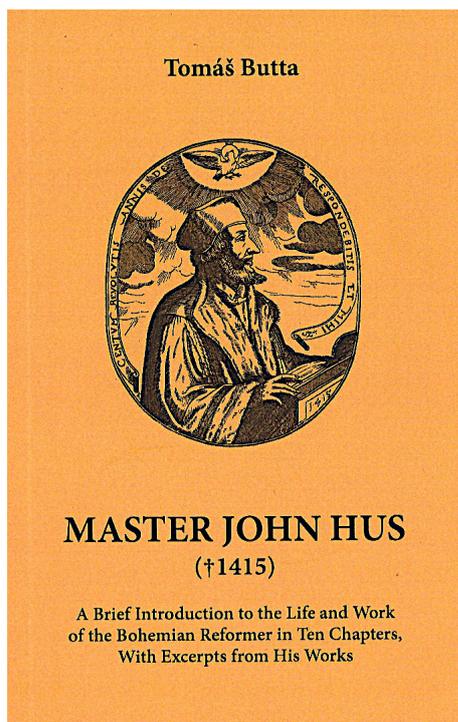


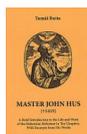
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A Brief Introduction to the Life and Work of the Bohemian Reformer in Ten Chapters, With Excerpts from His Works



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Popis

The year 2015 represents a jubilee of highest importance both for Christian churches, and for the general public in the Czech Republic. On 6th July we are celebrating the 600th anniversary of the martyr's death of Master John Hus, a renowned and highly-regarded religious thinker and one of the most prominent figures of the Bohemian Reformation, whose death at the stake at the Council of Constance in 1415 started a new chapter not only in Bohemian history, but also foreshadowed many events of the Protestant Reformation in Europe, which were still yet to come. This jubilee is, first and foremost, a great opportunity for us to get further acquainted with Master John Hus, his life and his work. He was an epic and prophetic figure, but also a very human and very humble one. Thus it is not only a quest for historians, theologians, philosophers and other scholars to get to know him, but also for Christian churches which acknowledge his legacy, as well as for the widest public. In order to succeed in this quest, it is absolutely necessary - in my opinion - to let Hus speak for himself through his works. In fact, the main focus of this book, in which I have tried to gather and carefully select various excerpts from Hus's works, is to offer the readers a closer look into the thought, attitudes and uneasy decision-making processes of this Bohemian man of deep and honest faith.

We can divide this book into three parts. The first part contains texts which John Hus wrote about himself and his life. Here you will mostly find interesting texts which can clarify for us his inner motivations: the background of his decision-making processes in the key situations of his dramatic life journey. From this perspective, Hus's letters to his friends, the faithful, colleagues and prominent figures of the political and church life offer an authentic and remarkable testimony of the time and represent the most reliable source to aid in our understanding. The second part consists of Hus's theological works. Hus is introduced here not only as an academic scholar and apt rhetorician, but also as a preacher of the Gospel, teacher of people, author of Christian hymns which are popular among Christian churches even today, critical theologian well-grounded in Scripture and Church tradition, and as a pastor caring for individuals and for the society. The third part contains several brief reflections on Hus's legacy on Christian thought throughout history and today. As Hus's thoughts and attitudes are deeply rooted in the Holy Scripture and Christian values, you will soon find out you cannot completely comprehend his works without at least elementary knowledge of the Scripture.

This book intends to provoke questions, dialogues, reflection, as well as an interest in a more profound study of Hus's legacy. To fulfil this task, the best option is always to consult directly the original writings, primary resources, and also both older and newer critical secondary literature. John Hus addresses the Czech nation in a timeless way, at the same time significantly transcending its region and history. Getting to know Master John Hus means travelling to the distant past and finding there a human being who is close to us in a special way.

(Tomáš Butta, Patriarch of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church)

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