



Patron Saint and Prophet: Jan Hus in the Bohemian and German Reformations (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology)

Phillip N. Haberkern

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The Bohemian preacher and religious reformer Jan Hus has been celebrated as a de facto saint since being burned at the stake as a heretic in 1415. *Patron Saint and Prophet* analyzes Hus's commemoration from the time of his death until the middle of the following century, tracing the ways in which both his supporters and his most outspoken opponents sought to determine whether he would be remembered as a heretic or saint. Phillip Haberkern examines how specific historical conflicts and exigencies affected the evolution of Hus's memory—within the militant Hussite movement that flourished until the mid-1430s, within the Czech Utraquist church that succeeded it, and among sixteenth-century Lutherans who viewed Hus as a forerunner and even prophet of their reform.

Using close readings of written sources such as sermons and church histories, visual media including manuscript illuminations and monumental art, and oral forms of discourse such as vernacular songs and liturgical prayers, this book offers a fascinating account of how changes in media technology complemented the shifting theology of the cult of saints in order to shape early modern commemorative practices. By focusing on the ways in which the invocation of Hus catalyzed religious dissent within two distinct historical contexts, Haberkern compares the role of memory in late medieval Bohemia with the emergence of history as a constitutive religious discourse in the early modern German land. In this way, he also provides a detailed analysis of the ways in which Bohemian and German religious reformers justified their dissent from the Roman Church by invoking the past.

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