

Summary

The work deals with the dissemination, duration, transformations and reception of the cult of an important Jesuit Saint, St. Francis Xavier, in the early modern Czech lands. Its goal is to contribute to the better understanding of the reality of the re-catholicization after the Battle of White Mountain and the forms of Czech spirituality of the 17th and 18th century. This particular cult was selected because of the fact that St. Francis Xavier was closely related to the main (or most prominent) participant of the re-catholicization, i. e. the Jesuit order, where he in the informal hierarchy of Saints occupied the second place immediately after the founder of the Society St. Ignacius of Loyola. Moreover, St. Francis Xavier belonged among the five new Catholic Saints canonized in 1622 (St. Ignacius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Philipp Neri, and St. Isidore of Madrid), who represented an important constituent of the revived post-Tridentine Catholic spirituality. However, although the existing secondary literature presupposes that the reverence to St. Francis Xavier was widespread in the Czech Baroque, no systematic study of this theme was realized until now.

First chapter deals with the specification of the theme of the work, maps existing knowledge and sources available and describes the methodology of the work. Second chapter briefly outlines the life and work of St. Francis Xavier. Third chapter tracks the spreading of the reverence to St. Francis Xavier after his death and its development, the canonization of the Saint and the continuation of the cult in the 17th and 18th century; its last section pays special attention to the diffusion of his cult in the Holy Roman Empire and the Central Europe and its local reception. In the 4th chapter the author follows the spreading of the cult of St. Francis Xavier to the Czech lands and its setting up, development and transformations in the Czech environment of the 17th and 18th century. He does so first by means of the systematic monitoring of the occurrence of Xaverian patrocines, presence of St. Xavier and the way of describing him in the Czech written production of the time and in the visual works of art and, complementarily, also of other information, predominantly about public festivities connected to the Saint. Consequently, the author outlines partial functions of the cult of St. Francis Xavier (i. e. Xavier as a patron saint of the university, protector against plague, against sudden death, against storm and bad weather etc.) and tries to delineate the development of the cult on the time axis. In the concluding chapter, the author summarizes his findings and answers the questions posed at the beginning of the work.

Key words: *Cult – cult of the Saints – St. Francis Xavier – Jesuits – Jesuit Saints – Czech lands – early modern period– church history – religious history – spirituality – devotion – Catholicism – re-catholicization – counter-reformation – Catholic reformation.*