Reception of the Pentateuch in the Medieval Polish Apocrypha of the New Testament

DOROTA ROJSZCZAK-ROBIŃSKA (iD)
Adam Mickiewicz University, dorroj@amu.edu.pl

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to analyze the translation and reception of the Pentateuch in medieval Poland by examining the Old Polish (vernacular) apocrypha of the New Testament. It analyses, for example, passages in which a verse from the Pentateuch is quoted or paraphrased, in which a quotation from the Books of Moses is omitted by an evangelist, as well as all passages in which the names of various figures and heroes of the Old Testament Pentateuch, are invoked. It turned out that in medieval Polish-language biblical apocryphal narratives the Pentateuch functions differently from other biblical and patristic sources. It is not used as freely as the Gospels or the Psalms. It is used to characterize the Jewish world and the precepts of the Law. Quotes from the books of Moses rarely function as prophecies. The Pentateuch in Old Polish apocrypha functions as a reservoir of stories, a collection of catchphrases to be evoked. This is because while the heroes of the Old Testament were prominent in preaching, art, and language, the text of the Torah was not frequently translated into the Polish language.

Keywords: Old Polish language, Pentateuch, Torah, Old Polish apocrypha of the New Testament, translation, Middle Ages

The Old Polish apocrypha of the New Testament are the most extensively preserved Polish-language medieval texts (a total of over 2,000 pages of manuscripts and old prints). This collection consists of nine texts:[1]

1. *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* (Przemyśl Meditation) [hereinafter referred to as RP] is the largest preserved Slavic apocrypha (845 leaves of a densely written manuscript), kept in the National Library in Warsaw (ref. no. 8024 III). It tells the story of the Holy Family (from the birth and childhood of Mary, through the childhood and youth of Jesus and His public activity, to a description of the events of Holy Week). The text has not survived in its entirety (it breaks off at the scene of the interrogation before Pilate, and the first few pages are also missing[2]).

---

1   A complete bibliography for the Old Polish apocrypha, and each text can be found on the website *Old Polish Apocrypha of the New Testament*, https://apocrypha.amu.edu.pl/elabo (access 30.09.2022).

2   It is usually numbered starting from p. 3, see introduction by Wiesław Wydra to the second edition of the manuscript: "Ihm lag offenbar als Vorlage ein stark defektes Exemplar des *Rozmyślanie* vor, das nicht

DOROTA ROJSZCZAK-ROBIŃSKA

For many years, this historical treasure was considered solely a compilation of Latin and Czech sources. For this reason, it was often assessed negatively and considered an inept and excessively long-winded text. Nowadays, it is the subject of research by specialists from various fields.[3]

2. *Rozmyślania dominikańskie* (Dominican Meditations) [hereinafter referred to as RD] is a beautifully decorated manuscript (237 leaves; each page of the text is accompanied by a full-page miniature) kept in the Library of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery in Kraków (ref. no. 287). This passion meditation is devoted to biblical events from Palm Sunday to the scene of the burial of Jesus and Mary's return from Golgotha. Over the years, the connection of RD with the late medieval mystery tradition has also been pointed out.[4] The purpose of the text is not obvious: on the one hand, it is a meditative work; on the other, it exhibits a highly dialogical nature.

3. *Sprawa chędoga o męce Pana Chrystusowej* (Comely Discourse About the Passion of Lord Christ) [hereinafter referred to as SCh] is an extensive passion sermon, included together with two other apocrypha in one codex (manuscript at the National Library in Warsaw, ref. no. 3040 III). The text conveys mainly content from the Gospels, complemented with fragments of, among others, *the Gospel of Nicodemus*, the writings of the Church fathers, and medieval sermons (e.g., *Sermones tres de Passione Domini*).[5] Inside, there are also a few typically apocryphal folk stories (such as a processed story about the Madej's bed (a torture rack) – about an outlaw who hosted the Holy Family on their way to Egypt,[6] and references to the sensational fate of Judas, inspired by the myth of Oedipus[7]).

4. *Ewangelia Nikodema* (Gospel of Nicodemus) [hereinafter referred to as EN] – two different translations of *Acta Pilati*, included in the codex of Wawrzyniec of Łask (next to *Sprawa Chędoga* [Comely Discourse About the Passion of Lord Christ]). The first one, written on leaves 260r–282v, contains a description of

---

nur keinen Schluß hatte, worüber der Schreiber den Leser übrigens loyalerweise am Ende informiert (s. S. 847), sondem in dem auch in der Mitte Blätter gefehlt haben müssen. So schrieb er plötzlich am Rande: *hic est deffectus* […] Wahrscheinlich fehlte in der Vorlage ein Blatt (mit einer Kolumne Text), für dessen Text der Kopist einen Teil der S. 2 (der Rückseite der Titelseite) frei ließ, um gegebenenfalls später den Anfang nachtragen zu können" (Wydra, "Historische und kodikologische Beschreibung," XXX–XXXI).

3   The bibliography of *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* (Przemyśl Meditation) includes several hundred items (see footnote 1). It contains works not only by literary scholars, linguists and medievalists, but also by art historians and theologians. This apocrypha is considered, for example, to have inspired Veit Stoss when creating the altarpiece in St. Mary's Basillica in Krakow (see, e.g. Smoleń, "Rozmyślanie przemyskie"; Smoleń, "Ołtarz Mariacki Wita Stwosza").

4   For example, Dobrzeniecki, "Rozmyślania dominikańskie na tle"; Górski, "Znaczenie *Rozmyślań dominikańskich*"; Ziółkowska, *Specyfika języka*. This theory was questioned by Kamil Kopania ("Słowo – Obraz – Teatr").

5   See Rojszczak-Robińska, *Staropolskie pasje*.

6   The topic was recently discussed in the article: Kotlarska – Stelmach, "Motyw Dobrego Łotra."

7   See Adamczyk, "Przeklęty jeszcze w matce."

Our Lord's Passion and the story of Joseph of Arimathea. The second one, written on leaves 127r–152r, is a repetition of the story of Joseph of Arimathea and a description of Christ's descent into the abyss. Until recently, it was believed that these two were two fragments of the same text. This idea was challenged by Wiesław Wydra, who noted that these were two separate translations, probably based on different sources.[8]

5. *Historyja trzech kroli* (History of the Three Kings) [hereinafter referred to as HTK] is an Old Polish translation of *Historia Trium Regum* by John of Hildesheim, included in the same codex as SCh and EN, on leaves 153r–260r. The work, extremely popular in medieval Europe, is a description of the three wise men's journey to Bethlehem and their return, the characteristics of their lands, as well as the story of the discovery and transfer of their relics.

6. *Karta Rogawskiego* (Rogawski Folio) [hereinafter referred to as KR] – one parchment leaf with a fragment of a larger text kept at the Princes Czartoryski Library in Kraków (in a folder under reference number 2566). For years, this text was considered to be a fragment of an earlier copy of *Sprawa chędoga* (Comely Discourse about the Passion of Lord Christ).[9] In recent years, this view has been revised.[10]

7. *List Lentulusa* (Letter of Lentulus) [hereinafter referred to as LL] – a translation of *Epistula Lentuli*, an extremely popular text, dating back to around the 13th and 14th centuries. The translation was entered on leaves 302v–303r of a paper codex currently kept at the Jagiellonian Library (ref. no 2151), dated to the years 1417–1418. According to Józef Reczek and Wacław Twardzik, the basis for the translation of the Old Polish *List Lentusa* (Letter of Lentulus) is the Latin text in the *b* version, somewhat similar to the *a* version.[11] This is an apocryphal description of what Jesus looked like.

8. *Żywot świętej Anny* (Life of Saint Anne) [hereinafter referred to as ŻSA] is a translation of *Legenda Sanctissimae Matrone* by Jan z Koszyczek (Joannes de Coszycze); it is an apocryphal-hagiographic text. The copy of the old print, housed in the Jagiellonian Library collection (BJ St. Dr. Cim. 147), is a unique second edition printed by the publishing house of Hieronim Wietor around the year 1532. The only known copy of the first edition, dated 1520, was destroyed in a fire at the National Library during World War II.[12]

9. *Żywot Pana Jezu Krysta* (Life of Lord Jesus Christ) by Baltazar Opec [hereinafter referred to as ŻPJK] is a print dated 1522 from the printing house of Hieronim Wietor. This story about the life of the Holy Family, decorated with woodcuts

---

8   Wydra, "O kodeksie Wawrzyńca." See also Izydorczyk – Wydra, *A Gospel of Nicodemus*; Borowiec, "O języku dwóch redakcji."
9   Bernacki, "Karta z 'Rozmyślania'"; Janów, "Trzy przyczynki."
10   Rojszczak-Robińska, "Karta Rogawskiego."
11   Reczek – Twardzik, "List Lentulusa."
12   Krzak-Weiss – Meller – Wydra, *Drukowane teksty polskie*.

and enriched with prayers and songs, has also been saved in other, later editions.[13] It is based, among other things, on Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes vitae Christi*, *Speculum passionis*, or – as Roman Mazurkiewicz recently pointed out – on sermons by Pelbart of Temesvar.

The Old Polish apocrypha of the New Testament are a group of historical treasures extremely important for research on the foundations of Polish religious culture. All the objects discussed here date back to the 15th and 16th centuries but have mostly survived only as copies, sometimes copies from copies, so they are much older. As a result, due to the multi-layered work of copyists, the genetic layers of the texts attest to various stages of development of the Polish language (e.g. older and newer forms of imperatives or remains of the dual number), as well as to various stages of development of theological thought.

Old Polish apocrypha are multi-style texts. Although they were written in a high style in a religious language, inside – just like in the Bible – there are fragments of other styles (e.g. elements of the official language in the trial scene) or other genres (such as hymns, planks, or sermons). In many passages, the Old Polish apocrypha are parallel; they describe the same scene (and apart from the preserved Old Polish texts of daily prayers, there is almost no basis for comparing different translations or editions of the same text). This is also what makes them such an interesting subject of study.

The Polish-language medieval apocrypha are important for another reason. The texts are based on many different Latin and Czech sources[14] (sometimes drawing on the same editions, other times on different editions of the same works, and at times on entirely distinct texts). Writers use sources independently. Contrary to what was thought for years,[15] research from recent years shows that Polish authors treated Latin sources in different ways. Conscious translation activities have been noticed and specific translation strategies are being investigated.[16]

This is highly important because the resources of Polish medieval literature are fairly limited compared to the written historical treasures of other European countries. For example, no Old Polish translation of the Pentateuch has survived to this day. However, in the Middle Ages, the entire Old Testament was probably translated into Polish, commissioned by Queen Sonka, wife of Władysław Jagiełło. Of this codex, known as Queen Sophia's Bible or the Sárospatak Bible, only a few pages and a pre-war photographic edition have survived to this day (the codex, ending with the Book

---

13   See also Wydra – Wójcik – Krzak-Weiss, *Żywot Pana Jezu Krysta Baltazara Opeca*.
14   In this article, the term "source" is understood as a foreign-language text constituting the basis of the entire Polish-language apocryphal work or its fragment. The source may be direct or indirect, quoted or paraphrased.
15   See for example Brückner, *Literatura religijna*; Adamczyk, *Biblijno-apokryficzne narracje*.
16   See for example Mika, *Maryja, Jezus, Bóg*; Rojszczak-Robińska, *Jak pisano "Rozmyślanie przemyskie"*; Rojszczak-Robińska, "Łacińskie źródła *Rozmyślania*."

of Job, was lost in 1945). The basis of the translation, as proved by Zofia Wanicowa and researched by Ewa Deptuchowa,[17] was a Czech translation, not the Vulgate. In addition, excerpts from the Book of Exodus and the Book of Leviticus have been preserved (four leaves of the manuscript at the Ossoliński Library in Wrocław, no. 50) as well as *mammotrekty* (bilingual translation aids): *Mamotrekt lubinski* and *Mamotrekt kaliski*.[18] Considering the scant survival of Polish medieval translations of the Old Testament, the quotations from the Pentateuch surviving in the Old Polish New Testament apocrypha are particularly valuable (although there are only a few of them). It is surprising that the topic of the reception of the Pentateuch in medieval literary texts in Polish has not been discussed so far in the literature.

The aim of this article is, therefore, to analyze the translations and the reception of the Pentateuch in medieval Poland by examining the Old Polish New Testament apocrypha. The author is only interested in vernacular texts in Polish. The following criteria have been adopted for material selection: first, an analysis is carried out of those passages in the apocrypha for which a verse from the Pentateuch is explicitly indicated as a direct or indirect source. For that, a newly created database Old Polish New Testament Apocrypha is used. Second, the passages in the Old Polish apocrypha are analyzed based on verses from the Gospels in which the Pentateuch is mentioned. Of interest here are both those that include embedded quotations and those that omit the quotations. Third, an analysis of passages parallel (sounding the same or saying the same)[19] to the above two is carried out to check whether certain phenomena are typical of apocrypha as such or only of one particular text. Despite the fact that for years apocrypha have been perceived as a relatively uniform group of texts, there are clearly defined preferences in the selection and use of sources. Fourth, the author finds and analyzes all fragments in which the names of figures and heroes of the Old Testament Pentateuch were mentioned. The results of the analyses are placed in the context of previous research on the reception of biblical and early Christian texts in the Polish Middle Ages.

1. The Pentateuch as a Source for Apocrypha – References to the Gospels

The Gospels refer to the Pentateuch more than twenty times. This is completely understandable: "Only the law and prophets were read during synagogue worship. Though the psalms were sung in worship, none of the writings were read."[20]

---

17   Wanicowa, "Vere scire est"; Deptuchowa, *Odpowiedniki czeskiego aorystu.*
18   Żurowska-Górecka – Kyas, *Mamotrekty staropolskie.*
19   For more details, see Rojszczak-Robińska, *Staropolskie pasje.*
20   Viljoen, "The Foundational Statement," 394.

As researchers point out, "The fulfilment of the Old Testament in Jesus is the basic orientation of Matthew's Gospel, and thus also forms the crux of Jesus' argument on the law. […] Jesus' own coming represents the fulfilment of the law. [Jesus] did not oppose the Torah, but brought it to fruition. Jesus came to affirm the Scriptures and to bring them to new actuality in people's lives."[21] Polish biblical-apocryphal narratives most often choose the Gospel of Matthew out of the four Gospels.[22] Many of these passages were adopted directly by our apocrypha, as here, when the commandments are referred to:

> Słyszeliście, iże rzeczono w Starem Zakonie: 'Nie zabijaj.' A kto zabije, będzie dostojen są-dzenia[23] (RP266/15–18).
>
> [You have heard that it was said in the Old Testament: "Do not kill." And whoever kills will be subject to judgement.]
>
> audistis quia dictum est antiquis non occides qui autem occiderit reus erit iudicio (Matt 5:21)[24]
>
> non occides (Exod 20:13)
>
> non occides (Deut 5:17).

Polish texts use these passages in various ways. For example, in this section, an analysis of three passages indicated by Dariusz Adamczyk will be carried out, where the same quotations from the Pentateuch appear in all three synoptic Gospels. This is the so-called "matter of resurrection," "the Decalogue commandments" and "the commandment to love one's neighbor."

The conversation between Jesus and the Sadducees about the issue of resurrection appears only in *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* (Przemyśl Meditation). This is not surprising. The other apocrypha do not say anything about Jesus' public activity, but only about His childhood or Passion. The author of ŻPJK, who also described the entire life of Jesus, usually omitted His teachings and speeches, focusing on the events. The author of RP followed the Gospel of Matthew like him also quoting from the Book of Exodus:

---

21 Viljoen, "The Foundational Statement," 395.

22 See Rojszczak-Robińska, *Staropolskie pasje*.

23 Old Polish quotations provided in this article are from the website *Staropolskie apokryfy Nowego Testamentu* (Old Polish Apocrypha of the New Testament) (apocrypha.amu.edu.pl), retaining the publishers' editorial markings (described in the tab: About the project). In this article, quotations are located by providing the text abbreviation, the leaf number and the range of lines after a slash.

24 The author also quotes fragments of Latin sources from the above-mentioned website, following editorial rules adopted there (descriptions of foreign-language sources can be found in the tab: Studies: About the sources).

Et ait ego sum Deus patris tui Deus Abraham Deus Isaac Deus Iacob (Exod 3:6)

De resurrectione autem mortuorum non legistis quod dictum est a Deo dicente vobis: Ego sum Deus Abraham et Deus Isaac et Deus Iacob. Non est Deus mortuorum sed viventium (Matt 22:31–32).

Aniście czli o wstaniu z martwych, ktoreż wam jest rzeczono od Boga: «Jam Bog Abramow, Bog Izakow, Bog Jakubow»? Nie jestci Bog umarłych, ale żywych (RP414/12–15).

[Have you not read about the resurrection of the dead, which was told to you by God: "I am the God of Abram, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob"? I am not the God of the dead, but the living.]

The quote is not complete (as often happens in the case of texts from the Book of Psalms[25]). It was also noticed that those passages where the word is important and where matters of faith are talked about (like all Jesus' speeches) are translated rather faithfully (unlike typical event scenes). This is the case here as well.

The same quotation appears again in *Ewangelia Nikodema* (the Gospel of Nicodemus), exactly as in the *Book of Exodus*, although via *Evangelium Nicodemi* (the Gospel of Nicodemus):

A to oni trzej mężowie, rozumiej prorocy, odpowiadając rzekli: „O, żyw jest Pan Bog ojcow naszych, Bog Abram, Bog Isaak i Bog Jakob, jakosmy słyszali mowiącego Jesusa <z> zwolenniki swymi i widzielim go wstępującego w niebo, prawdę powiadamy" (EN131r/16–131v/3).

[And these three men, namely prophets, answered and said this, "Oh, by this that the Lord God of our fathers, the God of Abram, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob is alive [we swear] that we heard Jesus speaking with His disciples, and we saw Him ascending into heaven; we speak the truth."]

Here one can see that the quote from the Pentateuch serves a different purpose. It became part of a certain formula, the formula of the oath, similarly to RP61/9: *Żywie Bog ojcow naszych* [the God of our fathers is alive] (after *Evangelium Infantiae Christi: Vivit Dominus Adonai exercituum*).

The problem of formulaicity[26] and assimilation of specific phrases from the Pentateuch appears even more clearly in the case of quoting the Decalogue commandments. As Dariusz Adamczyk notes:

Common quotations in the Synoptic Gospels from Exod 20:12–16 and Deut 5:16–20 concern the five commandments of the Decalogue. All of them are included in the pericope about the rich young man (Matt 19:16–22; Mark 10:17–22; Luke 18:18–23). In addition,

---

25   See Rojszczak-Robińska, "Translation of the Psalms."
26   See for example Puda-Blokesz, "Formuły i formuliczność"; Bajerowa, "Swoistość języka religijnego."

two of them are found in Matt 5: *You shall not kill* (v. 21) and *You shall not commit adultery* (v. 27). The commandment to honor your parents is also found in Matthew and Mark: "Honour your father and mother ... . Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death." (Matt 15:4; cf. Mark 7:10)[27]

Of the indicated passages in the Old Polish apocrypha, only quotations from Matt 5:21; 5:27, and 15:4 are present:

> Słyszeliście, iże rzeczono w Starem Zakonie: «Nie zabijaj» (RP266/15–17).
> [You have heard that it was said in the Old Testament: "Do not kill."]
> Słyszeliście, iże rzeczono w Starem Zakonie: «Nie *czyń* cudzołostwa» (RP266/3–4).
> [You have heard that it was said in the Old Testament: "Do not commit adultery."]

The pericope about the rich young man has not been translated in any of the Polish texts. It is, however, very clear that the Commandments were a well-known, familiar text. They were, after all, one of the first texts translated into vernacular languages, including Polish. As Wiesław Wydra, a researcher of the oldest Polish-language Decalogues, noted: "The etymology of the word *kaznodzieja* (a clergyman who preaches the commandments) also indicates that from ancient times, the Ten Commandments have been the most frequently discussed text in the church."[28] It was most likely written down from memory.[29] The familiarization of these commandments can be seen in construction changes:

> Nam Deus dixit honora patrem et matrem (Matt 15:4).
> Honora patrem tuum et matrem tuam (Exod 20:12).
> Bog przykazał czcić ojca i mać (RP354/21–22).
> [God commanded you to honor your father and mother.]

Instead of quotations with commands expressed in the form of an imperative in the form of direct speech introduced by *dixit* ('he or she said'), constructions with an infinitive appear in the Polish text.

The third place where all the synoptics quoted the same fragment of the Pentateuch is the so-called Commandment of Love. Adamczyk points out that it is mentioned in three different passages: when talking about the Greatest Commandment (Matt 22, Mark 12, Luke 10), in the commandment to love one's enemies (Matt 5),

---

27   Adamczyk, "Wspólne cytaty," 237–238.
28   Wydra, *Polskie dekalogi,* 3.
29   See for example Kuźmicki, "Czynnik pamięciowy"; Wójcik, "*Ars memorativa*"; Wójcik, *Culture of Memory*.

and in the pericope about the rich young man (Matt 19). Interestingly, in *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* (Przemyśl Meditation) it appears three times, once in accordance with chapter 5 of the Gospel of Matthew:

> Słyszeliście, iże rzeczono: «Miłuj bliźniego twego, a nienaźry nieprzyjaciela swego» (RP270/11–14).
> [You have heard that it was said, "Love your fellow man and hate your enemy."]

The Polish author included the speech on the greatest commandment twice more, once in accordance with the Gospel of Luke (RP331/8–21) and the second time, again, in accordance with the Gospel of Matthew. He did this in passages where the Evangelists' versions differed significantly from each other (as in the scene of the healing of Jairus' daughter[30]). Both translations are faithful, but in the second instance, it is worth paying attention to two issues:

> I spytał[y] jego jeden z nich, ktory jest był doktorem w zakonie, kusząc jego, i rzekł: „Mistrzu, ktore jest więcsze przykazanie w Zakonie?". A miły Jesus odpowiedziawszy jemu i rzekł: „Miłuj Pana Boga twego z twego wszego serca i twoją wszytką duszą, i z twej wszytkiej myśli. Toć nawięcsze i napirwsze przykazanie. A wtore jest rowne temu: «Miłuj bliźniego swego jako sam siebie». A w tych dw<u> kaźniu leży wszytek Zakon i Prorocy" (RP415/2–14).
> [And one of them, who was a scribe, asked him, testing him, and said, "Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" And the kind Jesus answered him and said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the most first commandment. And the second one is this: Love your fellow man as yourself. And on these two commandments, the entire Law and the Prophets rely."]

As Adamczyk noted: "The adjective *megale* – 'great' used by Matthew, appears in a positive form. However, it has a superlative meaning, in accordance with the construction found in Hebrew and New Testament Greek."[31] The Polish writer succeeded with his task – he used the form *więcsze* – "greater" ("ktore jest więcsze przykazanie w Zakonie" [which is the greatest commandment in the Law]), which in modern Polish is a form of the higher degree, while in medieval Polish it could be a form of both the comparative and superlative degree (Krystyna Kleszczowa calls it the comparative degree[32]). In the next sentence, the Polish author clearly used the superlative degree, but it is accompanied by a superlative form derived from the numeral *napierwsze przykazanie* [the most first commandment]*,* instead of *pierwsze*

---

30   For more details, see Rojszczak-Robińska, "Strategies for Quoting."
31   Adamczyk, "Wspólne cytaty," 247.
32   Kleszczowa, "Kategoria stopnia."

przykazanie [the first commandment]), as if he wanted to emphasize the importance of the commandment: "Toć nawięcsze i napirwsze przykazanie" [This is the greatest and the most first commandment].

For comparison: in *Żywot Pana Jezu Krysta* (Life of Lord Jesus Christ) there are no such scenes, but the commandment to love God is quoted in the description of Mary's youth, in a typical apocryphal narration:

> Potym wstawszy od modlitwy, przykazania Bożego sie jęła i dwoje sobie ku nawyszemu wypełnieniu wybrała: „Będziesz miłował Pana Boga twego ze wszytkiego serca, ze wszytkiej dusze i siły twej, a bliźniego twego jako sam siebie" (ŻPJK2v/4–8).
>
> [Then, rising from prayer, she took up God's commandments and chose two for her highest fulfillment: "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and your fellow man as yourself."]

Here, Baltazar Opec follows Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes vitae Christi*:

> Ex omnibus tamen praeceptis divinae legis, tria praecepta praecipue servavi in corde meo, videlicet: 'Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo et ex tota anima tua, et ex tota mente tua, et ex omnibus viribus tuis.' Item: 'Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum.' (MVC, cap. III).

Mary is presented as one who knows Christian teachings even before the role of Jesus was fulfilled (in Old Polish apocrypha, Mary is shown as a person with great theological awareness).

***

It is quite rare that a quotation from the Pentateuch is inserted into a translated fragment of the Gospel, or that one quotation is replaced by another, as is the case here:

> Responderunt ei Iudaei nos legem habemus et secundum legem debet mori quia Filium Dei se fecit (John 19:7).
>
> A my mamy zakon, ktory nam Bog dał przez Mojżesza, i jest to pisano w naszem zakonie, jiże nam Mojżesz przykazał od Boga rzekąc: «Przydzie-li do was iny profeta, nauczając was, abyście wy boga inego modlili, i rzekłby ten prorok do luda: 'Podźmyż, służmyż inemu bogu, ktorego wy ni znacie ani waszy ojcowie znali', tego profetę mamy umorzyć»" (RP811/21–812/5).
>
> [And we have a law which God gave us through Moses, and it is written in our law, which Moses declared to us from God, saying: "If another prophet comes to you, teaching you to worship another god, and if this prophet says to the people: 'Come, let us serve another god, whom you do not know, nor did your fathers know,' this prophet we must kill."]

Si surrexerit in medio tui prophetes aut qui somnium vidisse se dicat et praedixerit signum atque portentum. Et evenerit quod locutus est et dixerit tibi eamus et sequamur deos alienos quos ignoras et serviamus eis (Deut 13:1–2)

Propheta autem ille aut fictor somniorum interficietur (Deut 13:5).

In the trial scenes, significantly expanded in comparison to canonical sources, the author put into the mouths of Jewish priests references to the Old Testament (often including the Pentateuch as a source of law). In this way, they try to justify their demand for passing judgment against Jesus.

It also turns out that a quotation from the Pentateuch is omitted in the process of compiling sources, as is the case here, where the author of the Polish apocryphal work translated only one of two fragments from the Old Testament quoted by John in his Gospel, the one from the Book of Zechariah, and omitted a fragment from the Book of Exodus:

A to sie jest stało, iżby Pismo popełniło sie, jeż mowi: „Ujrzą w Dzień Sądny, kogo są przekłoli" (SCh121r/7–9).

[And this happened to fulfill the Scripture, which says, "On the Day of Judgment they will see who they pierced."]

Facta sunt enim haec ut scriptura impleatur os non comminuetis ex eo. Et iterum alia scriptura dicit videbunt in quem transfixerunt (John 19:36–37).

nec os illius confringetis (Exod 12:46).

et precum et aspicient ad me quem confixerunt et plangent eum (Zech 12:10).

Nowadays – contrary to what Alexander Brückner claimed – there is an understanding that the authors of Old Polish apocrypha did not incorporate every detail "that the Catholic world knew and wanted to know about Mary and Christ; their selectiveness is where their main originality lies."[33] These omissions can be observed both at the level of entire threads (as indicated above, there is no scene with the rich young man), individual verses, or given information (local names are often omitted in situations of inconsistency among the Evangelists, e.g. in the scene of the multiplication of the loaves – Magadan and Dalmanutha, Matt 15:39 and Mark 8:10). The same is true of some quotations from the Pentateuch. None of the surviving apocrypha contains a translated fragment from the Gospel of Matthew regarding divorce matters and includes a citation from the Book of Genesis, as seen in Matt 19:4:

---

33 Brückner, *Literatura religijna*, 155–156.

> qui respondens ait eis non legistis quia qui fecit ab initio masculum et feminam fecit eos (Matt 19:4).
>
> et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam ad imaginem Dei creavit illum masculum et feminam creavit eos (Gen 1:27).

Perhaps the Polish authors were not sure about the provisions of the Law, and maybe the topic of divorce was alien to them and that is why they did not discuss the topic at all.

It is similar in the case of the scene from Luke 2:23:

> sicut scriptum est in lege Domini quia omne masculinum adaperiens vulvam sanctum Domino vocabitur (Luke 2:23).

Even though the presentation at the Temple itself was depicted in both apocrypha describing Jesus' childhood (i.e. RP and ŻPJK), this reference to the provisions of the Law is not there.

2. How Was the Pentateuch Translated in Old Polish Apocrypha?

When analyzing the translations of canonical texts, one issue stands out: there was probably no Polish translation, and the texts were translated only occasionally. Translations from the Pentateuch are usually faithful and literal, although independent of each other:

> Przeklęty, ktory wisi na drzewie (RP774/10).
> [Cursed who hangs on a tree]
> Przeklęty każdy, ktory wisi na drzewie (SCh4v/8–9).
> [Cursed anyone who hangs on a tree]
> quia maledictus a Deo est qui pendet in ligno (Deut 21:23).
> Nie jednem chlebem żyw człowiek, ale wszelikim słowem, ktore pochodzi z ust Boży<ch> (RP196/1–3).
> [Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God's mouth.]
> Nie samym telko chlebem żywie człowiek, ale i słowem, ktore pochodzi z ust Bożych (ŻPJK23r/35–36).
> [Man does not live only by bread alone, but also by the word that comes from God's mouth.]
> non in solo pane vivat homo sed in omni verbo quod egreditur ex ore Domini (Deut 8:3).
> qui respondens dixit scriptum est non in pane solo vivet homo sed in omni verbo quod procedit de ore Dei (Matt 4:4).

The same is true when the Pentateuch is quoted from non-canonical sources, as in the case of the prophecy from the Book of Numbers, repeated four times in *Historyja Trzech Kroli* (the History of the Three Kings) – each time from the popular work of John of Hildesheim *Historia Trium Regum*:[34]

> Orietur stella ex Iacob et consurget virga de Israhel (Num 24:17).
>
> Materia vero istorum trium regum beatorum ex prophetia Balaam, sacerdotis Madian, prophetae gentilis, originem traxit, qui inter plurima alia prophetando sic ait: 'Orietur stella ex Iacob et exurget homo de Irael et dominabitur omnium gentium' (HTR cap. II).
>
> Jistność zaprawdę tych trzech krolow błogosławionych z prorokowania Balaam, kapłana Madian, proroka pogańskiego, początek wzięło, który między inszymi wiele rzeczami prorokując tako rzekł: „Wyniknie gwiazda z Jakoba a powstanie człowiek z Is*r*<ae>l, to jest z żydowstwa, a będzie panował wszytkiemu ludu". Jako w Starym Zakonie zupełniej jest wypisano (HTK153v/24–154r/8).
>
> [Truly, the presence of these three blessed kings originated from the prophecy of Balaam, the priest of Midianites, a pagan prophet, who, among many other things, prophesied as follows: "A star will arise from Jacob and a man will arise from Israel, that is, from the Jewish land, and he will rule over all peoples," as it is written more precisely in the Old Testament.]
>
> Dlatego gdyż czasow onych przez proroka Balaan C*y*rusewi chwalebnie było prorokowano rzekąc: „Wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob, a powstanie człowiek z pokolenia żydowskiego, a będzie panował wszytkiemu ludu" (HTK156r/5–10).
>
> [Therefore, when in those days it was prophesied gloriously to Cyrus by the prophet Balaam, saying, "A star will arise from the tribe of Jacob, and a man will arise from the Jewish tribe, and he will reign over all peoples."]
>
> Unde dum temporibus illis per Balaam tam gloriose esset prophetatum: 'Orietur stella ex Iacob et exsurget homo de Israel et dominabitur omnium gentium' (HTR cap. III).
>
> Iże z wielkiej opatrzności Boskiej ku pocieszeniu i weselu, i wierze naszej wiedzmy to owszejki być, iże Balaam, pirwszy prorok pogań*s*twa, teże prze gwiazdę pierwsze wezwanie ludu prorokował, gdyż rzekł: „Wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob", et cetera (HTK162v/18–163r/7).
>
> [And by the great providence of God, for our comfort and joy and faith, let us know that it is certain that Balaam, the first pagan prophet, also prophesied by a star the first calling of the people, for he said, "A star will rise from the tribe of Jacob," etc.]
>
> quod ex magna providentia divina ad consolationem et fidem nostram sciamus esse factum, quod Balaam primus propheta ex gentilibus etiam per stellam primitias vocatione gentium prophetavit, cum dixit: 'Orietur stella ex Iacob et exsurget homo de Israel et dominabitur omnium gentium' (HTR cap. V).

---

34   Kaliszuk, "The Three Kings."

między ktorymi wiele rzeczy naleźli, ktore przez Kaldeusze, Perses, podług ich proroctwa miany być napełnione, a zwłaszcza proroctwo Balaam, proroka pogańskiego, ktory między jinszymi rzeczami tako mowił: „Wzejdzie a wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob, a powstanie człowiek z Israel, to jest z pokolenia żydowskiego, a będzie panował wszytkiemu ludu" (HTK167v/2–11).

[among which they found many things which were to be fulfilled by the Chaldeans, the Persians, according to their prophecy, especially the prophecy of Balaam, a pagan prophet, who, among other things, said this: "A star will rise and come forth from the tribe of Jacob, and a man will arise from Israel, that is, of the Jewish generation, and he will reign over all peoples."]

Inter quos quam plurima invenerunt, quae per Chaldaeos, Persas secundum ipsas prophetias deberent adimpleri et specialiter de prophetia Balaam prophetae gentilis, quae inter cetera ait: 'Orietur stella ex Iacob et exsurget homo ex Israel et dominabitur omnium gentium' (HTR cap. V).

This example clearly shows a characteristic typical of Polish medieval texts: at that time, there were no established translations in the Old Polish language. Each time in a Latin text the quote from the Book of Numbers is given in the same linguistic form, i.e. "Orietur stella ex Iacob et exurget homo de Israel et dominabitur omnium gentium," while in the Polish text, each time it is in a different form:

Wyniknie gwiazda z Jakoba a powstanie człowiek z Is*r*<ae>l, to jest z żydowstwa, a będzie panował wszytkiemu ludu.

Wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob, a powstanie człowiek z pokolenia żydowskiego, a będzie panował wszytkiemu ludu

Wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob, et cetera.

Wzejdzie a wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob, a powstanie człowiek z Israel, to jest z pokolenia żydowskiego, a będzie panował wszytkiemu ludu.

The differences are in the choice of the verb (*wyniknie – wzejdzie a wyniknie*) [will arise – will rise and come forth] and in both name groups (*gwiazda z Jakoba – gwiazda z plemienia Jakob – człowiek z Israel, to jest z żydowstwa – człowiek z pokolenia żydowskiego – człowiek z Israel, to jest z pokolenia żydowskiego*) [a star from Jacob – a star from the tribe of Jacob – a man from Israel, that is, from the Jewish land – a man from the Jewish generation – man from Israel, that is, from the Jewish generation].

Characteristic of Polish medieval translations present in the apocrypha are auxiliary structures (introduced by *to jest* [this is]) or synonymizing structures (introduced with connecting conjunctions),[35] which may indicate that the text was translated for

---

[35] For more details, see for example Rojszczak-Robińska, "Trudne miejsca"; Masłej – Mika, "Glosy jako integralny"; Stelmach, "Szeregi składniowe."

the purpose of explanation or that it was later added. Frans van Liere noted that "Medieval authors quoted the Bible more often from oral than from written sources, suggesting that medieval Christians, especially monks, had a large memory store of Scripture that resulted from the hours they spent each week reading it aloud."[36]

3. What Are the Textual Functions of Fragments of the Pentateuch in the Old Polish Apocrypha?

If one assumes that fragments from the Pentateuch were translated only occasionally, it must also be assumed that they were used consciously. Research on the sources of Polish apocrypha carried out in recent years shows that different Latin sources function at different levels of the text. The Gospels form a whole and they may appear in narrative, commentary, or dialogue.[37] The Psalms also appear in dialogue or narrative, although they are rarely commented on.[38] The writings of the Fathers of the Church are mainly used to read the Holy Scripture – on four levels: literal (also understood in a historical sense), moral, allegorical, and anagogical.[39] The texts of the so-called classical apocrypha appear either as the basis of the whole or in loose references (*Protoevangelium of James*[40]). Only the *Gospel of Nicodemus* is used directly.[41]

The situation is still different in the case of quotations from the Pentateuch:

Old Polish authors refer to the Pentateuch primarily when they refer to Jewish customs and provide readers with additional explanations, as is the case here:

> mensis iste vobis principium mensuum primus erit in mensibus anni (Exod 12:2).
>
> et servabitis eum usque ad quartamdecimam diem mensis huius immolabitque eum universa multitudo filiorum Israhel ad vesperam (Exod 12:6).
>
> Kiedyż jest przyszedł dzień, ktoryż zwan Wielikanoc, czuż we czwartek, tegoż dnia miano zabić baranka ku wieczerzy, to jest czwartegonacie dnia miesiąca pirwego, czuż marca, a piątegonaście dnia poczynały sie święta wielikonocne, gdyż było potrzebizna zabić baranka wielikonocnego podług tego, jako Bog był przykazał Mojżeszowi w Zakonie rzekąc: „Miesiąc ten początek wam miesięcy będzie, pirwy między miesięcy rocznemi, czwartegonacie dnia będziecie ofiarować baranka wszytką tłuszczą synow israelskich k wieczoru" (RP519/13–520/4).

---

36 Liere, *An Introduction*, 208.
37 See Rojszczak-Robińska, "Strategies for Quoting."
38 See Rojszczak-Robińska, "Translation of the Psalms."
39 See Rojszczak-Robińska, "Writings and the Authority"; Rojszczak-Robińska, "Kontekst patrologiczny."
40 See Reczek – Twardzik, "List Lentulusa"; Starowieyski, "Rozmyślanie przemyskie."
41 Izydorczyk – Wydra, *The Gospel of Nicodemus*; Rojszczak-Robińska, "W poszukiwaniu nieznanej."

[When the day came that was called Easter [Passover], that is, on Thursday, a lamb would be slaughtered for supper on that day, that is, on the fourteenth day of the first month, that is, in March, and on the fifteenth day the Easter celebrations would begin, when the Passover Lamb would have to be slaughtered according to this, as God commanded Moses in the Law, saying, "This month will be the beginning of months for you, the first month among the months of the year, and on the fourteenth day in the evening you will offer a lamb with all Israeli people."]

Giving the date of Passover, the Polish author explains why it had to take place on that day. He quotes the commandment, combining the 2nd and 6th verses of the Book of Exodus. Additionally, he explains that March in the Gregorian calendar, i.e. the third month, is the first month for Jews (*miesiąca pirwego, czuż marca* [in the first month, which is March]). This is a literal reading in a historical sense.

Fragments from the Pentateuch are often quoted in trial scenes. Sometimes they simply build the plot, especially the dialogues. The priests refer to the provisions that order Jesus to be sentenced:

Odpowiedzieli Żydowie: „My mamy zakon, a podług tego zakona ma umrzeć, bo sie synem Bożym mienił. A my mamy zakon, ktory nam Bog dał przez Mojżesza, i jest to pisano w naszem zakonie, jiże nam Mojżesz przykazał od Boga rzekąc: «Przydzie-li do was iny profeta, nauczając was, abyście wy boga inego modlili, i rzekłby ten prorok do luda: 'Podźmyż, służmyż inemu bogu, ktorego wy ni znacie ani waszy ojcowie znali', tego profetę mamy umorzyć»". A tem prawem Żydowie chcieli miłego Jesukrysta umorzyć, a ręka książęca ma być na tego człowieka. A tem prawem chcieli, by ji Piłat osądził ku śmierci, przeto iże sie synem Bożym nazywał (RP811/18–812/11).

[The Jews answered, "We have a law, and according to this law He must die because He considers Himself the Son of God. And we have a law which God delivered to us through Moses, and it is written in our law which Moses delivered to us from God, saying, "If another prophet comes to you, teaching you to worship another god, and that prophet says to the people 'Come, let us serve another god, whom you do not know, nor did your fathers know,' this prophet we must kill." And with this law the Jews wanted to kill the beloved Jesus Christ, and the princely power was to be over this man. And by this law, they wanted Pilate to sentence Him to death because He called Himself the Son of God.]

The Polish writer put into the mouths of the priests a compilation of verses 1–6 of chapter 13 of the Book of Deuteronomy. The author also explained the behavior of the Jews using the provisions of the Law:

Przeto rzekli, iże chcieli, aby ukrzyżowan a by jego sławy i jego czci mogli tem więcej uwlec. Bo podług ich Zakona śmierć krzyżowa była sromotniejsza nade wszytki ganiebne

śmierci i mieli to w ich Zakonie napisano, gdzież stoi: „Przeklęty, ktory wisi na drzewie" (RP774/3–10).

[That is why they said that they wanted Him to be crucified – so that they could insult His fame and His honor even more. For according to their Law, death on the cross was more shameful than all other shameful deaths, and it was written in their Law where it stands: "Cursed who hangs on a tree."]

On the other hand, knowledge of the Jewish people's history or their Law was also attributed to Pilate:

Piłat, usłyszawszy, lękł sie tych słow jeszcze więcej niż pirwej, bo widział, iż już musił ji dać ubić, bo był sędzią i wydawcą prawa cesarskiego i takież zakonu żydowskiego, <jen> przykazował takiego ubić, gdzie tako pisano: „Wywiedź uwłoczcę czci Boskiej, aby <ji> wszytek lud kamionował" (RP812/11–19).

[Pilate, hearing that, was even more afraid of these words than before because he saw that he already had to let Him be killed because he was a judge and legislator of the imperial law and also of the Jewish law, which ordered to kill such a person, where it was written: "Bring out the one who insults God's honor so that all the people may stone him."]

This is where the narrator's point of view is evident. Similar comments, often showing the falsehood of Jewish priests, appear in non-narrative texts, as is the case here:

Mienili, aby chcieli zakon pełnić: „Niewinnego i sprawiedliwego nie ubijaj", a przeto jako fałszywi przemieniając Jesusowi złe uczynki (RP770/25–771/3).

[They claimed that they wanted to uphold the law: "Do not kill the innocent and the just." Yet, in their falsehood, they attribute evil deeds to Jesus.]

What is important to note is that very often in trial scenes, there is only a reference to the Law, as is the case here (without providing a specific quote):

Bo my mamy prawo dwoje w ziemi: pirwe, iże ktokolwie naucza albo każe przez dopuszczenia wyszego biskupa, tego mamy umorzyć, a drugie prawo mamy: ktory-by-koli swem szeptanim uczynił niepokoj w ziemi, tego mamy umorzyć (RP789/5–11).

[For we have two laws in the land: the first, that whoever teaches or preaches without the consent of a high bishop, we are to kill; and the second law we have is that whoever causes trouble by his incitement in the land, we are to kill.]

Awareness of the Pentateuch, both direct quotes and free references to its provisions or history (for example, a significant scene taken from *the Gospel of Nicodemus*, in

which Pilate reminds the Jews of all the blessings they received from God during their escape from Egypt, see SCh83v/9–84v/1 and RP809/19–811/15), builds trial scenes, extremely important for Polish apocrypha (four out of nine texts are exclusively passion apocrypha).

The Pentateuch is also used to convey moral teachings. However, this is only the case in passages where quotations from the Pentateuch were taken from the Gospels – in dialogues, in the words of Jesus referring to the Decalogue and other OT regulations, such as the previously discussed fragments from Matthew 5.

A small number of quotations from the Pentateuch serve to prove that the prophecy has been fulfilled or to recall the prophecy – as in the case of the temptation in the desert scene – also taken from the Gospels:

> Ale zwyciężyciel rzekł: „Pojdzi wen, szatanie! Pisano jest: «Pana Boga twego będziesz chwalić a jemu samemu będziesz służyć»” (ŻPJK23v/15–17).
>
> [But the victor said, "Get thee behind, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord your God you will praise, and only Him you will serve'"]
>
> Tunc dicit ei Iesus vade Satanas scriptum est Dominum Deum tuum adorabis et illi soli servies (Matt 4:10).
>
> Dominum Deum tuum timebis et ipsi servies (Deut 6:13).

Also in this vein is the already discussed promise from the *Book of Numbers* in *Historyja Trzech Kroli* (the History of the Three Kings). As Tobias Nicklas noted regarding the early Christian apocrypha: "several narrative texts show that at least some ancient Christian groups tried to prove that only their – Christological – reading of many parts of Jewish scriptures made sense."[42]

It is impossible to clearly locate most of such quotations. The device employed here is the use of a quotation in a new context, which is known to researchers of medieval texts as repurposing. Authors of the introduction to the volume *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture* noted that: "Translation is never an innocent act. Because languages, as the semiologist Umberto Eco has noticed, are reciprocally incommensurable, translation is always, on some level, implicated in the process of interpretation, appropriation, or re-creation, even when a translator positions himself as a *fidus interpres*."[43] This is not surprising – it is similar in the case of the intertextuality of the Gospels, such as the commandment to hate enemies quoted by Jesus, which is not expressed directly in the Old Testament.[44]

---

42 Nicklas, "The Influence of Jewish," 142.
43 Wisnovsky, "Introduction," 16.
44 See Adamczyk, "Wspólne cytaty," 251: „However, in the Old Testament there is no commandment to hate your enemies. We do not find it in rabbinic writings either. Hatred of enemies was the precept of

4. The Functioning of Names of the Pentateuch Figures in the Old Polish Apocrypha of the New Testament

Another way the Pentateuch manifests in the Old Polish New Testament apocrypha is through references to its people and figures. This is a very interesting topic, which will only be outlined here. The following figures from the Pentateuch are mentioned in various ways in the Old Polish New Testament apocrypha: Adam, Eve, Seth, Abel and Cain, Abram and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Rebekah, Joseph, Noah, Moses, Aaron, Rachel, Dathan, and Abiram. These figures appear, primarily in allegorical readings – as types or antitypes. Jesus is directly called the second Adam:

> kiedy <by> kto Jesukrysta zwał Adamem, nie zbłądziłby, iżby rzekł „wtory Jadam" (RP324/17–19).
> [if someone called Jesus Adam, he would not go astray, because he would have said "the second Adam"]

Jesus is the lamb offered by Abraham instead of Isaac:

> Toć on baranek, ktorego ofierował Abram miasto Izaka, Bog i syn Boży prze nas opłcony (RP67/1–3).
> [This is the lamb that Abraham offered instead of Isaac, God and God's son incarnate for us.]

There are also typically apocryphal readings. Among the many miracles associated with the birth of Jesus, there is also this one with Noah's Ark:

> Tej nocy stary korab Nojego, jen był na gorach armańskich, dał świadectwo Święte Trojcej w Jesukrystusowem, Synu Bożem, narodzeniu z Maryje dziewice, bo są z niego, z tego isnego korabia, wypadły trzy drzewa, puściły odmłodzi, zakwitnąwszy i dały owoc (RP71/2–9).
> [On that night, Noah's old ark, which was in the Armenian mountains, gave testimony to the Holy Trinity in the birth of Jesus, God's Son, from the virgin Mary, because from it, from this very ark, three trees fell out, sprouted branches, blossomed and gave fruit.]

Elsewhere it is said that Judas's thirty pieces of silver were the same money with which Abraham bought a field for his and Sarah's burial. The same money was used to pay Joseph's brothers for selling him into slavery. The same money returns to Egypt as payment for grain, the same money is gold offered by one of the three wise men to the Newborn, etc. (for the whole story see HTK202r/20–204v/15).

---

the Qumran sect. In the *Book of the Rule of Qumran* there is a commandment to hate all the sons of darkness, depending on their guilt." See also Adamczyk, "Starotestamentalne cytaty."

The names of the figures of the Pentateuch function in the texts of Old Polish biblical and apocryphal narratives most often as a fixed concept, a certain slogan evoked in the mind of the writer and reader. So, Adam often appears in the context of sin; he is mentioned, for instance, in the scene of temptation in the desert by the author of RP:[45]

Kusił ji też troją rzeczą, ktorąż i Adama kusił, ale nie takiem rzędem (RP195/17–19).
[He also tempted Him with three things with which he had also tempted Adam, but not in the same order.]

or in the conversation between Mary and Jesus:

Wszak wiesz, miła panno, iżci Bog Ociec za grzech Adamow inszej ofiary nie żąda, jedno krwie i śmierci swego i twego jedynego syna (ŻPJK64v/37–65r/2).
[You know very well, dear maiden, that God the Father demands no other sacrifice for Adam's sin, only the blood and death of His and your only Son.]

and, finally, in the introduction to the sermon in *Sprawa chędoga* (Comely Discourse about the Passion of Lord Christ):

A gdyż naszej pierwej rodziny, Adama i Jewy, grzech a niemoc była jest pycha, łakomstwo a nieposłusztwo, przez posłusztwo miano oprawiono być (SCh2r/6–10).
[And since the sin and weakness of our first family, Adam and Eve, was pride, greed and disobedience, they were to be corrected by obedience.]

Mary is also supposed to help repair the crime of the first parents, called 'Adam's wrong,' 'Adam's disobedience,' 'Adam's sin,' 'Eve's curse':

A mow jej, by go wesoło w swoj żywot przyjęła, bo przez nię ludzkie plemię chcę zbawić i nieposłuszeństwa Adamowego zapamiętać (ŻPJK5v/27–29).
[And tell her to welcome Him joyfully into her bosom, because through her I want to save the human tribe and forget Adam's disobedience.]
Dzisia śmierć, ktorą niewiasta sprawiła, rozumiej Ewa, żeńczyzna, rozumiej dziewica Maryja, oddaliła (HTK229v/4–6).
[Today the death caused by a woman – Eve in this context – has been counteracted by another woman, signified here as the Virgin Mary.]

---

45   See Stelmach, "Grzech Adama."

Interestingly – the sin of Adam, not of Eve, is talked about much more often, which differs from the Old Slavic apocrypha *(e.g. The Word about Adam and Eve*[46]). Of note, it seems that in the case of Eve, what is emphasized is the effect – the original sin affecting humans (a curse, the appearance of death), while in the case of Adam – the act itself (a sin, disobedience).

The name of Eve is also mentioned in the scene of Peter's Denial, along with other names of women who became the cause of the destruction of men in the long history of Israel. An Old Polish author explains this:

> Bo i ktorego nawiętszego męża od początka świata niewiasta ku kłop*o*tu nie przyprawiła? Od pirwego człowieka począwszy, Ada*m*a – Jew*a*, Dalida – Samsona, B*e*ts*a*b*ee* – Dawida, Mo[r]abit<k>a – Salomon<a> a dziewka wrotna – Piotra. Przetoż <o>*b*wykł dziwno dyjabeł święt*e* męże zdradzi*ć* niewieścim przyprawienim, a nawięcej *ty*, ktorzy sie dzierżą ku dworam książęcym albo prełacskim (RP693/8–18).
>
> [Now, which of the greatest men since the beginning of the world has not been put into trouble by a female? Beginning with the first man, Adam – by Eve, Samson – by Delilah, David – by Bethsheba, Solomon – by a Moabite woman, and Peter – by the servant girl, doorkeeper. That is why the devil used to strangely betray holy men through women, especially through those who stayed at the courts of princes or bishops.]

and in the scene with Pilate's wife:

> Dyjabełcim stary chytrzec jest: bacząc przez niektore znamiona, iż on był prawy Bog, bo widział jego wielką cirpliwość i pokorę, widział, iże sie święci ojcowie radowali z jego śmierci, a przeto chciał śmierć Jezusowę przekazić przez niewiastę, jako ją wwiodł przez Jewę, ukazawszy sie żenie Piłatowej, strasząc i mowiąc jej: „Ten człowiek, o ktorego Żydowie stoją, iżby był na śmierć osądzon, jestci owszejki niewinny i przyjaciel Boży a wielki święty, a dlatego sprzeciw sie, abyć nie umarł" (ŻPJK90v/25–91v/2).
>
> [The devil is an old trickster: seeing through certain signs that this one, He was the true God, because he saw His great patience and humility. He saw that the holy fathers rejoiced at His death, and therefore he wanted to undermine the death of Jesus through a woman, like he had done through Eve, having appeared to Pilate's wife, frightening her, he said, "This man whom the Jews are asking to be sentenced to death is completely innocent and is a friend of God and a great saint; that is why you must object so that He does not die."]

that is, where the cause of a man's error may be a woman. In the case of Pilate, it is perverse to think that if the judgment had not been passed, salvation would not have been achieved. It may also be a separation from the Orthodox Church, where Claudia Procula is venerated as a saint.

---

46   See Stelmach – Zarkova, "Język słowiańskich apokryfów."

Adam also appears as a symbol of the beginning of times:

Pirwe niż był pod Adamowem plemieniem, pirwszy j*am* cie namienił (RP215/21–216/1).
[Even before he was among Adam's tribe, I was the first to name you.]
Ani sie też temu nie trzeba dziwować, gdy od czasow Jadama, ojca pirwego, nie naleziona taka niewiasta, ktorą by wybrał Bog wszechmogący, iżby była starą matką jego syna a matką matki Bożej (ŻSA18r/10–14).
[Nor should this be surprising, as since the time of Adam, the first father, no woman has been found whom Almighty God chose to be the grandmother of His son and the mother of the mother of God.]

There is also a constant concept of perceiving Adam as the first father and Eve as the mother, although in the case of Eve it is explicitly written that her function as the mother of all people is taken over by Mary:

Juże Jewa nie będzie zwana [ale] matka wszech na świecie będących, ale tej dziewicy będzie dawna chwała (RP47/16–19).
[Eve will no longer be called the mother of all those in the world, but the former glory will be restored to this virgin.]

Sarah, Rachel, and Rebekah foreshadow the late motherhood of both Saint Elizabeth of the Gospels and the apocryphal Anna, the mother of Mary.
Abraham appears most often in a row of names, mentioned along with Isaac and Jacob:

jako obiecował waszym ojcom, Abramowi i Izakowi, i Jakobowi (RP63/3–5).
[as He promised your fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob]
i będą odpoczywać z Abramem, z Izakiem i Jakobem w krolewstwie niebieskiem (RP287/14–16).
[and they will rest with Abraham, with Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven]

Perhaps a fragment of the *Book of Exodus*, quoted in the *Gospel of Matthew*, which we have already discussed, is echoed here:

ego sum Deus Abraham et Deus Isaac et Deus Iacob non est Deus mortuorum sed viventium (Matt 22:32).
et ait ego sum Deus patris tui Deus Abraham Deus Isaac Deus Iacob (Exod 3:6).

Aniście czli o wstaniu z martwych, ktoreż wam jest rzeczono od Boga: «Jam Bog Abramow, Bog Izakow, Bog Jakubow»? Nie jestci Bog umarłych, ale żywych (RP414/12–15).

[Have you not read about the resurrection, what was said to you by God: "I am the God of Abram, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob?" He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.]

The narrator also mentions Dathan and Abiram, as well as Lot's wives, in a very emotional address to those who betrayed Jesus:

Wszakoż widzicie, iże sam Krystus jest mocniejszy i mogłby was wszech pobić, by chciał, i oszwem by mogł kazać ziemi, iżby pod waszemi nogami sie otworzyła i pożarła was wszytkie, jako pożarła Dat*an* i Abiram; albo by mogł na was spuścić ogiń i siarę gorącą z nieba i zgładzić was jako Sodomę i Gomorę; albo by was mogł w kamienie przemienić jako żonę Lotowę (RP627/13–25).

[For you see that Christ Himself is mightier and could beat you all if He wanted to, and certainly He could command the earth to open up under your feet and devour you all, as it devoured Dathan and Abiram; or He might send down fire and hot brimstone from heaven upon you and destroy you as Sodom and Gomorrah, or He might turn you into stones like Lot's wife.]

There are also idiomatic expressions in the Polish texts, e.g. 'Abraham's bosom' as a synonym for death or 'Abel's blood' as a synonym for innocent blood:

pomsta krwie niewinnych, ktora jest przelana na ziemię od Abla sprawiedliwego aże do Zacharyjasza, syna Barachijaszowego, ktoregoście zabili w kościele za ołtarzem (ŻPJK 46v/31–33).

[the vengeance of the innocent blood that is poured out on the earth, from the righteous Abel to Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you killed in the temple behind the altar]

Oto krew brata naszego, Abla, woła do ciebie za nami z ziemie rzeknąc: „Ojcze, odpuści im, boć nie wiedzą, co działają" (ŻPJK99v/24–26).

[This blood of our brother, Abel, is crying out to you from the earth, saying, "Father, forgive them because they do not know what they are doing."]

The Old Polish apocrypha, which strongly influenced the formation of the Polish religious language, may be the source of these biblicalisms,[47] which still function in the Polish language today.

And there are many more references of this type in medieval Polish apocrypha than actual quotations from the Pentateuch. In this respect, the use of this source differs from the use of other Old Testament books.

---

47   See for example Koziara, *Tradycyjne biblizmy*.

Conclusion

The Pentateuch in medieval Polish-language biblical and apocryphal narratives functions differently than other sources. There are not so many quotations from the Pentateuch in the apocrypha – about 30 fragments have been located on over 2,000 leaves. Some references to the commandments of the Law are difficult to identify. Any content from the Pentateuch added to other sources is also rarely found; it is not used as freely as the Gospels or Psalms. It serves primarily to characterize the Jewish world and indicate the commandments of the Law. Quotations from the Books of Moses rarely function as prophecies.

In the Old Polish apocrypha, the Pentateuch functions more as a supply of stories, a collection of entries to be recalled, rather than a stock of quotations. The Old Testament heroes were present in preaching, art, and language – this is the time when idiomatic expressions, such as *łono Abrahama* ('Abraham's bosom') and *arka Noego* ('Noah's ark') were developed in the Polish national language.

The impression after analyzing the approach of Old Polish apocryphal writers to various sources, is that these authors knew the content of the Pentateuch and the stories within it better than its exact text.

Bibliography

Primary literature
Staropolskie apokryfy Nowego Testamentu [Old Polish Apocrypha of the New Testament], apocrypha.amu.edu.pl (access 30.09.2022).

Secondary literature
Adamczyk, D., *Starotestamentalne cytaty w Ewangelii według świętego Mateusza i ich zastosowanie w aktualnych polskich podręcznikach do katechizacji. Studium biblijno-katechetyczne* (Kielce: Jedność 2006).

Adamczyk, D., "Wspólne cytaty z Pięcioksięgu w Ewangeliach synoptycznych," *Kieleckie Studia Teologiczne* 8 (2009) 233–256.

Adamczyk, M., *Biblijno-apokryficzne narracje w literaturze staropolskiej do końca XVI wieku* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM 1980).

Adamczyk, M., "'Przeklęty jeszcze w matce…'. Jedna ze staropolskich wersji biografii Judasza," *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 45/1 (1997) 69–84.

Bajerowa, I., "Swoistość języka religijnego i niektóre problemy jego skuteczności," *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne* 3 (1994) 12–17.

Bernacki, L., "Karta z 'Rozmyślania o życiu Pana Jezusa,'" *Pamiętnik Literacki* 10/1/4 (1911) 470–477.

Borowiec, K., "O języku dwóch redakcji polskiej Ewangelii Nikodema z kodeksu Wawrzyńca z Łaska (1544). Rekonesans," *Język staropolskich apokryfów. Pytania, problemy, perspektywy*

(eds. D. Rojszczak-Robińska – A. Deskur – W. Stelmach; Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne 2023) 53–90.

Brückner, A., *Literatura religijna w Polsce średniowiecznej. Pismo Święte i apokryfy* (Warszawa: Gebethner & Wolff 1903).

Deptuchowa, E., *Odpowiedniki czeskiego aorystu w Biblii królowej Zofii* (Kraków: Lexis 2008).

Dobrzeniecki, T., "*Rozmyślania dominikańskie* na tle średniowiecznej literatury pasyjnej," *Rozmyślania dominikańskie* (eds. K. Górski – W. Kuraszkiewicz; Wrocław: Ossolineum 1965) XXXIX–XLII.

Górski, K. "Znaczenie *Rozmyślań dominikańskich* dla kultury polskiej przełomu XV i XVI wieku," *Pogranicza i konteksty literatury polskiego średniowiecza* (ed. T. Michałowska; Wrocław: Ossolineum 1989) 203–207.

Izydorczyk, Z. – Wydra, W., *A Gospel of Nicodemus preserved in Poland* (Turnhout: Brepols 2007).

Janów, J., "Trzy przyczynki do historii piśmiennictwa staropolskiego," *Sprawozdania z Czynności i Posiedzeń Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności* 47/2 (1946) 33–43.

Kaliszuk, J., "The Three Kings in Popular Piety in Poland in the late Middle Ages," *Religion und Magie in Ostmitteleuropa. Spielräume theologischer Normierungsprozesse in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (ed. T. Wünsch; Berlin: Lit 2006) 239–255.

Kleszczowa, K., "Kategoria stopnia staropolskich przymiotników," *Studia linguistica Danutae Wesołowska oblata* (eds. H. Kurek – J. Labocha; Kraków: Universitas 2004) 85–92.

Kopania, K., "Słowo – Obraz – Teatr. Uwagi na temat *Rozmyślań dominikańskich*," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 66/1–2 (2004) 7–48. DOI: https://doi.org/10.11588/artdok.00001679.

Kotlarska, I. – Stelmach, W., "Motyw Dobrego Łotra w staropolskich apokryfach Nowego Testamentu na tle dziewiętnastowiecznych bajek ludowych," *Literatura Ludowa* 66/4 (2023) 45–60. DOI: https://doi.org/10.12775/LL.4.2022.003.

Koziara, S., *Tradycyjne biblizmy a nowe polskie przekłady Pisma Świętego (ujęcie filologiczno- -normatywne)* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego 2009).

Krzak-Weiss, K. – Meller, K. – Wydra, W. (eds.), *Drukowane teksty polskie sprzed 1543 roku* (Poznań: Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne 2019).

Kuźmicki, M., "Czynnik pamięciowy w powstawaniu tekstu średniowiecznego," *Polonica* 35 (2015) 115–129. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17651/POLON.35.10

van Liere, F., *An Introduction to the Medieval Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2014).

Masłej, D. – Mika, T., "Glosy jako integralny składnik średniowiecznego tekstu. W poszukiwaniu adekwatnych procedur badawczych," *LingVaria* 29 (2020) 121–133. DOI: https://doi.org/ 10.12797/LV.15.2020.29.08.

Mika, T., *Maryja, Jezus, Bóg w „Rozmyślaniu przemyskim". O nazywaniu osób* (Poznań: WiS 2002).

Nicklas, T., "The Influence of Jewish Scriptures on Early Christian Apocrypha," *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Apocrypha* (eds. A. Gregory *et al.*; Oxford: Oxford University Press 2015) 141–152. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199644117.013.8,

Puda-Blokesz, M., "Formuły i formuliczność jako wyznaczniki stylu biblijnego," *Polszczyzna biblijna – między tradycją a współczesnością* (eds. S. Koziara – W. Przyczyna; Tarnów: Biblos 2009) I, 35–52.

Reczek, J. – Twardzik, W., "List Lentulusa w staropolskim przekładzie," *Prace Filologiczne* 20 (1970) 343–355.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., *Jak pisano „Rozmyślanie przemyskie"* (Poznań: Rys 2012).

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "'Karta Rogawskiego'. Zapomniany zabytek języka staropolskiego," *Slavia Occidentalis* 74 (2017) 119–134. DOI: https://doi.org/10.14746/so.2017.74.7.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "Kontekst patrologiczny *Rozmyślania przemyskiego*. Wokół Judasza," *Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne* 18 (2005) 261–277.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "Łacińskie źródła *Rozmyślania przemyskiego*. Pytania, problemy perspektywy," *Staropolskie Spotkanie Językoznawcze*. I. *Jak badać teksty staropolskie* (eds. T. Mika – D. Rojszczak-Robińska – O. Stramczewska; Poznań: Rys 2015) 135–154.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., *Staropolskie pasje: Rozmyślanie przemyskie, Sprawa chędoga, Karta Rogawskiego. Źródła – język – fabuła* (Poznań: Rys 2016).

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "Strategies for Quoting the Holy Scriptures in the OldPolish Biblical-Apocryphal Narrations," *Scrinium* 16 (2020) 271–291. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/18177565-00160A26.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "Translation of the Psalms in the Old Polish Biblical-Apocryphal Narrative Texts: The Beginnings of Vernacular Religious Language," *The Bible Translator* 74/1 (2023) 126–147. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/20516770221151156.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "Trudne miejsca 'Rozmyślania przemyskiego'. Problem glos," *Zbliżenie. Literatura – kultura – język – translatoryka* (ed. I. Fijałkowska-Janiak; Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego 2011) 213–219.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "W poszukiwaniu nieznanej staropolskiej pasji. Tłumaczenie *Ewangelii Nikodema* w polskojęzycznych tekstach średniowiecznych," *Słowo z perspektywy językoznawcy i tłumacza*. V. *Polszczyzna w tekstach przekładu* (eds. A. Pstyga – M. Milewska-Stawiany; Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego 2016) 35–46.

Rojszczak-Robińska, D., "Writings and the Authority of the Church Fathers in Old Polish Apocryphal Texts," *Scrinium* (2023) 1–25. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/18177565-bja10075.

Smoleń, W., "Ołtarz Mariacki Wita Stwosza w Krakowie na tle polskich źródeł literackich," *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne* 5 (1962) 211–343.

Smoleń, W., "*Rozmyślanie przemyskie* jako źródło ikonograficzne kwatery Ofiarowania Maryi Ołtarza Mariackiego Wita Stwosza w Krakowie," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 51/3 (1960) 123–143.

Starowieyski, M., "'Rozmyślanie przemyskie' na tle apokryfów Nowego Testamentu," *Rozmyślanie przemyskie. Świadectwo średniowiecznej kultury religijnej* (eds. J. Bartmiński – A. Timofiejew; Przemyśl: San Set 2016) 25–34.

Stelmach, W., "Grzech Adama w staropolskich apokryfach Starego i Nowego Testamentu (na przykładzie «Historyi barzo cudnej o stworzeniu nieba i ziemie» oraz «Rozmyślania przemyskiego»)," *Język – Szkoła – Religia* 17 (2022) 144–155. DOI: https://doi.org/10.26881/jsr.2022.17.11.

Stelmach, W., "Szeregi składniowe w staropolskich apokryfach Starego i Nowego Testamentu (na przykładzie *Historyi barzo cudnej o stworzeniu nieba i ziemie* i *Rozmyślania przemyskiego),*" *LingVaria* 31/1 (2021) 157–168. DOI: https://doi.org/10.12797/LV.16.2021.31.12.

Stelmach, W. – Zarkova, D., "Język słowiańskich apokryfów z kręgu kultur cerkiewnosłowiańskiej i łacińskiej na przykładzie *Słowa o Adamie i Ewie* oraz *Historyi barzo cudnej o stworzeniu nieba i ziemie*. Rekonesans," *Kwartalnik Językoznawczy* 3 (2016) 28–39.

Viljoen, F.P., "The Foundational Statement in Matthew 5:17–20 on the Continuing Validity of the Law," *In die Skriflig* 45/2–3 (2011) 385–407.

Wanicowa, Z., "Vere scire est per causas scire, czyli jak znajomość przyczyn pozwala lepiej rozumieć staropolszczyznę. Biblia królowej Zofii a czeskie tłumaczenia biblijne," Z. Wanicowa, *Ignota, dubia, reperta. Czytać i rozumieć staropolszczyznę* (Kraków: Lexis 2009) 76–93.

Wisnovsky, R. *et al.*, "Introduction," *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture* (eds. R. Wisnovsky *et al.*; Turnhout: Brepols 2011) 1–22.

Wójcik, R., "*Ars memorativa* w Polsce późnego średniowiecza na tle Europy Środkowej," *Mnemonika i pamięć kulturowa epok dawnych* (eds. M. Prejs – A. Jakóbczyk-Gola; Warszawa: Neriton 2013) 109–132.

Wójcik, R. (ed.), *Culture of Memory in East Central Europe in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period* (Poznań: Biblioteka Uniwersytecka 2008).

Wydra, W., "Historische und kodikologische Beschreibung der Handschrift," *Rozmyślanie przemyskie. Transliteracja, transkrypcja, podstawa łacińska, niemiecki przekład* (eds. F. Keller – W. Twardzik; Freiburg i. Br.: Weiher 1998) XIX–XXXVII.

Wydra, W., "O kodeksie Wawrzyńca z Łaska (1544 rok) i Ewangelii Nikodema w nim zawartej," *Z dziejów literatury i kultury staropolskiej. Studia o książkach i tekstach* (eds. W. Wydra – W.R. Rzepka; Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM 2017) 83–96.

Wydra, W., *Polskie dekalogi średniowieczne* (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy Pax 1973).

Wydra, W. – Wójcik, R. – Krzak-Weiss, K. (eds.), *Żywot Pana Jezu Krysta Baltazara Opeca* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM 2014).

Ziółkowska, O., *Specyfika języka „Rozmyślań dominikańskich" w świetle składni i leksyki* (Poznań: Rys 2016).

Żurowska-Górecka, W., – Kyas, V. (eds.), *Mamotrekty staropolskie* (Wrocław: Ossolineum 1977–1980) I–III.