

## Summary

THE IMAGE OF LIGHT IN ATTIRE IN JAN HUS' *POSTIL*

The symbolic image of “light in attire” (*světlo v obleči*), found in Jan Hus' medieval collection of Czech homiletic commentaries on scriptural passages known as *Postil*, is examined in the present study against the general background of Alexander Stich's penetrating analysis of the symbolism of light and attire in Jaroslav Seifert's *Světlem oděná* (“Attired in Light”, a collection of poems published in 1940). Compared with Seifert's multi-faceted poetic image of the city of Prague “attired in light”, Jan Hus' use of *světlo v obleči* does not seem, at first sight, to be much more than a translation of a metaphor used by Saint Gregory the Great. At closer look, however, Hus' choice of *obleč* – arguably a rather uncommon and semantically somewhat vague word at the time – appears to be a well-considered creative act generating a variety of connotations of the concepts of “light” and “attire”. It is argued that by employing an uncommon word – yet a word easily identifiable with common Czech expressions derived from the same root – Jan Hus was able to masterly parallel the symbolic use of the Latin word *testa* – “(earthen) container (protecting the light inside)” – in the sense of “the human outside covering/protecting the godly inside” with the Czech word *obleč* – “a (cloth or leather) cover/attire (protecting the light inside)” – to express the same metaphor.

Keywords: Hus; *postil*; metaphor; translation; symbolism of light; symbolism of attire

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