

“NE VERBUM DEI IN NOBIS SUFFOCETUR ...”

PREACHERS OF THE EARLY HUSSITE ERA AND THEIR
RHETORICAL TECHNIQUE

Pavel Soukup

Since preaching was very important for the Hussite reformers, the present contribution is based on the assumption that this appreciation of the role of the homily in connection with the use of certain communication strategies is one of the principal reasons for the broad resonance the Hussite doctrine found across the whole social spectrum. The study focuses on the structural and rhetorical approaches used in those Latin and Old Czech sermons that have been preserved in verbatim form, mainly texts by Jan Hus and Jacobellus of Mies. Thus, the reconstruction of the communicative process does not depend exclusively on meta-homiletic sources, but rather takes into account the sermons themselves, which had been neglected by past research efforts. In homilies both ad clerum and ad populum, the study detects addressee-orientated wording and specifically homiletic patterns of thought. Closer analysis shows that homiletic methods from the heyday of scholasticism were applied to Hussite sermons in a selective fashion. This result is especially valuable for an appraisal of the true importance of early Hussitism among the ecclesiastical reform movements of its time.