in other places the image of a hero revolting against authority and bringing to life the Hussite movement named after him. Or, on the contrary, he stands for a disobedient and irresponsible priest who himself had no idea what he would elicit, or a German opponent ranking among those who caused the departure of the foreign masters and students in 1409, and thus also the decline of Prague University.

Our May 2015 conference will thus focus on the origination and formation of the reflection of Huss' personality, life and legacy across history and mainly in the Czech lands, albeit with regard to the same processes unwinding in the outside world and its communities and social groups. In no way are the differences and discrepancies among the various traditions going to be obscured. At the same time, the role of Prague as the centre of the direct reception of Huss' heritage and the source of inspiration for the continuing pre-modern tradition will be underlined, equally as it is the place where the modern form of this tradition developed and steadily gained considerable acceptance.

Subject fields:

- John Huss and the image of the Bohemian reformer as reflected in the works of his contemporaries (including the reception of Huss' oeuvre)
- John Huss and the Hussite Prague as the stage for the reform
- The Czech lands, Europe and the Hussite tradition in the 16th and the early 17th centuries (the beginnings of Huss' "second life": the saint, the heretic and the forerunner of the Reformation)
- The "heretic tradition" in a Catholic country. Huss in Bohemia and Moravia between the Thirty Years' War and the Josephine reforms
- John Huss and his echoes abroad between Baroque and the Enlightenment
- The Huss' tradition during the Czech National Revival in the international context from the Josephine reforms to the First World War (Huss as a national hero, a subject of political disputes...)
- The pinnacles of Huss' tradition, its subsequent exhaustion, revival, misuse and indifference to it (from the First World War to present)

- Reflection of the Hussite tradition in fine arts, literature and film across centuries

Conference languages: Czech, German, English

Speech duration: 20 minutes

Please e-mail your offers (including an abstract, maximum 1 standard page) to hus2015@seznam.cz. The deadline for your e-mails is 30 November 2014.

The conference preparatory committee reserves the right to refuse a paper or to only accept it for the ensuing printed publication.

The speakers will be provided free accommodation in Prague for the duration of the conference.

On behalf of the preparatory committee:

doc. PhDr. Martin Holý, Ph.D

doc. PhDr. Václav Ledvinka, CSc.

PhDr. Eva Doležalová, Ph.D.

doc. Mgr. Jaroslav Šebek, Ph.D.