

Summary

THE MIRROR IN THE RIDDLE: THE EFFECT OF VERSE ENIGMAS IN THE OLD CZECH ADAPTATION OF *THE STORY OF APOLLONIUS, KING OF TYRE*

This study examines the Old Czech novel *O Apolónovi* (“On Apollo”) focusing on its narrative structure and the symbolic function of its compositional elements. It explores its formal experimentation and reflects on the implications of the innovative reordering of the inserted riddles, with a riddle about a mirror placed in the final position. It demonstrates how meaning emerges from tensions between language and materiality, verse and prose and different layers of narrative, revealing the text’s strategies of self-reflection and self-positioning. The shifting and obscure relationship of the proposed juxtapositions in the Latin *Apollonius* are usually described as a narrative device to convey the theme of a quest for knowledge. The author argues, however, that the Old Czech novel’s composition is formally structured to encourage readers to adhere to a specific moral conduct.

Keywords: Apollonius of Tyre, poetics of prose, critical figuration, ethics and form, medieval vernacular literature, narratology

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