

Biblical Studies in Poland in the Context of Current Tendencies. SBL Meeting, Berlin, 7-11 of August, 2017

Introduction

During International Meeting of Society of Biblical Literature in Berlin on 7-11 of August 2017, Polish scholars from different biblical centers presented the theme: “Biblical Studies in Poland in the Context of Current Tendencies”. It was the first so large presentation of Polish biblical studies organized outside of Poland after the World War II.

Prof. Waldemar Chrostowski spoke about developments and perspectives of Polish Biblical Scholarship. He emphasized the meaning of the creation of the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars in the year 2003. It is the most important forum of meetings, scholarly presentations and discussions. As to the perspectives, some aspects should be noted, all of them connected with the up-to-day scholarly researches done especially at the theological faculties in the country. The list of most important topics, taken and developed currently, and, possibly also in the near future, follows: biblical hermeneutics; the diaspora of Israelites in Mesopotamia (VIII-VI B.C.E.) and its impact on the history and religion of ancient Israel; the prophetic literature; the Septuagint as the Bible of Biblical Judaism and the Church; the Aramaic Bible; Biblical Judaism – Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism; the studies of Gospel, focused especially on historical Jesus; studies of St. Paul.

Prof. Mariusz Rosik spoke about new translations and commentaries of the Bible. He noted that after Vatican II several translations of the Bible emerged in Poland. Each of them is characterized by its specificity, which reflects the assumptions used by the translators. In recent decades, also several biblical commentaries in Polish were published. Some of them are strictly scientific, while others may be classified as pastoral aids. Polish translations of the Bible as well as well as Polish biblical commentaries were shortly presented in the paper.

Prof. Grzegorz Szamocki in his paper reviewed the works of Polish scholars related to the Old Testament, especially Pentateuch, Prophets and Wisdom Literature. The results of the studies are discussed in the annual conferences, organized by the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars, and published in the open-access journals.

The presentation of Prof. Artur Malina focused on researches undertaken recently by Polish biblical scholars which can make an impact on New Testament

studies. Their results were discussed in the annual conferences, organized by the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars as well as the Institutes of Biblical Sciences of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw and the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, and published in the open-access journals. Among them there are some research projects rated excellent and innovative by the international experts of the National Science Centre in Poland.

Prof. Mirosław S. Wróbel presented in his paper the findings of a new project started in Poland in 2014: Multivolume series *Biblia Aramejska* [Aramaic Bible] which include, *Targums to the Pentateuch* (*Targum Neofiti 1*, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, *Targum Onkelos*), *Targums to the Prophets* and *Targums to the Writings*, all translated into the Polish language. The first two volumes: *Targum Neofiti 1 to Genesis and to Exodus* were published in Poland and constitute the model for the whole project. Prof. Wróbel also outlined his recent work, i.e. *Wprowadzenie do Biblii Aramejskiej* [Introduction to the Aramaic Bible] which, being a volume 0, serves as the explanation and introduction to the targumic literature.

Prof. Krzysztof Mielcarek in his paper noted that despite the fact that the Polish biblical institutes cannot claim as vast an involvement in the studies of Septuagint as some West European centres, in the last few decades quite a few scholars at different Polish theological faculties issued some interesting monographs and articles concerning this very biblical field. Moreover, just four years ago (in 2013) the first Polish translation of the LXX came into being (prepared by R. Popowski) and in 2017 a special interuniversity project has been established at the Card. Wyszyński University in Warsaw (UKSW) to study Codex Alexandrinus accompanied by the biannual journal named *Studia Biblica Graeca*.

Mirosław S. Wróbel

Polish Biblical Scholarship – Development and Perspective

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Both the development and the perspectives of Polish biblical scholarship are inherently related to modern history of Poland. The key issues are reflected in the dates of the most important events: the year 1918 – the regaining of the independence after 123 years of partitions made by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, leading to the wiping out of the Poland from the political map of Europe; the years 1939-1945 – the period of the Second World War which led to enormous losses in human lives (6 million Polish citizens perished, among them 3 million Polish Jews) and great material losses, as well as the loss of one third of the territory and a shifting of Polish borders to the west; the years 1962-1965 – the period of the Second Vatican Council and the year 1966 – festive celebrations of the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland; the year 1978 – the election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła to papacy; the year 1989 – the beginning of the radical political-social transformation, which has been lasting until now.

1. Selected Aspects of the Development of Polish Biblical Scholarship

Before the Second World War, there were five academic theological faculties in Poland (the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Stefan Batory University in Vilnius, John Casimir University in Lvov, University of Warsaw, and the Catholic University of Lublin), in which biblical studies were developed, as well as a dozen of major priestly seminaries, in which the candidates to priesthood were acquainted with the Bible and the basics of biblical studies, especially the languages, history, archaeology, geography, exegesis, and theology. During the German and Soviet occupation of Poland, the universities were either closed or entirely changed as concerns their authorities and character. Many professors, among them professors of biblical scholarship, and clergymen were either executed or otherwise killed during military actions.

After the year 1945, the universities in Vilnius and Lvov found themselves outside of Poland, on the territory of the Soviet Union – in the Lithuanian Socialist Soviet Republic and the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic. The professors from Vilnius and Lvov who survived the destructive German (Nazi) and Soviet (communist) occupation, moved to various cities in of Poland, within its past-war borders. In the year 1954, the communist authorities closed two of the remaining three theological faculties – in the Jagiellonian University and in the University of Warsaw, creating in Warsaw two new academic schools: the Academy of Catholic Theology and the Christian Theological Academy (for confessions other than the Catholic one). Despite strong ideological pressures, especially in the first years after their creation, biblical studies were quite thriving there. It is a significant merit of the pre-war generation of biblical scholars, who returned to promoting scholarship and unremittingly prepared new personnel. The Theological Faculty of the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw established close ties with the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Lublin, in order to grant academic titles and degrees. Both these universities have great merits in the development of biblical studies and the preparation of lecturers for priestly seminaries.

What also needs emphasizing is the far-sightedness of Polish Catholic bishops, since the year 1949 led by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the primate of Poland. Soon after the end of the war, as it was the case in the life of Karol Wojtyła, who in November 1946 was sent to study in Rome, many priests were sent to study abroad, especially in Rome. Biblical studies were very important in this endeavour, which is confirmed by the examples of outstanding persons, like Joseph Thaddeus Milik. The Stalinist period (1953-1956) stopped this process, but later the number of Poles attending biblical studies abroad, especially in the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, steadily increased. This was possible thanks to systematic financial aid of the Congress of American Poles and German charity institutions, especially Kirche in Not. Protestant biblical scholars studied mainly in Germany, some Orthodox theologians also studied in the West. During the political thaw of that time, three non-university theological faculties were created: in Cracow (1959), Wrocław (1964), and Poznań (1968), which in 1974 took the name: Pontifical Theological Faculty, and the Academic School of Catholic Theology in Warsaw (1962). All these institutions were linked to the local priestly seminaries, fostering the academic status of theological courses, and biblical scholarship constituted their pillar. Since 1959, meetings of Polish biblical scholars, started in Cracow, Warsaw, Gniezno, and Poznań, became important places of thought exchange. These beginnings led to the tradition, cultivated until now, of annual symposia taking place in various cities of Poland. In September 2017, in Legnica, the 55th Symposium of Polish Biblical Scholars took place.

Shortly before the Second Vatican Council, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Poland created the Section of Biblical Scholars. During the Council and

in the following years, the conciliar documents were successfully propagated in the Catholic Church in Poland. The instruction *On the Historical Truth of the Gospels* (21st of April 1964) and the Dogmatic Constitution on the Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum* (8th of November 1965) had a great impact. The implementation of the conciliar teaching was carried out in a way which was less dramatic than that in the Western Europe. This was a consequence of the fact that in 1966, when the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland was celebrated in an extraordinarily festive way, also the conclusion of the great pastoral initiative known as the Great Novena took place. Biblical scholars also participated in it, not only in a pastoral way, but also by preparing a new translation of the whole Bible, in line with the suggestions of the Second Vatican Council from original languages, into Polish, as the so-called *Biblia Tysiąclecia* [Millennium Bible] (1965). Since the time of Jakub Wujek (1598), it was the first Catholic translation of all sacred books, provided with introductions and commentaries. It soon became the Bible of the Catholic Church in Poland, and in Polish milieus around the world. In the wake of the conciliar renewal, somewhat later, in the years 1973-1975, another complete, also multi-author translation of the Bible from the original languages appeared, known as the *Biblia Poznańska* [Poznań Bible]. This three-volume work contains much longer introductions to the biblical parts and books, as well as elaborated commentaries to more difficult places and pericopes in the Bible.

The post-conciliar period has been called the 'biblical spring' in the Catholic Church in Poland. It is significant that theologians and biblical scholars had to engage in confrontation with secularist counterparts over religion, who represented and propagated the Marxist vision of the world, humans, and religion itself. At the turn of 70s of the 20th century, this confrontation got stronger. Its core consisted in polemics around vital issues in the interpretation of the Bible, for example, the creation narratives in Genesis and evolution, original sin and the origin of humankind, the phenomenon of miracles, the historicity of Jesus Christ, the beginnings of the Church, etc. The atmosphere of controversy was not without influence upon the reception of the historical-critical method, as well as the postulate of Rudolf Bultmann and his followers concerning the demythologization of the Bible and its message, reinterpretation of the basic truths of the Christian faith, like the virginal conception of Jesus and his resurrection, or the interpretation of findings at Qumran and in other places at the Dead Sea. There appeared many publications concerning these issues, both on the academic and a more popular level. Catholic biblical scholars suggested reservation in accepting the 'novelties', which were used by Marxist scholars as a tool in their fight against the religion and the Church. In the context of increasing polemics and controversies, which were hostile to religion and Christian interpretation of the Bible, initiatives of 'dialogue' of theologians with Marxism were put forth. They brought nothing good, and led to relativization of concepts and to confusion.

On the other hand, biblical pastoral work was successful. Biblical topics were introduced to catechesis of children and youth, which was undertaken in parishes and churches, and this constituted a counterbalance to education at schools, thus hindering the process of laicization and atheization of the younger generation. At this stage, Catholic biblical scholars sporadically undertook ecumenical collaboration with biblical scholars of other Christian denominations, which resulted from the lack of mutual contacts and from mistrust, which could be perceived in social, ecclesiastical, and academic relations.

The election of John Paul II (16th of October 1978) gave a new impulse to invigorating Church life and theology, including biblical studies. But the martial law (the years 1981-1983) and the period which followed immediately, did not favour development of research. Censorship still existed, which significantly prolonged the process of publication of texts; political infiltration of the academic milieu, including the theological one, still remained; economic hardships increased. However, the pilgrimages of John Paul II to his homeland (1979, 1983, 1987) led to strengthening of the need of freedom and the growth of moods contrasting with the imposed ideology and the political system. Its decline was more and more visible, and the restrictions on travelling abroad were also relaxed. Priests were sent to undertake biblical studies in Rome and in Jerusalem, as well as at German and French universities. Moreover, as a new phenomenon, such studies were also undertaken by lay people. The weakening and finally the end of a strong world-view confrontation favoured quiet and balanced reception of the newest trends and tendencies in the development of theological and biblical studies. It was favoured by the reception of scholarly and popularizing publications of Polish biblical scholars, as well as numerous translations of theological and biblical literature from foreign languages, which was fostered by the Pax Publishing Institute. The publishing activities of the Catholic University of Lublin and of the Academy of Catholic Theology also need to be emphasized. In Poland, as opposed to other countries of the communist bloc, even those who did not speak foreign languages and did not have the possibility to travel abroad, had access to quality publications of foreign scholars.

The period that followed the political and social transformation, which began in 1989, brought about other important changes. The development of theological and biblical studies was greatly favoured by the regulation of the legal status of the Pontifical Theological Academy in Cracow and the Pontifical Theological Faculties in Wrocław, Poznań, and Warsaw. In 1999, the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw was transformed into Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University. The creation of new theological faculties at state universities was also important. At present, there are eleven ecclesiastical theological faculties in Poland: Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, the University of Opole (1994), Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (1998), the University of Warmia and

Mazury (1999), the University of Silesia (2000), Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (2001), and the University of Szczecin (2003). The remaining four theological faculties exist at non-state schools, namely, at John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, at the Pontifical Theological Academy in Cracow, and at the Pontifical Theological Faculties in Warsaw and in Wrocław.

The creation of the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars in 2003 was a groundbreaking event for the integration and development of the biblical milieu. It continues the activity of the Biblical Section at the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Poland, and it is the most important forum for annual meetings and thought exchange. The papers and discussions, as well as personal data, addresses and the most important elements of scholarly achievements of more than 300 members of this association are published in the annual *Zeszyty Naukowe Stowarzyszenia Biblistów Polskich* [*Academic Papers of the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars*]. Its statute and activity functioned as an example for similar integration projects of the representatives of other theological disciplines in Poland.

2. Selected Aspects of the Perspectives of Polish Biblical Scholarship

In the survey of the present state and future of Polish biblical scholarship, both opportunities and various challenges, which need to be faced, can be observed. They all come out against the background of what has already been achieved and what shapes the contours and tasks that need to be undertaken.

The achievements which reveal and balance various currents in Polish biblical scholarship are really impressive. The first element consists in new, complete and fragmentary, translations of the Bible into Polish, as well as biblical dictionaries and commentaries, of both academic and pastoral profiles. Two commentaries, which exist for almost 20 years (the *Katolicki komentarz biblijny* [*The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*]) and the series *Międzynarodowy Komentarz do Pisma Świętego* [*The International Bible Commentary*]), were translated from English. The remaining ones were written by Polish authors. The studies on the Old Testament, of both exegetical and theological, as well as historical and religion-study profiles, developed and became popular. Interesting hypotheses, for example that of the existence of a vigorous diaspora of the Israelites in Assyria, can greatly influence the knowledge of the history of Israel before the Babylonian exile and of the origin of many biblical books. The same can be said about the studies of the New Testament, especially of the so-called synoptic problem. Hermeneutic problems concerning both parts of the Christian Bible, the Old and the New Testament, are also important. Discussions on these problems were stimu-

lated by the document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993), and they were held during annual meetings and in publications of Polish biblical scholars. Conferences and lectures for broader public also arouse great interest. The same concerns mass-scale pilgrimage of the faithful to the Holy Land and other biblical lands, in which many biblical scholars participate as organizers and guides.

International exchange and new ways of communication, especially the Internet, by enabling free access to library resources worldwide, favour the development of specializations in biblical research. For example, fruitful research on the phenomenon of intertextuality and its significance for a deeper study and understanding of the message of the Bible is carried out. It is accompanied by the growth of interest in synchronic approach and new literary methods, which supplement the hitherto dominating diachronic-profile studies. The last decades in Poland brought about dynamic increase of interest in Targumic literature (the Aramaic Bible) and the Septuagint (the Greek Bible). In both cases, quality monographies and minor-scale studies, as well as translations of selected Targums and the whole Septuagint into Polish were published. The achievements of Polish Qumranology and the growing number of studies on the manifold influence of the Bible on the Polish and European culture complete this retrospection. The cooperation of biblical scholars with representatives of other scholarly disciplines is more and more visible.

In the new situation, ecumenical contacts between scholars of various Christian denominations are intensified. They develop not only because of particular needs (participation in doctoral and post-doc-grade procedures, as well as proceedings for the academic title of professor), but also spontaneously, as an expression of openness and a new mutual attitude. In a less significant way, it concerns interreligious contacts. It is true that in the 90-ties of the 20th century there were some signs of religious and theological dialogue with believers of Judaism, which were promoted on the Jewish side by the Rabbi Byron L. Sherwin, but it soon turned out that various past problems and conditions, as well as rigours of political correctness came into play then and still make themselves felt today.

An important achievement of the Polish biblical scholarship consists in the multi-volume work, done by Piotr Ostański. It is not matched by other biblical milieus in Europe, although they have a much longer and unrestricted tradition of documenting the achievements of biblical studies. In 2002, the two-volume *Bibliografia biblistyki polskiej 1945-1999* [*Bibliography of Polish Biblical Scholarship 1945-1999*] was published. In 2010, the likewise two-volume *Bibliografia biblistyki polskiej 2000-2009* [*Bibliography of Polish Biblical Scholarship 2000-2009*] was issued. In 2015, the volume *Bibliografia biblistyki polskiej 1945-1999* [*Bibliography of Polish Biblical Scholarship 2010-2013/2014*] appeared. This monumental work is a full “inventory” of publishing activity of the

whole Polish biblical milieu since the end of the Second World War until now. It registers all published texts, maps, audio and video cassettes, compact discs, computer programmes, and sets of slides. It lists the works of Polish biblical scholars published in Poland and abroad, as well as the works of foreign authors translated into Polish or reviewed by Polish authors. It gathers not only publications which refer directly to the Bible, but also materials concerning general issues, especially antiquity in the Middle East, which enables placing the sacred books of Israel and of the Church in the context of their origin, and it reflects the results of meticulous comparative research. For the years 1949-1999, 23 366 biblical publications were listed; for the years 2000-2009, thus one-fourth of the preceding period, 22 482 publications; and the list for the years 2010-2013/2014 comprises 11 177 publications. It should be noted that P. Ostański incessantly continues his work, still supplementing it and bringing up to date.

Editorial series and journals also constitute an important forum for cooperation and promotion of biblical studies. Among them, there are well-known achievements like *Wprowadzenie w Myśl i Wezwanie Ksiąg Biblijnych*, *Prymasowska Seria Biblijna*, *Rozprawy i Studia Biblijne*, *Analecta Biblica Lublinsensia*, *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia*, *Lingua Sacra – Monografie*, and *Scripta Biblica et Orientalia*. Among the distinguished and renowned journals, there are: *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny*, *Roczniki Teologiczne*, *Verbum Vitae*, *The Biblical Annals*, *Scriptura Sacra*, and *The Polish Journal of Biblical Research*. More and more often, publications in foreign languages appear therein. As concerns the contents of the publications, there is a parity of exegetical-theological and historical issues, but in texts and papers of individual biblical scholars these accents are variously spread. Regarding the reception of new ways of literary analysis, they are rarely isolated from the achievements of the historical-critical method. There are significant symptoms of broader consideration of cultural anthropology and sociology in the exegesis of biblical texts, as well as sociology, psychology, psychoanalysis, and feminist reading. Influences of fundamentalist exegesis of biblical books are few, and weaker and weaker. To the traditional ways of transmitting and spreading information and audiovisual aids, unprecedented possibilities of the application of informatics and computer techniques were added.

The survey of the present state and future of Polish biblical scholarship should not pass over some ballasting conditions and difficulties. The first of them is the danger of the decrease of quality of biblical studies which are carried out at theological faculties of both state and non-state universities. This is a paradox, which results from the incorporation of all diocesan and religious seminaries into the structures of university studies. Every major seminary, which prepares candidates for priesthood, is linked to a certain – usually local, but there are also exceptions – theological faculty. This fact should result in the rise of the level of theological and biblical studies. However, an opposite phenomenon can be

observed: the programme of seminary studies and the reality of the life of the seminarians leave their marks on the structure and programme of university theological faculties. Many biblical scholars, in fact working in two or more institutions, take the theological curricula and habits of the priestly seminaries into the university theological faculties, and there is no significant influence in the reverse direction. The opinion that the level of biblical studies, not to mention academic research, decreases is more and more often voiced. It concerns, except for John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, especially languages: the standard of teaching of Hebrew and Greek (not to mention Latin!) was much higher some decades ago than it is today. One of the negative results of this phenomenon is the weakening interest in the exegesis of the Church Fathers and increasing ignorance in patrology and patristics.

The presence of theology and biblical scholarship at universities should result in the development of interdisciplinary cooperation. In Poland, similarly to other countries of the former communist bloc, there is no good and deeply rooted tradition in this respect. Theologians, once expelled from state universities and pushed to the margins of the academic and cultural life, generally did not establish official contacts with representatives of other scholarly disciplines, and moreover, they were generally treated by them with disdain. It is worth noting that it was not earlier than in 2003 that, not without difficulties and opposition, the Committee of Theological Studies was created by the Polish Academy of Sciences. The problems of biblical scholarship have an important place in its activity. With some minor exceptions, for example Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, theological and biblical questions do not generally spread to other university faculties. There are few inspiring interdisciplinary debates and discussions at Polish universities in which biblical scholars do take a significant part. Too rarely, lasting cooperation with linguistic scholars, historians, archaeologists, geographers, and sociologists is established. This is not a fault of biblical scholars only, because in many academic milieus old ideological prejudices and a hostile attitude to religion and theology can still be seen. The approach once presented by a professor at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, 'A theologian can only be free in his research if he is not a man of the Church', is not absent. In Poland, such a statement is perceived not as a sign of a-religiosity, but of anti-religiosity. Nevertheless, contacts with representatives of other scholarly disciplines, which are present in the Polish Orientalist Society, the Orientalist Commission of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Polish Society of Jewish Studies, are being established. The increasing presence of lay people, a part of whom have extraordinary research, organizational, and educative achievements, is a new and important phenomenon.

The asymmetry between didactic and research load in Polish biblical scholarship is another important circumstance. The number of courses, often under-

taken in various places, which requires constant travelling, as well as their level, conditioned by the needs of the seminarians who prepare themselves to priesthood, cause the lack of time for rigid scholarly research. It is postulated that a part of the academic staff at university theological faculties should be enabled in a systematic way to undertake intensive research, which could be achieved by the decrease of the didactic load. The policy of the Ministry of Higher Education, which promotes grants and scholarships for selected scholarly projects and undertakings, begins to cause beneficial changes. The future of Polish biblical scholarship is also connected with the decreasing number of candidates for studying theology and for priesthood. The theological faculties deal with this problem in various ways, by introducing studies, which do not have a theological profile (journalism, Italian studies, tourism, etc.), and in which biblical scholarship (if it is taught) does not go beyond introductory level.

The situation and the achievements of biblical scholarship in Poland should not be simply compared with its situations and achievements in the Western and Eastern Europe. For over half a century, as opposed to the West, there was no possibility of free exchange of thought, publication of the results of the research, travelling, free pursuing of academic career, and appropriate funding of theology. Nevertheless, many biblical scholars actively and passively participated in the conferences of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature, and colloquia of biblical scholars of the German-speaking countries which were organized in Vienna. The important Qumranological colloquia, which took place in Mogilany and Cracow, should also be highlighted. An important element consists in research scholarships and guest lectures offered within international scholarly exchange. As concerns the comparison with countries of the Eastern Europe, the ideological pressure there was much stronger, and the Catholic Church never played a role as important as it did in Poland. A great achievement of Polish biblical scholars consists in the continuous and manyfold aid offered to theological institutions in Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, and the Baltic countries. Relatively widespread knowledge of Polish led to the use of Polish translations of the Sacred Scripture and of biblical publications, which were partly translated into local languages. It also led to profiting from the work of Polish biblical scholars, who offered courses in local priestly seminaries and theological institutions. Even if in the West *slavica non leguntur*, in the East the publications in Polish became a passage to undertaking theological research and developing biblical studies.

New Translations of the Bible and Biblical Commentaries in Poland

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In the first part of this paper, the most recent translations of the Bible into Polish are presented, and in the second part we focus on contemporary Polish biblical commentaries. The time frame limit for this presentation is 1999, the year of the publication of the fifth edition of the *Biblia Tysiąclecia* [Millennium Bible], which has become the liturgical translation in the Roman Catholic Church.

1. Translations of the Bible

1.1. The Millennium Bible

The most popular translation of the Bible in Poland is the so-called Millennium Bible. As the title suggests, the Millennium Bible was prepared to commemorate the millennial anniversary of the Baptism of Poland. Poland became a Christian country in 966. The fifth edition of the Millennium Bible appeared 34 years after the first edition initiated by the Benedictines from Tyniec in Cracow and published by Pallottinum Press in Poznań. It was the first translation of the whole Bible into Polish in the last 350 years. The Millennium Bible was adopted as the liturgical translation in the Catholic Church in Poland.

In 2016 the Episcopal Conference of Poland declared a need to prepare the sixth edition of the Millennium Bible. A team of editors was created to coordinate work on this translation. In September 2017, a group of ten Polish biblical scholars took part in a week's course on the newest trends in biblical translation studies. The course took place in Rome and was taught by professors from the famous Nida Institute in Washington.

1.2. The Jerusalem Bible

The Polish version of the Biblia Jerozolimska [Jerusalem Bible] is also related to the Millennium Bible. The Jerusalem Bible was published for the first time in one volume in French in 1956. It was prepared by biblical scholars from École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem. It was the first modern translation of the Bible from the original languages in the Roman Catholic Church. Later on, editions of the Jerusalem Bible in other languages began to be published. A full Polish edition of the Jerusalem Bible was published only in 2006. Introductions, footnotes, cross-references and subheadings come from the edition *La Bible de Jérusalem* (Paris 1996), while the text of the Bible itself is based on the fifth edition of the Millennium Bible. As it becomes clear, the text of the Bible was not translated anew from the original languages; instead, the already existing text of the Millennium Bible was used.

1.3. The Paulist Bible

The Biblia Paulistów [Paulist Bible] is becoming more and more popular in Poland. The full title of the translation reads as follows: *Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu. Najnowszy przekład z języków oryginalnych z komentarzem* [*The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. The newest translation from the original languages with a commentary*] [Częstochowa: Edycja Świętego Pawła 2008]. St. Paul's Society, in response to the encouragement of John Paul II to read the Bible frequently, found in *Tertio millennio ineunte* (40), took up preparations to translate the whole Bible in 1996. Each of the biblical passages was provided with a short, practical commentary. The commentaries were placed at the bottom of the pages, while additional texts were placed on the margins: cross-references to other books of the Bible on the inner margins and essential notes on the outer margins. Some appendices were added to the translation: a dictionary of biblical terms (189 entries), chronological tables, and maps. The New Testament was published in 2005, while the whole Bible was published in 2008 during the Synod of Bishops on the theme of the Word of God, which took place in Rome.

1.4. The Interlinear Translation

Between 1994 and 2009, the following volumes of the interlinear translation were published by “Vocatio” Press: *Grecko-polski Nowy Testament* [*The New Testament*] (1994) – with grammatical codes; *Pięcioksiąg* [*The Pentateuch*]

(2003) – with grammatical codes, transliteration, and an index of roots; *Prorocy* [*The Prophets*] (2007) – with grammatical codes, transliteration, and an index of Hebrew words; *Pisma* [*The Scriptures*] (2009) – with grammatical codes, transliteration, and an index of Hebrew and Aramaic words; *Księgi greckie* [*The Greek Books*] (2008) – with grammatical codes and an index of basic forms. The indexes of roots of Hebrew and Aramaic words and of Greek words are a great advantage of the interlinear translation, as they can be confronted with the Hebrew- and Aramaic-Polish and Greek-Polish dictionaries published by the same press.

1.5. The Ecumenical Translation

An important achievement in the ecumenical field is the ecumenical translation of the Holy Bible. It was completed in 2016, while the work on it began in 1995. The New Testament with Psalms was published in 2001, and the last part of the Old Testament (the books of the prophets) was published in 2016. The translation is the fruit of cooperation of eleven Polish Churches: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical-Augsburg, *i.e.* Lutheran, Evangelical-Methodist, Polish Catholic, Old Catholic Mariavite, Baptist, Pentecostal, Adventist, and the Assemblies of God. It was prepared by thirty translators. The publisher is the Bible Society in Poland. The publication of this translation perfectly coincides with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

1.6. Popowski's Septuagint

In 2017, the first Polish translation of the Septuagint was published. Its translator is professor Remigiusz Popowski and its full title reads as follows: *Septuaginta czyli Biblia Starego Testamentu wraz z księgami deuterokanonicznymi i apokryfami* [*The Septuagint or the Bible of the Old Testament with deuterocanonical books and apocrypha*], 3rd ed. [Warsaw: Vocatio 2017]). From an academic point of view, this translation is very significant for two reasons: firstly, because the Greek Bible studies in the Catholic Church have intensified within the last two decades; secondly, because research on the Septuagint provides a deeper perspective on the issue of the separation of the Church and the Synagogue in the first centuries of Christianity.

It must be added that Remigiusz Popowski also translated the New Testament into Polish, which gave rise to a monumental work entitled *Biblia pierwszego Kościoła* [*The Bible of the First Church*] (Warsaw: Vocatio 2017), where the translation of the Old Testament is the translation of the Septuagint.

1.7. The Greek and Polish New Testament

2017 is also the year of publication of a very valuable work, the result of efforts of two biblical scholars from the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow. Roman Bogacz and Roman Mazur took up the task of preparing the Greek-Polish New Testament. The Polish text was taken from the 5th edition of the Millennium Bible, whereas the Greek text with the whole critical apparatus was adopted from the 28th revised edition of *Novum Testamentum Graece* (eds. E. & E. Nestle –K. & B. Aland) (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 2012). Each page of the Greek text is coupled with a page of the same text in Polish. The Polish text is supplemented with footnotes, commentaries and margin information from the Jerusalem Bible.

2. Biblical Commentaries

In the second part of this paper, contemporary Polish biblical commentaries are presented. It seems that achievements of the Bible studies in Poland in this field can be divided into five areas.

2.1. The New Biblical Commentary

Nowy Komentarz Biblijny [The New Biblical Commentary] is undoubtedly the most important one. Actually, it is a series of scholarly commentaries to each book of the Bible. The adjective “new” implies the existence of two previous series of commentaries: the first one comprises commentaries from the Catholic University of Lublin (published by Pallotinum in Poznań); the other one is the so-called Biblia Lubelska [Lublin Bible]. The publication of The New Biblical Commentary began in 2005. The editors and authors are Polish biblical scholars of different backgrounds. Each volume includes a quite long introduction to a given book of the Bible and then commentaries to particular passages, divided into three parts: historical-literary issues, exegesis, and the kerygmatic aspect. Each of the authors of commentaries also provides their own translation of the biblical text and tries to take into account philology, literary analysis, the history of the creation of the text, historical and archaeological background, and parallel biblical and non-biblical texts. Up to now, 32 volumes of the commentary have been published (17 commentaries to the Old Testament and 15 to the New Testament).

2.2. The Pocket Biblical Commentary

Podręczny Komentarz Biblijny [The Pocket Biblical Commentary] is a shortened and simplified version of The New Biblical Commentary. The goal of the same authors is to prepare a commentary with an emphasis on the theological-ascetic message of each book, ignoring some information from the area of scholarly exegesis, as this form of commentary is to serve pastoral rather than academic purposes. The first volume was published in 2008. Five volumes have been published so far.

2.3. A Commentary to the Millennium Bible

As part of the golden jubilee of the creation of the Millennium Bible, Pallotinum Press prepared *Komentarz teologiczno-pastoralny do Biblii Tysiąclecia* [*A Theological-Pastoral Commentary to the Millennium Bible*], which was published between 2014 and 2015. It comprises five volumes, the first volume divided into two parts. The biblical text comes, of course, from the Millennium Bible, while the commentary to particular books of the Bible consists of two parts: a historical-theological introduction and exegetic explanations.

2.4. Commentaries to Individual Books which are not Part of a Commentary Series

There are also some Polish commentaries to particular books of the Bible that do not belong to any series of commentaries. Individual scholars, whose main subject of interest is a single book of the Bible, frequently publish commentaries to single books, but these do not constitute part of a larger project comprising other books of the Bible. Those commentaries might be exemplified by the following works: Antoni Paciorek, *Ewangelia umiłowanego ucznia* [*The Gospel of the Beloved Disciple*] (Lublin: RW KUL 2000); Janusz Czerski, *Pierwszy List do Koryntian* [*The First Epistle to Corinthians*] (Bibliotheca Biblica; Wrocław: TUM 2009); Dariusz Iwański, *Księga Lamentacji* [*The Book of Lamentations*] (Toruń 2015-2016) I-II.

2.5. Translated Commentaries

A separate group of commentaries comprises translations of works, including some large tomes, written by foreign authors. As mentioned above, the time frame limit for this presentation is the year 1999, just before the Great Jubilee in 2000. Solely for the great jubilee of Christianity, translations of two monumental biblical commentaries were prepared in the series *Międzynarodowy Komentarz do Pisma Świętego* [The International Bible Commentary] (ed. W. Farmer) (Warszawa: Verbinum 2000) and *Katolicki komentarz biblijny* [The New Jerome Biblical Commentary] (Warszawa: Vocatio 2001).

The greatest contributor to popularization of biblical commentaries translated from foreign languages is Vocatio Press. Other titles worth mentioning include: David Stern, *Komentarz żydowski do Nowego Testamentu* [Jewish New Testament and Jewish New Testament Commentary] (Warsaw: Vocatio 2004) – the book also includes the author's translation of the New Testament; Craig S. Keener, *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Nowego Testamentu* [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament] (Warsaw: Vocatio 2000); John H. Walton – Victor H. Matthews – Mark W. Chavalas, *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Biblii Hebrajskiej* [Bible Background Commentary – Old Testament] (Warsaw: Vocatio 2005). In this context, one could also mention commentaries by Gianfranco Ravasi published by Salvator Press in Cracow and many others.

Five translations of the whole Bible have been published in Poland since 1999 as well as a translation of the Septuagint and the Greek-Polish New Testament based on the 28th edition of Nestle-Aland. 2005 was the year of publication of the first volume of *Nowy Komentarz Biblijny* [The New Biblical Commentary], the most important scholarly analysis of each book of the Bible. Simultaneously, commentaries of a more pastoral type were published, for example the unmentioned above ten-volume *Biblia dla każdego* [The Bible for Everyone], which is a translation of the Italian work edited by Gianfranco Ravasi.

It appears that we can distinguish five characteristics of Polish biblical commentaries:

- the application of literary, linguistic, and structural methods in addition to the historical-critical method preferred in the previous century
- the appreciation of the significance of the Greek Bible (the Septuagint) as the Bible of the Church in the first centuries
- paying much attention to the issue of parting of the ways of the Church and the Synagogue
- intertextual studies
- ecumenical value.

Old Testament Studies in Poland

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1. Historical Conditions and Centers of Study of the Old Testament in Poland

In recent decades, the advancement of Old Testament studies in Poland, and the kinds of research undertaken, were significantly affected by the historical context and by the political, social and religious conditions in which Polish biblical studies were conducted and developed. Communism, with its anti-religious ideas, limited the number of academic centers of theological studies to the minimum and made contact with foreign centers difficult. Economic problems, which often hindered research and publication, also stood in the way of the work that the growing number of Polish biblical scholars wanted to undertake, and indeed did undertake. Those scholars came mainly from the Catholic clergy. Their education was made possible by the financial support of foreign church institutions, especially in Germany and the United States. They studied mainly at famous Catholic schools and universities, such as the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, the French Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem, or the Franciscan Biblical School in Jerusalem. Some of them also had the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the Bible at theology faculties in Germany. In Poland, for many years of the twentieth century, there were basically only two universities where more advanced biblical studies were conducted, namely the Catholic University of Lublin (since 2005 the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) and the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw (since 1999 Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University). After some time, these institutions were joined by the Pontifical Theological Academy in Krakow (since 2009 the Pontifical University of John Paul II), and after the political changes in 1989, by theology faculties which opened in state universities as well: in Opole, Katowice, Poznań, Olsztyn, Toruń and Szczecin. This, in broad terms, is the situation at the present time, though it should be added that some Polish Bible scholars carry out their teaching and research in the field of Holy Scripture within the framework of other university faculties (for example history or humanities faculties), as well as in diocesan theological seminaries.

2. Old Testament Researchers and the Nature of Their Work

According to the information provided in the 14th issue of the bulletin *Zeszyty Naukowe Stowarzyszenia Biblistów Polskich* [*Academic Papers of the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars*] (14/2017), out of just over 300 members of the Association, only about 13 percent deal with the Old Testament and relate their publications to this area of research. Some of these biblical scholars are professors and lecturers who have the status of independent researchers at their universities. The second group comprises mostly young scholars, highly qualified and full of enthusiasm, who are at the start of their academic career. Their contribution to Polish biblical studies is often dynamic, and they constitute the hope for its further development. Although the circle of Old Testament scholars in Poland consists primarily of Catholic priests, today lay people, including women, also belong to it.

The principal elements in the work of Polish Old Testament scholars are university-level teaching and their own scholarly research. Lectures and classes in exegesis and theology of the Old Testament are part of the curriculum of theological studies. They are also a basic part of the specialized biblical doctoral studies programs offered by theological faculties. In this way, new biblical scholars are also educated in Poland.

Research is the second pillar of the work of Polish Old Testament scholars. This work is stimulated not only by the ambitions of the Bible devotees but also by the demands that every university places on its academic staff and by the opportunities it gives. Financing of projects, international exchange programs (e.g. Erasmus), national and international symposia and congresses – all these things stimulate scholars, creating the conditions for them to present their own academic achievements and share research conclusions and opinions. Above all, this increases enthusiasm for further research and consequently personal development of scholars who deal with the Old Testament.

In recent years, a significant increase in cooperation in the field of Old Testament research has been observed in Poland, involving both collaboration between individual biblical scholars and, above all, creative cooperation between Old Testament study centers. Among these, a special role is played by the respective Biblical Institutes of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw and of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. Polish scholars of the Old Testament are also increasingly engaged in cooperation with research centers and their representatives abroad, mainly in Europe and the United States.

3. Tools for Integration and Work: Associations, Conferences and Projects

An important factor in the cooperation of Old Testament Polish scholars is their membership of the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars. The long-serving chairman of the Association, Professor Waldemar Chrostowski, has contributed greatly to the integration of this community, not only by coordinating its activities, but also by inspiring new directions and forms of scholarly cooperation. He has encouraged contacts between individual biblical scholars and helped them to support one another in their fields of research as well as to take on new challenges.

The annual symposium of Polish biblical scholars provides an opportunity for meetings and conversations. Lectures and discussions on topics related to Old Testament texts are an important point of its program.

Biblical study centers in Poland organize annual academic conferences on the Old Testament. The one in 2017 was hosted by the Institute of Biblical Studies of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, and was devoted, as usual, to one book of the Old Testament, in this case the Book of Zephaniah.

In turn, in 2017 the Department of Biblical Theology of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń hosted the annual conference devoted to a specific biblical subject, in this case “The Bible and Morality”. In most of the papers, as every year, the texts of the Old Testament formed the subject of reflection and analysis.

Some Polish Old Testament scholars are members of international associations, such as the Catholic Biblical Association or the Society of Biblical Literature. As part of their membership, they take an active part in symposia and congresses organized by these associations.

Polish centers of biblical studies also regularly organize international conferences with lectures on topics which always concern the Old Testament. Outstanding specialists in the field, often of world renown, are invited to participate in these conferences. Important events of this type are the International Autumn Biblical Conferences, organized annually by the Institute of Biblical Studies at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. This year the conference was entitled: “The Dead Sea Scrolls Seventy Years Later. Manuscripts, Traditions, Interpretations, and Their Biblical Context”. It was attended by such famous scholars as John J. Collins (Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT, USA), Adrian Schenker OP (University of Fribourg, Switzerland) and Emanuel Tov (Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel).

Polish Old Testament scholars also engage in international cooperation as part of the implementation of research projects. An example here is a team from the

Department of Biblical Studies in Toruń, headed by Professor Wojciech Pikor, who initiated contacts with scholars of the Accademia Alfonsiana in Rome for joint research in the field of the relationship between the Bible and morality.

4. Subject and Directions of Research Reflected in Research Projects and Publications

The range of Old Testament studies in Poland is relatively wide. This is reflected in both research projects and publications. In both cases, the range of research extends from introduction to the Bible to theology. The subjects of inquiry and analysis include linguistic issues, the historical background to the formation and development of Old Testament literature, its exegesis and theology.

Polish Old Testament scholars generally have a good command of languages and are thus able quite easily to access the achievements of non-Polish researchers working in environments with a long, rich and renowned tradition of biblical studies of the Old Testament. The knowledge acquired in this way, combined with the results of their own investigations, often leads them to formulate new hypotheses or provide new arguments for views already voiced or directions of research already pointed out by fellow biblical specialists. In the first case, an example may be the thesis of the Assyrian Diaspora of Israelites propagated by Professor Waldemar Chrostowski. It has become the subject of many studies and publications, some of them expressing support for the thesis on the part of other researchers, others entering into substantive and critical discussion with it. On the other hand, Polish Old Testament scholars are the authors of numerous studies in the form of monographs and academic articles, in which they combine analysis of the biblical message with a solid study of vocabulary, the current form of the text and its history, or the historical conditions for its formation. In this way, they are also involved in the debates that take place among exegetes of the Old Testament at home and abroad.

A characteristic feature of many of the publications of Polish Old Testament scholars is broadly understood exegesis of biblical texts and motifs, with a focus on the fullest and most accurate reading of the theological message expressed in them. Thus we find a range of monographs and articles which look at their subject from a variety of methodologically acceptable perspectives in order to provide a professional and competent answer to the question: What does this text want to tell its reader? Or better: What does God want to tell a man through these words or through this or that motif? In this way both more and less extensive publications are created, and joint ventures are undertaken. An attempt is made to carry out an analysis according to different approaches and methods.

The number of publications on the first books of the Bible is relatively large. Prominent among authors who deal with these books, including the analysis of specific issues, is Professor Janusz Lemański, head of the Department of Exegesis and Biblical Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Szczecin. Grzegorz Szamocki, a professor at the Institute of History of the University of Gdańsk, is known for his lectures and publications on the historical conditions and history of the texts of the Book of Deuteronomy and the Book of Joshua, their relation to the canonical context and the reading and interpretation of their message. At the Institute of Biblical Studies of the John Paul Catholic University of Lublin, under the direction of Professor Dariusz Dziadosz, in collaboration with representatives of exegetical and theological circles of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw and the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, extensive research is being carried out on the Book of Judges and the First Book of Samuel as two key elements of the so-called deuteronomic historiography of Israel (Josh. – 2Kings). The aim of the research is to prepare a detailed exegetic and theological commentary on these books. Scholars from the Department of Biblical Studies of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, especially Professor Wojciech Pikor and Professor Zdzisław Pawłowski, are engaged in interpreting the texts of the Pentateuch and prophetic books, a task which they carry out with great competence, applying narrative and rhetorical analysis in their research.

There is a great interest, reflected in numerous academic publications, in some of the wisdom books such as the Books of Job or Wisdom or Syrach. The large-scale study of the text of the Old Testament in the Septuagint is noteworthy. In this respect, Bible scholars from the Institute of Biblical Studies of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, including Professor Waldemar Chrostowski and Professor Barbara Strzałkowska, and the representatives of other Polish centres who cooperate with them, such as Professor Michał Wojciechowski (Chair of Biblical Theology of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn) and Professor Andrzej Piwowar (Institute of Biblical Studies of the John Paul Catholic University of Lublin), have made a major contribution.

In the last half-century, new translations of the Old Testament into Polish have appeared and been incorporated into editions of the entire Bible. In this context we may mention the translation published in successive editions of the so-called *Biblia Tysiąclecia* [Millennium Bible], issued for the first time in 1965 for the millennium of Christianity in Poland, and the translation of the Old Testament in the so-called *Paulist Bible* (2008).

Among the special achievements of Polish Old Testament scholars, one should certainly include two multi-volume commentaries on individual books of the Bible. The first began to appear in 1962 in the series entitled *The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament* issued by the Pallottinum publishing

house. The second is published as part of the New Biblical Commentary series published since 2005 by St. Paul Edition.

Other important fruits of the research work and cooperation of Polish Old Testament scholars in recent times include the *Hebrajsko-polski Stary Testament. Przekład interliniarny z kodami gramatycznymi, transliteracją i indeksem słów hebrajskich i aramejskich* [*Hebrew-Polish Old Testament. Interlinear Translation with Grammar Codes, Transliteration and Index of Hebrew and Aramaic Words*]. This is a three-volume work (Pentateuch, Prophets and Writings), edited by Professor Anna Kuśmirek of the Institute of Biblical Studies in Warsaw. Other significant achievements are the *Grecko-polski Stary Testament. Księgi greckie. Przekład interliniarny z kodami gramatycznymi i indeksem form podstawowych* [*Greek-Polish Old Testament. Greek Books: Interlinear Translation with Grammatical Codes and an Index of Basic Forms*] by Professor Michał Wojciechowski, head of the Department of Biblical Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn; and the *Septuaginta czyli Biblia Starego Testamentu wraz z księgami deuterokanonicznymi i apokryfami* [*Septuagint, that is the Old Testament Bible, Along with Deuterocanonical Books and Apocrypha*], a translation by Professor Remigiusz Popowski of the Catholic University of Lublin.

An unprecedented development in Polish biblical studies, a great outcome of the work of specialists and their contribution to Old Testament studies, is the plan to publish the Aramaic Bible in Polish. Two volumes of this huge series have already appeared, namely: *Targum Neofiti 1: Księga Rodzaju* [*Targum Neofiti 1. Book of Genesis*] and *Targum Neofiti 1: Księga Wyjścia* [*Targum Neofiti 1. Book of Exodus*], containing a critical translation and introduction by Professor Mirosław Wróbel, a prominent biblical scholar and expert on the Targums issues from the Institute of Biblical Studies in Lublin.

Polish Bible scholars who deal with the Old Testament also make use of their strengths and skills to create and deliver tools for working on the text. This is mainly a matter of dictionaries and grammars of biblical languages, and includes both original publications and translations. As regards dictionaries, *Podręczny słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu* [*The Handy Hebrew- and Aramaic-Polish Dictionary of the Old Testament*] by Professor Piotr Briks deserves to be mentioned, as does (especially) *Wielki słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu* [*The Great Hebrew-Polish and Aramaic-Polish Old Testament Dictionary*] (Vol. I-II) – edited by Przemysław Dec (a translation of the famous work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner in the version developed by Johann J. Stamm), and *Hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski słownik Stronga z lokalizacją słów hebrajskich i aramejskich oraz kodami Baumgartnera* [*The Hebrew-Polish and Aramaic-Polish Dictionary of Strong with the Location of Hebrew and Aramaic Words and Baumgartner's Codes*].

In the field of grammars of biblical languages, a particularly useful one, both for students and for teachers of the Old Testament, is the *Wprowadzenie do hebrajskiego biblijnego* [*Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*], drawn up by Professor Henryk Drawnel and Bartłomiej Sokal, which is the Polish version of the highly appreciated and popular manual of Thomas O. Lambdin.

Polish Old Testament scholars publish the results of their research in the form of books and articles in Poland and increasingly also abroad. Many books on the subject of the Old Testament are published within the frame of a series, for example the Prymasowska Seria Biblijna [Primate's Biblical Series] and Rozprawy i Studia Biblijne [Biblical Dissertations and Studies]. Both series are published by the publishing house Vocatio in Warsaw, under the scholarly editorship of Professor Waldemar Chrostowski. At the Institute of Biblical Studies in Lublin the Studia Biblica Lublinensia series publishes monographs devoted to biblical studies, including studies on the Old Testament, while the series Analecta Biblica Lublinensia specializes in presenting materials from biblical symposia organized by the Institute. No journal in Poland proclaims itself by its title to be devoted only to studies of the Old Testament. Articles from this field are published in general biblical and theological journals, some of which have become known and have gained a reputation also abroad, due to the publication of texts in congressional languages. For example, the quarterly *The Biblical Annals*, issued by the Institute of Biblical Studies in Lublin, has now acquired an international character. Articles on the subject of the Old Testament are often the first and basic part of such popular and renowned journals as, for example: *Verbum Vitae* (Institute of Biblical Studies of the John Paul Catholic University of Lublin), *Collectanea Theologica* (Faculty of Theology of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw), or *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia* (Faculty of Theology of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń). A new initiative of biblical scholars from the Institute of Biblical Studies in Warsaw is the publication of the semi-annual *Studia Biblica Graeca*, containing scholarly articles and the results of biblical research, including research concerning the Septuagint.

The scope of activity of Polish scholars involved in research on the Old Testament also includes popularizing initiatives designed for non-specialists. These enable them to bring their scholarship to a wider audience of people who do not always have the level of biblical, historical and theological knowledge required to understand the statements of the Old Testament authors, so distant from them in terms of time as well as geography.

Old Testament studies in Poland have a rich history. In the long period of communism, the intensity and kind of research that was possible, was often limited by the small financial outlay on science in general, and by the historical conditions created by the state. Now, however, with improved economic conditions in the country and at universities, and with the research potential assured by the

large number of highly committed and well trained Bible scholars, we have every reason to be hopeful concerning the further development of learning in this field as in others.

New Testament Studies in Poland

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This short essay on the state of New Testament studies in Poland, divided in three parts, answers the following questions: Who? What? How?

Prof. Waldemar Chrostowski presented the development and perspectives of the biblical studies in Poland. According to his paper, their prospects result from their development so far. The same dependency applies to the relationship between the current state of New Testament studies in Poland and their future. Their potential is shown in the following circumstances: a significant number of biblical scholars; the majority of which took specialized courses in foreign academic centers and cooperate with one another via, inter alia, the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars; the activities of faculties of theology, thanks to their full academic rights, stimulating researches. Results of scientific work can now be widely popularized during symposia and in publications. How do the New Testament studies look like in the context of biblical studies? Let us analyze a few examples.

On the basis of information provided by the latest list of members of the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars¹ it can easily be calculated that at least 200 of them devoted their latest scientific papers (so called professorship books, habilitation and doctorate theses, licentiate theses) to the second part of the Christian Bible. The number constitutes more than 60 percent of all the biblical scholars being members of the association.

In Poland there are no journals devoted exclusively to New Testament studies, but the texts concerning this field of studies are published on regular basis in the journals of biblical scholarship². The international and national symposia

¹ Cf. *Zeszyty Naukowe Stowarzyszenia Biblistów Polskich* 14 (2017) 33-293.

² *The Biblical Annals* and *Verbum Vitae*, both published by the Institute of Biblical Sciences in the Faculty of Theology of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* by the Polish Theological Society; *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia* by Faculty of Theology of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń; *Scriptura Sacra* by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Opole; *Scripta Biblica et Orientalia* by the Faculty of Humanities of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; *Zeszyty Naukowe Stowarzyszenia Biblistów Polskich* by the Association of Polish Biblical Scholars.

always include papers devoted to the area of biblical studies in question. For example, during the latest edition of the 12th International Biblical Days, organized by the Institute of Biblical Studies of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin devoted to anthropology in the Scriptures, 50 percent of papers concerned New Testament.

Due to the topic of the presentation one more cycle of conferences initiated in 2014 and organized by the Institute of Biblical Sciences of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University must be mentioned. Each year the cycle is devoted to one book of the New Testament. Its participants deal with issues grouped in three categories: genesis of a selected book, interpretation of the texts with application of new methods and its interpretation nowadays. In 2017 the conference was devoted to the Gospel according to John.

Answering the question “Who?” I would like to draw attention to a phenomenon that is typical for the entire biblical studies in Poland and applies especially to New Testament studies. Each of the scholars experiences a huge demand for academic work from theologians and other scientists dealing with humanities. Moreover, there is a significant need to circulate the results of the contemporary research in the popular and pastoral realm³.

Now let us try to answer the second question. What is going on in New Testament studies in Poland? It is impossible to summarize in a few minutes even the most important research conducted in the major academic centers in Poland. Therefore, let us have just a few glimpses on the work carried out.

One should mention books and articles written by Prof. Roman Bartnicki of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University. His works are very valuable for exegetes dealing with the New Testament and the early Christianity: since the 80s he has been popularizing the current trends and approaches in the studies on the narrative books of the second part of the Bible⁴. The same academic center is currently working on application of elements of social science criticism to interpretation of the Bible. A monograph by Prof. Janusz Kręciński⁵ included Polish biblical studies into the body of research that applies methods which have been developed within the framework of cultural anthropology, sociology and history⁶.

³ To give an example, for four years I have been writing short commentaries on the Sunday Scripture Readings in *Gość Niedzielny*, the biggest Polish weekly magazine sold in 120 thousand copies.

⁴ *Ewangelie synoptyczne. Geneza i interpretacja* [*Synoptic Gospels. Genesis and Interpretation*] 4th ed. (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego 2012); [with K. Klósek], *Metody interpretacji Nowego Testamentu. Wprowadzenie* [*Methods of New Testament Interpretation*] (Kraków: Petrus 2014).

⁵ *Honor i wstyd w interpretacji Ewangelii. Szkice z egzegezy antropologiczno-kulturowej* [*Honor and Shame in the Gospels' interpretation. Sketches from exegesis anthropological-cultural*] (Warszawa: Verbinum 2013).

⁶ In the forward to the book John J. Pilch expressed his conviction that readers will be able to analyze other books of the Old and the New Testament using the dynamics of honor and shame. Thanks to

The studies of two other scholars of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin deserve mentioning. Dr. Adam Kubiś in the Gabalda Editions published a research monograph, which is the first, and so far the only one, monograph-length study of the Johannine use of the Book of Zechariah as a whole⁷. In five chapters, he analyzes two explicit quotations of Zechariah, one uncertain quotation, and a significant number of allusions and echoes. The main contribution of this study is to show the relevance of Zechariah for the Johannine christology and pneumatology, both centered around the idea of the temple. Dr. Marcin Kowalski in his Ph.D. thesis, published by the University Press of America⁸, by employing rhetorical approach, argues for the unified character of 2 Corinthians. According to him, against the majority of interpreters, the four final chapters of the epistle should be labeled not as an apology, or a parody of the opponents' boasting, but as periautologia (self-praise speech) which bears similarities to ancient encomiastic discourses, to the speeches by Isocrates, and to the paradoxical boasting of Socrates.

Today two projects immensely important for research on the relation between the New Testament and Judaism are presented: the inter-university research on the Septuagint and an edition of the text of Targum Neofiti with the Polish translation⁹. An outstanding event this year was publication of Polish Nestle-Aland version carefully prepared by New Testament scholars of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow¹⁰. Thanks to this project precious materials are offered, helpful in didactics of biblical subjects and supporting the academic research work.

Answering the question "What?", attention should be drawn to the achievements of the youngest biblical scholars, who execute projects financed by the National Science Centre – a government agency – supervised by the Ministry of

this work one can speak of reception of achievements of New Testament studies in the field of studies on the books of the Old Testament. Already last year in the course of the habilitation proceedings a monograph was presented that integrates vital elements of this approach in the interpretation of the first five chapters of the Book of Wisdom: *Honor sprawiedliwego i wstyd bezbożnego w antropologicznokulturowej interpretacji Mdr 1–5* [Honor of the Righteous and Shame of the Godless in a Cultural Anthropological Interpretation of Wis 1-5] (Warszawa – Ząbki: Bractwo Słowa Bożego – Apostolicum 2015).

⁷ *The Book of Zechariah in the Gospel of John* (Pendé: Gabalda 2012).

⁸ *Transforming Boasting of Self into Boasting in the Lord. The Development of the Pauline Periautologia in 2 Cor 10–13* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America 2013).

⁹ *Targum Neofiti 1. I. Księga Rodzaju. II. Księga Wyjścia. Tekst aramejski – przekład – aparat krytyczny* [Targum Neofiti 1. I. The Book of Genesis. II. The Book of Exodus. Aramaic Text – Translation – Critical Apparatus – Notes] (Biblia Aramejska [Aramaic Bible]; Lublin: Gaudium 2014-2017).

¹⁰ *Nowy Testament grecki i polski = Novum Testamentum Graece et Polonice. Tekst grecki Novum Testamentum Graece na podstawie dzieła Eberharda i Erwina Nestle 28th ed. (eds. B & K. Aland – J. Karavidopoulos – C.M. Martini – B.M. Metzger) (tekst polski: Biblia Tysiąclecia, 5th ed. [eds. R. Bogacz – R. Mazur]) (Poznań: Pallottinum 2017).*

Science and Higher Education, set up to support basic research in Poland. Let us focus on the last two. The first one, completed by Marcin Moj, of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Silesia in Katowice, was devoted to the “sandwiches-techniques” of the Gospel according to Mark. This young scholar provided his readers with probably the most complete criteria of distinguishing between the sandwiches-techniques and explains absence of these compositions in the section of the Gospel “Jesus’ road to Jerusalem”. Another project, conducted by Monika Czarnuch, of the same University, examines the first commentary to the Gospel according to Mark written in Greek, which is Theophylact’s of Ohrid *Explanation of the Gospel of Mark*. This work is important in the context of studies on “Byzantine options” and, contrary to the common belief, proves a significant independence of the first Greek commentator from John Chrysostom and *Catena in Marcum*.

Obviously, this is not the only possible answer to the question “How?” (i.e. on the way of doing research on texts of the New Testament, characteristic for Polish biblical studies). Biblical texts are researched as historical documents of the earliest Christianity and literary works of the first century. The vast majority of Polish biblical scholars are also well-prepared theologians, who are aware of the importance of their research for theology as a whole and for each of its sub-disciplines. Therefore, using both the classical historical and critical method as well as the latest approaches which integrate historical and social sciences, literature and art sciences, their study is not confined to these types of research. Even if the texts may and should be examined within the framework of methodologies, adequate for social sciences and the history of religion, their choice as the material subject results from the fact that they are a testimony to the historical revelation. Due to this fact, the works of Polish biblical scholars are dominated by the content comprising this revelation: God, Christ, Holy Spirit, the image of man and the world and their destiny in the divine plan.

Thanks to this, Polish biblical studies, especially New Testament studies, do not duplicate research that may be carried out on other, non-theological, faculties, but constitute a proper interpretation of biblical texts, congruent with the assumptions, methods and purposes specified clearly also for other humanities.

The Aramaic Bible Project

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The Aramaic Bible Project (Biblia Aramejska) is the multivolume series of translations of Targums to the Pentateuch (Targum Neofiti 1, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Targum Onkelos), Targums to the Prophets and Targums to the Writings into Polish language. The main goal of this project is introduction, translation and critical edition of the text of Targums. The final effect of this project will be the full text of Targums in Polish language.

Targumic studies in Poland started in the second half of 20th centuries. Among Polish scholars who deal with targumic literature there are Marek Baraniak, Waldemar Chrostowski, Sylwester Jędrzejewski, Piotr Kot, Anna Kuśmirek, Marek Parchem, Krzysztof Pilarczyk, Ryszard Rubinkiewicz, Paweł Rytel-Andrianik. These scholars in their works give the general description of the targumic literature or deal with the specific parts of the biblical texts, especially New Testament, and their relation to the Targums. However, never was there a complete translation of the Targums into Polish attempted before. The Aramaic Bible Project tries to fill this gap by starting this remarkable task.

The project started in Poland in the year 2014 at John Paul II Catholic University in Lublin. The place of birth of this project is very significant because in Lublin a very famous rabbinic school – Jeszywas Chachmei Lublin – was founded by rabbi Meir Shapiro. In this school until 1939 and the Second World War, the Talmudic and Targumic studies took place. So in a symbolic way this project continues the history of the Jewish Community in Lublin.

Until now two volumes of translation and Introduction were published by director and editor of this project:

1. M.S. Wróbel, *Targum Neofiti 1. I. Księga Rodzaju. Tekst aramejski – przekład – aparat krytyczny – przypisy* [*Targum Neofiti 1. Genesis. Aramaic Text – Translation – Apparatus – Notes*] (Aramaic Bible 1; Lublin: Gaudium 2014).
2. M.S. Wróbel, *Targum Neofiti 1. I. Księga Wyjścia. Tekst aramejski – przekład – aparat krytyczny – przypisy* [*Targum Neofiti 1. Exodus. Aramaic Text – Translation – Critical Apparatus – Notes*] (Aramaic Bible 2; Lublin: Gaudium 2017).
3. M.S. Wróbel, *Wprowadzenie do Biblii Aramejskiej* [*Introduction to the Aramaic Bible*] (Biblia Aramejska; Lublin: Gaudium 2017).

The first two volumes are the translation into Polish and a critical study of *Codex Neofiti 1*. The manuscript, found in the Vatican Library in 1949, is of a great importance for research on the history and Jewish exegesis of the Hebrew Bible, as well as on the influence of Targum traditions on New Testament texts. The language of *Targum Neofiti 1*, used in ancient Palestine, plays an important role in research on the language of Jesus, the Apostles and emerging Christianity.

The first two volumes constitute a model for translation and critical study, along with a critical apparatus and a commentary, for the further volumes of Targums to the Pentateuch in three versions (*Targum Neofiti 1*, *Targum Pseudo-Jonatan* and *Targum Onkelos*), for the Prophets and the Writings. The publication of volume 1 and 2 of the Aramaic Bible indicates an urgent need to make this precious source available for further research of ancient traditions in the Second-Temple Judaism, of the influence of these traditions on the authors of Christian texts (the New Testament, patristic writings) and on the authors of rabbinic texts (Mishnah, Tosefta, Gemara, Talmud).

The next volumes are being prepared by Polish and Jewish scholars coming from various scientific centers in Poland.

Introduction to the Aramaic Bible can be used as introductory book (so called volume zero). It contains such chapters as origin and development of Targums, significance of Aramaic language, use of the Targums in the Synagogue worship, classification and properties of Targums, translation techniques, theology of Targums and their influence on the New Testament. This publication contains the newest bibliography of targumic literature, especially the detailed studies to the Targums to the Pentateuch, to the Prophets and to the Writings.

The Aramaic Bible Project can be viewed as a crucial contribution towards a better understanding and deeper interpretation of normative texts of Judaism and Christianity. The project is interdisciplinary. Its results may be used by the specialists of various disciplines like history, paleography, archaeology, sociology and theology. Targums constitute an important testimony of the ancient Jewish biblical exegesis. Aramaic paraphrases became a significant factor of the evolution of the meaning of the scripture and they made an invaluable contribution to the development of theological thought which the early Church also drew from. Targums reveal what Judaism was like and how it developed at the turn of the times of the Old and the New Testament. The Aramaic language contained in them plays a significant role in the research of the language of Jesus, the Apostles and emerging Christianity. Thanks to Targums it is possible to delve deeper into the religious and historical context of the New Testament texts which took shape at that time. Targums may be seen as a bridge connecting the Torah and the Gospel. The content of Targums was used by ancient Christianity which was born in the context of Judaism. In targumic literature we can see the link between Judaism and Christianity. Both Jews and Christians understand the Bible in the

light of targumic interpretation. The influence of the Targums on the texts of the New Testament has four dimensions: words interpolations, common expressions, common ideas of history of salvation, and common theological concepts. Also in rabbinic literature of the time of tannaim (I-II century A.D.) and amoraim (III-IV century A.D.) we can find the traces of targumic traditions. Between II and IV century there existed a set of the official Targums accepted by Rabbis. It was known by the Church Fathers, especially by St. Jerome (IV century A.D.) who made reference to the Palestinian Targums in his work *Hebraicae quaestiones in Genesis*. Also Origen in his works made references to the targumic traditions.

The present project finds its place in research of ancient sources which can give us better understanding of canonical texts (Old and New Testament) and peritestamental literature (pseudepigrapha, Qumran manuscripts, rabbinic literature). The translation of Targums from Aramaic into Polish language makes it possible the access the Jewish literature containing old traditions which was used by the New Testament authors and rabbinic Judaism. The access to the Targums in Polish language enables better understanding of ancient Jewish traditions for many scholars. Thanks to that opportunity it will be possible to develop further studies on influence of these traditions on other ancient texts. In many cases targumic texts can be an interpretative key for better understanding of canonical and extra-canonical texts.

The Aramaic Bible Project fits well in the teaching of the Church aimed at a deepening of the dialogue between Christianity and Judaism. Pope John Paul II and his successors – Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, based on the Council's Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, teach that Christianity and Judaism are related to each other as religious communities. By diving in the depths of its own mystery, the Church discovers the bond linking it to Judaism. Without a reference to the Jewish world and its traditions it is not possible, to fully understand the teaching of Jesus Christ or the country where the Church was born. The Aramaic Bible Project enables Christians to better understand Judaism of the Second Temple Period, within which the Church was born. This project can be of significant help to bodies concerned with the dialogue between the Synagogue and the Church.

The modern targumic studies should focus on implementing modern methods of form criticism and redaction criticism in targumic research, which allow making a strict distinction between a Targum and a Midrash, as well as make it possible to trace all the stages of the formation of individual Targums and to date them. It is still important that all the available manuscripts are collected and published in a critical edition. The Aramaic Bible Project carried out in Poland since 2014 intends to fulfill this demand by gradually making the rich world of ancient sources available to readers.

The Seventy-Two and their Polish Adherents Septuagint Studies in Poland: Recent Trends and Current Status

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The biblical research on the Septuagint and cognate studies in Poland do not have such a long and rich history as those in Germany, Great Britain, France or other Western countries. Nevertheless, Polish scholars have made some significant contributions in the field. In the last decades of the XX century some important studies appeared, and the XXI century is proving especially productive. The presentation is divided into eight sections concerning particular fields of research or categories of published works, addressing each of the following topics in turn: (1) tools; (2) translations; (3) papers on historical perspectives of the LXX; (4) general theological or philosophical approach; (5) introductions; (6) periodicals; (7) monographies; and finally (8) a general overview of Polish contributions to this field of scholarship and (9) bibliography.

1. Tools

Polish scholarship does not have biblical tools dedicated specifically to the LXX, except some partial studies. In 2013 Prof. Michał Wojciechowski published an interlinear translation of deuterocanonical books¹¹, including grammatical codes and a list of basic forms. The volume is a very useful tool for studying the Greek books of the Old Testament.

One can also mention a few biblical commentaries devoted to books belonging to the Greek Bible and being part of the new Polish series of commentaries. Once again, the scholar M. Wojciechowski from Olsztyn man-

¹¹ M. Wojciechowski, *Grecko-polski Stary Testament. Księgi greckie. Przekład interlinearny z kodami gramatycznymi i indeksem form podstawowych* (Warszawa: Vocatio 2008) pp. 818.

aged to prepare two important studies of the *Book of Tobit*¹² and of the *Book of Baruch*¹³.

The third commentary to the *Book of Wisdom* was issued by the best specialist of the sapiential literature of the older generation of the Polish biblical scholarship, Rev. Prof. Bogdan Poniży from Poznań¹⁴. The remaining books in the series are still to be published.

Last but not least, some years ago a group of younger scholars interested in the Septuagint studies, launched a project of preparing an introduction to the LXX on an academic level, in cooperation with the Benedictine monastery near Cracow. This effort unfortunately had to be suspended, but hopefully the idea will be taken up again in the near future.

2. Translations

Polish scholars managed to prepare some important translations, both of books of the Greek Bible and also of some important texts connected with the Septuagint studies. First substantial work showed up in 1996 when Rev. Prof. Antoni Tronina published his translation of the Psalter from the LXX¹⁵. This well-wrought translation was supplied with short introduction and brief annotations in the footnotes.

Particularly active in the field of translation is, once again, Prof. Michał Wojciechowski. In 2001 his translation of apocryphal books from the LXX was published. It covered the *Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees*, so-called *Third Book of Esdras*, *Psalms 151* and the *Prayer of Manasseh*¹⁶. He appended his texts with a short introduction to each book, bibliography and many helpful footnotes providing relevant explanations. A year later he published his translation of the *Letter of Aristeas*¹⁷, and in 2013, as mentioned, he translated the deuterocanonical books¹⁸. He also managed to prepare two other important translations of the *Book of Tobit* and of the *Book of Baruch*, just when Prof. B. Poniży produced

12 M. Wojciechowski, *Księga Tobiasza czyli Tobita. Opowieść o miłości rodzinnej* (NKB ST 12; Częstochowa: Edycja Św. Pawła 2005) pp. 218.

13 M. Wojciechowski, *Księga Barucha* (NKB ST 24/2; Częstochowa: Edycja Św. Pawła 2016) pp. 167.

14 B. Poniży, *Księga Mądrości* (NKB ST 20; Częstochowa: Edycja Św. Pawła 2012) pp. 552.

15 *Psalterz Biblii greckiej* (przełożył według wersji Septuaginty, wprowadzenie i komentarz A. Tronina) (Lublin: RW KUL 1996) pp. 272.

16 M. Wojciechowski, *Apokryfy z Biblii greckiej. 3 i 4 Księga Machabejska, 3 Księga Ezdrasza oraz Psalm 151 i Modlitwa Manasses* (RSB 8; Warszawa: Vocatio 2001) pp. 328.

17 M. Wojciechowski, *List Pseudo-Arysteasa*, *STV* 40/1(2002) 121-167.

18 M. Wojciechowski, *Grecko-polski Stary Testament. Księgi greckie* (Prymasowska Seria Biblijna; Warszawa: Vocatio 2008) pp. 818.

his translation of the *Book of Wisdom*¹⁹. These three latter translations are integral parts of a new professional biblical commentary series chaired by Rev. Prof. A. Paciorek²⁰.

However, the most extensive, indeed epoch-making²¹, translation was done by Rev. Prof. Remigiusz Popowski SDB. This specialist of classical Greek from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin managed to prepare the very first Polish translation of the entire Septuagint²². R. Popowski has been a renowned specialist of *koine* Greek for the last forty years. Together with M. Wojciechowski he had already prepared an interlinear edition of the New Testament (1993)²³ and a year later, working alone, issued a Polish-Greek Dictionary of the New Testament (1994)²⁴.

In his LXX translation Popowski used Ralph's 2006 critical edition updated by Hanhart. Thus his work covers 53 writings of the Septuagint. His translation technique follows the model of ancient writers, thus, he consistently reproduces the specific style of the LXX's authors and carefully seeks a single Polish equivalent for each important Greek term in the text. His short introductions to each of the books and his notes appearing below the main text are also of great value. One can only look with awe at the great accomplishment of this one man, having produced a sort of work usually requiring an entire team of scholars.

3. Studies of the Historical Context

The history of the Septuagint was dealt with in some articles and general introductions implemented into the broader studies.

Rev. J. Frankowski already in early 1970s presented the history of the Letter of Aristeas²⁵. A. Żurek, gave a short sketch of the historical road from the LXX to Vulgate²⁶. Rev. Prof. J. Warzecha provided some information about Alexan-

¹⁹ See n. 4 above.

²⁰ New Biblical Commentary; Częstochowa 2008-; See nn. 2-4.

²¹ See the review of the work by A. Tronina in *Bóg Stworzyciel* (ed. A. Paciorek) (Scripturae Lumen 6; Tarnów: Biblos 2014) 615.

²² *Septuaginta, czyli Biblia Starego Testamentu wraz z księgami deuterokanonicznymi i apokryfami* (Warszawa: Vocatio 2013) XXVI, 1637.

²³ *Grecko-polski Nowy Testament* (Warszawa: Vocatio 1993) XLVI, pp. 1236.

²⁴ R. Popowski, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu* (Warszawa: Vocatio 1994) XVIII, pp. 938.

²⁵ J. Frankowski, J., „List Arysteasza, czyli legenda o powstaniu Septuaginty”, *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 25/1 (1972) 12-22.

²⁶ A. Żurek, „Od Septuaginty do Wulgaty – Biblia w Kościele pierwszych wieków”, *Tarnowskie Studia Teologiczne* 11 (1992) 99-107.

drian diaspora²⁷, as did K. Pilarczyk²⁸ and P. Piwowarczyk²⁹. A somewhat more general view on the LXX in the context of Hellenistic Judaism was given by K. Mielcarek³⁰. However, none of the scholars mentioned above, seems to be focused on the historical aspect of the LXX.

4. Theological or Philosophical Approach in General

A few articles have concentrated on general theological or philosophical discussions over the role of the LXX. In 1984 E. Stanula studied the value of the LXX as viewed by Hilary de Poitiers. About fifteen years later W. Szczerba explored the role of the LXX in providing Christian philosophical terminology. In his two articles Szczerba presented a broadly recognised conviction about strong linkages between the LXX, Philo, and Christian theologians of the patristic times³¹.

Then two other articles appeared almost simultaneously (2001) dealing with the issue of the inspiration of the Greek Bible text (W. Chrostowski³², K. Mielcarek³³). Even though the approaches of the two scholars to the problem seem very much alike, their conclusions are slightly different. Rev. Chrostowski strongly affirms the inspiration of the LXX, while Mielcarek, agreeing generally with such a statement, leaves the question open to further discussion.

27 J. Warzecha, „Z dziejów diaspyry aleksandryjskiej”, *Pieśniami dla mnie Twoje przykazania. Księga pamiątkowa dla Księdza Profesora Janusza Frankowskiego w 50. rocznicę święceń kapłańskich i 75. rocznicę urodzin* (ed. W. Chrostowski) (Warszawa: Vocatio 2003) 339-372.

28 K. Pilarczyk, „Apokryfy judaistyczne – obce elementy w religijnej tradycji żydowskiej? Z dziejów kanonu pism świętych judaizmu”, *Studia Judaica* 11/1 (2008) 31-42.

29 P. Piwowarczyk, „Żydzi egipscy wobec władców ptolemejskich. Rekonesans źródełowy”, *Studia Judaica* 10/2 (2007) 215-234.

30 K. Mielcarek, „Biblia grecka i jej wpływ na judaizm hellenistyczny”, *Studia Nauk Teologicznych PAN* 4 (2009) 27-35.

31 W. Szczerba, „Język Septuaginty jako narzędzie ufilozoficznienia Biblii”, *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Filozofia* 36 (1999) 279-293; *Idem*, „The Language of the Septuagint as a Window on the Philosophy of the Hebrew Bible”, *Lingua ac Communitas* 8 (1998) 67-85.

32 W. Chrostowski, „Wokół kwestii natchnienia Biblii Greckiej”, *Żywe jest słowo Boże i skuteczne. Księga pamiątkowa dla Ks. Prof. Bernarda Wodeckiego SVD w 50. rocznicę święceń kapłańskich* (ed. W. Chrostowski) (Warszawa: Vocatio 2001) 89-110.

33 K. Mielcarek, „Ku nowej koncepcji natchnienia LXX”, *Roczniki Teologiczne* 48/1 (2001) 5-25.

5. Introductions

As mentioned above, there is no proper, comprehensive introduction to the LXX available in Polish. However, some short attempts, either general³⁴ or partial³⁵ studies, book-by-book introductory studies have been offered in the form of articles. In the first group, four names are worth mentioning: M. Wojciechowski, W. Chrostowski, K. Mielcarek and S. Jędrzejewski. In the second group, B. Strzałkowska proved to be the most effective of the younger generation of scholars (Genesis, Josue, Song of Songs, Hosea), however M. Wojciechowski (Tobit, [3 Mch, 4 Mch, 3 Esdr – within his book]) and B. Poniży (Wisdom) have their merits as well.

One can also mention the several encyclopaedia entries concerning the Septuagint and related topics, most of which were prepared by the biblical scholars from the Catholic University of Lublin³⁶.

6. Periodicals

In 2017 the Biblical Institute of the Theological Faculty of Cardinal Wyszyński University launched an important project associated with the LXX. The biblical scholars from Warsaw started a new biblical biannual named *Studia Biblica*

³⁴ See: T. Sinko, *Literatura grecka*. II/1. *Literatura w epoce hellenistycznej* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności 1947) esp. 196-210; S. Jędrzejewski, „Septuaginta – Biblia helleńskiego judaizmu”, *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 58/4 (2005) 245-262; M. Wojciechowski, „Literatura grecko-żydowska i Septuaginta”, *Literatura Grecji starożytnej. II. Proza historyczna, krasomówstwo, filozofia i nauka, literatura chrześcijańska* (ed. H. Podbielski) (Źródła i Monografie 255; Lublin: TN KUL 2005) 929-944; W. Chrostowski, „Biblia chrześcijańska a Biblia żydowska”, *Razem przy stole Słowa. W 40-lecie dekretu II Soboru Watykańskiego o ekumenizmie „Unitatis Redintegratio”* (ed. W. Popielewski) (Colloquia Disputationes 2; Poznań: Redakcja Wydawnictw WT UAM 2004) 53-68; Mielcarek, *Biblia grecka*, 27-35.

³⁵ See: M. Wojciechowski, „Authority and Canonicity of the Book of Tobit”, *The Biblical Annals* 4/2 (2014) 381-395; M. Wojciechowski, „Tak zwany List Jeremiasza (Ba 6). Pochodzenie, forma i przesłanie”, *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia* 7/2 (2014) 107-122; B. Poniży, „Kiedy powstała Księga Mądrości?”, *Słowo jest prawdą. Księga pamiątkowa dla Księdza Profesora Stanisława Mędali CM w 65. rocznicę urodzin* (ed. W. Chrostowski) (Warszawa: Vocatio 2000) 264-277; B. Strzałkowska, „Księga Rodzaju w Septuagincie”, *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia* 4(2011) 95-121; *Idem*, „Księga Aggeusza w Septuagincie”, *Collectanea Theologica* 82/4 (2012) 75-98; *Idem*, „Księga Jozuego w Septuagincie”, *Collectanea Theologica* 84/4 (2014) 83-104; *Idem*, „Księga Ozeasza w Septuagincie”, *Collectanea Theologica* 86/4 (2016) 77-102; *Idem*, „Księga Pieśni nad Pieśniami w LXX”, *Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne* 30/10 (2015) 208-233.

³⁶ See *Encyklopedia katolicka* (Lublin: TN KUL 1973–2014) I-XX; for instance: S. Szymik, „Septuaginta”, *Encyklopedia katolicka* (Lublin: TN KUL 2012) XVII, 1432-1435; A. Piwowar, „Syrach”, *Encyklopedia katolicka* (Lublin: TN KUL 2013) XVIII, 1355-1356; A. Zawadzki, „Tobiasza Księga”, *Encyklopedia katolicka* (Lublin: TN KUL 2014) XIX, 817-818.

Graeca. As the title suggests, the journal covers the results of research concerning especially the LXX, as well as New Testament, Church Father studies, and Jewish Hellenistic texts. It is the ambition of the founders to stimulate international dialogue through the pages of their periodical, and thus invite scholars from abroad to join in an intellectual exchange. It is crucial to the editorial board not only to present actual, original studies of the Greek Bible issues, but also to open up an exchange of ideas and experiences in the contemporary septuagintal research.

Studia Biblica Graeca would have four separate sections: philological and translational studies; historical studies and studies concerning Greek Jewish and early-Christian literature; theological and hermeneutical studies; and bibliographical offerings (reviews, reports, bibliographies).

7. Monographies

Providing a detailed description of all the books devoted to the LXX which were issued in Poland is impossible here. Thus, the reader should consult the bibliography appended following the text proper. Most of the entries concern works produced by scholars already mentioned above (Ponیزی, Chrostowski, Wojciechowski, Mielcarek, Strzałkowska), but some names are new (Linke, Kowalik, Dymitrów, Popko). The works usually directly address specific issues of books like Wisdom, Tobit, Ezekiel, Genesis, Sirach, Hiob or Jeremiah. Some, however, try to build a bridge toward the New Testament – Hierosolyma-Jerusalem problem in the LXX and in the Lukan work (Mielcarek).

Just a short description of two of the monographs will be given, both written by young Polish scholars. The first is a doctoral dissertation defended by the Dominican Fr. Łukasz Popko at the École Biblique et Archéologique Française in Jerusalem in January 2014. The book, *Marriage Metaphor in Jer 2:1-4:2. A Diachronic Study Based on the MT and LXX*, is a comparative study of Jer 2:1-4:2 according to the LXX and MT.

According to the author, both the Hebrew and Greek texts are products of conscious creative reworking rather than reflecting a series of errors by inattentive scribes. The probable development of the actual BH form of Jer 2:1-4:2 started from a primitive poem (exilic, hostile to Egypt, from a Judean or Babylonian perspective [2:4-37]); which was then rewritten at the time of the return (3:1-5.12-13.19-4:2), and again after the Temple reconstruction, envisioning an ideal future (3:14-18). In the latter two stages, the short prologue about the nation's faithful youth was added (2:2-3) as well as the allegory of the two wives (3:6-11). The last insertion, according to Fr. Popko, gave the whole narrative a new context, exchanging a rebellious daughter for an adulterous wife.

The second book is the newest fruit of Polish scholarship concerning the LXX, which constitutes a key element in B. Strzałkowska's post-Ph.D. researches: *Księga Przysłów 1-9 w Septuagincie. Analiza „dodatków” i „braków” w zestawieniu z Tekstem Masoreckim w świetle starożytnych świadectw tekstualnych* [*The Book of Proverbs 1–9 in the Septuagint. The Analysis of “additions” and “gaps” juxtaposed with TM in the light of the Ancient Textual Witnesses*] (*Rozprawy i Studia Biblijne* 48; Warszawa: Vocatio 2017) pp. 666.

The young scholar from Warsaw claims that the Greek text of Proverbs is a very important witness to the understanding and interpretation of the HB, since it is full of Hellenistic philosophical and cultural allusions which have fundamentally altered its original character.

Strzałkowska set two goals for her study: ascertaining the primordial Prov^{LXX} (OG), through textual criticism, and achieving a proper understanding of the Greek text of Proverbs in comparison to HB, i.e. determining its character, translation technique and theology. Having studied the phenomena of additions and gaps, she is convinced that these were caused either by intentional changes on the part of the translator (and thus could be treated as a kind of Prov^{LXX} theology) or, in rare cases, by the errors of copyists. The still later intrusions of editors say nothing about the original theology of Prov^{LXX}; if anything at all; such revisions tended to draw the Greek text closer to HB. The major differences between Prov^{HB} and Prov^{LXX} are the result of the alternative Hebrew text (Vorlage), but some minor differences or apparent gaps are in fact a consequence of a translation technique which was “ad sensum” in nature rather than literary.

8. General Overview

The contribution of Polish scholars to worldwide research on the LXX over past few decades amounts to 215 different texts altogether. Among these there are 175 scientific papers (including 15 books), 22 popular articles and 18 reviews. Among Polish authors involved in septuagintal studies, one can identify a group of at least ten people who, not only publish regularly on the subject, but are fully focused on such studies. The others are involved sporadically or tangentially.

Unfortunately, only few of the books and articles mentioned above have been published in the conference languages, hence most remain inaccessible to the wider world of scholarship.

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