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***“Non sedit super equum fervidum,  
sed super asinam”:***  
**Concerning One of Jan Hus’s Antitheses  
in His Czech *Postilla*<sup>1</sup>**

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The “antitheses of Christ and Antichrist” is a traditional concept in the Antichrist rhetoric. The two figures are the customary elements in this context, as is obvious from the time of Origen. Yet, this figure is not always the most distinctive feature of the Antichrist critique. The rhetoric connected with the Antichrist theme offers an entire series of other possibilities on how to speak or write about the topic.

Jan Hus also utilises diverse elements in his critique of the Antichrist, which he derives from a variety of sources, the original version of which he adjusts to the character of his work and to the specific situation. Direct citations in Hus’s Antichrist critique reveal the influence of earlier authorities, particularly that of Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>2</sup> Among his contemporaries he cites John Wyclif, particularly his idea that the highest Antichrist also occupies the highest place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>3</sup> Although he does not cite Czech authors such as Milíč of Kroměříž or Matěj of Janov, it is possible to speak of them, in reference to the Antichrist and to a great extent also to Hus’s rhetoric, as precursors or inspirations.<sup>4</sup> In Hus’s writings we find

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- 1 This study originated within the framework of the project *Jan Hus and Hussite Literature for the 21. Century* (GA ČR 17–154335).
  - 2 For citations from Bernard in Hus’s work, see Lucie Mazalová, *Eschatologie v díle Jana Husa* [Eschatology in the Works of Jan Hus] (Brno, 2015) 118–119, 157–158, and 198.
  - 3 See, for instance, Hus’s synodal sermon “Diliges Dominum Deum”, in *Ioannis Hus et Hieronymi Pragenses, confessorum Christi Historia et monumenta*, ed. M. Flacius Illyricus (Nuremberg, 1558) II:27v–31v (here 28r), the critical edition is available in Zuzana Lukšová, *Synodální kázání Jana Husa Diliges Dominum Deum* [Diliges Dominum Deum, Synodal Preaching of Jan Hus], PhD. Thesis, Faculty of Arts (Brno, 2018) 137–185 (here 144–145); and Johannes Wyclif, *Sermones*, ed. Johann Loserth (London, 1887), I:252–258 (here 252).
  - 4 The concept of “Hus’s precursors” was used by Augustin Zitte in his *Lebensbeschreibungen der drey ausgezeichneten Vorläufer des berühmten M. Johannes Hus von Hussinecz, benanntlich: des Konrad Stiekna, Johannes Milicz und Mathias von Janov; nebst einer kurzen Uebersicht der böhmischen Religionsgeschichte bis auf seine Zeit* (Prague, 1786). For more on the history of this concept, see: Helena Krmíčková et al., *Pro defensa veritatis evangelice* (Brno, 2015) 7–8. Most recently this concept was questioned by František Šmahel, *Jan Hus, Život a dílo* [Jan Hus: Life and Work] (Prague, 2013) 26, 236, and 262–263.

a large number of the same ideas and turns of phrase.<sup>5</sup> If we speak about the domestic milieu in which Hus operated at the turn of the fifteenth century, we have to assume not only the influence of so-called precursors, but also that of local oral tradition.<sup>6</sup>

One symbolic element that was present at this time was the Christ/Antichrist antithesis, which had already appeared in the treatise *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti* of the Czech author Matěj of Janov.<sup>7</sup> Hus, however, most likely could not adopt the specific antithesis from Matěj that derives from Zechariah 9:9 and describes, on one hand, a humble Christ arriving on a donkey, and on the other hand, an ostentatious Pope-Antichrist in purple and on a white horse. In Hus's work we find this antithesis in a clear-cut form in the Czech *Postilla* (1413), as noted for the first time by Karel Chytil in 1918.<sup>8</sup> Here, however, this antithesis based on Zechariah 9:9 appears after first having undergone a certain evolution in Hus's writings.

There are several notable aspects of this antithesis. It could be presented in art as well as in literature, and thus it resembles a famous antithesis of Christ and the Pope included in the *Tabulae veteris et novi coloris* of Nicholas of Dresden and, above all, in its Czech version in the Jena Codex.<sup>9</sup> It is strange that it does not appear in the works of Matěj of Janov, who favoured the use of antitheses in his presentation of Antichrist. And while this antithesis is very expressive and does appear in Hus's work at various

5 See a detailed discussion of this relationship in Mazalová, *Eschatologie*, 227–247

6 Such ideas are evident in both processions and audio-visual formulations of the Antichrist theme. See: Petra Mutlová, "Communicating Texts through Images: Nicholas of Dresden's *Tabule*," in *Public Communication in European Reformation, Artistic and other Media in Central Europe 1380–1620*, ed. Milena Bartlová and Michal Šroněk (Prague, 2007) 29–37; Milena Bartlová, "Prout lucide apparet in tabulis et picturis ipsorum," *Studia Mediaevalia Bohemica* 3 (2011) 249–274, with additional literature for this subject.

7 The antitheses are invoked throughout the third book of the *Regulae*, for instance: *Regulae* III, 5, 5, 8, 30: "Antichristus et Christus poterunt comparari. Sicut Christus fuit totus verax et venit per veritatem,| sic Antichristus erit totus mendax...| Sicut Jhesus fuit totus pius,| sic ille homo perditionis [see 1 Thess 2: 3] est totus crudelis.| Ille, scilicet Christus, totus humilis,| iste totus superbus." Vertical lines signify transitions to the opposite thesis.

8 Karel Chytil, *Antikrist v naukách a umění středověku a husitské obrazné antithese* [Antichrist in Medieval Learning and Art, and Hussite Pictorial Antitheses] (Prague, 1918) 143.

9 *Tabule veteris et novi coloris seu Cortina de Anticristo, přepis textu s ikonografickým komentářem* [Transcription of the Text with Iconographic Commentary] ed. Milada Homolková et al., in *Jenský kodex* [Jena Codex], ed. Kamil Boldan a kol. (Prague, 2009) 107–108 (cf. folios 12v and 13r); the antithesis of the pope riding on a white horse and Christ bearing his cross is based on Mt 27:31–32; Mk 15:20–21 and Lk 23:26–28, cf. with the Latin text of the *Tabule*: "Tabule veteris et novi coloris seu Cortina de Anticristo," in *Master Nicholas of Dresden The Old Colour and the New*, ed. Howard Kaminsky et al. (Philadelphia, 1965) 38–39. See also the depiction in the Göttingen manuscript, which is considerably damaged in the relevant place: *Tabule staré a nové barvy Mikuláše z Drážďan ve staročeském překladu* [Master Nicholas of Dresden The Old Colour and the New in Old Czech Translation], ed. Milada Homolková and Michal Dragoun (Prague, 2016) 334–335, with a transcription on 157.

times – embryonically it shows up at the turn of 1404, another developmental stage follows in 1407–1408 – nevertheless it is rather rare in Hus’s writings, especially if we consider how often he refers to Antichrist and what type of rhetoric he employs. He prefers antithetical expressions and often refers to Antichrist without explicitly using the word *Antichristus*. Finally, and still more specifically, since Hus uses this antithesis in his sermon collections, its appearance could be presumed in the synodal sermons,<sup>10</sup> especially since he delivered them in the years when working with this antithesis. Yet, the antithesis does not appear anywhere else except in the works which I will discuss below. It seems that Hus did not wish to use this antithesis in any place or at any time other than in the sermons directly associated with Palm Sunday. A single – liturgically understandable – exception is a sermon for Advent Sunday in his *Leccionarium bipartitum – Pars hiemalis*.

## I.

Chronologically, Hus’s first work in which the fundamental form of the antithesis appears is the collection *Collecta Ad te levavi* (1404–1405).<sup>11</sup> It is specifically in a sermon for Palm Sunday (no. 32),<sup>12</sup> which primarily relies on the pericope Matthew 21:5, and Zechariah 9:9. It cites the antithesis contained in Pseudo-Chrysostom’s explication of Matthew 21 almost verbatim. It is exactly here that we encounter the image of the humble Christ on a donkey. The contrast is represented by one who rides in a golden chariot, dressed in a purple robe, or on a rambunctious horse that loves conflicts and disputes. The sermon was to suggest to the preacher how to interpret Mathew’s gospel and Zechariah; namely, by asserting that the biblical passages should be interpreted in the spirit of the concluding antithesis and developing the idea of Christ’s humility. Although it is not explicitly stated who was to be Christ’s antithesis, it was likely the sinful clergy rather than a random sinner. This can be concluded on the basis of the sermon and with regard to the criticism of the clergy that Hus pursued with marked intensity in 1404–1405. Let us recall especially the university sermon *Abiciamus opera tenebrarum* (1404), the explication *Super Canonicas* (1404–1405), the synodal sermon *Diliges Dominum Deum*, or the treatise *De sanguine Christi glorificato* (both from 1405). In all these writings, the expression “Antichrist” and its derivatives occur

10 Hus has compiled two synodal sermons: *Diliges dominum Deum* (1405), and *State succincti* (1407), published in *Ioannis Hus et Hieronymi Pragensis, confessorum Christi Historia et monumenta*, ed. M. Flacius Illyricus (Nuremberg, 1558) II:f. 32r-36v.

11 František M. Bartoš and Pavel Spunar, *Soupis pramenů k literární činnosti M. Jana Husa a M. Jeronýma Pražského* [The Register of the Literary Activities of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague] (Prague, 1965) 139 (No. 88).

12 Johannes Hus, *Sermones de tempore qui Collecta dicuntur*, MIHO, 7:170–173 (No. 32).

frequently. On the contrary, in the sermon on Matthew 21, such rhetoric is entirely absent:

Non sedit in curru aureo preciosa purpura fulgens nec ascendit super fervidum equum, discordie amatorem et litis, qui gloria iactantiae pectus habet repletum, qui de longe odorat bellum et gaudet ad vocem tube et cum viderit sanguineam pugnam, dicit in corde suo: Bene factum.<sup>13</sup> Sed sedit super asinam tranquillitatis et pacis amicam. Non autem vides in circuitu eius splendentes gladios aut cetera ornamenta armorum terribilium. Sed quid? Ramos frondentes, testimonia pietatis. Venit ergo mansuetus, non ut propter potentiam timeretur,| sed ut propter mansuetudinem amaretur.<sup>14</sup>

## II.

A similar situation arises in Hus's *Leccionarium bipartitum – Pars hiemalis*<sup>15</sup> (1407–1408) in the sermon on Matthew 21:1–9 for Advent Sunday. In this text, however, Hus explicitly posits a priest or even, theoretically, the pope as a contrast to Christ on the donkey. Moreover, this contrast comes in a statement that is very similar to the one that we encounter in the *Postilla*:

‘Cum fuerit rex constitutus, non multiplicabit sibi equos.’ [Deut 17, 16] Si non licet hoc regi, ergo magis nec clerico, si non de redditibus propriis, multo minus de rebus ecclesiasticis et patrimonio Crucifixi. *Crisostomus*: ‘Non sedit Dominus in curru aureo preciosa purpura fulgens nec ascendit super fervidum equum, discordie amatorem,| sed super asinam, tranquillitatis et pacis amicam.’<sup>16</sup> Et nescio, quomodo papa cum ceteris equisedis legit hoc ewangelium et collectam, que ante introitum templi in die Palmarum post processionem legitur.<sup>17</sup>

A similar antithesis is also evident in this passage, which later appears in the *Postilla* and which is complemented by Hus's brief Czech translation and explanation in *Leccionarium bipartitum*. It is a part of *Oratio solemnis in dominica in Palmis recitata*:

13 Vertical lines signify transitions to the opposite thesis.

14 Johannes Hus, *Sermones de tempore qui Collecta dicuntur*, 172–173; cf. Pseudo-Chrysostomus, *Opus imperfectum in Matthaëum*, hom. 37, PG 56, 837. Punctuation is adjusted in Latin texts to facilitate comprehension.

15 Johannes Hus, *Leccionarium bipartitum – Pars hiemalis*, MIHO 9:46–58 (No. 2).

16 Abbreviated citation from Pseudo-Chrysostom, see n. 15 above.

17 Johannes Hus, *Leccionarium bipartitum – Pars hiemalis*, 53–54.

Qui sedet super Cherubin et thronus eius rutilat in columpna nubis, parvissimi peccoris quadrigero vehebatur a poplite; non aureis petalis spumancia frena figabant, nec index pendulo lapis micabat sub falere, non purpurato gemeus vernabat ordo sub tegimine, nec fucatis ostro fimbriis radiancia filia pendebant, quibus seculi arridens pompa et altitudo mundana intumescit. | Sed vili indumentorum amictus velamine sedens super pullum, asine filium subiugalis, celorum Dominus iter carpebat pulvereum, quatenus et nos sue mansuetudinis tam salubribus exemplis imbueret... Jenž sedí na Cherubín a stolice jeho na slúpe oblaka, na maličkém hovádku čtvernohém jedieše, | ne zlatými kúsky pěnívé úzdy okoval, ani stkvúcí kámen stkvěl se pod visutým dekem, ani stkvúcie niti visiechu s trápci krví barvenými, v nichž se kochá neb raduje světská pýcha a vysokost světská nadýmá, | ale v biedném oděvci sedě na oslíku nebeský pán jedieše v prachu, aby nás své pokoře tak dobrými příklady naučil.<sup>18</sup>

In this case it is also possible to make a comparison with one of Hus's synodal sermons, this time *State succincti* from 1407, which abounds with Antichrist themes and terminology deriving from the concept of Antichrist, but does not contain this antithesis. On the contrary, *Leccionarium bipartitum* does not employ such terminology.

### III.

Zechariah 9:9 appears also in the Bethlehem sermon for Palm Sunday, which takes its starting point from Mathew 21 (5. 4. 1411)<sup>19</sup> and once more emphasises *humilitas magna*. The abbreviated citation from Pseudo-Chrysostom is also included here. Opposite the humble Christ there now stand contemporary priests, although without any explicit critique of the pope. A novel aspect in this use of the antithesis is the connection with John's gospel, as well as an explicit challenge to the clergy. We must realise, however, that the extant versions of the Bethlehem sermons were not written by Hus directly, and we do not know to what extent they reproduce Hus's originals:

Ecce, quam humile et contentibile animal Christus rex regum elegit ad insidendum, dum Jerosolimam equitaret, dans exemplum secularibus, ut licite possint equis insidere, | non autem sacerdotibus, qui nunc

<sup>18</sup> Hus, *Leccionarum*, 57.

<sup>19</sup> Johannes Hus, *Sermones in capella Bethlehem*, ed. Václav Flajšhans (Prague, 1940) 3: 205–209 (No. 129). Jiří Daňhelka has called attention to this connection of the *Postilla* with the Bethlehem sermons in his note to the *Postilla* sermon in Johannes Hus, *Česká nedělní postilla* [Czech Sunday *Postilla*], MIHO, 2:615, in a note to lines 31–33.

seculares volunt in pompa equitanti precellere... Et sic hoc est **preceptum sacerdotibus**, ut adducant animas ad Deum, solutas a peccatis... ‚Ecce rex tuus‘ [Zech 9:9; Jn 12:15; Mt 21:5] Zacharie, ut supra, et Johan. 12 dicitur: ‚Noli timere, filia Syon – ecce rex tuus venit tibi sedens super pullum‘ [Jn 12:15; cf. Zech 9:9 a Mt 21:5]... sedens super pullum asine humiliter, non pompose te conculcare volens, sed ad se allicere... *Crisostomus*: ‚Non sedit Dominus super curru[m] aureo, purpura, veste splendida, nec super equm fervidum discordie amatorem, | sed super pullum asine et asinam pacis amicam.‘ In eo superbia nostra contunditur... Sed **ve nobis**, ex quo hic Christum non sequimur in operibus neque sequemur in meritis...<sup>20</sup> Unde de ipso dicit Ambrosius, quod in vili veste Dominus ferebatur in asina, ut nobis daret exemplum humilitatis, ut patet in oratione, que legetur post processionem hodiernam ante introitum templi.<sup>21</sup>

#### IV.

The Sermon for Palm Sunday in the *Postilla* (1413)<sup>22</sup> is also based on Matthew 21. The sermon is intended for the instruction of priests, and in it Hus even ridicules the sinful clergy and the pope.<sup>23</sup> He also employs Zechariah 9:9 and Pseudo-Chrysostom here, and he contrasts the humble Christ, riding on a donkey, with the ostentatious Pope-Antichrist riding on a caparisoned horse and embodying the fullness of the sinful priesthood. Although we do not find a direct assertion in this antithesis that such a pope is Antichrist, it is still indicated by the context. Namely, Hus calls those who follow a pope who is attached to worldly matters and who is hypocrite as Antichrist. Likewise, he writes about “Antichrist’s fabrications,” which are followed by the clergy who resist Christ’s example and bow before an ostentatious pope. There cannot be any doubt about what was said above as well as from the context of the other sermons in the *Postilla*. There is a fundamental shift from the earlier forms of the antithesis, because the term Antichrist did not appear closely to this antithesis in any of Hus’s previous works. Moreover, Hus here analyses the antithesis at great length, connects it with his criticism of contemporary clergy, and in addition confirms its validity by a citation from Bernard of Clairvaux,<sup>24</sup> who is for Hus the highest non-biblical authority concerning the question of the Antichrist:

20 Cf. the citation to Pseudo-Chrysostomus above, n. 15.

21 Johannes Hus, *Sermones in capella Bethlehem*, 3:207.

22 An edition of the sermon is printed in: Johannes Hus, *Česká nedělní postila*, MIHO, 2: 177–184; the dating of the sermon is discussed on p. 150.

23 Johannes Hus, *Česká nedělní postila*, 181.

24 *Ibid.*, 179 (No. 20).

For the prophecy of Zechariah to be fulfilled, who says in 9:9 “Oh your king rides to you, he is just and a saviour, he is poor seated on an ass”... And he also gave an example that secular and spiritual lords could ride, if needed, but avoiding pride. Therefore, he on a donkey, without a saddle... Therefore St. John Chrysostom says:<sup>25</sup> “The Lord did not sit in a golden carriage, shining in a golden hat, nor did he sit on a rambunctious horse, but on a gentle donkey.”... The one who sits on Cherubim<sup>26</sup>... Oh, so today **the pope, the bishop**, and also **the parish priest** should read word by word when the procession stops in front of the church door ... **And we do not know how well the pope could read**, although he would perhaps know how, or perhaps the bishop; because there are many **popes, archbishops, cardinals, bishops, canons, and parish priests who are unable to read books. How could he read, yes everything would be against him? Christ on a donkey, / and he on a large white horse or charger, with bridle sheathed in gold...** they kneel in front of the pope, yes they carry a baldachin above him and call him most holy and press on begging for prebends, and kiss his feet; although he lets his armoured mercenaries, who with silver clubs strike the legs of the poor. **And he sitting on a horse laughs at that – that he is so highly praised. / And our dear, quiet, humble Saviour rides with great weeping on a little donkey.../** Those are deceived who confirm his privilege, such as the cardinals, who also with him ride in the same pride, even though not all have a baldachin above or golden shoes. They do not go on foot like the apostles next to the donkey, which carries Christ ahead of the pope. Those also deceive themselves, who kneel as he rides by, and also all those who think that it is the right thing to do. Like I also did, as long as I had not known well the writings and the life of my Saviour. In what divine scripture did they find such errors? Surely from the **fabrications of the Antichrist...** / “On a small donkey,” St. Bernard says, “not in carriages, not on horses<sup>27</sup> with golden bridles, nor silver ones, nor on gilded saddles, but a humble one, sitting on a donkey covered by a piece of his disciples’ garment, which was not expensive.”<sup>28</sup>

25 Cf. Pseudo-Chrysostom, cited above in n.15.

26 As stated by A. Vidmanová in notes on Johannes Hus, *Leccionarium bipartitum – Pars hie-malis*, 57 it is a part of a Latin ecclesiastical prayer, a part of which is printed in “Předloha legendy o Umučení [The Model of the Legend about Martyrdom],” *Listy filologické* 40 (1913) 258–259.

27 Bernard of Clairvaux, “Sermones in ramis palmarum: Sermo 3,” in *S. Bernardi opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. M. Rochais (Rome, 1968) 5:53.

28 Johannes Hus, *Česká nedělní postila*, 177–179: “aby proroctvie naplnil svatého Zachariáše, jenž die v 9. k.: ‘Aj, král tvój jede k tobě, spravdivlý a spasitel, on chudý a sedě na osliču a na oslíku’... *A také dal příklad, že mohú páni svěští jezdit i duchovní, ku potřebě, ale varující se pýchy. Protož on na oslíku, bez sedla, sprostně...* Protož die svatý: ‘Neseděl jest pán na vozu zlatém, v drahém zlatohlavě stkvě sě, ani jest vsěl na bujný kón, ale na tichú oslíku’... ‘Ten,

## V.

Hus quotes Bernard more frequently in connection with the question of the Antichrist in his thirty-third sermon from *Super Cantica canticorum*<sup>29</sup> than in the *Sermones in ramis palmarum*. In connection with the antithesis in Hus's *Postilla* it is, above all, essential to examine Bernard's *De consideratione*, and specifically Bernard's instruction to Pope Eugenius on how to perform the papal service correctly. This passage forms a part of Hus's *Sermo de pace* (1414).<sup>30</sup> The particular passage in which Bernard criticises illicit papal pomp – the sign of which, among others, is the riding on a white horse – is based on an antithesis of Peter and the pope. The theme and Bernard's authority therefore essentially persist, but the cited work and the form of the antithesis are altered. As far as terminology is concerned, the situation is analogous with that in a series of Hus's late works, or in the case of the works with the *Postilla* antithesis. Despite the fierce criticism of Antichrist in the *Sermo de pace*, the term Antichrist appears only twice, and in the Viennese manuscript ÖNB 4902 the word *Antichristus* is entirely missing.<sup>31</sup>

Petrus hic est, qui nescitur processisse aliquando vel gemmis ornatus vel sericis, non tectus auro, non vectus equo albo nec stipatus milite nec circumstreptentibus septus ministris; absque hiis satis tamen credidit

*jenž sedí na Cherubin ...'* Aj, tak dnes slovo od slova **papež, biskup i farář** má čísti, když před dveřmi kostelními stane u procesí... **I neviem, kterak by papež to mohl dobre čísti**, ač by snad uměl, neb biskup; neb mnozí bývají **papeži, arcibiskupové, kardináli, biskupové, kanovníci i faráři, neumějí v knihách čísti. Kterak mohl by čísti, ano všecko by bylo proti němu? Kristus na oslíku,| a on na velikém bielém oří neb hynštu, v uzdě zlatem okované...** před papežem klekají, ano nad ním nebe nesú a nazývají najsvětějším a trú sě, prosiee za obroky, a nohy libají, ač dopustie oděnci žoldněři, jenž kyji stříbrnými chudě do nůh tepú. **A on, sedě na hynštu, směje sě tomu, že tak u veliké chvále jest. | A náš milý, tichý, pokorný spasitel jede s velikým pláčem na oslíku...** | Tiť sě klamají, kteří jemu toho přivolec potvrzují, jako kardinálové, jenž také s ním jedú v takéž pýše, jedné žeť nebe ne každý nad sebú má a třevícov zlatých. Tiť nejdú pěši, jako apoštolé, podlé oslicé, jenž nese Krista před papežem. Také sě klamají, kteříž před ním, an tak jede, klekají, a ti všickni, kteříž mnie, by to bylo dobre. Jakož sem já mněl, dokud sem písma a života svého spasitele nedobře věděl... Kterým písmem božím to sú sobě našli? Jistě **Antikristovým vymyšlením...** | ‚Na oslíku, die svatý Bernard,| ‚ne na voziech, ne na koních v zlatých uzdách ani v stříbrných, ani v sedlách pozlacených, ale pokorný, oslíku sedě na hřbetě, položiv rúšce úředníkův svých, jenž nebylo jest drahé.“

29 Cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, "Sermones super Cantica Cantorum 33" in *S. Bernardi opera*, ed. Jean Leclercq et al. (Rome, 1957) 1:244. Hus cites from it in the sermons *Abiciamus opera tenebrarum, Diliges Dominum Deum* and in his correspondence. See L. Mazalová, *Eschatologie*, especially, 110, 117, 198, and 217–218.

30 Jan Hus, *Sermo de pace*, in *Constantiensia*, ed. Helena Krmíčková et al. (Turnhout, 2016) 16 and 34.

31 Hus, *Sermo de pace*, 11 and 24.



posse inpleri salutare mandatum: Si amas, pasce oves meas. [Jn 21:15]  
In hiis successisti non Petro, | sed Constantino.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, after this antithesis there is another that is included in Nicholas's *Tabulae veteris et novi coloris*, the vernacular Jena Codex, and most likely also in the Göttingen manuscript. In addition, this antithesis closely resembles a set of contrasting images in Hus's *Postilla*. From the viewpoint of the sources of citations in Hus's works, however, it stands closest to the just quoted passage from *Sermo de pace*, because in the Latin text as well as in the Czech version in the Jena Codex it contains a reference to the aforementioned passage in Bernard's *De consideratione*:

Primus: *Scilicet, Cristus portans crucem dicit: Novissimus virorum. Isa. LIII (...)*

Secundus: *Scilicet papa equitans in equo dicit: Summus pontifex utens insigniis apostolice dignitatis. Extra de privilegiis, Antiqua.*

Tercius: *Lege vitam Cristi ab utero matris usque ad patibulum crucis et non invenies nisi stigmata paupertatis. In hiis Constantino, successisti et non Petro. Bernhardus ad Eugenium Papam.*<sup>33</sup>

In the Jena Codex, Christ carrying a cross and the pope on a white horse form the core of the depiction itself, which brings together more details concordant with the antithesis, which reaches its acme in the *Postilla*.<sup>34</sup> There is even an explicit reference to Bernard here: "Third: Read the life of Christ from his mother's womb to the gallows of the cross and you will not find a single trace of poverty. But in what you have you are Constantine's deputy, not Peter's. Bernard to Pope Eugene."<sup>35</sup>

Although in Hus's writings one finds other antitheses that partially resemble the antithesis in the Czech *Postilla* – whether based on Zechariah 9:9 or Pseudo-Chrysostom – they never include the specific image of Christ riding on a donkey together with the pope sitting on a white horse; there appears only one part of the antithesis and some of its constituent parts.

32 Ibid. 60, cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, "De consideratione," in *S. Bernardi opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. M. Rochais (Rome, 1963) 3:453.

33 See: *Tabule veteris et novi coloris*, 38–39; *Jenský kodex*, 107–108 (f. 12v and 13r). The Göttingen manuscript is damaged at the relevant place: *Tabule staré a nové barvy Mikuláše z Drážďan*, 157

34 The sermon in the Czech *Postilla* corresponds to: f. 12v and the flagellation of Christ; and f. 13r depicting the pope on his white horse.

35 I cite the most recent transcription, in: *Tabule staré a nové barvy*, 156 (Cf. *Jenský kodex*, f. 12v).

## VI.

As mentioned before, the antithesis from Hus's *Postilla* is not found in the works of other Czech authors. This is also true of the antithesis from Hus's *Sermo de pace*. In that case, however, there exists a parallel in Wyclif's treatise *Conclusiones triginta tres sive De paupertate Christi* (1378, and thus predating the *Tabule*), because there the English philosopher cites the same passage from Bernard's *De consideratione*:

Tu pastor precedis deauratus tam multa circumdatus varietate. Oves quid capiunt? Si auderem dicere: Demonum magis quam ovium pascua hec sunt. Non sic factitabat Petrus, non sic agebat Paulus (...) 'Petrus nescitur aliquando processisse gemmis ornatus vel sericis, non tectus auro, non vectus equo albo nec stipatus milite nec circumstrepentibus septus ministris; absque hiis tamen credidit satis posse impleri salutare mandatum Petro Johannis ultimo: Si amas me, pasce oves meas. [Jn 21:15] In hiis successisti non Petro sed Constantino.'<sup>36</sup>

Although in Wyclif's writings we find other additional antithesis that is based on Zechariah 9:9 (and on Matthew 21:5) and has a similar meaning, its final form differs from the versions in Hus's *Postilla*. Above all, it lacks the quotation from Pseudo-Chrysostom. It appears in Wyclif's polemical treatise *De Christo et suo adversario Antichristo* (1382). Above all, it is concerned with criticism of the pope, as is the entire short treatise, in which the pope figures as Antichrist:

Secundo Christus dicitur homo mansuetissimus et maxime domesticus suis subditis ex hoc, quod iuxta dicta fuit homo humillimus. Sic enim venit Ierusalem sedens super asinam et pullum eius sine sella, dum discipuli posuerunt super ea vestimenta sua et eum desuper sedere fecerunt, ut patet Matth. vicesimo primo, [cf. Mt 21:7] et tunc impleta est prophetia de Christo Sachar. nono, [Zach 9:9] quod venit Ierusalem mansuetus. | **Pa**pa autem dicitur habere cardinales et familiam nimis superfluum ad onus ecclesie et illi cum equitant habent sellas splendidas et numerum famulorum et equos ac mulas cum apparatu alio omnino superfluo et tam ecclesie, quapropter istam superfluitatem solverit, quam loco, cui ipse advenerit, omnimode oneros[o], et tamen ex fide capimus, quod Christus in loco, cui advenerat, infinite efficacius seminaverat iura Dei.<sup>37</sup>

36 Johannes Wyclif, *Conclusiones triginta tres sive de paupertate Christi*, in *Opera minora*, ed. Johann Loserth (New York, 1913) 51. Cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, "De consideratione," in *S. Bernardi opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. M. Rochais (Rome, 1963) 4:452–453 (No. 2–3). The resemblance to *Sermo de pace* was noted by Amedeo Molnár in his edition of *Sermo de pace* (Prague, 1995) 96 and 466.

37 John Wyclif, *De Christo et adversario suo Antichristo*, ed. Rudolf Buddensieg (Gotha 1880) 56–57.

Wyclif's short treatise *De Antichristo* (1383) also contains an antithesis that is based on Matthew 21:5, and which Wyclif utilises at this time for criticism of Church prelates. Even this antithesis is, however, formulated differently from the one in Hus's *Postilla*:

Et patet, quod **clerus** ut sic odiens legem Christi ut sic odit ipsum regem et omnes ut sic dicunt: „Nolumus hunc regnare super nos“ [Lk 19:4] sed cesarem, quia prelatum cesarium, ut papam vel dotatum alium, sibi eligunt tamquam ducem et pauperem Christum renuunt, sicut et eis vivificam medicinam. Quis, rogo, de dotatis clericis non designaretur sufferre Christi pauperiem, cum tamquam rex venit sine strepa sedens super asinam et pullum filium subiugalis, ut patet Matthei XXI. [Mt 21:5] **Prelati** autem **nostri** graviter ferrent pauperiem huius regis, nec vellent habere regentem antichristinam concomitantiam talem ducem; ideo manifestum videtur, quod in amore postponunt vel verius odiunt regulam huius regis; et cum necesse sit hunc ducem vel diabolum esse patronum cunctorum militantium, necesse est renuentes Christum **Antichristum** eligere tamquam ducem...<sup>38</sup>

I do not believe that we can identify with certainty the direct sources of the antithesis, which takes its starting point from Zechariah 9:9 and which attains within Hus's writings its most distinct form in the Czech *Postilla*.<sup>39</sup> Its particular motifs with regards to the Antichrist appear among various authors and in various contexts prior to Hus, and they can be bound together in a relatively lengthy tradition. The motif of the white horse – which is in this context connected with Antichrist – appears in the Czech tradition, for instance, as early as the *Velislavova bible* (f. 155v).<sup>40</sup> Karel Chytil finds an example of this antithesis among the moralists, even as early as, for instance, the tenth-century Bishop Ratherius of Verona.<sup>41</sup> Individual motifs also appear in many places in the Jena Codex.<sup>42</sup> As far as the use of antitheses in general is concerned, Matěj of Janov is a prime example in the domestic tradition.

38 John Wyclif, *De Antichristo*, ed. Johann Loserth (London, 1896) 272–273.

39 Cf. the question of possible images in the Bethlehem Chapel and their connection with the antitheses, which was discussed by Karel Chytil in his chapter devoted to the *Tabule* in his monograph *Antikrist v naukách a umění středověku a husitské obrazné anthithese* [The Antichrist in Medieval Doctrines and Art and the Hussite Pictorial Antitheses] (Prague, 1918), 139–172. See also the arguments of František M. Bartoš in his study, “Po stopách obrazů v Betlémské kapli [Tracking Images in Bethlehem Chapel],” *ČNM* 133 (1964) 129–141; and Miloslav Vlček in his study “Obrazy v Betlémské kapli [Images in the Bethlehem Chapel],” *ČNM* 130 (1961) 129–142. Despite their various arguments, however, there is still no definitive proof of such a connection. See: Šmahel, *Husitská revoluce*, 2: 28.

40 Accessible at: [www.manuscriptorium.com](http://www.manuscriptorium.com), listed under shelf mark MS NKP XXIII.C.124.

41 Chytil, *Antikrist*, 144.

42 Aside from those instances already mentioned, see e.g. the symbol of gold and precious stones on f. 35v and the editors' comments on this folio.

If it is accepted that his work influenced Jakoubek of Stržbro distinctly and directly, then he may well have exercised an indirect influence on a relatively wide circle of preachers, including Hus. Hence, it is difficult to determine the exact points at which any one of the influences begins and ends.

Certainly, one cannot neglect Wyclif's very probable influence on the form of the antithesis in Hus's *Sermo de pace*. It is not possible, however, to deduce any potential influence on the *Postilla* from this particular case. The similarities in Wyclif's work signify – within the medieval tradition of ideas and texts – above all, a confirmation of the fact that this type of antithesis (based on Mt 21 and Zech 9) was relatively common and that, in the context of the Antichrist literature, Bernard of Clairvaux was particularly influential. This is attested, for instance, by the citation of the Thirty-Third Sermon from *Super cantica canticorum*<sup>43</sup> by Matěj of Janov. The similarities in Wyclif's work certainly justify the assumption that thanks to reading Wyclif's work, the Englishman's formulation might have inspired Hus to use this type of antithesis in the *Postilla*. It is also possible, however, that an important impulse might have stemmed from the flourishing of visual representations of such antitheses.<sup>44</sup> In brief, I do not believe that we are justified in presuming Wyclif's decisive influence on Hus's *Postilla* simply because both of them cite Bernard's antithesis.

In this connection I would conclude with a more general discussion about (1) the role of Wyclif, (2) the role of Hus's paraphrases of his precursors, and (3) the role of oral tradition in Hus's concept of the Antichrist. Within the medieval intellectual milieu one cannot rely on the presence of citations and their frequency. It is necessary to consider the prestige of various authorities used by medieval authors and the specificity of given situations. The degree of a writer's authority was often determined by its longevity, and thus Hus preferred to cite older authors by name and avoid explicit references to more recent ones. Although the ideas of Hus's contemporaries were surely of utmost importance in their relevance, it was unthinkable for him to name them together with the ancients, as if they were of equal significance. Within this context, Wyclif enjoyed an exceptional status. It was necessary to distinguish him from his numerous cotemporaries (and also precursors) in Prague whose intellectual activity represented a work more or less in progress. Wyclif's work, to the contrary, was completed and had reached its culmination. Moreover, it had become the touchstone of the antagonism between the reformist currents and the official church in Prague. Citing Wyclif meant perpetuating (and persisting in) the resistance to the deliberate destruction of his books by fire. Domestic authors did not need such solicitude. Moreover, their ideas could be diffused orally within the framework of Prague's intellectual

43 *Regulae*, 5, 10, 8, III: 240–241.

44 See the description of the impulses giving rise to the *Tabule*, for instance, in: Mutlová, "Communicating Texts," 29–37.

circles and become combined with additional ideas which were diffused in a similar manner.

Hus was most likely affected by a whole series of influences. His concrete situation and his own viewpoints enabled him to bestow a flavour of originality on traditional notions, and thus he was able to bring this type of antithesis – through a gradual development – to its most concrete and distinctive form in the *Postilla*. The most original aspect of the *Postilla* is its connection of Pseudo-Chrysostom's commentary with (1) an overtly mocking criticism of the pope and (2) with the remainder of the sermon that expressively utilises the term Antichrist. Moreover the *Postilla* is a compact work, a fact which must not lead us to neglect the connection with Hus's explicit admission to a struggle against the pope and his bull and also the connection with the use of the term "Antichrist" in additional places in the *Postilla*.<sup>45</sup> Prior to the *Postilla*, Hus had not connected the pope-Christ antithesis (with which we are specifically concerned) with a more profound criticism of the Antichrist (or, as the case may be, with the term *Antichristus*), most likely because prior to 1408 his critique of the pope had not yet reached a such force. One needs only to recall the difference between Hus's appeal in 1410 and his appeal in 1412; in 1410 he had appealed from a false human law to God and to the pope, but in 1412 he turned only to Christ.<sup>46</sup>

Translated from the Czech by Zdeněk V. David

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45 Jan Hus, *Česká nedělní postila*, MIHO, 2:160–167.

46 The text of this appeal has been printed in: Novotný, *Korespondence*, 129–133.