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Critical Edition and Philological Analysis of the Isa 53 Text Based on the Coptic Manuscript of sa 52 (M 568) and Other Coptic Manuscripts of the Sahidic Dialect and the Greek Text of the Septuagint

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Abstract: The article is a critical edition, translation, and philological analysis of the Isa 53 text, prepared on the basis of the Coptic manuscript of sa 52 and other available manuscripts, written in the Sahidic dialect. Its first part outlines general information about the section of codex sa 52 (M 568) that contains the analyzed text. This is followed by a list and brief description of other manuscripts that contain at least some verses from sa 53. The most important part of the article is the presentation of the Sahidic text and its translation into English. The differences identified between the Coptic translation and the Greek Septuagint were presented in a table. It includes, for example, additions and omissions in the Sahidic translation, lexical changes, and semantic differences. The final part of the article aims to clarify more challenging philological issues observed either in the Coptic text itself or in its relation to the Greek text of the LXX.

Keywords: Coptic language, Sahidic dialect, Book of Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah, sa 52 (M 568), CLM 205, edition of Isa 53

Chapter 53 of the Book of Isaiah is one of the most quoted passages in the Old Testament. It contains the text that is commonly known as the Fourth Song of the Servant of the Lord. It begins at the end of chapter 52 (vv. 13–15) and fills the whole of chapter 53. Due to practical reasons (to avoid splitting chapter 52), the Coptic text of the verses Isa 52,13–15 has already been compiled.[1] The subject of this article will be the critical edition, translation, and philological analysis of the subsequent verses of the Song that fill Isa 53.

The first six verses contain the words of people who report the tragic fate of the Servant with deep compassion. At the same time, they admit in the first person, that they “did not esteem him” (v. 3). The Servant of the Lord “carried our sorrow” (v. 4), undertaking substitutionary atonement.

Verses 7 to 10 quote the words of the Prophet who describes details of the passion. He emphasizes the Servant’s meekness, calm, and silence in the face of suffering (v. 7).

1 The text is currently in preparation for printing in the scientific journal *The Biblical Annals*.

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Following his imprisonment, the Servant is cut off from the land of the living and stricken to his death (v. 8). He had his grave made with the wicked (v. 9). All this suffering was the will of Yahweh, but at the same time, it was undertaken voluntarily (v. 10).

The final two verses of the Song (11 and 12) are about the effects of the expiatory offering. The Servant's death "shall justify many" (v. 11) and the justified will belong to him (v. 12). Verse 12 is the final verse of the Song and, at the same time, the closing of chapter 53.

This article can be regarded as a continuation of the chapters of the Book of Isaiah compiled so far.[2] The edition of Isa 53 will be based mainly on the Sahidic manuscript numbered **sa 52**[3] in Karlheinz Schüssler's compilation (**M 568** in the Leo Depuydt compilation),[4] which is to be found under the number **CLM 205** in the modern electronic database of the Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature.[5] This work is based on both the photographic edition (referred to as a *facsimile*), provided by the Vatican Library, and the microfilm, provided by the Morgan Library in New York. For the last few years, black and white photographs of that Library's Coptic collection have been available on the website: https://archive.org/details/PhantoouLibrary.[6] Photographs in color have also been published as part of the Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament (DECOT) project on the website: http://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace, where our manuscript is to be found under the number **ID 622008**.[7]

Page numbers in this compilation will be provided according to the numbering of the *facsimile*, which is to be found in the Vatican Library. Since the numbering on the Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament (DECOT) website does not

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2 The edition of the text of Proto-Isaiah (Isa 1–39) based on manuscript sa 52 is available in: Bąk, *Proto-Isaiah in the Sahidic Dialect*, 343–660. A study of Isa 40 can be found in the article: Bąk, *Isa 40*. Text of Isa 41 is available in Bąk, *Isa 41*. Text of Isa 42:1–44:4 was published in Bąk, *Isa 42:1–44:4*. Text of Isa 44:6–45:25 was compiled in Bąk, *Isa 44:6–45:25*. Chapters Isa 46–48 in Bąk, *Isa 46–48*, text of Isa 49–50 in Bąk, *Isa 49–50*. Chapters 51–52 are in preparation for printing.

3 Schüssler, *Sa 49–92*, 17–19.

4 History and detailed description of the manuscript: Bąk, *Proto-Isaiah*, 13–28. See Depuydt, *Catalogue*, 20–22.

5 CLM stands for the Coptic Literary Manuscript. See https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/205 (access 26.02.2023).

6 Verse Isa 53:1 begins on the site: https://archive.org/details/PhantoouLibrary/m568%20Combined%20%28Bookmarked%29/page/n107/mode/2up?view=theater (access 26.02.2023).

7 However, caution needs to be exercised here, as the transcription of the text contains some errors. These can be found in the following places:
– on p. 109 (f. 54^{r}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅) in line 11 of the right column, the sa 52 manuscript contains the following entry: **ⲉⲧⲛⲥⲙⲏ**. The DECOT transcription contains one more vowel and reads: **ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲥⲙⲏ**,
– on p. 110 (f. 54^{v}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅) in line 29 of the left column in the DECOT transcription we find the following entry: **ⲙⲡⲗⲁⲟⲥ**, while the sa 52 manuscript reads **ⲙⲡⲁⲗⲁⲟⲥ**.
The cited examples of errors in the DECOT transcription can be verified on the website: https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace (access 19.03.2023).

correspond to the *facsimile* edition, this article will also provide the original Coptic page numbers to avoid ambiguity.

The following study combines features of both the diplomatic edition of manuscript sa 52 (M 568) and of its critical edition. In addition to the preferred manuscript sa 52 from the Pierpont Morgan collection, editions of all other currently available Coptic manuscripts in the Sahidic dialect, containing at least some verses from Isa 53 will also be considered. In the critical apparatus (indicated by an exclamation mark in superscript: $^{!}$) a reading more akin to the Greek text of the Septuagint will be suggested.

Critical edition and philological analysis of the selected fragment will be carried out according to the order adopted in the study of the earlier chapters of the Book of Isaiah. It will therefore include the following elements: 1) a general description of the pages of sa 52 manuscript containing the text of Isa 53, 2) an edition of the Coptic text on the basis of the sa 52 manuscript taking other available witnesses into account, 3) English translation, 4) a list of disparities between the Greek text of LXX and its Coptic translation, presented in a table, 5) an analysis of more challenging philological phenomena observed in the Coptic fragment of Isa 53.

1. General Information about Isa 53 in sa 52 Manuscript

The text of Isa 53 begins in line 9 of the right column on page 109 of the facsimile (f. 54^{r}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅), and ends in line 2 of the left column on page 111 (f. 55^{r}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲅ̅). Thus, the text of chapter 53 is less than three columns long.

As was observed in the compilation of earlier fragments, the writing material was not selected with great care. On page 109 (f. 54^{r}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅) in line 10 of the right column, which is exactly where the Isa 53 chapter begins, one can even see a small perforation. The same perforation is also to be seen in line 10 of the left column on page 110 (f. 54^{v}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅). A perforation is also visible on the right-hand margin of the same page 110, around the 12th and 13th lines of the text. Since it is located outside of the column, it does not affect the letters.

The columns containing the Isa 53 text consist of a similar number of lines. In the left column on page 110 (f. 54^{v}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅) we have 33 lines, while in the right column on page 109 (f. 54^{r}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅) and in the right column on the page 110 (f. 54^{v}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅) there are 34 lines.

In two places in our text, some words were written under the columns. It is likely that the scribe wanted to complete a logical unit without having to move a part of the word to the next page. This phenomenon can be observed on page:

– 109 (f. 54^{r}, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅), where the letters ⲠⲖⲨⲄⲎ that form the word ⲞⲨⲠⲖⲨⲄⲎ with an indefinite article, were written under the right column,

– 110 (f. 54v, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅), where the letters ϭⲟⲡϥ that belong to the word ⲁⲩϭⲟⲡϥ were written under the right column.

Throughout the whole of the sa 52 manuscript, one can notice enlarged initial letters extending beyond the columns of the text on the left. They are indicative of an attempt to logically divide the content. They appear in places near which a new thought begins. The enlarged initial letters are often accompanied by symbols that can be regarded as ornamental elements. These take a variety of forms. Sometimes they take the form of five dot punctuation, which is the case, for example, on page 109 (f. 54r, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅) or on page 110 (f. 54v, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅), in both cases they are to be found on the left-hand side of the right column. In other places, they take shapes that resemble a heart or a leaf (so-called coronis), which can be seen on page 110 (f. 54v, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅) on the left-hand side of the left column. Even if the above symbols had an ornamental function, it has to be noted that their shape is fairly primitive and does not show much effort on the part of the scribe to prepare their manuscript with care.

The text of the sa 52 manuscript was written in black ink. The enlarged ornament letters, written on the left-hand side of the columns, were later reworked in red. It is difficult to determine whether the red ink was used by the original scribe or applied later.

The text of Isa 53 includes a few places where some letters have been omitted. In line 26 of the right column on page 109 (f. 54r, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅) the scribe wrote two letters ⲁⲩ, while the correct spelling here would have been the conjunction ⲁⲩⲱ. On page 110 (f. 54v, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅), meanwhile, in line 31 of the left column we find the notation ⲛⲛ̅ⲙ̅ⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ with the initial letter ⲛ written twice. The correct spelling would be ⲛ̅ⲙ̅ⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ. Similar dittographies were identified on previous pages of the sa 52 manuscript.

In the text of Isa 53, the *nomina sacra* appear a few times. One can notice the lack of consistency in their spelling. For example, on page 109 (f. 54r, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅) in lines 9 and 10 of the right column (Isa 53:1) we can read the full form ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ, while on page 110 (f. 54v, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲃ̅), in the fourth line of the right column (Isa 53:10) we only find the abbreviation ⲡ̅ⲟ̅ⲥ̅,[8] which should take the form of ⲡ̅ϫ̅ⲥ̅ in the Sahidic dialect.[9] The inconsistency in the spelling of the *nomina sacra* has been noted many times in the sa 52 manuscript.

8 This spelling of the *nomen sacrum* is characteristic of the Fayyumic dialect (see Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*, 787b).

9 On the DECOT site, the *nomen sacrum* was misread as ⲡ̅ϭ̅ⲥ̅ (see https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=622008&fbclid=IwAR3TDeECwvoRaXyDc0EgFJU6uZ9dFQ5ynkvee0FXCgEV2hK73AQvDM_-XL8 [access 15.06.2023]).

2. List of Manuscripts Containing the Text of Isa 53 in the Sahidic Dialect of the Coptic Language

Fragments of chapter 53 of the Book of Isaiah can be found in a few other manuscripts, which are less complete than sa 52. With regard to the naming of the manuscripts, precedence will be given to the designations used in Schüssler's study.[10] References to electronic collections will be provided where possible. At least some verses of the text of Isa 53 are to be found in the following manuscripts:

Sa 48: papyrus codex, held in the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana in Geneva, designated as Papyrus Bodmer XXIII.[11] Contains the text of Isa 47:1–51:17 and Isa 52:4–66:24. The manuscript is dated between 375–450.[12] Due to its early origins, it is an invaluable aid in the edition of parts of the Book of Deutero-Isaiah and the entire Book of Trito-Isaiah.[13] The manuscript was edited by Rodolphe Kasser in 1965.[14] In the electronic database, Papyrus Bodmer XXIII was designated as **CLM 40**[15] and **LDAB 108542**.[16] The manuscript has already been used in the compilation of earlier chapters of Deutero-Isaiah.[17]

Sa 105^{L}.4: the folio forms part of a parchment lectionary with biblical texts from both the Old and New Testaments. It is kept in Vienna in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek under the number **K 9880**.[18] It contains the text of Isa 63:7–11; 52:13–15 and the text of **Isa 53:1–3** that occupies the right column on the page identified with the Coptic number ⲢⲔⲂ̅ (= 122), which is of interest to the present study. The manuscript was included in Arthur Vaschalde's list as **SER 25**.[19] The text was edited by Carl Wessely.[20] An electronic edition can also be found on the DECOT website, where the manuscript appears under the number **sa 298L** (**ID 620298**).[21] This manuscript has already been used for the compilation of Isa chapters 51–52.[22]

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10 Schüssler, *Sa 21–48*; Schüssler, *Sa 93–120*; Schüssler, *Sa 185–260*.

11 The facsimile of the codex in an electronic form is available at: https://bodmerlab.unige.ch/fr/constellations/papyri/barcode/1072205362 (access 3.03.2023). The fragment of Isa 53, which is relevant to this study, begins at https://bodmerlab.unige.ch/fr/constellations/papyri/mirador/1072205362?page=034 (access 3.03.2023).

12 Schüssler, *Sa 21–48*, 106. See also https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/40 (access 3.03.2023).

13 More information to be found in: Schüssler, *Sa 21–48*, 106; Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XXIII*, 7–33.

14 Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XXIII*.

15 See https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/40 (access 3.03.2023).

16 See https://www.trismegistos.org/text/108542 (access 27.11.2023).

17 See description of the manuscript in: Bąk, *Isa 46–48*, 604–605.

18 Schüssler, *Sa 93–120*, 44. More information on the entire manuscript sa 105^{L} can be found on pages 41–46.

19 Vaschalde, "Ce qui a été publié," [1920] 249. Number 25 on the Vaschalde list refers to the edition of the manuscript (see Wessely, *Griechische und koptische Texte*, 64).

20 Wessely, *Griechische und koptische Texte*, 64 (No. 25a). Editing was carried out by hand. On page 66, there is a handwritten rendering of the first five lines of the column (title ⲎⲤⲀⲒ̈ⲀⲤ and the verse Isa 52:13).

21 See https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=620298 (access 20.03.2023).

22 The text is currently in preparation for printing in the journal *The Biblical Annals.*

Sa 108[L]: this manuscript is a bilingual (Coptic-Arabic) lectionary containing the readings for the Holy Week. It comes from the White Monastery in Sohag. Currently, it is kept in the Vatican Library.[23] Its full shelfmark is **Rom, BV, Borgia copto 109, cass. XXIII, fasc. 99**. It was established that the manuscript dates from the period between the 12th and 14th centuries. The manuscript has already been used several times for editions of earlier chapters of Proto- and Deutero-Isaiah.[24] The passage Isa 52:13–53:12 was edited by Augustinus Ciasca, in whose manuscript it was designated as IC.[25] This study will use the edition of **Isa 53:1–12a**. Verses 1–6 have also been published by Émile Amélineau.[26] Photographs of the manuscript and its electronic edition are available on the DECOT website.[27]

The manuscript was included in Arthur Vaschalde's list as part of *Collection Borgia* and was numbered Z. 99 CA.[28] On the DECOT website, the lectionary appears as **sa 16L** (**ID 620016**).[29] In the catalog of the Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature, it is also known as **CLM 3288**.[30]

Sa 187: is a fragment of a parchment card whose full catalog name is **Oxford, BL, Copt. g. 9**. Paleography dates the manuscript to the 5th century. The text is very difficult to read.[31] The manuscript was edited by Paul Kahle.[32] The manuscript was included in Walter Till's list.[33] On the Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament (DECOT) website, the manuscript is cataloged as **sa 2139** (**ID 622139**). A transcription of the text can also be found there.[34] In other electronic systems, the parchment is also known as **CLM 991**[35] and **TM 107819** (**LDAB 107819**).[36]

Manuscript sa 187 on its *recto* side contains the text of Isa 52:14b–15; 53:1–2a, and, on the *verso* side, **Isa 53:2b–4**. The present study will use the *verso* side. This manuscript has already been used for the compilation of chapters 51–52 of Isa.[37]

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23 More detailed information on the manuscript is available in Schüssler, *Sa 93–120*, 49–69.
24 See Bąk, *Proto-Isaiah in the Sahidic Dialect*, 364–365; Bąk, *Isa 40*, 77–78; Bąk, *Isa 46–48*, 605–606.
25 Ciasca, *Sacrorum Bibliorum fragmenta*, II, 241–243.
26 Amélineau, "Fragments de la version thebaine," 126.
27 See https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=620016 (access 20.03.2023).
28 Vaschalde, "Ce qui a été publié," [1920] 247. Designation Z. 99 refers to the Georg Zoega compilation (*Catalogus codicum copticorum*, 189–192). The added abbreviation CA stands for the aforementioned edition by Ciasca. The first volume by Ciasca also includes a description of the entire manuscript (*Sacrorum Bibliorum fragmenta*, I, XXVI–XXVIII).
29 See https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=620016 (access 20.03.2023).
30 See https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/3288 (access 20.03.2023).
31 See Kahle, *Bala'izah*, 332.
32 Kahle, *Bala'izah*, 332–333.
33 Till, "Coptic Biblical Texts," 228.
34 See https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=622139 (access 18.03.2023).
35 See https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/991 (access 18.03.2023).
36 See https://www.trismegistos.org/text/107819 (access 18.03.2023).
37 The text is currently in preparation for printing in the journal *The Biblical Annals*..

Sa 211L: paper lectionary from the White Monastery in Sohag. The catalog name of the manuscript is **Oxford, BL, Cod. XX (Huntington no. 5)**. It was estimated that it likely dates back to the 12th/13th century.[38]

In Arthur Vaschalde's list, the manuscript is listed under the name **Bodl. (Hunt. 5)**.[39] This is also where information about Adolf Erman's edition of passages from the Old Testament is found.[40] The published verses belong to different books of the Old Testament and come from four manuscripts, which Erman designated with letters: A, B, C, D.[41] The text of **Isa 53:7b–12**, which is of relevance to this study, comes from a manuscript designated as D. References to Bodl. (Hunt. 5) were taken into account in the critical apparatus of Augustinus Ciasca, where it appears as "D. edit. ab Erman" and later as "D".[42] This paper will take Erman's edition into account.[43] The manuscript has already been used in the edition of the text of Isa 49–50.[44]

In the online catalog available on the DECOT website, the manuscript was designated as **sa 292L** (**ID 620292**). An electronic edition of the manuscript can also be accessed there.[45]

Sa 212L**.9**: extensive parchment codex, written on more than 300 pages. It was found in the White Monastery in Sohag, although it was most likely written in the Fayyum area. Currently, its various fragments are kept in London, Paris, Rome, and Vienna. In Schüssler's compilation, they were cataloged as sa 212L.[46] It is estimated that they date back to the period between the 9th and 11th centuries. The codex contains fragments of various books of the Old Testament. The only extant fragment of the Deutero-Isaiah is the **Isa 53:3–12**, which will be used in this compilation. In Schüssler's catalog, it was designated as sa 212L.9, while its full name is **Paris, BN, Copte 12919 fol. 14**.[47] The text was edited by Gaston Maspero.[48] In the Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature catalog the manuscript is also known as **CLM 456**.[49] Its name on the DECOT website is **Sa 2148L** (**ID 622148**).

38 See Schüssler, *Sa 185–260*, 64.

39 Vaschalde, "Ce qui a été publié," [1920] 249. "Hunt." is a reference to a collector named Huntington (see Schüssler, *Sa 185–260*, 60).

40 Erman, "Bruchstücke," 401–440.

41 Erman, "Bruchstücke," 402–404.

42 A comparison of Ciasca's critical apparatus with Erman's edition demonstrates that Ciasca's compilation failed to address all differences (Ciasca, *Sacrorum Bibliorum fragmenta*, II, 241–243).

43 Erman, "Bruchstücke," 425–426.

44 Bąk, *Isa 49–50*, 11–12.

45 See https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=620292 (access 21.03.2023). The text of Isa 53:7–12 is to be found on the pages of the manuscript numbered 3080 and 3090.

46 Schüssler, *Sa 185–260*, 68–72.

47 Schüssler, *Sa 185–260*, 79–80.

48 Maspero, "Fragments de manuscrits," 223–224.

49 See https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/456 (access 22.03.2023).

Photographs of individual pages and an electronic edition of the manuscript are also to be found there.[50]

CLM 3469: is a codex found by Polish archaeologists in 2005, referred to as *Qurna Isaiah*.[51] It is currently kept in the Coptic Museum in Cairo under the number 13446. The manuscript is a papyrus codex. It contains the text of **Isa 47:14–66:24**. Alin Suciu estimates that the codex dates back to the end of the 7th or beginning of the 8th century.[52] In the Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature database, which is currently in development, the manuscript figures as CLM 3469.[53] Its alternative name is **TM 111691**.[54] An electronic edition of the manuscript is available on the website of the Digital Edition of the Coptic Old Testament (DECOT),[55] where the *Qurna Isaiah* figures as **sa 2028** (**ID 622028**). To avoid confusion with the manuscript nomenclature, based on Schüssler's *Biblia Coptica*, adopted in this article, this codex will be referred to as **CLM 3469**. The codex has already been used in the compilation of earlier chapters of Deutero-Isaiah.[56] The text of **Isa 53**, which is relevant to this study, begins on page 26 of the manuscript in line 6 of the right column, and ends on page 35 in line 20 of the left column. The text is in very poor condition. Only small fragments can be read.

In order to illustrate the contents of particular manuscripts better, the occurrence of the verses from Isa 53 is presented in the table where:

- an "x" means the occurrence of the whole verse,
- an "(x)" means the occurrence of only a fragment of a given verse,
- an empty space in the table means the absence of a given verse in the manuscript.

50 The text of Isa 53:3–12 is to be found on pages numbered 2250 and 2260 in the DECOT system. See https://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=622148 (access 22.03.2023). Placing photographs of the codex on the DECOT website makes it possible to verify certain errors made by Maspero
– in line 4 of the left column on page 156 (Copt. ⲣ̅ⲛ̅ⲋ̅) Maspero reads as ⲛ%ⲛⲟⲃⲉ, which should be correctly read as ⲛⲛ%ⲛⲟⲃⲉ,
– in line 19 of the left column on page 156 (Copt. ⲣ̅ⲛ̅ⲋ̅) Maspero reads as ⲁⲛⲧⲁⲗϭⲱ which should be read as ⲁⲛⲧⲁⲗϭⲟ,
– in line 9 of the right column on page 156 (Copt. ⲣ̅ⲛ̅ⲋ̅) Maspero reads as ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩϩⲉ ⲉⲕⲣⲟϥ which should be correctly read as ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩϩⲉ ⲕⲣⲟϥ.

51 For more about the discovery itself, see Górecki, "Sheikh Abd el-Gurna," 186–187; Górecki – E. Wipszycka, "Scoperta di tre codici," 118–132.

52 Suciu, "The Sahidic Tripartite Isaiah," 383.

53 See https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/3469 (access 27.02.2023).

54 See https://www.trismegistos.org/text/111691 (access 27.02.2023).

55 See http://coptot.manuscriptroom.com/manuscript-workspace/?docID=622028 (access 27.02.2023).

56 See Bąk, *Isa 46–48*, 606.

The contents of the manuscripts are as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sa 48	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sa 105^{L}.4	x	x	(x)									
Sa 108^{L}	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	(x)
Sa 187		(x)	(x)	(x)								
Sa 211^{L}							(x)	x	x	x	x	x
Sa 212^{L}.9			(x)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CLM 3469	(x)	x	(x)	x	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x)	x	(x)	(x)

3. The Sahidic Text of Isa 53

As in the case of the previous chapters, the following symbols have been introduced in the edition of the Coptic text:

< > angle brackets indicate that the text has been completed in order to facilitate its proper understanding,

{ } braces indicate the scribe's redundant letters (frequently resulting from dittography),

> symbol indicates the absence of the given form in the manuscript whose number is provided beside it,

! exclamation mark in superscript suggests a more correct reading,

\ / symbol indicates that the letter was later added by the scribe above the line,

/ \ symbol indicates that the letter was later added by the scribe below the line.[57]

The text of Isa 53 in the Sahidic dialect of the Coptic language reads as follows:

V. 1 ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥⲡⲓ̈ⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲛⲥⲙⲏ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉϭⲃⲟⲓ̈ ⲙⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥϭⲱⲗⲡ ⲉⲛⲓⲙ [v. 1]

V. 2 ⲁⲛϣⲁϫⲉ ⲙⲡⲉϥⲙⲧⲟ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛ̄ⲑⲉ ⲛⲟⲩϣⲏⲣⲉ ϣⲏⲙ· ⲛⲑⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩⲛⲉ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲕⲁϩ ⲉϥⲟⲃⲉ·
ⲉⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲥⲁ ⲙⲙⲁⲩ ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲉⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲉⲟⲟⲩ· ⲁⲛⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲣⲟϥ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲉⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲥⲁ· [v. 2]

57 See Bąk, *Isa 46–48*, 609.

V. 1 ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥⲡⲓ̈ⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲉⲧⲛⲥⲙⲏ: ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲉ̄ⲡⲉⲛϩⲣⲟⲟⲩ ϩ̄ⲣⲟⲟⲩ sa 108^{L} | ⲉⲧⲛⲥⲙⲏ: ⲉⲡⲉⲛϩⲣⲟⲟⲩ sa 48 | ⲡⲉϭⲃⲟⲓ: ⲡⲉϭⲃⲟⲉⲓ sa 48

V. 2 ⲁⲛϣⲁϫⲉ: ⲛ̄ϣⲁϫⲉ sa 108^{L} | ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩⲛⲉ: ⲛⲟⲩⲛⲉϩ sa 108^{L} | ⲉⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲥⲁ: ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ ⲥⲁ sa 48, ⲙⲛ̣ⲧϥ̣ ⲥ̣ⲁ̣ sa 187, ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ϥ̄ ⲥⲁ CLM 3469 | ⲉⲙⲛⲧϥ ⲉⲟⲟⲩ: ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ϥ ⲉⲟⲟⲩ sa 48, ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ϥ̄ [ⲉⲟⲟⲩ] sa 105^{L}.4, ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ϥ̄ ⲉⲟⲟⲩ sa 108^{L}, sa 187, CLM 3469 | ⲛⲉⲙⲛⲧϥ: ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧ̄ϥ̄ sa 105^{L}.4 | ⲟⲩⲇⲉ: ⲟⲩⲧⲉ sa 105^{L}.4

V. 3 ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲛⲉⲣⲉⲡⲉϥⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲥⲏϣ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲉϥⲟⲕⲙ̄ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ· ⲟⲩⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉϥϩⲛ̄
ⲟⲩⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ· ⲁⲩ<ⲱ> ⲉϥⲥⲟⲟⲩⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϥ̄ⲓ̄ ϩⲁ ⲗⲟϭⲗⲉϫ· ϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲕⲧⲟ ⲙⲡⲉϥϩⲟ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲁⲩⲥⲟϣ̄ϥ̄·
ⲁⲩⲱ ⲙⲡⲟⲩⲟⲡϥ· [v. 3]

V. 4 ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϥⲓ̈ ϩⲁ ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ· ⲁⲩⲱ ϥⲙⲟⲕϩ ⲉⲧⲃⲏⲏⲧⲛ̄· ⲁⲛⲟⲛ ϩⲱⲱⲛ ⲁⲛⲟⲡϥ ϫⲉ ϥϩⲛ̄
ⲟⲩϩⲓⲥⲉ ⲙⲛ ⲟⲩⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ· (p. 110, f. 54^{v}, Copt. ⲣ̄ⲓ̄ⲃ̄) ⲙⲛ ⲟⲩⲙⲟϩⲕ̄ⲥ̄· [v. 4]

V. 5 ⲛ̄ⲧⲟϥ ⲇⲉ ⲁⲩϣⲟⲟϭⲉϥ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲛⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲩⲗⲉϭⲗⲱϫϥ̄ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ·
ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ ⲉϫⲱϥ· ϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ϩⲙ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲁϣ ⲁⲛⲧⲁⲗϭⲟ· [v. 5]

V. 6 ⲁⲛⲥⲱⲣⲙ̄ ⲧⲏⲣⲛ̄ ⲛⲑⲉ ⲛϩⲛⲉⲥⲟⲟⲩ· ⲁⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲡⲗⲁⲛⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥϩⲓ̈ⲏ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ ⲧⲁⲁϥ
ϩⲁ ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ· [v. 6]

V. 7 ⲛⲧⲟϥ ϩⲱⲱϥ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ϫⲉ ⲁⲩⲑⲙⲕⲟϥ ⲙⲡⲉϥⲟⲩⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱϥ· ⲛⲑⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲉⲥⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲁⲩⲛ̄ⲧϥ̄
ⲉⲡⲉϥⲙⲁ ⲛⲕⲟⲛⲥ̄ϥ̄· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲑⲉ ⲛⲟⲩϩⲓⲉⲓⲃ ⲙⲡⲉⲙⲧⲟ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲙⲡⲉⲧϩⲱⲱⲕⲉ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟϥ ⲉⲙⲡⲉϥϯ
ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲥⲙⲏ ⲛⲧⲉⲓϩⲉ· ⲛ̄ϥ̄ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲱⲛ ⲛⲣⲱϥ ⲁⲛ [v. 7]

V. 8 ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲉϥⲑ̄ⲃ̄ⲃⲓⲟ· ⲁⲩϥⲓ̈ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥϩⲁⲡ· ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϣ ϣⲁϫⲉ ⲉⲧⲉϥⲅⲉⲛⲉⲁ· ϫⲉ ⲥⲉⲛⲁϥⲓ̈
ⲙⲡⲉϥⲱⲛ̄ϩ̄ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲕⲁϩ· ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ ⲙⲡⲁⲗⲁⲟⲥ ⲁⲩⲛⲧ̄ϥ̄ ⲉⲡⲙⲟⲩ· [v. 8]

V. 9 ϯⲛⲁϯ ⲛ{ⲛ}ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ ⲉⲡⲙⲁ ⲛⲧⲉϥⲕⲁⲓ̈ⲥⲉ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲣ̄ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲟ ⲉⲡⲙⲁ ⲙⲡⲉϥⲙⲟⲩ· ϫⲉ
ⲙⲡⲉϥⲉⲣ ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲕⲣⲟϥ ϩⲛ ⲧⲉϥⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ· [v. 9]

V. 3 ⲛⲉⲣⲉⲡⲉϥⲉⲓⲛⲉ: ⲉⲣⲉⲡⲉϥⲉⲓⲛⲉ sa 105^{L}.4 | ⲛⲉϥⲟⲕⲙ̄: ⲉϥⲟⲕⲙ̄ sa 48, sa 105^{L}.4 | ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲛ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ: ⲙ̄ⲡⲁ ⲣⲱⲙⲉ sa 108^{L} | ⲟⲩⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ: !ⲟⲩⲡⲗⲏⲅⲏ sa 48, sa 105^{L}.4, ⲟⲩⲡ̣ⲗ̣ⲏ̣ⲅ̣ⲏ sa 187, [ ]ⲡⲗⲏⲅ̣ⲏ CML 3469 | ⲛ̄ϥⲓ: ⲛⲉϥ[ⲉⲓ] sa 105^{L}.4 (DECOT: ⲛ̣ϥ̣ⲓ̣), ⲛⲉϥⲉⲓ sa 108^{L} | ⲗⲟϭⲗⲉϫ: ⲗⲟϫⲗⲉϫ sa 48, sa 187, CLM 3469, ⲛⲉⲛⲗⲟϫⲗⲁϫ sa 108^{L}, ⲗⲟϫⲗⲁϫ ⲛⲓ̈ⲙ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲁⲩⲥⲟϣ̄ϥ̄: ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲩⲥⲱϣϥ sa 108^{L}, ⲁⲩⲥⲱϣ̄ϥ̄ sa 212^{L}.9

V. 4 ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϥⲓ̈: !ⲡⲉⲧϥⲓ̈ sa 108^{L} | ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ: ⲛⲛ%ⲛⲟⲃⲉ sa 212^{L}.9 | ϥⲙⲟⲕϩ: ⲉϥⲙⲟⲕϩ̄ sa 108^{L} | ϩⲱⲱⲛ: + ϫⲉ sa 108^{L} | ϥϩⲛ: ⲉϥϩⲛ sa 108^{L}, [ⲉϥ]ϩⲛ sa 187 | ⲟⲩⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ: !ⲟⲩⲡⲗⲏⲅⲏ sa 48, CLM 3469 | ⲟⲩⲙⲟϩⲕ̄ⲥ̄: ⲟⲩⲙⲟⲕⲥ sa 48, !ⲟⲩⲙⲟⲕϩⲥ sa 108^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9, CLM 3469

V. 5 ⲁⲩϣⲟⲟϭⲉϥ: ⲁⲩϣⲟⲟ̄ϭⲉⲃ sa 108^{L}, ⲁⲩϣⲟⲟϭ̄ϥ̄ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲛⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ: ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ sa 108^{L}, ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲁⲩⲗⲉϭⲗⲱϫϥ: !ⲁⲩⲗⲉϫⲗⲱϫϥ sa 48, sa 212^{L}.9, ⲁⲩⲗⲉϫⲗⲟϫϥ sa 108^{L} | ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ: ⲛⲉⲛⲁ̄ⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ sa 108^{L}, ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲃⲉ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲛⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ: ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ(ⲛ)ⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ sa 48, ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲛⲉⲓ̈ⲣⲏⲛⲏ sa 108^{L}, [ⲛ]ⲧⲉⲛⲉⲓⲣ̣[ⲏ]ⲛⲏ CLM 3469 | ϩⲣⲁⲓ: ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ sa 108^{L}

V. 6 ⲧⲏⲣⲛ̄: ⲧⲏⲣⲉⲛ sa 108^{L} | ⲛϩⲛⲉⲥⲟⲟⲩ: ⲛ̄ϩⲉⲛⲉⲥⲟⲟⲩ sa 48, ⲛ̣̄ϩ̣ⲉ̣[ⲛ]ⲉⲥⲟⲟ̣ⲩ̣ CLM 3469 | ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ: ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲃⲉ sa 212^{L}.9

V. 7 ⲙⲡⲉϥⲟⲩⲱⲛ: ⲙ̄ⲡϥⲟⲩⲱⲛ sa 48, ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ϥ̣̄[ⲟⲩⲱⲛ] CLM 3469, pr. ⲁⲩⲱ sa 108^{L} | ⲉⲁⲩⲛ̄ⲧϥ̄: ⲁⲩⲛ̄ⲧϥ̄ sa 108^{L} | ⲉⲡⲉϥⲙⲁ: !> sa 48, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲛⲕⲟⲛⲥ̄ϥ̄: !ⲉⲕⲟⲛ̄ⲥ̄ sa 48, ⲛ̄ⲛⲕⲟⲛⲥϥ sa 108^{L}, ⲉ%ⲕⲟⲛⲥϥ% sa 211^{L}, ⲉⲕⲟⲛⲥ̄ϥ̄ ⲛ̄ϥ̄ⲙⲁⲛ[sic] sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲛⲟⲩϩⲓⲉⲓⲃ: ⲛⲟⲩⲉϩⲓ̈ⲉⲓ̈ⲃ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲙⲡⲉⲙⲧⲟ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ: > sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲙⲡⲉⲧϩⲱⲱⲕⲉ: ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲧϩⲱⲱⲕ sa 108^{L} | ⲉⲙⲡⲉϥϯ: ⲉⲙⲡ̄ϥ̄ϯ sa 48, [ⲉⲙⲡ]ϥ̣ϯ CLM 3469, !ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥϯ sa 108^{L}, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲛⲧⲉⲓϩⲉ: ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲉⲓϩⲉ sa 48, ⲧⲁⲓ̈ ⲧⲉ ⲑⲉ sa 108^{L} | ⲛ̄ϥ̄ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲱⲛ: ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥⲟⲩⲱⲛ sa 108^{L}, ⲛⲉϥⲛⲁⲟⲩⲱⲛ sa 211^{L} | ⲁⲛ: > sa 108^{L}

V. 8 ϩⲙ̄: ϩⲛ̄ sa 48 | ⲡⲉϥⲑ̄ⲃ̄ⲃⲓⲟ: ⲡⲉϥⲑ%ⲃⲃⲉⲓⲟ sa 211^{L} | ⲁⲩϥⲓ̈ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥϩⲁⲡ: ⲁⲩϥⲓ ⲡⲉϥϩⲁⲡ sa 48, ⲁⲩ[ϥⲓ] ⲡ̣ⲉϥϩⲁⲡ CLM 3469 | ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϣ ϣⲁϫⲉ: !ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲁϫⲉ sa 48, ⲡ̣ⲉⲧⲛⲁϣ[ⲁϫ]ⲉ CLM 3469 | ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲙ: ⲉ̄ⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲓ̈ϫⲙ sa 108^{L}, sa 211^{L} | ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ: ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ sa 108^{L}, ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲉⲓ[sic] sa 212^{L}.9, [ⲉⲃⲟⲗ] ϩ̣ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲁⲛⲟ[ⲙⲓⲁ] CLM 3469 | ⲙⲡⲁⲗⲁⲟⲥ: ⲙ̄ⲡⲗⲁⲟⲥ sa 48, sa 108^{L}

V. 9 ⲛ{ⲛ}ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ: !ⲛ̄ⲙⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ sa 48, sa 211^{L}, ⲙ̄ⲡⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ sa 108^{L}, ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲛⲧⲉϥⲕⲁⲓ̈ⲥⲉ: ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲕⲁⲉⲓⲥⲉ sa 48, ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲕⲉⲥⲉ: sa 108^{L} | ⲙⲡⲉϥⲉⲣ: ⲙ̄ⲡϥ̄ⲣ̄ sa 48, CLM 3469, ⲙ%ⲡⲉϥⲣ sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ: ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲉⲓ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲙⲡⲉϥⲉⲣ ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓⲁ· ⲟⲩⲇⲉ: > sa 108^{L} | ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲕⲣⲟϥ: ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩϩⲉ ⲉⲕⲣⲟϥ sa 108^{L}, ⲙ̄ⲡⲟⲩϩⲉ ⲕⲣⲟϥ sa 212^{L}.9 | ⲧⲉϥⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ: ⲧ̄ϥ̄ⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ sa 212^{L}.9

V. 10 ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡ̅ⲟ̅ⲥ̅[sic!] ⲟⲩⲱϣ ⲉⲧⲉⲃⲟϥ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ ⲧⲉϥⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ· ⲉⲧⲉⲧⲛ̅ϣⲁⲛϯ ϩⲁ ⲛⲉⲧⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ·
ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̅ⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲛⲁⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲩⲥⲡⲉⲣⲙⲁ ⲛ̅ⲛⲟϭ ⲛⲁϩⲉ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ ⲟⲩⲱϣ ⲉϥⲓ̈ ⲉ̅ⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲙ̅
ⲡϩⲓ̈ⲥⲉ ⲛⲧⲉϥⲯⲩⲭⲏ v. 10

V. 11 ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲟϥ ⲉⲡⲟⲩⲟⲉⲓⲛ· ⲉⲡⲗⲁⲥⲥⲉ ⲙⲙⲟϥ ϩⲛ̅ ⲧⲙⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲣ̅ⲙ̅ⲛϩⲏⲧ· ⲉⲧⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ⲡⲇⲓ̈ⲕⲁⲓ̈ⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲟ
ⲛϩⲙ̅ϩⲁⲗ ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ ϩⲛ̅ ⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲉⲧⲛ̅ⲁϥⲓ̈ ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲛⲛⲉⲩⲛⲟⲃⲉ· v. 11

V. 12 ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ̈ ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁⲕⲗⲏⲣⲟⲛⲟⲙⲉⲓ ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ· ⲁⲩⲱ ϥ̅ⲛⲁⲡⲱϣ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ϣⲱⲗ
ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ϫⲱⲱⲣⲉ· ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϫⲉ ⲁⲩϯ ⲛⲧⲉϥⲯⲩⲭⲏ ⲉⲡⲙⲟⲩ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲩⲟⲡ̅ϥ̅ ϩⲛ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲟⲥ·
ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥϥⲓ̈ ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̅ⲛⲉⲛⲟⲃⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛⲧⲁⲩⲧⲁⲁϥ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ
ⲛⲉⲩⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ· ⲁⲩⲡⲱⲧ ⲉϫⲱϥ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲩⲇⲓⲱⲕⲉ ⲙⲙⲟϥ ⲁⲩϭⲟⲡϥ· (p. 111, f. 55r, Copt. ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲅ̅)
ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ ⲕⲱ ⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ· v. 12

4. English Translation of Isa 53

The translation of Isa 53 from the Sahidic dialect of the Coptic language into English reads as follows:

Chapter 51

V. 1 Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

V. 2 *We announced*[58] before him like a child, like a root in a thirsty land; he has no form or glory, and[59] we saw him, and he had no form or beauty.

V. 3 But his form was without honor *and*[60] *was changed*[61] beyond all men, a man being in calamity and knowing how to bear[62] sickness; because his face is turned away, he was dishonored and not esteemed.

V. 10 **ⲡ̅ⲟ̅ⲥ̅**: !**ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓⲥ** sa 48, sa 108^{L}, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9, CLM 3469 | **ⲉⲧⲉⲃⲟϥ**: !**ⲉⲧⲃ̅ⲃⲟϥ** sa 48, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9, CLM 3469, **ⲉ̅ⲧⲉϥⲃⲟϥ** sa 108^{L} | **ⲧⲉϥⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ**: !**ⲧⲉⲡⲗⲏⲅⲏ** sa 48, CLM 3469, **ⲧⲉⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ** sa 108^{L}, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 | **ⲛⲉⲧⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ**: !**ⲛⲟⲃⲉ** sa 48 | **ⲉⲩⲥⲡⲉⲣⲙⲁ**: **ⲉⲩⲥ̅ⲡⲣ̅ⲙⲁ** sa 108^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9, **ⲉ%ⲟⲩⲥⲡⲉⲣⲙⲁ** sa 211^{L} | **ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ**: **ⲁ̅ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ** sa 108^{L}, **ⲟⲩ**[sic] **ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ** sa 212^{L}.9

V. 11 **ⲧⲙⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲣ̅ⲙ̅ⲛϩⲏⲧ**: **ⲧ̅ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲣ̅ⲙ̅ϩⲏⲧ** sa 48 | **ⲉⲧⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲉ**: **ⲉⲧⲙⲁⲉⲓⲉ** sa 48, sa 211^{L}, CLM 3469 | **ⲛϩⲙ̅ϩⲁⲗ**: **ⲛ̅ϩⲁϩⲁⲗ** CLM 3469 | **ϩⲛ̅ ⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ**: !**ⲛ̅ⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ** sa 48, sa 108^{L}, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9, CLM 3469 | **ⲉⲧⲛ̅ⲁϥⲓ**: !**ⲡⲉⲧ-ⲛⲁϥⲓ** sa 108^{L}, sa 211^{L} | **ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲛⲛⲉⲩⲛⲟⲃⲉ**: **ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲛⲉⲩⲛⲟⲃⲉ** sa 48, **ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ϩⲁ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲛⲟⲃⲉ** sa 108^{L}

V. 12 **ϩⲛ ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲟⲥ**: **ⲙⲛ% ⲛⲁⲛⲟⲙⲟⲥ** sa 211^{L} | **ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥϥⲓ̈ ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ̈**: **ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϥⲉⲓ̈** sa 108^{L}, **[ⲡⲉⲛ]ⲧⲁϥϥ[ⲓ]** CLM 3469 | **ⲛ̅ⲛⲉⲛⲟⲃⲉ**: **ⲛ̅ⲛⲟⲃⲉ** sa 48, **ⲙ̅ⲡⲛⲟⲃⲉ** sa 108^{L}, **[ⲙⲡ]ⲛⲟⲃⲉ** CLM 3469, **ⲛⲛ%ⲛⲟⲃⲉ** sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 | **ⲉϫⲱϥ**: **ⲛ̅ⲥⲱϥ** sa 108^{L} | **ⲁⲩⲇⲓⲱⲕⲉ ⲙⲙⲟϥ**: **ⲁⲩⲇⲓ̈ⲱ̅ⲕⲉⲓ̈ ⲛ̅ⲥⲱϥ** sa 108^{L}, **ⲁⲩⲇⲓⲱⲕⲉⲓ ⲙⲙⲟϥ** sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 | **ⲁⲩϭⲟⲡϥ**… : > sa 108^{L}

58 NETS: *He grew up* → see the commentary.
59 Lit. om. *and* → T 2.
60 Om. in NETS → T 1.
61 NETS: *failing* → T 3.
62 Lit. *how to walk under suffering* (?) → see the commentary.

V. 4 This one *will bear*[63] our sins[64] and suffers pain for us, and[65] we *ourselves*[66] accounted him to be in trouble and calamity and ill-treatment.

V. 5 But he was wounded because of our acts of lawlessness and has been weakened because of our sins; upon him *are the children* of our peace;[67] by his bruise we were healed.

V. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; a man has strayed in his own way,[68] and the Lord gave him over to our sins.

V. 7 And he, because he has been ill-treated, *did not*[69] open his[70] mouth; like a sheep he was led to the *place of his*[71] slaughter, and as a lamb is silent[72] before the one shearing it, so *he will not open*[73] his mouth.

V. 8 In his[74] humiliation his judgment was taken away. Who will *be able to*[75] describe his generation? Because his life *will be* taken[76] from the earth, he was led to death from the acts of lawlessness of my people.[77]

V. 9 And I will give the wicked for *the place of*[78] his burial and the rich for *the place of*[79] his death, because he committed no lawlessness, nor was deceit[80] in his mouth.

V. 10 And the Lord desires to cleanse him from[81] his[82] blow. If you give an offering for *your*[83] *sins*,[84] your soul shall see a long-lived offspring. And the Lord wishes to take away[85] from the pain of his soul

63 NETS: *bears* → T 7.
64 Tr. → T 6.
65 Lit. om. *and* → T 2.
66 Om. in NETS → T 1.
67 NETS: *upon him was the discipline of our peace* → see the commentary.
68 LXX: lit. *has been strayed in* his own way → T 7, see the commentary.
69 NETS: *does not* → T 7.
70 Lit. om. *his* in LXX → T 1.
71 Om. in NETS → T 1.
72 Lit. *having not given his voice* → T 3.
73 NETS: *he does not open* → T 7.
74 Lit. *his* om. in. LXX (ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει) → T 1.
75 Om. in NETS → T 1.
76 NETS: *is being* taken → T 7.
77 See the commentary.
78 Om. in NETS → T 1.
79 Om. in NETS → T 1.
80 Om. *found* → T 2.
81 Lit. *from* om. in the LXX → T 4.
82 Lit. *his* om. in the LXX → T 1.
83 Om. in NETS → T 1.
84 NETS: *sin* → T 7.
85 Different division of verses. See the commentary.

V. 11 to show him light and[86] mold him[87] with understanding, to justify a righteous one[88] who is well subject *in a multitude*,[89] and he himself shall bear their sins.[90]

V. 12 Therefore he shall inherit many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong,[91] because his soul was given over to death, and he was reckoned among the lawless, and he bore the sins of many, and because of their *lawlessness*[92] he was given over. *They ran against him and persecuted him and seized him. But the Lord forgave them.*[93]

5. Tables of Discrepancies between Languages

The differences between the text of the Septuagint and its Coptic translation will be presented in the following order: additions (Table 1), omissions found in the Coptic text (Table 2), the use of different vocabulary (Table 3), changes of prepositions (Table 4) and articles (Table 5),[94] changes in word order (Table 6)[95] and semantic changes (Table 7).[96] The last Table shows the Greek borrowings appearing in the Coptic text of Isa 53 (Table 8).[97]

Table 1. Additions in the Coptic text

53:3	ἄτιμον: without honor	+ ⲁⲩⲱ (Ziegler: και Co)
53:4	ἡμεῖς: we	ⲁⲛⲟⲛ ϩⲱⲱⲛ: we *ourselves* (> Ziegler)
53:7	τὸ στόμα: mouth	ⲣⲱϥ: *his* mouth (Ziegler: + αυτου Co)
53:7	ἐπὶ σφαγήν: to the slaughter	ⲉⲡⲉϥⲙⲁ ⲛⲕⲟⲛⲥϥ̄: to *the place of his* slaughter; > sa 48, sa 211^{L}, sa 212^{L}.9 (> Ziegler)

86 Lit. *and* om. in Copt. → T 2.
87 Lit. *mold* om. in the LXX → T 1.
88 Lit. *the* righteous one → T 5.
89 NETS: *to many* → T 4.
90 Tr. → T 6.
91 Tr. → T 6.
92 NETS: *sins* → T 3.
93 Om. in NETS → T 1.
94 The omission or addition of an article does not necessarily result from the translator's intent to interfere with the content of the work. The semantic rules frequently (especially in Coptic) determine whether a given article will be omitted.
95 The differences in word order do not always have to reflect actual changes introduced by the Coptic translator. They often depend on the syntactic rules, according to which, e.g. the direct object usually appears immediately after the verb (see Isa 41:18, 19) (cf. Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, sec. 182).
96 It includes grammatical and semantic changes (e.g. number, tense, person, gender, etc.).
97 For remarks concerning the Tables, see Bąk, *Isa 41*, 76.

53:8	ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει: in *the* humiliation	**ϩⲙ̄ pefⲑ̄ⲃⲃⲓⲟ**: in *his* humiliation (Ziegler: + αυτου Co)
53:8	τίς διηγήσεται: who will describe?	**ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲉⲧnay ϣⲁϫⲉ**: who will *be able to* describe? Sa 48: **ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϣⲁϫⲉ** (= LXX) (> Ziegler)
53:9	ἀντὶ τῆς ταφῆς αὐτου: for his burial	**ⲉⲡma ⲛⲧⲉϥⲕⲁïⲥⲉ**: for *the place of* his burial (> Ziegler)
53:9	ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ: for his death	**ⲉⲡma ⲙⲡⲉϥⲙⲟⲩ**: for *the place of* his death (> Ziegler)
53:10	τῆς πληγῆς: [from his] blow	**ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ tefⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ**: from *his* blow (Ziegler: pr. απο Co)
53:10	περὶ ἁμαρτίας: for sin	**ϩⲁ netnⲛⲟⲃⲉ**: for *your* sins; Sa 48: **ⲛⲟⲃⲉ** (= LXX) (> Ziegler)
53:11	πλάσαι: to mold	**ⲉⲡⲗⲁⲥⲥⲉ mmof**: to mold *him* (Zieger: + αυτον Sa)
53:12	παρεδόθη: he was given over	**+ ⲁⲩⲡⲱⲧ ⲉϫⲱϥ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲩⲇⲓⲱⲕⲉ ⲙⲙⲟϥ ⲁⲩϭⲟⲡϥ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲡϫⲟⲉïⲥ ⲕⲱ ⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ:** *They ran against him and persecuted him and seized him. But the Lord forgave them* (Ziegler: κατεδραμον επ αυτον και εδιωξαν αυτον συνελαβον αυτον και κυριος αφηκεν αυτοις Sa)

Table 2. Omissions in the Coptic text

53:2	καί[1]	lit. om. in Coptic texts (> Ziegler)
53:4	καί[2]	lit. om. in Coptic texts (> Ziegler)
53:9	οὐδὲ εὑρέθη δόλος: nor was deceit *found*	**ⲙⲛ̄ ⲕⲣⲟϥ**: there is no deceit (> Ziegler), sa
53:11	καὶ πλάσαι: *and* to mold	**ⲉⲡⲗⲁⲥⲥⲉ**: to mold (> Ziegler)

Table 3. Word changes

53:3	ἐκλεῖπον: failing	**ⲛⲉϥⲟⲕⲙ**: changed (> Ziegler)
53:7	ἄφωνος: is silent	**ⲉⲙⲡⲉϥϯ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲥⲙⲏ**: lit. *having not given his voice* (> Ziegler)
53:12	διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν: because of their *sins*	**ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲛⲉⲩanomi:a**: because of their *lawlessness* (Ziegler: ανομιας without any reference to Coptic)

Table 4. Changes of prepositions

53:10	τῆς πληγῆς: [from his] blow	**ebol hn ⲧⲉϥⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ**: *from* his blow (Ziegler: pr. απο Co)
53:11	πολλοῖς: to many	**hn+ ⲟⲩⲙⲏⲏϣⲉ**: *in* a multitude (> Ziegler)

Table 5. Changes of articles

53:6	ἄνθρωπος: a man	ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ: the man (> Ziegler)
53:11	δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον: to justify a righteous one	ⲉⲧⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲉ ⲡⲇⲓ̈ⲕⲁⲓ̈ⲟⲥ: to justify *the* righteous one (> Ziegler)

Table 6. Changes in word order

53:4	οὗτος^1 / τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν^2 / φέρει^3: this one^1 / bears^3 / our sins^2	ⲛⲧⲟϥ^1 / ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϥⲓ̈ ϩⲁ^3 / ⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ^2 (> Ziegler)
53:11	τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν^1 / αὐτὸς^2 / ἀνοίσει^3: he himself^2 / shall bear^3 / their sins^1	ⲛⲧⲟϥ^2 / ⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲁϥⲓ̈ ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ^3 / ⲛⲛⲉⲩⲛⲟⲃⲉ^1 (> Ziegler)
53:12	τῶν ἰσχυρῶν^1 / μεριεῖ^2 / σκῦλα^3: he shall divide^2 / the spoils^3 / of the strong^1	ϥ̄ⲛⲁⲡⲱϣ^2 / ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϣⲱⲗ^3 / ⲛ̄ⲛ̄ϫⲱⲱⲣⲉ^1 (> Ziegler)

Table 7. Semantic changes

53:4	φέρει: he bears	ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁϥⲓ: lit. the one who *will bear*; Sa 108^L: ⲡⲉⲧϥⲓ (= LXX) (> Ziegler)
53:6	ἄνθρωπος τῇ ὁδῷ αὐτοῦ ἐπλανήθη: a man has strayed (lit. has been strayed) in his own way	ⲁⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲡⲗⲁⲛⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥϩⲓ̈ⲏ: the man has strayed in his own way (> Ziegler)
53:7	οὐκ ἀνοίγει: he *does not* open	ⲙⲡⲉϥⲟⲩⲱⲛ: he *did not* open (> Ziegler)
53:7	οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ: he *does* not open his mouth	ⲛ̄ϥⲛⲁⲟⲩⲱⲛ ⲛⲣⲱϥ ⲁⲛ: he *will* not open his mouth (> Ziegler)
53:8	αἴρεται: *is being* taken	ⲥⲉⲛⲁϥⲓ: *will be* taken (> Ziegler)
53:10	περὶ ἁμαρτίας: for sin	ϩⲁ ⲛⲉⲧⲛⲛⲟⲃⲉ: for your *sins* (> Ziegler)

Table 8. Greek words in the Coptic text

53:3	ἀλλά	ⲁⲗⲗⲁ
53:5, 8, 9, 12	ἀνομία	ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲓ̈ⲁ
53:12	ἄνομος	ⲁⲛⲟⲙⲟⲥ
53:8	γενεά	ⲅⲉⲛⲉⲁ
53:5	δέ	ⲇⲉ
53:11	δίκαιος	ⲇⲓ̈ⲕⲁⲓ̈ⲟⲥ
53:12	διώκω	ⲇⲓⲱⲕⲉ
53:5	εἰρήνη	ⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ
53:11	καλῶς	ⲕⲁⲗⲱⲥ (LXX in Isa 53:11 εὖ)
53:12	κληρονομέω	ⲕⲗⲏⲣⲟⲛⲟⲙⲉⲓ
53:8	λαός	ⲗⲁⲟⲥ
53:2(2x), 9	οὐδέ	ⲟⲩⲇⲉ

53:3	παρά	ⲡⲁⲣⲁ
53:1	πιστεύω	ⲡⲓ̈ⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ
53:6	πλανάω	ⲡⲗⲁⲛⲁ
53:11	πλάσσω	ⲡⲗⲁⲥⲥⲉ
53:3, 4, 10	πληγή	ⲡⲗⲩⲅⲏ
53:9	πονηρός	ⲡⲟⲛⲏⲣⲟⲥ
53:10	σπέρμα	ⲥⲡⲉⲣⲙⲁ
53:10, 11, 12	ψυχή	ⲯⲩⲭⲏ

6. Analysis of Selected Philological Issues Encountered in Isa 53

The final part of the article is dedicated to the analysis of the most challenging philological issues encountered in the text of Isa 53. They primarily arise from differences between the Coptic manuscripts. They may also refer to the manner in which the Greek text of the Septuagint was read and translated into the Sahidic dialect. The verses requiring a brief philological commentary include:

Isa 53:2

At the beginning of the verse, the Septuagint manuscripts present two different language versions. Some of them contain the phrase ἀνέτειλε μὲν ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ("he grew up before him").[98] While others open the verse with the words ἀνηγγείλαμεν ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ("we announced before him"). A testimony of the second reading can be found in the Coptic translation ⲁⲛϣⲁϫⲉ ⲙⲡⲉϥⲙⲧⲟ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ.

Isa 53:3

The Coptic translation ⲉϥⲥⲟⲟⲩ̅ⲛ̅ ⲛ̅ϥⲓ̅ ϩⲁ ⲗⲟϭⲗⲉϫ, which is a rendering of the Greek εἰδὼς φέρειν μαλακίαν ("knowing how to bear sickness"), poses some interpretive difficulties. The form of the verb ⲛ̅ϥⲓ could be interpreted in two ways.

1) First, the Coptic letter ⲓ could have been written as a shortened version of the verb ⲉⲓ. The expression ⲉⲓ ϩⲁ ⲗⲟϭⲗⲉϫ would therefore be a more descriptive translation of the Greek φέρειν ("to bear") and could be understood as "to walk under suffering." Perhaps the translator wanted to emphasize that

98 This reading is supported by both Ziegler and Rahlfs (*Septuagint*), who only added the final letter -ν in the verb: ἀνέτειλεν. In the introduction to the Greek text of the Book of Isaiah, Ziegler states that it is uncertain which version of Isa 53:2 should be considered more original (Ziegler, *Septuagint Isaias*, 99).

the suffering of the Servant of the Lord was not short-lasting. However, this interpretation of the Coptic ⲛ̄ϥⲓ may not be very convincing. This is because the preposition ϩⲁ only occurs alongside the verb ⲓ in the Bohairic dialect and means "come to, approach," which usually refers to persons.[99] Moreover, spelling the verb ⲉⲓ as ⲓ is characteristic of dialects such as Bohairic, Fayyumic, and Subakhimic. The standard form in the Sahidic dialect is always ⲉⲓ.

2) Another way to interpret the ⲛ̄ϥⲓ form could be to read it as a haplography. The correct spelling would be ⲛ̄ϥϥⲓ. The conjunction ⲛ̄ϥ– would be followed by the verb ϥⲓ in a compound with the preposition ϩⲁ. The construct ϥⲓ ϩⲁ ("bear under, support"[100]) corresponds very well to the Greek φέρειν.

The latter solution seems to be simpler and more plausible. Since the oldest manuscript of sa 48 also contains the haplographic reading of ⲛ̄ϥⲓ, we could venture to say that the copyist's error was made at the very beginning of the manuscript tradition of the Coptic version of the Book of Isaiah and was repeated in subsequent codexes.[101]

Isa 53:5

In the verse, we encounter the Coptic phrase ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛⲧⲛ̄ⲉⲓⲣⲏⲛⲏ ⲉϫⲱϥ which is difficult to understand and which should be literally translated as: "upon him are the children of our peace." Its closest context speaks about the suffering of the Servant of the Lord. Where does the statement "the children of our peace" are upon him come from? It is likely that the Coptic translator made a mistake by misreading the Greek noun. In the text of the Septuagint we find the term παιδεία, which means "discipline" or "instruction."[102] It should have been translated to the Coptic language as ⲥⲃⲱ.[103] The noun παιδεία can also mean "childhood."[104] It is likely that this meaning was taken into account by the Coptic translator who used the noun ϣⲏⲣⲉ ("son," "child"[105]), preceded by the plural definite article ⲛ̄–. It is therefore possible to translate the Greek παιδεία as the Coptic ⲛ̄ϣⲏⲣⲉ. All manuscripts available to us contain this version of the translation. However, in the context of verses referring to the sufferings of the Servant of the Lord, the statement "upon him are the children of our peace" does not make much sense.

99 See Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*, 71a.
100 Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*, 621a.
101 An exception here would be a late, possibly 14th century, lectionary sa 108[L], in which we find the spelling ⲛⲉϥⲉⲓ.
102 Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 455b.
103 See Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*, 319b.
104 Cf. Romizi, *Greco antico*, 903a.
105 Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*, 584a.

Isa 53:6

A subtle difference can be observed between the Greek and the Coptic texts, which results from the use of the verb πλανάω in different grammatical forms. The Septuagint reads it in the passive form ἐπλανήθη, which suggests that it was man who went astray (literally "has been strayed," "allowed himself to be strayed") in his way. The Coptic translation uses the verb ⲡⲗⲁⲛⲁ, which can be interpreted as the active form. This makes man not the object but the subject of the act of straying. The Coptic text, therefore, suggests that man himself was responsible for his straying.

Isa 53:8

In Ziegler's critical apparatus, we find a remark suggesting that the Sahidic text does not translate the Greek τοῦ λαοῦ μου ("of my people") precisely, as it omits the possessive pronoun μου. This remark agrees with the manuscript of sa 48 and sa 108^{L}, in which we indeed find the phrase ⲙ̄ⲡⲗⲁⲟⲥ ("of the people"). Witnesses such as 212^{L}.9, sa 211^{L}, and our manuscript sa 52, however, read it as ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲗⲁⲟⲥ, which corresponds exactly to the version provided in the Septuagint. Ziegler's remark: "μου] > Co(Sa^{p})" does not apply to our manuscript.

Isa 53:10

Different editions of the Septuagint offer different ways of breaking down verses 10 and 11. In Alfred Rahlfs'[106] edition, which is the basis for the NETS translation, verse 10 ends with the words: καὶ βούλεται κύριος ἀφελεῖν ("and the Lord wishes to take away"). In Ziegler's[107] edition, verse 10 includes these additional words: ἀπὸ τοῦ πόνου τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ ("from the pain of his soul"). As our compilation is based on Ziegler's edition, we will rely on his breakdown of the verses.

Isa 53:12

The Coptic translation contains one of the longest additions to the Greek text in the entire book of Deutero-Isaiah: ⲁⲩⲡⲱⲧ ⲉϫⲱϥ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲩⲇⲓⲱⲕⲉ ⲙⲙⲟϥ ⲁⲩϭⲟⲡϥ· ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁⲡϫⲟⲉⲓ̈ⲥ ⲕⲱ ⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ("They ran against him and persecuted him and seized him. But the Lord forgave them"). Ziegler remarked that a similar text is to be found on the margin of the Greek manuscript numbered 86: κατεδραμον και εδιωξαν συνελαβον και κυριος αφηκεν αυτοις ("They ran and persecuted and seized. But the Lord forgave them"). Since it is a minuscule manuscript, it could not

106 Rahlfs, *The Septuagint*.
107 Ziegler, *The Septuagint. Isaias*.

have been the basis for the earlier Coptic translations, such as manuscript sa 48, dated to the 4th or 5th century.[108] Did the reverse process take place? Was the remark on the margin of manuscript 86 added on the basis of the Coptic manuscripts? What was the *Vorlage* of manuscript 86? Answering these questions would require a more detailed study of this Greek manuscript. Undoubtedly, expanding the final verse of the Fourth Song of the Servant of the Lord was intended to establish an even closer link between the Old Testament song to the person of Jesus Christ. This explanation can also be found in Ziegler's critical apparatus, where the added words are treated as a Christian addition: "additamentum christ."

Summing up the above analyses, it should be first noted that the Fourth Song of the Servant of the Lord is to be found in a relatively large number of Coptic manuscripts. Beside our sa 52 we encounter it in seven other witnesses. A comparison of the Sahidic manuscripts does not show any great discrepancies between them. Many discrepancies result merely from different vocalisations. The manuscripts usually provide a faithful translation of the Greek Septuagint. The only major difference in relation to LXX is to be found at the end of the Song. The Coptic witnesses add the following text there: "They ran against him and persecuted him and seized him. But the Lord forgave them." It is most likely that this final addition indicates the reading of the Fourth Song in the key of Christian interpretation.

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108 The longer ending of the verse was also not known to St. Jerome, the early 5th century author of an extensive commentary to the Book of Isaiah (see Jóźwiak, *Pieśni o Słudze Pańskim* [Songs of the Servant of the Lord], 107–112, 220).

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Lending and Borrowing in the Teaching of Sirach (Sir 29:1–7)

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Abstract: Among the various topics and issues that Ben Sira discusses in his book is the issue of borrowing. The sage covers it in detail and at length in Sir 29:1–7, presenting it not from a financial and economic perspective, but from a sapiential viewpoint, appropriate to the nature of his work. The purpose of this article is to explore Sirach's teaching on the subject of borrowing and lending of material goods. As a preliminary matter, the issue of borrowing in the setting of the ancient Near East and in biblical Israel is presented in a highly synthetic manner. Next, the boundaries of the literary unit that is the subject of the presented analyses and its structure are defined. In the remainder of the article, the Greek text of Sir 29:1–7 (the Hebrew version of this pericope is not known) is exegetically analyzed drawing on the historical-critical method. The examined literary unit is divided into two main parts. The first is a discussion of the general rules concerning lending and borrowing, i.e. based on the texts of the Torah, the obligation to grant a loan also reminds one of the obligation to return the debt according to the terms agreed upon. The second part of the pericope depicts the difficulties associated with not returning borrowed goods on the part of dishonest borrowers (delay in returning the loan, making excuses, even aggression towards the creditor). Fundamental to the sage's teaching on the subject of borrowing are the texts of the Pentateuch saying that one should give loans. However, the author is a realist and therefore devotes much of his reflection on the issue to the difficulties involved in returning borrowed goods, with a view to encouraging his disciples to adopt an attitude of prudence and caution lest they suffer the loss of some of their possessions. Yet, despite these risks, he encourages them to support those in need with loans.

Keywords: Book of Sirach, Sir 29:1–7, loan, lending and borrowing in the Old Testament

The main objective of the teaching of the Book of Sirach is the shaping of a wise and just man. Among the many different issues addressed in this work and intended to help achieve this goal, it was impossible to miss a reference to economic and financial matters. While, obviously, the book is not an interpretation of the economics of the time or a form of a textbook on financial activities, it does contain valuable sapiential comments on selected issues that were not only important and deserving of special attention at the time of its writing but are still relevant today. Borrowing is one of them. A presentation of the teachings of the sage from Jerusalem on borrowing shall be the subject of this article.[1] To discuss this issue, the question of borrowing

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1 The theme of lending and borrowing in the teachings of Sirach was addressed by Maurice Gilbert (cf. "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179–181; *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206–208) and by Bradley C. Gregory (cf. *Like*

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in ancient times (in neighboring countries and, based on the texts of the Old Testament, in Israel itself) will first be presented as a background and introduction to the sage's teaching. This shall be followed by a delimitation of Sir 29:1–7, a pericope that contains the most extensive discussion of the issue covered not only in the Book of Sirach but also in the entire Bible. The structure of Sir 29:1–7 and the exegesis of this text based on the historical-critical method including elements of syntactic and semantic analysis will then be presented. The analysis of the sage's teaching on borrowing will be based on the shorter Greek version of the text of the Book of Sirach (GI), since the Hebrew original of the pericope in question has not survived to this day,[2] making it the oldest form of Sir 29:1–7 that is currently known. And, moreover, it is the version of the text that was included in the canon of Scripture. The Syriac version[3] is much more recent. Even though it is a translation based on the Hebrew text, it contains many additions of its own and shows Ebionite influences, as well as some dependencies on the Greek text,[4] for which reason references to it, will be omitted in this article.

1. Borrowing in the Ancient Near East

First, the practice of lending in the countries that constituted Israel's immediate surroundings, and then in the chosen people itself in the times preceding the life and activities of the sage from Jerusalem, will be presented in a very concise manner, since this is not the main purpose of this article. This will enable a better and more complete understanding of Ben Sira's teaching on the subject.

an Everlasting Signet Ring, 135–151). The former provides a rather cursory account of the said issue in the teachings of the sage from Jerusalem, while the latter discusses them somewhat more broadly and thoroughly but from a perspective of generosity and magnanimity. What is lacking, then, is a thorough analysis of Sir 29:1–7. This article seeks to address this gap. Its novelty lies in the proposed structure of the second part of the analysed pericope, i.e. vv. 4–7, and the presentation of the dynamics of the debtor's reluctance to return the borrowed goods.

2 Cf. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira*, 47, 53–54; Boccaccio – Berardi, *Ecclesiasticus*, 15–16; Egger-Wenzel, *A Polyglot Edition of the Book of Ben Sira*, 349–353; Mopsik, *La Sagesse de ben Sira*, 177; Morla Asensio, *Los manuscritos*, 160; *The Book of Ben Sira. Text*, 25.

3 For the text of the Syriac version with Spanish and English translations, see Calduch-Benages – Ferrer – Liesen, *La Sabiduría del Escriba*, 182–185. Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 136–137; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 269–271.

4 Cf. Calduch-Benages – Ferrer – Liesen, *La Sabiduría del Escriba*, 37–51; Piwowar, "La storia testuale," 31–53; Wright, *No Small Difference.*

1.1. Neighboring Countries

Ewaryst Kowalczyk states that borrowing is a phenomenon as old as humanity itself.[5] The practice was well known and widespread throughout the ancient Near East. Historical sources testify that it already existed in the countries of ancient Mesopotamia, as evidenced by numerous documents preserved to our time.[6] They show that most often loans involved money or grain They were granted at an interest rate,[7] which meant that those who granted them made profits that were quite high since they ranged from 20 to 25% in the case of a cash loan and about 33% for goods in kind.[8] And, in some exceptional situations, the profit made by the lender could be as high as 100%.[9] Therefore, lending was a very profitable practice, allowing one to make money quickly and increase one's own wealth at the expense of borrowers. A significant rise in lending at interest occurred in the 7th century B.C. with the introduction of coins (this occurred in the Aegean area).[10]

Lending had not only economic but also social consequences. This is because it sometimes happened that people or animals were given as pledges. And in the event of an inability to repay the debt and the interest due, servants were given to the creditor, if one had them, or even children or a wife, to perform forced labor. They would virtually become their slaves so that some of the debt could be repaid in this way.[11] In extreme cases of inability to repay the debt, the debtors themselves would become slaves of those from whom they borrowed money or other goods. This practice is evidenced in the Bible (cf. Prov 22:7; Matt 18:23–34).

Loans were also widespread in ancient Egypt. In the state of the Pharaohs, too, they were granted at an interest rate, which in the late 3rd and early 2nd centuries B.C., that is, in the time contemporary with Sirach, was 12% per annum[12] (Bruce W. Frier, on the other hand, claims that in the 3rd century B.C., the percentage in Egypt ruled by the Ptolemies was higher and reached 25%[13]). Also in ancient Greece, starting in the 6th century B.C., the practice of lending at interest was already well-known and became more widespread with time.[14]

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5 Cf. Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 191.

6 Cf. Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 191. See Lipiński, "Contrats de prêt araméens," 99–129.

7 "The basic concept of interest is almost as old as organized societies; interest; interest-bearing loans of precious metals or commodities are found already in Hammurabi's Babylon (early 2d millennium B.C.E.)" (Frier, "Interest and Usury," 423). Cf. Maloney, "Usury and Restrictions," 1–20.

8 Cf. Eicher, "Pożyczka," 991; de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 170–171; Witaszek, "Biblijne podstawy własności prywatnej," 33.

9 Cf. Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 192; Lipiński, "Contrats de prêt araméens," 99, 121.

10 Cf. Frier, "Interest and Usury," 423.

11 Cf. Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 193; Lipiński, "Contrats de prêt araméens," 122–123.

12 Cf. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 170–171; Witaszek, "Biblijne podstawy własności prywatnej," 33.

13 Cf. Frier, "Interest and Usury," 423.

14 Cf. Frier, "Interest and Usury," 423.

1.2. Israel

Loans were also known and widely practiced in Israel, as indicated by Israel's legal texts – the Torah (cf. Exod 22:24; Lev 25:35–36; Deut 15:7–11). They were generally taken to meet specific needs – deficiencies related to family sustenance – rather than to pursue economic or manufacturing activities (the vast majority of which were agricultural, with income or self-sufficiency always at high risk).[15] This practice was intended to save the life of a person in need – the poor, the destitute – and not to multiply the wealth of the lender. Jewish legislation, unlike the customs of the neighboring nations, forbade the charging of interest on a loan, but only with regard to Jews – it was permissible to charge it from non-Jews (cf. Deut 23:21).[16] Usury was strictly forbidden. Its prohibition applied not only to money but also to food and other items (cf. Exod 22:24; Lev 25:36–37; Deut 23:20).[17] According to the Law, giving a loan as a form of economic assistance to a poor and needy person (cf. Deut 15:8, 11) was a commandment, even when the Sabbatical year, in which all debts and loans were canceled, was approaching (cf. Deut 15:9).[18] This is because helping people in need who lack sufficient means to live was considered an act that pleases God, who will surely repay with His blessing those who show graciousness toward the poor and those in need of support (cf. Deut 15:10). Lending to the poor was therefore recommended as an act of piety (cf. Ps 37:21, 26; 112:5; Prov 19:17)[19] and could only be practiced to help a person in need.[20] The Torah regarded borrowing as a duty incumbent upon Israelites and an act of charity towards the poor and those in need of support, while at the same time limiting the rights of the creditor (prohibition of usury).[21]

Historical and prophetic books explicitly confirm that loans were widespread in Israel and that the practice generated considerable social tension both before

15 Cf. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, 555; Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 195–196, 282.

16 Cf. Eicher, "Pożyczka," 991; Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 180; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 205–206; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 146–147; Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 194; Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 282; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 268; Witaszek, "Biblijne podstawy własności prywatnej," 32–33.

17 Cf. Baranowski, *Księga Powtórzonego Prawa*, 530; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 440; Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 194; Lemański, *Księga Wyjścia*, 485; Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2209; Seeligmann, "Darlehen," 338–348; Tronina, *Księga Kapłańska*, 371–372.

18 Cf. Baranowski, *Księga Powtórzonego Prawa*, 385; Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1:1–21:9*, 313; Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 237–238.

19 "The exemplar of piety introduced in sapiential and prophetic books; was a man who gave loan willingly and did not demand the interest" (Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 199). Cf. Baranowski, *Księga Powtórzonego Prawa*, 530–531; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 205; Lemański, *Księga Wyjścia*, 485; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 268; Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370; Seeligmann, "Darlehen," 320–322; Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus*, 184).

20 Cf. Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 194; Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 321–322.

21 Cf. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 237; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206; Seeligmann, "Darlehen," 322.

the Babylonian captivity (cf. 1 Sam 22:2; 2 Kgs 4:1; Ps 109:11; Jer 15:10; Hab 2:7) and after it (cf. Neh 5:1–13).[22] However, the prophet Ezekiel confirms the violation of the prohibition against usury and describes those who do not practice it as pious (cf. Ezek 18:8, 13, 17; 22:12).[23] This is also confirmed in Ps 15:5 and Ps 37:26.[24] Proverbs 28:8 warns that wealth accumulated through the collection of interest and usury is fleeting and will quickly pass away.[25] According to Ezekiel, usury was one of the reasons why Jerusalem was condemned and later destroyed (cf. Ezek 22:12).

2. Delimitation of Sir 29:1–7

All commentators and scholars of the work of Ben Sira agree that a new literary unit begins in Sir 29:1.[26] The preceding pericope (Sir 28:13–26) warned against the misuse of speech, showing the devastating consequences of injudicious use of words. Language – speech (γλῶσσα; vv. 13a,14a,15a,17b,18b) is its central protagonist, to which all third person singular pronouns in the feminine gender (αὐτῇ – vv. 16a, 26a; αὐτῆς – vv. 19[x4], 20[x2], 21[x2], 22b and αὐτήν – v. 23a) refer, which makes almost every verse refer to its leading theme (exceptions are vv. 24–25).

The first verse of Chapter 29 changes the focus of Sirach's teaching from describing the consequences of misuse of speech to the granting of a loan. This change is emphasized by the twice-used verb δανίζω/δανείζω ("to lend money"[27]) in stichs 1a and 2a. The beginning of the pericope is thus clearly marked by the change in vocabulary and, consequently, its subject matter.

Determining the ending of the literary unit that begins in Sir 29:1 is much more problematic. Maurice Gilbert argues that it ends in 29:20. He formulates his opinion based on the presence of similar phrases: "be careful not to fall down" in 28:26 (πρόσεχε μὴ πέσῃς) and "be careful not to fall into" (πρόσεχε μὴ ἐμπέσῃς) in 29:20b.[28] In view of this proposal to establish the boundaries of the pericope that begins in 29:1, it should be noted that generally, the syntagma that marks the boundaries of a literary unit occurs at its beginning and end, thus forming its framework. In this case, verse 28:26 belongs to the pericope immediately preceding Sir 29:1–7, which

22 Cf. Kowalczyk, "Lending in the Bible," 198–199; Seeligmann, "Darlehen," 323–324, 327.
23 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 180; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 147; Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 282.
24 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 181; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 147–149; Witaszek, "Biblijne podstawy własności prywatnej," 33.
25 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 180–181. See Dziadosz, "Nie wymieniaj przyjaciela za pieniądze," 82.
26 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 133.
27 Cf. Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 369; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, I, 95; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 492; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 139.
28 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.

significantly weakens the Belgian exegete's argument. In favor of recognizing 29:1–20 as a literary unit is the fact that it constitutes an appeal by the sage to the adepts of wisdom, encouraging them to provide assistance to those in economic distress. It should be noted, however, that the first part of it is about lending to a neighbor (vv. 1–7), the second with alms given to a poor person (29:8–13), and the third with surety to a neighbor (29:14–20).[29] Thus, in its totality, it is not uniform, although it does refer to the willingness to provide various forms of assistance to people in financial distress. Some scholars believe that Sir 29:1–20 has two sections rather than three. They combine vv. 1–7 and 8–13 together, claiming that they constitute a single pericope (29:1–13), while vv. 14–20 form a separate literary unit.[30]

The theme of granting loans, introduced in 29:1, continues up to and including verse 7 (cf. sec. 2.2 on the structure of the analyzed pericope).[31] Sir 29:8 begins with the word πλήν, which acts as a contrasting conjunction ("but," "however").[32] It, therefore, introduces content opposite to that previously presented by the author,[33] although it does not necessarily mark the beginning of a new literary unit.[34] However, in the case of 29:8, there is a change of theme, which is why Sir 29:8–13 should be considered a new thematic unit, although quite closely related to Sir 29:1–7. The new pericope (29:8–13) no longer speaks of a loan, but of almsgiving (ἐλεημοσύνη; vv. 8a, 12a). The demonstrative pronoun αὕτη in 29:12b also refers to almsgiving. Furthermore, it should be noted that the activities Ben Sira commands his disciples to perform in 29:1–7 refer to a neighbor (ὁ πλησίον; see vv. 1a, 2a), while the beneficiary of the practice prescribed in 29:8–13 is a poor man (ταπεινός – v. 8a; πένης – v. 9a).

Based on the role played by the conjunction πλήν in Sir 29:8a, the subject matter covered, and the inclusion of the persons to whom the activities recommended by the sage should apply (giving loans and supporting with alms), it can be concluded that the pericope that began in 29:1 ends in Sir 29:7.[35]

29 Cf. Anderson, "Almsgiving," 125; Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179–186; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206–211; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 134–135; Harrington, *Jesus Ben Sira of Jerusalem*, 97; Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 236–240; Pérez Rodríguez, "Eclesiástico," 1205–1208; Vella, "Eclesiastico," 110–113; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177–182.

30 Cf. Alonso Schökel, *Proverbios*, 247–249; Minissale, *Siracide*, 144–146; Morla Asensio, *Eclesiastico*, 146–149; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 268–269; Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 209–211; Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 369; Vigini, *Siracide*, 173–174. See Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 134.

31 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 135.

32 Cf. Aitken, "The Literary Attainment," 114–115.

33 Cf. Arndt – Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 669; Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 181; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 564.

34 Cf. Gilbert, "God, Sin and Mercy," 129, n. 4; Marböck, *Jesus Sirach 1–23*, 209, 211, 218, 220.

35 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179–181; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206–208; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 133–135; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 269–271; Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 369–370; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

3. Translation of Sir 29:1–7

The text of Sir 29:1–7 shall be analyzed with reference to the Greek version of this pericope with the critical edition of the Greek text of the work of the sage from Jerusalem published by Joseph Ziegler[36] as the source text.

29 1 One who shows mercy will lend to their neighbor,
and one who supports with their hand keeps the commandments.
2 Lend to your neighbor in the time of their need,
and give back to your neighbor in due time.
3 Make your word forceful and act in a trustworthy manner towards them,
and at all times you shall find what you need.
4 Many have considered a loan as a thing that is found
and caused trouble to those who came to their aid.
5 Up to [the moment] when they receive, they will kiss their hands
and will lower their voice with regard to their neighbor's wealth;
and at the time of repayment, they will be putting off the time
and return words of indifference
and will blame the time.
6 If they could, they will find it difficult to receive half
and will consider it as a thing that is found;
and if not, they have deprived them of their riches,
and got them as their enemy without reason
with curses and insults, they will repay them
and repay them with defamation instead of glory.
7 Many have turned away not because of wickedness
they acted cautiously so that [not] to allow themselves to be plundered without cause.[37]

4. The Structure of Sir 29:1–7

The pericope to be analyzed is clearly divided into two main parts.[38] The first of them (vv. 1–3) presents the general principles concerning loans. It should be noted, however, that it does so first from the perspective of the lender (vv. 1–2a), then in

36 Cf. Ziegler, *Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach*, 259–261.
37 Own translation. Cf. Kraus – Karrer, *Septuaginta Deutsch*, 1130; Wojciechowski, *Księgi greckie*, 611–612; Pietersma – Wright, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, 743; Popowski, *Septuaginta*, 1231–1232.
38 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 137; Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 236; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 269–270; Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

relation to the borrower (vv. 2b–3).[39] The forms of the verb δανίζω/δανείζω (δανιεῖ in v. 1aβ and δάνεισον in v. 2aα), together with the substantivized adverb πλησίον, form the framework of the first section of the first part of the pericope (vv. 1–2a) containing the teaching of the wise man of Jerusalem about loans.[40] The framework of the second section (vv. 2b–3), in turn, is formed by the noun καιρός (εἰς τὸν καιρόν in v. 2bβ and ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ in v. 3bα).

The second part of Sir 29:1–7, i.e. vv. 4–7, focuses on problems relating to returning a loan. Its framework is formed by the substantivized adjective πολλοί ("numerous," "many"; cf. vv. 4a and 7a).[41] A concentric structure can be discerned in it, at the center of which is the description of the difficulties relating to the repayment of a loan.

Sir 29:4 is an introduction to the second part of the pericope analyzed here. It presents the main cause of the difficulties relating to the return of the borrowed goods, from which all the problems of the lender in recovering the loan described in the following verses derive. In the structure of Sir 29:4–7, it corresponds to the last verse of this pericope summarizing the entire literary unit by showing the consequences of dishonesty relating to this form of assistance to the needy. Both of these verses have a general character. Stichs 5ab show the borrower's attitude toward the provider of support before the loan is granted, while stichs 6ef show their attitude toward the creditor at the time when they should repay the debt. They are based on an antithetical scheme: feigned benevolence (v. 5ab) – hatred and hostility (v. 6ef). Meanwhile, the central stichs (vv. 5c–6d) illustrate the difficulties and problems relating to the repayment of the loan caused by a dishonest debtor.[42]

Putting together the elements presented above that form the structure of the analyzed literary unit, one arrives at the following composition of the unit:

Part I: the practice of lending and borrowing (vv. 1–3)
    vv. 1a–2a – with reference to the lender
    vv. 2b–3b – with reference to the borrower
Part II: the dangers of lending (vv. 4–7)
    A: v. 4 – an overview of the problem associated with lending
        B: v. 5ab – attitude towards the lender before the loan is received
            C: vv. 5c–6d – reluctance of the borrower to return the loan
        B': v. 6ef – attitude towards the lender when it has to be returned
    A': v. 7 – the consequences of an inappropriate approach to loans.

39 See Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 144; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177. Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 140–141.
40 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.
41 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.
42 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.

According to M. Gilbert, the first part of Sir 29:1–7, i.e. verses 1–3, has a prescriptive nature of a commandment, as it is dominated by imperatives, while the second part (vv. 4–7) is a description of the situation relating to loans in the Jewish community at that time.[43]

5. An Exegesis of Sir 29:1–7

An exegetical study aimed at finding out the message of the teaching of the sage from Jerusalem on lending and borrowing will be divided into stages in accordance with the structure of the analyzed literary unit.

5.1. General Rules Concerning Loans (Sir 29:1–3)

In the first part of the pericope on the subject of loans, the sage, first of all, presents two basic principles regarding this form of assistance to those in need of support (the obligation to lend and the obligation to repay), and also gives motives that are supposed to inspire and encourage their practice in everyday life.

5.1.1. The Commandment to Lend (Sir 29:1–2a)

Ben Sira begins his reflection on loans by looking at them from the perspective of a person who is asked by someone for assistance in the form of a loan of money or other material goods. The first verse of the pericope is constructed as a synonymous parallelism, in which the syntagma ὁ ποιῶν ἔλεος (“one who shows mercy”; v. 1aα) corresponds to ὁ ἐπισχύων τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ (“one who supports with their hand”; v. 1bα), while δανιεῖ τῷ πλησίον (“will lend to their neighbor”; v. 1aβ) to the words τηρεῖ ἐντολάς (“keeps the commandments”; v. 1bβ).[44] A person who shows mercy to someone in need is thus defined as one who supports them and granting a loan is tantamount to keeping the commandments. The above statements are of great importance, as they provide a theologically grounded motivation for giving loans to those in material difficulties. This is the foundation of the teaching of the sage from Jerusalem on this form of assistance to the needy.

The subject of the first stich of v. 1 is defined by the substantivized *participium praesentis activi* of the verb ποιέω (“to do,” “to make”) – ὁ ποιῶν, accompanied by the direct object ἔλεος (“pity,” “mercy,” “compassion”). It should be noted that the participle is preceded by an article, while its object does not have it. Expressed in this way, the subject can refer to a specific person (individualizing meaning of

43 Cf. Gilbert, “Prêt, aumône et caution,” 179; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206.
44 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 141.

the article) or to a person who is a representative of a certain group of people who show mercy (general or generic use of an article[45]), whose action refers not to an individual, specific and well-defined act, but to an act whose nature – essence – is mercy (the noun ἔλεος without an article). In this way, the Greek text expresses various forms of action taken as a result of pity towards another person – they can have different expressions and forms. In the Greek translation of the work of Ben Sira, the verb ἐλεέω ("to pity," "to have pity," "to show pity") occurs four times[46] but the translator did not use it in 29:1aα. Instead, he used the less refined term ὁ ποιῶν ἔλεος, rather than ὁ ἐλεῶν. He probably did so in order to emphasize effective assistance to someone in need, and not merely the pity felt at their sight or arising in one who encounters them and sees their dramatic plight but does nothing to help them. The syntagma used in v. 1aα highlights effectively coming to someone's aid through a specific action that expresses mercy toward those in need. The phrase ποιεῖν ἔλεος occurs two more times in the Greek version of Sirach. However, in both cases, its subject is God, not man as in 29:1aα (cf. 46:7b: ἐν ἡμέραις Μωυσέως ἐποίησεν ἔλεος ["in the days of Moses he showed mercy"] and 50:22d: ποιοῦντα μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν κατὰ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ ["him who deals with us according to his mercy"]). The noun ἔλεος appears twenty-three more times in the Greek translation of Ben Sira's work outside of 29:1a.[47] It is most often used to refer to one of God's main attributes (as many as eighteen times).[48] Only five verses speak of mercy shown by man (cf. 18:13; 28:4; 36:23; 44:10 and 45:1). Thus, one who shows mercy is becoming conformed to God Himself (cf. 18:13ab). Moreover, such a person secures fame and a good name lasting among posterity which, according to the sage from Jerusalem, are the only form of immortality and eternal life.

The predicate of the first stich of Sir 29:1a is δανιεῖ (*indicativus futuri activi* of the third person singular of the verb δανίζω/δανείζω[49]). The future tense of this verb form can be considered either perfective ("will lend") or imperfective ("will be lending").[50] It seems that due to the imperfective aspect of the other verb forms occurring in 29:1 δανιεῖ should be considered progressive *futurum*, i.e. expressing the continuation or repetition of an action in the future ("will be lending"). The future tense form δανιεῖ could possibly also be considered *futurum gnomicum* ("lends").[51] This

45 Cf. Piwowar, *Składnia języka greckiego*, § 88.

46 See Sir 12:3; 16:9; 36:1, 11 (cf. Hatch – Redpath, *A Concordance*, 450). In references to texts from the Book of Sirach, the numeration suggested by Rahlfs is followed, because it has been adopted by most editions of Sirach in modern translations, therefore this numeration of verses has been kept to make it easier for the reader to find the quoted texts.

47 See Sir 2:7, 9, 18; 5:6; 16:11, 12; 18:5, 11, 13[x2]; 28:4; 35:23, 24; 36:23; 44:10; 45:1; 46:7; 47:22; 50:22, 24; 51:3, 8, 29 (cf. Hatch – Redpath, *A Concordance*, 452).

48 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 237; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

49 Cf. footnote 33.

50 See Piwowar, *Składnia języka greckiego*, §§ 355–357.

51 Cf. Piwowar, *Składnia języka greckiego*, § 360.

is an important observation because the sage is not inviting his disciple to make a one-time loan but to come to the aid through this form of support of those in need whenever they are in trouble and lack the means to survive or secure a decent life for themselves and their families. Aside from the analyzed pericope, the verb δανίζω/δανείζω occurs two more times in the Greek version of Sirach. In 8:12a, the sage urges his disciple not to lend to a man who is more mighty – more powerful than the disciple (ἀνθρώπῳ ἰσχυροτέρῳ σου)[52] since it is to be expected that he will not return what was lent to him and it will have to be considered a loss (8:12b).[53] In 20:15c, the sage warns against accepting a loan from a fool (ἄφρονος; in 20:14a), because he will demand the return of the borrowed goods in a very short time, and consequently, a loan from him will be of little use and will not solve the borrower's material troubles. Based on these two remarks by the sage, which are quite critical of lending, the question arises: why does he encourage lending in 29:1a, when he had previously warned his disciple against it? The change in attitude depends on whom one lends to or from whom one receives a loan. In the first case (8:12), it is someone who is more wealthy and has more power than the one who lends to them. In the second (20:14), it is an unwise person who is not guided by wisdom and who lacks it. Therefore, that person acts imprudently and illogically. Giving a loan to or accepting it from people of these two categories is risky and hazardous for the lender and borrower, because in the first case, the loan is equivalent to a loss of the loaned goods, while in the second case receiving it and having to pay it back quickly does not solve the troubles of the one asking for support and help. In 29:1a, on the other hand, the situation radically changes, since reference is made to lending to a neighbor (τῷ πλησίον). Resulting from the substantivization of an adverb, the noun ὁ πλησίον in the Greek version of Sirach always occurs with an article,[54] i.e., it refers either to a specific and individual person, or it has a generic meaning (in which case it denotes an indefinite representative of an entire group of people who can be described as neighbors). A neighbor is a person with whom someone is connected by some ties or with whom one shares the same life attitude (cf. 13:15–16). It can refer to a neighbor, friend, acquaintance, or to someone belonging to the Chosen People, that is, to the same social and religious community.[55] It should be noted that the sage from Jerusalem always encourages adopting a positive attitude toward one's neighbor From the group of people to whom the noun ὁ πλησίον can be referred to, excluded are relatives.[56]

52 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 141.
53 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 129–133.
54 See Sir 5:12; 6:17; 9:14; 10:6; 13:15; 15:5; 16:28; 17:14; 18:13; 19:14, 17; 22:23; 25:1, 18; 27:18, 19; 28:2, 7; 29:1, 2, 5, 14, 20; 31:15, 31; 34:22 (cf. Hatch – Redpath, *A Concordance*, 1149).
55 Cf. Fichtner, "B. πλησίον in the LXX," 313–315.
56 Cf. Falkenroth, "ὁ πλησίον (ho plēsion)," 258; Fichtner, "B. πλησίον in the LXX," 312–313; Léon-Dufour, "Bliźni," 75.

However, that does not mean that Sirach's teaching does not apply to them.[57] Since he encourages lending to a close person, it can be inferred that the call applies all the more to relatives in trouble and in need of help as well. Bradley C. Gregory argues that the word 'neighbor' in 29:1–2a refers to a person in need,[58] which can be a friend or acquaintance as well as a relative.

The second stich of v. 1 describes a man showing mercy as one who supports with their hand (ὁ ἐπισχύων τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ; v. 1bα). The verb ἐπισχύω ("to make firm," "to support"[59]) is *hapax legomenon* in the Greek version of the work of Ben Sira. The syntagma ὁ ἐπισχύων τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ is the opposite of the phrase χερσὶν παρειμέναις ("to lowered hands" – 2:12aβ) and is close in its meaning to the phrase ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ("extend your hand" – 7:32a; cf. 15:16b; 31:14a, 18b) and to the hand-opening gesture mentioned in Sir 40:14a. The *dativus* τῇ χειρί in 29:1bα should be considered a *dativus instrumentalis*, i.e., it indicates the mediating element through which the action expressed by the verb ἐπισχύω is performed. The noun χείρ ("hand") occurs fifty-nine times in the Greek text of Sirach. In the vast majority of cases, it is used in a metaphorical sense as a symbol of power,[60] action,[61] or possession.[62] In 29:1b, a hand is a metaphor for acting for the benefit of another person. "The hand here becomes a symbol of goodwill and readiness to help."[63] According to Giuliano Vigini, the noun intensifies the idea of support – coming to the aid of the needy expressed by the verb ἐπισχύω.[64]

Based on the synonymous parallelism contained in v. 1, showing mercy is thus equated with acting to empower someone else who is in need of help and support. In light of the first stich of 29:1, it should be understood as lending something that is necessary to a person in need – because its shortage puts the life of that person in need and their loved ones in danger. Lending them what they need is, on the one hand, an actual and real empowerment for them, and on the other hand, it is an action that is performed with power, i.e. it is an effective action that leads to the intended goal, and not just some attempt to come to their aid that ends in failure or fiasco.

One who supports with their hand and keeps the commandments (τηρεῖ ἐντολάς). Giving a loan and meeting the needs of someone in financial distress is an expression of faithfulness to the covenant and fulfillment of the commandment to help them. Lending, according to Ben Sira, is not just an action that has an economic

57 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 142.
58 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 142.
59 See Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 663; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, I, 176; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 823; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 283; Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.
60 Cf. Sir 2:18; 4:9, 19; 8:1; 10:4, 5; 11:6; 14:25; 15:14; 33:13; 36:2, 5; 43:12; 46:2, 4; 47:4; 48:18; 49:11; 51:3, 8. See Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.
61 Cf. Sir 9:17; 15:16; 25:23, 26; 33:26; 38:10, 13, 15, 31; 48:20b; 50:12, 13, 15, 20.
62 Cf. Sir 29:5, 26; 33:22; 35:9.
63 Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 237.
64 Cf. Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.

dimension, but is an expression of the faith and religiosity of the lender (cf. 27:1).[65] The noun ἐντολή ("command," "precept," "commandment," "provision") occurs seventeen more times in the Greek version of the Book of Sirach besides 29:1. In the vast majority of cases it is used, as in the analyzed stich, in the plural (only three times does it appear in the singular; see 35:4b, 29:9a, and 39:31a). It, therefore, refers to the commandments – the Lord's precepts which He gave to Moses (cf. 45:5) and which are the essence of the covenant made with the chosen people (cf. 28:7; 32:24; 45:17). Keeping the commandments – following them is a very important attitude because it is an expression of wisdom (cf. 1:26) and staying in covenant with the Most High (cf. 35:1). It earns God's approval of the one who does it (cf. 15:15). Moreover, it is an expression of fear of the Lord (cf. 23:27). A pious person keeps them (cf. 35:1; 37:12), but whoever transgresses and disobeys them brings contempt upon themselves (cf. 10:19). The sage recommends reflecting on the commandments (cf. 6:37). The important role played by keeping the commandments in everyone's life is the reason why the sage urges his disciples to observe them and put them into practice in their lives (cf. 28:6; 32:23). The commandments also mandate coming to the aid of the poor (cf. 29:9). This observation by Ben Sira is the basis for the assertion expressed in 29:1b that whoever supports his neighbor keeps the commandments. The noun "commandments" in v. 1bβ is used in the plural since it refers to commands mandating support through a loan to a person in need of help contained in three different books of the Torah (Exod 22:24; Lev 25:35–36; Deut 15:7–11).

The first verse of the pericope devoted to Ben Sira's teaching on loans indicates two important reasons why they should be given.[66] First, they are an expression of mercy toward a neighbor who needs help. Second, they are also a fulfillment of the commandments which dictate coming to the aid of those in material and economic distress. Both of these theological arguments are the most perfect and eloquent motives for giving a loan to a neighbor.

After presenting the disciples with the aforementioned reasons for lending to a neighbor what is necessary for them, the sage in 29:2a formulates a commandment expressing the duty to support with a loan a neighbor in need. He expresses it using an imperative of the aorist of the active voice of the verb δανίζω/δανείζω (δάνεισον; cf. v. 1aβ). The second person singular ("you") of this verb form indicates that the commandment is addressed directly and personally to an adept of wisdom – it is not merely legal and general in nature, but personal (individual) and directly concerns the hearer/reader of Ben Sira's teaching, who may be a lender as well as a borrower. It is expressed in the aorist, which means that it is not a general exhortation (always lend whenever someone asks you for this form of support) but has a very

65 Cf. Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.
66 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

strong appeal, i.e. it must be carried out immediately and at once, without delay or excuses. The commandment refers, as in v. 1aβ, to one's neighbor (τῷ πλησίον).

The commandment expressed by Ben Sira in v. 2a, however, is not unconditional and absolute, i.e. applicable to every situation in which any person needs help. First of all, it refers to a neighbor, i.e. someone with whom the lender has some kind of relationship. They are not an unknown person or a complete stranger to the lender, but someone close to them, as indicated etymologically by the term ὁ πλησίον (see above in the commentary on v. 1aβ) Second, the sage limited the commandment to lend to a situation he describes as someone in need asking for support (ἐν καιρῷ χρείας αὐτοῦ).[67] The noun χρεία ("need," "necessity")[68] in the analyzed stich, since it is not preceded by an article, has a general meaning, i.e., it does not refer to some specific situation in which someone experiences a want but connotes any such situation. The masculine personal pronoun in the singular genitive case αὐτοῦ should be considered *genetivus subiectivus*, i.e. that the need in question is experienced by a neighbor.

Undoubtedly, Ben Sira's instruction expressing the necessity to give loans alludes to the texts of the Law calling for the needy to come to the aid of the needy through this form of support (cf. Exod 22:24; Lev 25:35–36 and Deut 15:7–11). This is made explicit in 29:1bβ through the use of the word ἐντολή in the plural. Nevertheless, Luis Alonso Schökel, Bradley C. Gregory and Georg Sauer believe that the commandment to lend expressed by Ben Sira refers only to Deut 15:7–11.[69] However, one should note some differences between the obligation to give loans formulated by the sage from Jerusalem and the legal texts of the Pentateuch. First, these texts speak of an obligation to give a loan to a poor person from one's people (Exod 22:24) or a brother (Lev 25:35; Deut 15:7, 11). Ben Sira, on the other hand, instructs his disciples to give loans to their neighbors. Thus, he seems to be extending the obligation to lend to include individuals more loosely related to the lender (neighbors) than blood relatives or those belonging to the Jewish people (brothers).[70] The Sage says nothing about the prohibition of usury, while the texts of the Torah speak explicitly about it (Exod 22:24; Lev 25:36; Deut 23:20).[71] The absence of mention of this restriction can be interpreted in two different ways. First, Ben Sira does not mention it because it is widely known and there is no need to remind about it.[72] Second, it can be considered

67 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 237; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

68 The noun χρεία can refer to need – necessity referring to the utterance of a word (cf. 4:23; 8:9; 32:7), material things (cf. 11:9, 23; 39:26, 33), housing (cf. 29:27), as well as illness or suffering (cf. 38:1, 12).

69 Cf. Alonso Schökel, *Proverbios*, 247; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 141–142; Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 209.

70 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 143.

71 Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370; Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 260–261.

72 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 141.

that he allows lending at interest and condones usury.[73] However, the latter seems unlikely, as it would mean that he introduces a significant change to the Jewish legislation contained in the Torah. On the contrary, the sage advocated strict and accurate observance of the precepts contained in the Torah, so he was unlikely to allow the possibility of charging usury on loans. He, therefore, did not mention the prohibition of lending at interest, since he focused exclusively on the positive commandment to lend to support one's neighbor.

5.1.2. Obligation of the Borrower (Sir 29:2b–3)

The second section of the first part of the pericope containing Ben Sira's teaching on loans (vv. 2b–3) is devoted to the debtor's obligation to return borrowed goods. It, therefore, presents the issue at hand from the perspective of the borrower. This is emphasized by the use of the conjunction καί, which at the beginning of v. 2b should be read in the opposite sense ("but," "however").[74]

One who has received a loan is under an obligation to return the borrowed goods. Just as the commandment to give loans was expressed by means of the aorist imperative (δάνεισον; see above), so also the obligation to return it is formulated by means of the same grammatical form (ἀπόδος). The binding effect inherent in these forms is therefore the same, i.e., the same effect applies to the instruction to give loans as to that to return them. Despite this, however, it seems that the use of the adverb πάλιν ("back," "in return") in v. 2b reinforces the idea of having to give back the borrowed goods. Thus, the obligation to return the incurred debt would be more emphasized and highlighted than the obligation to grant loans.

The verb ἀποδίδωμι ("to give back," "to return") appears six times in the Greek version of Sirach except in the analyzed pericope, where it occurs as many as four times (vv. 2a, 5d, 6ef). In four cases its subject is God (cf. 11:26; 12:6; 17:23 and 33:13), while in the other two (cf. 4:31 and 18:22) it is man. Both of these texts have important messages in the context of loan repayment. The first calls for not extending one's hand to receive and withdrawing it when the time comes to give back (ἐν τῷ ἀποδιδόναι συνεσταλμένη – 4:31b). The second is even closer in its message to 29:2b. This is because the sage appeals in it to his disciple not to refrain from performing (literally, "in order to give back") the oath in due time (μὴ ἐμποδισθῇς τοῦ ἀποδοῦναι εὐχὴν εὐκαίρως – 18:22a). The reason is that it is not right to wait until death (cf. 18:22b). Ben Sira calls upon his disciple to fulfill (realize) at the proper ("prearranged") time what he had promised beforehand. After all, doing so attests to one's integrity and honesty. Sir 18:22b describes both of these traits as being righteous (δικαιωθῆναι – "to be considered righteous"). Similarly, Ps 37:21 also describes

73 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 146.

74 Cf. Blass – Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar*, § 442.1; Arndt – Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 393; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 353; von Siebenthal, *Ancient Greek Grammar*, 431.

the one who does not return borrowed goods as a wicked man and the one who borrows as a righteous one.[75]

Everyone has an obligation to live up to their commitments, whether it be keeping a vow – a promise – or returning borrowed items, within the proper, i.e. agreed upon, time. Sir 29:2b emphasizes the need to meet this obligation in time by the use of the syntagma εἰς τὸν καιρόν (literally, "on time" or "in time"). It should be pointed out that the noun καιρός ("time," "hour," "moment") generally in the Bible does not refer to time as such but takes on the meaning of "proper time," "opportune time," "right moment."[76] It therefore points to a specific, exact time, hour, or moment that is distinctive and unique. The time referred to in v. 2b is a reference to the time when a loan should be given to a needy person in distress (cf. v. 2a).[77] In both cases, reference is made to a specific time when one must take appropriate action (either to give a loan or to return a debt). In Sir 29:2b, it refers to a precisely agreed-upon time to return the borrowed goods. Indirectly, this indicates the practice of establishing, at the time of lending, the time when the loan must be returned to the lender. In v. 2b, the noun ὁ πλησίον no longer refers to the person to whom the loan was given (cf. vv. 1a, 2a) but, instead, to the one who gave the loan. The connection between the two people (creditor and debtor) in this stich has already been made explicit – they are linked by the loan.

In order to be able to fulfill the obligation undertaken at the time of receiving the loan to return the borrowed goods within the specified time, the disciple should make the given word, i.e. the obligation assumed to return the debt forceful (στερέωσον λόγον). It is a prerequisite for fulfilling the contract Making the word given when entering into a loan agreement forceful, which the sage recommends to the one who receives the loan, is intended to make their obligations unchanging by keeping the word they have given relating to the return of the goods received, both as to their quantity and the time at which they should be returned. The borrower undertook to return them and should keep the word that has been given.[78] Perhaps the noun λόγος ("word," "speech") used in v. 3a indicates an oral form of making loans since in the Greek version of the work of the sage from Jerusalem it refers only to words spoken, heard, proclaimed, etc. The commandment to comply with the terms of the loan expressed in 29:3aα resembles one of the sage's teachings on speech. An instruction also relating to not changing one's opinions and being true to one's views is contained in 5:10: "Be firm in your understanding and let your word be one" (ἴσθι ἐστηριγμένος ἐν συνέσει σου καὶ εἷς ἔστω σου ὁ λόγος). Consistency

75 Cf. Duesberg – Fransen, *Ecclesiastico*, 221; Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 181; Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 148–149.

76 Cf. Delling, "καιρός," 458–459; Arndt – Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 394–395; Hahn, "καιρός," 835–836; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 355–356.

77 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

78 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

in one's convictions and faithfulness to one's word are among important qualities of both someone who has gained wisdom and one who has found himself in a difficult economic situation and had to borrow to find a way out of financial trouble. Especially for people in the latter category, it is extremely important to enjoy the trust of others, as Ben Sira points out in 29:3aβ. The verb πιστόω in the passive voice, in which it occurs in the analyzed stich, takes on the meaning: "to be considered trustworthy," "to act in a trustworthy manner," "to prove oneself trustworthy."[79] The syntagma πιστώθητι μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ (literally, "deal with them in a trustworthy manner") also occurs in 27:17a: "Love your friend and deal with them in a trustworthy manner/be trustworthy with them"). In both cases, the sage uses it to call on his disciple to be faithful to another person, both lender and friend.[80] Sir 27:17a links faithfulness and being trustworthy to keeping a secret, while 29:3a links faithfulness and being trustworthy to obligations under an agreement to repay a loan received. In the former case, the other person's trust can be lost by revealing a secret pertaining to them, while in the latter case, it can be lost by failing to return a loan either in a certain amount/quantity or at the wrong time (other than agreed upon).

The second stich in v. 3 gives the motivation to preserve the attitudes to which the sage called upon his disciple in 3a, i.e., to abide by the terms of the loan, and thereby prove oneself to be a trustworthy person.[81] The borrower's fulfillment of these requirements will allow the opportunity to apply for possible further support in material and economic difficulties, should they fall into them again.[82] Their reliable fulfillment renders the borrower credible in the eyes of others and ensures that they will always be able to count on the support of others.[83] This was important in a community where the majority of people made their living from agricultural labor. After all, this occupation has always been (even today) associated with a high risk of economic failure due to adverse weather (e.g. drought) or other natural hazards (e.g. pests – locusts, or animal or plant diseases). Those who have fulfilled their obligations related to the loan they had taken out will always find people to come to their aid – they will receive support whenever they need it (ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ εὑρήσεις τὴν χρείαν σου).

One should note the convergence of vocabulary between v. 2a and v. 3b. Both speak of due time (ἐν καιρῷ) and need (χρεία). Thus, they correspond with each other, which indicates the dependence between lending to others and finding help

79 See Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1408–1409; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, II, 377; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 1681; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 559.

80 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 237; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177.

81 Cf. Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.

82 Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 177–178.

83 "[…] repayment of a loan is not only a religious obligation, but also a sound practice in terms of one's self-interest" (Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370). Cf. Morla Asensio, *Eclesiastico*, 148; Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206; Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 237; Pérez Rodríguez, „Eclesiástico," 1206.

when in economic distress. On this basis, one can conclude that obtaining help is in some (not strictly defined) way conditional on giving it to someone else.[84]

Sir 29:2b contains the most important and fundamental obligation of the borrower, which is to return the goods received as agreed upon at the time of taking the loan. The borrower undertakes to return it in accordance with the agreement, which they should comply with if they want to count on possible further assistance from others. If they fail to meet the terms of its repayment they will then lose the trust of others – a fundamental feature in financial dealings, and no one will lend to them again when they run into economic difficulties again.[85]

The main message of the first part of the pericope on loans is that in it, the sage draws attention to two duties. The first is the need to support those in need by lending them what is necessary for them (v. 2a). The second is the obligation to return the borrowed goods in accordance with previous arrangements (v. 2b). Thus, Sir 29:2 is the central part of Sir 29:1–3, which contains the most important message of the sage's teaching on loans,[86] which is emphasized by the twofold reference to the proper – appropriate time (ἐν καιρῷ in v. 2aβ i εἰς τὸν καιρόν in v. 2bβ).[87] It has the nature of a commandment stemming from the authority of the teachings of the master of wisdom, which is emphasized by the forms of the imperative mode of the verbs in it (δάνεισον in v. 2aα and ἀπόδος in v. 2bα).[88] Failing to give a loan as well as reluctance to repay it is an offense and an injustice.

5.2. The Dangers and Difficulties Associated with Loan Repayment and Their Consequences (Sir 29:4–7)

After discussing the general principles relating to loans, which include the basic norms of their granting with the relevant arguments and motivations behind them, Ben Sira presents the problems related to loan repayment. Not being an idealist, he recognizes and accurately describes the problems involved in returning debt. The purpose of this part of the sage's teaching is to make the lender aware of the difficulties in recovering the lent goods, and even the risk of losing them, i.e. the debtor's failure to return them The sage discusses them thoroughly and extensively, as indicated by

84 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178.

85 "By being honest and faithful he will establish credibility as a reliable borrower, thus ensuring that in the future he will find a lender when he is in need (v. 3b), It is this kind of reliability that is the foundation for the reciprocity envisioned in v. 2" (Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 144).

86 "Verse 2 […] is literarily central and the reciprocity reflected therein is to be understood as the core of Ben Sira's sociological vision, which stands in contrast to the reality expressed in vv. 4–7" (Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 144). Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.

87 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.

88 Cf. Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206.

the volume of this part of the pericope on the subject of loans (15 out of 21 stichs of the entire literary unit).

5.2.1. Debtors' Dishonesty Causes Problems with Loan Granting (Sir 29:4)

Ben Sira begins the second part of his teaching about loans with a statement that, on the one hand, serves as an introduction to a more detailed discussion of the reluctance of borrowers to return the goods they have borrowed, and, on the other hand, reveals the main reason for the creditor's difficulties and problems in recovering the loan they have granted.[89]

The substantivized adjective πολλοί ("many," "numerous"), which serves as the subject of 29:4, is not preceded by an article, since it does not refer to specific individuals, but indicates their nature, i.e., the way they treat and handle the borrowed goods. "Many" means that the problems described in the verses that follow regarding the return of borrowed items are not isolated cases, or do not affect a narrow group of people, but constitute a significant and important social problem since numerous people act in the manner described further towards the lenders and the goods given to them. Misconduct and dishonesty relating to the repayment of loans were thus a practice – abuse – that was fairly common and generally known.[90]

The main difficulty in recovering a loan is the mentality of the people to whom it was given and the way they treat it. According to the sage, they believe that it is not associated with an obligation to be repaid, as he cautioned in 29:2b–3a, but treat it as something they received for free without any obligations attached to it. The Greek version of Ben Sira's work compares this approach to finding something (ὡς εὕρεμα ἐνόμισαν δάνος – literally "considered a loan as a thing that is found"). The verb form ἐνόμισαν should be considered a complexive aorist, i.e. it expresses the attitude of borrowers which has occurred in numerous instances in the past. As such, it does not speak of an act of many people taken in a single moment (momentary aorist), but rather the decisions of many different people taken at different times in the past. Thus, it points not to a single act, but to a mindset – a widespread mentality that has been repeatedly manifested in not returning debts. The repetitive nature of this activity is also emphasized by the very meaning of the verb νομίζω ("to have in the habit of," " to usually do," "to think," "to believe," "to consider"), which has an imperfect aspect.

The noun δανός ("loan"[91]) is *hapax legomenon* in the Greek Bible.[92] A loan is considered by many "as a thing that is found" (ὡς εὕρεμα). That is to say, something that has been received free of charge and no one has any obligation with respect

89 Cf. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 210; Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370.
90 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 138.
91 Cf. Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 369; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, I, 95; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 492; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 140.
92 Cf. Hatch – Redpath, *A Concordance*, 285.

to it, because at the time it was found it belonged to no one and now it is owned by the finder, i.e. the borrower. Thus, this thing that has been found can be compared to a present – a disinterested gift, possibly an almsgiving, towards which there is no obligation to return it to the person who gave it. The noun εὕρεμα ("finding," "a thing that is found";[93] Takamitsu Muraoka and Burkard M. Zapff also translate it in the sense of "unexpected wealth/luck"[94]) occurs two more times in the Greek text of the work of Ben Sira outside of the pericope under analysis. In 20:9, the sage says that it happens that unexpected good fortune brings harm, and the thing that is found/unexpected good fortune (εὕρεμα) leads to loss (εἰς ἐλάττωσιν). Thus, the verse expresses a thought opposite to that in 29:4a, where the thing that is found enriches and becomes a profit for the one who has found it. Sir 35:9 encourages one to make generous offerings to God that are in accordance with the possibilities of the giver (καθ᾽ εὕρεμα χειρός – literally, "according to the unexpected good fortune of the hand"). The word emphasizes the aspect of unexpectedness – surprise, i.e. that something comes to a person in a way that surprises them, which they completely did not expect and did not even dream of. According to the translator of the original version into Greek, the loan received by the borrower is just such unexpected luck – something that came unexpectedly and for free. If one treats it in this way, they do not assume any obligation to return it, but consider it a freely given (found) thing, with regard to which they have no obligation.[95] In practice, they consider that they do not have to give it back, because they treat it as a gift. Hugolin Langkammer describes the perception of a loan described in v. 4a as a severance of the loan received from its giver.[96] According to Ben Sira, this is the main problem that underlies further difficulties in giving back the borrowed goods. From it originate all further difficulties in recovering it and reluctance to return it.

The mentality described in 29:4a becomes a cause of trouble for lenders. The Greek text states this in a general way in v. 4b: παρέσχον κόπον τοῖς βοηθήσασιν αὐτοῖς ("they caused trouble to those who came to their aid"). From the point of view of the syntax of the Greek language and in light of the first stich, the aorist form παρέσχον ("they gave," "they provided," they caused," "they made") should be considered a complexive aorist analogously to ἐνόμισαν (see above). Whenever someone has taken the approach to a loan given to them as described in 29:4a, they caused trouble for the one who gave it to them. The noun κόπος ("trouble," "difficulty," "toil," "hardship," "drudgery," "labor") expresses the effect of considering the loan a found thing with regard to the creditor. In light of this noun used in 29:4b, it is important to

93 Cf. Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 729; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, I, 188–189; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 889.

94 Cf. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 140; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178. See also Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 206.

95 Cf. Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.

96 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 238.

pay particular attention to 22:13, where the author states that with a foolish (ἄφρων) and unreasonable (ἀσύνετος) man one should not have any relations, moreover, one should beware of him as he only causes trouble. Based on this, it can be said that foolish people are the cause of trouble for others. Applying this thought to 29:4b, it can be assumed that also a man who treats a loan as an unexpected good fortune, for which one has no obligation, can be considered unreasonable since he causes trouble to the one who gave him the loan. Trouble – difficulty, the cause of which is an unreliable borrower, is primarily of a material and economic nature, i.e. it refers primarily to the borrowed goods, with the recovery of which the creditor has problems. One can also note problems of a psychological nature in the form of various tensions relating to interpersonal relations, as will be discussed in v. 6d–f, which the above state of affairs causes in the life of the lender (a distant analogy to κόπος in 13:26).

Those who experience trouble are referred to as "those who came to the rescue" (τοῖς βοηθήσασιν). The aorist of the active-voice participle of the verb βοηθέω ("to run to the rescue," "to come to the aid of," "to help") is preceded by an article because it refers to specific individuals who helped those in need by lending them money. In the translation into Greek of the book of Sirach, the analyzed verb occurs two more times in addition to 29:4b. It is always used in the form of a substantivized participle, i.e. it refers to persons. In 12:17 the adversary – the enemy in a time of calamity, seemingly as one who helps (ὡς βοηθῶν) – contributes to the downfall, while in 51:7 the author states that when he was in a situation where his life was threatened because of a wrongful slander, there was no one among people who wanted to help him (ὁ βοηθῶν).

In 29:1a, the granting of a loan was described as an act of charity, while in 29:4b it was described as assistance given to a person in need due to financial hardship. The first perspective is theological, while the second is humanitarian and economic. However, the help with which the lender comes to one in need is not appreciated by the latter. The lender's kindness encounters a lack of appropriate response, for it does not evoke gratitude, but a failure to recognize the help and deliverance given, expressed in a reluctance to return the borrowed goods. Thus, help aimed at rescuing a person in need from trouble becomes trouble for the one who came to their aid, i.e. the situation is reversed diametrically to the disadvantage of the one providing help and charity.

5.2.2. The Attitude of the Person Wishing to Receive a Loan Towards the Lender before Receiving the Loan (Sir 29:5ab)

In the subsequent presentation of the problems of loan repayment, Ben Sira describes the attitude of the borrower toward the lender prior to receiving the loan.[97] The author describes this moment by means of the temporal subordinate clause

97 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 238.

ἕως οὗ λάβῃ ("until [the moment] he receives").[98] To achieve this goal, he will kiss the hands of the lender (καταφιλήσει χεῖρας αὐτοῦ). The future tense form καταφιλήσει can be considered καταφιλήσει as progressive or gnomic futurum (cf. δανιεῖ in 29:1aβ). The verb καταφιλέω ("to kiss") in the Greek text of the Bible is for the most part combined with an object, which is another person or persons. In the LXX, it is only in the verse under review that its direct object is a part of the human body instead of another person (cf. Luke 7:38, 45, in which it combines with the accusative of the noun πούς ["leg," "foot"] as a direct object). Kissing hands is an expression of respect and submission to someone – an attitude of servility,[99] but they are not sincere and disinterested. Alexander A. Di Lella refers to this behavior as hypocrisy.[100] The gesture is intended to gain the kindness of the person from whom the loan is expected. In light of 29:1b, it can still be interpreted slightly differently. That is, since a loan is perceived as supporting with one's hand, by kissing the lender's hand, the prospective borrower directs his false respect not toward the person who can support him, but toward that person's hand as an organ that serves as an intermediary in coming to his aid. Kissing the hand thus emphasizes the self-interest of the person in need toward the lender. The gesture is merely to gain their favor to be able to obtain the loan. It does not express true respect and regard for the lender, though.

The second way in which the one seeking to receive a loan behaves toward the one who can give it to them is to lower his voice with regard to his wealth (v. 5b). The noun χρῆμα ("possessions," "riches," "money") occurs thirteen more times in the Greek version of Sirach besides Sir 29:1–7. In addition to 40:26 and 46:19, it is found in texts that speak rather negatively about riches, especially if they belong to evil and unjust people (cf. 5:8; 14:3, 5; 21:8; 31:3; 34:20; 40:13). One should not rely on material goods (5:1). For they contribute to changes in power (10:8). They often alienated their possessor from other people, keeping him isolated from them (37:6). Thus, they pose a kind of threat in one's life. For the person wishing to receive a loan, on the other hand, they have a positive dimension, they can help them out of the difficult situation they have found themselves in. Their reaction to them is to lower their voice (ταπεινώσει φωνήν).

The verb ταπεινόω ("to diminish," "to lower," "to reduce") can express two different – extreme – attitudes one can take. First, it can refer to humbling oneself, i.e. humility (cf. Sir 2:17; 3:18; 4:7; 7:17; 12:11; 18:21; 34:26). Second, it can have the pejorative meaning "to humiliate," "to deprecate" (cf. Sir 6:12; 7:11; 13:8; 33:12;

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98 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 138.

99 "Kisses are generally signs of affection or respect; but the action of kissing someone's hand is probably a gesture that crosses over into submission and servility, perhaps similar to kissing someone's feet" (Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 138). Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179; Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 210; Vigini, *Siracide*, 172; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178.

100 Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370.

40:3). In Sir 29:5b, it takes the first of the meanings indicated above.[101] It expresses a voluntary lowering of one's voice, i.e., speaking quietly, but the sage points out that they do so with regard to – for the sake of riches (ἐπὶ τῶν χρημάτων – literally, "before riches // in regard to riches"). The lowering of the voice before riches is an enigmatic attitude. Based on the borrower's behavior described in 29:5a, which according to B.C. Gregory is complemented by the conduct described in 29:5b,[102] it can be concluded that also the latter attitude of the person in need of support expresses respect towards the person from whom they expect a loan or from whom they seek it.[103] Di Lella believes that the lowering of the voice by the borrower expresses the fact that they are seeking to obtain a sum of money that is small compared to all the wealth of the person lending to them.[104] On the other hand, according to José Vella, this action emphasizes the intensity of the request for a loan,[105] while according to G. Sauer, it highlights the borrower's difficult economic situation.[106] However, it should be noted that the expression of one's own submission does not refer to a person, but is made in relation to that person's wealth – the possessions from which the one requesting the loan can benefit.[107] Again, as in the first stich in v. 5, the borrower adopts a false and self-interested attitude that is oriented not toward the lender as a person, but toward their material possessions.

To sum up the description of the attitude – behavior of the borrower towards the one who can help them with a loan, it should be said that they adopt an attitude of respect and humility towards them.[108] However, they do so in a self-interested, insincere, and false manner in order to gain their favor.[109] They are not expressing sincere and genuine reverence toward them, but rather with regard to what they can gain from them if they receive a loan. Stichs 5ab, therefore, do not reflect the actual attitude of the one in need of help to the one who can give them a loan. This false behavior ends when they achieve their goal, i.e., obtain the loan (v. 5aα).

5.2.3. Reluctance to Repay Debt (Sir 29:5c–6d)

In the central section of the second part of 29:1–7, i.e. vv. 5c–6d, the sage outlined the reluctance of the borrower to return the borrowed goods and the tactics of the debtor who does not intend to return what they have borrowed. They describe

101 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178.

102 Bradley C. Gregory (*Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 138) believes that v. 5b complements – completes the message of v. 5a.

103 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 179.

104 See Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370.

105 See Vella, "Eclesiastico," 111.

106 See Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 210.

107 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 138.

108 Cf. Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 207.

109 "It seems that the adjective 'deceitfully' is better suited to convey the attitude of a canny person, eager to extort as much money as possible from a benefactor" (Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 238).

the manipulation techniques aimed at delaying the return of the debt to the creditor, or retaining all or only some of it.

The first stich of this section (v. 5c) introduces a change of time perspective and refers to the moment when the borrower should return the goods received to their rightful owner. This is indicated by the syntagma ἐν καιρῷ ἀποδόσεως (literally, "at the time of return"). The noun ἀπόδοσις in the Greek translation of the Old Testament occurs only once more in Deut 24:13 in a context very similar to Sir 29:5c. What this text is talking about is the necessity of returning the pledge, in the form of a cloak, before sunset. It is derived from the stem of the verb ἀποδίδωμι ("to give back," "to return") – ἀποδο – to which the suffix – σις has been added to indicate the effective performance of the action.[110] It refers to the obligation to return a loan, which Ben Sira explicitly instructed about in v. 2b ("return to your neighbor at the proper time"). The two words expressing the necessity of returning the debt, both the form of the imperative mode of the aorist (ἀπόδος) and the analyzed noun ἀπόδοσις, point to the accomplishment of the act of giving back the borrowed goods – its effective completion, rather than the process of returning them, i.e., the gradual and partial payment of the financial obligations incurred. In other words, it is a matter of effectively giving back the debt at the proper time established at the time that the loan was granted (v. 5cα; ἐν καιρῷ; cf. the syntagma εἰς τὸν καιρόν in v. 2bβ).

When the borrower should give back the loan, they fail to do so, and instead postpone the moment of repayment (παρελκύσει χρόνον; v. 5cβ). The verb παρέλκω ("to postpone," "to put off," "to delay"[111]) occurs three more times in the Greek version of Sirach outside of the analyzed literary unit. In 4:1b, 3b and 29:8b it expresses holding something back from someone and delaying the performance of an action Characteristic of its use in Sirach is that in all three texts, it occurs in prohibitions expressed with the syntagma μὴ παρελκύσῃς and refers to people in need to whom help should be given. In 29:5c, though, it does not refer to a person lacking something, since they have given a loan, which in turn attests to their wealth. The future tense of the form παρελκύσει in the analyzed stich can be regarded as a *futurum* progressive ("will put off") or gnomic progressive ("puts off"). Its subject is, of course, the borrower (to whom all the personal forms of the verbs in vv. 5–6 refer except for v. 6ab).

The change in time perspective comes together with a metamorphosis in the way the borrower relates to the one who gave them material assistance. At first, feigned respect and humility were shown toward the lender (v. 5ab). At the time when the borrowed goods should be returned, the borrower's attitude changes into that of indifference. The Greek text expresses this course of action with the syntagma

110 See Romizi, *Greco antico*, 176.

111 Cf. Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1335; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, II, 357; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 1591; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 533.

ἀποδώσει λόγους ἀκηδίας (“he will be returning/will return words of indifference”; v. 5d). Instead of returning the borrowed goods, as they were obliged to do (ἀπόδος τῷ πλησίον – “return to your neighbor”; v. 2bα), what they give in return for the favor is indifference, as if the need to return the loan did not concern them – as if it were a thing found (cf. v. 4a). Thus they cause trouble to the one who supported them and came to their aid (cf. v. 4b). By doing so, the borrower shows disrespect and disregard for the lender, an attitude contrary to the latter’s behavior toward the former before giving them the goods they needed. The debtor’s present conduct reveals their falsehood and insincerity towards the one who gave them the loan, supporting them in their economic difficulties.

In addition, the dishonest borrower will blame time for not being able to fulfill the assumed obligations of repaying the loan (τὸν καιρὸν αἰτιάσεται; v. 5e).[112] The words expressing self-justification, with which the unreliable debtor seeks to justify their inability to repay the loan, are unlikely to refer to time as such, i.e., to the passing of time, which the borrower believes has passed too quickly, leaving them unable to accumulate the goods owed in order to give them to the lender. They should probably be referred more to the fixed moment of returning the loan since the noun in the singular accusative καιρόν is preceded by a article (τόν), which makes the syntagma τὸν καιρόν point to a specific moment – time. Blaming time should therefore be interpreted as an accusation saying that the time in which the borrowed goods should be returned was set as too short and therefore the debtor failed to accumulate or prepare what they should return. If the above interpretation is correct, it also proves the borrower’s dishonesty, since the time to return the borrowed goods was certainly set in agreement with the borrower, i.e., they knew it from the time the loan was granted and accepted it as sufficient and appropriate to pay the debt. However, at the time when it should be returned, they claim that the time for repayment of the debt was set as too short, which made them unable to repay the entire amount owed.

At the beginning of v. 6, a change occurs in the description of the borrower’s reluctance to return the loan at a time when it should be returned. The previous stichs (v. 5cde) referred to the debtor’s initial reaction to having to settle the debt. They tried to delay the return of the loan, be indifferent and disregard the lender’s appeals, and make excuses for not yet being able to return the goods lent to them. Verse 6ab describes the behavior of a debtor who was “pushed to the wall” and forced to pay back the debt.[113] Their attempts to avoid returning the goods lent to them did not have the expected result or only served to postpone the obligation to repay. When forced to repay the debt, they continue to avoid the fulfillment of all their obligations, and even if they are able to give the entire amount, they do not do so, returning only

112 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178.
113 Cf. Pérez Rodríguez, “Eclesiástico,” 1206.

half (v. 6a), so as to satisfy the demands of the lender for a while. Based on the presentation of the problems involved in returning the loan given in 29:5c–6d it is difficult to decide whether the borrower had no intention of returning it from the beginning of their efforts, or whether they had intended to return it, but some obstacles made it impossible. According to B.C. Gregory, based on v. 5ab, the latter possibility should be presumed, i.e., that the borrower intended to fulfill their obligation, but obstacles beyond their control made them unable to do so.[114] Hugolin Langkammer, on the other hand, argues that the sage is talking about two different types of debtors, both the one who can return the entire loan and the one who is unable to return even part of it.[115]

The first stich in. 6 contains a conditional sentence of the *eventualis* type, referring to the future. It, therefore, expresses the possibility of the action it refers to. This is emphasized not only by the syntactic construction of the sentence itself but also by the use in the antecedent of the conditional sentence of the verb ἰσχύω ("to be able to," "to have the ability to," as well as "to have physical fortitude," "to be strong") in the coniunctivus of the aorist of the active voice. The debtor, even if able to return the loan in full, will not return the entire loan as agreed upon at the time of its granting but will bring only half of it (τὸ ἥμισυ), and that with great difficulty (possibly "merely" – μόλις). This adverb also occurs in 26:29a, where it is mentioned that a merchant will only with difficulty (μόλις) free themselves from wrongdoing in their trade. A similar effort is taken by the debtor in order to return half of the total amount owed, which underscores how much reluctance they feel about returning the entire loan since they must force themselves to give up even just half of it. At the same time, from the lender's point of view (the lender is the subject of both κομίσεται [in v. 6a] and λογιεῖται [in v. 6b]; the first form is to be considered medium indirectly reflexive, while the second form is to be considered *medium deponens*), the return of even half is seen as something unusual, which has been compared to a thing that is found (εὕρεμα), and thus to something they did not expect and no longer counted on (v. 6b). The repayment of even a part of the debt is treated by the lender as a great surprise and fortune.[116] What should be noted here is the irony with which the sage speaks about returning part of the debt. First, the person in need considered the loan granted to them as a thing that is found (cf. v. 4a), now, in the same way, the lender perceives the return not of the entire debt, but only a part of the goods owed to them.[117] The initial situation has reversed radically, now it is the creditor who is in the role of a petitioner seeking the return of what they first borrowed. The borrower is no longer the one asking for help – now it is the borrower who dictates the conditions for

114 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 139.
115 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 238.
116 Cf. Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 207; Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 180; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178.
117 Cf. Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.

the return of borrowed goods.[118] The first two stichs of v. 6 most vividly emphasize how much difficulty the lenders had to face in recovering the loan they had granted. What was the borrower's obligation becomes an act that is almost extraordinary and out of the ordinary.

The return of borrowed goods is not as obvious and certain as one might expect. It often happened that the lender did not receive the return of even a part of the loan with which they supported the needy person, which is mentioned in the syntagma εἰ δὲ μή ("and if not"). It introduces an adversative clause, which in this case means that the debtor has not returned to the creditor even a part of the money or the things owed to them.[119] The words εἰ δὲ μή should not be linked with the verb form ἀπεστέρησεν, since the indicative mood is generally not linked with the negative participle μή (cf. 5:12b). From a syntactic point of view, the syntagma εἰ δὲ μή can replace ἐὰν δὲ μή,[120] which would make it appropriate to refer it to ἐὰν ἰσχύσῃ from the beginning of v. 6a. Then it would imply that if, on the other hand, the debtor could not give back the borrowed goods, they would deprive the creditor of their property.

If the debtor does not return the borrowed goods to the lender, this act has two consequences. First, the lender is deprived of their property, that is, they are robbed (v. 6cβ). Second, a relationship of enmity arises between the two – one becomes the enemy of the other (v. 6d).

If the borrower does not pay the dues to the lender, the latter will be deprived of their wealth (ἀπεστέρησεν αὐτὸν τῶν χρημάτων αὐτοῦ – "deprived them of their riches"). The verb ἀποστερέω ("to deprive someone of something") occurs three more times in the Greek version of the work of Ben Sira in addition to the analyzed pericope. In the passive voice, it takes on the meaning of "to allow oneself to be robbed." In the Greek translation of Sirach, it always occurs in reference to tangible goods and expresses the wrong attitude that is the cause of evil and sin. One should not deprive a poor person of the necessities of life (cf. 4:1; 34:21). Also, one who deprives another person of sustenance is a murderer (cf. 34:22). Admittedly, 29:6c refers to depriving a fairly wealthy person, not a poor one, of their possessions, since they were able to give a loan, but they lost part of their wealth in their desire to help another. However, this does not change the fact that failure to return a debt is considered a serious offense. The lender, wishing to help a person in need of support, was deprived of part of their wealth. Their good will was exploited by a dishonest borrower who, before obtaining the loan, lowered their voice with regard to the assets of the one from whom they sought the loan (cf. v. 5b), but now does not recognize the need to return

118 "Now that the borrower has control over the money, the tables are turned. No longer is he is the servile petitioner; rather, the lender now is the powerless one and is relieved if he is cheated out of only half his money" (Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 139).

119 Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370; Vigini, *Siracide*, 172.

120 Cf. Blass – Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar*, § 376.

the borrowed goods and keep them for themselves. Of course, the creditor did not pass on all of their property to the needy, but only part of it. The inability to recover the lent goods does not make them poor or in need of help from others, but deprives them of part of their property and contributes to their impoverishment.

The second consequence of not repaying the loan is that the debtor makes an enemy of the one who, in the name of mercy and kindness, came to their aid and lent them what they needed (v. 6d). The verb κτάομαι ("to acquire," "to gain," "to obtain," "to make merit for oneself") used in 29:6d means that the dishonest borrower has gained an enemy with their conduct. It is combined with a double accusative (αὐτὸν ἐχθρόν), in which the pronoun αὐτὸν refers to the creditor. It is the debtor who makes the lender their enemy, not the other way around, as logic might indicate. This is indicated by the fact that it is the borrower, not the lender who is the subject of ἐκτήσατο. The syntagma ἐκτήσατο αὐτὸν ἐχθρὸν δωρεάν, occurring in 29:6d, is also found in exactly the same form in 20:23. This text speaks about how some people promised their friend, under the influence of their shame, something that they failed to carry out and thus made that friend their enemy for no reason, i.e., unnecessarily.[121] Both of these texts, referring to different situations, state that a friend or someone close and kind can become an enemy if one deals with them in a dishonest, perverse, and deceitful manner. The sage emphasizes that in both cases this change occurred without necessity – it was not necessary, that is, it occurred in vain, i.e. without serious reason (δωρεάν). In the case of the borrower, they gained the borrowed goods because they did not give them back and kept them for themselves, but they lost a kind-hearted person who could have come to their aid in the future if they ever needed support again. Through their dishonest behavior, they lost more than they gained.

Verse 29:6d bridges the central section of the second part of Sir 29:1–7, i.e. vv. 5c–6d, with its fourth section, which describes the attitude of the dishonest debtor toward the lender. At the same time, it introduces and explains the attitude of the dishonest debtor toward the creditor.

5.2.4. The Debtor's Attitude Towards the Creditor at the Time of Settling the Obligations Arising from the Loan (Sir 29:6ef)

The next two stichs describe the conduct of a dishonest debtor toward the lender who has granted them a loan that has not been returned. What they do to the lender is the result of the fact that, having failed to return the borrowed goods, they have made the creditor their enemy (v. 6d). The reward for kindness and help is curses and

121 "Whereas the lender should have been repaid his money and appropriate honor for even helping the one in need, he instead receives no money. And to add a touch of humorous irony, Ben Sira remarks in v. 6d, as a bonus, the lender has acquired an enemy *gratis*, or more colloquially, 'at no additional cost' (δωρεάν)" (Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 139–140). Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178.

insults (v. 6e). According to the principles of granting loans, the person who received the loan should return it (cf. v. 2a). The dishonest debtor, on the other hand, instead of giving back the borrowed goods, gives back unkind words expressing not only disrespect (κατάρας – "curses") but also insults (λοιδορίας – "insults") that aim to take away the good name of the one who supported them when they were in need. Instead of being grateful for the lender's graciousness and assistance, the dishonest debtor repays the lender (ἀποδώσει αὐτῷ) with defamation and humiliation. The above attitude of the dishonest debtor is not projected onto the one who gave them the loan, but primarily onto the debtor themselves – it shows what kind of person they really are. It highlights their immorality (defaulting on their obligations and slandering an honest lender)[122] and their violent nature, which is expressed verbally. In addition to the analyzed verse, the noun κατάρα ("curse," "swearing") appears six more times in the Greek version of the work of the sage from Jerusalem. It is certainly a word that has a very strong negative connotation. Mother's curse tears out foundations (cf. 3:9b). To remember an adulterous woman will be a curse (cf. 23:26a). It is also the fate of sinners and their inheritance after death (cf. 41:9[x2]). The life of an ungodly person is a curse, and when they die they pass to perdition (cf. 41:10). Also the life of a poor person is a curse (cf. 38:19b). Thus, in light of the above texts, one can better understand how much harm the dishonest debtor is trying to do to the one who, out of the kindness of their heart, helped them in their troubles and difficulties. They are trying to cast upon the lender the infamy that was the fate of adulterers, sinners, and ungodly people. For fulfilling the Law (cf. v. 1b) and lending to a neighbor in need, the lender faces very serious charges from the one whom they helped.

The second noun that expresses what a perverse debtor repays their benefactor with is the word λοιδορία ("insult," "affront," "slander," "malevolence"). It is a synonym for κατάρα, but seems to have a much greater negative force to do evil to the person against whom it is applied. This is eloquently emphasized in Sir 22:24b, which states that insults precede the shedding of blood, i.e., they lead to killing – murder. In 27:21 an insult is compared to a wound, the former can be forgiven – through reconciliation, while the latter can be bandaged. The first of these texts clearly indicates that an insult leads to physical aggression and often ends in bloodshed. A dishonest debtor attacks their benefactor verbally, their aggression towards them is so great that it can lead to physical violence and even murder. This emphasizes how much hatred the debtor has for the lender and what they are capable of against them.

Such recompense may be encountered by the lender if they try to support a dishonest person in their plight. Another repayment that a lender may receive (ἀποδώσει) from an untrustworthy debtor is defamation (ἀτιμία) instead of glory (ἀντὶ δόξης; v. 6f). The noun ἀτιμία ("disrespect," "dishonor," "disgrace," "humiliation") occurs seven more times in the Greek version of Sirach in addition to 29:6f.

122 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 238.

One can bring dishonor upon themselves by exalting themselves above others (cf. 1:30). It is a constant companion of a liar (cf. 20:26). A lazy person covers themselves with it (cf. 22:1). Also eavesdropping brings defamation upon the person who does it (cf. 21:24). Twice, as in 29:6f, the word appears with the noun δόξα ("glory"). In 3:10b, dishonor is contrasted with glory (a father's dishonor is no glory for his son), while 5:13 says that defamation and glory as extremes (opposites) are in speech or because of speech (ἐν λαλιᾷ). What the lender should receive is not only the return of the goods they have lent but also a good word that gives them glory for their attitude of mercy toward the one in need of help. However, what they receive is defamation and words of dishonor from the untrustworthy debtor, who not only fails to return the borrowed goods but also takes away the good name of the person who came to their aid and gave them support and thus saved them from ruin.[123] Defamation-dishonor aims to take away a person's good name that, according to Ben Sira, was one of the greatest assets a person could possess, since it guaranteed them eternal existence in the memory of future generations – the only form of immortality known to the sage. Thus, a dishonest debtor wants to deprive the creditor not only of their property (they have not given it back – they have robbed them) but also of respect in the eyes of other people. The sage thus emphasized the exceptional perverseness and perfidy and extreme dishonesty of a debtor who behaves in this way. Di Lella argues that the curses and insults mentioned in v. 6e should be linked to the repayment of the loan. For him, the borrower has repaid the debt, but by defaming their benefactor they are responding to that benefactor's kindness.[124]

In the attitude of the borrower towards the one who aided them with a loan, it is necessary to notice a growing resentment, which turns almost into aggression, and a radical change in their attitude towards their benefactor – from humility and respect, it goes to insults and defamation.[125] At first, it was expressed through inventing obstacles and excuses, which subsequently turned into a much sharper form of resentment expressed with insults and almost physical aggression.[126]

5.2.5. Consequences of Dishonesty Regarding Loans (Sir 29:7)

The last verse of the analyzed pericope serves as its summary.[127] In its message, it refers not only directly to the second part of it, i.e. to the difficulties involved in repaying the loan (vv. 5c–6d), but also indirectly to the very commandment to grant it (v. 2a).

The substantivized adjective in the nominative plural of the masculine πολλοί ("many," "numerous") is the subject of all verb forms in v. 7. Together with πολλοί

123 Cf. Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 207; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 179.

124 Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370. See also Pérez Rodríguez, "Eclesiástico," 1206.

125 Cf. Gilbert, "Prêt, aumône et caution," 180.

126 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 139; Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 178–179.

127 Cf. Alonso Schökel, *Proverbios*, 248.

from v. 4a, it forms the framework of the second part of Sir 9:1–7, i.e. vv. 4–7. In 29:7, it refers not to borrowers as in v. 4a, but to people who were asked to lend money but refused. The verb ἀποστρέφω used in a non-transitive form takes on the meaning of "to turn away." It occurs twelve more times in the Greek version of the work of Ben Sira outside 29:7a. Only in two texts its subject is God (cf. 17:1; 23:5); in all other texts, the one who turns away is man. Man should not turn away from poor people and those asking for help (cf. 4:4, 5; 29:9), nor from words of wisdom (cf. 21:15). Instead, he must turn away from sin and iniquity, and from that which leads to them (cf. 8:5; 9:8; 17:26). Judges did not turn away from the Lord (cf. 46:11). Turning away can also express pride (cf. 14:8) or acquiescence to wickedness (cf. 27:1). According to B.C. Gregory, the phrase "to turn away" is a common term expressing a refusal to support a person in need.[128] Many of those who were asked for help in the form of a loan turned away from those seeking it, despite the fact that it was and is a duty to support them in their difficulties (cf. v. 2a; 29:9 also mentions this). They did not support their neighbor, though, not because of their wickedness and disobedience to the Lord's command (οὐ χάριν πονηρίας) but because of the difficulties involved in repaying a loan by unworthy debtors, as described above. They did not take the risk because they were afraid of being deprived of their wealth for which they had worked hard. Wickedness (πονηρία) is always negatively portrayed and judged by Ben Sira,[129] so he constantly warns against it and tries to protect his disciple from its influence. In 29:7a, it was not the main reason for the decision of numerous people not to lend to the needy. It was not because of it that they refused to give a loan. The actual motive for their conduct was caution and prudence, which is supposed to protect the lender from the dishonesty of debtors who can cause a lot of trouble for creditors and even misappropriate the borrowed goods (v. 7b).[130] The translation of the work of the sage from Jerusalem into Greek expresses this with the verb form εὐλαβέομαι ("to be prudent/cautious," "to be on guard," "to act/proceed cautiously"[131]). In addition to 29:7, it occurs eight more times in the Greek version of Ben Sira's work. It expresses an attitude of caution, which often comes close to that of fear and anxiety motivated by respect (cf. 7:6, 29; 34:14) or apprehension and uncertainty about the future (cf. 22:22; 23:18; 26:5; 41:3). The attitude expressed by the verb in 29:7 is close to that of which the sage speaks in 18:27a: "A wise man in all things/because of all things will be cautious" (ἄνθρωπος σοφὸς ἐν παντὶ εὐλαβηθήσεται). It is in this light that the refusal to grant a loan to a person asking for it in their economic distress should be interpreted. This caution is not unfounded. It is justified by the attitude of dishonest borrowers

128 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 140.

129 Cf. Sir 3:28; 12:10; 19:22; 25:13[x2], 17; 31:24; 35:3; 42:13, 14; 46:7; 47:25 (cf. Hatch – Redpath, *A Concordance*, 1186).

130 Cf. Vella, "Eclesiastico," 111.

131 Cf. Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 720; Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, I, 187; Montanari, *Vocabolario*, 879; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 301.

toward giving back the goods lent to them. It often results in creditors recovering only a portion of what they borrowed, and sometimes the lender is completely deprived of part of their property, not to mention the trouble and difficulty that dishonest debtors cause (delaying the repayment and insulting their benefactors). In view of these common problems and the widespread dishonesty of debtors, one should carefully consider whether or not to give a loan. Ben Sira recommends caution, as it proves the wisdom of the lender.

The sage recommends adopting an attitude of prudence so as not to be deprived of a portion of one's own wealth by lending it to a dishonest person, nor to be deprived of respect and of a good name by that person. This intention is expressed by the Greek text of the work of Ben Sira by means of the subordinate clause of purpose ἀποστερηθῆναι δωρεὰν ("so that one does [not] allow oneself to be robbed without reason"), in which the infinitive of the aorist of the passive voice should be considered *infinitivus finalis*. Sir 29:6c has already spoken of depriving the lender of their goods (using the same verb; cf. v. 6c) if one does not return the things borrowed from them. Robbery, therefore, has serious consequences that can even lead to death if a person deprived of what belonged to them has lost their livelihood. The lender probably has given to the needy person only a part of their property, which is not everything that belongs to the lender but even being deprived of that part can cause serious consequences in their life and bring them trouble. Therefore, a request for a loan should be considered carefully, because if the borrower turns out to be dishonest and does not return it, it can have serious consequences for the life of the lender and their entire family. Such deprivation of the lender of the goods that belonged to them and should be returned to them is described by Ben Sira as an action that is wrongful, i.e. unjust or groundless, i.e. taken without reason (δωρεάν; cf. v. 6d).[132]

The dishonesty of many debtors resulted in the reluctance of many people to take risk and give loans, because they could be robbed if the goods lent were not returned to them,[133] and they also would risk defamation and disrespect. Ben Sira, therefore, encouraged prudence and caution that are typical of wise and rational people, i.e. to think carefully before lending. Although he recalled the obligation to lend and come to the aid of those in need, he points out that one should be cautious and not give loans too hastily. Caution and prudence are the sage's only justification for not providing support in this form to people who are in economic distress. Thus, he defends the right to property and protects possessions from being misappropriated under the guise of a loan or in the process of granting it.

132 Cf. Skehan – Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 370.
133 See Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 207. Cf. Palmisano, *Siracide*, 271.

Conclusions

Ben Sira, in addressing the issue of loans in his reflection, faced a considerable challenge. On the one hand, he had to be faithful to the precepts of the Law, which imposed an obligation to come to the aid of a person in economic difficulty (v. 2a), especially if that person was a Jew. On the other hand, everyday life showed vividly how great a risk is taken by the lender – very often they received back only some part of the loan or were deprived of what they had lent, despite the commandment that any borrowed goods should be returned (v. 2b). However, the sage is not a naive man who is detached from the surrounding reality, and he recognizes the problems and difficulties associated with returning borrowed goods by dishonest debtors.[134] In the second part of the pericope, he describes them in some detail, thus providing a sad picture of his times.[135] He discusses them in sufficient detail to warn his disciple of the many dangers that are associated with recovering a loan. Caution and prudence are among the most important qualities a wise man should have, which is why he encourages the student of wisdom to exercise discernment and not make overly hasty decisions about lending goods to another person. This attitude is perfectly synthesized in Sir 29:20: "Help your neighbor according to your ability, and be careful of yourself, lest you fall." Daniel J. Harrington notes that the sage's teaching on loans calls for generosity and magnanimity, but on the other hand is marked by realism and practicality.[136] The potential lender must take into account the possibility of losing the goods that they are lending, which is why they should think carefully about whether, in wanting to help their neighbor, they can be robbed by that neighbor and whether this could lead to their own economic trouble. Burkard M. Zapff believes that Ben Sira approaches the granting of a loan primarily from the point of view of a wealthy man who may be robbed by a dishonest debtor.[137] Maurice Gilbert, on the other hand, points out that the pericope about the loan was intended, like the entire work of the sage from Jerusalem, to properly educate his disciples also with regard to lending goods to the needy and returning them if they themselves were asked to grant a loan or had to ask for help.[138]

Even though Ben Sira does not say it explicitly, it seems that despite that the Law mandated that one should give loans, the sage admitted the possibility of refusing to do so if prudence and caution suggested that there was a high probability that the one

134 Cf. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 140, 150; Palmisano, *Siracide*, 270.

135 Cf. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 210.

136 Cf. Harrington, *Jesus Ben Sira of Jerusalem*, 97.

137 Cf. Zapff, *Jesus Sirach 25–51*, 179.

138 Cf. Gilbert, *Les cinq livres des Sages*, 207. "He expects that his students will be involved in financial dealings and seeks to provide them with wise guidance in keeping with their religious ideals" (Harrington, *Jesus Ben Sira of Jerusalem*, 97).

who asks for support would not return to the owner the goods borrowed from them.[139] This probability, however, does not change the fact that one should support those in need, especially if they are persons related in some way (e.g., by ties of kinship or belonging to the Jewish people) to the one who can provide the loan.[140]

The strong focus on and emphasis of the Torah's laws on the necessity of granting loans (cf. vv. 1–2a), despite the possibility and risk of being robbed, had not only a religious motivation – the fulfillment of the precepts of the Law – but also a socio-political one. At the time of Ben Sira, the existence of the chosen people was threatened by very strong Hellenistic influence, primarily in terms of culture and religion, but also in terms of economics. The sage reminded people about the obligation to give loans to those in financial distress in order to save their fellow nationals – brethren from bankruptcy and becoming dependent on (or even servants of) wealthy individuals who were fascinated and influenced by the Greek way of living. Giving loans was meant to save Jews from losing their identity and to unite them even more as a people, or at least to keep individuals from becoming dependent on the Greeks and those influenced by Hellenism (they were generally wealthy people who owned fortunes, and therefore could give loans).

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139 Cf. Langkammer, *Księga Syracha*, 238.

140 "For Ben Sira these harsh social realities do not mitigate the obligation to lend to someone in need, even if an air of caution attends this act of mercy. While the refusal of many to lend to their neighbors is understandable, the Wisdom-Tora ideal of generous mercy to one's neighbors takes precedence" (Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 150).

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Sociocultural Power of Biblical Translation in Early Modern Europe: The Cases of the Ostroh Bible (1581) and the King James Bible (1611)

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Abstract: This paper presents sociocultural profiles of the Ostroh Bible (1581) and the King James Version of the Bible (1611) in terms of their agency, authoritative status and regulative functions. Despite scholarly and popular attention given to both texts, no attempts have been made so far to compare them. This paper intends to break the mold and focuses on the causes and results of the collective agency of the two versions at the textual, paratextual and extratextual levels as well as on the gatekeeping role of these translations and the ways they affected the development of their respective cultures. It is also demonstrated that the OB and the KJV performed the function of "the second originals." Also subject to analysis are the prefaces to the two editions, which disclose information about important translation figures and deal with issues of universal and sacred history.

Keywords: biblical translation, Ostroh Bible, King James Bible, translation research, religious studies, textual, extratextual and paratextual agency

Dedicated to the 440th anniversary of the Ostroh Bible
and the 410th anniversary of the King James Bible

The recent wave of academic interest in the sociocultural plane of translation brings the question of power and agency to the forefront of Translation Studies and opens up new avenues for exploring deceptively exhausted subjects, such as the analysis of authorized or canonized Bible translations.

One may argue that the power-related approach viewing translation as a "[…] cultural political practice, constructing or critiquing ideology-stamped identities for foreign cultures, affirming or transgressing discursive values and institutional limits in the target-language culture"[1] is hardly applicable to the Holy Scripture, which is a unique and true spiritual message. Yet the history of Bible translations demonstrates the inescapable interference of ideological factors. This seems perfectly reasonable, as its sacred status makes the Bible the most influential text in the world culture.

1 Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, 19.

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The sociocultural approach to the study of Bible translations fosters a reconsideration of the ideological role that the basic (most authoritative or even authorized) Bible translations have played in establishing the religious space of a nation and influencing its cultural space.

This paper is an attempt to compare sociocultural profiles of the Ostroh Bible (1581) and the King James Version of the Bible (1611) in terms of their agency, authoritative status and regulative functions.

1. The Ostroh Bible and the King James Bible: Agency and Empowerment Parallels

Two early modern Bibles came out within 30 years at the opposite sides of Europe, and albeit revised, they still have an impact on today's believers. Both publications share immense authority: the OB provided the Textus Receptus for Slavia Orthodoxa (and, in a way, paved the way for vernacular translations); the King James Bible set a standard of high-flown style for the whole Anglophone world. These external factors of authority, patronage and openness do not fully reveal the internal factors underlying the translators' principles of correctness, social axiology and orientation toward reader-friendliness. It is fascinating how the writers conveyed the message of valuable reading by applying a rich systems of topoi or imagery.

Sherry Simon emphasizes that "[…] translations undertaken in times of cultural transition sometimes acquired the status of originals"[2] and, besides the Septuagint and the Vulgate, uses the KJV as an obvious example. Not only did the KJV become the source for subsequent Protestant translations into many languages, but it also triggered the continuous revising process beginning with the Revised Version of the New Testament (1881) and the Old Testament (1885) and the American Standard Version (1901) (which were also revised), up to the most recognized New King James Version of the Bible (1982).

The OB in the Ukrainian religious space also acquired the status of "the second original," the first complete Church Slavonic translation in print and the most authoritative text of the Holy Scripture, which for centuries was used for liturgy and quoted in sermons and theological literature. All subsequent Church Slavonic versions of the Bible produced in Russia (Moscow Bible 1663, Elizabeth Bible 1751) were nothing but Russianized variants of the OB. The most glaringly distinctive example of the colonization policy implemented in the Moscow Bible is the replacement in the preface of the phrase "народ руський / Rus'ian people" with "народ великороссийский / Great Russian people."

2 Simon, "Translators," 160.

These revised editions of the OB made a far-reaching impact on translations of the Holy Scriptures into Ukrainian, such as the Gospels and Psalms translated by Pylyp Morachevskyi in the 1860s.

Even more interesting is the fact that the seminal edition of the Greek Bible *Vetus Testamentum Graecum* in five volumes edited by Robert Holmes and James Parsons (1798–1823) relied on some of the data taken from the OB.[3]

The status of the OB as "the second original" resonated more tangibly in 2006 when Rafayil Turkoniak (Torkoniak) translated it into modern Ukrainian and was awarded the most prestigious Ukrainian state prize for works of culture – the Taras Shevchenko National Prize.

Both the OB and the KJV are indispensable components of the English and Ukrainian cultural spaces, respectively, and sources of the Biblical register manifested in the literature and phraseology. Known as "the noblest monument of the English prose," "the most celebrated book in the English-speaking world,"[4] the KJV, as George Steiner aptly argues, is "the domesticated Bible," "felt not so much as import from abroad as an element of the native past of the English people."[5] "No book has had greater influence on the English language" (Alan G. Thomas), especially on its idiomatic layer, and this aspect is thoroughly analyzed in David Crystal's book *Begat. The King James Bible and the English Language*.[6] The KJV had a huge impact on the English literature. As Northrop Frye aptly demonstrates in his seminal book *The Great Code. The Bible and Literature* (1982), modulations from the KJV constantly resonate in the writings of the 19th century, much like proverbs in literatures of other cultures.[7]

Likewise, the style of *The Kobzar* by Taras Shevchenko, who established the Ukrainian national poetic canon, was greatly influenced by the Elizabeth Bible, which is a revised version of the OB. At the same time, Church Slavonic expressions entered the idiomatic vocabulary of the Ukrainian language, often with ironic connotations (e.g. *ізбієніє младенцев* "massacre of the innocents," *явлення Христа народові* "the appearance of Christ before the people," *притча во язицех* "the byword" etc.).

Nevertheless, the skopos, i.e. the purpose of translation behind the KJV and the OB, was not only a scholarly collaborative effort "to create out of many good Bibles one principal good one." Of course, the agents involved in the projects also had no intention or ability to predict the extent to which they would affect their respective languages and literature. Their activism lay in the theological and political dimensions, which were closely intertwined. The KJV aroused from the attempts to

3 Evseev, "Rukopisnoe predanie slavyanskoy Biblii," 3.
4 Campbell, *Bible*, 1.
5 Steiner, *After Babel*, 365.
6 Crystal, *Begat*.
7 Frye, *The Great Code*.

organize Christianity in the post-Reformation period and became a mighty weapon in the struggle against Roman Catholic domination; identically, the OB aimed at reducing the expansion of Roman Catholicism in its strive to reconvert Orthodox Ukrainians into the Latin Rite.

Yet amidst all the tremendous good they brought, the OB and the KJV at the time of their publication played the role of powerful ideological instruments designed to take under control the religious and cultural spaces of the respective nations.

Gordon Campbell[8] and Roy E. Ciampa[9] view the KJV as a commitment to promote more peaceful coexistence of Anglicans and Puritans, although on royal terms. To this end, the scholars from both camps were summoned to come up with a Bible that would be acceptable to both groups. Nevertheless, in reality only moderate Puritans were involved in the project, as the King firmly rejected Presbyterianism in favor of Episcopal Anglican Church. The KJV was primarily to challenge and suppress the popular Geneva Bible (1560) favored by Puritans for its democratic marginal notes and lexical changes in tune with the idea of "the dominion by grace." Among the rules outlined in the instructions to translators, particularly noteworthy is the demand to use the "Old Ecclesiastical Words" (like "church," "bishop," "priest" and "charity") rather than recently proposed alternatives ("congregation," "elder," "minister" and "love").[10]

The above considerations have triggered somewhat extreme endeavors to shatter the authority of the KJV. Most conspicuous is the viewpoint of Giles Fraser, who dubs the KJV "A Fetish for the Bible" and explains the explosion of its popularity by the ban on publishing the Geneva Bible since 1640s and even by the success of Handel's *Messiah*, whose libretto was a compilation of verses from the 1611 translation.[11] Similarly, the success and positive impact of the Ostroh project is marred by the fact that it irremediably interrupted the process of translating the Bible into Ukrainian. The 16th century partial translations of the Bible into Ukrainian (the most renown is the Peresopnytsia Gospel, 1561) attest to the penetration of the Reformation ideas into Ukraine. For example, Vasyl Tiapynskyi and Valentyn Nehalevskyi, who produced two partial translations of the Gospels, represented Socinianism, the extreme wing of Protestantism and, apart from reinterpreting theological dogmas, ardently championed the right of common people to read the word of God in their native tongue. The authority of the OB deepened the gap between the Church Slavonic language and the vernacular and discontinued any further attempts to produce a Ukrainian version of the Holy Scripture for almost three centuries. It is not surprising that

8 Campbell, *Bible*, 32–34.
9 Ciampa, "Ideological Challenges," 140–141.
10 Campbell, *Bible*, 36.
11 Fraser, "A Fetish for the Bible."

Ivan Franko[12] and Dmytro Chyzhevskyi[13] regarded this "coherently Church Slavonic text without Ukrainian elements" a conservative phenomenon of its time. Maksym Strikha rightly maintains that with time the OB "[...] rather established the idea of Ukrainian and Russian unity, since this very text laid the foundation for the Moscow (1663) and St.-Petersburg (1751) «canonized» editions of the Holy Scripture."[14] It is also possible to draw a parallel between the persistence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate to use Church Slavonic for liturgy and the King James Only movement in some religious societies and communities in the United States of America and Great Britain who believe that KJV is infallible and divinely inspired. Compare: "We believe the King James 'Authorized Version' Bible to be the perfect and infallible word of God. We believe the Bible was inspired in its origination and then divinely preserved throughout its various generations and languages until it reached us in its final form" (online Bible Believers' Church Directory)[15] – "The temple is, in fact, the door to the spiritual Heaven. Therefore, its objects are also detached from the world: icons, thurible, frankincense, candles etc. The same pertains to the Church Slavonic language. It is our verbal "thurible" put into the censer of our hearts when we pray and censer to the Almighty God."[16]

In terms of agency, both projects resulted from collective translation, which is a model established by Septuagint allegedly produced by seventy-two scholars. Sherry Simon identifies three reasons for collective translation of the Bible: 1) to serve as a proof of a direct link between translation and divine presence; 2) to ensure institutional guidance and control over the translation process; 3) to shield the individual translator from oppression and mistreatment via shared responsibility.[17] In this case study, the criteria of objectivity can complement this list.

The KJV project was accomplished by people of different backgrounds – theological (Anglican and Puritan) and educational (priests and lay linguists) – in order to minimize the individual prejudices and preferences of the translators. To this end, six translation panels or companies, two each at Westminster, Oxford and Cambridge, worked on separate parts of the Bible and scrutinized each other's contributions.

The OB was prepared by the committee of the foremost scholars from the Ostroh Academy, such as Herasym Smotrytskyi, Dionysius Rallis-Palaeologus, Yevstaphiy Nafanayil, and printed by Ivan Fedorovych.

The power relationship between the royal patrons of the projects and their translators is represented in the translators' prefaces, which, according to André Lefevere, "[…] invariably follow a precise schema that emphasizes the central position of

12 Franko, "Suchasni doslidy," 405.
13 Chyzhevskyi, *Istoriya ukrayinskoyi literatury*, 229.
14 Strikha, M., *Ukrayinskyi pereklad*, 39.
15 Campbell, *Bible*, 265.
16 Chyzhenko, "Chomu tserkva."
17 Simon, "Translators," 163.

the initiator of the translation."[18] Yet in this case study, the pivotal role of the patrons of the KJV and the OB, King James I and Prince Kostiantyn of Ostroh, is not a mere sign of reverence and veneration. Both projects grew out of plans put forward by these royal and learned men who summoned the foremost scholars and linguists of their time to work on the translation. At the same time, the patrons had a hold on the paratextual agency, which according to Kaisa Koskinen[19] and Outi Paloposki[20] consisted of inserting and adding notes and prefaces, and extratextual agency consisting of selecting books to be translated, as well as the use of different editions and intermediary translation.

King James' paratextual agency is manifested in one of the fifteen rules set out to be observed by the translators, namely to avoid notes on the margins: "No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text."[21] This requirement can be explained by the King's dislike of the popular Geneva Bible (1560) or rather "[…] of the politics preached in the margins of the Geneva Bible,"[22] such as the anti-monarchical note in Exod 1:19 allowing disobedience to Kings.

Prince Kostiantyn's paratextual agency is even more tangible as he authored the first preface to the translation done under his aegis.

The extratextual dimension of both projects lies in their relay nature, namely the use of intermediary sources rather than new translations from Old Hebrew and Greek. The King James Bible translators were supposed to rely heavily on the Bishops' Bible (1568). The requirement was set out as the first rule in the instruction for the translators: "The ordinary Bible read in the church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit."[23] Yet the intermediary source itself was just a revision of the Great Bible and the Geneva Bible, which in turn were revisions of their predecessors – William Tyndale, Miles Coverdale and Thomas Matthew's Bibles. As many of the King James Bible translators were well-versed in Hebrew and Greek, they also consulted the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint.

The derivative character of the translation is openly acknowledged in the preface, "The Translators to the Reader," which was regrettably removed from the King James Bible by the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society in 1804: "Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that

18 Lefevere, "Translators," 136.
19 Koskinen, *Beyond Ambivalence*, 99.
20 Paloposki, "Limits of Freedom," 191.
21 Campbell, *Bible*, 36.
22 Metzger, *The Bible in Translation,* 71.
23 Campbell, *Bible*, 35.

we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, ... but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one."[24]

It is widely held that the OB is for the most part a revision of the so called Hennadiyevs'ka Bible (1499). This assumption is allegedly based on the evidence Prince Kostiantyn himself provided in his Preface while expressing his gratitude to Prince Ivan Vasilievich of Moscow for the manuscript of the complete Bible. Yet the conclusion seems rather inconsequential, since later in the Preface the author grieves over "the divergences and damaged text" of the Hennadiyevs'ka Bible, which made him collect "a lot of other Bibles, different writings and in different languages" with a view to analyzing and comparing their content.[25] Ivan Ohiyenko, an eminent Bible Studies specialist and a translator of the complete Bible into Ukrainian (1962), also argues that the texts of the OB and the Moscow manuscript differ considerably. His comparative analysis attests to the fact that the translators used other sources, both Church Slavonic, especially Southern Slavonic, and Greek ones.[26] This position is supported by Rafayil Turkoniak, the translator of the OB into Ukrainian: "It (*the OB*) is a critical elaborated translation done independently by the Ostroh scholars where very little remains from the Hennadiyevs'ka Bible."[27] It is likely that the translators of the OB used two editions of the Greek Holy Scriptures - Complutensis and Aldina, as well the Vulgate, Masoretic Hebrew texts and different Slavonic and non-Slavonic translations.[28] Paradoxically, the OB, which was intended to become a stronghold against the pervasive Protestantism, might have been partly based on the Polish translation of the New Testament by Symon Budny, one of the most prominent activists of the Socinian movement.[29]

2. Prefaces as Sources for Research on Translation and Translation History

The then monumental editions had similar structures of prefaces. A preface to or by the Royal Authority signified the eminence of the publication and the sanctioning approval, which was to protect the book and its makers against all adversaries. The two editions were powerful instruments in the fight against Roman Catholic domination. The Church of England evolved in a Protestant church and implemented the Protestant policy of biblical translation into vernacular, while the OB was the fruit of

24 KJV, [6–16].
25 OB, [8].
26 Ohiyenko, "Ostrozka Bibliya."
27 Torkoniak, "Ostrozka Bibliya," 1053–1054.
28 Tsurkan, *Slavyanskiy perevod Biblii,* 213.
29 Frick, *Polish Sacred Philology*, 114.

Orthodox-Protestant cooperation. This is why the patronage of editions like these was so crucial, and it was realized in double prefaces: the first one was composed by the Royal Authority (that of Prince Kostiantyn of Ostroh in the OB) or dedicated to the Royal Authority (in the KJV); the second one was a preface from the translators to the readers where they had an opportunity to dwell upon a wide range of biblical, theological, literary and historical issues.

Meanwhile, practice shows that prefaces are not common in translation editions,[30] although they serve a number of guiding functions, such as explaining the status of a translation in a national polysystem or justifying translation strategies that have been applied in the translation. From the latter perspective, the value of prefaces differs in the two – English and Ukrainian – traditions of translation studies: it is much higher in Ukrainian translation studies, as they help to reconstruct the translation theory of the time, about which we know nothing specific (in the form of books and treatises). However, the translators' need to speak to their readers shows which topics were of top-ranking authority. The terms used to describe the implementation of this most important task are the key to the reconstruction of theoretical views on translation as a system. Indeed, they are highly relevant for translation theory and praxis: "Translators writing prefaces could help build bridges between the theory and practice of translation and develop a more professional meta-language."[31] In certain periods in the history of some national cultures, prefaces serve as full-fledged theoretical papers.

Despite a number of differences, the prefaces share some of the same features: the act of rendering the Truth/Wisdom for a wider readership reflected the key social and religious values for evaluating the texts. As of today, translation prefaces cover the following topics: "1) Difficulties in undertaking the translation, 2) Information on the translator, 3) Information on the source text, 4) Acknowledgements and dedications, 5) The origin of the translation, 6) Clarification of the title, and 7) General approach and specific procedures in translating."[32] Judging by the prefaces in the OB and the KJV, we can easily deduce that the repertoire of translation issues has remained unchanged since the Renaissance. Having taken a look at the 10th-century prologue attributed to St. Constantine the Philosopher, a Byzantine translator, theologian and missionary to the Slavs,[33] it can be concluded that the repertoire grew from pinpointing the main translation and interpretation obstacles to presenting the translation within social, political and cultural contexts covering the issues of sacred history and even state-building.

30 Dimitriu, "Translators' prefaces," 194.
31 Dimitriu, "Translators' Prefaces," 203.
32 Haroon, "The Translator's Preface," 106.
33 Matchauzerova, *Drevnerusskie teorii*, 31–34.

3. Acknowledgement of Translation Nations and Scholars

The role of the prefaces is similar in praising and establishing the authority of the Churches whose efforts contributed to the translations. The Church of England was not so well established 100 years after its inception by Henry VIII. This is why the Bible project was not only to help resolve religious disputes in society, but also to strengthen the Church of England, which through this translation could resist the power of the Roman Catholic church. It also reflected the societal turmoil of other European nations and the issue of translating the Bible into vernacular languages. In Ukraine, the political prestige of the Ukrainians who were Orthodox was under threat. Ukraine was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and its ethnic population was discriminated against after Lithuania converted from Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism. A large-scale publication, such as the printed translation of the whole Bible, raised and strengthened the prestige of the Church of Kyiv, thus uniting Slavia Orthodoxa (especially Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and Wallachia, as well as strengthening ties with Bulgaria, Serbia and Muscovy) and resisting the assimilationist practices of the Polish and Hungarian gentry.

The differences between the two publications demonstrate the dissimilarity of academic development in the two countries that benefitted from the sacral history of biblical translation, as well as Latin scholarship. One obvious difference lies in acknowledging the predecessors: John Trevisa (fl. 1342–1402) is praised, while Francysk Skaryna (1470–1552) is not even mentioned, although his contribution to the praxis of biblical translation was definitely well-known and accepted. The mention of John Travisa in the text of this authority was like a sanction for promoting his theoretical views. The fundamental tenet of Trevisa's views was the possibility of understanding a foreign-language message that emerges through translation: "Sith the time that the great and high tower of Babylon was builded, men have spoken with divers tongues, in such wise that divers men be strange to other and understand not others' speech."[34] Understanding is the key motif of his reflections, and it is similarly reiterated in the OB: "But when you think of the High, understand the Lord's words that He not only commands to read, but also to study; and after studying, to keep."[35] This can be fulfilled only if the foreign text is available in the language spoken by the reader.

In his treatise, Travisa contemplates which genre is better for translation: poetry or prose. His answer favors prose: "In prose, for commonly prose is more clear than rhyme, more easy and more plain to know and understand."[36] Although the Bible is a poetic book as well, the principle of prose translation dominates in biblical

34 Weissbort – Eysteinsson, *Translation*, 47.
35 OB, [7–8].
36 Weissbort – Eysteinsson, *Translation*, 50.

translation. The reason is the same, i.e. the clarity of style and the simplicity of understanding. The value of verbal culture is vital for the OB, as it is reiterated numerously, e.g. in describing Paul the Apostle: "He, wonderfully caught up to the third heaven, is a faith-worthy witness and a great utterer of the divine mysteries; he heard unspoken words, which you can say to a person."[37] The attitude towards the Word is the common ground of Travisa's and OB translators' views that unite the KJV and the OB without any direct and superficial connection. However, it is voiced more clearly in the KJV: "it is necessary to have translations in a readiness. Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most Holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water."[38]

The KJV pays significant attention to the respect towards other nations, and its motivations are as follows: "The Apostle excepteth no tongue; not Hebrewe the ancientest, not Greeke the most copious, not Latine the finest."[39] The leading idea of the OB is the unity of Slavia Orthodoxa that uses the "Slavonic" (actually: Church Slavonic) language in Church. The patron of the OB, Prince Kostiantyn of Ostroh, dedicates this magnificent undertaking: "To you in Christ, – as was prophesied by the Eternal God before all worlds – those ones, chosen among the Rus nation, and all those ones who speak the Slavonic language and who are united in the Orthodoxy of this Church, Christian people of every profession."[40] The Slavonic unity is based on the authority of the Orthodox Church and the Church Slavonic language.

Although the main purpose of printing both the OB and the KJV is the "common good" and salvation,[41] the same idea was voiced by Francysk Skaryna under the influence of the 1506 Czech Bible. His focus on vernacular language was not crystallized by himself nor officially supported, perhaps due to social and political turmoil impacting religious life. Nevertheless, the numerous manuscripts of his translation testify to the widespread approval of his undertaking. Francysk Skaryna managed to publish 20 books from the Old Testament in Church Slavonic along with elements of Bookish Middle Ukrainian as well as Belarusian and Ukrainian vernacular. He tried to make his translation reader-friendly by simplifying or adding annotations to the text.[42] His strategies were to pave the way for new, later biblical translation projects, the essence of which was again summarized – although not in the Ukrainian context, but the universal translation praxis – in the KJV: the translation is "also for the behoof and edifying of the unlearned which hungered and thirsted after Righteousnesse, and had souls to be saved as well as they, they provided Translations into the vulgar

37 OB, [8].
38 KJV, [6].
39 KJV, [6].
40 OB, [3].
41 Cf. OB, [7] and KJV, [4].
42 Shmiher, *Perekladoznavchyi analiz,* 41–42.

for their Countrymen, insomuch that most nations under heaven did shortly after their conversion, hear CHRIST speaking unto them in their mother tongue, not by the voice of their Minister only, but also by the written word translated."[43] The 1561 vernacular translation of the Gospels into Middle Ukrainian (the Peresopnytsia Gospels) sprang from these visions, and the policy of vernacular translation flourished in abundant printed and written Homiliary Gospels, although the official printings were sanctioned some centuries later. In this respect, the KJV shows the importance of the State in biblical translation, although is states how significant the translation of the Bible is for the existence of the State.[44]

4. Universal and Sacred History

Place names help historians track the migration of influences, while they also mark the borders of cultural spaces. The collections of these names clearly delineate two civilizations presented in the OB and the KJV: the former is oriented toward the Orthodox Orient; the latter, toward the wider European Christendom. The knowledge of geography is tightly intertwined with historical references, especially those to the sacred history which was seen as the highest authority in religious disputes. This could certainly also leave some room for the manipulation of historical facts.

The OB was the voice of the nation that was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, suffering from political and religious discrimination and, thus, striving for a powerful Protective Authority. As the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople was itself under the threat of physical liquidation, it could not perform the function of the Protective Authority, although it gave blessings, sanctions, and had enough moral authority to consolidate creative efforts in all Orthodox countries, and not only in them. The preface contains the following geographical references:[45]

- Constantinople (the highest spiritual authority);
- Rus (historical sacrum);
- Lithuania (a political center);
- Muscovy (the most north-eastern Orthodox Country, heir of the cultural and religious legacy of Novgorod);
- Roman lands (the value of all-inclusiveness);
- Candia (Crete);
- Greece (monasteries with recognized spiritual authority);
- Bulgaria (monasteries with recognized spiritual authority);

43 KJV, [8].
44 Cf. KJV, [4].
45 OB, [5].

- Serbia (monasteries with recognized spiritual authority);
- Egypt (the place where the Septuagint was created).

This list marks the boundaries of the alternative Orthodox Christendom as seen by academia in the Volyn city of Ostroh. The idea of common faith helped various nations preserve their religious identity which, at that time, was a fundamental component of their national identity, and sometimes the confessional component even dominated over the ethnic one.

The historical geography of the KJV is much richer,[46] and it can be grouped into several domains:
- ideological space (Christendom as sacrum; Rome as an adversary);
- sacred space (Syria and Israel, as well as Jerusalem, as topoi in sacred history);
- topoi of early biblical missional space (Greece, Egypt, Asia, Africa);
- Christian space (also including Dalmatia [today's Croatia], India, Persia, Ethiopia, Armenia, Scythia and Sauromatia [today's Ukraine], Poland);
- Royal Possessions (Great Britain, France, Ireland).

Religious geography was just formed at the time[47] the two Bibles were printed. Religion was an instrument of power which was to support both British and Orthodox "nations." History, especially sacred history, but also historical geography, was a powerful tool in arguing against Roman Catholicism in an attempt to draw a line between the local "Us" and the foreign "Other."

The historical authority was also exercised by mentioning the names of political figures (David, Constantine, Theodosius, Justinian), biblical scholars (Aquila, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, Augustine, Theodoret) and biblical translators (Jerome, Ulfilas, John Bishop of Sevil, Bede, Efnard, King Alfred, Methodius, Valdo Bishop of Frising, Valdus and some more). The curious connection between the OB and the KJV lies in the reference to the Polish-Language Protestant Brest Bible published at the behest of Mikolaj Radziwill. This 1563 Bible translation project was so well-known in Europe that the English translators mentioned it in their preface. Taking into account the fact that the Orthodox and Protestants cooperated on religious matters, the Brest Bible was among sources that inspired the publication of the OB.

46 KJV, [4, 6, 8–10].
47 Matlovič – Matlovičová, "Geografický determinizmus," 133–134.

Conclusions

The sociocultural profiles of the Ostroh Bible and the King James Bible overlap at a few distinctive points, such as: the role of "the second original" in the popular prototypical perception, liturgy and literary tradition and the subsequent production of translations; collective translation agency to ensure objectivity, shared responsibility and divine inspiration; the absolute paratextual and extratextual agency of the royal patrons, who gathered translators, set out the rules for translation and made themselves visible in the paratexts; the function of the ideological instrument.

The topoi mentioned in the prefaces show how their authors conceptualized themselves. Over the next centuries, the all-inclusiveness hinted at in 1611 resulted in many successful large-scale geopolitical projects, while the conservative and closed Orthodox Orient became partially orthodox in terms of doctrine and tradition, but without the dynamic progress and flexibility with regard to future forms of political life. At the same time, as in any war-like situation, the significance of what is not said but meant stays the same. However, unlike the reader of the time, today's reader cannot decipher the codes and values contained in the prefaces, although the 1611 preface is more explicit, while the 1581 version is addressed more to a narrow circle of theologians. What is impressive is that the idea of the Divine Law as a foundation of an earthly State is more debated in the English preface, while the Ukrainians did not seize this chance to rediscuss – and spiritually restore – the values and grandeur of the State of Kyivan Rus. The difference between the Western Reasonability and the Eastern Abstractness shows the two extreme markers of European cultural space.

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Ecclesio-Mariological Interpretation of Rev 12:1–6 in Early Christian Writings

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Abstract: Early Christian literature contains numerous commentaries on the books of the Holy Scripture, including the Revelation of St. John. Among the many symbols it contains, we can find an intriguing theme related to the sign of a Woman clothed with the sun (cf. Rev 12:1–6). Nowadays, the above-mentioned passage is most often interpreted in the Mariological spirit. An ecclesiological explanation is provided frequently too. It turns out that in the writings of the early Church authors, the reference to the Church was decidedly the dominant one, while the interpretation favoring Mary was almost marginal. A mixed interpretation was formulated too, for example, by Quodvultdeus. It features three images: ecclesial, Christological, and Mariological. This paper will present the statements made by early Christian authors, representing both the Eastern and the Western Church, on the meaning of the sign of the Woman in the Revelation, and on the ways they interpreted it in commentaries on this book of the Bible.

Keywords: Church, Mary, Revelation, Church Fathers, sign, Rev 12:1–6

The Revelation of St. John, which is the final book of the New Testament, is strongly influenced by the Judeo-Christian tradition, which caused it to be held in high esteem among Jewish followers of Christ.[1] However, this cannot be said about the whole of the Christian world, which was sometimes reluctant to recognize it as a canonical book. The little-known Junilius of Africa,[2] author of a short book titled *The Principles of Divine Law* (*Instituta regularia divinae legis*), which has the character of an isagoge, mentions the Revelation of St. John among the prophetic books and states that "doubt is expressed among the peoples of the East about John's Revelation" (*de Iohannis Apocalypsi apud orientales admodum dubitatur*).[3] This statement does not imply that the book is to be excluded from the canon, however, it is not included among the o *perfectam*, books but among the *mediam auctoritatem*[4] books.

The first early Christian author to expressly confirm that St. John was the author of the Revelation was St. Justin (c.a. 165 AD). He wrote: "[…], further, a man among

1 Tobias Nicklas ("The Early Text of Revelation," 225–238) addresses historical issues related to the transmission of the text of the Revelation through various manuscripts.
2 Junilius lived in the 6th century and was a layman initiated into the Scripture and Church literature. During the reign of Emperor Justinian (527–565), he held the responsible function of *quaestor sacri palatii* in Constantinople. For more information about him see Czyżewski, *Księgi Pisma Świętego*, 6–16.
3 Iunilius Africanus, *Instituta* I 4 (PL 68, 18).
4 Cf. Iunilius Africanus, *Instituta* I 7.

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us named John, one of the apostles of Christ, prophesied in a Revelation made to him that they who have believed our Christ will spend a thousand years in Jerusalem, and that afterwards the universal, and, in one word, eternal resurrection of all at once, will take place, and also the judgment."[5]

This is an important testimony to the fact that the Revelation was used by proponents of millenarianism to support the belief in a kingdom of Christ that would last a thousand years between the first and the second resurrection.[6] An opponent of the millenarists, Origen (c.a. 254 AD) also recognized the Book of Revelation. It was reported by Eusebius of Caesarea (339 AD), who quoted an unknown passage from the Commentary on the Gospel of St. John. Mentioning the authorship of the fourth Gospel, Origen was to add about John that "he wrote also the Apocalypse."[7]

The Revelation was certainly highly controversial in the Church of the early centuries, especially in the Eastern circles. Since the end of the second century, there has been no unanimity regarding this book, as was the case with the Epistles to the Hebrews, St. James, the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the Second and Third Epistle of St. John, and the Epistle of Jude. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (386 AD) did not include the Revelation in the New Testament canon. The same was done by St. Gregory of Nazianzus (390 AD), while Amphilochus, bishop of Iconium (after 394 AD) stated in his *Iambs* (lines 316–318) that most rejected it as apocryphal. The Syrian Church did likewise until the 6th century.[8] Until the middle of the 5th century, the Church of Antioch and the Churches of Asia Minor had doubts about recognizing the Revelation as a canonical book. This is why St. John Chrysostom (407 AD), originating from the Antiochian community, did not use it in his works. Meanwhile, Eusebius of Caesarea included a catalog of New Testament books in his *Ecclesiastical History* and wrote "As to the Apocalypse, the opinion of the majority is still to this day divided one way or the other."[9] However, he made a reservation that it "is to be placed, if it really seem proper, the Apocalypse of John"[10] as a widely known book. Yet, this did not prevent him from placing this book among writings that he called "inauthentic," adding for the second time: "the Apocalypse of John, if it seem proper, which some, as I said, reject, but which others class with the accepted books."[11] Information about the doubts that were raised in the Church with regard to that book, was drawn by Eusebius of Caesarea from bishop Dionysius of Alexandria (264 AD).[12]

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5 Iustinus, *Dialogus cum Iudaeo Tryphone* 81, 4 (Williams, 173).
6 Cf. Pietras, "Starożytne spory wokół Apokalipsy," 36.
7 Eusebius Caesariensis, *Historia ecclesiastica* VI, 25, 9 (Lawlor – Oulton, 198).
8 Chorepiscopus Polycarpus translated the New Testament at the request of the Monophysite bishop of Mabbug, Philoxenus (523 AD). The translation contained all books of the New Testament and the Deuterocanonical books, including the Apocalypse.
9 Eusebius Caesariensis, *Historia ecclesiastica* III, 24, 18 (Lawlor – Oulton, 86).
10 Eusebius Caesariensis, *Historia ecclesiastica* III, 25, 2 (Lawlor – Oulton, 86).
11 Eusebius Caesariensis, *Historia ecclesiastica* III, 25, 4 (Lawlor – Oulton, 87).
12 Cf. Eusebius Caesariensis, *Historia ecclesiastica* VII, 25.

The canonicity of the Revelation was commented on by St. Jerome (419 AD). In his view, while the Latin part of the Church hesitated to recognize the Letter to the Hebrews, the Greek part had problems recognizing the Revelation.[13] The Alexandrians were an exception in the Eastern Church, as they did not deny its belonging to the New Testament. Certainly, the reason for the divergence between the Church of Alexandria and the Church of Antioch with regard to the Revelation was biblical exegesis. The Alexandrians looked at it from the allegorical point of view (Origen, St. Athanasius, Didymus of Alexandria, St. Cyril of Alexandria). The above-mentioned Dionysius of Alexandria, who expressed some doubts with regard to the authorship of the book, was an exception. Meanwhile, the circles associated with the school of Antioch (especially Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, St. John Chrysostom, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus) were attached to the adherence to the literal meaning of the Biblical Scriptures and failed to explain the end times described in the Revelation. For this reason, between the 4th and 6th centuries, some members of the Eastern Church rejected the book, others approached it with reserve, while still others were timidly silent about its existence, as was the case with the Cappadocian Fathers.[14]

Despite some difficulties with the reception of the Revelation, we can find commentaries on this book of the Bible in early Christian literature and references to it in other writings of the Church Fathers. It is fair to say, however, that commentaries on the Revelation as such were rare in antiquity.[15]

Church writers of the patristic era provided an interesting interpretation of the perhaps most popular passage referring to the sign of the Woman and the Dragon. The text in question is Rev 12:1–6

> And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another

13 Cf. Hieronymus Stridonensis, *Epistula* 129, 3.

14 For a broader discussion of different positions concerning the Revelation, cf. Pietras, "Starożytne spory wokół Apokalipsy," 36–41. In the comprehensive monograph (*The Johannine Corpus*), Charles E. Hill examined many sources, including patristic ones, dating especially from the 2nd century, and demonstrated that the Church of that time was relatively quick to adopt the Gospel of St. John, which was denied in numerous studies. They pointed out that it was used, above all, by heretical Christian groups, especially the Gnostics. Hill considered this view to be an "orthodox paradigm of Johnophobia" (*ibidem*, 11) and decided to refute it (*ibidem*, 11–72). In his opinion, the orthodox Christians of the 2nd century included the Gospel of St John in the canon with the other Gospels. This was the case in the Churches of Syria, Asia, Rome, and Gaul. The important thing for our subject is that although Hill focuses primarily on the Gospel of John, he also mentions his three letters and the Revelation which, in his opinion, were approached holistically and regarded as canonical (*ibidem*, 447–463). A similar thesis was developed by T. Scott Manor. In his text *Epiphanius'* Alogi *and the Johannine Controversy* he maintained that the Church has once tried to dismiss St. John's Gospel and the Revelation as heretical forgeries. Based on the examined early Christian testimonies, he arrived at similar conclusions to those reached by Hill; namely, that the Revelation, at least in some circles, was regarded as a canonical book, as were St. John's Gospel and his three letters.

15 Cf. Kimsza, "Cezarego z Arles," 48.

> wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.[16]

Contemporary exegetes interpret the sign of the Woman in the Mariological or ecclesiological vein.[17] Choosing a Mariological explanation, they point to the Johannine tradition, where Mary is referred to with the word Woman (cf. wedding at Cana in Galilee, John 2:4; last will at the cross, John 19:26).[18] There is also an ecclesial vein, where the sign of the Woman is interpreted collectively and applied to the Church. The Woman who escapes from the Dragon to the desert is not an individual but a symbol of the Church in collective terms. On the one hand, she resembles the Israelites who escaped to the desert when chased by the Pharaoh and his troops; on the other hand, she stands for the Church; the offspring of the Woman, persecuted by Satan.[19]

This gives rise to the question of the patristic interpretation of this apocalyptic passage. Did early Christian writers also recognize this double (Mariological and ecclesial) interpretation? Which one is dominant in their commentaries? How do they justify their choices?

1. Ecclesiological Interpretation of Rev 12:1–6

The earliest writer to refer to the Woman clothed with the sun from the Revelation of St. John is Hippolytus of Rome (3rd century AD).[20] It should be noted at once that his

16 NKJV, version 2021.

17 Ludwik Stefaniak ("Mulier amicta sole," 262–283), writing from the biblical point of view, is trying to answer the question of who or what is personified by the Woman clothed with the sun in the Revelation of St. John. For a more recent study of this theme, though in a similar vein, cf. Bednarz, "Niewiasta obleczona w Słońce," 23–42. The reading of the apocalyptic sign of the dragon from the biblical point of view was undertaken by Marek Karczewski in "Dynamika symbolu," 203–223.

18 Cf. Podeszwa, *Paschalna pamięć o Jezusie*, 311–312.

19 Cf. Bednarz, "Niewiasta obleczona w Słońce," 41. The Mariological and ecclesiological reading of Rev 12:1–6 by contemporary exegetes is also mentioned by Augustyn Jankowski in *Apokalipsa św. Jana*, 205.

20 St. Jerome, listing the works by Hippolytus in *De viris illustribus* (61), mentions, among others, the title *De Apocalypsi*. Therefore, on this basis, he was for a long time believed to be the author of such a text. Contemporary research points to a different, more plausible idea, namely, that Hippolytus wrote an apologetic work that was probably titled *In Defense of the Gospel of St. John and the Revelation* (the same title was placed on the pedestal of the "Statue of Hippolytus"). However, we are unable to fully confirm

work is not a commentary but rather a defense of the above-mentioned book against accusations formulated by a certain Caius, who doubted its canonicity and denied St. John's authorship.[21] In the work, which is titled *Heads against Caius* we read that the Woman mentioned in Rev 12:1 is "the figure of the Church."[22]

An interpretation of the passage that is of interest to us is to be found in the text by Hippolytus titled *On Christ and Antichrist*. Explaining individual verses of Rev 12:1–6, the author writes: "*By the woman then clothed with the sun*, he meant most manifestly the Church, endued with the Father's word, whose brightness is above the sun. And by the *moon under her feet* he referred to her being adorned, like the moon, with heavenly glory. And the words, *upon her head a crown of twelve stars*, refer to the twelve apostles by whom the Church was founded."[23]

It is clear from the above statement that Hippolytus, while speaking of the Church, associates it with the person of Christ and the Disciples. The Christological character of ecclesiology can be seen in still further explanations provided by Hippolytus. When he refers to the words of the Revelation that the Woman *was pregnant and crying out in the pain and agony of giving birth* (Rev 12:2), he states that they mean the Church "will not cease to bear from her heart the Word that is persecuted by the unbelieving in the world."[24] The theme of the Church giving birth to Christ recurs in yet another passage where Hippolytus interprets the meaning of the verse: "She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations" (Rev 12:5). He says that the above is "always bringing forth Christ, the perfect man-child of God, who is declared to be God and man, becomes the instructor of all the nations."[25] Yet, Hippolytus does not end his discourse on the Church giving birth to Christ here. The Christological-ecclesial aspect also appears in the author's explanation of the sentence: "her child was caught up to God and to His throne" (Rev 12:5). It means "that he who is always born of her is a heavenly king, and not an earthly."[26]

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the originality of this title, especially as there is another name for this text, namely *Heads against Caius*. This may not necessarily be the original title; it may constitute a part of the whole treatise in which Hippolytus defends the Revelation and the Gospel of St. John against the accusations formulated by Caius. Meanwhile, Jerome provided an abbreviated title of the work in question. Research on the topic was conducted by: Prigent, "Hippolyte, commentateur de l'Apocalypse," 391–412; Prigent – Stehly, "Les fragments," 313–333; Camplani – Prinzivali, "Sul significato dei nuovi frammenti," 49–82; Cerrato, *Hippolytus Between East and West*; Naumowicz, "Pierwsze interpretacje Apokalipsy," 30–35.

21 Eusebius of Caesarea calls Caius an ecclesiastic who lived under Pope Zephyrinus (cf. *Historia ecclesiastica* II, 25,6) and attributes to him the authorship of a work titled *Dissertation*, in which he argued that a certain Cerinthus, founder of a new heresy, was to write the Revelation modeled on the epiphanies of the great disciple (cf. *Historia ecclesiastica* III, 28,1–2).

22 Hippolytus Romanus, "Fragmente," passage 8 to Rev 12:1 (GCS 1, 232).

23 Hippolytus Romanus, *De Christo et Antichristo* 61 (ANF 5, 534).

24 Hippolytus Romanus, *De Christo et Antichristo* 61 (ANF 5, 534).

25 Hippolytus Romanus, *De Christo et Antichristo* 61 (ANF 5, 534).

26 Hippolytus Romanus, *De Christo et Antichristo* 61 (ANF 5, 534).

Thus, in Hippolytus, we only find an ecclesiological explanation of the passage of the Revelation of St. John that is of interest to us, with no reference to Mary. We can also find Christological allusions in his work, however, he always associates the person of Christ with the Church. Giving birth to Christ by the Church, mentioned three times by Hippolytus, occurs by means of proclaiming the word of God.

Meanwhile, Victorinus of Pettau (Poetovium) (304 AD),[27] who is regarded as the first Latin exegete,[28] is the author of the oldest preserved (though not in its entirety) commentary on the Revelation.[29] Analyzing the passage referring to the Woman clothed with the sun, Victorinus writes that "is the ancient Church of fathers, and prophets, and saints, and apostles, which had the groans and torments of its longing until it saw that Christ, the fruit of its people according to the flesh long promised to it, had taken flesh out of the selfsame people."[30]

Victorinus also sees the image of the Church in the two wings of the eagle, mentioned in later verses, when the apocalyptic Woman is recalled (cf. Rev 12:14). At first, he refers them to the prophet Elijah and to the one who will be a prophet with him, while they represent "that Catholic Church (*ecclesiam omnem catholicam*), whence in the last times a hundred and forty-four thousands of men should believe on the preaching of Elias."[31] Similarly to Hippolytus of Rome, Victorinus makes no Mariological allusions in the description of the Woman clothed with the sun. The Woman personifies the ancient Church on the one hand and the unity of patriarchs and prophets with the Disciples on the other. Victorinus also uses the juxtaposition of Old and New Testament figures while interpreting the moon under the Woman's feet. He says that it symbolizes the bodies of Old and New Testament saints.[32]

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27 The name of the city, which is situated in north-eastern Slovenia, where Victorinus was bishop, has many versions, i.a. Petovium, Petavium, Poetovio. Today, it is called Ptuj. For more on this topic, cf. Šalamun, "Ptuj. Krajepisno-zgodovinska črtica," 308.

28 Cf. Altaner – Stuiber, *Patrologie*, 269; Quasten, *Initiation aux Pères de l'Église*, II, 487. A general account of some of the Latin commentaries on the Revelation is provided by Roger Gryson in "Les commentaires patristiques (à suivre)," 305–337 and "Les commentaires patristiques (suite et fin)," 484–502.

29 Until 1916, the commentary on the Revelation by Victorinus (discovered in the Codex Ottobonian latinus 3288A) was known only in St. Jerome's version (review of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* by Victorinus of Pettau), who cleared it of millenarian accents and redrafted it (cf. Quasten, *Initiation aux Pères de l'Église*, II, 488). More on this subject was written by Martine Dulaey in "Jérôme « éditeur »," 199–236. In the introduction to his review, Jerome writes that he would like to remove *quod in eorum commentariis de mille anni regnorum repperi* (Prologus) from the commentary by Victorinus. Jerome did not make any amendments with regard to the interpretation of Rev 12:1–6, which is of interest to us. This means that he interprets this biblical text in the same way Victorinus does; namely, in the ecclesiological vein: cf. Hieronymus Stridonensis, *Recensio ad Commentarium in Apocalypsim Victorini Petovionensis* XII, 1 and XII, 4.

30 Victorinus ep. Poetoviensis, *Commentarii in Apocalypsim Ioannis* XII, 1 (ANF 7, 806).

31 Victorinus ep. Poetoviensis, *Commentarii in Apocalypsim Ioannis* XII, 6 (ANF 7, 807).

32 Cf. Paczkowski, "Alcuni aspetti teologici," 202.

The theme of the apocalyptic sign of the Woman is also developed by Methodius of Olympus (312 AD) in the work titled *Symposium*, modeled on Plato's text bearing the same title. The above-mentioned author writes that

> The Woman who appeared in heaven clothed with the sun and crowned with twelve stars and with the moon as her footstool, travailing in birth and in pain to be delivered, this, my dear virgins is properly and in the exact sense of the term our Mother, a power in herself distinct from her children, whom the prophets have, according to the aspect of their message, sometimes called Jerusalem, sometimes the Bride, sometimes Mount Sion, and sometimes the Temple and God's Tabernacle.[33]

Although Methodius does not identify the Woman with the Church directly in the text, as she is referred to with the word "power" (δύναμις), she is defined in typically ecclesial terms. She is called Jerusalem, the Bride, Mount Sion, Temple, and God's Tabernacle. All doubts are completely dispelled when Methodius, having quoted a passage from the prophet Isaiah on the future glory of Jerusalem (cf. Isa 60:1–4) further states that the power in question is the Church adorned with the glory of heaven, shining "in pure and wholly unsullied and abiding beauty, emulating the brilliance of the lights."[34]

It is also worth noting that the author of the *Symposium* calls the Church "our Mother" (μήτηρ ἡμῶν) and "Virgin" (παρθένος). Methodius explains why the Church should be called a Mother. Explaining the meaning of the moon under the Woman's feet, he states that it is a metaphor for the faith of the baptized people. According to Methodius, the Church gives birth to new followers of Christ through baptism and shapes them into the image and likeness of Christ. This act of giving birth is similar to a woman giving birth; it involves pain, and through it, the Church is "bringing forth natural men as spiritual men, and under this aspect is she indeed their mother."[35] Further, the author explains that the son of the Woman in Revelation is not Jesus but the faithful and the baptized. Because of them it is "the Church that is in labor, and it is those who are washed in baptism who are brought forth."[36] According to Methodius, Jesus cannot be the son because "the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word was fulfilled long before the Apocalypse, whereas John's prophetic message has to do with the present and the future."[37]

In Methodius, as in earlier authors commenting on the sign of the Woman (Rev 12:1–6), we encounter a clear ecclesiological theme. However, no references to

33 Methodius Olympius, *Convivium decem virginum* VIII, V (Musurillo, 110).
34 Methodius Olympius, *Convivium decem virginum* VIII, V (Musurillo, 111).
35 Methodius Olympius, *Convivium decem virginum* VIII, VI (Musurillo, 111).
36 Methodius Olympius, *Convivium decem virginum* VIII, VII (Musurillo, 112).
37 Methodius Olympius, *Convivium decem virginum* VIII, VII (Musurillo, 112).

Mary are made. The development of the exegesis to include the aspect of baptism, which appears in the explanation of the title Church-Mother, is a kind of novelty.

A *Commentary on the Apocalypse* was also written by Tyconius of Africa (390 AD).[38] The author was a well-known figure in the Christian world, as evidenced by numerous statements about him made by St. Augustine. On the one hand, the bishop of Hippo cautioned against reading his works without due caution, as these things "he has said as a Donatist heretic";[39] on the other hand, however, he cited his works and emphasized his intellectual qualities, yet always with the reservation that "he was a Donatist."[40] Returning to the commentary by Tyconius, it should be noted that it is highly allegorical. In the proposed explanations of Rev 12:1–6, in addition to Christological content, one can find ecclesiological themes with a spiritual and eschatological interpretation.[41]

The interpretation of the Woman of Rev 12:1–6 by Tyconius is quite complex, however, it is kept in the ecclesial perspective.[42] In his opinion, the apocalyptic Woman "signified the church, which, as the Apostle Paul testifies, puts on Christ, *the sun of justice* (Mal 4.2)."[43] The moon "however, which is described in this passage as having been placed under the feet of the woman, is designated as the church of the heretics, which *the sun of justice*, Christ, does not allow to shine with his presence."[44] Yet, this is not the only explanation of the symbolism of the moon, as the author of the commentary believes that "since everything which is set down about the church in the Scriptures can be interpreted in a double way, we can also interpret and compare the moon to the good part of the church."[45] The stars placed above the head of the apocalyptic Woman are also associated with the Church: "He designated the stars as the twelve apostles, whom Christ set over the twelve tribes of Israel as a crown on the head of his church and adorned with spiritual gems."[46] Tyconius refers the fiery dragon, signifying the devil, with seven heads and diadems, and ten horns, to kings and their kingdoms "who will blow against the entire church in the end."[47] We can find a Christological-ecclesial explanation in the work of Tyconius as well. Twice he

38 Tyconius is also known for his important piece of work on the Holy Scripture, which was very popular even in the Middle Ages, titled *Liber regularum*, in which he discusses hermeneutic and theological questions in the Bible. For more see Czyżewski, "Ocena *Liber regularum*," 235–247. For ecclesiological references in the commentary by Tyconius see: Adamiak, "Eklezjologiczny charakter," 151–162. On the reception of the Commentary by Tyconius and its influence on other authors cf. Steinhauser, *The Apocalypse Commentary of Tyconius*.

39 Augustinus, *De doctrina christiana* III 30,43 (Shaw, 568).

40 Augustinus, *Contra epistulam Parmeniani libri tres* I, 1 (PL 43, 33).

41 Cf. Lempa, "Apokalipsa św. Jana," 37.

42 Cf. Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation*, 308.

43 Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* §444 (Lo Bue, 178).

44 Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* §445 (Lo Bue, 178).

45 Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* §446 (Lo Bue, 179).

46 Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* §449 (Lo Bue, 179).

47 Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* §457 (Lo Bue, 182).

mentions the Church that "always gives birth to Christ by means of suffering,"[48] foretelling the future of the Church; namely, the persecution of Christ and His followers.

St. Caesarius of Arles (542 AD) also made an attempt at the interpretation of the Revelation. His *Exposition of the Apocalypse* is likely just material collected for the study of this book of the Bible. Some hold the opinion that it contains homilies or homiletic commentaries on the Revelation.[49] Irrespective of that, it is worth looking at those passages of his work in which he explains the meaning of Rev 12:1–6. At the very beginning, we must emphasize that the interpretation of the passage that is of interest to us, proposed in the statements made by Tyconius that we analyzed earlier, is similar to that found in St. Caesarius of Arles. He too makes a very strong association between Christ and the Church.[50]

Caesarius assigns a separate meaning to nearly every passage in the text that is of interest to us. The Woman clothed with the sun (cf. Rev 12:1), according to his interpretation, represents the Church. This is nothing new, as we have already learned that the oldest traditions saw her as a symbol of the Church.[51] However, explanations of the symbolism of the elements accompanying the apocalyptic Woman offered by Caesarius are unique. He interprets the brightness of the Sun with which she is clothed as the hope of the resurrection. The bishop of Arles justifies it with the words in Matthew's Gospel about the righteous who will shine like the sun (cf. Matt 13:43).[52] The moon under the feet of the Woman (cf. Rev 12:1), who signifies the Church, represents false people and bad Christians. They are under the feet of the Church, which means that it has power over them.[53] Finally, the twelve stars represent the twelve Disciples.[54] Caesarius also relates the sign of the great red dragon to the Church (cf. Rev 12:3). It symbolizes the devil trying to "kill the offspring of the Church."[55] Commenting on the words in the Revelation referring to the Dragon's tail, sweeping down a third of the stars of heaven (cf. Rev 12:4), he says that it symbolizes the heretics who persecute the Church. "Through their second baptism" they "cast down the stars from heaven to the earth of their followers."[56] Therefore, the Church, which constantly gives birth to new believers through baptism, should be careful not to

48 Tyconius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* §463 (Lo Bue, 184).

49 Cf. Morin, "Les commentaire homilétique," 43; Żurek, "Kościół w czasach ostatecznych," 167. Paweł Wygralak ("Pastoralne przesłanie," 715–717) discusses the significance of the work by the bishop of Arles in the history of the exegesis of the Revelation of St. John.

50 Radosław Kimsza ("Cezarego z Arles," 47–59) presents the significance of the symbols decoded by Caesarius in the Revelation of St. John, including that of the Church. In his study, he only included a commentary on the first nine chapters of this book of the Bible.

51 Cf. Piekarz, *Orędzie na nasze czasy*, 56.

52 Cf. Żurek, "Kościół w czasach ostatecznych," 170.

53 Cf. Piekarz, *Orędzie na nasze czasy*, 57.

54 Cf. Caesarius ep. Arelatensis, *Expositio de Apocalypsy* 9 (PL 35, 2434).

55 Caesarius ep. Arelatensis, *Expositio de Apocalypsy* 9 (PL 35, 2434).

56 Caesarius ep. Arelatensis, *Expositio de Apocalypsy* 9 (PL 35, 2434).

lose them to heresy.[57] This mode of interpretation can also be seen in contemporary exegetes who identify the apocalyptic Dragon with Satan who is trying to eliminate Christ's presence from the sphere of his activity.[58] Caesarius does not hesitate to link the child born from the apocalyptic Woman (cf. Rev 12:5) with the Person of Christ and with the Church. For the Church is the body of Christ and consequently, as he mentioned earlier, it continually gives birth to new believers through baptism.[59] The Christological-ecclesial aspect is also to be seen in the interpretation of the verse referring to the Woman who escaped to the desert (cf. Rev 12:6). The desert is the world in which the Church acts thanks to the leadership and care provided by Christ himself. The power and help from Christ make the Church able to "trample and destroy like scorpions and snakes the proud and ungodly people, and every satanic force."[60] Therefore, in St. Caesarius of Arles, as in commentaries on Rev 12:1–6 analyzed earlier, we are dealing with a typical ecclesial interpretation, combined with a Christological one. Yet, there are no Mariological references there.

Sixth-century bishop of Hadrumetum in Africa and author of *Commentary on Revelation* Primasius also follows Tyconius' line. As he admits in the introduction to the text, some of the things he gathered in it were taken over from the Donatist; however, he had previously softened some of his statements and rejected others. Primasius offers an allegorical interpretation not only of the passage that is of interest to us but also of the entire book, which he relates to the Church.[61] Thus, the apocalyptic temple, heavens, and the Woman clothed with the sun represent the Church that has clothed itself with Christ. The moon, according to Primasius, also symbolizes the Church.[62]

References to the commentary by Methodius discussed earlier, were made by Andrew of Caesarea in Cappadocia, who lived at the turn of the 6th and 7th centuries.[63] His *Commentary on the Apocalypse* consists of 24 books, divided into 72 chapters (this is a symbolic number derived from the 24 elders of the Apocalypse, multiplied by 3, as each of them has a body, a soul, and a spirit, the product of which is 72). Like Methodius, he sees the sign of the Woman as the symbol of the Church; the newborn child is not Christ, and therefore the events described in the Revelation refer to the present and the future because Christ was born before the events accounted for by John. Andrew also provides an explanation of the birth pains. In his opinion, they symbolize the hardships borne by the Church in order to enable humanity to be

57 Cf. Caesarius ep. Arelatensis, *Expositio de Apocalypsy* 9 (PL 35, 2434).
58 Cf. Kotecki, *Kościół w świetle Apokalipsy*, 154.
59 Cf. Caesarius ep. Arelatensis, *Expositio in Apocalypsin* 9 (PL 35, 2434).
60 Caesarius ep. Arelatensis, *Expositio in Apocalypsin* 9 (PL 35, 2434).
61 Cf. Wysocki, "Prymazjusz," 994–995.
62 Cf. Primasius ep. Hadrumetanus, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* III, 12 (PL 68, 872).
63 A general overview of the commentary by Andrew of Caesarea was provided by Arkadiusz Jasiewicz in "Interpretacja 'Komentarza do Apokalipsy'," 163–173.

spiritually reborn through baptism.[64] Andrew also mentions the commentary by Ecumenius, however, he does not mention his name at any point; he is rather critical of him and argues with him. He says: "some […] had understood this woman entirely to be Mother of God,"[65] and subsequently reinforces it with an argument from Methodius: "But the great Methodios took her to be the holy Church considering these things concerning her [the woman] to be incongruous with the begetting of the Master for the reason that already the Lord had been born long before."[66] It can therefore be said that Andrew of Caesarea in Cappadocia is involved in a polemic with the Mariological interpretation. He believes that it was a result of a wrong understanding of the virgin birth. The Revelation speaks about present and future events and does not deal with events set in the past.

2. Mariological Interpretation of Rev 12:1–6

In the exegesis of the patristic times the sign of the Woman is sometimes associated with Mary, the Mother of Jesus.[67] Mariological interpretation of Rev 12:1–6 is first found in Greek authors. Epiphanius of Salamis (403 AD) was the first to identify the sign of the Woman with Mary. Discussing eighty heresies in the text titled *Panarion*, he devoted some attention to that issue. A reference to chapter 12 of the Revelation of St. John in the work of Epiphanius is made in connection with his attempt to answer the question about the end of Mary's life. Epiphanius quotes a text from Luke 2:35 and states that some interpret it as a hint suggesting Mary's death. Meanwhile, the bishop of Salamis believes that the author of the Revelation, speaking of the dragon chasing the Woman (cf. 12:13–14) does not suggest that the dragon has power over her; what is more, studying the Holy Scripture, he could "neither find Mary's death, nor whether or not she died, nor whether or not she was buried."[68] Without going into the details of the suggestions made by Epiphanius, we need to conclude that he interprets the figure of the Woman in Revelation in an individual sense and identifies her with Mary. There can be no doubt about it, as he explains the above-mentioned text from Luke referring to the Mother of Jesus (Luke 2:35) on the basis of selected verses of the twelfth chapter of Revelation (12:13–14).[69]

In Greek circles, the Mariological interpretation was developed by Ecumenius, a philosopher and orator who lived in the 6th century. This is the name of the author

64 Jasiewicz, "Interpretacja 'Komentarza do Apokalipsy,'" 170.
65 Andreas Caesariensis, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* XI, 33 (FC 123, 136).
66 Andreas Caesariensis, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* XI, 33 (FC 123, 136–137).
67 Cf. Lewandowska, "Figura Smoka w Ap 12," 38.
68 Epiphanius, *Panarion* 78, 11 (Williams, 624).
69 Cf. Corsato, *Letture patristiche*, 169–171.

of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse*.[70] The image of the above-mentioned Ecumenius that emerges from this piece of work is one of an orthodox author who explains the Revelation in a spiritual manner, finding in it prophecies relating to the past, present, and future.[71] In his commentary one does not find any influence of the Western interpretation of this book of the Bible, which may mean that he was not familiar with it,[72] or that he comments on it using a key that is specific to him and entirely independent. Doubtlessly, Ecumenius identifies the sign of the Woman with Mary. He says that "this is the mother of our Savior, and that the sign in fact presents her in heaven rather than on earth, as she is pure of soul and body, equal to angels and to the citizens of heaven, […] has a body, even though she has nothing in common with the earth, and is free from evil. On the contrary, she is fully exalted, worthy of heaven, even though she has a human nature and human essence. The Virgin is co-substantial with us."[73]

The Son born of Her is Christ, the twelve stars over the Woman's head are the twelve Disciples, and the pain and suffering She feels while giving birth point to Her suffering before Christ was born. Meanwhile, the apocalyptic dragon who wanted to devour the Woman's child is Herod stalking Jesus; therefore, the scene of the Woman's escape to the desert represents Mary's escape to Egypt.[74] This explanation seems logical and consistent with later interpretations. A reservation can only be made with regard to the escape to Egypt, as the Revelation speaks about the Woman's Child being taken to God, while she escapes to the desert. Meanwhile, in the case of Mary, all members of the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph made the escape (cf. Matt 2:13–14).

Quodvultdeus (c.a. 454 AD) was the first early Christian author writing in Latin to identify the Woman clothed with the sun with Mary.[75] In the *Sermon De Symbolo* he wrote "In the Apocalypse of the apostle John it is written that the dragon stood in full view of the woman about to give birth, in order that when she gave birth, he would eat the child born [of her]. Let none of you ignore [the fact] that the dragon is the devil; know that the virgin signifies Mary (*mulierem illam virginem significasse*),

70 For information about Ecumenius and the main stages of research on the discovered manuscripts of his commentary see: Wojciechowski, "Metoda egzegetyczna," 88–90.

71 It can be said of the method of interpreting the Revelation used by Ecumenius that he did not over-allegorize and was rather focused on seeking the symbolic meaning, including allegorical meaning. He did so because he took into account the literary character of that book of the Bible. The exegetic method used by Ecumenius was discussed by Michał Wojciechowski in "Metoda egzegetyczna," 90–91; also cf. Prigent, *Apocalypse 12*, 28–30.

72 Cf. Starowieyski, *Nowy słownik*, 302–303.

73 Oecumenius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 6, 12:1–2 (Groote, 165).

74 Cf. Oecumenius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 6, 12:1–2.

75 Pavol Farkaš (*La "Donna" di Apocalisse 12*, 14) wrote in his monograph that Quodvultdeus was probably the first in the Western circle to interpret Rev 12 in the Mariological spirit. According to statements made by early Christian writers analyzed above, he was the first to apply this kind of exegesis.

the chaste one, who gave birth to our chaste head (*quae caput nostrum integra integrum peperit*)."[76]

This theologically intriguing statement, apart from a Christological and ecclesial theme (which will be addressed in the next point), contains a Mariological theme too. The author points to Mary and says that the apocalyptic Woman represents her. He refers to her using the title Virgin (*virgo*). It must be emphasized that Quodvultdeus, in his teaching on Mary's virginity, adopts the views of his master, St. Augustine. The bishop of Hippo defended this truth many times, especially in his polemics with Jovinian, Helvidius, and the Antidicomarianites.[77] Like St. Augustine, Quodvultdeus calls Mary "Virgin" (*virgo*) even though she gave birth to Christ. He reinforces this term with another one, saying *integra integrum peperit*.

Mention should also be made of Cassiodorus, a Latin writer later than Quodvultdeus (583 AD), who is the author of a short summary of the Book of Revelation (*Complexiones in Apocalypsin*)[78] that contains only thirty-three short chapters. The interpretation of the Woman of Rev 12:1 is Mariological, as it identifies her with the Mother of Christ not with the Church,[79] even though the author cites Tyconius in his explanations.[80]

3. Mixed Interpretation

By now, we have identified two ways of interpreting Rev 12:1–6; namely, ecclesial and Mariological. However, there is a third possibility, mentioned by Quotvultdeus, whom we have cited above. As was mentioned before, it is not only Mary that he sees in the figure of the apocalyptic Woman. He admits that a different interpretation is possible too. In the *Sermon De Symbolo* he writes that "[the woman] also embodied in herself a figure of the holy church (*ipsa figuram in se sanctae Ecclesiae demonstravit*): namely, how, while bearing a son, she remained a virgin (*virgo permansit*), so that the church throughout time bears her members (*membra eius pariat*), yet she does not lose her virginity (*virginitatem non amittat*)."[81]

Thus, Quodvultdeus employs an interpretation that can be called mixed. The apocalyptic Woman is not only Mary but also the Church. Moreover, the Mariological and ecclesial themes are linked to Christ. In the first place, it is worth noting

76 Quodvultdeus, *Sermo ad catechumenos. De Symbolo* III 1,4–6 (Finn, 67).
77 The problems related to St. Augustine's doctrine on Mary's virginity were addressed by M. Gilski in his book on St. Augustine's contextual Mariology (*Mariologia kontekstualna*, especially 99–103).
78 Cf. Kieling, "Księga Apokalipsy," 216.
79 Cf. Cassiodorus, *Complexiones in Apocalypsin* 16 (PL 70, 1411).
80 Cf. Corsato, *Letture patristiche*, 175.
81 Quodvultdeus, *Sermo ad catechumenos. De Symbolo* III 1,4–6 (Finn, 68).

the adjective "holy," which is applied to the Church. Here, as earlier with Christ and Mary, we have the problem of purity understood in terms of holiness: *integra integrum peperit*. Of course, a certain amount of caution must be exercised here, as the holiness of Christ and Mary and the holiness of the Church are not of the same degree, especially when we consider that the Church brings together holy and sinful people alike. Nonetheless, the Church is holy because its Head, Christ, is holy. This means that the holiness of the Church follows from the purity (holiness) of Christ. We also need to consider the continuation of Quodvultdeus' statement, which continues the above-mentioned triple theme, stating that Mary "while bearing a son, she remained a virgin (*virgo permansit*), so that the church throughout time bears her members (*membra eius pariat*), yet she does not lose her virginity (*virginitatem non amittat*)."[82] The author points to Mary as the Mother of God and, at the same time, believes in her virginity *in partu*. In this, he sees a certain analogy to the Church; namely, its giving birth to the followers of Christ through baptism, which does not diminish its significance and holiness in any way. Just as Mary remained a virgin during and after the birth of Christ, we can speak of the virginity, or innocence, and holiness of the Church. However, the virginity of the Church should be viewed in two dimensions; bodily and spiritual. In bodily terms, the Church can be called a virgin only in part, as not all of its members live in chastity. What matters to us here is the spiritual dimension, which indicates that the whole Church is a virgin.[83]

There is one more aspect worth paying attention to. Although Quodvultdeus in his statement does not use the terms *Mater Dei* and *Mater Ecclesiae* with reference to Christ and to the Church, respectively, it can be suspected that this is how he thinks of Mary and the Church. Due to the fact that it gives birth to the followers of Christ, the Church can be seen as representing spiritual motherhood. Quodvultdeus' master, St. Augustine, compared Mary to the Church in an almost identical way. In one of his sermons, he stated that the Church

> is a virgin (*virgo est*) and she also brings forth children. She imitates Mary who gave birth to the Lord. Did not the holy Mary bring forth her Child and remain a virgin? So, too, the Church both brings forth children and is a virgin (*virgo est*). And if you would give some consideration to the matter, she brings forth Christ, because they who are baptized are His members. […] If, therefore, the Church brings forth the members of Christ, she is very like to Mary.[84]

It is worth pausing a bit longer on this statement by St. Augustine which, as was already mentioned, is very similar to a statement written by Quodvultdeus, a spiritual

82 Quodvultdeus, *Sermo ad catechumenos. De Symbolo* III 1,6 (Finn, 68).
83 Cf. Gilski, *Mariologia kontekstualna*, 105–106.
84 Augustinus, *Sermo 213: In traditione symboli* II, 7 (Muldowney, 127).

disciple of the bishop of Hippo. Analyzing this statement will give us a better understanding of Quodvultdeus' thought. In the cited text, St. Augustine, like Quodvultdeus, links the theme of virginity to the motherhood of Mary and the Church. The bishop of Hippo is not alone in linking these aspects. Although Augustine speaks about the imitation of Mary by the Church with reference to virginity and motherhood, he also notices the differences that exist between them. They are identified by Marek Gilski in his monograph, where he considers the text cited above, as well as many other statements made by the bishop of Hippo.[85] It should first be noted that Augustine speaks about the imitation (*imitatur*) of Mary by the Church with regard to virginity and motherhood. Therefore, it is legitimate not to identify the virginity of the Church with Mary's virginity. Using the expression *virgo est* twice with reference to the Church, Augustine refers to its spiritual character, as the Church's virginity in the bodily sense can only be spoken of with respect to a certain group of its members. Meanwhile, in the case of Mary, the bishop of Hippo recognizes her virginity both in the bodily and spiritual sense: "the holy Mary bring forth her Child and remain a virgin." About the Church, we can say that it imitates Mary in the sense that, like she, it is both a mother and a virgin. It is a mother because it gives birth to members of the Body of Christ in the sacrament of baptism. Although Augustine speaks of the similarity between them, he still sees a double difference in the nature of the motherhood of Mary and of the Church. Based on the statement of the bishop of Hippo cited above, and on his other statements, M. Gilski, whom we have already mentioned, explains this difference by pointing out that, according to Augustine, Mary gives birth in the body (*in corpore*), while the Church has been given by Christ in the spirit (*in spiritu*) the thing "that His mother had in the body."[86] There is one more difference, which M. Gilski calls a quantitative difference, pointing out that while Mary gives birth to Christ, the Church gives birth to whole nations. In spite of this difference, we can talk about the similarity between the motherhood of Mary and the Church. Through Christ (one Person) who was born of Mary, all people who were born in the Church were united. On the other hand, however, it should be noted that the similarity mentioned by St. Augustine does not imply that Mary and the Church are similar in their relationship to Christ. The bishop of Hippo calls the Church the Bride of Christ and Christ the Bridegroom of the Church, but when it comes to Mary, he does not attribute to her "any particular bridal relationship with her Son."[87]

Summing up the statement made by Quodvultdeus, we can say without a doubt that it represents an ecclesio-Mariological and, additionally a Christological interpretation of Rev 12:1–6. It certainly relies on Tyconius' exegetic tradition (specifically,

85 Cf. Gilski, *Mariologia kontekstualna*, especially 98–112.
86 Gilski, *Mariologia kontekstualna*, 111.
87 Gilski, *Mariologia kontekstualna*, 111–112.

the fourth of his hermeneutic rules *de genere et specie*)[88] which makes it possible to combine the Mariological and ecclesial traditions. Therefore, he identifies the symbol of the Woman (*species*) with the person of Mary who gives birth to Christ and, at the same time, is a representative and a figure of the Church. Meanwhile, the genus (*genus*): the Church as mother-virgin is represented by Mary who gives birth to the mystical Christ.[89]

Conclusions

The cited statements by early Christian writers, except for Epiphanius, Cassiodorus, Quodvultdeus, and Ecumenius, leave us with no doubts that the apocalyptic Woman was not identified with Mary. It should therefore be concluded with all decisiveness that the Mariological interpretation of Rev 12:1–6 was not frequent in history, and especially in the Church of the first centuries.[90] Except for the above-mentioned writers, the remaining early Christian authors representing both the Eastern and the Western Church, emphasized that the sign of the Woman in the Revelation symbolized the Church. Methodius of Olympus, who recognizes the Church in the sign of the apocalyptic Woman, focuses on two images: that of the Church as Bride of Christ, and of the Church as Virgin-Mother.

Having read the texts on Rev 12:1–6 written by early Christian writers, one can raise a legitimate question about the reason for the dual interpretation of this passage in the Bible. We are dealing with an ecclesiological interpretation initiated by Hippolytus of Rome. In the 4th century, Epiphanius of Salamis provides an explanation in the Mariological key, which associates the sign of the Woman mentioned in Rev 12:1 with Mary. We also need to mention an interpretation combining the ecclesiological and the Mariological exegetic trends (Quodvultdeus). The answer to the question is certainly complex and arises from historical and theological causes.

First of all, it is worth considering the place in the Revelation in which we find the chapter that is of interest to us. In an extensive monograph dedicated to the entire chapter twelve of the Revelation, Sister Barabara Barylak remarks correctly that it is placed in the section referring to three great visions that are directly or indirectly linked to the Church. She refers to the first vision, in which Christ addresses seven Churches with a message (cf. Rev 1:9–3:22). The second vision contains numerous

88 In the work titled *Liber regularum* (PL 18, 33–46), in which Tyconius deals with biblical hermeneutics, the fourth rule is called *De specie et genere*. He explains that he understands species (*species*) as a certain part, while genus (*genus*) is understood as a whole to which the part called species belongs. For more see Czyżewski, "Ocena *Liber regularum*," 235–247.

89 Cf. Prigent, *Apocalypse 12*, 23.

90 Cf. Poniży, "Niewiasta," 357–358.

ecclesial allusions (cf. Rev 4:1–11:19). Finally, the third vision (cf. Rev 12:1–18) accounts for the plight of the persecuted Church, even though it does not contain the word *ecclesia*.[91] This may be the first reason why the ecclesiological interpretation dominates in all the analyzed texts referring to Rev 12:1–6. We should also consider the fact that the first four centuries were marked by persecution of the Church. As the apocalyptic vision mentioned above was identified with the plight of the persecuted Church, this could have influenced the explanation of the sign of the Woman in the ecclesiological key.

Both Epiphanius of Salamis and Andrew of Caesarea noted that a Mariological interpretation was known before Methodius. Does this mean that this view, as John McHugh maintains, was held widely in the 4th century?[92] We certainly should not underestimate two significant events that could have provided a stimulus for interpreting the sign of the Woman in the Mariological key. The first one is linked with St. Jerome, who referred the Hebrew pronoun *hu*, used in Gen 3:15 to the Woman and translated it into the feminine form as *ipsa*: "she shall crush your head" (Vulgate). This led to the application of the same interpretation in the Mariological vein to the woman in Gen 3:15 and in Rev 12:1–6.[93] We should also not forget the other important event in the history of the Church, namely, the Council of Ephesus, held in 431 AD, after which the doctrine of Mary started to flourish.

The two interpretations are not mutually exclusive; to the contrary, they complement one another. The apocalyptic Woman can represent the Church in the earthly and heavenly dimensions, which was strongly emphasized by writers such as Hippolytus of Rome, Victorinus of Pettau, Methodius of Olympus, Tyconius, Caesarius of Arles, Primasius, and Andrew of Caesarea. It can also represent Mary as an image, model, and type of the Church, which was pointed to, above all, by Quodvultdeus. The individual dimension of the apocalyptic sign related to Mary was noticed by Epiphanius of Salamis, Cassiodorus, and Ecumenius. Finally, we need to stress that both the ecclesial and Mariological interpretations of Rev 12:1–6 were sometimes linked to Christ, which gave rise to a mixed picture of ecclesial, Christological, and Mariological nature.

It is appropriate to ask about one more issue related to the interpretation of Rev 12:1–6. Could the above-mentioned differences be due to the translations of the book used by the respective authors? This does not seem possible for at least two fundamental reasons. Firstly, there were not that many ancient translations of the Revelation. The translations we have originate from Africa and from Europe. Moreover, Jerome's Vulgate transmitted the text in a Latin translation. There were also

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91 Cf. Barylak, *Niewiasta z Ap 12*, 25. A solution of this kind is also suggested by Artur Malina in "Zwycięstwo Rodzicielki Życia," 14.

92 Cf. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus*, 513.

93 Cf. Barylak, *Niewiasta z Ap 12*, 123.

two Coptic translations and an insignificant Syrian translation.[94] The second reason for giving a negative answer to the question asked is to be found in the Rev 12:1–6 passage itself. From the philological point of view, it was not so complex that differences in the translations of certain words could influence the ways it was interpreted. We can consider one more important aspect; namely, some commentators make it appear that they were familiar with commentaries on this book of the Bible. None of them has pointed to an improper use or incorrect translation of a word, sentence, or passage by another author, at least as far as Rev 12:1–6 is concerned. If there was any criticism, it referred only to the interpretation of this biblical pericope.

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94 Cf. Jankowski, *Apokalipsa św. Jana*, 108–111.

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Elements of Apophatic Theology in the Writings of Elizabeth of the Trinity

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Abstract: The article is a theological and spiritual reflection on the spiritual doctrine of the French mystic St. Elizabeth of the Trinity OCD (Élisabeth Catez), who lived from 1880 to 1906. The present study seeks to explain the reason why apart from cataphatic (positive) expressions, characteristic of nuptial Carmelite mysticism, which Elizabeth represents, her writings sometimes contain apophatic (negative) expressions, emphasizing the unknowability of God. The historical and literary, hermeneutical, philological and comparative analyses of her work lead to the following conclusions; as a Carmelite she consciously referred to the teaching of the Areopagite (Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite) and to the later continuator of his thought, Bl. John Ruusbroec (Ruysbroeck); however, to apophatic expressions – e.g. infinite, unchanging, inaccessible, indescribable, immovable, inexhaustible, unknown, invisible, incomprehensible, incomparable, elusive – she gave a nuptial tone, for the sake of emphasizing the beauty and poetic nature of the bridal love of God and man. For this reason, Elizabeth does not represent the apophatic trend, but uses its language to emphasize the beauty of God and the poetic character of his relationship with man.

Keywords: negative theology, apophatic theology, mysticism, Elizabeth, Trinity, Carmelite spirituality

The theological and spiritual writings of Elizabeth of the Trinity OCD (Élisabeth Catez), who lived in France from 1880 to 1906, grew up in Dijon, and was canonized in 2016 by Pope Francis, primarily emphasize the nuptial dimension of man's relationship with God. The author belongs to the Carmelite school of spirituality, and thus she seeks to describe man's spiritual life as a dynamic journey from a spiritual engagement to Jesus Christ to the wedding ceremony in the bosom of the Holy Trinity, which begins – thanks to the grace of faith – already here on earth. At the focal point of her doctrine is a description of the spiritual beauty of the Divine Bridegroom. These descriptions are contrasted with some phrases that seem to be a manifestation of respectful refraining from making statements about God and fear of "locking" him only in strictly defined concepts.

This raises the following question: Was Elizabeth's mysticism influenced in any way by the tradition of apophatic theology (negation – Gr. *apophasis*; *aphairesis*) dating back to the thought of Philo of Alexandria (died after 40 CE) referring to Neoplatonism?[1] If so, one can further ask: Was Elizabeth consciously inclined

1 De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 911; cf. Czupryn, "Neoplatonizm," 916. In the present study on Elizabeth's writings, the author adopts the interchangeable use of the terms "negative theology" and

towards negative theology? To what extent did she remain independent and original in her spiritual experience?

Despite several theological commentaries on her thought, this topic has not been analyzed in great detail.[2] For this reason, it seems worth making it the focus of the present article.

The basic source material for learning about Elizabeth's thought are her writings published in the original language – French:[3]

– *Œuvres complètes* (critical edition of her writings);
– "P 72 ter: Union de l'âme à Notre Seigneur," 43–44;
– "P 72 bis: Souvenir du 23 novembre 1899," 41–43.

The extent to which apophatic theology is present in Elizabeth's writings and what function it possibly plays in the mystical descriptions she creates is worth examining in the following three stages, which will correspond to the three paragraphs of this study:

– an attempt to find in the environment shaping Elizabeth's thought those figures who are included in the current of negative theology;
– a hermeneutic analysis of the expressions used by Elizabeth, which have the character of apophatic theology;

"apophaticism" following dictionary interpretations of these expressions (cf. e.g. Zambruno, "Teologia negativa," 2059–2060; Spiteris, "Apofatismo," 66). It should be noted, however, that analysts of the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite favor the distinction between these expressions, understanding "negative theology" as making negative statements about God, and "apophaticism" as abstaining from any statements (see Stępień, "Teologia negatywna," 249–251; on recent studies of the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, see Edwards, "How Negative Is the Theology of Dionysius the Areopagite?," 601–621; Ramelli, "Apophaticism," 564–579). It seems that, with this distinction, both "negative theology" and "apophaticism" can be observed in Elizabeth's writings. Since the Carmelite did not rely solely on Areopagite and combined "negative theology" and "apophaticism" in her writings, it seems reasonable in this study not to make the aforementioned distinction.

2 The most important theological studies of the life and doctrine of Elizabeth of the Trinity include publications by theologians such as: Hans Urs von Balthasar, Roberto Moretti, Antonio Sicari, Conrad De Meester (included in the Bibliography of this article). Balthasar comes closest to the topic of apophaticism in Elizabeth's doctrine, devoting one chapter to the issue of "Infinity" in his work *Elisabetta della Trinità*. This text, however, is not a systematic analysis of all the expressions belonging to negative theology present in the thought of the Carmelite from Dijon, but focuses mainly on the titular "infinity," which is understood by Elizabeth as a transcendent reality and an indescribable place, a destination a man seeks to reach; a depth that characterizes the human soul and attracts the depth of God. Balthasar also notices that for the Carmelite, the "infinite liberation" of man means "dying with Christ," which allows a created person to experience infinite love. The aforementioned text by Balthasar seems to contribute the most to the discussion of the role of apophaticism in Elizabeth's writings.

3 On the other hand, the primary source for learning about Elizabeth's life and the words spoken by her are the documents of the canonization process, as well as the testimonies written down and compiled in a separate collection: Sacra Congregatio pro causis Sanctorum, *Divionen*; Postulazione della Causa, *Elisabetta parla ancora*; *La Servante de Dieu*; Fornara, *Testimoni dai processi di beatificazione*.

– an attempt to resolve whether Elizabeth is a conscious continuator of apophatic thought, and a proposal for a value-based interpretation.

Elements of a general theological method will be helpful in the research, such as: making a hypothesis on the presence of apophatic theology in Elizabeth's writings; historical description; philological analysis taking into account the context; explanatory theological description; creating a general mental sketch of Elizabeth's theology, while emphasizing the meaning of apophatic expressions; presenting a final thesis regarding the issue of the place of apophaticism in the theology of Elizabeth of the Trinity.

1. Elizabeth's Apophatic Inspirations

When analyzing the theological and spiritual thought of Elizabeth of the Trinity, one must be aware that she had no theological education, did not create systematic descriptions and did not use strictly defined methods. Her notes are general sketches, inspired by prayerful study of the Bible, reading the works of mystics and theologians,[4] careful listening to homilies and conferences, as well as the direct action of God's grace. Sometimes she herself clearly indicated the sources of the quotes, and sometimes the similarity of thoughts was noticed only by careful researchers of her writings. Based on the French edition of her works,[5] which contains a rich critical apparatus, it is possible to prepare an indicative list of authors cited by Elizabeth.

In order to find possible influences of negative theology on Elizabeth's thought, it is worth arranging this list chronologically[6] and then finding representatives of apophaticism in it. Then, it will be necessary to focus on the distinctive terms they use for God. It seems that it will also be valuable to present these expressions in a broader context – against the background of the history of apophatic theology. It will then be possible to look for these expressions in Elizabeth's works – which will be done in the next paragraph of this study – and answer the question of how much they are present in her spiritual theology and what function they serve there.

Let us now proceed to make a list of the main writers[7] quoted by Elizabeth, and select those who emphasized the unknowability of God. Of course, the primary

4 De Meester notes that the Carmelite read the Bible and the works of theologians often in editions other than those we know today; De Meester, "Introduction générale," 80.

5 Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*.

6 Taking the authors' death date as the criterion.

7 In the aforementioned critical edition, indexes have been compiled of the more important authors cited by Elizabeth, as well as the names of those mentioned by her; see Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 1083–1103. De Meester and Balthasar comment on Elizabeth's spiritual inspirations, listing similar individuals (see De Meester, "Introduction générale," 20–21; Balthasar, *Elisabetta della Trinità*, 24).

source for Elizabeth was the Bible, and it was primarily in this realm that she may have first encountered apophaticism.[8] The Carmelite also drew inspiration outside the *strictly* biblical world; she valued the teaching of figures such as:
– St. Augustine (354–430);
– Areopagite (Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite; lived in the 5th–6th centuries);
– St. Angela of Foligno (1248–1309);
– St. Catherine of Siena (1347–1380);
– Bl. John Ruysbroeck (1293–1381);
– St. Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582);
– St. John of the Cross (1542–1591);
– St. Francis de Sales (1567–1622);
– Henri-Dominique Lacordaire OP (1802–1861);
– Charles-Louis Gay (French bishop and author of books on spirituality; 1815–1892);
– St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897);
– Irénée Vallée OP (religious name Gonzalve, retreat giver; 1841–1927).

In order to investigate whether Elizabeth may have drawn apophatic content from any of the aforementioned non-Biblical figures, it is worth recalling in very general terms the history of negative theology itself – while looking for connections to the teaching of the Carmelite.

At the origin of systematic reflection on the unknowability of the Divine Essence (*ousia*) stands Philo of Alexandria (born between 30–13 BC, died between AD 42–54), a Jewish philosopher and theologian writing in Greek and popularizing allegorical interpretation of the Bible. Like him, many early Christian writers[9] were convinced that knowledge of the Divine Essence was beyond the natural cognitive capabilities of man, and that the Divine Essence remained virtually unknown to man. A negative theology based on expressions from the New Testament began to emerge, including the following phrases emphasizing God's transcendence (in Greek with the prefix *a*-):[10]
– the invisible one (Gr. *aoratos*; Rom 1:20; Col 1:15; 1 Tim 1:17; Heb 11:27);
– the ineffable one (Gr. *arretos*; 2 Cor 12:4);

8 Cf. Spiteris, "Apofatismo," 65–66. Elizabeth encountered the following apophatic expressions in the Bible: Col 1:15 ("Invisible" – see P 96: "l'Invisible"); 1 Tim 6:16 ("Inaccessible light" – see DR 29: "inaccessible [lumière]"; "Inaccessible" – see P 96: "l'Inaccessible"); 1 John 4:12 ("No one has ever seen [God]" – see DR 2: "Nul n'a vu le [Père]"); Heb 11:27 ("Invisible" – see CF 20; DR 10: "l'Invisible").

9 Such as: St. Justin (c. 100 – c. 165), St. Irenaeus of Lyon (bishop; between 130 and 140 – c. 202), St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 – before 215), Origen (c. 185 – 253 or 254), St. John Chrysostom (c. 350–407), St. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580–662), and the Cappadocian Fathers, especially St. Basil of Caesarea (Basil the Great, bishop, 329–379) and St. Gregory of Nyssa (bishop, c. 335–394). See De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 911–912.

10 This theology also found expression in the Eastern liturgy; De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 912.

– the unspeakable one (Gr. *anekdiegetos*: 2 Cor 9:15);
– the unfathomable one (Gr. *aneksieraunetos*; Rom 11:33);
– the inaccessible, inscrutable one (Gr. *aprositos*; 1 Tim 6:16);
– the incomprehensible one (Gr. *aperinoetos*; not found in the NT);
– the indescribable one (Gr. *aperigraphos*; not found in the NT);
– the unimaginable one (Gr. *aschematistos*; not found in the NT);
– the imperceptible one (Gr. *atheatos*: not found in the NT);
– the unspeakable, unknown one (Gr. *aphatos*; not found in the NT, a typical Neoplatonic term).

The person who first systematized the relationship between cataphatic and apophatic theology, and thus contributed to the development of mystical theology, was Areopagite (Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite). It is significant that Elizabeth mentions Areopagite by calling him "St. Dionysius" (Fr. *saint Denys*), and quotes his statement that God is "the great solitary" (Fr. *le grande solitaire*).[11] It is worth noting that in the collection of the Carmelite library in Dijon, which the Carmelite used, there were probably two publications containing the writings of the Areopagite.[12] Today, however, it is difficult to clearly determine, as Conrad De Meester points out, whether Elizabeth read these works or whether she only knew the Areopagite's thought from hearsay.[13] However, it can be assumed that Elizabeth also became familiar with other apophatic terms used by the Areopagite.

And although for Pseudo-Dionysius himself, pure apophaticism actually consisted of refraining from making statements about God, since he is transcendent and superior to any human affirmative or apophatic expressions, the Areopagite taught that such an approach should not imply the destruction of theology and its language. In his opinion, negative theology is still theology, and its function is to defend

11 DR 26. Incidentally, this expression, referring to Neoplatonic thought and emphasizing the transcendence of God and his "solitude" in the ontic dimension, was not incorrect at that time, although we know that God is the Communion of Three Persons and – in the light of contemporary personalistic thought – he is not lonely. It is worth adding that Elizabeth uses the term "The lonely God" (Fr. *le Dieu solitaire*) in P 72 bis, *11*.

12 Namely: *Œuvres de Saint Denys l'Aréopagite* (trans. J. Dulac; Paris: Martin-Baupré 1865, Pp. 672); and *Théologie mystique* (trans. B. Darboy; 1845), a brief treatise quoted in: Chardon, *La Croix de Jésus*, 425–437. Thinking about why these particular books were in the Carmelite library in Dijon, one can assume that the reason was that Madame Acarie (Barbe Avrillot, 1566–1618), who was the wife of Pierre Acarie and gathered the French intelligentsia at the *Hotel Acarie* for salon gatherings, had a major contribution to the creation of the French Carmelite foundation. It was at salon gatherings that the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius were very popular. It was also in that Parisian environment that her cousin, the young Pierre de Bérulle, later a cardinal and promoter of the Carmelite foundation in France, formed his spirituality. It is worth adding that when Madame Acarie became a widow, she joined the Carmelites and took the name Mary of the Incarnation (Pius VI declared her Blessed in 1791); Bruno de Jésus-Marie, *Madame Acarie*, 10; cf. Secondin, *Storia*, 32.

13 See Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 173.

against any conceptual reduction of God and presenting him in an idolatrous manner.[14] It was for this reason that Pseudo-Dionysius did not abandon making statements about God, but sought to use terms that would emphasize his mystery. Hence, the Areopagite was close to terms such as: "silence" (Gr. *sigē*), "rest" (Gr. *hēsychia*), or "darkness" – as a metaphor for the inaccessible light of God. To emphasize God's transcendence, he often used expressions containing "exaltation" (with the prefix *above*-; Gr. *hyper*-) and apophatic "denial."[15]

Pseudo-Dionysius' negative theology, which contained traces of Augustinian Neoplatonism, was in a way corrected by St. Thomas Aquinas who stated that God is not *beyond being* but that he *is subsistent Being* (Lat. *ipsum esse subsistens*) that is *unnameable*. Thomas – like the Areopagite – was of the opinion that man actually unites with the Unknown.[16] Perhaps Elizabeth drew apophatic inspiration directly from Aquinas. This is what Conrad De Meester believes[17] but it is rather no more than his intuition, as he does not provide convincing evidence. What is certain is that Elizabeth was familiar with some of the ideas of St. Catherine of Siena,[18] who in turn drew inspiration from the teachings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, among others. It is worth adding here that Elizabeth herself also directly referred to the thoughts of the Bishop of Hippo on several occasions, but she probably knew them not from personal reading, but from conferences she had heard.[19]

References to Thomas Aquinas – continuing negative theology – can be found in, among others, the writings of Meister Eckhart OP (c. 1260 – c. 1328).[20] Together with

14 De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 912–913; cf. Hryniewicz, "Apofatyczna teologia," 745.

15 The terms thus created served to emphasize the truth that God is above all knowledge and remains completely unknowable: he is above Being, above all essence (Gr. *hyperousios*), above all Good (Gr. *hyperagathos*); above all Divinity (Gr. *hypertheos*); hyper-radiant (Gr. *hyperphaēs*); the unknowable one (Gr. *hyperagnōstos*); the elusive one (Gr. *anaphēs*); the ineffable one (Gr. *aphthegtos*); De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 913.

16 De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 913.

17 De Meester, "Introduction générale," 49.

18 Elizabeth refers to St. Catherine in: GV 7; DR 4. She quotes her words emphasizing the transcendence of God and the contingency of human existence in L 50: "He is «He who is,» and we are «they who are not»" ("Il est «Celui qui est» et nous «celle qui n'est pas»"). See L 62; 73; 115; 129; 131; 160; 171; 199; 231; 239; P 106; NI 12; 15. Elizabeth may have been familiar with Catherine of Siena's thought from reading the work of Raymond of Capua OP (1330–1399): *Vie de Sainte Catherine de Sienne*, or from the teaching of Irénée Vallée OP, a preacher at the Carmel in Dijon (see Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 362, 417, 420, 615, 904). She must have heard about Catherine's well-known work *The Dialogues* – which she mentions in L 199 – but this does not mean that she studied it in its entirety (see Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 544, 599, 909).

19 See GV 4; L 206. In L 214, Elizabeth quotes words attributed to St. Augustine, although they are actually the words of Bishop Severus of Milève, who died before 397, a friend of St. Augustine, that were quoted during a retreat conference by Martin Fages OP, a retreat giver whose religious name was Pierre-Henri-Dominique: "[...] love, forgetting its own dignity, yearns to lift and enlarge the beloved being: the measure of love is to love without measure" (see Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 571). For references to St. Augustine, see also L 224; 236; 264; cf. Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 135, 417, 485.

20 De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 913.

his disciples – John Tauler OP (c. 1300–1361) and Bl. Henry Suzo OP (1295–1366) – he gave rise to Rhineland mysticism (Rhine-Flemish school), developing the apophatic current following the school of Pseudo-Dionysius. The Rhineland mystics, in turn, had a strong influence on the apophatic thought of Bl. John Ruysbroeck (1293–1381), a Dutch theologian and mystic, to whom, in turn, Elizabeth of the Holy Trinity repeatedly referred in her notes.[21]

She explored Ruysbroeck's theology, according to which God's Essence is the fullness of ontic "to be" – of transcendent, absolute, infinite, and dynamic nature. A manifestation of this dynamism is the life of the three Persons of God, and a person can experience this life through faith in Jesus Christ, through knowing his humanity and abiding in the Church, which is his Mystical Body. The "Divinity" itself, however, remains immeasurable, incomprehensible, and inaccessible to man. Therefore, the highest level of knowledge of God is "ignorance" which comprehends nothing but opens to knowledge that surpasses all natural means of attaining it.[22]

The apophatic current, with its roots in the thought of the Areopagite (Pseudo-Dionysius), was enriched by the Carmelite experience of the "dark night"[23] developed until the 17th century thanks to the works of Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle (1575–1629), an oratorian and mystic, founder of the French school of spirituality, a great promoter of the establishment of Carmelite Monasteries in France according to the Teresian reform, fascinated by the works of, among others, Pseudo-Dionysius, St. Augustine and Bl. John Ruysbroeck. Negative theology seems to have faded into the background over time, and the interest in it – in the 20th century, thanks to works written by Anselm Stoltz OSB (1900–1942) and Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky (1945–1953).[24]

When summing up all that has been said about the possible sources of Elizabeth's apophatic inspiration, the following conclusions can be drawn:

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21 Elizabeth was familiar with an anthology of Ruysbroeck's writings from their French translation: *Rusbrock l'admirable*. She makes a mention – not a direct one – of reading this book in L 300. The translator, Ernest Hello, relied on a Latin edition edited by Surius (†1578), who, in turn, did not always rely on Ruysbroek's original texts but sometimes also on those of one of his disciples, i.e. Godfried van Wevel (1320–1396). See Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 81, 93–94, 96–97, 707. References to Ruysbroeck's thought can be found in Elizabeth's works, for example, in: CF 1; 4; 7–8; 10–14; 17–18; 21–24; 32; 35–37; 40; 43; GV 2; 5; 8; DR 1; 3–5; 7; 10–11; 21; 25; 28; L 288; 307; NI 17.

22 Misiurek, "Jan Ruysbroeck," 820–821.

23 One can see a clear influence of Pseudo-Dionysius on Carmelite mysticism, especially on St. John of the Cross, who called the path to full union of man with God "night" (see, for example, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, I,2,1); see Zambruno, "Teologia negativa," 2065–2066. Far fewer traces of apophaticism can be found in St. Teresa of Avila, and they are less discernible, for example, in her poetic works, as well as in her work, *The Interior Castle* (especially the so-called *sixth mansions*). Of significance is that it is these very Carmelite mystics that Elizabeth was reading; see the tables of citations for each of their works in Élisabeth de la Trinité, *Œuvres*, 1083–1087.

24 The publications that are referred to are: Stolz, *Théologie de la mystique*; Lossky, *Théologie mystique de l'Église d'Orient*; see De Andia, "Negativa (teologia)," 914; Hryniewicz, "Apofatyczna teologia," 746; Secondin, *Storia*, 32; Deville, *L'École*, 32; cf. Misiurek, "Francuska duchowość," 292.

- the primary source that spoke of God's transcendence for her was the Bible (with the writings of Paul that were of particular importance in this regard);[25]
- authors who identified themselves with negative theology and had a strong influence on the Carmelite in this aspect are Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, Ruysbroeck, and John of the Cross (especially the last two);
- she also came across negative theology in the Carmelite school of spirituality;
- she made her apophatic thought more profound with the French school of spirituality;[26]
- In the two previous areas, an important role, albeit a "hidden" one, was played by Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle[27] who "brought" Teresian Carmel to France, contributed to the revival of the intellectual and religious life of the French Church, through the interest of the faithful in mysticism – including apophatic mysticism.

Having given some consideration to historical and formal aspects, it seems appropriate at this point to move on to a philological and theological-critical study of Elizabeth's writings. What will be needed now is to find, categorize, and semantically analyze apophatic expressions. The purpose here will be to read the motives behind Elizabeth's use of certain phrases, therefore both the text and the context of her writings will be taken into account. All this with the intention of trying to answer the question about the place of negative theology in the mysticism of the Carmelite nun of Dijon, the originality of her thought, its great significance, and timeliness in the next part of this study.

2. Apophatic Expressions in Elizabeth's Thought

A close reading of Elizabeth's writings mentioned in the introduction to this paper gives grounds to conclude that, indeed, they included terms related to apophaticism, and that they can be divided into the following two groups:

- strictly apophatic formulations – emphasizing the transcendence of God and encouraging to suspend judgments about him; these are: invisible (Fr. *invisible*); inaccessible (Fr. *inaccessible*), incomprehensible (Fr. *incompréhensible*), unimaginable (Fr. *insondable*), indescribable (Fr. *ineffable*), ineffable (Fr. *inénarrable* – about the mystery of Christ); elusive (Fr. *insaisissable* – though not directly about God, but about his mysteries); unknown (Fr. *inconnu* – about the mysteries

25 See "Table des références bibliques," *Œuvres*, 1074–1082.

26 Reflected in the collection of books in the Carmel of Dijon, as well as in the teaching of retreat givers and preachers.

27 Elizabeth does not mention him even once in her writings.

of God); incomparable (Fr. *incomparable* – in relation to the relationship with God);
– expressions related to apophatic thought – comparisons, and metaphors that emphasize the mystery of God; these include: nothingness (Fr. *néant* – in reference to man); nothing (Lat. *nescivi*); night (Fr. *nuit*); darkness (Fr. *ténèbre*); shadow (Fr. *ombre*); hidden (Fr. *caché*); hide oneself (Fr. *se cacher*); helpless (Fr. *impuissant* – about human capabilities).[28]

At the beginning of the hermeneutical analysis, the first group – formulations closely related to apophaticism – shall be discussed. Following the tradition, Elizabeth uses the word "invisible" (Fr. *invisible*), both in the adjectival form and as a noun. The adjectival form refers in her writings to God, the supernatural world, and to the mystery of the communion of saints. Thus, "invisible" to mortal people is: God, the "bosom of the Father," the Divine Essence, God's mysteries;[29] the eternal world and imperishable things;[30] people who – like angels – from heaven help those on earth.[31] Elizabeth's use of the noun form emphasizes that "the Invisible One" is God's own name, and that God revealing himself to Moses in the Old Testament crosses the line of "being invisible" in the mystery of the Incarnation.[32]

The next apophatic term is "inaccessible" (Fr. *inaccessible*). It is noticeable that the Carmelite uses it in a similar way. She uses it to refer to God's Essence,[33] to the light in which God hides himself,[34] and also uses it as God's own name.[35] What needs to be noted here is that Elizabeth does not mean that God is distant, but that man cannot grasp him with intellect.[36]

The same pattern – the use of the word as an adjective and as a noun – can also be seen in the case of the word "incomprehensible" (Fr. *incompréhensible*).

28 Other words could also be included in this group, such as "mystery" (Fr. *mystère*; see e.g., NI 15, where the word serves as God's Name).

29 See CF 1 ("c'est le sein du Père, ou l'Essence divine, invisible à tout regard mortel"); P 32, *3* ("Aux pieds des saints autels/ Du Dieu invisible aux mortels"); P 103, *2* ("Du mystère invisible/ Tout sera dévoilé").

30 See L 142, *1* ("tout ce monde invisible, aux lumières de la foi, se rapproche tant de nous"); L 238, *1* ("ceux qui […] «n'ont pas recherché le choses visible, car elles sont passagères, mais les invisibles qui sont éternelles»"); L 268, *1* ("ils m'ont encore rapprochée de Dieu, du monde invisibles"); L 278, *2* ("les âmes qui […] n'ont pas recherché les choses visibles parce qu'elles sont passagères, mais les invisibles parce qu'elle demeurent éternellement"); cf. L 331, *1*.

31 Cf. L 293, *1* ("être votre Ange invisible"); L 340, *2* ("près de Lui, elle doit être l'Ange invisible").

32 See DR 10 ("Il est dit de Moïse qu'il était «inébranlable dans la foi comme s'il avait vu l'Invisible» […] «inébranlable dans la foi comme s'il avait vu l'Invisible»"); P 96, *3* ("Sous les traits d'un petit enfant/ On peut contempler l'Invisible"); CF 20 ("Il était inébranlable dans la foi comme s'il avait vu l'Invisible").

33 See CF 1 ("c'est le sein du Père, ou Essence divine […] inaccessible à toute intelligence humaine").

34 See DR 29 ("Il restait caché en son inaccessible [lumière]").

35 See P 96, *3* ("Le Dieu caché, l'Inaccessible/ Pour nous se fait petit enfant").

36 Cf. CF 1.

The Carmelite expresses the truth that the Essence of God,[37] the life of the Trinity,[38] the life in heaven is "incomprehensible" to man,[39] and the "incomprehensible" God transcends human cognition in the mystery of the coming of the Son of God into the world.[40]

And again, similarly for the word "unfathomable" (Fr. *insondable*). The mystery of the supernatural life of man in relationship with the Divine Essence is "unfathomable,"[41] and the "Unfathomable One" comes into the world,[42] and becomes present in man, making his dwelling in man.[43] In this way, man can repose in God, in the "Unfathomable Abyss," which is the beginning of heavenly life – already here on earth.[44]

The way in which these four words are used – "invisible" (Fr. *invisible*), "inaccessible" (Fr. *inaccessible*), "incomprehensible" *incompréhensible*) i "unfathomable" (Fr. *insondable*) – are used, indicates a fairly precise intention. These terms are for Elizabeth:

– an emphasis on the mystery of the supernatural world;
– God's own names;
– a demonstration of the uniqueness of the penetration of transcendence into the created world, which was accomplished through the mystery of the Incarnation.

It is clear here that in the Carmelite's work, the "invisibility" and "inaccessibility" of God are juxtaposed with the coming of the Divine Bridegroom to the earthly world. Elizabeth, therefore, does not reject apophatic notions, but "incorporates" them into the Mystery of God's Incarnation. A distant analogy can be recognized here: just as the transcendent God enters everyday life, in the same way, the words indicating his transcendence also describe his unique coming into the world in Bethlehem and his constant coming into the world in the Church.

Continuing the analysis of the first group of words – directly related to apophaticism – one also encounters terms that Elizabeth uses only in the adjective form. She uses them to express the uniqueness of God's mysteries, as well as to describe the depth of her own feelings: admiration, respect, and adoration. For Elizabeth,

37 See L 274, *3* ("vous faire pénétrer les profondeurs insondables de l'Etre Divin").
38 See DR 44 ("l'insondable Trinité"); L 332 ("le simple regard sur Lui nous sépare de tout et nous fixe en l'insondable profondeur du mystère des Trois").
39 See P 96, *3* ("O mystère incompréhensible").
40 See P 103, *2* ("Et l'Incompréhensible/ Nous sera révélé").
41 See P 80, *1* ("Etre Infini, Profondeur insondable/ Nous communions à ta Divinité").
42 See P 91, *3* ("O profondeur, insondable mystère"); P 91, *5* ("O profondeur, insondable mystère"); P 91, *7* ("O profondeur, insondable mystère"); P 91, *9* ("O profondeur, insondable mystère").
43 See P 88, *4* ("Tu pénétras l'Etre Insondable,/ Portant en toi «le don de Dieu»"); P 109, *1* ("Cet abîme insondable et ce profond mystère").
44 See DR 7 ("ce repos en Dieu, Abîme insondable, prélude et écho de ce sabat éternel").

the mystery of human death,[45] life, and happiness[46] is something elusive (Fr. *insaisissable*). She writes about the "unknown" (Fr. *inconnu*) joys[47] and realms[48] towards which the Bridegroom – Jesus Christ – leads. She draws attention to the ineffable (Fr. *inénarrable*) mysteries of God's work that Mary made the subject of her reflections,[49] which led her to the fulfillment of God's indescribable (Fr. *ineffable*) plan in her life.[50] Elizabeth uses the word "indescribable" (Fr. *ineffable*) to describe the beauty of the Bridegroom,[51] his love,[52] God's "kisses,"[53] God's mystery,[54] as well as ecstasy,[55] graces received,[56] happiness,[57] joy,[58] tenderness,[59] desires,[60] plans,[61] and peace[62] – with which God bestows and fills the man's heart. Elizabeth calls the happiness towards which man moves incomparable (Fr. *incomparable*).[63]

The second group of terms associated with apophaticism are expressions involving images, comparisons and metaphors. They do not belong to negative theology in a strict sense but are its *sui generis* echoes. In order to emphasize the transcendence of God, Elizabeth chooses to refer to man by the word "nothingness" (Fr. *néant*).[64]

45 See L 238, *1* ("Quel mystère insaisissable que la mort").

46 See J 25 ("c'est un ombre, une chose insaisissable […] l'espoir d'un bonheur toujours attendu et insaisissable").

47 See LA 7 ("C'est «moi» qui viens, et je t'apporte la joie inconnue"); L 323, *1* ("sur ma croix où je goûte de joies inconnues"); L 324, *1* ("j'expérimente des joies inconnues"); L 328bis, *1* ("sur ma croix où je goûte de joies inconnues"); L 340, *1* ("des mois de bénédictions, de joie profonde, inconnue du monde").

48 See P 66, *19* ("De me transporter en des régions inconnues").

49 See DR 2 ("Elle, c'est l'inénarrable, [c'est] le «secret qu'elle gardait et repassait en son cœur»"; cf. Luke 2:19).

50 See CF 40 ("Jamais la vision ineffable qu'elle contemplait en elle-même ne diminua sa charité estérieure").

51 See L 271, *1* ("aller voir Celui que j'aime en son ineffable beauté"); P 104, *v.6* ("[…] je quitterai la terre/ Pour aller contempler l'ineffable Beauté").

52 See P 90, *4* ("Jésus, le Prince de la Paix,/ Lui dont l'amour est ineffable").

53 See P 85, *3* ("Il vient Lui-même au-devant de ses vierges/ Pour leur donner l'ineffable baiser").

54 See P 121, 3 ("Un secret tout amour, un secret ineffable").

55 See L 194, *1* ("L'Amour fait sortir de soi celui qui aime pour le transporter par une ineffable extase dans le sein de l'Objet aimé"). It should be noted that Elizabeth does not talk about mystical phenomena related to ecstasy, but about the very essence of mystical ecstasy; see Gogola, "Trójca Święta," 138.

56 See L 284, *3* ("l'enrichir de grâces ineffables").

57 See L 187, *1* ("je Lui dis avec un ineffable bonheur: «Vous êtes mon Tout»); L 324, *2* ("quel bonheur ineffable goûte mon âme en pensant que le Père m'a prédestinée pour être conforme ã son Fils crucifié"); P 105, *v.19* ("Et lã je pus surprendre, ô bonheur ineffable,/ Les projests d'union formês par le Seigneur"); P 55, *v.25* ("Et je suis incapable de dire/ Le divin, l'ineffable bonheur/ Dont Jésus inonde mon cœur").

58 See L 270, *1* ("cela m'est une joie ineffable").

59 See P 93, *1* ("Je viens le révéler l'ineffable tendresse/ Qui plane sur ton âme et la nuit et le jour").

60 See P 107, *t* ("L'ineffable désir d'un cœur reconnaissant").

61 See P 100, *2* ("Je formais avec toi des projets ineffable"); P 115, *3* ("Voici que seon cœur forme un projet ineffable").

62 See L 171, *3* ("dans l'âme règne une ineffable paix"); P 79, *1* ("Dans un profond silence, une ineffable paix"); P 88, *4* ("Ensevelie en l'adoration/ En une paix tout ineffable").

63 See P 39, *1* ("A peine déjà je vous possède/ Qu'à cet incomparable bonheur/ La pour de vous perdre succède").

64 See CF 4 ("que l'abîme de notre néant, de notre misère"); CF 12 ("je vois mon néant, ma misère, mon impuissance"); CF 22 ("au commencement était le néant […] Le type de toutes les créatures, qui n'étaient

It should be noted here from the outset that in pure negative theology the term “nothing” defines the possibility of describing God, that is, it practically denies the possibility of describing him by any term. Elizabeth – perhaps inspired by the thought of the Areopagite or Catherine of Siena – uses the term “nothingness” as a metaphor and symbol – the existential fragility of man, the contingency of being, and man’s moral weakness – to emphasize the greatness and transcendence of God. The Carmelite seeks to emphasize that the “nothingness” represented by man can be infused by God with God’s Being, his merciful love. According to Elizabeth, without the help of God, human words, language, and even prayer are helpless (Fr. *impuissant*),[65] and man knows nothing (Lat. *nescivi*).[66] This is because God is concealed (Fr. caché)[67] – he can hide himself (Fr. *se cacher*),[68] but from this concealment in transcendence, by becoming a Child, he takes the initiative to encounter man.[69] God approaches and meets man, but this encounter takes place here on earth – according to Elizabeth, who is a true disciple of the school of John of the Cross in this respect – still in the midst of the mysterious night (Fr. *nuit*),[70] darkness (Fr. *ténèbre*)[71] and shadow

pas encore sorties du néant”); GV 5 (“l’abîme de l’immensité de Dieu se trouve en tête à tête avec l’abîme du néant de la créature, et Dieu étreint ce néant”); DR 21 (“se plonger dans l’abîme de son néant”); L 252, *1* (“par nous-mêmes nous ne sommes que néant et péché”); L 273, *3* (“que la terre et les choses d’ici-bas sont néant au regard de l’éternité”); L 340, *2* (“le néant de ce qui passe sans être fait pour Dieu”); J 97 (“reconnaître sa faiblesse et son néant”); P 118, *7* (“Oh, précipitons-nous au fond du «double abîme»: «L’immensité de Dieu, notre propre néant»”).

65 See L 154, *1* (“le langage de la terre est impuissant”); L 163, *1* (“Devant de telles épreuves le langage humain se sent bien banal et bien impuissant”); L 201, *1* (“La parole humaine se sent bien impuissante”); L 241, *1* (“ma prière est bien impuissante”).

66 See DR 1 (“«Nescivi.» Je n’ai plus rien su […] «Nescivi»! Je ne sais plus rien”); DR 4 (“encore ce petit mot: «Nescivi» […] On pouvait faire du bruit, s’agiter autor d’elle: «Nescivi»! On pouvait l’accuser: «Nescivi»”); DR 5 (“on peut atteindre son point d’honneur: «Nescivi»! Dieu peut se cacher, lui retirer sa grâce sensible: «Nescivi»”).

67 See DR 29 (“Il restait caché”); P 96, *3* (“Le Dieu caché”).

68 See DR 5 (“Dieu peut se cacher, lui retirer sa grâce sensible: «Nescivi»”).

69 See P 96, *3* (“Le Dieu caché, l’Inaccessible/ Pour nous se fait petit enfant”).

70 See NI 15 (“Puis, à travers toutes les nuits, tous les vides, toutes les impuissances, je veux vous fixer toujours et demeurer sous votre grande lumière”); P 95 (“Lorsque tu ne vois plus briller sa douce flamme/ Et que la nuit profonde environne ton âme”); L 239 (“[...] puisque nous le [Christ] possédons en nous, qu’importent les nuits qui peuvent obscurcir notre ciel: si Jésus semble dormir, oh reposons-nous aussi près de Lui; soyons bien calmes et silencieuses; ne le réveillons pas mais attendons dans la foi”); L 273 (“Pense que ton âme est le temple de Dieu […]; à tout instant du jour et de la nuit les trois Personnes divines demeurent en toi”); L 329 (“[…] chaque nuit, tandis que vous reposez, nous [Dieu en lequel Élisabeth se sait assumée] irons vous visiter avec la Plénitude d’amour!”); L 332 (“Déjà dans la nuit de la foi, les unions sont si profondes, les étreintes si divines!”); DR 10 (“la ténèbre sacrée» en faisant la nuit et le vide dans toutes mes puissances”); cf. Elisabeth’s words: “J’ai tellement souffert cette nuit que j’étais tentée de me jeter par la fenêtre; mais je me suis dit: ce n’est pas ainsi qu’une Carmélite doit souffrir” (Postulazione della Causa, *Elisabetta parla ancora*, 157).

71 See DR 10, *1* (“Il se «cache dans les ténèbres» puis semble d’autre part se contredire en disant que «la lumière l’environne comme d’un vêtement». […] c’est que je dois me plonger dans la «ténèbre sacrée»”; cf. Ps 18 (17):12; Ps 104 (103):2); L 165 and L 193: (“La foi, c’est le face à face dans les ténèbres”; cf. 1 Cor 13:12–13); J 29 („[…] cette parole divine […] est la lumière qui doit nous éclairer dans les ténèbres d’ici-bas”).

(Fr. *ombre*).[72] "Nights" and "darkness" are symbols of purification, test, and mysterious immersion into the depths of God's mysteries. "Shadow," on the other hand – in the natural world arising because the source of light is obscured – serves Elizabeth as a symbol of the acts of the Holy Spirit, shielding man and empowering him to receive the creative act of God, full of divine light, which for man living here on earth may appear as still too strong, but in reality is a manifestation of God's love – conforming him to Jesus Christ and empowering man so that, without ceasing to be human, he can participate in the Mystery of the Communion of the Divine Persons.

Having outlined the distinctive features of the two groups of terms used by Elizabeth, either directly or indirectly related to apophaticism, it is also worth noting formulations that constitute a certain link between her apophatic and cataphatic theology.

In terms of vocabulary, they contain negations but they cannot be considered apophatic. This is because they are not a refusal to make statements about God, but, on the contrary, they represent his attributes. It seems pertinent to mention them here, as they provide further background to Elizabeth's apophatic formulations, and thus serve in understanding how the Carmelite used negative theology. These are the following terms: inexhaustible (Fr. *intarissable*, *inépuisable*); infinite (Fr. *infini*); unchangeable (Fr. *immuable*); unchangeability (Fr. *immutabilité*); uncreated (Fr. *incréé*); independent (Fr. *indépendant*). Elizabeth referred these terms both to God and to the entire supernatural world, as well as to the gifts the Creator gives to humans.

Drawing on philosophical terminology, she refers to God as "uncreated Being" (Fr. *l'Etre incréé*)[73] and also uses the word "infinite" (Fr. *infini*). The proper name of

72 See NI 15 ("[…] ô Père, penchez-vous vers votre pauvre petite créature, «couvrez-la de votre ombre», ne voyez en elle que le «Bien-Aimé en lequel vous avez mis toutes vos complaisances»"); DR 1 ("Nul n'a pénétré le mystère du Christ en sa profondeur, si ce n'est la Vierge. […] tous les saints restent dans l'ombre quand on regarde aux clartés de la Vierge!…"); L 246 ("[…] je m'unirai à l'âme de la Vierge alors que le Père la couvrait de son ombre, tandis que le Verbe s'incarnait en elle, et que l'Esprit Saint survenait pour opérer le grand mystère. C'est toute la Trinité qui est en action, qui se livre, qui se donne […]"); L 269 ("Vis au-dedans avec Eux dans le ciel de ton âme; le Père te couvrira de son ombre, mettant comme une nuée entre toi et les choses de la terre pour te garder toute sienne"; cf. Matt 17:5 and Luke 1:35); L 278 ("[…] je ne parle pas de la vie religieuse, qui est la grande séparations avec le monde, mais de la dégagement, de cette pureté qui met comme un voile sur tout ce qui n'est pas Dieu et qui nous permet d'adhérer sans cesse à Lui par la foi. Que le Père vous couvre de son ombre et que cette ombre soit comme une nuée qui vous enveloppe et vous sépare; que le Verbe imprime en vous sa beauté, pour se contempler en votre âme comme en un autre Lui-même; que l'Esprit Saint qui est l'Amour fasse de votre cœur un petit foyer qui réjouisse les Trois Personnes divines par l'ardeur de ses flammes […]"); P 79 ("Elle [Marie, Vierge fidèle] attire le Ciel, et voici que le Père/ va lui livrer son Verbe, pour en être la Mère!/ Alors l'Esprit d'amour de son ombre la couvre"; cf. Luke 1:35); P 85 ("Il plane ici, son ombre nous protège/ Regardons-Le pour nous virginiser").

73 See P 91, 3 ("l'Etre incréé s'oriente sur moi").

God, of the whole Trinity, is "Infinite,"[74] for it is he himself who is "infinite": Being,[75] Holiness,[76] Love,[77] Mercy,[78] Solitude.[79] With that said – as previously mentioned – referring to God as "Solitude" in Elizabeth's time was not a fallacy, it referred to Neoplatonic thought, and analyzing her texts one can come to the conclusion that she understood this concept not so much in metaphysical terms, emphasizing the nature of the Divine, but in a nuptial and moral perspective – as the Bridegroom who wishes to invite his bride to meet him in seclusion.

Elizabeth sees the uniqueness of the dynamics of love between God and people. There is an "infinite" desire hidden in the human heart, which becomes a thirst for the "infinite," equivalent to the hunger to meet God,[80] to draw from the "inexhaustible" (Fr. *intarissable*,[81] *inépuisable*[82]) source, namely the Heart of Jesus.

According to Elizabeth, "infinite" (Fr. *infini*) is God's: holiness,[83] sweetness,[84] peace,[85] riches,[86] Majesty,[87] Mystery,[88] tenderness of the fatherly hand that allows the participation in the sufferings that are the guarantee of his love.[89] "Infinite" are also the depths of God[90] and the realms of encounter with him.[91] "Infinite" is God's love,[92] and human love can also be such – evolving to the point of identifying in one

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74 Elizabeth uses the word "infinite" as God's own name: DR 40 ("sans doute à la distance qu'il y a de l'Infini au fini"); cf. L 158, *1* ("n'est-Il pas cet infini dont nos âmes ont si soif"); L 185, *1* ("cette Trinitè qui dès ici-bas est notre cloître. Notre demeure, l'Infini"); L 109, *2* ("C'est l'Infini"); por. L 87, *2*; L 90, *1*; L 115, *2*; L 117, *1*; L 121, *1*; L 124, *1*; L 129, *3*; L 156, *2*; L 182, *2*; L 197bis, *1*; L 202, *1*; L 203; P 79, *2*; P 85, *6*.

75 See P 80, *1* ("Etre Infini. Profondeur insondable"); P 91, *7* ("L'Etre infini s'ensevelit en moi"); cf. L 133, *1*.

76 See NI 16, *3* ("autant de louanges, d'adorations et d'hommages envers sa Sainteté infinie").

77 See CF 20 ("pour aller se reposer au sein de l'Amour infini"); CF 44 ("là nous charterons au sein de l'Amour infini"); cf. L 172, *1*; L 184, *1*; L 212, *1*; L 268, *1*; L 298, *1*; NI 17; P 90, *4*.

78 See J 33 ("la Miséricorde infinie").

79 See NI 15, *4* ("O mes Trois, mon Tout, Ma Béatitude, Solitude infinie"); DR 27 ("Il [Le Créateur] la fait passer en cette solitude immense, infinie, en ce «lieu spacieux» chanté par le prophète qui n'est autre que Lui-même").

80 See L 49, *1* ("cet soif infinie de Lui"); cf. L 169, *1* ("Il a mis en mon cœur une soif d'infini"); L 139, *1*; L 107, *1*.

81 See P 57, *1* ("Ce Cœur fontaine intarissable").

82 See P 57, *1* ("Ce Cœur source inépuisable").

83 See L 224, *1* ("quelle assurance cela nous donnerait pour paraître un lour devant sa sainteté infinie").

84 See CF 17 ("Les délices qu'Il apporte sont infinies, puisqu'elles sont Lui-même").

85 See P 109, *4* ("Je puisse à travers tout demeurer comme au Ciel «En ta dilection» et ta paix infinie").

86 See L 284, *5* ("afin de la combler de ses richesses infinies").

87 See DR 43 ("en face de cet Amour tout-puissant, de cette Majesté infinie").

88 See L 313, *1* ("une main d'une tendresse infinie").

89 See L 332 ("je vais m'écouler dans l'infini du Mystère").

90 See L 132 ("la Beauté radieuse qui […] dès ici-bas veut nous emporter toujours plus loin dans les profondeurs infinies").

91 See L 49, *1* ("[…] dans le régions infinies où il n'y a plus que Lui"); L 54, *1* ("dans les régions infinies où l' «Un» avec Lui se consomme"); cf. L 61, *2*; L 278, *2*.

92 See L 149, *1*; L 150, *1*; L 191, *2*.

ecstasy with God's love.[93] God opens "infinite" horizons[94] for man and bestows "infinite" happiness[95] and sweetness.[96] He deposits in man's inner self an ever-increasing capacity to receive him, in a sense as "infinite" as he himself.[97]

Elizabeth, using words that could appear artificial and overly high-flown in descriptions of the bridal relationship between God and man, "warms them up" by adding a new context. She calls the Trinity, God himself "Unchangeable" (Fr. *Immuable*),[98] but at the same time calls him Unchangeable: Beauty,[99] Love,[100] and Goodness.[101] She writes that "unchanging" are his plans,[102] will, and desires with regard to human souls,[103] as well as his love.[104] He is the one who gives "unchangeable" peace,[105] and tenderness,[106] and is himself an "unchangeable" abode[107] for man. Quoting Ruysbroeck, the Carmelite also adds that in eternal life, beyond reason, people will find deep peace in the divine "unchangeability" (Fr. *immutabilité*).[108]

Elizabeth perceives the merging of the invisible world, whose mystery one can attempt to convey in apophatic language, with the visible world, which in turn can be described in cataphatic terms. This union was achieved as the unrepeatable event of the Incarnation but it also extends over time. Elizabeth notes – based on Ruysbroeck's theology – that Jesus Christ continually comes to the world and does so always as if it were his first coming, as if he had not come before, since as God he exists in the "eternal now" and thus remains "independent" (Fr. *indépendant*)[109] of time.

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93 See L 192, *1* ("l'amour, cela est quelque chose d'infini et en l'infini on peut toujours aller plus loin"); cf. L 192, *3*; L 192, *1*; NI 13, *9* ("la même extase d'infini amour").

94 See L 209, *1* ("elle voit se dérouler des horizons infinis").

95 See L 236, *1* ("mon bonheur grandit toujours, il prend des proportions infinies").

96 See J 105 ("dans mes larmes je sens un calme, une douceur infinis"); J 111 ("elle sent une douceur infinie dans ce sacrifice").

97 See L 249, *1* ("Il creuse en votre âme des capacités plus grandes pour le recevoir, c'est-à-dire en quelque sorte infinies come Lui-même"); cf. L 305, *4* ("le souhaits de mon cœur sont infinis comme Lui-même").

98 See DR 5 ("l'âme ainsi simplifiée, unifiée, devient le trône de l'Immuable"); cf. DR 28; L 70, *2*; L 73, *1*; L 109, *1*; L 132; L 249, *3*; L 298, *1*; NI 15, *1*; P 74, *10* ("Et contemplerons des clartés/ De l'immuable Trinité"); P 80, *1* ("O Trinitè, ô Dieu, notre Immuable"); P 82, *2*; P 90, *4*; P 115, *3*; cf. DR 44 ("C'est encore sans sortir de là qu'elle vivra, à l'image de la Trinité immuable").

99 See L 121, *1* ("toujours sous le regard de l'Immuable Beauté"); cf. P 84, *1*; P 85, *2*.

100 See L 212, *1* ("elle a vu l'Immuable Beuté").

101 See L 210, *1* ("deux petit sœurs qu habitent l'Amour Immuable").

102 See DR 6 ("Si je rapproche ces deux exposés du plan divin et éternellement immuable").

103 See CF 41 ("Comment réaliser ce grand rêve du Cœur de notre Dieu, ce vouloir immuable sur nos ãmes"); cf. L 234, *1*.

104 See LA 5 ("aimée d'un amour immuable et créateur").

105 See DR 21 ("la paix véritable, immuable et parfaite que rien ne trouble").

106 See P 106, *v.3* ("Je viens te révéler l'immuable tendresse").

107 See L 208, *2* ("C'est là, en cette demeure immuable, que j'aime cous retrouver"); L 261, *1* ("que le Dieu teut Amour soit votre demeure immuable"); cf. L 274, *3*.

108 See CF 14 ("C'est lã qu'au-dessus de la raison nous attend la tranquillité profonde de la divine immutabilité").

109 See CF 17 ("son arrivée, indépendante du temps, consiste dans un éternel «maintenant»").

Having completed another part of the analysis, it is worth reiterating that the apophatic tradition is present in Elizabeth's writings in three ways:

– in expressions strictly belonging to negative theology;
– in symbols illustrating human inability to know God;
– in affirmative formulations – emphasizing God's transcendence.

Therefore, it seems reasonable to pose the question – "What function does this tradition serve?" And since, as already pointed out, apophaticism in Elizabeth's wrtitings is "enveloped" with nuptial cataphatic expressions, further questions may be added: What is the purpose of placing apophaticism at the very center of the description of the spousal relationship between God and man? And can such apophaticism still be called apophaticism?

3. The Function of Apophaticism in the Nuptial Mysticism of Elizabeth

In an effort to resolve the issue of the significance of negative theology in the Carmelite's mystical reflections, it must be stated, first of all, that apophaticism is not a focal point in her work, nor is it a dominant feature in her writings. Elizabeth's primary focus is on getting to know Jesus Christ in a spousal bond, which leads her to a broad perspective on various theological concepts, such as Christ's pre-existence; the redemptive dimension of his death on the cross; Christ's and the Entire Trinity indwelling in a man; Jesus' presence in the Eucharist; Christ as the way toward the union with the Triune God; God's election of each person in Jesus Christ; the Christian as Christ's "sacrament" and his "additional humanity" (Fr. *humanité de surcroît*).[110] So, does apophaticism appear in Elizabeth's works only occasionally representing some kind of dissonance? The way to find the answer is the truth that love involves mystery. Therefore, let us focus on how Elizabeth understood spousal love for Christ.

As Elizabeth put it in a questionnaire completed when she entered the convent in early August 1901 – at the center of her experience of relationship with God was

110 See L 256 ("Qu'elle est sublime, la mission de la carmélite; elle doit être médiatrice avec Jésus-Christ, Lui être comme une humanité de surcroît en laquelle Il puisse perpétuer sa vie de réparations, de sacrifices, de louanges et d'adorations"); L 309 ("Il [l'Époux] veut que je sois une humanité de surcroît en laquelle Il puisse encore souffrir pour la gloire de son Père, pour aider aux besoins de son Église"; cf. Col 1:24); NI 15 ("que je Lui sois une humanité de surcroît en laquelle Il renouvelle tout son Mystère"). For more on Elizabeth's thoughts on the Christian understood as Christ's "additional humanity" see Martínez-Blat, *Doctrina*, 175–179; Miczyński, "Chrześcijanin," 131–137. The development by the Carmelite of that idea, closely linked to the truth about God's indwelling in the justified man, is an argument for Joanne Mosley (*Elizabeth*, 474–475) to call Elizabeth a "doctor."

getting to know the "soul of Jesus Christ."[111] In French spirituality of the 19th century, devotion to the "soul of Christ" meant learning about the richness of the interior of his person – including the world of feelings, will, desires – but also the mystery of God. At the same time, the adoration of the Incarnate Son was – through the work of the Holy Spirit – a transformative force for the believers. Therefore, Elizabeth wrote in one of her letters: "[...] my Bridegroom [Christ] is so beautiful, by loving [Him] I am transformed into Him."[112] Obviously, it must be added that the Carmelite did not mean any empirical, emotional or sensual experience,[113] nor did she mean a metaphysical transformation – since a man will always remain a created person. That sentence should be understood as admiration for the spiritual beauty of the Uncreated Person and becoming internally similar to him. Elizabeth, explaining how she understands "being the bride of Christ," writes: "*Being the bride of Christ!* This is not just an expression of the sweetest of dreams: it is a divine reality; the expression of the whole mystery of similarity and union; […] it is to enchant his Heart to such an extent that, forgetting all distance, the Word overflows into the soul, as if into the bosom of the Father, with the same ecstasy of infinite love! It is the Father, the Word and the Spirit who take possession of the soul, divinizing it into One through love [...]."[114]

That very context should be taken into account when looking for the meaning of negative theology in the mysticism of Elizabeth of the Trinity. Answering the question of who her Divine Bridegroom was, the Carmelite saw that his person of the God-man connected the transcendent world with the visible world. Transcendent God – the invisible one (Fr. *invisible*), the inaccessible one (Fr. *inaccessible*), the incomprehensible one (Fr. *incompréhensible*), the unimaginable one (Fr. *insondable*), the indescribable one (Fr. *ineffable*), the ineffable one (Fr. *inénarrable*), the elusive one (Fr. *insaisissable*), the unknown one (Fr. *inconnu*), the incomparable one (Fr. *incomparable*) – in the reality of the Incarnation and the Eucharist becomes very close to a man. As the Son of the Eternal (Fr. *le Fils de l'Éternel*),[115] Jesus Christ is both the hidden God (Fr. *le Dieu caché*),[116] the inaccessible one (Fr. *l'Inaccessible*),[117]

111 See NI 12 ("*Quel livre préférez-vous?* – L'âme du Christ, elle me livre tous les secrets du Père qui est aux Cieux").

112 L 130 ("Il est si beau, mon Fiancé, maman je l'aime passionnément et l'aimant je me transforme en Lui").

113 Cf. Miczyński, *Rozwój duchowy*, 112.

114 NI 13 ("*Etre épouse du Christ!* Ce n'est pas seulement l'expression du plus doux des réves: c'est une divine réalité; l'expression de tout un mystère de similitude et d'union; […] c'est avoir ravi son Cœur au point qu'oubliant toute distance, le Verbe s'épanche dans l'âme comme au sein du Père avec la même extase d'infini amour! C'est le Père, le Verbe et l'Esprit envahissant l'âme, la déifiant, la consommant en l'Un par l'amour […]").

115 DR 2.

116 P 96.

117 P 96.

the invisible one (Fr. *l'Invisible*)[118] but also Emmanuel (Fr. *Emmanuel*),[119] God with us (Fr. *Dieu avec nous*),[120] Jesus- the Host (Fr. *Jésus-Hostie*).[121]

Elizabeth, following the theological tradition, uses apophaticism to emphasize God's transcendence but also to point out that the extraordinary mystery is the love linking the Bridegroom-Christ with the bride-creation. According to the Carmelite, there is a huge ontic and moral difference between the Unknowable, Infinite Bridegroom and the creation, making the bride perceive herself as nothingness and weakness only. It might seem, therefore, that Elizabeth's "apophatic" perception of God would create that distance – in her theological works – appear unbridgeable. Meanwhile, the Carmelite refers to the words of the Psalmist "deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls" (Ps 42:8), interprets them allegorically and teaches that the immeasurable merciful love of the Bridegroom pours into the abyss of human weakness.[122] Thus, apophaticism in Elizabeth takes on a new meaning – it strengthens the dynamics of the description of the spousal love of God and a man. The weakness of human existence becomes a space for the manifestation of the immeasurability, the infinity of God. The Carmelite emphasizes many times that a person justified by God is his dwelling place. Therefore, it can be seen that Elizabeth links all apophatic expressions related to God with the center of a man. A man carries the radiance of the Infinite God within himself, the invisible, inaccessible, incomprehensible, inconceivable, indescribable and ineffable one, who is Infinite Love (Fr. *Amour Infini*).[123] The horizons of the human heart are broadening,[124] a man – created in the image of God (cf. Gen 1:26)[125] – becomes more and more similar to Jesus Christ, the Divine model (Fr. *Modèle divin*).[126] Therefore, Carmelite writes that for a person living in a relationship of love with God, life on the Earth is already an anticipated heaven,[127]

118 P 96.

119 P 96.

120 L 187.

121 P 24.

122 L 298 ("Lui [Jésus, Dieu], Il est l'Immuable, Celui qui ne change jamais: Il t'aime aujourd'hui comme Il t'aimait hier, comme Il t'aimera demain. Même si tu Lui as fait de la peine, rappelle-toi qu'un abîme appelle un autre abîme et que l'abîme de ta misère, petite Guite, attire l' abîme de sa miséricorde, oh! vois-tu, Il me fait tant comprendre cela").

123 L 172 ("[…] écoutez tout ce qui se chante en son Âme, en son Cœur; c'est l'Amour, cet Amour Infini qui nous enveloppe et veut associer dès ici-bas à toutes ses béatitudes").

124 L 89 ("Si vous saviez comme je suis heureuse, mon horizon grandit chaque jour"); L 203 ("[les âmes] c'est jusqu'à l'Infini de Dieu qu'elles pénètrent, et là, dans ce silence et ce calme où Il est Lui-même […]. Le Ciel, il viendra un jour et nous verrons Dieu en sa lumière. Oh! La première rencontre! Elle fait tressaillir mon âme! Priez pour moi; l'horizon est si beau, le divin Soleil fait briller sa grande lumière").

125 Cf. CF 24; CF 31; GV 3; DR 8; DR 22.

126 P 121, *5*.

127 See L 330 ("Pour vous, si vous voulez, je demanderai, et ce sera le signe de mon entrée au Ciel, une grâce d'union, d'intimité avec le Maître; c'est ce qui a fait de ma vie, je vous le confie, un Ciel anticipé: croire qu'un Être qui s'appelle Amour habite en nous à tout instant du jour et de la nuit et qu'Il nous demande de vivre en société avec Lui").

eternal happiness in the infinite. Thus, Elizabeth uses apophaticism to show eschatological reality.[128]

Here, an attempt can be made to systematize the answer to the question of what function negative theology plays in the works of Elizabeth of the Trinity. For that purpose, one can reproduce her way of thinking, summarizing it as follows: the Carmelite:

- borrows the apophatic concepts from the history of theology;
- uses them as God's name, the name of Christ;
- uses them to describe the way of God coming to a man – in the mystery of the Incarnation, the Eucharist, God's dwelling in the human interior;
- uses them to describe the depths of a man's inner being, the mystery of human being, which bears "God's image";
- uses them to expresses the eschatological perspective, the end of a man's fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the Trinity.

Thus, it can be said that apophaticism, which strictly refers to God, in Elizabeth's mysticism – in a sense – broadens its scope and begins to refer also to the mystery of the interiority of a man, to the depths of Christian experience of a man – to their thoughts, decisions and feelings (thus, Elizabeth continues the well-known theme of negative theology, which can be found in, e.g., Gregory of Nyssa). For through the union with Christ-Bridegroom, a man becomes the dwelling place of the Infinite and moves toward living in the Infinite.

There are some philosophical traits in Elizabeth's apophaticism; however, its roots are primarily in God's revelation contained in the Bible. It has the following dimensions:

- Christocentric – with incarnational, soteriological and ecclesial overtones; emphasizing the mystery of the Incarnation, Redemption (co-dying with Christ and moving toward glory in the Resurrection), as well as the mystery of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ;
- nuptial – relating to the mystery of spousal love with God;
- sentimental – expressing awe, the intensity of mystical feelings – awe, admiration, worship.

A doubt arises here as to whether, through such context, Elizabeth did not change the content of apophatic expressions, giving them a predicative character. Is that a continuation and development of apophatic thought, or *de facto* shift to cataphatic theology? Or perhaps it is simply a mixture of apophatic and cataphatic language – more or less deliberate? The Carmelite, although she was not a theologian,

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128 See DR 17 ("Puisque mon âme est un ciel où je vis en attendant «la Jérusalem céleste», il faut que ce ciel chante aussi la gloire de l'Eternel, rien que la gloire de l'Eternel"; cf. Hbr 12:22).

consciously used theological expressions, did not want to change them, tried to use them to describe her own experience and faithfully follow the Bible and the teaching of the Church. It seems that with such approach, Elizabeth:

- protects apophaticism from turning into extreme agnosticism that suspends any judgment about God and doubts whether anything true can be said about him at all;
- emphasizes the direct connection of apophaticism with mystical experience and intuitive knowledge;
- protects apophaticism from the error of treating mystical experience as impersonal, or extremely subjective;
- complements the sometimes *stricte* apophatic formulations, although by doing so, she happens to depart from classical negative theology;
- broadens the horizons of apophaticism – which no longer concerns only God, but also his mysteries – including human existence;
- frees it from the wrongly understood apophaticism, presenting God as the one who always remains a Mystery, living in a man.

Elizabeth harmoniously combines apophaticism with cataphatic theology, as well as with symbolic theology, mainly nuptial one, and thus the truth about God's transcendence and immanence takes on a unique existential character for her. In this context, one may ask whether the Carmelite's combination of the apophatic and nuptial dimensions does not bring her closer in thinking to Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), to his thought structure known as the unity of opposites (Lat. *coincidentia oppositorum*), i.e. characteristic statements being in opposition to each other and serving to "express inexpressible truths."[129] In the theological sketches written by Elizabeth, one can find the following contradictory expressions: indescribable and describable God; the Lonely God and the Trinity; distance and relationship with God; similarity or complete dissimilarity to God; infinity and finitude; the darkness of faith and the light of God; outer life and inner experience;[130] etc. In this perspective, Elizabeth seeks to show that the unchanging and ineffable God is not indifferent to creation, but infinitely involved in the fate of people.[131]

It should also be mentioned – as Christian-Marie Michel rightly does – that the main Guide in spiritual life and theological reflection for Elizabeth was the Holy Spirit,[132] which is why she remained herself – essentially independent in her mystical experience from other authors, and therefore original. She stuck to the Bible and Tradition, and thanks to this – as Eduardo Sanz de Miguel points out – she managed

129 Cf. Borriello, "Il linguaggio mistico," 163.
130 Louf, "Élisabeth de la Trinité et Ruusbroec," 61.
131 Cf. Perrier, *Tu es maison*, 310.
132 Michel, *Le Ciel sur la terre*, 111.

to overcome any forms of reductionism of spirituality of her era (e.g. proposed by Jansenism).[133] Elizabeth received from God the grace of spontaneous self-transcendence, awareness of the limitations of her experience and not confusing it with God. It seems that thanks to this she was able to radically reject all subjectivity[134] and remain with a simple heart close to the Heart of God (Fr. *cœur à cœur*).[135]

What is valuable is how the Carmelite from Dijon was able to combine the language of systematic theology with the mystical language – metaphorical, symbolic, emotional.[136] She "dressed" the personal, subjective and inexpressible mystical experience in apophatic expressions, which she "warmed" with nuptial language of high emotional temperature. She thus understood the theological tradition she encountered, as well as the religious culture in which she grew up, as both a heritage and a task.[137] All her theological sketches served to convey the truth that God's eternal plan for creation is dynamic, that the Father constantly seeks to shape man in the image of his Son (cf. Rom 8:29),[138] and that this is accomplished through the work of the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth does not define the limits of this development,[139] but, following St. Paul, writes that before the creation of the world, people were chosen by the Father in Christ to be "holy and blameless in His sight," "to the praise of his glorious grace" (see Eph 1:4–6).[140] The beauty of the mystery of this eternal plan of God – dating back to the time "before the creation of the world," already realized here on earth through union with the Divine Bridegroom (Fr. *Époux*),[141] and fulfilled in the world to come – was precisely what Elizabeth sought to express in apophatic language.

* * *

In the postmodern world, which can be described in a way as "post-intellectual," as it is often reluctant to make clear divisions or analytical definitions,[142] can *via negativa* lead to the refinement of thought, to purification.[143] The mysticism of Elizabeth of the Trinity seeks to combine philosophy and theology, as well as objective truths

133 Sanz de Miguel, *Santa Isabel*, 133.
134 Peñalba, "Teología," 252.
135 This expression is often used by Elizabeth: see, for example, L 138; 161; 270; P 55; J 135.
136 See Miczyński, *La cristologia esistenziale*, 387.
137 This understanding of culture – as a heritage and a task – was strongly emphasized by St. John Paul II in his teaching; see Kowalczyk, *…lecz aby świat zbawić*, 405–406.
138 See, for example, CF 12; CF 27; CF 30; GV 9; DR 1; DR 14.
139 It seems that any attempt to provide a measure of spiritual development would always be associated with the risk of entering into excessive and inadequate schematism; cf. Chmielewski, *101 pytań*, 27–28.
140 See, for example, CF 22; CF 23; GV 12; DR 23.
141 P 73, *4*.
142 Cf. Nadbrzeżny, *Filozofia zbawienia*, 17.
143 Cf. Mortley, "The Via Negativa," 590.

with subjective experience. It is a testimony of how one can appreciate the search of previous generations, and at the same time follow one's own path towards the Truth, towards the Mystery of Being.

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Understanding the Catholic Notion of Redemptive Suffering in a Contemporary Context

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Abstract: Although the Catholic Church nowadays still officially values the ideas of self-sacrifice and the redemptive nature of suffering, academically, there exists a tendency to adapt these ideas to modern values. With the advancement of medical technology, the pursuit of health predominates the mindset of modern people and the practice of redemptive suffering turns out to be an outdated or even ridiculous idea. At the societal level, it is a problem concerning the incompatibility between Catholic dogmas and secular values. At the individual level, it is a question of believing these "empirically unbelievable" religious doctrines without being in a curious form of schizophrenia and insincerity. This paper attempts to examine the difficulties in understanding the Catholic notion of redemptive suffering in the twenty-first century. We attempt to demonstrate that the unintelligibility of this notion lies not in the idea of the willing sacrifice of a person for another human being; rather, it is more concerned with the content and way of suffering, as well as the explanation offered for it. We then suggest that taking the "supernatural Catholic worldview" seriously is an important condition to attain a deeper understanding of the notion of redemptive suffering. Lastly, we will examine whether the notion lacks contemporary significance by looking into some cases in the Catholic communities nowadays.

Keywords: redemptive suffering, Catholicism, human suffering, devotional practice, salvation, spirituality

That Jesus died on the cross for the salvation of humankind is a basic belief accepted in every major Christian tradition. But for Catholics, Christ's salvific or redemptive suffering extends also to every Christian insofar as he or she willingly offers up his or her suffering in union with the Passion of Christ. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994), it is stated that "'the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery' is offered to all men. He calls his disciples to 'take up [their] cross and follow [him],' for 'Christ also suffered for [us], leaving [us] an example so that [we] should follow in his steps.' In fact Jesus desires to associate with his redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries."[1] Such a notion of redemptive suffering, with its emphasis on the partnership of Christians, if taken seriously, would at once put Catholicism in a bizarre position in contemporary society. The reason is clear, because contrary to the conventional worldview,

1 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 618.

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suffering is viewed not as an impediment to one's living, but as something valuable for the salvation of souls.

In the Holy Year of Redemption, Pope John Paul II addressed the Catholic meaning of human suffering with special emphasis on the redemptive nature of suffering in his apostolic letter, *Salvifici Doloris*.[2] In the letter, the Pope, puts forth a profound analysis of redemptive suffering, with an emphasis on urging Catholics to approach or face human suffering in terms of its redemptive nature. In the history of the Catholic Church, there has been quite a number of believers who have imitated Christ and practiced redemptive suffering throughout their lives. A question may be raised at this point: How is it possible that suffering, particularly innocent suffering, is not viewed as evidence against the existence of an omnipotent and all-loving God but rather a positive way to overcome evil and human adversity?

In fact, the problem concerning the difficulty in making sense of redemptive suffering in relation to everyday life arises mainly in the modern era. Before the Reformation, Christians generally considered self-sacrifice an important principle guiding their way of living, and the Church was seen "as a community of suffering, sacrifice and grace."[3] Although the Catholic Church nowadays still officially values the ideas of self-sacrifice and the redemptive nature of suffering, in the relevant theological discourse, as well as in everyday religious practice, there is a tendency to try to modify these ideas to fit the values and ways of modern life, especially after the Second Vatican Council.

Along with the advancement of modern medical technology, the pursuit of health becomes a predominant idea in our time, and suffering, illness and bodily defects are symptoms or signs of failure in human life.[4] As such, the Catholic conception of human suffering, particularly the practice of redemptive suffering, becomes an outdated or even ridiculous idea. Some feminists, such as Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, claim that to give human suffering a salvific meaning is nothing more than a way to glorify suffering and an exploitation of the oppressed.[5]

Besides the above-mentioned medical viewpoint, there is another factor that makes it difficult to understand the concept of redemptive suffering. It pertains to the attitude towards taking the supernatural or sacred elements of religion seriously in everyday life. The Western secularization process in modern social development is very much a process in which people are gradually getting rid of the influence of

2 John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*.
3 For further discussion of this issue, see Amato, *Victims and Values*, ch. 3.
4 For further discussion of the modern medical viewpoint on human suffering, see the following works: Cassell, "Suffering and Human Dignity," 15–30; Thibault, "Activating the Resources of the Soul," 245–253; and Shuman – Meador, *Heal Thyself*.
5 Brown – Parker, "For God," 2.

the supernatural or sacred aspects of religion on people's lives.[6] The same happens in the relevant academic field. From the early development of sociological theorizing to the present-day religious studies, one of the main goals is to adopt an objective perspective to explain the sacred aspect of religious phenomena in secular terms.[7] As such, the supernatural, transcendental or sacred elements of Christianity have been greatly undermined or eliminated.[8] It is in this sense that the practice of redemptive suffering, which encourages Catholics to offer their suffering for known and unknown beneficiaries, is being questioned.

This paper attempts to examine the problem and difficulties in understanding the Catholic notion of redemptive suffering in the contemporary world. To start, we will go through some relevant scholarly works about redemptive suffering, in an attempt to highlight some major research approaches to this topic in the related academic field. After this, we will move on to the difficulties in understanding redemptive suffering in the present-day world. We argue that the unintelligibility of this notion lies not in the idea of the willing sacrifice of a person for another human being; rather, it is more concerned with the content and way of suffering, as well as the explanation offered for it. We will then proceed to outlining the historical development of this Catholic notion and suggest that taking the "supernatural Catholic worldview" seriously is an important factor in attaining a deeper understanding of redemptive suffering. In the conclusion, we will examine whether it is still possible for contemporary Catholics to make sense of the redemptive nature of human suffering.

1. Review of the Concept of Redemptive Suffering in the Related Academic Field

In almost all the major Christian traditions, it is generally agreed that the salvation of human beings is both a gift from God and the task of human beings. They mainly differ in the balance of these two aspects.[9] Both Protestants and Catholics accept the view that the salvation of souls through Jesus' death on the cross, being a magnificent grace from God, is the foundational belief of Christianity. However, their

6 Charles Taylor offers an original and insightful discussion of this secularization process in his book, *A Secular Age*.

7 For further discussion of this issue, see the following works: Wiebe, "Religious Studies," 98–124; Kitagawa, "The History of Religions," 121–143; Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*.

8 Jean Borella (*The Sense*, 23–30) has given an incisive analysis on the loss of Christian faith under the influence of modernism.

9 For further elaboration on this issue, see Olson, *The Mosaic*, ch. 12.

different understandings of the salvation doctrine in part give rise to diversity within the Christian community concerning the interpretation of redemptive suffering.

Simply put, for many Protestant churches, justification of the sinner is a once and for all process. When one believes in God and is baptized under the authority of the Church, one could be saved by Christ and gain eternal life after death. The redemption of Christ is wholly and entirely a gift of God's grace that cannot be earned.[10] But for a Catholic, the process of conversion of human beings lasts a lifetime. This means that the salvation of soul requires the baptized person to participate in the Catholic liturgy and be perseverant in abiding by the commandments of God during his or her whole life. In this sense, the sacrament of Baptism is regarded as an initiation of the life-long work of sanctification of the believer.[11] Catholics believe that human beings could join in the redemption work of God and, as such, attain the salvation of their own and others' souls on earth and in purgatory. In other words, in Catholicism, the notion of redemptive suffering is not confined to the crucifixion of Jesus, but can also be applied to the suffering of ordinary Christians.[12] This means that one can share the redemptive value of Christ's suffering by offering one's suffering up to God in a willing or even joyful manner.[13] Cardinal Avery Dulles explains that such a joyful manner is considered the most sublime Christian response to human suffering, as Catholics "suffer with joy because affliction brings them into closer union with their crucified Lord, and enables them to participate in the expiatory sufferings that he accepted for the redemption of the world."[14] In this sense, suffering becomes something positive, embraced by true followers of Christ.

In his book, *Saved from Sacrifice. A Theology of the Cross*, S. Mark Heim further points out that for many people, redemptive suffering is "entirely objectionable, a dark brew of self-abnegation, violence, and abuse. They contend that belief in the redemptive power of Jesus' death amounts to a masochistic idealization of suffering. Saved by blood, Christians are charter bound to glorify sacrifice and to encourage the oppressed to embrace their misery 'in imitation of Christ.'"[15] For many people nowadays, this seems to be a tailor-made criticism for the notion of redemptive suffering. To uphold such an idea of sacrifice may give people the feeling of absurdity because it is irreconcilable with contemporary value beliefs, such as the ideas of

10 Olson, *The Mosaic*, 282–284.

11 For further elaboration on this point, see Hahn, "Come to the Father," 75–76.

12 For many of the Protestants, on the other hand, the notion of redemptive suffering is applied to the Passion of Christ only. For further discussion of this issue, see VandenBerg, "Redemptive Suffering," 394–411; and Lebacqz, "Redemptive Suffering Redeemed," 262–274.

13 The offering of pain and suffering as devotion to God has been a long tradition in Catholicism. For details, see the following works: Mowbray, *Pain and Suffering*, ch. 3; Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 22–25; and O'Connell, "The Roman Catholic Tradition," 121.

14 Dulles, "Divine Providence," 334.

15 Heim, *Saved from Sacrifice*, 3. Indeed, Heim here only expresses the feminist objection to the notion of redemptive suffering.

autonomy and self-fulfillment.[16] Further, this also elicits and intensifies the perennial question concerning the incompatibility between human suffering and the existence of an omnibenevolent God in Christianity.

Compared to other theological topics, academic literature on this subject matter is relatively thin, even within the Catholic academic circle. In what follows, we shall briefly review some relevant academic writings so as to highlight some major research approaches to the concept of redemptive suffering.

One research route, widely, perhaps implicitly, taken by Protestant scholars, aims at confining the issue of redemptive suffering solely to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In her paper "Redemptive Suffering: Christ's Alone," Mary VandenBerg exemplifies this position well.[17] With her detailed analysis of the definition of "redemption" presented in the Bible, VandenBerg claims that there is no evidence in the Scriptures that human suffering is redemptive in nature. Redemption can only be accomplished by God, and thus redemptive suffering is only applicable to the situation of Christ. To VandenBerg, any other correlation of this concept with human suffering will only lead to improper acceptance of unjust suffering. On the other hand, some scholars attempt to employ the notion of redemptive suffering, including both the suffering of Christ and that of the human kind, to answer the Christian problem of evil and suffering at the philosophical and conceptual level.

In her paper "The Problem of Evil," Eleonore Stump has developed a theodicy of redemptive suffering through a series of rigorous logical arguments.[18] Stump criticizes the classic approaches to the problem of evil offered by Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, and John Hick.[19] She argues that these approaches cannot provide a satisfactory answer to the existence of many underserved sufferings. Stump then endeavors to solve the problem through her analysis of three Christian beliefs, with a conclusion that part of the redemptive values of human suffering lies in people's union with God in heaven.[20] In her analysis of the Old Testament story of the two brothers, Cain and Abel (Gen 4:1–16), Stump points out that the problem of evil and suffering is, in fact, God's choice between spiritual loss (Cain's soul) and physical loss (Abel's body) of human beings.[21] Of the two options, at least in the story, the spiritual

16 For further discussion of the academic debate and observation on this topic, see the following works: McGrath, *The Twilight of Atheism*, 145–149, 183–185; Dworkin, *Life's Dominion*; and Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief*.

17 VandenBerg, "Redemptive Suffering," 394–411.

18 Stump, "The Problem of Evil," 392–423. Although Stump does not directly mention the term "redemptive suffering" in her paper, her explanation offered for the existence of moral evil and natural evil does exhibit the features of the redemptive function of human suffering.

19 A concise review of the three scholars' approaches to the problem of evil can be found in Stump's paper, "The Problem of Evil," 393–397.

20 The three Christian beliefs are (1) Adam fell; (2) natural evil entered the world as a result of Adam's fall; (3) after death, depending on their state at the time of their death, either (a) human beings go to heaven or (b) they go to hell. See Stump, "The Problem of Evil," 398, 415–418.

21 Stump, "The Problem of Evil," 413–415.

gain of human souls outweighed the physical loss of the sufferer;[22] thus, underserved suffering becomes a possible path leading to the redemption of sinners. Stump then maintains that human suffering can only be made sense of when it is explained in terms of its redemptive nature.

Similarly to Stump, Marilyn McCord Adams also sees the notion of redemptive suffering as an effective approach for Christians to face the problem of evil. Adams' analysis in the paper "Redemptive Suffering: A Christian Approach to the Problem of Evil" is also analytical and conceptual in nature.[23] Adams proposes a "Martyrdom Model" as the paradigm of redemptive suffering.[24] She explains that in the face of the rejection from the hard-hearted sinners, God has employed a costly approach, the death of the martyrs, to redeem more souls. In the suffering of the martyrs, Adams believes that not only the sufferer benefited, but both the onlookers and the persecutors also received redemption. It is in this sense that the redemptive nature of human suffering is revealed.

Both Stump and Adams attempt to deal with the incompatibility problem between suffering and the existence of an all-loving Christian God at the conceptual level. However, regardless of the credibility of their arguments, insofar as horrendous, especially innocent suffering is concerned, for many people, it is the real frustration at the existential level that matters. This point has been nicely narrated by Fyodor Dostoevsky in his great novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*. Ivan Karamazov, one of the major characters in the story, raises the existential question about the inducement of goodness at the expense of others' suffering or innocent suffering.[25] Ivan's major questions are: in what sense an omnipotent and all-loving God could justify his plan of allowing sufferings, especially gratuitous sufferings, in this world? How could one accept his or her existence in a world that was redeemed, for example, through the horrendous suffering of an innocent child?

For people like Ivan, no matter how great the goodness being induced from the existence of evil and suffering, it cannot compensate for the suffering that is taking place right at the present moment. As suggested by Brian Hebblethwaite, Ivan "was not concerned about the consistency of a set of ideas which Christians project upon the universe. He was genuinely angry with the Christian God."[26] The situation is unintelligible to Ivan exactly because it is not characterized as insane or masochistic.

22 Stump ("The Problem of Evil," 410–411) explains this point with reference to the following Christian belief: "[O]n Christian doctrine death is not the ultimate evil or even the ultimate end, but rather a transition between one form of life and another. From a Christian point of view, the thing to be avoided at all costs is not dying, but dying badly; what concerns the Christian about death is not that it occurs but that the timing and mode of death be such as to constitute the best means of ensuring that state of soul which will bring a person to eternal union with God."

23 Adams, "Redemptive Suffering," 248–267.

24 Adams, "Redemptive Suffering," 257–261.

25 Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Book 5, chs. 4 and 5.

26 Hebblethwaite, *Evil*, 13.

It is unintelligible because the suffering is allowed by an all-loving and all-mighty God. To these people, the pain and torture in human suffering outweigh any goodness induced by the act of offering suffering for the purpose of redemption.

The foregoing analysis demonstrates an important point about the meaning of the Catholic notion of redemptive suffering. On the other hand, to some scholars, perhaps, the conception of redemptive suffering can only be rendered intelligible through adjusting its meaning to the empirical world. In his paper "Redemptive Suffering and Paul's Thorn in the Flesh," Ronald Russell attempts to use the notion of redemptive suffering as a way to respond to human suffering in the context of modern medical ethics, hospice care, and the issue of euthanasia.[27] For Russell, the redemptive aspect or meaning of suffering is to be understood in terms of the "experience to educate or improve the sufferer."[28] He uses the biblical analysis of "Paul's thorn in the flesh" to show that Paul has gained spiritual improvement in the trial of his "thorn" (2 Cor 12:7–10) This means that Paul's experience with suffering from the thorn was redemptive in that "it brought divine education or improvement to him."[29] Russell considers the traditional Church teaching of the redemptive function of human suffering for the souls in purgatory as an "ancient Church theology." He then further points out that such a traditional definition of the notion may undermine the acute situation of the sufferer at the experiential level.[30] It is quite clear that Russell dismisses the mystical or supernatural aspect of redemptive suffering in his discussion.

Another scholar, William J. O'Malley, in his book *Redemptive Suffering. Understanding Suffering, Living with It, Growing through It*, addresses the notion of redemptive suffering in an everyday context.[31] The discussion in this book is carried out almost wholly from a mundane perspective or on the basis of some common sense knowledge of suffering, leaving aside the supernatural aspect of the issue in Catholicism. Although the author is a Jesuit, he does not take many of the official teachings of the Catholic Church into account. For example, he expresses a tone of disbelief in the doctrine of original sin and takes the idea of the atonement of Jesus on the cross for the salvation of souls rather lightly.[32]

In both Russell and O'Malley's works, their efforts are mainly aimed at reinterpreting the notion or practice of redemptive suffering in a way that is compatible with the modern way of living at the expense of its supernatural attributes. However, these attributes can hardly be ignored as long as our discussion is set within

27 Russell, "Redemptive Suffering," 559–570.
28 Russell, "Redemptive Suffering," 568.
29 Russell, "Redemptive Suffering," 569.
30 Russell, "Redemptive Suffering," 562–563.
31 O'Malley, *Redemptive Suffering*.
32 O'Malley, *Redemptive Suffering*, 20, 35.

the Catholic tradition. The exclusion of supernatural elements may distort the full meaning of redemptive suffering in the Catholic faith.

We see that in the long history of the Catholic Church, the act of redemptive suffering takes place in the life of actual historical and contemporary figures. There has been quite a number of believers who practiced redemptive suffering and believed that it may lead to the redemption of other human beings, including people in this world and those in the purgatory. This will be the main focus of the last section.

2. The Difficulties in Understanding Redemptive Suffering

Let us consider a real case that took place in modern times in America. Audrey Santo (1984–2007), a Catholic girl, at the age of three, had a swimming pool accident at home. Since then, she remained in a coma and a number of miracles allegedly happened in her home. Her case attracted wide attention in America, and her supporters consider her a "victim soul."[33] In her analysis on the relation between Catholicism and disability, Christine James explains that "the victim soul is a person who believes that he or she suffers as Christ suffered for others, and as such, he or she gains closeness to Christ as the supreme victim, and his or her suffering renews the redemption that Christ's suffering secured for the faithful."[34] To many Catholics, James continues, "the connection between the idea of victim souls as redemptive figures and saints as intercessory figures is still very much a part of Catholic thought, orthodox or not."[35] However, a reviewer of the biography of Audrey Santo writes: "This was the book that finally made me decide to leave the Catholic Church once and for all. How any intelligent human being can have the slightest respect for a God that supposedly gets kicks out of the senseless suffering of a child is beyond me …. This book is a prime example of the utter morbidity and diseased spirituality of any religion that feeds off guilt, shame and sado-masochistic impulse."[36]

It is hard to bring forth any empirical evidence or conceptual arguments to defend the act of redemptive suffering against this kind of criticism or response. If we take a closer look at the issue, we can see that it is not about the "truthfulness" of the matter, but about the "reasonableness" of acting as such. What is the "rationale" behind this act? Is the "rationale" reasonable? Can we explain redemptive suffering

33 For a succinct discussion of Audrey Santo's case, see Kane, "She offered herself up," 80–119. For further detail, see Petrisko, *In God's Hands*; and also the film, *Audrey's Life. Voice of a Silent Soul*, directed by John Clote Alabama: EWTN 1996).

34 James, "Catholicism and Disability," 173.

35 James, "Catholicism and Disability," 174.

36 "Troy from California," online reviewer of *In God's Hands* for http://www.amazon.com, 1999. This quotation is borrowed from Kane, "She offered herself up," 89.

in a reasonable way with reference to concrete human existence or experience? A reasonable explanation here does not necessarily intended to convince people to believe in redemptive suffering. Rather, it is an attempt to show the rationale behind the practice of redemptive suffering and thus help to articulate it more clearly in relation to everyday human experience or activity.

It is true that in real life there are situations in which a person willingly suffers for the sake of another person. One good example is a mother praying to the Buddha to heal her son at the cost of her own life or any other suffering. However, the unintelligibility of the Catholic notion of redemptive suffering lies not in the idea of the willing sacrifice of a person for another human being. Rather, it is more concerned with the content and way of suffering, as well as the explanation offered for it. The question is whether it makes sense for an omnipotent, omniscient and omnibenevolent God to allow the offering of suffering for the redemption of souls.

In order to clarify the problem in question, we shall delineate three levels of redemptive suffering in Catholicism. First, suffering can redeem the sufferer's own soul. To some extent, this level of suffering may be understood as a way to purify the sufferer's soul so as to obtain salvation in some sense.[37] The second level involves suffering for other people, for examples, suffering for one's family member, one's country or even for the whole world. It is seen as an attainment of a higher stage in Catholic spirituality in that one is able to sacrifice oneself for the sake of others. For both the first and the second levels, people generally have no problem making sense of the situation with reference to other religious traditions or social and moral norms. The issue in question lies mainly at the third level, the unique religious practice and belief in Catholicism. This level includes suffering for the salvation of people, either known or unknown to the sufferer, who are on earth, in the purgatory or who have not even been born yet.

As noted, if it is a situation involving the sacrifice of oneself for a relative or one's country, people may find it easier to understand the reasonableness of the action, irrespective of whether they agree with it or not. In other words, it is a reasonable act to sacrifice oneself for others with visible consequences, such as the removal of physical or mental pain, or saving a person's life or one's country. But in the case of the third level of redemptive suffering described above, it also includes suffering for

37 In Catholicism, the purgative stage presents a continual warfare of the Christian within oneself. It is called a "warfare" because for those with the intention or motivation towards holiness, they will need to fight against human inclination to commit sin throughout the entire lifetime. This is an initial stage when a Christian begins his or her way to spiritual perfection. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (no. 2015), "the way of perfection passes by way of the Cross. There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle. Spiritual progress entails the ascesis and modification that gradually lead to living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes." In the Catholic spiritual tradition, the purgative stage is a preparation period in which the soul of the individual is required to be purified before entering the illuminative and unitive stages. For further discussion of the spiritual tradition in Catholicism, see Aumann, *Christian Spirituality*.

the purpose of saving souls in the afterlife. Furthermore, the sufferer mostly knows nothing about the consequences of his or her sacrifice in a concrete sense.

Apart from the difficulty to make sense of the third level of redemption mentioned above, the unintelligibility of the situation is intensified with regard to its form and way of suffering. In Catholicism, almost any kind of suffering offered to God possesses a salvific function. From a mosquito bite or a minor cold to severe suffering such as terminal illness or the sudden death of a loved one, all this can be used for the redemption of souls. Of all these sufferings, the most incomprehensible and at the same time the severest is perhaps the one which exemplifies Christ's Passion in a lifelong duration. In the history of the Catholic Church, there has been quite a number of people who demonstrated the practice of redemptive suffering in such a way. In some cases, the sufferer may suffer severely in a rather pointless or senseless ways in the eyes of the world.[38] Audrey's suffering demonstrates this last point well. Consider the following passage by Joseph A. Amato:

> Christianity [Catholicism] went beyond representing Christ as a sacrificial scapegoat who atones for wrongs. Instead, it invited its believers, who chose not to defend his friends like John the Baptist, his followers like Peter and Paul, or even himself from injustice, humiliation, and death. Defiant of so much that constitutes human nature, Christianity called its believers to abandon the identities and values they had accumulated through their own pain, labour, suffering, and sacrifice and to join themselves to the single redeeming sacrifice of Christ.[39]

This passage succinctly presents the anti-modern characteristics of the practice of redemptive suffering. It is almost in total conflict with contemporary value beliefs such as the principle of self-determination, pluralism and individualism. Modern society highly values pluralism; it cherishes the development of individual identity in accordance with one's natural disposition and growth after birth. But this form of Catholicism asks its believers to forfeit their individual rights, to align their individual identity to that of Christ, and to seek suffering instead of pleasure. What is the significance of locating this notion of redemptive suffering in the contemporary social context? In what way can Catholics nowadays make sense of it in connection with their daily and religious lives?

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38 In his book, for example, Orsi (*Between Heaven and Earth*, 126) succinctly describes the suffering of a late nineteenth century American Saint, Gemma Galgani (1878–1903): "What was important to her devout–and to Gemma herself–was not merely the pain itself, for all their obvious fascination with Gemma's blood, but that this suffering was for others. Gemma was a 'victim soul.' … The blood that poured down Gemma's face, the pain in her head and side, the anxiety of demonic attacks, were all signs of Gemma's generous and capacious love."

39 Amato, *Victims and Values*, 43.

In his book *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor raises an important question: "Why was it virtually impossible not to believe in God in, say, 1500 in our Western Society, while in 2000 many of us find this not only easy, but even inescapable?"[40] Taylor explains that the modern world's "condition of belief" is greatly different from that of the premodern world.[41] Similar in some way to Taylor's line of reasoning, we shall in what follows outline some conditions of the modern world which constitute the difficulties to understand the concept of redemptive suffering.

After the Second Vatican Council, many Catholics, especially theologians, believed that the so-called reconciliation between Catholicism and modern social values was becoming an attempt to adapt or adjust Catholicism to the norms of modern society.[42] Such an attempt, as shown in past decades, inevitably tends to undermine the supernatural, transcendental or sacred elements of Catholicism.[43] Contemporary values such as pluralism and the principle of self-determination are gradually being used as standards for assessing the value and significance of doctrines in contemporary society. Here, supernatural elements are being replaced with empirical references.

The question raised by Rudolf Bultmann in the mid-twentieth century already clearly demonstrated this difficulty: "Can Christian preaching expect modern man to accept the mythical view of the world as true? To do so … could have only one result–a curious form of schizophrenia and insincerity. It would mean accepting a view of the world in our faith and religion which we should deny in our everyday life."[44] Unlike that of the pre-modern times, everyday life of contemporary Catholics has nearly nothing to do with the intervention of God or of angels and demons. The supernatural realm withdraws from the front stage. The original sin, for many theologians and scholars, only denotes a would-be or hypothetical existential situation to explain the evilness of human nature, without actual or real meaning.[45] And the same applies to the practice of redemptive suffering. To many people, those supernatural explanations, such as the avoidance of eternal suffering in hell or the salvation of

40 Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 25.

41 Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 28.

42 Though not writing from a Catholic perspective, Margaret R. Miles, in her work *The Image of Practice of Holiness,* warns the reader about the danger of practicing classic Christian devotional manuals in contemporary society. She claims that many authors of these manuals focused too much on the spiritual aspect of human existence. Miles considers it is important to reinterpret the central themes of these teachings so as to adapt them to the contemporary way of living. For a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the situation of the modern Catholic Church, see McCarthy, *The Catholic Tradition.* For a succinct discussion on Vatican Council II, see Bellitto, *Renewing Christianity*, ch. 5.

43 For further discussion of this issue, refer to the following works: Bellitto, *Renewing Christianity*, 207–210. See also Komonchak, "Interpreting the Council," 17–36 and Menozzi, "Opposition to the Council," 325–348.

44 Bultmann, "New Testament," 3–4.

45 For examples, see McFarland, *In Adam's Fall* and O'Malley, *Redemptive Suffering*, 20–23.

the souls in purgatory, no longer appear to be reasonable explanations for the practice of redemptive suffering.

This pattern of faith or, let us say, the belief of Christianity, conceived in the above sense, as Jean Borella puts it, becomes just one kind of ideology available for people to choose from because of the need for a principle to justify normative principles or practices nowadays. In this "Christianity ideology," the identity of a Catholic or Christian is only "defined as the minimal aggregate of beliefs necessary for the moral support of those undertakings imposed by the universal fraternal struggle."[46] Catholicism understood as such has made "the sense of the supernatural" disappear from the human heart. But it is exactly this "sense," claims Borella, that "from the beginning of time kept faithful vigil in our immortal souls, awaiting its illumination by a divine revelation, that sense thanks to which the supernatural could make sense, that eye which looked with unwearied hope for a 'beyond' of heaven and earth, … It is this which is dead, overwhelmed by the din of engine noise and crushed beneath the pall of urban concrete."[47]

The above demonstrates the dilemma of contemporary Catholicism. At the societal level, it is concerned with the incompatibility between Catholic dogmas and modern social values. At the individual level, it is about believing these "empirically unbelievable" religious doctrines and supernatural claims without being in a curious form of schizophrenia and insincerity. The issue at stake lies not in the "content of the truth itself," but the "faith that these truths demand."[48] In other words, it is faith that may help a Catholic resolve the apparent contradiction between the supernatural Catholic worldview and the "fact" or "reality" of mundane affairs in a secular world. This holds true for the matter of redemptive suffering. But unfortunately, "faith" can hardly be established or developed through mere theoretical discourse. Insofar as Catholicism is concerned, faith can only be obtained through providential intervention and the co-operation of the individual person. For Catholicism, this so-called "co-operation," to a large extent, consists in the person's virtuous practices of imitating Christ, especially through sharing in Christ's suffering. But the emphasis on rational thinking at the expense of the sense of the supernatural in religion, and the negative attitude towards suffering are two generally accepted ideas in our time. This largely explains the difficulties in understanding redemptive suffering in contemporary Catholicism.

46 Borella, *The Sense*, 1.
47 Borella, *The Sense*, 26.
48 Borella, *The Sense*, 6.

3. Making Sense of Redemptive Suffering in Catholicism: Past and Present

In his article "On Worldviews," James Olthuis has given the following succinct description of the structure and function of worldviews:

> A worldview (or vision of life) is a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it. This vision need not be fully articulated: it may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned … Nevertheless, this vision is a channel for the ultimate beliefs which give direction and meaning to life. It is the integrative and interpretative framework by which order and disorder are judged; it is the standard by which reality is managed and pursued; it is the set of hinges on which all our everyday thinking and doing turns.[49]

The notion of a worldview so defined serves "both descriptive and prescriptive functions."[50] It is descriptive in that it consists of a set of fundamental beliefs that possess truth value, although they are hardly verifiable in an empirical way. Prescriptively, it is not just a way of understanding reality but also a way of living and making value judgements. At the descriptive level, the Catholic worldview contains a rich account of the creation, organization and development of the world, with the central theme of the fall of humanity and the redemption brought forth by Christ. At the prescriptive level, it comprises the rules and commands that guide human behavior; and it is in this respect that the act of redemptive suffering is considered as an important way for human beings to gain back salvation.

Simply put, there are three important themes that greatly distinguish the worldview of Catholicism from that of the other world religious traditions. These are: first, the sin of Adam destroyed the innocence and purity inherent in human nature; second, this original sin was then passed on to all mankind, and thus human beings lost the state of innocence and are inclined to sin; third, Satan's seduction led to the fall of man, and henceforth he, together with other fallen angels, lays down serious obstacles to block man's way back to God. All this conveys an important message in Christianity – that it is very difficult for human beings to fight against sin and attain perfection in this world. It appears that for Christians, many of the events that took place in the Bible and human history, for example, the intervention of Yahweh in Israel history, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and later Christians bringing forth different types of spiritual practice, have one important purpose: to teach human beings how to live a genuine Christian life.[51]

49 Olthuis, "On Worldviews," 29.
50 This is the comment on Olthuis' description given by David K. Naugle (*Worldview*, 349).
51 Aumann, *Christian Spirituality*, 2–3.

In the history of the Catholic Church, this worldview, together with the conception of redemptive suffering, has been an important element in the formation of the identity of a Catholic. This has been vividly demonstrated in the Church history through the lives of a number of Catholics, especially those considered saints. One major purpose of this paper is to attempt to demonstrate certain essential conditions for understanding redemptive suffering. We assume that one must engage with some proper practice in order to grasp the meaning of this notion. This is the crucial question. It raises an important point concerning the foundation of practice in making sense of redemptive suffering. However, it should be cautioned that the concept of practice here is to be understood in a rather broad sense. It includes: the proper life practice such as that carried out by Catholic saints; some sort of sympathetic attitude towards the practice of redemptive suffering; or just some kind of imagination with a basic understanding of the relevant religious tradition required for the reader. In other words, "practice" here refers to a broad sphere of human activity, ranging from everyday life to moral spiritual participation.

In what follows, we shall outline the historical development of the notion of redemptive suffering in Catholicism. Then, we will examine a few examples concerning the practice and understanding of the notion among lay Catholics in the present day. Through these examples, we shall observe how a deep faith in the Catholic worldview and a serious attitude towards one's religious life may enhance one's understanding of the redemptive nature of human suffering.

James Hitchcock, in his book *History of the Catholic Church. From the Apostolic Age to the Third Millennium*, provides a concise description of how the suffering of Christ became a distinctive feature of Christianity. He writes, "[p]art of the genius of Christianity was that it did not shrink from the horrible way in which Jesus' public life ended but actually placed it at the very center of the faith. The symbol of the cross did not become ubiquitous for several centuries, but St. Paul already boasted that, even though the cross was an obstacle to nonbelievers, 'We preach Christ, and Him crucified.'"[52] This passage clearly demonstrates the unique characteristics of the element of suffering in Christianity. It also shows that the "horrible" death of Jesus on the cross represents an important point of orientation for future Christians to carry on their lives and sustain their faith. In the New Testament, Jesus mentioned his sacrifice many times and stressed that taking up one's cross every day should be the goal of his followers.[53] By saying this, Jesus foretold the fierce persecution that would befall his followers after his death and in the coming centuries. The sacrifice

52 Hitchcock, *History of the Catholic Church*, 23.

53 Jesus revealed his suffering three times: The first time refers to Matt 16:21–23; Mark 8:31–33; Luke 9:22; the second time refers to Matt 17:22–23; Mark 9:30–32; Luke 9:44–45; and for the third time, see Matt 20:17–19; Mark 10:32–34; Luke 18:31–34. On the point of carrying one's cross as Christian responsibility, see Matt 10:38; Mark 8:34 and Luke 14:27.

of the Christian martyrs then became the foundation of Christianity and it is also in this sense that the redemptive nature of human suffering is revealed.[54]

In the first few centuries of the Church's development, the Church Fathers further extended the meaning of martyrdom from the instance of shedding one's blood to a lifelong practice of asceticism and monasticism. St. Clement of Alexandria claimed that "we call martyrdom perfection, not because the man comes to the end of his life as others, but because he has exhibited the perfect work of love."[55] St. Anthony of the Desert, a pioneer of hermit life, developed ways of suffering for Christ by abandoning himself to live and pray in the harsh desert environment. Put differently, this is to be regarded as a kind of "lifelong martyrdom" and "a continuation of the traditional martyrdom," in which Christians endure great dryness and achieve perfection by alienating themselves from the mundane world.[56] At this stage, Christians no longer sought immediate death from their persecutors, but instead, they came to an understanding of the kind of lifelong martyrdom in striving for perfection and the devotion of oneself to God and His Church.[57]

With the rapid development of civilization and the expansion of the Church, the understanding of redemptive suffering and its relation to the genuine Christian life became much more subtle and internalized in the Middle Ages.[58] For example, St. Bernard of Clairvaux placed great emphasis on how to love God. He insisted that Christians can only achieve perfection and learn how to love God by imitating the life of Christ.[59] In doing so, one must be prepared for enduring severe suffering throughout their life. In the thirteenth century, St. Francis of Assisi offered a new kind of Catholic spirituality for the Christians of his time. His way to suffer for Christ through living an austere life of poverty and humility became the paradigm of the Catholic saint at that time.[60] To a medieval Catholic, almost any kind of suffering and despair could have had a certain salvific meaning in the ultimate or eternal end.[61] It is also in this sense that suffering no longer remains a misery in the human world. For even trivial pains, such as papercuts or insect bites, could be dedicated to the salvation of souls.[62]

54 Hitchcock, *History of the Catholic Church*, 50–53, 55. In fact, it should be noted that the idea of redemptive suffering has already been introduced in the Old Testament. The Book of Isaiah mentioned the concept of a "suffering servant" in "The Fourth Song of the Suffering Servant." (Isa 53:2–12). Josef Ton has lucidly explained this point in his book *Suffering*, 13.

55 Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* IV, 4.

56 Hitchcock, *History of the Catholic Church*, 74.

57 Amato, *Victims and Values*, 47.

58 Amato, *Victims and Values*, 56.

59 Aumann, *Christian Spirituality*, 97. For St. Bernard of Clairvaux's teaching of Christian love, see his works: *On Loving God* (*De Diligendo Deo*) and *Sermons on Song of Song* (*Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*).

60 Weinstein – Bell, *Saints and Society*, 50.

61 Amato, *Victims and Values*, 56. For a detailed analysis of the medieval conception of human suffering, see Mowbray, *Pain and Suffering*, ch. 3.

62 Mowbray, *Pain and Suffering*, 72–79.

During the Reformation period, Protestants challenged the Catholic teaching stating that the Church over-emphasized the influence of human effort on the redemption of souls.[63] However, it is also right at that time that many Catholics, including Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, chose to stay in the corrupted religious orders in an attempt to renew the Church as well as to uphold the apostolic tradition.[64] These Catholic reformers noticed that suffering was inevitable in Christian spiritual growth, and thus the spirit of suffering was again promulgated as one prominent feature within those newly formed religious orders. For example, the Discalced Carmelites in Spain, one of the leading new religious orders formed from the old order of Carmelites, advocated that suffering, self-denial and poverty were essential elements of cloistered life in addition to the strict discipline of prayer.[65]

The term "victim soul" originated in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The concept of "victim soul" is in fact closely connected to the notion of redemptive suffering. Paula M. Kane explains that the term is described in various religious writings and spiritual works as a way to "plead with God to make reparation for the suffering of others, the victim soul voluntarily embraces and receives pain."[66] And the act of obedient submission of the sufferer coincides with Christ's complete obedience to God in His Passion.[67] In the 1900s, the concept of a victim soul was further formulated and promoted in the Catholic Church. Different religious orders, such as the Benedictines, Jesuits, Franciscans and Passionists, began to promote the concept among their clergy and religious.[68] In the year 1928, Pope Pius XI issued *Miserentissimus Redemptor* to endorse victim spirituality in relation to the theology of reparation and Sacred Heart Devotion. In fact, throughout the twentieth-century, victim spirituality understood as above was widely developed in the European and U.S. Catholic parishes.[69] Many Catholics believe that some human beings are selected as the victim souls whose sufferings are considered "co-redemption with Christ."[70]

In 1984, the Holy Year of Redemption, John Paul II addressed the meaning of human suffering along with the Catholic tradition in his apostolic letter *Salvifici Doloris*.[71] Plantinga praises the Pope's letter for being "a profound meditation on

63 Amato, *Victims and Values*, 58. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, refer to Pelikan's work, *The Christian Tradition*, chs. 1 and 3.

64 For further discussion of the counter-reformation, see Bireley, *The Refashioning*, ch. 2; and Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*.

65 Payne, *The Carmelite Tradition*, xxi–xxxiii.

66 Kane, "She offered herself up," 83.

67 For further discussion of this point, see Maguire – Mulhern, "Reparation," 128–130.

68 Kane, "She offered herself up," 84–85.

69 Kane, "She offered herself up," 86. For a detailed examination of the culture of suffering in American Catholicism, refer to Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth*.

70 Kane, "She offered herself up," 85.

71 For the review on this work, see Echeverria, "The Gospel," 111–147.

suffering and a powerful effort to discern its meaning from a Christian perspective."[72] John Paul's discussion goes further beyond theoretical and conceptual analysis; he is able to provide a vivid narrative of the redemptive nature of suffering within the context of the Sacred Scripture. In addition to the common explanation of suffering in Christianity, such as relating it to evilness and punishment, John Paul II attempts to make prominent the "redemptive nature of suffering." He writes:

> The Redeemer suffered in place of man and for man. Every man has his own share in the Redemption. Each one is also called to share in that suffering through which the Redemption was accomplished. He is called to share in that suffering through which all human suffering has also been redeemed. In bringing about the Redemption through suffering, Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption. Thus each man, in his suffering, can also become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ.[73]

Now we can see that from the crucifixion of Christ onwards, the early Christian martyrs, the "lifelong" martyrdom of the medieval saints, the victim spirituality in the nineteenth century, to Pope John Paul II's *Salvifici Doloris*, all this clearly demonstrates that suffering is an important and essential feature of Christianity. However, on the other hand, it is also the case that nowadays, this "essential feature" becomes more and more distant and insignificant in Catholic circles.

A question may arise at this juncture: Is it possible for a Catholic nowadays to believe firmly in the redemptive nature of human suffering and offer his or her suffering for the redemption of souls? Taylor's words that in the 2000s many of us find disbelief in God "not only easy, but even inescapable"[74] have already given a negative answer to this question. Furthermore, Bultmann's claim that to accept the mythical view (such as the Catholic notion of redemptive suffering) as true is tantamount to "accepting a view of the world in our faith and religion which we should deny in our everyday life"[75] further reinforces Taylor's answer. All these statements suggest that the practice of redemptive suffering, though occupying a vital role in the history of Christianity, belongs to the ancient or medieval era, perhaps without having contemporary significance. In this case, another question may arise. Without actual, concrete examples or communities, what is the point of investing in the project of making sense of redemptive suffering nowadays? This is not a question that can be dealt with in a simple and straightforward way. It involves various issues concerning interpretations of the Christian faith, especially in the post-Vatican II era. A thorough discussion of these issues may require at least the length of another paper.

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72 Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 488, n. 38; 493, n. 46.
73 John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, no. 19.
74 Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 25.
75 Bultmann, "New Testament," 4.

We shall instead conclude this article by looking at the question of whether the practice of redemptive suffering is devoid of actual concrete references and thus lacks contemporary significance. First, we shall consider the case of Chiara Luce Badano (1971–1990), an Italian laywoman who was beatified in 2010 by Pope Benedict XVI.

Chiara Badano, as the only child of Ruggero Badano and Maria Teresa Caviglia, was born on October 29, 1971 in Sassello, a small Ligurian town in northern Italy. Ruggero and Maria raised Chiara with traditional Catholic teachings in a highly religious community where the majority population were churchgoers.[76] Chiara began to take the Bible seriously when she came across the Focolare Movement in 1980.[77] In 1983, during an international congress of the movement, Chiara rediscovered the meaning of "Jesus forsaken," a central theme in the Focolare spirituality, focusing on the role of Christ as the intermediary between man and God, with special attention to the moment when Jesus felt forsaken by the Father on the cross. Michele Zanzucchi explains that "when a member of the Focolare talks about choosing to love Jesus forsaken, they mean that they try to love him in all the difficult circumstances and situations of their lives and the lives of those near to them."[78] By this time, Chiara realized that personal suffering could be offered to God for the unity of human beings both on earth and in heaven.

At the age of seventeen, Chiara was diagnosed with bone cancer (osteogenic sarcoma). This was a critical moment in Chiara's religious life during which she was left in a real quandary about whether or not to accept this suffering obediently. After a short period of struggle, Chiara soon accepted her "task" and decided to offer her suffering to God for the redemption of sinners. She even refused to take morphine to relieve her pain during the treatment process. Chiara explained herself to others as follows: "It [the use of morphine] takes away my lucidity, and all I have to offer Jesus is suffering. That's all I've got left. If I'm not lucid, what sense has my life got?"[79] In the two-year battle with cancer, Chiara gradually attained a deeper understanding of the redemptive nature of her suffering. Once she said to her mother: "Jesus removes my stains with bleach to remove even blackheads, bleach burns. So when I get to Heaven, I will be as white as snow…I have nothing left, but I still have my heart and with that I can still love."[80]

On October 7, 1990, Chiara finally succumbed to cancer. Her full acceptance of cancer as part of God's redemptive work influenced many young Catholics in her

76 Zanzucchi, *Chiara*, 12.

77 The Focolare Movement is a Catholic international organization founded by a Catholic laywoman, Chiara Lubich, in 1943. The organization aims at promoting universal brotherhood among Christian and non-Christian communities.

78 Zanzucchi, *Chiara*, 22.

79 Zanzucchi, *Chiara*, 43.

80 "Chiara *Luce* Badano, a Radiant Life. Last Times," https://www.chiarabadano.org/en/life/#ultimi (access 23.11.2023).

time and ours. On the day of her beatification, September 25, 2010, twenty-five thousand young people attended the ceremony.[81] Chiara's life provided a very "up-to-date" example showing that the practice of redemptive suffering is also possible for Catholics in the twenty-first century.

The findings from the ethnographic field research conducted by Katherine A. Dugan may further expound on this "possibility" of understanding redemptive suffering in today's world. In her fourteen-month field research (2012–2014), Dugan investigated the millennial-generation Catholic devotional practice in the United States. Young missionaries in the Catholic organization DIRECT[82] are taught and instructed with a strict interpretation of the Catholic traditional teachings. Each "gender-segregated small group" of missionaries is assigned to a particular Catholic saint, such as St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Faustina, and St. Gemma.[83] They all read the saints' life stories and learn their virtuous way of living. According to Dugan's observations, the Catholic saints gradually become the role models for these millennials and lead them to the path of sainthood.[84] These "saints to be," as observed by Dugan, commit their lives to practicing a pious Catholic way of living, including the saints' way of suffering for the redemption of souls.[85]

Despite the apparent conflicts between modern ideologies and orthodox Catholic teachings, we can see that traditional Catholic devotionalism, including the practice of redemptive suffering, still plays a vital role for some Catholics nowadays in the cultivation of their identities. As Dugan writes: "Devotionalism exists in contemporary Catholicism, and it does so with reimagined emphases that reflects millennials' cultural and religious context."[86] It appears that making sense of the notion of redemptive suffering, considered as a vital doctrinal concept in the Catholic tradition, could be possible for those who take the Catholic faith seriously and persistently practice virtuous Christian living in the present-day world.

Conclusions

We are aware of the fact that the Catholic worldview and the depiction of redemptive suffering examined in this paper may appear in many ways contrary to

81 Leahy, "A Young People's Saint," 164.
82 DIRECT (Disciples in Relationship Evangelizing Catholics Together) is the pseudonym employed by Dugan in her research to represent the Catholic organization that trains young Catholics to evangelize on American Campuses.
83 Dugan, "St. Gemma," 9.
84 Dugan, "St. Gemma," 9.
85 Dugan, "St. Gemma," 9–11.
86 Dugan, "St. Gemma," 20.

the contemporary notion of knowledge, modern ways of living, and even moral values and social norms. Although this paper is not about the problem of redemptive suffering in the modern social context, we would like to highlight some of the tensions surrounding this issue in modern society.

In our view, there may be three types of responses to the preceding discussion of the Catholic worldview. Firstly, some Catholics may consider this worldview an everlasting truth that is not to be amended or changed in light of any worldly values. However, the upholders of this position have to answer the question brought forth by Bultmann above. Secondly, others may regard this worldview as not reflecting the true belief of Christianity. However, the point is that this worldview not only represented the traditional Catholic point of view, but was also endorsed in some of the documents of the Second Vatican Council, as well as in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. As such, to reject this worldview is tantamount to rejecting Catholicism as a whole. Thirdly, some other Catholics may take this worldview as truth, but attempt to amend or reinterpret those aspects which are contrary to modern culture. The main difficulty of this position lies in the possibility of reconciling the unseen part of the Catholic worldview with modern culture. Further, it may also lead to a situation in which the Catholic Church concentrates her attention on worldly affairs, such as poverty and social justice, rather than on the salvation of souls in eternity. Although these three responses are not the concern of this paper, we would like to propose them for future consideration in relevant academic studies.

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Abstract: This publication aims to identify similarities and differences in the ways of implementing the principle of the common good in classical (commercial) and social enterprises. Given the differences between social and classical enterprises in terms of their objectives and modes of action, it has to be stressed that the nature of the contribution they make to the common good differs in terms of subject and object. The research is embedded in Catholic social teaching (CST) because this approach presents one of the theoretically and practically richest theories of the common good, and secondly, it allows to discover modern ways of building the common good while respecting centuries of tradition and referring to philosophical classics. The common good principle in the light of CST lets us focus not only on the material but also the transcendental aims of human work and life which lead to more sustainable management. Commercial enterprises strengthen intellectual capital and expand technological and business knowledge. The profit earned by these companies essentially contributes to the good of society (taxes, investment, charity), including employees (bonuses, training). Social enterprises, on the other hand, have the advantage of investing in social capital and thus building a civil society based on mutual trust and support, especially at a local and institutional level. The profit generated by these organisations is a means to achieve social goals and not an end in itself. The results of our research show that both commercial and social enterprises contribute to common good on their own ways but the best results can be achieved when they cooperate and use all of their strengths for building the better future.

Keywords: Catholic social teaching, common good, classical enterprise, social enterprise

Enterprises, both classical and social ones, are part of the economy and, as groups of individuals functioning within a framework of accepted norms and values, they are called upon to achieve specific objectives, which should take into account not only the individual good of people but also the common good. Given the multi-dimensionality of human work and the transformations taking place within communities, it is impossible to indicate a definitive list of goods – goals – which are achieved collectively. However, it is possible to define those goods, which are necessary for the proper functioning of human beings, and which are carried out within

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specific communities. It is the idea of *bonum commune* that forms the basis of social life, defined as the mutual relationship of at least two people, the essence of which is to build the common good.[1] Common good should be seen as a signpost reminding us of the existence of overarching values which determine the way we behave in specific situations and institutions. Examples of such institutions include all communities that function around socially valued goods[2] which means that classical and social enterprises also can be taken into account.

As humans are social beings who interact within different social groups, it is natural that there is some definable good for all people and all communities. The common good understood in this way requires people to reject selfish, individual goals in favour of the common good, which is a combination of individual and community goals.[3] In the context of managing economic organisations, focusing on common good requires a redefinition of the economy paradigm, which is most often based on generating profit, and it distances itself from the aspect of values and morality.[4] With this in mind, François Houtart postulates a change of the mental model – from one that promotes development based on the creation of wealth to a more sustainable model of human coexistence on Earth. The former is based on the following assumptions: 1) development should take place regardless of side effects, such as destruction of the environment and society; 2) the resources of the planet are infinite; 3) the exchange value is higher than the use-value; 4) the measure of the economy is the rate of profitability and the accumulation of capital, which creates enormous inequalities.[5] In Houtart's view, this kind of thinking is the cause of many crises, so it is necessary to consider not only actions leading to the multiplication of material wealth but, first and foremost, to strive for the development which will enable the harmonious coexistence of man and nature. This new paradigm should include the following elements: 1) relationship with nature; 2) production of the material background of physical, cultural and spiritual aspects of life; 3) cooperation of political and social organisations; and 4) interpretation of reality and individual involvement of the entities in constructing the culture.[6] It seems that orientation towards social and environmental goals makes social enterprises predisposed, by their nature, to operate according to a sustainable paradigm. However, it must be emphasised that the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is being applied in classical enterprises with increasing frequency, which indicates a growing awareness of the need to act in the spirit of sustainable development and concern for future generations.

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1 Szymczyk, "Hierarchiczny charakter dobra wspólnego," 36; Marek – Jabłoński, "Care of the Common Good," 3–5.
2 Szymczyk, "Wolność – prawda – dobro," 79.
3 Kisil – Moczydłowska, "Wrażliwość organizacji," 163.
4 Jamka, "Ekonomia dobra wspólnego," 27.
5 Houtart, "From 'Common Goods,'" 88.
6 Houtart, "From 'Common Goods,'" 89.

This publication aims to identify similarities and differences in the way in which classical and social enterprises implement the principle of the common good, both within the organisations and in societies in which they exist.

1. The Essence of the Common Good

The common good is perceived in different ways depending on the notion in philosophy or the nature of science within which the concept is analysed. When presenting its essence, we will primarily analyse the social teachings of the Church as an approach that presents one of the theoretically and practically richest theories of the common good.[7] However, our analysis does not involve explaining the core truths of the faith, even if it is known that Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is based on them, or showing them as the only possible way forward, as other philosophical systems offer their own approaches to the common good.[8] However, we wish to turn to CST as an outlook that can see modern ways of building the common good, while respecting centuries of tradition and referring to philosophical and theological classics like Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine and many more.[9] Based on two pillars: the dignity of the human person and the supremacy of the common good, CST offers internally coherent ways of applying universal principles to address the problems that arise in particular situations faced by the contemporary man.[10]

Although there are many publications on the common good, there is no consensus among researchers on one finite definition of the concept. The most commonly used definition seems to be the one contained in *Gaudium et Spes* (no. 26), according to which the common good can be understood as "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment." However, much more often researchers try to present the essence of this concept by referring to its characteristics.

According to *Catechism of the Catholic Church* common good is oriented on the progress of person (*CCC* 1912) so it assumes that a person should strive to excellence. To make this possible the common good should presuppose respect both every person *per se* and her fundamental and inalienable rights; requires well-being and development of the society; and requires peace ensured by the authorities (*CCC* 1907–1909). Caring for the common good, or simply acting with the awareness

7 Holland, "Theological Economy," 38; Młynarska-Sobaczewska, "Dobro wspólne," 64; Bonanni – Lépineux – Roloff, "Introduction," 4.
8 Annett, "Human Flourishing, the Common Good," 39–40.
9 Bradstock, "Recovering the Common Good," 320; Argandoña, "Common Good," 362; Bonanni – Lépineux – Roloff, "Introduction," 4.
10 Annett, "Human Flourishing, the Common Good," 48.

that human actions should be governed by this principle, is seen as a moral stance.[11] Alejo José G. Sison and Joan Fontrodona highlight two properties of *bonum commune*: 1) it is shared by all members of the community; 2) it contributes to human flourishing[12]. Furthermore, the common good consists of social systems oriented towards the long-term management of resources in accordance with shared values, thus building social identity. The exceptionality of this system, however, lies in its ability to self-organise, i.e. the organisation or community itself makes decisions regarding its resources taking into account other considerations than just the prevailing market mechanisms. The next feature of the common good is its collaborative creation, whilst respecting the principles of equity and sustainable access, to pass it on to future generations intact.[13] Concern for future generations implies the need to ensure more sustainable development[14] manifested, among other things, in showing care for the environment or access to basic goods necessary for the life of all people. In this context, Pope Francis (*EG* 58) calls for a return to such an approach to economics and finance that serves humanity and enables the creation of balance and a social order based on solidarity with the poor and needy.

The mutual solidarity between people working for the common good makes them create good that transcends the goals of the social group and contributes to the development of both the community and the people themselves.[15] In that perspective, the common good is understood as "a set of conditions, devices and means in which people find maximum opportunities for the development of their own personality" (*human flourishing*), so it is shown as an external institutional good.[16] Members of society must understand that they can achieve their good only by participating in society. Therefore, their contribution to the good of the community is a precondition which must be fulfilled to enable its members to achieve the individual good. Thus, they must contribute to building the good of other members of the community, as it is the involvement and cooperation of all that facilitates the increase in both the good of the community as a whole and the good of each of its members.[17] The common good is the immediate goal of social life. As it is based on obligations towards the community, which include care and responsibility for the growth of the community members, it is the basic norm of any social group, including economic organisations, on which other principles within the society are based.[18]

For the need of further analysis it is worth noting the two fundamental dimensions of the common good: 1) the objective one understood as any means of

11 Reich, *The Common Good*, 18.
12 Sison – Fontrodona, "The Common Good of Business," 102.
13 Marton-Gadoś, "Dobra wspólne," 46.
14 Holland, "Theological Economy," 45.
15 Jabłoński – Szymczyk, *Realist-Axiological Perspectives*, 167.
16 Szymczyk, "Immanentny i instrumentalny aspekt," 157.
17 Argandoña, "Common Good," 363.
18 Szymczyk, "Pojęcie zasady społecznej,"122; Szymczyk, "Hierarchiczny charakter dobra wspólnego," 41.

satisfying the needs of group members arising within the framework of specific goals; 2) the subjective one explaining the purposefulness of the community.[19] The first is related to the instrumental and institutional common good, which is devoid of spiritual character and takes the form of social institutions, within which the individuals can improve themselves and pursue their goals.[20] In this perspective, human development is related to the organisational level of the society and adequate means provided by the society for the growth of an individual.[21] The subjective dimension, perceived as the immanent and essential aspect, is related to the intrinsic character of the common good, emphasises the goals and the natural tendency to improvement, which occurs both within individuals and the community.[22] Those approaches are complementary to each other because, on the one hand, the common good is the perfection of individuals who form the community, and on the other hand, man needs material goods for their own development, which they can only achieve by being a member of society. Thus, the integral development of a person takes place as a result of the interaction of people who make use of available material resources (living conditions).[23] Therefore, the development of good in the immanent sense also requires instrumental good reflected in the activities of the institutions offering such tools.[24]

To sum up, it is important to emphasise the reciprocity of the relationship between the person and the common good. Everyone is called to build the common good and benefit from it in return, regardless of their material status, age or intellectual maturity.[25]

2. The Concept of Classical and Social Enterprise

As the purpose of this publication is to analyse how the common good is built through the activities of classical and social enterprises, we will now present the characteristics of these two types of organisations to highlight some similarities as well as differences in their functioning.

Enterprises are the basic and most popular economic entities in each country. Despite being part of the economic system, they operate as self-financed and fully autonomous units. Regardless of differences in legal form (from sole proprietorships to companies), the enterprises focus on generating economic value. They are created

19 Szymczyk, "Wolność – prawda – dobro," 79.
20 Szymczyk, "Immanentny i instrumentalny aspekt," 163.
21 Gryżenia, "Dobro wspólne," 12.
22 Szymczyk, "Immanentny i instrumentalny aspekt," 158–159.
23 Gryżenia, "Dobro wspólne," 12.
24 Szymczyk, "Immanentny i instrumentalny aspekt," 166.
25 Annett, "Human Flourishing, the Common Good," 44.

as a result of market opportunities arising in the environment, the fulfilment of which is associated with generating a profit.[26] Therefore, it is often assumed that the measure of an enterprise's performance is the degree to which its customers' needs are satisfied, which translates into financial results. However, Peter F. Drucker notes that the enterprise is, first and foremost, a social construct based on those who represent the greatest value and the greatest potential of any organisation.[27] Regardless of the organisational form, it is the employees who contribute to fulfilling the goals, working together with other team members and using their talents and experiences to achieve organisational success.

For conventional companies, the most important motivation for taking action is the desire to obtain financial benefits, so the results of their actions are considered in the context of satisfying customer needs. However, this does not mean that social objectives are not fulfilled within this type of organisation.[28] The shift in the perception of goals by classical enterprises has been influenced by the CSR concept, which emphasises the fact that companies must not only focus on their own benefits, but they should also take into account the interest of society in their actions. In this regard, business activities are related to building long-term relationships between enterprises and stakeholders.[29] In practice, the application of the CSR concept by classical enterprises means that these entities, in addition to their economic objectives, also pursue additional goals of a social nature.

Social enterprises represent a special kind of business entity, oriented mainly around social goals. They base their activities on economic tools thanks to which they make profits, and can thus achieve their goals and financially support a specific community. However, multiplying the profit or wealth of their owners is not their main goal. This relatively continuous grassroots activity assumes a social orientation as its basis, the determinant of which is the social utility of the action.[30] The social economy has various functions that can be considered with respect to individual areas, such as employment, social activity or community building.

The concept of social entrepreneurship itself is not new. What is a novelty, however, is the use of the term "social enterprise" to describe organisations that make it possible to achieve the above-mentioned objectives efficiently and effectively. The term was first used in Europe (initially, in the late 1980s, especially in Italy[31]) to describe third-sector organisations that provide social services in a continuous

26 Trivedi – Stokols, "Social Enterprises," 6–7.
27 Drucker, *The Practice of Management*.
28 Newman, "Examining the Influence," 2907; Jamali – Mohanna – Panossian, *Responsible Leadership*, 34.
29 Szegedi – Fülöp – Bereczk, "Relationships between Social Entrepreneurship," 1403.
30 Zadroga, "Ekonomia społeczna," 213.
31 According to Anita Bartniak ("Ewolucja przedsiębiorstwa społecznego," 22), the term was first used in 1990 in the title of the Italian magazine "Impresa Sociale." More at: Borzaga, "L'impresa sociale," www.irisnetwork.it/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Definizione_impresa-sociale.pdf (access 30.11.2021).

and business-like way.[32] Social enterprises are positioned in the typology of organisations between classically conceived commercial enterprises and *non-profit* entities such as foundations or associations.[33] This is because they differ both from the entities for which the market is the major point of reference, and from institutions focused solely on social objectives.

Essentially, social enterprises are viewed as hybrid organisations, because they combine social and economic objectives in their activities. They are primarily oriented towards seeking opportunities and creating social change rather than profit.[34] They create and develop social capital, implement innovative solutions to social problems (especially overcoming social exclusion) and contribute to sustainable socio-economic development. Indeed, the essence of social entrepreneurship is to bring about social change based on a creative and entrepreneurial approach to existing challenges.[35] Social enterprise thus appears to be a construct born out of a reflection on service to society, particularly to socially excluded groups of people, and a concern for nature and a more sustainable concept of economic activity. Social enterprises, by combining the efficient use of resources through a business model and the mission of charities, can be highly effective in addressing complex social problems in a comprehensive manner.[36]

There is no agreement in the literature on defining social enterprise.[37] Three dominant schools of the definition of social enterprise can be identified: *earned income*, *social innovation* and *EMES*. The first two approaches originated in the United States, while the third concept emerged in Europe as a result of the work of the EMES research network.[38] The difference between these approaches essentially lies in a different view of the role of a social enterprise leader.

In Europe, the reintegrating and associative function of social entrepreneurship is particularly emphasised. A central role in these processes is played by a group of

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32 Borzaga – Defourny, *The Emergence of Social Enterprise*, 166.
33 Volkmann – Tokarski – Ernst, "Background," 4.
34 Battilana – Lee, "Advancing Research on Hybrid Organizing," 405–407.
35 Bull – Ridley-Duff, *Understanding Social Enterprise*, 56.
36 Ramus – Vaccaro, "Stakeholders Matter," 307.
37 To find our more, see e.g. Ciepielewska-Kowalik, A. – Starnawska, "Social Enterprise in Poland," 138–151; Daud Fhiri, "The Discussion of Social Entrepreneurship"; Hota – Subramanian – Narayanamurthy, "Mapping the Intellectual Structure," 89–114.
38 A research network of collaborating universities and researchers in Europe (now also worldwide) who undertake research on social enterprise and social entrepreneurship – see more at www.emes.net. "EMES takes its name from the French title of its first research project, '*L'EMergence de l'Entreprise Sociale en Europe*' (The emergence of social enterprises in Europe) completed between 1996 and 2000. Formally established as a non-profit association (ASBL under Belgian law) in 2002 EMES was originally composed of European university research centers and individual researchers. After many years of collaborative research and projects jointly conducted with researchers from other regions, EMES decided in 2013 to open its membership to researchers from around the world." (see more at: www.emes.net/who-we-are/ (access 29.11.2021).

citizens and their joint “grassroots” initiative. Self-help and the establishment of public and private partnerships are also vital elements. In the USA, on the other hand, social enterprises are mostly created by individuals – those who are characterised not only by their entrepreneurial spirit but also by their charismatic leadership and social inclinations. Hence, social enterprises functioning in the USA combine the aspect of social innovation with market-based activities and the use of management methods characteristic for private enterprises.[39]

In terms of EMES, the concept of the social enterprise consists of two dimensions: economic and entrepreneurial as well as social. Within the entrepreneurial attribute, we can distinguish: 1) a continuous activity producing goods and/or selling services; 2) a high degree of autonomy; 3) a significant level of economic risk; 4) a minimum amount of paid work. On the other hand, the social dimension that helps to distinguish social enterprises from profit-oriented ones includes: 1) an explicit aim to benefit the community; 2) an initiative launched by a group of citizens; 3) a decision-making power not based on capital ownership; 4) a participatory nature, which involves various parties affected by the activity; 5) a limited profit distribution.[40]

3. The Common Good in Classical and Social Enterprises

Given the dual nature of the common good and the differing objectives of classical and social enterprises, it is the synergies in building the common good rather than antagonisms between the two groups of the analysed enterprises that should be sought after. On the one hand, those organisations can be portrayed as places where their members grow and, through their own development, build the common good of both the organisation they work in and the wider community. On the other hand, the contribution of enterprises to the common good of the local community, the nation or, in the globalisation age, the entire planet, should also be presented. When analysing the contribution of enterprises, both classical and social ones, to the common good, it should be stressed that those groups are not homogeneous. While recognising classifications of enterprises based on the number of employees, turnover or internationalisation, it is important to bear in mind that both the core values of a company and the prioritisation of individual objectives are to a large extent derived from the vision of the founders and decisions made at the highest level of management. Therefore, among classical enterprises, there will be organisations oriented only toward profit maximisation, but also organisations that are socially

39 Defourny – Nyssens, *The EMES Approach*, 4–6; Kerlin, “Social Enterprise,” 248.
40 Defourny – Nyssens, “Social Enterprise,” 288.

responsible, care about the growth of their employees and are committed to the common good. As Pope Benedict XVI notes, the economy sees the emergence of initiatives which, without rejecting the idea of profit, are directed toward a higher purpose beyond the pure logic of exchange and profit as a goal in itself (Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*). Such initiatives include various activities of both social and profit-oriented enterprises, but also cooperation between those organisations. This can be an alternative that allows businesses to undertake independent CSR initiatives,[41] thus enabling them to pursue social objectives, and serve to build the common good through cross-sectoral cooperation. In the context of Social Exchange Theory, it can be said that a business enterprise brings commercial knowledge, financial resources and market legitimacy to this exchange, while the attractive assets of a social enterprise are community knowledge, social capital and social legitimacy. Furthermore, a significant contribution of social enterprise to the common good is building civil society by strengthening mutual trust between community members and institutions.[42]

4. Implementation of the Subjective Aspect of the Common Good

Business organisations have a distinctive set of values, on which their activities and business relationships are based. By using universal values such as honesty, integrity and ethical business conduct as the background for their actions, companies lay the foundations for building the common good. Although social and classical enterprises differ in the priorities of their activities, both types of examined organisations are directed towards achieving specific goals. It seems that the most important factor for building the common good is to work collectively to achieve the mission of the organisation. Even if individual departments of an organisation are autonomous or the subsidiaries are geographically dispersed, the mission sets the main directions of the company, unites employees around a common goal and motivates them to cooperate for the common good.

To function, economic organisations have three major goals to fulfil: security – which means maintaining the existence on the market; profit – which ensures the possibility to function and secures funds for investments; growth – without which it is impossible to compete with other enterprises on the market. Failure to achieve any of these goals in the long term leads to bankruptcy and thus to the disappearance of the company from the market.[43] A slightly different perspective is provided by

41 Di Domenico – Tracey – Haugh, "The Dialectic of Social Exchange," 888.
42 Di Domenico – Tracey – Haugh, "The Dialectic of Social Exchange," 893.
43 Kożuch, *Nauka o organizacji*, 97–98.

Catholic Social Teaching, according to which it is not making a profit that should be the main goal of a company but the very existence of the company as a community of people serving society as a whole by satisfying various needs. When generating profit, not only the financial benefits must be taken into account, but also moral and human factors, which in business should be seen as at least equally important as profit (*CA* 35). This way, the enterprise becomes a community working for the benefit of society, rather than a place for the pursuit of individual interests.[44] The common good, understood as all social conditions that allow a community or its members to continuously improve, on the one hand, shows the relationship between the individual and the community and, on the other, draws attention to the concern for security in relation to other groups. Thus, there is no place for selfishly disregarding the welfare of another person or group, e.g. by limiting oneself only to actions that are detrimental to another company.[45]

In the case of social enterprises, social goals such as social reintegration or the creation of stable jobs for excluded individuals are of paramount importance, while running a business and the profit made from it are the means to achieve those goals.[46] Among the various objectives of social enterprises, there is also the support for the creation of the common good,[47] which can be understood as the conditions of social life that enable the holistic development of teams and their participants. Thus, social economy entities provide an excellent environment for creating the common good by building on their social capital and, as a result, multiplying the capital resources. Responding to poverty-related problems, social economy entities pay attention to the principle of social solidarity, which aims to reconstruct and adjust the distribution of wealth created for the common good.[48] Accordingly, social enterprises focus on an active search for solutions to a problem within the community that has been established, and therefore the common good is treated as a common goal of the members of the enterprise. Apart from the principle of solidarity, those entities build their actions on the principles of subsidiarity, cooperation and responsibility.[49]

Another aspect of an organisation operating based on the common good principle is the concern for both internal and external stakeholders through the activities that benefit the owners, employees and the local community within which the organisation is functioning.[50] In this context, leaders have an important role to play in maintaining the right relationships with all the organisation's stakeholders.[51] How-

44 Cornwall – Naughton, "Who Is the Good Entrepreneur?," 71.
45 Sysko-Romańczuk, "Przedsiębiorstwo i konkurencja," 14.
46 Rosiek, "Przedsiębiorstwo społeczne," 267; Zadroga, "Przedsiębiorczość społeczna," 75.
47 Zelga, "Uwarunkowania Ekonomii Społecznej," 42–43.
48 Zadroga, "Ekonomia społeczna," 219–220.
49 Wygnański, *O ekonomii społecznej*, 5–6.
50 Kisil – Moczydłowska, "Wrażliwość organizacji," 164.
51 Wnuk – Lipińska, "Coaching," 130.

ever, the tasks of the leader would differ in classical and social enterprises. In classical enterprises, leaders are mainly owners of capital who use available resources to achieve economic objectives and, sometimes, also social ones. In social enterproses, however, leaders are more like managers-activists, the initiators of social change, who manage an enterprise aimed mainly at social problems and, at the same time, carry out economic activities that enable them to remedy those problems.[52] Similarly, the roles of individual stakeholder groups in the analysed types of organisations will differ. For leaders of social enterprises, the most important stakeholder group will be the beneficiaries of social activities provided by these organisations, while the leaders of classical enterprises focus their efforts on satisfying the needs of customers and the gratification that comes with it. However, regardless of the distribution of weights and priorities, all economic organisations involve in building the common good through their activities. Classical enterprises make a significant contribution to the common good of the community in which they operate. Thanks to taxes paid by the enterprises, local authorities can plan major investments or implement specific projects. By creating jobs, the enterprises improve the quality of life of the residents who are offered employment, and with the wages paid the employees can fulfil many of their personal and family plans. Taxes imposed by law on commercial organisations are essentially treated as their (indirect and coercive[53]) contribution to the common good. The state derives a huge amount of the financial resources necessary for its functioning from taxes, and thus directly implements the principle of the common good. With taxes collected, the state promotes the good of citizens by offering them public services such as internal and external security, education, culture, infrastructure, social benefits and others, and thus the tax system contributes to the redistribution of income by also taking into account the needs of the poorest, which should be one of its objectives.[54]

Due to the social and economic usefulness of the objectives pursued by social enterprises, in most legal systems (i.e. USA, Germany, France, Poland), the legislator grants them public privileges, especially tax exemptions. By implementing the principle of subsidiarity, these organisations relieve the state in certain areas of social life and thus play an auxiliary role to the state. Therefore, they can enjoy certain privileges in turn. Many privileges of social enterprises are closely linked to their pursuit of tax-preferred objectives and allocation of funds earned through business activities for these objectives. Hence, possible allegations that fiscal benefits obtained by social enterprises, can be used to develop economic activities appear to be unfounded. This is because, in principle, tax exemptions are oriented toward social goals and ultimately

52 Fridhi, "Social Entrepreneurship," 16.

53 In Polish law a tax is "a public, free of charge, compulsory and non-returnable cash benefit to the State Treasury, the voivodship, county or municipality, resulting from the tax act." (Mikos-Sitek, "Podatek," 727).

54 National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*, no. 202.

towards the common good.[55] The objectives enabling entitlement to tax privileges are indexed and must be met along with specific requirements imposed by the state. Typically, they are religious, charitable and public objectives, with the latter group varying depending on the legal system of the country. It may include public safety objectives, the promotion of science and research, culture and the arts, or the preservation of national heritage.[56]

The undisputed difference in building the common good will be seen in organisational outputs distribution. One of the concerns of stakeholder theory is achieving consensus on the distribution of financial outputs which means that it has to be stated who is responsible for the distribution, who has the right to make decisions on it and who benefits from those decisions.[57] While in commercial enterprises profit can simply be divided and given to shareholders, in social enterprises profit can be used for the development of the organisation and its members, but it cannot be divided between employees or other shareholders. As mentioned before, making a profit is one of the main objectives of operation for the owners of classical enterprises, while for the owners of social enterprises, making a profit is motivated by the need to stay in business and finance their missions. Paradoxically, however, the high profits of a social enterprise may be an indicator of insufficient implementation of its mission.[58] The profit of social enterprises is, therefore, a common good that does not serve the owners of the organisation only but, by definition, is intended for the development of the community created by the employees and beneficiaries of the organisation. However, when looking at the activities of classical enterprises, part of the profit is indeed allocated to the owners, but it is not uncommon for them to share the profit with their employees through additional bonuses or benefits and also to provide employees with growth opportunities by financing their training or excel their work conditions. In addition, part of the profit is allocated for the payment of dividends and, as part of the CSR strategy, might be spent on charitable activities. Finally, part of the profits is used for investments, which often results in new jobs and, in the long term, in a higher amount of taxes, improved infrastructure or increased demand for services from other businesses. Thus, it is clear that in terms of profit, social enterprises tend to build the internal good of the organisation, while classical enterprises contribute more to the good of society.

55 Dominowska, *Prowadzenie działalności gospodarczej*, 117–124.
56 Dominowska, *Prowadzenie działalności gospodarczej*, 123.
57 Phillips – Freeman – Wicks, "What Stakeholder Theory Is Not," 487.
58 Jamka, *Czynnik ludzki*, 37.

5. Implementation of the Subjective Aspect of the Common Good

Due to the diverse nature of the common good in business practice, we can say that the organisation itself is a common good that achieves collective value by forming a community of people that develops talents, meets individual needs and at the same time – ensures the right direction, in line with the purpose of the organisation. This internal good of the enterprise can be understood as a collaborative work focused on the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, virtues and a sense of meaning as well as on the production of goods and services to meet the needs of society.[59] By establishing cooperation within economic organisations, regardless of their main purpose, owners and employees create new common good, to which each person contributes using his or her competencies, skills, and motivations. The owners, in turn, provide capital, work tools or investments in new technologies.[60] It is, therefore, a practical implementation of ethical solidarity, because by taking up a job in an enterprise, whether social or classical, a person finds there the conditions necessary for his/her own development, often not only professional. Therefore, by hiring employees, economic organisations create opportunities and conditions to provide work for society, thus meeting the objective aspect of the common good.

The development of a human person is closely linked to the Aristotelian concept of *eudaimonia*, which, in turn, is rooted in the common good. Indeed, commitment to the creation of the common good entails support for the integral development of humanity, understood as the development of the person and the development of all people. It is important not to focus on one dimension of human nature, but to promote the growth of each person, without excluding anyone, in all dimensions (social, economic, cultural, political, intellectual, emotional, aesthetic and religious). This eudaimonistic vision implies access not only to material goods but also to spiritual, relational or cultural goods.[61]

When looking at the employment structure in both types of the analysed organisations, one may notice similarities as well as differences. In both types of enterprises, employees complete tasks for which they receive remuneration. In social enterprises, in addition to full-time employees, work is often provided by people at risk of social exclusion[62] and volunteers. In profit-oriented enterprises, however, hiring disabled or socially excluded people is not so frequent, and volunteering occurs as the involvement of full-time employees in charitable activities during their working hours as an implementation of CSR.

59 Sison – Fontrodona, "Participating in the Common Good," 612.
60 Melé, "Meanings of Work," 104.
61 Annett, "Human Flourishing, the Common Good," 49.
62 Maxwell – Rotz, "Potential Assistance for Disadvantaged Workers," 149.

Social enterprises often employ people who, for various reasons, are excluded from society, and therefore provide an employment opportunity to people who would find it very difficult to find work elsewhere, especially in classical enterprises, which often put productivity and efficiency first. Thus, social enterprises contribute to the common good by helping those individuals to fulfil their obligation to work by creating opportunities for them to do so.[63] Furthermore, they draw attention to the need for finding solutions targeted at problems of exclusion and injustice because, by employing people excluded from society and listening to their needs, they enable them to become involved in building the common good and making the problems they face more public.[64]

In social enterprise a common practice is engaging volunteers. From the perspective of the development of people who voluntarily help others, it can be said that their activities are intrinsically motivated and bring them many personal benefits. By working in a social enterprise, volunteers acquire many competencies that are sought after in professional life such as self-confidence, the ability to organise their own work or interpersonal and communications skills.[65] At the same time, they become more sensitive for social problems, needs of excluded people and in the future are highly likely to be social change agents.

Regardless of the diversity of employee groups, economic organisations should provide their members with the opportunities and tools necessary to conduct their tasks at work. If the enterprise's capacity allows, the leaders also provide employees with access to a variety of professional development programmes. However, the motivation of the leaders to support employee development may vary. Leaders, depending on their own hierarchy of values and organisational values, may invest in the development of their employees based only on the needs of the organisation and indicate the growth of organisational effectiveness as the primary goal. At the other extreme, there will be leaders whose aim is the integral development of the person employed in the organisation under their management. This approach is characteristic of servant leadership[66] and humanistic management.[67] However, it is important to stress that these extremely different attitudes can be applied to both commercial and social enterprises.

When it comes to ensuring adequate working conditions, the employer can focus on creating a sustainable workplace. It can be defined as "a positive workplace that has a contribution to improved work-life balance, employees' well-being, involvement in ethical and social decision-making, and develops awareness of being a part

63 Annett, "Human Flourishing, the Common Good," 50.
64 Chalupnicek, *Social Entrepreneurship*, 172.
65 Urmanavičienė – Čižikienė, "The Challenges of Managing Voluntary Work," 91.
66 Greenleaf, *The Servant as Leader*, *passim*; Winston – Fields, "Seeking and measuring," 417.
67 Melé, "Human Quality Treatment," 462; Acevedo, "Personalist Business Ethics," 203, 214.

of the whole (community and the world)."[68] So we are not just talking about a "green workplace," where pro-environmental behaviour is promoted, but about a working environment aimed at the integral development of employees. Each person feels an inner call to improve themselves by seeking the meaning of their own existence, learning the truth and loving what is truly valuable.[69] Seeking one's own perfection is a lifelong process, as a person's needs and desires change as they grow. To achieve perfection, a person cannot be a passive observer of life but should take rational actions to improve both oneself and the surrounding environment.[70]

In the management practice, there are many activities aimed at the development of employees, ranging from on-the-job training and providing access to self-study materials, to building professional development programmes, financing employee training, planning career paths and availability of talent management programmes. As one moves up the career ladder, the worker develops his / her competencies and takes on more and more responsibility for the organisation's activities. In this process, however, it is important to combine the goals of the organisation with those of the individual, to avoid investing in the development of the employee only for the benefit of the company. When considering nothing but the needs of the organisation, the leaders treat employees only as a mere resource that must be used to achieve greater efficiency in realising organisational goals, without respecting his or her humanity. However, the right approach to employee development is to act toward service and cooperation, ensure an adequate level of employee participation in the management of the company and support the development of employee competencies, including moral competencies.[71] Therefore, it seems necessary, in the process of development, to pay attention to the application of normative ethics as well as virtue ethics, which show economic activities in a broader perspective, i.e. set boundaries for the functioning of the organisation, taking into account specific values in the context of creating the common good,[72] which is both a condition and a result of the happiness of those participating in the common good achieved by living virtuously.[73]

The danger of treating employees objectively is also present in the "war for talent," which is hugely popular today.[74] Therefore, for the holistic development of the employee, a better approach to talent management would be an inclusive approach,[75] which, through career management, professional development programmes and

68 Samul, "Spiritual Leadership," 7.
69 Melé, "Human Quality Treatment," 461.
70 Gorski, "Human Flourishing," 31.
71 Melé, "Human Quality Treatment," 465.
72 Nieborak, "Rynek finansowy," 161–162.
73 O'Brien, "Reconsidering the common good," 31.
74 Stuss, "Talent Management," 200; Collings – Mellahi, "Strategic Talent Management," 305.
75 Meyers – Woerkom, "The Influence of Underlying Philosophies," 194; Swailes – Downs – Orr, "Conceptualising Inclusive Talent Management," 532–533; Marek, "Zarządzanie talentami," 29.

succession planning, supports the development of all members of the organisation, thus enabling each member to contribute to the common good both inside and outside the company.

Conclusions

The process of building the common good is present both in classical and social enterprises. The analysis of the nature and objectives of both types of analysed organisations, taking into account the research perspective provided by CST, makes it possible to identify certain similarities and differences both within these entities and in their environment. First and foremost, all organisations, as communities of persons, are established to achieve specific goals and, through the growth and development of its members, build the common good in an organisational and a social sense. It should be emphasised that universal concern for the common good – irrespective of the type of organisation – is essential for human flourishing. Moreover, every person is called upon to build the common good in the social environment he or she participates in, using the available tools and structures. This specific principle of reciprocity/exchange (take – give) facilitates the person's flourishing.

The perspective of the common good as a guidepost in the way of thinking and acting within classical and social enterprises (and, more broadly, in the context of sustainable development) included in this paper tends rather look for similarities between the enterprises and thus trigger synergies in the process of building the *bonum commune*. Both groups of organisations – commercial ones, through the application of the CSR concept, and social ones, through the fundamental orientation towards higher goals than profit – pursue social goals. Together, they serve to build the common good through cross-sectoral cooperation. It, therefore, needs to be emphasised that economic organisations analysed, in pursuing their objectives, contribute to the development of the common good either directly or indirectly.

Given the differences between social and classical enterprises in terms of their objectives and modes of action, it has to be stressed that the nature of the contribution they make to the common good differs in terms of subject and object.

In terms of subject, commercial enterprises contribute primarily to changing market conditions. By investing financial resources in the development of the R&D sector, they strengthen intellectual capital and expand technological and business knowledge. Through the principle of competitiveness, they influence the shape of the labour market and the use of natural resources as a production factor. The profit earned by these companies essentially contributes to the good of society (taxes, investment, charity), including employees (bonuses, training). Social enterprises, on the other hand, have the advantage of investing in social capital and thus building a civil society based on mutual trust and support, especially at a local and institutional level. As a rule, the profit generated by these organisations is either used for internal purposes (professional development and social integration of employees) or is supposed to bring specific benefits to the immediate beneficiaries. However, it always remains merely a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Bearing in mind the value of work, the conditions for which – as part of the common good – are created by both classical and social enterprises, it should be emphasised that in the subjective dimension, the accents of both types of organisation are distributed somewhat differently when it comes to the structure of employment. Three groups of employees can be distinguished in social entrepreneurship entities: 1) "ordinary" employees (leaders-managers, experts, professionals, specialists), 2) those hired due to belonging to a group of people at risk of social exclusion (e.g. persons with disabilities, long-term unemployed) and 3) volunteers. Whereas, when it comes to commercial enterprises, the latter category of employees is underrepresented, and employee volunteering is rather incidental and connected to CSR activities. This is why leaders, recognising the diverse needs of the members of the organisation under their management, not only promote the implementation of the principle of the common good but also make sure to create such working conditions in which employees can implement it in their daily practices and pursue paths for their own professional and often personal development. This results in building an organisational culture based on the principle of the common good and the selection of specific management concepts and techniques aimed at realising the *bonum commune*.

To sum up, both classical and social enterprises contribute to the common good. Recognising the diversity of activities and the mode of operations of these organisations, it is worth emphasising that both types of organisation are essential to the continuous development and multiplication of good in the community.

The research perspective adopted in this article, determined by CST through the common good, certainly has limitations. It must be stressed that the sources were deliberately narrowed down here to those typical of the Catholic tradition. Hence, essentially, two approaches to the common good, typical of the Church's social teaching, were applied: one subjective and one objective

The research results presented in this article can be expanded in the future by taking into account other theories of the common good and characteristics of specific philosophical systems or religious traditions (i.e. Judaism, Islam, Buddhism).

As a future direction of research, it is possible to indicate, among other things, the concept of strategic management of a social enterprise based on the principle of the common good in terms of selected philosophical or religious theories. Another line of research could be to conduct empirical studies to determine the understanding of the principle of the common good by owners and members of classical and social enterprises. The next step would be to identify conditions conducive to the common good and individually interview members of the organisation to explore the impact of these conditions on their flourishing.

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Protestant Church Strategy in Building Spiritual Identity for Generation Alpha

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Abstract: This research aims to explain Protestant Church strategy in building Christian identity for Generation Alpha (Gen Alpha) amidst the adverse effects of globalization. Currently, the generation is navigating the complex terrain of a postmodern era characterized by the pervasive dissemination of concepts such as skepticism, subjectivism, and relativism. Gen Alpha has experienced a profound shift in cultural values, with a marked transition from religiosity to secularity. Consequently, Church must direct its attention towards the ideological and spiritual well-being of the generation. The influence of distortionary forces on the perception of reality is a matter of concern, stemming from various sources such as peers in the community, the educational system, social media, and the vast expanse of the Internet. The result show that Gen Alpha has been raised in the context of post-Christian and post-Church cultural environments. In this research, a qualitative research approach is used, predominantly through an extensive review of pertinent literature. The examination commences with an in-depth exploration of Gen Alpha and the formation of spiritual identity. Subsequently, the strategic initiatives conducted by Protestant Church are examined and the initiatives include worship services, fatherly mentorship, and cultivating a strong Christian identity. The conclusion shows the collaborative efforts of Church with the pastoral team, in the construction of its ministry. This is characterized by the implementation of transpersonal actions, the guiding of healing initiatives for the needs of families, and the cultivation of personalized spiritual practices. An important component of the comprehensive strategy includes the training and education of fathers to assume a central role in building the spiritual development of children. Furthermore, Church values the spiritual building of children aged between 4 and 14 years to fortify Christian identity.

Keywords: Generation Alpha; Church; Christian; healing; social media

Generation Alpha (Gen Alpha) is the third generation to witness rapid advancements in digital technology. Gen Alpha is commonly referred to as the Digital Native generation or Gen Z, inherently navigating social media and the Internet. Additionally, it is known as the "Polar" generation, denoting political polarization and the alarming trend of polar ice cap depletion due to climate change. The generation inhabits a postmodern era characterized by substantial influence and unrestricted access to concepts such as skepticism, subjectivism, and broad relativism, as well as having a general suspicion of the role of ideology.[1] Confronted daily with a world where reality is often distorted, these young minds have been shaped since childhood by interactions in the community, educational institutions, social media, and the Internet.

1 Duignan, "Postmodernism Philosophy."

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Furthermore, the pervasive influence extends to the experiences in Christian Church and family, creating unique challenges in navigating the "real world." Gen Alpha has its limitations, namely [1] the attention span and concentration are compromised due to the inclination to simultaneously engage with multiple screens and scan through information. [2] The limited time for traditional socializing has led the generation to predominantly inhabit the online sphere. The individuals learn, engage in recreational activities, and interact through various social networks. [3] The development of imagination and creativity is impaired due to the reduced use of physical toys. [4] Reduced ability to achieve happiness, considering that excessive use of smartphones and social media increases depression, anxiety, and loneliness.[2]

Church has a hard time reaching this I-net generation in the seductive era of globalization, with a fast-changing digital world, social media engagement, mobile activity, and free virtual space. Gen Alpha resides in two distinct dimensions increasingly converging to form the physical and virtual world. The sense of identity tends to develop more passively, particularly in terms of spiritual identity. This disparity is an outcome of a substantial transformation in cultural values, which has shifted from a sacred to a more secular orientation.[3] The term "Generation Alpha" was not associated with religion or agnosticism but grew up in a post-Christian and post-Church culture.[4] Uniquely, Gen Alpha and parents (Generation Y) have the same characteristics, existing in the space of media and information technology. The spiritual identity of parents is not fully cultivated but marked by limitations and lacks the necessary refinement, setting a potentially detrimental example.

In this context, the demographic is important in the world market as the next customers to influence decision-making process of parents.[5] These children are raised in an environment where their desires and passions are heavily influenced by technology and media with consumerist tendencies, potentially leading them from adhering to traditional spiritual values. Literature shows that Gen Alpha has a considerable influence over consumer behavior, technology trends, educational paradigms, market dynamics, and various economic variables.[6] Even though 55% of children aged between 7 and 12 have used social media, about 76% of respondents believe that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Therefore, technology has become the tool of choice for Gen Alpha, with 77% adopting the concept at the center of all activities, including learning. A total of 82% believed in learning more when granted access to technology.[7]

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2 "Generation Alpha Will Lead a 100% Digital World."
3 Landrum, "Gen Z Is Spiritually Illiterate."
4 Walker, "5 Reasons."
5 Rani Thomas – Madiya – MP, "Customer Profiling of Alpha," 75–86.
6 Rani Thomas – Madiya – MP, "Customer Profiling of Alpha."
7 Retail SEE Group, "The Values and Identity."

Another influential factor is the changing nature of the traditional Christian family due to LBGTQ+ developments, which are accepted in about 56 countries.[8] Same-sex marriage has been legally recognized, affording individuals from Gen Alpha the opportunity to exercise the right to parenthood through adoption. In these cases, both gay men and lesbian women have the option to become legal parents through the use of surrogate mothers or mothers.[9] Sperm banks have become prevalent in developed countries, facilitating the possibility for women to volunteer as surrogate mothers for gay and lesbian family. These children are typically conceived through the In Vitro Fertilization method and there is a growing number of Gen Alpha who has entered the world through adoption, raised by family against traditional Christian beliefs. These circumstances pose a significant challenge for Protestant Church and Christian family in the efforts to maintain Christian identity in Gen Alpha.

Aside from family issues, another part of this problem is the high dependency on media technology devices. Topping the list of content most likely to influence Gen Alpha to buy something are online videos, mentioned by 24% of survey participants. However, a third of young teens (13–16-year-olds), around 32%, are influenced by social media content, as well as 15% and 9% of 10–12-year-olds and 6–9-year-olds. A total of 41% are actively tagging friends to share exciting content, rising to 49% among 13–16 year olds. Same-sex marriage has been formalized, providing the right to have children through adoption. Gay men or lesbian women can become the legal parents of children by using surrogate mothers and fathers.[10] Therefore, the quality of happiness, level of life satisfaction, and expectations of others tend to decrease. There are even persisting increased levels of pessimism and children are more depressed and anxious than previous generations. The generation is inundated with an abundance of choices, information, and technology, leading to a sense of overprotection.[11] The profound impact of technological changes is evident in the way members live, think, feel, and behave. They heavily rely on technology to explore the world, and this reliance has led to a reduction in dependence on interactions with their peers compared to earlier generations. Moreover, there is a trend of decreased emphasis on religious matters among these individuals.

The perspective of Stanisław T. Zarzycki centers on the role of Church in unveiling biblical spirituality as the embodiment of the gospel and salvation history, reaching its apex in Jesus Christ. In history, the redemptive act of humanity is proclaimed, transcending knowledge and faith, while maintaining its profound significance, thereby imparting theological meaning to people across generations.[12] Antje Jackelén placed a spotlight on the digital world complex dynamics, featuring polarizing

8 Flores, "Social Acceptance of LGBTI People."
9 Flores, "Social Acceptance of LGBTI People."
10 Cox, "Social Media."
11 Vlasuk, "Generation Alpha," 363.
12 Zarzycki, "'History' as a Category," 385.

forces, populism, protectionism, post-truth narratives, patriarchal influences, and the intricate interplay of secularization and the newfound visibility of religion. In the context of spiritual leadership, the important role of resilience, coexistence, and hope as indispensable theological elements were considered for navigating uncharted territory. These elements serve prophetic, ethical, and theological functions, improving the growth of digitalization to enhance the mental and spiritual well-being of religious individuals.[13] Meanwhile, Merensiana Hale provided a comprehensive overview, considering the unique characteristics and developmental needs of the generation. This includes insights into the upbringing and early exposure to future-oriented thinking.[14] Amrit Kumar Jha expressed the need to shape the understanding and contextualization in the 21st century global ecology by envisioning a promising future.[15] There is still a significant gap in the research connecting Gen Alpha with the levels of spirituality. Therefore, this research places its primary focus on understanding Church strategy in building Christian identity. The analysis is important, considering the unique challenges and circumstances to be encountered.

This research explores Protestant Church strategy in building strong Christian spiritual identity in Gen Alpha. The methodology used is qualitative, relying on a comprehensive examination of relevant literature. The discussion initiates with an introduction to Gen Alpha, analyzing the current spiritual identity. Subsequently, this research offers an in-depth examination of the strategy used by Protestant Church to cultivate Christian identity through different means. The strategy was examined, considering specific concepts, and drawing multiple conclusions. The central argument shows that Protestant Church strategy for building Christian identity in Gen Alpha revolves around shaping the character of parental religiosity, establishing a bridge for outreach, and enhancing the quality of the divine family unit in households. The framework for implementing these strategies includes Church services, designed with various components to address the specific needs of the generation. Furthermore, the role of fathers in family is important, and the age range of 4–14 is identified as a crucial phase for enhancing conversion experiences.

1. Christian Identity in Gen Alpha

Gen Alpha was born between 2010 and 2024, as the first demography belonging to the 21st century, where technology and change occur very fast to shape childhood. Furthermore, it can easily relate to previous generations without any sharp

13 Jackelén, "Technology, Theology," 6.
14 Hale, "Generation Alpha," 240–245.
15 Jha, "Understanding Generation Alpha."

distances.[16] The generation starts many new social development dynamics and is the first to fully be connected to online. Gen Alpha is also the most diverse generation, as the first to live in "unconventional" homes, to possess globally accessible groups, and many other firsts. The individuals were born from the collapse or partial recovery of the global economy, the pandemic. Gen Alpha grew up in post-Christian and post-Church mindset[17] from idealistic Millennial parents, with a small portion of the realistic Gen Z. In addition, it is considered the Generation of Hope, which is more adaptable, connected, diverse, and empowered to lead the future.[18] The generation has grown up in a world where technology has been accessible. According to results, contemporary young individuals allocate an average of nine hours daily to screen time,[19] translating to 63 hours per week. As a result, a 14-year-old girl (the age of the oldest Gen Alpha) is likely to have more cultural similarities with a boy of the same age in another place than with a 60-year-old. This means there is a phenomenon of similarity and duplication of lifestyles that afflicts almost all members of Gen Alpha.

Gen Alpha or post-Christian generation is numerically the largest among population demographics. This means that the generation is becoming the most influential religious force in the West.[20] In 2017, James Emery White referred to Gen Z as American first post-Christian generation but this has been disproved. The introduction to the Gospel is at an all-time low in American history even when comparing teenagers raised in Church settings.[21] The pattern of failure passed down through successive generations has left a lasting legacy. The initial hypothesis posits that Gen Alpha represents a departure from convention as the first generation where religious engagement has significantly reduced.

The digital world is entirely separate from the physical but does not relate to the existing cultural narratives told through social media and other applications. However, it is elementary to understand that these worlds have no relationship with each other. Gen Alpha has the following traits: [1] highly connected – permanently connected to new technologies as a way of life; [2] independent – independent in making decisions and managing digital identity; [3] visual – video is their format of choice; [4] highly diverse – in ethnicity, gender, tastes, lifestyles, and viewpoints.[22]

Marius Drugas describes Gene Alpha as the "Screenagers" or "the wired generation." The definition shows a generation connected to smart devices, and characterized by more significant curiosity, creativity, and independence than their

16 McCrindle – Fell – Buckerfield, *Generation Alpha*, 19–21.
17 Astapenko, "Personal Characteristics."
18 Peña, "Generation Alpha."
19 Edwards – Fox, "Teens Spend."
20 White, "An Early Look at Generation Alpha."
21 Conner, "3 Cultural Stories."
22 "Generation Alpha Will Lead a 100% Digital World."

predecessors. Technology dependency also leads to relational and emotional problems, hence, “screamers” are used to describe the angry behavior.[23] The research by Evgenia V. Astapenko, Tatiana V. Klimova, Galina A. Molokhina, and Elena A. Petrenko showed that the dominant system of children-parents relationships in the family has implications for the peculiarities of recreational activities in conditions of epidemiological self-isolation. This dramatically affects the intrapersonal structure and the state of resources.[24] Therefore, when parents stay with children who spend more virtual leisure time, the implication is a reduced level of acceptance, willingness to cooperate, and symbiosis with one another. Closest relatives such as parents lack the religious skills to show the gospel as inspiring, fun, and providing new hope. In the context of spiritual values, the level of religiosity is very dependent on the social media consumed daily. This situation implies that when Gen Alpha shows a strong curiosity and interest in technological advancements, while largely excluding spiritual elements or God from their pursuits, their religiosity is at a critical juncture, with potential consequences for the decline. The significant shift is closely related to the comparatively lower spiritual quality of parents, who belong to Gen Y. The presentation of Kerrin Huth regarding the 2016 Australian census results shows a good trend, where Gen Y, aged 18–34, represents the highest percentage of non-religious individuals in society. This at 39%, compared to an average of 30% for the entire Australian population. Therefore, Gen Y is increasingly adopting alternative forms of identification rather than adhering to traditional institutional religious practices.[25] Most of Gen Alpha owned and followed the digital footsteps of Gen Y before understanding the term Gen Z (the group that was born between 1995 and grew up with the rise of social media). Millennials understand social media as a tool, but for Gen Alpha, the concept is a way of life. Data shows that 40% of parents are willing to replace or add a robotic caregiver in the home.[26]

Research published in the August 2012 issue related to the *Journal of Marriage and Family* found that young adults of Gen Y believe parental support is abnormal and unnecessary.[27] In this context, before Millennials began to marry and have children, the notion that parental influence is not entirely indispensable in the development of children character and spirituality has been adopted. Consequently, it is common to observe parents in Gen Alpha who lack a strong spiritual identity and the ability to impart religious teachings to the offspring. In a research, half of parents report that teenagers share “all” of the religious beliefs. Meanwhile, an additional four out of ten parents state that children share “some” of their religious beliefs.[28] It is

23 Drugaș, “Screenagers,” 1–11.
24 Astapenko, “Personal Characteristics.”
25 Huth, “Connecting with Generation Alpha,” 24–27.
26 “Why Generation Alpha and Z Is Non-Religious?”
27 Divecha, “What Gen Y Needs from Parents.”
28 Pew Research Center, “Shared Beliefs.”

clear from the above explanation that some essential points to be considered include. [1] Gen Alpha continues to have the characteristics of the Digital Natives category and live in a digital, virtual, intelligent, and technology-dependent world. [2] These individuals inherited a low level of spirituality from parents. [3] Technology dependency also leads the generation to dangerous relational and emotional problems.

2. Church and Ministry Strategy for Gen Alpha

Gen 1:26–28 states that God created man, both male and female, in His image and likeness with the cultural mandate to be fruitful and have dominion over the earth and the creation. Humans are given extraordinary abilities and capacities as "Gods" on earth (Ps 82:6). In Gen 5:1–3, the Bible shows that Adam was created in the image and likeness of God and given a human name at creation. After Adam lived for 130 years and had sons, the Bible makes the distinction that he begat a son in the image and likeness of man and named him Seth. The quality of the divine seed was degraded when Adam, created in God image, changed to Seth, who was born in the image and likeness of man.

Every human life lost the glory of God after man sinned and the earth was dominated by Satan. This incident shows the trend that great and marvelous abilities of man can turn into a catastrophe when Satan is worshipped (Eph 2:2; John 12:31). Man no longer has faith and is trapped by Satan tricks (2 Tim 2:26), as well as enslaved by the power of evil (1 John 5:19; Eph 2:2). Even Jesus, the fasting man, faced severe temptations from Satan in Matt 4:8–9. Satan wanted to question the divinity of Jesus by presenting the splendor of the world kingdoms, hoping to be worshipped. The fall of humanity into sin disrupted harmonious relationships between fellow humans and also fractured the ability to govern and manage the earth in unison. Even though humans can create, the creations often tend toward malevolence, and as time progresses, the concept multiplies. Under Satan dominion, people are subjugated through the law of sin, replacing the culture of God kingdom with a counterfeit culture that contradicts the Gospel. In the current context, Gen Alpha, characterized as a digitally savvy and knowledge-hungry cohort shows an inversely proportional relationship with spirituality. Consequently, the generation requires a unique approach to spiritual guidance to instill Christian identity. There are several strategies used by Church to communicate spiritual identity.

2.1. Church and Transpersonal Practice for Gen Alpha

Church accompanies Gen Alpha physically and online in gaining spiritual experience. It must be more active and creative in providing ways and facilities to understand

and practice the faith in building spiritual identity. The transpersonal approach as a solution is the spontaneous transmission of spiritual life experience. The experiences include profound spiritual, mystical experiences, oneness with the universe, and out-of-body experiences without ignoring spiritual, transcendental, or aspects. The research of Benjamin D. Crace showed that the transpersonal psychology approach was participatory and mediated the research of spirituality.[29] John Knights, Danielle Grant, and Greg Young mentioned that transformational personal experiences allowed an individual to enter a new level, becoming an authentic, ethical, caring, and more effective leader in the 21st century.[30] Therefore, the approach can be used in participatory spiritual identity building, showing the ministry of Church and pastoral team in imparting conscious spiritual experiences. The initial and exceedingly crucial aspect is the worship experience. Each worship service conducted should not be considered as a passive and devoid of meaning ritual. In this context, Church must be willing to adopt a transformation of its style and liturgy, while preserving the sanctity and significance of worship. This adaptation should captivate and stimulate the curiosity of Gen Alpha and religious experiences can find expression through digital media, as exemplified by innovations such as "Jesus Phone" or "Coffeeism." In this hypermodern society, digital media comprise the sacred and the profane, elevating the concept to a form of sanctity.[31] This means that breakthroughs in media worship should be possible. Church and its media ministry can inspire holiness, even when used for profane activities. In addition, praise and worship become the primary means of transformation for disciples and restoring self-image in knowing God. Church services can provide a great space, time, and opportunity for Gen Alpha to experience God presence personally. The critical focus is that discipleship and self-image restoration should be related to the character of the generation.

The second facet of the transpersonal approach includes Church commitment to educating individuals about the value of appreciating every creation of God. Jennifer Mata-McMahon offered topics on building children spirituality with spiritual meaning-making in relationship with God, as well as forming identity and self-awareness.[32] At the core of this teaching is the profound value of cherishing Christ act of forgiveness through the crucifixion, as the greatest gift for humanity (John 3:16). Gen Alpha is guided to comprehend that forgiveness of sins leads to salvation. The spiritual journey of identity formation becomes pronounced when an individual fully comprehends the experience of forgiveness and personal redemption with complete self-awareness. The process significantly depends on the consistent and progressive practice of experiencing a new birth through genuine repentance from an early age.

29 Crace, "A Transpersonal Conversation."
30 Knights – Grant – Young, "Developing 21st Century Leaders," 6–21.
31 Lewis, "Social Media," 517–532.
32 Mata-McMahon, "Reviewing the Research in Children's Spirituality," 140–152.

The third aspect states the importance of Gen Alpha understanding that spiritual encounters are connected to the consciously managed thoughts, emotions, and will. This recognizes the significance of yearning for and desiring to partake in God benevolence. The fundamental dimension of experience includes personal acceptance, healing, the receipt of love and grace, acts of kindness, and the restoration of inner strength. Conscious spiritual experiences also guide the generation towards cognitive growth and spiritual encounters enriched by deep appreciation and unwavering trust in God.

2.2. Church, through the Family Healing Movement, as a Medium for Self-Image Recovery of Gen Alpha

Gen Alpha shows a keen receptivity to the world and the necessity for guidance through the abundance of information available. The learning style leans towards intuition rather than a linear approach, and excels through active participation, making use of high-capacity brains. Furthermore, the perspective on the world tends to show hierarchical structures, enhancing the belief that all individuals share a more equitable standing online.[33] Gen Alpha idolizes individuals from various fields, including artists, actors, athletes, musicians, and influencers such as YouTubers and this has a profound impact on self-perception from an early age. In this situation, Church is expected to collaborate with parents in reshaping self-image. Derek J. Tidball proposed that Church should bridge the ministry gap, possess the acumen to discern generational requirements, and take a leading role.[34] Hyunok Yi and Malan Nel described how teenagers felt about the absence of fathers. The local Church situation with fatherless teenagers showed a lack of interaction with the pastor or congregation.[35] Therefore, the concern is to include parents in improving self-image of Gen Alpha. In analyzing marital fidelity, the Lord also stresses the birth of generations or divine offspring (Matt 2:15–16). Families must pass on the true Christian identity to children. In Gen 1:28, man was permitted to be fruitful and multiply, while Matt 7:16–17 mentions that every good tree bears good fruit. The role of parents significantly influences children quality and when the concept is not balanced with spiritual identity, intelligence tends to lead to various conflicts and problems. Consequently, this may disrupt the social development and spiritual identity formation of the upcoming Gen Alpha. In this perspective, there are four essential aspects that parents should understand when shaping children identity. The first aspect is building spiritual identity, where parents are tasked with teaching children to understand God correctly. Character development is the second key focus, with parents

33 Zur Institute, "On Digital Immigrants."
34 Tidball, *Teologi Penggembalaan*, 342.
35 Yi – Nel, "Father Absence," 1–11.

responsible for guiding children on good conduct. The third aspect is knowledge, and parents play an important role in imparting insight and understanding. Finally, parents are responsible for cultivating resilience, instilling the capacity to respond maturely in various situations.

The Family Healing Movement method is Church program designed like a 2–3 day retreat outside the context of Sunday worship. The event is held in a specific and agreed place, attended by parents and children, and facilitated by Church. In the research of Jan Paul Hook and Joshua N. Hook, this phenomenon is described as the "healing cycle," a comprehensive model that does not address a single psychological disorder. In interpersonal therapy groups, members work through grace, safety, vulnerability, truth, belonging, and confession, while the final step of confession leads back to grace.[36]

Church pastoral team mediates in bringing the family together. The main objective is to form an intact Christian Family identity between parents and children to stay in God love. Another objective is to equip family with the capacity to establish trust among members and anticipate potential negative consequences of social media usage. The process of rebuilding troubled children self-image should commence with parents. According to Emma Thompson, Jade Sheen, and Darryl Maybery, the fundamental importance of parenting as a life domain is crucial in guiding and facilitating the recovery of mental health. This research introduces two key dimensions of mental health recovery, namely parenting and recovery journey as shared responsibilities.[37] The concept of children rightful self-image and value in the family structure is gradually diminishing. Therefore, Church is expected to serve as a mediator, facilitating a renewed personal connection between parents and children with God.

The Family Healing Movement includes several aspects related to honesty and unity with an open attitude of forgiveness and acceptance of each other existence. The second aspect is to equip individuals with the truth regarding the actual image from God Word. Establishing small groups creates a platform for open communication and the exchange of thoughts on matters related to Christian, enabling an atmosphere of understanding among the members of Gen Alpha. Furthermore, the restoration of a new self-image is experienced through honesty and true repentance. The movement is concerned with the restoration of self-image, divine reconciliation, and a return to a quality spiritual identity. The concept is continuous and can be re-conducted with a customized number of participants. In Christian theology, the movement can solve reconciliation and inner healing among members. John

36 Hook – Hook, "The Healing Cycle," 308.
37 Thompson – Sheen – Maybery, "Measuring Recovery," 219–259.

S. Klaasen calls the process a pastoral care approach to address the issues of suffering, reconciliation, and shepherding the soul.[38]

2.3. Personal Practice: Church Mentoring and Supervision Activities

Generations are connected through technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the latest technological advancement. AI is a term coined at a summer school in the mathematics department of Dartmouth University in 1956. According to John McCarthy, AI is the science and engineering of making intelligent machines.[39] The impact of this technological advancement is replacing humans in work projects. The second thing is the impact of manipulation, where humans manipulate the relationships with each other. The third and most dangerous impact is the subjugation of humans to their creations. AI and social media have made most humans dependent on the concept. Another well-known term is RoboGen, meaning that the identity of the generation is no longer human but robotic. This includes three leading technologies, namely holograms, AI, and robotics. Gen Alpha is destined to be the "super smart," most educated, "self-taught," and technologically secure children.[40]

Rom 12:2 affirms that man is not bound to the world. Meanwhile, Eph 2:13–16 states that Jesus is the Door to Restoration, as the prime example of practicing divine identity. Love is also essential and must be practiced personally at all times. The definition of personal practice is the act of faithfulness in performing activities, such as devotional time and Bible meditation. The act of discipline and faithfulness is the primary key to the growth of Christian faith (Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2; 49:3; 77:12; 119:15; Matt 26:40–41, Mark 14:38; Eph 6:18; 1 Pet 5:8). The first practical aspects to be implemented for Gen Alpha is personal prayer, which trains the weak flesh to remain in the strength of faith (1 Thess 5:17; Matt 26:40–41). The phrase "keep praying" shows the importance of vigilance in all situations, rather than focusing on the passage of time. This generation must cultivate faith-based communication and acquire the ability to discern God voice through personal prayer. True prayer increases intimate relationships shared between father and son (Luke 11:1–2, 10–13). Meanwhile, the teaching of Jesus admonishes man to build friendships (John 15:15). Church teaches that prayer requires several essential elements, namely [1] Space and Time (Matt 6:11), [2] Believing in Faith (Mark 11:24), [3] Longing for God (Matt 42:2; 63:2), [4] Perseverance (Col 4:2), and [5] Openness (Ps 139:23).

The second aspect includes the practice of praying, praising, and worshiping God, which is a fundamental spiritual discipline in both the Old and New Testaments (Ps 22:4; 47:1; 66:8;100; 135:2; 149:3; Acts 15:16; John 4:22–23). The third is

38 Klaasen, "African Christianity and Healing," 1–7.
39 McCarthy, "A Proposal for the Dartmouth Summer Research Project," 12–14.
40 Uhrig, "Generation Alpha," 87–90.

spending time in silence, specifically to meet and talk with God through prayer and meditation on the Bible. Quiet time appears to be an aspect of Christian faith that many believers often underestimate. This aspect contains essential elements such as imitating Jesus (Mark 1:35), responding to God desire (Job 7:17–18), building fellowship (Luke 10:42; Isa 50:4), filling spiritual vessels (Ps 90:14), building the inner man (Dan 6:4, 11), and gaining new strength (Isa 40:30; Lam 3:22–23).

There is evidence that religion and spirituality in youth are associated with [1] positive religious or spiritual development, [2] a plethora of positive outcomes, including moral development, [3] quality of parents-teenagers relationships, [4] psychological well-being, [5] identity formation, [6] less violence, [7] and reconciliation in the family.[41] Church can take an essential role in building spirituality by teaching, educating, mentoring, and supervising the personal practice of Gen Alpha. The first step is to ensure that the generation understands and realizes the importance of daily personal practice activities. In addition, discipleship classes are necessary for opening minds and providing spiritual understanding centered on God Word. The activity of praying and practicing faith in daily life remains the focus of Church and the mentoring team. Gen Alpha requires guidance and role models from parents, Church, and spiritual peers in physical and virtual realities. The responsibilities of mentoring and spiritual oversight must be adopted to navigate and nurture a resilient spirituality during evolving times.

3. Church in Mentoring Fathers as Priests and Spiritual Models for Gen Alpha

The research conducted by David C. Dollahite and Loren D. Marks stated 12 essential roles of spiritual development in childhood. At least 4 of the roles can be used as key measures, namely: [1] issues related to answering questions including existence, intimacy, and God, [2] conversion and disaffiliation, [3] impactful personal spiritual experiences, and [4] temperament and personality.[42] Fathers play a significant role in children developmental capacities and life experiences. This refers to freedom, broadening children outlook, firm discipline, and male role models. For children who lack fathers figure, concerning leadership qualities, Gens Y, Z, and Alpha show traits of guidance, empowerment, and inspiration,[43] affecting the psychological development

41 Dollahite – Marks, "Positive Youth Religious and Spiritual Development," 2.
42 Dollahite – Marks, "Positive Youth Religious and Spiritual Development," 2.
43 McCrindle, "Understanding Generation Alpha."

from a young age.[44] Children will have difficulty adapting to the environmental community when psychological development is impaired from childhood.

Church action is needed in the ministry of the community of fathers to restore the role in forming Christian identity of Gen Alpha. The actions include the formation of a particular group of fathers from young family with children of the generation. The pastor and pastoral team of Church become the prominent leaders and team that teaches and mentors fathers. This group is not a cell community or the Bible study class but a part of the pastoral counseling ministry. The primary purpose is to provide regular mentoring and discipleship to maximize fathers role as head of the household, priest, and example of faith in the family. Some fundamental concerns arise from observing the characteristics of young family that must be carefully controlled, such as [1] the influence of the Bible as God Word appears to be reduced. This can be attributed to the inclination towards the rapid acquisition of information in the digital world. The tendency to place greater trust in internet search results over pastoral counsel poses a pressing challenge. [2] A disturbing trend is observed in the attitudes of children in the family, characterized by a lack of respect, often manifested through abusive communication and this issue must be addressed promptly. [3] Despite parental efforts to reprimand and advise, there is an evident need for structured training, guidance, and building. The preoccupation with social media, which consumes a substantial portion of the time, shows the necessity for comprehensive intervention.

Firstly, Church and its stewardship must adapt to the needs of mentoring classes for fathers in young family. Mentoring and discipleship on the part of Church prevent the limitations of fathers in leading children. Fazel E. Freeks explores that mentoring and its processes can be a workable and possible solution to restore relationships in fractured family. Mentoring is an essential and effective method to help men understand fatherhood.[45] Church needs to prepare the pastoral teams through initial training and teaching basic psychological skills related to Gen Alpha. The trick is for Church to synergize with Christian psychologists and pastoral counseling must be open to experiencing breakthroughs in providing the best solutions for parenting class. This psychological perspective on religious practices can detect obstacles to personal and spiritual growth.[46]

Secondly, Church mediates a program known as “Real Men,” which restores men responsibility according to the divine characteristics, and the program is aimed only at married men of Millennials. The Real Men program includes Servants of God, pastors, and Christian practitioners, acting as mentors. In addition to approaching the participants through worship and the Word, several distinctive themes are

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44 Ashari, “Fatherless in Indonesia,” 35–39.
45 Fazel, “Mentoring Fathers,” 1–9.
46 Nye – Savage – Watts, *Psychology for Christian Ministry*, 20–21.

presented, such as the maximum law guiding the role of maximum men and fathers (1 Cor 10;1–10), the power of prayer (1 Tim 2:8), the treatment of the wife (1 Pet 3:7), a priest in the home (1 Tim 2:8; Prov 4:20–21), personal responsibility (Gen 3:6), a transformed leader (Rom 12:1–14; 2 Tim 2:4), abiding in the Word (Jas 1:19–25), and man imagination as motivation (Ps 101:1–7). Man learned to interact with each other about the family life and discuss marital challenges, and relationships with children through the program.

Thirdly, this research proposes "Spiritual Quality Time," which is a voluntary and conscious effort to devote particular fathers time to children in an intimate and religious space. Even though schools may provide children with play opportunities, this cannot serve as a definitive measure of success in shaping personal development within the context of family and faith. Typically, parents reserve weekends and holidays as precious moments to spend quality time with children. Church can also play a role in augmenting these efforts by offering alternative programs and serving as hosts for a variety of enriching activities. In this context, Evgenia V. Astapenko, Tatiana V. Klimova, Galina A. Molokhina, and Elena A. Petrenko addressed the peculiarities of recreational activities in conditions of forced epidemiological self-isolation. The results lead to the conclusion that in families where children invest significant leisure time in virtual activities, parents-children relationship shows decreased levels of children acceptance and a diminished desire for symbiotic interaction.[47] Gen Alpha tends to lead the learning, blurring the lines between formal and informal methods and replacing traditional one-way information transmission.[48] The program provides a measurable interactive space where Church helps men to create a different pattern of interpersonal relationships. From this perspective, a proposed solution entails facilitating exclusive playtime between Gen Alpha children and fathers, distinct from mothers. The objective is to bridge any relational gaps, supporting fluid and high-quality communication, authentic expressions of love, and the pursuit of genuine happiness that transcends social media (Titus 2:7; Matt 19:4; Luke 15:11–32). Church participates by mediating and providing the correct and maximum method. A form of this event can be a joint retreat and the activities are designed to be carried out between fathers and children, such as repeating meals, playing games, eating with musical accompaniment, or sharing stories and experiences in an open or accessible space. Shawna Mischell Dixon showed that the five most common teaching methods used were service learning, technology, student presentations, question and answer, and peer teaching.[49] Church can use these five methods in teaching how to be a religious fathers by including nature, communicating the meaning of life through stories and testimonies, and using the power of prayer in building hope and the truth

47 Astapenko, "Personal Characteristics."
48 Hamedāni, "The Generation Gap," 149–172.
49 Dixon, *A Survey of Teaching Methods*.

of God Word. For believers, the family and children serve as a reflection of the heavenly state bestowed by God, while simultaneously acting as a golden bridge leading to the promised eternal life.

4. Church and Spiritual Identity Building in the 4/14 Window

In terms of age, the oldest Gen Alpha is around 13–14 years old. This research shows the compatibility with the concept of child evangelism known as the "4/14 Window" by Bryant Myers, Director of World Vision MARC Ministries, in a presentation at the EFMA Executive Retreat. The depiction of Myers painted a picture of the quantity and plight of children and youth enduring hardship. The significance is a compelling statistic in the United States, where nearly 85% of individuals who made a life-altering decision to embrace Christ were between the formative ages of 4 and 14.[50] The megatrend of world evangelism also leads to the conversion of young people. David Kinnaman has released the results of the survey on the digital generation. The result shows that spiritual practitioners build a more fluid relationship with the digital generation, comprising 48% and 40% of youth and senior pastors. Meanwhile, evangelism and outreach were carried out by 29% and 24% of senior and youth pastors for the young generation.[51]

Church first mission is to prepare believing souls to become disciples of the Lord (Matt 28:19–20) and provide teaching and disciplinary action for the growth of faith. Furthermore, it continually educates the congregations to stand firm against the struggles of life (Acts 2:24). From the beginning, Church calling was to provide spiritual education and strengthen the faith of every member. The primary basis of its ministry is to equip Gen Alpha to move from darkness to the light of God (Matt 28:19–20). It is relevant to educate the generation by adequately introducing the Bible into daily life. The Bible essence of salvation, truth, and the dignity of life remains at the core of Church with an adaptive strategy. Raymond M. Rigdon pointed to gospel exploration and understanding as a core need and the most supportive correlation was the opening and deepening of the spiritual classroom.[52] Church returns to the true mission of the Great Commission, making all believers true disciples of Christ and free from sin, bondage, evil influences, and worldly influences.[53] Furthermore, it is open as a founder and leader, both physically and for the development of cyberspace to nurture and teach Digital Natives.[54] The leadership team is an essential

50 Conner, "3 Cultural Stories."
51 Kinnaman, "Pastors and Parents."
52 Colson – Rigdon, *Understanding Your Church's Curriculum*, 50.
53 Ruhulessin, *Struktur Organisasi Dan Misi Gereja*, 14.
54 Tulgan, "Meet Generation Z."

intermediary and the practice of mentoring classes is difficult to be conducted for a relatively long time. However, spiritual leaders must take full responsibility for the digital era and mentoring classes. Church also acts as an initiator in developing relationships and a community. According to Paul Jarzembowski, disaffiliation and lack of adult inclusion in religious literacy failed to establish a model of ministry in responding to trends of spiritual decline.[55] Church moves from a religious to a public space with precisely the same nature through a different method. The digital generation has two lifestyles, namely physical and virtual activities. Church acts as an intermediary through the ideal team, opening up opportunities for counseling, talent development, and self-fulfillment. Church method of building community and relationships must be subjected to renewal and adaptation. The Siga Arles, John Baxter Brown, Geneieve James Manzano Jr Glicerio, Natiity Petalar, and Sokolovski Augustin[56] mission approach to spiritual development in the 4/14 window includes three methodologies that remain relevant in the digital age. Firstly, church uses a strategy of engaging children by offering entertainment infused with spiritual elements during worship services. The aim is to attract children and promote parents to participate in church activities. Secondly, individuals who have attained a level of maturity in age and spirituality serve as custodians of the quality of knowledge about God, playing a crucial role in guiding and building the growth of the congregation. Thirdly, a profound relationship exists between children, the mission, and social transformation when churches shift the focus to include the transformation of children. However, the evangelistic mission must maintain a commitment to upholding the standards of an effective and authentic testimony to Christ. Children remain primarily oriented toward supporting a personal relationship with Christ and learning how to be integral members of the wider Christian community. The spiritual development mission bridge calls for a movement to elevate the quality of children spiritual identity as active mission agents for the generation. Critical weaknesses can then be anticipated in the practice and level of children's attendance for Christ (Matt 18;1–5; Mark 9:33–37; Luke 9:46–48). Fourth, Church ministry expands the 4/14 evangelistic mission through the virtual world. There should be more than physical books and traditional games to increase the speed of literacy and knowledge of Gen Alpha. Furthermore, reading books, storybooks, and the Bible can be made into media applications. This is because physical and conservative approaches are often not very comfortable. The 4/14 evangelistic mission can be carried out in online media such as TikTok and Instagram in the form of serialized stories, straightforward spiritual content, and worship promotions or testimonies. Approximately 25% of Gen Alpha are actively engaged on social media platforms, with 28% of the online activity influenced by promotions from friends. An interesting aspect is the high receptiveness to

55 Jarzembowski, "Mobilizing the Field Hospital," 1.
56 Arles, *Children & Youth as Partners in Mission*.

direct engagement with commercial links. Other data shows that 19%, 24%, and 13% enjoy social media posts, online videos, and website pictures.[57] According to Thompson, Gen Alpha has behavioral characteristics focused on creativity, dynamism, leadership, and a solid connection to technology.[58]
Fifth, Church opens a special pastoral counseling service for children, who possess different characteristics. The importance of this opening is because Gen Alpha is experiencing declining mental health due to the influence of parents disturbed issues. Parents mostly from Gens Y and Z are open to recieve help for mental health issues. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), 35% and 37% of Millennials and Gen Z self-reported receiving mental health therapy or treatment in 2019.[59] The implication is that Gen Alpha is exposed to psychological problems before teenage. Therefore, children counseling programs may need to follow the promotion or implementation methods of pastoral counseling. The process can be carried out by youth pastors or Sunday school teachers to effectively change the look, structure, and focus of ministry for Gen Alpha.[60]

Conclusion

In conclusion, Gen Alpha was challenging to trust since the actions were based on personal action and observation. Church was responsible for building Christian parents and identity, as well as acting as a mentor and facilitator in the exploration of faith. Furthermore, Gen Alpha possessed the most significant number of members, inheriting an identity for the future. The strategy was to build the quality of two-way communication between children and fathers as parents. Church was expected to mentor, train, and prepare men for the role of fathers in young families. In addition, space could be opened to collaborate with creators on social media in passing gospel messages. Church should focus on the mission of spiritual development in the 4/14 window by maximizing Sunday school services and pastoral counseling for children. There was a potential for further research that could examine the impact of social media on evangelizing Gen Alpha using a quantitative approach. The result could explore the potential for extending the proposed evangelization and pastoral methods to specific denominations and Churches, such as Orthodoxy or Roman Catholicism.

57 Fletcher, "Generation Alpha," 11–13.
58 Dos Reis, "Study on The Alpha Generation," 9–19.
59 Fletcher, "Generation Alpha."
60 Walker, "5 Reasons."

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The Prophetic Character of Christian-Oriented Sexual Freedom in the Conjugal Relationship in the Thinking of Moral Theologians

A Brief Theological and Ethical Look Back at Pope Paul VI's Encyclical Letter Humanae Vitae of 1968

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Abstract: In 2023, people on the European continent find themselves recovering after several social upheavals caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as several military conflicts, especially the war in Ukraine. At the same time, however, there is a significant wave of migration to the so-called safe (socially secure) countries of Western Europe. Despite the significant problems that this migration causes for a politically polarized Europe, Western European, but also other countries are experiencing an astoundingly strong demand for labor (e.g. Germany openly talks about the economic need for up to 400,000 jobs per year). This year marks the 55th anniversary of the publication of the long-awaited encyclical of Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, which rejected all methods of artificial contraception. In this contribution, the author attempts to look at the problems of the culture of life in European space through the lens of several ethical and philosophical thoughts. This contribution, therefore, seeks to reflect both upon the rejection of *Humanae vitae* by modern Western society, as well as consider the propositions of future steps that will help stabilize European society, including the concepts of economics, family, and values according to the said encyclical.

Keywords: family policy of Europe, protection of marriage in the age of demographic crisis, the message of the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* for the modern society of the 21st century, Christian sexual ethics in the context of the culture of life

Introduction and Retrospection

In July 2023, 55 years have passed since the promulgation of Pope Paul VI's then long-awaited encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, which rejected all methods of artificial contraception, that is the use of artificial means to prevent conception. The acceptance of this encyclical was already very complicated and several bishops' conferences (German, Austrian, Belgian) were very cautious about accepting it at the time.[1] These national conferences of bishops left the acceptance of *Humanae Vitae* to the decision

1 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 201.

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of the conscience of the individual, which brought about many tense situations at the time of the sexual revolution in Western Europe.[2] Although the year 1968 resonates for our post-communist countries as the year of the unsuccessful so-called Prague Spring and the subsequent forced, unwelcome visit of a contingent of Warsaw Pact troops to the territory of then Czechoslovakia, for the countries of Western Europe and the USA, other important themes of the development of modern post-war society, including new forms of freedom, were at stake at that time, such as pacifism, the fight against racism, or unregulated sexual freedom.

In later reflection on the subject, Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini caused quite a stir in 2008 when he interviewed P. George Sporschill (an Austrian Jesuit who is known for his long-standing commitment to street children in Romania) in his book *Jerusalemer Nachtgespräche*, where he sharply rejected *Humanae Vitae* as a work that had caused many “lies” and “damage.” Martini claimed that many people had turned away from the Church as a result of the Encyclical letter and that the Church had distanced itself from them as well. On the other hand, Archbishop Héctor Rubén Aguer of La Plata, Argentina, for example, rejected Martini’s criticism and described *Humanae Vitae* as a doctrine based on a continuous tradition that goes back to the Church Fathers.[3] Finally, Pope John Paul II developed his personalist theory of sexuality and consistently defended the meaning of the encyclical.

Helmut Weber, a moral theologian from Trier, Germany, highly praises John Paul II’s contribution to the interpretation of *Humanae Vitae* in the exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*. The said exhortation contains the essential ideas of the 1980 Synod of Bishops, which are reworked by John Paul II and bring new arguments to the debate. The decision of the *Humanae Vitae* is here reaffirmed, but at the same time, the only recognized method of natural family planning is here more prominently highlighted and morally defensible with a new argument in which it is no longer the greatness of nature but the greatness of the person that is considered as the decisive element. The use of this method thus has personal consequences and secures personal values such as considerateness, the capacity for renunciation, and fidelity. Another German moralist, Bernhard Fraling, points out that the criticism of *Humanae Vitae* often overlooks that, in addition to reinterpreting the spousal relationship based on personalistic philosophy, this encyclical was written for the entire world with an eye on developing countries and advocated matters of great importance for the neglected poor. These countries have often been the target of indiscriminate attacks by campaigns for artificial contraception far beneath human dignity. These campaigns were making development aid conditional upon the use of artificial protection before conception, and such pressure harmed the people of Latin America

2 Boné – Malherbe, *Engendrés par la science*, 124.
3 “Kardinal Martini distanziert sich von Humanae vitae” and “Kopfwäsche für Kardinal Martini.”

in particular. Representatives of these countries thus understood *Humanae Vitae* as a document of liberation.[4]

Pope Benedict XVI also highlighted and confirmed the validity of *Humanae Vitae*.[5] Benedict recalled that the teachings of Paul VI were taken up by John Paul II and underpinned by anthropological and moral foundations. In this light,

> children are not objects of human planning but recognized as true gifts, which are received with an attitude of responsible generosity towards God. In this way, natural planning of parenthood enables people to administer what the Creator in His wisdom has inscribed in a human being without damaging the intact sense of sexual devotion. This requires a psychical maturity that is not direct but grows in dialogue and mutual listening, as well as in a unique control of sexual desire. This is the path of growth in virtue.[6]

Subsequently, on the 40th anniversary of this encyclical, the famous sermon by Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna was also written, recalling the guilt of Europe, which has said no to life three times in the last 40 years: against *Humanae Vitae*, by legalizing abortion, and the future of life by legalizing homosexual marriages.[7] The Canadian Bishops' Conference, in turn, on the 50th anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*, was fervent for the rediscovery of the values of *Humanae Vitae*, especially for those who are troubled by problems of love. In this way, the bishops highlight the *prophetic character of Humanae Vitae* for the development of two fundamental human institutions: marriage and the family. The bishops add that *Humanae Vitae* shows a truly thorough reflection on God's plan for human love. It shows a holistic view of a human being and the mission to which humans are called. *Humanae Vitae* is an invitation to become open to the sincerity, beauty, and dignity of the creaturely call that is a vocation.[8]

1. Responsible Parenting as a General Ethical Principle of Sexuality

In seeking an answer to responsibly lived conjugal sexuality, one must recognize that this is not an issue based on a single encyclical and a subsequent 55 years of approval or rejection. As several moral theologians have pointed out, this is an issue that has resonated in the Church since its beginning. In the context of the history

4 FC 32, CCC § 2370, cf. Weber, *Spezielle Moraltheologie*, 370 and Fraling, *Sexualethik*, 203.
5 Pope Benedict XVI, "Humanae vitae: aktualität und prophetische Bedeutung," 136 and Human Life International Österreich, Europäische Ärzteaktion, *Humanae vitae. Der Glanz der Wahrheit*, 121.
6 "Benedikt XVI.: Humanae vitae nach wie vor aktuell."
7 Schönborn, "Die Sünde der Bischöfe."
8 "Canada: Bishops Issue Statement to Mark 50th Anniversary of Humanae Vitae."

of contraception in Catholic theology and in the canon law of the Church, Joachim Piegsa and Fraling recommend a study by John T. Noonan.[9] *Birth control* was a term of importance in the late 1960s (and, as a matter of fact, remains so in certain circles of Western European social ethicists to this day), about as important as global warming and consistent pacifism are today. Thus, in advocating artificial methods of *birth control* (birth control can also be referred to by the phrase fertility control),[10] i.e., various methods of contraception, many (including Catholic theologians) appeal to the demands of conjugal love and responsible parenthood, human freedom, or responsible sex. A book by Georg Denzel is one of the available works in this area of research.[11] It is precisely because of his way of arguing and criticizing the Church, that it will be important to look deeper into this topic in the future. In contrast to the now widespread notion of family planning, Wilhelm Ernst of Erfurt emphasizes the term responsible parenthood as a generalizing ethical principle.[12] These authors prefer not to specify a particular method, but to leave the decision to the conscience of the parents. At the outset, therefore, it is necessary to try to define and clarify these important elements of married life, since they are the essence and the starting point of the ethical evaluation of contraception as understood by popes from Paul VI to the present day.[13]

The Second Vatican Council described spouses as "equally cooperating" with God's creative love and "equally as interpreters of that love." The word "equally" seeks to point to the *limited capacity of human beings to understand the plans of God*. Thus, the spouses are left with the right to decide exercising their "joint discretion" whether they wish to conceive a child and what spacing of time should exist between children conceived by them. Piegsa refers to the comment of Bernard Häring on *GS* 50.[14] In this way, the Council has defined an important criterion about responsible parenthood: there is no real contradiction between God's laws regarding the transmission of life and what serves true conjugal love. In this way, responsible parenthood *serves* and does not harm conjugal love.[15]

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9 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 197, n. 316 and Fraling, *Sexualethik*, 201, Noonan, *Empfängnisverhütung* and Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 86–103.

10 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 99.

11 Denzel, *Zakázaná slasť* [Forbidden Bliss], 95–105.

12 Ernst, "Empfängnisregelung," 131.

13 Fraling, *Sexualethik*, 204.

14 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 196, n. 309.

15 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 196.

2. Clarification of the Essential Goals of Marriage in Modern Catholic Doctrine

The essential realities of marriage, which are consistent with its goals, are communion in love and the willingness to accept and raise children. However, it was not until the Second Vatican Council in *GS* 48, 1 that these goals were first affirmed.[16] Marital sexuality has similar goals – the first is the expression of the spouses' love for one another (the bonding goal) and the second is the transmission of life (the procreative goal). The author adds that this order was already defined by the *Catechism Romanus* as a work of the Council of Trent in 1566.[17] These goals are inscribed in sexuality, and cannot be separated from each other. John Paul II defined these goals as follows: the *connective goal* is understood as the expression of the spouses' mutual love and thus the expression of their total self-giving. "Sexuality only humanly manifests itself if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and a woman commit themselves completely to each other until death. Full bodily self-giving would be a lie if it were not the sign and fruit of a whole personal self-giving in which the whole personality is present even with its earthly dimension" (*FC* 11). This conjugal love comes from its highest source, God. He instituted marriage intending to bring about in human beings the plan of His love. Therefore, by giving themselves to one another, which is proper and exclusive to them, spouses strive for such a communion of persons (*intentio unionis*) that they may cooperate with God in the procreation and education of new beings. Marital love can be characterized primarily as a fully human love, that is, a sensual and spiritual love. It is not, therefore, a mere instinctive or emotional desire, but above all an act of free will that tends to maintain the unity and growth of this love. In this way, the spouses become as it were one heart and one soul so that together they attain their human perfection. Another characteristic of this love is its completeness, which means the spouses share everything, both joys, and pains, without pursuing selfish advantages or unjust exceptions. If one truly loves one's spouse, it is certainly not only for the sake of what one receives from them, but one loves them for their own sake, and this is done gladly to enrich the other by the gift of oneself and to become completely united with them. Conjugial love is also faithful and exclusive to the end of life and tends to bring new lives into the world (*HV* 8–9). This mutual self-giving, or the true essence of conjugal love, is accomplished by the explicit expression of the will of the partners before God. The desire for the complete unity of the spouses (or even of the betrothed) finds in this consent its valid expression and fulfillment in the irrevocable unity which is the exact constitutive element of this consent. In the conjugal sexual act, then, this desire achieves a new fulfillment, because it is precisely in the sexual act that the self-surrender – consent

16 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 100.
17 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 198.

to which has previously been manifested and promised – is performed. With this consummation of marriage, the consummation of self-surrender, its indissolubility begins. The physical union is thus the fulfillment of conjugal love.[18]

In contemplating the *procreative function*, it is necessary to understand that conjugal love, which unites the spouses completely and makes them one flesh, is not exhausted only within the conjugal couple. For it makes them capable of the greatest possible giving, by which they become God's co-workers in transmitting the gift of life to the new human being. In this way, by giving themselves to one another, the spouses also give of themselves a new reality, a child, a living and real image of their love, a permanent sign of conjugal unity, as well as a living and indivisible synthesis of their paternity and maternity (*FC* 34–35). Marital procreation is thus the fruit and sign of their love, a living witness of their full mutual giving (*FC* 28). Simply put, the transmission of life consists in the act of the human being – the perfectly natural sexual action – and in the work of nature – the fertilization and implantation of the ovum in the womb.[19] Thus, it follows from this analysis that one cannot agree that the sexual act is an act of nature, because it is primarily an act of the person.[20]

These two goals have not been easy to define in the history of the Church, which for a long time leaned towards the Augustinian (Neo-Platonic) tradition, and only at the Second Vatican Council did it lean towards the Thomistic (Aristotelian) tradition.[21] It was not until Pius XI's encyclical *Casti Connubii* that the natural method of family planning (albeit now superseded by the Ogino–Knaus method) was clearly stated, thus affirming the above-mentioned two goals of marriage and sexuality. Unlike *Humanae Vitae*, however, Pius XI's encyclical also contains the ecclesiastical-legal consequences of not following the natural method of planned parenthood. Artificial contraception has been called a grave sin.[22] Finally, we must note that the contraceptive pill RU 486 is regarded as an abortifacient pill.[23] Pope Pius XII himself explicitly stood for natural family planning and, at the same time, for allowing spouses to enjoy sexual pleasure even if it does not lead directly to the procreation of offspring. Piegsa quotes in particular Pius XII's speech of October 29, 1951, to the members of the Association of Italian Catholic Midwives and of November 26, 1951, to the members of the "Front of the Family" Congress and the Association of Large Families.[24]

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18 Hildebrand, *25 let „Humanae vitae"* [25 Years of "Humanae Vitae"], 24.
19 Tondra, *Morálna teológia* [Moral Theology], 122–123.
20 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 112.
21 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 197.
22 Fraling, *Sexualethik*, 202.
23 Boné – Malherbe, *Engendrés par la science*, 47.
24 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 197, n. 317 and 318.

3. Council Argumentation and Method of Artificial Contraception

The Council's reasoning (*GS* 51) was intended, according to Piegsa, to show that spouses who choose not a natural, but an artificial method of contraception are also seeking to care for their marital love. But this so-called "good intention" alone cannot determine the moral quality of the way they act, because as the Council emphasized: this quality depends on "**objective criteria**" that are based on the nature of the person and his or her act. Piegsa adds that this is true in the conduct of human beings in all spheres of life. That which is not congruent with the personal dignity of one or the other partner cannot be "sanctified by the good intention" of one or both partners. This applies primarily to means that directly lead to premature abortion. Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* declares that these criteria of morality are taken from the nature of the person and their acts. *Humanae Vitae*, in turn, teaches that the criteria in question are derived from the nature (character) of marriage and its acts.[25] These analyses thus depend strongly on the definition of the word nature.[26] The Council argues first for the essence of the person and then for the essence of the act. The Catholic, therefore, cannot argue that good intention sanctifies the means, that is, in this case, the means for artificial contraception. Indeed, objective criteria must be taken into account for the reason that the attitudes of the spouses thus remain morally unobjectionable. The Catholic, therefore, cannot argue that good intention sanctifies the means, that is, in this case, the means of artificial contraception. Indeed, objective criteria must be taken into account for the reason that the attitudes of the spouses thus remain morally unobjectionable.[27] What the Council meant by objective criteria concerning marriage (*GS* 51) is expressed by Piegsa as follows: the conjugal act corresponds to "the full sense of the mutual surrender of the partners" as well as to the full sense of "truly humane conception in true love."[28] It should be noted, however, that the Council's aim was not to determine directly the morality of contraception but to give a principle of the solution by favoring the mutual good of the spouses rather than the good of the natural finality of the act of conception.[29]

Thus, *Humanae Vitae*'s unequivocal decision for the natural method of family planning is not to be taken as a choice of one method among many, but as a **partnership path to** which there is no humane alternative.[30] Piegsa relies on the book by Josef Rötzer.[31]

25 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 197.
26 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 104.
27 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 206, n. 357.
28 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 206.
29 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 101.
30 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 199.
31 Rötzer, *Natürliche Geburtenregelung*, 9.

What, according to Piegsa, is the essential difference between natural family planning methods and artificial methods of preventing conception? According to *HV* 12, the essential difference lies in the violation of "the irrevocable union of the two senses of sexuality: loving self-giving and life-giving. Whoever *actively* violates this connection acts (at least in fact) as if they were the master of the sources of life and not a servant of the Creator's plan (*HV* 13)."[32] Thus the difference between these methods is moral.[33]

According to Michel Séguin, Paul VI's analysis rests on three points: responsible parenthood (that is, mutual knowledge of and respect for each other's biological processes and their function); biological laws are part of the human person; reason and the will must exercise a proper mastery over instinct and the passions.[34] To do this, one must again realize from the theological perspective of *Humanae Vitae* that the *creative act of God is the origin of all human life*: in the moment of the sexual encounter of the spouses, one discovers the transcendent intervention of God for the coming into existence of every human being. In the cyclical capacity of the couple's conception the openness to the one God can be found, because in this way the possible beginning of life is established, which takes its source in the depth of God and His creative, free, and loving act. This is the essential ground of the argument.[35] By abstaining sexually on fertile days in this way, the married couple affirms the recognition of the presence of God the Creator belonging to their sexuality, even if they do not want to have children at that moment. In this way the spouses prove that they are not lords and masters over the source of life, but rather servants of the image given by the Creator.[36]

4. A More Accurate Understanding of Difficult *Humanae Vitae* Passages Using the Law of Gradual Growth

Piegsa shows how difficult it is to explain this theology of creation by the example of the traditional understanding of contraception as killing the future fetus (and of people protecting themselves against conception as potential murderers). Scholastic theologians rejected the prevention of conception mainly for three reasons: it is killing, it goes against nature, and it destroys the marriage relationship. The Holy Officium decrees of May 21, 1851, and April 19, 1853, state that preventing conception violates

32 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 209.

33 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 102; and Séguin, *La contraception et l'Église*, 63–64.

34 Séguin, *La contraception et l'Église*, 63–64.

35 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 109.

36 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 110.

natural law.[37] An unsigned article in *L'Osservatore Romano* on February 16, 1989, countered this argument, which is still often used today, and whose argument was found years later in the 1995 encyclical *Evangelium Vitae,* in article 18.[38] Thus, about John Paul II's statement in *FC* 32, where he points to the use of artificial contraception as an act that is "in itself a moral disorder" (*intrinsecum malum*), it is important to recall the argument in question from *EV* 61: "Christian Tradition – is clear and unanimous, from the beginning up to our day, in describing abortion as a particularly grave moral disorder." Ernst adds that John Paul II in *Familiaris Consortio* made clear his twofold objection to artificial contraception: it works against openness to life and also against the total mutual surrender of the spouses. In contrast, there is no such reservation with the natural method of family planning. Here the spouses submit themselves completely to God's plan and the condition of complete mutual surrender, that is, surrender without interference with bodily integrity.[39]

Piegsa notes that, in comparison with "situational ethics," which mainly stresses the subjective situation, there remains a balanced, clear view of what the decision will and will not bring into existence. The choice, therefore, cannot transform "internal confusion" into "order," but it can nevertheless affect the responsibility of the actor to different levels. The citation in question is, therefore, a refusal not only of situational ethics but also of its contrary extremity, which in some circumstances – referred to as moral confusion in itself (*intrinsecum malum*) – does not allow for grounds that reduce culpability. This is why the term "law of graduality" (gradual growth) has been introduced both in moral theology and in pastoral theology, and even in some instructions of the Magisterium.[40] This term has its origin in John Paul II as the notion of the "**law of gradualness**." "And so what is known as 'the law of gradualness' or step-by-step advance cannot be identified with 'gradualness of the law,' as if there were different degrees or forms of precept in God's law for different individuals and situations. In God's plan, all husbands and wives are called in marriage to holiness, and this lofty vocation is fulfilled to the extent that the human person can respond to God's command with serene confidence in God's grace and his or her own will" (*FC* 34).[41] Otherwise, it is known as **the gradual mode of growth**. "Therefore, an educational growth process is necessary, so that individual believers, families and peoples, even civilization itself, by beginning from what they have already received of the mystery of Christ, may patiently be led forward, arriving at a richer understanding and a fuller integration of this mystery in their lives" (*FC* 9). However, this law must not be interpreted as a denial of immutable norms. Nevertheless, there remains a tension between objective duties and subjective capacities (but not in the sense of

37 Denzel, *Zakázaná slasť*, 98, 100.
38 "La norma morale di «Humanae vitae»"; Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 210–211.
39 Ernst, "Empfängnisregelung," 135.
40 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 211.
41 Giovanni Paolo II, "Omelia durante la Santa Messa."

autonomous morality). One must not present the commandments as objective commandments in the sense of an unattainable ideal (*FC* 34). Piegsa cites the introduction of the principle of graduality by Archbishop Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in his diocese of Munich-Freising on December 8, 1980: "This idea of graduality outlines the motif of being on the way, which is thus concretized for moral knowledge and practice. The whole Christian journey is a conversion-conversion in gradual steps."[42] For John Paul II, in this way, the body in the sexual act becomes an access route to the knowledge of the person as the subject of the relationship of gift. The body signals that a person is an object worthy of the gift. Thus, a person finds in this relationship the deep meaning of his or her being. The body thus possesses a conjugal significance (*significatio sponsale*) – even in the celibate sense, as a marriage to the Church and to Christ.[43]

5. Understanding the Difficult Concept of Intrinsecum Malum as the Principle of Superabundance

Regarding the notion of *intrinsecum malum*, John Paul II in *Familiaris Consortio* did not accept the proposals of the Synod of Bishops of 1980, and in the context of the still open questions on this subject, he recalled this notion even more strongly. After *Familiaris Consortio*, as Fraling points out, this question is no longer open, and, in the sense of *Humanae Vitae*, artificial contraception is understood as *intrinsecum malum*. Fraling seems to think that how artificial protection from conception is prohibited in *Familiaris Consortio* is close to a view of grave misconduct.[44]

However, as some theologians have pointed out, the relationship between love and human conception can only be fully appreciated if it is understood as a principle of **superabundance** ("overflowing abundance"), rather than as a mere instrumental connection, where the *sexual act would appear to be merely a means to procreate children*. Superabundant finality implies an "overflowing" fullness of purposeful finality, where the meaning of a thing is not only the achievement of a given purpose but also, in some way, an "extra" meaning; a meaning in itself. It also differs from instrumental finality, where the meaning and value of a fact (which is a means) is directed only towards its purpose, whereas in the case of superabundant finality, the instrumental fact has its meaning and value independently of the purpose towards which it is directed. As has already been said, the essential meaning and value of the conjugal sexual act is the closest unity in love-self-giving, and this unity has a value higher than

42 Piegsa, *Der Mensch*, 212–213.
43 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 113.
44 Fraling, *Sexualethik*, 207.

any other union of persons. However, to this, in itself, a valuable and meaningful good, is also entrusted with the procreation of offspring. The same act, the purpose of which is the completion of unity, at the same time becomes, in its "overflowing" fullness, the source of the conception of new life. Its purpose, then, is procreation, but not in the sense of mere instrumental functionality, as in the case of animals, but in the sense of "overflowing" or "overflowing fullness" – the overflowing of love.[45]

Therefore, sexuality, through which a man and a woman give themselves to each other in acts that are proper and belong exclusively to the spouses, is not a merely biological dimension but it touches the **inner core of the human personality as such**. The reproach of biologism of sexuality concerns a very restrictive vision of *Humanae Vitae* that concentrates the criteria of the morality of the sexual act from the material respect of the natural cycle of fertility and thus relegates to the background of the personal value of the sexual act. With the theoretical support of natural law, the value of the capacity to conceive sexually, which humans share with animals, does not involve what is intrinsic to the human person, i.e. the unity of persons. Thus, moral criteria should not be based on the biological dimension of sexuality, but on the personal mutual relation of the spouses giving of themselves to each other. The answer is to be sought in the unity of the two goals of marriage (*HV* 12). In this biological orientation of the sexual act of human nature, one must discover the "true good" of the person, a meaning and finality that transcends the simple biological level.[46] If a man were to hold something back for himself, even if only the possibility of deciding otherwise later, he would not be fully giving himself away for that reason alone. This fullness of self-giving required by conjugal love is consistent with the demands of responsible procreation, which, insofar as it is directed towards the procreation of a human being, transcends by its nature a purely biological order and includes within itself personal values that need the contribution of both spouses for their harmony (cf. *FC* 11). Conjugal love, therefore, requires that spouses are well aware of their mission concerning responsible parenthood, which is very much emphasized today and therefore should be properly understood. It must therefore be considered from various legitimate interrelated points of view. If biological processes are taken into account, responsible parenthood means knowing their functions and respecting them; because in the capacity to bring forth life, the human reason discovers the biological laws that are part of the human person. If innate instincts and drives are taken into account, then responsible parenthood implies the necessary mastery to be exercised over them by reason and will. If the physical, economic, psychological, and social conditions are considered, then responsible parents are those who, after reasonable deliberation and with generosity, decide to adopt a larger number of children, or who, for serious reasons and in keeping with moral precepts,

45 Hildebrand, *25 let „Humanae Vitae"*, 26–29.
46 Bedouelle – Brugués – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 106–107.

decide not to have another child for a certain or indefinite period. But the responsible parenthood in question consists above all of an inner relation to the objective moral order which God has established and of which a right conscience is a true interpreter. The task of responsible parenthood, therefore, requires that the spouses fully understand their duties towards God, towards themselves, towards the family, and human society, while correctly maintaining a scale of values (*HV* 10).

6. A Repeated Solution to the Arguments of Biological Anxiety and the Physical-Spiritual Unity of the Human Person before the Face of God's Holiness

In his address to the International Congress for Moral Theology on November 12, 1988, on the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Humanae Vitae*, John Paul II returned to the affirmation of this doctrine. Against the reservations of many theologians, he stated that "what is in doubt here, when this doctrine is rejected, is the idea of the very *holiness of God*. This is not a doctrine invented by human beings, but rather a doctrine inscribed by the creative hand of God like the human person and confirmed by God in Revelation. If we open this doctrine up for discussion, we are thereby declaring obedience to God Himself. That is, we prefer the light of our reason to the light of Divine wisdom and thus fall into the darkness of error. At this point, it seems as if John Paul II wanted to elevate this doctrine as infallible, whereas many episcopal conferences at the time classified it as not infallible.[47]

Yet we must also be aware of the extent of the counter-arguments here:

– It is possible to come across the argument that the use of contraception is a *purely biological act*. This is not true, since even the conception of a human being, even if it were done without love, is not a mere biological act. For the whole of human personality, spiritual life is in various ways linked to some physiological presuppositions but therefore does not itself become a purely biological reality. Throughout the universe, we find always and again the fact that far higher realities are bound up with conditions of a lower order. But it would be absurd to confuse these orders. The creation of the human person, in which the spouses are co-participants, is therefore not a simple biological act, although it is bound by purely biological relations, and therefore the interruption of this process is also not a purely biological intervention. Similarly, "blowing off" another person's head is not a biological intervention, but murder, because the life of a human being depends on certain biological processes, disrupted by that very shot. Artificial birth control is thus a rupture of the causal bond embedded in human

47 Ernst, "Empfängnisregelung," 135.

beings, in which the biological processes of the marital act are meant to be the expression and fulfillment of the closest union in love, which has a causal connection to the creation of a new human being.[48] The finality of conception is much more than the simple physical act of conception (a law of nature). It is essentially an expression of the natural law that is inscribed in every human being. This law itself asserts a moral obligation for human beings and gives sexuality a purely metaphysical meaning. The fundamental motive that enables human reason to see the capacity for conception as more than a simple biological act is that the fruit of the sexual act is a person, that is, a being directly willed and loved by God and henceforth in relationship with Him for all eternity. Therefore, the conjugal union maintains an "intrinsic procreative sense" even during the woman's infertile period. Even if the ability to conceive is sometimes impossible due to a possible error of physical nature, the metaphysical meaning persists because the act remains essentially oriented toward conception.[49]

– It is also often argued that contraception, if safe and available to all, is the most effective means of preventing abortion. Therefore, those who proclaim the wrongness of contraception are accused of actually aiding the spread of abortion. Such reasoning is, in fact, fallacious. Perhaps many people do indeed use contraceptives to avoid the temptation of abortion later on. However, the anti-values inherent in the "contraceptive mentality" – which is something fairly different from responsible fatherhood and motherhood, expressed as respect for the entire truth of the marital act – cause this very temptation to become even stronger when an "unwanted" life is actually conceived. The pro-abortion culture is most prevalent in environments that reject the Church's teaching on contraception.

From the perspective of the Church, contraception, and abortion are certainly two fundamentally different forms of evil: one opposes the entire truth of the sexual act as the proper expression of conjugal love, and the other destroys the life of the human being. Despite their different natures and moral weight, they are very often closely related as fruits of the same tree. There is indeed no shortage of cases in which a person resorts to contraception or even abortion under the pressure of many existential difficulties, which, however, do not exempt anyone from respecting natural norms.

John Paul II adds:

> Still, in very many other instances such practices are rooted in a hedonistic mentality unwilling to accept responsibility in matters of sexuality, and they imply a self-centred concept of freedom, which regards procreation as an obstacle to personal fulfilment. The life

48 Hildebrand, *25 let „Humanae Vitae"*, 39.

49 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 107–108.

> which could result from a sexual encounter thus becomes an enemy to be avoided at all costs, and abortion becomes the only possible decisive response to failed contraception. The close connection which exists, in mentality, between the practice of contraception and that of abortion is becoming increasingly obvious. It is being demonstrated alarmingly by the development of chemical products, intrauterine devices and vaccines which, distributed with the same ease as contraceptives, really act as abortifacients in the very early stages of the development of the life of the new human being (*EV* 13).

Summarizing the issues discussed at the congress in 1988, one can see two fundamentally different anthropologies that appear in the dispute about *Humanae Vitae*: the Christian one and the biologist one, i.e., the ultimate materialist one. This thread is only hinted at by evoking the spiritual and purely biological sense of contraception. At the same time, it should be added that when discussing the fact of the deification of the person through contraception, this occurs objectively, i.e., even when contraceptive intercourse is consensual.

7. The Consequences of Different Approaches to Birth Control and the Role of the State in the Pursuit of Liberty, Justice, and the Common Good

The fundamental issue, however, is that the analysis of contraception is limited only to the dimension of individual morality. Since the publication of *Humanae Vitae*, there have been two negative developments in this regard. The first was foreseen by Paul VI in *HV* 17, where he signals the expected development of anti-natalist policies pursued by national governments and international organizations and aimed mainly at reducing the population in developing countries.

If the Church finds contraception ethically acceptable, it will also not have the ability to criticize such policies from an ethical position:

> Finally, careful consideration should be given to the danger of this power passing into the hands of those public authorities who care little for the precepts of the moral law. Who will blame a government which in its attempt to resolve the problems affecting an entire country resorts to the same measures that are regarded as lawful by married people in the solution of a particular family difficulty? Who will prevent public authorities from favouring those contraceptive methods which they consider more effective? They may even impose their use on everyone if they regard this, as necessary. It could well happen, therefore, that when people, either individually or in the family or social life, experience the inherent difficulties of the divine law and are determined to avoid them, they may give

into the hands of public authorities the power to intervene in the most personal and intimate responsibility of husband and wife (*HV* 17).

The second is related to the blurring of the line between contraception and abortion with the advent of the early abortion pill. Since the combined oral contraceptive pill (COCP) is also potentially abortifacient, making embryo implementation impossible or significantly more difficult, acceptance of the contraceptive pill would practically be equivalent to acceptance of the early abortion pill.[50] After all, it is hard to imagine that big pharmaceutical companies would produce contraceptives only for Catholics. This leads to a fundamental objection to attempts to undermine the teaching of *Humanae Vitae*: for the Church to permit the use of hormonal contraception would be almost equivalent to the Church withdrawing its objections to abortion.

In addition to the reasons for responsible parenthood laid down by the Council (the good of the spouses as well as of their children; "the material and spiritual conditions of the times and the standard of living"; the good of the whole family, society and the Church; *GS* 50), the *overpopulation of the world and thus the inability to feed such a large population, or the inability of poor countries and people to provide for their offspring,* is very often used as an argument for the necessity of artificial contraception. Eberhard Schockenhoff, on the other hand, stresses that evaluated according to ethical criteria, the natural method of family planning is advantageous: it is safe, cheap, has no harmful side effects, and is reversible at any time. At the same time, this method favors cooperation between man and woman and fosters an attitude of mutual respect and consideration whereas most artificial methods make it easier for the man to transfer the tasks of family planning entirely to the woman.[51] A married couple who chooses to live this way must embrace the new lifestyle together. This natural method then repays the couple by strengthening their independence and moving away from permanent dependency.

Some theologians even doubt the efficacy of natural methods of family planning in other cultural circumstances: however, Schockenhoff also points out the disadvantage of the natural method, which is often inapplicable in conditions of extreme poverty, since the failure of inadequate nutrition and other circumstances can disrupt a woman's cycle, often leaving married couples unable to make full use of the method. On the other hand, the moral norm of the Church cannot accommodate itself to the moral weakness of human beings.[52] Franz Furger, for example, cites the civilizational differences existing between the method of measuring temperature and the method of self-observation of the properties of cervical mucus, and from

50 Jarczewska, *Szkodliwość doustnej antykoncepcji hormonalnej* [Harmfulness of Oral Hormonal Contraception].

51 Schockenhoff, *Ethik des Leben*, 379.

52 Schockenhoff, *Ethik des Lebens*, 379–380.

this, he derives the necessity that the burden of family planning should not rest solely on the woman, and, according to him, a procedure that does not burden biological processes must be preferred.[53]

The State is also an essential institution for *responsible parenthood*, and it too must be concerned with the good of the human person and respect for human dignity. "The good of the human person requires that the latter be taken seriously not only from a biological, sociological, or demographic point of view but in its bodily-spiritual integrity and moral self-efficacy." The state must seek to help citizens by balancing the ethical principles of liberty, justice, and the common good.[54]

8. A Philosophical View of Man and Nature

Finally, it seems reasonable at this point to consider the relationship between human beings and nature from a philosophical perspective. The philosopher Jean-François Malherbe points out that the fundamental moral question raised by contraception is not whether this or that method is natural or not, because the concept of nature (at least of a biological nature) cannot serve as an ethical criterion. It does not follow, of course, that all methods of regulating conception are the same and that it is possible to renounce their moral evaluation, but that it is necessary to find a criterion of evaluation other than biological character (naturalness). Malherbe focuses his attention here on **respect for the person**.[55] In the scientific world, it is common to think that if a problem is technically solved (in this case the artificial possibility of preventing conception), then the solution can automatically be classified as humane. Indeed, objectifying surgery is fruitful because, without it, people would have no physiological knowledge of the reproductive cycle. However, the use of this objectification can be wrong: if we would like to be convinced, either by mistake or voluntarily, that the problem of contraception is a purely technical or physiological matter. The ethical problem of contraception is the men and women who use such methods and at the same time ask about the meaning of their decision. Thus, it is not the technique of contraception used that is the greatest problem today, but the **dialectic of objectification**, that is, the decision to regard the other and, on this occasion, oneself as an object. **Subjectification**, on the contrary, wants to adopt the technical tool used so that it can be an opportunity to develop a relationship, a communication,

53 Furger, *Etika seberealizace* [The Ethics of Self-Realization], 136.
54 Schockenhoff, *Ethik des Lebens*, 358.
55 Boné – Malherbe, *Engendrés par la science*, 53.

a humanization to appropriate the means of its action: to make things pure for us as they are, if people are to resist the danger of technological dependence.[56]

Conclusion

On the substantive side, it is worth pointing out at least one issue. Not only biologistic but as John Paul II says, a holistic view of human sexuality is very important (*FC* 11). It is worth emphasizing that in the Church's teaching, biological facts in themselves never constitute a criterion for ethical action. Rather, Catholic anthropology emphasizes the bodily-spiritual unity of the person ("Corpore et anima unus" – *GS* 14). With consciousness and freedom, sexual activity, including its biological aspect, is an act of the person as a whole. In the natural rhythm of fertility, reason recognizes the message of the Creator, essential for the ethical ordering of sexual life. Just as an extreme biologism is unacceptable in ethical considerations, so is the marginalization of the corporeal (biological) aspects, as if they pertained only to non-personal reality.

All open-minded people can be sufficiently convinced of the negative consequences of the spread of the contraceptive mentality. Above all, it is necessary to realize what a wide and easy path such an attitude can open for marital infidelity, a general decline in morality, and a degradation of ethical values. There is a danger that men and women, accustomed to using contraceptives, will lose respect for each other, disregard their physical and mental balance, make themselves a tool for satisfying their sexual urges, and will not regard themselves as life partners to be loved and honored.

Already in 1984, the philosopher Jean-François Malherbe stated in his lectures during a series of lectures at the University of Namur in France that artificial contraception had resulted in an anti-contraceptive (sic) mentality, the suicidal character of which we are gradually learning.[57] Malherbe also asks the question of whether birth control is more natural, or is it less natural than the fight against infant mortality in the world.[58]

Nor is long experience necessary for the next argument. Namely, to be convinced of the weakness of human nature and to understand that people – especially young, who are so easily swayed by compulsions – need encouragement to uphold ethical values and, conversely, must not be allowed to ease their way into violating them. The use of contraception is spreading wrong views among young people about

56 Boné – Malherbe, *Engendrés par la science*, 56.
57 Boné – Malherbe, *Engendrés par la science*, 81.
58 Boné – Malherbe, *Engendrés par la science*, 53.

the meaning of sexuality, with only the word "enjoy" coming to the fore, without fear of becoming pregnant. The holistically personal meaning of sexuality and its expression of the complete self-giving of two persons in marriage is forgotten.

Finally, one must realize that the more parents try to use the natural method of family planning, the more they will realize its moral superiority. However, the further transmission of life can only truly succeed if the parents live in a lasting relationship together.[59] Therefore, if the mission of procreating is not to be at the mercy of human arbitrariness, it must be recognized that the power that a person can have over their own body and its natural functions has certain limits that must not be exceeded. These limits are not set for any other reason than paying due respect to the whole human body and its natural functions, according to the principles already mentioned (*HV* 17).

Given John Paul II's theology of the body, respecting the meaning of total self-giving means respecting the inherent power of life. In this way, artificial contraception is an "objective disorder of love" because a contradiction arises between the meaning of the spouses' mutual giving of themselves through the unity of love and the effective sexual act. This is the definition proposed by G. Martelet. Nevertheless, this incongruity may not be subjectively perceived if the psychological perception of the interruption of the gift is not fully conscious. Thus, instead of total gift-giving, a falsification of the inner truth of love may occur (*FC* 32).[60] Thus, the means of artificial contraception practically falsify the meaning of the total gift. Although such a vision seems very idealistic, it nevertheless corresponds to the Christian understanding of human nature, which is created, fallen, and redeemed to its capacity for conception. Human love and sexuality, despite their original beauty and the promise of happiness that comes with it, are sites of a moral struggle of self-mastery, of openness to God and others, that interferes with the mystery of sin and grace in our lives.[61]

In this article, the idea that the love of man and woman must fight against the objectification of the body and redeem itself in subjectivization, concretized in the respect of one for each other, is certainly an idea to be highlighted and promoted: love must manifest itself in work for the well-being of the other. However, this work for the well-being of the other should also include sexual well-being, and it should not, arguably, be conditioned by fear of conception. Believing that the purpose of human beings is, without a doubt, procreation and, therefore, believing in the special relationship that is the union of a man and a woman, one finds it also reasonable to believe that people have been given the freedom to choose the right moment, i.e. the moment in which the couple is in the material, psychological and moral conditions favorable for motherhood/paternity.

59 Weber, *Spezielle Moraltheologie*, 371.
60 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 119.
61 Bedouelle – Bruguès – Becquart, *L'Église et la sexualité*, 120.

All religions of the world (except Buddhism) have a *pronatalist* character.[62] Nevertheless, the ideas of *responsible parenthood* according to rational criteria (prudence, consideration of the good, consideration of the family situation, guarantee of proper upbringing) are only invoked within Christianity with an explicitly religious legitimation.[63] Even in the face of the many injustices in the world, one must always bear in mind that the birth of every child is a celebration of life which must not lead to feelings of threat and reactions of fear but must be a cause for joy and blessing. The arrival of each new life, wherever it is born on earth, shows the profound meaning of life beyond all planning.[64]

Translated by Eliodora Olan

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62 Schockenhoff, *Ethik des Lebens*, 382.
63 Schockenhoff, *Ethik des Lebens*, 383.
64 Schockenhoff, *Ethik des Lebens*, 386.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. *Rozmyślania dominikańskie* (Dominican Meditations) [hereinafter referred to as RD] is a beautifully decorated manuscript (237 leaves; each page of the text is accompanied by a full-page miniature) kept in the Library of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery in Kraków (ref. no. 287). This passion meditation is devoted to biblical events from Palm Sunday to the scene of the burial of Jesus and Mary's return from Golgotha. Over the years, the connection of RD with the late medieval mystery tradition has also been pointed out.[4] The purpose of the text is not obvious: on the one hand, it is a meditative work; on the other, it exhibits a highly dialogical nature.
3. *Sprawa chędoga o męce Pana Chrystusowej* (Comely Discourse About the Passion of Lord Christ) [hereinafter referred to as SCh] is an extensive passion sermon, included together with two other apocrypha in one codex (manuscript at the National Library in Warsaw, ref. no. 3040 III). The text conveys mainly content from the Gospels, complemented with fragments of, among others, *the Gospel of Nicodemus*, the writings of the Church fathers, and medieval sermons (e.g., *Sermones tres de Passione Domini*).[5] Inside, there are also a few typically apocryphal folk stories (such as a processed story about the Madej's bed (a torture rack) – about an outlaw who hosted the Holy Family on their way to Egypt,[6] and references to the sensational fate of Judas, inspired by the myth of Oedipus[7]).
4. *Ewangelia Nikodema* (Gospel of Nicodemus) [hereinafter referred to as EN] – two different translations of *Acta Pilati*, included in the codex of Wawrzyniec of Łask (next to *Sprawa Chędoga* [Comely Discourse About the Passion of Lord Christ]). The first one, written on leaves 260r–282v, contains a description of

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

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

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

5 See Rojszczak-Robińska, *Staropolskie pasje*.

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

7 See Adamczyk, "Przeklęty jeszcze w matce."

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

5. *Historyja trzech kroli* (History of the Three Kings) [hereinafter referred to as HTK] is an Old Polish translation of *Historia Trium Regum* by John of Hildesheim, included in the same codex as SCh and EN, on leaves 153r–260r. The work, extremely popular in medieval Europe, is a description of the three wise men's journey to Bethlehem and their return, the characteristics of their lands, as well as the story of the discovery and transfer of their relics.
6. *Karta Rogawskiego* (Rogawski Folio) [hereinafter referred to as KR] – one parchment leaf with a fragment of a larger text kept at the Princes Czartoryski Library in Kraków (in a folder under reference number 2566). For years, this text was considered to be a fragment of an earlier copy of *Sprawa chędoga* (Comely Discourse about the Passion of Lord Christ).[9] In recent years, this view has been revised.[10]
7. *List Lentulusa* (Letter of Lentulus) [hereinafter referred to as LL] – a translation of *Epistula Lentuli*, an extremely popular text, dating back to around the 13th and 14th centuries. The translation was entered on leaves 302v–303r of a paper codex currently kept at the Jagiellonian Library (ref. no 2151), dated to the years 1417–1418. According to Józef Reczek and Wacław Twardzik, the basis for the translation of the Old Polish *List Lentusa* (Letter of Lentulus) is the Latin text in the *b* version, somewhat similar to the *a* version.[11] This is an apocryphal description of what Jesus looked like.
8. *Żywot świętej Anny* (Life of Saint Anne) [hereinafter referred to as ŻSA] is a translation of *Legenda Sanctissimae Matrone* by Jan z Koszyczek (Joannes de Coszycze); it is an apocryphal-hagiographic text. The copy of the old print, housed in the Jagiellonian Library collection (BJ St. Dr. Cim. 147), is a unique second edition printed by the publishing house of Hieronim Wietor around the year 1532. The only known copy of the first edition, dated 1520, was destroyed in a fire at the National Library during World War II.[12]
9. *Żywot Pana Jezu Krysta* (Life of Lord Jesus Christ) by Baltazar Opec [hereinafter referred to as ŻPJK] is a print dated 1522 from the printing house of Hieronim Wietor. This story about the life of the Holy Family, decorated with woodcuts

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

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

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

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

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

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

13 See also Wydra – Wójcik – Krzak-Weiss, *Żywot Pana Jezu Krysta Baltazara Opeca*.

14 In this article, the term "source" is understood as a foreign-language text constituting the basis of the entire Polish-language apocryphal work or its fragment. The source may be direct or indirect, quoted or paraphrased.

15 See for example Brückner, *Literatura religijna*; Adamczyk, *Biblijno-apokryficzne narracje*.

16 See for example Mika, *Maryja, Jezus, Bóg*; Rojszczak-Robińska, *Jak pisano "Rozmyślanie przemyskie"*; Rojszczak-Robińska, "Łacińskie źródła *Rozmyślania.*"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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21 Viljoen, "The Foundational Statement," 395.

22 See Rojszczak-Robińska, *Staropolskie pasje*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 See Rojszczak-Robińska, "Translation of the Psalms."

26 See for example Puda-Blokesz, "Formuły i formuliczność"; Bajerowa, "Swoistość języka religijnego."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

***

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

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

> Si surrexerit in medio tui prophetes aut qui somnium vidisse se dicat et praedixerit signum atque portentum. Et evenerit quod locutus est et dixerit tibi eamus et sequamur deos alienos quos ignoras et serviamus eis (Deut 13:1–2)
>
> Propheta autem ille aut fictor somniorum interficietur (Deut 13:5).

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

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

> A to sie jest stało, iżby Pismo popełniło sie, jeż mowi: „Ujrzą w Dzień Sądny, kogo są przekłoli" (SCh121r/7–9).
>
> [And this happened to fulfill the Scripture, which says, "On the Day of Judgment they will see who they pierced."]
>
> Facta sunt enim haec ut scriptura impleatur os non comminuetis ex eo. Et iterum alia scriptura dicit videbunt in quem transfixerunt (John 19:36–37).
>
> nec os illius confringetis (Exod 12:46).
>
> et precum et aspicient ad me quem confixerunt et plangent eum (Zech 12:10).

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

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

qui respondens ait eis non legistis quia qui fecit ab initio masculum et feminam fecit eos (Matt 19:4).

et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam ad imaginem Dei creavit illum masculum et feminam creavit eos (Gen 1:27).

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

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

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

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

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

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

Przeklęty, ktory wisi na drzewie (RP774/10).

[Cursed who hangs on a tree]

Przeklęty każdy, ktory wisi na drzewie (SCh4v/8–9).

[Cursed anyone who hangs on a tree]

quia maledictus a Deo est qui pendet in ligno (Deut 21:23).

Nie jednem chlebem żyw człowiek, ale wszelikim słowem, ktore pochodzi z ust Boży<ch> (RP196/1–3).

[Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God's mouth.]

Nie samym telko chlebem żywie człowiek, ale i słowem, ktore pochodzi z ust Bożych (ŻPJK23r/35–36).

[Man does not live only by bread alone, but also by the word that comes from God's mouth.]

non in solo pane vivat homo sed in omni verbo quod egreditur ex ore Domini (Deut 8:3).

qui respondens dixit scriptum est non in pane solo vivet homo sed in omni verbo quod procedit de ore Dei (Matt 4:4).

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

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

34 Kaliszuk, "The Three Kings."

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wyniknie gwiazda z plemienia Jakob, et cetera.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Przeto rzekli, iże chcieli, aby ukrzyżowan a by jego sławy i jego czci mogli tem więcej uwlec. Bo podług ich Zakona śmierć krzyżowa była sromotniejsza nade wszytki ganiebne śmierci i mieli to w ich Zakonie napisano, gdzież stoi: „Przeklęty, ktory wisi na drzewie" (RP774/3–10).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Awareness of the Pentateuch, both direct quotes and free references to its provisions or history (for example, a significant scene taken from *the Gospel of Nicodemus*, in which Pilate reminds the Jews of all the blessings they received from God during their escape from Egypt, see SCh83v/9–84v/1 and RP809/19–811/15), builds trial scenes, extremely important for Polish apocrypha (four out of nine texts are exclusively passion apocrypha).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jesus is the lamb offered by Abraham instead of Isaac:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

or in the conversation between Mary and Jesus:

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

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

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

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

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

45 See Stelmach, "Grzech Adama."

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

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

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

and in the scene with Pilate's wife:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sarah, Rachel, and Rebekah foreshadow the late motherhood of both Saint Elizabeth of the Gospels and the apocryphal Anna, the mother of Mary.

Abraham appears most often in a row of names, mentioned along with Isaac and Jacob:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

47 See for example Koziara, *Tradycyjne biblizmy*.

Conclusion

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

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

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

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History and Development of Clergy Training in Poland

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Abstract: Among the many issues related to priesthood, questions often arise about how the Church prepares pupils/students for priestly service, what this formation involves and who is responsible for it. The article attempts to answer these questions from a historical perspective. It begins by presenting the idea of seminary life and the beginnings of the institution of theological seminaries. Then it discusses the decision of the Council of Trent, which obliged the Church to establish theological seminaries in all dioceses. The next stage in the education of the clergy was introduced by the document of the Second Vatican Council, *Optatam Totius*, which defines the nature and mission of a priest. It obliged local churches to develop their own *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis*. The Polish *Ratio Fundamentalis* drew its inspiration from this document. The analysis of the new *Ratio* for Polish seminaries developed in 2021 concludes the latest stage in the history of clergy formation.

Keywords: Priesthood, seminary, formation, *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*

1. The Phenomenon of Vocation

In approaching the consideration of the vocation to the priesthood or, in general, the vocation of man to a life dedicated to God, it should be noted that the very concept of vocation goes beyond the purely religious sphere of human existence. It has a broader meaning, although it always refers to the sense and shape of a person's life – a sense that every person seeks to some extent, and the shape that he or she more or less consciously gives to his or her life. After all, vocation is determined by the abilities that everyone is equipped with, although unevenly, when coming into this world; it is determined by interests that can change or be less or more extensive; it is determined by the dispositions of person's will and character, as well as living conditions in which a person lives. One man manages to develop and multiply his abilities and talents, while another wastes and loses them; one deepens his interests and passions, finding in them the fulfillment of the meaning of his life, while another drops them somewhere on his paths, allowing them to be replaced by deep emptiness; one is able to direct his will in a consistent pursuit of a clearly defined life goal, while another allows the weaknesses of his character and will to take control, achieving nothing or very little in life.[1]

1 Selejdak, *Stawać się kapłanem*, 11–13.

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Thus, vocation concerns any profession a person chooses, any social role they perform, all their skills, abilities, aptitudes, predispositions, talents and passions. When we say of someone that they are called, what we mean is that they are chosen or predisposed to perform a certain task, or appointed to fulfill a certain function or role. To call someone also means: to point to them, to select, to make a choice, to mark, to entrust, to summon.

These terms bring us closer to the religious context of the meaning of vocation. They suggest that in the matter of a person's vocation we are dealing with something much more than their natural, innate abilities and interests or their mental and character predispositions. It is as if the cause of this vocation was someone else, someone outside of these purely natural dispositions of every human existence. Someone, who chooses this existence, who marks it, who points to it, who reads it by name.

Taking a closer look at the semantics of the word "vocation," tracing its multiple meanings, we found ourselves in the circle of those that showed us its religious meaning. It is God that is the Author and Cause of this vocation. He calls a person when he endows them with existence, and when, by giving them the grace of faith, he makes them always attentive to God's voice, living in a relation to God, filled with his love.[2]

Vocation, in the religious sense, can refer both to specific nations and to individuals. The Book of Deuteronomy takes us back to the time when God, by his creative power, called the nations into existence, and chose one of them, the nation of Israel, as especially beloved by him. "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries" (Deut 32:8); "And the LORD has declared this day that you are his people, his treasured possession as he promised, and that you are to keep all his commands. He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honor high above all the nations he has made and that you will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised" (Deut 26:18–19).

The people of Israel, called by God to a close friendship with him and to obey all the laws, commandments and regulations revealed to them, probably did not immediately discover the peculiar pedagogy that this extraordinary Covenant carried. This pedagogy was revealed to us by Vatican II, stating in the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation that the Creator, by allowing the people of Israel to be so close to himself, desired "that Israel came to know by experience the ways of God with men. Then too, when God Himself spoke to them through the mouth of the prophets, Israel daily gained a deeper and clearer understanding of His ways and made them more widely known among the nations" (*DV* 14).

With these words, the Church has conveyed to us the truth about the role of the nations as participants in God's plan of salvation. God directs his message to people, reveals his salvific intentions to them, unveils his "ways in relation to men"

2 Selejdak, *Stawać się kapłanem*, 13–15.

through the nations, through the peoples, and thus through that form of man's existence on earth which he, the Creator, predestined for him from the beginning.[3]

Among the calling of specific nations and people to special missions and tasks, there is a calling to priestly ministry. The vocation to the priesthood in the "hierarchy" of all forms of vocation that God bestows on people, faithful Christians, is something unique. To it is attached the highest dignity, it is the highest degree of God's choice. The Holy Father John Paul II in his exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* stated briefly: "the priestly ministry in the life of the Church and in the world knows no substitute" (*PDV* 10). After all, it is due to the ministry only that the promise of the Lord Jesus is being fulfilled to this day in all the places on earth to which the Gospel has been carried: "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"[4] (Matt 28:20).

The priest carries out his pastoral ministry in imitation of Christ, the Good Shepherd. With him – the High Priest – the priest is most closely united, engrafted into his priesthood. The priest undertakes his priestly mission in his name and in his stead, through the work of the Holy Spirit. This exercise of pastoral duties in Christ's name and in his stead are, of course, the proclamation of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments and, above all, the power to forgive sins in the sacrament of Penance and the consecration of the Bread and Wine at the Sacrifice of the Mass, through which each priest becomes the "cause" of the presence of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus among the people. It is primarily through this power of priests to transform the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of the Lord that this promise of the Son of God to remain with us "always, to the very end of the age" is fulfilled in such a perfect way.

Obviously, the direct executors of the mission of Christ were the Apostles, but the priests have also continued it throughout history, for, as John Paul II states in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*: "In their turn, the apostles, appointed by the Lord, progressively carried out their mission by calling – in various but complementary ways – other men as bishops, as priests and as deacons in order to fulfill the command of the risen Jesus who sent them forth to all people in every age" (*PDV* 15).

In considering the sacramental priesthood, one cannot overlook its close bond with the Church – as close as its bond with Christ. When referring to this relationship, the Holy Father states that they are "interiorly united in a kind of mutual immanence." "We can now see the essential dimension of the Christian vocation: Not only does it derive 'from' the Church and her mediation, not only does it come to be known and find fulfillment 'in' the Church, but it also necessarily appears – in fundamental service to God – as a service 'to' the Church." (*PDV* 35).

3 Selejdak, *Stawać się kapłanem*, 13–15.
4 Spurgjasz, "Aktualizacja kapłaństwa."

Bearing in mind that vocation is a gift to the Church, it should be noted that it is a reflection of the mystery of the Trinity. It has a Trinitarian structure. It refers to God the Father as the One who chooses and situates man in his salvific plan. God himself chooses the moment and place in which he endows a man with a vocation. Jesus sends the chosen ones of the Father to "all days until the end of the world" bring the Gospel, Christ's message of love and salvation merited by him, to people. Those sent by Christ are anointed and consecrated by the Holy Spirit, and given inner power to be able to carry out their priestly mission.[5] The words of the Lord Jesus addressed to the Apostles: "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me" (Matt 10:40) and: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21) are continually renewed. Even today, in the third millennium of Christianity, young people who are "chosen" and "sent" perceive these words as directed to themselves. Their timeliness is imperishable.

A priestly vocation is a gift of God's love for a man, a particular man. And however much one may talk about vocation in biblical, theological, sociological, historical terms – it still remains a mystery. There is actually no regularity in God's granting of this gift. Facing God's call always means for a young person the necessity to confront the most ambitious plan of their life, the proposal to choose a path not yet known and difficult, as it requires sacrifice. In the heart of the called one there is an intimate dialogue with the One whose voice has proved to be a call, and this voice will not be silenced until an answer is received. This "scenario" of vocation was presented by Pope Paul VI in his Message for the 5th World Day of Prayer for Vocations in 1968: "The call is as extensive as the response. […] Oblations, we call them: Here lies in practice the heart of the matter. […] It is the humble and penetrating voice of Christ who says, today as yesterday, and even more than yesterday: Come. Freedom reaches its supreme foundation: precisely that of oblation, of generosity, of sacrifice."[6]

Certainly, many of these answers, including the positive ones, are perhaps disturbed at first by some fears and apprehensions, or by a sense of not being fit for a grand mission. This internal dialogue sometimes lasts for several months, or even years. Slowly, some kind of readiness is born in the heart that hears this voice. This readiness is the very answer given to God, as if declaring one's own will. A positive response begins a new path, which we call seminary formation.

5 Pontifical Work for Ecclesiastical Vocations, *New Vocations*, 32–39.
6 Paul VI, "Messaggio," 134–135.

2. Seminaries as a Place for the Formation of Vocations

The idea of seminary life as a separate center of preparation for the priesthood should be traced back to when the Apostles were prepared to preach the Good News. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything (Mark 4:34), they experienced the most important moments of historico-redemptive moments with Christ on their own.

The origins of the seminary as an institution go back historically to the second century after Christ. At that time, the homes of bishops were the first environments for the preparation of future priests. The same century saw the establishment of catechetical schools in Caesarea, Antioch, Alexandria and Rome. And at the end of the same century, a special office of archdeacon was established for the education of new clergy.

A similar motive was behind the establishment of parish and monastery schools, as well as the later cathedral schools, as evidenced by the resolutions of the Synods: Toledo II in 527 and Toledo IV in 633. Leading the way among them was the school at the Lateran Basilica in Rome, especially during the reign of Gregory the Great (590–604), and in Britain the cathedral schools in York and Canterbury, which produced many excellent priests.[7] In the canonical rule of St. Chrodegang of Metz (died 766), can be traced the prototype of seminary regulations, further examples of which were later the relevant passages of the *Decretum Gratiani* (1140) and the resolutions of the Councils: Lateran III in 1179 and Lateran IV in 1215.[8] Special colleges for future clergy established at universities also served the purpose of preparing priests. Established at almost all universities (*universitates studia generalia*), they slowly paved the way for the provisions of the Council of Trent on the establishment and operation of seminaries across the Church. On 15 July 1563, canon 18 of the *De Reformatione* decree of Session XXIII was approved, which established the obligation to establish seminaries in all dioceses for the formation of candidates for the priesthood. Pius IV, in his bull *Benedictus Deus* of 26 January 1564, decreed the establishment of seminaries across the Church as formation houses for future priests. In the second half of the 16th century, a number of diocesan synods were held and convened in order to establish seminaries.

First Vatican Council did not address the issue of clergy formation, despite the many requests from bishops for indication to strengthen seminaries and to establish special schools for the formation of seminary lecturers. It was due to Leo XIII and Pius X that the Holy See's interest in this issue began to develop. The result of this was the creation of the Congregation for Seminaries and Universities by Benedict XV on 4 November 1915. The simultaneous establishment of the *Code of*

7 Sacra Congregatio de Seminariis et Studiorum Universitatibus, *Seminaria Ecclesiae Catholicae.*
8 Buxakowski, "Znowelizowane 'Ratio fundamentalis.'"

Canon Law (1917) gave the Church universal legislation defining the structure of a seminary within church organisation. On 24 May 1931, the Congregation for Seminaries and Universities published, at the request of Pius XI, the apostolic constitution *Deus Scientiarum Dominus* to raise the scientific level of ecclesiastical studies. This was a clear program given by the Holy See to theological studies. In the following years, formation in seminaries developed in the direction of purely scientific studies. This overly scientistic nature of seminary training created the need for a new direction in priestly formation, which the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council described as "more pastoral." The change that Vatican II brought to priestly formation can be put in two aspects: of structure and of substance; but the two are deeply intertwined.[9]

The text on priestly formation was not promptly created. It was preceded by discussions and several editorial stages. The *Acta Antepraeparatoria* contains as many as 557 proposals for the document. In 1962–1964, a final proposal was developed and presented to the Synod Fathers. It was debated twice: in November 1964 and October 1965. The final enactment of the decree took place at a public session on 28 October 1965. The decree was adopted almost unanimously – with only three votes against.

3. Priesthood in the Teaching of Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council states in the *Optatam Totius* decree that seminaries are necessary for priestly formation. Their purpose is to help those who are called to become "true shepherds of souls after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd" (*OT* 4). The decree clarifies the nature and mission of the priest. It thus defines priestly identity, which is expressed in sacramental and ontological participation in the priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priesthood comes from Christ and is his – the One and High Priest's – continuation. Through the anointing in the sacrament of Holy Orders, the Holy Spirit makes the priest similar to Jesus Christ. From the bond between the priest and Christ arises the priest's relationship to the Church. The priest, representing Christ, performs his function not only in the Church, but also for the Church. The purpose of the priest's life and action is to preach the Gospel to the world and build up the Church in the name and place of Christ, the Head and Shepherd.[10]

In fulfilling such tasks, the role of higher education seminaries is irreplaceable. The seminary should be, first and foremost, a privileged place to encounter Jesus and

9 Marchisano, "L'evoluzione storica."
10 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree *Optatam Totius*.

to constantly be in him, for anyone aspiring to become a priest. In order to be able to create such conditions for the formation of future clergy, a proper seminary structure is necessary. The Council's decree *Optatam Totius* stated that in view of the great diversity of nations and countries, only its general norms can be given. About the function of seminaries, especially higher seminaries, necessary for priestly formation, it said: "Here the entire training of the students should be oriented to the formation of true shepherds of souls after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd. […] Therefore, all the forms of training, spiritual, intellectual, disciplinary, are to be ordered with concerted effort toward this pastoral end, and to attain it all the administrators and teachers are to work zealously and harmoniously together, faithfully obedient to the authority of the bishop." (*OT* 4).

Thus, the Council, while obliging local churches to develop guidelines for their seminaries, established a close relationship between general principles for the formation of future priests and those derived from specific needs and diverse local conditions. This was put in the following terms: "Since only general laws can be made where there exists a wide variety of nations and regions, a special 'program of priestly training' is to be undertaken by each country or rite. […] In this way will the universal laws be adapted to the particular circumstances of the times and localities […]" (*OT* 1). And indeed, work on the creation of basic principles for priestly formation began almost immediately after the Council. The initiative in preparing these principles was to come from the individual Episcopal Conferences.[11]

Each Episcopal Conference was required to submit its own *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis*,[12] which was to be approved by the Congregation for Catholic Education in the Vatican. The obligation to approve priestly formation for each Episcopal Conference was determined by the Council. The Council also required the Congregation to develop a model of rules for priestly formation, in light of which the proposals made by local churches could be evaluated. On 6 January 1970 the Congregation issued the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* instruction, which was a preliminary step in fulfilling the tasks mandated by the first post-conciliar Synod of Bishops. Thus, five years after the Council and three years after the Synod, the first document enriched by the post-conciliar discussion on the formation of future priests appeared. It represented a necessary step on the road to preserving unity in diversity. In drafting the document, the main concern was to address three demands:

- u n i t y, to dispel vague opinions on priestly formation;
- u n i v e r s a l i t y, in order to provide appropriate rules for the issuing of regulations adapted to different locations, appropriate to different conditions;
- r e l e v a n c e, so that, after considering contemporary problems in priestly formation, appropriate measures are taken to avoid emerging dangers.

11 Jerominek, "Zasady wychowania seminaryjnego."

12 *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* (1970).

The new *Ratio Fundamentalis* provided some sort of a model for post-conciliar collegiality and became a classic example of the implementation of the Council's resolutions. In accordance with the provisions of the first post-conciliar Synod, *Ratio Fundamentalis* was given a normative character, and not merely a recommendatory one. Such character of the document was approved at the plenary session of the Congregation for Catholic Education on 3 October 1969.[13] The document, thus, became binding throughout the entire universal Church. It was intended to serve as a model and guide the drafting of all other documents on formation in the seminaries.

After the distribution of the new *Ratio Fundamentalis* to the Episcopal Conferences, sufficient conditions already existed for the local churches to proceed to draft their own rules for priestly formation. The *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* instruction, prepared by the Congregation, proved extremely helpful to the Episcopates in the preparation of their way of priestly formation, adapted to local conditions. The new *Ratio* was followed by further documents from the Holy See that regulated and assisted the formation of the clergy. Thus:

- 20 January 1972 the Congregation for Catholic Education sent a letter to the bishops on matters of teaching philosophy in seminaries;
- 21 April 1975 the Congregation developed a document on the teaching of canon law to aspiring priests;
- 22 February 1976 seminaries received a document on the theological formation of future priests;
- 3 June 1979 the Congregation issued an instruction on the liturgical education of alumni;
- 6 January 1980 the Congregation issued a circular letter on the more important aspects of spiritual preparation in seminaries.[14]

On the fifteenth anniversary of the first elaboration of *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, on 19 March 1985, the Holy See issued another document on priestly formation.[15] In fact, it was a revised *Ratio* of 6 January 1970. The basis for this revision was the promulgation of the new *Code of Canon Law* on 25 January 1983. The section covering education and discipline in seminaries, as well as priestly formation, received a completely new structure. "Basic Program for Priestly Formation" referring to this section was deprived of its legal force. In this way, bishops and educators lost the working tool they had previously been able to use in carrying out their tasks. After considering the matter, the Congregation for Catholic Education deemed it appropriate to review the aforementioned "Basic Program" and amend it to suit the new circumstances. The changes made concerned the provisions that

13 Kaczmarek, "Nowe zasady formacji."
14 Buxakowski, "Znowelizowane 'Ratio fundamentalis,'" 291.
15 *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* (1970).

were expanded, rather than the text of the document itself. The revised *Ratio* was approved by the Holy Father John Paul II.[16]

A continuation of the conciliar thought on priestly formation was promulgated by John Paul II on 29 February 1992 in the exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*. It set new directions for priestly formation and became the post-Vatican II reference point in all matters related to the formation of priests. New horizons for priestly formation were opened by the Holy See document entitled *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation. Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* of 8 December 2016. It obliges all Episcopal Conferences to prepare relevant national documents.

4. *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia*

After the Vatican II, the Church in Poland did not wait passively for the publication of the *Ratio Fundamentalis* by the Holy See. At a meeting of rector priests in Kielce in 1964, the problems of educating young clergy and of ways of running seminaries in Poland were addressed.[17] A year later, in Poznań, at a meeting of rectors, a commission was appointed to prepare a project for teaching in seminaries. The rectors' session was accompanied by papers analysing the educational demands of the Vatican II documents and an in-depth reflection on the history of seminaries in Poland.[18] The guidelines of the Holy See and the current needs of the Church in Poland were considered in the context of the changes taking place in the mentality of young people.

The adaptation of the conciliar decree *Optatam Totius* to Polish conditions was the subject of discussion and deliberation at the subsequent conventions of the superiors of seminaries. In 1966 in Lublin, a decision was made to prepare a draft *Ratio Studiorum* according to the decree *De Institutione Sacerdotali Ponenda Sunt* promulgated by the Congregation for Seminaries and Universities. It was also decided to prepare detailed guidelines for spiritual and intellectual formation for the next rectors' meeting, based on the conciliar decree *Optatam Totius.*[19]

Komisja Seminariów Duchownych przy Komisji Studiów i Seminariów Episkopatu Polski [The Commission of Seminaries under the Commission of Studies and

16 Walachowicz, "Formacja przyszłych kapłanów."

17 Protokół z posiedzenia księży rektorów w Kielcach During the meeting of rectors, a lecture on seminaries was delivered by Bolesław Kumor, "Struktura seminariów w Polsce XVII, XVIII i XIX wieku" (1964) [Structure of Seminaries in Poland of the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries].

18 Protokół z posiedzenia księży rektorów w Poznaniu. The lecture was delivered by Władysław Miziołek, "Reorganizacja studiów w seminariach duchownych w obecnych warunkach." [Reorganisation of Studies in the Seminaries under Current Conditions].

19 Protokół z posiedzenia księży rektorów w Lublinie.

Seminaries of the Polish Episcopate] developed several projects to facilitate the formation of the Polish *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis*. Thus, in 1967, the first guidelines for seminaries in Poland were created. They became the starting point for the development of two more projects: Regulamin dla alumnów wyższych seminariów duchownych [Regulations for Alumni of Higher Education Seminaries][20] and Zasady życia dla alumnów wyższych seminariów duchownych w Polsce [Rules of Life for Alumni of Higher Education Seminaries in Poland].[21] At that time, the rectors of the seminaries drafted a project of the examination regulations for the higher education seminaries in Poland in 1967.[22]

This resulted in a comprehensive *Ratio* project for seminaries in Poland. In February 1967, the finished project of priestly formation was sent out to seminaries for feedback.[23] After making corrections, the commission presented the project to the Episcopate, which approved the document and sent it to Rome in 1968. On 12 August 1968, the Holy See approved, for a period of six years – *ad experimentum* – a Latin document entitled *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis in Seminariis Poloniae Decretis Concilii Vaticani II Accomodata.*[24] The implementation of *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis* was monitored with great care. As early as on 9 April 1968, a questionnaire was sent out to all seminaries, asking them to respond regarding the following two questions:

– to what extent the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, approved by the Congregatio pro Institutione Catholica on 12 August 1968, was implemented during the 1968/1969 academic year, in the respective seminary;
– how to separately distinguish the implementation of the *Ratio Studiorum*, which is a component of the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis*.[25]

Ratio Studiorum refers specifically to the program and content of seminary studies and the forms of their assimilation by the alumni. Both, the introduction of the resolutions of Vatican II in the area of priestly formation, as well as the implementation of the *Ratio Institutionis* were not easy. In Poland, it was a time of struggle for the independence of seminaries, as state authorities tried to spread supervision over them. Appropriate reports were required and attempts were made to visit seminaries. Eventually, as a result of negotiations, the Episcopate – although convinced of the wrongfulness of visitation by the board of trustees – decided to tolerate the visitation of so-called "non-theological subjects."

20 Regulamin dla alumnów.
21 Zasady dla alumnów Wyższych Seminariów Duchownych z 1967.
22 Projekt zasad formacji kapłanów w Polsce z 1967.
23 Projekt zasad formacji kapłanów w Polsce z 1967.
24 Ratio institutionis sacerdotalis in seminariis Poloniae.
25 Ankieta: Nowe Ratio.

The 1960s were also a real threat to the existence of several seminaries. Initially, alumni of certain seminaries, and later of almost all, were forced to perform military service. The clerical unit in Bartoszyce, with more than 300 seminarians, was named as the largest seminary in Poland. This gave rise to new problems in the seminary formation of alumni during their military service. Despite unfavorable conditions, work on the implementation of the principles of priestly formation was steadily progressing. At the meetings of rector priests, a keen interest was taken in the implementation of *Ratio institutionis* in Poland, and crisis situations in seminaries in the West were analysed.

An important development in the organisation of the work on improving the formative role of seminaries was the establishment of a separate Komisja Episkopatu ds. Seminariów Duchownych [Episcopal Commission for Seminaries]. It was established on 15 January 1970 at the 107th Polish Episcopal Conference.[26] The work regulations of this Commission were approved four years later, on 15 November 1974, by the General Council.[27] The *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia* project, prepared based on the 1970's *Ratio Institutionis*, was finally presented by the Commission to the Polish Episcopal Conference on 4 April 1971. It was then sent to Rome on October 15 that year and was approved for six years.[28]

On 15 November 1974 in Warsaw, at a meeting of the Komisja Episkopatu ds. Seminariów Duchownych [Episcopal Commission for Seminaries], it was announced that the *Ratio institutionis sacerdoralis* would be addressed again. This was because certain deficiencies and inaccuracies had been noted in the process of its implementation. The *Ratio* did not mention the confession of alumni. Some shortcomings were also noticed regarding the study program. The main reason, however, for undertaking the revision of the *Ratio* were the changing political conditions in Poland, which affected young people enrolling in seminaries. It was particularly concerned with the impact of Marxist ideology on the younger generation.[29]

In order to work out concrete proposals on possible changes and amendments, a survey was conducted among professors of all seminaries. Work on modifying the *Ratio Studiorum* continued until 1975. At a meeting of the Komisja ds. Seminariów [Commission for Seminaries] on November 23 that year, a draft was presented that took into account the suggestions sent in response to the aforementioned

26 Pawlina, *Młodzież i jej duszpasterze*, 17–30.

27 Regulamin Komisji ds. Seminariów Duchownych z 1974. In the same year, at the 145th Polish Episcopal Conference, at the proposal of the General Council, Bp. Lech Kaczmarek was appointed as the chairman of the Komisja ds. Seminariów Duchownych [Commission for Seminaries]. His deputy was Fr. Czesław Lewandowski, and the secretary was Fr. Władysław Bomba. See Letter from the Primate of Poland, Card. S. Wyszynski.

28 Buxakowski, "Znowelizowane 'Ratio fundamentalis,'" 290.

29 Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Episkopatu ds. Seminariów Duchownych z dnia 15 XI 1974.

survey.[30] Two years later, the partially modified *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia* was approved by the Polish Episcopal Conference and sent to the Holy See for approval. On 10 November 1977, the Congregation authorised the new *Ratio Institutionis* for six years.[31]

Considering the experience already gained, as well as the changing situation in Poland, it was necessary to prepare for possible further modification of the *Ratio Institutionis* during those six years. The rector priests of the seminaries sent their proposals to the Komisja Episkopatu ds. Seminariów Duchowych [Episcopal Commission for Seminaries]. These comments concerned mainly the intellectual formation of the alumni. Particularly at issue were lectures in patrology, religiology and the Polish language conversion course.[32] With help in reworking the *Ratio* came a circular letter from the Congregation for Catholic Education on 6 January 1980 concerning the more important aspects of spiritual preparation in seminaries.[33] Many consultations were prepared, until finally, at the meeting on 7 April 1983, the proposed amendments to the *Ratio Institutionis* were approved. A month later, on May 4, they were approved by the Polish Episcopal Conference and sent to the Congregation in Rome, where the changes were approved for the next six years.[34] The manner and degree of their implementation in the formation process was to be illustrated by a survey sent out on 20 April 1984 on pastoral formation in seminaries. In the following year, on March 9, the Congregation for Catholic Education, following the 1983 promulgation of the new *Code of Canon Law* issued the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*.[35] The new *Ratio* was not really new, but took into account changes in canon law regarding seminaries.

As a result of this change, and after amendments were made and approved by the Polish Episcopal Conference, seminaries in Poland had their own formation rules for future clergy. These were to remain in effect until 1989, when the six-year term of the Ratio institutionis for Poland, approved in 1983, expired. *Ratio Institutionis* for Poland.

The turn of the 1980s and 1990s in Poland brought new political, social and cultural problems that had significant implications for the life of the Church and the ministry of the clergy. In this context, the need to revise the existing form of training for priests became particularly urgent. Since a Synod of Bishops devoted to the problem of priestly formation had been announced for 1990, work on a new *Ratio* was therefore not undertaken. The guidance of the Synod was awaited. After it was over, it was announced that another document on priestly formation would

30 Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Episkopatu ds. Seminariów Duchownych z dnia 23 XI 1975.
31 Zasady formacji kapłańskiej w Seminariach Duchownych w Polsce z 1977.
32 Letter from Bp. L. Kaczmarek.
33 List okólny Kongregacji Nauczania.
34 Amendments to the "Ratio institutionis" sacerdotalis.
35 *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* (1985).

be published. And, indeed, on 29 February 1992, John Paul II promulgated the exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*. The document indicated new perspectives and a new model for the formation of future priests.[36] The indications contained in this exhortation effectively determined the direction of the work on the new *Ratio* for Poland, which had already begun.

Other significant events in the life of the Church in Poland have also prolonged the wait for a new document on formation in seminaries. First of all, on 25 March 1992, a new organisation of the Church in Poland was established. New dioceses were created. During the academic year 1991/1992, an apostolic visitation took place in our seminaries. It resulted in indications given to the rectors of higher seminaries at a special conference held in Częstochowa on 22 April 1993.[37] The then prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Card. Pio Laghi, made clear suggestions concerning the reform of the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia*.[38] Work already underway at the time to prepare a draft *Ratio Studiorum pro Polonia*, led by Fr. Stanisław Czerwik, entered a more intensive phase. Comments and proposals from rectors, seminary professors and alumni on the direction of the reform were collected. These materials were presented at the rectors' convention in September 1994 in Olsztyn. They indicated the divergence of expectations rather than setting the direction for constructive change.

During the conference of rectors in Kraków on 6 September 1995, archbishop Stanisław Szymecki, the chairman of Komisja ds. Seminariów [Commission for Seminaries] appointed a new team to work on the *Ratio.*[39] This team prepared a draft *Ratio Studiorum* and presented it to the Polish Episcopal Conference, which approved it at its plenary meeting and sent it to Rome. On the feast day of Our Lady of Częstochowa on 26 August 1999, the Congregation for Catholic Education approved the new program for the formation of Polish priests entitled *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia*.[40] This document regulated formation of the priesthood in Polish seminaries until 2016.

36 Jaworski, "W kierunku reformy 'Ratio studiorum.'"

37 Documents from the Symposium Following the Apostolic Visitation.

38 Sugestie dla nowego "Ratio."

39 The team included rector priests: Wacław Depo from Radom, Alojzy Drożdż from Tarnów, Marian Florczyk from Kielce, Romuald Jaworski from Płock, Zdzisław Kroplewski from Koszalin, and Tomasz Węcławski from Poznań. See Arch. SEP, t. SD.

40 Zasady formacji kapłańskiej w Seminariach Duchownych w Polsce z 1977.

5. *Ratio Institutionis* of 1999

Young people who are called by the Lord Jesus to carry out his saving work come to the seminary. Simply having knowledge only is not enough there. Thus, the task of the Higher Education Seminaries, in addition to providing an appropriate education, is to create such conditions that these young people, through the years of formation, become men of God. So that they not only tell what they have learned about God, but that they testify about God. The Higher Education Seminary is a university, but a peculiar one, as studying takes place at a desk, in lecture halls and on one's knees.

As a university, the Higher Seminary has its own rules of life and its own specific program of study. A reform of the study in the Higher Education Seminaries in Poland was being prepared for many years. This has been mentioned in previous chapters. Let's focus here on an analysis of the *Ratio* that guided the lives of the alumni during our first series of surveys, conducted in 2000 – the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis* of 1999. It is made up of eight chapters and gives an integral vision of the formation of priests. It begins with vocations and ends with ways of forming those responsible for the seminaries.

The main points of the *Ratio* are a reminder that the entire Church is responsible for vocations, meaning that every believer has an impact on the maturation of the future priest, and an indication that a priest's identity must flow from a relationship with Jesus. It is him that the clergy person will later represent with his entire life. Therefore, the document under discussion focuses on describing the structure of the seminary and the functions of those responsible for formation and its principles. An alumni in Poland is subjected to intellectual, spiritual and pastoral education. The presumption is that the priest, upon graduation from the seminary, will be a harmoniously formed, educated person with a properly formed conscience.

The second part of the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia* is the *Ratio Studiorum*. It covers the general principles of the philosophical and theological studies, their formal structure and didactic program. While providing a list of subjects, it also specifies the basic issues to be covered in lectures and the applicable number of lecture hours.[41]

Changes in seminary formation are due to *signum temporis*. The challenge of time has two facets. The first relates to those to whom the Gospel will be preached. The second relates to candidates coming to the seminary. The addressee of pastoral activities today is the man of postmodernism. The modern man often thinks that he knows Christianity, but ceases to be interested in it. He has trouble pausing in silence, reflecting and opening up to the mystery. He relativises the truth, and often has a habit of lying. He experiences a kind of schizophrenia of public and private life. In order to work among people with such mentality, adequate intellectual

41 Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, *Ratio institutionis*, 31–134; Selejdak, "Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis."

preparation of priests is required, not only on the content side but also on the methodological side.

Thus, there is a need for adequate preparation of priests to confront the problems of modern civilisation. *Signum temporis* also refers to a young man who enters the seminary. The incoming candidates are often poorly prepared from the cultural, intellectual and religious side. They bring the entire legacy of modern culture with them that reveals itself in symptoms such as a yearning for absolute freedom, rebellion, chaos in the world of values, disturbed emotionality and inner restlessness. They often come from broken families, families of alcoholics, single mothers. Although young, they are sometimes already deeply wounded. They also have a different experience of the Church than candidates coming to the seminary years ago. Many of them have experienced the contact with various religious groups and movements. This is a new generation. Not inferior, but certainly different.[42]

Therefore, the formation process needs changes that take into account the condition of the younger generation and the expectations of the believers. So, what is this novum in the formation of future generations of priests?

Studies in the higher education seminaries last six years. There has long been a discussion as to whether they should be lengthened. The idea was to have an introductory year before starting seminary. This would be aimed at equalizing the intellectual level of candidates and preparing them for philosophical and theological studies. This concern made its way into the *Ratio pro Polonia*, and even more attention was given to it in the latest *Ratio* of 2021.

To remedy the aforementioned difficulties, the introduction of a propaedeutic period was recommended. Its duration depends on who the candidates are and what they represent. In practice, it is proposed to organise introductory courses and introduce certain classes in the first year of theological studies. *Ratio* calls such classes an "introduction to Christianity." It considers four issues: the introduction to the truths of faith, the celebration of the Christian mystery, as well as the Christian moral life and prayer.[43]

It seems that the strongest aspect of *Ratio pro Polania* is intellectual formation. A specific curriculum for each year is given. The manner of its implementation is also outlined. The same applies to pastoral formation. Worse is the case of spiritual and human formation. Although the *Ratio* provides a general vision of this formation, it lacks the means and methods of implementation. For example – a lot of attention is paid to education for freedom. But how to do this? How to balance freedom with discipline in seminaries? Much attention is paid to human formation, but how to conduct it?

42 Jaworski, "Problemy metodyki nauczania."
43 Węcławski, "Wprowadzenie chrześcijańskie."

When introducing a new formation program, one should be aware that God himself is the first Formator. And if changes to the existing model of formation are undertaken, it is only because the Church obliges us to do so. And to this command of the Church, those responsible for seminary formation respond – yes. It is obvious that this formation program cannot be imposed. It is to be the property of all those responsible for the formation of future priests. The conviction that one is right in what one is doing provides a guarantee of the right course of formation. Otherwise, one will do more harm than good to the development and formation of future priests. Therefore, mutual openness to comments, indications and advice in the implementation of the new principles of priestly formation in Poland seems most advisable.

Bishop Damian Bryl, within the framework of the Commission of the Episcopal Conference for the Clergy began, together with an appointed team of specialists, to work on the Polish interpretation of the Vatican document The Gift of the Priestly Vocation. *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*. This resulted in the *Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis pro Polonia*, which came into effect on 1 October 2021.

6. *Ratio Intututionis* of 2021

Let us therefore take a look at the latest document according to which alumni of the last two years are being educated. Although our 2020 survey still covered seminary candidates who began their formation at a time when the latest document had not yet been introduced in Poland, the training of future priests is already taking place according to it. Let us turn here to the opinion of Fr. Tomasz Trzaskawka, secretary of the Team For The Preparation of New Rules for Priestly Formation in Poland, who emphasizes, first and foremost, the priority of the seminarian/priest's relationship to God in the Church.[44] Thus, the emphasis in the training of seminarians has been placed not on preparing them for future tasks in the Church, but on helping them grow in their personal relationship to the Most High. The most important issue is to consider who the cleric is to become. For if he himself is humanly and spiritually more mature, if he is able to build more mature relationships, he will also maturely lead others, that is, according to the spirit of the Good Shepherd.

The *Ratio pro Polonia* states that "there is nothing more important in Christian formation than education in the faith, understood as a relationship." The priestly kerygma, according to the document, should be founded precisely on the priest's relationship with God, since if the relationship was learned and theoretical – it would be deceitful. Therefore, evangelising and communicating the good news of God must be based on the salvific relationship the priest has built with Jesus. Without it – as

44 Trzaskawka, "Priorytetem są relacje."

the authors of the *Ratio* clearly emphasise – pastoral activity will not succeed. This is very much emphasised throughout the document and is the main point of reference in the training of seminarians. Defining this relationship, Trzaskawka recommends: "seminarians and presbyters are to radiate what is truly essential in Christianity. This must be evident in their entire life, in the way they build relationships with others."[45] Thus, it can be seen that the *Ratio* clearly shifts the burden from intellectual formation (not in the sense of a lower level of theological knowledge, but in the sense of relying mainly on theory) to spiritual and ethical formation, serving to create a man who experiences his faith deeply, and joyfully shares it with others.

Similarly, Fr. Wojciech Wójtowicz, chairman of the Conference of Rectors of Higher Education Seminaries says[46]:

> The new *Ratio* strongly emphasises the importance of the kerygmatic dimension at all stages of formation. There is no priesthood without the experience of a personal encounter with Jesus the Savior, with Christ the Priest and Servant. So the first fruit of good formation for our alumni is simply the visible joy of the saved in their lives. Ultimately, the idea is for future priests to bear spiritual fruit by clearly communicating with each other: it's not me, it's Him – it's God. The second important aspect of the document is the demand for a seminary that, while forming for the hierarchical priesthood, does not create an identity based on a particular role of a person, but strongly shapes the spirit of servitude and Christian brotherhood; it is also a seminary in which the first concern is not the transmission of rules governing ecclesiastical institutions, but the formation of a sense of community. The formation space understood in this way ceases to be mainly a system of control and verification, and becomes, firstly, a space for multidimensional personal development.

In terms of the curriculum, the new *Ratio* proposes unifying the systems of study in the various seminaries and revising the current way of dividing teaching hours for young theologians into different fields of study. The episcopate has also decided to introduce a propaedeutic year in the form envisioned by the Vatican. The year without theological studies, as postulated in the new *Ratio*, presents a very high value at various levels, teaching a young person responsibility for himself, his environment and forming in him the ability to recognise his character.

The educational program for the next stage emphasises the role of "becoming a disciple of Christ" (in line with Pope Francis' recommendation that the ministry of discipleship must precede the ministry of missionary). These two years, coinciding with philosophical and humanistic formation, include learning to understand the mission of a priest, listening to the words of the Gospel and reflecting on them.

45 Trzaskawka, "Priorytetem są relacje."
46 Wójtowicz, "Wywiad."

The next stage of training can be called a time of "becoming similar to Christ." About that stage, Wójtowicz puts it this way:

> It occupies another three years. Thus, this stage is a time of learning servant love and acquiring readiness to carry the cross in order to obediently follow the Lamb wherever he goes. A misunderstood category of 'alter Christus,' meanwhile, can serve to form in the spirit of clericalism. Thus, the called one should discover that he, himself, is no one special, but the incomprehensible is Jesus' grace that he brings, and therefore special is his vocation.[47]

Pastoral training does not occur until the final, sixth year of seminary education, according to the *Ratio*. This is the stage of being a "missionary," that is, preparing the seminarian for pastoral tasks and service to his community. Throughout the years, alumni work with and for the people, doing internships in, inter alia, hospices, prisons, nursing homes, oases and pilgrimages. The *Ratio Institutionis* also does not forget about gaining experience in evangelisation and catechetical practice.

In summary, priestly formation is to be progressive, that is, to go through successive stages, but with respect for the personal rhythm of development of the candidate for the priesthood. The *Ratio* makes it clear that this development in spirituality and the attuning of one's worldview and actions to the life of Jesus should continue throughout the priest's life.

7. The Ecclesiology of Pope Francis versus Contemporary Priestly Formation

Having gathered the conclusions on clerical formation according to the *Ratio*, it is worth to present some reflections on the ecclesiological emphases in the formation process. Indeed, the priesthood, especially the diocesan presbyterate, is in its essence called to serve in the changing conditions of social and cultural development. The priest's desire for personal development – otherwise always right – must be constantly confronted with the realities of the times. While serving Christ in imitation of the apostles, the Church is constantly sent to the "present" world. Therefore, among the formation suggestions, it is precisely the problem of ecclesiology that requires special reflection.

The Church of God is a mystery. The mystery of the Church cannot be adequately formulated by any definition or theological concept. However, it can be attempted to express it through an image that would reflect, in accordance with the will of

47 Wójtowicz, "Wywiad."

Christ, the fullness of the essence of the Church. This "image" of the Church serves as a basis for pastoral, and especially formative, activity. Over the past centuries, various images have been formed referring to what the Church in its essence is. Thus, when thinking about the Church, we refer to it as: People of God, Mystical Body of Christ, Sacrament of Salvation. The Second Vatican Council gave us a new image of the Church – *communio*, community. This concept has dominated theology and pastoral care since 1965. The value of community in the Church of the 21st century is emphasised by Pope Francis, and in his ecclesiology we can find clues as to how candidates for the priesthood should be educated in modern times.

Francis' ecclesiology is an interpretation of the Church today. The Pope is not engaged in theoretical reflection on the Church, but rather seeks – through his ministry – to make it real. Through his activity, the Church "happens," and we can have a sense of "being the Church." Three images of the Church appear in Pope Francis' teaching. They are, in a way, the dominant feature of his approach to ecclesiology. The first – is the image of the bent woman. St. Luke, in the Gospel, speaks of a woman who had "a spirit of infirmity" for eighteen years, was bent over and could not raise herself up in any way. The Pope uses this Gospel figure to illustrate the state of sickness of a self-centered Church. It is a Church bent over, but not bent over in front of another person, but rather bent over itself – a Church preoccupied solely with itself. The second image of the Church is that of a loss of hope, the image of the disciples going to Emmaus. Francis used it in an attempt to show that there is a loss of hope within the Church today. This is accompanied by a kind of weariness, disillusionment. And finally, the third image is that of the good Samaritan. This is the Church bending over to a person who is on the margins of society.[48]

These three Gospel images are used by Pope Francis to present an "open door" Church. At this point it is worth recalling the memorable words spoken by Pope John Paul II: "Do not be afraid to open wide the doors to Christ." It was a call to open the door, the door of one's heart, so that Jesus could enter inside the various spaces of our lives. However, Francis' call to "open the doors" has a slightly different meaning – it is about opening the doors of the Church so that Christ can come out of it. The Pope calls for going out, saying: "A Church that does not go out of itself, sooner or later, sickens from the stale air of closed rooms." To a staid Church, concerned with securing what it has, the Pope contrasts the Church that should open up and go out into the world. However, there is a risk that such a Church that goes out into the world could have an accident, just like any person going out on the street. Responding to this doubt, Francis stated: "A thousand times I prefer a Church after an accident to a sick Church." Typical diseases of a closed Church are self-centeredness, bending over only oneself, staring only at oneself. This state of being closed, locked from the inside is, after all, familiar to the Church. Before Pentecost, the Church remained

48 Draguła, "Kościół Franciszka."

in the Upper Room, closed "out of fear." Thus, overcoming alumni's fears of opening up to the world, teaching them to be with people and to accompany people should be a very important part of clerical formation.

After Vatican II, an anthropological attitude dominated ecclesiology. It was expressed in the statement: "Man is the way of the Church." This phrase became the leading one for pastoral care. Pope Francis introduces a similar, but modified vision, which can be summarised in the statement that "the Church's task is to go out towards." Francis emphasises the word "going out" often. It is an encouragement to start some process, some action. The key word often used by Pope Francis in the context of describing the Church is the word "movement." A movement that should animate the Church. This movement is expressed by three verbs: "walk," "build," and "confess." The first describes walking in the face of God. The second is a call to build on the foundation that is Christ. The third refers to shunning the spirit of worldliness. Movement is necessary because when we are not walking, we are stagnant. The Church – like its Savior – Is on the move because it has been sent to those who are unwell. It is necessary to go with Christ all the way, to the peripheries – the Pope exhorted. "Peripheries" is another term that occupies an important place in the Pope's teaching. This term did not appear unexpectedly. It was used by Jorge Bergoglio while he was still serving his diocese. In the notes of his speech during the conclave, we read that "the Church is called to go out and direct her steps to the peripheries. Not only the geographical ones, but also the existential ones: the peripheries of the mystery of sin, of pain, of injustice, of ignorance; the peripheries of all kinds of poverty."[49] As pope, he first used the word "peripheries" at the Chrism Mas on Holy Thursday. Since then, the term "peripheries" has constantly appeared in papal teaching.

Francis' "peripheries" can be understood in three ways. First – peripheries are places and people where God is not present. It is necessary to bring him there. Second, there are the so-called existential peripheries. These include a wide variety of experiences, which are located in areas such as material poverty, spiritual poverty, loneliness, sadness, illness, imprisonment, suffering, indifference, ignorance, pain, and so on. Third, the term "peripheries" can be understood in a theological sense. It defines any situation "where the faithful are most vulnerable to the onslaught of those who wish to rob them of their faith." This plundering does not necessarily take place as a direct attack on faith, religious beliefs or a fight against the Church. It takes place far more, and far more often, when any negative experiences project religious attitudes and result in doubt about the received salvation. And even more profoundly, the "peripheries" are a state of lack of hope, a state of loss of faith. Pope Francis hints: The Church must go there with Christ.[50]

49 The words of Card. Jorge Bergoglio before the conclave, quoted in Błasiak, "Paradygmat misyjny."
50 Draguła, "Papieża Franciszka koncepcja ewangelizacji."

An important category in Pope Francis' ecclesiology is "closeness." The aforementioned images of the Church – the merciful Samaritan and the disciples on the road to Emmaus – speak of "closeness on the road," of "the Lord who draws near to us" when we are unwell, and carries us on his shoulders to the nearest shelter. About the closeness that the Church should have, the Pope says as follows: "Closeness is needed so that the word, justice, love can be proclaimed in such a perfect way that the response is an attitude of faith. Encounter, conversion, unity, communion and solidarity require 'closeness' as a concrete evangelical criterion."[51]

Experiencing the closeness of the Church, which speaks of the closeness of the saving Christ, is a condition for evangelisation. According to the Pope we, as the Church, without closeness, become mere "members of an NGO or followers of a multinational corporation."[52] The Church cannot lose its essence – the Christ present in it accompanies people, is with them in their existential experiences.[53]

Speaking of pastoral style, the Pope warns against promoting a "distant," devoid of closeness, tenderness, cordiality pastoral. At most, a certain dimension of proselytism can be expected from this type of pastoral care, but it never leads to inclusion in the Church. Closeness, on the other hand, creates communion and belonging, enables encounter and creates a culture of encounter. The image of closeness includes the figure of the Church as a Mother who teaches us to walk well through life. But when children grow up and become independent, they sometimes get lost. However, the Mother remains patient in every situation, accompanies the child, and when the child makes mistakes, she tries to understand them. The Church is a merciful Mother. She does not judge, but gives God's forgiveness.[54]

Pope Francis also warns the Church against the so-called spiritual temporalism. The point here is that we are used to a pastoral ministry that is rather static and largely bureaucratic, expressed in concrete norms, regulations, orders. The Pope repeatedly casts doubt on such pastoral care, calling it a clericalisation of the Church. The starting point of this criticism for him is the attitude of the Pharisees: "They were the ones who prejudged the closeness of God wandering with his people, prejudged him, who became man to be one of us and to wander. They filtered him through their traditions, made an idea out of him, made a mere belief out of this truth, and distanced God from the people." The Pope calls such attitude "spiritual temporalism," which characterises those who are "controllers of the faith." "I think," says Francis, "that many times Jesus keeps knocking on the door, but from within, so that we will let him out. The Church behaves as if it wants to lock Jesus inside and not allow him to come out."[55]

51 Franciszek, *Chciałbym Kościoła*, 51.
52 Franciszek, *Chciałbym Kościoła*, 78.
53 Kijas, *Papież Franciszek*, 152–157.
54 Grimaldi, *Ero Bergoglio*, 105–109.
55 Duda, "Wyjść jak Jonasz."

Pope Francis' pastoral vision is to move from a Church that "orders the faith" to a Church that "transmits and gives the faith." The Pope speaks of the need to reorient our pastoral care. He says that it is necessary to change the closed model of evangelisation activity, which is limited to what already was, and in its place create a Church of open doors.[56] He also talks about the so-called pastoral conversion. By this he means balancing the efforts of the Church. The church devotes most of its forces to those who come to it. The Pope suggests dividing these forces. Dedicate half of them to those who are not in the Church. Pastoral conversion also means reducing bureaucracy in favor of building closeness. It also means shifting the emphasis from moralising to mercy.[57]

Thus, the Church that is happening, that is occurring, requires a change of mentality. We talk about the Catholic Church as a universal Church. Over the years we have become accustomed to thinking that universal means European – after all, so many popes came from Italy, and the last two – a Pole and a German – were also Europeans. Everything they said to us was understood in the context of a small piece of the world, which is Europe. Perhaps God gives us a pope from a different cultural background so that we understand that the Church of Christ is not just "our" Church: the European, American or Argentine Church. The universal Church is not the Church of popes – John Paul II's, Benedict XVI's or Francis' – the Church is Christ's. And candidates for the priesthood should be formed to this understanding of the Church.

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REVIEWS/RECENZJE

VERBUM VITAE • 41/4 (2023) 1121–1130

Paul Copan – Ronald K. Tacelli (red.), *Zmartwychwstanie Jezusa: fakt czy fikcja? Debata Williama Lane'a Craiga i Gerda Lüdemanna* (tł. A. Czwojdrak; Warszawa: Fundacja Prodoteo 2023). Ss. 240. 49,90 PLN. ISBN: 978-83-67634-08-3

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Nikomu nie trzeba chyba przypominać słów Pawła Apostoła, który pisał do Koryntian, że „jeśli Chrystus nie zmartwychwstał, daremne jest nasze nauczanie, próżna jest także wasza wiara" (1 Kor 15,14). U początków chrześcijaństwa kwestia zmartwychwstania Jezusa była absolutnie fundamentalna. Wiara pierwszych pokoleń uczniów Pańskich była wiarą w całej rozciągłości paschalną i rezurekcyjną. W późniejszych stuleciach, nawet jeśli wciąż deklaratywnie uznawano centralny charakter prawdy o zmartwychwstaniu Jezusa, faktycznie temat ten zszedł na dalszy plan w chrześcijańskiej teologii i duszpasterstwie. Akcent w przedstawianiu treści wiary padał coraz częściej na samą tożsamość Jezusa, Jego dwie natury, wyjaśnianie znaczenia natury Boga i tym podobne zagadnienia. Metafizyka wyparła w dużej mierze pierwotną dynamikę, która cechowała początki chrześcijańskiej teologii. Bóg jawił się w chrześcijańskiej myśli i przepowiadaniu niekiedy raczej jako zimny absolut niż Ojciec Jezusa, który wskrzesił Go z martwych.

Współczesny zwrot ku początkom chrześcijaństwa siłą rzeczy jest także zwrotem ku tematowi zmartwychwstania Chrystusa. Paschalny wymiar jest wyraźnie obecny w wielu ruchach i wspólnotach odnowy Kościoła. Temat zmartwychwstania jest także przedmiotem gorącej debaty teologicznej i staje niejako na nowo w centrum zainteresowania teologii chrześcijańskiej. Współczesny kontekst sprawia, że wokół tego zagadnienia powstaje szereg pytań, zarówno podobnych do tych stawianych w ciągu wieków, jak i zupełnie nowych. Pytamy dziś na przykład o to, jak ma się zmartwychwstanie do utrwalonej w chrześcijaństwie pod wpływem platonizmu teorii o nieśmiertelnej duszy człowieka. Ale są i pytania bardziej fundamentalne, dotykające wprost prawdziwości zmartwychwstania Jezusa i jego rozumienia. Czy mamy do czynienia z pewnym historycznym faktem, czy raczej z teologicznym symbolem? Czy grób stał się dosłownie pusty, czy też chodziło jedynie o pewne wizje żywego Chrystusa, których doświadczali apostołowie po śmierci Mistrza? Czy zmartwychwstanie było jakimś obiektywnym wydarzeniem, czy raczej subiektywnym doświadczeniem zwolenników Jezusa? A idąc dalej: Czy w ogóle w świetle nowoczesnego,

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naturalistycznego obrazu rzeczywistości jest jeszcze do pomyślenia, by Bóg zainterweniował w bieg dziejów, wyprowadzając z grobu jakąś zmarłą osobę?

Właśnie wokół takich pytań ogniskowała się debata, jaką odbyli w 1997 roku cenieni badacze i myśliciele protestantcy William Lane Craig i Gerd Lüdemann. Zapis dyskusji wraz z komentarzami innych uczonych i odpowiedziami na te komentarze uczestników debaty wydano drukiem w języku angielskim w 2000 roku. Obecnie nakładem Fundacji Prodoteo ukazał się polski przekład tej książki. Mimo że jest to tłumaczenie pozycji sprzed ponad dwudziestu lat, trzeba przyznać, że materiał nie stracił na aktualności i nadal może przysłużyć się polskiej debacie teologicznej. Argumenty Craiga, Lüdemanna i innych uczonych zachowują swoją wartość i nawiązują do wciąż obowiązującego stanu wiedzy o powstawaniu Nowego Testamentu. Trzeba zatem zdecydowanie pochwalić wydawcę za wybór tej pozycji, która mocno prowokuje czytelnika do refleksji na temat zmartwychwstania Jezusa i może stymulować szereg dyskusji dotyczących początków chrześcijańskiej wiary. Pochwały należą się też tłumaczce, dzięki której książkę czyta się gładko i bez zgrzytów. Można mieć jedynie kilka szczegółowych uwag, na przykład pogląd przeciwstawny wobec naturalizmu to po prostu supranaturalizm (ang. *supranaturalism*), a nie „nadprzyrodzoność" (s. 79). Całość książki, mimo nieraz bardzo skomplikowanej argumentacji i polemik, jest na tyle dynamiczna i żywa, że może zainteresować także czytelników spoza grona ekspertów.

Warto przedstawić pokrótce dwóch uczestników debaty, której zapisem jest omawiana książka. William Lane Craig to znany filozof i apologeta chrześcijański, uczeń Johna Hicka. Jego działalność naukowa skupia się na obronie wiary we współczesnym kontekście społecznym i intelektualnym. Craig jest chrześcijańskim konserwatystą, a jednocześnie wpisuje się w nurt filozofii analitycznej. Jest autorem wielu książek i artykułów naukowych oraz popularnonaukowych. Wśród jego zainteresowań są także tematy związane z Nowym Testamentem, Jezusem historycznym i początkami chrześcijaństwa. Z kolei Gerd Lüdemann (zm. 2021) był egzegetą Nowego Testamentu i historykiem. Wykładał w Stanach Zjednoczonych i w Niemczech (Getynga). Zasłynął radykalnymi poglądami dotyczącymi historyczności przekazu Ewangelii. Pod koniec życia odszedł od klasycznie rozumianej wiary chrześcijańskiej, zbliżając się do światopoglądu humanistycznego i ateistycznego.

Książka jest podzielona w klarowny sposób na streszczający i wprowadzający w debatę wstęp oraz trzy części. Pierwsza zawiera zapis pierwotnej debaty pomiędzy tytułowymi myślicielami – po wypowiedziach wstępnych następują kolejne repliki dyskutantów. W drugiej części do debaty dołączają kolejne osoby, które popierają poglądy Craiga lub Lüdemanna. W ostatniej części książki główni dyskutanci odpowiadają na zarzuty postawione w części drugiej, a jedocześnie podsumowują swoje punkty widzenia.

Pierwszą część otwiera wypowiedź wstępna Craiga. Jak przystało na amerykańskiego filozofa analitycznego, formułuje on swoje argumenty w sposób niezwykle przejrzysty i precyzyjny. Od początku nawiązuje do poglądów Lüdemanna i odnosi się do nich – zna je bowiem z publikacji tego autora (s. 35). Na szczęście dokładnie wyjaśnia, do jakich tekstów i poglądów się odwołuje, dzięki czemu czytelnik się nie gubi, nawet jeśli nie ma dostępu do prac oponenta Craiga. Wywód apologety sprowadza się ostatecznie do dwóch zasadniczych tez. Pierwsza z nich głosi, że każda teoria na temat zmartwychwstania Jezusa musi brać pod uwagę i wyjaśniać cztery fakty, które według Craiga są absolutnie pewne: pogrzeb Jezusa dokonany przez Józefa z Arymatei, odkrycie pustego grobu Jezusa, fenomen ukazywania się zmartwychwstałego Pana wielu osobom oraz powstanie chrześcijańskiej wiary w zmartwychwstanie Chrystusa. Craig uważa, że nie sposób zanegować tych czterech faktów, a każda teoria, która chce dotykać tematu zmartwychwstania Jezusa, musi obejmować wyjaśnienie ich wszystkich. Druga teza filozofa jest następująca: Najlepszym wyjaśnieniem wszystkich czterech wspomnianych faktów jest to, że Bóg rzeczywiście i dosłownie wskrzesił Jezusa z martwych. Idąc za historykiem Christopherem McCullaghem, Craig wylicza sześć kryteriów, które powinna spełnić teoria historyczna, by można było ją uznać za prawdziwą: mieć szeroki zakres eksplanacyjny, mieć wielką moc eksplanacyjną, być prawdopodobna, nie być doraźna ani naciągana, być zgodna z powszechnymi przekonaniami i zdecydowanie prześcigać konkurencyjne teorie w spełnianiu wszystkich tych warunków. Według Craiga takie warunki spełnia najlepiej jego teoria, natomiast poglądy Lüdemanna, według których zmartwychwstanie było jedynie kwestią subiektywnych wizji uczniów, są pod tym względem o wiele słabsze (s. 43).

Wypowiedź wstępna Lüdemanna ma bardzo dynamiczny charakter, ponieważ egzegeta postanowił zrezygnować z odczytania przygotowanego tekstu i odnieść się wprost do wystąpienia Craiga. Od początku polemista podkreśla niewiarygodność literalnego przekazu o powstaniu z martwych Jezusa w perspektywie współczesnego obrazu świata. Podkreśla z mocą, że w przypadku świadectw Nowego Testamentu mamy „do czynienia ze starożytnymi tekstami dotyczącymi konkretnego czasu, które nie zostały napisane przez naocznych świadków" (s. 45). Jako argument za tym, by z dystansem traktować przekaz Ewangelii, Lüdemann podaje antysemityzm, który jego zdaniem wypełnia karty Nowego Testamentu. Z kolei jeśli chodzi o samo zmartwychwstanie i jego literalne rozumienie, jakie reprezentuje Craig, Lüdemann odwołuje się do historii tekstów, które mówią o powstaniu Jezusa z martwych. Najstarszym z nich jest Pierwszy List do Koryntian, a konkretnie jego piętnasty rozdział. Paweł nie mówi tam dosłownie o pustym grobie, co Lüdemann uznaje za argument przemawiający za tym, że apostoł nie utożsamiał zmartwychwstania z dosłownym opuszczeniem grobu przez Jezusa. Prawda o zmartwychwstaniu zrodziła się w pierwotnym chrześcijaństwie raczej pod wpływem wizji podobnych do tej, jakiej doświadczył sam Paweł na drodze do Damaszku. Zdaniem Lüdemanna nie ma większej różnicy pomiędzy popaschalnymi chrystofaniami a na przykład współczesnymi objawieniami maryjnymi. Mamy więc do czynienia z pewnymi fenomenami wizji religijnych, na podstawie których tworzy się różne teorie i doktryny.

W swojej odpowiedzi Craig stwierdza, że jego oponent nie wyjaśnia swojej teorii wystarczająco szczegółowo. Postanawia więc niejako zrobić to za niego, a więc przyłożyć teorię halucynacji (takiego terminu używa Craig) do wskazanych wcześniej kryteriów wiarygodności każdej teorii wyjaśniającej jakiejś wydarzenie historyczne. Zdaniem filozofa teoria Lüdemanna nie spełnia dostatecznie owych warunków wiarygodności. Przede wszystkim nie wyjaśnia ona niektórych faktów, na czele z pustym grobem. W swojej odpowiedzi Lüdemann jeszcze raz wyjaśnia, dlaczego nie uznaje historyczności pustego grobu. Odwołując się do 1 Kor 15, niemiecki egzegeta stwierdza, że wzmianka o pogrzebie była dla Pawła Apostoła po prostu potwierdzeniem śmierci Jezusa. Ponadto Lüdemann sprzeciwia się używaniu odnośnie do chrystofanii terminu „halucynacja", a zamiast tego proponuje termin „wizja", wolny od konotacji jednoznacznie pejoratywnych (s. 58). W kolejnej replice Craig jeszcze raz kładzie akcent na niepowątpiewalne jego zdaniem fakty, takie jak pochówek Jezusa przez Józefa z Arymatei i odkrycie pustego grobu po trzech dniach. Zdaniem filozofa Lüdemann wzbrania się przed uznaniem tych faktów z powodu swoich ideologicznych przedzałożeń. Lüdemann nie może uznać interwencji Boga, bo odgórnie ją wyklucza, powołując się na poglądy Immanuela Kanta i Davida Hume'a. Zdaniem Craiga są to poglądy już dawno podważone i zdyskredytowane, a uznanie możliwości konkretnego działania Boga w świecie nie ma w sobie nic irracjonalnego (s. 63). Craig potwierdza również, że wierzy w dosłowne wniebowstąpienie Jezusa, o co wcześniej pytał go oponent. Z kolei w swojej następnej replice Lüdemann stwierdza, że w takim razie Craig powinien uznać także inne starożytne opowieści o wstępowaniu do nieba różnych herosów. Jak powiada egzegeta, uznając literalne rozumienie zmartwychwstania i wniebowstąpienia Jezusa, „musielibyśmy być bardziej wielkoduszni w stosunku do twierdzeń rozmaitych religii antycznych i przyjąć, że ich herosi faktycznie poszli do nieba, zostali wskrzeszeni i tak dalej" (s. 65). Interesująca jest również argumentacja Lüdemanna wyjaśniająca fakt, że nikt po prostu nie odnalazł ciała Jezusa, by zanegować roszczenia pierwszych chrześcijan odnośnie do zmartwychwstania ich Mistrza. Egzegeta stwierdza, że głoszenie zmartwychwstania zaczęło się dobre kilkadziesiąt dni po śmierci Jezusa, jak sugeruje to Łukasz, dlatego mogło już być niemożliwe odnalezienie dających się zidentyfikować zwłok Jezusa z Nazaretu.

Na koniec pierwszej części obaj uczestnicy debaty przedstawiają swoje wypowiedzi końcowe. William Craig w zaskakujący sposób przechodzi od technicznych i zawiłych rozważań dotyczących wiarygodności zmartwychwstania Jezusa do osobistego świadectwa wiary. Opowiada historię o tym, jak pod wpływem swojej koleżanki nawrócił się i zafascynował Jezusem, odkrywając Go jako żywego Zbawiciela. Craig przyznaje, że jego wiara w zmartwychwstanie opiera się nie tylko na świadectwach historycznych i ich interpretacji, ale także na osobistym doświadczeniu religijnym, w ramach którego spotyka Chrystusa jako żywą postać (s. 70–71). Lüdemann oznajmia, że szanuje doświadczenie Craiga, choć sam nie chce dzielić się tak osobistymi przeżyciami. Zamiast tego podsumowuje jeszcze raz zwięźle swoje poglądy, stwierdzając, że nie sposób dziś dosłownie wierzyć nie tylko w zmartwychwstanie Jezusa, ale także na przykład w to, że umarł On za nasze grzechy. Zdaniem niemieckiego egzegety „Zmartwychwstały Chrystus to trup w szafie Kościoła. Innymi słowy, każdy zdaje się wiedzieć, że Chrystus nie zmartwychwstał, lecz z jakiegoś osobliwego powodu postanowiliśmy nie podejmować radykalnych kroków, a żyć w ramach nakreślonych przez tradycyjne chrześcijaństwo" (s. 74).

Druga część książki zawiera polemiki innych badaczy, którzy ustosunkowują się do wypowiedzi Craiga i Lüdemanna. Pierwszym z nich jest Stephen T. Davis, profesor filozofii z Claremont McKenna College. Obstaje on jasno przy poglądach Craiga i broni ich. Jego zdaniem tezy wygłoszone przez Lüdemanna opierają się na trzech przesłankach, z których wszystkie są fałszywe. Po pierwsze, Hume i Kant wcale nie obalili biblijnego obrazu świata, jak utrzymuje Lüdemann. Davis twierdzi, że wielu badaczy dowiodło już, iż argumentacja Kanta i Hume'a pod tym względem nie jest w pełni konkluzywna. Wciąż zupełnie racjonalne jest uznawanie możliwości Bożej interwencji w świecie, nawet jeśli na co dzień posługujemy się metodologicznym naturalizmem. Po drugie, wiara w zmartwychwstanie wcale nie musi się wiązać z wiarą w literalnie rozumiane wniebowstąpienie, jak utrzymuje Lüdemann. Zdaniem Davisa nie trzeba uznawać prawdziwości wniebowstąpienia, by uznać realność zmartwychwstania. Sam zaś Davis uznaje jedno i drugie, negując przekonanie, że wniebowstąpienie wiąże się z tak zwanym trójpoziomowym obrazem świata. Jezus wstępując do nieba, nie przemieszcza się w górę, lecz zmienia niejako wymiar swojego istnienia. Dlaczego w takim razie uczniowie widzieli Pana unoszącego się dosłownie ku górze? Zdaniem Davisa było to pewne wyobrażenie symboliczne, które Bóg unaocznił ze względu na uczniów, by pomóc im zrozumieć, że odtąd Jezus będzie oddalony od nich w czasie i przestrzeni. Trzecie założenie Lüdemanna, z którym nie zgadza się Davis, to to, że Nowy Testament zawiera szereg tekstów antysemickich, co osłabia jego wiarygodność jako całości. Filozof dowodzi, że teksty Nowego Testamentu nie są faktycznie antysemickie, nawet jeśli jest w nich dużo polemiki z judaizmem nieuznającym Chrystusa.

Drugim polemistą włączonym do dyskusji jest Michael Goulder, profesor studiów biblijnych z Uniwersytetu Birmingham. Ewidentnie jest on zwolennikiem poglądów Lüdemanna, które interpretuje i rozwija, argumentując za ich słusznością. Wprowadza do debaty pojęcie wizji nawróceniowych. Jego zdaniem takich właśnie wizji doświadczyli uczniowie spotykający zmartwychwstałego Chrystusa, szczególnie Paweł i Piotr. Inni zwolennicy Jezusa mogli doświadczyć wizji wtórnych, a więc niejako zarazić się entuzjazmem apostołów i ulec wpływowi ich doświadczeń. Jeśli chodzi o te elementy biblijnej narracji, które Craig nazywa pewnymi faktami, Goulder przedstawia alternatywne wyjaśnienie ich powstania. Jego zdaniem wiara w zmartwychwstanie mogła zrodzić się pod wpływem samych wizji, a późniejsza opowieść o pustym grobie wynika z rodzącej się wewnątrzchrześcijańskiej polemiki dotyczącej zmartwychwstania (s. 107). Zdaniem Gouldera, odwrotnie niż według

Craiga, to właśnie teoria wizji jest bardziej prawdopodobnym wyjaśnieniem powstania wiary w zmartwychwstanie niż teoria dosłownego wyjścia Jezusa z grobu. „We wczesnych relacjach, listach Pawłowych i stojących za nimi tradycjach jedynie wizje zostały potwierdzone przez świadków. Historie o pustym grobie i o Jezusie, który jadł i którego dotykano, powstały 30–70 lat po tym wydarzeniu i trzeba je tłumaczyć napięciami w Kościele" (s. 111).

Autorem trzeciej polemiki jest Robert H. Gundry, profesor Nowego Testamentu i greki z Westmont College. Gundry jest zwolennikiem poglądów Craiga i całą uwagę skupia na tym, by obalić wywody Lüdemanna. Najpierw jednak oznajmia, że jego celem jest sprowadzenie argumentacji obydwu dyskutantów do pewnego rdzenia. Jego zdaniem po takiej redukcji, oczyszczającej tok rozumowania od publicystycznych ozdobników charakterystycznych dla żywej debaty, z argumentacji Lüdemanna pozostaje niewiele, podczas gdy Craig ma za sobą solidne racje. Gundry potwierdza, że widać w Nowym Testamencie pewien rozwój narracji o zmartwychwstaniu, jednak rozwój ten nie musi oznaczać, że u podstaw brakuje historycznych fundamentów. Zauważa, że teoria Lüdemanna nie tłumaczy, dlaczego w przypadku wielu innych wizji, również w tradycji biblijnej, nikt nie stwierdził, że dana osoba, którą w taki sposób widziano, zmartwychwstała (na przykład Mojżesz i Eliasz w opowieści o przemienieniu Jezusa na górze Tabor). Wydaje się więc, że subiektywne wizje nie są wystarczającą bazą, na której mogłaby powstać opowieść o cielesnym zmartwychwstaniu Jezusa. Tym samym rację ma Craig, utrzymujący, że Bóg zainterweniował w los Jezusa i dosłownie wskrzesił Go z martwych, wyprowadzając Go z grobu.

Ostatnim polemistą jest Roy Hoover, profesor literatury biblijnej z Whitman College. Broni on pozycji wytyczonych przez Lüdemanna, podkreślając, że opozycja pomiędzy dwoma dyskutantami jest charakterystyczna dla współczesnej debaty teologicznej. Zgodnie z tytułem swojego tekstu Hoover pokazuje, że dokonuje się tu „[r]ywalizacja między ortodoksją a prawdomównością". Craig ma nastawienie ortodoksyjne, a więc chce bronić tradycyjnie rozumianej substancji wiary chrześcijańskiej. Lüdemann z kolei jest prawdomówny w tym znaczeniu, że bezkompromisowo szuka prawdy o genezie tekstów Nowego Testamentu i o początkach doktryny chrześcijańskiej, nawet jeśli ta prawda miałaby okazać się niewygodna dla chrześcijan. Zdaniem Hoovera optyka Craiga jest nie do utrzymania w kontekście współczesnego obrazu świata kształtowanego przez nauki ścisłe. Z kolei spojrzenie Lüdemanna da się połączyć ze współczesną mentalnością. Wpisuje się ono w poszukiwanie sensu chrześcijańskiej wiary w dzisiejszym kontekście. Swoje rozważania Hoover podsumowuje wskazaniem dwóch nieciągłości i dwóch ciągłości pomiędzy biblijną wiarą w zmartwychwstanie a duchową sytuacją współczesnego człowieka. Zdaniem biblisty nieciągłości to wiara w działającego w świecie Boga stwórcę, dziś już nie do utrzymania, oraz trójpoziomowa wizja kosmosu składającego się z piekła na dole, ziemi po środku i nieba na górze. Z kolei dwa tropy, które czynią nas dziś bliskimi wiary pierwszych chrześcijan w zmartwychwstanie, to przekonanie, że warto mimo wszystko być dobrym i sprawiedliwym, oraz wiara w to, że świat może się zmieniać i stawać się lepszym miejscem. Wiara w zmartwychwstanie to w tym ujęciu wiara w to, że rzeczywistość może wyglądać inaczej (s. 157).

W ostatniej części książki Craig i Lüdemann podsumowują całą debatę, odnosząc się również do głosów polemistów. Tym razem jako pierwszy wypowiada się Lüdemann, który zwięźle przypomina, że jego zdaniem trzeba uparcie szukać naturalnego wyjaśnienia powstania wiary w zmartwychwstanie, zgodnie ze standardowymi zasadami naukowych badań. Niemiecki egzegeta, odnosząc się do uwag polemistów, stwierdza raz jeszcze, że fizyczny charakter zmartwychwstania Jezusa jest w Nowym Testamencie czymś wtórnym wobec pierwotnych świadectw o wizjach zmartwychwstałego. Ponadto Paweł nie znał przekazu o pustym grobie, a to dopiero Marek w autorski sposób utworzył opowieść o nim. Lüdemann upiera się też, że Nowy Testament rzeczywiście zawiera teksty antysemickie, co powinno alarmować czytelnika i wzbudzać dystans wobec ewangelicznego przekazu. Na koniec egzegeta odwołuje się do sugestii Hoovera, że trzeba szukać dziś nowego języka teologii, zgodnego ze współczesną mentalnością. Lüdemann oznajmia (a końcowe teksty pisane są długo po pierwotnej polemice), że nie wierzy już w możliwość takiego przedsięwzięcia. Obecnie sam nie utożsamia się już z chrześcijaństwem, a bliżej mu do humanistycznej wiary w ludzki potencjał, podobnej do tej, której świadectwem są teksty starożytnych gnostyków.

Craig w podsumowaniu wraca raz jeszcze do swoich „czterech faktów” i po raz kolejny stara się je uzasadnić. Apologeta obstaje przy pojęciu halucynacji w odniesieniu do teologii Lüdemanna. Jego zdaniem trzeba odróżniać wizje werydyczne, a więc takie, za którymi stoi jakaś obiektywna rzeczywistość, od wizji niewerydycznych, a więc właśnie halucynacji. Kiedy teksty biblijne mówią, że Jezus ukazał się uczniom, nie znaczy to, że mieli oni jedynie Jego subiektywne wizje, ale że faktycznie to On postanowił im się ukazać. Subiektywne wizje nie wyjaśniałyby powstania chrześcijańskiej wiary, ponieważ wiele osób miało różnego rodzaju widzenia, jednak nikt nie stwierdził z tego powodu, że dana postać zmartwychwstała. Najbardziej wiarygodną pozostaje więc teoria mówiąca, że Bóg naprawdę wskrzesił Jezusa z martwych. Poglądy Lüdemanna są natomiast redukcjonistyczną psychologizacją, wynikającą z programowego wyrugowania nadprzyrodzonego wymiaru z obrazu rzeczywistości.

Wielką wartością książki *Zmartwychwstanie Jezusa: fakt czy fikcja?* jest przede wszystkim jej tematyka. Debata przedstawiona w tej pracy dotyczy spraw absolutnie fundamentalnych dla wiary chrześcijańskiej. Dzięki Craigowi i Lüdemannowi czytelnik może zastanowić się dogłębnie i bezkompromisowo nad tym, co w rzeczywistości się wydarzyło dwa tysiące lat temu po śmierci Jezusa, co sprawiło, że Jego uczniowie zaczęli głosić, iż On żyje. Tym samym książka może być wielkim ożywieniem polskiej debaty teologicznej, zwłaszcza że padają w niej po obu stronach tezy radykalne i prowokujące do namysłu.

Ogromną zaletą książki jest także jej forma. Zasadnicze wypowiedzi Craiga i Lüdemanna, które stanowią pierwszą część, są zapisem żywej debaty, dzięki czemu cechują się dynamiką, a nawet żywiołowością. Głosy polemistów jeszcze bardziej ubogacają książkę, sprawiając, że mamy do czynienia z różnymi punktami widzenia, które jednak nie stoją obok siebie, ale nieustannie są ze sobą konfrontowane. W tym znaczeniu książka wydana przez Fundację Prodoteo może być lekcją co do tego, jak może wyglądać pełna dynamiki, odwagi i zaangażowania debata teologiczna.

Jeśli chodzi o same poglądy głoszone przez Craiga i Lüdemanna, to argumenty każdego z nich niewątpliwie mają swoje słabsze strony. Craig zdaje się uporczywie trwać przy twardym supranaturalizmie, nie chcąc zauważyć, że da się mówić o realnym zmartwychwstaniu bez upierania się przy rozumieniu go jako jakiejś formy reanimacji somatycznej. Choć apologeta twierdzi, że także on operuje w przestrzeni egzegezy historyczno-krytycznej, jednak można odnieść wrażenie, że jego podejście do tekstu biblijnego jest momentami nieco naiwne. Pusty grób nie musi wcale być faktem historycznym, a wiele wskazuje na to, że rzeczywiście narracja o nim pojawiła się stosunkowo późno. Ponadto Craig nie odpowiada na trafne pytania Lüdemanna o to, co działo się z ciałem Jezusa po zmartwychwstaniu, jeśli było to właściwie to samo ciało, które spoczęło wcześniej w grobie. Jak rozumieć wniebowstąpienie, by nie uciekać w karkołomną teorię, że uczniowie zobaczyli to, co Bóg pozwolił im zobaczyć, by zrozumieli sens tego wydarzenia w ramach swojego obrazu świata? Craig nie odpowiada na te pytania. Jego poglądy są dobrze przemyślane i solidnie uargumentowane, ale bazują jednak na swoistym literalizmie biblijnym. Choć Craig słusznie punktuje ideologiczne założenia Lüdemanna, to sam ma swoje supranaturalistyczne przedzałożenia. Z łatwością przechodzi do wyjaśnienia nadprzyrodzonego, nie chcąc zobaczyć, że da się szukać prostszych rozwiązań.

Gerd Lüdemann imponuje swoim sceptycyzmem i krytycznym podejściem do źródeł tradycji chrześcijańskiej, w którą sam przez długi czas był zanurzony. Egzegeta ma rację, że trzeba w nauce szukać rozwiązań naturalnych, zgodnie z postulatem metodologicznego naturalizmu. Nie byłby możliwy postęp wiedzy na jakikolwiek temat, gdyby pośpiesznie uznawano jako wyjaśnienie różnych faktów Boże ingerowanie w świat. Jeśli chodzi jednak o szczegółowe rozwiązania, które proponuje Lüdemann, momentami wydają się one wątpliwe. Oponenci mają rację, punktując, że egzegeta opiera się na psychoanalizie postaci Piotra i Pawła dotkniętych jakoby szczególnymi wątpliwościami, wewnętrznymi konfliktami i wyrzutami sumienia. To właśnie te duchowe zmagania miałyby czynić ich podatnymi na wizje zmartwychwstałego Jezusa. Trudno jednak uznać za konkluzywne wnioski wypływające z domorosłej psychoanalizy postaci żyjących dwa tysiące lat temu, do których to postaci mamy dostęp tylko przez skąpy materiał źródłowy. Ponadto Lüdemann, prezentując kwestię zmartwychwstania jako opartą na wizjach uczniów, dochodzi w nieuprawniony sposób do przekonania, że Jezus po prostu nie zmartwychwstał. Wizje nie oznaczają tymczasem przywidzeń, mogą być teoretycznie darem Boga i pokazywać jakąś prawdę. Innymi słowy, to, że widzenie zmartwychwstałego było czymś subiektywnym, a nie fizycznym, nie musi oznaczać, że było nierealne. Realność i fizyczność to nie to samo. Jezus mógł powstać z martwych, a wizje mogły być tego znakiem. Co wobec tego znaczyłoby, że Jezus zmartwychwstał, skoro nie oznaczałoby, że grób stał się pusty? Tego nie wiadomo, ale nieuprawnione jest proste przejście od negacji pustego grobu i fizyczności zmartwychwstania do zaprzeczenia zmartwychwstania jako takiego.

Czytelnik szukający prawdy o zmartwychwstaniu Jezusa zostaje rzucony niejako między Scyllę Craiga i Charybdę Lüdemanna. Z jednej strony mamy nieco naiwny supranaturalizm i biblijny literalizm, z drugiej zaś – negowanie zasadności wiary chrześcijańskiej i banalną psychologizację. Craig nie rozumie, że nie trzeba uznawać pustego grobu i fizycznej obecności zmartwychwstałego Jezusa w spotkaniach z uczniami, by wierzyć głęboko w prawdę o zmartwychwstaniu Chrystusa. Lüdemann nie rozumie, że można wierzyć głęboko w prawdę o zmartwychwstaniu Chrystusa, odrzucając jednocześnie ślepe i literalne rozumienie biblijnego przekazu.

Mimo wszelkich radykalnych różnic pomiędzy Craigiem a Lüdemannem i zwolennikami obydwu, wydaje się, że paradoksalnie istnieje potężny wspólny mianownik między tymi perspektywami. Obaj badacze zdają się uważać, że jeśli ktoś nie uznaje dosłownego zmartwychwstania Jezusa (przez co rozumieją faktycznie coś w rodzaju literalnego ożywienia zwłok i nadaniu temu ożywionemu ciału jakiegoś nadzwyczajnego charakteru), nie może być chrześcijaninem. Nie da się wierzyć w zmartwychwstanie, jeśli nie wierzy się w pusty grób i fizycznie obecnego zmartwychwstałego Jezusa, który z uczniami jadł posiłek i pozwalał im się dotykać – mówią zgodnie Craig i Lüdemann. Wyraziście tę alternatywę przedstawia sam tytuł książki, stworzony przez redaktorów. Albo fakt, albo fikcja. Przy takiej alternatywie nie ma miejsca na niuansowanie. A co jeśli rzeczywistość jest bardziej skomplikowana? Poza faktami i fikcjami istnieją też na przykład symbole wyrażające duchowe prawdy. Nie są one fizycznymi faktami, ale nie są też niemającymi związku z rzeczywistością wymysłami. Są próbą narracyjnego ujęcia czegoś niewysłowionego, jakiegoś autentycznego doświadczenia duchowego. W tym wypadku jest to doświadczenie Jezusa jako nadal żyjącego, obecnego w sercu chrześcijanina i we wspólnocie Kościoła. Wielu współczesnych teologów poszukuje prawdy o zmartwychwstaniu Jezusa właśnie w takim kierunku, odrzucając proste utożsamienie go z wyjściem z grobu ożywionych ponownie zwłok. Nawet ci myśliciele, którzy upierają się przy historyczności pustego grobu, często podkreślają, że zmartwychwstanie to nie reanimacja somatyczna, a pusty grób to jedynie pewien znak cudu zmartwychwstania. Przykładem może być polski teolog Marian Rusecki. Jeszcze inni teolodzy rezygnują z przyjmowania pustego grobu jako faktu historycznego, a wiarę w zmartwychwstanie wiążą z duchowym doświadczeniem uczniów, których nie można utożsamiać z halucynacjami czy wymysłami. Przykładem takiej postawy może być Edward Schillebeeckx. O zmartwychwstaniu jako symbolu pisał z kolei wprost Paul Tillich, znany teolog protestancki. Symboliczne rozumienie zmartwychwstania nie musi oznaczać, że odmawia się temu wydarzeniu realizmu. Chodzi raczej o takie rozumienie symbolu, w którym jest on wyrażeniem czegoś, co jest jak najbardziej rzeczywiste, jednak niewyrażalne w sposób dosłowny. Wyjście Jezusa z grobu można by więc rozumieć jako pewien symbol Jego przejścia do nowego życia, które staje się doświadczalne dla uczniów Pana. Oczywiście pozostaje pytanie, czy takie rozumienie zmartwychwstania byłoby zgodne z nauczaniem Kościoła katolickiego. Odpowiedź na to pytanie wymagałaby szerszej i głębszej analizy, której wyniki z pewnością zależałyby od tego, o jaką dokładnie koncepcję zmartwychwstania by chodziło. Faktem jest jednak, że nie sposób zamknąć wszystkich możliwych rozwiązań w prostej alternatywie „fakt czy fikcja". Myślenie symboliczne, tak ważne dla chrześcijaństwa i religii w ogóle, każe nam szukać prawdy ponad historycznymi faktami, bez zgody na to, by utożsamiać symbol z fikcją. Symbol to nie „tylko symbol" – jak zwykło się mówić – ale raczej „aż symbol". Tej właśnie perspektywy, niewpisującej się w sztywny podział na fakt i fikcję, najbardziej brakuje w tej skądinąd tak wartościowej książce.

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Wit Chlondowski, *Objawienia prywatne. Praktyczny przewodnik* (Pszenica i Kąkol; Warszawa – Poznań: Dominikańskie Centrum Informacji o Nowych Ruchach Religijnych i Sektach – Wydawnictwo W Drodze 2022). Ss. 149. 24,90 PLN. ISBN: 978-83-7906-599-8

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Publikacja *Objawienia prywatne. Praktyczny przewodnik* jest drugim tomem serii Pszenica i Kąkol tworzonej przez Dominikańskie Centrum Informacji o Nowych Ruchach Religijnych i Sektach pod redakcją Radosława Brońka, Norberta Augustyna Lisa, Emila Smolany[1]. Składa się ze Wstępu do serii, odautorskiego Wstępu do książeczki oraz pięciu, a w zasadzie sześciu rozdziałów, bo redaktor, nie wiedzieć czemu, zdecydował się na uznanie ostatniej części zatytułowanej „Zakończenie i polecane książki" za jeden z nich.

Pomysł publikacji i główny zamiar o. Wita Chlondowskiego został przedstawiony we Wstępie i w Zakończeniu. Autor przyznaje, że pisał „tę książkę z pragnieniem, by stała się ona przystępnym przewodnikiem dla tych, którzy są zainteresowani tematem objawień prywatnych, wizji, lokucji […] i innych nadprzyrodzonych fenomenów religijnych" (s. 11). Mają one, jak zauważa franciszkanin, wpływ na ludzi, rozchodzą się po globalnej wiosce niczym powódź (kilkadziesiąt tysięcy objawień maryjnych w samym XX wieku!), tak że dziś można mówić o swego rodzaju „duchowości objawieniowej" (s. 13). Nie jest bez znaczenia, że „zdecydowana większość to objawienia fałszywe" (s. 12), niewiedza powoduje zamieszanie w tej dziedzinie, a w rezultacie stawia się objawienia prywatne na równi z Objawieniem publicznym. Nawet biskupom zdarza się brak znajomości zasad rozeznawania. „Z jednej strony więc objawienia, wizje i proroctwa odgrywają piękną i ważną rolę w życiu Kościoła, a z drugiej wiele z nich nie jest autentycznych, zawiera błędną naukę i w konsekwencji rodzi zamęt, podziały oraz niezgodę. Właśnie dlatego powstała ta książka" (s. 16–17) – w ten niefortunny językowo sposób określony został powód powstania dziełka.

1 Do tej pory w serii ukazały się: J. Pyda, *Cuda* (2022); S. Zatwardnicki, *Biblia „po katolicku", czyli dlaczego nie* sola Scriptura (2023); A. Bańka, *Świecki lider w Kościele* (2023).

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Z kolei w Zakończeniu Chlondowski wyraża nadzieję dotyczącą swojej publikacji: „Proroctwo to fascynujący temat. Jak każdy Boży dar wymaga jednak rozeznania i przyjęcia. Autentyczne objawienie prywatne ma szansę stać się źródłem błogosławieństwa i nawrócenia dla całych narodów, ale objawienie fałszywe może być przyczyną zwiedzenia dla wielu. Dlatego ufam, że ta krótka podróż po historii proroctwa chrześcijańskiego będzie pomocą w rozeznawaniu dziś Bożego światła" (s. 145). Jednak książeczka jest czymś więcej niż „krótką podróżą po historii proroctwa", a jeśli może w jakiejś mierze stanowić tytułowy „praktyczny przewodnik", to bardziej dzięki teoretycznym określeniom relacji między objawieniami prywatnymi a Objawieniem publicznym, przywołaniem biblijnych i kościelnych reguł rozeznawania, a także wyjaśnieniom, na czym polega kościelny proces oceny danego objawienia prywatnego. Mamy zatem do czynienia, przynajmniej po części, ze spojrzeniem na ten temat z lotu ptaka, z poziomu „meta", umożliwiającym zorientowanie się w całościowym krajobrazie.

W rozdziale pierwszym, zatytułowanym „Czym jest objawienie prywatne, czym proroctwo, a czym fałszywe proroctwo i «nieproroctwo»", czytelnikowi prezentuje się najpierw definicję objawienia prywatnego. „Mówiąc krótko, to poapostolskie fenomeny prorocze, czyli te wszystkie proroctwa, które Duch Święty daje nam po śmierci apostołów" (s. 19). Już tutaj następuje sprowadzenie objawień prywatnych do proroctw, i to rozumianych jako charyzmaty nadzwyczajne znane z listów Pawłowych, którego autor będzie się trzymał do końca i które moim zdaniem zadecydowało o tym, że książeczka, pomimo wartościowych treści, nie ułatwia zrealizowania celu serii, czyli oddzielenia pszenicy od kąkolu (wrócę do tego w dalszej części recenzji). Chlondowski pisze, że objawienia prywatne „to te wszystkie wizje i objawienia, które nastąpiły po ukształtowaniu się Nowego Testamentu" (s. 23). Proroctwo jego zdaniem to suma natchnienia i przynaglenia do wypowiedzenia tego, co zostało objawione (w tym miejscu autor odsyła do Tomasza z Akwinu).

Objawienia prywatne należy odróżniać, jak przypomina Chlondowski, od „Objawienia publicznego, które otrzymaliśmy w Piśmie Świętym i Tradycji Apostolskiej" (s. 20). Nie jest to najbardziej trafne wyrażenie, bo Objawienia nie da się zawrzeć ani w książce, ani nawet w Tradycji. Zresztą sam autor na kolejnej stronie dopowiada, że „Objawienie publiczne to Boże działanie skierowane do całej ludzkości […]. Nie jest to tylko suchy przekaz jakichś informacji, ale żywy proces, przez który Bóg zbliża się do człowieka". W Piśmie i Tradycji postrzegać należałoby raczej formy przekazu i poznawania Objawienia Bożego. Wracając do różnicy między objawieniami prywatnymi a publicznym, franciszkanin podkreśla, że w pierwszym przypadku lepiej byłoby mówić o *apparitio* – zjawieniu, a tylko w drugim o *revelatio* – objawieniu czy odsłonieniu. Za Soborem Watykańskim II autor utrzymuje, że nie należy oczekiwać żadnego publicznego Objawienia przed paruzją, a stwierdziwszy to, wskazuje – tym razem za *Katechizmem Kościoła katolickiego* – na sens objawień prywatnych: mają one pomagać w pełniejszym przeżywaniu Objawienia publicznego w danym czasie, i choć nie należą do depozytu wiary, mogą jednak go wspierać przez np. nowe formy pobożności, które ułatwiają zrozumienie i przeżywanie Ewangelii „tu i teraz".

Autor *Objawień prywatnych* wprowadza następnie rozróżnienie na natchnienie i proroctwo dla całego Kościoła, które również nazywa natchnieniem, tyle że przeznaczonym dla całego Kościoła. O tym drugim rodzaju natchnień pisze, że domagają się „stanowczo ściślejszego rozeznania" i że orędzia te podlegają „trzyetapowej procedurze rozeznawania i z zasady są długotrwałe (ponieważ pomiędzy etapami należy odczekać na owoce, jakie się zrodzą)" (s. 28). Ten proces, omówiony przez autora w dalszej części książki, zostanie streszczony niżej.

Duszpasterz Wspólnoty i Szkoły Nowej Ewangelizacji „Zacheusz" w Cieszynie odróżnia następnie „autentyczne proroctwo" (s. 28–29), które – jak twierdzi – „jest charyzmatem" (s. 29, z odesłaniem do 1 Kor 13,12), od „fałszywego proroctwa" (s. 30). To ostatnie jest przekazywaniem jako słów Boga tego, co od Niego nie pochodzi. Brakuje tutaj zatem prawdziwego natchnienia. Jest możliwe, że wypowiadający tego rodzaju fałszywe proroctwo świadomie kłamie lub myli własne intuicje i myśli z Bożymi natchnieniami. Franciszkanin właśnie ten drugi przypadek określa mianem „nieproroctwa". Każdy zaangażowany w ruch charyzmatyczny zapewne potwierdzi, że fenomeny te stanowią znakomitą większość wszystkich przypadków domniemanych proroctw pojawiających się we wspólnotach charyzmatycznych.

Gdy autor opisuje różne formy proroctwa (obrazy, wewnętrzne lub zewnętrzne słowa, natchniona modlitwa, prorocze pieśni, prorocze znaki), odwołuje się do ilustracji biblijnych, a więc do tego, co znalazło się w Objawieniu publicznym. Skąd ta pewność, że chodzi o to samo zjawisko, skoro tak mocno, i notabene słusznie, rozróżniło się Objawienie publiczne od prywatnego? Przyjęta metoda wydaje się dyskusyjna. Od strony antropologicznej dzieli Chlondowski postrzeganie objawień prywatnych (nie zostało to odnotowane w przypisie, ale chyba za badaniami Ratzingera nad średniowieczną teologią, odwołującą się z kolei do myśli Augustyna[2]) na wizje zmysłowe, wewnętrzne i duchowe. W przypadku objawień prywatnych najczęściej chodzi o drugi rodzaj, a zatem trzeba uznać, jak za – tym razem przywołanym wprost – Ratzingerem zauważa Chlondowski, że nie są one „fotografiami" Bożej rzeczywistości, gdyż przechodzą przez „filtr" wizjonera.

W rozdziale drugim („Krótka historia proroczego charyzmatu") autora zajmuje proroctwo w Izraelu i jego ustanie, wypełnienie obietnicy wylania Ducha Świętego na wszelkie ciało (por. Jl 3,1–2) w Nowym Przymierzu, a następnie manifestowanie się ducha proroczego w Kościele pierwotnym. Chrześcijanie postrzegają w proroctwie kontynuację lub odnowę proroctwa Izraela, tyle że teraz przez proroków miałby się wypowiadać sam powstały z martwych Pan. Wydaje mi się, że już sam Nowy

2 Por. J. Ratzinger, *Rozumienie objawienia i teologia historii według Bonawentury. Rozprawa habilitacyjna i studia nad Bonawenturą* (tł. J. Merecki; Opera Omnia 2; Lublin – Freiburg im Breisgau: Wydawnictwo KUL – Herder 2014) 458–459.

Testament odczytany w swojej kanonicznej całości, a nie przez pryzmat zwolennika charyzmatów, jakim był apostoł Paweł i jakim jest Chlondowski, pozwala zakwestionować ten punkt widzenia. Kościół jako całość jest spadkobiercą obietnicy danej Izraelowi, dlatego nie epizodyczne przejawy Ducha Świętego (charyzmaty), ale Duch wylany na wszystkich i na całe życie kościelne jest spełnieniem się obietnicy. Wyznanie „Jezus jest Panem" wypowiadają wszyscy chrześcijanie, bo wszyscy zostali napełnieni Duchem Świętym. Cały odnowiony Lud Boży jest ludem proroczym, co trzeba uznać, jeśli nie mamy cofnąć się do Starego Przymierza.

Przyjęcie zaproponowanego przeze mnie punktu widzenia pozwoliłoby uniknąć pułapki, w którą musiał wpaść franciszkanin, gdy zajął się kwestią coraz bardziej wraz z upływem czasu marginalnej roli tzw. charyzmatów nadzwyczajnych. Chlondowski przyznaje, że „kolejne wieki przynoszą jednak ewidentnie rzadsze występowanie tego charyzmatu i osłabienie jego roli w Kościele" (s. 43), i próbuje tłumaczyć to racjami zgoła mało teologicznymi. Zadecydować miała o tym reakcja Kościoła na objawienia Montana i jego zwolenników („był to pierwszy przypadek niezdrowej «duchowości» skupionej na objawieniach prywatnych" – s. 43), która doprowadziła do ograniczenia „korzystania z tego charyzmatu do hierarchii kościelnej i świętych" (s. 44). (Swoją drogą trudno to uzgodnić z częstym otrzymywaniem objawień prywatnych przez „zwykłych" wiernych – stanowią one znakomitą większość zatwierdzonych objawień, o których autor pisze w rozdziale piątym). Kolejnym powodem miało być „powolne zanikanie spontanicznych spotkań modlitewnych na rzecz uporządkowanej liturgii" (s. 44) – jakby Chlondowski uważał, że chrześcijanie gromadzili się głównie na spontanicznych spotkaniach i że to właśnie one dawały więcej możliwości Duchowi Świętemu. Za ostatni powód uznaje autor (za Karlem Rahnerem) wpływ platonizmu.

Chlondowski odnotowuje jednak w historii Kościoła „regularne powroty proroczej aktywności, zwłaszcza w wielu tzw. ruchach odnowy" (s. 45), pośród których wymienia ascetyczny, monastyczny, odnowę dwunastowieczną, strumień objawień maryjnych („to również forma proroctwa, w której Bóg przemawia za pośrednictwem Maryi" – s. 46), jakie pojawiły się w XIX wieku, oraz oczywiście dwudziestowieczny ruch charyzmatyczny, którego jest aktywnym uczestnikiem. Dostrzegam tutaj pewną niekonsekwencję: Czy charyzmatyczna odnowa, skoncentrowana przede wszystkim na charyzmatach nadzwyczajnych, jest kolejnym ogniwem w tym samym łańcuchu ruchów odnowy, czy też należy ją traktować – a tak zdaje się to widzieć sama odnowa charyzmatyczna – jako niespodziankę Ducha Świętego różniącą się od poprzednich ruchów odnowy? Innymi słowy, jest kontynuacją czy nowością? Chlondowski – jako teolog dogmatyczny specjalizujący się w pneumatologii[3], między innymi w teologii

3 Por. W.P. Chlondowski, *Pneumatologia Raniera Cantalamessy* (Dysertacja doktorska; Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II; Lublin 2013); W.P. Chlondowski, *Spełniona obietnica. Kim jest i jak działa Duch Święty?* (Cieszyn: Zacheusz 2016).

charyzmatów – nadmienia co prawda, że istnieją teorie o zaniku proroctwa po okresie apostolskim (s. 38, przyp. 5), ale sam się do nich nie przychyla. Tymczasem trzeba by raczej pójść wąską drogą między skrajnościami – oczywiście, że Bóg nie przestał udzielać charyzmatów, tj. łask darmo danych (*gratia gratis data*), ale dzisiejsze fenomeny są nieporównywalne z tymi z czasów apostolskich. Wynika to już z samego faktu zamknięcia Objawienia publicznego w tamtym okresie, któremu towarzyszyła szczególna łaska udzielona nie tylko apostołom i hagiografom, ale i całemu Kościołowi apostolskiemu[4].

„Rozeznawanie proroków i proroctw" to tytuł rozdziału trzeciego. Chlondowski pisze, że jeśli charyzmat proroczy towarzyszy w „nieprzerwany sposób" kościelnej historii (chciałoby się zapytać: skąd więc potrzeba ruchów odnowowych?), to „to samo można powiedzieć o fałszywym proroctwie" (s. 49). Autor *Objawień prywatnych* przywołuje biblijne reguły rozeznawania fenomenu proroctwa. Ze Starego Testamentu wynika, że zwracać należy uwagę na to, w czyim imieniu przemawia prorok, jak wygląda jego życie moralne (czy jest zgodne z Bożym prawem) i czy jego prorocze zapowiedzi i obietnice się realizują (por. Pwt 18,20–22).

Nowy Testament wskazuje, że: żadne proroctwo niczego nie dodaje/nie ujmuje z pełni Objawienia w Chrystusie, jest natomiast jego aktualizacją („charyzmat proroczy sprawia, że przekazana już raz na zawsze Boża prawda jest doświadczana przez współczesnych ludzi TU i TERAZ" – s. 53); objawienie nie może podważać wyjątkowości i unikalności Jezusa, prawdziwości Jego ludzkiej lub boskiej natury (por. 1 J 4,1–3 – a nie, jak podano w książeczce, 1 J 41,3); liczy się posłuszeństwo względem hierarchicznego wymiaru (sic!), gdyż w Kościele współistnieją dary hierarchiczne i charyzmatyczne, co każe uznać, że „brak posłuszeństwa pasterzom i jedności z nimi jest oznaką nieautentyczności proroctwa" (s. 56); z jednej strony nie można Ducha gasić, z drugiej należy wszystko badać (1 Tes 5,19–21), a z charyzmatów korzystać w sposób rozumny i uporządkowany (1 Kor 14,32), z czego wynika, iż „wszelkie twierdzenia, że Duch Święty nieodparcie zmusza nas do proroczego działania, zdradzają, że nie Paraklet jest źródłem tego impulsu, ale sfera emocjonalna" (s. 58); charyzmat proroctwa winien opierać się na miłości (por. 1 Kor 14,4). Chlondowski dodaje również – moim zdaniem kontrowersyjną, choć w środowiskach charyzmatycznych traktowaną niemal jak dogmat – tezę, iż „proroctwo jako charyzmat nigdy nie jest w 100% pewne i dlatego zawsze musi być rozeznawane" (s. 57). Autor uzasadnia ją Pawłowym twierdzeniem, że dary są niedoskonałe (1 Kor 13,12), i to z tego powodu miałaby się pojawiać potrzeba roztrząsania proroctw (1 Kor 14,29).

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4 Już po napisaniu tych słów zajrzałem do artykułu Wita Chlondowskiego („*Charyzmat proroctwa – peryferyjny fenomen czy istotna forma aktualizacji objawienia?*", *Teologia w Polsce* 4/2 (2010) 277–292; poprawiłem tytuł artykułu, w oryginale mowa jest nie o „fenomenie", lecz „fenomemie"), w którym o jednym z Dokumentów z Malines pisze, że „wprowadza rozróżnienie między proroctwem jako darem konstytutywnym Kościoła oraz proroctwem po-apostolskim, mimo że zaznacza, iż mają one wspólne cechy" (*ibidem*, 289).

Chlondowski pisze, że w historii Kościoła, w opozycji do np. ruchu montanistów, „strona katolicka podkreślała […], że autentyczne prorokowanie dokonuje się w pełnej świadomości, ze zrozumieniem i opanowaniem. Musi być ono rozeznawane przez rozum i wiarę oraz poddane pod osąd biskupów, którzy stoją na straży Tradycji Apostolskiej. Za niezgodne z Tradycją Apostolską uznano też nauczanie na temat przekazywania charyzmatu proroczego, ponieważ proroka powołuje sam Bóg" (s. 61). To ostatnie stwierdzenie jawi mi się jako ważne w obliczu pewnych trendów, jakie pojawiły się w ruchu neocharyzmatycznym i jakie przenikają również do katolickich środowisk charyzmatycznych. Chodzi o tzw. *impartation*, inaczej *transferable anointing*, swego rodzaju „przekazywanie namaszczenia" propagowane np. przez znanego również w Polsce Randy'ego Clarka z Global Awakening.

Według autora omawianej publikacji, „bazując na Biblii i patrystyce, teologia w kolejnych wiekach zaczęła systematyzować rozeznawanie autentyczności proroctw" (s. 61). Nie wiem, w jaki sposób połączyć to, co pisał wcześniej Chlondowski o biblijnym rozeznawaniu, z systematyzacją kryteriów rozeznawania objawień i zjawisk nadprzyrodzonych, jakie wykształciły się w historii Kościoła i jakie sam franciszkanin uznaje za „cenne i aktualne" i dlatego je omawia (zob. rozdziały trzeci i czwarty). Wymienia najpierw trzy przyczyny sprawiające, że objawienie jest fałszywe: prorok świadomie, w złej intencji, kłamie (wstrząsający przykład franciszkanki, która zawarła pakt z szatanem, a jej życie było pełne nadnaturalnych fenomenów); żywa wyobraźnia proroka, niedojrzałość czy też zaburzenia jego osobowości powodujące iluzję utożsamianą z proroctwem; popełnione przez proroka oszustwo motywowane zaangażowaniem społeczno-politycznym (np. w czasie zamętu politycznego, religijnego czy wojny pojawia się oczekiwanie na wybawiciela).

Gdy zaś chodzi o sześć powodów (taka zapowiedź pada na s. 63, bo już na s. 69 mowa tylko o pięciu) przyczyniających się do błędnej interpretacji autentycznego objawienia, zostają tutaj zaliczone:

1. Niedokładna interpretacja objawienia przez tego, kto je otrzymał.
2. Niezrozumienie warunkowego charakteru proroctwa (*casus* Jonasza!); „do tej grupy – jak uznaje Chlondowski – należą wszelkie prorocze obietnice związane ze szkaplerzem, cudownym medalikiem, czcią Najświętszego Serca Pana Jezusa, Niepokalanego Serca Maryi, praktykowaniem pierwszych piątków i sobót miesiąca itp. Wszystkie tego typu obietnice to typowe proroctwa warunkowe" (s. 73).
3. Przypisywanie objawieniom, które przedstawiają historyczne sceny w przybliżeniu, absolutnej dokładności historycznej. Nie bierze się tutaj pod uwagę, że Bóg dostosowuje się do wiedzy wizjonera i posługuje się znanymi mu obrazami; każde objawienie „ma jeden cel – doprowadzić do uświęcenia, nawrócenia i zjednoczenia z Bogiem, a nie prowadzić wykłady z historii czy archeologii" (s. 74).
4. Dodawanie do Bożego światła ludzkich „elementów" (światło Boże przechodzi przez ludzi, tak że następuje mieszanie Bożego działania z ludzkim).

5. Błędy sekretarzy (spisujących objawienia i nieraz dokonujących „korekty", czy to świadomie, czy bez złej woli).
6. Brak rozeznania, fideizm („Dość często występującym błędem jest przekonanie, że rozumowe rozeznawanie objawień stanowi oznakę braku wiary" – s. 79–80).

Rozdział czwarty („Normy postępowania przy rozeznawaniu domniemanych objawień z 1978 r.") jest w końcu tym, w którym czytelnik szukający kryteriów rozeznawania nie charyzmatycznych fenomenów, ale objawień prywatnych, znajdzie to, czego szukał. Upubliczniony przez Kongregację Nauki Wiary w 2011 roku dokument to, jak pisze Chlondowski, „zwięzła kwintesencja katolickiego nauczania na temat objawień prywatnych i ich rozeznawania. Podsumowuje on zarówno biblijne zasady rozeznawania, jak i 2000 lat doświadczenia Kościoła w tym zakresie" (s. 81). Trudno tu jednak doszukać się biblijnego rozeznawania charyzmatów, natomiast na pewno jest to wynik mądrości Kościoła w podejściu do tytułowego fenomenu. Jak pisze autor, „aktualna, oficjalna procedura rozeznania przez Kościół domniemanych objawień lub przesłań składa się z trzech następujących po sobie etapów" (s. 81). Ważne jest, że każda kolejna faza następuje dopiero po pozytywnym zakończeniu poprzedniej:

1. Ocena zjawiska według kryteriów pozytywnych i negatywnych. Do pierwszych należą: badanie samego faktu objawienia (czy faktycznie do niego doszło, jakie mamy relacje i świadectwa); analiza szczególnych okoliczności związanych z domniemanym objawieniem (przymioty wizjonerów, ich równowaga psychiczna, życie moralne, uległość władzy kościelnej itp.); sprawdzenie, czy przesłanie wolne jest od błędów teologicznych i duchowych; zwrócenie uwagi na owoce pobożności (czy jest ona zdrowa i czy rodzi trwałe owoce). Do kryteriów negatywnych zalicza się: błąd dotyczący faktu objawienia; błędy doktrynalne przypisywane zjawie (czy to samemu Bogu, czy też Maryi lub świętym); dążenie do zysku; poważne czyny niemoralne popełnione przez wizjonera lub jego zwolenników; choroby psychiczne czy skłonności do psychopatii; zbiorowa psychoza czy histeria.
2. Zezwolenie na pewne publiczne wyrazy kultu czy pobożności (tzw. reguła *pro nunc nihil obstare,* „na razie nic nie stoi na przeszkodzie"). Jak zaznacza Chlondowski, „nie jest to oficjalne uznanie objawień za nadprzyrodzone" (s. 88), władze kościelne nadal czuwają nad podlegającym rozeznaniu fenomenem.
3. Uznanie trwałości duchowych owoców nowej pobożności, co pozwala w końcu wydać ocenę, że zjawisko jest „autentyczne i nadprzyrodzone" (*de veritate et supernaturalitate*). Taka aprobata podejmowana jest przez władze kościelne (biskup, konferencja episkopatu lub Stolica Apostolska) i ma wyrażać jedynie czy aż, że badane objawienie nie zawiera treści sprzecznych z wiarą i obyczajami (moralnością), a wiernym wolno je przyjąć w roztropny sposób (Chlondowski

odwołuje się tutaj do fragmentu adhortacji *Verbum Domini* Benedykta XVI). Kościół może jednak wydać na każdym etapie ocenę negatywną, w formule *constat de non supernaturalitate* („stwierdza się, że nie ma tu działania nadprzyrodzonego").

Sam autor utrzymuje, że „uznanie danego objawienia prywatnego jest więc potwierdzeniem, że nie pozostaje ono w sprzeczności z Ewangelią – jedynym Objawieniem. Nic do niego nie dodaje, a jedynie pomaga przeżywać je w dzisiejszym świecie" (s. 93). Twierdzi również, że „uznanie autentyczności danego objawienia prywatnego nie «narzuca» jednak wszystkim katolikom obowiązku jego przyjęcia. Raczej od tego momentu Kościół proponuje korzystanie z tych treści. Wierni mogą w sposób całkowicie wolny zdecydować, czy dane proroctwo pomaga im żyć Ewangelią" (s. 94). Niby jest to prawda, a jednak można odczuć pewien niedosyt. Czy cały proces rozeznawania zmierzałby jedynie do takiego, skądinąd oczywistego stwierdzenia? Czy np. stosunek Kościoła do objawień w Fatimie miałby katolikom niczego nie mówić? Czy tego rodzaju objawienie miałoby mniej znaczyć dla wiernych niż uznane za prorocze charyzmatyczne natchnienie dla uczestników wspólnoty odnowowej?

Franciszkanin tłumaczy tę swego rodzaju zachowawczość Kościoła niebezpieczeństwem skupienia się wiernych na objawieniach prywatnych kosztem Objawienia publicznego; chodziłoby o ryzyko „zrównania" i traktowania objawień prywatnych jako „ponadczasowych", jakby miały być „dodatkiem" do Biblii, a nie – jedynie czy aż – pomocą w życiu Ewangelią w danym momencie historii.

Autorowi należy się pochwała za klarowne wyjaśnienie pojęć *nihil obstat*, *imprimatur* i *imprimi potest*. Ta naprawdę dobra porcja książeczki pozwala się rozprawić z pomieszaniem, które często leży u źródła błędnego uznania danych objawień za potwierdzone przez Kościół. Należy bowiem wyraźnie odróżnić uznanie autentyczności objawienia (trzyetapowa procedura opisana powyżej i zakończona pozytywną oceną) od zgody kościelnej na wydanie danej książki. *Imprimatur* („niech będzie drukowane") to aprobata na wydanie książki, która następuje po otrzymaniu pozytywnej opinii cenzora kościelnego – jego *nihil obstat* („nic nie stoi na przeszkodzie") oznacza, że dzieło jest wolne od błędów dotyczących katolickiej wiary i moralności, lecz nie jest uznaniem prawdziwości treści ani ich nadprzyrodzonego źródła. Gdy książka ma być wydana przez członka instytutu zakonnego, potrzebne jest zezwolenie przełożonego, które zostaje wyrażone frazą *imprimi potest* („może być drukowane") i które również zostaje poprzedzone otrzymaniem *nihil obstat*. Wbrew temu, co się dzieje na „rynku religijnym", należy za Chlondowskim oczekiwać, iż wszystkie książki zawierające opisy objawień prywatnych winny uzyskać pozytywną opinię cenzora (*nihil obstat*) i zgodę ordynariusza miejsca (*imprimatur*).

Jak gorzko, bo na bazie autopsji, pisze Chlondowski: „nie można […] zgodzić się z naiwną argumentacją osób, które niejako z założenia uznają wszystkie objawienia maryjne za autentyczne, bo «diabeł nienawidzi Maryi i nigdy by się pod nią nie podszył, żeby zachęcać do różańca». To częsty argument, z którym się spotykam!" (s. 84). Dodałbym do tego, że ja z kolei wielokrotnie słyszałem z ust charyzmatyków podobne stwierdzenie, tyle że dotyczące modlitwy uwielbienia – ponoć w jej trakcie, po wezwaniu Ducha Świętego, wszystko, co się wydarza, musi mieć nadprzyrodzony charakter, bo diabeł ucieka z miejsca, w którym uwielbia się Boga. Tak niestety nieraz wygląda rozeznawanie w praktyce, które dopomina się o drugą książeczkę Chlondowskiego, jaką można by zatytułować: *Natchnienia charyzmatyczne. Praktyczny przewodnik*.

Tytuł rozdziału piątego zapowiada jego treść: „Objawienia prywatne oficjalnie zatwierdzone przez Kościół". Czytelnik zapewne zdziwi się, jak mała jest liczba zaaprobowanych objawień. Jest zresztą pewna trudność z ustaleniem tej liczby, głównie z tego powodu, że przed 1978 rokiem brakowało jednolicie stosowanych kryteriów. Na „liście Chlondowskiego" znajdują się jedynie objawienia, na których temat Kościół się wypowiedział (zatem nie znajdzie tam czytelnik np. objawień otrzymywanych przez św. Faustynę). Autor przedstawia „najpierw te objawienia, które zostały oficjalnie zatwierdzone i nie ma co do nich żadnych wątpliwości, a na koniec te, co do których wątpliwości się pojawiają" (s. 103). W pierwszej grupie wymienia trzynaście objawień: Guadalupe (Meksyk, 1531); Paray-Le-Monial (Francja, 1673–1675); Laus (Francja, 1664–1718); Paryż (Francja, 1830); La Salette (Francja, 1846); Lourdes (Francja, 1858); Green Bay (USA, 1859); Pontmain (Francja, 1871); Gierztwałd (Polska, 1877); Fatima (Porugalia, 1917); Beauraing i Banneux (Belgia, 1932–1933); Kibeho (Rwanda, 1981–1989); San Nicolas (Argentyna, 1983–1990). W drugiej grupie objawień znalazły się dwa: Akita (Japonia, 1973) i Finca Betania (Wenezuela, 1976–1987).

W ostatniej części „Zakończenie i polecane książki" pojawiają się dwa „ascetyczne" akapity podsumowujące oraz zapowiadające listę polecanych publikacji związanych z podjętym w książeczce tematem. Niestety ani autor, ani wydawca nie udostępnili czytelnikowi pełnej bibliografii pozycji cytowanych w przypisach.

To dobry moment, żeby raz jeszcze przypomnieć moją najważniejszą krytyczną uwagę odnośnie do recenzowanej pozycji. Otóż treści, które w zamiarze miały służyć oddzieleniu pszenicy od kąkolu, z powodu przyjętego przez autora założenia o bliskości czy wręcz tożsamości charyzmatu proroczego z objawieniami prywatnymi, wprowadzają w tej kwestii niepotrzebne zamieszanie. Wyraźnie daje to o sobie znać właśnie w tej proponowanej liście lektur. W sekcji „Teologia proroctwa i jego historyczny rozwój" znalazło się miejsce dla dokumentu Kongregacji Nauki Wiary oraz książki omawiającej historię ruchu zielonoświątkowego protestanckiego autora; ani jedno, ani drugie nie dotyczy *stricte* objawień prywatnych. Z kolei w sekcji „Praktyczne rozeznawanie osobistych natchnień" rad udzieli nam nie tylko św. Jan od Krzyża jako doktor Kościoła, ale również charyzmatycy: Damian Stayne (katolik) i Jeff Eggers (protestant).

Pierwszy z nich zostaje określony przez Chlondowskiego jako „jeden z najbardziej znanych świeckich katolickich ewangelizatorów", którego książka *Odnów swoje cuda*[5] miałaby być „cennym świadectwem i przewodnikiem w temacie posługi charyzmatem proroczym i uzdrowienia" (s. 148). No cóż, żeby się przekonać, jakiego rodzaju „rozeznanie" proponuje Stayne, wystarczy obejrzeć youtube'owe relacje z prowadzonych przez niego spotkań połączonych z modlitwą o uzdrowienie. Zobaczyć tam można wypowiadane w imieniu Jezusa Chrystusa rozkazy, przeklinanie chorób i wydawanie poleceń chorobom czy oczekującym uzdrowienia częściom ciała, a także „modne" w środowiskach charyzmatycznych, niebiblijne zresztą, ogłaszanie uzdrowienia wynikające z fałszywej doktryny o mocy słowa. Ten ewangelizator z Wielkiej Brytanii prosi następnie obecne na sali osoby, które poczuły się lepiej, by podniosły rękę czy zaklaskały, i już mamy „potwierdzone" idące w setki uzdrowienia. To, co proponuje Stayne, to wprost negatyw zaleceń Kongregacji Nauki Wiary wydanych w instrukcji *Ardens felicitatis desiderium*, dokumencie poświęconym modlitwie o uzdrowienie[6].

Z kolei Eggers jest jednym z liderów międzynarodowego Domu Modlitwy (International House of Prayer; IHOP) w Kansas City, MI, organizacji związanej z niebezpiecznym, a bardzo wpływowym ruchem zwanym reformacją nowoapostolską (New Apostolic Reformation)[7]. Wstęp do książki *Proroczy jak Jezus*[8] napisał Mike Bickle, pastor kierujący IHOP, który wierzy w to, iż powstające na całym świecie tego rodzaju domy modlitwy przyniosą przebudzenie dla świata i przyspieszą czas przyjścia Chrystusa. Cała ideologia tego ruchu bazuje na rzekomo biblijnym (proroctwo Joela), ale wywiedzionym z prywatnych „objawień" oczekiwaniu, że zanim Pan powróci, nastąpi największe wylanie Ducha Świętego w historii.

W ten sposób pozwala się kąkolowi rosnąć na polu razem z pszenicą. Przeczy to zamiarom serii, w jakiej publikacja się ukazuje, a który to zamiar o. Bronisław Broniek, jeden z jej redaktorów, definiuje następująco:

> Żyjemy w czasie synkretyzmu i pomieszania pojęć – także w dziedzinie religii i wiary. […] Chcemy zobaczyć – mówiąc językiem biblijnym – co jest ewangeliczną pszenicą, a co zasiewem Złego, kąkolem. […] Jesteśmy przekonani, że katolicy potrzebują dziś klarownego wykładu doktryny Kościoła oraz jasnych kryteriów – zgodnie z Biblią, Tradycją i Urzędem Nauczycielskim Kościoła – w odniesieniu do zjawisk, które się pojawiają. Zależy nam na

5 D. Stayne, *Odnów swoje cuda. Dary duchowe dla naszych czasów* (red. A. Lasoń-Zygadlewicz – J. Sztaudynger; Łódź: Mocni w Duchu 2017).

6 Por. Kongregacja Nauki Wiary, *Instrukcja na temat modlitw w celu osiągnięcia uzdrowienia pochodzącego od Boga*, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20001123_istruzione_pl.html (dostęp: 4.09.2023).

7 Por. S. Zatwardnicki, „Uwaga, Reformacja Nowoapostolska (NAR)!", *Homo Dei* 2 (2021) 82–90.

8 J. Eggers, *Proroczy jak Jezus. Uwalnianie serca Boga w twoim świecie* (tł. K. Polak; Katowice: Recolligere 2017).

solidnej treści, która jest oparta na dobrych, wiarygodnych źródłach, w tym oficjalnym nauczaniu Kościoła[9].

Podsumowując, należy docenić podjętą próbę zajęcia się objawieniami prywatnymi, gdyż rzeczywiście odgrywają one dużą rolę w pobożności wiernych. Chlondowski dobrze orientuje się w najnowszych trendach (np. „trzy dni ciemności" czy „oświecenie sumień"), dość umiejętnie też wplata przykłady ilustrujące teoretyczne treści, które należało zaprezentować czytelnikowi. Należy też docenić te części książeczki, w których autorowi udaje się oddzielić pszenicę od kąkolu, gdy rzeczywiście wprowadzone przez niego rozróżnienia wnoszą światło zrozumienia tematu objawień prywatnych. Nie należy jednak całości przeceniać, gdyż nie może to być ostatnie słowo w tej sprawie. Z powodu krytykowanego przeze mnie głównego założenia, jakie przyjął autor – zestawienie ze sobą objawień prywatnych i charyzmatycznego proroctwa – mamy do czynienia wręcz z pewnym pomieszaniem. Na polu wciąż pozostaje i pszenica, i kąkol, czego można było łatwo uniknąć, pozostawiając w książeczce jedynie rozdziały czwarty i piąty, poprzedzone rozróżnieniem Objawienia publicznego od objawień prywatnych – są to właśnie te treści, których oczekiwał zapewne czytelnik.

Możliwe, że o. Wit Chlondowski dał się zasugerować tzw. Dokumentom z Malines – opracowaniom dotyczącym odnowy charyzmatycznej, w których możemy przeczytać w kontekście tzw. charyzmatów nadzwyczajnych: „Nie będziemy tutaj wyznaczać ogólnych reguł rozeznawania dla oddzielenia dobrego ziarna od kąkolu i autentycznej mistyki od mistycyzmu. […] Być może warto w tym miejscu przypomnieć postawę Kościoła wobec objawień prywatnych. Dotyczy to zarówno «słów proroctw» i wizji, jak i form pobożności, które często powstają na bazie jakiegoś prywatnego objawienia"[10]. Tyle że jeśli w dokumencie jedynie sugeruje się ogólną postawę powściągliwości[11] oraz postrzeganie stosunku do charyzmatów analogiczne do kościelnego stosunku do objawień prywatnych, franciszkański charyzmatyk zdaje się ten kierunek odwracać. Zamiast zachować rozróżnienia, próbuje pojednać to, co winno zostać rozróżnione. Nie sądzę jednak, by mógł być konsekwentny w tym, co proponuje: ani nie wykazał, że Kościół stosuje biblijne reguły rozeznawania proroctw do objawień prywatnych, ani sam nie odnosi zapewne do pojawiających się w jego

9 R. Broniek, „Wstęp do serii Pszenica i kąkol. Laboratorium mutacji wiary", W. Chlondowski, *Objawienia prywatne. Praktyczny przewodnik* (Pszenica i Kąkol; Warszawa – Poznań: Dominikańskie Centrum Informacji o Nowych Ruchach Religijnych i Sektach – Wydawnictwo w Drodze 2022) 5, 8–9. Nie od rzeczy będzie dodać, że dominikanin jest autorem publikacji *Duchowe bezdroża. Przewodnik po wierze zmutowanej* (Kraków: WAM 2020).

10 L.J. Suenens (red.), *Ekumenizm a odnowa charyzmatyczna* (tł. A. Foltańska; Dokument z Malines 2; Kraków: Serafin 2007) 77.

11 Suenens, *Ekumenizm a odnowa charyzmatyczna*, 78.

wspólnocie charyzmatów trzyetapowego procesu rozeznawania, jakie Kościół stosuje względem objawień prywatnych.

Co prawda autor nie wpada w typową dla wielu charyzmatyków (i wielu wierzących w ogóle) pułapkę bagatelizowania objawień prywatnych opartego na prawdzie, że Kościół nie zobowiązuje do ich przyjęcia, wręcz nawet wypowiada o objawieniach tego typu pozytywne twierdzenia, ale też w zasadzie nie podaje czytelnikom ani głębszego uzasadnienia potrzeby zwrócenia należnej uwagi na objawienia prywatne, ani też nie wyjaśnia zadawalająco, w jaki to sposób objawienia prywatne miałyby służyć przeżywaniu Objawienia publicznego *hic et nunc*. Nie znajdujemy też próby wyjaśnienia, dlaczego katolikowi „Kowalskiemu" nie wystarcza samo Pismo Święte, zwłaszcza że słowo Boga jest czytane i aktualizowane w czasie liturgii słowa.

Pytania można by mnożyć. Czy już w punkcie wyjścia mylą się ci, którzy z pobożnymi uczuciami sięgają po tego rodzaju objawienia, i czy coś jest z nimi nie tak, gdy przemawiają one do nich bardziej niż słowa natchnione? Czy to nie ludzki (a zatem również historyczno-kulturowy) wymiar bosko-ludzkiej Biblii sprawia problemy współczesnym, tak że szukają oni przesłania wypowiedzianego na sposób im bliższy? Czy nie ten sam Duch obiecany przez Pana stoi za Pismem i poapostolskimi objawieniami? Co to znaczy, że objawienia prywatne „pomagają przeżywać" Ewangelię, i czy jest to tylko dopust Boży, czy pozytywnie rozumiana Jego wola? Jak „związać" ze sobą objawienia prywatne z Pismem Świętym, skoro pierwsze służą Objawieniu publicznemu, którego świadectwo znalazło się na kartach pism natchnionych? Rozumiem, że mała objętościowo książeczka nie mogła pomieścić wszystkich odpowiedzi, szkoda jednak, że w zasadzie żadnych uzasadnień teologicznych nie podpowiada. Pod tym względem – biorąc pod uwagę, że *praxis* opiera się na teorii – zawodzi w funkcji praktycznego przewodnika.

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Marek Parchem, *Interpretacja Biblii w Qumran i inne studia* (Biblica et Judaica 8; Pelplin: Bernardinum 2020). Ss. 478. ISBN 978-83-8127-429-6

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W ramach serii Biblica et Judaica w ręce czytelników trafia książka *Interpretacja Biblii w Qumran i inne studia*, której autorem jest ks. prof. dr hab. Marek Parchem. To ceniony specjalista zajmujący się w pracy naukowej Starym Testamentem, a zwłaszcza Księgą Daniela i literaturą międzytestamentalną (zwoje z Qumran, apokryfy Starego Testamentu, literatura targumiczna). Szczególnym przedmiotem jego badań są żydowskie pisma o charakterze apokaliptycznym z okresu Drugiej Świątyni. W tym zakresie opublikował kilka książek i kilkadziesiąt artykułów naukowych. Jest wybitnym znawcą języków starożytnych. Jako pierwszy przetłumaczył na język polski: *Apokalipsę Barucha* grecką, *Testament Mojżesza*, *Apokalipsę Daniela*, Księgę Powtórzonego Prawa z Targumu Neofiti oraz Księgę Jozuego, Księgi Królów, Księgę Jeremiasza i Księgę Ezechiela z Targumu Jonatana.

Recenzowana książka składa się z trzynastu rozdziałów, z których każdy stanowi tekst napisany i opublikowany przez autora w latach 2007–2019, w większości na łamach czasopisma *Collectanea Theologica* (rozdziały I–VII, IX i XI). Prezentują one badania oparte na zwojach odnalezionych na Pustyni Judzkiej nad Morzem Martwym. Praca została podzielona nad dwie zasadnicze części: 1) Interpretacja Biblii w Qumran (rozdziały I–IX) i 2) Inne studia (rozdziały X–XIII). Osiem z prezentowanych artykułów (rozdziały I–VII i IX) stanowi poszerzoną formę wystąpień podczas konferencji naukowych z cyklu Interpretacja Pisma Świętego organizowanych na Uniwersytecie Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie. Konferencje te omawiały poszczególne księgi biblijne, zwłaszcza ich orędzia, interpretację i recepcję.

W pierwszej części recenzowanej książki omówiona została obecność Biblii w zwojach z Qumran, przede wszystkim zachowane kopie ksiąg biblijnych, a także dokumenty (m.in. apokryfy, peszery, parafrazy) nawiązujące do materiału biblijnego, w tym wydarzeń i osób znanych z kart Pisma Świętego. Druga część obejmuje różne studia qumrańskie, zarówno o charakterze analitycznym (rozdziały X–XI), jak i syntetycznym (rozdziały XII–XIII).

Rozdział I stanowi tekst „Księga Rodzaju 12–50 w Qumran: interpretacja opowiadań o patriarchach w wybranych tekstach z Pustyni Judzkiej" (s. 19–42; zob. *Collectanea*

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Theologica 88/4 [2018] 139–193), który został podzielony na cztery części: 1) Trzej patriarchowie wspominani razem (s. 20–22), 2) Patriarcha Abraham (s. 22–33), 3) Patriarcha Izaak (s. 33–39), 4) Patriarcha Jakub (s. 39–42). Księga Rodzaju we wspólnocie z Qumran cieszyła się wielką popularnością (28 lub więcej kopii), co wpłynęło na powstanie wielu utworów inspirowanych jej treścią, będących często parafrazą materiału biblijnego. W rozdziale tym zostaje podjęta ogólna charakterystyka patriarchów w zwojach qumrańskich na podstawie analizy wybranych tekstów mówiących o Abrahamie (4Q252, kol. 2 oraz kol. 3; 4Q225, frag. 2, kol. 1; 1QapGen), Izaaku (4Q225, frag. 2, kol. 1–2) i Jakubie (4Q158, frag. 1–2). Jedną z trudności, z którą musiał się zmierzyć autor, jest zachowanie w bardzo fragmentarycznym stanie większości tekstów zwojów z Pustyni Judzkiej, np. *Peszer do Księgi Rodzaju* (4Q252; s. 23–28), *Apokryf Księgi Jubileuszów* (4Q225; s. 28–30, 34–39), *Przeredagowany Pięcioksiąg* (4Q158; s. 40–42). Jedynie *Apokryf Księgi Rodzaju* (1QapGen; s. 30–33) zachował się w większej całości. Związane z tym były trudności w ich interpretacji, ponieważ szczątkowe zachowanie wielu tekstów nie pozwalało na wyciągnięcie pewnych wniosków. Autor zwraca uwagę, że dokumenty qumrańskie po pierwsze przepracowują biblijny materiał o patriarchach, ubogacając go nowymi elementami, m.in. rozszerzając i uzupełniając jego treść, a po drugie ukazują patriarchów w kontekście przymierza i obietnic Bożych oraz jako wzór posłuszeństwa i wierności Bogu.

Rozdział II „Księga Kapłańska w Qumran" (s. 43–80; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 88/4 [2010] 85–114) w pierwszej kolejności omawia fragmentaryczne rękopisy tekstu tejże księgi odnalezione w różnych miejscach Pustyni Judzkiej nad Morzem Martwym (Qumran, Masada, miejsce bliżej nieznane). Autor przeanalizował siedemnaście tekstów, w tym piętnaście napisanych w języku hebrajskim (1Q3, 2Q5, 4Q17, 23–26, 26a, 26b, 6Q2, 11Q1–2, Mas1a, Mas1b, Xlev; s. 44–51), a także dwa w języku greckim (4Q119–120; s. 51–52) i jeden w języku aramejskim (4Q156; s. 53–54). Następnie Parchem przebadał dokumenty qumrańskie pod kątem występowania cytowania Księgi Kapłańskiej za pomocą formuł wprowadzających (s. 54–62) oraz interpretacji przepisów prawnych pochodzących z tejże księgi (m.in. 11Q19; s. 65–67). Księga Kapłańska wśród członków społeczności qumrańskiej cieszyła się dużym uznaniem. Związane to było z dużym naciskiem, jaki kładli oni na kwestię czystości rytualnej, łączącej się bezpośrednio z zagadnieniem świętości (s. 68–79). Wspólnota z Qumran realizowała polecenie, które Bóg kieruje do Izraela właśnie w Księdze Kapłańskiej: „bądźcie świętymi, bo Ja jestem święty" (Kpł 11,44.45). Ponadto autor wypunktował trzy ważne i interesujące zjawiska występujące w qumrańskich zwojach biblijnych Księgi Kapłańskiej (s. 80): 1) rękopisy hebrajskie są zapisane pismem starohebrajskim (cztery zwoje) oraz pismem kwadratowym (jedenaście zwojów); 2) tekst tej księgi zachował się w trzech językach: hebrajskim, aramejskim i greckim; 3) tekst Księgi Kapłańskiej zachował się na jednym zwoju wraz z innymi księgami biblijnymi (m.in. z Wj w 3Q17; Lb w 4Q23), co wskazuje, że kolejność ksiąg Tory w Qumran była taka sama, jak w tekście masoreckim.

Rozdział III nosi tytuł „Jozue w Qumran: zwoje biblijne (4Q47–48, XJozue), tekst parabiblijny (4Q123), wzmianki o osobie Jozuego (CD 5,4; 1Q22 1,11; 4Q175 21) oraz apokryficzny cykl Jozuego, tj. *Apokryf Jozuego* (4Q3 78–379, 4Q522, 5Q9, Mas11)" (s. 81–132; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 84/4 [2014] 131–173). Autor omawia w nim tradycje związane z osobą Jozuego. W tym celu bada kopie biblijnej Księgi Jozuego (s. 82–87), tekst parabiblijny (s. 87–89), wyraźne wzmianki o osobie Jozuego (s. 90–94) oraz zbiór dokumentów tworzących tzw. cykl Jozuego, tj. *Apokryf Jozuego* (s. 94–132). Według Emanuela Tova[1] Księga Jozuego, ze względu na zachowanie jedynie trzech kopii (dla porównania: Ps – 40 kopii; Pwt – 30; Iz – 21; Rdz – 20), nie cieszyła się zbyt dużą popularnością wśród członków wspólnoty qumrańskiej. Jednak – jak podkreśla Parchem – tradycje związane z osobą Jozuego odgrywały ważną rolę wśród członków społeczności qumrańskiej, ponieważ jej treść była komentowana i aktualizowana. Autor udowadnia to na podstawie analizy *Apokryfu Jozuego* (4Q3, 78–379, 4Q522, 5Q9, Mas11; s. 94–132), przytaczając komentarz dotyczący wypełnienia się klątwy Jozuego (Joz 6,26) wobec tych, którzy odbudują Jerycho (4Q379; s. 105–121), oraz wyjaśnienie przyczyny, dla której Jerozolima nie została zdobyta przez Jozuego, a co za tym idzie, niemożności umieszczenia tam Namiotu Spotkania (4Q522; s. 121–128).

Rozdział IV stanowi tekst „Księga Ezechiela w Qumran" (s. 133–178; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 77/4 [2007] 103–138) składający się z czterech części, w których po kolei są omawiane: 1) rękopisy biblijnej Księgi Ezechiela (s. 134–136) odnalezione w Qumran (1Q9, 3Q1, 4Q73–75, 11Q4) oraz na Masadzie (Mas1d); 2) cytaty z Księgi Ezechiela w niebiblijnych pismach qumrańskich (4Q174, 4Q177, CD; s. 136–147); 3) qumrańskie rękopisy niebiblijne związane z Księgą Ezechiela – *Pseudo-Ezechiel* (4Q383–391; s. 147–168); 4) niektóre motywy z Księgi Ezechiela obecne w pismach qumrańskich (CD, 1QH, 1QM, 1QS, 2Q24, 4Q385, 4Q405, 11Q14; s. 169–176). Autor – analizując dokument określany jako *Pseudo-Ezechiel*, który stanowi przeróbkę i interpretację tekstów pochodzących z Księgi Ezechiela – omawia pojawiające się tam tematy: zmartwychwstanie jako nagroda dla sprawiedliwych (4Q385, frag. 2; s. 153–160), wizja chwały Bożej (4Q385, frag. 4; s. 160–165), wizja przyszłej Świątyni (4Q391, frag. 65; s. 165–167), parafraza wyroczni przeciwko Egiptowi (4Q385, frag. 1; s. 167–168). Występowanie niektórych motywów z Księgi Ezechiela w pismach qumrańskich świadczy o tym, że cieszyła się ona dużym uznaniem wśród członków społeczności qumrańskiej. Autor wskazuje, że Księga Ezechiela była traktowana w Qumran jako pismo autorytatywne. Na dowód tego przytacza wyraźne cytowanie tej księgi przy użyciu formuły: „jak zostało napisane w..." (4Q174, 3,16–17; 4Q177, 9,13–14), „jak przysiągł im Bóg przez..." (CD 3,20–4,2) oraz „jak [Ezechiel] powiedział przez..." (CD 19,11–12; s. 176). Podkreśla, że duże uznanie dla Księgi

1 E. Tov, „Book of Joshua", *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. L.H. Schiffman – J.C. VanderKam; New York: Oxford University Press 2000) I, 431.

Ezechiela wśród Qumrańczyków wynikało z kapłańskiego charakteru przepowiadania Ezechiela, a przede wszystkim eschatologii opierającej się na powrocie z wygnania i przyszłym odnowieniu, co było tożsame z myślą i egzystencją wspólnoty z Qumran. Wskazuje, że istnienie kopii biblijnego tekstu Księgi Ezechiela, jak i dokumentów związanych z tą księgą, a także liczne aluzje i reminiscencje obecne w pismach qumrańskich dowodzą, że była ona w Qumran znana, czytana i interpretowana przez społeczność, inspirując i wywierając znaczący wpływ na jej teologię. Marek Parchem stwierdza, że „tekst *Księgi Ezechiela* był w Qumran reinterpretowany i służył jako punkt wyjścia do przedstawienia całkowicie nowych koncepcji, zwłaszcza jeśli chodzi o nadanie treściom biblijnym wyraźnego charakteru apokaliptycznego" (s. 178). Widać to – co podkreśla autor – zwłaszcza w przypadku zmartwychwstania rozumianego jako odpłata dla sprawiedliwych, przyśpieszenia czasu zbawienia wiernych Bogu czy pytania o czas końca. Doprowadziło to do uwypuklenia własnych poglądów doktrynalnych, które odznaczały się apokaliptycznym spojrzeniem na rzeczywistość poprzez wykorzystanie słownictwa, stylu i motywów pochodzących z Księgi Ezechiela, jak i samego tekstu biblijnego.

W Rozdziale V „Księga Amosa w Qumran" (s. 179–210; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 85/4 [2015] 145–176) zostały omówione trzy zagadnienia: 1) rękopisy biblijnej Księgi Amosa odnalezionych w Qumran (4Q78, 4Q82, 5Q4) oraz w Wadi Murabba'at (Mur 88), które zachowały się fragmentarycznie (s. 179–188); 2) cytaty Księgi Amosa w niebiblijnych zwojach qumrańskich (4Q174 – *Midrasz dotyczący czasów ostatecznych*, 4Q387 – *Apokryf Jeremiasza*; s. 190–198); 3) *Peszer do Księgi Amosa* 5,26–27 (s. 199–209) znajdujący się w *Dokumencie Damasceńskim* (CD 7,14–19). Księga Amosa cieszyła się stosunkowo dużą popularnością i uznaniem wśród członków społeczności qumrańskiej. Autor podkreśla, że księga ta była traktowana jako pismo autorytatywne, a wskazują na to jej cytowania przy użyciu formuły wprowadzającej (podobnie: Tora, Iz, Jr): „Jak zostało napisane" (4Q174, kol. 3, linia 12; s. 190), „jak powiedział" (CD 7,14 i 16; s. 201). Parchem szczególną uwagę poświęca *Peszerowi do Księgi Amosa* 5,26–27 (CD 7,14–19), w którym tekst biblijnej Księgi Amosa jest interpretowany w odniesieniu do sytuacji wspólnoty znajdującej się na wygnaniu w Damaszku, wprowadzając do swojego komentarza aspekt eschatologiczny. Perykopa Am 5,26–27 jest częścią proroctwa o sądzie nad Izraelem z powodu praktykowania przez niego idolatrii, natomiast w *Dokumencie Damasceńskim* cytaty tej perykopy są interpretowane jako proroctwo o zbawieniu odnoszącym się do wspólnoty. *Dokument Damasceński* nawiązuje do wydarzeń z początków historii wspólnoty, mówiąc o szacunku, jakim na wygnaniu wspólnota darzy Pismo Święte i właściwie interpretuje „Księgi Prawa" i „Księgi proroków". Jednocześnie zapowiada przyjście dwóch Mesjaszy: „Wyjaśniającego Prawo" (Mesjasz kapłan) i „Księcia całego zrzeszenia" (Mesjasz król; s. 210).

Rozdział VI zawiera artykuł „Księga Ozeasza w Qumran: rękopisy biblijne (4Q78–79, 4Q82), cytaty w zwojach niebiblijnych (CD, 4Q163, 4Q177; 4Q434) i *Peszer do Księgi Ozeasza* (4Q166–167)" (s. 211–243; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 86/4 [2016] 139–171). O popularności i uznaniu Księgi Ozeasza we wspólnocie qumrańskiej świadczą zachowane dokumenty: fragmenty rękopisów biblijnych (4Q78–79, 4Q82; s. 211–216); cytaty w *Dokumencie Damasceńskim* (CD 1,13–14; 4,19; 8,3; 19,15–6; 20,16; s. 216–224), w *Peszerze do Księgi Izajasza* (4Q163, frag. 23, kol. 2, linii 14; s. 225–227), w *Midraszu dotyczącym czasów ostatecznych* (4Q177, kol. 10, linie 13–14; s. 228–231), w tekście *Błogosław duszo moja* (4Q434, frag. 7b, linie 2–3; s. 231–233), a przede wszystkim w *Peszerze do Księgi Ozeasza* (s. 233–242), który zachował się w pozostałościach dwóch zwojów (4Q166–167). Wszystkie te dokumenty autor poddaje szczegółowej analizie, wskazując autorytatywny charakter Księgi Ozeasza w Qumran. Dowodzi tego fakt stosowania formuł wprowadzających przy cytowaniu tejże księgi: „o którym zostało napisane" (CD 1,13; s. 217), „jak powiedział" (CD 19,15; 20,16; s. 222–223). Podkreśla także, że w większości przypadków cytaty z Księgi Ozeasza zostały wybrane z niezwykłą trafnością, odpowiadającą ich oryginalnemu kontekstowi, którym jest opis wojny syro-efraimskiej. W pismach qumrańskich zostały użyte do opisu konfliktu między wspólnotą a jej przeciwnikami. *Peszer do Księgi Ozeasza* (4Q166–167; s. 234–242), który zachował się w dwóch rękopisach, może świadczyć, że Księga Ozeasza była przedmiotem studiów qumrańczyków. Jej tekst posłużył za źródło komentarza, w którym znajdują się aluzje zarówno do wydarzeń historycznych, jak i eschatologicznych. Jednak autor uczciwie stwierdza, że wyciągnięcie pewnych wniosków jest niezwykle utrudnione, a czasem wręcz niemożliwe, co wynika z bardzo fragmentarycznego stanu zachowania tekstu obydwu rękopisów peszeru.

Rozdział VII stanowi artykuł „Księga Sofoniasza w Qumran: rękopisy biblijne, cytaty i aluzje w zwojach niebiblijnych oraz *Peszer do Księgi Sofoniasza*" (s. 245–270; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 87/4 [2017] 125–150). Został on podzielony na trzy części. W pierwszej części (Biblijne rękopisy Księgi Sofoniasza; s. 245–251) autor poddaje analizie zwoje biblijne, w tym cztery napisane w języku hebrajskim, a odnalezione w Qumran (4Q77–78, 4Q82) i w Wadi Murabba'at (Mur 88), oraz jeden z Nachal Chewer (8Hev 1), który został napisany w języku greckim. W drugiej części (Cytaty i aluzje w niebiblijnych zwojach z Qumran) w pierwszej kolejności bada dokumenty, które zawierają cytaty z Księgi Sofoniasza: *Reguła zrzeszenia* (1QS 5,11; s. 251–253) oraz *Wykład na temat patriarchów* (4Q464, frag. 3, kol. 1, linia 9; s. 254–257). Następnie pochyla się nad tekstami z wyraźnymi aluzjami do Księgi Sofoniasza, a odnalezionymi w następujących dziełach: *Reguła zrzeszenia* (1QS 10,22; par. 4Q260, frag. l, kol. 5, linia 3; s. 257–258), *Zwój hymnów* (1QH 13,32; 17,6; s. 259–260), *Parafraza Ksiąg królewskich* (4Q382, frag. 9, linia 4; s. 260–263), *Słowa ciał świecących* (4Q504, frag. 1–2, kol. 5, linie 5–6; s. 263–265). Autor zwraca uwagę, że Księga Sofoniasza cieszyła się popularnością i uznaniem wśród członków społeczności qumrańskiej, za czym przemawia fakt stosunkowo częstej obecności tej księgi w tekstach z Qumran. W trzeciej części Parchem analizuje *Peszer do Księgi Sofoniasza* (s. 266–269), który zachował się w pozostałościach dwóch zwojów (1Q15, 4Q170). Wskazuje, że biblijna Księga Sofoniasza była przedmiotem studiów prowadzonych przez członków wspólnoty, a jej tekst posłużył za źródło komentarza (s. 270).

W Rozdziale VIII znajduje się tekst, którego tematem jest szeroko pojęta „«Tradycja Danielowa» w Qumran" (s. 271–332; zob. W. Chrostowski [red.], *„Przeznaczyłeś nas dla Twojej prawdy" (4Q495). Studia dla Dr. Zdzisława J. Kapery w 65. rocznicę urodzin* [Rozprawy i Studia Biblijne 29; Warszawa: Vocatio 2007] 266–317), którą autor omawia w czterech częściach: 1) Rękopisy biblijnej Księgi Daniela (1Q71–72; 4Q112–116; 6Q7; s. 272–276); 2) Cytaty z Księgi Daniela w pismach qumrańskich (4Q174; 11Q13; s. 276–278); 3) Qumrańskie rękopisy niebiblijne związane z Księgą Daniela: *Modlitwa Nabonida* (4Q242; s. 279–285), *Tekst historyczny* (4Q248; s. 285–286), *Księga Gigantów* (4Q530; s. 286–289), tzw. cykl *Pseudo-Daniela* (4Q243–245; s. 289–306), *Apokryf Daniela* (4Q246; s. 306–313), *Cztery królestwa* (4Q552–553; s. 313–318), *Apokalipsa aramejska* (4Q489; s. 318–319), *Daniel i Zuzanna?* (4Q551; s. 319–320); 4) Niektóre motywy z Księgi Daniela obecne w pismach qumrańskich (s. 321–330), do których należą m.in.: tajemnica, peszer, wojna eschatologiczna, zmartwychwstanie, sąd, wywyższenie wiernych Bogu. Daniel należał do bardzo popularnych postaci w okresie Drugiej Świątyni, o czym świadczą rękopisy biblijne, pisma aramejskie i hebrajskie z Qumran związane z Danielem oraz dodatki greckie zachowane w Septuagincie. W związku z tym autor zauważa, że w Qumran Daniel był powszechnie uważany za proroka, a tym samym Księga Daniela była traktowana jako pismo autorytatywne, co podkreśla użycie przy jej cytowaniu formuł: „Jak zostało napisane w..." (4Q174, 4,3–4; s. 277) oraz „jak powiedział..." (11Q13, 2,18; s. 278). Także Józef Flawiusz stwierdza, że Daniel był „prorokiem dobrych nowin", a jego księgę nazywa „proroctwem" (*Ant.* 10,268–269). Parchem wskazuje, że głównym powodem popularności i dużego znaczenia Księgi Daniela w Qumran jest fakt, że niektóre elementy decydujące o tożsamości wspólnoty qumrańskiej oraz sposób jej samookreślania się były zaczerpnięte z tej księgi (s. 331). Zarówno w Księdze Daniela, jak i w pismach qumrańskich podkreśla się zagrożenie ze strony wrogich sił, które zostaną unicestwione dzięki interwencji Boga. Takie działanie Boga będzie równoznaczne z ostatecznym ocaleniem tych, którzy w czasie prześladowania i ucisku okazali się wierni Bogu. Zbawienie sprawiedliwych stanie się nagrodą, która będzie polegać na życiu we wspólnocie z istotami niebiańskimi w królestwie Bożym. Autor podkreśla charakter apokaliptyczny zarówno w Księdze Daniela, jak i w odniesieniu do wspólnoty qumrańskiej. W obu tych przypadkach uwaga skierowana jest na eschatologiczne wypełnienie Bożych planów, gdy nastąpi definitywne zwycięstwo dobra nad złem, a mowa jest o wydarzeniach mających nastąpić „przy końcu dni", które staną się „czasem wybawienia dla ludu Bożego" (1QM 1,5; por. Dn 12,1).

Pierwszą część niniejszej książki kończy Rozdział IX „Księgi Kronik (1–2 Krn) w Qumran" (s. 333–349; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 89/4 [2019] 199–219). Autor omawia tu dwa zagadnienia: 1) Rękopis tekstu biblijnego 1–2 Kronik (?) – w którym pochyla się nad rękopisem 4Q118 (s. 333–339); 2) Aluzje do 1–2 Krn w niebiblijnych zwojach z Qumran: *Zwój Świątyni* (11QT; s. 337–339), *Apokryf Jozuego* (4Q522; s. 339–344), *Peszer do Księgi Rodzaju* (4Q252; s. 344–346), *Modlitwa Manassesa* (4Q381, frag. 33 i 35; s. 346–349). Wśród członków społeczności qumrańskiej Księgi Kronik nie cieszyły się zbyt dużym zainteresowaniem. Autor wskazuje, że tekst zbliżony do biblijnego prezentuje zaledwie jedna zachowana kopia (4Q118; s. 333–334). Stan jej zachowania jest bardzo fragmentaryczny i nie ma pewności co do jej identyfikacji, jednak może reprezentować jakąś formę tekstu biblijnego lub jego parafrazę. Chociaż można byłoby uznać go za kopię tekstu biblijnego różną od wersji masoreckiej, to jednak autor bardziej przychyla się do postrzegania tego dokumentu jako parafrazy lub tekstu paralelnego do 1–2 Księgi Kronik (s. 335). Ponadto na nikłe zainteresowanie Księgami Kronik w Qumran wskazuje brak wyraźnych cytatów w zwojach niebiblijnych, a nieliczne aluzje w *Apokryfie Jozuego* (4Q522; s. 339–344) i *Peszerze do Księgi Rodzaju* (4Q252; s. 344–346) autor uważa jedynie jako prawdopodobne nawiązania do 1–2 Księgi Kronik. Natomiast w odniesieniu do *Zwoju Świątyni* (11QT; s. 337–339) oraz *Modlitwy Manassesa* (4Q381, frag. 33 i 35, linie 8–11; s. 346–349) zauważa pewnego rodzaju związek istniejący między nimi a Księgami Kronik, przy czym obie te kompozycje nie są utworami własnymi wspólnoty z Qumran.

Na drugą część niniejszej książki (Inne studia) składają się cztery rozdziały, z których pierwszy (Rozdział X) nosi tytuł: „*Hymn do Stworzyciela* – psalm mądrościowy z Qumran (11Q5 26,9–15)" (s. 353–381; zob. B. Strzałkowska [red.], *„Więcej szczęścia jest w dawaniu aniżeli w braniu". Księga pamiątkowa dla Księdza Profesora Waldemara Chrostowskiego w 60. rocznicę urodzin* [Ad Multos Annos 15; Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Biblistów Polskich 2011] II, 1177–1199). Autor zaprezentował tu utwór, który znajduje się w zwoju zawierającym psalmy biblijne i apokryficzne (11QPsa), a który dotychczas był nieznany w innych źródłach. Dokonał jego tłumaczenia i analizy na podstawie trzech strof. Hymn ten znajduje się w zwoju 11Q5, który mierzy 4,112 m długości i zawiera 49 psalmów, w tym 9 pozabiblijnych (s. 353). Takim utworem jest *Hymn do Stworzyciela* (11Q5, kol. 26, linie 9–17), który stanowi mądrościowy psalm apokryficzny na cześć Boga Stwórcy, wysławiający Jego absolutną i suwerenną władzę wyrażoną w akcie stwórczym. Zostało to uwypuklone przez użycie licznych tytułów i określeń, takich jak: „wielki", „święty", „Święty nad świętymi", „Ten, który uczynił ziemię", „Ten, który ustanowił świat", oraz zastosowanie personifikacji Bożych atrybutów otaczających Jego tron w niebiosach: wspaniałość, łaska, prawda, prawość, sprawiedliwość. Autor zwraca szczególną uwagę na stwierdzenia: „dzięki wiedzy swego serca", „dzięki swej sile", „dzięki swej mądrości", „dzięki swemu rozumowi", które podkreślają Boże działanie w powołaniu wszystkiego do istnienia. Bóg objawia swój majestat, potęgę i mądrość istotom niebiańskim, które wychwalają wspaniałość aktu stwórczego. W pierwszej strofie (s. 359–366) hymn opisuje majestat i wielkość Boga zasiadającego na niebiańskim tronie, w drugiej (s. 367–376) natomiast zostało opisane dzieło stworzenia jako manifestacja Bożej mądrości wobec istot niebiańskich. Trzecia strofa (s. 376–381) zawiera cytat z Jr 10,12–13 w formie błogosławieństwa wobec Boga za objawienie Jego mądrości w dziele stworzenia. Hymn ukazuje Boga zarówno jako Stwórcę, jak i jako Dawcę wszelkiej pomyślności, dostatku i szczęścia.

Rozdział XI stanowi tekst „*Peszer do Księgi Nahuma* (4Q169) z Qumran – aluzje do wydarzeń historycznych z I w. przed Chr." (s. 383–429; zob. *Collectanea Theologica* 81/4 [2011] 63–100), który jest jednym z najbardziej historycznych dokumentów odnalezionych w Qumran, ponieważ opisuje wydarzenia znane dotychczas z dzieł Józefa Flawiusza. Autor podejmuje się analizy qumrańskiego komentarza do Księgi Nahuma w kontekście znajdujących się w nim wzmianek o wydarzeniach historycznych z I w. przed Chr. W tym celu dzieli rozdział na dwie części: Ogólne wprowadzenie (s. 384–386) i Interpretacja biblijnej Księgi Nahuma w 4Q169 (s. 386–429). Druga część została podzielona na cztery paragrafy: 1) Imiona własne oraz określenia osób i ugrupowań (s. 387–394), które występują w dokumencie; 2) Konflikt Aleksandra Janneusza z faryzeuszami (s. 395–413); 3) Sytuacja w Judei w czasie panowania Aleksandry Salome oraz bratobójcze walki między Hirkanem i Arystobulem (s. 413–421); 4) Klęska Arystobula i zdobycie Jerozolimy przez Rzymian (s. 421–429). Wśród imion pojawiają się imiona własne władców z dynastii Seleucydów: Demetriusza III Eukairosa (s. 387–388) i Antiocha IV Epifanesa (s. 389). Parchem omawia i wyjaśnia pojawiające się w badanym dokumencie określenia osób lub stronnictw, takie jak: „wściekły lew" (utożsamiany z Aleksandrem Janneuszem; s. 389–391), „władcy Kittim" (jako Rzymianie; s. 391–392) czy też „szukający pochlebstw" (ugrupowanie faryzeuszy; s. 392–394). W sposób szczególny analizuje czasy Aleksandra Janneusza (103–76 przed Chr.) i jego konflikt z faryzeuszami w 88 r. przed Chr. (4Q169, frag. 3–4, kol. 1), ich zdradę i współpracę z Demetriuszem III w czasie jego najazdu na Judę (s. 397–399), a następnie rozprawienie się z faryzeuszami (s. 400–408), których kazał ukrzyżować. Janneusz kazał ukrzyżować około ośmiuset swoich przeciwników, o czym wspomina w swoich dziełach Józef Flawiusz (*Ant.* 13,380–383, *B.J.* 1,97–98). Następnie Parchem pochyla się nad tekstem (4Q169, frag. 3–4, kol. 2) mówiącym o panowaniu Aleksandry Salome (76–67 przed Chr.) i bratobójczym konflikcie Arystobula (67–63 przed Chr.) z Hirkanem (4Q169, frag. 3–4, kol. 3–4). Konflikt zakończył się zdobyciem Jerozolimy (63 r. przed Chr.) i podbojem Judei przez Pompejusza, co zostało omówione w ostatnim paragrafie drugiej części artykułu. Nastąpił wówczas upadek dynastii hasmonejskiej i *de facto* koniec istnienia niepodległego państwa Judei. W interpretacji 4Q169 Parchem musiał się zmierzyć z utrudnieniami wynikającymi z fragmentarycznego stanu zachowanego tekstu. Udało mu się to doskonale, przez co ukazał *Peszer do Księgi Nahuma* jako niezwykle cenne źródło do poznania wydarzeń znanych dotąd z dzieł Józefa Flawiusza.

Tekst z Rozdziału XII „Pojęcie i funkcje «ducha Bożego» w pismach z Qumran" (s. 431–449; zob. G.M. Baran – J. Królikowski – P. Łabuda [red.], *Duch Święty*

[Scriptura Lumen 8; Tarnów: Biblos 2016] 111–126) omawia znaczenie terminu „duch” (*rûaḥ*) w odniesieniu do Boga w pismach qumrańskich. W pierwszej części autor analizuje zagadnienie: Pojęcie „ducha Bożego” w zwojach z Qumran (s. 434–437). Jak podkreśla, termin ten występuje w nich ok. 500 razy, z czego blisko 60 razy odnosi się do Boga (s. 431). Po przeanalizowaniu wielu źródeł zwraca uwagę, że najczęściej pojawia się z rzeczownikiem „świętość” (*qôdeš*) prawie 30 razy (s. 435). W kilku przypadkach występuje w wyrażeniu „duch świętości” (1QS 9,3; 1QSb 2,24; 4Q171; 4Q258; 4Q270; 4Q504; 4Q506), zwykle jednak z sufiksem zaimka osobowego odnoszącego się do Boga: „duch świętości Jego” (1QS 8,16; 4Q255; 4Q270; 4Q287; 4Q422; 4Q444) oraz „duch świętości Twojej” (1QH 4,38; 6,24; 8,20.21.25.30; 15,10; 17,32; 20,15; 23,29; 1Q39; 4Q427; 4Q504; s. 435). Podkreśla to wyraźnie transcendencję Boga. Ponadto występuje także z innymi rzeczownikami, m.in.: wiedza (1QH 6,25; 4Q444), miłosierdzie (1QH 8,27), wierność (11Q5; s. 436). W drugiej części rozdziału autor pochyla się nad zagadnieniem: Funkcje „ducha Bożego” w zwojach z Qumran (s. 437–448). Po analizie wielu dokumentów qumrańskich, w których duch Boży jest przedstawiany jako manifestacja wielkości, potęgi i mądrości Boga, wyznacza sześć głównych sposobów Jego działania, które odpowiadają kolejnym paragrafom: 1) „Duch Boży” w dziele stworzenia (4Q422, frag. 1, kol. 1, linie 6–8; 4Q511, frag. 30, linie 4–6; s. 438–440), 2) „Duch Boży” jako źródło natchnienia prorockiego (1QS 8,15–16; CD 2,12–13; s. 440–441), 3) „Duch Boży” jako źródło mądrości (1QH 5,35–36; 6,23–24 i 36–37; 20,14–16; s. 441–443), 4) „Duch Boży” jako obrońca i opiekun (1QH 8,24–25; 1QH 15,9–10; 17,32; s. 443–444), 5) „Duch Boży” jako ten, który uświęca i oczyszcza z grzechów (1QH 8,24–25; 1QH 15,9–10; 17,32; s. 445–447), 6) „Duch Boży” zamieszkujący we wspólnocie qumrańskiej (1QS 9,3–5; 447–448). Jak zauważa autor, Duch Boży wspiera członków wspólnoty z Qumran, aby mogli prowadzić nowe życie, a tym samym stali się świątynią Boga, tj. „domem doskonałości i prawdy w Izraelu” (1QS 8,9; s. 449).

Książkę zamyka Rozdział XIII „Motyw tronu-rydwanu Bożego w pismach z Qumran i początki mistyki *merkābāh*” (s. 451–471; zob. *Studia Pelplińskie* 52 [2018] 283–301). Artykuł składa się z dwóch części: 1) Początki mistyki tronu-rydwanu Bożego (*maʿăśēh merkābāh*) oraz 2) Mistyka tronu-rydwanu Bożego w pismach z Qumran. W pierwszej części (s. 452–454) autor, odwołując się do literatury na temat pałaców niebiańskich (*hêkālôt*), wskazuje, że Świątynia w niebiosach ze znajdującym się w jej wnętrzu tronem Bożym o kształcie rydwanu (*merkābāh*) była centralnym motywem mistyki żydowskiej i pochodzi z II w. po Chr. Zaznacza jednak, że początków mistyki *merkābāh* należy upatrywać na przełomie IV i III w. przed Chr. (s. 453), co wiąże się z czasem powstania 1–2 Księgi Kronik. To w nich termin *merkābāh* po raz pierwszy pojawia się w sensie technicznym jako określenie tronu-rydwanu Boga (1 Krn 28,18; s. 454), a stosowanym w późniejszej mistyce żydowskiej. Uważa, że na wczesnym etapie mistyka ta rozwijała się w ramach apokaliptyki, a świadectwa tego znajdują się w *Księdze strażników* (*1 Hen* 14,18–23), Księdze Daniela (Dn 7,9–10) czy też w *Apokalipsie Abrahama* (*ApAbr* 18; s. 471). Motyw tronu Bożego w kształcie rydwanu (*merkābāh*) z wizją Ezechiela (Ez 1,4–28) pojawia się w dwóch pismach qumrańskich: *Pseudo-Ezechiel* (4Q385, frag. 6, linie 5–15; s. 457–462) oraz *Pieśni ofiary szabatowej* (4Q405, frag. 20, kol. 2 + frag. 21–22; s. 462–470). Motyw ten, znajdujący się w tych dwóch dokumentach, autor poddaje szczegółowej analizie w drugiej części artykułu. Podkreśla, że motyw tronu-rydwanu Bożego w zwojach z Pustyni Judzkiej wskazuje na ciągłość rozwoju nurtu mistycznego, którego pierwsze ślady znajdują się w tekstach biblijnych (1 Krn 28,18), a który w całej pełni rozwinął się w II–III w. po Chr. (s. 471).

Podsumowując, należy stwierdzić, że książka *Interpretacja Biblii w Qumran i inne studia* jest cennym wkładem w badania zwojów znad Morza Martwego, gromadząc ich wyniki w jednym miejscu. Ukazuje olbrzymią, wieloletnią, wręcz benedyktyńską pracę Marka Parchema, jednego z czołowych i doświadczonych badaczy starożytnych tekstów biblijnych i literatury Drugiej Świątyni. Przebadał on olbrzymią liczbę dokumentów qumrańskich, także dokonując ich tłumaczenia i interpretacji, a wyniki tych badań zbiera ta praca. Pozwala to lepiej poznać i zrozumieć proces interpretacji i recepcji ksiąg biblijnych w Qumran oraz ich wpływ na kształtowanie się niektórych elementów decydujących o tożsamości wspólnoty qumrańskiej. Niniejsze dzieło powinno zatem zainteresować nie tylko wąski krąg specjalistów zajmujących się zagadnieniami związanymi z Qumran, ale również biblistów, historyków i tych wszystkich, którzy pragną pogłębić swoją wiedzę na temat czasu i środowiska, w którym powstawały i kształtowały się teksty biblijne i parabiblijne.

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Autorka najnowszego podręcznika w języku włoskim do nauki biblijnego języka greckiego jest wykładowcą morfologii greckiej, wprowadzenia do krytyki tekstu oraz wspólnie z Rosario Pierrim prowadzi wykład z krytyki tekstu i metodologii egzegetycznej Nowego Testamentu w Studium Biblicum Franciscanum w Jerozolimie. Wcześniej wykładała również język koptyjski saidzki (sahidycki). Przed rozpoczęciem studiów biblijnych ukończyła w 2000 roku studia matematyczne na uniwersytecie w Pizie. Następnie w 2013 roku uwieńczyła swoje studia biblijne licencjatem z nauk biblijnych i archeologicznych na uczelni, na której obecnie pracuje. W 2018 roku obroniła zaś tam swój doktorat *Iterazioni sinonimiche nella Lettera di Giacomo. Studio lessigrafico ed esegetico*[1]. Jest autorką dziewięciu artykułów naukowych oraz czterech recenzji.

Oceniany podręcznik charakteryzuje się bardzo rozbudowaną i złożoną strukturą, która obejmuje: słowo wstępne, właściwy wstęp, wykaz skrótów, bibliografię, uwagi wstępne, dwadzieścia lekcji, wykazy (według kolejności: spójników, partykuł, przyimków, wykrzykników), końcówki deklinacji oraz koniugacji; po nich następują paradygmaty odmian czasowników greckich, a następnie został podany słownik włosko-grecki. Całość zaś dzieła zamykają trzy indeksy: cytowanych wersetów biblijnych, tematyczny oraz słów greckich występujących w podręczniku. Z samej struktury prezentowanego podręcznika można się przekonać, że Chiorrini postanowiła przygotować dzieło poważne, dobrze przemyślane i zaplanowane (autorka potwierdza to we Wstępie na s. VII) oraz że starała się ułatwić uczącemu się biblijnej greki jego studium i poznawanie tegoż języka, czemu służą wszystkie aneksy zawierające podsumowania wcześniej poznanych form i części mowy, indeks tematyczny oraz słownik włosko-grecki ułatwiający przygotowanie zaproponowanych w podręczniku ćwiczeń polegających na tłumaczeniu zdań z języka włoskiego na grecki. Z punktu widzenia studenta lepiej byłoby, gdyby autorka podręcznika na końcu swego dzieła

1 E. Chiorrini, *Iterazioni sinonimiche nella Lettera di Giacomo. Studio lessicografico ed esegetico* (Analecta 89; Milano: Terra Santa 2020).

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umieściła słowniczek grecko-włoski, a nie jedynie wykaz słów greckich wraz z odsyłaczami do poszczególnych stron, na których dane słowo pojawiło się po raz pierwszy. Uczący się greki za pośrednictwem *Corso di greco biblico* pozna w sumie 920 słów greckich (264 czasowniki proste [nie licząc dalszych 200 czasowników złożonych], 444 rzeczowniki i 122 przymiotniki – zob. s. IX). Wybór zaproponowanych do nauczenia się słów został oparty na ich częstotliwości występowania przede wszystkim w NT, ale również w LXX.

W słowie wstępnym do podręcznika Rosario Pierri wskazuje na jego oryginalność i nowatorskość. Metoda nauczania zaproponowana przez Chiorrini nie opiera się głównie na uczeniu się bazującym na pamięciowym opanowaniu gramatyki, choć jak zaznacza ten znany filolog, jest ono również ważne w nauce każdego języka, lecz przede wszystkim na technice analizy rozpoczynającej się od poszczególnych słów i rozciągającej się w dalszym etapie na analizę większych jednostek tekstu – fraz, a następnie całych zdań, zarówno prostych, jak i złożonych. Temu sposobowi nauczania greki towarzyszą wyjaśnienia i definicje, które pozwalają, zdaniem Pierriego, na wygodny i odpowiedni sposób uczenia się poszczególnych kategorii gramatycznych i składniowych. W centrum tej metody nauczania greki znajduje się rdzeń danego słowa, wokół którego krążą różne komponenty morfologiczne, przy pomocy których tworzone są słowa wyrażające właściwe znaczenia i odpowiednie treści.

Powyższą opinię Pierriego autorka potwierdza we Wstępie do podręcznika, stwierdzając, że zgodnie z tradycją nauczania języka greckiego w Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, będzie opierała się na historycznym rozwoju języka greckiego, aby przekazać uczącemu się podstawy filologiczne *koiné* i ukazać specyfikę tej formy języka greckiego. Chiorrini deklaruje również, że w nauczaniu słownictwa greckiego będzie opierała się na rdzeniach słów greckich, aby ułatwić studentom nauczenie się jak największej liczby słów, oraz że w nauczaniu biblijnej greki nie będzie rozróżnienia na grekę Nowego Testamentu i tę Septuaginty, ale będą one nauczane razem, ponieważ celem uczenia się języka greckiego jest poznanie greki biblijnej, a więc zarówno NT, jak i ST – LXX (por. s. VII).

Niestety trudno jest odnaleźć to założenie podręcznika, o którym mówią Pierri i Chiorrini, w samej jego treści. Być może w toku prowadzonych zajęć jest ono realizowane, ale w treści podręcznika przejawia się ono jedynie w zwróceniu uwagi na budowę poszczególnych słów (zostały podane rdzenie i uczący się poznaje sufiksy, za pomocą których zostały utworzone poszczególne słowa – zwłaszcza rzeczowniki i przymiotniki).

Autorka podręcznika deklaruje na s. VIII, że jej celem nie było opracowanie gramatyki naukowej, lecz podręcznika do nauki podstaw greki biblijnej, stąd jego tytuł *Corso di greco biblico* (*Kurs greki biblijnej*). W samym tekście podręcznika można dostrzec dwa poziomy: podstawowy i pogłębiony. Zostały one wyróżnione za pomocą różnej wielkości fontu, ten drugi zapisany jest mniejszym rozmiarem i pozwala na pogłębienie oraz pełniejsze zrozumienie treści zawartych w poziomie podstawowym. Do rozszerzonego poziomu należą np. nie tylko pogłębione objaśnienia wybranych form, ale również przykłady użycia poszczególnych czasów, trybów lub zagadnień składniowych.

Jednostki dydaktyczne, których jest dwadzieścia, pozwalają nie tylko poznać morfologię biblijnego języka greckiego, ale zawierają również podstawowe wiadomości odnoszące się do jego składni, co umożliwia pełniejsze zrozumienie zdań zawartych w ćwiczeniach i poprawne ich tłumaczenie.

Bibliografia podzielona jest na: teksty biblijne (LXX, grecki NT i Wulgatę), autorów antycznych (Józef Flawiusz i Filon z Aleksandrii) oraz narzędzia i studia, wśród których znajdują się zarówno podręczniki, gramatyki, jak i słowniki. Nie jest ona kompletna, brakuje w niej niektórych bardzo uznanych gramatyk greki biblijnej, jak np. podręczniki Jamesa Swetnama, Filippa Serafiniego czy Clifforda Sunila Ranjara. Oczywiście bibliografia podręcznika nie musi obejmować wszystkich innych podręczników lub opracowań dotyczących gramatyki greckiej, ale mogłaby zawierać więcej innych podręczników do nauki tego języka jako pomoce lub odniesienia dla uczącego się greki.

Właściwe lekcje zawierające gramatykę biblijnego języka greckiego poprzedzone są Uwagami wstępnymi poświęconymi pochodzeniu języka greckiego i jego dialektom, a w szczególności *koiné*, w którym zostały spisane księgi biblijne NT i na który przetłumaczono pisma hebrajskie tworzące ST.

Dwie pierwsze z dwudziestu jednostek dydaktycznych, analogicznie do innych podręczników do nauki greki, mają swój szczególny charakter wprowadzający w język i gramatykę tego języka. W pierwszej z nich został przedstawiony alfabet grecki ze szczegółowym podziałem wszystkich liter greckich na samogłoski i spółgłoski z ich klasyfikacją na poszczególne kategorie i grupy. Na końcu lekcji I omówione zostało zjawisko rozziewu (*hiatus*) i jego konsekwencji w języku greckim (elizja i krasis). W lekcji II autorka przedstawiła zasady fonetyki greckiej oraz formowanie się słów, opierając się na rdzeniu i różnego rodzaju sufiksach, które mają różne zadania zarówno słowotwórcze, jak i fleksyjne. Każda z tych początkowych lekcji zawiera słowniczek obejmujący rzeczowniki wszystkich trzech deklinacji, co jest nieuzasadnionym wyprzedzeniem materiału i może budzić niezrozumienie u uczącego się greki. Rzeczą charakterystyczną wszystkich słowniczków każdej z dwudziestu lekcji jest to, że obok formy podstawowej rzeczownika i jej znaczenia podany jest w nawiasie rdzeń danego słowa wraz z jego znaczeniem. Jest to zgodne z początkową deklaracją autorki, ale może wprowadzać po raz kolejny pewnego rodzaju zdziwienie studenta, zwłaszcza w przypadku słów, które mają więcej niż jeden rdzeń np.: ὁ πατήρ czy τὸ τέκνον (zob. s. 46).

Poczynając od lekcji III, rozpoczyna się poznawanie gramatyki greckiej od czasownika. Student dowiaduje się w niej o tym, czym jest czasownik oraz o kategoriach gramatycznych określających jego formy (czas, tryb i strona). Następnie poznaje temat czasownika, koniugacje, temat czasu teraźniejszego oraz tryb oznajmujący czasu teraźniejszego strony czynnej (*indicativus praesentis activi*) zarówno koniugacji I (czasowniki nieściągnięte i ściągnięte), jak i II koniugacji. Już w tej lekcji widać pewne braki w logice prezentacji materiału teoretycznego recenzowanego podręcznika. Prezentacja odmiany *indicativus praesentis activi* czasowników I koniugacji (tych nieściągniętych) nie budzi żadnych zastrzeżeń, ponieważ został omówiony ich temat oraz końcówki osobowe, które te czasowniki przyjmują w tym trybie czasu teraźniejszego strony czynnej. Jednak w wypadku czasowników ściągniętych nie zostały podane zasady, na których opierają się ściągnięcia samogłosek α, ε i ο z samogłoskami końcówek osobowych, co znaczenie utrudnia poznanie odmiany tej grupy czasowników (nie tylko w trybie oznajmującym, ale również w pozostałych trybach i formach nieosobowych tej grupy czasowników greckich). Autorka podała jedynie odmiany tych czasowników w *indicativus praesentis activi*, co zmusza studenta do pamięciowego opanowania odmiany tych czasowników bez możliwości zrozumienia zachodzących w nich ściągnięć. Po poznaniu trybu oznajmującego czasu teraźniejszego strony czynnej czasowników I koniugacji student poznaje odmianę tych form czasowników II koniugacji, które są podzielone na trzy grupy: do pierwszej należą czasowniki, w których dochodzi do apofonii jakościowej w liczbie mnogiej (τίθημι, δίδωμι, δείκνυμι), drugą stanowi samodzielnie czasownik εἰμί, trzecią zaś czasowniki ἵστημι, ἵημι, φημί, εἶμι. Podział ten budzi zdziwienie, ponieważ nie jest oparty na jednoznacznych i oczywistych kryteriach. W słowniczku tej lekcji Chiorrini podała długą listę czasowników prostych i pochodzących od nich czasowników złożonych (trzy strony – ponad 100 czasowników) wraz z rdzeniami czasowników prostych oraz ich znaczeniem, ale nie podała żadnej informacji dotyczącej ich rekcji, co jest znacznie ważniejsze w nauce greki i bardziej przydatne w tłumaczeniu tekstów niż znajomość rdzeni, z których one pochodzą. Niestety wskazane zjawisko dotyczące nauki czasowników greckich jest powtarzane w dalszych lekcjach *Corso di greco biblico*. Na końcu jednostki dydaktycznej autorka podręcznika zaproponowała siedem różnych ćwiczeń, m.in.: tłumaczenie i analizę form czasownikowych, odmianę wybranych czasowników w *indicativus praesentis activi*. Jedno z nich jest zupełnie nieprzydatne dla uczącego się greki na poziomie podstawowym. Jest to ćwiczenie E13, w którym student ma za zadanie utworzenie tematu czasu teraźniejszego za pomocą podanych powiększeń lub podwojeń.

W lekcji IV został omówiony rzeczownik wraz z kategoriami gramatycznymi, które służą do określenia go (przypadek, rodzaj i liczba), oraz rodzajnik, który określa rodzaj rzeczownika. Następnie autorka podręcznika omawia II deklinację, prezentując odmianę rzeczowników do niej należących wszystkich trzech rodzajów oraz rzeczowników ściągniętych wraz ze zmianami w ich akcentowaniu w różnych przypadkach obu liczb. Rzeczą interesującą w tej lekcji jest podanie sufiksów, za pomocą których tworzone są rzeczowniki należące do II deklinacji (§§ 151–153). Część teoretyczna tej jednostki dydaktycznej jest zakończona wiadomościami składniowymi odnoszącymi się do syntaktycznych funkcji mianownika, reguły odnoszącej się do użycia liczby pojedynczej orzeczenia wtedy, gdy jego podmiot wyrażony jest rzeczownikiem w rodzaju nijakim liczby mnogiej, oraz funkcji rodzajnika. W zaproponowanych na końcu tej lekcji ćwiczeniach pojawiają się zdania i syntagmy do tłumaczenia z języka greckiego na włoski i odwrotnie czy polecenie dopisania właściwych rodzajników do podanych form odmienionych rzeczowników II deklinacji lub odmiana wraz z rodzajnikami po dwa rzeczowniki każdego rodzaju II deklinacji. Jednak ostatnie z zaproponowanych ćwiczeń, w którym student ma przeanalizować i przetłumaczyć zdania i frazy, zawiera słowa i formy, których uczący się jeszcze nie zna. Co prawda zostały one podane pod tekstem tego ćwiczenia, ale materiał ten wybiega poza poznany do tej pory przez uczących się greki materiał.

W kolejnej lekcji została omówiona I deklinacja w całej swej złożoności (zarówno rzeczowniki rodzaju żeńskiego, jak i męskiego wraz z rzeczownikami ściągniętymi) oraz wyjątkami od niej. Następnie autorka przedstawiła sufiksy nominalne wykorzystywane do tworzenia rzeczowników I deklinacji. W części końcowej poświęconej składni greckiej omówiła zaś funkcje syntaktyczne biernika (*accusativus*), dokonała również wprowadzenia do przyimków i szerzej przedstawiła dwa z nich – te łączące się z akuzatiwem, czyli ἀνά i εἰς. Należy podkreślić, że część składniowa tej jednostki dydaktycznej została opracowana bardzo dokładnie i rzetelnie, tzn. Chiorrini przedstawiła wszystkie funkcje składniowe akuzatiwusa oraz użycia omówionych szerzej dwóch przyimków łączących się z tym przypadkiem gramatycznym wraz z przykładami zaczerpniętymi z Biblii. Niestety w ćwiczeniach ponownie pojawiają się zdania zawierające słowa, których studiujący grekę jeszcze nie poznał. Choć trzeba przyznać, że wszystkie one podane są wraz z ich dokładnym tłumaczeniem (np. μου „di me" czy πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι „per essere osservato" na s. 103) poniżej danego ćwiczenia, w którym występują.

Lekcja VI poświęcona została czasom historycznym. Rozpoczyna się od przedstawienia, w jaki sposób formowane jest powiększenie występujące w trybie oznajmującym tych czasów oraz końcówek używanych do tworzenia ich form. Następnie Chiorrini przechodzi do znaczenia i form *indicativus imperfecti activi* najpierw czasowników I, a następnie II koniugacji. Podobnie jak w przypadku form trybu oznajmującego czasu teraźniejszego strony czynnej, i tym razem autorka podręcznika nie podała reguł odnoszących się do ściągnięć samogłosek końcowych z samogłoskami końcówek, a przedstawiła jedynie formy odmienione czasowników kontrahowanych. W drugiej części tej lekcji dotyczącej składni zostały omówione funkcje składniowe genetiwusa oraz przyimki, które łączą się z tym przypadkiem. Podobnie jak w lekcji poprzedniej, ta część tej jednostki dydaktycznej została opracowana dokładnie i nie budzi najmniejszych zastrzeżeń. W ćwiczeniu E32 (s. 124) ponownie pojawiają się słowa i formy, których uczący się jeszcze nie zna, ale podobnie jak we wcześniejszych ćwiczeniach, podane są poniżej dokładne tłumaczenia nieznanych jeszcze słów i form, co umożliwia przetłumaczenie podanych zdań.

Kolejna lekcja (VII) rozpoczyna się od omówienia odmiany przymiotników I kategorii/klasy zarówno tych prostych, jak i ściągniętych. Po nich zostają przedstawione sufiksy używane do tworzenia przymiotników tej grupy. Również druga część tej jednostki dydaktycznej poświęconej składni greckiej dotyczy przymiotników – ich funkcji syntaktycznych oraz pozycji. Na końcu zostały podane przyimki łączące się zarówno z akuzatiwem, jak i genetiwem. Ćwiczenia zaproponowane na końcu tej lekcji w sposób szczególny dotyczą oczywiście poznanych przymiotników oraz ich funkcji atrybutywnej lub predykatywnej.

W lekcji VIII zostały przedstawione zaimki wskazujące oraz strona medialna i bierna *praesentis* i *imperfectum* czasowników I koniugacji. Po raz kolejny Chiorrini, omawiając powyższe formy czasowników ściągniętych, nie podała żadnych zasad kontrahowania się samogłoski tematycznej (-ε, -α i -ο) z samogłoskami końcówek osobowych. W części poświęconej składni omówiła funkcje syntaktyczne datiwu oraz przyimki łączące się wyłącznie z tym przypadkiem gramatycznym, ograniczając rolę składniową syntagmy ἐν + *dativus* jedynie do wyrażenia miejsca i narzędzia (§ 235), co jest dość poważnym uproszczeniem i zarazem błędem. W ćwiczeniu E39, które polega na dokonaniu analizy oraz przetłumaczeniu podanych zdań, w zaproponowanych przez autorkę tekstach greckich pojawiają się słowa, których uczący się greki jeszcze nie poznał i nie zostały one umieszczone, jak do tej pory, poniżej ćwiczenia, aby pomóc w tłumaczeniu zdań greckich. Są to np. czasownik ἀκολουθέω i rzeczownik γογγυσμός.

Lekcja IX poświęcona jest III deklinacji. Zostały w niej omówione wszystkie podgrupy tej deklinacji razem, co sprawia, że zawiera ona bardzo dużo nowych informacji i odmian do opanowania przez studenta.

W kolejnej jednostce dydaktycznej (lekcja X) Chiorrini omówiła tryb rozkazujący czasu teraźniejszego wszystkich trzech stron czasowników I koniugacji oraz jedynie dwóch czasowników spośród tych należących do II koniugacji (τίθημι i εἰμί). Informacje dotyczące odmiany pozostałych czasowników II koniugacji można odnaleźć w pogłębieniu gramatyki na s. 185 pod paradygmatami *imperativus praesentis activi*. Tabelę z ich odmianami można odnaleźć dopiero na końcu podręcznika w aneksie zatytułowanym *Coniugazioni* (s. 415–452). Autorka mogła więc odesłać studenta do właściwych stron, zamiast odmianę tych brakujących imperatywów czasowników II koniugacji prezentować w pogłębieniu. Należy zauważyć, że nie został podany żaden przykład, w jaki sposób należy tłumaczyć formy *imperativus praesentis*. Uczący się greki musi domyślić się, jak to czynić z teoretycznego opisu znaczenia tej formy gramatycznej (zob. § 254) lub sięgnąć do pogłębienia, w którym obok imperatywów czasu teraźniejszego znajdują się również imperatywy aorystu i *perfectum*, co utrudnia poznanie znaczenia *imperativus praesentis*. Następnie zostały podane i omówione zaimki osobowe i dzierżawcze. W części dedykowanej wiadomościom dotyczącym składni języka greckiego zostały wymienione przyimki, które mogą łączyć się ze wszystkimi trzema przypadkami zależnymi.

Lekcja XI zawiera prezentacje koniunktiwów oraz optatiwów czasu teraźniejszego wszystkich trzech stron czasowników I i II koniugacji. Przy czym, podobnie jak w lekcji poprzedniej, spośród czasowników II koniugacji zostały przedstawione formy *coniunctivus praesentis* jedynie trzech czasowników (τίθημι, δίδωμι i εἰμί; zob. § 271), zaś optatiwów jedynie dwóch (τίθημι i εἰμί; zob. § 276). Ponownie brakuje przykładów, jak należy tłumaczyć podane formy czasownikowe. Zostały one umieszczone w pogłębieniach, ale można w nich znaleźć formy, których uczący się greki jeszcze nie zna (np. *coniunctivus aoristi activi* διέλθωμεν, *coniunctivus perfecti medio-passivi* ὦσιν τετελειωμένοι, *optativus aoristi* ἐπιτιμήσαι czy *optativus medio-passivi* εἴη...εὐλογημένος). Autorka, omawiając ten tryb, nie wspomniała o jego najczęstszym zastosowaniu w grece biblijnej, a mianowicie o użyciu go w zdaniach podrzędnych celowych i skutkowych wprowadzonych przez ἵνα lub ὅπως. Choć w Rz 6,1, podanym jako przykład zastosowania koniunktiwu, występuje właśnie to użycie tego trybu, to niestety autorka nawet nie zauważyła go, podkreślając jedynie *coniunctivus deliberativus* ἐπιμένωμεν. W dalszej części gramatycznej Chiorrini podała spójniki (łączące, rozłączne, przeciwstawne i wyjaśniające) oraz partykuły. W ostatniej części tej jednostki dydaktycznej zostały przedstawione najważniejsze wiadomości dotyczące budowy i podziału zdań wraz z ich krótkimi opisami.

W lekcji XII zostały omówione formy bezokolicznika czasu teraźniejszego obu koniugacji oraz zaimki wzajemności i zwrotne, zaś w części drugiej, odnoszącej się do składni języka greckiego, rodzaje zdań podrzędnych oraz funkcje składniowe bezokolicznika, które zostały przedstawione dość pobieżnie i zdawkowo. Przytoczone przykłady w pogłębieniach materiału ponownie zawierają formy nieznane studentowi i choć są przykładami przedstawionych funkcji syntaktycznych bezokoliczników, to jednak są dość trudne do ich zrozumienia. Należy zwrócić uwagę, że brakuje w tej lekcji omówienia konstrukcji *accusativus cum infinitivo*, która przecież często pojawia się na kartach greckiego tekstu Biblii.

W lekcji XIII uczący się greki poznaje formy imiesłowu czasu teraźniejszego strony czynnej i medialno-biernej obu koniugacji. W wypadku II koniugacji podane zostały nominatiwy i genetiwy najważniejszych czasowników do niej należących (wyjątek w stosunku do poprzednio przedstawionych form czasowników tejże koniugacji). Również część składniowa tej jednostki dydaktycznej została poświęcona participiom, tzn. ich funkcjom syntaktycznym w języku greckim.

W lekcji XIV został omówiony aoryst. Autorka podręcznika wprowadziła i przedstawiła wszystkie rodzaje aorystu (sygmatyczny, mocny, rdzeniowy) wszystkich trzech stron (najpierw czynnej, następnie biernej i na końcu medialnej) obu koniugacji równocześnie. Zawarte w tej jednostce tematycznej tabele przedstawiające dokładną odmianę poszczególnych trybów aorystu w trzech stronach pozwalają na szczegółowe zapoznanie się z wszystkimi formami tego czasu. W części poświęconej składni greckiej zostały omówione zdania podrzędne.

W lekcji XV Chiorrini zapoznaje uczącego się greki z zaimkami: pytajnym i nieokreślonym (τίς i τις), względnym określonym i nieokreślonym oraz przymiotnikowymi. W części zaś poświęconej syntaksie omawia zdania podrzędne względne.

Lekcja XVI wprowadza czas przyszły. Analogicznie do prezentacji aorystu w lekcji XIV zostały omówione wszystkie rodzaje *futurum* wszystkich trzech stron wraz z ich formami. Niestety zbyt pobieżnie zaprezentowano formy asygmatyczne czasu przyszłego (ściągnięte) w § 356. Autorka podręcznika przedstawiła również formy optatiwu czasu przyszłego, które w grece biblijnej nie występują. W drugiej części tej jednostki dydaktycznej omówiła zdania warunkowe wszystkich czterech rodzajów.

W lekcji XVII uczący się greki biblijnej poznaje formy kolejnego czasu gramatycznego, którym jest *perfectum*. Po omówieniu znaczenia tego czasu Chiorrini opisała tworzenie się reduplikacji, a następnie przeszła do prezentacji poszczególnych rodzajów perfectum w zależności od tematu czasownika. Podane tabele zawierające formy wszystkich trybów *perfectum* szczegółowo i dokładnie pozwalają poznać odmianę czasowników w tym czasie. W § 385 autorka podręcznika przedstawiła zmiany spółgłosek, do jakich dochodzi podczas odmiany czasowników, których tematy zakończone są spółgłoskami w odmianie ich w stronie medialno-biernej *perfectum*. Uczyniła to, opierając się jednak nie na poszczególnych grupach spółgłosek kończących temat czasownika, ale na początkowej spółgłosce/spółgłoskach końcówki osobowej, co wydaje się być mniej czytelne. W części poświęconej zagadnieniom składniowym zostały omówione zdania czasowe.

Kolejna jednostka dydaktyczna (lekcja XVIII) poświęcona jest poznaniu greckiego czasu zaprzeszłego (*plusquamperfectum*) wszystkich trzech stron. W drugiej części, dotyczącej gramatyki, uczący się języka greckiego poznaje odmianę wszystkich rodzajów przymiotników należących do II klasy lub grupy przymiotników. Natomiast w części ostatniej, poświęconej zagadnieniom składniowym, zostały przedstawione zdania wyrażające cel lub skutek.

Przedostatnia lekcja (XIX) podręcznika rozpoczyna się od omówienia form *futurum perfectum*, które w praktyce w stronie czynnej pokrywają się z konstrukcją peryfrastyczną wyrażającą czas przyszły dokonany, zaś w stronie medialno-biernej są równoważne z formami czasu przyszłego strony medialnej. Najczęściej w podręcznikach do greki biblijnej podkreśla się, że nie ma żadnych różnic morfologicznych pomiędzy formami czasu przyszłego niedokonanego i dokonanego i że jedynie najbliższy kontekst pozwala dokładnie określić, czy daną formę *futurum* należy uznać za dokonaną czy też niedokonaną. Wobec tego dziwi wprowadzenie form czasu przyszłego dokonanego w podręczniku Chiorrini. Następnie zostają omówione formy stopnia wyższego i najwyższego przymiotników I i II kategorii/klasy oraz przysłówki wraz z ich stopniowaniem. Jednak w omówieniu porównań nie została przedstawiona rola genetiwu ani syntagmy ὑπό + *genetivus*. W części zaś poświęconej składni zostały omówione zdania podrzędne zezwalające, względne ograniczające i wyłączające.

W ostatniej jednostce dydaktycznej (lekcja XX) uczący się greki poznaje liczebniki oraz wykrzykniki. W części poświęconej zagadnieniom składniowym zostały przedstawione zdania podrzędne porównawcze i zdania okolicznikowe sposobu.

Celem tej długiej części recenzji, omawiającej zawartość poszczególnych jednostek dydaktycznych, było wskazanie, w jaki sposób Chiorrini „zorganizowała" swój podręcznik do nauki greki biblijnej, tzn. w jakiej kolejności wprowadza poszczególne zagadnienia odnoszące się do morfologii i składni tego języka. Jak można się przekonać, autorka *Corso di greco biblico* uporządkowała materiał w sposób logiczny, który pozwala na stopniowe poznawanie gramatyki greckiej, bazujące na przyjętej przez nią metodzie, która koncentruje się wokół tematów słów i na nich się opiera. Można jednak zauważyć, że w niektórych lekcjach został nagromadzony zbyt obszerny materiał do nauczenia się, co może utrudniać jego opanowanie. Z tej uwagi natury merytorycznej odnoszącej się do podręcznika można również wysnuć spostrzeżenie dotyczące jego aspektu dydaktycznego. Podzielenie całości gramatyki greckiej jedynie na dwadzieścia jednostek dydaktycznych sprawia, że są one zbyt obszerne, aby omówić je w ciągu jednych zajęć, nawet jeśli trwałyby one półtorej godziny. Oczywiście jedną lekcję można omawiać w ciągu kilku zajęć (dwóch lub trzech), ale wtedy pojawia się problem ćwiczeń, tzn. uczący się studiują teorię i dopiero co kilka zajęć mogą utrwalić ją praktycznie, robiąc odpowiednie ćwiczenia.

Odnośnie do samych ćwiczeń zawartych w podręczniku, należy podkreślić, że są one zróżnicowane, tzn. uczący się ma wykonać różne zadania, co pozwala mu na lepsze opanowanie materiału teoretycznego, np. ma odmienić jakieś słowa według wzoru, który poznał w czasie danej lekcji, przetłumaczyć podane zdania zarówno z języka greckiego na język włoski, jak i z włoskiego na grecki (jest to zadanie o wiele trudniejsze, ponieważ wiele zdań można przetłumaczyć na różne sposoby, co sprawia, że podczas sprawdzania i omawiania tego rodzaju ćwiczeń trzeba poświęcić na to znacznie więcej czasu i uwagi, aby omówić różne możliwości przetłumaczenia jakiegoś tekstu na język grecki) czy też dokonać analizy podanych tekstów. Bogactwo form wyrażone w ćwiczeniach jest niewątpliwym atutem recenzowanego podręcznika. Choć, jak zostało zaznaczone wcześniej, w ćwiczeniach początkowych lekcji występują formy i słowa, których uczący się jeszcze nie zna, i choć zostały one tamże wyjaśnione i przetłumaczone, to jednak nie powinny znaleźć się w ćwiczeniach na danym poziomie znajomości gramatyki przez uczącego się greki.

W niektórych lekcjach zostały wprowadzone wiadomości, które nawiązują do omawianych w nich treści, ale wyprzedzają wiedzę uczącego się, przez co nie są zrozumiałe. Odnosi się często wrażenie, że autorka starała się zawrzeć w danej lekcji zbyt wiele informacji, które na danym etapie poznawania języka greckiego niczemu nie służą, a wręcz zaciemniają jego znajomość poprzez niedostosowanie wiadomości do poziomu uczącego się. Przykładem mogą być informacje dotyczące rodzaju rzeczowników w § 134 odwołujące się do przymiotników, których student jeszcze nie zna, oraz rzeczowników mogących mieć dwa rodzaje gramatyczne (męski i żeński).

Ostatnia część podręcznika Chiorrini rozpoczyna się od zestawienia najpierw spójników, przyimków oraz wykrzykników. Jest to zupełnie niepotrzebne, ponieważ wszystkie te słowa powinny znajdować się z podaniem ich znaczenia w słownikach zawartych w poszczególnych lekcjach i w końcowej części książki. Zamiast paradygmatów poszczególnych deklinacji i ich grup autorka gramatyki podała w §§ 448–452 jedynie końcówki odmian rzeczowników, przymiotników i zaimków odmieniających się według wszystkich trzech deklinacji. Po tych wiadomościach podsumowujących wszystkie trzy deklinacje zostały podane końcówki form czasownikowych (§§ 454–456) oraz odmiana participiów (§§ 457–462). Na dalszych stronach drugiej części podręcznika, zawierającej podsumowanie gramatyki greckiej, zostały podane pełne odmiany czasowników I i II koniugacji (§§ 463–487), następnie czasowniki nieregularne, podzielone na grupy odpowiadające budowie ich tematu (§§ 488–501). Ten sposób ich prezentacji odpowiada podziałowi tematów słownych czasowników na poszczególne grupy i jest zgodny z gramatyczną ich klasyfikacją, ale chyba lepiej podać je bez tego podziału w kolejności alfabetycznej, ponieważ uczący się greki i tak musi zapamiętać ich formy podstawowe, a zgodnie z ich podziałem podanym przez autorkę podręcznika, musi także zapamiętać, do jakiej grupy należy dany czasownik nieregularny, co wydaje się być dodatkowym obciążeniem jego pamięci. Ponadto podanie ich w kolejności alfabetycznej ułatwia odnalezienie danego czasownika nieregularnego.

Podany przed indeksami słownik włosko-grecki ułatwia studentowi wykonanie ćwiczeń polegających na przetłumaczeniu zdań z języka włoskiego na grecki zawartych prawie w każdej lekcji (wyjątek stanowią dwie pierwsze lekcje).

Podane na końcu podręcznika indeksy (miejsc cytowanych, tematyczny i słów) pomagają w owocnym korzystaniu z gramatyki, pozwalając na szybkie odnalezienie danego zagadnienia gramatycznego, jak i znaczenia danego słowa greckiego (indeks nie podaje znaczenia słowa, ale odsyła do lekcji, w której ono się pojawiło i w której zostało podane jego znaczenie). Zamiast tego ostatniego indeksu lepiej byłoby podać słownik zawierający wszystkie słowa, które pojawiły się w słownikach na końcu poszczególnych lekcji przed ćwiczeniami. Jeśli chodzi o słowniki i sposób uczenia czasowników, to ich wielkim mankamentem jest brak wiadomości odnoszących się do ich rekcji. Jest to o wiele ważniejsze dla poznającego język grecki niż wiadomości odnoszące się do tego, od jakiego rdzenia one pochodzą.

W podręczniku nie zostały podane klucze do ćwiczeń, co oznacza, że jest on przeznaczony do pracy z lektorem języka greckiego i nie może zostać wykorzystany do samodzielnej nauki greki biblijnej.

Podsumowując, należy stwierdzić, że *Corso di greco biblico* zawiera całość gramatyki biblijnego języka greckiego oraz podstawowe informacje dotyczące jego składni, które pozwalają na poznanie podstaw tego języka. Pomimo pewnych drobnych braków Chiorrini rzetelnie i solidnie opracowała jego zawartość merytoryczną i choć zarzekała się, że jej celem nie jest przygotowanie gramatyki, ale podręcznika, to jej opracowanie ma wiele wspólnego z gramatykami, co nie znaczy, że nie jest podręcznikiem. Jako podręcznik jest raczej trudny do wykorzystania dydaktycznego ze względu na fakt, że każda z lekcji zawiera zbyt dużo materiału teoretycznego, którego przedstawienie i omówienie wykracza poza czasowe ramy jednostek dydaktycznych na uczelniach. Nagromadzenie tak wielu wiadomości w ramach jednej lekcji wynika z pragnienia Chiorrini, aby dane zagadnienia gramatyczne były skupione w jednym miejscu i omówione wspólnie bez konieczności ich rozbijania na części (to upodabnia *Corso di greco biblico* bardziej do gramatyk niż do podręcznika). Bogactwem recenzowanego podręcznika są ćwiczenia, o których była mowa powyżej. Kończąc, można powiedzieć, że ze względów merytorycznych jest to dobry i rzetelnie przygotowany podręcznik gramatyki biblijnej greki, ale trudny do wykorzystania dydaktycznego.