Varia

Miscellaneous Studies

Contents

ARTICLES

Verbum **V**itae

Oracle of Doom or Oracle of Salvation?
A New Interpretation of Animal Metaphors
in Isa 31:4-5 in the Light of Rhetorical Analysis

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Abstract: This article seeks to clarify the meaning of animal metaphors contained in Isa 31:4-5. Difficulties in interpreting these metaphors are associated with the Hebrew syntax as well as the proper reading of the symbolism of the characters and animals found within these verses. These issues also raise the question of the message of the whole prophecy: is it an oracle of doom or of salvation? The article provides an overview of previous attempts to explicate the metaphors and proposes a new interpretation of them. It turns out that Isaiah consciously and intentionally uses some ambiguous images and formulas in order to make a specific impression on the addresser. Such literary devices are characteristic of his statements from the last period of his activity (705–701 BC). The new interpretation of animal metaphors presented in this study also results from the structure of the oracle, which has emerged through the use of Hebrew rhetoric methods.

Keywords: Isaiah, Isa 31:4-5, animal metaphors, rhetorical analysis

In the history of interpretation of Isa 31:4-5 a multitude of disparate and conflicting interpretations have been proposed. There is no fundamental agreement concerning the metaphorical meaning of the lion and the young lion in v. 4 or flying birds in v. 5. What is the motif of these two comparisons: do they announce doom or salvation? Or does one of them announce doom while the other – salvation? If so, why are they bound together? Or maybe the prophecy transformed its message during ages. What are their functions hidden between the verses condemning the Israelites' behavior (31:1-3 with the typical lament expression – הוֹי) and the part announcing the defeat of the Assyrian aggressor (vv. 8–9)? These ambiguities are also reflected at the syntactical level of the text. What does the expression from v. 4: יֵרֵד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לִצְבֹּא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן exactly mean? What are the meanings of the statements that YHWH shall "go down to fight upon Mount Zion" or that he shall "go down to fight against Mount Zion"? One can also find other ambiguities and difficulties in interpretation. In fact, this part of the Isaianic text is a real *crux interpretum* for many exegetes.

The article seeks to resolve at least a part of the aforementioned exegetical problems through an exploration of the real meaning of the metaphors of a growling lion (v. 4) and hovering birds (v. 5), hoping to answer the following questions: What is hidden behind the images of a lion and birds? To whom do the animals refer to? Can one find other hidden subjects, e.g. behind the image of shouting shepherds (v. 4)?

My research is divided into two sections. The first is dedicated to literary issues, placing the prophecy in its own literary and historical context. Then, a structure of the passage pointing out its internal dynamics will be proposed in the light of the rhetorical analysis of the text. In the second part, a new interpretation of the two animal metaphors is advanced. A new understanding of Isaiah images of lion and birds in chap. 31 is supported by remarks concerning the Semitic rhetoric made in the first part of the study.[1]

1. The Prophecy in Its Context

1.1. The Literary Context of Isa 31

Within the section Isa 28–35, one can distinguish smaller parts according to the term הוֹי occurring six times there.[2] It stands as an initial term of six prophecies concerning primarily Jerusalem and her citizens (29:1.15; 30:1; 31:1), but also Samaria (28:1) and Assyria (33:1). Such a scheme allows to treat chap. 28–33 as the sequence of the interwoven oracles of judgment and salvation.[3] A motif that binds them together can be the reign of YHWH (32:1; 33:22): God wants to remove depraved layers of leadership from Jerusalem by using the Assyrian Empire as a tool. However, the exaltation of YHWH discloses his majesty and power both to Israel and other nations

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[1] This article is based on the conclusions presented as the S.S.L. (Licentiate in Sacred Scripture) thesis: *Oracle of Doom or Oracle of Salvation? An Exegetical Study of Isaiah 31*. The dissertation was written under the supervision of Prof. Alessandro Coniglio and defended on January 30, 2018, at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem.

[2] One can assume that Isa 28–35 is a separate unit because it is the longest poetic text in the section of Isa 28–39. The last part (chap. 36–39), written in prose, is the so-called Historical Supplement, which presents the events of 701 BCE and introduces the message of hope that stays at the beginning of Deutero-Isaiah (chap. 40).

[3] As an example, one can show the outline presented by Gary Stansell ("Isaiah: 28–33," 71):
   1.הוֹי : 28:1-4 (judgment), 28:5-6 (salvation), 28:7-22 (judgment), 28:23-29 (salvation);
   2.הוֹי : 29:1-4 (judgment), 29:5-8 (salvation), 29:9-14 (judgment);
   3. הוֹי: 29:15-16 (judgment), 29:17-24 (salvation);
   4. הוֹי: 30:1-17 (judgment), 30:18-26 (salvation);
   5. הוֹי: 31:1-4 (judgment), 31:5–32:8 (salvation), 32:9-14 (judgment), 32:15-20 (salvation);
   6. הוֹי: 33:1 (judgment), 33:2-24 (salvation).

(cf. 28:5-6; 29:6; 30:30). This finally leads to the salvation of Zion, whose model is the miraculous salvation of Jerusalem in 701 BCE (28:16; 29:8; 33:20).[4] Characteristically, certain patterns are repeated in these oracles. First, God opposes and fights against not only the enemies of Israel (e.g. Assyria), but the chosen people as well. Second, God uses other nations – especially Assyria – as tools. The decimation of the Assyrian army in 701, however, is not an expression of YHWH's powerlessness, but rather a manifestation of his direct action, without the usage of any instrument. Third, the miraculous saving of Jerusalem in the eyes of Isaiah is a failure of human intent. These motives appear, among others, in the following oracles.

The first (Isa 29:1-14) refers to Ariel. Although there are many attempts to show the origin of this word, without any doubt, it designates Jerusalem.[5] The characteristic motif of this passage is the proceeding of YHWH in the fight against Jerusalem, suggesting an instrumental reading of Assyria's role and her attempt to conquer the capital. The repeated preposition עַל – וְחָנִיתִי כַדּוּר עָלָיִךְ וְצַרְתִּי עָלַיִךְ מֻצָּב וַהֲקִימֹתִי עָלַיִךְ מְצֻרֹת "and I will encamp against you round about; I will besiege against you with towers and raise siegeworks against you," in 29:3) indicates the military reality of capturing the city. Apart from that, it points out that the opponents of God are not only the nations, waging war with Judah, but also the chosen nation itself (cf. also יֵרֵד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לִצְבֹּא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן וְעַל־גִּבְעָתָהּ in 31:4 and the similar expression in 29:8 – כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם הַצֹּבְאִים עַל־הַר צִיּוֹן).[6] Another characteristic motif is the juxtaposition of Assyria and Ariel as opponents of YHWH. For both of them, their victory is ultimately compared to an illusory dream (in v. 7 for Ariel, in v. 8 for Assyria). The miraculous salvation of Jerusalem does not make it boast and joy, but denounces false human wisdom (vv. 9–12; cf. the term חָכָם in 29:14 and 31:2), which becomes its humiliation (v. 4).

The second oracle הוֹי (29:15-24) is addressed to הַמַּעֲמִיקִים מֵיהוָה – "deeply hiding themselves from YHWH" (cf. the call שׁוּבוּ לַאֲשֶׁר הֶעְמִיקוּ סָרָה in 31:6), who are identified as those whose "actions are covered with darkness" (v. 15). Taking into account the context of the section of chap. 28–39, the allusion to the secretly anti-Assyr-

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4 Cf. Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39*, 205–206; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 357.

5 Even the occurrence of this word in various consonantal variants (הראל, אראל, אריאל, אראיל) leads to the conclusion that it is likely to be borrowed from another language and adapted to the Israelite consciousness, oftentimes in different ways. The name "Ariel" may have connotations with the word "lion," which would indicate an honorable heroic title (cf. 2 Sam 23:20; Godbey, "Ariel, or David-Cultus," 262). In the Book of Ezekiel, it probably denominates the central part of the altar (firebox), on which the sacrifice, the so-called "God's hearth," was offered (cf. Feigin, "The Meaning of Ariel," 132; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 426). The Akkadian word *arallū* stands for the land of the dead (cf. Albright, "The Babylonian Temple-Tower," 138; Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 72). On the basis of the Mesha Stele, some exegetes advocate understanding as figurines, statues of divinities (cf. Feigin, "The Meaning of Ariel," 134). On the other hand, based on the Qumran lessons, a connection with the original name of Jerusalem began to be found (cf. Youngblood, "Ariel, «City of God»," 458–460).

6 Cf. Sobierajski, *Antropologiczny wymiar proroctw*, 232–233, 244.

ian negotiations during the Sennacherib's sitting on the throne (705 BCE) can be seen. "Actions covered with darkness" may have an ambiguous meaning. On the one hand, the direct confrontation with Assyria could have been doomed to failure at the outset, hence the search for coalition partners had to involve secret negotiations carried out by the kingdom of Judah.[7] On the other hand, it may also be an allusion to the hindering advice from YHWH, but acting only according to one's own plan (cf. vv. 16.18.24). However, there is no doubt that the addressees are the elites of the capital (if not in political matters, certainly in everyday life, especially in judiciary – cf. 29:21). What is characteristic is that their identity is defined as שֹׁקְדֵי אָוֶן – "ready to evil" (29:20, cf. פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן – "those who do evil" in 31:2).

The preceding immediate context of the analyzed passage is the הוֹי oracle in chap. 30, which in many places looks very similar to chap. 31. The parallel can be seen at the very beginning of the two woe-oracles, which are directed to those who seek refuge in Egypt. The essence of the offense is self-reliance as well as not seeking the advice in YHWH (30:1.2.9; cf. 31:1). The announced ineffectiveness of Egypt's help (root עזר in 30:5.7; cf. 31:3) and the voidness of her protection (31:3) have their contraposition in an appeal to put confidence (בִּטְחָה in 30:15; cf. 31:1) in God. The second parallel can be found in the description of future prosperity (30:19-26), which foreshows both, proceeding YHWH and affluent life in a favorable environment. The reference to "that day" (31:7, cf. 30:26) is strictly connected with defiling silver-covered idols and gold-plated images and throwing them away (30:22; cf. 31:7). The third powerful parallel refers to Assyria and her collapse. Significantly, the prophet first proclaims the intervention of YHWH by the invasion of the Assyrian army (30:27), but then the situation changes: God no longer recognizes Assyria as his instrument and foretells her destruction (30:31-33).[8] It is mostly depicted by the motif of fire (30:27.30). The end of the whole oracle, which shows the place called Tophet, is significant: "His firepit made both deep and wide, with fire and firewood in abundance, and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of sulfur, setting it afire" (30:33), because brings to mind analogous end in chap. 31 ("Says the Lord who has a fire in Zion and a furnace in Jerusalem" – 31:9). What is important, "the final hostility of YHWH towards the (Assyrian) empire is not an expression of the ineffectiveness of his intentions; he has foreseen it «for a long time» (מֵאֶתְמוּל – 30:33) and the next stage is his independent, direct action."[9] Below I will show that similar patterns are also found in the prophecy of Isa 31.

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7   Cf. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 408.

8   The recognition of the presence of God in the Assyrian army is supported by the analysis of the phrase: הִנֵּה שֵׁם־יְהוָה בָּא מִמֶּרְחָק, especially the noun שֵׁם and the adverb מִמֶּרְחָק appearing here. Cf. Sobierajski, "«The Name of YHWH Comes from Afar» (Isa 30:27)," 431–445.

9   Sobierajski, "«The Name of YHWH Comes from Afar» (Isa 30:27)," 444.

1.2. The Composition

1.2.1. Structure of the Prophecy

The analyzed passage of Isa 31 can be divided into four units: (1) verses 1–3, (2) verses 4–5, (3) verse 6, and (4) verses 7–9.[10]

The rhetorical unity of the first part is testified by the terms "Egypt" and "horses" (מִצְרַיִם and סוּסִים in vv. 1.3) standing as extreme terms, as well as the term "help," both in the substantive (עֶזְרָה in vv. 1.2) and verbal (עָזַר in v. 3[2x]) forms. To those terms one can also add "chariot" (רֶכֶב in v. 1) and "horsemen" (פָּרָשִׁים in v. 1) as belonging to the same semantic field associated with the things in which Israel seeks support. The messenger formula in the beginning of the next part (v. 4) stands also as a formal criterion, appointing the end of the unit preceding it. The foregoing formal criteria are supported by the content ones. Besides the semantic field mentioned above, consisting of names describing the reality of help for Israel, there is also another field that shows the activities of trust: "to lean" (שָׁעַן), "to trust" (בָּטַח), "to regard" (שָׁעָה), "to seek" (דָּרַשׁ; all of them in v. 1) and a third one in some sense opposing the one mentioned above, i.e. describing the breakdown of trust: "to stumble" (כָּשַׁל), "to fall" (נָפַל), "to perish" (כָּלָה; all of them in v. 3).

The second part (vv. 4–5) is well marked by the messenger formula (כֹּה אָמַר־יְהוָה in v. 4) serving as a function of the initial term. For the unity testifies, above all, to the form, i.e. two comparisons constructed in the same way (כַּ… כֵּן… in vv. 4.5), as well as to a semantic field of animals: "lion" (אַרְיֵה in v. 4), "young lion" (כְּפִיר in v. 4) and "birds" (צִפֳּרִים in v. 5).

The third part (v. 6) is distinguished from the rest of the text by its syntactical form: it is a direct appeal (grammatically: imperative) to turn back to God.[11] The unity of this part is confirmed by the predicate in imperative ("turn back" – שׁוּבוּ) and the subject in vocative ("sons of Israel" – בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), which stand at the extremes of the part.[12]

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[10] The terminology used to designate the rhetorical units (from the smallest one: term – member – segment – piece – part – passage [equivalent of 'pericope'] – sequence – section – book) and the terms designating the rhetorical function of symmetrical elements (initial, final, extreme, median and central terms) follows: Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis*, 374–375.

[11] For the vocative as a marker denoting the beginning of a part of the text: van der Lugt, *Cantos and Strophes*, 79.

[12] The MT has the 3 pl. הֶעְמִיקוּ, hence some commentators prefer to translate the whole phrase as: "Turn back to him to whom the children of Israel have made a deep betray," treating בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל as the subject of the relative clause (Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, 250; Irwin, *Isaiah 28–33*, 115; Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 217; Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 477–478). However, here a vocative fits much better: "Turn back to him whom you have made a deep turning aside, sons of Israel!," (Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 573; Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 190), all the more as the subject of the primary clause does not have to be the same as that of the relative clause. Cf. Joüon – Muraoka, *A Grammar*, § 158n; Isa 54:1; Ezek 26:17; 29:3.

The last fourth part (vv. 7–9) is delimited by two technical expressions, which operate as formal criteria: "on that day" (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא in v. 7) and "oracle of YHWH" (נְאֻם־יְהוָה in v. 9). From the syntactical view, one can also find similar constructions of relative clauses standing as extreme terms, e.g. a human had the idols that he made for himself (אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ לָכֶם in v. 7), God has the fire and furnace on Mount Zion (אֲשֶׁר־אוּר לוֹ בְּצִיּוֹן וְתַנּוּר לוֹ in v. 9). The unity of this part is supported, as in the first part, by two semantic fields. The first contains things that are related to human safety: "idols of silver" and "idols of gold" (אֱלִילֵי כַסְפּוֹ וֶאֱלִילֵי זְהָבוֹ in v. 7), "sword" (חֶרֶב in v. 8[3x]), "rock" (סֶלַע in v. 9) and "standard" (נֵס in v. 9). The other constitutes the verbs of vanishing: "to throw away" (מָאַס in v. 7), "to fall" (נָפַל in v. 8), "to flee" (נוּס in v. 8), "to pass away" (עָבַר in v. 9) and "to be shattered" (חָתַת in v. 9).

1.2.2. Rhetorical Dynamics of the Text

The four parts, of which the passage in question is composed (vv. 1–3, 4–5, 6, 7–9), form the structure ABA'B'.

The analysis of rhetorical dynamism has to be considered on two complementary and interwoven planes. The first one assumes that the passage is composed of the two oracles: judgment (vv. 1–5) and salvation (vv. 6–9). Both of them, by contrast, represent two alternative situations in Israel. The former shows the current state. The chosen people turns to Egypt for help (v. 1), but it is immediately indicated that this will be unsuccessful (v. 3).[13] YHWH's intervention is announced as a protest "against house of evildoers" (עַל־בֵּית מְרֵעִים in v. 2). To specify more precisely such an intervention in the second part (vv. 4–5) is introduced, combined by two comparisons. The continuity of thought underlines the similar construction "fight against Mount Zion" (לִצְבֹּא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן in v. 4) with the same preposition עַל. In addition, the connectivity of both parts is emphasized by the term "YHWH" (vv. 3.4) standing as a median term. The cause-effect dependency is brought in by the conjunction כִּי,

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[13] Syntactically, there is a problem with the verbal chain in v. 1: *yiqtol* (יִשָּׁעֵנוּ), followed by *wayyiqtol* (וַיִּבְטְחוּ) and the double negation *wə…lo-qatal* (וְ…לֹא דָרְשׁוּ, וְלֹא שָׁעוּ). Willem A.M. Beuken claims that the first part "expresses the current situation ('who go down… and rely'), while v. 1β relates the process which led up to it and is still going on. This past that continues in the present is best translated by the present verb forms ('who trust… but do not look… or consult')." Cf. Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 189. Similar situation can be found in v. 2, where nominal clause is followed by a *wayyiqtol* (וַיָּבֵא), the negation *wə…lo-qatal* (וְ…לֹא הֵסִיר) and *wəqatal* (וְקָם). Hans Wildberger suggests that וְקָם should be translated in the past tense just because of the *qatal* verbs preceding it (cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 205–206). Approving Beuken's proposal one can also notice the fact that non-perfective conjugation (*yiqtol*) signifies, among other things, the iterative past in main clauses (cf. Waltke – O'Connor, *An Introduction*, § 31.1.1.b), whereas the perfective (*qatal*) – "can be correlated with present-time reference as it is understood in English […]. In the persistent (present) perfective, the suffix conjugation represents a single situation that started in the past but continues (persists) into the present" (Waltke – O'Connor, *An Introduction*, § 30.5.1.c). Having this in mind, I propose to translate it as the English present perfect form, with the meaning of v. 1: they are continuously asking Egypt for help because at some moment they decided to trust more in its chariots than in God ("Woe for those who go down to Egypt for help, on horses lean, and have trust in chariot"); analogously v. 2.

which – together with the messenger formula – performs the function of a central term (for vv. 1–5, and then for vv. 6–7 – together with the stereotype formula "on that day"). One also finds an analogy by appealing to the multiplicity of those who had to defend Israel (כִּי־עָצְמוּ מְאֹד in v. 1; cf. יִקָּרֵא עָלָיו מְלֹא רֹעִים in v. 4). The second alternative situation of the Israelites presupposes their conversion, expressed in their return to YHWH (v. 6). Although, the link of this part to the next one (vv. 7–9) is no longer so rhetorically exposed, but there is a clear passage of effect, suggested by the conjunction כִּי.[14] The sign, which indicate the unity of the second oracle (vv. 6–9), might also be the relative clause with אֲשֶׁר (vv. 6.7.9) repeated three times.[15] This dynamics can be schematically presented as follows:

AB (vv. 1–5)   Fate of Israel deviated from YHWH
A'B' (vv. 6–9)   Fate of Israel returned to YHWH

The symmetry of these bi-parts is underlined – from the rhetorical side – above all by the presence of the expressions standing as central terms, that are composed of the conjunction כִּי and stereotype formulas (כִּי כֹה אָמַר־יְהוָה in v. 4 and כִּי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא in v. 7).[16]

Such an approach must be completed and integrated with the second one, showing parallels between each part. The parallel between A and A' is emphasized by the contrast of Israel's behavior, expressed by the verbs of motion. As before, the Israelites went to Egypt for help and they did not seek God (v. 1), so now Israel is called to return (שׁוּבוּ in v. 6) to YHWH. Moreover, this descent (יָרַד) implies not only the horizontal, but also the vertical distance, which in A' is cast by the verb הֶעְמִיקוּ. On the other hand, on the semantic basis, it is important to notice the opposite of the attitude: the deep "turning aside" (סָרָה) of Israel is contrasted to the word of YHWH, which he "has not turn aside" (לֹא הֵסִיר in v. 2), he does not change. The parallelism also emphasizes the presence, only in these parts, of the name "Israel." Although the syntagms associated with this noun are different (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in v. 1, קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל in v. 6), but one can see the bridge formed between the parts. The "sons of Israel" do not recognize their belonging to YHWH – the "Holy of Israel," and they seek strength and help in foreign powers, instead of looking for them in God. Thus, despite the volume difference of part A and part A', they show a clear parallelism. On the other hand, the relationship between B and B' results from their function, which is to show the effects of these particular attitudes of Israel: either rejecting YHWH or returning to him. Formally, the parallelism is primarily emphasized by the final

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14   Cf. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 575; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 406.
15   In v. 4c, there is also the אֲשֶׁר conjunction, but in an adverbial phrase of time (meaning "when").
16   Such a structure is confirmed by the observation made by Marvin A. Sweeney (*Isaiah 1–39*, 407): "It is noteworthy that chap. 31 makes little sense without vv. 6–9. If the passage was designed to condemn alliance with Egypt, it can hardly succeed in that it fails to present an alternative strategy until vv. 6–9. Egyptian alliance is condemned, but the images of destruction in vv. 1–5 hardly provide a full basis for abandoning the position. As vv. 4–5 make clear, Jerusalem is doomed whether Egypt attempts to help or not. Vv. 6–9 provide the basis for positive action."

terms "Jerusalem" and "Zion," which marks the ends of these units. It is true that in part B they do not appear side by side, but, by treating each of the comparisons as the separate pieces, one can see that the terms stand always at their ends (vv. 4.5; the same as in part B', already together at the end of the oracle – v. 9). The term "YHWH" fulfills an analogous function: indicating the end: in part B in the construct chain יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת (vv. 4.5), while in part B' as נְאֻם־יְהוָה (v. 9). From the point of semantics, this parallelism is expressed by the descriptions of the behavior of the lion and of Assyria. While the lion is not afraid about the fullness of shepherds and "by their voice is not shattered and at their noise is not daunted" (מִקּוֹלָם לֹא יֵחָת וּמֵהֲמוֹנָם לֹא יַעֲנֶה in v. 4), Assyria behaves in an opposite way: "he shall flee itself from a blade of sword […] his rock in terror shall pass away, and shall be shattered by the standard his officers" (וְנָס לוֹ מִפְּנֵי־חֶרֶב... וְסַלְעוֹ מִמָּגוֹר יַעֲבוֹר וְחַתּוּ מִנֵּס שָׂרָיו in vv. 8.9). One can see both, the similarity of words (the verb חָתַת in vv. 4.9) and the sentence structure (using the preposition מִ). Thus, the diagram of the dynamics of the whole oracle presented above can be supplemented and presented as follows:

A (vv. 1–3)   Deviation of Israel
    B (vv. 4–5)   God's rise against Israel
A' (v. 6)   Call to return
    B' (vv. 7–9)   God's rise against Assyria

The understanding of the message of the two comparisons (vv. 4–5) will be, on the one hand, based on their linkage with part A from the causal point of view and, on the other hand, their significance should be read by looking at the parallel part B'. Having outlined the structure of the oracle, one can therefore see the premise that the animal metaphor may combine two elements: punishment for deviation (taking into account its correlation with vv. 1–3) and the character of this punishment (which somehow will be similar to the character of the salvation from vv. 7–9). Therefore, if the salvation will be done by God himself and not according to the human thoughts ("Assyria shall fall by a sword, not of mortals" – v. 8), then we expect to find similar thoughts in the part B of the oracle (vv. 4–5). The following section will show that Isaiah gives such a meaning to these comparisons.

2. A New Proposal of Interpreting the Two Metaphors

2.1. The Metaphor of the Lion

The sentence syntax implies that behind the image of the lion (כְּפִיר, אַרְיֵה) is YHWH himself (in both parts of the comparison the lion and YHWH are the only ones in sg.). All exegetes accept this interpretation, and it is also consistent with the li-

on's symbolism in the Middle East and on the pages of the Old Testament.[17] "The most powerful among the wild beasts, which does not turn back before any" (Prov 30:30); it is famous for its strength (2 Sam 1:23), courage (2 Sam 17:10) and roaring (Ezek 22:25). Particularly, the latter feature was used to compare YHWH to the lion because of his loud voice aligned just to the lion's roar (the verb שָׁאַג in Job 37:4; Amos 1:2, both also with the noun קוֹל used in Isa 31:4). The Book of Hosea brings a direct comparison of God to the lion (and also to other wild animals: leopard and bear – cf. Hos 13:7-8) in the context of the Syro-Ephraimitic War (the beginning of Isaiah's activity): He will be "as a lion to the house of Judah," who "tears the prey and departs" (Hos 5:14).[18] The latter case is particularly important as some of the exegetes maintain that YHWH could not be represented in the image of the lion tearing apart his prey – Jerusalem.[19] However, if Hosea, contemporary to Isaiah but operating in the Northern Kingdom, illustrates the action of God by the image of the wild beast against Ephraim, one should be open to the same interpretation in Isa 31:4 regarding the Southern Kingdom.

The enemies of Israel were also described as lions. As an example, one should mention Amos 3:12, in which – in an ironical way – the help for Israel is showed: the shepherds are able to rescue from the lion's mouth "only two legs or a piece of an ear." In the context of Isaiah, the invasion of Assyria is compared to "a roaring lion (לָבִיא and כְּפִירִים), which growls, grasps its prey (טֶרֶף, cf. 31:4[20]) and carries it off, and there is no rescue (מַצִּיל, cf. 31:5)" (5:29).[21] The Assyrian rulers during the war expeditions described themselves willingly as lions.[22] The last example (Isa 5:29) is significant, because Assyria is clearly portrayed for Isaiah as a tool in the hands of YHWH (cf. 5:26; 10:5-6.15); however, it rebels against the task assigned by God (10:7). In this light, in the image of the lion from chap. 31 one cannot directly see YHWH, but Assyria, though it remains only the tool in his hand.

There is a discussion whether behind the image of "shepherds" – רֹעִים – some specific people or nation can be seen. The problem with the entire image is that the shepherds are not normally perceived as aggressors against sheep nor is the lion their defender. The verb רָעָה has specific, theological implications in Isaiah. Together with the רָבַץ, it is often used to describe the future condition: either the desolation (5:17; 27:10) or peace provided by the presence of the only one shepherd – YHWH

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[17]   Cf. Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, 316; Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39*, 225; Motyer, *Isaiah*, 202; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 427; Childs, *Isaiah*, 232; Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 177; Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 221; Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 479; Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 404.

[18]   A broader discussion of the symbolism and metaphors of animals, especially lions, also with regard to deities, see: Nielsen, "I am Like a Lion to Ephraim," 184–197.

[19]   Cf. Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 235–236; Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 257–258.

[20]   The noun טֶרֶף normally describes the prey of wild animals, very often linked with the image of the lion (Gen 49:9; Num 23:24; Deut 33:20; Job 4:11; 38:39; Ps 7:3).

[21]   The other examples are: Jer 2:14-15; 4:7; 25:38; Nah 2:12; Zech 11:3.

[22]   Cf. Tawil, "El león y las aves," 161–162.

(14:30), also in the eschatological perspective (11:7).[23] The motif of the appropriate ruler, who could provide peace for Judah, is leading especially in the first part of Proto-Isaiah (chap. 1–12). Such a task does not fit the succeeding kings or the leaders of Jerusalem (cf. 1:10.23; 3:1-4.12-14; 5:8-23; 7:10-12; 9:13-15; 10:1), hence YHWH announces the awakening of the ideal ruler – Emmanuel (chap. 7). The prophecy of Isa 8:23b–9:6 shows his introduction to the throne, and in chap. 11 – description of his reign.[24] What is more, the "shepherd" can also refer to the kings in the ancient Near East.[25] The use of the plural רֹעִים, in chap. 31, may thus be a conscious contrast to the other rulers (whether nations or individuals) with the very one who will reign according to the will of YHWH. In this light, "shepherds" (31:4) can mean both, Jerusalem's leaders, seeking help in Egypt, and Egypt itself, which for Judah seemed to be an effective guarantor of peace.[26] Such understanding is confirmed by v. 3, in which the annihilation of the helper (Egypt) and the helped one (Judah) is equally pronounced.

These "shepherds" are characterized by two nouns describing their voices: קוֹל ("voice") and הָמוֹן ("noise, rumble"). Both of them have the specific usage in Isaiah (besides the use of קוֹל in the situation of speech or cry, e.g. Isa 10:30; 15:4; 24:14; 28:23): they often occur in theophanies (6:4; 29:6; 30:30-31) and similar to them, the descriptions of YHWH's moving into battle (13:4; 33:3), or among the features that describe the opponents of God (17:12; 32:14). As it was mentioned above, the "voice" of God is sometimes compared to the lion's "roar." One has to consider especially the nearest context of chap. 31: in chap. 30 קוֹל is connected very clearly with the manifestation of divine power and the punishment for Assyria (30:30-31, cf. also 29:6). Moreover, the expression מִקּוֹל יְהוָה יֵחַת אַשּׁוּר from 30:30 is very similar to that from 31:4: מִקּוֹלָם לֹא יֵחָת. The voices are opposed one to each other: the one of God "frightens" Assyria, the one of Assyria cannot "frighten" God.[27] Certain irony

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23 Cf. Sobierajski, "Mesjański ekosystem (Iz 11,6-8)," 132–133.

24 One can contradict the continuity of these prophecies and their messianic nature in relation to the expectations of the royal descendant. Their connection is primarily due to the common motif of the child and a number of elements belonging to the topos of the king and the monarchy. Texts from chap. 9 and 11 would be both autonomous prophecies and some kind of re-interpretation of the oracle of chap. 7 because Isaiah himself sought to understand the message of Emmanuel. More broadly, both their mutual relationship and the argumentation for their messianic character are discussed in: Pikor, "Pytanie o mesjański sens Izajaszowych proroctw," 15–36.

25 Cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 221.

26 Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 574.

27 Both occurrences of the verb חָתַת are in *Ni* can also be found in Isa 7:8; 8:9, and for this reason – for H. Wildberger (*Isaiah 1–12*, 351) – this verb belongs to the typically Isaianic vocabulary. The second verb עָנָה is used here in its basic meaning "to be daunted" (*Qal*, but more often in *Pi*: "to humble, violate, degrade," e.g. Gen 34:2; Exod 22:21; Ps 94:5) and derives from the root ענה (the homographic root both for the meaning עָנָה I: "to answer" and עָנָה II: "to humble"; historically, probably the first one derives from the original ענו and the second from עני, although there is no certainty about it). Cf. Gerstenberger, "עָנָה II," *TDOT* XI, 231.

of the changed roles in theophany can be seen: the divine appears, the people make noise, the divine does not frighten.[28] The second noun הָמוֹן is in Isaiah, in the same nearest context, assigned to this hostile empire as well. Chap. 29 describes Assyria during the siege of Jerusalem in 701 with the words הֲמוֹן זָרַיִךְ ("the murmur of strangers"), הֲמוֹן עָרִיצִים ("the murmur of tyrants") and הֲמוֹן כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם ("the murmur of all the nations") (29:5.7.8). In conclusion, one may find some ambiguity during the analysis of the vocabulary of the shepherds against which the lion appears. On the one hand, the shepherds can refer to the rulers and defenders in the capital, which the Kingdom of Judah expected, also among the other nations. On the other hand, there are clear references to the Assyrian army besieging Jerusalem during the 701 BCE campaign. Isaiah seems to imply just at this point that YHWH – lion – is against both Assyria (and her king), and Jerusalem, specifically her rulers.

Taking into account these two analysis of "shepherds" and "their voice," one can show yet another possible allusion to be seen in this image. Shawn Z. Aster sees in the root עזר (vv. 1.2.3) an Isaianic reference to the person of Azuri, king of Ashdod, who before 712 BCE ceased paying tribute for Assyria and encouraged the nearest kingdoms to form an anti-Assyrian coalition. The rebellion was smothered by Sargon, who conquered Ashdod and its neighboring cities. For sure also Judah was called to join the coalition. On the other hand, the root רע, returning twice (v. 2), invokes the Egyptian commander Re'u, whose superior was Shabaka. He, along with Iaubidi, king of Hamath, and Hanun, king of Gaza, developed a revolt against Assyria in about 722 BCE. In the battle at Rafiah, Sargon defeated the allied troops. These events influenced Judah and the neighboring kingdoms, which remained loyal to the Assyrian Empire at least until 716 BCE.[29] The abovementioned connotation between the root רע and the Egyptian commander Re'u also supports the fact, that his name was found in the inscription from 707 BCE (thirteen years after the battle at Rafiah):

Hanun, king of Gaza, together with Re'u, the *turtenu* [second-in-command] of Egypt, made battle and war against me at Rafiah. I smashed and defeated them. Re'u feared the noise of my weapons and fled, and his place is not seen

and that his name is written using the shepherd's logogram. Such an image corresponds to the irony of Isa 31:4: it is difficult to imagine that the voice of shepherds could frighten the beast, however, only the sound of Sargon's weapons was sufficient to make Re'u's escape, even without seeing the direct threat.[30]

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28   Cf. Eidevall, "Lions and Birds as Literature," 84.
29   Cf. Aster, "Isaiah 31," 351–354.
30   Cf. (also the quotation of the inscription is after:) Aster, "Isaiah 31," 352. There is also another inscription from Khorsabad, in which the sentence is found: "Re'u, like a shepherd whose sheep was stolen, fled alone and went away."

The second part of the comparison presents a major problem: how should we understand יֵרֵד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לִצְבֹּא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן וְעַל־גִּבְעָתָהּ ? The God will go down "to wage a war on the Mount Zion" or "to wage a war against Mount Zion"? Arguments for the first interpretation are as follows:

1. The ancient translation of the Vulgate: "super montem Zion." However, one must remember that the preposition "super" do not have the same ambiguity as עַל in Hebrew, so the translator had to choose one of the semantic options leaving the other one.[31]

2. The character of the whole speech. The second comparison speaks about the salvation of Jerusalem (גָּנוֹן וְהִצִּיל פָּסֹחַ וְהִמְלִיט – v. 5), therefore, for some exegetes, it is a clear signal that in the same spirit of salvation one should also read v. 4.[32] However, also at this point we can ask: was v. 5 really the promise of salvation originally? For some exegetes it is for sure an redactional addition, representing the later stage in the development of the oracle: it transforms the preceding image of destruction into the promise of salvation.[33]

3. For the others, the image is not about the lion that pounces on its prey, but that protects its prey: "it will not allow anyone to steal from him what belongs to him"[34]; the same concerns the birds defending the city. However, there is no unanimity: Marvin A. Sweeney claims that "just as the lion protects his prey in order to eat it himself, so YHWH will protect Zion in order to punish it himself by bringing the Assyrians."[35]

Arguments for understanding עַל as the adversative preposition ("against") are as follows:

1. The syntax of the sentence, in which – if the author wanted to avoid any ambiguity – it could be enough to change the order of the sentence to יֵרֵד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן לִצְבֹּא, so that there would be no doubt in its interpretation; because the verb צָבָא literally means "to wage war, go into the battle" with עַל – "against" somebody (cf. Num 31:7; Zech 14:12).[36]

2. In the so-called "second beginning" of the Book of Isaiah (2:1), there is a passage (2:6-22) that seems to be a programmatic word for the whole Proto-Isaiah. The ten times repeated announcement of rising YHWH "against everything" (עַל כָּל), which is proud and exalted (2,12-16), underlines the divine judgement over the world.[37] The proud "mortals" (2:9.17) are not only the leaders of Jerusalem or Assyria, but it can be every human (cf. 2:22).

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[31] It is noteworthy that *LXX* at this point (ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Σιών) is as perfectly ambiguous as the MT.
[32] Cf. Clements, *Jerusalem and the Nations*, 91–92; Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 201–203.
[33] Cf. Donner, *Israel Unter den Völkern*, 136; Childs, *Isaiah*, 58–59; Dietrich, *Jesaja und die Politik*, 183–185.
[34] Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39*, 316. Cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 221.
[35] Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 404–405. Cf. Exum, "Of Broken Pots," 338.
[36] Cf. Childs, *Isaiah*, 58; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 405; Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 404.
[37] Cf. Sobierajski, *Antropologiczny wymiar proroctw*, 275–284.

3. If YHWH is against everything that is proud and high, does this also include Zion and the holy city of Jerusalem? Chap. 29 dispels these doubts: Isa 29:4 defines Ariel as humbly speaking from the earth and dust (וְשָׁפַלְתְּ מֵאֶרֶץ תְּדַבֵּרִי וּמֵעָפָר תִּשַּׁח אִמְרָתֵךְ, cf. the same verbs שָׁפֵל and שָׁחַח in Isa 2:9.11.17), just after being encamped by God.[38]

4. In the aforementioned context of pride one has to notice a strange definition of Mount Zion: גִּבְעָתָהּ (31:4), which may be a reference to 2:14 (עַל כָּל־הַגְּבָעוֹת). Firstly, there is only one more place in the Old Testament, in which Jerusalem is described as located on גִּבְעָה – in Isa 10:32 (גִּבְעַת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם), but also in the context of pride (cf. 10:33-34); Zion is never described in this way.[39] Secondly, גִּבְעָה is often connected with the pagan-cult places (2 Kgs 14:23; 16:4; 17:10; Jer 2:20; 13:27; 17:2; Hos 4:13) and – especially in Isaiah – with pride (Isa 2:14 and as a verb in 2:15; 3:16; 5:15.16; 10:33). Therefore, it is rational to see the rising of God against the pride of Jerusalem in this verse, the attitude that is so often denounced by the prophet.[40]

5. Chap. 29 also shows clearly that God can fight against Jerusalem.[41] The triple occurrence of the particle עַל (וְחָנִיתִי כַדּוּר עָלָיִךְ וְצַרְתִּי עָלַיִךְ מֻצָּב וַהֲקִימֹתִי עָלַיִךְ מְצֻרֹת – Isa 29:3) emphasizes the military situation of capturing the city, and also refers to 2:12-16.

6. In the preceding part A (Isa 31:1-3), the technical term וַיָּבֵא רָע (31:2) signifies divine judgement,[42] so one can expect such judgement in the nearest context. Moreover, the parallel expression to וַיָּבֵא רָע is וְקָם עַל־בֵּית מְרֵעִים וְעַל־עֶזְרַת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן – preposition עַל repeated twice (here in the adversative meaning) seems to be undertaken exactly by עַל from part B (v. 4); the divine judgement can also indicate the syntagma יַטֶּה יָדוֹ from the preceding part and all the verbs (כָּשַׁל, נָפַל and כָּלָה), which describe the fall both of Judah and Egypt. Therefore, the reader may expect a more detailed explanation of their demolition.

7. As it was mentioned, the picture of the comparison brings a lion, who takes care about his loot, but finally this prey is to be consumed by him.

It seems that the ambiguity of the use of the preposition עַל was intended by the author.[43] On the one hand, the whole oracle can be read as a threat against Jerusalem because of the abovementioned arguments. Again, one has to notice that in the nearest context the similar expression כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם הַצֹּבְאִים עַל־הַר צִיּוֹן refers to the Assyrian invasion of Judah. Remembering about Assyria's alignment with the tool in

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38 Cf. Sobierajski, *Antropologiczny wymiar proroctw*, 239–241.
39 One can think if Ezek 34:26 tells about the capital, but there is no clear indication of this.
40 Cf. Sobierajski, *Antropologiczny wymiar proroctw*, 51–65.
41 In the first part there is, in fact, a treatment both of the Egyptians and those who put their trust in them, as enemies of YHWH. Cf. Eidevall, *Prophecy and Propaganda*, 102.
42 Cf. Rick – Dohmen, "רעע," *TDOT* XIII, 585–586.
43 Cf. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 574.

YHWH's hand, the divine "going into the battle against Mount Zion" can be read as an attack of the hostile empire on Jerusalem. Besides, the symbolism of the lion, which Isaiah very clearly applied to the Assyrian Empire, indicates this understanding of the prophecy. In the past, if the Isaiah's listeners heard about God's judgement that would come with the Assyrian army (5:26-30; 7:18; 8:7; 10:6), compared to the lion (5:29),[44] so in the present oracle (31:4-5) they would expect such a message from Isaiah: the God's punishment through Assyria is coming. But the second part of the comparison is not as they expected. There is no mention about Assyria, but about YHWH, who himself will fight against Zion, but also "on Mount Zion," at His own place. For the leaders of Jerusalem this was the oracle of judgement because they expected God's punishment by the hands of Assyria, for what they were prepared having entered into alliance with Egypt. The message from the prophet is quite different, announcing the intervention of God himself. Their plan was uncovered, their wisdom failed, so they cannot avoid punishment.

2.2. The Metaphor of Birds

The second comparison, which contains the image of birds, allows for many explanations. Its first part has only two words: כְּצִפֳּרִים עָפוֹת – "like birds hovering." Such an image is blurred, hence producing many interpretations, for example:
1. "the birds hover over a young bird which has fallen out of the nest to defend it"[45];
2. "a mother bird which flies back and forth over her nest when a predator is near, both to distract the enemy and, if necessary, to offer herself as a victim to save her little ones"[46];
3. the scavenger birds that are attracted by the lion's killing because usually the lion does not eat its entire prey at once[47];
4. "bird whose nest or whose food is threatened"[48];
5. frightened birds fleeing away from danger[49];
6. large birds casting away their shadows over the city[50].

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[44] Also, the listeners of Isaiah were probably well known in the images (e.g. of the lion) that hostile emperors applied to themselves. Cf. Machinist, "Assyria and Its Image," 735–736. See also the detailed example of such "Assyrian propaganda" in: Aster, "The Image of Assyria in Isaiah 2:5-22," 249–278.

[45] Exum, "Of Broken Pots," 338. Cf. Hempel, *Apoxysmata*, 26–28.

[46] Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 574. Cf. Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 177; Shemesh, "Isaiah 31,5," 256–260; Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 404.

[47] Cf. Barré, "Of Lions and Birds," 58; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 407; Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 202–203.

[48] *HALOT* III, 1047; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 427.

[49] Cf. Fohrer, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 121. Here the comparison to the birds is used in relation to the inhabitants of Jerusalem with their fearful behavior because of the oncoming Assyrian army. Otto Kaiser (*Isaiah 13–39*, 317) sees an omission here, the text could be: "like fluttering birds the nations will be scattered."

[50] Irwin, *Isaiah 28–33*, 114.

The first image is based on the text Deut 32:11: "As an eagle (נֶשֶׁר) stirs up its nest, and hovers (יְרַחֵף) over its young; as it spreads its wings (יִפְרֹשׂ כְּנָפָיו), takes them up (יִקָּחֵהוּ), and bears them aloft on its pinions (יִשָּׂאֵהוּ עַל־אֶבְרָתוֹ), the Lord alone…" But at this point, there are two problems. Firstly, the actions of the eagle are described by quite different verbs than עוּף, especially by נָשָׂא that clearly indicates "bearing," in contrast to Isa 31:5. Secondly, the noun צִפּוֹר refers generally to the birds (Gen 7:14; Lev 14:4; Ezek 39:4), or to the small birds like sparrows (Deut 22:6; Eccl 12:4),[51] whereas, in Deut 32 is an eagle, and as far as one can find images of eagle carrying young on its wings (cf. also Exod 19:4), this is not possible in the case of צִפֳּרִים. The similar argument can be raised against cases (3), (4) and (6). The Old Testament uses another term for birds of prey: עַיִט (cf. Gen 15:11, also עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם in 2 Sam 21:10 or עַיט צִפּוֹר in Ezek 39:4), and it has to be expected that Isaiah, well versed in the natural world,[52] would use it (cf. עַיִט in Isa 18:6 that is considered to be Isaianic).[53] The case (2) is also hard acceptable, which I will show below analyzing the verb פָּסַח. The understanding of צִפֳּרִים that I want to follow is (5), although applied not to the Jerusalemites, but to the besiegers. In such a sense, the verb עָפוּף would not mean simply "to hover" but "to fly away," a meaning which is confirmed in Ps 90:10 and Job 20:8 (also in *Qal*). The sense would be: just like sparrows, that could be very numerous, are flying away at once – frightened by something – and none of them remains, the same will be with the enemies of Jerusalem, e.g. with the grand and multitudinous Assyrian army (cf. Isa 37:36). Against this interpretation one can argue that "it is in fact YHWH himself who is being compared to the hovering birds."[54] However, one can point to the fragments in Proto-Isaiah in which the essence of the metaphor lies in the overall condition of the compared entities. For instance, in Isa 10:15, the proud of the ax and of the saw is compared to the absurd situation of raising by the rod the one who lifts it up or lifting by the staff the one who is not wood (it does not matter whether we associate the axe/saw with the rod/staff). There is also a similar rhetorical device in Isa 29:8: the subject of the comparison (the vehicle of the metaphor) in this case is not the one who dreams, but the dream (cf. 29:7) with all its illusiveness (being hungry, dreaming about food and then waking up still hungry). Analogically, such a vehicle in Isa 31:5 are not the birds themselves, but their departure, and the tenor of the metaphor is saving Jerusalem.

In Isa 31:5 some kind of irony may be recognized. The birds are the symbol of weakness (Ps 11:1), unaware of danger they are trapped by their enemies (Prov 7:23; Lam 3:52).[55] Sennacherib in his annals brags about Hezekiah: "Himself I made a pris-

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51 Cf. Otto, "פָּסַח," *TDOT* XII, 445–446.
52 Isa 10:14; 17:5-6; 28:23-29. Cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 676–677.
53 Cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 13–27*, 211.
54 Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 224.
55 Such symbolism might come from the common practice of fowling at that time. Cf. Borowski, *Every Living Thing*, 155–158.

oner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage."[56] If in the past the Assyrian king boasted that he had conquered the nations just like grasping a nest, like gathering eggs that have been forsaken (Isa 10:14), so now he and his army are equal to the departing birds. But there is one more interesting observation. Among the boasts of the tyrant one can also find: וְלֹא הָיָה נֹדֵד כָּנָף וּפֹצֶה פֶה וּמְצַפְצֵף ("and there was none that moved a wing, or opened its mouth, or chirped" – 10:14). The last verb in *Pilpel* has a similar, onomatopoeic root to צִפּוֹר, and also occurred in Isa 29:4, though there in reference to Jerusalem (מֵעָפָר אִמְרָתֵךְ תְּצַפְצֵף – "your speech shall whisper out of the dust"). It seems that in this case Isaiah used intentional ambiguity as well: the birds could be the numerous Assyrian army that suddenly disappeared (Isa 37:36), but can also refer to the enemies of the will of YHWH inside the capital, among the Israelites. In fact, because of the similarly to the first comparison, the listeners of the prophet's oracle could at first impression (after hearing only the first part כְּצִפֳּרִים עָפוֹת) think of it as the divine judgement. God's punishment is coming, the Assyria like a lion is approaching, so all the nations – among them the Jerusalemites – will fly away like defenseless swallows. In their own opinion, they are prepared for such a situation – they have already made a covenant with Egypt. But also in this case, the second part of the comparison is unexpected for them. Isaiah announces the salvation of Jerusalem, though they have no idea how it will happen.

The above observations are confirmed by the analysis of the following four verbs making up the second part of the comparison. The verb גָּנַן occurs only in Proto-Isaiah and in Deutero-Zechariah, always in the sense of "defending" (Isa 37:35; 38:6[57]; Zech 9:15; 12:8). The basic meaning – "to cover, surround, defend, protect" – can also be seen in confronting it with the noun מָגֵן ("shield" as a weapon), derived from the same root גנן (cf. e.g. 2 Chr 23:9).[58] Immediately, however, the question arises: How could small birds be anybody's protection (in a shield manner)? As it has been said, a few proposition were made to resolve this problem. The birds could hover over a young bird or the nest or the food to defend it. But would it be possible that Isaiah chooses such small and weak animals as an example of the shield? Even if one assumes the meaning of "the scavenger birds" (which is doubtful), it would be difficult to demonstrate how this "hovering" over the prey could have a "protecting" character (e.g. if even human – Abram or Rizpah – could scare them in Gen 15:11 and in 2 Sam 21:10)? I claim that the nature of this protection lies in the understanding of the following verbs: הִצִּיל פָּסֹחַ וְהִמְלִיט.

The basic meaning of the verb הִצִּיל (*Hi* is the most common form of the root נצל in the Old Testament) is "to take away" with the nuance of separation. As examples

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56 *ANET*, 288 (fragment from Taylor Prism).
57 The same passages are in 2 Kgs 19:34; 20:6. Regarding the mutual relations of both narrative sections 2 Kgs 18–20 and Isa 36–39 see e.g.: Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 335–341; Anderson, "The Rise, Fall, and Renovation," 147–167.
58 Cf. Freedman – O'Connor – Ringgren, "מָגֵן," *TDOT* VIII, 74–75.

one can point to Gen 31:9.16 (God taking away the livestock), Hos 2:11 (with the parallel verb לָקַח) or Ps 119:43 ("Do not take the word of truth from my mouth!"). This understanding leads to the derivative meaning, i.e. "to save, to deliver" (e.g. Exod 3:8; Ps 142:7; Prov 10:2; Isa 19:20). However, even those fragments in which the root נצל takes the meaning of "rescuing, saving, protecting," there exists the perceptible idea of "taking away."[59] In the context of Proto-Isaiah, there are at least three important occurrences. Firstly, the group of verbs appears in the so-called historical addition (Isa 36–39), always in the meaning of rescuing the capital from the hand of the Assyrian king (cf. 36:14-20; 37:11-12; 38:6). Secondly, in the announcement of the danger from the people that will come from the ends of the world (5:26-30), Assyria is compared to the roaring lion (כְּפִיר, cf. 31:4) that grasps its prey (טֶרֶף, cf. 31:4), carries it off and "none can rescue" (אֵין מַצִּיל – lit. "there is no one who can take it away"). This action of course implies taking off the prey to eat it, i.e. to destroy it. Thirdly, in chap. 20, God calls Isaiah to walk naked and barefoot as a sign of leading away the Egyptian captives by the king of Assyria. At the end of the chapter, the inhabitants are complaining: "This is what has happened to those in whom we hoped and to whom we fled for help (לְעֶזְרָה, cf. 31:1) and deliverance (לְהִנָּצֵל in *Ni*) from the king of Assyria! And we, how shall we escape (נִמָּלֵט in *Ni*, cf. 31:5)?" The *Ni* stem underlines the reciprocal aspect of the verbs here, that people want to act in their own favor to deliver and escape. Otherwise, in 31:5, both verbs are in *Hi* stem. It raises the question: can it show the causative aspect that only God can do the deliverance, in contrast to chap. 20? It is possible, however, one has to note that נצל does not occur in *Qal*, so it would be questionable to talk about the causative aspect without knowing anything about the meaning and even the existence of נצל in the base stem. The second verb הִמְלִיט, usually occurring in *Ni* ("to escape"), supports this theory; it has the *Hi* form only in two verses: Isa 31:5 and 66:7. In the latter, it means "to give birth to," so it can be understood as "to cause to escape" (from the mother's womb).

Very unusual and unexpected is the appearance of the verb פָּסַח only here, in Isaiah (there are also two occurrences of the adjective פִּסֵּחַ – "lame" in 33:23; 35:6). Its basic meaning is "to be lame, to limp" (the use one can see in Elijah's rebuke: "How long will you go limping with two different opinions?" in 1 Kgs 18:21) and the second one "to pass or spring over" (cf. Exod 12:13.23.27).[60] Precisely because of these two options, there are also two tendencies to interpret the inf. abs. פָּסֹחַ in the context of Isa 31. The first one is based on the meaning "to be lame," understanding this action as hobbling, as the birds do when their nest is threatened. The parent bird limps away from the nest, pretending that one of its wings is broken and thus luring

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59 Cf. Hossfeld – Kalthoff, "נצל," *TDOT* IX, 536.
60 Cf. Shemesh, "Isaiah 31,5," 258. However, there are many doubts if these two meanings derivate from two roots or a single root, as well as opinions about a mutual relation between them. For such attempts and also a very rich bibliography see: Otto, "פָּסַח," 1–24.

away the predator that sees an easy prey.[61] The text Isa 37:7, in which God says about the Assyrian king: "I myself will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land" is raised as an argument. So, in some sense, YHWH lured away Sennacherib from the capital and led him into his own country. In this attractive understanding we can, however, discern the following difficulties: (1) the verb פָּסַח means "to be lame" and not "to pretend being lame"; (2) there is a comparison to the birds, not one bird that usually uses such a distraction. Therefore, what fits much better fits is the second meaning "to pass over, to spare" also referring to the etiology of the Passover festival. Although in his preaching, Isaiah refers to the events of Exodus[62] a few times, he makes no reference to the Paschal Night. However, this does not prove that the traditions of this festival were alien to him. This cannot be said with absolute certainty, but one can find an analogy between the passage of YHWH in Egypt (and the sparing of Israeli houses at the same time with slaying off the Egyptian firstborns – Exod 12:29) and the sparing of Jerusalem while the angel was passing through the Assyrian camp (Isa 37:36). "One cannot assume with absolute certainty that Isaiah is trying to remind the listeners of the Passover night,"[63] but for sure the specific character of the last two verbs (פָּסֹחַ וְהִמְלִיט) can be seen in Isa 31:5. "Shielding" Jerusalem and "delivering" it refer to YHWH's passing over Jerusalem to spare it (פָּסֹחַ) and causing all its enemies to "escape," i.e. to disappear (הִמְלִיט). What is important is that these enemies do not only include the besiegers, but also – this cannot be ruled out – some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which is testified in Isa 29:20 and 30:17 (with the verbs כָּלָה – "to finish," נוס – "to flee," the same as in Isa 31:3.8).

Conclusion

The literary analysis carried out according to the rules of the Semitic rhetoric method has shown up the textual structure of Isa 31:1-9. The text has been divided into two main images: the fate of Israel, deviating from YHWH (vv. 1–5), and the fate of Israel, returning to YHWH (vv. 6–9). Although, each scene describes different situations, they are complementary and harmonizing. Furthermore, the structure reveals the internal dynamism of each scene: both have the element of the presentation of the actual condition (deviation from God or potential return to him), which is fol-

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61 Cf. Keel, "Erwägungen," 430; Shemesh, "Isaiah 31,5," 259–260.
62 E.g. raising the staff over the sea (Isa 10:26; cf. Exod 14:26); raising the staff against the people (Isa 10:24; cf. Exod 2:11-12); the motif of "the wrath of the Lord" and "stretched hand" (Isa 5:25). Some of these verses are, however, treated as an editorial supplement. The theological motifs of Exodus are definitely more frequently pronounced in Hosea or Deutero-Isaiah. Cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 578.
63 Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 224.

lowed by the adequate result: God's rise against Israel (vv. 4–5) or against Assyria (vv. 7–9). Therefore, the understanding of the message conveyed by the animal metaphors has been read at two levels. The first one binds them with part A (vv. 1–3) from the causal point of view: the comparisons are expected to be the punishment for Israel. The second combines their significance with the look at the parallel part B' (vv. 7–9). The salvation presented there is not specified, nevertheless Assyria will fall by the sword, though the sword not of man (v. 8). Therefore, both the punishment for Jerusalem (B) and her salvation (B') will not occur according to the human thoughts.

The problem posed at the very beginning regarding the meaning of the phrase from v. 4: יֵרֵד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לִצְבֹּא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן has found its solution. One has not to choose between the two translations: "YHWH shall go down to fight upon Mount Zion" or "against Mount Zion." Both meanings are acceptable; moreover, both of them were intended by Isaiah and are essential parts of his message. Yet, the ambiguity of the use of the preposition עַל was intended. The listeners, hearing about the lion, would expect such a message from Isaiah: God's punishment through Assyria is coming… But the message from the prophet is quite different, announcing the intervention of God himself, not through Assyria. God himself is the lion and he is against both Assyria (and her king), and Jerusalem (her rulers and defenders). One can see a similar scheme in the second comparison in v. 5. The listeners, hearing about the birds, would understand the image this way: God's punishment by the hands of Assyria is coming and all the nations will fly away like sparrows… But the message is quite different, announcing the salvation of Jerusalem in yet an unknown way. The besiegers are the ones who will fly away, but the historical salvation of the capital in 701 BC would mean at the same time the devastation of the defenders' plans. Hence, defenders' thoughts and intentions are also as fragile and fleeting as birds departing in an instant. The city is saved, so the alliance with Egypt turned out to be completely unnecessary.

The structure of the pericope and its exegesis reveal the main goal that guided the prophet transmitting God's message. It is most visible in v. 6, which was a direct appeal and had to convince the hearers, including the current readers of the Book of Isaiah, to rely only on YHWH.[64] The key of the prophet's message is based on his individual and intimate encounter with YHWH. For him God is always "an almighty, absolutely demanding being, who could consume him and yet could set him free at the same time."[65] This experience hasted the prophet to announce the divine message to his addressees with full energy and engagement, as well as with every possible mean, including shock and surprise shown by the incoherence of Isaiah's oracle, to convince his listeners.

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64   Cf. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 407.
65   Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 616.

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Candidates for the Priesthood in Poland A.D. 2020: A Research Report

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Abstract: The article essentially aims at answering who were the Polish young men wishing to become priests in 2020 as compared with the candidates who entered Polish seminaries in 2000. The answer was based on quantitative and qualitative surveys conducted in 2000 and 2019 among seminarians at the very beginning of their priestly formation. The questionnaires, though exposing great cognitive possibilities, cannot measure what concerns the mystery of vocation or faith. Despite these limitations, the obtained results have allowed us to find out, for example, where the seminarians came from and what their backgrounds were. They also show their interests, the level of their general and religious knowledge as well as their values. Of importance was to get to know their visions of the priesthood and the Church. The present paper, as a synthesis of the study published in book form, gives a profile of the contemporary candidate for the priesthood. The results of the research can be used by formators and all those who make arrangements for the introduction of the new *Ratio Institutionis* in Poland.

Keywords: seminarian, vocations, candidates for the priesthood, youth

In 2000, for the first time in Poland, sociological research was carried out in all major seminaries. At that time, candidates for the priesthood who had just started their first year of study were examined.[1] Nearly twenty years later, the study was repeated.[2] Two decades is almost a generational change. Therefore, the following questions were asked again: Who are these young men? Are they priest material? Have there been any changes in the mentality of those entering the seminary during this time?

In order to obtain answers to the above questions, a new questionnaire was developed on the basis of the original one.[3] Some questions were reformulated, and

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[1] In 2000, 925 candidates were examined, which constituted 100% of all those who entered the major seminaries at that particular time. A comprehensive study concerning the research is available in the publication: Pawlina, *Kandydaci do kapłaństwa trzeciego tysiąclecia.*

[2] In 2019, 289 candidates who began the first year of priestly formation were surveyed (questionnaires were not sent back by four seminaries, but the number of candidates in these institutions was 11 men in total). A full analysis and comprehensive approach to the problem can be found in: Pawlina, *Powołania kapłańskie AD 2020.*

[3] The original questionnaire consisted of 88 questions, while the new one – *Powołania diecezjalne 2019* – 91 questions. The research was conducted after the candidates had been admitted to the seminar-

some new added. The results of the sociological analyses have created an opportunity to present the profile of the contemporary candidate for the priesthood in Poland. The following article is a synthesis of the research report published as a book.

1. Family Context

1.1. The Social Situation of the Candidates' Families

The first and most important educational environment of a young person is the family. It is in the family that faith is formed, vocation is discovered, and many other qualities that will be crucial to social life are acquired. The example of the parents subconsciously influences the image of God and the way of treating the Church community as a family of God's children. Therefore, the role of the family cannot be overestimated, and its influence on the formation of the personality, on sensitivity and pro-social attitudes of the future priest is particularly important.

Among the basic questions that outline the profile of the candidates for the seminary, the most obvious one was the presence of the parents in their lives. Exactly 90% of the respondents replied that both parents were still alive (in 2000 – 90.4%), only the mother – was indicated by 7.6% of them (in 2000 – 8.1%), only the father – 1% (in 2000 – 0.9%), while in the case of 1% of the respondents both parents were dead (in 2000 – 0.3%). In fact, the distribution of the answers is similar to that of 20 years ago. The higher percentage of orphaned people can be explained by the fact that now older candidates join the seminary.

The fact of having both parents does not automatically mean being under their direct care or being brought up by them. 84.1% of the candidates for the priesthood grew up in a two-parent family (in 2000 – 83.2%), in a family that has lost one parent – 3.1% (in 2000 – 4.3%), in a divorced or separated family – 6.6% (in 2000 – 5.7%), in a remarried family – 1.7% (in 2000 – 2.7%), and in a single mother family – 1.7% (in 2000 – 2.5%).

Apart from their parents, young men's closest companions are brothers and sisters. Priestly vocations from single child families constitute a definite minority – 6.6% (in 2000 – 8.2%). As many as 92% of the respondents admitted having siblings (the result does not add up to 100% due to the lack of answers in some surveys). Most of the respondents were brought up in the company of one brother or one sister – 39.4% (in 2000 – 38.1%), two siblings were indicated by 26% (in 2000 – 29.3%), and

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ies, but before their lectures or talks started. The point was that the respondents should not yet undergo any formation processes, and that their answers were as authentic as possible.

three – 13.1% (in 2000 – 13.2%), for four – 6.9% (in 2000 – 4.9%), for five or more – 6.6% (in 2000 – 2.7%). The average number of children in the families of candidates for the priesthood was exactly two (in 2000 – 2.91). The decline in the fertility rate of families is therefore extremely progressive, although it is noteworthy that the largest group of candidates still comes from families with two children.

1.2. Parents' Age, Education and Profession

Taking into account the parents whose sons began their seminary formation, it is worth noting that 6.7% of the mothers were under 40 years of age (in 2000 – 10.7%). The largest group of parents is in the 46–50 age group – 28.3% of the mothers and 26.9% of the fathers (in 2000 – 27.7% and 34.6%, respectively). While in the group of the fathers the indicated age range still maintained the dominant position, there was a shift in the mothers' group. In 2000, the greatest number of vocations was declared by the respondents whose mothers were in the 41–45 age group (39.1%). Currently, this group consists of only 23% of the respondents. Taking into account the entire survey, it was calculated that the average age of the mother of the contemporary seminarian is 49.5 years (in 2000 – 46.6), and of the father – 51.7 years (in 2000 – 49.3). This increase is probably due to the fact that more and more people with some life experience (not only high school graduates) enter the seminary, as well as the increased representation of the youngest siblings (when the age of the parents is already more advanced than in the case of the firstborn).

Family upbringing, apart from the religious aspect, is probably significantly related to the social and professional aspirations of the parents. What kind of education do the families of the candidates for the priesthood have? The first reflection that arises from the analysis of the answers obtained is that in many families the educational attainment of the mother and father is fairly significantly diversified. Among the mothers, higher education is most common – 33.2% (in 2000 – 13.3%) and basic vocational education is in second place – 32.9% (in 2000 – 29%). Among the fathers, basic vocational education dominates – 46.4% (in 2000 – 43.6%) over higher education – 21.1% (in 2000 – 10.3%). From the above data, the following two conclusions can be drawn: firstly, in the homes of the candidates for the priesthood, the mothers have significantly better education; secondly, over the last two decades the role of families with higher education has more than doubled. On the other hand, the number of the respondents whose parents have a primary school or lower level of education decreased: for the mothers this percentage is now 2.4% (in 2000 – 13.8%), for the fathers 3.5% (in 2000 – 12.5%). To sum up, more and more young people from intellectual families join seminaries. In this case, the priesthood is probably not an option for gaining a higher social status or satisfying material needs, but voluntarily and reflectively choosing a specific path of spiritual and intellectual development.

Questions about education and occupation do not yet provide a complete picture of the social situation in the families of candidates for the priesthood. Thus it is worth considering the parents' professional situation. Currently, 70% of the mothers and 77.7% of the fathers work professionally (in 2000 – 48.4% and 58.3%, respectively), 4.2% of the mothers and 3.8% of the fathers are unemployed (in 2000 – 9.5% and 6.9%, respectively), 3.2% of the mothers and 6.1% of the fathers are pensioners (in 2000 – 16% and 16.6% respectively). These data indicate a significant increase in the professional activity of the parents and a decrease in the group of the unemployed and the pensioners.

2. Cultural and Intellectual Quality of the Vocations

2.1. Candidates' Age and Education

The decision to enter a seminary is usually made at a young age. Graduating from secondary school naturally forces a person to specify their plans. It is during this period that the greatest number of priestly vocations is born. In Poland the average age for men starting their studies in the seminary is currently 21 years and 4 months (in 2000 – 20 years and 2 months), with the dominant age of 19. It is the most common age for obtaining a high school diploma (matura). The candidates who were aged up to 20 inclusive constitute 64% of all the respondents (in 2000 – 76.6%), the group of the candidates aged 21–25 is 23.9% (in 2000 – 18.9%), aged 26–30 is 5.9% (in 2000 – 2.1%) and over 30 is 4,5% (in 2000 – 0.9%).

The average age has increased by more than a year over the past 20 years. This increase is a consequence of the fact that many more men over 30 – 4.5% (in 2000 – 0.9%) now respond to their vocation to the priesthood.

A typical educational level of a candidate for the priesthood is secondary school – 46.6% (in 2000 – 45.7%). Graduates of technical secondary schools constitute a much smaller group – 18.3% (in 2000 – 26.8%). There are hardly any vocations originating from vocational secondary schools – 0.7% (in 2000 – 11.9%) and post-secondary schools – 1% (in 2000 – 1.7%). The negligible percentage of vocations born in technical colleges is the result of the reduction and phasing out of secondary vocational education in Poland in the recent decades. Overall, 65.6% of the candidates for the priesthood have secondary education. Twenty years ago, this group comprised 84.4% of the candidates. The rest of the respondents began university programmes earlier, with varying results. 15.9% of the respondents did not complete their Bach-

elor's studies (in 2000[4] – 2.3%), 7.9% (in 2000 – 1.7%) completed their Bachelor's studies or post-secondary schools. 3.1% did not complete their Master's programmes (in 2000 – 8.5%), while 6.9% of the respondents have completed their Master's studies (in 2000 – 2.4%).

The results of the study indicate that the number of those who began Bachelor's or Master's study programmes after graduating from secondary school has doubled. Currently, their percentage is 33.8% compared to 14.9% in 2000. Moreover, the percentage of the candidates for the priesthood who completed their Master's studies is almost three times the percentage in 2000 – 6.9% compared to 2.4%.

This segment of research was supplemented by the question about work experience. It turns out that over half of the candidates (51.2%) already worked professionally (in 2000 – 18.5%), and 48.1% did not (in 2000 – 80.7%).[5] The high rate of those with work experience, with the previously obtained results on the respondents' education and age, suggests that some young people may have had only short periods of employment, e.g. part-time holiday jobs or internships. Nevertheless, the percentage of the candidates declaring taking up some professional activity before entering the seminary has almost tripled over the past twenty years. This may mean that the candidates for the priesthood have greater awareness and experience in discerning their path of life.

2.2. Candidates' Spheres of Interests

Candidates for the priesthood, apart from broadly understood social interests, have individual interests, preferences and hobbies. What kind of interests are these?

Music was listed first – 61.9% (in 2000 – 50.9%), then sport – 45.3% (in 2000 – 50.9%), tourism – 45% (in 2000 – 47, 9%), film – 38.8% (in 2000 – 38.3%), computer – 33.3% (in 2000 – 24.4%), theatre – 20.4% (in 2000 – 15, 5%), DIY and technical activities – 19.4% (in 2000 – 18.6%), photography and filming – 15.5% (in 2000 – 9.9%) and collecting – 7.6% (in 2000 – 7.8%). There are no significant differences in the interests of young people over the last two decades. The spheres of interests also include reading books and newspapers. Therefore, future priests were asked about the number of books read during the last year. It turned out that 9% of the respondents had not read any book (in 2000 – 5.4%), 44.6% of the respondents declared that they had read at least five books (50.9% in 2000), more than ten books – 10.4% of the respondents (in 2000 – 18.2%). 34.9% of the future clergymen (in 2000 – 11.8%) read dailies or information portals. 8.3% were interested in reading the news on

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4   The 2000 survey also included the question about "completed / not completed post-secondary education" among its education categories. The 1999 Bologna Process introduced a new category into higher education – the Vocational Bachelor.

5   The results do not add up to 100% due to the lack of responses.

a daily basis (9.4% in 2000). The remaining group read the press two or three times a week (18.7%), once a week (10%) or occasionally (27.7%). In 2000, the corresponding results were as follows: two or three times a week – 24.4%, once a week – 15% and occasionally – 39.1%.

Summing up the readership of the press among future priests, it can be stated that the number of those interested in daily reading has increased significantly. Perhaps it is related to the increasing access to the Internet sources. On the other hand, the number of those interested in any access to information decreased by over 10%. While reading the press is becoming more and more popular, in the category of book readership the results show the opposite tendency. The number of those declaring a lack of interest in reading anything has almost doubled in the past year, and the group of those reading more than five books a year has decreased by nearly 20%.

2.3. Religious Knowledge

One would expect candidates for the priesthood to possess a certain base of religious knowledge. Therefore, subsequent questions concerned topics related to the catechism as well as the broadly understood knowledge of the religious situation in the Catholic Church. When asked about the names of the two predecessors of John Paul II, 83.3% (in 2000 – 47.8%) of the respondents gave the correct answer. The next question concerned the knowledge of the titles of papal encyclicals. More than half of the respondents (54.3%) could not indicate any title (in 2000 – 42.6%). This means a decline in the knowledge of the papal teaching among young people.

The next set of questions was related to the knowledge of the catechism. When asked about the number of the requirements to receive the sacrament of Penance, 84.8% (89.4% in 2000) gave the correct answer. When asked for details, i.e. the correct names of the five elements, were given by 70.2% (in 2000 – 72.8%), and none was given by 13.5% (in 2000 – 15%). Future priests were also asked about the most important Christian commandments. The commandment of love was indicated by 81.7% of the respondents (in 2000 – 83.9%), another commandment – 15.6%, and 2.8% did not give any answer.

The names of the Evangelists were another point checking the candidates' religious knowledge. All the Evangelists' names were mentioned correctly by 92.7% (in 2000 – 93.3%). 1.4% did not mention any name. The others named one, two or three Gospel authors.

The last of the tasks concerned the identification of a non-monotheistic religion. The correct answer was given by 87.2% of the respondents (in 2000 – 66.6%).

The presented results of the research on religious knowledge show a general decrease – by several or so percentage points – in almost all of the issues discussed. The simplest explanation for this fact seems to be the weakness of religious education

classes and the progressive secularization of the society. However, there is a hypothesis that there are people who were not very religious or practicing Catholics and yet decided to enter the seminary at a more mature age after having lost their knowledge of the catechism.

Young people spend a lot of time surfing the web. How is it expressed with the candidates for the priesthood?

Only one person admitted to not using the Internet at all. More than half of the candidates (51.5%) indicated that they used the Internet for two hours a day or more. This means that they devoted relatively the largest part of their free time to it; 31.8% of the respondents used it for 1–2 hours. The biggest concern is the fact that as many as 15.2% of candidates for the priesthood use the Internet for more than four hours a day, which means they are on the verge of being addicted.

3. Factors and Circles that Strengthen or Weaken One's Vocation

3.1. Fears

In addition to aspirations and ambitions, man experiences various fears related to both the present and the future. These fears may result from the influence of the external world, but also from being aware of one's own imperfections or from the pressure to choose one's life path.

The candidates for the priesthood were presented with eleven categories of concern, of which they could identify three. Most fears concerned the loss of a loved one – 34.6% (in 2000 – 25.2%), the feeling of loneliness, lack of friends – 32.9% (in 2000 – 20.1%) and severe illness, loss of health or disability – 28.4% (in 2000 – 25.6%). In further places it was indicated: departure from one's ideals – 28% (in 2000 – 26.6%), realizing at the end of life that it was empty and wasted – 28% (in 2000 – 37.9%), fear of human hatred and envy – 26.3% (in 2000 – 37.9%), lack of success in the implementation of plans related to study or work – 13.1% (in 2000 – 12.5%), a colourless and boring life – 9.7 % (in 2000 – 6.1%), being ridiculed and embarrassed – 9.3% (in 2000 – 5.4%), poverty – 9.3% (in 2000 – 5.3%).

3.2. Participation in the Altar Service

For many decades, altar-boys have been the most basic and universal formation group for male youth. As part of the research, the candidates for the priesthood were asked about their relationship with the community of altar servers. When asked if they had been altar boys before entering the seminary, 84.4% of the respondents an-

swered "yes" (in 2000 – 82.9%), and 15.6% denied performing such duties (in 2000 – 16.5%). Therefore, the replies confirm that the community of altar-boys remains one of the main sources of vocations.

The next question was about the length of time they served at the altar. It turns out that their participation in the altar service often started immediately after their First Communions. As many as 44.3% of the respondents declared that they had served for 9–12 years (in 2000 – 52.5%), while 14.9% served for 13 years or longer (in 2000 – 9.6%). 13.8% of the respondents served up to four years (in 2000 – 16%), and 10.4% – 5–8 years (in 2000 – 21.1%). Consequently, the vast majority of the candidates have many years of experience in the liturgical community of the altar, which probably influenced their decisions to join the seminary. Detailed research on the duration of the altar service revealed a wide time frame: from three months to thirteen years. The highest percentage of vocations was after 10 years of this service – 17.6% of the respondents, after 11 years – 12.8% and after 12 years – 8.3%. So it seems that those who began their altar service right after their First Communions often decided to enter the seminary after completing their secondary school or technical college education. This pattern of reaching a mature decision concerning vocation to the priesthood concerns 38.7% of the surveyed group.

3.3. Participation in Religious Communities and Groups

Those who enter the seminary have often undergone active formations in various types of religious groups and associations. More than half of the surveyed participants (67.5%) admitted that they had belonged to some community other than that associated with the altar service (in 2000 – 57.4%). Only a third of the candidates (32.5%) had no additional communal formation (in 2000 – 41.8%).

A group of 195 candidates who confirmed their participation in various Catholic groups were then asked to name them. The question was open-ended, so as many groups as applied could be given. The Light-Life Movement (Oaza) was indicated most frequently – 33.3% (in 2000 – 42.6%). Subsequently, vocations were born in such movements as: the Catholic Youth Association – 11.8% (in 2000 – 28.1%), Academic Ministry and Youth Ministry – 11.3% (in 2000 – 2.3%), parish and local youth communities – 10.8%, rosary and prayer groups – 8.2%, parish choirs, other choirs and artistic groups – 7.2% (in 2000 – 6.8%), the Youth Apostolate Movement and other apostolic groups – 6.2% (in 2000 – 4%), Caritas groups and parish volunteering – 5.6%, communities of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit – 4.1% (in 2000 – 9.6%), the Neocatechumenate – 3.6%. Among the large nationwide communities, the following were also mentioned: the Movement of Pure Hearts, the School of New Evangelization, the Union of Scouts of the Republic of Poland and Scouts of

Europe, pilgrimage groups, Bible circles and the Covenant of Mercy. A separate category of the respondents was those who indicated other than the above-mentioned Catholic movements – 17.9% (in 2000 – 19.8%).

3.4. Third Parties Supporting the Intention to Enter the Seminary

People declaring their intention to enter the seminary usually provoke a specific reaction in their interlocutors, starting from the closest ones through their chaplains, friends, teachers, etc. It may be a favourable or unfavourable reaction to the decision. In the next block of questions, the influence of the opinion of the community on shaping vocation to the priesthood was examined.

Respondents could provide more than one answer to the first question. It was necessary to indicate those who supported the intention of starting their seminary studies. Among the answers provided, the first two were clergymen: some priest – 81% (in 2000 – 69.2%) and their parish priest – 80.6% (in 2000 – 75.7%). The other responses included: the mother – 74.7% (80.9%), some friend – 73% (in 2000 – 46.5%), the father – 62.3% (in 2000 – 62.5%), the grandmother or grandfather – 56.7% (in 2000 – 52.6%), some sibling – 53.6% (in 2000 – 44.5%), a religious instruction teacher – 52.2% (in 2000 – 42.9%), other family members – 50.5% (in 2000 – 32.4%), teachers – 27% (in 2000 – 23.2%) and someone else – 15.2% (in 2000 – 10.2%). Compared to the previous survey, the distribution of the indicated answers did not change much, while the support of the clergymen and religious instruction teachers (known to the candidates) on the candidates' decisions increased. Perhaps we owe it to more mature vocations which raise less concern of the chaplains. The rate of the teachers' support remains relatively low.

3.5. Opponents of the Decision to Enter the Seminary

The decision to enter the seminary sometimes causes negative reactions in the closest social environment of the candidate. Only less than half of the respondents (40.1%; in 2000 – 45.7%) declared that they had not met with disapproval of their intentions by third parties. The rest of the candidates indicated those opposing their decision, respectively: friends – 34.6% (in 2000 – 34.9%), other family members – 20.4% (in 2000 – 13.5%), siblings – 15.9 % (in 2000 – 7.2%), the mother – 13.1% (in 2000 – 4.9%), a teacher – 10.7% (in 2000 – 10.8%), the father – 9.3% (in 2000 – 7.8%), a grandmother or grandfather – 8.7% (in 2000 – 3.1%), a religious instruction teacher – 2.4% (in 2000 – 0.1%), a parish priest – 1% (in 2000 – 0.9%), a priest – 1% (in 2000 – 1.1%), someone else – 4.8% (in 2000 – 6.7%).

It should be noted that despite the generally lower level of disapproval towards the decision to enter the seminary, the disapproval is currently stronger among fam-

ily members: distant relatives (+6.9 percentage points) and the immediate family, i.e. siblings (+8.7 percentage points), the mother (+8.2 percentage points), a grandmother and grandfather (+5.6 percentage points) and the father (+1.5 percentage points). This increase in the level of disapproval can be explained by the expanding secularization of the society, a decrease in the social prestige of the priest, and perhaps also the declining fertility rate of families who find it difficult to accept the fact that their sons decide to give up professional education or founding a family.

4. Candidates' Religiousness

4.1. Religious Experience

The primary environment for shaping faith is the family. The parents are indicated as the first and primary teachers of life, including religious life. Candidates for the priesthood were asked about their fathers and mothers' attitude towards faith. Their responses should not be taken as an objective assessment of the parents' religiosity but rather as the sons' opinions on the patterns received in the family home.

The respondents indicated that the mother was usually more religious than any other family member. Her attitude as deeply religious or religious was defined by a total of 88.2%, while in the case of the father – a total of 70.9% (in 2000, respectively: 92.4% and 73.6%), of which the fundamental difference between the parents (in favour of the mothers) occurs mainly in the category of deeply religious people.

The group of parents who are undecided on the matters of faith but attached to the religious tradition is not represented in large numbers. The mothers were indicated by 5.5% of respondents, and the fathers by 12.8% (in 2000, respectively: 4.8% and 11.5%). On the other hand, the group of indifferent parents or non-believers constitutes an even smaller percentage: 3.1% among the mothers and 7.9% among the fathers (in 2000: 1.2% and 6.9%, respectively). Research has shown that a religious family continues to be the most valuable resource for priestly vocations. On the other hand, the percentage of people – although still small – declaring their parents' indifference to the matters of faith is slowly increasing. This trend shows that some youth are able to find their way to God, even though they do not experience a positive example from one or both parents. As in 2000, it can be stated that the religiosity brought out of the home was owed by the candidates to a slightly greater extent to the mothers than to the fathers.

The following instances concerned the most important sources of the candidate's faith. The respondents could choose three answers and indicate the hierarchy of their

importance. As the primary factor, most respondents indicated the tradition and upbringing in the family – 28.7% (in 2000 – 24.5%), the second was going to church, the influence of sermons and priests – 24.9% (in 2000 – 24.9%), in the third place – life experiences – 18.3% (in 2000 – 8%), and in the fourth – personal thoughts and beliefs – 17.6% (in 2000 – 27.1%).

There is a noticeable increase in the importance of religious education at home and an even greater impact of personal experiences on the decisions made. On the other hand, the personal thoughts and beliefs of the respondents, which in the previous survey were the most frequently indicated factor of faith, lost their significance. This may be a sign of the diminishing individualization of faith in favour of the development of communal elements both at home and in the wider environment.

Summing up, the three basic factors in shaping faith given by the candidates are: going to church, listening to sermons and meeting with priests was the primary factor – 83.4% (in 2000 – 76%), secondly, tradition and education in the family – 67.5% (in 2000 – 67.2%), thirdly – personal thoughts and beliefs – 63.7% (in 2000 – 69.8%), life experiences – 60.6% (in 2000 – 37.6%) came in the fourth place.

The number of the responses indicating a different (unspecified) factor stimulating faith nearly doubled – 9.7% (in 2000 – 5.5%). Thus, the largest increase was recorded in the category of personal experiences as well as participating in church life, which seems to confirm the thesis that the contemporary candidate for the priesthood is a person who actively seeks faith on the level of ecclesial life, perhaps in the liturgy, in community or in personal contacts with priests.

Youth is the time of life when one looks for a purpose, the real sense of life. So what gives meaning to the lives of candidates for the priesthood?

Most of the respondents declared: 'religious faith' and 'some other factor' – 61.9% (in 2000 – 42.7%), "religious faith only" – 28% (in 2000 – 44.8%), first of all "some other factor," and "faith too" – 3.1% (in 2000 – 3.7%). The meaning of life beyond faith (in something else) was declared by 4.2% of candidates for the priesthood (in 2000 – 1.6%).

When asked whether faith helps them in everyday life, a positive answer was given by 91% of the respondents (in 2000 – 90.9%), the answer "probably yes, sometimes" – 7.3% (in 2000 – 8.1%), none of the respondents indicated a negative answer. When asked if only religious faith can give a person support and a sense of security, the candidates for the priesthood stated as follows: "yes" – 53.3 (in 2000 – 73.5%), "depending on the situation" – 36.3% (in 2000 – 20.4%), "no" – 4.2% (in 2000 – 2.1%).

These questions show the young people's growing scepticism about faith. Perhaps it does not concern the mere dogmas or foundations of religiosity, but there is a clear conviction that faith has a "competitor" (not specified in this study) which is necessary to complete the individual image and meaning of human life. As compared

with the earlier statements, one can guess that apart from faith, factors such as patriotism or other general human values are becoming increasingly more valuable for young people.

Can the experience of God's nearness affect one's calling? In the next question – which did not specify what sense of proximity to God it was – 78.9% of the respondents admitted having such an experience (in 2000 – 67%), 3.5% did not admit it (in 2000 – 4.6%), and that it was difficult to say – 17.6% (in 2000 – 26.4%). This shows that the group of seminarians personally experiencing the proximity to God has grown significantly. The experience of God's presence is one of the most subjective and difficult elements to diagnose in this study. However, the respondents were asked to try to describe their experiences in the form of an open statement. Among those who declared an evident perception of God's presence and action in their lives, most respondents experienced His existence in the Eucharist, sacraments and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – 30.3% (in 2000 – 16.9%), then while praying, speaking to God, reflecting on the Word of God, meditating – 22.8% (in 2000 – 18.4%), in difficult life situations – 21.5% (in 2000 – 24.2%), in everyday life, in nature, in another person – 9.2% (in 2000 – 16.6%), in connection with the vocation to the priesthood – 6.1% (in 2000 – 4.8%), when God heard their prayers – 4.4% (in 2000 – 2.9%), during pilgrimages and visiting special places – 3.5% (in 2000 – 5.2%), during retreats – 1.8% (in 2000 – 7.3 %). Moreover, a large group of the respondents (20.2%) did not indicate any of the above-mentioned situations, confirming, however, the sense of God's presence in other circumstances (in 2000 – 13.9%). At the same time, 27.2% of the surveyed group described their experiences of God's presence without relating them to any specific circumstances (some respondents included more than one type of experience – the percentages do not add up to 100%).

The analysis of the responses shows that Christians experience God's nearness more and frequently during their daily prayerful lives: Holy Mass, sacraments and adoration, as well as while praying, talking to God, meditating on his Word and reflecting. Yet, the experience of his presence is weaker when participating in some extraordinary forms of pastoral ministry: pilgrimages or retreats. On the one hand, this may indicate a crisis of retreats (especially during the so-called school retreats), and on the other, perhaps a conscious participation of the young in the liturgy of the Church and in reading the Word of God is increasing.

4.2. Religious Faith

Looking at the views of the young generation on faith, it is impossible to ignore the eschatological questions related to the existence of the ultimate. In a world that increasingly denies the existence of eschatological realities, candidates for the priesthood have shown a far-reaching unanimity in confirming the teaching of the Church. When asked about the belief in the existence of hell, 99% of the respondents gave

a positive answer (in 2000 – 95.2%), and the belief in the existence of Satan was also confirmed by 99% (in 2000 – 96.6%). The increase in the belief in the existence of hell and Satan compared to the 2000 study can be explained by the increasingly common teaching of the exorcists, as well as by numerous public and private revelations, widely described and commented on in religious media.

What is the most important duty of Catholics? This issue seems to be one of the key questions addressed to the candidates for the priesthood. Carrying out their pastoral ministry in the future and supporting others on the path of faith, they should have a properly formed hierarchy of the Christian values. Is this true in reality? Most people indicated loving God as the most important Catholic duty – 64.4% (in 2000 – 52.8%), obeying the commandments came second – 15.2% (in 2000 – 25.4%), in the third place – loving your neighbour – 14.9% (in 2000 – 13.2%), and in the fourth one – obedience to the Church – 1.7% (in 2000 – 3.5%).

It can be said that in twenty years there has been a growing awareness of the attitude of love as the primary disposition for fulfilling the Christian vocation. On the other hand, the attachment to juridical obeying the law has decreased – even if obeying the commandments implies the fulfilment of the most important of them – the commandment of love.

4.3. Religious Practices

Religious practices are the most frequently manifested form of religiosity. They do not exhaust the entire complexity of the phenomenon of faith, but for the candidates for the priesthood, they are undoubtedly one of the key factors in the process of vocational growth. Attending Mass is for them an exceptionally valuable experience, which is confirmed by the first question about church attendance over the last year. As many as 76.8% of the respondents attended the Eucharist several times a week (assuming that they included Sunday Mass), and 20.8% attended Mass every Sunday. Thus, a total of 97.6% of the seminarians declared a constant, weekly participation in the Holy Mass (in 2000 – 94.1%). The remaining 2.4% practiced "almost every Sunday" (in 2000 – 4.1%). On the basis of the answers given, it can be seen that for all the candidates the Holy Mass was the most fundamental and inseparable element of their faith. It cannot be ruled out that participation in Mass on Sundays may be motivated by various reasons. In order to produce an explanation of this issue, the respondents were asked the question: "What does Sunday Mass primarily mean to you?" The largest number of the respondents indicated "a religious experience" – 62.3% (in 2000 – 67.0%); the answer "something else" was given by 21.1% (in 2000 – 13.3%), in the third place the response was "fulfilling the command of conscience" – 9.3% (in 2000 – 14.4%), and in the fourth "fulfilling the duty to the Church" – 5.5% (in 2000 – 2.9%). The answers provided suggest that Mass is becoming slightly less

personal, although the number of those who are unable to identify their main motive for participating in the Eucharist is increasing.

Apart from belonging to the community of the Church, the main expression of which, is participation in the liturgy, the degree of religiousness of candidates for the priesthood can be determined by asking about their personal and family prayer. This type of prayer is not subject to the pressure of one's environment; it is an expression of individual piety and longing for God. The first in a series of questions concerned the frequency of prayer over the past year. 68.5% of the candidates for the priesthood prayed two or more times a day (in 2000 – 66.1%), once a day – 20.4% (in 2000 – 28.4%), from time to time – 4.2% (in 2000 – 1.2%), every few days – 3.5% (in 2000 – 1.4%). In total, 88.9% of the respondents declared praying at least once a day (in 2000 – 94.5%). This means that the number of those who pray every day decreased by 5.6 percentage points compared to the survey conducted 19 years ago.

The set of issues related to the practice of faith in families includes the question of cultivating popular religious traditions at home. The most common custom is to share the wafer at Christmas – 99% (in 2000 – 99.3%), followed by: blessing food at Easter – 97.2% (in 2000 – 98.5%), commemoration of all the faithful departed, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day – 92.7% (in 2000 – 94.0%), blessing of the Easter palms – 90.2% (in 2000 – 85.9%), strict fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday – 87.8 % (in 2000 – 94%), participation in Corpus Christi processions – 85.3% (in 2000 – 90.4%), Friday fasting – 82.2% (in 2000 – 81.8%), participation in the Way of the Cross – 70.6% (in 2000 – 74.7%), singing Christmas carols – 66.4% (in 2000 – 72.2%), rosary services – 59.4% (in 2000 – 68.3%), Lenten (Bitter) Lamentations – 54.2% (in 2000 – 60.9%), May services – 53.8% (in 2000 – 68.1%), common prayer – 48.6% (in 2000 – 42.9%) blessing of candles at the Purification – 47.6% (in 2000 – 62.6%), blessing of herbs on the feast of the Assumption – 40.2% (in 2000 – 39%), pilgrimages – 32.9% (in 2000 – 43.9%), Fatima services – 31.5% (in 2000 – 27.1%), reading the Holy Bible – 29% (in 2000 – 33.4%) and Divine Mercy Chaplet – 28.7% (in 2000 – 32.3%).

The analysis of the data shows that the number of home religious practices related to most of the above-mentioned customs decreased in the analysed period. The greatest decrease in practices can be observed in terms of participation in: blessing of the candle – 15 percentage points, in May services – 14.3, pilgrimages – 11, rosary services – 8.9, Bitter Lamentations – 6.7 and fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday – 6.2 percentage points. At the same time, however, we can observe an increase in some religious practices, especially common prayer – by 5.7 percentage points, Fatima services – by 4.4 and blessing of the Easter palms – by 4.3. The popularity of the services can be explained by the increased recognition of the Fatima apparitions in connection with their 100th anniversary in 2017.

However, it is overall apparent that the traditional prayers and services in church-es and chapels are becoming less appreciated. Perhaps in the following years a shift of practices towards more individual and personal forms will be observed, which may suggest an increased interest in common prayer or observing Friday abstinence from meat.

4.4. Morality

Human morality is shaped by many factors, religious and ethical or even social. Therefore, the candidates for the priesthood were asked if they believed that there were precise criteria for what was right or wrong, or if there were no strict and abso-lute criteria in that matter. The greatest number of the respondents supported the ex-istence of such unambiguous criteria – 42.9% (in 2000 – 56.4%), against their exis-tence – 28.7% (in 2000 – 20.2%), 12.8% of the respondents denied the truth of both statements (in 2000 – 6.9%), and the difficulty in indicating the answers was given by 15.6% (in 2000 – 13.8%). Thus, there is an evident tendency to doubt the existence of objective rules for distinguishing between good and evil, and perhaps also to relativ-ize our good and bad decisions in certain areas of life.

The respondents were also asked whether the behaviours and attitudes men-tioned in the survey were always good or whether they could be good or bad de-pending on the context of their occurrence. The candidates for the priesthood recognized that the following values were primarily seen as "always good": mercy – 95.5% (in 2000 – 96.1%), forgiveness – 95.2% (in 2000 – 95.1%), humility – 94.8% (in 2000 – 91.1%), honesty – 93.8% (in 2000 – 93.5%), respect for the elderly – 91.3% (in 2000 – 95.8%), obeying moral principles – 88.9% (in 2000 – 90.6%), truthfulness – 65.4% (in 2000 – 69.5%), discretion – 61.6% (in 2000 – 76.5%), interpersonal solidarity – 57.4% (in 2000 – 66.7%), obedience – 50.5% (in 2000 – 53.8%), tolerance – 42.2% (in 2000 – 72.1%) and stability of beliefs – 38.1% (in 2000 – 55%). In many areas, the views of young people entering the seminary have remained at a similar or slightly lower level of acceptance for the "absolute good" than 20 years ago. The largest decrease in unconditional acceptance was in the field of tolerance – by 29.9 percentage points, stability of beliefs – 16.9 and discretion – by 14.9.

In the field of the negative behaviours, the respondents indicated unequivocal disapproval, regardless of the external situation ("always bad") with regard to the fol-lowing phenomena: accepting bribes – 96.2% (in 2000 – 93.5%), giving bribes – 90.7% (in 2000 – 84.2%), theft – 81% (in 2000 – 83.6%), buying pirated copies of music recordings – 72% (in 2000 – 53.2%), buying pirated copies of computer pro-grammes – 71.6 % (in 2000 – 54.1%), lies – 55% (in 2000 – 58.2%) and primarily taking care of one's own business – 52.9% (in 2000 – 67%).

4.5. Core Calues

The respondents were asked to list the five most important values or goals they wish to achieve in their lives. When asked what above all gives meaning to human life, deep religious faith was most often declared – 88.2% (in 2000 – 92%). In both studies, this answer came in the first place but the order of the remaining answers was different. In 2019, love and great feelings came second – 57.1% (in 2000 – 40.1% and 5th place). In the third position, the respondents indicated finding their own place in the society and the feeling that one is useful and needed – 48.8% (in 2000 – 56.9% and the 2nd place). Family happiness was listed fourth – 46.4% (in 2000 – 31.6% and the 7th place). Gaining human trust and friends came in the fifth position – 41.9% (in 2000 – 50.6% and the 3rd place).

The subsequent values were as follows:
– 6th place – activity and pursuit of the chosen goal – 32.9% (in 2000 – 41.4% and the 4th place),
– 7th place – the work you like – 23.9% (in 2000 – 32.6% and the 6th place),
– 8th place – developing your individuality and personal style as well as the ability to be oneself – 20.8% (in 2000 – 16.4% and the 10th place),
– 9th place – leaving a long-term legacy – 19% (in 2000 – 19.7% and 9th place),
– 10th place – education and the pursuit of knowledge – 16.3% (in 2000 – 23.7% and the 8th place)
– 11th place – believing in a great idea – 14.9% (in 2000 – 11.5% and the 11th place).

As the lowest values in the ranking, the respondents placed the wealth of life experiences, tasting everything, even at the cost of distress – 2.1% (in 2000 – 1.1%), money, well-being and life comfort – 2.8% (in 2000 – 1.6%) and a quiet life without any surprises – 2.8% (in 2000 – 2.9%).

5. Vision of the Church

5.1. The Essence of the Church

The Church is a divine and human reality – it contains both the visible and the spiritual. For this reason, the description of the Church in sociological terms primarily refers to her institutional dimension. Nevertheless, the candidates for the priesthood were asked about their understanding of the Church.

The first of the questions given to the respondents was general: "What does the Catholic Church primarily mean to you?" The respondents could choose only

one out of eight answers. For the majority of the surveyed group, the Church was first of all a community of believers – 73.7% (in 2000 – 76.5%), then, with much lower indications: an institution that protects faith and customs – 9% (in 2000 – 7.7%), a sacred institution with the Pope and the clergy – 6.6% (in 2000 – 8.5%), a global organization with certain secular goals as well – 0.3% (in 2000 – 1%), something else – 8.3% (in 2000 – 4.4%), hard to say – 1.7% (in 2000 – 1%). Basically, the distribution of the answers was consistent with the research of the year 2000, although the group of those who were unable to clearly define their vision of the Church has increased significantly.

Can you be a religious Catholic without the Church? The thesis, which is now quite often formulated by liberal media, did not gain much support in the eyes of the candidates for the priesthood. They were to respond to this issue in relation to two definitions: the Church as the People of God and the Church as an institution. According to the answers received, it is impossible to be a Catholic without the Church understood as the People of God – this was what 91.3% of respondents believed in (in 2000 – 90.3%). However, 3.5% saw such a possibility (in 2000 – 3.8%), and 4.2% declared that it was difficult to answer (in 2000 – 5.1%). If, however, we look at the Church as an institution, the necessity of her existence was declared by 70.6% of the respondents (in 2000 – 60.6%), an opposite opinion was expressed by 11.8% (in 2000 – 16.5%), a difficulty in giving an answer was indicated by 17% of the respondents (in 2000 – 21.4%).

5.2. The Essence of the Priestly Service

The vocation to the priesthood, as any vocation, is a kind of mystery. We are dealing here with the action of God and the response of a free man to His call.

The candidates for the priesthood were asked about the constitutive dimension of their vocation. The nature of the priesthood was characterized by several basic terms, and the surveyed were asked to identify the one that best suits their aspirations. Apart from choosing one of the terms describing the priesthood, the respondents could mark the box "something else." The most frequently indicated answer was the concept of service – 72% (in 2000 – 68.1%), then: dedication – 13.8% (in 2000 – 19.5%), responsibility – 4.2% (in 2000 – 2.1%), privilege – 1.7% (in 2000 – 1.5%), challenge – 1.4% (in 2000 – 1.9%), example – 1% (in 2000 – 0.6%), profession – 0% (in 2000 – 0.3%). The answer "something else" was chosen by 4.8% of the respondents (in 2000 – 4.5%). So for the past twenty years there has been no fundamental change in the understanding of the central idea of the priesthood. However, there has been a slight increase in terms such as service, dedication and responsibility, which would mean that today's candidates are more conscious of their calling and aware of the difficulties that accompany this path of life.

5.3. Pastoral Passions of Future Priests

At the source of the vocation there is also the conviction about the need to support pastoral work by new priests. In the light of this readiness to undertake the priestly ministry, it seems extremely interesting to ask what type of work in the Church the future candidates for ordination wish to devote themselves to.

The largest group of the respondents saw their priestly service as work in a parish – 45.3% (in 2000 – 36.4%). 18.3% of the respondents (in 2000 – 17.3%) did not yet think about it. Others saw themselves respectively: in special pastoral ministry of some social or professional circles, such as the army, the sick, prisoners, etc. – 11.4% (in 2000 – 11.7%), in something else – 7.3% (2000 – 4.4%), in academic work – 5.2% (in 2000 – 5.3%), in mission ministry – 5.2% (in 2000 – 8%), working in church administration, e.g. in the curia – 2.4% (in 2000 – 2.4%), in catechetical work – 2.4% (in 2000 – 7.8%), in charity work and helping the poor – 1.7% (in 2000 – 5.4%). The percentage of those declaring their willingness to do missionary and charity work decreased significantly. This might be related to entrusting these duties to specialised agencies of the Church, charities, missionary orders, etc. This work is less associated with the parish ministry, which is the main goal striven for by the candidates for the priesthood. There was also a clear decline in those willing to do catechetical work. Their reluctance may result from their awareness of difficulties that accompany teaching religious instruction in schools as well as the low prestige of the teacher of religious instruction.

Conclusion

Over the past twenty years, there has been an evident decrease in vocations to the priesthood (2000 – 925; 2019 – 300[6]). The seminarians are generally young men although there is a noticeable rise in the candidates' age since nowadays more men aged about 30 choose to become priests. Their typical education is the completion of high school and obtaining the final certificate, which is called "matura" in Poland. On the other hand, the number of seminarians who have completed higher education or have work experience is increasing. The candidates' motivation for entering the seminary is to fulfil the inner need to deepen their relationship with God. The vast majority of them served as altar boys, and some took an active part in religious communities and movements. For almost three quarters of the respondents,

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6   This number consists of 289 surveyed candidates and 11 candidates from the seminaries which did not send back the surveys.

the Church is first and foremost a community of believers, and for the vast majority the priesthood means service.

The respondents are not deprived of a critical view of the Church in which they wish to minister in the future. More than half of them believe that contacts between priests and the faithful are too superficial, more than a third express the opinion that the Church does not stand up to the conditions and challenges of the contemporary world. The candidates for the priesthood have been brought up in the world of electronics and the Internet, which is why they strongly believe that they should use the media in pastoral ministry.

The image of the candidate for the priesthood that emerges from the research is far from being ideal. Yet, this is just the beginning of the way to the priesthood as the studies and priestly formation last six years. God's grace and personal efforts can considerably help change this picture.

Translated by Agnieszka Krocin

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Verbum Vitae

Nuptial Motifs in Composition:
A Key to the Interpretation of the Song of Songs

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore the references to nuptial customs found in the Song of Songs as well as their place in relation to the structure of the text. The first stage of analysis consists of identifying various types of these references, while the second stage involved analysing and evaluating their positioning within the composition of the Song of Songs as an expression of the editorial intent of the biblical writers. The study has used elements of form analysis and lexical analysis as well as a comparative analysis of biblical and non-biblical/sub-biblical texts. The analysis revealed that the most important places in the structure of the Song of Songs are allocated to the so-called "poetic episodes," which have been distinguished earlier, concerning the different stages of nuptials – engagement negotiations, wedding procession, wedding feast and consummation of the marriage. Therefore, they constitute a point of reference for the interpretation of the remaining songs and at the same time the teachings of the sages in the Song of Songs.

Keywords: love, nuptials, wedding songs, mohar, wedding procession, bridesmaids, bride, poetic episode, teachings of sages

To Rev. Professor Tadeusz Brzegowy,
my mentor and the one who revealed the beauty
and depth of the Song of Songs to Polish readers,
on the occasion of his 80th birthday

The Song of Songs has always been of interest to scholars and has raised numerous questions about the way it should be interpreted. In the early Christian tradition, it was part of the current of allegorical interpretation of the relationship between Christ and his people. Yet, a number of arguments suggest that this was not the interpretation of the Songs that was intended by the biblical writers.[1] There is no indication that at the time the New Testament books were written, the Song of Songs was interpreted allegorically. Rabbinic texts from the turn of the first and second centuries

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[1] Brzegowy, "Ku dosłownej interpretacji," 67–95; Garrett – House, *Song of Songs*, 74–76; Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 4.

C.E. testify that in Jewish circles at the time, a naturalistic and literal understanding of the Song was well known.[2]

Disputes concerning the interpretation of the Songs of Solomon resulted in numerous studies and various attempts to read the poem. Also, a number of publications have been written by Polish biblical scholars; these were presented in an article by Waldemar Chrostowski.[3] In turn, Tadeusz Brzegowy made a special contribution to the Polish biblical scholarship on the Song of Songs.[4] His discovery that the literal meaning of the text is rooted in the intentions of the biblical writers paved the way to a search for a deeper meaning of the biblical praise of the mystery of human love.

Petronella W. T. Stoop-van Paridon rightly noted that "the variety of opinions on the way the SofS should be interpreted is exceptionally wide."[5] She pointed out that interpretations of the Song of Songs "range across a wide spectrum, from renderings of a highly spiritual nature on the one hand, to those which on the other hand could perhaps even be described as pornographic."[6] This biblical book inspires exploration, stirs emotions and is even sometimes called erotic.

Its most difficult issue is "problematic love." Firstly, love is presented in a naturalistic manner. Lech Stefaniak wrote over half a century ago that "sanctity and eroticism cannot be absolutely reconciled."[7] This problem has been partially overcome: today it is emphasized that, compared with the love poetry of the ancient Near East, in the Song sensual intimacy is shown in a sublime and discreet manner. "The frequent use of 'hidden language' is striking. Consequently, the erotic/sexual passages are not offensive. On the contrary, a decent respectful reserve is evident here."[8]

The relationship between the lovers seems to be even more problematic. Although there are allusions to weddings in the Song, there are also images of lovers who are clearly not married (7:11–8:3). Jennifer Andruska asks directly: married or

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2   Keel, *The Song of Songs*, 4.

3   Three parts of the publication present Polish translations, commentaries and various issues concerning the Song. See Chrostowski, "Pieśń nad pieśniami," 7–21. It is impossible to mention them all, but some are worth noting: the comprehensive studies by Tadeusz Brzegowy (*Pisma mądrościowe Starego Testamentu* and *Pieśń nad pieśniami*) and Julian Warzecha ("Miłość potężna jak śmierć") as well as numerous articles by Krzysztof Bardski, who explored symbolism and analysed allegorical interpretation and intertextual influences: "Duchowa interpretacja Pieśni nad Pieśniami" (2008); "Czy Oblubienica rzeczywiście «znalazła pokój»?" (2016), and others.

4   Brzegowy opened a new chapter of Polish expressive interpretation of the Song, publishing a number of scholarly articles under telling titles: "Jak rozumieć Pieśń nad Pieśniami?" (1985); "Ku dosłownej interpretacji Pieśni nad Pieśniami" (1988); "«Miłość mocniejsza niż śmierć». Egzegeza Pnp 8,6–7" (1993–1994); "Miłość małżeńska według Pieśni nad Pieśniami" (1993–1994); "Złożoność i jedność literacka Pieśni nad Pieśniami" (1995) and "Pierwszy poemat opisujący w Pieśni nad pieśniami (4,1–7)" (1996).

5   Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 4.

6   Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 5; Cf. Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 37.

7   Stefaniak, "Pieśni nad Pieśniami," 194.

8   Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 9. Barbiero (*Song of Songs*, 505) referred to the work of Giovanni Garbini, who attempted to reconstruct the original versions of the songs and assessed them as more erotic.

unmarried lovers? In her opinion, the allusions to marriage are vague and insufficient, so the thesis that the relationship was a marriage is not supported by the text.[9]

1. Problem and Purpose: Research Method and Strategy

What kind of love, then, is the subject and message of the book? What did the biblical writers intend to teach? What is the didactic purpose of this particular book? André Lemaire argues that the entire Old Testament was used for the purpose of educating.[10] The Song of Songs, attributed to Solomon (1:1), was included in a collection of writings which received sapiential editing. Jenifer Andruska even believes that "like all wisdom literature, the Song is didactic" and treats individual songs as instructions.[11] What, then, was it supposed to instruct about? Why does the Song seem to combine the freedom of customs in (experiencing) love on the one hand and allusions to nuptials on the other? The purpose of this study is to answer two questions. The first one concerns the kind of references to weddings in the text and the customs connected with them. The second is related to the place and role within the Song held by terms, idioms, motifs and other recognized allusions to nuptials.

At the first stage of analysis, various types of references to a wedding are identified. I have looked for terms, phrases, idioms as well as images, motifs and other allusions that refer to customs associated with weddings. Elements of form analysis and lexical analysis as well as a comparative analysis of biblical and extra-biblical texts have been used.

In order to evaluate the arrangement and interrelationship of the contents, it is important to have an understanding of the basic stages of the process of developing literary compositions in the ancient Near East. Therefore, the most important findings in this regard are briefly introduced.

The second step is to examine the layout/position of the identified references (terms, idioms, motifs and others) in relation to the structure of the text. At this point, it is necessary to recall the findings regarding the structure of the Song. Then I will attempt to assess the place of these elements in the text as an expression of the editorial intent of the biblical writers.

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9   Andruska, *Wise and Foolish Love*, 5–6. Cf. Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 38.
10 According to Lemaire (*Les écoles et la formation de la Bible*, 49–54, 72–85), biblical texts were written for didactic and educational purposes.
11 The author emphasized the didacticism of the Songs, analysing their relationship with the sentences of the Book of Proverbs and looking for their educational dimension (Andruska, *Wise and Foolish Love*, 35–41).

2. References and Allusions to Nuptials

The first stage of analysis is to determine what references there are to nuptials in the Song. Various references and allusions to weddings and customs associated with them can be found in the poem. Some are explicit, others can be guessed at. They also differ in frequency, some being repeated and others appearing only once in the text. Reading the text of the poem, one can easily recognize the most obvious references, i.e., terms directly connected with marriage and nuptials.

2.1. Terminology

a. Nuptials

The Hebrew word חתנה means "marriage, bridal or wedding,"[12] and is related to the term חתן, meaning "groom, newlywed or son-in-law."[13] The term חתנה is used once in the phrase "the day of the nuptials," in the description of King Solomon's procession: "Go out and look, daughters of Zion, at King Solomon … on the day of his nuptials, on the day of the joy of his heart" (3:11). The phrase חתנתו ביום finds here its parallel, ביום שמחת לבו. For the groom, "the day of the nuptials" is synonymous with "the day of the joy of his heart."[14]

b. Bride

The word כלה can be translated as "fiancée, bride or newly wedded wife"[15] and hence in connection with the successive stages of getting married. The term is used as many as six times in the poem, all of which appear in one block (4:8.9.10.11.12; 5:1).

2.2. Literary Forms

In addition to the terms that leave no doubt as to their meanings and connections to weddings, literary forms alluding to customs associated with marriage can be recognized in the text of the poem. These include nuptial vows and wedding songs.

a. The Wedding Oath

The nuptial oath was an oral declaration which confirmed the marriage contract. It was pronounced by the man. Verified in Aramaic wedding contracts found in the Jewish colony in Elephantine, Egypt, the oath was "She is my wife, and I am her

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12   BDB, 368; KB, 345.
13   BDB, 368.
14   Pope, *Song of Songs*, 448–451; Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 156–157; Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 150.
15   Additionally, the term can mean a daughter-in-law, but exegetes generally agree that in the Song it is used in its primary meaning (Zorell, *Lexicon hebraicum*, 359; KB, 438; cf. Garrett – House, *Song of Songs*, 193).

husband from this day forward forever."[16] It emphasized and, as it were, established the bond of marital belonging within the nuptials. The oath is repeated in the Song of Songs; it neither refers to marriage nor informs us of who he and she are to each other, but it is difficult not to notice the allusion to the wedding vow.

The oath emphasizes mutual belonging, and since in the poem the woman is the dominant person, as it were, it is also not surprising that it is her and not him who utters it: דודי לי ואני לו (2:16a). Only one noun, דודי, appears in this phrase, which is matched by the reflexive preposition אני. The phrase is completed by the preposition ל, supported by the possessive prepositions י and ו. The format is very simple: my beloved for me, and I for him, translated as "my beloved is mine, and I am his." In 6:3a, the vows contain the reversed order, and the phrase is somewhat differently expressed: אני לדודי ודודי לי (6:3a; cf. 7:11[10]).

This time the betrothed first affirms their belonging to the other: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."[17] Importantly, she also speaks of her belonging to him using the metaphor of a vineyard: "behold, before me is my vineyard, my own," or translated more literally, "my vineyard is mine, before me" (8:12a). This passage will be analysed in the following section.

b. Wedding Songs – *waṣfs*

The Song of Songs, as most exegetes believe, was built upon various love songs. Some of these have been found to have parallels in the Arabic *waṣf* poems, which were used to glorify the beauty of the newlyweds over the course of a multi-day wedding. There is even a theory that interprets the entire Song of Songs in light of the customs associated with the seven days of weddings, called the "wedding week theory."[18]

The songs of the *waṣf* have distinctive features that can be recognized in the selected songs of the Song. Gianni Barbiero calls them a description of the body of the beloved.[19] It is characteristic that this description follows a certain pattern. The woman's body is described from top to bottom or vice versa. Other features are numerous comparisons, drawn from both the natural world, and elaborate images referring to works of art.[20] The characteristics of a *waṣf* are expressed by four of the songs in the poem under analysis. Thus, for example, the *waṣf* of the seventh chapter glorifies, in turn, feet, hips, womb, belly, breasts, neck, eyes, nose, head and hair – "like royal pur-

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16   de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 32–33.
17   The whole phrase is extremely simple and somewhat reminiscent of the Latin marriage vow, "*ubi tu Gaius, ibi ego Gaia*" [where you Gaius, there I Gaia], cited by Plutarch in *Quaestiones Romanae*, no. 30: "Question 30. Why do the bridemen that bring in the bride require her to say, 'Where thou Caius art, there am I Caia'?"
18   Pope, *Song of Songs*, 141–142; Garret – House, *Song of Songs*, 83; Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 7. The custom of praising newlyweds with special songs is still kept alive in some regions of Syria and Egypt.
19   Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 13.
20   Cf. Brzegowy, *Pisma mądrościowe Starego Testamentu*, 128; Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 13.

ple, braided into plaits" (7:5). Biblical scholars especially differ on to which extent the verses can be indicated as belonging to a particular *waṣf* song. This is related to the features of the study of the Song of Songs. Three of the songs praising the newlyweds refer to a woman (4:1–7; 6:4–7; 7:2–8) and one to a man (5:10–16).

2.3. Nuptial Customs in Poetic Episodes

The finding that the nuptial theme appears in the poem based on certain terms (e.g., "bride" or "wedding day") and literary forms (*waṣf* wedding songs) legitimizes a further search for more subtle connotations, images, metaphors and allusions characteristic of the language of poetry. Considering the customs related to marriage in the ancient Near East, one must ask whether references to them in the form of poetic images, metaphors and allusions are discernible in the Song of Songs.

In some, especially the older biblical traditions/texts, marriage between a man and a woman is stated briefly: "he took a wife" (לקח see, e.g., Gen 25:20; 27:46; 28:2.9; 38:2). Others emphasize the element of negotiation which involved *mohar* or "payment and gift" (Gen 34:12) for a wife, among other things. Other texts have affirmed the practice of a more elaborate ceremony to convey a woman from her father's house to her husband's house (see the wedding of Jambri's son: 1 Macc 9:37–39). One may note the separation of the betrothal stage, preceded by negotiations (see Gen 29:18–23), from the bringing in of the wife, often in a ceremonial wedding procession (see 1 Sam 25:42; Ps 45[44]:15), the introduction of the wife into the house, the wedding (see Judg 14:10–12) and the consummation of the marriage (see Tob 8:1–14). Late traditions refer to the writing of a wedding contract (see Tob 7:14).[21]

In the Song of Songs, we can recognize elements of customs concerning marriage in the ancient Near East. The text is poetic and does not contain narrative or dramatic elements, but it does contain descriptions characterized by a certain eventfulness. Therefore, the passages in which we find allusions to certain actions and behaviours related to wedding customs are called "poetic episodes." Three such episodes were identified.

c.   Engagement Negotiations – Poetic Episode in 8:8–12

The negotiation of the marriage terms between the families of the bride and the groom was the first action in preparation for the wedding. In some traditions, including non-biblical ones, the very agreement and transfer of the bride's fee seems to be regarded as tantamount to a marriage (see Gen 34:12).[22] The poetic episode

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[21]   Cf. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 32–33; Szymik, "Małżeństwo i rodzina w Biblii," 203–225.
[22]   The myth of "The Nuptials of Yarikh and Nikkal" from Ugarit contains a significant scene of the "weighing of the mohar" in which the bride's entire family participates (Cf. Mrozek, "Między umową ślubną a poezją w tekstach z Ugaritu," 437).

concerning the negotiations and the bride's fee can be found in the final part of the literary composition of the Song of Songs. The isolated episode (8:8–12) contains utterances of different persons; they can be described as the words of the brothers, the woman herself and the bridegroom, who furthermore addresses Solomon. The episode is not fully coherent as the images and metaphors change; the girl is first compared to a wall and gate, then the metaphor of a vineyard is applied to her, and Solomon's vineyard is also mentioned. However, the clear motif of payment for a wife allows us to see here a continuation of the theme. The episode consists of four parts, each of which can be read as a "voice in the discussion."

vv. 8–9: the brothers discuss their sister's maturity (to marry)

v. 10: the girl declares that she is already mature (moreover, in love)

v. 11: the brothers use the metaphor of Solomon's vineyard to speak of a high price (a thousand shekels of silver)

v. 12: the beloved declares that the vineyard is his and pays more than was asked for; the price is extremely high, and so it appears to be symbolic.

b. The Wedding Retinue – Poetic Episode in 3:6–11

The main wedding ceremony consisted of bringing in a wife, which had a ceremonial and social character (the whole community learned that a certain woman became the man's wife). Therefore, there was a ceremonial procession from the father's house to the husband's house, in which the groomsmen and bridesmaids accompanying the bride played an important role.

The third chapter of the Song of Songs provides a poetic description of King Solomon's wedding retinue. There are two terms in verses 9–11 that are a sign of trouble for the translation and interpretation of the depiction. The first term is a late *hapax legomenon* of foreign, possibly Greek, origin – אפריון (3:9) – meaning "a litter, stretcher or palanquin," a form of built-in litter.[23] It is sometimes interpreted in translations as a figurative throne. However, since the term מטה (3:7), meaning "a bed, couch or stretcher,"[24] was used earlier, translators are inclined – in view of the wedding context – to favour a special litter, covering the person being carried. According to Keel, it was a special litter made and decorated for the nuptials ("King Solomon made himself a litter").[25] In the context of the wedding procession of a wealthy and significant person, its function is understandable.

The other troublesome term is עטרה, usually translated elsewhere in the Bible as "a crown." However, as Gianni Barbiero notes, according to the testimony of the First Book of Kings – recounting the reign of King Solomon – Solomon's mother did

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[23] BDB, 68; cf. Pope, *Song of Songs*, 441, 444. See φορεῖον (LXX); Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 165.

[24] BDB, 641.

[25] Keel, *The Song of Songs*, 130; cf. Exum, "Seeing Solomon's Palanquin," 310–311; Garret – House, *Song of Songs*, 180–181; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 444–445.

not crown him king, nor did his wedding coincide with the coronation day. It seems much more convincing to interpret "coronation" as the adornment of the groom's head with a nuptial wreath.[26] The term will be discussed below.

By explaining the issue of the litter and the wreath, one can already easily see the image of a wedding procession in this passage of the text. The royal procession is surrounded by the royal entourage, whose members act as bridesmaids on this day (3:5–8). They are armed (as were the groom's companions in the referenced wedding procession of one of Jambri's sons [1 Macc 9:39]), but in addition to security concerns, weapons are part of the festive attire. Keel calls them a guard of honour.[27]

In the first verses of the passage in question, two processions are presented. Their movements are emphasized, on the one hand, by the phrase "who is she that emerges from the desert" (3:6), and on the other hand, by the description of Solomon carried in the litter (3:7). The scene, described most clearly, represents the moment when the two retinues meet, and the bridesmaids are called upon to be the first to go out to meet the bridegroom's entourage. This role of the bridesmaids was shown in the New Testament: in Jesus's parable, the bridesmaids wait in the bride's house for the bridegroom's procession, and when he finally arrives they are summoned: "The bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!" (Matt 25:6). The significance of the entire poetic episode from the Song of Songs analysed here is completed by the direct indication that this happens "on the day of his nuptials" (וביום [3:11]).

> Come out, daughters of Jerusalem, look, daughters of Zion,
> at King Solomon wearing the wreath that his mother has dressed him with
> on the day of his nuptials, on the day of the joy of his heart (3:11).

d. The Wedding Feast and the Consummation of Marriage – Poetic Episode in 4:8–5:1

When the bride was introduced to the groom's house,[28] the feast to which the guests were invited began. In the Song of Songs, the motif of a feast appears twice. It is important that the fiancée is present in both cases although her presence is marked differently. The first chapter presents the image of a king surrounded by people feasting: "When the king is at the feast, my nard spreads its fragrance" (1:12). The Hebrew term מסב signifies a circle, a group of people surrounding a table where one can sit

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26   Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 161.
27   Keel, *The Song of Songs*, 129.
28   Cf. Song 1:4. Gianfranco Ravasi (*Il Cantico dei Cantici*, 330) argues that in the very first verses of the Song of Songs, the bridegroom – presented as a king – leads the bride into his chambers to complete the marriage act.

in a circle,[29] so the biblical translations interpret the expression applied to the king (במסבו), which consists of a masculine noun preceded by the preposition ב and ending with a singular, masculine possessive pronoun in the third person, as a feast, a royal feast[30] (Gerleman: "der Koenig im festlichen Kreis bleibt").[31] The picture of this feast is completed with an unusual detail – a description of the spreading scent of the bride's expensive perfume.

The feast motif also appears in the poem's central section (5:1). The feast itself does not yet equate to the wedding, but the motif of the feast is connected with the poetic image of the marriage act,[32] which is important in the nuptial ritual and constitutes its completion.[33] It is presented through suggestive images of the happy bridegroom entering the garden – which was closed to him until then (4:12) – eating honey and fruit and drinking wine and milk. Speaking triumphantly, the bridegroom again and again addresses his beloved "bride" (4:8–12; 5:1) (כלה), the term closely associated with weddings, and speaks of his affection and love (4:9–10). The bridegroom, exulting in his good fortune (the consummation of his marriage), simultaneously urges the wedding revellers to rejoice and feast: "Eat, my friends, drink, get drunk, dearest ones!" (5:1b). The final part of verse one, corresponding to the wedding feast, is based on three invocations in the imperative mode. They open with the verb אכל – "to eat," "to consume" – in the imperative *Qal* form of the second person plural. The next two verbs, שתה and שכר, are related to the consumption of drinks and are in the same conjugation and form as the first one. These three verbs are accompanied by only two complements: the companions, רעים and דודים. These are generally parallel terms. Exegetes unanimously identify this place as the chiastic centre of the structure of the Song of Songs.[34]

2.4. Figures and Objects

The other connections to weddings in the Song of Songs can be identified at the level of figures and objects. These include those playing the roles of bridesmaids and groomsmen and the clothing of the newlyweds.

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29   See also "surroundings," "round table"; KB, 540.

30   Zorell, *Lexicon hebraicum*, 451: "mensa … vel circulus."

31   Gerleman, *Ruth, Das Hohelied*, 9. In post-biblical Hebrew, *měsibbā* means "a party" or "a banquet" (Garrett – House, *Song of Songs*, 146).

32   Cf. Garrett – House, *Song of Songs*, 32; Brzegowy, *Pisma mądrościowe Starego Testamentu*, 130; Assis, *Flashes of Fire*, 94–147; Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 162.

33   Cf. Gen 29:23.25; Tob 6:14.17–18; 7:11.15–16. The story of Sarah, as told in the Book of Tobias, shows that a marriage that has not been consummated is treated as a failed marriage. Although Sarah was given in marriage, she "received no name" (Tob 3:8b) from any of her husbands, who died on their wedding nights.

34   Garrett – House, *Song of Songs*, 32; Dorsey, "Literary Structuring in the Song of Songs," 81–96; Cf. Johnston, "The Enigmatic Genre," 39.

a. Bridesmaids and Groomsmen

In the episode concerning the wedding procession, there are bridesmaids and groomsmen. They are not referred to by any specific terms, but the description clearly places them in such a role. King Solomon's wedding procession includes, in the roles of bridesmaids, the groomsmen, surrounding the royal coach – as described above – and the royal entourage, or the guard of honour (3:7–8).

The bridesmaids, according to accepted custom, also make up the retinue. Abigail's following consisted of five girls (cf. 1 Sam 25:42); the retinue of the king's daughter consisted of virgins who "follow her" and "introduce her to" the king (cf. Ps 45[44]:15). In the Song of Songs, the bride's retinue is the proudly named "daughters of Jerusalem,"[35] also called "daughters of Zion" (3:11). It is them who, in the context of King Solomon's wedding procession, are unambiguously presented in the roles of bridesmaids, called to go out and greet the bridegroom.[36] This allows us to see their roles in this perspective elsewhere in the poem as well (1:5; 2:7; 3:5.11; 5:8.16; 8:4).

b. The Dress of the Newlyweds and the Nuptial Wreath

The dress of the newlyweds was festive, but it is difficult to treat the praised beauty of their appearance and ornamentation in the Song of Songs as exclusively having to do with nuptials because they are a characteristic feature of love poetry in general. In those passages where a wedding is mentioned, it can be assumed that the description of the bride and groom has to do with the ceremony. In *waṣf* songs, however, the descriptions are full of elaborate symbols and imagery, so it is difficult to treat them as actual descriptions of the bride and groom's appearance. The wafting scent of the bride's expensive perfume in has a slightly different character in the context of a feast that may bear the characteristics of a wedding.[37] Perfume also created the festive nature of the feast and emphasized the grandeur and uniqueness of the bride. "When the king is at the feast, my nard spreads its fragrance" (1:12). Similarly, precious fragrances surround the bride arriving in retinue (3:6), and the climactic image of the union of the spouses is surrounded by the unusual scents of the bride's precious scents (4:10–5:1).

A characteristic feature of the bride's clothing was a veil covering her face[38] (cf. Gen 29:23–25). In the Song of Songs, the bridegroom longs to see the face of his

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35   The two phrases, "daughter of Jerusalem" and "daughters of Zion," belong to different phrases. However, the text of 3:10–11 is inconsistent and creates difficulties in interpreting. As Roberts argues: "The removal of the מ from [מבנות ירושלם] detaches בנות ירושלם from the description of the אפריון and allows it to be attached instead to the following invitation to the daughters of Zion to come out and see the spectacle of Solomon's wedding day. בנות ירושלם is thus taken as a vocative with the imperative צאינה [go forth] and the whole […] is recast as a chiastic bicolon" (Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 154–155; cf. Garret – House, *Song of Songs*, 181; cf. Pope, *Song of Songs*, 446; Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 150–152).

36   Cf. Garret – House, *Song of Songs*, 182–183; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 446–447.

37   Cf. Pope, *Song of Songs*, 348–349. Cf. 4:14.16; 5:1.

38   de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 33–34.

betrothed, which is hidden behind a veil: "Your eyes like doves behind your veil" (4:1; cf. 4:3; 6:7). "My dove, …, let me see your face" (2:14).

A unique element of the groom's attire was the nuptial wreath, which is indicated in the description of Solomon's wedding retinue (3:11). The word עטרה can mean "a crown, wreath or diadem."[39] The term is understood broadly; in the sapiential writings it is used figuratively (a wreath of glory, dignity, glory, adornment; cf. Job 19:9, Prov 4:9; 12:4; 14:24; 16:31). The analogous Akkadian term *eṭru* means "a headband" or a head ornament with the upper part uncovered.[40] As Gianfranco Ravasi and Gianni Barbiero argued, the nuptial wreath may already have been in use in Israel. It emphasized the extraordinary nature of weddings. The bridegroom became "the king of the nuptial ceremony."[41]

c. Conclusions

To summarize the first stage of the analysis, we can say that the poem has various kinds of references and allusions to weddings themselves (terminology) and to nuptial customs. Some are more explicit, such as the wedding procession, while others can be guessed at, as is the case with the wedding feast and the consummation of the marriage. Some of these references seem to be arranged in the form of more developed units, herein called poetic episodes. Others appear in various places singly – in contexts that do not seem to have a direct connection to weddings, in descriptions of a love that seems independent and uninhibited.

Therefore, the question arises as to how these (here isolated) various terms, phrases, and units referring to nuptials are situated in the structure of the poem. The next part of the analysis is an attempt to place them within the structure of the book and in relation to the other songs of the poem. This will help elucidate the compositional intent of the writers and determine their possible roles in the message of the poem. This is a difficult task, especially since the analysis of the structure of the poem itself causes problems for biblical scholars, as evidenced by its diverse readings.

3. The Arrangement of References and Allusions to Weddings in Relation to the Structure of the Poem

Before attempting to interpret the place and significance of the identified references and allusions to weddings in the structure of the Song of Songs, one must understand the process through which literary works were created in the ancient Near East.

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39   Stoop-van Paridon, *The Song of Songs*, 171.
40   KB, 698.
41   Ravasi, *Il Cantico dei Cantici*, 330; Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 161–163; de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 33–34.

This is important because this process led to the formation of specific features that distinguish the pieces from modern literary works (as well as the assumptions often made by biblical scholars). Understanding this process allows for a slightly different perspective on the literary and compositional features of the Song, which is crucial to the next stage of our analysis.

3.1. The Process of Creating Literary Works in the Ancient Near East

The way literary works were developed in the ancient Near East is the subject of ongoing discussions, especially in the last twenty years. Studies have been published on the processes of structuring oral messages and developing compositions through various procedures, including new introductions and endings.[42]

Jeffrey Tigay, who published a monograph in 1982 that focused on a detailed analysis of the stages of development of the Gilgamesh text throughout the centuries – from the Sumerian sources (the story of the legendary king of Uruk), through the Old Babylonian version, to the so-called standardized version of the epic from about 1100 (1200) B.C.E. – has contributed the most to illuminating these works, especially the literary process and the resulting textual features that can be discerned in many ancient works, including the books of the Bible.[43]

To describe this process in the shortest possible terms, due to the limitations of this paper, it is necessary to indicate several essential stages in the writing process, which usually span generations of writers.[44] The first stage consists of composing a new work on the basis of existing, smaller literary pieces, which, once incorporated into a new work, serve new purposes and form a new whole that is applied to the writers' aims.[45] Further work consists of unifying and developing this composition, by including both new units, adding, for example, new, "second" introductions and/or endings, and more "precise" work, adding new phrases or terms to develop the language or vocabulary. At the level of content and message, there are reinterpretations that broaden the message. The text becomes its own testimony to the inner development of the tradition. It is worth noting that at the final stage of the work the treatments tend to be less and less intrusive, of a lesser scope.[46] The dates of the "final" edits, understood as the time of decisive and effective operations on the text,

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42 See, e.g., Milstein, *Reworking Ancient Texts*, 305–308; Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*; van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*; Van Seters, "The Redactor in Biblical Studies"; Van Seters, "The Role of the Scribe"; Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*.

43 Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic*. Cf. George, "Gilgamesh and the Literary Traditions," 448–452.

44 See Jasnos, "Kształtowanie przekazu biblijnego," 87–99; Jasnos, "The Consequences of Early Literacy," 91–103.

45 This is well illustrated in Deuteronomy, built largely from the speeches of Moses, at the centre of which, however, is a separate literary form of the Deuteronomic Code; Chapter 28 is a separate literary form of a collection of curses; at the end of the book are two hymnic works (Chapters 32 and 33).

46 Tigay, *The Evolution of Gilgamesh Epic*, 246.

are inadequate in relation to the (thus understood) process of creating the work.[47] The result of this process is a work that has repetitions and is not fully literarily coherent in the way we expect from contemporary works. Yet paradoxically, there are many means of building a composition. The text may also have different, independent structures, which are not mutually exclusive.[48]

Considering the process through which a work is developed and the characteristics of the resulting text will help us come closer to understand the specific composition and, consequently, the spirit of the Song of Songs.

3.2. Research on the Structure of the Song of Songs

The second stage of the study aims to determining the place and role of the references and allusions to weddings within the text. It will consist of an analysis of the arrangement of such content in relation to the structure of the poem, and then an attempt to decode the editorial intention of the writers. This is not an easy task in view of the fact that the very structure of the Song raises many questions.[49]

Gianni Barbiero assumes that the Song is an anthology of diverse, disparate forms of love poems, which were originally independent of one another and set in different social contexts, but combined in the Song by associating ideas or unifying the theme.[50] At the same time, Barbiero recognized an "unmistakable personality: the refined literary artifice, the play of the metaphors, the repetition of terms and themes, coherent from beginning to end."[51] The poem is dominated by lovers' monologues, directed to the betrothed, or by words of the betrothed directed towards other people (e.g., to the daughters of Jerusalem, the guards of the city, or Solomon). Sometimes these monologues appear to merge into a dialogue (see 4:12–16; 8:8–10). In addition, there are shorter units, interjections, refrains and repeated invocations. Sometimes these seem to break up the continuity, but more often they unify the composition. Even so, the overall composition is to some extent a riddle, exacerbated by numerous *hapax legomena* that make it difficult to understand the separate passages of the text.

Many biblical scholars have examined the structure of the book. However, their studies of the composition and structuring of the Song of Songs have not yielded unequivocal answers.[52] The composition of the poem is not only based on songs, but

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47   This is well illustrated by the conflicting conclusions regarding the dates the Song was edited. Some have pointed to the era of Solomon or even earlier, while others have suggested the Persian period or later. Cf. Dobbs-Allsopp, "Late Linguistic Feature in the Song of Songs," 73.

48   An example of this is the Book of Deuteronomy, which from the point of view of composition has structural features of different forms. Therefore, biblical scholars see either a collection of Moses' speeches, a Deuteronomistic code or a covenant treaty in it.

49   Cf. Johnston, "The Enigmatic Genre," 36–52.

50   Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 17–18. Cf. Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 62–64; Luzarraga, *Cantar de los Cantares*, 121.

51   Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 18.

52   See: R.M. Davidson, "The Literary Structure," 44–65.

it also contains connecting elements – short expansions – which effectively make it difficult for biblical scholars to unambiguously relate the units to a particular song. The scholars' conclusions were evaluated by Phillip Roberts, the author of a study devoted to various ways the text was structured and giving a thorough analysis of the micro- and macro-structures in the Song.[53]

Despite the multitude of studies and assumptions put forward concerning the structure of the poem, Roberts noted that certain conclusions can be drawn. Biblical scholars have presented three main options of interpreting the structure. The first one assumes that the poem is a "relatively unstructured anthology" (up to 30 units have been singled out). The second option assumes that the poem has "a literary unity independently of whether or not it has a structure" (unified but unstructured). The unifying role of repetition is emphasized and so are the images (or themes), such as the garden, the vineyard as well as searching and finding. The third option assumes that the poem is a structured unity. Although within the last option there are various proposals for reading the structure, there are some generally accepted conclusions.[54]

Biblical scholars, analysing the structure of the Song of Songs, agree on its fundamental division into six units and their boundaries (differences occur within the scope of one verse). They could also discern repeated efforts to achieve a chiastic pattern (widely used in biblical literature) and accepted that the unit ending in 5:1 is the main one in the poem, while the last unit can be seen as a form of conclusion.[55] Roberts further points out that an analogous division of the Song into six units (parts) is also found in the older conception of reading the Song as a drama, as well as in the treatment of the Song as an anthology.[56] This confirms the validity of this fundamental division, regardless of how the structure of the Song is interpreted. The problematic nature of the details of the composition may be evidenced by the fact that even Cheryl Exum, the author of the commonly accepted division of the text into six units, came closer to an assessment of a "unified but unstructured" work in her later studies.[57]

Meanwhile, considering the process of literary composition in the ancient Near East outlined above, some features of the text of the Song can be shown. Although the incomplete compositional coherence is explicable, there are structuring elements resulting from the long process of gradual writing. Barbiero, who emphasized that the unity of the text is not narrative but lyrical, concluded that the arrangement of the individual songs is not accidental.[58] Taking into account the findings of biblical

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53   Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*.
54   Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 13; Cf. Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 62–64; Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 17–18.
55   Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 13; Davidson, "The Literary Structure," 44–65.
56   Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 13.
57   Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 12.
58   Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 505.

scholars concerning the features of the text, it can be assumed that the poem was probably based on the various kinds of love songs in use and continued to be developed gradually. One can assume that some elements were added: units expanding the theme and interpretive elements, which also reinterpreted the meaning of the whole piece (e.g., the late sapiential conclusion about the power of love in verse 8). Also, linking elements were introduced to unify the composition of the poem (e.g., through repetitions, refrains or the "chorus" of the daughters of Jerusalem). Roberts believes that two structural devices, inclusion and chiasm, played a key role in shaping the text of the Song.[59]

3.3. The Arrangement of the Units Referring to Weddings in Relation to the Structure of the Poem

In order to establish the place and role of the references to weddings (poetic episodes, idioms, and terms), it is necessary to relate them to the structure of the Song. The analysis should begin with the commonly accepted findings about the structure. Analysing the text of the Song of Songs, it is easy to notice a fairly clear similarity, a certain schematicity and repetition, which is analogous in two sections of the composition: 2:7–3:5 and 5:2–6:3 (B and B'). This observation was the basis for reading the structure of the whole. Firstly, these two parts embrace the central part of the composition, and secondly, they separate the remaining, external parts. On this basis, Exum distinguished six units in the text of the Song which build the structural chiasm.[60]

The chiastic structure of the Song of Songs

A: 1:2–2:6
B: 2:7–3:5
C: 3:6–5:1
B': 5:2–6:3
C': 6:4–8:3
A': 8:4–14

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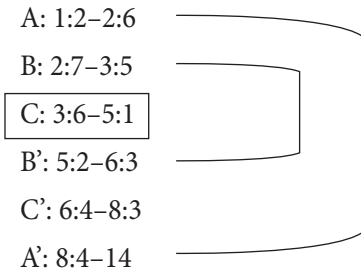
59 Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 43.
60 Brzegowy, *Pieśń nad pieśniami*, 40–41; Exum, "A Literary and Structural Analysis," 47–79; Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 11. Barbiero (*Song of Songs*, 19–20) distinguishes two parts in the structure of the "almost symmetrical" poem: 2:8–5:1 and 5:2–8:4. He divides the second one into a chiastic "alternation" between the songs of the woman (5:2–6:3 and 7:12–8:4) and of the man (6:4–7:11). These two sections correspond to Exum's separated sections B–C and B'–C'.

The peculiarities of such a literary construction include exposing the content in the centre of the chiasm and marking the connections between the content of the individual members. In the structure of the Song, analogies and connections are also present in the other members of the chiasm, but they are no longer so pronounced as in B and B'. In the case of C and C', one can also see analogies and efforts to link these units. The weakest related members seem to be A and A'.[61] These features are indicative of the stages in the process by which the biblical writers developed the work.

The stem (C) in this chiastic composition, surrounded by love songs of the B–B' members, contains poetic episodes which are crucial from the point of view of the wedding. Moreover, this core consists of as many as two poetic episodes, which, joined by the wedding song *waṣf*, build the whole of the central segment of the poem.

The central part of the Song of Songs (the core of the chiasm) – 3:6–5:1

1. **The wedding retinue**, a poetic episode – 3:6–11
2. The Wedding Song *wafs* – 4:1–7
3. **Wedding feast and** consummation of marriage, a poetic episode – 4:8–5:1.

The core of the composition consists of descriptions (episodes) of the wedding procession, the feast and the consummation, i.e. the most important customs concerning a wedding.[62] Moreover, with regard to the references to nuptials that were isolated earlier in the text, one can see that there is a concentration of them in this central section of the poem. The word "wedding" is used once in the poem (התנח [3:11]), while the word "bride" is used many times (כלה [4:8.9.10.11.12; 5:1]). The daughters of Jerusalem (already identified as bridesmaids in the first part of the analysis) are also featured here. In this single occurrence, they are given special prominence – they are called twice and given another title: "daughters of Zion" (בנות ציון [3:11]).

Thus, from the point of view of wedding customs, the most important poetic episodes and terms that have been distinguished – the wedding procession, the wedding feast and the consummation of the marriage – and the accumulated terms related to weddings have been placed in a central and structurally prominent place in the Song.[63] This demonstrates the clear intention of the biblical writers.

Moreover, the central section (C) has its compositional and poetic parallel in section C'. The two sections C–C' are thus in a compositional and literary relationship. Member C' provides a "parallel" for member C. In the second parallel section, C', an analogous dynamic is conveyed, but here the elements of nuptial customs are not the theme. However, the institutional elements of wedding customs are "no longer visible" in it; instead, there is a meeting of two desires, of two wills (4:16–5:1). These

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61 However, these analogies are distant, and there are exegetes who do not recognize them (Keel, *The Song of Songs*, 17; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 40). The details of the relationships between the various members are analysed: Davidson, "The Literary Structure," 50–53; Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 12; Brzegowy, *Pieśń nad pieśniami*, 40–41; Dorsey, "Literary Structuring in the Song of Songs," 82.
62 Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 63.
63 Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, 63.

are the will and the consummation, which – from the point of view of the praise of love presented in the Song – complete, as it were, the image of love.[64]

The two previously distinguished segments, opening and closing the composition (A and A'), have been identified by Timothea Elliot as the Prologue (1:2–2:7) and the Epilogue (8:5–14). She separates the units similarly to Exum (with a shift in terms of one verse).[65]

The segment of the composition identified as the epilogue contains significant verses about love being as powerful as death (8:6–7). Biblical scholars unanimously regard them as a sapiential conclusion to the entire poem, concerning the power of love.[66] The Epilogue also contains the poetic episode relating to the betrothal negotiations (8:8–12) described in the first section of this paper. Moreover, the motif of "payment for a wife" is present in these two units. This motif connects the wisdom conclusion with the poetic episode about betrothal negotiations. Although the structure of these units of text does not attest to their original connection; they were apparently linked in the course of the scribal works, and so was the characteristic of the scribal process of developing ancient literary compositions.

The Epilogue of the Song of Songs (member C') – 8:5–14:

8:5 – In love in the wilderness and under the apple tree [unclear passage]
8:6–7 – **The power of love, a sapiential conclusion**
8:8–12 – **Negotiating the engagement, a poetic episode**   the "bride's fee" motif
8:13–14 – An exhortation to the beloved (her), an exhortation to the beloved (him)

Roberts, who analysed the elements of continuity and microstructure in the text of the Song of Songs, treated 8:5–7 as a whole, despite the discontinuities that occur there. He emphasized that "there are structural indicators that these verses are intended to be read together."[67] Verse 7 is considered a prosaic intrusion, while it is generally accepted as an integral part of the sapiential conclusion. Although it differs in form, its sense and meaning are consistent and connected with the entire conclusion. Even if the final lines are written in prose, this does not undermine the message of the whole.[68]

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[64] Cf. Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 11–12.
[65] The difference regarding the boundaries of the isolated members concerns the bridegroom's repeated call in the poem (cf. 2:7; 3:5; 8:4) to the daughters of Jerusalem not to awaken the beloved. This exhortation (in verses 2:7 and 8:4), not closely related to the text, has been variously attributed to the isolated members by Exum and by Elliot (Elliott, *The Literary Unity of the Canticle*).
[66] Cf. Brzegowy, *Pisma mądrościowe Starego Testamentu*, 154; Andruska, *Wise and Foolish Love*, 177.
[67] Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 318.
[68] Especially the second part of verse 7 betrays the poem's lack of typical characteristics; it completely lacks all literary devices and imagery, parallelism, and phonological features typical for the Song. Biblical scholars treat the entire subsequent passage 8:7–14 as a later reworking (Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 328–329).

Verses 8–12 constitute a new unit. This is the poetic episode identified in the first part of the analysis concerning the engagement negotiations. From this point on, the persons and the subject change. The brothers are talking to themselves and to their sister. Then (verse 11) they change the subject and use a metaphor about the lease of Solomon's vineyard and the high price. Hearing these words the betrothed speaks up and announces that the vineyard is his, and he pays even more than was demanded (verse 12). As Roberts states,

> there seems to be no structural or poetic basis at all for connecting this segment with the preceding segment of 8:5–7. […] There is no apparent dialogical continuity, nor does the mood of the two segments seem at all the same. Indeed, there seems to be somewhat of a 'come down' from the high and serious praise of love in verses 6–7.[69]

Other authors also assume such a textual continuity, even though "such a thematic connection would be entirely lacking structural support."[70]

The bride price, the motif that linked the two key units that make up the epilogue, is not an accidental link. Moreover, both units speak of a price that is absolutely extraordinary. In the episode dealing with the engagement negotiations, the brothers, as if unwilling to marry off their sister, first say that she is not yet mature and point to visible physical features ("she has no breasts"). But when she herself denies it, they speak, using the language of metaphor, of the enormous price to be paid for the lease of the vineyard. The vineyard in the Song symbolizes the betrothed. The price of 1,000 shekels of silver is prohibitive and unrealistic.[71] It seems to be a symbolic price, especially since a parallel can be found in the Ugaritic myth of the *Nuptials of Yarikh and Nikkal*. *Yarikh* declares that he will pay his fiancée's father "a thousand (shekels) of silver and ten thousand of gold."[72] The fiancé in the Song declares something very similar.

The text of 8:12a has a specific composition. In the first phrase, two nouns: "vineyard" and "face," appear, accompanied by the possessive pronoun י, referring to the first person singular. Moreover, the same pronoun accompanies the relative preposition ש and the preposition ל. In this syntactic construction, the verb is missing, and there is a repetition of the pronoun י (my vineyard, my face, which is for me). The second part of the phrase concerning Solomon (8:12b) is a kind of parallelism:

> A thousand for thee, Solomon,
> two hundred for those who guard its fruit.

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69 Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 351–352.
70 Roberts, *Let Me See Your Form*, 352; cf. Krinetzki, *Kommentar zum Hohenlied*, 227.
71 By comparison, slave prices were up to 30–50 shekels of silver, as the Book of Deuteronomy and Leviticus attest. In the biblical texts, such a high price of mohar does not appear anywhere in the context of nuptials.
72 *KTU* 1:24; translated by A. Mrozek, "Między umową ślubną a poezją w tekstach z Ugaritu," *437*.

So the fiancé "breaks the price" and pays extra to his betrothed's guardians himself. But before that, he declares emphatically "she is mine," as if emphasizing the existence of a bond already stronger than the one sealed by the "bride's fee" (cf. 8:12a).

His words dovetail perfectly with the final statement of *sapiential puenta* in 8:7. The second part of the verse (8:7b) is a conditional sentence in which the *protasis* is elaborate, while the *apodosis* is very laconic.

> If anyone gives all the wealth of his house for love,
> no doubt they will despise him.

The essential terms in this sentence are love (אהבה) preceded by the preposition ב and the phrase יבוזו בוז. The phrase, based on the same stem, expresses the intensity of the action twice, in this case despising. The word love (אהבה) is closely related to the verb נתן (to give) and forms the phrase נתן באהבה. Thus, in this relative sentence, two phrases correspond to each other:

נתן באהבה - בוז יבוזו = "give for love" and "will despise with scorn"
Love cannot be bought, not with 1,000 shekels of silver or with "all the wealth of the house."

In the Song of Songs, this was the lesson taught by the Old Testament sages. What good is a man to "have a wife" if he has no love? The greatest value is love (see Sir 7:19). But love cannot be bought. Love cannot be forced. The Song repeatedly emphasizes the freedom of choice given to the girl; the beloved (he) repeatedly incants the bridesmaids not to wake the beloved (her) "until she herself is willing" (2:7; 3:5; 8:4).

The sentence with which the beloved addresses the daughters of Jerusalem opens with an imprecation expressed by the verb שבע in the *hifil* conjugation. The second part of the sentence directly concerning love is built on the basis of the conjunction אם, which is hypothetical in nature and means "if." It is related to the verb of imprecation to form the phrase שבע אם (I incant that you do not). The complement of this call, or even conjuring, is the noun "love" preceded by the genitive האהבה. The phrase of conjuring or imprecation, שבע אם, has a second part which opens with the conjunction עד preceding the verb חפץ in the *Qal* imperfect form of the third person singular: "until she desires, until it please (of love)."[73] This phrase is repeated three times, but in 8:4 the interrogative preposition מה appears instead of the Hebrew אם.

Read in this context, the epilogue expresses its message even more profoundly: payment for a wife undermines her dignity and the value of love itself, which is priceless. That is why the fiancé does not bargain, but gives the girl's brothers – who

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73 Cf. BDB, 342.

are demanding a staggering price – even more. But first he declares that his beloved already belongs to him.

The remaining nuptial vows and phrases identified in the first part of the analysis are found in many different places in the poem and clearly serve to bind or connect the whole. They therefore have an important function in terms of the composition of the poem. Moreover, they "bring in" the nuptial theme even in those songs that did not have such connotations. These are idioms of belonging, taking various forms, which are found in all the structural parts of the Song – except the prologue (2:16; 6:3; 7:11; cf. 4:16–5:1; 8:12).

The phrase "daughters of Jerusalem" plays an unusual role in the text. From a structural point of view, it also has the function of linking the composition. It is customary and traditional to ascribe to it the role of the chorus, but it refers to the now rejected attempts to read the Song as a drama. Meanwhile, in the central, most important section of the poem, the daughters of Jerusalem act as bridesmaids. It would not be an over-interpretation to assume that they play the same role, albeit metaphorically, throughout the poem. The bridesmaids "run around" the poem, accompany the betrothed, support them and mediate in their desire to be together. They are confidants and intermediaries between the two lovers, supporting both in their dilemmas. It is to the daughters of Jerusalem that the two partners repeatedly turn, asking about each other (1:5–8, 5:8–9, 5:16–6:1, 6:9b-10), asking for help in their search or chanting them not to wake the beloved (2:7; 3:5; 8:4).

Conclusion

To sum up, the analysis was to determine the type of references to weddings and nuptial customs as well as their place and role in the text of the Song. The references to nuptials identified in the first part of the analysis were examined with the structure of the text. An attempt was made to evaluate their arrangement in the structure of the text as an expression of the editorial intention of the biblical writers.

When it comes to the structure of the whole poem, the most important places are occupied by poetic episodes concerning different stages of a wedding. Therefore, they are the point of reference for the interpretation of the work, for reading its essential meaning. The wedding, located in the central part of the composition, constitute the climax (literally – see 5:1) of the love experienced by the couple. The betrothal customs referred to in the epilogue of the work (8:5–14), on the other hand, provide a reference point for the conclusion of the entire book – expressed in the form of a praise of the power of human love and a lesson about its pricelessness, as a protest against the commercialization of marriage.

The second issue concerns the relationship between the various forms of love songs in the Song of Songs. A partial answer was given: since the nuptial songs and episodes are found at the most important places in the structure of the Song, they provide a reference point for interpreting the other songs. However, it is necessary to ask about the function of the other non-wedding songs in the poem. It can certainly be assumed that they serve the purpose of praising love, but this general statement should be deepened by a more detailed study. It is worth repeating the parallel study, already undertaken by many biblical scholars, of analogies from the treasury of ancient Near Eastern literature, which trained writers readily used as a cultural reservoir of motifs and analogies (and transmitted in various languages and records). Taking into account both the specific process of developing the text of the Song and its didactic dimension, it is necessary to rethink these connections and, above all, the function of ancient Near Eastern love songs taken and used in the composition of the Song. However, this is already a new and demanding research task.

Returning to the initial question regarding the relationship between nuptial love and "free" love, one must answer that there are no different "loves" in the Song. There are different songs, from which the inspired sages of the Bible wove the Song of Songs.

At the very beginning a question was posed about the kind of love that is the subject of the message of the book. Does the Song praise free love? The answer to this question is that it does not, just as the Book of Genesis, focused on God's creative plan for man, does not deal with it. It deals with the mystery of the relationship between a man and woman; it does not mention marriage. Like the Song of Songs, the Book of Genesis (2:18–24) teaches the power of love between a man and woman. A man leaves his father and mother and joins with a woman so closely that they become as one.

However, some ask the question of whether he and she are already married in the various songs of the poem. There is no chronological order in the Song. The unity of the text is not narrative, but lyrical.[74] The images overlap and intermingle, for example, falling in love and nuptials interrelate and coincide in many respects throughout the poem. The entire work focuses on the dynamic representation of love being experienced. Reality in the Bible is usually presented in its dynamics, and speaking of physical intimacy did not trouble the ancient writers.

According to Andruska, "the influence of the sapiential genre on the Song was pervasive, running throughout the book."[75] What then was the lesson that the sages left in the Song of Songs? Just as the sapiential poet marvelled at the mystery of love between a man and woman in the Book of Proverbs (Prov 30:18–19), so in the Song of Songs the sapiential writers taught this mystery through images and metaphors.

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74   Cf. Barbiero, *Song of Songs*, 505.
75   Andruska, *Wise and Foolish Love*, 177.

Perhaps the perspective has changed, as the reality is presented from the woman's point of view.

The power of love and not the wedding itself is what the poem is dedicated to, and yet the motifs of nuptial are very explicit in the Song. The wedding ceremony is shown through the prism of love. The institutional framework of the nuptials is overshadowed (*mohar* – love cannot be bought) by the love of the betrothed, those who love and are loved, brought to the fore.

The teaching of the biblical writers, full of images and songs as well as sapiential sentences, is explicit and fathomable. The theology of love in the Song can briefly be expressed in several theses: love is a powerful and invincible force in human life, and its source is in God (the flame of the Lord); mutual belonging and love are built on the will of both spouses ("until she desires, until it please of love"); it is not the payment of a wife ("they will despise him"), but the care of love that is paramount when getting married; a deep relationship of love is among the most precious things in a person's life.

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Verbum **V**itae

Professional Ethics of Social Entrepreneurs: The Perspective of Christian Personalist Ethics[1]

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to indicate and describe the normative assumptions of the professional ethics of social entrepreneurs. The innovative nature of the proposed concept consists in taking into consideration the perspective of Christian personalist ethics. It is a theory of morality which includes considerations for the biblical and theological view of man, emphasizing above all their personal dignity. Referring to the principal axioms of this ethical doctrine allows for a presentation of a proposal of ethical principles and moral virtues – adequate to the mission, tasks, and vocation of social entrepreneurs. The article discusses the following issues: the essence of Christian personalist ethics, the mission and tasks of social entrepreneurs, the motivation and vocation of social entrepreneurs, ethical aspects of leadership in social enterprises, as well as the ethical principles and moral virtues of social entrepreneurs. A methodology characteristic of normative philosophical ethics and moral theology was applied. The results of the analysis of the methodically selected literature on the subject were processed by means of conceptual work, which allowed us to describe the professional ethics of social entrepreneurs from the point of view of Christian personalist ethics. Christian personalist ethics makes a valuable and original contribution to the description of the normative determinants of social entrepreneurship. The analysis of the mission and tasks of social entrepreneurs shows that they create social structures and processes that affirm the dignity of marginalized people and restore their capacity to participate in social and economic life.

Keywords: Christian personalist ethics, leadership, professional ethics, social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneur

Among those who undertake business activity, a certain distinct group can be distinguished, namely, social entrepreneurs. These are people whose motivation for activity differs from that of typical businessmen (commercial entrepreneurs). Similarly, the goals set by them for their activities are of different character. For commercial entrepreneurs, the paramount objective is to increase the market value of their private companies and to multiply personal wealth with the profits achieved. In contrast, the main idea of social entrepreneurship is the attainment of social goals – introducing positive solutions for individuals in need of support but also for the society (especially the local community), and for the preservation of the natural environment.

In the first case, the social goal is largely related to the problem of social exclusion and the difficulties faced by people threatened with marginalization (e.g., the disabled, former prisoners, long-term unemployed, refugees) with respect to finding suitable employment. Besides, as previously indicated, social entrepreneurs may also engage in issues related to local development and environmental challenges.[2] The originality of the approach of social entrepreneurs in their efforts to introduce positive social changes lies in the fact that their solutions are based on the mechanisms and means which are utilized in the classic entrepreneurship – the achieved financial results are allocated to the implementation of the aforementioned social goals. In order to pursue the idea indicated in practice, basing on an innovative concept, they establish and run social enterprises which, due to their organizational and legal character, allow them to operate "at the interface" of the market, social and public sectors.[3] Notwithstanding the broad definition-oriented discussion concerning the concept of "social enterprise,"[4] it should be emphasized that social entrepreneurship has three most important features: 1) social reason for activity, 2) clearly profitable form of activity serving the implementation of a social goal, and 3) innovative nature of the enterprise. Generally speaking, three dominant schools of defining social enterprise can be identified: *earned income*, *social innovation, and EMES*.[5]

Currently, increased interest in social entrepreneurship is observed not only among social activists, but also researchers.[6] The former sees it as an opportunity to compensate for the unreliability of the existing solutions based on the social policy of the state, welfare system, and standard methods used in social work practice. The latter, appreciating its practical values, emphasize that even – the best practice – requires deeper theoretical foundations. Various scientific studies serve this pur-

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2   It is worth noting that social entrepreneurs, through their activities in the indicated areas, implement the so-called sustainable development goals formulated in the document adopted by the resolution of the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015 entitled "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

3   Murzyn - Pach, *Ekonomia społeczna.*

4   One should be aware, however, that social entrepreneurship is a very complex phenomenon, and the term "social enterprise" is often used in the literature as an umbrella term for various types of social initiatives as well as diverse organizational and legal forms. Moreover, in individual countries or regions of the world, the concept of a social enterprise covers various forms, also from the point of view of particular goals or development paths of social enterprises. Therefore, as Marzena Starnowska notes, *a social enterprise* "is the most universal term representing what goes on in social entrepreneurship because it does not apply to any specific sector and does not indicate any specific organizational and legal form" (Starnawska, "Przedsiębiorczość społeczna w społeczeństwie obywatelskim w Polsce," 172–173). Cf. also: Ciepielewska-Kowalik *et al.*, *Social Enterprise in Poland.*

5   The first two approaches come from the United States, and the third concept has emerged in Europe as a result of the research work of the EMES network (a research network of collaborating universities and researchers from Europe who undertake research on social enterprises and social entrepreneurship – see more at www.emes.net).

6   Chell *et al.*, "Social Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics," 619; Mair - Robinson - Hockerts, *Przedsiębiorczość społeczna.*

pose.[7] Naturally, among them one finds ethical analyses and evaluations; after all, man – as a free and rational being – remains an entity subject to moral judgment in every sphere of their activity, even if their activity serves others. However, this aspect of the scientific discourse in relation to social entrepreneurship is rarely addressed.[8] This scarcity of research probably stems from the assumption held by some researchers whereby since this activity is, among others, of a socially assistive character, then it is – in principle – ethically correct, and therefore, it does not require a more in-depth moral reflection. The result of this erroneous view is the still unsatisfactory state of research[9] describing ethical determinants of social entrepreneurship.

Another problem is that the authors of the existing, albeit scarce, publications dealing with the indicated issues refer to various approaches toward normative ethics, such as Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, the ethics of virtues, the ethics of discourse, postmodern ethics, the ethics of care, etc. Yet, the subject matter has not been explored from the point of view of Christian personalist ethics. Hence, this research perspective is adopted in the process of analyzing and constructing the concept of the professional ethics of social entrepreneurs.

The main aim of the paper is to indicate and describe the normative assumptions of the professional ethics of social entrepreneurs. The unconventional nature of the proposed research concept pivots on Christian personalist ethics as a point of reference. It is a theory of morality which includes considerations for the biblical and theological view of man, emphasizing above all their personal dignity. Moreover, reference to the principal axioms of this ethical doctrine allows for a presentation of a proposal of ethical principles and moral virtues – adequate to the mission, tasks, and vocation of social entrepreneurs.

The research employed a method characteristic of normative philosophical ethics and moral theology: the content of the selected literature on the subject has been analyzed, and its outcome has been subjected to inference and conceptual elaboration. The selection of publications for analysis has been made according to the criterion of usability for conducting a study of the following specific issues: the essence of Christian personalist ethics, the mission and tasks of social entrepreneurs, the motivation and vocation of social entrepreneurs, ethical aspects of leadership in social enterprises as well as the principles of professional ethics and moral virtues of social entrepreneurs. Ultimately, the study has allowed for presenting the concept of professional ethics of social entrepreneurs from the point of view of Christian personalist ethics.

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7   Hota – Subramanian - Narayanamurthy, "Mapping the Intellectual Structure," 20.
8   Cornelius *et al.*, "Corporate Social Responsibility"; Chell *et al.*, "Social Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics," 621.
9   See more: Zadroga, "Methodological Premises"; Chell *et al.*, "Social Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics."

1. The Essence of Christian Personalist Ethics

A variety of ethics based on the recognition of and respect for the dignity of every human is termed personalist ethics. Usually, it is indicated as Christian personalist ethic. This is because the Greek term *persona* (person) is closely related to the formation of the theological teaching about Jesus Christ as God and Man in one Divine Person and about One God in Three Persons. Christian morality is also of personalist character because the entire Christian theology is of personalist character as it is concerned with personal God and man as a person who is spiritually linked to Him. It is the morality of man created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27) and the morality of man believing in Christ who, through his Incarnation, became spiritually linked with every human being.[10]

Hence, the Catholic Church paces man at the center of her entire moral teaching. Before discussing this issue in detail, it is worth recalling that in moral theology as a result of – influenced by the Second Vatican Council – the method of ethical regulation of human acts termed "moral theonomy"[11] is primarily used. This means that "the highest norm of human life is the divine law-eternal, objective and universal-whereby God orders, directs and governs the entire universe and all the ways of the human community."[12] In a different place, the Council explains that "the norm of human activity is to reflect the genuine good of the human race in accord with the divine plan and will and allow man to pursue their entire vocation and fulfill it individually or socially."[13]

It should also be noted here that in such an approach to the moral norm, the basic theses of the Christian faith are adopted, namely:
– There exists God who created the world and man.
– In every human being, God instilled a law which is recognizable by reason – this is the so-called natural law.
– The ability and objectivity of rational cognition has been weakened by the effects of the original sin; therefore, man is not always able to properly recognize or abide by this law.
– On account of the above, God has revealed the moral law. At the same time, He invites man to use the grace of which the sacraments are a principal source, so that he (man) could preserve this revealed God's law in his life.[14]

The Second Vatican Council also influenced the renewal of the approach of the Church toward the affairs of the modern world, including economy and entre-

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10   Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 25; John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis*, 10.
11   The term "theonomy" means "divine law" as it is derived from the Greek terms "theos" = God, and "nomos" = law.
12   Second Vatican Council, *Dignitatis humanae*, 3.
13   Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 35.
14   *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1949–2051. Nagórny, "Moralność chrześcijańska."

preneurship.[15] The anthropological dimension was adopted as the basic criterion for analyses and evaluations, which was supplemented with the personalist approach: "all things present on earth should be directed towards man, constituting their center and peak."[16] With regard to economic issues, the belief whereby man is "the creator, center and goal of the whole economic and social life" has become an axiom.[17] Therefore, it can be argued that the Church promotes personalist ethic within its moral doctrine. Most of all, it emphasizes the dignity of the human person and proposes solutions in which man – while remaining free to pursue their ultimate goal – is not seen only as a tool of social, economic, and political structures, but as a subject.

This approach was especially close to Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II. For him, the human person is not only the optimal starting point for a universal interpretation of being, but also a metaphysical model of all human activity. From these fundamental assumptions, he derived three axioms: (1) the primacy of spirit over matter; (2) the primacy of "being" over "having"; (3) the primacy of the person over the thing. On the basis of the last principle – referring to Kant's second imperative[18] – Karol Wojtyła formulated the personalist norm: "Whenever a person is the object of your activity, remember that you may not treat that person as only the means to an end, as an instrument, but must allow for the fact that he/she, too, has, or at least should have, distinct personal ends."[19] This principle is a normative expression of the recognition of the truth about man as a person and about the supra-utilitarian good.

The personalist norm is expressed in love, which is the affirmation of the value of man as the highest good. The commandment of love is so broad and capacious with respect to its extent and content that it ensures respect for every person and does not allow for their instrumental treatment. Thus, every human being, as a person, is entitled to love, that is, affirmation for themselves on the part of every other person. The source of the cognition of this norm is a properly formed and functioning conscience. Therefore, the personalist norm can be known and recognized by every person of good will.

The development of personalism not only enriched philosophy, theology, and Catholic social science, but also influenced the social and cultural changes of the last few decades.[20] Personalism – as the direction of thought, especially in the sphere of Euro-Atlantic culture[21] - is achieving an increasingly distinctive position among

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15 Gocko, *Kościół obecny w świecie*; Percy, *Entrepreneurship in the Catholic Tradition*.
16 Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 12.
17 Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 63.
18 "So act that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means." (https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/persons-means/#UsinAnotButNotMereMean [access: 3.04.2021]; Kant, *Uzasadnienie metafizyki moralności*, 62).
19 Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 27.
20 Bartnik, "Personalizm."
21 Personalism as a system was actually initiated in the USA but based on the European (especially German) philosophy. This was done mainly by: George H. Howison (1834–1916), Borden P. Bowne (1847–1910),

the multiplicity of scientific and cultural paradigms,[22] although it should be noted that it is still insufficiently appreciated, for example, by business ethicists in Poland.[23] Nevertheless, the assumptions of Christian ethics are taken into account in the research of business organizations around the world.[24] In this article, they are adopted as the hermeneutic key to the analysis of the ethical determinants of social entrepreneurship. Subsequently, it will allow us to make an attempt at the conceptualization of the professional ethics of social entrepreneurs in the spirit of Christian personalist ethic.

2. Mission and Tasks of Social Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is a concept whose range of meaning should not be limited only to human activity in business. Contrary to common belief, entrepreneurship – as one of the human attitudes – focuses not only on the "pursuit" of profit, but in a broader sense, its essence lies in the inclination and capability of active and creative relating to the surrounding reality. Its main goal is to effectively overcome all challenges based on the available resources. Despite the immensely impressive civilizational and technological progress in the last decades, there still exist many social challenges in the world today, such as poverty or unemployment. Those who try to solve them in an entrepreneurial way are called social entrepreneurs. The organizations they manage use business models to execute a specific social mission. Thus, they offer alternative solutions to traditional charity and charitable activities. Social entrepreneurship does not work against or alongside the market but strives to use it as a space and at the same time a means of achieving social goals.[25] There is increasing evidence that this approach is beneficial for people at risk of marginalization or social exclusion.[26]

The social entrepreneur is tasked with combining a social goal, set by a given non-profit organization, with an entrepreneurial approach closely related to business. Therefore, it is a person with a business-like mentality whose actions are ori-

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Edgar Sh. Brightman (1884–1953), Ralph T. Flewelling (1871–1960), Peter A. Bertocci (1910–1989), Walter G. Muelder (1907–2004), Carol S. Robb (b. 1945). In Europe, on the other hand, Emmanuel Mounier (1905–1950) was approaching the personalism system with the "Esprit" school.

22 See for example, Jęczeń - Guzdek - Petryk, *Personalizm w nauce i kulturze.*

23 Zadroga, "Business Ethics in Poland."

24 See for example, Melé - Fontrodona, "Christian Ethics and Spirituality."

25 Such an approach seems to be a practical implementation of what the Catholic Church postulates with regard to economic life: "The development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. Economic activity, conducted according to its own proper methods, is to be exercised within the limits of the moral order, in keeping with social justice so as to correspond to God's plan for man" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2426).

26 Karwińska - Wiktor, *Przedsiębiorczość i korzyści społeczne*; Praszkier - Nowak, *Przedsiębiorczość społeczna.*

ented toward solving social problems. To this end, they use a strategy typical of business projects, as well as innovation, creativity, and new technologies. Owing to their business competences and specific projects, they are able to create positive changes in a given community or social group, stimulate people to interact and build social capital based primarily on trust. In this sense, the social entrepreneur is often a visionary, social leader, political leader, and mentor transferring knowledge, skills, competences, as well as social values to his or her co-workers, most of whom are people at risk of social exclusion.[27]

The main tasks of the social entrepreneur include:

- identifying relatively permanent and inherently unfair conditions which lead to the exclusion or marginalization of social groups which are not able to solve a given problem or improve the existing situation on their own;
- identifying opportunities (chances) which can restore a fair balance in relation to the identified problem;
- undertaking specific projects that will create systemic solutions alleviating or eliminating a specific social problem, and which will provide better conditions for the functioning of a specific group, and even the whole society;
- basing in the process of implementing solutions, primarily on the potential of the interested parties.[28]

3. Motivation and Vocation of Social Entrepreneurs

The analysis of the literature on the subject and descriptions of good practices in the field of social entrepreneurship have led to the conclusion that social entrepreneurs are characterized by a strong internal motivation to engage in solving perceived social issues. These are, among others, problems such as unemployment, homelessness, and disability. Their main goal is the social activation and professional reintegration of those who are affected by this type of problem.[29] Thus, the image of a social entrepreneur is characterized by "the will to serve" others. It is an approach with clear pro-social motives, which are expressed in practice by serving the poor and protecting the weak.[30]

The deepest source of this approach can be found in spiritual motives. Hence, social entrepreneurs should also perceive their commitment to other people,

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27   Wronka-Pośpiech, "Cechy i kompetencje menedżera społecznego," 30.
28   Martin - Osberg, "Social Entrepreneurship," 29–39.
29   Praszkier, "Zwykli ludzie czy herosi?"
30   Nullens, "The Will to Serve"; Di Somma, "Protecting the Weak."

most of all, in terms of a spiritual vocation.[31] In his encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, Benedict XVI emphasizes that: "Every Christian is called to practice this charity, in a manner corresponding to his vocation and according to the degree of influence he wields [...]."[32]

True Christian faith always has social implications. The personal faith of social entrepreneurs should lead them to the development of social leadership skills. This, in turn, in the social dimension, should encourage them to:

- search for innovative solutions to problems which they notice in the social environment,
- improve social and economic structures so that every person, even the socially excluded, has the opportunity to participate in the work of creation,
- take responsibility for creating such an organization of work that will affirm the dignity of each employee.

Specific guidelines of the Church for Christian entrepreneurs and all other business men and women (people of good will) are contained in the document of the Pontifical Council "Iustitia et Pax" entitled *The Vocation of the Business Leader. A Reflection*.[33] It is a peculiar guide for entrepreneurs who feel called upon to take up the challenges (opportunities and threats) posed by modern economy, especially the business world. Its addressees are the leaders of market-oriented companies (international corporations, enterprises, family businesses), as well as the leaders of social economy entities (foundations, associations, social cooperatives, social enterprises). In the Foreword, Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson and Bishop Mario Toso wrote that "business leaders are called upon to engage with the contemporary economic and financial world in light of the principles of *human dignity* and the *common good*."[34]

In light of the spiritual and moral message of the abovementioned document, it should be emphasized that Christian leaders of social entrepreneurship, responding to their vocation, should strive for the internal integration of faith and earthly life. This will prevent them from leading a "divided life" which separates the requirements stemming from faith from their daily work in the social economy sector. Internally integrated social entrepreneurs will be able (in the spirit of service) to take on the role of a leader in their organizations. They will be willing to share their skills and competences with others, they will shape their work environment imbued with

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31   Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader*; Sirico, *The Entrepreneurial Vocation*; Novak, *Business as a Calling.* The words of Jesus Christ: "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more" (Luke 12:48) are an exhortation for every Christian to undertake professional duties (according to personal talents) not only for the sake of self-interest (remuneration), but also for the benefit of others.

32   Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 7.

33   Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader.*

34   Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader,* 6.

a good atmosphere of mutual kindness and trust and will include their companies in the process of creating the common good.

Social entrepreneurs know that profit is essential to the development of any company. However, at the same time, they understand that "focusing exclusively on profit, a situation when it is produced by improper means and without the common good as its ultimate objective, brings about the risk of destroying prosperity and creating poverty."[35] Therefore, it is still necessary to remind that every business leader who accepts that the only criterion for operating in business is to maximize profits at all costs, runs the risk of committing the sin of idolatry, that is, making business a sort of a "golden calf." They are also threatened with the sins of pride and greed, resulting from the illusory sense of their own power (cleverness, intelligence, knowledge) as a source of financial success and the willingness to maintain and increase the achieved results without taking into account other criteria of sustainable socio-economic development.[36] Meanwhile, the vocation of business leaders (especially in social enterprises) is not only to multiply and accumulate financial and physical capital, but also to develop human talents and moral virtues.

Some researchers, for example Sophie Bacq, Chantal Hartog and Brigitte Hoogendoorn, point out that the motives of social entrepreneurs can be "impurely altruistic." As a result, these authors go beyond the – almost taken-for-granted – moral image of social entrepreneurs as ethical persons. They particularly take a critical attitude toward the assumption that a strong focus on entrepreneurship is the source of an ethical approach. Thanks to their research, they presented evidence that the ethical problems of social entrepreneurs' result, among others, "from a frail entrepreneurial profile."[37] Therefore, in addition to the pro-social internal motivation described above, social entrepreneurs need important professional competencies because even the noblest motives for action will not replace professionalism, necessary in every profession.

Martyna Wronka-Pośpiech, who has been conducting research on the characteristics and competencies of social entrepreneurs for many years, emphasizes that anyone managing a social enterprise should have broad horizons, be creative and courageous in action, and open to innovation. In her opinion, the following competencies seem to be particularly important to social entrepreneurs: (1) building a strategy that allows them to achieve the goals of their social enterprises, (2) managing relations with external stakeholders, (3) managing employees and volunteers, (4) managing finances, and (5) perceiving social economy in the world of social and economic relations.[38]

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35 Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 21.
36 Christ warns us: "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).
37 Bacq *et al.*, "Beyond the Moral Portrayal of Social Entrepreneurs."
38 Wronka-Pośpiech, "Cechy i kompetencje menedżera społecznego," 33–35.

Another author, Teresa Piecuch, characterizing social entrepreneurs on the basis of the available literature on the subject, states that they are "leaders engaged in social initiatives, agents of social changes solving the most sensitive and difficult social problems. They are visionaries – they have good ideas and devote themselves completely (often at the cost of their own lives) to their implementation. They also have an excellent ability to enthuse others with their own initiatives, those who share their views and co-implement their ideas."[39]

Professionalization and growing competition in the social enterprise sector means that managers of these organizations must change from being passive administrators to active leaders. For this reason, as noted by Martyna Wronka-Pośpiech, social entrepreneurs "must acquire new skills and use new cognitive tools that will enable them to make rational managerial decisions. This is because leaders – on account of their knowledge and position – are expected to make decisions that have a significant impact on the achievements and results of the entire organization."[40]

While highlighting the role of leadership competences regarding social entrepreneurs, it should be recalled that numerous traditional studies on business leadership have developed with the assumption that business leadership can only be effective when it first of all aims at maximizing profits.[41] Nowadays, there is a growing belief that good leadership means moral leadership.[42] Moreover, there is growing interest in[43] *spiritual leadership*. Therefore, the issue of leadership in social enterprises should be described in greater detail, taking into account research trends of this type.

4. Ethical Aspects of Leadership in Social Enterprises

Taking into consideration the goals of social entrepreneurship, the theory of "Servant Leadership" (SL) is particularly interesting in this context. The creator of the Servant-Leadership model is Robert K. Greenleaf (1904–1990). His classic work on the subject[44] is a collection of lectures and articles delivered for over 20 years. On the other hand, his groundbreaking essay on SL, entitled *The Servant as Leader* was published in 1970.[45] The modern theory of SL goes back to the works of Greenleaf,

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39 Piecuch, T., "Charakterystyka przedsiębiorców społecznych," 67.
40 Wronka-Pośpiech, "Cechy i kompetencje menedżera społecznego," 36.
41 Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*; Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*.
42 Ciulla, *The Ethics of Leadership*; Johnson, *Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership*.
43 Dent *et al.*, "Spirituality and Leadership"; Fry, "Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership"; Fry - Nisiewicz, *Maximizing the Triple Bottom Line Through Spiritual Leadership*.
44 Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*.
45 It is worth adding that in 1964 Robert K. Greenleaf founded the Center for Applied Ethics, which later became the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership – www.greenleaf.org.

who formulated its basic definition as follows: "The servant-leader *is* servant first … It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead."[46] It is *the will to serve* that is the key point of the SL theory. Inge Nuijten emphasizes that "servant-leadership differs from other types of leadership in that it places the interests of those led above the self-interest of the leader."[47]

It should be noted that studies on leadership, which are part of social sciences, are based on a specific interpretation of the human person and social structures.[48] Moreover, these anthropological and social assumptions are an inherent part of a given worldview, philosophical thought, or theological doctrine (religion). For example, it has been proved that there is an important relationship between the philosophy of personalism and SL.[49] Hence, one can assume the existence of an equally important relationship between the Catholic theological thought and the SL theory because personalism – as already mentioned – is one of the most important philosophical sources for the contemporary Catholic theology.[50] Also, *the will to serve* – as the foundation of selfless love of neighbor and building a community – is also the main moral imperative for the followers of Christianity (naturally including the Catholic faith).

Thus, the available knowledge on the spiritual and moral dimensions of the SL theory as a leadership concept can be effectively applied in the area of social entrepreneurship. SL is a concept that focuses not only on the social performance of entrepreneurial activity but in particular on the inner motivation: to serve in the first place. Therefore, the concepts of social entrepreneurship and SL overlap. Whereas the former corresponds to a specific form of entrepreneurship in which social performance takes precedence over earning profits, the latter additionally highlights the basic motivations of compassion, humility, and selflessness. Serving the common good combines both concepts.[51] Obviously, the concept of SL, like any other model, has its limitations. Nevertheless, the explicit emphasis on the priority of the "will to serve" in this leadership concept can be remarkably inspiring, especially for social entrepreneurs.

Another principle of *social enterprises* is *mindful leadership*. This leadership style urges leaders to place humanity at the center of their business activities. Hence, a social entrepreneur as a "*mindful*" leader should act in accordance with *practical wisdom, selflessness* and *compassion* when making managerial decisions. "The moral core of mindful leadership, like that of servant leadership, involves serving others

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[46]   Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 13.
[47]   Nuijten, *Servant-Leadership*, 134.
[48]   Smith, *What Is a Person?*
[49]   Whetstone, "Personalism and Moral Leadership."
[50]   Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*; Granat, *Personalizm chrześcijański*; Bartnik, *Studies in Personalist System*.
[51]   Bouckaert – van den Heuvel, "Preface," vii.

according to their real needs, and is centered on elements of love, caring, and inclusivity of others."[52] Kevin Jackson emphasizes that

> Mindfulness contributes important elements missing from received approaches to servant leadership: first, the inclination of a mindfulness approach to focus on internal states, beliefs, attitudes, and motivations – features which bear on the leader's inner motivation to care for a wide range of stakeholders beyond just «followers» and to create value for them for non-instrumental reasons; second, the inclination of a mindfulness approach to focus on ethics-in-practice in addition to merely theoretical treatment.[53]

5. Ethical Principles and Moral Virtues of Social Entrepreneurs

Various types of professional ethics usually belong to the domain of normative ethics, especially deontology, and therefore, they are most often concerned with duties, obligations, and strictly defined procedures of conduct. They primarily take the form of ethical codes for a given profession. Their elements can also be found in professional oaths and pledges. Fundamental ethical principles that underpin certain professional ethics should be closely related to the general mission which a given profession pursues in social life. The moral identity of a particular profession is also determined by primary values and moral virtues, which are important from the point of view of its social status.[54] The presented discourse, therefore, prompts the question of what principles, values and virtues constitute the profession of a social entrepreneur.

Considering the paradigm of Christian personalist ethics, the fundamental moral principle for social entrepreneurs should be concern for respect of the personal dignity of every co-worker and recipient of their entrepreneurial activities. Being mindful that the essence of any ethical principle is to protect broadly understood good – your own good and the good of others[55] - the ethics of social entrepreneurship should primarily safeguard impersonal interests as well as should be expressed in selfless help to people threatened by social exclusion.

Thus – the source and encapsulation of all moral obligations of social entrepreneurs – should be traced to the Gospel commandment to love your neighbor, especially the poor.[56] However, it should be noted that social entrepreneurs cannot

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52 Jackson, "Mindful Servant Leadership," 220.
53 Jackson, "Mindful Servant Leadership," 229.
54 Lewicka-Strzałecka, *Etyczne standardy firm*, 30–32.
55 The fundamental commandment of Christianity calls upon us to love our neighbor as we do ourselves – see for example Mark 12:29–31.
56 See Matthew 25:31–36, as well as the monograph: Surmiak, *Opcja preferencyjna na rzecz ubogich*.

make managerial decisions that unfavorably affect the enterprise and themselves in order to provide short-term help. In this way, they would not fulfil their basic obligations, i.e., profitable production of goods and services and preservation of workplaces for people from the so-called underprivileged groups in the open labor market. The measure of their professional achievements is not only the positive social effect, but also the positive economic effect of the undertaken activities because the completion of the adopted mission without profit is unfeasible. Therefore, a social entrepreneur should be a responsible person. Setting out goals and their attainment must be constantly accompanied by the sense of responsibility – not only for the enterprise itself but also for the social outcomes that this form of activity may yield in the community.

The role of a leader introducing good changes also requires prudence in making decisions. They should always be aimed at building the common good. These two recommendations constitute other norms which should shape the way in which a social entrepreneur thinks and acts. Moreover, contributing to the common good a leader of a social enterprise should also follow the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, which can be viewed as further elements of the axiological core of social entrepreneurship.

Moreover, for a social entrepreneur freedom (independence) of action is certainly important. Of particular significance is the absence of pressure exerted by various types of institutions or interest groups. Such pressure could result in obstructing the proposed innovative solutions, which usually entail making difficult, rather unpopular decisions. Only extensive freedom in the process of implementing specific social projects will create the possibility of completing the mission of a social innovator or often even a pioneer in the introduction of creative solutions which facilitate positive socio-economic changes. This entails considerable responsibility for the decisions and actions they make. However, most of them are exceptionally strong personalities; they are brave, prudent individuals aware of the responsibility resting on their shoulders.[57]

When describing the ethical principles whose observance is an important aspect of social entrepreneurs' vocation, it is worthwhile to resort to the Catholic social teaching. The Church proposes to use the method: *see – judge – promote*: "Christian business leaders must be able to *see* this world in a way that allows them to make *judgments* about it, to build up its good and truth, to *promote* the common good and to confront evil and falsehood."[58]

Consequently, it is important to inquire what principles should a social entrepreneur invoke as a Christian business leader regarding the perception of problems and devising ways of solving them. In light of Jesus Christ's teaching: "Everyone to

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57 Piecuch, "Charakterystyka przedsiębiorców społecznych," 66.
58 Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader,* 16.

whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more" (Luke 12:48), it becomes obvious that entrepreneurs are especially called upon to undertake exceptionally important tasks not only for the sake of themselves but also for the benefit of others. At the starting point, they should have the conviction that "every Christian is obliged to practice this charity, in a manner corresponding to their vocation and according to the degree of influence they wield."[59] Following their vocation, Christian business leaders (including social entrepreneurs) should strive for the inner integrity of faith and earthly life, thus not slipping into a "divided life," in which the obligations of faith are separated from everyday business activity. Business leaders of the highest personal integrity, showing the spirit of service, are able to effectively take the role of leaders in their organizations, willingly sharing their skills and competences with others: they create a work environment imbued with mutual kindness and trust and involve their own enterprises in creating the common good. They can become aware of the magnificence and uniqueness of their vocation by "building a productive organization," which expresses the continuation of the work of creation. An important part of the vocation of social entrepreneurship leaders is their practice of ethical social principles in the course of their business operations.[60]

The document of the Pontifical Council "Iustitia et Pax" *The vocation of a Business Leader. A Reflection* contains references to two fundamental principles of the Church's social teaching, i.e., respect for human dignity and pursuit of the common good. Moreover, it defines six practical principles of business:[61]

1) producing goods and services of good quality – truly serve, i.e., meeting genuine human needs and are not based on speculation;
2) showing solidarity with the poor and needy by being alert for opportunities and services at an appropriate level;
3) fostering the significance and dignity of human work – recognizing its subjective character ("work is for man, not man for work"[62]; employees are not only "human resources" or "human capital");
4) managing people in the spirit of the subsidiarity principle – providing opportunities for employees to contribute to the mission of the organization;
5) creative and productive management of the resources of the organization to ensure not only financial profitability, but also broadly understood economic prosperity (care for the natural environment and the good of the close and further environment of the organization);

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59   Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 7.
60   Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader*, 8–14
61   Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader*, 42.
62   John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, 6.

6) justice in relations with the stakeholders of the organization – just wage for employees, just prices for customers, just returns for owners, just prices for suppliers, just tax payments for the community.[63]

As John Paul II stated, the ultimate purpose of a business firm in light of the indicated principles "is not simply to make a profit, but is to be found in its very existence as *a community of persons* who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society."[64]

With regard to the moral virtues that a social entrepreneur should have, one should first of all recall the cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, courage, and self-control.[65] They mainly direct human behavior toward the implementation of the cardinal values integrally connected with human dignity, which include truth, goodness, justice, and love.[66] In order to run a social enterprise, the following virtues are also necessary: creativity, the ease of building community bonds, practical realism, leadership skills, patience, perseverance, self-control, and humility.[67]

Moreover, the Church encourages entrepreneurs to be grateful for their talents, abilities, and skills and calls upon them to generously share their possessions with others in order to make the world a better place. The Church also requires them to be professional in their approaches to business, but at the same time the Church encourages them to respond to any doubts or fears that may arise from the perspective provided by the power of living faith, the power of supernatural hope, and the power of God's love.[68]

Conclusions

The discourse on social entrepreneurship shows that the phenomenon can be examined on the basis of two dimensions. The first one is external and concerns, among others, activities and/or organizational forms that entrepreneurs impart to their projects aiming at achieving social goals. The second dimension is related to the inner sphere and includes mental, moral, and spiritual determinants. It is from them, as from the root, that the specific shape of external initiatives in the field of social entrepreneurship grows. The development of a scientific theory embracing these two aspects is uneven. The vast majority of research focuses on the external

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63   Zadroga, "Powołanie lidera biznesu," 123–129.
64   John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, 35.
65   See Wisdom 8:7.
66   Koral, "Znaczenie wartości podstawowych."
67   Malloch, *Spiritual Enterprise*.
68   Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Vocation of the Business Leader*, 82.

manifestations of social entrepreneurship. In turn, its internal conditions require undertaking scientific research from the point of view of various research perspectives. One of the most important ones is the axiological and ethical-normative perspective. This type of discourse in relation to social entrepreneurship, taking into account different types of normative ethics (and their limitations), has already been undertaken to some extent in the scientific literature, but the perspective of Christian personalist ethics has been used to a marginal extent.

The discourse presented in this article allows us to conclude that Christian personalist ethics makes a valuable and original contribution to the description of the normative determinants of social entrepreneurship. The concept of professional ethics of social entrepreneurs as compared with other ethical theories (e.g., deontonomism or utilitarian ethics), on the basis of which applied ethics can be formulated, is an attempt to overcome the legalistic and casuistic approach toward professional morality, manifested in the creation of deontological codes of ethics for a given profession. A human act and its evaluation, as well as the moral obligations which are derived from it, should not be separated from the person as the subject of moral action. Therefore, it is not only intended to recognize the good or the evil of a specific act, but also to understand and adequately assess the person performing this act. It is also important to reflect on who the person is, what motivates him to act, what he is called upon to do and what he becomes through his actions.[69]

Inspired by Christian faith and personalist ethics, social entrepreneurs should act in such a way that they will ultimately achieve both economic and social success acting in the spirit of service to God and the common good. The parable of the talents may be a biblical inspiration here (Matt 25:14–30). As leaders, they should manage their social enterprises with the conviction that they fulfil their principal vocation in life and Christian faith. Their motivation must go deeper than the need to maximize profits and satisfy personal aspirations. Drawing from the fruits of spiritual life and incorporating ethical principles and moral virtues in their lives, social entrepreneurs should not only harmoniously grow as persons and Christians, but also responsibly and effectively act for the benefit of other people (especially those at risk of social exclusion), stimulating local development and undertaking pro-ecological activities – in line with the idea of social entrepreneurship.

Naturally, the research perspective adopted in this paper, defined as "Christian personalist ethics," has its limitations. Since it should be emphasized that the number of theological sources typical of the Catholic tradition has been consciously limited. Hence, the axiological and normative premises of Catholic social teaching were basically accepted. In the future the research results can be analyzed by more comprehensively considering the fruits of ecumenical theological thought with respect to

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69   John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*, 29.

Christian social mission and the biblical premises of the "revealed morality." A further direction of research may also include the issue of managing a social enterprise based on Christian moral values and principles.

Translated by Grzegorz Knyś

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Verbum Vitae

Recent Developments in Understanding Spirituality as Exemplified by the Concept of Self-Transcendence

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Abstract: The recent history of science has witnessed many shifts of paradigms. One of the major changes has been observed in the shift of spirituality, transforming from a traditional faith-based notion to a more secular or postmodern one. These changes are confusing for many modern people as they are not able to follow these rapid developments. This article is an attempt at providing a conceptual framework to understand the changes that the notion of spirituality has undergone using the concept of self-transcendence and its two major dimensions: vertical and horizontal. This model will serve to evaluate different ways of defining spirituality in both theology and the social sciences and to indicate the provenience of their roots in both disciplines. In conclusion, self-transcendence will be compared with the concept of self-actualization.

Keywords: spirituality, self-transcendence, vertical, horizontal, self-actualization

Both, in our society and in science, we have witnessed many major shifts in perspective. These changes can be traced all through the twentieth century until the present day. One of the most dynamic transformations has taken place in our understanding of spirituality. Although its origins are clearly religious in the Christian-Western-Catholic milieu, today, the notion of spirituality has crossed all former boundaries and has become nearly all-inclusive, thus compelling it to become vague and unreliable.

The classical, religion based notion of spirituality, which can be called a "hard version," refers one to a reality that transcends one's own self and one's own material world. In the modern, "soft versions" of spirituality, relating to a transcendent reality is not necessary; it is sometimes even considered politically incorrect. And yet the human capacity to self-transcend, generally meaning a conscious experience of going beyond oneself toward what one perceives as something of ultimate value, seems to be one of the major characteristics of the human being.

Indeed, contemporary research in humanities and social sciences shows that people who see themselves related to something greater than the self often feel happier and have a deeper sense of purpose in their lives. Generally speaking, we can

say that the human spirit is the underlying dynamism of human self-transcendence, which intentionally directs itself naturally to what can be known and loved. This spirit is not designed to be enclosed in itself, but to go out into the world and to reach out to other persons.[1]

1. The Conceptualization of Self-Transcendence

To better understand what has happen with the contemporary notion of spirituality, we can use the concept of self-transcendence developed by Karol Wojtyła. In his most important philosophical work, *The Acting Person*, Wojtyła introduces self-transcendence as the essential expression of our spirituality, which he links to two other concepts: self-determination and conscience. Through self-transcendence, we experience a spiritual dynamism, which, by its nature is immaterial and we discover that we are capable of transcending both our psychic constitution as well as the limitations of our body. As a consequence, spirituality is the integrating principle of our lives and cannot be reduced to psychic or organic processes.[2]

Wojtyła's most original contribution in this context is to present two different dimensions of self-transcendence: horizontal and vertical. He sees vertical self-transcendence as that of the person who has chosen to confront their own existence with a point of reference that is to be found beyond their personal human limitations such as an entirely free and intentionally chosen self-dependence on the truth or God. Horizontal self-transcendence is an intentional act such as directing ourselves toward other persons or objects.[3] Both forms of self-transcendence put together define spirituality in a very interesting way that will allow us to understand the shift in the notion of spirituality that has taken place recently. We propose to name the vertical self-transcendence "ontological" and the horizontal "moral" or "ethical" transcendence. This is a slight modification of Wojtyła's original thought, but it gives a clearer distinction of these two variants of self-transcendence.

When we conceive spirituality as reaching out to something beyond the human person, it becomes a very useful, two-dimensional concept. From a religious perspective, ontological self-transcendence means reaching out to God and searching to enter and sustain the relationship with God or, in more Christian terms, with the Holy Spirit. This dimension has in fact disappeared along the way through secularizing the concept of spirituality in modern social sciences. The ontological self-transcendence or, more precisely, the ontological dimension of self-transcendence, refers to

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1   Helminiak, "Confounding the Divine," 171.
2   Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 170.
3   Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 160.

the understanding of a spirituality that is sometimes called "substantial" meaning that it acknowledges the existence of supernatural reality.[4]

The ethical dimension of self-transcendence refers to the human capacity of reaching beyond oneself, through selflessness, and intentional sacrifice, thus overcoming one's weakness and egoist tendencies. For example, as humans, we can transcend our physiological constitution by continuing to write while living with persistent back pain; we are also capable of overcoming mental constrains such as depression, thus overcoming both our material and immaterial functioning.[5] This can be exemplified by: acts of love, protection of human dignity and respect for human rights and freedom.[6]

To some extent, this dimension of self-transcendence can be related to the concept of "functional" spirituality, indicating the purpose that spirituality serves and not so much its nature.[7] Certainly, both dimensions of self-transcendence are essential from a faith-based perspective. From a secular perspective, spirituality is seen from a more pragmatic vantage point where the horizontal/ethical aspect is more valued than any ontological motivation.[8]

In contemporary society, there is a strong tendency to self-realize or self-actualize, which opens the door to an entirely subjective understanding of spirituality without any reference to the concept of self-transcendence, not even to its horizontal dimension. Although so highly praised nowadays, self-awareness, as an important element of being human, may easily impair our capacity for self-transcendence which, according to Wojtyła, is crucial for one's self-fulfillment.[9] For Frankl, self-actualization is a by-product of self-transcendence.[10] Let us now characterize the vertical and horizontal forms of self-transcendence.

2. Vertical or Ontological Self-Transcendence

In theological terms self-transcendence is activated by the power of the Source of Being, where the finite being is drawn to God and invited to a deep relationship with Him. However, the power of self-transcendence does not originate in the human being. Its roots and its destination are Divine.[11] We will distinguish two aspects

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4   Jastrzębski, "Concepts of Spirituality," 99.
5   Krąpiec, *Człowiek jako osoba*, 12–13.
6   Krąpiec, *Ja – człowiek*, 384.
7   Krąpiec, *Ja – człowiek*, 100.
8   Jastrzębski, "The Normative Aspect," 97.
9   Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, 233–234.
10   Jastrzębski, *Homo theomorphicus*, 211.
11   Rahner, "Christology," 164–165.

of the vertical self-transcendence: *imago Dei* and *theosis*; the first being a point of arrival or a goal and the second the process that leads to the accomplishment of the former.

2.1. Imago Dei

The concept of self-transcendence can be related to a core topic in theological anthropology which is the doctrine of the *imago Dei*. With its roots in Genesis 1:26-27, it states that the human being has been created in the image of God. According to one of the interpretations of this text, called functional, being God's image is related to the mission of stewarding the world. These ideas from the Bible and early Christian theology were researched by many prominent theologians such as Karl Rahner, Paul Tillich, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Jürgen Moltmann.[12] We will focus our attention here on Pannenberg's thought.

According to Wolfhart Pannenberg, the functional interpretation of God's image pertains to a more general theological topic of our mission in the universe.[13] This mission is the fundamental dynamism of our being. We are called to go beyond what we are.[14] The works of early Church Fathers pointed to the dynamic dimensions of the human being. Also, they argued about the distinction between *image* and *likeness*. Being God's image is understood as stemming directly from Creation and is expressed in rather static terms. On the other hand, likeness is presented as a dynamic process in which we are invited to progress and perfect ourselves in reference to God's image. This is the call for self-transcendence[15]. Its motivation is clearly divine.

We can understand being God's image as the design and likeness being the destiny (something to be attained) of every human being. Pannenberg tends to point towards the future and interpret the imago Dei as one's destiny (*Bestimmung*) or goal.[16] His interpretation is eschatological: the fullness of creation in God's image remains located in the future, connected with the second coming of Jesus Christ, when Christians believe they will be sanctified at the end of time. According to Pannenberg, in order to reach the goal to which Christians are destined, individuals have to be raised above themselves, to be lifted above what they already are,[17] and in this sense self-transcendence is a constant process that can be called deification.

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12 Ladaria, *Antropologia teologica*, 147; Robinson, *Understanding the 'Imago Dei'.*
13 Wong, "Image of God," 59.
14 Van Huyssteen, *Alone in the World?*, 141.
15 Colagè, "The Human Being," 1007.
16 Shults, "Theology, Science, and Relationality," 816; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 180–181.
17 Wong, "Image of God," 51.

2.2. Theosis

In Eastern Christianity, the process of deification (Greek: *theosis*, *theopoiesis*; Latin: *deificatio*) describes, a new state of the human person transformed by the Holy Spirit. This process leads the human person to come as closely as possible to illustrating the likeness to God (Greek: *homoiosis theo*) in their life. It does not mean that we become God, but that through God's grace, we participate as fully as possible in God's nature.[18] From the vantage point of faith, this is the highest point of human self-transcendence.

God's image (*eikon*) is the dynamic foundation of self-transcendence as its point of arrival and the process of deification is its accomplishment over time. Thanks to the transforming presence of the Holy Spirit, the human person can progressively assimilate the blessed life of God and becomes God-like, which is also God's desire for the whole humanity.[19]

Deification is not a gift added to our nature. It is, however, an important element of transformed human nature, where it reflects its original model, having become a full image of the Triune God. Deification is an act of self-transcendence and transformation through which the human person not only surrenders to the redemptive work of Christ, but is actively involved in the discovery of their true destiny.[20] In the Christian tradition, one speaks about the natural longing (*desiderium naturale*) for God that can only be fulfilled through God's grace. Ultimately, vertical self-transcendence can be called "the fullest humanization of the human being."[21]

Deification or vertical self-transcendence is realized through the sacraments, where the baptized person dies with Christ in order to be born into his resurrected life. Through baptism, Christians receive their new existence, through confirmation the gift of the Spirit, and through the Eucharist the very life of God. Deification is caused by the power of the Holy Spirit through the sacraments of the Church and is demonstrated in the life of a believer through spiritual practices such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.[22]

3. Between Vertical and Horizontal Self-Transcendence

It has to be noted that from the vantage point of faith, both dimensions of self-transcendence are interrelated. Only in the modern secular understanding of spiritual-

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18   Jastrzębski, "Homo deificatus," 7.
19   Jastrzębski, *Homo theomorphicus*, 198.
20   Robinson, *Understanding the 'Imago Dei,'* 57.
21   Schönborn, *From Death to Life*, 56.
22   Congar, "Człowiek i przebóstwienie," 845.

ity, the horizontal self-transcendence can be seen in isolation, both with or without an explicit reference to Transcendence that at times is not associated with God. Nonetheless, there is one dimension of self-transcendence that can be seen as a mediator between both vertical and horizontal transcendence: our conscience.

As humans, we are interiorly compelled to look for truth, which affirms our transcendent nature. Through our minds, we come to an in-depth knowledge of the truth, although this truth does not need to be religiously impregnated. It is clear that for believers, this truth is God, but for secular social sciences, it is some kind of external instance that helps us judge our actions ethically. Self-transcendence in this context reveals itself in the cognitive effort of the human mind directed towards the truth. The human mind subordinates naturally to truth, because, metaphorically speaking, the truth is its light. In the human conscience, the dependency of mind on truth is revealed. This is another dimension of self-transcendence that is both vertical and horizontal. Vertical, because it transcends the individual human mind, horizontal, because it does not assume any supernatural reality.[23]

In human nature we discover two inexplicable phenomena: awareness and responsibility. Both of them can be experienced as the voice of conscience, of a clear, moral self-evaluation. This moral intuition can err, but it does not change the fact that we perceive it. When we enter into dialogue with our conscience, we discover the existence of a Superior Power, or experience transcendence.[24]

4. Horizontal or Ethical Self-Transcendence

The horizontal dimension of self-transcendence can be found in many modern definitions of spirituality that originate in both religious and secular context and thus are a natural bridge between these different ways of understanding spirituality.

4.1. Horizontal Self-Transcendence from a Religious Perspective

Some theologians attempt to define spirituality in terms of horizontal self-transcendence in order to create a context for dialog with social sciences. For instance, David Perrin says that "spirituality, as an innate human characteristic, involves the capacity for self-transcendence: being meaningfully involved in, and personally committed to, the world beyond an individual's personal boundaries."[25] Christian mystics often name the transcendent values towards which the movement of self-transcending

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23 Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 159.
24 Frankl, *Man's Search*, 64.
25 Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 20.

may direct itself such as justice, love, reconciliation, and peace. In fact, such values are shared by many religious traditions and also by people that describe themselves as spiritual but non-religious. The major difference from the Christian perspective is that the foundation of self-transcending energy in the human being is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.[26]

Sandra Schneiders relates her understanding of spirituality to self-transcendence as a conscious experience of going beyond oneself toward what one perceives as something of ultimate value.[27] Since here, we have no reference to any supernatural reality, such understanding of spirituality can be accepted by many social scientists.

Bernard Lonergan defines self-transcendence as an authentic existence. Having an authentic existence means having reached one's full human potential, including these four dimensions of spirituality: being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible. These constitute the transcendental and formal principles of development involved in the structure of our existence and, as such, can lead to self-transcendence becoming a normative principle.[28] This kind of presentation of spirituality or self-transcendence remains very close to their secular counterparts.

4.2. Horizontal Self-Transcendence from a Non-Religious Perspective

Horizontal or ethical self-transcendence has become an essential part of existential thought. It took the form of the authentic self; i.e., being independent from social and political frames such as totalitarianism and conformism which take away our dignity and freedom[29]. Authentic being in this regard signifies a life faithful to one's chosen values. We can self-transcend and become a better and unique person, which again indicates that self-transcendence has an ethical character.

Self-transcendence can also be seen in the human capacity to act against the constraints of one's body and psyche. Many times, we discover that we are capable of transcending both our psyche and body.[30] It can be attained and revealed through self-mastery, but also through employing self-realization. To be human is to be open to the world and not closed within one's own subjectivity. Self-awareness may be expressed by turning towards oneself, but the capacity for self-transcendence proves the ontological inclination of the human person to move outside of themselves, towards reality. In this way, self-fulfillment remains closely associated with self-transcendence,[31] which cannot be grasped without linking it to the structures of the person, those of self-governance and self-possession. Only against the background of

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26   Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 133–134.
27   Schneiders, "Spirituality in the Academy," 684.
28   Lonergan, *Insight*, 53.
29   Van Deurzen, *Everyday Mysteries*, 343.
30   Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 170.
31   Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, 233–234.

these structures can we appropriately interpret the dynamism of self-determination where self-transcendence has its roots.[32]

Along the same lines, Victor Frankl states that we only begin to show our ability to self-transcend, when we take control over the psychophysical (body and psyche). Only in this context can we completely manifest who we can be, because our dignity is inseparably connected with our spiritual or noogenic dimension. Frankl states that sickness cannot decrease our very existence, yet, it can "cover it up." Since the spiritual person or the very core of our being has to use their organism to communicate with the world, their handicap will result in a certain inertia that will create a new context for self-transcendence. As humans capable of self-transcendence, we always remain open to a world filled with other persons who we can meet and new meanings that we can fulfill.[33]

According to Frankl, to self-transcend means to be directed towards something or someone through work, a loving relationship or mission, to which we intentionally sacrifice ourselves. Outside of ourselves, we discover the world of values, and by realizing their potential, we perform acts of self-transcendence. Frankl definitely distinguishes acts of self-transcendence, which focus the self on objective values, from the process of self-actualization, which is guided more by the principle of pleasure associated with actualizing our potentialities. He points out that self-actualization should be only a side effect of self-transcendence.[34] This is an important point for understanding and evaluating the modern concepts of spirituality presented in social sciences.

Conclusion: Self-Actualization Versus Self-Transcendence

It is obvious that in our contemporary culture there is a tension between the secular and religious dimensions of human life, which is demonstrated clearly in varying notions of spirituality. Analyzing the concept of self-transcendence helps us to understand it more systematically. The common point of interest for both secular humanism and religion can be ethical self-transcendence. It can be a platform of dialog for both.

Apart from the tension between religious and humanist spirituality exemplified on vertical and horizontal dimension of self-transcendence, there is also another one: between ethical self-transcendence and self-actualization. This is well-illustrated in various psychological arguments between existential and humanist schools. In

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32 Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 159.
33 Frankl, *The Will to Meaning*, 113.
34 Jastrzębski, *Homo theomorphicus*, 211.

both cases, one underlines a desire to make the most of their lives. On the one hand, people seek to realize all their potential and accumulate experience, on the other, some understand that a greater sense of who they are does not come from the dynamism of self-actualization promoted by our society, but rather from their innermost motivation, their desire to seek and fulfill the purpose of life. This purpose does not seem to be self-actualization, but rather transcending, reaching beyond ourselves in order to achieve discovered objective goals and values.

For existential psychotherapy, self-transcendence is the very essence of being human. As humans, we are capable of defying biological, psychic and social determinisms. We can act contrary to our impulsive tendencies as well as go beyond the boundaries of our pathological and social conditions. It is this phenomenon of freedom which is the essence of spirituality discernable as self-transcendence. In any concrete existential situation, we are able to appeal simultaneously to our freedom and to our sense of responsibility.[35] Unlike motivation based on meeting needs, motivation associated with the search for meaning through the choice of values is characterized by attraction rather than compulsion.

We can define ourselves by reference to the objective world of values and meaning. Self-transcendence emerges from the convergence of "transcendence" and "spirit" as a human capacity to rise above the necessities of nature. Even if we do not reach the summit of our human potentials, we always remain essentially able of transcending natural necessity, which defies strict determinism. There will always be challenges that go beyond our human abilities, yet we regularly exceed our limits by making appropriate use of our freedom.[36]

The dynamism of self-transcendence ultimately decides the outcome of the situations we encounter in life. Speaking from a more existential perspective, we are able to face the task of adopting fate and integrating it into our own destiny. We do not need to get lost in any life situation so long as we can establish a distance (self-transcendence) between ourselves and this particular situation, which enables us to take the appropriate attitude towards it: to agree to it or oppose it. Thanks to this self-distancing capacity, freedom can be reinforced in us, and only thanks to this freedom can we make decisions against natural inclination or the atrocity of a situation.[37]

According to Frankl, we can actualize our capacity of self-transcendence by creating something new, or contributing something positive to this world, by experiencing goodness, truth, or the beauty coming from nature or from culture, and by encountering someone and offering this person our love. However, the highest manifestation of ethical self-transcendence may be realized by those deprived of these opportunities. Through their attitudes, they are able to transcend themselves

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[35]   Frankl, *Homo patiens*, 206.
[36]   Frankl, *Homo patiens*, 241.
[37]   Jastrzębski, *Homo theomorphicus*, 123.

and transform their suffering into achievement, even if it means transforming their suffering into an act of heroism, probably the highest level of self-transcendence or spirituality attainable.[38]

In the modern most functional and soft definitions of spirituality, there is no room for self-transcendence, not even for its ethical dimension. The soft functional definitions are purely pragmatic in nature such as understanding spirituality as simply being at peace with oneself. Sometimes it refers to an ideology or a lifestyle. It can also include inner strength, inner harmony, well-being or contentment, gratefulness and life satisfaction, as well as low levels of conflict in life. Such a way of understanding spirituality is very difficult to distinguish from the description of mental well-being.[39] The humanistic trends towards self-actualization were criticized from the religious grounds and defined as a "selfist" psychology or culture, with its hostility towards discipline, obedience, and deferment of gratification,[40] egoistic attitudes, and, in our terms, impairment of self-transcendence.

More existentially inclined thinkers see a great potential in promoting the concept of self-transcendence related to spirituality:

> Spiritual development is the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self-transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred. It is the developmental "engine" that propels the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose and contribution. It is shaped both within and outside of religious traditions, beliefs and practices.[41]

Self-transcendence understood as an integrating force of the human life, can redirect modern people toward chosen values, tradition, and life's purpose. In the contemporary world, the major threat to self-transcendence is the process of dehumanization, which causes the loss of the human self because of excessive individualism that in turn leads to alienation and despair. Promoting the idea of self-transcendence could become an antidote to the "empty or false self" emerging in the context of postmodern society as an illusion of egocentric human desires.[42] Unfortunately, for many people, this false self is and remains the basis of life and they are not able to achieve their most profound desires and find the meaning of life. In this context, promoting the idea of self-transcendence can be very helpful, even crucial for the well-being of our contemporary society, because it has capacity to lead to an understanding of spirituality in social sciences that is not totally divorced (or at odds) from its religious roots.

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[38] Frankl, *The Will to Meaning*, 60.
[39] Jastrzębski, "The Challenging Task," 11–12.
[40] See: Vitz, *Psychology as Religion*, 62.
[41] Benson – Roehlkepartain – Rude, "Spiritual Development," 205–206.
[42] Ryan, *Four Steps to Spiritual Freedom*, 19.

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Religious Pluralism
from the Catholic Point of View

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Abstract: The question about how religious pluralism should properly be understood from the Catholic point of view has been asked since the outset of Christianity. It was also formulated in the context of *A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together* signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb. The present article gives a theological interpretation of the sentence included in the Abu Dhabi document: "The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings." It argues that this passage should be understood correctly within the inclusivist paradigm that recognizes and confers to non-Christian religions and to religious pluralism a status *de iure* without jeopardizing the foundations of Catholic faith: the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. In conclusion, the question concerning the application of the assertion to the case of Islam has been explored.

Keywords: Religious pluralism, Christianity, Islam, pluralist paradigm, inclusivist *de facto* paradigm, inclusivist *de iure* paradigm, interreligious dialog

During his apostolic journey to the United Arab Emirates (February 3–5, 2019), in Abu Dhabi, on February 4, Pope Francis along with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, signed "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together." The document is very important to Pope Francis and has been well received worldwide.[1] Nevertheless, some Catholic circles have been shocked by the following affirmation concerning religious pluralism: "The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings"[2] [emphasis added].

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[1]   The importance of this document is underlined by the fact that Pope Francis refers to it in his last encyclical letter *"Fratelli tutti." On Fraternity and Social Friendship*. In the Introduction, he states: "I have felt particularly encouraged by the Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, with whom I met in Abu Dhabi, where we declared that 'God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters. This was no mere diplomatic gesture, but a reflection born of dialogue and common commitment. The present Encyclical takes up and develops some of the great themes raised in the Document that we both signed" (FT 5).

[2]   *A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together.*

The question concerns how this affirmation about the pluralism and diversity of religions should properly be understood from the Catholic point of view. This request was also addressed by the Bishops of Kazakhstan and Central Asia during their *Ad Limina* visit to the Vatican on March 1, 2019. In an interview given to Life Site News, Bishop Athanasius Schneider, auxiliary of Astana, explained that the Pope said that he could share the contents of their exchange on this point. This is what he said in the interview:

> On the topic of my concern about the phrase used in the Abu Dhabi document – that God "wills" the diversity of religions – the Pope's answer was very clear: he said that the diversity of religions is only the *permissive* will of God. He stressed this and told us: you can say this, too, that the diversity of religions is the *permissive* will of God.
>
> I tried to go more deeply into the question, at least by quoting the sentence as it reads in the document. The sentence says that as God wills the diversity of sexes, color, race and language, so God wills the diversity of religions. There is an evident comparison between the diversity of religions and the diversity of sexes.
>
> I mentioned this point to the Holy Father, and he acknowledged that, with this direct comparison, the sentence can be understood erroneously. I stressed in my response to him that the diversity of sexes is *not* the permissive will of God but is positively willed by God. And the Holy Father acknowledged this and agreed with me that the diversity of the sexes is not a matter of God's permissive will.
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> But when we mention both of these phrases in the same sentence, then the diversity of religions is interpreted as positively willed by God, like the diversity of sexes. The sentence therefore leads to doubt and erroneous interpretations, and so it was my desire, and my request, that the Holy Father rectify this. But he said to us bishops: you can say that the phrase in question on the diversity of religions means the permissive will of God.[3]

From this long quotation let us draw two main statements. Firstly, according to Pope Francis, "the diversity of religions is the permissive will of God." Secondly, this diversity is not positively willed by God as is, for example, the diversity of sexes.

Undoubtedly, the quoted sentence from "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together" can lead to "erroneous interpretations," and some theologians representing the so-called "pluralistic paradigm" in the theology of religions can refer to it in order to endorse their ambiguous theories. Nevertheless, one can query whether the interpretation given by Pope Francis, as it was presented by Bishop Schneider, is the only possible one from the Catholic point of view. The answer to this question is the main purpose of this paper. I would contend, it is not

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3   See: "Bishop Schneider Wins Clarification on 'Diversity of Religions' from Pope Francis, Brands Abuse Summit a 'Failure.'"

necessarily. I will try to argue that from the Catholic perspective, it is possible to maintain that the pluralism and the diversity of religions are *positively willed* by God in his wisdom, without relativizing at the same time the truth about the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. In order to demonstrate it, I will proceed in three steps. Firstly, I will present how this above-quoted sentence can be erroneously interpreted in the sense of religious pluralism, as it is understood by the theologians who represent a pluralistic paradigm. Secondly, I will show the interpretation given by Pope Francis to Bishops of Kazakhstan, namely that "the diversity of religions is the *permissive* will of God" is in line with the teaching of the post-Vatican II Magisterium of the Catholic Church that considers religious pluralism as existing *de facto*. Thirdly, I will try to prove – and this is my position – that it is also possible, from the Catholic standpoint, to state that religious pluralism is *positively* willed by God and therefore non-Christian religions can be viewed as existing *de iure* (or "in principle"), this, however, without jeopardizing the constant teaching of the Church about the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church.

In speaking about the Christian theology of religions, it has been largely accepted to distinguish three different paradigms: exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. The exclusivist paradigm claims that Christianity is the only path of salvation. Historically, it was combined with the very literal interpretation of the formula *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* ("Outside the Church there is no salvation"). Nowadays this paradigm is represented by some theologians related to the conservative evangelical movement within some Protestant denominations, with authors like: Robert A. Peterson, Christopher W. Morgan, Daniel Strange, William Edgar, Eckhard J. Schnabel, Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Stephen J. Wellum, Andreas J. Köstenberger, J. Nelson Jennings, and others. According to them, only the explicit faith in Jesus Christ is a saving faith. Consequently, those who have not such a faith cannot be saved. Stephen Wellum phrases it as follows: "Apart from the preaching, hearing, and believing of the gospel, there is no salvation."[4] Within the Catholic Church, there are very few, if any, followers of this stand. By contrast, there are more and more those who are attracted by the pluralist paradigm. Some of the very famous proponents of this position (like Paul F. Knitter, Raimundo Panikkar, or Roger Haight) are Catholic theologians. The pluralist paradigm contends that other religions are (or can be) equally salvific ways toward God as Christianity is. This is because Jesus Christ is not the unique and universal Saviour of the world but only the one who "represents" God's salvific activity in the world, and this is principally for Christians. Finally, the inclusivist paradigm maintains traditional affirmation about the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. Within this paradigm there exist two different approaches to religious pluralism. According to the first approach, non-Christian religions (except Judaism) exist as an expression of human longing for God, and their status as

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4   Wellum, "Saving Faith: Implicit or Explicit?," 183.

well as the religious pluralism as such can be named as existing *de facto*. According to the second approach, non-Christian religions exist out of the will of God, and therefore, their status as well as the religious pluralism as such can be named *de iure*. The first approach is very well summarized by the Declaration *Dominus Iesus*. But there are some Catholic theologians who, being in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church, advocate for pluralism *de iure*. I am of this opinion as well.

These three different approaches to the issue of the religious pluralism will structure our reflexion hereafter. The argument of this paper will be that the above-quoted sentence from "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together," namely that "The pluralism and the diversity of religions […] are willed by God in His wisdom," can properly be understood within the inclusivist paradigm which recognizes and confers to non-Christian religions and to religious pluralism status *de iure*, without jeopardizing the foundations of Catholic faith which are the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church.

1. The Pluralist Paradigm: Religious Pluralism Is Willed by God and non-Christian Religions Exist as Equal Means of Salvation

In his article on the declaration *Nostra Aetate*, Paul F. Knitter recognizes that this conciliar document was, on the one hand, "monumental," "revolutionary" and "a milestone in the history of religions" that "opens up the future of interreligious dialogue in a bold and revolutionary way," but, on the other hand, he affirms that it "also poses serious and threatening obstacles to that future."[5] The problem is due to the fact that, as open as it might be, the declaration claims Christian superiority over other religious traditions. According to Knitter, "*Nostra aetate* inscribes a tension – maybe a contradiction – between affirming the value of other religions and the need for dialogue, on the one hand, and asserting the supremacy of Christianity – Catholic Church – over all other religions, on the other hand."[6] The American theologian correctly identifies the reasons of such a claim. They are related to the fact that echoing other Vatican II documents, *Nostra Aetate* speaks about the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. Knitter recognizes that the same abiding tension or contradiction is present in the Post-Vatican II documents of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. He states: "In view of such clear assertions of the supremacy of Jesus Christ and his church over all other religious leaders and religions, liberals in the Catholic Church should not have been so surprised and chagrined at

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5   Knitter, "*Nostra Aetate*: A Milestone in the History of Religions?," 50.
6   Knitter, "*Nostra Aetate*: A Milestone in the History of Religions?," 50.

Dominius Iesus."[7] According to him, the only solution to properly understand religious pluralism as a dialogue between equal partners is to reinterpret the traditional Christian teaching about the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and his Church. And this is exactly what he does in his theology of religions.

What is his proposal? It is to understand the uniqueness of Jesus Christ in terms of "a symbol," similarly to the attempt presented by the American theologian Roger Haight in his famous book *Jesus Symbol of God.*[8] Haight proposes to explain the uniqueness of Christ in terms of the so-called "Spirit Christology." He writes:

> God as Spirit, or the Spirit of God, is simply God, is not other than God, but is materially and numerically identical to God. […] But God as Spirit refers to God from a certain point of view; it indicates God at work, as active, and as power, energy, or force that accomplish something.[9]

In this perspective, he interprets the different Soteriologies and Christologies of the New Testament as well as the definitions of the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon. He concludes that the core of Christian doctrine about Jesus consists in saying that "God and not less than God, is really present to and at work in Jesus, and that this is in such a manner that Jesus is a manifestation or embodiment of the reality of God."[10] This sentence is like a leitmotiv of Haight's Spirit Christology.

According to him, the assertion that the difference between Jesus and other human beings is "qualitative" – meaning by that "substantial" or "essential" – contradicts "the doctrine of the consubstantiality of Jesus with other human beings."[11] That is why he wants to express the uniqueness of Jesus only in terms of the "quantitative" difference. He asks: "If one says that the Spirit of God, which is God, is present to Jesus in a complete way, or in a fully effective way, in a most intense manner, need one say more?" So, according to Haight, one may understand that God as Spirit was present to Jesus in a superlative degree, and this is sufficient to convey his uniqueness.

This view about the uniqueness of Jesus has also been adopted by Knitter. According to him, all our "God talk" is symbolic. He states:

> To speak about Divine and things divine, we have to speak in symbols – that is, in metaphors, analogies, images. We should never think that our symbols or our notions capture all that can be said about God. Yes, they say something. But they never say everything. […] all our words, are "fingers pointing to the moon." Our words are never the moon itself.[12]

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7   Knitter, "*Nostra Aetate*: A Milestone in the History of Religions?," 51.
8   Haight, *Jesus Symbol of God*, 8.
9   Haight, *Jesus Symbol of God*, 447–448.
10   Haight, *Jesus Symbol of God*, 462.
11   Haight, *Jesus Symbol of God*, 463.
12   Knitter, "The Meeting of Religions," 49–50.

The consequences of this stand are manifold in our understanding of Jesus, God, salvation and religious pluralism. Knitter recognizes that the proclamation of Jesus as the Son of God is the fundamental and distinguishing belief of Christianity. Nevertheless, the central category whereby he explains what it means that Jesus is the "Son of God" is that of "a symbol." This is what he writes:

> Symbols enable us to see things we would otherwise not be able to see. Symbols participate in that which they symbolize but cannot be identified with what they symbolize. A wedding ring, in the eternity of its circularity and in the preciousness of its material, truly participates in the love that it expresses; yet the love is so much greater than this little, but so important, ring. So when the first Jesus-followers called Jesus the Son of God, they were using a symbol that expressed for them the experience that to meet Jesus was to meet God. […] For them 'Jesus' and 'God' were almost the same thing. But they weren't the same thing![13]

To summarize, according to Knitter, Jesus' divinity is nothing more than the fulfilment of his humanity. Consequently, there can be other "Sons" and "Daughters" of God, in other religious traditions, who, like Jesus, have fulfilled their humanity in their lives.

There are two direct and extremally important consequences of this understanding of Jesus[14]: first, that God *is not* Trinity; second, that Jesus *is not* the Savior of the world. The words "Father," "Son" and "Holy Spirit" do not, according to Knitter, designate the presence of three really existing divine Persons but they are the symbols or metaphors of "a mysterious immanence of God in the world – and of the world in God."[15] In other words, three divine Persons are just symbols.[16] Because Jesus is not God Incarnate, therefore – consequently – God in himself is not Trinity, and Jesus is not the Savior of the world. According to Knitter, Jesus does not cause God's saving grace but only reveals and makes known that this saving grace of God has already existed in the world. He, Jesus, also makes it real but he does it principally for Christians. The conclusion is that Jesus is not the only Savior of the world. And this is exactly what Knitter means when he writes: "Besides being more meaningful for many Christians, it also makes room for others, for other saviors in other religions."[17]

The final consequence of his understanding of the uniqueness of Jesus refers to his comprehension of the Church and her mission, as well as of religious pluralism. Knitter puts these three concepts together, because, as he explains, "one defines the other." And, because for him Jesus is not so different from Buddha or Muham-

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13   Knitter, "The Meeting of Religions," 67–68.
14   The same could be said about the Christology of Roger Haight.
15   Knitter, "The Meeting of Religions," 54.
16   Knitter, "The Meeting of Religions," 54.
17   Knitter, "The Meeting of Religions," 70.

mad, who can also be seen as the "sons of God" in a symbolic way, therefore there is no such a thing like the uniqueness of the Church (Christianity). All religions are equally willed by God and should have the same status. Therefore, for Knitter the pluralism and the diversity of religions is equally willed by God as is the pluralism and the diversity of colors, sex, races, and languages, and they have the same equal status as have colors, sex, races, and languages.

In short, for the theologians related to the pluralistic paradigm, the affirmation that the pluralism and the diversity of religions are willed by God in his wisdom leads straight to the denial of the traditional teaching of the Church about the unity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. All religions are equally willed by God and are equal means of salvation.

2. The Inclusivist Paradigm (*de facto*): Religious Pluralism Is Not Willed by God but God Can Use Non-Christian Religions as Means of Salvation for Their Believers

The predominant paradigm accepted by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church as well as the majority of Catholic theologians is the inclusivist paradigm which recognizes the pluralism and diversity of religions as existing *de facto*. In other words, non-Christian religions, except Judaism, do exist as the result of the human striving after God. They are human constructs which have been allowed by God and even in some stage of their existence blessed and used by him as the means of salvation for their followers. In this sense, one can say, as the Holy Father said to Bishop Schneider, that they exist out of the *permissive* will of God.

Just before and after the Second Vatican Council, this position was held by the famous French Catholic theologian Jean Daniélou. According to him, the history of salvation is limited to the Judeo-Christian tradition. Whatever was before that history or is today outside of it can be called "prehistory" of salvation. As Jacques Dupuis remarks, "Daniélou draws a sharp distinction between nature and supernatural, or equivalently between religion and revelation."[18] Non-Christian religions (except Judaism) are the results of human striving after God and belong to the order of natural reason and "natural religion." By contrast, Judaism and Christianity are the result of the divine intervention and belong to the order of supernatural revelation and supernatural faith. Daniélou writes: "Christianity does not consist in the striving of men after God, but in the power of God, accomplishing in man that which is beyond

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18   Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, 134.

the power of man; human efforts are merely the response called forth by the divine intervention."[19]

Therefore, for Daniélou the main difference between the Judeo-Christian religion and non-Christian religions is that the former has its origin in God and his supernatural self-communication, while the origin of the latter is in man and his natural longing for God. God can, eventually, use these non-Christian religions as the means of salvation for their followers, but because of the natural origin, their status as well as the status of religious pluralism, is *de facto*. This position was also held by another French theologian, Henri de Lubac. According to him, the non-Christian religions do not play a salvific role for their members and cannot be labeled "anonymous Christianity." On this point, he disagrees with Rahner.

The similar position is held by the British theologian Gavin D'Costa. First and foremost, he recognizes that "the Holy Spirit is acknowledged to be at work from the time of creation and before Christ's incarnation."[20] To clarify this he quotes the Encyclical letter of John Paul II, *Dominium et Vivificantem* (1986), in which the pope makes two important statements: firstly, that the action of the Holy Spirit "has been exercised, in every place and every time" and secondly, that "this action was to be closely linked with the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption, which in its turn exercised its influence on those who believed in the future coming of Christ" (*DV* 53). In other words, the saving action of the Holy Spirit has never been separated from the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption, as it has been said in "The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes.*"[21]

D'Costa agrees that "the Holy Spirit can be found in the hearts of non-Christian people and also in their values, cultures and religions"[22] and so "the Spirit is at work in other religions."[23] However, he does not attribute a salvific status to non-Christian religions. Although D'Costa accepts that other religions can be seen as part of God's plan of salvation, he clarifies in which sense this is possible: "they can be seen as part of God's plan in so much as they provide *preaparatio* to the gospel, but not in themselves as a means of salvation."[24] His argument is very much based on the teaching of the declaration *Dominus Iesus*. Along with the position held by the declaration, he recognizes that to confer to non-Christian religions a status *de iure* and to recognize them as a means of salvation, "would be contrary to the faith" because it would

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19 Deniélou, *The Lord of History*, 115–116.
20 D'Costa, "Christianity and the World Religions," 22.
21 "All people of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this Pascal Mystery" (*GS* 22).
22 D'Costa, "Christianity and the World Religions," 24.
23 D'Costa, "Christianity and the World Religions," 24.
24 D'Costa, "Christianity and the World Religions," 35.

mean "to consider the Church as *one way* of salvation alongside those constituted by the other religions, seen as complementary to the Church or substantially equivalent to her, even if these are said to be converging with the Church toward the eschatological kingdom of God" (*DI* 21). He concludes: "The door is thus closed on trying to establish any form of pluralism *de iure*, but it is kept open to explore how these religions might be forms of 'participated mediation' in so much as their positive elements might actually be part of God's plan to lead all people to Christ."[25]

Summing up, according to this group of theologians as well as to the declaration *Dominus Iesus*, the origin of other religions and religious pluralism is not in God but in the natural human longing for God, but this does not mean that God cannot use them as instruments of his salvific activity towards their believers.

3. The Inclusivist Paradigm (*de iure*): Religious Pluralism Is Willed by God but Only Christ is the Unique and Universal Savior of the World

The third group of Catholic theologians differs from the previous ones on two points: compared with the first group, they recognize the uniqueness and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church; compared with the second group, they recognize the *de iure* status of non-Christian religions. This is, in my opinion, the direction of the right Catholic interpretation of the quoted sentence from "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together." The reflection of such theologians as Karl Rahner, Jacques Dupuis, and Francis Clooney endorse the stance that it is possible from the Catholic point of view to affirm that "[t]he pluralism and the diversity of religions […] are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings." In his commentary on the declaration *Dominus Iesus*, another American theologian, Francis Clooney declares:

> Much in the declaration is clear and helpful in enunciating important rules which should fruitfully guide the thinking of Catholic Christians who accept the creed as central to their faith: believe in Christ in accord with the creed as a whole, and as it is understood in the Catholic tradition; acknowledge the unique and universal salvific importance of Christ with reference to all theological issues; safeguard the unity of the Word and Son of God with Jesus of Nazareth, whose Spirit is working in the world, and understand this unity as it has been remembered and passed down in the church; avoid responses to pluralism which posit the leveling of religious differences.[26]

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25 D'Costa, "Christianity and the World Religions," 34.
26 Clooney, "Implications for the Practice of Inter-Religious Learning," 157.

After this positive appraisal, Clooney raises some questions about the distinction that the declaration makes between "faith" and "belief" as well as about its understanding of "inspiration." Regarding the "faith-believe" distinction, he states that it "does not seem to do justice to the richer affirmation … that faith is a *dual* adherence, 'to God who reveals' *and* 'to the truth which he reveals.'" His argument is as follows:

> Were faith only "the acceptance in grace of revealed truth" and "the acceptance of the truth revealed by the One and Triune God", and assuming too that God reveals the truth in a single all-or-nothing gift, then it might fairly be stipulated that only Christians have this faith. But given the declaration's explanation of the faith as a "personal adherence of man to God" too, the denial of "faith" to the people of other religious traditions must be interpreted as also indicating that in other religious traditions there can be no relationship with God of the sort that counts as that personal adherence which is also faith. This is sad enough in itself, but it would also be contrary to what the declaration asserts later on, that God "does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals, but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches" (*DI* 8).[27]

The point Clooney is making here is that "the devoted Muslim or Hindu who adheres to God does in some real way have not only 'a life of belief' but also 'a life of faith' as defined in the declaration."[28]

His other point is about the "inspiration" of the scriptures of non-Christian religious traditions. According to Clooney, the teaching of the declaration is "confusing." He wonders how from the one side, the declaration can state that the scriptures of other religious traditions are not inspired by God's Spirit, and from the other side, it recognizes that "there are some elements in these texts which may be *de facto* instruments by which countless people throughout the centuries have been and still are able today to nourish and maintain their life-relationship with God" (*DI* 8). Clooney writes:

> By the Congregation's own description, then, it might reasonably be conceded that God is working among people of other religious traditions and guiding them through the action of Christ. We also know that the Spirit cannot be separated from Christ, who works in and through the Spirit; so one might dare to presume that the sacred scriptures of other traditions are already enlivened by the Holy Spirit.[29]

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27   Clooney, "Implications for the Practice of Inter-Religious Learning," 158–159.
28   Clooney, "Implications for the Practice of Inter-Religious Learning," 159.
29   Clooney, "Implications for the Practice of Inter-Religious Learning," 159.

Here Cooley does not assert that the scriptures of other religious traditions are as much inspired as the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, but that they are "in some way" inspired because God's Spirit is at work in them.

This is also the position of two other great Catholic theologians: Karl Rahner and Jacques Dupuis, to whom I would like to refer as well.[30] Both of them firmly hold to the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. Nevertheless, at the same time, within the inclusivist paradigm they recognize the *de iure* status of the non-Christian religions and religious pluralism.

Karl Rahner argued in this direction already before the Second Vatican Council. In his famous article "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions"[31] he presents four theses. The first one: "Christianity understands itself as the absolute religion, intended for all men, which cannot recognize any other religion beside itself as of equal right."[32] The second:

> Until the moment when the gospel really enters into the historical situation of an individual, a non-Christian religion (even outside the Mosaic religion) does not merely contain elements of a natural knowledge of God. … It contains also supernatural elements arising out of the grace which is given to men as gratuitous gift on account of Christ. For this reason a non-Christian religion can be recognized a *lawful* religion (although only in different degrees) without thereby denying the error and depravity contained in it.[33]

The third thesis is a consequence of thesis two, arguing in favor of "anonymous Christians."[34] The fourth thesis is about the actuality of Christian mission and the understanding of the Church as "the historically tangible vanguard and the historically and socially constituted explicit expression of what the Christian hopes is present as hidden reality even outside the visible Church."[35]

Central to his argument and the most important is the second thesis whereby Rahner gives the theological justification of religious pluralism as existing *de iure*. He divides it into two parts. Firstly, he contends that "there are supernatural grace-filled elements in non-Christian religions."[36] This is a key idea of Rahner's theology of religions based on his theology of grace which he comprehends as "the divine self-bestowal" that "penetrates to the ultimate roots of man's being, to the inner-most depths of his spiritual nature, and takes effect upon him from there, radically re-ori-

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30 Francis X. Clooney (*Comparative Theology*, 16) recognizes that his comparative theology is in harmony with the theology of religions of Karl Rahner and Jacques Dupuis.
31 Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 115–134.
32 Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 118.
33 Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 121.
34 See Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 131–133.
35 Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 133.
36 Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 121.

entating this nature of his towards the immediate presence of God."[37] He calls it "supernatural existential."

> This "supernatural existential" or mode of being (as we may call this finality and dynamic impulse which makes us tend towards the immediate presence of God) is indeed the outcome of grace. But it is inserted into man's nature through the salvific will of God to become an abiding element in his spiritual mode of being, and as something that is a living force in an always and everywhere, whether accepted or rejected by man's own free will.[38]

This "supernatural existential," which is an abiding element of the spiritual existence of all human beings, is constituted by the salvific will of God.

The other part of Rahner's second thesis consists in saying that the non-Christian religions need to have a positive significance and be considered "lawful religions," therefore, having the status *de iure*.[39] On the example of biblical Judaism, which was the lawful religion although it contained some false teaching given by the pseudo-prophets, Rahner argues that "we must therefore rid ourselves of the prejudice that we can face a non-Christian religion with the dilemma that it must either come from God in everything it contains and thus correspond to God's will and positive providence, or be simply a pure human construction."[40] Furthermore, he contends that admitting that each individual human being has the possibility in their lives of partaking in a genuine saving relationship with God,[41] and due to the social nature of human beings, non-Christian religions are willed by God as the means of salvation. He explains: "If … man can always have a positive, saving relationship to God, and if he always had to have it, then he has always had it within *that* religion which in practice was at his disposal by being a factor of his sphere of existence."[42] It does not mean that the non-Christians religions are "lawful in *all* their elements," neither is their status similar to the biblical Judaism of the Old Testament or Christianity.[43] His point is to say that "by the fact that in practice man, as he really is, can live his proffered relationship to God only in society, man must have had the right and indeed the duty to live this relationship to God within the religious and social realities offered to him in his particular historical situation."[44]

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37   Rahner, "Church, Churches and Religions," 34.
38   Rahner, "Church, Churches and Religions," 34–35.
39   Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 125.
40   Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 127.
41   This is also the teaching of the Second Vatican Council in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern Word *Gaudium et Spes*: "For, since Christ died for all men, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery" (*GS* 22).
42   Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 128.
43   See: Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 130–131.
44   Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 131.

Also, according to the Belgian theologian, Jacques Dupuis, in God's salvific plan for humanity, non-Christian religions have a positive role to play. In other words, non-Christian religions exist not only *de facto* but *de iure.* They are the means of salvation for their believers willed by God. Referring to Saint's Irenaeus theology of four covenants struck by God with humankind, Dupuis affirms that "nothing in the succession of the four divine covenants suggest that one abolishes those preceding, any more than one form of the fourfold Gospel substitutes for the other forms. All covenants hold together even as do the four Gospels."[45] It does not mean that all religions are equal, as pluralist theologians hold. Dupuis speaks about the "differentiated" and "complementary" revelations in three different stages. He writes:

> Three stages can be … distinguished – which do not correspond to a chronological sequence. In the first stage, God grants to the hearts of seers the hearing of a secret word, of which the sacred scriptures of religious traditions of the world contain, at least, traces. In the second stage, God speaks officially to Israel by the mouth of its prophets, and the entire Old Testament is the record of this word and of human responses to it. In both of these two stages, the word of God is ordered, however differently in each, to the plenary revelation that will take place in Jesus Christ. At this third stage, God utters his decisive word in him who is "the Word," and it is to this word that the whole New Testament bears witness.[46]

So, there is a clear distinction between the biblical Judaism of the Old Testament in which God "speaks officially to Israel" and the other non-Christian religions where the word of God uttered to their sages is not recognized as "official," and between the religion of the Judaism of the Old Testament and Christianity where "God utters his decisive word in him who is 'the Word.'" Nevertheless – and this is the point that Dupuis makes – God is really present and operating in non-Christian religions as the means of salvation. Furthermore, like Clooney, he is in favor of applying the terms "revelation" and "inspiration" to the other religious traditions and their sacred scriptures in the broader sense of these categories.[47]

In such a perspective, sketched out by these three great Catholic theologians, I place my own interpretation of the controversial sentence from "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together": "The pluralism and the diversity of religions [...] are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings."

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45   Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, 225.
46   Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, 250.
47   See: Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, 251.

Conclusion – the Case of Islam

In the conclusion, let us try to apply the aforementioned positions to the case of Islam. According to the pluralistic paradigm, Islam is one among many religions which is equally willed by God as Judaism and Christianity and can equally serve for its followers as a means of salvation. Christian theologians representing this paradigm would interpret the above-quoted sentence from "A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together" – "The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings" – in its most literal sense. They would argue that as the pluralism and the diversity of color, sex, race, and language are positively and historically willed by God in his wisdom; also, the pluralism and the diversity of religions are positively and historically willed by God in his wisdom, and therefore Islam, as a religion, is positively and historically willed by God in his wisdom as much as Christianity and other religions are. Saying so they would not, however, endorse the Muslim claim about Islam as the seal of God's revelation because, according to them, neither religion can have that kind of claim. All religions are equal in all respects.

From the second (= first inclusivist) perspective, the pluralism and the diversity of religions are not positively and historically willed by God in his wisdom. Hence, they do not exist *de iure* but only *de facto*. Only Judaism and Christianity are positively and historically willed by God in his wisdom and therefore, they have a status *de iure*. By saying this the proponents of this position do not deny that God can "use" other religions as means of salvation for their believers and that the Spirit, who "blows where he wills" (cf. John 3:8), can also be present and active in them in a salvific way. In this sense, the fathers of the Second Vatican Council argue that Islam is not only a natural religion but has the supernatural elements of divine revelation as well. Summarizing his findings about the teaching of Vatican II on Islam, Gavin D'Costa makes two important points. Firstly, he notices that "Islam is not seen purely as a natural religion, although it may also be that."[48] This is so primarily because Muslims "along with us [Christians] adore the one and merciful God" (*LG* 16) who "lives and exists in Himself, merciful and wields all power," and who is "the Creator of heaven and earth who has spoken to humanity" (*NA* 3). Secondly, "Islam is also seen to operate within an Abrahamic typology, but not in historical covenantal lineage to Abraham."[49] Adequately, according to the teaching of Vatican II as well as to this inclusivist position upholding that non-Christian religions have a status *de facto*, Islam is a religion which contains the supernatural elements of divine revelation and can be used by God as a means of salvation for Muslims, but is not in historical cove-

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48 D'Costa, *Vatican II. Catholic Doctrines on Jews & Muslims*, 210.
49 D'Costa, *Vatican II. Catholic Doctrines on Jews & Muslims*, 210.

nantal lineage to Abraham and cannot be viewed as positively and historically willed by God in his wisdom. Rather it should be considered as the result of the permissive will of God.

Considering the third (= second inclusivist) perspective which attributes to non-Christian religions a status *de iure*, the pluralism and the diversity of religions are seen as positively willed by God in his wisdom, but it does not imply that all of them are equal to Christianity and are formally and historically established by God. This is also true for Islam as a religion. Some theologians related to this perspective, like Jacques Dupuis, contend that the Qur'an can to some extent be considered as inspired by God and Muhammad as a prophet of God. Yet, even they do not contend that Islam as a religion was formally and historically established by God. I agree with Dupuis admitting that "the Qur'an in its entirety cannot be regarded as the authentic word of God. Error is not absent from it," and "this does not prevent the divine truth it contains from being the word of God uttered through the prophet."[50] These words echo what Clooney says about the understanding of the concept of "inspiration," namely that the sacred scriptures of other religions "are *in some way* really 'inspired' by God, since the Spirit is at work in them."[51] They also resonate with Rahner's assertion that "a non-Christian religion can be recognized as a *lawful* religion although only *in different degrees*."[52]

In conclusion, one can state that Islam, as a religion, is willed by God. However, it is not a historical religion but a religion in general terms. In other words, as Christians, we cannot affirm that Islam has been formally and historically established by God as is the case of Judaism and Christianity. There is no theological substantiation for such a conclusion in the Christian revelation.

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50   Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, 245. My views differ from those of Jacques Dupuis: instead of calling Muhammad a prophet, I prefer to use the wording "man of God."

51   Clooney, "Implications for the Practice of Inter-Religious Learning," 159.

52   Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 121.

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Christian Faith in Dialogue with Contemporary Culture in the Personalist Thought of John Paul II and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński

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Abstract: This article presents the intellectual legacy of both John Paul II and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński as advocates of a personalist view of culture. Their teaching emphasizes the person and human dignity in striving for human self-fulfillment in a community seeking God's transcendence. In this regard, their personalist vision of culture was defined in the context of the Second Vatican Council's teaching. Therefore, the theological anthropology of both John Paul II and Cardinal Wyszyński is based on personalism, communion, dialogue, and freedom. Nevertheless, when God is marginalized by human activity, especially by the ideology of secularism and religious indifferentism, a severe cultural crisis arises. As a result, the dialogical character of the teaching of John Paul II and Cardinal Wyszyński in the dimension of Christian culture emphasizes inculturation and evangelization of human activity. On the other hand, the Christocentric and personalist context of their concepts reflects the theocentric and anthropocentric vision of culture, which, rooted in praxeological pastoral thought, displays their views on culture not only in the dimension of philosophical and theological doctrine but above all as a pastoral vision presenting Christian culture integrated with contemporary existential experience and focused on the perspective of "a new heaven and a new earth" (cf. 2 Cor 12:4; Rev 4:2–8; 21:2–10).

Keywords: faith, personalism, culture, John Paul II, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, secularization, religious indifferentism, evangelization

The analysis of the phenomenon of culture demonstrates the fundamental dimension of human existence, which, by conditioning the human person's development, determines human life and activity in practically all their aspects. The unique value of Christian culture, especially on its personalist level, is expressed in striving to achieve complete personal maturity. Thus, it enables the realization of human potential and personal vocation in the temporal and supernatural aspect, despite the contamination with original sin. Based on earthly reality, Christian culture permeates all its dimensions but is ultimately oriented towards the supernatural. The dialogue of Christianity with culture, therefore, by its very nature should be expressed both in the evangelization of culture and in the inculturation of the Gospel, carried out in profoundly differentiated socio-political conditions.

The mutual relations between the human person and culture are eloquently defined by the words of John Paul II in UNESCO: "Culture is the proper way of human

existence and reality. Man is the only subject of culture in the temporal world, and he is also his only object and goal. Culture is what makes man more of a human being."[1] Therefore, it is not enough to look for the truth about man in his culture, although it is an important area of his knowledge and understanding. You have to start with a question about the essence of man, his humanity. If culture is an expression of human beings' work on their own humanity, the fundamental question to be answered is: who is a man, and who is he supposed to be? What is there to improve? What is the essence of humanity? These questions boil down to one thing: what is the truth about man? Can it be known without seeking the truth about the world, about God, man's relationship to himself, other people, and God?

According to Christian personalist principles, the center of culture is God-Man: Christ understood as Truth, Life, Love, and the Way. He teaches the integral view of man. "Without Christ, man cannot fully understand himself. He cannot understand who he is, what his proper dignity is, or his calling and final destiny."[2] The personalist perspective of Christian culture, placing the person at the center of considerations as the fundamental subject and source, gives him a personal, social, and dynamic character. That is why culture is not a static and "closed reality" but is continuously transformed. As an expression of human activity, the phenomenon of culture contains all the richness of the human personality. Presenting Christian culture from the perspective of the mystery of Creation and Redemption demonstrates man's creative activity in a history-saving dimension. Thanks to this, Christian culture becomes included in the supernatural culture, the foundation of Jesus Christ. Through the Incarnation, He enters man's history, connects him with God, and creates a culture in which the divine realm is re-connected with the human world.[3]

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1   Jan Paweł II, "W imię przyszłości kultury," 197–198.

2   Wyszyński, "Chrystusa nie można wyłączyć z dziejów człowieka," 241. Primate Wyszyński's anthropology presents a human person in relation to two salvific-historical events, i.e., the mystery of God's creation and the redemption events of Jesus Christ. However, human life's environment is an actual earthly reality, where a human person lives and works, develops, as well as improves himself. In other words, a man matures and grows personally in a specific place and time. It is the environment of human life, culture, and salvation (cf. Wyszyński, "List pasterski O chrześcijańskim wyzwoleniu człowieka," 30–46). John Paul II similarly interpreted culture. In Prague, to people of science and culture, the Holy Father said: "Without a transcendent perspective, without the sense of transcending visible reality, every culture remains a pathetic fragment, like the Tower of Babel. You cannot build culture by ignoring or stubbornly rejecting what cultus is – respect, respect. An uncultured person and an uncultured nation is a person and a nation without respect for themselves, for their neighbors, for the world, for God" (Jan Paweł II, "Przemówienie do ludzi nauki i kultury," 334).

3   In this sense, contemporary culture urgently needs a proper, "healthy" anthropology that recognizes and emphasizes the primacy of the person: a being in which the physical, mental and spiritual dimensions are integrated. Culture is what makes man as a person more human: more "is." It is also the basis of this paramount distinction between what man is and what he has. Everything that a man "has" is essential for culture; it is culture-forming, insofar as man, he can at the same time "be" more fully as a human being, more fully become a human being in all dimensions of his existence proper to humanity. Cf. Jan Paweł II, "Przemówienie na Uniwersytecie," 310.

Primate Wyszyński's statement should be understood in a similar context, as he states: "The level of unifying culture is higher than that of separating culture. All paths of this culture lead through human nature, the nation, the state, and the church community.[4] "Everything came out of the unity of God, everything was created through one paternal love, and with the help of this love, and everything is to return to this unity."[5] The humanizing function of culture, understood as the development of man in all his qualities, can be confirmed, however, as long as the culture is guaranteed an integral concept of man – a spiritual and material being, temporal, but oriented towards eternity, living in the time and called beyond all time, rational and, therefore, free – whose freedom is rooted in reason and free will.

1. Faith and Culture: A Mutual Correlation

A personalist vision of culture is a fundamental teaching dimension for Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński and John Paul II. Central to it is the community dimension of culture, which is essential concerning the family, the church, as well as local communities, and the nation. Undoubtedly, the Christian culture helped to survive the most difficult moments in Poland's history, especially during partitions and post-war enslavement by the totalitarian system of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

It was Christian culture that had become a kind of "enclave of freedom" and space for commentary as well as reflection on reality in its old and contemporary manifestations. In this sense, Christian culture has created a strong sense of separateness and strength, and at the same time, creatively inspired the individual to commit to the transformation of temporal reality in the perspective of "a new heaven and a new earth" (cf. Matt 5:10 and 19:28-30; Luke 10:21 and 14:14; Rev 4:2-8; 21:2-10). After all, it was in the space of Christian culture that the entire society's life took place during the last two centuries when it was often the only possible forum for expression for many Poles generations. Therefore, if we recognize that history is driven by culture, we will quickly understand that this is the approach to history that shaped Karol Wojtyła, the future Pope John Paul II, and the Primate of the Millennium, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński.

Their pastoral ministry grew out of Polish culture's entire ethos and its context of faith, rooted in the Christian tradition. It is especially evident in how both hierarchs tried to place culture at the center of the Church's pastoral efforts in the "New Evangelization." Indeed, the historical context from which they grew up strengthened their

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4   Wyszyński, "Nie oczekujemy życia łatwego," 10; cf. Jan Pawet II, *Pamięć i tożsamość*, 64–78.
5   Wyszyński, "Nie oczekujemy życia łatwego," 9.

conviction that culture is fundamental to human life. Their pastoral ministry had become an attempt to universalize the Polish experience of the community-forming role of culture, which took the form of papal reflection in official documents of the Church, post-war teaching of the Polish Episcopate, as well as in the dimension of institutional support, e.g., in the form of the "Pontifical Council for Culture."[6]

It implements the missionary goals defined by the Holy See: (1) It undertakes initiatives to bring together evangelization and contemporary culture (marked by unbelief and religious indifferentism). These activities aim to foster "an ever greater opening [of culture] to the Christian faith, which co-creates culture and science and is a source of inspiration for literature and art." (John Paul II *Inde a Pontificatus*, No. 1); (2) it displays the pastoral concern of the Church to overcome the gap between the Gospel and cultures. The aim of appropriate actions in this regard is to develop practical pastoral tools for the evangelization of cultures and the inculturation of the Gospel (cf. *ibid.*, no. 2); (3) It supports the relationship of the Church (including local Bishops' Conferences) and the Holy See with the world of culture (cf. *ibid.*, no. 3); (4) He engages in dialogue with non-believers who are open to such relations with the Church and ready to cooperate with her (cf. *ibid.*, No. 4); (5) Maintains and coordinates the work of the relevant Pontifical Academies (ibid.); (6) Participates in the implementation of cultural initiatives of other dicasteries of the Holy See; (7) Maintains constant dialogue with local Churches and religious superiors in order to foster the active presence of the Church in local cultural life; (8) Cooperates with universities and international Catholic, historical, philosophical, scientific, artistic and intellectual organizations in order to multiply joint initiatives; (9) Participates in initiatives of international organizations (such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or the Council of Europe) devoted to culture, philosophy of science, and anthropology. The aim of these activities is the visible participation of the Holy See in international congresses in the field of science, culture, and education; (10) Monitors the development of national policies and activities in the area of culture; (11) Facilitates the dialogue between the Church and culture through universities and research centers, primarily Catholic cultural centers, organizations associating artists, specialists, and researchers, and initiates significant activities for the integration of the world of culture; (12) He invites people who have a considerable influence on contemporary culture to come to Rome so that they can learn more about the Church's experience in this field and at the same time enrich the knowledge of the Holy See. These initiatives make the Council a place for meetings and dialogue.

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6   Out of concern for the consistent and competent implementation of the cultural intuitions and guidelines of the Council towards culture, John Paul II, with a letter dated May 20, 1982, addressed to the Secretary of State, established the "Pontifical Council for Culture" (cf. Jan Paweł II, "Powołanie do życia Papieskiej Rady do spraw Kultury," 765–768).

In this context, culture becomes the foundation of the New Evangelization. In the opinion of both representatives of the Church, faith and culture are in a mutual relationship where they must remain inextricably linked if they are to develop one another. In this sense, culture is the vehicle of dialogue between believers and non-believers.[7] In turn, art is an important area for cultural dialogue. It is here that both language, gesture, and ideas are intertwined as thoroughly as possible, often in a universal structure. In other words, in the personalist sense, culture should be built on the common foundation of the civilization of love to be authentically human. It is accomplished only through faith and grace that flow from the mystery of the Redemption accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, for both the Pope and Cardinal Wyszyński, the subject of culture is the man who grows through it. Culture itself is constituted by human *praxis* to such an extent that it makes "people more human." Thus, the most profound aspect of culture is the possibility of human activity, satisfying the human need for creative expression in the world (the humanizing role of culture). A complete understanding of the "humanizing" role of culture requires the presentation of the above concept in a broader context of contemporary personalistic thought, of which Karol Wojtyła, the later Pope John Paul II, was a particular representative. Especially the personalistic interpretation emphasizes that the source of the act is a man. In this context, the human act has two dimensions: internal and external. The "internal act" is in a particular way related to consciousness. Engaging the "external" aspect of the human act is not a simple consequence of human corporeality but a conscious entry into external reality. The experience of a human act must be comprehended as a whole. The experience of a human act, however, contains two basic structures: man's act and "something that happens in him." As a result, one should notice human activity and passivity – correlation and opposition. However, the mentioned opposition is not a contradiction, but it shows the dynamic situation of the subject passing from *potentia* to *actus*. Thus, a person experiencing an act undergoes an internal change as a person – something happens to him – but at the same time, in this situation of "going on," he becomes involved as a subject in external reality, that is, he acts. Subjectivity and agency in man are closely related. Therefore, it is not enough to say that this act is human and that this act is a human act because axiology alone is not enough to explain the subject's dynamic involvement.

There is a need to link axiology with ontology. The tension between potency and act – and at the same time binding these two poles – causes a new way of existence of the human person, and thus also a new way of acting – engaging. Therefore, as

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7   The "Secretariat for Unbelievers" was established on April 9, 1965, by Pope Paul VI. Its purpose was to study atheism and its causes. Moreover, he dealt with establishing a dialogue with non-believers. In May 1993, Pope John Paul II joined him with the "Pontifical Council for Culture." Cf. John Paul II, *Inde a Pontificatus*.

the author himself defines, there is a live relationship between the person and the act, thanks to which a person acts responsibly. In the structure of a human act, its transcendence and immanence should be emphasized. It means that a person is aware of his action and, at the same time, experiences this action. It is an action based not only on an emotional, rational and free nature but also on the acting person. So, *agere* is a result of *esse*. The dynamic human position understood in such a way consequences in the unity of the person with the act, the integration of many relations that cause a specific action to be defined as human. And although the Church is not the culture in herself, it exists in the space of culture. Culture, even though it is influenced by it, also affects the Church in the inculturation dimension.[8]

Therefore, a personalist vision of culture cannot be understood without this basic paradigm: faith is not meant to be private and individual but must create culture; that is, it must bear witness. The synthesis between culture and faith is a requirement not only of culture but above all of faith. Faith that does not become culture is not entirely accepted, not thoroughly thought out, not lived faithfully. If the Church does not attempt to speak the language of culture, she will withdraw from molding it and influencing it – which means that she will retract from the evangelization. The matter is not trivial from the perspective of faith, and therefore from the standpoint of the fundamental mission of the Church: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (cf. 1 Cor 9:16). So it is not enough to proclaim the message of truth in the context of the "Good News." It becomes necessary to take appropriate actions to incorporate this message into the contemporary world's particular reality. Therefore, the Incarnation dogma becomes the key to comprehending the personalist vision of Christian culture: thus adapting the announcement of the Gospel to the conditions of contingency, history, societies, and state communities.

The fundamental object of the Church's endeavors is evangelizing a culture that accepts the integral truth about man, demonstrates the dignity and greatness of his vocation, and merges Christian anthropology into its value system. In the personalist perspective, the "leading creator" and direct entity of culture is a human being understood as an individual human person.[9] Thus, culture is a reality derived from man, resulting from his personal action and expressed through his personal experiences, both individual and social. By creating culture, impressing his spirituality's

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8   Cf. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, 48–79.
9   "The creator of culture, the Cardinal emphasizes in his teaching, is first and foremost a human person. Although communities such as the state or nation can create more favorable conditions for its development, the ultimate creator, maker, and inspiration is the man himself" (Wyszyński, "Konstytucja Pastoralna," 119–120). In his teaching, Cardinal Wyszyński emphasizes two essential aspects of human involvement in culture. On the one hand, the man shapes the culture in which he reflects his inner world; on the other, he develops and forms this interiority through culture. The integral connection of these two elements of culture means that although they constitute a wholeness, they interpenetrate, co-create and condition each other. Cf. Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 31.

mark on his life and works, on relationships with God, people and nature, he gives it an idea, theme, and motive.

Thus, by creating culture, a human person also forms himself, developing himself as a spiritual and physical being.[10] In other words, man embraces everything that he has consciously and intentionally shaped: progress, science, art, technology, co-thinking, and cooperation with people. This whole reality transformed in and beyond him becomes the object, content, and goal of culture."[11] The above perspective is rooted in the very nature of a man who "[...] seeks to maintain his existence. [...] We know it in the most ontological and eschatological terms – as maintaining one's personality not only in the economic sense but also in the sense of his development and securing his duration – his eternal time."[12]

However, one cannot speak of the human person's fullness without considering his transcendent dimension. The specificity of religious values lies in the fact that they connect the human person with a reality separate from both the whole world of things and people – with the transcendent realm – pointing to the vertical dimension of human existence, from the point of view of which other aspects dimensions acquire a new meaning, intensity, and deepness. From a personalist perspective, this means that a proper understanding of the phenomenon of culture is possible only thanks to God, "[...] who shaped human nature in such a way that one of its most perfect life tasks is for man to become a complete human being, so that [...] within myself a physical and spiritual personality."[13] The creation of man in the image and likeness of God, as well as calling him to cooperate with God's economy of the world, means that the entire reality of culture – the direct creator of which is a man – only in God the Creator finds its original source as well as absolute subjectivity and explanation.[14] However, man as a person, a kind of micro-world and micro-community, becomes the main goal and content of culture. Human involvement, guided by reason and will, is by nature purposeful. Thus, culture, which on the one hand is aimed at building a better world and the fullness of the human person, on the other hand, becomes the image of a perfected human being. "The creativity of each person testi-

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10 According to Wyszyński ("Zadania i środki oddziaływania Kościoła," 59–60), a man whose precedence is announced by the Creator, who made him the king of creation and subordinates everything to him, has tasks in this world in temporal and eternal order. In the temporal order, the development of the personality with the help of the development of the material culture of the globe; in the eternal order, the deification of the personality so that man does not set himself deterministic limits, but knows that in personal development he is to reach his Creator.

11 Cf. Wyszyński, "O nowym człowieku w Jezusie Chrystusie," 351.

12 Wyszyński, "Homo Dei," 575.

13 Wyszyński, "Do uczestniczek zjazdu pielęgniarek," 339.

14 Cf. Wyszyński, "W słodkim jarzmie miłości," 382–383; Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 32.

fies to him, reveals his interior, his spirit, what he lives, what is his logos and ethos, what powers he has at his disposal."[15]

This understanding of the complex reality of culture flows from the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.[16] In this context, the good of the human person verifies the greatness and importance of culture. Thus, authentic culture holds humanistic values above all, and it is human creativity undertaken with the human being in mind and directed towards his fullness. Thanks to culture, then, the human person enters into various relationships with people and the world. "The Church, although it shows us heaven, is realistic, and although it puts the person above things [...], it is nevertheless based on earthly reality."[17] Through involvement in cultural activities, a person expresses his relationship to the world. At the same time, it is a particular realization of God's calling to subdue the land. The specificity of this vocation is that man receives the privilege of participating in God's work of creating the world of culture.

2. Culture and Its Personalist Origins, Values and Principles

In terms of John Paul II and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, personalism is expressed in certain axioms, iron rules for organizing and evaluating reality. They are the superiority of spirit over matter,[18] the priority of being over having,[19] and the preeminence

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[15] Wyszyński, *Zaszczytna służba Słowu*, 269. In this context, the word "creativity" used by Primate Wyszyński emphasizes the dynamic nature of human involvement in culture. Truth, goodness, and beauty are not only expressed by man but also discovered, shaped, and multiplied. Cf. Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 34.

[16] The Second Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes* defines "[...] as culture in a general sense everything that man perfects and develops the multiple faculties of his spirit and body; tries to subject the world itself to its knowledge through knowledge and work; makes social life more human, both in the family and in the entire state community through the progress of morals and institutions; finally, in his works over the centuries, he expresses, transmits and maintains great spiritual experiences and aspirations so that they serve the progress of many, and even the whole of humanity" (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 53).

[17] Wyszyński, "Kształtowanie kultury społeczno-katolickiej w Polsce," 437.

[18] Cf. John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis*, no. 16. The personalistic concept of the human person, exposing the greatness of man, at the same time emphasizes the infinite dignity of his person. Therefore, a man is a child of God – this is homo Dei in an ontic, moral and praxeological sense (cf. Wyszyński, "O chrześcijańskim wyzwoleniu człowieka," 19). As a human person, it is a kind of micro-world, micro-community. It is a world co-created by God together with society, fulfilled in history, redeemed by Christ, complemented by the work of the spirit and hands, and fulfilling the *kairos* of God's economy. Cf. Wyszyński, "Jasnogórskie zobowiązania...," 303–304; Wyszyński, "Ojcze nasz," 29; Wyszyński, "Kościół wspólnototwórczy," 149; Wyszyński, "Krzyż na szlaku Warszawy," 16–20.

[19] Cf. John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, no. 98; John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, no. 37. From the perspective of Christian personalism, in God, the Creator, all the desires and needs of the human person have their source. As Cardinal Wyszyński emphasized: "Man's desires and aspirations coincide with the properties of the Creator. So we have the inheritance of the Heavenly Father that Christ makes us aware of. We can safe-

of a person over a thing.[20] In this context, the personalist vision of socio-cultural life places man at the center of its analysis. In this sense, a person "is a rational and free being, is the master of creation."[21] The human person's unique dignity comes from being "the only creature on earth that God willed for himself."[22]

Thus, a person means a unique and particular fullness of being,[23] "center and summit of all that exists on earth."[24] He is an independent being: *ipsum esse subsistens*, and this subsistence means his own existence: one in itself, from itself, and for itself. Moreover, man is a spiritual and bodily being, characterized by an integral unity. He has his own internal causality: the whole acts on parts, unlike things whose causality is external, where one element affects the other.[25] The human person is

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ly say that we carry within us the qualities of our Creator, our Father, and our aspirations are implanted in us in the great and powerful Womb of Heavenly Father, from which we all come. From Him, we inherit all desires, aspirations, and "pangs of hunger," which are also our life desire" (Wyszyński, "Homo Dei," 576).

20   Cf. John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, no. 12, 13; John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis*, no. 16; John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, no. 34, 98; Jan Paweł II, *List do rodzin*, 13. From the latter principle, following the so-called "second imperative" of Immanuel Kant, Wojtyła derives and formulates the so-called "*personalistic norm*": "A person is such a being that his proper reference is love. We are just with a person if we love him – both God and people. Love of a person excludes treating him as an object of use" (Wojtyła, *Miłość i odpowiedzialność*, 29–30).

21   Wyszyński, "Społeczność przyrodzona i nadprzyrodzona," 61.

22   John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*, no. 13. "Apart from a man – emphasizes Cardinal Wyszyński – there is no personality, no rationality, no freedom" (Wyszyński, "Społeczność przyrodzona i nadprzyrodzona," 61). Karol Wojtyła, analyzing the subjectivity of the human person, emphasizes that in the philosophical tradition that arose from the definition of homo-animal rationale, a man was above all an object, one of the objects of the world to which he visibly and physically belongs. Objectivity understood in this way was connected with the general assumption of human reducibility. Subjectivity is, as it were, a triggering term for the fact that man does not allow himself to be reduced in his essence and to be "completely explained" by the nearest gender and species difference. Thus, subjectivity is, in a way, a synonym for what is irreducible in man. Cf. Wojtyła, *Podmiotowość i «to co nie redukowalne»*, 23.

23   Cf. Wojtyła, *Miłość i odpowiedzialność*, 22. A specific way of being, characteristic only for a man, determines his functioning in the socio-cultural reality and verifies his proper position in the entire ontic structure. Although, according to the Primate, "[...] man in his actions and efforts to master the earth is limited [...] nevertheless should remember that he has precedence over the created world" (Wyszyński, "Najważniejszą wartością na świecie jest człowiek," 961–962).

24   John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, no. 37. Although John Paul II, like Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, does not give a full definition of a person anywhere, one can formulate such a description based on their teaching. A person is someone who is self-existent in the objective and subjective sense, spiritually-material, rational, free, realized, but still realizing himself both in himself and the community of others, complementing himself especially in action as well as agency, and finally fulfilling himself in communion with Uncreated Person. Cf. Bartnik, "Osoba i Kościół," 89.

25   John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, no. 11. "The spiritual-corporeal nature of a human being, expressed in his free and rational action, is a constitutive quality of man" (cf. Wyszyński, *Uświęcenie pracy zawodowej*, 200). Therefore, the human person is a particular separate being, permanent, integrated despite the complexity, and at the same time unifying and integrating numerous activities and features as their subject, substrate and cause. The spiritual element in man fulfills the role of a visible sign of God's closeness to the material world. Through the body, a human person connects with the surrounding world, he is a part of it, he lives and acts in it, is subject to its laws, but also occupies a unique position in it. He is its master: he organizes it, controls it, transforms it and uses it for his life and development. The body – as a material

purposeful; the item is mechanical; the person himself determines his goal and constitutes value for himself (the so-called internal teleology, i.e., its orientation towards the good of the person[26]).

On the other hand, a thing has a purposefulness determined from the outside, and as such, is something indifferent to itself. The person cannot be replaced entirely, and there is no price for him. As an independent subject of a rational nature, he becomes the perfect being in all nature. Thus, the human person becomes the first and fundamental value of the entire social order.[27] As a result, the essential "[...] creator of culture is a human person"[28]: the main subject of history, the highest value, and the most spiritual reality of this world. As an important subject, expressing himself through the immaterial and immortal soul, he realizes himself through conscious and free action, which actualizes the possibilities contained in his nature.[29]

This fact explains such spiritual activities as cognition, love, and freedom. The complex structure of personality makes a man an ontically multi-layered being. As a rational and free being, he becomes at the same time an active entity that evaluates and creates values. Thus, the very existence of a human person and the purpose as well as the meaning of his life in the level of this world cannot be explained and must be shown in its whole personal dimension. Therefore, only a personalist vision of man – emphasizing both his central position in the entire created world, as well as the entire perspective of his natural and supernatural vocation – makes it possible to discover who the human person is to understand his value and meaning.[30]

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element – is also a kind of bridge connecting the reality of the material world with God. Cf. Kowalczyk, *Człowiek a społeczność*, 108–115.

26 Cf. John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*, no. 78. Although inscribed in earthly reality becomes a part of it, the spiritual-bodily structure, personal dignity, and supernatural calling make him appear as a being that surpasses the entire created world. However, it turns out to be a place where the human person – as the main subject of all creative activity – can realize his personality and achieve the right and satisfactory goal. (cf. Wyszyński, "Społeczność przyrodzona i nadprzyrodzona," 61). Man created in the womb of the world is the subject of the world, history; he is moving towards infinity. Moreover, he is the king of creation, but also his servant. He is left not only in the dilemma of truth-error, freedom-alienation, happiness-unhappiness, but most of all, moral good and evil. Morality turns out to be a new dimension of being, and it determines man: it constitutes him, makes him, verifies, and fulfills him. In morality, a man "happens" as a person. Cf. Bartnik, *Teologia kultury*, 91.

27 Cf. Wyszyński, "Najważniejszą wartością na świecie jest człowiek," 961–962.

28 Wyszyński, "Konstytucja Pastoralna," 118.

29 Action in the Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, to which the personalism of Wyszyński and John Paul II alludes, is understood as the highest act of substantial being. It is an expression of human possibilities contained in his substantial nature. Considering dialectical-processual philosophy referring to Heraclitus and Hegel – its heir is also Marxist dialectical materialism – the priority of action over being is recognized. Based on this trend, it is logical to say that it was the culture that created man. However, the ontic order is the opposite: it is a man who makes the culture through which he develops and perfects. Cf. Kowalczyk, *Filozofia kultury*, 90.

30 Cf. Wyszyński, "Chrystusa nie można wyłączyć z dziejów człowieka," 297–302.

In personalist cultural anthropology, a man appears as an eternally intended being, rooted in God's mind and embodied in a specific historical reality.[31] His total value, however, is expressed in the perspective of two fundamental salvific events: the creation of man in the image and likeness of God and the saving-redemptive event of Jesus Christ. Thus, "[...] all creation and redemption are the next stages of the incarnation of God's thought, which has existed in each of us from the beginning."[32] These two most critical salvific-history dimensions – the creative[33] and the saving-redemptive[34] – reveal not only the extraordinary dignity of the human person but also his primacy in the entire created world.

3. Secularism, Religious Indifferentism, and the (Post-) Modern Culture

The proclamation of Christ and his Gospel is a duty of the Church of all times and is directed to every person. The forms of fulfilling this duty depend primarily on people's needs and circumstances in a given time and cultural context. However, even a cursory attempt to examine the *signa temporum* of contemporary culture and civilization indicates that it is imbued with secularization and religious-moral in-

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[31] In his speech, Primate Wyszyński states: We are eternal in God's thought [...]. We have been for centuries in the mind of the Heavenly Father next to the reality of the existing Eternal *Logos* (Wyszyński, "W słodkim jarzmie miłości," 5–6).

[32] Wyszyński, "W słodkim jarzmie miłości," 5–6.

[33] God is more and more fully involved in the act of creating man. The direct encounter of the Creator with the created man produces an intimate personal dialogue expressed in a creative unity based on the Love of God Himself. "Let us make a man ..." – emphasizes Cardinal Wyszyński – that is, let us pass on the part of Our Love. Let us hand over a being created in our image and likeness, who would be able to accept our Love, participate in it and pay with love for the received Love " (Wyszyński, *Jesteśmy z miłości i dla miłości*, 10). The dignity of the human being is expressed as man's extraordinary closeness to God with regard to the way of creation and the content of the created man. For man is not created in the image and likeness of matter, but in the image and likeness of God. He bears the likeness of God in him because he is like God, who has made the whole world subordinate to himself and rules over it. Man has been received at his disposal the world created to be its ruler, but this does not exhaust the whole idea of the image and likeness. Made in the image and likeness of God, he is able to know and love his Creator (cf. Wyszyński, "O katolickiej woli życia," 33).

[34] The natural dignity of the human person culminates in the person of the God-Man "Jesus Christ. Without Christ, Cardinal Wyszyński emphasizes, man cannot fully understand himself. He cannot understand who he is, what his proper dignity is, or his calling and final destiny" (Wyszyński, "Chrystusa nie można wyłączyć z dziejów człowieka," 241). In the mystery of God incarnate, we find an explanation of the mystery of man and his dignity. Christ is "[...] a new proof of God's love for man, the culmination of which we see in the work of redemption. In Jesus Christ, the creative-saving love of God is concentrated and historicized. The person of the Son of God [...] combines the divine and human nature, the life of grace and nature, the supernatural and the natural, heaven and earth" (Wyszyński, "O chrześcijańskim wyzwoleniu człowieka," 21–23).

difference. This fact is repeatedly emphasized by John Paul II, pointing to "the loss of memory and Christian heritage, accompanied by a kind of practical agnosticism and religious indifference, causing many Europeans the impression that they live without a spiritual backing, like heirs who have squandered the heritage left to them by history."[35]

Opposing such thinking and attitudes of this kind requires knowing and interpreting them. The phenomena mentioned in the article's title – secularism, religious indifferentism, and the crisis of contemporary culture – have much in common in their content and complement each other. In this context, secularization emerges as a principle, fact, and ideology.[36] The above concept tries to emphasize man's cognitive power, which leads to the omission of God or His denial. It is also the cause and form of relegating religion and God to the "interior" of social and public life and developing religious and moral individualism. Consequently, it manifests itself in the atheization of science and culture, progressive socialization and monopolization of socio-cultural life (mass-culture promoting an attitude "do what you want"), resignation from external manifestations of religiosity, rejection of the relationship between religion and local culture, or national practices and a departure from traditional religious practices and moral attitudes.[37]

However, religious indifferentism is understood as a religious and moral lack of interest and concern, which is much more dangerous for contemporary Christian culture. Such an attitude towards God and religion is dangerous both in its nature and scope. In this sense, it is the most grievous form of atheism. It questions not only the possibility of God being able to exist but also the meaning of the existence of religion and the sense of religious needs rooted in human nature. Moreover, religious indifferentism as an attitude is utterly inaccessible to religious dialogue because it negates its need.[38] Also, the dimensions of this attitude are becoming more and more

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35   Jan Paweł II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, no. 7. Already in 1991, saying goodbye to his compatriots in Warsaw, John Paul II said: "We live as if God did not exist, it is also part of the European spirit. Part of the modern European tradition. Christ […] was put in brackets, and a different European mentality began to emerge; mentality, which can be briefly expressed in the sentence: We think like this, we live as if God did not exist" (Jan Paweł II, *Czwarta Pielgrzymka do Polski*, 223).

36   (1) In the first sense, secularization is the thesis that science, technology, and culture in their development should be guided by "autonomy" without any connection with religion and theology (broadly understood autonomy of earthly reality). (2) As a fact, secularism manifests itself in eliminating the sacred factor from the public life of individuals and human communities. (3) In the sense of ideology, secularization identifies itself with secularism. In this sense, the world's entire reality is explained by itself, without the need to resort to a God who becomes redundant or even disturbing. Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, no. 55.

37   Cf. Kerber, "Führungsethik in einer säkularisierten Industriegesellschaft," 651–661; Lübbe, *Der Lebenssinn der Industriegesellschaft*, 16–54.

38   On the socio-cultural level, religious and moral indifferentism manifests itself in several specific categories. Those are:
      – the so-called "Cultural violence" expressed in all kinds of brutality, violence, terrorism, and "boorishness";
      – "accelerating the rhythm of life," as well as "indifference of action and passion" inscribed in the expressly understood consumerism and practical materialism adopting the axiological principle of time is money;

dangerous. Religious and moral indifferentism is associated with certain features of contemporary culture and civilization, fitting into the specificity of the so-called "(Post) modern consciousness." In this sense, it ceases to be merely a personal matter of the contemporary intellectual elites who create the reality of culture and become a global historical phenomenon.[39] On the ideological and moral level, religious indifferentism manifests itself in the inability to face truth and goodness issues, as well as to meet the obligation to maintain consistency between life and ethical requirements. It is also connected with the loss of the sense of the transcendent meaning of human existence and loss in the field of ethics, even including such fundamental values as respect for life and family.[40]

Concerning truth and goodness, indifferentism is subject to all the modern tendencies of relativism and skepticism that have led to the total undermining of the truth. In this sense, relativism places its position between the negation of truth and the omission of the possibility of seeking it. The man of the past put God at the center of reality, the source of truth and goodness. Contemporary man makes himself or a community the measure of truth and goodness. However, it is not an absolute and unchangeable measure. An indifferentism, anchored in anthropocentrism of (post) modern "fluid reality" concerning the category of good, is characterized by historicism and immanentism. In this case, man as the subject of morality is indifferent to all transcendence. It manifests that (post) modern man becomes a sci-

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– "the need to be trendy" consisting in the absolute necessity to adapt to fashion, style, and the current rhythm of life, which is embodied by idols created by the mass media;

– "compulsion to success" achieved at any cost, and often "at a low price," where religious and moral values are often the subject of mockery and baiting;

– "modern doubt", when problems of a religious and moral nature are treated as apparent, and everything can be solved and explained using the theory of "logical positivism";

– "inability to dialogue" expressed by excluding religious and moral values and problems from the dialogue;

– "indifference of tolerance," which is understood as the equality of all ideas, religions, norms, and human behavior, where the categories of good and evil depend on individual opinions and decisions, and values and anti-values are placed on the same axiological plane. Cf. Wyszyński, "Ojczyznę wolną zachowaj nam Panie!," 367–369; Wyszyński, "Ale nie depczcie przeszłości ołtarzy...," 378–380; Wyszyński, "Tajemnica więzi z ojczyzną," 483–487; Swastek, "Laicyzacja życia publicznego," 23–32; Poupard, "Non-croyance et cultures d'aujourd'hui," 3–21; Legutko, "O tolerancji," 113–132; Pottmeyer, "Die Zeichen der Zeit," 166–176.

39 Cf. Mariański, *Religia i Kościół*, 83–84.

40 As John Paul II put it: "How can we remain silent, for example, about the *religious indifference* which causes many people today to live as if God did not exist, or to be content with a vague religiosity, incapable of coming to grips with the question of truth and the requirement of consistency? To this must also be added the widespread loss of the transcendent sense of human life, and confusion in the ethical sphere, even about the fundamental values of respect for life and the family. The sons and daughters of the Church too need to examine themselves in this regard. To what extent have they been shaped by the climate of secularism and ethical relativism? And what responsibility do they bear, in view of the increasing lack of religion, for not having shown the true face of God, by having "failed in their religious, moral, or social life"? (John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, no. 36).

entist, materialist, permissive, and finally a morality creator.[41] And that means axiological indifferentism. Such an outlook option causes a change in the very essence of the good, that is, its "internal" measure. Indifferentism treats "relative good" as an absolute and ultimate good. We are then dealing with a shortened perspective of good, to the point of blurring the line between good and evil. It also underlines the norm-forming concept of conscience. "Creative conscience" is no longer the giftedness of a person, thanks to which a person discovers a law which he does not impose on himself, but an arbitrary judgment about the good and moral evil of human acts (a man as a judge of morality who determines what is good and what is wrong).

The ways of thinking and existential attitudes mentioned here display the primary forms of manifesting religious and moral indifferentism in man's contemporary socio-cultural reality. Consequently, the sphere of the profane frees itself from ties with the sphere of the *sacrum*. Religion no longer determines neither everyday life nor the broadly understood cultural sphere of man, which are now subject to the "logic" of secular values. Besides, secularization spontaneously leads to the weakening of religious and ecclesiastical ties, as well as creates indifferentism towards all kinds of "transcendence," up to strictly atheistic standpoints. In this context, the adverse moral and educational effects of secularization and indifferentism directly affect the entire culture's impoverishment, introducing axiological nihilism into earthly human existence. It is disastrous because the omission of transcendence, objective truth, and goodness puts man on an existential strand and exposes him to destructive frustration and axiological emptiness.

The above observation already displays the normative nature of secularism and religious and moral indifference in the context of contemporary culture crisis. The realization of this duty becomes even more visible in the cultural reality when we learn more about this phenomenon's effects. They are particularly visible concerning the three fundamental values of Christian culture: truth, goodness, and *sacrum*. The attitude of indifferentism to the category of truth manifests itself in negating its

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[41] Such thinking manifests itself in several characteristic attitudes:
  − aversion and resistance to the promises of faith that appear "bland" and "illusory" because they do not guarantee any "concrete" happiness in the future and do not solve the fundamental problems of earthly life immediately, such as suffering, poverty, etc.;
  − "scientific indifference" putting absolute trust in science and technology, which as a rule should not be concerned with God, religion, and morality. Hence, the above issues should be considered irrational;
  − "experience of emptiness and loneliness," presented by many young people who live "at ease" in the belief that human existence is characterized by the "unbearable lightness of being";
  − "indifference to destruction," consisting in a complete lack of interest in life "here and now," treating the world as "total nonsense." Often, however, anarchist attitudes are endorsed;
  − "breaking interpersonal ties," as they are considered senseless and, as a consequence, lead to a loss of empathy and anti-social attitudes;
  − "youth indifference" are attitudes such as: "do whatever you want," "I don't care about anything yet," etc. Cf. Mariański, *Młodzież między tradycją i ponowoczesnością*, 205–240; Nash, "Genealogies of Indifference?," 25–42; Catto, "Interfaith Dialogue," 65–82.

existence and even the need to discover it. This type of mentality most often takes the form of cognitive agnosticism and the detachment of truth from human existence, and consequently, knowledge from man's action.[42] As Pope John Paul II emphasized: "The great certainties of the faith are being undermined in many people by a vague religiosity lacking real commitment; various forms of agnosticism and practical atheism are spreading and serve to widen the division between faith and life; some people have been affected by the spirit of an immanentist humanism, which has weakened the faith and often, tragically, led to its complete abandonment."[43]

Concerning the category of "good," the secularization of the cultural space, religious indifferentism manifests itself in moral immanentism and relativism, a false understanding and experiencing the phenomena of freedom, as well as a wrong evaluation of moral good and evil. Therefore, "one encounters a sort of secularist interpretation of Christian faith which is corrosive and accompanied by a deep crisis of conscience and Christian moral practice."[44] However, the beginning of cultural growth and the development of authentic interpersonal relationships that determine the proper development of culture is good, rooted in the love of God himself. "If God is love, and a man His child, [...] then man is also out of love, and love belongs to man's nature, that only thresholds and closed doors are the powers of truth, freedom, and justice – where there is no love."[45]

Considering the *sacrum*, religiously idiosyncratic people usually present agnosticism or the so-called "general faith." People indifferent to matters of faith may sometimes recognize the existence of the so-called "Higher Power" in a purely speculative manner. Nevertheless, the above belief does not affect their specific personal life. John Paul II characterizes the above situation as follows: "Many Europeans today think they know what Christianity is, yet they do not really know it at all. Often they lack knowledge of the most basic elements and notions of the faith. Many of the baptized live as if Christ did not exist: the gestures and signs of faith are repeated, especially in devotional practices, but they fail to correspond to a real acceptance of the content of the faith and fidelity to the person of Jesus."[46]

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[42] According to John Paul II, "Jesus is the truth of the universe and history, the meaning and destiny of human life, the foundation of all reality. You who have accepted this truth as a vocation and certainty of your life should show the legitimacy of this choice in your environment and your university work. We must therefore ask ourselves: what influence does the truth of Christ have on your studies, research, cognition of reality, and on the integral formation of the person? It happens that some, including those who say they are Christians, act as if God did not exist at the university. Christianity is not simply a subjective choice of a religious option, essentially irrational and private. As Christians, we have a duty to bear witness to what the Second Vatican Council affirms in its Constitution Gaudium et Spes: "Faith illuminates everything with new light, reveals the divine intention for the whole vocation of man and therefore directs the mind towards fully human solutions (no. 11)" (Jan Paweł II, "Przesłanie Jana Pawła II," 3).

[43] Jan Paweł II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, no. 47.

[44] Jan Paweł II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, no. 47.

[45] Wyszyński, "Kamienie węgielne budowania na górach świętych," 64.

[46] Jan Paweł II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, no. 47.

The striving for personal fullness, rooted in human nature, is realized primarily in the orientation towards truth, goodness, and beauty, leading to holiness. Reflection and thinking become the necessary initiators of culture-forming activities and determine their shapes. Between the rational nature of man and culture, there is a mutual complementarity relationship. Thanks to his mind, the human person does not get lost in the matter but masters it. He can use natural phenomena to fulfill his intentions purposefully, discover relationships between particular facts, and formulates general judgments.[47]

In this sense, even a cursory familiarization with the effects of secularization and religious indifferentism becomes a challenge to reach out to people who share the views and attitudes in life. Undoubtedly, new forms of atheization that defile religiously motivated morality are becoming a severe challenge for the Church of the 21st century. Thus, an essential dimension of involvement in culture is the humanization of the entire reality of human life, which is at the same time the area of cultural activity and cultural impact. If the human person is the goal and sense of culture, then man's values become its fundamental framework. These are, above all, the traditional values of truth, goodness, beauty, and holiness. Their essential role is that they constitute the basis of the culture of the spirit, and hence of all Western civilization.[48]

At the same time, cognitive, moral, artistic, and ideological values are not only means of achieving other goals and intentions, but they are the fundamental core of human culture: they are permanent in time and always valid. Moreover, for every human being, they set the direction of life – thus, they constitute essential criteria for assessing the behavior of all people. The implementation of these axiologically fundamental values determines the personal maturation of a human being. It is also a manifestation of the human person's potentialized nature, which strives for comprehensive development. Thanks to this, man becomes an authentic creator of culture. In a spiritual sense, Christian maturity opens in front of him the fullness of the truth inherent in the earthly reality that he is to transform.

Unfortunately, contemporary democratic structures and mechanisms exclude the centrality of religion in public and cultural life and, consequently, a significant influence of the Church in society. Nevertheless, John Paul II interprets this as the most urgent task of the contemporary Church, especially in the "Old Continent." Therefore, the Pope calls: "In the church in Europe, the 'new evangelization' is the task set before you! Rediscover the enthusiasm of proclamation. Hear today, addressed to you at the beginning of this third millennium, the plea heard at the beginning of the first millennium. […] Even if it remains unexpressed or even repressed, this is the most profound and genuine plea rising from the hearts of Europeans today, who

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47   Cf. Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 109.
48   Cf. Wyszyński. "Ale nie depczcie przeszłości ołtarzy...," 378–382.

yearn for a hope which does not disappoint. This hope has been bestowed on you as a gift, which must then be joyfully given away in every time and place. Let the proclamation of Jesus, which is the Gospel of hope, be your boast and your whole life."[49]

4. Towards Redeeming the Culture

In common understanding, contemporary postmodernism tries to situate Christian culture on the "unreal" margin of everyday life, just as superficial treatment of faith closes it in the private sphere of human spiritual experiences (religious indifferentism) and does not link it with the shape of everyday life and the ways of thinking and acting that create it. Making life choices, making decisions, courses of functioning among people, experiencing joy and drama, doing work, and celebrating. In the perspective of contemporary postmodern concepts, faith and culture try to deprive themselves of their true meaning.[50] In this light, it is not surprising that (post) modern culture – as a form of life in modern societies – only to a small extent expresses the faith of individuals and communities in God and transcendental values. The Christian culture itself is interpreted instead as an artistic creation that reaches more to Christian themes than arises from the foundations of Christian faith – that is, a culture that expresses and confirms its creator's faith. And the creators of culture are not only the creators of works of spiritual culture, art, and science but all those who – through culture – build their lives, giving it a shape more or less consistent with their own faith.[51]

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49   Jan Paweł II, *Ecclesia in Europa,* no. 45.
50   As Pope John Paul II repeatedly emphasized that the teaching of the Council, related to the relationship between faith and culture, penetrates with such difficulty into the practice of the Church's life and the contemporary Christians' attitudes. The words from the beginning of the pontificate (from 1982) to the representatives of the community of one of the European universities are significant: "There is no contradiction between culture and faith, as clearly emphasized by the Second Vatican Council; on the contrary, they can explain and enrich each other. Hence the special responsibility of Christian scientists and Catholic universities, the responsibility to contribute to the removal of a serious imbalance between general culture and the deepening of faith, which – as it seems – often ends prematurely, which must have an impact on the conduct of Christians and their presence in the world" (Jan Paweł II, "Dobro kulturalne każdego człowieka," 146).
51   The relationship between faith and culture has been a profound concern of the Church, especially since the Second Vatican Council. One of the most important documents of this Council, completed in December 1965, is the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes." It should be noted that Karol Wojtyła was one of the most active participants in the work on this document. In the context of the considerations presented here, particular attention should be paid to the chapter of this Constitution devoted to developing culture (and thus the relationship of the Church with contemporary culture) and the tasks of Christians in the development of culture. At this point, it seems necessary to quote the definition of culture adopted in the same Constitution, according to which: "culture in a general sense denotes everything that man perfects and develops the multiple talents of his spirit and body; tries,

The problem of translating faith into the culture will later become one of the most important themes of the pontificate of John Paul II, as well as the teaching of Cardinal Wyszyński. Why is it so important today to prevent faith and culture from drifting apart both in people's consciousness and in their lives? In this sense, it is vital to have a Christian concept of culture based on human improvement's personal and community dimensions. In other words, as an expression and confirmation of man, Christian culture is deeply rooted in the Gospel. It draws its dynamism from it, the truth about man, the meaning and purpose of his life, and the love of God that accompanies him.[52] Man creates himself through the inner effort of the spirit: thoughts, will, heart. At the same time, however, man creates a culture in community with others. Culture is an expression of interpersonal communication, co-thinking, and human cooperation. It is generated at the service of the common good – and becomes the fundamental good of human communities.[53]

In personalist terms, culture is thus understood as all creative activity of a human being. Through culture, man rationally and purposefully develops himself and the world, creating values that are revealed and lasted in the form of internalized works of culture, social structures, value systems, and technological achievements. Thus, the essential cultural factors have a double character: (1) impersonal because they come from the material world; (2) and personal, they are rooted in the human person or are directly related to him. Although they are of two kinds: personal and impersonal, spiritual and material, more active and rather the material basis for creating culture, they are always necessary, never separate and singular, but interpenetrate and complement each other to form a common human culture.[54]

Moreover, culture is a reality shaped by man in specific historical conditions. It cannot be created in isolation from the material world. It is very closely related to the human person from the act of creation and is the basis of his existence and action – the basis for the creation of human culture and history. Therefore, non-personal factors – coming from the world of matter – play a significant role.[55] Due to material elements, human spirituality can express itself. In this sense, the matter becomes the substance for interiorizing all spiritual endowments. Components of inanimate matter become, at the same time, essential building blocks, substance, and "language" that man needs to implement their inner ideas. They are also an indispensable ele-

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through knowledge and work, to bring the world itself under its control; makes social life more human, both in the family and in the entire state community, through the progress of morals and the efforts of institutions; finally, in his works over the centuries, he expresses, transmits and maintains great spiritual experiences so that they may serve the progress of many, and even the whole of humanity (*Gaudium et spes*, no. 53).

52 Cf. Jan Paweł II, "Fragment przemówienie w czasie Katholigentagu," 10–14.
53 Cf. Jan Paweł II, "Przemówienie do młodzieży na Wzgórzu Lecha," 723.
54 Cf. Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 63–77.
55 Cf. Ficek, "(Post-) Modernity and Christian Culture," 50–54.

ment of preserving and storing all the achievements of man's intellectual and aesthetic culture. Thus, a vital factor in the creation and existence of any artistic work.[56]

The human being's complex structure is expressed primarily in the multidimensional activity for transforming the temporal world, which creates the reality of technical, civilization, scientific, biological, social, and cultural progress. This dynamic of progress and comprehensive development, including cultural development, includes the missionary command of Jesus Christ: "Go into the whole world and make disciples of all peoples by baptizing them" (Matt 28:19). The missionary mandate defines the fundamental mission of the Church, which is evangelization, which is "[...] proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ in the modern world."[57] Above all, understanding and putting into practice Christ's teaching was not an easy task for early Christians as they had no ready-made model of culture to follow

Nevertheless, "by becoming man, the Son of God brought into the history of mankind all the Gospel riches of truth and goodness, and with it also revealed a new dimension of beauty: the Gospel message is filled to the brim with it."[58] In this sense, "cultural good" – that is, the inner culture of one person – is a value for others: "the greater one's" cultural "is, the more it must be used – consciously, actively, responsibly and in a Christian way – as a 'value for others.'"[59] This thought opens up critical perspectives for analyzing the educational consequences of the relationship between faith and culture. If faith is a gift from God, the daily devoted practice of faith in every area of life creates a truly human culture. Thus, God's gift to a person who builds his life on faith becomes, precisely through culture, God's gift to others.[60]

Therefore, a unique and irreplaceable role in culture understood as seeking and discovering the truth about man and the world is played by science and art together with their separate ways of knowing. In this context, it is crucial to bring the scientific and creative circles closer to the Church, making them aware of their mission in the world and the importance of constant dialogue with faith, the value of this dialogue for both spheres of human life – culture (in this case science and art) and faith. In the texts of both John Paul II and Cardinal Wyszyński, the appeal for defending the truth, appreciating and giving justice to all ways of knowing the truth, in all their

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56   Cf. Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 76–77.
57   Wyszyński, "Ewangelizacja świata," 4.
58   Jan Paweł II, *List do artystów*, 5.
59   Jan Paweł II, "Dobro kulturalne każdego człowieka," 148.
60   "The creator of culture, the Cardinal emphasizes in his teaching, is first and foremost a human person. Although communities such as the state or nation may create more favorable conditions for its development, the ultimate creator, maker, and inspiration is the man himself" (Wyszyński, "Konstytucja Pastoralna,"119–120). In this context, personalism emphasizes two essential aspects of human involvement in culture. On the one hand, the man gives shape to the culture in which he reflects his interior. On the other hand, through culture, he develops and shapes this interior. The integral connection of these two elements of culture means that although they constitute a whole, they interpenetrate, co-create and condition each other. Cf. Celej, *Kultura chrześcijańska duszą narodu*, 31.

autonomy and specificity – both through faith and through scientific cognition, and finally – contact with beauty.[61] The most important thing is that all those who choose a given path should be accompanied by the awareness of one truth that everyone strives for, openness to mutual inspirations that may result from their dialogue, responsibility for the actions taken, and their ethical dimension.[62]

In other words, science is seen through the prism of a personalist vision of culture. If it is to support man and the world's development, must accept the "human dimension of culture."[63] In this sense, the culture – as a fruit of faith, as well as art – does not have to be limited to explicit religious references. It's rooting in faith is determined by it's honesty in striving for the truth, it's attitude towards man and the world seen more broadly than in the context of material existence and pragmatic survival.[64] The sphere of values in the personalist approach is understood not only as Christianity's reality but also as a deposit cultivated in social life.

The axiological dimension of involvement in culture is realized primarily in the concern for the penetration of the entire reality of social life – human culture – with Christian values that lead to discovering the whole truth about the human person.[65]

Contact with art is not only a way of discovering the truth about the man but also of uncovering God. Culture is the road to faith here because it grows out of it. In this sense, the significant and eminent path to God is through beauty, which is an extraordinary dimension of the world created by God. Therefore, an essential element of the Church's life is caring for them, especially caring for the beauty of the liturgy. The highest achievements of the human spirit – high culture embracing the most outstanding works and activities, exceptional in discovering the truth about the world and people, about their experience and living life – awaken in man the need for truth, longing for beauty, readiness to do good, and sensitivity to transcendence. Thus, they open to the grace of faith. The history of culture displays that many of these great works grew out of a profound experience of faith. They represent a kind of testimony to the richness of people seeking God and finding Him. Thus,

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61   Cf. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, no. 12.
62   Cf. Cichocki, "Etos wychowawcy," 323–344.
63   In one of his speeches to people of science, John Paul II said: "As scholars and researchers, you are an international community whose activity can be decisive for the future of humanity, but on the condition that you are able to serve the true culture of man and protect this precious heritage. Your noble task is to work on the development of man, not only his possessions, knowledge, or strength. [...] This concept of culture results from the holistic view of man as a unity of body and soul, person and community, a rational being and ennobled by love" (Jan Paweł II, "Przemówienie na Uniwersytecie," 310).
64   As John Paul II put it: "For art, if it is authentic, although it does not necessarily express itself in typically religious forms, maintains the bond of internal kinship with the world of faith, so that even in the situation of a deep split between culture and the Church, art remains a kind of bridge leading to a religious experience. As a search for truth, the fruit of imagination that goes beyond everyday life, art is by nature a specific call to open up to the Mystery" (Jan Paweł II, *List do artystów*, no. 10).
65   Cf. Jan Pawet II, *Pamięć i tożsamość*, 88–89.

the world of works of artistic culture, transmitting the experiences of individual people, societies, or nations, is an essential building block and binder of their memory and identity, help in understanding themselves and their community, a factor that strengthens or weakens the sense of trying to improve oneself and one's world.[66]

Another important culture-creating environment is the school, understood as a place of formal education, as well as an educational and upbringing institution. But school is also an environment in which the young generation spends a large part of their lives, which is extremely important to their development. The school, therefore, plays a particular role in shaping man and thus in shaping culture. The cultural dimension of human education is a reality directly related to many spheres of human life: it is the totality of behaviors based on native and universal models, drawn from history and the Bible, provided by the home, school, church, and encoded in literature, theater, and art. Culture is wherever a person undertakes the full development of his spiritual life, both in the cognitive sphere and in the field of conduct and production. Culture is where a man gives his life a more prosperous and deeper shape, where it imprints its spirituality on life and works, on relations with God, with people, and with nature.

Each school is part of society and a nation's broader culture, introducing and building culture while constructively and creatively participating in it. At the same time, as a community, it has its own internal culture – its history, tradition, rituals, symbolism, its values, patterns, norms both formally declared and written and informally functioning, typical behavior of members of the school community, language and methods of communication, ways of solving problems, style of action and atmosphere. Finally, school is one of the primary environments that should support the family in education.[67]

In the light of the Christian concept of culture, upbringing means a process situated in the very center of culture as a space for the improvement of humanity. From this perspective, each school, being an institution that educates, enlightens, stimulates, and supports students' development, should, at least, try to counteract the emergence of a "torn" culture, the development of a culture of individual and group egoism. On the contrary, it should, by all means, work for a "genuinely personalist" culture.

The apparent direction of looking for answers is associated with strengthening the school's educational function, assuming constant care for the education level.[68]

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[66] Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Wstańcie, chodźmy!*, 74–75.

[67] Cf. Cichocki, "Etos wychowawcy," 345–346.

[68] In many documents of the Church, as well as in the teachings of popes and their statements to various bodies, the problem of the dominance of education by narrowly understood education, which is dangerous for today's culture, returns many times. Unfortunately, the diagnosis of John Paul II expressed as early as 1979 in words: "I think that more and more in the modern world, in different world systems, created on the basis of different ideologies, which, moreover, have quite a common root, more and more it will

Education that constitutes and creates an authentic, personalist culture must equip young people with competencies that are not limited to instruments of effective acquisition and "possession" of knowledge and skills valuable on the labor market and everyday institutional and social functioning. To develop humanity, we need broader competencies that allow us to prepare ourselves more "to be." In practice, it means a better understanding of the world, making choices in it by recognized values and moral standards, making an effort to learn the truth, contemplate beauty, achieve good by becoming "good" for others and building the common good, and on this path, creating goodness in himself.[69]

It also includes activities aimed at preparing a young person to enter the culture so that he can understand his own culture, find his place in it, appreciate the role of cultural identity in his life, the lives of his relatives, his community and nation, and consequently actively defend its most important values. Preparing people to be able and willing to work more and more consciously to "be," to work on oneself, on their humanity, is the essence of the personalist vision of upbringing. It is the process of leading and then supporting and accompanying the path to values, character education, building positive attitudes and attitudes characteristic of a Christian.[70]

Shaping a culture that is to be the genuine fruit of faith must begin with deepening the personal relationship with God. An essential step in this direction should be a deep understanding, acceptance, and implementation by Christians the message: what does it mean to be a Christian? Seeing the fruit of faith in culture, as well as the conscious building of culture in oneself and the world based on faith, requires reliable, persistent educational and formative work that would increase the awareness of the essence of this process in individuals and societies, i.e., realizing and fulfilling the truth about man and the world in the Christian spirit in love.[71]

Conclusions

The personalist perspective of Christian culture, strongly emphasized both in the teachings of John Paul II and Primate Wyszyński, displays the human person primarily as its only direct source and goal. A man understood as a unique and mysterious being,

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be obvious that the production of educated, highly trained, specialized units alone does not solve [...] the problem of man" (Jan Paweł II, "Przemówienie do profesorów," 731).

69   Cf. Cichocki, "Etos wychowawcy," 348–351.
70   Cf, Ficek, "(Post-) Modernity and Christian Culture," 70–74.
71   Jan Paweł II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, no. 45.

but at the same time close to the world, is called to realize his person and achieve his ultimate goal by shaping his own existence and changing the reality of the world.

Thus, by creating a world culture, man forms his own personalist culture, shapes and completes his personality, thus becoming a person in an ontological and moral sense. In this context, culture understood personalistically becomes the only way to create full humanity, both in the temporal and eschatological dimensions. In other words, in personalist cultural anthropology, a man appears as an eternally intended being – rooted in God's mind and embodied in a concrete historical reality. Its total value, however, is expressed in the perspective of two fundamental salvation events: the creation of man in the image and likeness of God and the salvific event of Jesus Christ.

Thus, the perspective of the extraordinary value and dignity of the human person becomes an essential feature of the personalist vision of involvement in culture. In this sense, the man directly touches God with his person, elevating him above all other creatures. The nature of the human person distinguishes him from other beings not only in a purely descriptive but also axiological sense. For this reason, man is more valuable than other beings on earth. This value, resulting from being a person and referred to as personal dignity, imposes both on man and society. He should respect it, which means to live "according to the measure of the human person."

For a Christian who treats activity in the field of culture as an element of his vocation, God is the final and deepest reference point and responsibility. Therefore, Christian culture-forming activity presents man with the prospect of cooperation with God. For there is no such form of external endeavor that could not be included in the sphere of spiritual work – that is, into such a dynamic contact with God that, by creating optimal conditions for human cultural development, is at the same time directed to God as the final goal. As it came out of God's hand, the world is a perfect work of creation, but it is not a finite, unchanging perfection. The world is not made so that a man would be only a passive user of it, like the resident of an enchanted castle. On the contrary, although the world is intended for man, he can continually add something more to God's harmony.

Therefore, culture – understood in personalist terms, both individual and social – ultimately improves the human person by learning the truth, doing good, and creating beauty in love. Due to the social nature of personalist Christian culture, all its essential elements have a supra-individual dimension. They enable the development of all social structures, as well as conditioning their identity, uniqueness, and sovereignty.

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The Metaphysics of the Incarnation in Contemporary Analytic Philosophy of Religion

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Abstract: The paper presents the latest achievements of analytic philosophers of religion in Christology. My goal is to defend the literal/metaphysical reading of the Chalcedonian dogma of the hypostatic union. Some of the contemporary Christian thinkers claim that the doctrine of Jesus Christ as both perfectly divine and perfectly human is self-contradictory (I present this point of view on the example of John Hick) and, therefore, it should be understood metaphorically. In order to defend the consistency of the conciliar theology, I refer to the work of, among others, Eleonore Stump, William Hasker, Peter Geach and Kevin Sharpe. As a result, I conclude that recent findings in analytic metaphysics provide an ontological scaffolding that explains away the objection of the incompatibility of the doctrine of the hypostatic union. In order to confirm this conclusion such metaphysical topics as properties attribution (what it means for an object to have a property), relation of identity (what it means for an object x to be identical with object y), and essentialism and kind membership (what it means for an object to belong necessarily to a kind) are scrutinized in detail.
Keywords: the Chalcedonian dogma, Christology, Analytic Philosophy of Religion, the relative identity, the Incarnation, borrowed properties

In this paper, I am going to present and summarize the most important results of the work of analytic philosophers with respect to metaphysics of the Incarnation that has been published in the last two decades. The recent rise of philosophical interest in the topics traditionally assigned to dogmatic theology is an interesting example of an interdisciplinary enrichment, which, within the context of the post-enlightenment history of mutual suspicions between theology and philosophy, is something worth noticing. This suspicion also occurred in the early analytic philosophy: "Religious motives in spite of the splendidly imaginative systems to which they have given rise, have been on the whole a hindrance to the progress of philosophy, and ought now to be consciously thrust aside by those who wish to discover philosophical truth."[1] Given this kind of opinions it should not come as a surprise that analytic philosophy was rarely a source of inspiration for theology. Therefore, one of the main goals of my

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paper is to shed light on this – mostly unrecognized by theologians – philosophical contribution to the problem of consistency of the doctrine of the Incarnation.

One has to notice that some of the contemporary representatives of the analytic philosophy of religion (Timothy Pawl, Richard Cross) fulfil this task by scrutinizing historical theories of Aquinas and Duns Scotus or by analysing the content of the concepts used in the formulation of the dogma such as the concepts of nature or of person. However, in this paper, I am interested only in original proposals of analytic philosophers (such as Eleonore Stump, Peter Geach, William Hasker, Brian Leftow, Robin Le Poidevin, and Kevin Sharpe), whose focus is on explaining away the objection of the self-contradictory nature of the dogma of the hypostatic union in Christ.

The structure of the paper is the following: first, I will shortly present the background of the discussion on the metaphysics of the Incarnation. The main part of the paper is divided into two sections: in the first one, I shall investigate the "symbolic" reading of the Chalcedon dogma (John Hick), and in the second, the defence of the "metaphysical" reading,[2] which in this paper is represented by the so-called Compositional Account. In the subsequent subsections, I shall defend this model by introducing the relevant notions of borrowed properties, the relative identity and the dominant kind. I intend to show that analytic philosophy of religion elaborated conceptual tools that are useful in the task of defending the consistency of the Chalcedon dogma.

1. The Coherence Objections

The method of testing the logical consistency of philosophical ideas is still popular among analytic philosophers. Philosophers, who usually struggle with providing definitive answers, can finally give one in the case of inconsistent ideas. At minimum, inconsistency of a thought decisively settles the problem: a self-contradictory idea cannot be true, and if it cannot be true, it is not. At maximum, striving for coherence could be viewed as a method of pursuing truth: "human reason's best chance at truth is won through the effort of integrating our data with our many and diverse

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2   I am aware that reducing the multiple interpretations of the Chalcedon dogma to a symbolic and a metaphysical reading is simplistic, but I focus on these two interpretations due to the limitations of my paper. However, I should mention that one could also indicate a "linguistic," "apophatic," and "inconsistent" reading of the dogma. According to the former, the Chalcedon definitions provided only "a pattern of predication" (Coakley, "What Does Chalcedon Solve and What Does It Not?," 146), according to the "apophatic" interpretation, they set a "boundary" on what cannot be said by ruling out aberrant interpretations of Christ (*ibidem*, 161), and according to the "inconsistent version" of the doctrine one has to accept them while acknowledging their inconsistent character (Beall, *The Contradictory Christ*).

intuitions into a coherent picture with the theoretical virtues of clarity, consistency, explanatory power, and fruitfulness."[3] Hence, it should not come as a surprise that the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation has stood in recent years at the centre of attention of analytic philosophy of religion. It is because the dogma of Chalcedon is both loaded with metaphysical content as well as it contains paradoxical statements:

> One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, [was] made known in two natures which are unconfused, unchanged, undivided, unseparated, with the difference of the natures being in no way removed on account of the union but rather the attributes proper (*idiotēs/proprietas*) to each nature are preserved and come together in one person (*prosopon/ persona*) and one hypostasis/subsistence, not parted or divided in two persons, but [in] one and the same So and only-begotten God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ.[4]

From now on, I shall refer to theology that defends views compatible with the dogma of hypostatic union as the conciliar theology, although one has to keep in mind that conciliar Christology cannot be reduced to the dogma formulated in Chalcedon. For example, the Third Council of Constantinople (681) specified Chalcedon's teaching by stating that in Jesus Christ, "two natural wills and operations fittingly come together for the salvation of the human race."[5]

According to the conciliar theology, there was (and is) one person – Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity – who has two distinct natures: the divine and the human nature which is composed of the body ensouled by a rational soul. These two natures are really unified in one person or *supposit*. The divine Son of God assumed human nature, and the assumption of this human nature leaves it whole and intact. This way of unification enables the two natures to act in their own individual ways.[6]

On the most basic level, the conciliar theology can cause confusion. It ascribes to Jesus Christ contradictory attributes such as, on the one hand, "timelessness" and "immutability" and "temporality" and "mutability" on the other. The Law of the Excluded Middle (LEM) states among others that for every object O and for every property P, either O exemplifies P or O does not exemplify P. It seems that the doctrine of the Incarnation violates the LEM, and hence the objection of its incoherence:

The Coherence Objection 1 (from now on: CO1): According to the conciliar theology, Christ is *p* and not-*p* at the same time, which is logically impossible.

CO1 states that it is impossible for one person to have both: attributes proper to human nature, as well as attributes proper to the divine nature.[7] A Christian response

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3   McCord Adams, *Christ and Horrors*, 11.
4   Cited in: Hauser, "On Being Human and Divine," 3.
5   Cited in: Hauser, "On Being Human and Divine," 9.
6   Pawl, *In Defense of Extended Conciliar Christology*, 16–17.
7   Hauser, "On Being Human and Divine," 9.

should present a coherent metaphysics demonstrating that the alleged impossibility is only illusionary.

Since I intend to present the metaphysics of the Incarnation by analytic philosophers, it is worth pointing out that they usually do not define the nature of metaphysics. They rather characterize metaphysics by topics that are assigned to this field of philosophical inquiry.[8] There is no doubt that at the centre of contemporary analytic metaphysics stands the problem of modality of things and properties of things. The ground-breaking work of Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, contributed to the resurgence of analytic metaphysics and reintroduced the notion of essence of an object and of essential properties of objects.

Essentialism is a view that sums up the debate on modality in a context that interests us here. According to essentialism, "if something is a member of a kind, then it is essentially a member of that kind."[9] For example, if Helen is a human being, then she is essentially a human being. By definition, it is logically impossible to acquire an essential property (the fact that Helen acquires a property *p* during her life, for example, an ability to speak French, is a sign that *p* is a contingent property of Helen). If "human being" is a natural kind, then one can question the possibility of the Incarnation in the following way:

The Coherence Objection 2 (from now on: CO2): It is impossible for the Son of God to become a human being, because in order to become a member of the kind: "human being," the Son of God must acquire the essential property of being a human being, and it is logically impossible to acquire an essential property.

An essential property of the divine nature is to be immaterial or spiritual and, by definition, an immaterial object cannot have a material part.[10] We are convinced that a robot cannot become a human being because a robot is essentially electronic, and nothing essentially made of metal can become an essentially organic entity (just as human beings are essentially organic[11]).

2. The Symbolic Reading of the Conciliar Christology

One of the first analytic philosophers who responded to the Coherence Objections was John Hick. He expressed his views as an editor in *The Myth of God Incarnate* (1977) and as an author in *The Metaphor of God Incarnate* (1993). As the titles of these works suggest, his solution to CO1 and CO2 consisted in a metaphorical read-

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8   van Inwagen – Sullivan, "Metaphysics."
9   Sharpe, "The Incarnation, Soul-Free," 119.
10   Leftow, "Against Materialist Christology," 67.
11   Marmodoro, "The Metaphysics of the Extended Mind," 214.

ing of the Chalcedon dogma. In other words, in his view, the mistake of the proponents of the Objections was to interpret the conciliar theology literally. According to Hick, there is an obvious puzzle as to how one being can jointly embody attributes of God and attributes of man, and the language of Chalcedon is deliberately vague and general in this regard.[12] Hick claims that the dogma of the hypostatic union was intended to eliminate false understanding of Jesus Christ, and, as such, it does not offer any explanation to the metaphysical question of the incompatibility of Christ's attributes. Moreover, in his opinion, every historical effort to give content to the dogma was condemned as heretical. For example, the most common, traditional reading, according to which the Second Person of the Trinity assumed the human nature entails that the latter was impersonal. It follows from this that the Son assumed a human "machinery" of the physical body and mental soul, but not a complete self-directing ego.[13] Therefore, one cannot say that Jesus Christ was truly a man, and, for Hick, this means that there is no difference between the conciliar theology and the heresy of Monophysitism. If one wants to avoid this consequence and emphasises the full humanity of Christ, then one has to admit that having a personal life belongs to human nature, and, in consequence, one commits the heresy of Nestorianism. The proponents of the traditional reading of Chalcedon have to either explain how Christ's soul and body fail to compose a human person or how they can avoid Nestorianism if Christ's soul and body do compose a human person.[14] Hick concludes that "to say, without explanation, that the historical Jesus of Nazareth was also God is as devoid of meaning as to say that this circle drawn with a pencil on paper is also a square."[15] The idea of the Incarnation is devoid of literal meaning, and hence, must be interpreted as a metaphor.

Hick notices that if one says that George Washington incarnates the spirit of American Independence from 1776, one does not state that Washington's nature was somehow united with the essence of the American Revolution nor that he participated in the essence of America. One rather expresses a conviction of a unique character of the first president of the United States and his historical role in winning independence from the United Kingdom. Similarly, according to Hick, if one uses the phrase: "the incarnated God" with reference to Jesus Christ, one does not commit oneself to ontological statements. One merely points out that Jesus "was a human being exceptionally open and responsive to the divine presence."[16]

Hick admits that the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation is true, but just as poetry or Hexameron are true. The metaphor of Jesus as the incarnate God is appropriate because the spirit of God indwelled in Jesus motivated His actions and

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12   Hick, *The Metaphor of the God Incarnate*, 102.
13   Hick, *The Metaphor of the God Incarnate*, 65.
14   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 281.
15   Hick, "Jesus and World Religions," 178.
16   Hick, *The Metaphor of the God Incarnate*, 105.

because Jesus was doing God's will. Similarly, the metaphor of the Son of God (that is the myth of the pre-existent divinity, who descends from heaven, dies to atone for the sins of the world, and returns in glory into the eternal life of the Trinity) shows Jesus' remarkable openness to God and His total responsiveness to divine grace. Christ incarnated the divine love of *agapē* through His actions (especially through His self-giving love), not ontologically. If the myth of the incarnate God changes our sinful attitudes or encourages us to respond to divine purposes, if it evokes our dispositions to serve God, then this is another reason to assess it as an appropriate metaphor. The conciliar theology is false when taken in the literal sense, but not if it is understood symbolically. The hypostatic union could be interpreted (following Donald Baillie) as a union of human action of Jesus and the divine grace that empowered Him to perform the given action.[17]

Hick also admits that a symbolic interpretation of the Chalcedonian Christology entails the rejection of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. It is because "responsiveness to God's purposes" or "openness to divine grace" are matters of degree. In principle, the spirit of God can indwell in every human being, and every human person that acts accordingly to a divine *agapē* reveals through his or her actions the life of God. "It can no longer be an *a priori* dogma that Jesus is the supreme point of contact between God and humankind."[18] It is worth noticing that a metaphorical reading of the dogma of the hypostatic union leads in consequence to the religious pluralism – a position that John Hick fully embraced but which is unacceptable for the majority of Christian philosophers.

3. The Compositional Account

The symbolic reading of the conciliar theology rests on a conviction that the Objections are accurate. It results in undermining the unique status of Christ with regard to a human relationship with God, and it rejects Christianity's self-knowledge of being an exclusive path to salvation. It is no wonder that Marylin McCord Adams wrote: "the turn away from medieval metaphysics […] has left contemporary Anglo-American Christology in shambles,"[19] and she urged for a return to metaphysics in Christology.

In order to defend the literal reading of the conciliar theology, one has to re-examine CO1 and CO2. Nobody denies that there is an element of paradox in the Chal-

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17 Hick, *The Metaphor of the God Incarnate*, 108.
18 Hick, *The Metaphor of the God Incarnate*, 110.
19 McCord Adams, *Christ and Horrors*, 2.

cedonian definition, but observing a paradox in a linguistic expression is not sufficient to state that it indeed contains a self-contradiction.[20]

Let us start our response by addressing CO1. Is there a way to show that there is no contradiction in claiming that Christ is limited and unlimited at the same time?

3a. Communication of Idioms

The simple way to explain away an appearance of self-contradiction is to indicate that in CO1, it is not really the same subject that is the subject of attribution. This is the main point of the doctrine of the communication of idioms, according to which one can aptly ascribe existence in time to the Son of God because the human nature of Jesus Christ indeed existed in time. Simultaneously, one can say that the Son of God is eternal because His divine nature is eternal.[21] Analytic philosophers colloquially refer to the doctrine of the communication of idioms as to "the *qua* move." This is because one can simplify this doctrine in the following way: Christ *qua* human nature existed in time; Christ *qua* divine nature is timeless.

The problem with the *qua* move is that it can be applied to many different objects. For example, an apple is red *qua* its skin and is nutritious *qua* its carbohydrates.[22] This raises the question of whether the communication of idioms is merely a linguistic construct, which says nothing about the ontological realities that undergird the predication. If the *qua* move is merely a linguistic rule, then it "achieves nothing," as William Hasker[23] harshly comments, and it "serves only to muddy the waters," as Thomas Senor adds.[24] One can clearly see the problem in the example of an apparently self-contradictory object like a round square (let's name it X). Nobody would be satisfied with the following effort to show the consistency of X: "X is round *qua* circle (C), and X has four angles *qua* square (S)," because it collapses into an evidently inconsistent statement: "X is round, and X has four angles." Let us notice that there would be no inconsistency if circle C and square S were different supposits, but in the case of Christ, this is precisely the move that the conciliar theology forbids: the human and the divine nature are not two distinct supposits (persons). Otherwise, we would end up with the heresy of Nestorianism. It seems that the doctrine of the communication of idioms by itself cannot dismiss CO1. We need a solution that would show how something timeless and something temporal can constitute a whole that is something more than a mereological sum of its parts.[25]

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20   Coakley, "What Does Chalcedon Solve and What Does It Not?," 155.
21   Pawl, *In Defense of Extended Conciliar Christology*, 17.
22   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 289.
23   Hasker, "A Compositional Incarnation," 436.
24   Senor, "The Compositional Account of the Incarnation," 53.
25   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 289.

3b. Borrowed Properties

The standard response of analytic philosophers comes from Eleonore Stump, who was inspired by Lynne Rudder Baker's notion of a "borrowed property."[26] Stump observes that wholes can have attributes because their parts do, or as Le Poidevin puts it, "the properties of the parts can carry over to the whole."[27] With respect to the apple example, the redness of the apple is borrowed from a part of the apple (namely its skin). One can truly assign redness to an apple, but it does not mean that it is red *simpliciter*. According to the borrowed properties hypothesis, an apple is red in virtue of its skin, and its skin is red *simpliciter*. In this way, one can understand how it is possible to attribute inconsistent properties to one object. For instance, an apple could be said to be red and yellow at the same time. It is red in virtue of its skin, and it is yellow in virtue of its core.[28]

The above model applied in Christology results in a theory that is called the Compositional Account. According to it, Jesus Christ (a single supposit) is composed of two numerically and qualitatively proper parts: the divine and the human nature.[29] The majority of analytic philosophers who take part in the debate takes "nature" to signify a concrete particular or a concrete object[30]; "the concrete ingredient in the metaphysical makeup of an individual that makes it the sort of individual that it is."[31] On the concretism approach the Incarnation consists in the Son of God adding to "Himself as a part a human body-soul complex. In doing so He becomes the Incarnate Christ."[32] The Son of God assumed a full natural endowment of a human being.[33]

There are several worries to be addressed concerning the Compositional Account. The first one is a worry that Jesus Christ as a composite does not have any attributes *simpliciter*. That seems to be Stump's point of view, but it is counter-intuitive. Brian Leftow replies that there are some properties of a part that are transferred to the whole as its properties *simpliciter*.[34] For example, Helen is intelligent because of her mind, so, in Stump's view, she is intelligent in virtue of her mind and not *simpliciter*, but this is a confusing way to express the truth about Helen's character. Leftow

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26   Stump, "Aquinas' Metaphysics of the Incarnation," 205.
27   Le Poidevin, "Identity and the Composite Christ," 173.
28   Le Poidevin, "Identity and the Composite Christ," 173.
29   Marmodoro – Hill, "Composition Models of the Incarnation," 469; Senor, "The Compositional Account of the Incarnation," 53.
30   Hauser, "On Being Human and Divine," 4–5; Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 278.
31   Hasker, "A Compositional Incarnation," 434. A notable exception from the concretist view on nature in analytic Christology is Alvin Plantinga ("On Heresy, Mind and Truth," 183–184) who takes "nature" to pertain to a property or a set of properties which characterize a certain object. According to him the Incarnation consists in assuming a property of being human. Later in the paper whenever I refer to "nature" I assume a concretist point of view.
32   Hasker, "A Compositional Incarnation," 433.
33   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 279.
34   Leftow, "A timeless God incarnate," 292.

observes that it is perfectly appropriate to say that Helen is intelligent *in her own right* as opposed to say that since Helen's nose is not intelligent *simpliciter*, then she is not intelligent *in her own right*. The best explanation for this fact is a hypothesis that what individuates Helen is her mind and not her nose, and this is why every property possessed by her mind *simpliciter* is possessed by Helen *simpliciter*. It seems then that nothing excludes the possibility of Jesus Christ having properties *simpliciter*. There is only one thing to adjudicate, namely, what individuates Christ? According to Leftow, the conciliar theology is quite clear in this regard: it is the Second Person of the Trinity who is "the identity-determining part" of the Incarnate God.[35] The Son of God is the ultimate possessor of the attributes of Christ. As Thomas Flint puts it: "the divine properties are naturally seen as latching directly onto the divine person, while the human properties clearly are immediately ascribable to Christ's human nature and only indirectly ascribable to the Son."[36]

3c. Relative Identity

The most discussed problem of the Compositional Account refers to the relations of identity in Jesus Christ. If He is a composite of the divine nature of the Son of God and the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth, then the Son of God is not identical with Jesus Christ, but He is a proper part of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, because the Son of God – the Second Person of the Trinity – is a divine person, then either we would have to say that Jesus Christ is impersonal, or commit a heresy of Nestorianism and say that there are two distinct persons in the incarnate God: Jesus Christ and the Son of God. One can present the current paradox in the following way:

The Paradox of Composition
(1) The divine nature of Jesus Christ = The Second Person of the Trinity
(2) Jesus Christ = The Second Person of the Trinity
(3) Jesus Christ = the divine nature of Jesus Christ

But on the Compositional Account, (3) is false, because according to it, the divine nature is a proper part of Christ, and does not stand in relation of identity to Christ.[37]

A rather unconventional way to solve the paradox was proposed by Andrew Loke and William Hasker. They both deny (1). Hasker simply states that the relation between the divine nature of Christ and the Word is not the relation of identity but of constitution.[38] Loke is more specific in his rejection of the identity of the pre-incarnated nature of God and the Son of God. He takes inspiration from the Aristotelian hylomorphic theory of individuals according to which objects are compounds

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35   Leftow, "A timeless God incarnate," 284.
36   Flint, "Should Concretists Part with Mereological Models of the Incarnation," 69.
37   Le Poidevin, "Identity and the Composite Christ," 178.
38   Hasker, "A Compositional Incarnation," 441–442.

of matter and form. In a controversial move, Loke applies this theory to all (also immaterial) objects, and he claims that the Son of God is also a compound of "the divine stuff" or "the divine matter," which amounts to the divine nature of the conciliar theology and of the form, which is "the individual essence of the Son that grounds the identity of the Person pre- and post-Incarnation."[39] It is quite possible that from the standpoint of orthodoxy Loke's solution causes more harm than the Paradox of Composition itself. First of all, by negating (1), we introduce four godheads in the Trinity (three Persons plus one divine nature). Second, we are forced to say that, i.e., the divine nature of Christ is not intelligent in its own right but in virtue of having the form of the Word. Third, it breaks with the tradition of ascribing the attribute of simplicity to God. The hylomorphic theory of identity was meant to be applied only to material objects.

In order to solve the Paradox of Composition in a way that would be consistent with the conciliar theology, one has to have a closer look at the notion of identity. A standard account of identity assumes that it is a dyadic relation between an object and an object (let us call this notion "the absolute identity"), but Peter Geach proposed a different account on which it is a "triadic relation which holds between an object and an object relative to a sortal concept."[40] To put it simply, one expresses the absolute identity in the form of an equation: "$x = y$," whereas the relative identity is expressed by the proposition: "x is the same F as y," where F stands for a sortal. This allows us to say that x is identical to y relative to sortal F, but x is not identical to y relative to sortal G. Let us invoke "the tale of a tail," that is, a famous example of cat Tibbles, in order to illustrate the problem. Let us assume that a part of Tibbles, let us call it Tib, consists of Tibbles without a tail. However, on Tuesday, Tibbles really lost his tail. If we only had the concept of absolute identity at our disposal, then the following Paradox of Identity would occur:

(a) Tibbles on Monday is not identical with Tib on Monday
(b) Tibbles on Tuesday is identical to Tib on Tuesday
(c) Tib on Monday is identical to Tib on Tuesday
(d) Tibbles on Monday is identical to Tibbles on Tuesday
(e) Tibbles on Monday is identical to Tib on Monday (law of transitivity, [b], [c], [d]), which is excluded by (a).[41]

But with the conceptual tool offered by Geach, one can solve the Paradox of Identity as follows:

(a') Tibbles on Monday is not identical with Tib on Monday
(b') Tibbles on Tuesday is identical to Tib on Tuesday
(d') Tibbles on Monday is the same *cat* as Tibbles on Tuesday

39 Loke, "Solving a Paradox Against Concrete-Composite Christology," 498.
40 Conn, "Relative Identity, Singular Reference, and the Incarnation," 61.
41 Geach, *Reference and Generality*, 216.

(d") Tibbles on Monday is not the same *lump of matter* as Tibbles on Tuesday

(c') Tib on Monday is the same *lump of matter* as Tib on Tuesday

(c") Tib on Monday is not the same *cat* as Tib on Tuesday (because on Monday, Tib is not a cat at all).[42]

The tale of a tail prompts a solution to the Paradox of the Composition:

(1') The divine nature of Jesus Christ is identical to the Second Person of the Trinity relative to nature (the divine nature is ontically the same as the Second Person of the Trinity).

(2') Jesus Christ is identical to the Second Person of the Trinity relative to personhood (Jesus Christ is personally identical to the Second Person of the Trinity).

From (1') and (2'), one cannot infer (3).

Obviously, one could criticize that the example of Tib and Tibbles is not applicable to the conciliar theology because it consists of a natural kind (cat) and an undetached part (cat without a tail). In other words, Tib is not a proper part of Tibbles, whereas not only the Chalcedon dogma refers to two natural kinds: divinity and humanity, but also the Compositional Account assumes that two distinct natures of the Incarnate God are His proper parts. This could lead to paradoxical statements. For example, if one takes a rock from which Michelangelo sculpted "David," one can notice that the sculpture was an undetached part of the rock and conclude that "David" existed long before it was "liberated" by the artist. As a response, I would point out that Christian philosophers do not have to argue that relative identity is something that occurs in the natural world on a daily basis. Quite the opposite, Peter van Inwagen, for example, restricts the application of the notion of relative identity solely to the Christian dogmas of the Incarnation and the Trinity.[43] If that is the case, then it should not surprise us that thought experiments involving relative identity do not contain instances of wholes and proper parts. According to van Inwagen, in the world of real and objectively existing objects, there are only two instances of relative identity. If there were no Christian revelation, we would not have had the faintest idea about relative identity, just as we would not have discerned between natures and persons. But for apologetic purposes, it is enough to show that relative identity is metaphysically and logically possible.

Robin Le Poidevin pointed at the second problem concerning relative identity. It seems to him that it presupposes the concept of absolute identity.[44] For example, if one says that (d') "Tibbles on Monday is the same *cat* as Tibbles on Tuesday" and (d") "Tibbles on Monday is not the same *lump of matter* as Tibbles on Tuesday," one still assumes the absolute identity of Tibbles. According to Le Poidevin, in order to be precise, one should put "Tibbles" in context: (d^): "Tibbles (d') on Monday is the same

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42   Le Poidevin, "Identity and the Composite Christ," 181.
43   van Inwagen, "And Yet They Are Not Three Gods But One God".
44   Le Poidevin, "Identity and the Composite Christ," 182.

cat as Tibbles on Tuesday" and (d^^): "Tibbles (d") on Monday is not the same *lump of matter* as Tibbles on Tuesday." Christopher Conn, however, rightly notices that this need for clarification can come only from the conviction that Geach's goal for introducing the concept of relative identity was to replace the traditional account of identity with the new one, but a defender of the conciliar theology is not obliged, as we have already noticed, to claim that there is no such thing as absolute identity.[45] On the contrary, if one compares (1') and (2'):

(1') The divine nature of Jesus Christ is identical to the Second Person of the Trinity relative to nature;

(2') Jesus Christ is identical to the Second Person of the Trinity relative to person-hood;

then one should come to the conclusion that there is no need for contextualizing Jesus Christ in (1') and Jesus Christ in (2') because the conciliar theology insists that the divine nature of Christ is the whole Christ (one could say the same about the human nature of Jesus). Otherwise, the Compositional Account would understand Christ's composition of the divine and the human nature in an aberrant way, that is, in the sense that He is half-God and half-man.

3d. The Unity of a Person

Normally, personal identity dominates ontic identity; that is, if Helen is a human person, then Helen is a human being. The conciliar theology, on the other hand, states that with respect to Christ, personal identity does not dominate ontic identity, and, therefore, although Christ is a human being, He is not a human person. Christopher Conn says that "we haven't got the faintest idea" how it is possible that two distinct beings are the same person.[46] This is what a true mystery consists in, and this why we need revelation to disclose the divine mystery. Philosophy can assure that the hypostatic union is not metaphysically excluded but does not inform us "how it is done." In this way, we touch upon the problem that was signalled in the section devoted to Hick's criticism of the literal understanding of the conciliar theology: how is it that Jesus' human soul and Jesus' human body failed to constitute a human person? The human nature of Christ was a concrete being that thinks, wills and experiences as other human beings, and yet in His case, this was not sufficient to make Him a human person. The reason for which Christian philosophers deny human person-hood in Christ is simple: the admission would amount to the aberrant heresy of Nestorianism that introduces division and separation in Christ. But can we rationally support such an exclusion? Are there any additional reasons to deny human person-hood in Jesus Christ apart from purely dogmatic?

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45   Conn, "Relative Identity, Singular Reference, and the Incarnation," 67.
46   Conn, "Relative Identity, Singular Reference, and the Incarnation," 77.

One of the hypotheses uses the Geachean principles of relative identity. As we remember, Geach could defend the view that (c") "Tib on Monday is not the same *cat* as Tib on Tuesday" because, on Monday, Tib was not a cat, but a part of a cat. In order to avoid the consequence that if on Monday Tibbles laid on a mat, then, in fact, there were two cats laying on a mat, Geach introduced a principle stating that if a set of parts composes at time *t* a member of a natural kind, no subset of the set composes at *t* a member of the same natural kind.[47] To put it simply, no part of a cat is the cat itself. Leftow applied the Geachean principle to the Compositional Account and claimed that the human nature of Christ as His part cannot be a person because a mere part of a person cannot be a person itself.[48] This solution seems to be neat and simple, but if we keep in mind that on the Compositional Account Christ is composed of the Son of God and the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth, it has an unwanted consequence in the conclusion that the Son of God as a mere part of Jesus Christ is not a person either. Leftow initially accepted this conclusion by saying that in the Incarnation, "a human being joins with the Son of God to constitute a 'larger' person,"[49] but eventually changed his views when he noticed that Son of God is identical to Jesus Christ, and He is not just a mere part of Christ.[50]

Anna Marmodoro and Jonathan Hill showed a possible way to specify Geach's and Leftow's solution to the threat of Nestorianism. They suspect that Geach's principle stating that a mere part cannot be a person comes from Aristotelian homonymy principle that states that a proper part of a whole ceases to be what it is if it ceases to be a part of that whole. For example, if a finger is cut off from a body, we use the term "finger" with respect to a cut off body part only homonymously.[51] Aristotle holds this view because he was convinced that an essential function of a thing determines its identity, and the former is determined by one substantial form of the thing in question. According to Marmodoro and Hill, this entails that "a part cannot retain its own identity in the whole, so a fortiori cannot be of the same kind as the whole."[52] From this it follows that if Christ is a person, then the human nature of Jesus is not.

Aristotle's insight that one determines the identity of a whole on the basis of its function can also find a useful application in an explanation of the unity of Christ. The threat of Nestorianism consists not only in ascribing personhood to the human nature of Jesus but also in introducing such separation between the divine and the human nature of Christ that one loses the unique ontological relation of the Son

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47   Geach, *Reference and Generality*, 215.
48   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 283.
49   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 283.
50   Leftow, "Composition and Christology," 321. The previous section was devoted to an explanation with the help of the notion of the relative identity how it is possible to sustain that Christ is composed of the two natures, divine and human, as well as that Christ is identical to the Son of God.
51   Aristoteles, *Metaphysica*, VII, 10.
52   Marmodoro – Hill, "Composition Models of the Incarnation," 485.

of God to Jesus of Nazareth. Marmodoro and Hill observe that because the main function of Christ – the salvation of humanity – requires a single agent who is neither merely a human being nor merely a divine being, then "the constituents of Christ form a genuine unity to the extent that they form a whole which itself functions in a unique way."[53]

Timothy Pawl thinks that one can solve the problem of the personhood of the human nature of Jesus much easier by simply asking what the concept of person as used by the conciliar theology means. In his opinion, there is something troubling in saying that the human nature of Jesus thinks, wills and experiences without being a person only if one claims that having a rich mental life is enough to be a person. This is not what Chalcedon meant when the concept of person was used in its definitions. Going back to Boethius' definition, Pawl reminds us that a person is a supposit of a rational nature, that is, something that sustains a rational nature. Christ's human nature fails to be a supposit because it is already sustained by the Word.[54] Leftow tries to express the same proposition in a language of non-traditional metaphysics by saying that Jesus' body and soul do not have life on their own, but they are a phase of the divine life. "It is as if God the Son were a bit of 'super-DNA' implanted in Mary's zygote at conception. This DNA controls the workings of the rest of the zygote's DNA, determining the biological development of the zygote, and the further development of the fetus, infant and child Jesus."[55] The key to understand Leftow's position is to remember his conviction that human persons supervene on human natures. In this light, if the conciliar theology teaches that human nature was assumed by the already existing Second Person of the Trinity, then there was no reason for another person to supervene on the exact same nature.[56]

3e. Kind Membership

The last question about the Compositional Account I would like to tackle at the same time addresses CO2: how is it possible that an essentially immaterial and simple God acquired a material part? How is it possible for an object to acquire modal properties of members of a different kind? Leftow, who, as we could notice, generally defends the conciliar theology, is especially troubled with CO2, and it seems that he cannot find a good solution to the threat it poses. He emphasises that God is a spirit and

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53   Marmodoro – Hill, "Composition Models of the Incarnation," 486.
54   Pawl, *In Defense of Concicliar Christology*, 33.
55   Leftow, "A Timeless God Incarnate," 283–284. Christopher Hauser ("On Being Human and Divine," 25) proposes a different way to get rid of the counterintuitive claim that although the human nature of Jesus wills, thinks and experiences, it fails to count as a person. On Hauser's account the only individual that says or does something is the person of Christ and not His natures. Christ uses His natures to do something, as we use our eyes to see, but it does not mean that our eyes are seeing something.
56   Leftow, "A timeless God incarnate," 288.

that there is an unsurpassable chasm between immaterial and material things: "How could something relevantly like a soul become something relevantly like a stone? The answer seems to me: 'it couldn't.'"[57] From his point of view, one can only defend the consistency of the conciliar theology by denying that Jesus had flesh and bones and that He can be seen in at least analogical way to how we see material objects, but as Hasker rightly pointed out, such a standpoint goes against the evidence from the Scripture (c.f. Luke 24:39).[58]

In order to explain away CO2, one has to reject essentialism and observe that an object can belong to multiple kinds while having modal properties of only one kind, which Kevin Sharpe calls "the dominant kind." His work is aimed at proving that it is possible to belong to a kind and not to possess modal properties of that kind unless it is the dominant kind of the object in question. "The dominant kind membership is a matter of what an object is most fundamentally."[59] We belong to kind "animal," as well as to kind "spiritual beings," but none of the above is our dominant kind, because most fundamentally, we are human beings. Therefore, our modal properties are properties of a human being and not of an animal. In the case of the Son of God, He is, post-Incarnation, a human being, but "human being" is not His dominant kind (on this theory, the dominant kind of Christ would be "divine person"). Sharpe postulates that only "dominant kind membership constrains on individual's compositional possibilities."[60] We cannot become a robot because our dominant kind – "human being" – puts restrictions on what our compositional possibilities are, but Christ's dominant kind has no restrictions whatsoever – a divine being is omnipotent. Moreover, even if one can appropriately say that "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14), it does not mean that the Son of God is essentially organic or material because "material object" is not His dominant kind.

Conclusions

There is more than a grain of truth in Sarah Coakley's remark about analytic Christology: "the modern concerns of the analytic school of philosophy of religion diverge strongly from what we know of the participants in the fifth-century debate."[61] The main focus of the ancient discussions was to provide a clear understanding of the notions of nature and of person (*physis* and *hypostasis*), which are, as we have noticed, of little interest in the current debate. However, there is a similarity, and

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57   Leftow, "The Humanity of God," 21.
58   Hasker, "A Compositional Incarnation," 438.
59   Sharpe, "The Incarnation, Soul-Free," 124.
60   Sharpe, "The Incarnation, Soul-Free," 127.
61   Coakley, "What Does Chalcedon Solve and What Does It Not?," 159.

because of it, a continuity between the traditional accounts and the ones I presented in this paper. In the fourth and fifth century, there would be no philosophical interest in analysing differences between nature and person if it was not for a Christian effort to explain the consistency of the mystery of the Trinity and of the incarnated Word. In order to achieve this goal, Christian thinkers made some important distinctions that (as a side effect) enriched metaphysics. Today, nobody denies the important role of the concept of a person in the philosophical vocabulary.

Our current situation is similar. Christology is still being challenged with respect to its logical consistency, and Christian philosophers, in order to defend Chalcedonian definitions, provide precise distinctions between absolute and relative identity, a borrowed property and a property *simpliciter* or a natural and a dominant kind, to name the most important (in my opinion) results of the analytic discussions on the metaphysics of the Incarnation. These distinctions most probably would never cross philosophical minds if it was not for problems posed by Christology. The aforementioned insights about relations, kind memberships and properties differ from the interests of classical metaphysics, but they serve the same goal of defending the conciliar theology. It could also be the case (the jury is still out because it is far too early for this judgement) that they shall also enrich the language of metaphysics, and in this way, they will deepen the way we look at the world.

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Fulfilling the Call to Holiness in the Views of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński.
An Outline of the Problem in the Light of the Ascetic Teachings of the Servant of God

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Abstract: The article outlines the issue of fulfilling the call to holiness based on the hitherto little-known ascetic teachings of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński. All the research work was carried out by analyzing Wyszyński's statements about the universal call to holiness and its four dimensions: theological, moral, ecclesial and psychological. The results of the analysis of the source texts were assessed in the light of the exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate* by Pope Francis. It was found that Wyszyński's teachings on the realization of the call to holiness lost nothing of its topicality and is fully rooted in the tradition of the Church.

Keywords: holiness, spirituality, vocation, Wyszyński, Francis

The Second Vatican Council underlined the call to holiness[1] as the full participation in God's life. The fullness of life in God is sometimes understood differently (e.g., as Christian perfection or union with God); however, it is mostly referred to as sanctity or holiness.[2] On the Solemnity of Saint Joseph in 2018, Pope Francis issued

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[1] Manuela Plans Belda (*Guiados por el Espíritu de Dios*, 41–42) defines the biblical understanding of holiness as follows: "En el Antiguo Testamento, el vocablo «santo» (qadosh) proviene de la raíz hebrea qds, que expresa la idea de «cortar», «separar». Que Dios es «Santo» significa su absoluta trascendencia en relación con las creaturas, su infinita majestad y grandeza: «Yo soy Dios, y no un hombre; soy el Santo en medio de ti» (Os 11,9; cfr. Sal 98). Solamente Dios es santo: «No hay Santo como el Señor» (1 S 2: 2). La santidad de Dios es suprema: «!Santo, Santo, Santo es el Señor de los ejércitos! ¡Llena está toda la tierra de su gloria!». En el lenguaje bíblico, «El Santo» no expresa una característica más de Dios, sino su propia esencia, el hecho de que Dios es Dios y no una creatura. Dios manifiesta y comunica su santidad, santificando a las creaturas [...] En el Nuevo Testamento, Jesús es llamado «Santo», por el Arcángel san Gabriel: «Respondió el ángel y le dijo: El Espíritu Santo descenderá sobre ti y el poder del Altísimo te cubrirá con su sombra; por eso, el que nacerá Santo será llamado Hijo de Dios» (Lc 1,35). En este texto se revela que Jesucristo tiene la misma santidad que Dios."

[2] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 825, states: "«The Church on earth is endowed already with a sanctity that is real though imperfect» (LG 48 # 3). In her members perfect holiness is something yet to be acquired: «Strengthened by so many and such great means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their

an apostolic exhortation *Gaudete exsultate*[3] on the call to holiness in the modern world. As the Holy Father pointed out, his aim was to "repropose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities" (*GE* 2). Pope Francis encouraged people to strive toward holiness, pointing out that it is possible in the modern world. He also stated the dangers which threaten it and its various determinants.[4] The scheduling of Cardinal Wyszyński's beatification on June 7, 2020 (postponed for the time after the COVID-19 pandemic) increased interest in his life, teaching and 33 years of service as a primate. The author of the article, inspired by Pope Francis' exhortation of *Gaudete et exsultate*, decided to present Cardinal's teachings on the striving toward holiness on the basis of his utterances. The article presents Wyszyński's teachings from the period of 1942–1981, which on various occasions was directly addressed to consecrated religious people, in particular to the members of the Secular Institute of Women Helpers of the Virgin Mary of Jasna Góra (Clarus Mons), Mother of the Church.[5] Among the source texts subjected to analysis are some of Wyszyński's utterances (numbering more than 3000), namely the ones which discussed the topic of striving toward holiness.[6] These utterances have a spiritual character and appear to be little known, as only some of them have been published. The author of the article is aware of the fact that a dozen or so publications have been published on the subject of the call to holiness in the view of Wyszyński, and that they are based primarily on the well-known homilies and sermons of the primate. However, he considered it advisable to present how these matters were presented to the secular consecrated by the cardinal.[7] The results of

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condition or state – though each in his own way – are called by the Lord to that perfection of sanctity by which the Father himself is perfect» (LG 11 # 3)." See Hadryś, *Dynamika chrześcijańskiego życia duchowego*, 52–60; Gogola, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, 104; Hadryś, "Różne ujęcia pełni życia chrześcijańskiego," 243–247.

3   Francis, *Gaudete et exsultate. On the Call to Holiness in Today's World*.

4   See: Roszak – Orłowski, *Świętość – wysiłek czy łaska?*; Dąbrowski, "Moralno-pastoralne aspekty świętości," 19–27.

5   The article addresses holiness in the moral sense, which a Christian person is supposed to realise with their entire life, and not about ontic holiness, which is received in baptism: "La santidad moral no es más que el desarrollo de la santidad ontológica en el obrar del cristiano, como enseña san Pedro […]. En este sentido, la santidad es una tarea que Dios confía al hombre. […] el cristiano no puede seguir llevando una existencia pagana o mundana, sino que debe vivir según Cristo" (Plans Belda, *Guiados por el Espíritu de Dios*, 44).

6   Since 2005, the Institute of Women Helpers of the Virgin Mary of Jasna Góra, Mother of the Church is called the Institute of Primate Wyszyński. The texts by Wyszyński, bearing appropriate numbering and used in this article, are typescripts and come from the archives of the above mentioned Institute.

7   See: Fortuniak, "Chrześcijańska koncepcja pracy," 85–103; Tomziński, "Prymas spod znaku Jasnej Pani," 77–91; Miziołek, "Życie i duchowość Stefana Wyszyńskiego," 9–34; Bortkiewicz, "Zbawczy charakter pracy człowieka," 291–310; Bortkiewicz, *Etos pracy*; Bartoszewski, "Ku beatyfikacji," 506–510; Ewartowska, "Bóg Ojciec a przybrani synowie," 41–57; Głowacki, "Wierność Bogu znakiem chrześcijańskiego życia," 29–38; Król, "Rola pracy," 39–52; Misiurek, "Chrześcijańskie życie duchowe," 398–420; Maćko, "Znaczenie modlitwy," 83–91; Werbiński, "Duchowość pracy ludzkiej," 105–131.

research works are presented in this article with reference to the universal call to holiness and its four dimensions: theological, moral, ecclesial and anthropological.[8] The relevant excerpts from Pope Francis' exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate* were also invoked for each of these dimensions. The author of the article is aware that the existential and ecclesial context of Cardinal Wyszyński and Pope Francis' statements is different; they set different goals for themselves when reflecting upon the call to holiness. However, the fact that they concern the same issue, and their statements are similar, not necessarily in terms of science but both have a pastoral character, made it advisable for the author to compare.[9] The author has been committed to the analysis and development of Wyszyński's teachings for nearly 20 years, however, due to the formula of the article, the subject matter of the article has been presented only in outline, and the full theological and pastoral reflection on this issue is the objective of the continued works aimed at publishing a special monograph after the beatification of the Primate of the Millennium. Addressing the issue in a limited form of an article necessitated the omission of, among others, the Marian aspect of striving for full life in God as well as the manifestations and features of holiness.

1. The Call to Holiness

Every Christian is called to holiness through the sacrament of baptism. Love is a measure of holiness, and the baptized person should grow in it through the word of God, the Eucharist, prayer, sacrifice for others, helping them and confessing Christ, witnessing for Him with life.[10] Wyszyński was aware of the universality of the call to holiness, which he spoke about in the context of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council: "The Church at the Council [...] reminded in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church that we are all called to holiness"[11] and when referring to the sacraments of baptism and confirmation: "All are in a sense ordained by baptism, by confirmation, and by other sacraments. Therefore, the holy apostolic writers rightly called all the faithful [...] saintly people."[12] When justifying the need to care for personal holiness on the part of the baptized person, Wyszyński made a special reference to the call to the apostolate. He believed that in order to successfully help others in at-

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8   Jerzy Gogola (*Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, 106) outlined the ideal of Christian perfection (holiness) by pointing out four dimensions of development that mutually interweave one another striving to reach their relative fullness: theological, moral, ecclesial (communal) and psychological. In this article, the fulfilment of the call to holiness according to Cardinal Wyszyński is presented with reference to this scheme.

9   See also Hadryś, "Jedna świętość czy dwie różne?," 111–126.

10   Cf. Wyszyński, "Rozdział V i VI – O Powszechnym powołaniu do świętości," No. 374, 2–9.

11   Wyszyński, "Środki Bożego awansu," 28.

12   Wyszyński, "Apostolstwo świeckich w Kościele," No. 758, 2.

taining salvation, it is necessary to undertake efforts for one's self-improvement and lead a deep, personal, spiritual life. According to the primate, every believer, supported by God's grace, is not only able to overcome even their most difficult, capricious temper, but is also obliged to undertake this task. Wyszyński emphasized that assisting our neighbours in gaining salvation must be combined with efforts aimed at one's advancement and self-improvement. According to the cardinal, it is the duty of the baptized person to prepare for the fulfilment of the baptismal call to the apostolate by self-control and work on internal improvement. This work toward self-improvement should be constant, that is, undertaken throughout life[13]: "The better a person performs apostolic work, the better they are at self-improvement. The more fruitful the apostolic work is, the more reliable the internal efforts are. If a person undertakes considerable effort in the pursuit of self-improvement, they become able to distinguish the areas of apostolic work themselves and respond to them."[14]

Wyszyński's reference to holiness in the justification of the call to holiness in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and the spirituality of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation is in harmony with the words of Pope Francis in his *exhortation Gaudete et exsultate*: "We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves" (*GE* 14). Francis reminded thereby that this vocation concerns every baptized person, that is, among others, husbands, wives, parents, grandmothers and grandparents, educators, employees and the ruling class. No one is excluded from the call to holiness since everyone has received it with the grace of holy baptism (cf. *GE* 14–15). According to the Holy Father, by giving a call to holiness, God guarantees the power of the Holy Spirit to make one capable of taking up and fulfilling this call (cf. *GE* 15).

2. The Theological Dimension of Holiness[15]

The source of human holiness is God, who communicates Himself to people through Christ.[16] The closer a person is to God, the greater their share will be in His holiness. Theologically speaking, it can be said that already upon baptism, a man or woman becomes a participant in God's holiness, however, looking at the problem

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13 Cf. Wyszyński, "*Charakter Instytutu Pomocnic Matki Kościoła*," No. 2572, 8; Wyszyński, "Prośba o pomoc w pracy nad sobą." No. 2573, 1–7.

14 Wyszyński, "*Charakter naszego Instytutu*," No. 1948, 10.

15 Jerzy Gogola (*Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, 106) states, "In Christian perfection the most important thing is the personal relationship with God. Since this relationship is created by faith, hope and love, i.e. the theological virtues, hence this dimension is named theological."

16 Jean-Pierre de Caussade (*Abandonment to Divine Providence*, 62) states: "The divine action alone can sanctify us, for that alone can make us imitate the divine Example of our perfection."

from a practical and moral perspective, they are obliged to cooperate with God's grace and personally strive to reach full participation in God's holiness, that is, to reach the fullness of Christian life.[17] The realization of the call to holiness takes place through the development of the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, and the achievement of their fulness culminates in the union with God.[18] In the light of the above, noteworthy is Wyszyński's statement whereby although the very presence of God in a baptized person makes them saintly, it is particularly important to "look at Christ, at His face, at His style of conduct, speech, response, conversation, discussion, [...] this means being implanted, being rooted in Christ, this means getting closer to the pattern of His image that God wanted to leave to us."[19] A deeply religious Christian "wants to be with Him everywhere and share God's most perilous strokes of fate. [...] The entire inner life, the entire striving for the union with God is to be based on the person of Christ"[20]: the Primate was of the opinion that holiness is not determined by a large number of prayers, because there are people who do not have the conditions to devote a lot of time to prayer, and also, that holiness does not consist in fidelity, for there are Christians who faithfully obey all rules and regulations, and are not saintly."[21] According to the cardinal, "holiness is a tiny seed that grows in the soul [...]. Holiness is my inner relationship to my God who lives in me [...]. It is the awareness that He is in me. He acts and I just submit to Him. [...] Holiness is my God in me."[22] For this reason, Wyszyński believed that you do not need to say much to God, but it is enough to be submissive to Him in everything: "This is some inner calming down, and inner opening to God. When this is our attitude to Him, we forget about the whole world. Then the mouth goes silent, the heart opens. [...] Each of us creates our own holiness. [...] This is the essence – total submission to God and union with Him through love, full hope. It is the essence of holiness and only this can be imitated."[23] A personal connection with Christ is essential in fulfilling the call to holiness, and it comes to fruition as submission to the Saviour in all things.[24]

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[17] Second Vatican Council, *Lumen gentium*, 40: "The followers of Christ are called by God, not because of their works, but according to His own purpose and grace. They are justified in the Lord Jesus, because in the baptism of faith they truly become sons of God and sharers in the divine nature. In this way they are really made holy. Then too, by God's gift, they must hold on to and complete in their lives this holiness they have received."

[18] Gogola, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*,106.

[19] Wyszyński, "Światła Boże na ludzkich drogach," No. 936, 12.

[20] Wyszyński, "Tajemnica powołania...," No. 813, 2.

[21] Wyszyński, "Homilia na uroczystość Wszystkich Świętych," No. 1958, 4.

[22] Wyszyński, "Homilia na uroczystość Wszystkich Świętych," No. 1958, 5.

[23] Wyszyński, "Homilia na uroczystość Wszystkich Świętych," No. 1958, 4–5.

[24] Stanisław Urbański ("Chrystoformizacja," 242) describes the Christian call to holiness in the following way, "Following means trying to 'become' like Jesus. Therefore, Christian holiness relies on being like Jesus. [...] Such following shows that our decisions somehow depend on God, which suggests 'the unity of the spirit.' And in this mystical state of mind, a man or woman wishes the same that God does. Having

As already mentioned, the essence of Christian holiness lies in a personal, profound connection of a baptized person with Christ, which means full development of the virtues of faith, hope, and love, i.e., the so-called theological dimension of holiness. The teaching of Franciszek is in harmony with the teaching of Wyszyński on that matter: "the measure of our holiness stems from the stature that Christ achieves in us, to the extent that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole life on his" (*GE* 21). According to the Pope, holiness consists in recreating various aspects of Jesus Christ's earthly life on earth in one's own personal life (cf. *GE* 20). The contemplation of the earthly life of the Son of God, various manifestations of His love and being for others, can greatly assist in this reflection of Christ's life, because everything that Christ experienced and lived through happened with a view to making His believers able to experience it in Him, and Him in them (cf. EG 20). There is a striking similarity between Francis' thoughts and the earlier quotations of Wyszyński's statements regarding the admiration of Christ's face.

3. Moral Dimension of Holiness

A deep relationship with Christ forms the theological dimension of holiness, which leads to the moral dimension, i.e., doing God's will as Christ did, and who said: "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me" (John 4:34). This means following in the footsteps of Christ and becoming like Him,[25] which will be expressed in particular love of your neighbour, including serving them even in minor matters. Wyszyński clearly pointed to the bond between the moral dimension of holiness and its theological dimension, stressing the need for personal[26] connection with Christ and perceiving Him in relations with neighbours, "I would be glad if you saw Christ clear enough in your everyday relations, like in cohabitation at home, on the street, on the tram – anywhere; so that you never miss Christ in anyone; so that you never insult or diminish Him in anyone or even hurt Him in anyone."[27] The Primate spoke about love to neighbours many times, pointing out that it comes from God's commandment of love and obligates us to help fellows on the way to salvation, i.e., to apostolate, and at the same time influences the effectiveness of such assistance. The argumentation of the need of love to fellows in fulfilling the call to the apostolate is strongly

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reached this state of mind, a Christian person performs the will of God to some extent identifying themselves with His will."

25 Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, I, 1, 1: "'Anyone who follows me shall not walk in darkness,' says the Lord. These are the words of Christ, and by them we are reminded that we must imitate his life and his ways if we are to be truly enlightened and set free from the darkness of our own heart."

26 Cf. Wyszyński, "Światła Boże na ludzkich drogach," No. 936, 12.

27 Wyszyński, "Kromka chleba," No. 155, 9–10.

emphasized in Wyszyński's teaching, which is addressed to the members of the institute. The Primate emphasized the need to be sensitive to others, pay attention to the lost and embrace every human being with love. He pointed to the importance of small, everyday matters and gestures of love. "It's not about serving great things. It is all about serving through small matters and favours, being helpful, generous, kind, able to deal with people, being cautious so as not to offend anyone in any way."[28] He emphasized, pointing to God's love for people, that it is possible to love every fellow, "Could I find any unsavoury person who I would not be able to love anymore, as I will always answer myself: How could I? God loves them, still loves them, nonetheless. And when we do not want to look around, let us look at ourselves – and yet God loves me. [...] we actually lose the motivation that could fuel our aversion to anyone. And then it turns out that God's commandment of love is the greatest blessing of love of fellows."[29]

Primate Wyszyński was too aware of the difficulties and fears related to the love towards people who have gone terribly astray or those existing on the peripheries of the society, in this context, for example, pointing to the saints who sacrificed themselves for people who needed their help the most, "Fear to give offense shows how complicated the Christian apostolate is. [...] Saintly people who have entered such company are still a source of scandal. And yet whenever they attended to bereaved people, a sort of a social upheaval took place."[30]

The Social Crusade of Love, initiated by Wyszyński in 1967, becomes part of practising love of fellows, i.e., of the moral dimension of holiness. It is expressed in ten concise headwords, the so-called "ABC of the Social Crusade of Love" and denotes day-to-day self-development carried out under the patronage of Blessed Virgin Mary as a model of Christian virtues:

1. Respect every human being, as Jesus Christ lives in them. Be sensitive to other people, your brothers and sisters. 2. Think well of everyone – do not think badly of anyone. Try to find something good even in the worst things. 3. Always speak kindly of others – do not speak badly of your neighbours. Redress the harm done with words. Do not create discord between people. 4. Speak to each person in the language of love. Do not raise your voice. Do not swear. Do not hurt anyone's feelings. Do not bring anyone to tears. Calm people down and show goodness. 5. Forgive everything, everyone. Do not hold a grudge. Always be the first to reach out your hand for reconciliation. 6. Always act to the benefit of your neighbours. Do unto others as you would wish them to do unto you. Do not think of what others owe to you, but what you owe to others. 7. Show compassion actively. Carry consolation, advice, assistance, with your heart, readily. 8. Work honestly, because the fruit of

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28   Wyszyński, "Homilia o świętym Janie Vianney," No. 466, 4–5.
29   Wyszyński, "Bóg jest Miłością," No. 281, 12.
30   Wyszyński, "Powołanie do apostolstwa," No. 2737, 4.

your work is used by others, just as you benefit from the work of others. 9. Get involved in carrying social assistance to your neighbours. Open up to the poor and the sick. Share what you own. Try to see those in need around you. 10. Pray for everyone, even for your enemies.[31]

In the light of the above mentioned, the moral dimension of Christian holiness is therefore, closely connected with the theological dimension in Wyszyński's teaching. It is quite significant, that even Pope Francis when writing about the call to holiness clearly showed its connection to the fulfilment of the mission received from God: "It is not healthy to love silence while fleeing interaction with others, to want peace and quiet while avoiding activity, to seek prayer while disdaining service. Everything can be accepted and integrated into our life in this world and become a part of our path to holiness. We are called to be contemplatives even in the midst of action, and to grow in holiness by responsibly and generously carrying out our proper mission" (*GE* 26). This mission is the call to apostolate. Each baptized person is called to identify with Christ and His desires, and thus they are obligated to build a Kingdom of love, justice, and peace together with Him (cf. *GE* 25). "Holiness is also parrhesia: it is boldness, an impulse to evangelize and to leave a mark in this world" (*GE* 129). It is not difficult to notice that Pope Francis connects the call to holiness with the call to the apostolate, as it was present in Wyszyński's teachings. The Primate of the Millennium, as already mentioned, additionally justified the need for personal pursuit of holiness with the calling to apostleship. Francis, in his turn, seems to have shifted the emphasis more towards combining these two callings. Nevertheless, it can be claimed that Wyszyński's combination of these two callings and the theological and moral dimensions of holiness resulting therefrom, has remained valid.

Sensitivity to the needs of fellows, in particular socially marginalized people, which is so much emphasized by Wyszyński, is a constant moral requirement. As Francis recalled after Benedict XVI, "holiness is nothing other than charity lived to the full" (*GE* 21). Moreover, Francis emphasized that in beatification and canonization processes, the signs of heroism in practicing virtues are taken into account, as well as "cases where a life is constantly offered for others, even until death" (*GE* 5). As a path to holiness pleasing God, he indicated the rule of conduct on the basis of which every worshipper of Christ will be judged: "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me (Matt 25:35-36)" (*GE* 95). He pointed out that God leads people where humanity is particularly wounded, and people are constantly looking for an answer to the question of the purpose of life: "God is not afraid [...] he himself became a fringe (cf. Phil 2:6-8; John 1:14). So, if we dare to go to the fringes, we will

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31   Wyszyński, "ABC Społecznej Krucjaty Miłości."

find him there; indeed, he is already there" (*GE* 135). Pope Francis and Wyszyński's understanding of the moral dimension of holiness seems to be convergent not only in the general sense accepted in the universal Church, but also in the aspects of sensitive love towards the neighbour living on the periphery of society.

4. Ecclesial Dimension of Holiness

In his ascetic teachings, Primate Wyszyński emphasized the truth that a man or woman is by nature a social being,[32] therefore "they cannot reach absolute perfection alone. If they isolate themselves, it means that they are not mature yet, as absolute perfection means engaging in people and coexisting with them. [...] And an isolated person will not gain what people are obliged to give them from the Father's love, from the saving kingship of Christ and the leading power of the Church."[33] He was aware of the fact that it is a great torment for a human being to avoid others because this leads to impoverishment and egocentricity: "There is no worse torment, no worse anguish than treating yourself with your own selfishness. [...] People must share Themselves with others as the Father gave Himself to the Son and must draw from others as the Son draws from the Father at the same time reaching out to the Father. Only then does it give this great love. [...] Only then does the human being develop."[34] Therefore, it is not surprising that the cardinal stresses the communal dimension of the pursuit of holiness. This aspiration is fulfilled in the Church where a man or woman becomes formally included upon receiving the sacrament of baptism. The baptized person is part of the supernatural organism of the Church, which, like any organism, consists of different members performing different functions. Individual members interact with each other and help each other.[35] Wyszyński reminded that even though there occur such powerful individual actions in the Church that give rise to saints in various areas of life, there are still many people who need help: "Salvation in the Christian order takes place in the Church, and the Church is «Ecclesia», which means a collection, gathering, community, and not only in terms of the liturgical activity and the Sacrifice of the Altar, but also in the universal, Catholic terms, i.e. Ecclesia universalis."[36] This happens so because it is much easier to strive for God together than individually. Quite a few people may be in spiritual slumber, but since

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[32] Cf. Wyszyński, "Komentarz Konstytucji pastoralnej," No. 419, 6–9; Wyszyński, "Na drodze do odnowy," No. 2661, 2–3.

[33] Wyszyński, "Na drodze do odnowy," No. 2661, 14–15.

[34] Wyszyński, "Uroczystość Świętej Rodziny," No. 387, 3–4.

[35] Cf. Wyszyński, "Społeczny charakter osoby ludzkiej," No. 1941, 2; cf. Wyszyński, "Komentarz Konstytucji pastoralnej," No. 419, 18–20.

[36] Wyszyński, "Społeczny charakter osoby ludzkiej," No. 1941, 3.

they are in a community these people submit to its supernatural mechanism and, as a result, they are prompted to act and behave in such a way that they would never follow on their own. The purely sociological contact with others in the Church is magnified through supernatural ties. Thanks to them, a person participates in those spiritual energies which pulsate throughout the body of the Church. From time to time a person who has fallen into spiritual lethargy awakens and becomes aware of their place in the supernatural organism of the Church, and thus, of their duties and tasks in this organism. All this, according to Wyszyński, indicates the necessity of social, collective striving for God.[37]

The baptized participate in the Church not so much through legal bonds, but more through spiritual, or supernatural, bonds. Every action of the baptized person, including their personal striving for holiness, has an ecclesial dimension; it is the action of the Church. According to Wyszyński, "all baptized people are called to participate in the Church not so much through legal and juridical bonds, but rather through spiritual, supernatural ones, through internal participation in the life of the Church."[38] The actions of the baptized person are always, also unconsciously, the actions of the Church, although "the more conscious they are, the more effective they get, but even if it were unconscious, it would still remain an action of the Church. [...] The whole Church is constantly working on me."[39] The Lord God, with His sanctifying action, comes to the baptized person through the Church. According to Wyszyński, for this reason each baptized person is obliged to maintain communication with the Church and meet God in a manner specified by Him, that is in the spirit of truths and mysteries taken into consideration in a given period of the church year. This meeting with God takes place in a special way thanks to the connection with the Church and is an expression of a certain obedience, submission to the Church, which Wyszyński expressed bluntly: "I just have an appetite for Easter, and now it is Christmas."[40] This obedience to the Church is of educational because it is guided by the Holy Spirit and rewarded with its graces. A relationship with God should not be developed according to one's own idea, but as God wishes and communicates it through the Church: "You have to trust the Church and renounce the prayer to which I am used, for the prayer of the Church. [...] This partly overcomes our individualism and is a repetition [...] of theological knowledge."[41] Emphasizing the experience of his relationship with God in the Church, the Primate also encouraged us to "pray as the Holy Father prays at the moment: he knows what is most needed."[42] In Wyszyńs-

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37   Cf. Wyszyński, "Społeczny charakter osoby ludzkiej," No. 1941, 2.
38   Wyszyński, "Nadprzyrodzona zależność od Kościoła," No. 328, 3.
39   Wyszyński, "Nadprzyrodzona zależność od Kościoła," No. 328, 5–6.
40   Wyszyński, "Modlitwa Zespołu," No. 18, 6.
41   Wyszyński, "Modlitwa Zespołu," No. 18, 6.
42   Wyszyński, "Modlitwa Zespołu," No. 18, 8. Cf. Wyszyński, "Podczas Mszy świętej," 1; Wyszyński, "Codzienność Świętej Rodziny," No. 588, 2–3.

ki's opinion, the development of theological virtues through prayerful contact with God should be carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the Church inscribed in a given period of the liturgical year.

In his exhortation Pope Francis drew attention to the fact that a baptized person realizes personal relationship with Christ and the attitude of following the Saviour at least partially in the community of the Church. He emphasized that without the Church, true holiness is not possible, because the Holy Spirit leads a baptized person to holiness together with other members of the Church: "it has pleased God to make men and women holy and to save them, not as individuals without any bond between them, but rather as a people who might acknowledge him in truth and serve him in holiness" (*GE* 6). According to Pope Francis, no one saves oneself as "an isolated individual, but God attracts us, taking into account the complex network of interpersonal relationships that develop in the human community: God wanted to enter into the dynamics of the people" "as an isolated individual. Rather, God draws us to himself, taking into account the complex fabric of interpersonal relationships present in a human community. God wanted to enter into the life and history of a people" (*GE* 6). It is not difficult to notice that this communal, ecclesial aspect of striving for holiness emphasized by Francis in his exhortation is clearly present in Wyszyński's teachings. However, the Pope justifies the necessity and specificity of prayer without referring to its ecclesial dimension (cf. *GE* 147–157), which was so characteristic of Wyszyński.

5. The Anthropological Dimension of Holiness

A man or woman who strives for holiness is guided in their daily life by love and trust in Christ, and they realize their calling in a unique and unrepeatable way. Although in Wyszyński's ascetic teachings there are not too many statements about the anthropological dimension of holiness, the Primate indicated a great variety of paths leading to holiness quite vividly, at the same time pointing out that each baptized person is individually guided by God: "A nun sanctifies herself with her obedience. A priest sanctifies himself through his apostolic charity. Saint Paul indicated mothers' path to sanctification through bearing children. […] Working for Christ is not just capering about in the meadow at will. Any work in God's kingdom must be acies bene ordinata. There are different temperaments, but each of us, apart from our own temperament and character, must also have Divine, Christlike temperament."[43]

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43 Wyszyński, "Wy jesteście Ciałem Chrystusowym...," No. 114*, 6. See: Hadryś, "Świętość w świetle ewangelicznych błogosławieństw," 11–25.

He believed that saints are more to be admired than to follow, because God leads everyone differently towards Himself.[44]

Among the various forms of fulfilling the call to holiness and the apostolate, Cardinal Wyszyński drew attention to the special and exceptional role of a woman who, regardless of being in a family or monastic life, is called to at least spiritual motherhood: "The woman, therefore, should perform a double function of the Church, as Christ's Bride and mother of souls, which the Church faithfully expresses and fulfils."[45] He repeatedly showed Blessed Virgin Mary to the members of the Institute as a model to follow: "The most important thing will always be [...] the calling to offer the sacrifice of your life together with Christ and following the example of Mary. […] Just as Mary was called upon to take part in the act of world renewal through the service to the Lamb of God – as the Beautiful Sheep – each of you has to be like She was and serve Christ according to Her."[46] However, according to the Primate, the following hierarchy should always be preserved: "First Christ, then Mary will come, and only then all the saints who are copies of Christ. Instead of looking at the copy, we are to reflect the spiritual image of Christ."[47]

There are many ways which lead to holiness. In this context, Pope Francis recalled the teaching of the Second Vatican Council: "Strengthened by so many and such great means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord – each in his or her own way – to that perfect holiness by which the Father himself is perfect […] Each in his or her own way" (*GE* 10–11). It is important to follow the example of the lives of Saints, but their lives cannot be fully copied, as this could take the baptized person away from the specific way prepared by God for them (cf. *GE* 11). For this reason, it is important that each believer recognizes their own way and "that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (cf. 1 Cor 12:7), not wasting strength trying to imitate something that was not for them. […] There are many existential forms of testimony" "that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (cf. 1 Cor 12:7), rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them. We are all called to be witnesses, but there are many actual ways of bearing witness" (*GE* 11). In the above context, it is also worth remembering that Pope Francis, being aware of the variety of ways to holiness, made it clear that " Not everything a saint says is completely faithful to the Gospel; not everything he or she does is authentic or perfect. What we need to contemplate is the totality of their life, their entire journey of growth in holiness, the reflection of Jesus Christ that emerges when we grasp their overall meaning

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44 Cf. Wyszyński, "Homilia na uroczystość Wszystkich Świętych," No. 1958, 3.
45 Wyszyński, "Kobieta w dziejach Kościoła," No. 480, 9. Cardinal Wyszyński invoked, among others, the figures of Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa of Lisieux.
46 Wyszyński, "Maria – Pulchre Agne...," No. 2676, 3.
47 Cf. Wyszyński, "*Zapatrzeć się w Chrystusa*," No. 110*, 12.

as a person" "Not everything a saint says is completely faithful to the Gospel; not everything he or she does is authentic or perfect. What we need to contemplate is the totality of their life, their entire journey of growth in holiness, the reflection of Jesus Christ that emerges when we grasp their overall meaning as a person" (*GE* 22). Among various forms of fulfilling the call to holiness, Pope Francis emphasized the "feminine genius" which, as he noted, manifested itself in women's styles of holiness (cf. *GE* 12). The Holy Father remembered Saint Hildegard of Bingen, Saint Bridget, Saint Catherine of Siena, Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint Teresa of Lisieux by names. It is easy to notice that Wyszyński had a similar perception of Saints, in whom God acts in various ways and leads to individual salvation, and who should not be taken as a model in everything but only in what is the most important, i.e., the direction they follow and their personal submission to God. The Primate, just like the Pope today, emphasized and appreciated the role of women in the Church and the specific nature of their striving for the totality of life in God.

Conclusion

Due to the limited volume of this article, the research conducted on the fulfilment of the call to holiness in the approach held by the Servant of God Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński and its topicality in the light of Pope Francis' *Gaudete et exsultate*, is not fully covered, but is only an outline of the problem and encouragement for further research. In the author's opinion, despite its limitations it can be concluded that:

1. Wyszyński, justifying the universality of the call to holiness with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and with the reception of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, made additional reference to the call to the apostolate. He did it so many times, believing that in order to succeed in helping others attain salvation personal holiness is required.

2. The Primate was aware that each baptized person fulfils their own holiness, and a personal relationship with Christ is a key element in fulfilling the call to holiness and fruitful submission to Christ. He pointed to the connection between the moral dimension of holiness and its theological dimension, emphasizing the need to perceive Christ in relations with neighbours. He stressed the need to be sensitive to others and pay attention to the ones who have gone astray the furthest. Moreover, he pointed out the importance of small, everyday gestures of love. He initiated the Social Crusade of Love.

3. Wyszyński emphasized the ecclesial dimension of the pursuit of holiness, believing that the actions of a baptized person, even unconsciously, reflect the actions of the Church. In his view, baptized people come to Church not because of

some legal ties, but due to spiritual or supernatural bonds. He indicated the variety of ways which lead to holiness, stressing that each baptized person is individually led by God. Among various forms of fulfilling the call to holiness and the apostolate, he drew attention to the unique role of women who are called to spiritual motherhood. He repeatedly pointed to Blessed Virgin Mary as a model to be followed.

4. Pope Francis and Cardinal Wyszyński have a very similar understanding of fulfilling the call to holiness, frequently using the same words and even similar expressions. It seems that this is primarily due to their statements being deeply rooted in the teachings and tradition of the Church, and of the Second Vatican Council in particular, as well as due to the nature of the teaching, which was not a theological lecture, but a pastoral message: both Wyszyński and Pope Francis wanted to touch human hearts and enlighten them with the desire to pursue holiness.

5. Wyszyński clearly highlights the universality of the call to holiness, the diversity of ways leading to it, as well as the link between the pursuit of personal holiness and the commitment to building the Kingdom of God. Pope Francis shares similar ideas, although it can be noted that Wyszyński placed particular emphasis on individual service to others, while Pope Francis emphasized actions of social and humanitarian character.

6. It is particularly significant that Wyszyński paid attention to the necessity of a deep and personal relationship with Christ. Christocentricity in fulfilling the call to holiness can be observed even in Wyszyński's teachings about Virgin Mary, as the focus on the person of the Saviour was quite often "inscribed" in the Marian dimension of spiritual life by the primate.[48] It is noteworthy that in fulfilling the call to holiness, Pope Francis also emphasizes the necessity of a profound bond with Christ.

7. Wyszyński's teachings about the realization of the call to holiness has not lost its topicality despite the changing existential conditions of the baptized people's life. In many respects it is identical to the teachings of Pope Francis, yet in some of them accents are placed differently. However, it seems that it would not be an exaggeration to conclude that the Primate of the Millennium, through his teachings in the area of fulfilling the call to holiness, is to a large extent the precursor of Pope Francis' teachings in the exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*. The teaching of both the Pope and the Cardinal is based on the Revelation and the Magisterium of the Church and is characterized by a positive and open attitude to people and world.

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48 Marian aspects of fulfilling the call to holiness according to Wyszyński, included in his ascetic teachings, are the subject of a separate study, which the author of the following article intends to publish after the beatification of the Primate.

The fulfilment of the call to holiness in the approach held by the Servant of God Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, outlined in this article on the basis of his ascetic teaching addressed to the members of the Secular Institute of Helpers of Mary may be an incentive to conduct further research on the issues of holiness in the teachings of the Primate of the Millennium. The comparison of the public and well-known statements of the Primate on this subject, which, as already mentioned, have been elaborated on in various ways, with his teaching on this subject addressed to lay consecrated persons seems to be a particularly important topic. This comparative analysis could offer a more comprehensive insight into the primate's reflections concerning the fulfilment of the baptismal calling to holiness, as well as indicate where he placed emphasis when speaking to all the faithful and consecrated lay people.[49] It may as also be interesting to analyse Wyszyński's statements concerning the sources and means of sanctification and the ways of using them which he recommended, as well as to determine to what extent they have remained valid in terms of theological and pastoral guidelines present in the Church during the period of preparation for the Primate's beatification. Certainly, it is worthwhile to comprehensively elaborate on the issue of the call to holiness in the approach of the Primate of the Millennium, taking into account all Wyszyński's source texts, i.e. official, public statements (sermons, homilies, pastoral letters) and his ascetic conferences and homilies addressed to Helpers of Mary, and also complete a comparative analysis with the teachings of Pope Francis contained not only in *Gaudete et exsultate*, but also in all his homilies and speeches.

Translated by Grzegorz Knyś

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49   For example, in the case of lay consecrated people, it is noteworthy that the Primate repeatedly draws arguments for caring about personal holiness from the apostolic nature of their calling – much more often than from receiving the sacrament of baptism.

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REVIEWS

Kalina Wojciechowska – Mariusz Rosik, *Oczekując miłosierdzia. Komentarz strukturalny do Listu św. Judy* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Chrześcijańskiej Akademii Teologicznej 2020). Ss. 458. PLN 92,40. ISBN 978-83-60273-53-1

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Gdyby zapytać chrześcijan różnych denominacji o List św. Judy, z pewnością potwierdziliby, że o nim słyszeli, że należy do pism Nowego Testamentu, a może nawet wskazaliby jego nowotestamentową lokalizację. I prawdopodobnie na tym zakończyłaby się ich wiedza na jego temat. Nawet w liturgii Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego na 365 dni tylko jeden raz w roku (sobota 8. tygodnia zwykłego) wierni mogą usłyszeć kilka Judowych wierszy (Jud 17.20b-25). Także w nauczaniu kaznodziejskim i homiletycznym pozostałych Kościołów trudno znaleźć nauczanie oparte na przesłaniu omawianego listu.

List św. Judy, po Liście do Filemona oraz Drugim i Trzecim Liście św. Jana, należy statystycznie do najkrótszych tekstów Nowego Testamentu. Według *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes*[1] występuje w nim 227 jednorazowych słów, którymi autor stworzył pismo o zawartości 456 wyrazów[2]. List ten to zaledwie dwadzieścia pięć wierszy, o których niemal całkowicie zapomniano w ramach badań Nowego Testamentu. We „Wstępie" recenzowanej książki autorzy przytaczają tezę Douglasa J. Rowstona z połowy lat 80. XX w., której trafność trudno jest kwestionować. Zdaniem Rowstona „List Judy jest prawdopodobnie najbardziej zaniedbaną księgą Nowego Testamentu"[3]. Nie można zaprzeczyć, że w badaniach nowotestamentowych ten krótki tekst zyskał jedynie marginalną uwagę naukowców. Być może łączenie Listu św. Judy z Drugim Listem św. Piotra, którego tekst „odznacza się bardzo niskim poziomem literackim" w świetle innych nowotestamentowych pism[4], spowodował taki, a nie inny sposób postrzegania jego treści. Nawet dla Marcina Lutra, ojca reformacji, był on niczym innym jak „wyciągiem" z Drugiego Listu św. Piotra lub jego „odpisem",

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[1] R. Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Worschatzes* (Zürich: Gotthelf 1958).
[2] Dla porównania List do Filemona to 141 słów na 328 wyrazów. Por. Morgenthaler, *Statistik*, 164.
[3] D.J. Rowston, „The Most Neglected Book in the New Testament", *New Testament Studies* 21/4 (1975) 554.
[4] Por. F. Mickiewicz, *List św. Judy, Drugi List św. Piotra* (NKB.NT 18; Częstochowa: Święty Paweł 2018) 146, 155–161.

o czym wspominają autorzy komentarza (s. 43), choć dziś uważa się zupełnie odwrotnie (s. 69–72)[5]. Anglikański uczony Richard Bauckham twierdzi, że „naukowe lekceważenie" Judowego listu doprowadziło do zaniedbania badań naukowych nad nim, a w ostateczności do ignorancji przesłania Judy[6]. Jego zdaniem „zwykłe naukowe osądy na temat Judy są niewiele więcej niż frazesami, które powtarzano po prostu przez sto lat"[7]. Dlaczego zatem List św. Judy traktowany jest „marginalnie" w szeroko rozumianej teologii? Czy jego dwadzieścia pięć wersetów nie zawiera żadnego interesującego teologicznego przesłania dla Kościoła i jego wiernych? Czy powoływanie się na tekst niekanoniczny (zacytowanie *expressis verbis 1 Hen* 1,9) jest podstawą do odstawienia na bok głębszej analizy tekstu tego listu?

Kalina Wojciechowska, luteranka i biblistka (Chrześcijańska Akademia Teologiczna w Warszawie), oraz ks. Mariusz Rosik, katolik i biblista (Papieski Wydział Teologiczny we Wrocławiu) wspólnie pochylili się nad tekstem Listu św. Judy. Nie jest to pierwsza taka luterańsko-katolicka współpraca, gdyż autorzy ci wydali wspólny komentarz Listu św. Jakuba: *Mądrość zstępująca z góry. Komentarz strukturalny do Listu św. Jakuba* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe ChAT 2018)[8].

Autorzy omawianej monografii postawili sobie bardziej ambitny cel, niż tylko udzielenie odpowiedzi na postawione powyżej pytania. Ich zamiarem było przywrócenie Judowemu pismu należnego mu miejsca we współczesnej refleksji biblistycznej (s. 33).

Z reguły komentarz do Listu Judy znajduje się w jednym tomie z komentarzami albo do obu listów św. Piotra, albo do Drugiego Listu św. Piotra, a indywidualny komentarz do samego Listu św. Judy „jest rzadkością" (s. 33). *Status quaestionis* polskich i zagranicznych komentarzy biblijnych poświęconych Judzie (s. 19–21) jasno pokazuje, że omawiany komentarz stanowi wyjątkowe dzieło nie tylko ze względu na rozmiar dokonanej pracy, ale przede wszystkim w zakresie sposobu prezentacji treści, który jest konsekwencją zrekonstruowanej przez autorów struktury pisma. Tym bardziej to ekumeniczne studium należy powitać ze szczególną uwagą i zadowoleniem.

Autorzy podzielili swoją pracę na dwie części. Pierwsza część to typowo introdukcyjna prezentacja głównych zagadnień związanych z Listem św. Judy. Badacze wprowadzają czytelnika w świadectwa tekstowe i zagadnienie kanoniczności listu (s. 39–46), omawiają kwestię autorstwa tekstu i czas jego powstania (s. 46–72),

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5   Zob. J.F. Hultin, „The Literary Relationships among 1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude", *Reading 1–2 Peter and Jude. A Resource for Students* (red. E.F. Mason – T.W. Martin) (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature 2014) 27–46.

6   Por. R. Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church* (London: Clark 1990) 134–135.

7   Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus*, 135.

8   Zob. D. Tomczyk, [rec.] „K. Wojciechowska – M. Rosik, *Mądrość zstępująca z góry. Komentarz strukturalny do Listu św. Jakuba* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe ChAT 2018)", *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 72/3 (2019) 285–288.

prezentują hipotezy dotyczące odbiorców listu (s. 72–75), jego słownictwo i styl (s. 75–81), gatunek literacki (s. 81–89) oraz strukturę (s. 89–95).

Część druga monografii to obszerny komentarz strukturalny (s. 99–445). Autorzy przedstawiają trzy koncepcje struktury Judowego pisma. Najpierw prezentują ujęcie listu jako samodzielnej homilii z dopisanym epistolograficznym preskryptem i zakończeniem w formie doksologii (R. Bauckham, Gene L. Green; s. 89–91). Następnie omawiają dwa dominujące kierunki rekonstrukcji jego struktury: zgodny z zasadami retoryki klasycznej (Duane F. Watson, Ernst R. Wendland; s. 91–93) oraz zgodny z zasadami retoryki hebrajskiej (Carroll D. Osburn, R. Bauckham; s. 93–95).

Odkrycie właściwej struktury literackiej Listu św. Judy jest kluczowe, ponieważ wpływa na interpretację wszystkich dwudziestu pięciu wersetów tego pisma. Trafnie zrekonstruowana struktura listu pozwoli zlokalizować centrum tekstu, a tym samym poprawnie zrozumieć jego teologiczne przesłanie. Odkrycie tego centrum wydaje się niemożliwe przy czysto linearnym odczytywaniu danego tekstu[9].

W swojej własnej propozycji K. Wojciechowska i M. Rosik nie rozdzielają obu dotychczasowych kierunków rekonstrukcji struktury Judowego pisma, ale przyjmują strukturę chiastyczną listu, w ramach której retoryka hebrajska „nakłada się na hellenistyczną strukturę retoryczną" (s. 94). Taka koncepcja „pozwala bardziej holistycznie spojrzeć na tekst i wydobyć z niego nie tylko aspekty alarmistyczne i parenetyczne (protreptyczne), ale również teologiczne" (*ibidem*).

Czy jest to właściwe założenie? Oczywiście możemy mówić o różnych kombinacjach analizy strukturalnej Listu św. Judy, dokonując różnych połączeń antycznej struktury listu, zasad retoryki klasycznej i chiastycznej struktury tekstu. Moglibyśmy wówczas powiedzieć, że List św. Judy to midrasz bez układu chiastycznego (1) lub z układem chiastycznym (2), że jest to list bez układu chiastycznego (3) lub z układem chiastycznym (4), że jest to list bez układu chiastycznego i retorycznego (5) lub że jest to list bez układu chiastycznego, ale z pewnym układem retorycznym (6).

Koncepcja przyjęta przez autorów przy interpretacji listu wydaje się ze wszech miar zasadna. Reguły retoryki nie zostały stworzone z myślą o listach, ale z myślą o przemówieniach. Dlatego nie powinno się wprost narzucać wzorca retoryki klasycznej na strukturę Judowego pisma[10]. Być może Juda w ramach ówczesnej struktury oficjalnego listu zastosował kilka technik, które pochodziły zarówno ze świata grecko-rzymskiej retoryki, jak i retoryki hebrajskiej, której właściwością jest użycie dwustronnej symetrii wokół osi centralnej. Nie chodzi tutaj jedynie o odwrócony paralelizm, ale o odkrywanie koncentrycznych wzorców myślowych autorów Starego

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9 Por. J. Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language. Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond* (Crestwood, IL: St Vladimir's Seminary 2008) 304.

10 Por. T.R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (The New American Commentary 37; Nashville: Holman Reference 2003) 420.

i Nowego Testamentu, dzięki czemu będzie można poznać pełny zakres możliwości struktury chiastycznej badanego tekstu[11].

W przeciwieństwie do komentarzy linearnych, przyjęcie chiastycznej, a właściwie koncentrycznej struktury tekstu Judy, pozwala wydobyć pełnię jego teologicznego przesłania. Osią komentarza są wiersze 14–15 (eschatologiczny sąd zapowiadany od początku historii zbawienia), jako główne „elementy Judowej soteriologii, chrystologii oraz hermeneutyki" (s. 34), a nie wiersz 11, jak w koncepcji S. Maxwella Codera i E.R. Wendlanda, ani wiersze 17–19, jak u C.D. Osburna. Poniższa tabela obrazuje przyjętą przez autorów ogólną strukturę organizacyjną komentarza (s. 94).

	Struktura retoryki klasycznej		List Judy		Struktura retoryki hebrajskiej	
1.	Preskrypt		1–2	1–3	Zbawienie	A.
2.	Exordium/prooimion		3–4	4	Bezbożność i sąd	B.
3.	Narratio		5	5ab	Zbawienie	A'.
				5c	Bezbożność i sąd	B'.
4.	Probation/argumentatio		6–19	6–19	Bezbożność i sąd	B".
5.	Peroratio/epilogos		20–25	20–25	Zbawienie	A".

Dzięki uszczegółowieniu chiastycznej struktury listu, autorzy odsłaniają „ukryte" elementy nauki Judy o zbawieniu w kontekście eschatologicznego sądu (s. 95). I tutaj dostrzegamy przewagę klucza strukturalnego nad komentarzami linearnymi, które zawężają analizę do wąskiego spektrum danego wiersza czy danej perykopy.

Podobnie jak to miało miejsce przy komentarzu strukturalnym do Listu św. Jakuba, obecna monografia prezentuje bardzo wysoki poziom analiz egzegetycznych, mocno osadzonych w znakomitym warsztacie filologicznym i teologicznym autorów. David A. Black zauważył: „Nie można powiedzieć, że zadanie egzegezy zostało wykonane, dopóki nie pojawi się odpowiednia analiza struktury semantycznej tekstu, wskazująca wyraźnie, w jaki sposób mniejsze jednostki tekstu grupowane są w większe jednostki semantyczne, w jaki sposób ułatwiają one rozwój literackiej treści dokumentu i wreszcie, jak tekst odnosi się do sytuacji historycznej wyłaniającej się z analizy literackiej"[12]. Wydaje się, że autorzy w pełni urzeczywistnili powyższe założenia.

Bez wątpienia wspólna praca K. Wojciechowskiej i M. Rosika przybliża nam treść i przesłanie Listu św. Judy. Chrystologia zbawienia w perspektywie eschatologicznego sądu wybrzmiewa nad wyraz mocno dzięki zastosowanemu kluczowi inter-

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11   Por. Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language*, 297.
12   D.A. Black, *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation. Essays on Discourse Analysis* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic 1993) 287.

pretacji – chiastycznej strukturze tekstu nałożonej na antyczną strukturę retoryczną. A skoro nastąpi sąd, wierni winni „oczekiwać miłosierdzia", które prowadzi „ku życiu wiecznemu" (Jud 21). Podmiotem miłosierdzia jest zaś Jezus Chrystus. Dzięki Jego śmierci i zmartwychwstaniu zmierzamy „ku życiu wiecznemu". Tym samym aspekt chrystologiczny w perspektywie eschatologicznej staje się *modus vivendi* całej teologii listu.

Oczekując miłosierdzia. Komentarz strukturalny do Listu św. Judy jest doskonałym uzupełnieniem brakujących szczegółowych komentarzy do Judowego tekstu nie tylko w Polsce, ale i na świecie. Szkoda jedynie, że tego typu prace nie wykraczają poza językowe granice naszego kraju. Pewne jest, że tłumaczenie dzieła na język angielski otworzyłoby drzwi do odkrywania myśli teologicznych zawartych w liście nie tylko badaczom, ale wszystkim zainteresowanym.

Należy pogratulować autorom komentarza odważnej egzegetyczno-teologicznej analizy Listu św. Judy oraz przyjętej koncepcji jego struktury. Bez wątpienia przywrócili Judowemu pismu należne mu miejsce we współczesnych badaniach biblistycznych. Można mieć nadzieję, że uważna lektura samego listu, jak i komentarza do niego, przyczyni się do pogłębionej refleksji nad chrystologiczno-soteriologicznym przesłaniem Judy, a sam List św. Judy przestanie być „najbardziej zaniedbaną księgą Nowego Testamentu".

Krzysztof Siwek, *Powstał prorok jak ogień. Droga Eliasza* (Biblijni Bohaterowie Wiary 1; Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Collegium Bobolanum 2020). Ss. 384. PLN 45. ISBN 978-83-952410-8-6

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Książka ks. dra hab. Krzysztofa Siwka *Powstał prorok jak ogień. Droga Eliasza* jest znakomitym synchronicznym komentarzem do tekstu masoreckiego cyklu opowiadań o Eliaszu, znajdujących się w Pierwszej i Drugiej Księdze Królewskiej (1 Krl 17 – 2 Krl 2). Z jednej strony autor stawia sobie za zadanie rzucenie nowego światła na biblijne teksty przedstawiające historię proroka z Tiszbe, z drugiej – podkreśla, że nie chce wchodzić w polemikę z modelami interpretacyjnymi związanymi z tekstem, co w praktyce oznacza cytowanie poglądów innych autorów przede wszystkim w celu uzupełnienia lub zilustrowania własnych analiz. Mamy zatem do czynienia z umiejętnym połączeniem własnych pomysłów interpretacyjnych z poglądami wcześniejszych komentatorów cyklu o Eliaszu.

Książka inauguruje serię wydawniczą Biblijni Bohaterowie Wiary. Pomysł serii wydaje się być trafnym ukłonem zarówno w stronę wykładowców biblijnej egzegezy w ośrodkach akademickich, jak i szerszego grona czytelników zainteresowanych tekstami pozwalającymi zrozumieć rolę i osobowość poszczególnych biblijnych postaci.

Dwie części, na które podzielona jest książka, poprzedzone zostały zwięzłym wprowadzeniem (s. 9–16). Część pierwsza „Przygotowanie do lektury" (s. 17–92), podzielona na dwa rozdziały, jest poświęcona zagadnieniom introdukcyjnym i ma przysposobić czytelnika do lektury tekstów o Eliaszu w Pierwszej i Drugiej Księdze Królewskiej. Autor analizuje kolejno biblijne i pozabiblijne tradycje związane z prorokiem, a następnie przywołuje kontekst literacki i historyczny opowiadań o tej biblijnej postaci. Część druga pracy, „Lektura" (s. 93–362), to szczegółowe studium poszczególnych mikrojednostek tekstu, tworzących epizody historii Eliasza. Jest to zasadnicza część książki, co odzwierciedlona zarówno jej objętość (materiał został podzielony na pięć rozdziałów), jak i wdrażanie założeń metodologicznych zapowiedzianych w części pierwszej. Na końcu książki znajduje się zwięzłe podsumowanie (s. 363–366). Dodatkowo autor zamieszcza *résumé* w języku francuskim (s. 367–370) i bibliografię (s. 371–378).

Autor rozpoczyna rozdział pierwszy od analizy tekstów biblijnych powiązanych z Eliaszem, tj. Ml 3,23-24; 1 Mch 2,58 czy mniej oczywistego tekstu z Hi 33–37, zestawiającego figurę Eliasza z figurą Elihu. Następnie omawia zorientowane starotestamentowo tradycje pozabiblijne, a konkretnie etiopską *Księgę Henocha* oraz komentarze dwóch rabinów – Eliezera i Jehudaha. Ponadto przedstawia wybrane fragmenty Nowego Testamentu, ze szczególnym wyróżnieniem Ewangelii Janowej (1,19-21) i Mateuszowej (11,11-14, 17,12; 27,46-49), a także pobiblijne tradycje chrześcijańskie zaczerpnięte z pism Romana Melodosa, Grzegorza z Nyssy i Orygenesa. W drugim rozdziale autor wprowadza czytelnika w problematykę cyklu o Eliaszu. Rozpoczyna od zwięzłego wyjaśnienia i przetłumaczenia (z języka angielskiego) terminologii narratologicznej, zaczerpniętej głównie z metodologii autorstwa Jeana-Louisa Ska. Warto przy okazji zwrócić uwagę na potrzebę przetłumaczenia na język polski narratologicznych prac tego belgijskiego jezuity, wieloletniego profesora rzymskiego Biblicum (np. *"Our Fathers have Told Us". Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives* [Subsidia Biblica 13; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico 1990]). Po zaklasyfikowaniu cyklu Eliasza jako historiografii autor przechodzi do analizy zagadnień literackich. W pierwszej kolejności omawia deuteronomistycznych proroków (m.in. Deborę, Samuela, Gada, Natana, Achiasza). Podjęte analizy stanowią bardzo dobre wprowadzenie nie tylko w tematykę prorocką, ale też deuteronomistyczną. Jednak najważniejszym punktem tej części pracy jest sproblematyzowanie cyklu opowiadań o Eliaszu pod kątem metodologicznym i historycznym. Autor przywołuje tutaj przede wszystkim rozróżnienie na podejście synchroniczne i diachroniczne w analizie tekstu, odwołując się do dokumentu Papieskiej Komisji Biblijnej *Interpretacja Biblii w Kościele* (1993). W tym kontekście stwierdza, że „obie metody należy docenić, a nierzadko także połączyć, gdyż wzajemnie się uzupełniają" (s. 62). Uwaga ta jest istotna dla zrozumienia dalszej części pracy.

Część druga jest szczegółową analizą tekstów opisujących historię życia proroka. Autor rozpoczyna od omówienia struktury cyklu o Eliaszu. Porównuje go w wybranych miejscach z następującym po nim cyklem o Elizeuszu. Przechodząc w kolejnych rozdziałach do analizy poszczególnych mikrojednostek cyklu o Eliaszu, posługuje się przejrzystym schematem: (1) tekst i jego przekład; (2) uwagi do tekstu; (3) komentarz. Autor wychodzi zawsze (1) od tekstu hebrajskiego w zapisie masoreckim. Następnie tekst ten jest transliterowany. Autor dostosowuje transliterację do polskiego czytelnika, np. unika rozróżnienia na samogłoski krótkie i długie czy rozróżnia transkrypcje liter z grupy „begatkefat" jedynie w przypadkach, kiedy zachodzi różnica przy wymowie szczelinowej. Po transliteracji autor umieszcza zawsze własne tłumaczenie fragmentu, w którym drukiem pogróbionym wyróżnia niektóre wyrażenia. Są one omawiane w kolejnych paragrafach z odwołaniem do transliteracji. Jest to komentarz nie tylko językowy, ale też niejednokrotnie historyczno-krytyczny. Przy omawianiu poszczególnych fragmentów autor poświęca najwięcej uwagi komentarzowi narratologicznemu, który pozwala na potraktowa-

nie całościowo nie tylko danej mikrojednostki, ale też szerszych partii tekstu. Owe szerokie partie tekstu są przyporządkowane do czterech grup, odpowiadającym kolejno trzeciemu, czwartemu, piątemu i szóstemu rozdziałowi książki. Te grupy to: (a) czas dojrzewania (1 Krl 16,29–18,46); (b) czas kryzysu (1 Krl 19,1-18); (c) czas konfrontacji (1 Krl 19,19-21; 21,1-29; 2 Krl 1,1-18); (d) czas rodzenia (2 Krl 2,1-12). Wypracowanie tego czteroczęściowego podziału wydaje się być jednym z głównych osiągnięć autora. Wnosi on konkretną nowość do dotychczas używanych typologii. Do „czasu dojrzewania" zostały przyporządkowane wszystkie fragmenty, w których Eliasz okazuję swoją moc prorocką (21 mikrojednostek). Zostaje w nich równocześnie opowiedziany przebieg konfliktu z Achabem. „Czas kryzysu" to wyczerpująca wędrówka proroka ku górze Horeb i niespodziewane otrzymanie przez niego nowej misji (5 jednostek). „Czas konfrontacji" to zarówno powołanie Elizeusza na swojego ucznia, jak i konfrontacja z dwoma królami z dynastii Omrydów (16 mikrojednostek). Wreszcie „czas rodzenia" to opis przekazania władzy prorockiej uczniowi Eliasza – Elizeuszowi. Jest to też czas narodzin Eliasza dla nieba (3 mikrojednostki).

Warto przyjrzeć się bliżej zastosowanej metodzie. Autor cytuje tekst masorecki bez znaków kantylacyjnych i akcentów, ale z samogłoskami i wariantami Ketiv/Qere. Cytowanie każdego wersetu w nowej linii daje efekt przejrzystości, jednak sprawia, że kilkuwersowy tekst zajmuje sporo miejsca na stronie. Następnie przy omawianiu hebrajskich wyrażeń i pojedynczych słów autor odwołuję się nie tylko do gramatyki i morfologii hebrajskiej, ale również do greki Septuaginty i dość często do języka akadyjskiego (ze względu na charakter pracy zazwyczaj bez odwołań do systemu znaczeniowego opracowanego przez konkretny słownik), rzadziej do języka ugaryckiego czy łacińskiej Wulgaty. Inne języki kultury biblijnej, podobnie jak hebrajski/aramejski z Qumran, nie stanowią istotnej części odwołań, co nie zmniejsza wartości monografii, a raczej ją konkretyzuje. Jeśli chodzi o komentarz do poszczególnych perykop, to jest on, zgodnie z zapowiedzią, prowadzony synchroniczną metodą narratologiczną, uzupełnianą o dane diachroniczne, np. poprzez odwołania do badań Waltera Vogelsa. Stosując metodę narratologiczną, autor nie skupia się wyłącznie na „głosie" narratora, ale interpretuje „głosy" postaci. W obu wypadkach nieco bardziej koncentruje się na warstwie języka niż na narzędziach narracyjnych (analiza zmian w strukturze czasowej, zmiana punktów widzenia, przejścia między domyślnym czytelnikiem i autorem, struktura dialogów itp.). Dla przykładu w sposób bardzo przystępny operuje, praktycznie na każdej stronie komentarza, funkcją i znaczeniem hebrajskich rdzeni wyrazowych. Jednocześnie możemy zaryzykować twierdzenie, iż w miarę komentowania poszczególnych epizodów język autora staje się nieco mniej lingwistyczno--narratologiczny, a coraz bardziej symboliczny, a jednym z ciekawszych momentów jest interpretacja jaskini Eliasza w kluczu jaskini platońskiej (s. 252).

Eksponowane miejsce w omawianej publikacji zajmuje obszerny cytat z książki kardynała Rogera Etchegaraya *J'avance comme un âne… Petits clins d'oeil au Ciel et*

à la Terre (Idę do przodu jak osioł… Dyskretne rzuty okiem na Niebo i na Ziemię). Z jednej strony modlitwa kardynała skierowana do Eliasza staje się dla autora inspiracją przeprowadzenia badań dotyczących „jednej z najbardziej niezwykłych postaci starotestamentalnych" (s. 9), z drugiej strony ucieleśnia ona teologiczny i antropologiczny styl przeprowadzonej egzegezy. Mamy tu raczej do czynienia ze spokojną i precyzyjną kontemplacją niż z pełnym spekulacji dyskursem. Słowo „komentarz" wydaje się najlepiej oddawać charakter pracy. Słowo to nie jest umieszczone w tytule, znajdujemy je jednak w każdej jednostce egzegetycznej właściwej części pracy (s. 109, 116, 119 itd.).

Kwestia, która mogłaby wymagać dalszego doprecyzowania, to sposób wprowadzenia zagadnień deuteronomistycznych. Kiedy autor czyni istotne uwagi odnośnie do wersji greckiej Księgi Mądrości Syracha (48,1–11), zestawia ten tekst z fragmentami Ksiąg Królewskich. Pewnym dyskomfortem jest to, iż w zupełnie zaskakujący sposób, właśnie przy komentowaniu Syracha, autor wprowadza czytelnika w pojęcie tradycji deuteronomistycznej. Wydaje się, że takie wprowadzenie byłoby czytelniejsze, jeśli znalazłoby się w oddzielnym punkcie. Ponadto autor opowiada się za hipotezą Waltera Dietricha, który z kolei rozwinął teorię Rudolfa Smenda (Dietrich przyporządkowuje narrację o proroku Eliaszu do tradycji prorockiej, określanej skrótem dtrP, w odróżnieniu od tradycji historycznej i prawnej, określanych odpowiednio skrótami dtrH i dtrN). Autor nie podejmuje jednak próby odniesienia teorii Smenda-Dietricha do innych kluczowych teorii deuteronomistycznych, jak tej Franka Moore'a Crossa. Zdaje się, że w ten sposób autor chce uprościć dalsze procedowanie, ale w takim wypadku teoria Smenda-Dietricha zafunkcjonowałaby lepiej jako przypis, a nie jako element tekstu głównego, tym bardziej że w zasadniczej części pracy autor nie posługuje się skrótem dtrP, uogólniając autorstwo do dtr, tj. deuteronomisty.

Zidentyfikowanie głównej tezy monografii może nastręczać pewnych trudności. Sprawny czytelnik zauważy jednak, że istotnym jej aspektem jest zrozumienie wewnętrznej drogi przemiany Eliasza, ujętej w czteroczęściowym kluczu dojrzewanie – kryzys – konfrontacja – rodzenie. Analizując te części, autor nazywa duchowe i narracyjne niuanse związane z procesem nawrócenia. W błyskotliwy sposób zauważa, że Eliasz przechodzi wewnętrzną drogę od kogoś, kto sprawia wrażenie jakby powoływał samego siebie, do kogoś, kto odkrywa, że powołanie jest darem Boga. Jeśli mielibyśmy zidentyfikować główną tezę książki, to byłoby nią wspomniane spostrzeżenie. Dodatkowo zarówno plusem, jak i minusem pracy może być akcentowanie wagi patrzenia na postać proroka poprzez pryzmat niejednoznacznego pojęcia „bohater" (s. 44–45). Owocuje to m.in. tym, że w momencie tak pełnym napięcia jak kontrowersyjna rzeź proroków Baala (s. 211–212), autor ogranicza się wyjątkowo do cytowania poglądów innych autorów, tak jakby chciał ochronić dobre imię Eliasza-bohatera, podczas gdy dyskutowany moment pełni konkretną funkcję narracyjną i charakterologiczną w historii Eliasza, rozumianego jako bohatera opowiadania.

Suma summarum, polskojęzyczny czytelnik otrzymuje bardzo przystępne i dobrze napisane wprowadzenie do problematyki związanej z bohaterem wiary – Eliaszem. Wprowadzenie będzie pomocne zarówno podczas indywidualnej lektury tekstu, jak i zajęć w ramach studiów teologicznych, biblijnych czy lingwistycznych.

Kevin Symonds, *On the Third Part of the Secret of Fatima* (St. Louis, MO: En Route Books and Media 2017). Ss. 582. $26,95. ISBN 978-1-950108-23-7

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W 2017 roku Kevin Symonds opublikował monografię *On the Third Part of the Secret of Fatima*. Opracowaniem publikacji zajęło się wydawnictwo En Route Books and Media, dając do rąk czytelników potężną, liczącą 582 strony monografię poświęconą problematyce objawień fatimskich, a zwłaszcza kwestii trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej. Obok wersji papierowej przygotowano również e-book dostępny na czytniki Kindle.

Chociaż od wspomnianej publikacji Symondsa minęło już kilka lat, to jednak z kilku powodów warto sięgnąć do tej monografii. Po pierwsze, autor podejmuje temat trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej z perspektywy osoby przyjmującej tezę o opublikowaniu w 2000 roku całości sekretu, co przez środowiska tradycjonalistyczne, a zatem przywiązane do liturgii i nauczania przedsoborowego, jest mocno kwestionowane. Jako że zwolennicy stanowiska oficjalnego, tj. przyjmowanego przez Stolicę Apostolską, niechętnie publikują teksty polemiczne, każda pozycja, a zwłaszcza monografia, poświęcona trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej z tej perspektywy jest cenna.

Po drugie, Symonds podejmuje merytoryczną polemikę z argumentami środowisk tradycjonalistycznych, przy czym nie jest to powtarzanie utartych sloganów czy udawanie, że problem nie istnieje, lecz przywołanie tych argumentów i ustosunkowanie się do nich w taki sposób, by bronić oficjalnego stanowiska Stolicy Apostolskiej w sprawie trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej.

Po trzecie, publikacja na gruncie polskiej teologii jest mało znana. Generalnie w literaturze polskiej tematyka trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej pojawia się sporadycznie, a czytając artykuły poświęcone tej problematyce, odnosi się wrażenie, że autorzy nie są świadomi całej masy problemów związanych z tzw. wizją biskupa w bieli. Jest to o tyle zastanawiające, że polskich publikacji poświęconych w ogóle objawieniom fatimskim jest naprawdę sporo. Sięgnięcie do publikacji Symondsa winno być wręcz obowiązkowe dla autorów, którzy chcieliby się aktywnie włączyć w bardzo złożoną dyskusję na temat trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej. Książka Symondsa wraz z ostatnio opublikowaną monografią w języku polskim, poświęconą temu problemowi (D. Mielnik, *Śledztwo w sprawie sekretu fatimskiego. Czy w Fatimie Maryja ostrzega-*

ła przed Soborem Watykańskim II i nową Mszą?, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL 2020), ufajmy, ożywi dyskusję również na gruncie rodzimej teologii.

Publikacja Symondsa składa się z trzynastu rozdziałów poprzedzonych wstępem (s. 11–16) i zwieńczonych epilogiem (s. 338–340), a dodatkowo z dziesięciu apendyksów (s. 341–561) oraz dość obszernej bibliografii (s. 562–580). Okładka zaprojektowana została starannie i przyciąga wzrok potencjalnego odbiorcy.

W rozdziale pierwszym (s. 17–58) autor przybliża odbiorcy faktografię fatimską. Prezentuje wybrane wydarzenia i okoliczności, które doprowadziły w XXI wieku do konfliktu w zakresie faktycznej zawartości trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej. Rozdział drugi (s. 59–84) stanowi próbę przybliżenia i odparcia jednego z ważniejszych argumentów zwolenników istnienia dwóch części sekretu, a mianowicie problemu objętości tajemnicy. Symonds próbuje z jednej strony wytłumaczyć, skąd wzięło się przekonanie o tym, że trzeci sekret fatimski został spisany na ok. 20–25 linijkach tekstu, z drugiej usiłuje wykazać, iż faktografia potwierdzająca ten przekaz nie jest pewna, a zatem nie może służyć jako argument.

Rozdział trzeci (s. 85–102) poświęcony jest szczegółowej analizie wykładów kardynała Alfredo Ottavianiego na temat trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej. Symonds zestawia różne wersje jego przemówienia i pokazuje różnice, do jakich doszło w tłumaczeniach. Podjęte tu analizy są niezwykle cenne, ponieważ wystąpienie Ottavianiego z 1967 roku jest podstawą do tworzenia różnego rodzaju argumentów przez zwolenników tezy o istnieniu nieopublikowanej części tajemnicy. W rozdziale czwartym (s. 103–119) autor mierzy się z problemem zapowiadanej daty publikacji trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej (1960) i próbuje ustosunkować się do tego, czy data ta istotnie została wskazana przez Matkę Bożą, czy może wymyślona przez samą s. Łucję.

Rozdział piąty (s. 120–147) poświęcony został analizie spotkania s. Łucji i Augustyna Fuentesa w 1957 roku. Autor bada różne przekazy dotyczące tego wydarzenia i stara się ustalić wiarygodność kluczowych sformułowań (rzekomo) użytych podczas tego spotkania. W rozdziale szóstym (s. 148–163) Symonds odnosi się do problemu przerażającego charakteru sekretu. Usiłuje pokazać, skąd wzięło się takie przekonanie, które stanowi jedną z przesłanek odrzucania mało przerażającej wizji biskupa w bieli jako (pełnej) trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej.

Rozdział siódmy (s. 164–172) poświęcony został komunikatowi z 1960 roku, w którym poinformowano opinię publiczną o decyzji niepublikowania trzeciej części tajemnicy fatimskiej (wbrew woli Matki Bożej). Autor zestawia ze sobą oryginał i tłumaczenia tego komunikatu, zwracając uwagę na pewne niuanse językowe. W krótkim rozdziale ósmym (s. 173–180) podjęty został temat odizolowania s. Łucji od świata zewnętrznego i uniemożliwienia jej składania osobistych świadectw wobec opinii publicznej. Autor próbuje pokazać, że s. Łucja nie tyle znalazła się w klauzurze klasztornej jako „niewygodny świadek", ile raczej ułatwiono jej prowadzenie życia kontemplacyjnego.

W stosunkowo obszernym rozdziale dziewiątym (s. 181–216) podjęty został temat jednego z najważniejszych argumentów przywoływanych przez zwolenników istnienia dwóch części sekretu, a mianowicie kwestia słynnego zdania o zachowaniu dogmatu wiary w Portugalii. W tej części publikacji autor próbuje zneutralizować niemal powszechnie przyjmowany sens tej frazy i usiłuje wykazać, że odnosi się on nie do apostazji, ale do prześladowań w Rosji. Równie obszerny rozdział dziesiąty (s. 217–255) podejmuje problem odwoływania się przez kard. Josepha Ratzingera do Edouarda Dhanisa w komentarzu napisanym w 2000 roku. Symonds usiłuje pokazać, że przy tym konkretnym odwołaniu Ratzinger nie odnosił się do nieprzychylnych opinii Dhanisa na temat Fatimy[1], ale nawiązywał do innych twierdzeń tego autora.

Rozdział jedenasty (s. 256–292) poświęcony został próbie wytłumaczenia ewentualnych sprzeczności pomiędzy słowami Ratzingera z 2000 roku a jego przemówieniami z 2010 roku, kiedy to jako papież podjął pielgrzymkę do Fatimy. Symonds usiłuje wykazać, że tak naprawdę Benedykt XVI nie przeczył sam sobie, a jego pozornie niezgodne wypowiedzi dotyczyły dwóch zupełnie różnych kwestii. W rozdziale dwunastym (s. 293–311) podjęty został ważny temat świadectwa Ingo Döllingera w sprawie faktycznej zawartości trzeciej części sekretu fatimskiego. Autor usiłuje pokazać, że zachowane w tej materii przekazy nie są wewnętrznie spójne, a przez co nie mogą być w pełni wiarygodne.

Wreszcie trzynasty rozdział pracy (s. 312–337) pomyślany został jako miejsce na nieporuszone wcześniej tematy. W tej części Symonds podjął m.in. problem daty zapisania trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej w kontekście listu s. Łucji do biskupa da Silvy z dnia 9 stycznia 1944 roku; problem użytej nomenklatury na kartce, na której zapisana została trzecia część sekretu; kwestię jednego z oświadczeń przełożonych zakonu, w którym przebywała wizjonerka; zagadnienie wypowiedzi Ratzingera z 1984 roku oraz kard. Angelo Sodano z 2000 roku; temat zapoznania się z trzecią tajemnicą fatimską przez Jana Pawła II w kontekście decyzji o poświęceniu świata Niepokalanemu Sercu Maryi.

Liczba rozdziałów recenzowanej monografii zapewne miała nawiązywać do trzynastego dnia objawień fatimskich, a zwłaszcza 13 lipca, kiedy to Maryja przekazała dzieciom trzecią tajemnicę fatimską, która jest centralnym tematem tej publikacji. Tego rodzaju zabiegi literackie wiążą się z ryzykiem niewłaściwego doboru treści, niezachowaniem wewnętrznej spójności dzieła albo niewyczerpaniem tematu. Teoretycznie ostatni rozdział publikacji został pomyślany jako swoistego rodzaju część

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[1] Eduardo Dhanis był zwolennikiem rozróżniania pomiędzy tzw. Fatimą I oraz Fatimą II. Owa dywersyfikacja służyła uzasadnieniu, że nie wszystko, co s. Łucja przekazała światu, rzeczywiście musiało pochodzić od Maryi. Nie wnikając w daleko idące konsekwencje tego rozróżniania, na potrzeby niniejszego tekstu warto jedynie zauważyć, że według zwolenników istnienia niepublikowanej części sekretu, taka dywersyfikacja umożliwia Stolicy Apostolskiej „legalne” usunięcie treści, które są dla niej niewygodne. Tak więc powoływanie się Ratzingera na tego autora, który dał solidne podstawy do przesiewania treści objawień fatimskich, jest zdaniem niektórych osób bardzo podejrzane.

ogólna, w której można umieścić niewykorzystane wcześniej treści, ale w praktyce to rozwiązanie ma swoje wady, chociażby uniemożliwia szczegółowe przebadanie poruszanych w tym rozdziale kwestii.

W przypadku monografii Symondsa zaproponowane rozwiązanie podziału omawianych treści nie do końca zdało egzamin. Można się zastanawiać nad połączeniem niektórych rozdziałów (np. drugiego z trzecim czy dziesiątego z jedenastym), aczkolwiek zasadniczy problem leży zupełnie gdzie indziej. Otóż jest kilka wątków, których na pewno w tej publikacji zabrakło. Symonds nie odniósł się choćby do niezwykle ważnego dokumentu kard. Lorisa Capovilli, będącego jednym z najważniejszych argumentów za istnieniem dwóch części sekretu fatimskiego. W ogóle nie zajął się szczegółową analizą wystąpienia kard. Tarcisio Bertone w programie „Porta a Porta", a zwłaszcza pokazanymi wtedy kopertami, które w bardzo mocny sposób potwierdzają słuszność zarzutów kierowanych wobec Stolicy Apostolskiej przez zwolenników istnienia nieopublikowanej części sekretu. Monografia nie zawiera żadnego odniesienia się do świadectw takich osób, jak o. Malachi Martin, kard. Mario Luigi Ciappi, kard. Silvio Oddi czy ks. Tomasz Jochemczyk. Nawet jeżeli ten ostatni mógł być nieznany autorowi, to wypowiedzi wcześniej wymienionych autorów na temat zawartości trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej Symonds musiał znać. W żaden sposób autor nie ustosunkował się również do problemu dwukrotnego zapoznania się z trzecią tajemnicą fatimską przez Jana Pawła II[2]. To są tematy, którym można było poświęcić odrębne rozdziały, co jednak w konsekwencji naruszyłoby przyjętą odgórnie strukturę trzynastu rozdziałów.

Obok głównej zawartości na publikację – jak wspomniano – składa się również szereg apendyksów. Symonds przedstawia w nich wypowiedzi kard. Ottavianiego na temat trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej; transkypt z rozmowy kard. Capovilli z Marco Roncallim z 1994 roku; transkrypt konferencji z 26 czerwca 2000 roku; transkrypt z programu „Porta a Porta", w którym kard. Bertone pokazał do kamer manuskrypt wizji biskupa w bieli; wywiad Fuentesa z s. Łucją oraz kilka tekstów samego Symondsa, opublikowanych przy innych okazjach.

Bibliografię recenzowanej publikacji, obok książek, w znacznym stopniu tworzą różnego rodzaju zasoby internetowe, czego jednak nie należy traktować jako metodologiczny błąd autora. Faktycznie dyskusja na temat trzeciej części sekretu fatimskiego w ostatnich czasach przeniosła się przede wszystkim do przestrzeni internetowej, stąd nieuwzględnianie publikowanych tam tekstów po prostu nie dałoby autorowi pełnego wglądu w podjętą problematykę.

Czy publikację Symondsa warto polecić? Na tak postawione pytanie należy odpowiedzieć twierdząco. Autor nie powtarza już funkcjonujących treści dotyczących trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej, ale stara się rzucić nowe światło na toczącą się dysku-

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[2]   Autor nawiązuje co prawda do odczytania tajemnicy po zamachu, ale w zupełnie innym kontekście, bez odniesienia się do tego, że Jan Paweł II miał zapoznać się z trzecią tajemnicą fatimską jeszcze w 1978 roku.

się. Bardzo cenna jest treść załącznika „D", w którym autor umieszcza zapis bardzo trudno dostępnego wystąpienia kard. Bertone w programie „Porta a Porta". Dodatkowy walor publikacji zapewnia to, że autor odnosi się do różnych zarzutów formułowanych względem oficjalnego stanowiska Stolicy Apostolskiej w sprawie upublicznienia trzeciej tajemnicy fatimskiej i próbuje je zbić, broniąc tym samym tezy, że w 2000 roku Watykan opublikował całość sekretu. Czy jednak robi to w sposób przekonujący? W opinii recenzenta – nie. Na taką ocenę składa się kilka czynników. Po pierwsze, Symonds w niektórych rozdziałach swojej publikacji podaje alternatywne wytłumaczenia problemów związanych z trzecią tajemnicą fatimską. Czyni to zawsze na korzyść oficjalnego stanowiska Stolicy Apostolskiej, jednak nie troszczy się w sposób należyty o to, żeby wykazać, że proponowane przez siebie rozwiązania są lepsze od interpretacji drugiej strony sporu. Po drugie, autor nie uwzględnia w monografii kilku bardzo ważnych wątków (wspomnianych powyżej), które w istotny sposób mogą wpływać na wynik prowadzonych analiz. Po trzecie, już na początku publikacji Symonds proponuje bardzo wątpliwą metodologię w zakresie przyznawania wiarygodności posiadanym materiałom dowodowym. Polega ona na uznawaniu za prawdziwe oświadczeń świadka (których sam świadek w żaden sposób nie dokumentuje) na niekorzyść publicznie dostępnego dokumentu potwierdzającego tezę przeciwną. Wszystkie te mankamenty razem wzięte w opinii recenzenta sprawiają, że autor broni swej tezy w sposób nieprzekonujący dla krytycznego i obeznanego z tematyką czytelnika.

Barbara Bokus – Ewa Kosowska (eds.), *Truth and Falsehood in Science and the Arts* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 2020). Pp. 299. Open Access. ISBN 978-83-235-4220-9 [PDF]

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In our times, issues of truth and falsehood are most often considered within logic/epistemology, ethics/morality, or ontology/axiology. Truth and error are repeatedly determined with respect to judgments. In this case, truth and falsehood is a logical characteristic of judgments and defines their conformity or lack thereof to reality. In an axiological sense, truth is associated with truthfulness, and as such it is contrasted with lying. In such a case, truth is a moral value for which one should strive. Things are different with truth considered in hermeneutic-ontological contexts, where truth is a value in relation to being. For Martin Heidegger, this meant that *Dasein* can truly exist because openness is the essence of its existence, i.e. *Dasein* expresses, or opens, the being in its being.[1] For Józef Tischner, on the other hand, truth leads us to an ethical experience of another person in an encounter, because it presents them in their authenticity and without duplicity.[2] In these contexts, however, we lose the strictly epistemic significance of truth and falsehood. Truth is also an element of cognitive acts and is constituted in cognitive relations. That is why it seems necessary to distinguish between different ways of understanding truth as a value, in this case logical (a quality of judgments), axiological (a quality of speech acts), ontological (a way of being), or epistemic (a quality of cognitive acts). The current "epistemological dogma" states that a dual objective – striving for truth and avoiding errors – exhausts our cognitive aspirations. In particular, this view suggests that the entire epistemic value of knowledge must result from the aforementioned two objectives. There is no doubt that truth is a value in an epistemic sense. True cognition is, after all, more valuable than false cognition. The acting subject of a cognitive relation

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1   M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer 1927).
2   J. Tischner, *Filozofia poznania* [Philosophy of Cognition] (Kraków: Papieski Wydział Teologiczny 1978–1979).

which recognizes truth as a value is more likely to choose whatever presents itself as true than that which appears false.

Getting closer to truth is also a challenge for ecumenical dialogue. It is not enough to liberate and arouse goodwill. Something more is needed. Showing the role of truth in the ecumenical movement, John Paul II pointed out that truth shaped the conscience, giving directions for unity. This truth, at the same time, forms consciences and directs efforts of Christians – brethren divided from one another – to Christ's prayer for unity (*Ut unum sint*, no. 33). Truth has the power to form consciences correctly. Conscience, naturally, has to be followed by deeds, which is why the Pope called for truth of consciences and efforts of Christians. Therefore, humility is needed to accept truth. And this is what the Pope mentioned in his encyclical *Ut unum sint* when he stated that the interior and personal dimension of dialogue must be accompanied by a spirit of charity for the interlocutor and humility with regard to the truth which comes to light and which might demand a change of assertions and attitudes (*Ut unum sint*, no. 36).

1. Complementarity of the Treatment of the Subject

The (open access) e-book *Truth and Falsehood in Science and the Arts* edited by Barbara Bokus and Ewa Kosowska[3] published by Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego in April 2020, touches upon two areas of arriving at the truth and exposing falsehood. In their analyses the authors conduct an intensive search for an answer to the question of how the issue of truth and falsehood related to science and the arts should be examined today. It is in the introduction that we read that this content-rich volume is "the outcome of a conference organized for the conclusion of the 10-year Inter-University Program of Interdisciplinary PhD Studies at the »Artes Liberales« Academy." The program included academic teachers who supervised some excellent doctoral dissertations and students, most of whom now hold doctoral and post-doctoral degrees. Professor Barbara Bokus's firm commitment and professionalism resulted in a number of texts that could be compiled into a multiple-author monograph. Even a cursory glance at the table of contents allows the reader to expect to learn about interdisciplinary research exploring various periods and cultures, where truth and falsehood meet as a foundation of human motivations, choices, decisions and behaviors. A more thorough reading of the texts reveals efforts to universalize the results of those detailed searches.

The great majority of the authors presenting the fruits of their qualitative research on truth and falsehood in science and the arts invoke the resources offered

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3   https://www.wuw.pl/product-pol-12401-Truth-and-Falsehood-in-Science-and-the-Arts-PDF.html.

by global literature starting from classic texts (J. Axer, "Between Science, Art, and Forgery: Latin Textual Criticism as a Case Example"), through the example of Maciej Sarbiewski's theory of poetic art (M. Łukaszewicz-Chantry, "Only a Poet Never Lies…"), to the French descriptions of the Morlachs (W. Sajkowski, "Honesty as a Trait of Non-Civilized Man in the French Image of Southern Slavs at the Turn of the 18th and 19th Centuries"). There is no shortage of references to philosophical texts (A. Grzeliński, "The Validity of Aesthetic Judgments: George Santayana's Polemics with Tradition"; A. Żymełka-Pietrzak, "Not Naked but Wearing "Dress upon Dress": Johann Georg Hamann on Truth"; P. Tomczok, "Truth and Falsehood of the Mirror: Subjectivity – Reflection – Practice"). The analyses of researchers representing contemporary psychology are no less interesting (P. Kałowski, "Narration True and False: Dialogical Self Theory in Psychotherapy"; A. Milanowicz, "Truth and Untruth in Irony"; A. Smurzyńska, "When Does Simulation Enable Us Adequately to Attribute Mental States to Others?"). Some of the texts contain references to religion (M. Rogalski, "The Disengaged Researcher as a Type: Truth and Probability in Studies on Religious Thought"; R. Zawisza, "Hannah Arendt's Marranic Evasions and the Truth of Her Cryptotheology") or to music (J. Barska, "Music vs. Truth: Illustrative Music in the Context of Musical Aesthetics"; K. Kolinek-Siechowicz, "Truth and Early Music: The Intersection of Arts and Humanities"; A. Chęćka, "Truth Embodied in Music"). Great value can be found in bold references to the art of painting (P. Słodkowski, "Truth of a Painting, Truth of Matter: Robert Rauschenberg, Henryk Streng, and the History of Art") and the history of literature (M. Junkiert, "The Polish History of Literature as a *Lieu de Mémoire*"). The issue of truth and falsehood in architecture and museology has also been considered (J. Kutnik, "Truth of the Place and Truth of the Exhibition: 'Case Study' of the State Museum at Majdanek"). Such a selection of texts is strongly justified by the large-scale nature of the research results. The editors of the book have taken care to order the texts in a way that would enable readers to acquaint themselves with the effects of multiple-level and multiple-aspect research conducted on materials drawn from diverse periods and cultures. The value of the publication lies in its diversity, expertise and complementariness. With such an extensive issue as truth and falsehood in science and the arts, it would be hard to expect a complete presentation of answers, and this was not in fact the intention of the authors of this worthwhile collection of texts.

Noting the originality of the topic itself, both from a material (truth versus falsehood) and a formal (in science and the arts) perspective, it is worth underlining that the monograph considerably contributes to filling the gap that exists in the large-scale research focused on the problem of truth and falsehood. The world literature includes numerous interesting works whose authors undertake to solve questions related to truth and its nature. Already at the start of the 20th century, Bertrand Russell's monograph *On the Nature of Truth and Falsehood*, included in *Philosophical Essays* (1910), was a great success. It became hard to ignore this issue in subsequent

research. The number of Russell's citations – impact that today would be measured using the Hirsch index – remained high for many years. Even a century later, we can find further coherent studies.[4] Essentially, the aforementioned works present the results of research in disciplines related to one another, mostly philosophy, logic or ethics. Less often, we find studies on truth in the arts.[5]

One important feature of the e-book *Truth and Falsehood in Science and the Arts* is the polyphony of academic statements about truth and falsehood. These studies do not represent a single, overriding vision offered by one author, but are the result of dialogues between independent individuals and their points of view, their receptions of a selected fragment of reality. We can thus say that even in themselves, they reflect a process whereby the discovery of truth and falsehood does not mature solely "in one person's mind" but emerges between those who seek it together, is born in the process of a dialogue inevitably entangled in language conventions. It is worth noting the great literary artistry of the texts under review. The sophisticated reader is sure to feel unsatisfied due to the lack of representative texts from a number of fields in which the problem of truth and falsehood is considered. They certainly include theological sciences and law, although one could acknowledge that Przemysław Piwowarczyk's "Mechanism of Mystification and Demystification at the Point of Contact between the Humanities and Science: Case Study of the *Gospel of Jesus' Wife*" could be counted among the former group, and so could Michał Rogalski's "The Disengaged Researcher as a Type: Truth and Probability in Studies on Religious Thought." Future research ought to include a study focused on a classic for the issue in question, namely the convert John Henry Newman (1801–1890). Both his life and his entire oeuvre confirm the dialogical character of truth, an outlook fully compatible with that which guided the initiators and authors of the collection under review.

2. Originality of the Texts Presented

There is no question that most authors of the monograph rely strongly on previous research on truth and falsehood in their respective disciplines and research areas. The originality of their approaches, however, lies in confronting truth and falsehood in such a way as to arrive at elementary knowledge on the world around us, in both

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4   For example, R. Casati – A.C. Varzi, "True and False: An Exchange," *Circularity, Definition, and Truth. Indian Council of Philosophical Research* (eds. A. Chapuis – A. Gupta) (New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research 2000) 365–370; B. Dupret, *Practices of Truth. An Ethnomethodological Inquiry Into Arab Contexts* (Amsterdam – Philadelphia, PA: Benjamins 2011); N. Feit – A. Cullison, "When Does Falsehood Preclude Knowledge?," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 92 (2011) 283–304.

5   For instance, M.W. Roskill, *Truth and Falsehood in Visual Images* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press 1983).

science and the arts. In many cases the authors have invoked important methods and artistic means helping to achieve this objective. Consequently, after outlining the methodological situation in the textual criticism of the 1960s and 1970s, Jerzy Axer considers the reasons behind the changes in his methodology as an editor in the subsequent decades. In conclusion, he takes a stance on contemporary disputes on the role of a scientific editor, with a special focus on the interdisciplinary aspects of this problem. Przemysław Piwowarczyk reveals how, in the course of investigating the authenticity of the so-called Gospel of Jesus' Wife, it became impossible to ascertain it through laboratory tests and traditional paleographic or historical analyses. It was not until professional journalists became involved that solid investigative journalism brought hard-to-refute evidence. Karol Wilczyński analyses two terms found in two works by Al-Ġazālī – the notion of precipitance (Arabic: *tahāfut*) and "conforming to authority" (Arabic: *taqlīd*), which are described in *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* (*The Precipitance of the Philosophers*) and *Al-Munqiḏ min al-ḍalāl* (*Rescuer from Error*). He offers a different interpretation of these two works by Al-Ġazālī. Maria Łukaszewicz-Chantry analyzes a treatise by Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (*De perfecta poesi, sive Vergilius et Homerus*), and on its basis, he argues that poetical fiction is often a veil concealing precious truth that can be grasped through the right allegorical interpretation. Izabella Zatorska discusses the problem of the elusive essence of things on the example of Baroque theater. From the perspective of *theatrum mundi*, with the help of the "theater within the theater" structure (Shakespeare, Pierre Corneille, Molière), she draws attention to the other, disturbing depth of "the norm of the day." She points out how, in the drama of existence, Józef Tischner defined a significant difference between a lie and an illusion. Wojciech Sajkowski presents the French outlook on the morality of peoples considered uncivilized at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, specifically the Southern Slavs inhabiting today's Croatia and Montenegro. His analysis reveals the place of the Slavic communities living on the peripheries of Europe during the Enlightenment in the discussions of the time on the morals of civilized peoples and those considered savage. Adam Grzeliński discusses the truth of aesthetic judgments in the concept of George Santayana, the author of such works as *The Sense of Beauty* and *Reason in Art*. His distinction between the beauty of matter, form and expression draws attention to the dual meaning of the validity of aesthetic judgments: indicating their universality on one hand, and on the other – referring us to the ideals of reason, whose sensual representation is available in works of art. Anna Żymełka-Pietrzak uses an analysis of the metaphor of truth found in Johann Georg Hamann's letter of 27 July 1759 directed to Immanuel Kant, where truth is depicted as a woman wearing many layers of dresses but removing the clothing reveals a fearful ghost, to define Hamann's theological-ethical model of truth. God's truth becomes accessible to humans in communicational acts of condescension, its special form being the God-Man Incarnate. The author imitates God's kenotical act towards her own thoughts. This kind of approach to a work also

means serving the truth. Marta Baron-Milian presents the epistemological status of poetry from the perspective of questions asked by the economy of literature. She juxtaposes selected theories of poetry (those of Jochen Hörisch, Viktor B. Shklovsky, Jean Baudrillard and Franco Berardi), which we could in fact view as "economies of poetry" due to their proposed descriptions of the qualities of the poetic medium in an economic perspective. Paweł Tomczok considers how the mirror and the process of reflection create an imaginational resource of countless philosophical models of truth and falsehood. A mirror reflection suggests that a faithful representation of reality is possible, and also – almost simultaneously – that the reflection can be inaccurate, distorted, blurred, too dark or too bright. Consequently, the mirror defines the aim of cognition while immediately suggesting the possibility of various barriers to achieving that aim. Michał Rogalski conducts a critical analysis of the possibility of assuming an objective, impartial stance towards the object of one's own investigation. Based on Aristotle's analyses related to rhetoric, the author shows that presenting research results in writing is connected with assuming a stance towards them and giving them a place and importance in the context of the argumentation, which involves a value judgment operation. He discusses Gadamer's idea of writing history over and over again to account for the changing context. This leads to a strong accentuation of researchers' own worldviews in their research. Rafał Zawisza sets out to re-interpret Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* from the point of view of the concept of natality. Her hypothesis and concepts, such as a "philosophical Marranist," enables Zawisza to explain how her secular anthropology was a form of cryptotheology. Piotr Kałowski discusses the notions of truth and falsehood in psychotherapy, describing the theory of the dialogical self as an approach compatible with postmodernism. Comparing it with the dominant cognitive-behavioral approach, he presents examples of its practical application, especially in problems related to the sense of identity and its continuity, and discusses the merits and limitations of the metaphor of therapy as dialogue and narrative. Anna Milanowicz offers an essay showing irony as a form of masking and camouflage. In the latter part of the text, she asks whether irony has a gender. Replying to this question, she briefly outlines the conclusions from research on differences in the way men and women understand and use irony and self-irony. Adrianna Smurzyńska draws special attention to assuming another person's perspective and to the simulation theory. She considers the results of studies on the development of the ability to differentiate perspectives and disorders of this ability in borderline personality disorder. The ability to distinguish one's own and others' mental states is presented as an element of social cognition that enables an adequate mentalization, by accepting the presence of various perspectives and the possibility of the coexistence of various representations of reality. Joanna Barska devotes a lot of attention to examples of the application of various music rhetorical figures and how they function. She underlines, however, that despite a certain universalization of the language of music, the system of musical-rhe-

torical figures is extremely diverse and subject to individual contextual interpretation. Karolina Kolinek-Siechowicz also considers the issue of truth in music, but from the point of view of the historically informed performance of early music. The author looks at different stages in this trend, asking about the extent to which seeking authenticity in performance and closeness to the composer's intention has been the result of striving for historical truth and how much truth it reveals about the contemporary aesthetic attitudes of musicians and audiences. Anna Chęćka also joins the discussion about truth in music. She shows that the two paths are most often followed by the English-speaking world's analytic philosophy. The first one assumes seeking truth or falsehood in the actual musical work and its structures, while the other is related to truth in experiencing music, and thus to the sincerity, authenticity of a performance (and especially performers' faithfulness to the score and to themselves). Piotr Słodkowski proposes a methodological reflection on inter-image relationships. He juxtaposes two examples of artistic practice: Rauschenberg's erasure of de Kooning's drawing and Henryk Streng's removal of his own signature from his paintings. He concludes that both interferences support the transition from an intertextual approach to paintings to a research optics that enhances the physical aspect of a visual representation. Maciej Junkiert analyzes the origins and special character of the 19th-century Polish historical-literary research. He compares the context of the birth of this new discipline in partitioned Poland and in the German states. He indicates similarities and differences, which were the result, among other things, of the fact that the history of literature was an important academic discipline in the German states, whereas Polish scholars developed it in much tougher circumstances. Last but not least, Jan Kutnik discusses the problem of truth in museum exhibitions related to the tragedy of World War II (e.g. Majdanek, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Stutthof). Based on his own research conducted in 2016–2019, he concludes that shaping the relationship between the truth of the place and the truth of the exhibition, skillfully using authenticity and finding new ways of "speaking" to visitors is an enormous challenge for exhibitors.

Conclusion

The texts of the entire volume are of a high academic standard. As already mentioned, the authors reference the latest studies in the areas of research they discuss. They do not hesitate to offer their own conclusions and propose interesting and innovative solutions to the problems under discussion.

Both in its entirety and selected fragments, the e-book *Truth and Falsehood in Science and the Arts* will successfully (and easily, as an open access publication) serve anyone pursuing in-depth studies on the phenomenon of truth. The crystallization

of truth is effected in confrontation with falsehood in many aspects of science and the arts, as noted by the authors. One can also perceive the alethic (Greek: ἀλήθεια) significance of falsehood. This kind of conclusion could suggest that the two phenomena are complementary in many areas of human activity. The examples of such complementarity discussed in the book can serve as subjects of further analyses and bases for successive dissertations, significantly expanding the research on truth and falsehood in science and the arts.