

**The logic of circular reasoning
in the exegesis of XX-century,
and its overcoming.**

Wojciech Kosek

This article is the translation of the article:
W. Kosek, “*Logika błędnego koła w egzegezie XX w. i jej przewyciężanie*”, [in:] W. Chrostowski, H. Witczyk, K. Bardski, A. Malina, W. Rakocy, R. Sikora, A. Tronina, B. Strzałkowska (editors), “*Zeszyty Naukowe Stowarzyszenia Biblistów Polskich*” (9), Warszawa 2012, p. 385-431.

Abstract

The present article aims to show, on the one hand, the danger of applying in scientific exegesis the proofs in which the logic of the circular reasoning links the premises and thesis. On the other hand, the purpose is to show the value of obedience to methodological rules which Magisterium of the Church gives as being essential to read the truth revealed by God as Author of Holy Scriptures.

On the example of the established in many scientific circles conviction that the Passover rite is the effect of the gradual process of merging of formerly separate two holidays, pastoral and agricultural, the article shows such a belief as being for two reasons unfounded.

First, it shows that biblical proof of the truthfulness of such a view is entangled in the logic of circular reasoning. Secondly, it proves that canonical text Ex 1-18 is a treaty of the covenant made between God as sovereign and Israel as a vassal in four stages required by an ancient ceremonial from 12th B.C. The requirements of this first covenant concern both pastoral and agricultural elements.

Table of content:

Introduction.

1. Difficulties and achievements of research methods in exegesis.

1.1. Diachronic and synchronic methods in biblical studies.

1.2. The final text of the Holy Scriptures and facts of salvation history.

1.3. Study of the canonical biblical record of salvation history and the logic of circular reasoning in historical-critical exegesis.

2. Scientific proof and pseudoscientific proof.

2.1. Introduction.

2.2. The theory of scientific proof and pseudo-scientific proof.

2.3. Basic principles of Catholic exegesis.

2.4. Biblical ‘proof’ for the historical development of Passover according to R. de Vaux.

3. An attempt to overcome the logic of circular reasoning on the example of the biblical foundations of the Passover rite.

3.1. The most important event of the Old Testament.

3.2. Leaving Egypt in light of entering into a covenant in Gen 15.

3.3. The Book of Exodus 1-18 as the covenant treaty in relation to the Passover rite.

3.4. Conclusions from the analysis of the Passover rite in light of the literary structure of Ex 1-18.

3.5. Addenda about the literary structure of the law pericope.

Summary.

Introduction.

This article will present the logic of circular reasoning as a severe threat to the correctness of scientific research in every field, including biblical investigations. The main goal of the article is not so much to show errors but to show a tool that allows freeing scientific achievements from the ballast of seeming and pseudo-scientific achievements. This tool is, first of all, a method of verification of own research achievements, which every researcher has the right and obligation to apply at least directly before publishing the fruit of his work. This method consists in checking whether the logic of circular reasoning does not bound the assumptions and the results of the work.

In the first part of the article, we will discuss the difficulties and achievements of diachronic and synchronic methods in exegesis, with particular attention to the Church’s principle that the final text, not its fragments coming from different historically earlier sources, is the Word of God’s Revelation. One will point out that the historical-critical method is going through a severe crisis because many of its representatives do not take into account this very principle of the Church.

In the second part of the article, we will discuss the theory of scientific and pseudo-scientific (subjected to the logic of the circular reasoning) proof. To illustrate the theory, we will also present here a real example of the proof entangled in the logic of the circular

reasoning, where the famous biblical scholar showed in a supposedly scientific way what was the historical development of the Passover rite.

It is worth knowing that contemporary researchers usually believe that the structure of the Passover rite is the result of a historical process of merging two completely separate festivals¹: the pastoral festival of the lamb offering, and the agricultural festival of sacrificing the first fruits of grain.

There are, however, opposite opinions: “The often expressed view that before the Israeli Passover there was already some form of this feast as an annual spring festival of nomads is based only on considerations in the field of the history of culture and religion. **There are no extrabiblical sources, either earlier or contemporary with the Bible, to support this hypothesis.**”²

The third part of the article will show the Passover rite in light of canonical method focused not on searching for errors in the text but, on the contrary, on reading both the literary efforts of the hagiographer and theological goals to which that efforts were to serve in the salvation history transmission. The literary structure of Exodus 1-18 will be briefly presented here as the structure of the ancient covenant treaty and, at the same time, as a literary source for the literary structure of “The Passover Haggadah” – the liturgical book which is obligatory in the annually celebrated Jewish Passover.

In this part, the structure of Passover celebration will be presented as identical with the structure of covenant made by God with Israel between the waters of the Sea of Reeds, on the way from Egypt to Mount Horeb. The Feast of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread which begins with the Feast of Passover and lasts one week are two inseparable dimensions of one great liturgical Israel’s worship of God-Saviour. They are such by God’s command given in the time of direct preparation for leaving Egypt. It will be shown that the fundamental four-element rite of Passover was not subject to development, but it was from the beginning, that it was built as an actualization of the four-element ceremony of the covenant-making.

1. Difficulties and achievements of research methods in exegesis.

1.1. Diachronic and synchronic methods in biblical studies.

The work of many biblical scholars over the last decades has focused on the investigation of the origin of individual fragments of the text from some earlier ‘sources.’ This work was

¹ Cf. R. CANTALAMESSA, *Pascha naszego zbawienia. Tradycje paschalne Biblii i pierwotnego Kościoła* [Passover of our salvation. Paschal traditions of the Bible and the early Church], translated by M. Brzezinka, Kraków 1998, p. 16; A. ROLLA, F. ARDUSSO, G. GHIBERTI, G. MAROCCO, *Enciclopedia della Bibbia* [Encyclopedia of the Bible], Torino 1969-1971, vol. 5., col. 537: The Passover corresponds to the nomadic life of Israel (corrisponda vita nomade di Israel) but has taken on a new meaning in connection with the exodus. Cf. also H. HAAG, *Vom alten zum neuen Pascha. Geschichte und Theologie des Osterfestes* (Stuttgarter Bibel-Studien, 49), Stuttgart 1971, p. 58-63: vom Nomadenpesach zum Pesach Israels; R. DE VAUX, *Instytucje Starego Testamentu, vol. I & II. Vol. I. Nomadyzm i jego pozostałości, instytucje rodzinne, instytucje cywilne, vol. II. Instytucje wojskowe. Instytucje religijne* [Old Testament Institutions, vol. I & II. Vol. I. Nomadism and its remnants, family institutions, civil institutions. Vol. II. Military institutions. Religious institutions], translated by T. BRZEGOWY, Poznań 2004, p. 504; the same in English: R. DE VAUX, *Ancient Israel. Its Life and Institutions* (The Biblical Resources Series), translated by J. McHugh, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1997, p. 493; on the Internet: <https://books.google.pl/books?id=A42yVk8kj8kC>

² Cf. F. RIENECKER, G. MAIER; W. CHROSTOWSKI (scientific editor of the Polish edition), *Leksykon biblijny* [The biblical lexicon], Warszawa 1994, p. 591. It is worth noting that a careful reading of the last two studies shows that R. de Vaux maintains the view of the two original feasts because he supercritically interprets biblical texts, for example Deut 16:1-8: R. DE VAUX, p. 497 in Polish, 485-486 in English; F. RIENECKER, G. MAIER; W. CHROSTOWSKI, *Leksykon biblijny*, op.cit., p. 592. Cf. also T. A. BRYAN, *The New Compact Bible Dictionary*, Michigan 1967, p. 173 (Feasts).

required by representatives of the Formgeschichte school³ and diachronic methods coming from it⁴. The last few decades of exegesis, influenced by the assumptions of this direction, resulted in a dramatic discrepancy between the results of the work of its various representatives and just a departure of many of them from the original meaning of the Word, pronounced by God through hagiographers inspired by Him⁵. In contemporary biblical studies, it is more and more often possible to read descriptions of the problems of breaking up the Holy Books; it is possible to hear in them a deeply hidden question about the meaning of this ‘exegesis.’⁶

The biblical text, broken down into individual, presumed ‘sources’ or ‘traditions,’ was often interpreted as if it were a collection of separate, unrelated groups of sentences.

It should be noted, however, that no one has permission to modify the canonical text by moving⁷ its fragments: when the exegete has discovered that individual fragments belong to different sources, he cannot combine fragments from a single source into a new ‘whole’

³ Although Catholic exegesis may use this method with caution, it only is if the biblical scholar knows how to distinguish its good sides from its bad ones connected with the philosophical and doctrinal misconceptions of its founders. The proper achievements of this method include an in-depth study of literary genres of individual text units: Cf. PONTIFICAL BIBLICAL COMMISSION, *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*. Instruction Concerning the Historical Truth of the Gospels, No. V: “scarcely admissible philosophical and theological principles have often come to be mixed with this method, which not uncommonly have vitiated the method itself as well as the conclusions in the literary area. For some proponents of this method have been led astray by the prejudiced views of rationalism. They refuse to admit the existence of a supernatural order and the intervention of a personal God in the world through strict revelation, and the possibility and existence of miracles and prophecies. Others begin with a false idea of faith, as if it had nothing to do with historical truth – or rather were incompatible with it. **Others deny the historical value and nature of the documents of revelation almost a priori.** (...) All such views are not only opposed to Catholic doctrine, but are also devoid of scientific basis and alien to the correct principles of historical method.”

⁴ The history of the Pentateuch research from the 16th century to the present, along with the bibliography, with particular emphasis on diachronic methods, see: S. MĘDALA, *Wprowadzenie ogólne do Pięcioksięgu* [General Introduction to the Pentateuch], [in:] L. STACHOWIAK (ed.), *Wstęp do Starego Testamentu* [Introduction to the Old Testament], Poznań 1990, p. 53-64. Cf. also J. L. MCKENZIE, *Dictionary of the Bible*, op.cit., p. 653-657 (Pentateuch).

⁵ Cf. F. RIENECKER, G. MAIER et al., *Leksykon biblijny* [Biblical Lexicon], op.cit., pp. 414-415: the authors show the history of method development in a very reliable and genuinely rational way and indicate in detail the specific accusations made to its representatives by other scientists. Cf. also R. RUBINKIEWICZ, *Nowe aspekty egzegezy biblijnej* [New Aspects of Biblical Exegesis], [in:] R. RUBINKIEWICZ (transl. and ed.), *Interpretacja Biblii w Kościele. Dokument Papieskiej Komisji Biblijnej z komentarzem biblistów polskich* [Interpretation of the Bible in the Church. Document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission with a Commentary of Polish Biblical Scholars], Warszawa 1999, p. 104: author, member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, lists the main accusations against the historical-critical method, gives references to the subject literature. Particularly drastic is the objection, formulated by P. Stuhlmacher, that this method “is a child of Oświęcim and **historicism**. To some extent, it created a gap between the historical and theological understanding of the text.” The voice of two other biblical scholars is also valuable here: I. de la Potterie and A. Stock indicate the error of atomizing the biblical text, dealing with its prehistory while omitting the meaning of its final (canonical) form.

⁶ S. WYPYCH, *Autor, źródła, kompozycja i struktura Księgi Jozuego* [Author, Sources, Composition and Structure of the Book of Joshua], [in:] R. BOGACZ, W. CHROSTOWSKI (ed.), *Verbum caro factum est. Księga pamiątkowa dla Księdza Profesora Tomasza Jelonka w 70. rocznicę urodzin* [Verbum Caro Factum est. Memorial Book for Professor Tomasz Jelonek on the 70th Birthday] (series: Ad Multos Annos, 11), Warszawa 2007, p. 497-516; J. LEMAŃSKI, *Pięcioksiąg dzisiaj* [Pentateuch Today], Kielce 2002.

⁷ Cf. POPE PIUS X, Encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. The Pope warned against the ‘scientific’ shifting of fragments of Bible by modernist exegetes, writing about their rules in point 34 (How the Bible is Dealt With): “The traces of this evolution, they tell us, are so visible in the books that one might almost write a history of them. Indeed this history they do actually write, and with such an easy security that one might believe them to have with their own eyes seen the writers at work through the ages amplifying the Sacred Books. To aid them in this they call to their assistance that branch of criticism which they call textual, and labor to show that such a fact or such a phrase is not in its right place, and adducing other arguments of the same kind. They seem, in fact, to have constructed for themselves certain types of narration and discourses, upon which they base their decision as to whether a thing is out of place or not.”

of the salvation history⁸. Is he undoubtedly sure he knows all the fragments and their original order? No, it is impossible to know it. Therefore, how can he responsibly proclaim theology of this ‘tradition’?

All the more so, he must not fail to notice that it is not this ‘whole’ but **the canonical, final text** that is the word of God. The understanding of this vital principle concerning the truth of the canonical text, which guarantees the acceptance of what God through His Holy Scriptures wished to say, is the basis of real scientific achievements⁹.

The same current of diachronic exegesis began to treat the religion of Israel as one of the numerous manifestations of the general phenomenon of religiousness of the primitive people, and not as a gift of the genuinely revealing God, the true God!¹⁰ Through analyses of questionable methodological value, it has been shown (and continues to be shown!) that it is necessary to correct the statements of God’s messengers. It concerns the prophets and wise men evaluating on behalf of God the moral-religious condition of Israel and indicating the sources of its decline¹¹. The correction has also been extended to the historical dimension

⁸ Cf. F. V. WINNETT, *The Mosaic Tradition*, Toronto 1949: On the one hand, the author is very capable of rejecting false premises underlying the ‘sources’ method. For example, he criticizes the assigning to one source the sentence in which Moses, using the staff of God, performs a miracle, and to another source (P) the sentence in which Aaron is the performer – cf. p. 4. He discovers that the differences result from the requirements of the storytelling composition and not from the idea/ideology of emphasizing the role of Moses or Aaron. On the other hand, however, he so consistently accepts other false premises that from the sacred text of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy he does not hesitate to ‘cut out’ the texts he considers to be the original whole and give it the name ‘Mosaic Tradition’ – cf. pp. 173-206.

⁹ Cf. R. ZAWADZKI, *Słowo Boże jako partner dialogu [Word of God as a dialogue partner]*, [in:] R. BOGACZ, W. CHROSTOWSKI (ed.), *Verbum caro factum est*, op.cit., p. 523: The author vividly shares his experience of discovering the fact that lives the Word which he like a surgeon examining the corpse subjected to exegetical procedures! The result of this profound experience is the following statement: “No one is allowed to gag such a partner. One must not tell Him that He wanted to say something else than what He said. Also, one must not ‘close one’s ears’ to His words. Cf. also J. KRĘCIDŁO, “Piotrze, czy miłujesz mnie ponad wszystko?” *Propozycja alternatywnej interpretacji πλέον τούτων w J 21:15*, [“Peter, do you love me more than anything?” *Proposal for an alternative interpretation of πλέον τούτων in Jn 21:15*], [in:] *ibid*, p. 328: The author opposes the ‘exegesis’ of J. A. Bewer, who as a representative of historical-critical exegesis reedit the text in the name of the alleged knowledge of its original form, but de facto he subordinates the canonical text to the ideological assumptions of his method. Kręcidło states at the end, “**The biblical text in its canonical form, taking into account a healthy criticism of available versions, is an inviolable value.**”

¹⁰ The Bible leaves no doubt in this matter, and especially the Book of Exodus does this also. See W. EICHRODT, *Theology of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, translated by J. A. BAKER, Philadelphia 1967, p. 164: revealed in Ex 7:11.22; 8:7.18; 9:11 the attempts of the Egyptian sorcerers to match for God and His miraculous signs made by Him through His servant Moses showed their complete powerlessness – the no-similarity of the pseudo-divine powers to God whose name is יהוה. Cf. also S. HAŁAS, *Pustynia miejscem próby i spotkania z Bogiem. Wybrane zagadnienia biblijnej teologii pustyni [Desert is a Place of Trial and Meeting with God. Selected Issues of the Biblical Theology of the Desert]*, Kraków 1999, p. 339-340. The author points out the methodological weakness of such exegesis, which explains as the myth (known in various religions) the biblical motif of the desert as a place of residence of God. The more straightforward explanation – according to Hałas – is in historical understanding: the Israelites actually went through the desert and experienced their encounters with God on it; it was not a myth, but a fact, a historical experience. Both the hagiographers and all the other people living in the Middle East experienced the same desert realities. This shared experience explains the presence of the same geographical and natural elements in the Bible and the myths of neighboring cultures. It does not mean, however, that the way these elements are understood in the Bible is the same as in myths!

¹¹ Cf. M. S. SMITH, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism. Israel’s Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts*, New York 2001, p. 14: the author claims that the Israelites in Canaan did not differ from other nations in terms of religious rituals. Although according to the Book of Exodus, they became people of Yahweh in Sinai by virtue of covenant made there, this image of Israelites as followers of monotheism comes from the monarchy period from priestly circles. The text, therefore, expresses their desire; it is an attempt to express the identity of Israel and not a description of the real situation. Similarly, the author perceives the error in the teaching of prophets: non-monotheistic practices seemed to them as a result of the influence of the surrounding nations, but facts were different: Israel has initially been polytheistic, so she was very slowly attaining full monotheism.

of the Bible, resulting in even the most fundamental facts occur to be contrary to the research¹²!

A great deal of devastation was also done by scientists who persuaded about the legendary, non-historical character of the events recorded in the Old Testament. Even such a fundamental fact for Israel as God's intervention and the exodus of the Fathers from Egypt are considered by many to be 'folk stories/tradition.' As a result, they deprived themselves of the opportunity to read the real history, the salvation history; they deprived their disciples of this opportunity¹³.

This departure from truly insightful scientific research has been met with courageous criticism¹⁴ and a call to leave such 'exegesis.' Biblical works from the 1970s appeared to be a breakthrough in this field¹⁵. Thanks to this, among the representatives of the criticized diachronic directions, one should notice today the awareness of the fact that since each commentator proclaims his concept, the only fact, something unchangeable (and not a changing hypothesis) is the canonical text, and the entire Pentateuch – despite its literary complexity – is more uniform than the creators of those directions assumed¹⁶.

¹² Cf. Ibid., p. 146: The author 'corrects' the Scriptures by claiming that it was God El who led the Israelites out of Egypt, and then this act was attributed to Yahweh when the two gods were merged into one character! He quotes Num 23:22; 24:8. Cf. also p. 135: El was the principal god of the pantheon because in all Western Semitic languages the same word 'El' was used to denote a god. Cf. also p. 141: the author misinterprets Ex 6:2-3: the patriarchs worshiped God as El, but did not know Him as Yahweh: "This passage shows that Yahweh was unknown to the patriarchs. Rather they are depicted as worshippers of El." About the possibility and necessity of a different understanding of Ex 6:2-3 see point 1.3.4.5. of the doctoral thesis: W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy w świetle schematu literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18*, Kraków 2008.

¹³ Cf. R. HENDEL, *The Exodus in Biblical Memory*, "Journal of Biblical Literature" 120/4 (2001), p. 601-602: the author appreciates Albright's accurate factual approach (cf. W. F. ALBRIGHT, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths*, New York 1968, p. 164). Hendel states with bitterness the fact that many scientists departed from Albright's view: "Recent decades have seen a diminution of William F. Albright's confidence that the exodus was **undoubtedly a historical event**", simultaneously indicating several representatives of the misinterpretation: J. M. MILLER, J. H. HAYES, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, Philadelphia 1986, p. 67-68, 78; J. A. SOGGIN, *An introduction to the History of Israel and Judah*, London 1993, p. 26-27, 108-139.

¹⁴ Cf. T. STANEK, *Kto jest bogiem w Egipcie – analiza retoryczna Ex 6:2-9:35* [Who is a God in Egypt – Rhetorical Analysis Ex 6:2-9:35], "Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne" 19 (2005), p. 9-11: the author gives a rich bibliography and effectively opposes such tendencies through reliable synchronous analysis.

¹⁵ Cf. R. RUBINKIEWICZ, *Powstanie Pięcioksięgu w świetle najnowszych badań* [The Uprising of the Pentateuch in Light of the Latest Research], "Roczniki Teologiczne" 46 (1999) z. 1, p. 111; W. CHROSTOWSKI, *Ogród Eden. Zapoznane świadectwo asyryjskiej diaspory* [The Garden of Eden. Recognized Testimony of the Assyrian Diaspora], Warszawa 1996, p. 226-230.

¹⁶ Cf. T. BRZEGOWY, *Najnowsze teorie na temat powstania Pięcioksięgu – próba oceny* [Recent Theories on the Origins of the Pentateuch – an Attempt to Evaluate], "Collectanea Theologica" 72 (2002), p. 11-44. 12, 39-40; R. N. WHYBRAY, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1995, p. 1-2: the author opposes the questioning of the traditional division of the Old Testament into three groups (Pentateuch, Earlier Prophets, Latter Prophets) by stating that there are serious grounds for its maintenance, because: The Book of Genesis speaks about the persons and events preceding Moses, Ex 2:2 speaks about the birth of Moses, Deut 34:5 about his death; from a human standpoint Moses is the central figure of Ex-Deut; J. L. SKA, *Le Pentateuque: état de recherche*, "Biblica" 77 (1996), p. 245-247: without questioning the method itself, the author discusses four main divergent theories regarding the origin of the Pentateuch, which represent the following persons: 1. Whybray – argues in favor of synchronous reading of the entire Pentateuch as one coherent narrative, 2. Blenkinsopp – distinguishes two significant collections, deuteronomistic and priestly; the inspiration for him are the works of the Heidelberg school, i.e., Rendtorff, Blum, Albertz and Crüsemann, 3. Campbell and O'Brien modeled after the classic theory of Wellhausen, developing ideas of Noth, 4. Zenger – takes an intermediate position between the theory of sources and that of the Heidelberg school, especially F. Crüsemann; he speaks about three collections: pre-priestly, priestly, deuteronomistic.

Above all, it is necessary to devote as much time as possible to a thorough examination of the canonical text¹⁷ in order to truly discover the message contained in it from the Creator and Savior of the humankind.

A way out of the perceived drama in biblical studies, from the severe lack of a scientifically reliable method, is to use comparative (diachronic) analyses between the established canonical text of the Hebrew Bible and the canonical text of Septuagint. The differences between the two texts should point out how the biblical text has been received in the religious community of Israel, and thus, the time and circumstances of its uprising and its supplementation, made with the changing moral condition of the People¹⁸.

Correct comparative analysis should help to understand the message of texts, especially those that are very difficult to interpret. Examples of such exegesis one should note among biblical scholars both Polish¹⁹ and other nationalities²⁰.

The second truly reliable way to get out of the briefly outlined crisis in exegesis is to adopt a methodological principle, which is given by **J. L. Ska**, professor of the Pontifical Biblical Institute: The research should begin with a synchronous analysis of the canonical text: it is necessary to discover the structure of the text and its coherence. Only when a reliable synchronous analysis reveals that the text contains inconsistencies or some literary ‘refractions,’ one can indicate in it the existence of several ‘sources’ or ‘redactions.’

The professor states emphatically: “for most specialists, the time had passed when it was possible to assign with great certainty the verses of the Pentateuch to the four great ‘baskets’ J, E, D, and P.”²¹

¹⁷ Cf. B. LEMMELIJN, *Setting and Function of Exod 11:1-10 in the Exodus Narrative* [in:] M. VERVENNE (ed.), *Studies in the Book of Exodus. Redaction – reception – interpretation*, Leuven 1996, p. 443-460. The author on pp. 447-448 quotes many divergent scientific opinions on the assignment of particular verses of chapter 11 of the Book of Exodus to the original sources or traditions. Then on pp. 449-456 she examines the literary context, content, and literary motifs of the canonical text of this chapter, showing its editorial composition. This approach ultimately allows (pp. 456-460) to discover the significance of Ex 11 for the reading of the adjoining chapters of the Book of Exodus.

¹⁸ This is a noteworthy methodological proposal capable of overcoming the limitations of the historical-critical methods noted by B. S. Childs, namely the uncertainty and hypotheticality (at least in some of the stages assumed by the researchers) of the historical process that led from the original forms to the final canonical text; the author himself proposes and develops here a different method – the ‘canonical exegesis’: cf. B.S. CHILDS, *The New Testament as Canon. An Introduction*, London 1984, p. 42, 48-53.

¹⁹ Cf. W. CHROSTOWSKI, *Prorok wobec dziejów. Interpretacje dziejów Izraela w Księdze Ezechiela 16, 20 i 23 oraz ich reinterpretacja w Septuagincie* [*Prophet Towards History. Interpretations of the History of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel 16, 20 and 23 and their Reinterpretation in the Septuagint*], Warszawa 1991: see, for example, the analysis of ‘historicizing reworkings’ in Ezek 16, 6-7: pp. 164ff; S. HAŁAS, *Pustynia miejscem prężności*, op.cit., p. 252, footnote 35: the author indicates that the text of the Book of Exodus in the Hebrew Bible is longer than in the Septuagint. It occurs from it that the subsequent redactor made additions in the original Hebrew text consistent with his theological assumptions; such processed text was translated into Greek.

²⁰ Cf. M. VERVENNE, *Current Tendencies and Developments in the Study of the Book of Exodus*, [in:] M. VERVENNE (ed.), *Studies in the Book of Exodus*, op.cit., p. 35-36. The author points out that in the Hebrew Bible, Ex 13:21 is consistent with Neh 9:12.19 and is longer than Ex 13:21 in Septuagint, consistent with Deut 1:33 in the Hebrew Bible. On this basis, he concludes that Ex 13:21-22 in the Hebrew Bible may reflect the work done by the final editor, who has harmonized the text from the Priestly tradition with the Deuteronomic tradition.

²¹ Cf. J. L. SKA, *Introduzione alla lettura del Pentateuco*, Roma 1998, p. 164 – quoted from: R. RUBINKIEWICZ, *Powstanie Pięcioksięgu w świetle najnowszych badań* [*The Origins of the Pentateuch in Light of the Most Recent Researches*], art. cit., p. 118. As an example of combining a synchronous method with a diachronic analysis, see: D. DZIADOSZ, *Przejście przez morze – aktywna obecność Boga kreującego Izrael (Ex 13:17-14:31)* [*Passing by the Sea – the Active Presence of God Creating Israel (Ex 13:17-14:31)*], “Verbum Vitae” 6 (2004), p. 71-92.

The breakthrough in the Pentateuch research reveals itself in questioning the traditional four sources²²:

- Scientists raise significant doubts about the origin, essence and even existence of the Yahwist texts,
- The fragmentary character of the Elohist text makes scientists resign from perceiving it as an independent tradition;
- It is discussed whether the Priestly work should be understood as an independent tradition or only as editorial work on previous non-priestly texts.

At the end of the 20th century, analysts²³ pointed out that there were **three divergent theories** of the research of the literary development of the Pentateuch:

- source criticism, enriched by redaction criticism
- tradition criticism
- redaction criticism

Therefore, synchronous research of the canonical text is now more and more widely recognized as a reliable way of studying inspired books; the self-constraining of an exegete to research according to historical-critical methods meets with criticism, even if one can see his achievements to date and the enormous amount of work he has put into knowing the Bible over many years²⁴.

The classical historical-critical method is too focused on reaching the historical realities of the described events, treating the text only as a window through which one can look at history; itself text and its meaning remain here outside the mainstream of research interest!²⁵

Biblical scholars²⁶ more and more often draw attention to the absolute necessity of separating themselves from the methods of extreme historicism, which cannot reach the message of God's Word, thus becoming a pseudo-scientific method.

One can observe an increasing accusation of such an extreme approach, delivered towards many representatives of historical-critical methods.

Although the exegetes who practice historicism argue that the Pontifical Biblical Commission has approved the historical-critical method, they do not notice that they should apply it in a spirit of obedience towards the indications of the Magisterium of the Church²⁷, to

²² Cf. J. WAGENAAR, *Crossing the Sea of Reeds (Exod 13-14) and the Jordan (Josh 3-4). A Priestly Framework for the Wilderness Wandering*, [in:] M. VERVENNE (ed.), *Studies in the Book of Exodus*, op.cit., p. 462-463.

²³ Cf. M. VERVENNE, *The Question of 'Deuteronomistic' Elements in Genesis to Numbers*, [in:] F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ - A. HILHORST - J. T. A. G. M. VAN RUITEN - A. S. VAN DER WOUDE (ed.), *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honour of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (SVT, 53), Leiden - New York - Köln 1994, p. 245 - I follow J. WAGENAAR, *Crossing the Sea*, op.cit., p. 463.

²⁴ Cf. J. E. OWENS, *Book Reviews: George W. Coats, Exodus 1-18 (FOTL 2A; Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1999)*, "Catholic Biblical Quarterly" 62/1 (2000). The author of the commentary so appraises Professor Coats' book: "The volume is clearly the fruit of much labor and adds to the form-critical analysis of Exodus. However, in the period between Coats' submission of the first draft in 1972 and the publication of the book in 1999 literary analysis (rhetorical, sociocultural, narrative-critical, etc.) has broadened the scholarly discussion of structures and individual units in biblical texts. More recent studies have moved beyond a focus on strictly form-critical units **to the final text.**"

²⁵ Cf. D. J. A. CLINES, *What Does Eve Do to Help? and Other Readerly Questions to the Old Testament* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 94), Sheffield 1990, p. 10.

²⁶ Cf. W. EICHRODT, *Theology of the Old Testament*, op.cit., vol. 1, p. 31: "It is high time that the **tyranny of historicism** in OT studies was broken and the proper approach to our task re-discovered." Cf. also S. SZYMIK, *Podejście kanoniczne w interpretacji Pisma Świętego [Canonical Approach in the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures]*, "Roczniki Teologiczne" 49 (2002) w. 1, p. 27.

²⁷ Cf. J. RATZINGER, *Preface* to the document of Pontifical Biblical Commission "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church": "The Pontifical Biblical Commission, in its new form after the Second Vatican Council, is not an organ of the teaching office, but rather a commission of scholars who, in their scientific and ecclesial responsibility as believing exegetes, take positions on important problems of Scriptural interpretation and know

which the final sentence on this matter belongs. If they themselves often fail to see that in their work they do not honor the Bible as a book of believers, at the same time they evaluate quite a different method of interpretation, namely that aimed at the fundamental goal of discovering the true meaning of God's speech in the Bible, as a 'non-scientific' or 'fundamentalist.' They do so despite the significantly grave warnings of the Holy Father John Paul II in 1993 year²⁸ and of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in the "*Foreword to the Document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission.*"²⁹

Characteristic of methods focused on historical, literary 'sources' is to attribute too significant role to hagiographers and their human cultural habits, cognitive limitations, fallibility. Exegete, who reads the holy text in the spirit of such methodological assumptions, is focused on finding contradictions in the text; therefore, he finds them there! Such a concentration of the mind does not allow him to patiently and repeatedly read the analyzed text to search for, and finally to perceive, the logic of non-contradiction, which genuinely connects the 'inconsistencies' discovered by him in a harmonious whole.

The Fathers of the Church could be a model for the contemporary generation of exegetes, a model of approach to Scripture with holy fear, with reverence for the text which not only came from the human hand but above all from the mouth and heart of God who loves us.

It is, therefore, necessary to assume in exegesis that even in the Bible as the fruit of human thought in historically conditioned circumstances the history of the Word of God "is intimately intertwined with the history of humankind. In fact, it is the very basis of the history of humanity. For this reason, human history is not composed simply of human thoughts, words, and initiatives. Vibrant traces of the Word of God can be seen in nature and culture. Not only does the Word give human knowledge its true value, but the human sciences themselves help reveal the Word's identity."³⁰

One should premise in the research work devoted to a selected salvific event that it is not true that 'in exegetical analyses, one should not mix historical events with their interpretation by one or another biblical author,' as assume many contemporary commentators³¹.

that for this task they enjoy the confidence of the teaching office." Cf. on the Internet: https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC_Interp-FullText.htm#N3.

²⁸ Cf. POPE JOHN PAUL II, *Address on the Interpretation of The Bible in The Church* [in:] J. A. FITZMYER, *The Biblical Commission's document "The interpretation of the Bible in the Church": text and commentary* (series: *Subsidia biblica*, 18), Roma 1995, p. 1-10: "The Church is not afraid of scientific criticism. She distrusts only preconceived opinions that claim to be based on science, but which in reality surreptitiously cause science to depart from its domain" (p. 3). "The Catholic exegete does not entertain the individualist illusion leading to the belief that one can better understand the biblical texts outside the community of believers. The contrary is true ..." (p. 7). Cf. on the Internet: <https://books.google.pl/books?id=5R2Iyo3WUEYC>

²⁹ Cf. J. RATZINGER, *Preface to The Document of Pontifical Biblical Commission The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*: "the genuine author, God, is removed from the reach of a method which was established for understanding human reality (...) Everything that shrinks our horizon and hinders us from seeing and hearing beyond that which is merely human must be opened up." Cf. on the Internet: https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC_Interp-FullText.htm#N3.

³⁰ The GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, *Lineamenta for XII Ordinary General Assembly. The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*, No 8 c. Cf. on the Internet: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20070427_lineamenta-xii-assembly_en.html

³¹ It is not an easy task since during the work on *The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* the tendency to intellectual and spiritual 'escape' from the consistent adoption by exegetes of the historical dimension of the Bible texts became apparent. Cf. J. KOZYRA, *Sobór Watykański II o Biblii [Second Vatican Council about the Bible]*, [in:] T. JELONEK (ed.), *Sto lat Kościelnego nauczania o Biblii. Materiały z Colloquium Biblicum [Hundred Years of Church Teaching About the Bible. Materials from Colloquium Biblicum]*, Kraków 1993, p. 40-41: "In the constitution scheme prepared for the final vote, there was no term 'historicity of the Gospel' (*historicitas Evangeliorum*). The Commission avoided it by replacing it with the term 'truly and faithfully' (*vera et sincera*). The names 'history' and 'historical' (*history et historica*) are ambiguous for the modern man. However, it could cause not only astonishment but also serious confusion that it is the reason for the rejection

On the contrary, an effort should be made to discover in Scripture all references to this event. Since hagiographers – authors of individual texts – wrote according to their cultural conditions under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they did not only express their views on the events they described, which the Spirit barely allowed to ‘publication’ in His books, but in various ways they conveyed **the whole of one salvific truth, historically indisputable, given by the Spirit**³².

Many exegetes, however, due to methodologically conditioned supercritical attitude and practical disobedience to the authority of the Church’s Magisterium do not see that **God** is above all the Author of the Bible. God inspired the hagiographers writing at His command so that the text would contain this and only this that He wanted to convey in it, especially about His real interventions in true human history³³.

1.2. The final text of the Holy Scriptures and facts of salvation history.

To illustrate the problem of the relationship between the Holy Scriptures and facts of salvation history, it is worth referring to an example from the contemporary life of the Church.

One knows that the text of the Encyclical *Verbum Domini* by Pope Benedict XVI in its official, final form reflects precisely what the Pope wants to teach the Church about the Holy Scriptures. **This final text** should be taken into account by a scientist who wants to invoke the authority of the Pope in his work.

Similarly, the reference to the final, canonical text of the Holy Scriptures is the only way to show what God wanted to say about the particular situation we read about in the text. Of course, this requires having a final text set up with scientific reliability (based on available reliable manuscripts and codices). The Church has the task of protecting this final sacred text from the allegedly scientific acts of removing or adding or transferring some of its fragments by someone who cannot understand the logic of their literary form, which is present actually in manuscripts and codices³⁴.

To understand the teaching of the Pope is necessary to know the original language of the Encyclical (or its correct translation) and its grammatical principles, the used literary

of the established and long-adopted terminology. It was the opinion of many Fathers of the Council and Pope Paul VI himself. The Pope at the last stage of the proceedings in the Conciliar Commission demanded the inclusion of the word ‘historicity’ into the text regarding the Gospel. How this historicity should be understood is indicated by the text of the Constitution itself (no. 19): ‘the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation.’ Thus, the Gospels are historical documents.”

³² Cf. also the words of the Pope: BENEDICT XVI, [in:] Synod of Bishops, *XII Ordinary General Assembly. The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church. Lineamenta*, No 15 d: “I would very much like to see theologians learn to interpret and love Scripture as the Council desired, in accordance with *Dei Verbum*: may they experience **the inner unity of Scripture** – something that today is helped by ‘canonical exegesis ...’”. Cf. on the [Internet – link](#).

³³ Cf. VATICAN COUNCIL II, *Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum)*, No. 11a. See also K. A. KITCHEN, *On the reliability of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge, UK 2003, p. XIV: “In the last few years increasingly extreme views about the Old Testament writings have been trumpeted loudly and proclaimed ever more widely and stridently; in the service of these views, all manner of gross misinterpretations of original, firsthand documentary data from the ancient Near East itself are now being shot forth in turn, to prop up these extreme stances on the Old Testament, regardless of the real facts of the case. Ideological claptrap has also interfered with the present-day situation. It has been said that ‘political correctness’ has decreed a priori that the Old Testament writings are historically unreliable and of negligible value.”

³⁴ Cf. POPE BENEDICT XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, 48: “No less striking is the question posed by Saint Basil the Great in the *Moralia*: ‘What is the distinctive mark of faith? Full and unhesitating certainty that the words inspired by God are true (...) What is the distinctive mark of the faithful? Conforming their lives with the same complete certainty to the meaning of the words of Scripture, not daring to remove or add a single thing.’”

genres, and the entire cultural context (viz. ways of expressing thoughts in the modern world) within which the text has been written. Analogically to understand what God wanted to convey in the final text of the Holy Scripture is necessary to know the original language of the text, the literary genres, the entire cultural context within which the text has been written. Hence the need for scientists to apply principles which have always been present in the Church and on which the contemporary historical-critical method places particular emphasis.

In both cases, to find out what the author wants to say is important not to refer to a text other than the final, ‘canonical’ text. If scientists were to give as the Pope’s teaching what was in the text of the Encyclical in its pre-final form, they would make a grave mistake! Similarly – this phenomenon is unfortunately widespread in contemporary studies – a grave mistake is to show the salvation history based on pre-final texts, fragmentary texts, texts belonging to some sources or layers.

The final text alone, the canonical text of the Holy Scriptures, is the Word of God, thus God-given revelation of His own words and deeds and their interpretation.

God in the Holy Scriptures, in its final text, not pre-final one, proclaims the truth about the words He uttered really and deeds He did really by entering into the history of humankind. For if in the community of faith, to which God graciously descended with his word and deed, people’s opinions began to appear in time concerning what happened really in their history, only God could finally decide what the truth was. If, then, these human opinions (possibly even contradictory) were written down so that after a considerable flux of time they would be a literary material for the last editor of the Holy Bible, inspired by God, their fragments were incorporated by him in such a measure and in such a way into the final text to convey the truth fully known only to God about his words and deeds as interventions in the history of humankind. No such fragments were included that were contrary to the truth known by God.

The role of historical-critical exegesis is therefore to reach the literal sense of words in their historical-cultural context, not to create some new ‘books’ (created by the researcher from fragments attributed by him to some single source or to some single layer or social group influencing the text) that would allegedly convey ‘what really happened’ in opposition to what results from the final text.

What happened really in history is described in the final text. The historical value of the final text must not be questioned. Otherwise, the research is illusory and seemingly scientific.

1.3. Study of the canonical biblical record of salvation history and the logic of circular reasoning in historical-critical exegesis.

An example illustrating the misunderstanding of the role of the historical-critical method is dividing verses from Exodus 14 to change one historical event into two events that are utterly incompatible with the revealed real event.

Unbelieving in the real historical value of the message of the sacred Books is characteristic for an exegesis exaggeratedly focused on the role of hagiographers as authors and editors of ‘source’ literary material, the material which finally made up the canonical text of the Bible³⁵.

In this situation, the Church’s Magisterium is increasingly pointing out the value of the canonical approach, an approach initiated in the 1960s by American biblical scholars, especially B. S. Childs³⁶. In his insightful studies, this author uses the achievements

³⁵ The Holy Father Benedict XVI dedicated his book to defending the historical value of the Bible. Cf. also the teaching of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła on the misinterpretation of the basic message of *Dei Verbum*, cited by J. KOZYRA, *Sobór Watykański II o Biblii*, op.cit., p. 35: “God’s Revelation, in its essence, consists in the revelation that God gives about Himself. It is necessary to have before one’s eyes, and not only the means of expression or the sources of Revelation.” [Objawienie Boże polega więc w swej istocie na objawieniu Siebie ze strony Boga. To trzeba mieć przed oczyma, a nie tylko same środki wyrazu czy źródła Objawienia].

³⁶ Among the significant works of this biblical scholar one should mention: *Biblical Theology in Crisis*,

of diachronic analyses, but exceeds their limitations:

without neglecting the significance of the historical process that led to the creation of the final, canonical form of the Word of God, he rejects both non-ecclesiastical, secular understanding of history, and this relying in the study of this literary process on allegedly objective secular criteria, the use of which leads to the elimination of God as the One who is present in the history of Israel and the Church³⁷.

Childs in his analyzes first shows own allocation of text fragments to individual sources (being the sets characterized by distinctive features, typical for each of them individually) **to show the meaning of the text in the form given to it by the last editor**. He can brilliantly appreciate the importance of the Church's principle, according to which the canonical text is the Word of God. A significant example of Childs' high academic skill is his statement regarding the historical-critical fragmentation of the description of the passage of the Israelites through the Sea of Reeds. Childs noted first that **Ex 14:1-31** reveals two kinds of the causes of the water cleaving: natural and supernatural. How does this method analyze this text? To the older source (J), it attributed the fragments containing natural factors; to the later source (P), it attributed the fragments containing supernatural factors. In effect, this method committed the division of the whole story into two unrelated stories!

Childs, in the spirit of the Church's understanding of the meaning of the canonical text, perfectly shows the historical and theological role of the 'canonical editor.' This editor from centuries ago, like a critical judge, opposed a mentality that does not accept the fact that God and man **cooperate**, and thus rejects the participation of supernatural and natural 'factors' in the miracle: if he found in the Tradition of Israel two types of texts, from which the first was revealing only supernatural factors, and the second only natural ones, he skillfully combined them in such a way that they could express the truth about this **cooperation**. He was, therefore, able to compose literary material so that the individual parts, which together comprise the full Tradition, would be understood by the reader as an integral whole, as the only carrier of God's truth!³⁸

According to contemporary biblical scholars³⁹, the sentence Ex 14:16, describing the natural act of raising a staff and stretching out a hand, comes in part from source E (14:16 a), in part from source P (14:16 b), and therefore originally reportedly had no connection with the verses attributed to source J!

Similarly, the statement that the sea was divided by God who sent the strong wind (14:21b), the biblical scholars separated from the text telling about Moses stretching out his

Philadelphia 1970; *The Book of Exodus. A Critical Theological Commentary*, Philadelphia 1974; *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, London 1983; *Old Testament Theology in Canonical Context*, Philadelphia 1989; *The New Testament as Canon. An Introduction*, London 1984; *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testament*, London 1992; *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture*, Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge 2004.

³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 321: "To speak of the privileged state of the canonical form is not to disregard Israel's past history. However, it refuses to fuse the canonical process of the shaping of the witness of the prophets and apostles with an **allegedly** (underscore of W. Kosek) objective scientific reconstruction that uses a critical filter to eliminate those very features that constitute its witness, namely, the presence of God in the history of Israel and the church". See also on pp. 319-320 the history of exegesis that led to this secular, non-biblical understanding of biblical history!

³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 229: "The early level was natural; the latter was supernatural. The canonical redactor operates as a critical judgment against such a move and bears witness to how the separate parts which comprise the full tradition are to be understood".

³⁹ Cf. G. E. WRIGHT, *Exodus, Book of*, [in:] G. A. BUTTRICK and others, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. An Illustrated Encyclopedia: identifying and explaining all proper names and significant terms and subjects in the holy scriptures, including the apocrypha: with attention to archeological discoveries and researches into the life and faith of ancient times*, Nashville 1991, vol. 2, p. 193. The other one states otherwise (only source E): S. MĘDALA, *Wprowadzenie ogólne do Pięcioksięgu*, op.cit., p. 69.

hand towards the sea!; they have split the canonical text Ex 14:21 into two sources: reportedly 14:21ac belongs to E⁴⁰ or P⁴¹, and 14:21b to J⁴²:

Ex 14:21 a	Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea	(E or P)
Ex 14:21 b	and the Lord swept the sea with a strong east wind throughout the night and so turned it into dry land.	(J)
Ex 14:21 c	When the water was thus divided	(E or P)

By approaching the inspired text in this way, the exegete does not reach the primary goal of reading God's revelation, that is, the text in its final form! What is more: **as a result of his analyzes exegete achieves what he assumed at the beginning of his reasoning (makes a mistake of the circular reasoning):** he smashes the text in such a way that he can announce that: 1. source J contains only such texts that show God's immediate saving actions⁴³, 2. source P (or possibly E) contains only those texts in which the subject of action is Moses, and never God – because He is transcendent!⁴⁴ Transcendence understood in this way, however, is not transmitted by the Bible!

The research methods used in the third part of this article to analyze Exodus 1-18 as the biblical basis for the Passover rite belong to the group of synchronous methods that investigate the message of the canonical text and the intention of the hagiographer-redactor⁴⁵. In the contemporary history of biblical exegesis, such methods have also been successfully used to study the Divine Revelation contained in the Book of Exodus⁴⁶.

It is worth pointing out particularly to G. Fischer's persistent quest for universal acceptance in the modern exegesis of consequences resulting from the scientifically

⁴⁰ Cf. S. MĘDALA, *Wprowadzenie ogólne do Pięcioksięgu*, op.cit., p. 69.

⁴¹ Cf. G. E. WRIGHT, *Exodus, Book of*, op.cit., p. 193.

⁴² Cf. S. MĘDALA, *Wprowadzenie ogólne do Pięcioksięgu*, op.cit., p. 65; G. E. WRIGHT, *Exodus, Book of*, op.cit., p. 193.

⁴³ Cf. S. MĘDALA, *Wprowadzenie ogólne do Pięcioksięgu*, op.cit., p. 68 (the author gives an accent to the saving action of God; it is not the patriarchs who are omnipotent, but God).

⁴⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 70 (E: emphasizing the role of significant historical figures), p. 75 (P: enhancement of God's transcendence).

⁴⁵ As a hagiographer's intention, one should understand not some of his mental states accompanying writing, but above all 'his will to communicate something.' Cf. J. CHMIEL, *Intencja autora jako zasada hermeneutyczna. Przyczynek do teologii natchnienia biblijnego* [*Intention of the Author as a Hermeneutic Principle. Contribution to the Theology of Biblical Inspiration*], "Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny" 32 (1979), p. 6. The author then notes (p. 11) unusually aptly that "Dei Verbum," a document created as part of the proceedings of the Second Vatican Council, contains in No. 12 (see also and No. 19) the phrase 'the intention of the sacred writers', not the 'intention of God.' In this way, the Fathers of the Council deliberately did not identify the intention of the hagiographer with the intention of God as the Author, leaving the issue of "fuller sense" (*sensus plenior*) open to further research – God can include in the text more than the hagiographer consciously included in it.

⁴⁶ Cf. The discussion of exegetical methods and problems, presented by M. VERVENNE, President of the 44th Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense, held in 1995: M. VERVENNE, *Introduction*, [in:] M. VERVENNE (ed.), *Studies in the Book of Exodus*, op.cit., p. 5-8. The article presents the following scholars and their views: 1. pp. 5-6: E. Otto: The Pentateuch is not a compromise between the Dtr tradition (*deuteronomistic*) and the P tradition (*priestly*), but manifests the post-priestly redaction, the author of which adapted the priestly concepts to the deuteronomistic ones; 2. p. 7: F. Polak: The Book of Exodus is thematically uniform because it presents the development of the revelation of God: from private revelation to Moses, through public revelation at Sinai, anti-revelation of the golden calf, private one to Moses in Ex 33-34, to the descent of the cloud of glory of God onto the tabernacle; 3. p. 7: G. Fischer: Ex 1-15 does not contain any text from the source/redaction P (*priestly*); the individual fragments in Ex 1-15, previously understood as P, should be considered as 'the voice of the narrator' (*Stimme des Erzählers*); Ex 1-15 one must consider as a homogeneous story (*einheitliche Erzählung*); 4. p. 7-8: P. Weimar opposes to the contemporary divisions of Ex 1:1-2:25 into several independent fragments and shows that it is a coherent text composed of three two-part elements: α). 1:1-7 + 1:8-14; β). 1:15-17 + 1:18-21; γ). 1:22-2:4 + 2:5-10, of which the central element 1:15-21 is the center of thematic and verbal symmetry (*Symmetrizentrum*), surrounded by the outer elements 1:1-14 and 1:22-2:10. At the same time, Ex 1:1-2:25 is an introduction to the whole book and its fundamental issues.

documented⁴⁷ thesis of insufficiency not only the hypothesis of the four sources, but also the hypothesis of the redactional layers of the Pentateuch to explain its content.

2. Scientific proof and pseudoscientific proof.

2.1. Introduction.

Before discussion of the theory of scientific and pseudo-scientific proof, it is worthwhile to present a typical error of circular reasoning in exegesis, connected with a flawed relation established by exegete between two issues:

1. The dating of particular fragments of the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament
2. The dating of the successive stages in the historical development of the Passover festival.

A correct methodology must carry out the task from point 1 (dating fragments of Scripture) independently of any guess concerning the findings in point 2 (i.e. the arrangement of the historical stages of the Passover development), if in the next step of the scientific analysis it wants to prove, on the basis of point 1, the correctness of the solutions made in point 2.

In other words: in proving the course of the Passover rite development history, it is a mistake to refer to the dating of biblical passages if such dating was made earlier based on presume concerning the hypothetical history of the Passover rite development. This rule is especially helpful when the author of such an assumption is from the world of science and experiences it as ‘cutting-edge.’

In such a situation, circular reasoning takes place in proving:

0. Dating of the successive stages of the historical Passover development: the scientist arranges a sequence of stages of the Passover development, from the initial stage to the final stage of it. Here, the scientist **assumes a particular list of successive stages of this development.**
1. Dating of the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament: the scientist analyses **the content** of those Scripture texts which say something about Passover, and compares it with **the list of successive stages of the Passover development** to determine whether the text represents an earlier or later stage of the Passover development. Scientist obtains as a result of his work at this stage a list of all passages of the Bible talking about Passover, arranged from oldest to youngest one. He may also announce that he knows the date of each biblical fragment of this list.
2. Dating of individual stages in the historical development of the Passover feast: the scientist has **a list of all biblical passages talking about Passover, arranged from the oldest to the youngest.** Based on this list, he reads the first text from the list and writes down what was first in the Passover rite. Then he reads the consecutive fragment from the list and writes down what occurred in the next stage of the Passover rite development, that is later, according to the dates from the list. He does the same until the end of the list. As a result of his work, the scientist obtains **a list of subsequent stages of the Passover development.**

The scientist as a result of his work achieves (in point 2) the same what he placed as an assumption at the very beginning (in point 0)! It is the error of circular reasoning.

The presence of such sequences of reasoning in research work is a severe defect that

⁴⁷ Cf. G. FISCHER, *Exodus 1-15 – eine Erzählung*, [in:] M. VERVENNE (ed.), *Studies in the Book of Exodus*, op.cit., p. 149. The author refers to the publications: E. BLUM, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW, 189), Berlin 1990. Of course, Blum takes into account redactional work and later additions. HOUTMAN, *Der Pentateuch. Die Geschichte seiner Erforschung neben einer Auswertung*, Kampen 1994. It was Houtman who unquestionably stated (p. 419) that the theory of sources/layers does not explain anything about the origins of the Pentateuch. “Die Quellentheorie vermag keine Antwort auf die Frage nach der Entstehung des Pentateuch zu leisten”.

places this work and its results outside the field of science.

In science, it is necessary to check whether what currently functions in the scientific community as an indisputable truth has been proved based on really uncontested data.

It is difficult when some statements are commonly quoted in textbooks. For example, it is common to print such lists: the following fragments belong to the source J, the following fragments belong to the source P, and so on. The biblical scholars share them **without informing readers precisely about criteria** used in their creation; they do not allow checking their value. Such a criterion, a false one, could have been the text content discussed here, concerning the alleged development of the Passover.

It is always worth in scientific work to know these criteria to avoid committing an unintentional error of circular reasoning when one starts from the thesis of one's predecessors to carry out a scientific proof of the truth of what was their research assumption.

Example:

Taking over from the textbook a list of fragments belonging to sources/layers, the researcher would like to analyze the development of the Passover rite on this basis. Fragments arranged according to the date of their creation, from the earliest to the latest, the researcher can read as a new whole, from which he can extract successive verses saying something about the Passover. For example: if the earliest texts concern only the lamb sacrifice, and the next ones add the necessity of making this sacrifice in one place, and the next ones add the necessity of making this sacrifice in Jerusalem, and the next ones add something about eating unleavened bread, and so on – then one has a scientific biblical proof for the historical development of the Passover rite and one exactly knows what stages this development had.

If, however, the researcher does not pay attention to strict keeping the division between assumptions and thesis of proof, he at the beginning annexes into assumptions what he imagines and supposes about the development of the Passover ritual. For example: if he supposes that everything in the world has been undergoing development and evolution, hence he also assumes that it is true regarding the Passover feast. In consequence, he also assumes that it is almost certain that the Passover rite developed from two independent feasts, pastoral and agricultural, which in the later period were combined into one whole. He also “knows” that the centralization of cult was **the idea of priests**, and so forth. So he looks through subsequent books and extracts from them texts concerning these subsequent supposed stages so to ‘discover’ dating of them – he will define as the earliest those texts that speak only about the lamb sacrifice, and so forth.

It is possible to perceive such a mistake quite quickly when the author is one person and when he does it in one publication, separating the two areas, i.e., making first the dating of biblical passages based on the alleged Passover development, and ‘discovering’ the Passover development stages based on the dates of fragments in the next chapter of the work.

It is difficult to see such a mistake of circular reasoning when:

- one author worked out the dating based on the alleged development of the Passover, and someone living after him later made the ‘discovery’ of the Passover development based on the dates of the fragments.
- the same author in the same publication undertook the task of proving the Passover development, while he uses the information about dating of books as one of his evident arguments (with the status of truthfulness established among scientists, without taking into account the question whether this truth was not ‘proved’ based on the alleged development of the Passover), and ‘resolves’ the contradictions appearing in the course of reasoning by referring to the ‘obviousness’ of arguments drawn from ... the alleged development of the Passover rite, without noticing that he relies on what he is to prove.

The second case regards the book of R. de Vaux⁴⁸. It is quite challenging to sort out his scientific record, but when one does it, it is clear that the Passover rite development, assumed by the author, is the basis of the dating of biblical fragments, and in turn so obtained dating of biblical fragments becomes an assumption for biblical ‘proof’ that the Passover really developed in the history of Israel in such a way as assumed the author!

In order to prove this, one refers below to a few excerpts from R. de Vaux’s publication. One will precede this task by a discussion of the fundamental knowledge concerning the logic of circular reasoning.

2.2. The theory of scientific proof and pseudo-scientific proof.

Explanation of the term “logic of circular reasoning.”

The explanation of this concept will be to answer the following questions: What is the scientific proof? What is the pseudo-scientific proof or the proof according to the logic of circular reasoning?

What is the scientific proof?

The proof is the thought process which, starting from the real premises, comes to the statement “the thesis is true” as a result of the logically correct sequence of subsequent reasonings.

Three main elements of proof:

1. the real premises of proof
2. a sequence of consecutive logical observations-reasonings
3. thesis

What is the pseudo-scientific proof or the proof according to the logic of circular reasoning?

The pseudo-scientific proof is a thought process that imitates scientific proof but in which it is possible to verify the truthfulness of one or more of its premises only then it proves earlier that its thesis is correct.

The difference between pseudo-scientific proof and scientific proof

Three main elements of pseudo-scientific proof:

1. premises of proof: depending on the thesis!
2. a sequence of consecutive logical observations-reasonings
3. thesis

Three main elements of scientific proof:

1. premises of proof: independent of the thesis
2. a sequence of consecutive logical observations-reasonings
3. thesis

Typical proving according to ‘the logic of circular reasoning.’

I. The scientist claims baselessly:

“I know that the premise **p_x** is true”

(I know it from the fact, evident for me, that **the x statement** is true.)

II. The scientist then carries out the proof in this way:

1. I have correct premises: premise p₁, ..., premise **p_x**, ...
2. I have a sequence of consecutive logical observations-reasonings, based on premises p₁, ..., **p_x**, ...
3. I have a thesis: **the x statement** is true.

⁴⁸ R. DE VAUX, *Instytucje Starego Testamentu*, op.cit., p. 496-504 in Polish, 484-493 in English.

2.3. The basic principles of the Catholic exegesis.

The Catholic exegete, like every reliable scientist, performs analyzing the Bible to discover God's truth, not his imaginations/projections, imposed on the biblical text. Therefore, in the spirit of trust and obedience to Magisterium of Church, he takes necessary guidelines to eliminate from his work pseudo-proves, built on the principle of the logic of circular reasoning. One presents below elementary observations according to which the obedience of the researcher to the methodological recommendations of the Church's Magisterium is scientifically justified! At the end of this point, one will prove the theorem of Church's Magisterium that the Bible does not contain pseudo-historical sentences, and therefore that the biblical text has real scientific value as a historical work.

Basic principles of scientific work:

- Biblical: on the day of judgment I will render an account for every careless/useless word I speak (cf. Mt 12:36)
- moral: I must not act in uncertainty
- logical: I must base my reasoning on verifiable, correct foundations (premises), i.e.:
 - on facts, not opinions
 - on conclusions based on facts

How is the circular reasoning error eliminated?

In research procedures, one always rejects proofs in which at least one premise (assumption):

- is based only on the human opinion (even of scientific authorities), not on facts
- is true only if the thesis is true

What are 'facts' then?

- the Bible: its canonical texts, viz. the Masoretic text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament; LXX
- monuments of literature, art, and the like
- the results of archaeological findings dated based not on their content but parameters independent of it, e.g., according to the C-14 method or location in the cultural layer dated regardless of its content

What authorities and why do we need to take as premises without proving their truthfulness?

- the authoritative documents of the Church's Magisterium are necessary for the scientific evidence of the Catholic exegete.
- it is because there is a set of theses for which it is impossible to prove scientifically that:
 - they are true
 - they are false

What is impossible to be proven scientifically?

- that God enters into the history of people, personally or through Angels
- that God has entrusted Magisterium of the Church with the task of guarding the real treasure which is the Word of God in Holy Scriptures and Tradition
- that the final canonical text is God's Word
- that the canonical text has the value of a historical work in which the true story of God's relationship with humankind is presented using a variety of literary genres
- that the canonical text is free from error – if we do not demand that hagiographers write according to our principles of determining facts

What is impossible to be proven scientifically? – conclusions:

There is no basis for interpreting a sentence like ‘God said to Moses in Egypt...’ as a pseudo-historical sentence, written for example by priests to ‘justify’ some religious reform (e.g., centralization of worship in Jerusalem – because they were, for example, interested in higher incomes from pilgrims). Why? Because in our world, there are no two separate sets of grammatical rules, of which one serves to convey the truth and the other to convey falsehood. Therefore, one should note that it is true that:

Any sentence written to falsify history does not need to differ linguistically from a sentence written to convey historical truth!

That is why there is no basis to interpret sentence like ‘God said to Moses in Egypt...’ as a pseudo-historical one. Moreover, since there are no such grounds, one should accept – in obedience to Magisterium of the Church – that such a sentence is a historical one, namely: God said actually to Moses in Egypt what is written in this sentence.

If something cannot be scientifically determined, then the solution chosen by the Church’s Magisterium must be accepted.

There are no scientific grounds for interpreting sentences recorded in the Holy Scriptures as pseudo-historical ones. Therefore, a scientist is obliged to accept in obedience to the Church’s Magisterium that sentences in the Bible have historical value, although to correctly read this history he must know the literary genres the biblical writers used to write down historical facts.

2.4. Biblical ‘proof’ for the historical development of Passover according to R. de Vaux.

In this section, one will give examples of the most apparent logical errors of the French biblical scholar, which he committed in his famous book, first published in French in two volumes under the title *Les Institutions de l’Ancien Testament*, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris 1958, 1960; it is available in English: *Ancient Israel. Its Life and Institutions (The Biblical Resources Series)*, translated by J. McHugh, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1997; in Polish: *Instytucje Starego Testamentu, vol. I & II. Vol. I. Nomadyzm i jego pozostałości, instytucje rodzinne, instytucje cywilne, vol. II. Instytucje wojskowe. Instytucje religijne*, translated by T. Brzegowy, Poznań 2004.

The aim of this analyses is not merely to ‘point mistakes out,’ but to show how dangerous in scientific work is to violate the basic principle of Catholic exegesis: the obedience to Magisterium of the Church, to which we owe scientific methodological principles in exegesis.

The first error of circular reasoning of R. de Vaux:

1. R. de Vaux’s observations about Passover in the times of King Josiah:

- 2Kings 23:21-23 does not mention the Feast of Unleavened Bread but only Passover as a pilgrimage feast.
- 2Chr 35:1-18 describes the same event as 2Kings 23:21-23 and mentions both feasts (in v. 17 speaks about the Feast of Unleavened Bread).

2. R. de Vaux’s thesis:

p. 498 in Polish translation: **Additions are inspired by cultic practice contemporary to Chronicler;** therefore, the text 2Chr 35:1-18 mentions the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In the time of Josiah, Passover was not yet associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

p. 486 in English translation: “There is a much longer account of this Passover in **2Chr 35:1-18** but it tells us nothing more about the customs followed in the time of Josias: the additional information is inspired by practices in vogue during the Chronicler’s day: the feast of Unleavened Bread is mentioned (v. 17).”

Explanation of the first circular reasoning error:

Because R. de Vaux ‘knows’ that Passover was not yet associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the time of Josiah (**this is a part of his thesis**), therefore, reading about the Feast of Unleavened Bread in 2Chr 35:1-18 interprets it as **‘additions inspired by cultic practice contemporary to Chronicler.’**

However, one should note that there are no real reasons that would allow the French biblical scholar to claim that the fragment about the Feast of Unleavened Bread is ‘an addition inspired by...’. Why? Because one can put such question: does the fragment about the Feast of Unleavened Bread have a different grammar or vocabulary (from a different period of the language development) compared to the rest of the text? The author did not show the prove based on arguments independent from such claim! It was enough for him to make such a conclusion that follows his expectations and thesis. However, this is not enough. Moreover, it is not scientific at all.

The mere observation of R. de Vaux that in 2Kings there is no mention of the Feast of Unleavened Bread means for him that this feast was not on the next day after the Passover celebration at all in the times of King Josiah. However, his conclusion is erroneous; it follows from his hidden assumption that the text Ex 12:1-13:16, clearly describing the merging of the Passover and Unleavened Bread at the time of the first Passover in Egypt, is not the historical truth. But if one assumes that the biblical text Ex 12:1-13:16 conveys historical truth, then King Josiah’s command ‘Celebrate the Passover in honor of the Lord your God, as it is written in the book of the covenant’ (2Kings 23:21) is sufficient to confirm the readers’ conviction that the celebration of the Passover was inseparably linked to the seven-day period of Unleavened Bread. So the French Biblical scholar mistakenly concludes that in the days of King Josiah, the Passover was celebrated without a connection to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

An in-depth analysis of Hebrew expression “The Book of Law” in the Bible – סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה (Deut 28:61; 29:20; 30:10; 31:26; Josh 1:8; 8:34; 2Kings 22:8; 22:11; 2Chr 34:15; Neh 8:3; 8:8) – reveals that **God had ordered already Moses to write down in a particular Book of Law the laws that Israelites were to observe in the worship of God, including course of holidays.** God instructed that Israelites were in future to place this book in the temple next to the Ark of the Covenant (Deut 31:26). It is about this book that the text of the Second Book of Chronicles speaks, “In the process of extracting the money deposited in the temple of the Lord, the priest Hilkiyah found the Book of the Law of the Lord, transmitted through Moses” (2Chr 34:14). The discovering of this book took place during the reign of King Josiah and was the cause of the king’s radical efforts, who in his holy determination, step by step, returned in worship to the original form commanded by God. Since there is a very modest description of the origins of this reform in the 2Kings relationship, the Chronicler extended it to include all the relevant details. One can see from his accounts that the priest found the book written by Moses and that he found it in the temple treasury, that is, in the place where it was to be according to God’s order given to Moses.

King was obliged to make a copy of that law, which was kept in the temple by levitical priests. When, after a period of deviation from that law, the Book of Law was found in the temple in times of Josiah, the king carried out actions, painful for many, to restore God’s order written down there. He did it in such a way that everything was to be as the law of this book stated. Thus for Josiah also could be no other way to celebrate Passover than that which God had arranged through Moses and which he had described in detail in the Book of Law.

One should note at the end of this extensive commentary that its value can be seen as a result of naive thinking. It will be such in the eyes of those scholars who appreciate human ingenuity in discovering novelty rather than obedience to the basic hermeneutical

principle which states that the canonical text is the true record of events in the history of Israel, and thus also in everything which concerns the fulfillment of God's commands by Moses and subsequent leaders of the People.

The second error of circular reasoning of R. de Vaux (p. 498 in Polish, p. 486 in English):

1. R. de Vaux's observations:

- There are two oldest liturgical calendars: Elohist (Ex 23:14-17) and Yahwistic (Ex 34:18-23)
- Ex 23:15 and Ex 34:18 speak about the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a pilgrimage festival 'ḥag'
- Ex 23:18 and Ex 34:25 speak about the Feast of Passover; there is the term 'ḥag' in both verses

2. R. de Vaux's reasoning:

according to Polish translation: Ex 23:18 and Ex 34:25 speak about Passover as a feast ḥag, but the presence of the term ḥag makes it necessary to understand their redaction as having performed later than Deuteronomy redaction when the Passover became a pilgrimage feast ḥag;

according to English translation: "However, since the word ḥag occurs in both verses, both must have been edited after Deuteronomy, when Passover had become a pilgrimage (ḥag)"

3. R. de Vaux's thesis:

Two oldest liturgical calendars (Ex 23:14-17 and Ex 34:18-23) speak about only the feast of Unleavened Bread as a pilgrimage feast 'ḥag.'

Explanation of the second circular reasoning error:

Since R. de Vaux 'knows' that the two oldest calendars speak only about the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a pilgrimage feast ḥag (it is his thesis!), while reading in Ex 23:18; 34:25 about the Passover as a pilgrimage feast ḥag he interprets the presence of the term ḥag as being a result of the later redaction of this text, 'when the Passover became a pilgrimage feast ḥag.'

However, there are no premises independent of his thesis that can be used to verify his belief that the word 'ḥag' somebody later added to the original text. The biblical scholar here commits a circular reasoning error, drawing from his thesis the argument for removing the term 'ḥag' from the text about the Passover as the feast ḥag.

The third error of circular reasoning of R. de Vaux:

1. R. de Vaux's premises:

- Yahwistic texts (J) are earlier than Priestly texts (P)
- p. 497 in Polish, 485 in English: Ex 12:1-20.40-51 are the P texts
- p. 503 in Polish, 492 in English: Ex 12:23-27.39 is the J text

2. R. de Vaux's reasoning:

Reading the texts, one states:

- Ex 12:23-27.39 (J) speaks about only one original feast of Israel, the Feast of Passover, being the shepherds' feast. It says nothing about the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- Ex 12:1-20.40-51 (P) speaks about two consecutive feasts, Passover and Unleavened Bread, joined into one feast.
- All these texts link the feast/feasts mentioned in them with the exodus from Egypt.

3. R. de Vaux's thesis:

Because the oldest texts (J) speak about only the Passover, so only the Feast of Passover is original Israel's holiday recalling the departure (exodus) from Egypt. At the time when priests were editing their texts (P), they connected the Passover feast with another one, the Feast

of Unleavened Bread, and gave it the same meaning as had the Passover from the time of the exodus.

Explanation of the third circular reasoning error:

One should consider what are the sources of this French biblical scholar's conviction that premises in his proof are true, namely, that Ex 12:23-27.39 is J, and Ex 12:1-20.40-51 is P. The author does not give arguments independent of the content of these texts, e.g., does not show that these texts are characterized by specific grammar (more/less ancient) for J/P, specific vocabulary (more/less ancient) for J/P. No, none of such arguments for the truthfulness of the premises is here.

How does the author know that Ex 12:23-27.39 is J? – for the text here is only about Passover. His thesis requires that in the older texts, and thus in J, only Passover is mentioned, so he himself cut out specific text fulfilling this requirement and named it J. Analogically, how does the author know that Ex 12:1-20.40-51 is P? – for the text here is both about the Passover and the Unleavened Bread. Because his thesis requires that in younger texts, and thus in P, both Passover and Unleavened Bread is mentioned, so he himself cut out specific text fulfilling this requirement and named it P.

Therefore, the truthfulness of these premises depends on the thesis:

- Premise 1: Ex 12:23-27.39 is J because it is only about the Passover
- Premise 2: Ex 12:1-20.40-51 is P because it is about both the Passover and the Unleavened Bread

Hence and reasoning will yield the thesis: originally (what is written in texts J) there was only the Passover, and then (what is written in texts P) the Passover combined with the Unleavened Bread.

The error of circular reasoning lies in the fact that the author does not refer to premises independent of his thesis.

Conclusions:

1. The claim of R. de Vaux, showing the alleged historical development of the Passover, has not been proved.
2. The reference in the scientific work to the dating of Scripture fragments, derived from R. de Vaux's theorem, has no scientific basis.

There is another way to approach the text of Scripture: the canonical method. Without assuming a priori any errors, repetitions, discontinuities, and so on, the exegete reads the text with the highest care to understand it as error-free. Only when he cannot understand some abruptness after careful analysis, he can assume that they occur as a result of two or more sources merging.

3. An attempt to overcome the logic of circular reasoning on the example of the biblical foundations of the Passover rite.

In the last part of this article, one will present an entirely different approach to studying the Passover ritual according to the Scripture than that represented by R. de Vaux. In the spirit of obedience to the Church's Magisterium, one should read the Bible text in such a way to not impose upon it one's own, pre-established thesis. One should assume that everything stated about the Passover in the final canonical text is of full historical value when it is written according to the principles of the literary genre which in ancient times served to record history.

It means that after discovering the literary genre of the studied text as a 'historical' one, and after understanding it in a cultural context in which was created not only this text but also other texts of analogous literary construction, the reading of its contents leads to knowledge

of the historical truth about events which are described in the text. The text is not about legend but real historical events if its literary genre is the one which people used in antiquity to document history not to write legends.

3.1. The most important event of the Old Testament.

The most important event of the Old Testament is Israel's departure from Egypt. The Israelites refer to it in every situation in which the threat of the nation's existence intensifies their memory of God the Saviour. The exit from Egypt is the event to which the prophets referred during the Babylonian captivity while announcing the end of bondage as a new exit, more significant than that this first.

In its fundamental phase, the exit from Egypt is described in Ex 1-18 and celebrated in the annual Passover strictly according to the requirements of 'The Passover Haggadah.' 'The Haggadah' is a liturgical book containing concrete prayers, wisdom instructions, songs, symbolic acts (washing of hands, eating of symbolical dishes, and so on), performed in sequence, assigned to a subsequent fourteen points of ritual. It is the Jewish book of the Paschal Vigil liturgy⁴⁹.

One should note that from the salvific (and military) point of view, there are two the most significant paschal events⁵⁰: 1. The banquet of lamb in Egypt, during which God killed all the first-born of Egypt; 2. The passage through the Sea of Reeds, during which God finally killed Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with the whole of his army.

Looking at the Bible as a whole, however, one can see something more: for the passage of the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud at night between the divided waters of the Sea of Reeds (the Red Sea in the LXX) there is nowhere else an event more strikingly similar than the one described in Genesis 15: in order to make a covenant with Abram, the Lord passed at night under the sign of fire and the sign of smoke among the halves of animals divided by Abram.

Nowhere else has the Lord passed in such two, vertically ascending, signs between the halves of something. Even while God led Israelites to Promised Land for forty years, walked only either in the sign of pillar of fire (at night) or in the sign of pillar of cloud (during the day). Thus, only in two events, the description of which is in Gen 15:9-21 and Ex 14:19-31, God passed in such both signs simultaneously. This analogy indicates the need for considering whether or not the passage between torn waters, described in Ex 14:19-31, is an act of covenant-making, as it is in Gen 15:9-21. This basic fact is worth pointing out at the beginning because commentators have not perceived it at all.

3.2. Leaving Egypt in light of entering into a covenant in Gen 15.

The Book of Exodus emphasizes the presence of God as the defender of Israel while crossing the sea. God Himself, present here in two signs, pointed out the exceptionality of His presence through the extremely relevant 'military acts' which He performed at the beginning (14:19-20) and the end (14:24) of His passage with Israel across the sea.

Ex 14:19-20 depicts⁵¹ what happened immediately before Israelites' entering the way

⁴⁹ Cf. R. CANTALAMESSA, *Pascha naszego zbawienia*, op.cit., p. 35. The author also uses the term referring to the Christian liturgical book: "Ordo hebdomadae sanctae."

⁵⁰ Cf. I. PAHL, *Noc paschalna – „Matka wszystkich wigilii” – wykład gościnny w Instytucie Liturgicznym Papieskiej Akademii Teologicznej w Krakowie (30.04.1999)* [*Paschal Night – "Mother of all Vigils" – Guest Lecture at the Liturgical Institute of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow (April 30, 1999)*], translated by J. ZYCHOWICZ, "Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny" 52 (1999) No. 2, p. 133: the first Christians took over the celebration of Easter from the Jewish Passover and read ancient texts, especially: 1. Ex 12 about the Israeli Passover with the killing of the lamb, 2. Ex 14 about crossing the Red Sea. The passage was the dominated theme of the holiday.

⁵¹ Verse 20 is difficult to translate. Here is the translation of the author of the article.

between the waters: “The angel of God, who had been leading Israel’s camp, now moved and went around behind them. The column of cloud (עַמּוּד הַעָנָן) also, leaving the front, took up its place behind them,²⁰ so that it came between the camp of the Egyptians and that of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness (וַיְהִי הָעָנָן וְהַחֹשֶׁךְ), and it enlightened the night (וַיִּאָר אֶת-הַלַּיְלָה). And the one has not drawn near unto the other all night.”

Moreover, Ex 14:24 reports on what happened when Israel was at the end of the way across the sea: “But just before dawn the Lord looked down on the Egyptian army from **the pillar of fire and cloud** (בְּעַמּוּד אֵשׁ וָעָנָן), and He threw their forces into total confusion.”

Therefore, when Israel was near the end of the way between the divided sea waters, the Lord was still with them in the sign of pillar of fire and cloud. The Lord walked with Israel whole the way, walked in these two signs whole their way at night. The Hebrew expression in Ex 14:24 indicates that it was one vertically rising sign of God’s presence, which on the Egyptians side was a dark cloud, preventing them from reaching the Israelites, and on the Israelites side it was a fire, enlightening their way in the darkness of the night.

This amazing scenery of the night passage between the halves of the sea, one should compare with the description of the covenant made by God with Abram between the halves of animals. We read⁵² in Gen 15:17-18: “When the sun had set, and it was dark, there appeared a smoking brazier (תַּנּוּר עֹשֵׂן) and a flaming torch (וּלְפִיד אֵשׁ), which passed between those pieces.¹⁸ That day the Lord made a covenant (בְּרִית) with Abram.”

Striking visual similarity! But not only this dimension connects the two events. It is worth pointing out and other common elements between them, in their broader context:

- God promised to Abram’s offspring the whole country with its nations from the Egyptian River to the Euphrates River (Gen. 15:18-21; Ex 3:8.17; 13:5),
- God foretold that the descendants of Abram would be slaves in a land that was foreign to them (cf. Gen 15:13; Ex 1:8-22; 2:23-25; 3:7-10. 16-17; 4:31; 5, 2. 4-21;) for more than 400 years (cf. Gen 15:13; Ex 12:40f),
- God foretold that after this time they would be brought forth by Him with great possessions to Canaan (cf. Gen 15:14; Ex 12:36.38),
- God has announced that in the time of leading them out there will be great punishments with which He will touch their oppressors (cf. Gen 15:14; Ex 3:20; 4:23; 6:1.6; 7:4-5. 14-11:10; 12:12-13. 23. 29; 13:3. 9. 14. 16),
- God said to Abram, “Fear not” before the passing between the animals; He said through Moses the same words to Israelites before their passing between waters – cf. Gen 15:1 (אֶל-תִּירָא) and Ex 14:13 (אֶל-תִּירָאוּ). Israelites heard the same words of God, said through Moses, before the act of the covenant-making on Sinai (cf. Ex 20:20: אֶל-תִּירָאוּ!)

⁵² Literally: a furnace of smoke and a torch of fire. The construction of two nouns used, the first of which is in *status constructus*, is usually translated according to logic: the noun (the first noun) with the adnominal genitive (the second noun); it expresses the relation of belonging of something expressed by the first noun to something expressed by the second noun. See G. DEIANA, A. SPREAFICO (elaboration of the original version), S. BAZYLIŃSKI (elaboration of the Polish version), *Wprowadzenie do hebrajszczyzny biblijnej [Introduction to Biblical Hebrew]*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 44-46. However, there are situations in which the translation must take a different logic – for example Lev 2:4: מַצֵּה תַנּוּר – literally ‘cake of furnace,’ translated as ‘cake baked in a furnace;’ Dan 10:6: כְּלָפִידֵי אֵשׁ – literally ‘torches of fire,’ translated as ‘fiery torches;’ similarly in Zech 12:6: ‘burning torch.’

- It was precisely at night, it was precisely **between the halves** of the beings divided in half (the animals in Gen 15; the sea in Ex 14), when God **passed**⁵³ under the red sign of fire and white sign of smoke/cloud (cf. Gen 15:17f; Ex 13:21f; 14:19-22.24).

We have here an incredibly striking similarity of both passages, perceivable already in their visual perception by both Israelite, thinking through images, and contemporary readers of the Bible. Because the first of these ‘passing through’ is directly named the act of the covenant-making, it inspires us to examine the second one in the same perspective.

3.3. The Book of Exodus 1-18 as the covenant treaty in relation to the Passover rite.

Comparison of Gen 15 and Ex 14 indicate that crossing through the divided sea waters can be an act of making a covenant. This research intuition was confirmed by the study of the literary structure of the Book of Exodus, whereby the assumption of the priority of the word relationship before the theme relationship was necessary to protect the process of discovering the literary principles structuralizing the text (the ones imposed by the hagiographer) against the researcher’s subjectivism/imagination⁵⁴. The literary structure of the text is remarkable because it was the hagiographer who consciously gave it to the whole work in order to use it to convey the essential message carried by this whole, consisting of the words, sentences, and pericopes⁵⁵.

The method of studying the literary structure (literary scheme) is often called the rhetorical method⁵⁶. Particularly noteworthy is the discoverer of the concentric structure of the Letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament, A. Vanhoye. He pointed out that the following elements are essential for the literary structure: words that overlap (binding neighboring sections), announcements of the theme, repetition of words (characteristic for a given section), inclusions (words or phrases as elements signaling the separation of some text as a section due to the occurrence of these elements

⁵³ For comparison of both events, it is essential to note **the transition between the divided entities**. There is no point in concentrating on the sacrificial dimension of the act of cutting the animals by Abram. This dimension does not occur in the description of crossing the Sea of Reeds. Therefore, the comparison of both events does not take place within it. It is not the victim that is the binding element, but the transition between the halves of something divided into halves.

⁵⁴ Cf. J. WARZECHA, *Nowe spojrzenie na Psalmy. Wokół książki L. Alonso-Schökela: Treinta Salmos, Madrid 1981* [A New Look at Psalms. Around the Book by L. Alonso-Schökela: Treinta Salmos, Madrid 1981], *Studia Theologica Varsaviensia* 22 (1984) No. 1, p. 197-201. Author of the article shows how L. Alonso Schökel, the lecturer of the Old Testament at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome overcame the limitations of the method of genres by Gunkel, becoming the precursor of the well-understood role of the exegete in assimilating the content of the inspired text: through the study of its individual literary form, one get through to the content intended by the hagiographer; see also J. WARZECHA, *Analiza strukturalna w egzegezie psalmów* [Structural Analysis in the Exegesis of Psalms], “*Studia Theologica Varsaviensia*” 26 (1988), p. 54-66. 61.

⁵⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 61: the author discusses the work: M. GIRARD, *Les Psaumes. Analyse structurelle et interprétation*, Montreal – Paris 1984; on pp. 56-57, J. Warzecha thoroughly comments and highlights the main assumptions of the work that influenced the proper development of exegesis: L. ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *Treinta Salmos. Poesia y oración*, Madrid 1981: research has shown that H. Gunkel, the creator of the Formgeschichte method, limiting himself to the study of literary genres and the living environment, was unable to discover the composition principles of individual psalms, because each of them can be uniquely built. Alonso has shown that the literary medium of meaning is also relations (chiastic, alternating, concentric) between the elements of the structure of the work, and not just the words, sentences, or motifs.

⁵⁶ Cf. S. HAŁAS, *Analiza retoryczna [Rhetorical analysis]*, [in:] T. JELONEK (ed.), *Z badań nad Biblią* (2), op.cit., p. 25-38. Following R. Meynet, the author presents the leading authors of this direction: R. Lowth and J. A. Bengel, who created their works in the 17th century. He also gives the results of their analyses. He points out that parallelisms (synonymic, antithetic, synthetic) and concentric structures are typical for Semitic composition techniques; they can be connected not only with verses but also with larger fragments of text. The author gives numerous examples of biblical structures. Cf. T. A. BRYAN, *The New Compact Bible Dictionary*, op.cit., p. 434 (*Parallelism*): “Parallelism [is] a characteristic of OT Hebrew verse, which has neither rhyme nor meter.”

at the beginning and at the end of it)⁵⁷.

As a result of the research, it turned out that the first eighteen chapters of the Book of Exodus are a literary whole built of six pericopes. This whole is a covenant treaty⁵⁸ because it fulfills the literary assumptions of vassal covenant treaties which were concluded in the Ancient Near East from around the sixteenth to the twelfth century before Christ. Among other things, one showed that the passage of God and Israel between the divided sea waters is described in the fourth pericope, in which – according to the then assumptions – it was necessary to write down the course of the definitive act of covenant-making between sovereign and vassal.

The treaty of the covenant consisted of two basic groups of pericopes: the group of four internal pericopes was a report from the course of the ceremony of the covenant-making between the two rulers, while the other two pericopes formed a literary ‘frame’: the historical introduction showed the past relationships between the two partners; the pericope regulating future everyday relations between them crowned the whole.

Regarding the issue of the annual Passover of Israel essential is that its rite consists of **four basic parts**. As the liturgical action progresses, the accomplishment of these successive parts gradually carries the participants to the place and time⁵⁹ of the next of **four stages** of the covenant ceremony. God and Israel performed this ceremony under cover of the process of liberating Israel from Egyptian slavery. Therefore, it is not an easy task to notice this ceremony. It consists of events described in the sequence of four middle pericopes of Ex 1-18 as the covenant treaty: Ex 6:2-11:10; 12:1-13:16; 13:17-14:31; 15:1-21. These events have two dimensions: a. The liberating of Israel – easy to notice, b. The cultic-religious ceremony of the covenant-making – difficult to notice.

The first central pericope of the ancient Eastern Treaties of the sixteenth to twelfth centuries BC described the actual course of the first part of the covenant-making ceremony, viz **presenting of both partners** who met at a predetermined date and place. In this part, one used to show with Eastern exaggeration the greatness of sovereign and his merits for vassal, including the value of gifts promised by him.

The text 6:2-11:10 in the Book of Exodus is the first central pericope, where text 6:2-8 and the extensive description of miraculous signs (changing the rod into a serpent, and next nine signs-plagues) are the presenting of the greatness of God as a stronger contractor. The Eastern exaggeration here has no equal! God is a contractor that is extremely superior to all others!

⁵⁷ Cf. A. VANHOYE, *La structure littéraire de l'épître aux Hébreux*, Paris 1976.

⁵⁸ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny Ryt Paschy W Świetle Schematu Literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18* [*The original rite of the Passover in the Light of the Literary Scheme of the Book of Exodus 1-18*], Kraków 2008, p. 199-283; Idem, *Zawarcie przymierza w Wj 1-18 na tle zwyczajów Bliskiego Wschodu* [*The Covenant-Making in Ex 1-18 on the Background of Ancient Near East Customs*], [in:] T. JELONEK, R. BOGACZ, *Między Biblią a kulturą I* [*Between the Bible and the Culture I*], Kraków 2011, p. 9-32.

⁵⁹ Israel believes that by virtue of the Passover liturgy, God carries all its participants into a historically past time: see פסח הגדה של פסח *Hagada. Opowiadania o wyjściu Izraelitów z Egiptu na pierwsze dwa wieczory święta Pesach*. [*Haggadah. Stories about the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt on the first two Evenings of Pesach*]. Wydawnictwo Księgarni M. Zalczmana, Vienna 1927, p. 33. “Hagada” is currently available in the “Bibliofilska Edycja Reprintów” as a reprint, made from a copy from private collections at the Interdruck GmbH Printing House in Leipzig, Warszawa 1991. Further cited as *Hagada, reprint*. The “Hagada” teaches on page 33: “W każdym wieku Izraelita powinien się tak uważać, jak gdyby sam został wyswobodzony z niewoli egipskiej. (...) Nie samych tylko ojców naszych wybawił Najświętszy, niech będzie pochwalony, lecz i nas wraz z nimi wybawił” [In every age, the Israelite should consider himself as if he had been freed from Egyptian captivity. (...) Not only did the Most Holy save our fathers – let Him be praised – but He also saved us with them.] Cf. also: M. NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch*, Stuttgart 1948, p. 51: the author discusses the meaning of Deut 26:8; Deut 6:21-23; Josh 24:6.7; Ex 12:26.27f; 13:3.8f 14-16; 23:15 = 34:18. It is of the fundamental importance for the Jewish proof for the real (not only imagined!) possibility of participating in the historical paschal events of salvation.

In turn, the announcement contained here, concerning liberating Israel from slavery and giving the land of Canaan to her, are His terrific promises of the covenant. The phrase, present among God's promises, "I will take you as my own people, and you shall have me as your God" (6:7) is an act of the covenant ceremony initiation, because it is analogous to the expression "I am going to make a covenant with you."⁶⁰

It is worth noting that the genealogy of Moses and Aaron (6:13-27), seeming to be a completely random literary material in light of the comments made so far, is also a fulfillment of the assumptions of this pericope of the treaty: it shows a representer of the second contractor!⁶¹

In the first of four parts of Passover ritual, the principal purpose of the first part of the covenant ceremony is also fulfilled, mainly through the narrative of leader, who in the so-called paschal haggadah shows magnificence of God and all His merits to Israel from the beginning to times of Solomon⁶², when they built temple. Some other acts precede this story. Symbolic eating of vegetables immersed in salty water has the same purpose: in some degree see and taste the situation of the Egyptian enslavement of the Fathers (who were humble as the green plants in the field, trampled under foot, so they cry salty tears), from which the good Lord wanted to lead them out.

Also breaking of unleavened central bread (one of three matzahs) by leader and then hiding the larger part of it as Afikoman (which will be discussed in the third main part) corresponds to God's promise of Israel's liberation, which in its fundamental phase was realized by God through the act of 'breaking into two parts' the waters of the sea⁶³.

In order to understand the Jewish or Christian liturgy, one should note that liturgical signs may have either the function of explanation/revelation or the function of making-present of the salvific events. The Afikoman breaking, which in the third part will be the act of making-present of the passage through the sea, in this first part is only to explain the situation, to show the magnificence of God, to announce the event whose author and performer He will be⁶⁴.

⁶⁰ Cf. F.-L. HASSFELD, E. RENT, *Przymierze [Covenant]*, translated by B. WODECKI, [in:] F. KÖNIG, H. WALDENFELS (ed.), *Leksykon religii [Lexicon of Religion]*, Warszawa 1997, p. 367; F. RIENECKER, G. MAIER and others, *Leksykon biblijny*, op.cit., p. 674; S. WYPYCH, *Przymierze i jego odnowa. Studium z teologii biblijnej Starego Testamentu [The Covenant and its Renewal. Study of Biblical Theology of the Old Testament]*, Kraków 2003, pp. 157, 165-167.

⁶¹ Just the literary fact that the hagiographer contained this genealogy in the inclusion should be thought-provoking – cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 113.

⁶² The course of the first part indicates that *The Passover Haggadah* (official liturgical book, according to which one must faithfully celebrate the Passover) dates back to the time of Solomon because the God's merits, enumerated in the first part, are from only the period ended with this king, whereas one knows that the ancient principle of covenant renewal celebration stated that vassal must enumerate all sovereign's merits until the renewal day. The Passover celebration proves to be the covenant renewal celebration. That is why Solomon specified in his *Haggadah* all God's merits up to the Temple construction grace. Later generations, however, that took over his work, apparently did not want to disturb the beauty of its literary structure; they preferred to give up the preservation of that ancient principle. That is why in *Haggadah*, after the outline of Israel's history from Terah to Egyptian plagues, chairman poetically enumerates in the final recitation the 14 most important God's blessings-works, performed during the time from Israel's leaving Egypt to the time when she enters Canaan and builds the Temple (see *Hagada, reprint*, op.cit., pp. 27-28: "How numerous are the blessings that the Blessed One has sent to us"). The number 1 + 14 corresponds to the date of Passover and the beginning of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (the evening of the 14th day, when the 15th day began – see Ex 12:6.18). Adding more events would disturb this number, evidently considered as extremely important. Analogously, four main parts of rite have in sum the same number of 14 points.

⁶³ Cf. S. PECARIC (ed.), *Hagada na Pesach i Pieśń nad Pieśniami [Haggadah on Pesach and Song of Songs]*, Kraków 2002, p. 78.

⁶⁴ An example taken from Christian liturgy is the difference between reading about the death of Jesus in the first part of the Mass (viz. the sign that reveals/announces), and the set of words and gestures of consecration in the third part (viz. the sign that makes present the Death of Jesus). One must notice this, since today even the Magisterium of the Church emphasizes that the very reading of Scripture has to some extent a sacramental

The second central pericope of treaties described the actual course of the ceremony of imposing **the covenant law** and also presented its content. The distinction between this law, named **‘the covenant clause,’** and the law from the last, sixth pericope, is particularly relevant here. The essential goal of covenant clause was not to regulate the daily relations between the partners but to define a qualitatively entirely different commitment⁶⁵: covenant clause describes in what annual ceremony the vassal would celebrate the day of covenant-making and thus remind for himself and his people about the submission relationship towards the sovereign.

In the Book of Exodus, the whole 12:1-13:16 is this pericope; it informs that the law, the covenant clause, obligates Israel to annually celebrate in honor of God on the night of the 15th day of the month Abib, and to not eat any acid by seven days, from the evening of the 14th day until the evening of the 21st day of that month, and to consecrate to God the first-born animals and to redeem the first-born people.

Detailed regulations point to the obligation to circumcise all the participants of the Passover, the obligation to tell the sons about God’s intervention in Egypt at that night, the obligation to eat roasted lamb with bread and bitter herbs. As in the covenant of circumcision it was necessary to remove from the Lord’s People everyone who was not circumcised (cf. Gen 17:14), analogously in the covenant of Passover it was necessary to do it with everyone who would not refrain from eating acid from the evening of the 14th Abib until the evening of the 21st Abib (cf. Ex 12:15.19)⁶⁶.

The hagiographer pointed out twice that the Israelites had accepted the Law of Passover presented to them by Moses and had done everything the Lord had commanded them to do (cf. Ex 12:28.50). Thus **the weaker covenant contractor accepted the covenant law** bestowed upon him and was ready to take up the next element of the ceremony, viz the definitive act of making (cutting) the covenant.

Before discussing this next element, one should emphasize that if the editor of the Book of Exodus had not used some technique of literary composition of his work⁶⁷, it would not have been possible to know where, according to his concept, one pericope ends and another begins, and thus it would have been impossible to discover that 12:1-13:16 is a literary whole, a pericope of law; it would not have been possible to read his work correctly.

The last redactor of the Book of Exodus took an effort to compose the text precisely according to the specific Hebrew literary principles of pericopes demarcation. Unfortunately, the effects of these admirable efforts were mistakenly interpreted by modern researchers

character, requiring believers to recognize Christ Himself as being here present – cf. BENEDICT XVI, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, 56. As Pope John Paul II teaches about the Eucharist in the Encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharist*, 11: “The Eucharist is indelibly marked by the event of the Lord’s passion and death, of which it is not only a reminder but the sacramental presence. It is the sacrifice of the Cross that lasts for centuries.”

⁶⁵ Cf. R. JASNOS, *Teologia prawa w Deuteronomium [Theology of Law in Deuteronomy]*, Kraków 2001, p. 192.

⁶⁶ These three verses contain the same phrase: וְנִכְרְתָהּ הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִיא (and that soul will be cut out – that one), which determines the necessity to remove everybody who does not fulfill one of the covenant requirements: to be circumcised; not to eat acid. Next, the same phrase appears in the Sinai covenant (cf. Ex 31:14): everybody who would work at the Sabbath is to be ‘cut out’ from the People of the Lord. The other places: Lev 7:20f. 27; 19:8; 22:3; Num 9:13; 15:30; 19:13.20.

⁶⁷ For example, they do this by putting the text into the frame of an inclusion. For a discussion about inclusion as one of the compositional techniques of the Hebrews see in: A. VANHOYE, *Structure and Message of the Epistle to the Hebrew (Subsidia Biblica, 12)*, translated by J. SWETNAM, Roma 1989, p. 20-22: The author first gives as an example Psa 8 and Mt 7:16-20 – the whole first verse is repeated in the final verse. Then he points out that for the existence of inclusion it is not necessary that the whole verse is repeated – it is usually a part of the verse (see Mt 19:30 and 20:16; Jn 5:19 and 5:30) or even just some single words (see Jn 2:1-2 and 2:11; Jn 9:1-2 and 9:41), or even just one word (see Wis 2:17 and 2:20).

as being a result of compiling some arbitrary texts from various sources⁶⁸.

The essential literary endeavor in 12:1-13:16 is **the intertwining of three legislative speeches of God with two speeches of Moses** so that the Moses' speech completing the communication to Israelites of the content of these God's speeches closes this pericope⁶⁹.

Thus, the first speech of God (12:1-20) contains information about the laws concerning time of celebration, lamb and unleavened bread, while the first speech of Moses (12:21-27 a) is limited to communicating the laws concerning lamb. Moses communicates laws concerning time of celebration and unleavened bread in the second speech 13:3-15, which lies in the text in a far distance from the first speech and crowns the whole pericope.

In this second speech, there is again a procedure of interlacing: although this speech comes directly after the third speech of God (13:1-2), which contains only the order to consecrate every firstborn to God, Moses does not begin his second speech with the problem of firstborns. He first (13:3-10) refers to those issues of the first speech of God, which he leave aside in his first speech: to the problem of time of celebration and the problem of unleavened bread. Finally, the second part (13:11-15) of Moses' second speech concludes the pericope of the covenant law: Moses speaks here about the issue God ordered in the third (last) His speech, viz. about the command to consecrate every firstborn to God.

It is also worth paying attention to the 'duplication' – according to the authors of the Pentateuch source theory and many other commentators – of the description of the march out from Egypt: in Ex 12:29ff and Ex 13:17ff. Some think that Ex 12:29 is the beginning of the description of starting the march out, while others claim that Ex 13:17⁷⁰.

To resolve the problem is enough to notice **the differences in circumstances of the march out**, recorded in both texts. There in Ex 12:29ff, the hagiographer draws attention to the elements of legal and liturgical significance: the Israelites brought out from Egypt the unleavened dough, precious dishes, and garments. Indeed, in the annual Passover celebration, the Israelites fulfill the requirements derived apparently from this text because they do not eat acid, use precious vessels⁷¹, and dress in the best clothes⁷². Ex 12:29, therefore, is not meant to tell about the passage of God and Israel into the next part of the covenant-making ceremony. On the contrary, it has yet to explain the covenant law, it is, therefore, to fulfill the same goal as the entire pericope Ex 12:1-13:16, of which it is the middle part.

On the other hand, according to the hagiographer's plan, the second description of the march out (Ex 13:17ff) has the aim to tell about the passage of God and Israel into the next part of the ceremonial, because the hagiographer here (cf. Ex 13:19) with double emphasize, and therefore extremely special⁷³, underlines that the Israelites **took Joseph's bones** with them when they began to set off from Egypt. According to "The Passover Haggadah,"⁷⁴ it means that every participant of Passover has to see himself as now leaving Egypt with Fathers⁷⁵.

⁶⁸ Cf. S. MĘDALA, *Wprowadzenie ogólne do Pięcioksięgu*, op.cit., p. 65 (J), 69 (E), 72 (P). R. DE VAUX, *Instytucje Starego Testamentu*, op.cit., p. 496-504 in Polish, 484-493 in English.

⁶⁹ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 146-147.

⁷⁰ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 80.

⁷¹ In wealthy families, these are the dishes used only once a year, just for Passover! – Cf. A. UNTERMAN, *Żydz. Wiara i życie [Jews. Faith and Life]*, translated by J. ZABIEROWSKI, Łódź 1989, p. 229.

⁷² Cf. S. PHILIP DE VRIES, *Obrzędy i symbole Żydów [Jewish rituals and Symbols]*, translated by A. BOROWSKI, Kraków 1999, p. 182: the chairman of the feast puts on himself his robe in which he will be dressed after death.

⁷³ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 155.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Hagada, reprint*, op.cit., p. 33.

⁷⁵ For just as patriarch Joseph participated in the exodus because the Israelites leaving Egypt also took his bones (עצמות), so too – according to the command of the "Haggadah" – every Israelite must perceive his/her essence/bone (עצמות) as if he/she were leaving Egypt. The interpretation is enabled by the double meaning of the Hebrew word עצמות: 1. bone, 2. being.

The difference between the two descriptions of the march indicates that the presence of both of them, the first in pericope 12:1-13:16 describing the giving of the covenant law, the second in pericope 13:17-14:31 describing the definitive act of making (“cutting”) a covenant by march and crossing the sea (as described below), is not a redundant doublet, but the fulfillment of the requirements of the literary structure of ancient Hittite treaties.

In the second part of the four-part Passover rite, the main goal of the second part of the covenant-making ceremony is realized, mainly through the eating of unleavened bread with bitter herbs⁷⁶, as commanded by God in Ex 12:8. After accepting and fulfilling the covenant law in this way, the participants sit down for a solemn supper, not regulated by God’s law, but only by the rabbinical principle not to eat too much and not to eat after midnight – which is vital for eating the Afikoman in the next central part.

The third central pericope (Ex 13:17-14:31) is a description of the third part of the covenant-making ceremony. This passage between the halves of the divided sea is the definitive, irrevocable act of the covenant-making (“cutting”), analogical in the meaning to the passage of God in Gen 15.

In Passover, the liturgical sign of the participation of the whole community in the passage with Fathers is the eating of unleavened Afikoman, which the leader breaks and gives to every participant. They eat Afikoman after the end of the supper crowning the second central part of the Passover, in the point named in Hebrew אָפִיקוֹמָן (hidden).

Unfortunately, contemporary Jews do not understand the meaning of the Afikoman. It is caused, among other things, by a misunderstanding of its Hebrew name, contained in “The Passover Haggadah”⁷⁷! The Jews think that the word ‘Afikoman’ is a distortion of some Greek expression. For example, they mention the word ‘ἐπίκωμον,’ which means dessert or after-dinner entertainment. Since they eat the Afikoman in a rather short time from the end of the supper, it seems that the explanation is correct – if the Afikoman is a dessert, it is something that ones eat at the very end of the main meal.

Jews also explain that: 1. The name אָפִיקוֹמָן (hidden) of this point of rite refers to the custom of hiding Afikoman (which takes place in the first central part of the rite) and of finding it right now, near the end of the rite, 2. They do it to arouse the curiosity of children to prevent them from falling asleep during the paschal night of vigil. They do not suppose that this custom has some deeper historical grounds; namely, it is connected with “the dough before it was leavened, in their kneading bowls wrapped in their cloaks on the shoulders” (Ex 12:34) of Israelites at the time of their starting the march and passing to the Sea of Reeds and between its divided waters.

Both rabbinic explanations are incorrect from the viewpoint of analysis of the Book of Exodus and “The Passover Haggadah.” The name ‘Afikoman’, in Hebrew אָפִיקוֹמָן, is the compound⁷⁸ אָפִיקוֹ + מָן (manna + its bottom), which means: ‘its bottom is manna’ or ‘its bottom, manna’ or alternatively ‘the bottom of the sea,’ pointing to the unleavened (and therefore similar in taste to sweet manna) bread of the way, which they were baking of not yet acidified dough taken from Egypt from the place, where they were eating the lamb-Passover, to the place of passage through the Sea of Reeds and then to the place of receiving

⁷⁶ Due to the impossibility of offering a lamb (because the Jerusalem temple is ruined), they do not eat a paschal lamb.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Hagada, reprint*, op.cit., p. 13: in the 5th point of the ritual, the father, when asked by his wise son, is to quote the answer, which is from the treaty “Pesachim” X.8. of the Mishnah. This answer, however, is commonly incorrectly translated; there are various attempts to understand it. Cf. for example, C. ADLER (ed.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (volume I-XII), New York – London, 1901, vol. I, p. 224. Cf. a correct understanding: W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 322-357.

⁷⁸ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., s. 324-329.

from God the manna, which replaced this bread.

The word אָפּוֹן also hides the relation to the passage through the Sea of Reeds. The name of the place where the Israelites were after passing through the uncovered seabed is, according to Num 33:7, בְּעַל צְפוֹן (according to Ex 14:2.9: בְּעַל צְפוֹן). The words אָפּוֹן (hidden) and צְפוֹן (north) differ only by the vowel signs added to the biblical text by Masoretes only six centuries after Christ.

Thus, the eating of Afikoman is a liturgical sign, which makes participants present in the time and place of covenant-making between God and Israel. Through this liturgical act, they participate in the passage of God and Israel between halves of the Sea of Reeds. Therefore, the eating of Afikoman does not belong to the second central part (in which one eats meals prescribed by law, and then a festive dinner not regulated by law), but to the third central part, connected with the third stage of the leaving Egypt.

Jewish commentators usually do not fully understand this, although a few opinions contain traces of some old correct discussions. This is the case with rabbi S. Pecaric's work⁷⁹, where the author, on the one hand, correctly links the Afikoman with the leaving of Egypt – hence the custom of wrapping the Afikoman in a unique napkin and putting it on one's shoulder for a moment, to follow Fathers who carried dough wrapped in coats (cf. Ex 12:34). On the other hand, he incorrectly links the eating of Afikoman only with the future liberation of Israel, forgetting about their real participation in leaving Egypt by virtue of the Passover liturgy.

However, rabbi Pecaric draws the correct conclusion: "eating the Afikoman (...) begins the second part of the Seder." The author understands by 'the second part of Seder' the second half of the ritual of Passover, viz. the group consisting of the third and fourth main part. It is worth noting and appreciating since many other commentators understand eating the Afikoman only as eating the 'dessert' crowning the second central part, the supper!

A confirmation of this concept is also the custom of Jews from some traditions⁸⁰: before proceeding to eat Afikoman, they clean up the room and table on which until that moment they ate festive supper in a relaxed atmosphere.

One of the meaningful liturgical signs of this part is the recitation of the prayer "Birkat hamazon," which commentators misinterpret⁸¹ as a thanksgiving prayer for the ended supper. However, this prayer is above all thanksgiving for the food on the first stage of the way from Egypt, the food, which the unleavened bread was, and which is present in Passover liturgy as Afikoman since it was the only food at the most challenging time – in a situation of constant threat from the pursuing troops of Pharaoh – so in Passover there is a strict ban on eating anything after eating Afikoman.

The confirmation of this understanding is the content of the thanksgiving song which they are now singing. Also, the next point of the Seder has the same meaning: they now open the door and recite the prayer asking God to pour out His wrath on the nations that hate Israel. Opening the door is a sign that now, in this third central part, the start of the march out of Egypt is made-present, and the threat from Pharaoh is now real! – now God will pour out His wrath on Pharaoh!

The fourth central pericope (Ex 15:1-21) is a description of the implementation of the fourth part of the covenant-making ceremony: the fulfillment of its promises and commemoration of the fact of the covenant conclusion. The singing of a hymn in honor of God as King of Israel, on the one hand, means that Israel from now recognizes herself as God's vassal. On the other hand, the song is Israel's anticipatory entry into possession

⁷⁹ Cf. S. PECARIC (ed.), *Hagada na Pesach*, op.cit., p. 78.

⁸⁰ Cf. J. DROZD, *Ostatnia Wieczerza nową Paschą [The Last Supper as the New Passover]*, Katowice 1977, p. 43 – this is according to the additional Halacha regulations regarding this cup.

⁸¹ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 317.

of the land which God-sovereign promised her at the time of the realization of the first part of the ceremony. One should emphasize that already at the time of the historic exodus this hymn was **the liturgical crowning**⁸² (just through the hymn) **of the whole plan of God**, who wanted to complete the final element of the covenant ceremony here, on the other side of the Sea of Reeds. It is evident that “God always reveals Himself in concrete history, using the cultural codes⁸³ written into it,” where the “cultural code” it is the human custom of making covenants according to a traditional ceremony.

In the fourth part of the Passover rite, one sings Psa 114-118 (or 115-118), then Psa 136⁸⁴ along with the recitation of the additional prayer preceding it; then one says a very long prayer “The soul of every living being shall bless Your name, Lord our God.”⁸⁵

One should emphasize that the literary genre of the text Ex 1-18 is the one in which the people used to write down the vassal covenant treaties in the 16th-12th centuries before Christ. Such a literary genre indicates that everything that the text Ex 1-18 conveys is not literary fiction, but a record of the ceremony of covenant-making between God as a sovereign and Israel as a vassal.

At the same time, one should emphasize that scientific research must not assume in advance, that the Biblical text does not convey the historical salvific facts reliably, i.e., not according to their actual order. An exegete, reading with scientific perspicaciousness a sacred text, only then may claim that a literal interpretation would be wrong if he unquestionably discovered text’s literary genre as a ‘non-historical’ (for example, a fairy tale, a Midrash). In the case of Ex 1-18, however, the literary genre is the ‘historical’ one – Ex 1-18 is the ancient treaty of covenant-making.

To question the historical credibility of this biblical record would be contrary to both the teaching of the Church’s Magisterium⁸⁶ and real scientific honesty. Since the literary genre of the text Ex 1-18 was precisely determined by literary analyses, moreover, since it is a genre of ancient Hittite treaties, nobody has right to question **the historical value** of this record, just as nobody claims to have right to question the historical value of the Hittite treaties discovered by archaeologists – in the common opinion they are a record of historically credible political agreements of ancient peoples, and not only a literary fiction written for propaganda purposes.

⁸² Cf. W. BOROWSKI, *Kantyk Mojżesza i Miriam (Wj 15, 1-21)* [*Canticle of Moses and Miriam (Ex 15:1-21)*], “Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 29 (1976), p. 256. The author draws attention to the cult origins of the canticle of Moses and the canticle of Miriam. It primarily bases on verse 20: the women took the tambourines and, following Miriam, danced and sang in honor of God. On the day of passage of the Sea, the purpose of this cult was to praise the God-Savior. In the next days, years, and generations during the feasts, when they were similarly doing, the goal was to commemorate God’s saving deeds. At the same time, the author emphasizes (pp. 255/256) that **the origin of this cult connects with the day of crossing the Sea, and not with a later period.**

⁸³ Cf. POPE BENEDICT XVI, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*. On the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church, 114.

⁸⁴ One can not overestimate the presence of this psalm in the Passover seder, because an emphatic phrase “**to halve into halves**” (לְגַזֵּר יָם-סוּף לְגִזְרִים) occurs in the description of the dividing of the Sea of Reeds in verse 15, constituting a “verbal allusion” (through the root גזר) to the covenant-making of God with Abram (Gen 15:17) between **the halves** (הַגִּזְרִים) of animals. On the “verbal allusion” as Hebrew interpretive technique, see in A. JANKOWSKI, *Aniolowie wobec Chrystusa [Angels Towards Christ]*, Kraków 2002, p. 45.

⁸⁵ Cf. *Hagada, reprint*, op.cit., p. 54-60. About Ps 118 see A. TRONINA, *Psalmy «eucharystyczne»: Todah [‘Eucharistic’ Psalms: Todah]*, “Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 41 (1988), pp. 293-297. Cf. The Hebrew-English Haggadah on the Internet:

https://www.sefaria.org/Pesach_Haggadah%2C_Hallel%2C_Songs_of_Praise_and_Thanks.3?lang=bi

⁸⁶ Cf. POPE BENEDICT XV, Encyclical *Spiritus Paraclitus*, No. 22: “history (...) must square with the facts, since history is the written account of events as they actually occurred.” Cf. on the Internet: http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xv_enc_15091920_spiritus-paraclitus.html

Ex 1-18 is a real treaty with the same historical value as any other treaty. Ex 1-18 has the features of treaties that were drawn up no later than the 12th century BC. Ex 1-18 is therefore probably a treaty no younger than the 12th century BC⁸⁷.

It is worth mentioning that each of the six pericopes has its particular literary genre. God is the main protagonist of the sacred text, and His successive salvific acts are an essential element, which distinguishes subsequent pericopes. Besides, analysis shows⁸⁸ that performing the text studying according to theocentric criterion yields magnificent results. It is thanks to it that one discovered the signs of structure (Struktursignal⁸⁹) given by the hagiographer-redactor, indicating the boundaries between the pericopes. It turned out that these structural signs are: the change in the tempo of action, the change in the literary genre. Adjacent pericopes differ from each other in that they have a different literary genre or different tempo of the action.

3.4. Conclusions from the analysis of the Passover rite in light of the literary structure of Ex 1-18.

The analyses carried out showed that the customs of the four main parts of the Passover rite are strictly related to what happened in the four main stages of Israel's historic exit from Egyptian captivity through God's intervention. In the liturgical signs, the rite of the Passover annually accomplishes what has happened in history: not only the liberation but also the making of the covenant between God and Israel carried out according to the cultural code – the ancient ceremonial.

Understanding the Book of Exodus 1-18 as a covenant treaty allows reading in a new light those passages which in the previous comments seemed to be duplicated descriptions of one event, or contradictory descriptions, or descriptions that are not in the right place or from different sources. Exodus 1-18 is a literary masterpiece, the model for the Paschal Haggadah as the Jewish liturgical book for the celebration of the annual Passover.

The article shows, for example, that Ex 3 and Ex 6, previously interpreted as a duplicated description of one event, are descriptions of two different events. The first revelation initiates God's proposition for entering into a covenant with Israel; the second one is a fulfillment of a requirement of the first part of the ceremony, at the beginning of which the contractors had to present themselves.

In turn, the genealogy of Moses and Aaron in Ex 6:13-27 turned out to be an example of a description allegedly not in the right place in the Bible: it serves to present the weaker contractor, according to the requirements of the first part of the covenant-making, so it is not an unnecessary fragment of unknown origin and purpose. Equally, the appointment of judges in Ex 18:13-21 is also in the right place, because it is related to the covenant between the waters of the Sea of Reeds, described in Ex 1:1-18:27, and not the covenant at Mount Horeb – commentators often think that this text should be moved somewhere after Ex 19, where the description of the Sinai covenant is.

There is no basis for splitting the Ex 1-18 text into any fragments from different sources. The text is beautiful, logical and cohesive, the reading of which requires only believing in its

⁸⁷ One knows from archaeological research that the scheme of treaties changed for sure in the eighth century B.C. – **there is no historical prologue** in the Aramaic and Assyrian texts. In Ex 1-18, as in the Hittite schemes from the 16th-12th century B.C., the historical prologue occurs (it is Ex 1:1-6:1). Cf. P. BUIS, *La notion de l'Alliance dans l'Ancien Testament*, Paris 1976, p. 120; A. MILLARD, *Skarby z czasów biblijnych* [*Treasures from Biblical Times*], translated by J. WÓJCIK, Racibórz 1994, p. 64; K. A. KITCHEN, *On the reliability of the Old Testament*, op.cit., p. 4-5, 283-294.

⁸⁸ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 195.

⁸⁹ Cf. S. ŁACH, *Księga Powtórzonego Prawa. Wstęp – przekład z oryginału – komentarz – ekskursy* [*Deuteronomy. Introduction – Translation from the Original – Commentary – Excursus*], Poznań – Warszawa 1971, p. 61-62.

originating from God, who has passed it on to us through the talented and profoundly believing hagiographers of His choice.

Proving the development of the Passover rite, the scholars based their concepts on the erroneous assumption, that not the final text of the Scriptures but some alleged earlier versions are the authentic carriers of historical truth. The Church, however, firmly and undeniably teaches that not some earlier source fragments but the final text inherited from the descendants of Abraham is the Word of God.

Furthermore, one should remember that biblical scholars proving the alleged development of the Passover rite committed the error, which is the most critical scientific mistake. The reasoning, in which the proof of the thesis was carried out based on the premise derived from the thesis which had to be proven (the so-called error of circular reasoning), completely disqualifies this theory.

The publications of the French biblical scholar R. de Vaux gave the impression that the theory of the sources of the Pentateuch was not only methodologically correct, but also genuinely verified by the results of his research, i.e., historical knowledge about the development of the Passover rite, the result which in no other way could have been achieved. A careful reading of his works reveals, however, that he does not distinguish the thesis from the premises.

The result of the work of the French biblical scholar is contrary to what God wished to communicate in the Scriptures, and in particular in Ex 1-18, in the canonical text. The Passover rite is not the result of the merging of two separate feasts, agricultural and pastoral, but the liturgical actualization of the covenant ceremony, a ceremony established culturally by men in the Ancient Near East about sixteen centuries B.C.

One must perceive that Himself God in cooperation with man is the author of the Passover rite as the annual renewal of the covenant made between the divided waters of the Sea of Reeds. The proof for this is that God Himself has wished to harmonize His plan of bringing Israel out of Egypt with the four-part ceremony of the covenant-making and that He has wanted to make the covenant not only on the Horeb but also on the way to it.

The Passover rite, therefore, from the very moment of leaving Egypt contained:

- ‘pastoral’ elements. The God-sovereign gave them as a covenant clause specifying the requirements for the eating of lamb-Passover, lamb-sacrifice. The purpose of this law is to awaken the memory of His mercy towards them at the time when He was killing the firstborns of Egypt – what was happening while they were eating the feast of lamb-Passover in honor for God.
- ‘agricultural’ elements. God gave them under the covenant clause as a requirement to remove all acid and not to eat it for a period of seven days, from the 15th to the 21st day of the month of Abib, i.e., from the time of leaving to the first rest at Mara. The passage through the sea, and thus the very act of the covenant-making, falls precisely in the middle of this period⁹⁰.

The ‘pastoral’ elements serve to make Israel remember the first fundamental intervention of God, i.e., the killing of all the first-born in the land of Egypt at midnight of the 15th day of Abib, and the salvation all the first-born of Israel at the same time. The ‘agricultural’ elements serve to make Israel remember the second fundamental intervention of God, i.e., the killing of the most eminent Egyptians at dawn, as they were crossing the divided Sea of Reeds, and, at the same time, the saving of all of Israel from death in the sea.

⁹⁰ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 22, 376.

3.5. Addenda about the literary structure of the law pericope.

The literary structure of the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) serves to show the equal importance of ‘pastoral’ and ‘agricultural’ elements because they two are to serve in the paschal liturgy to remember about two fundamental God’s salvation acts.

Within the framework of the law pericope⁹¹ (Ex 12:1-13:16), the hagiographer, using the inclusion of almost identical verses (12:28 = 12:50), separated part Ex 12:28-51, in which he used a reflection-inducing literary technique. Here he presented these two groups of laws in parallel, but in reverse order to the order of the events they represent: first the laws on unleavened bread (12:28-33 is an introduction; 12:34-42 is **the description of starting the departure** with an unleavened dough; it is the historical justification for the need not to eat acid for seven days, i.e., until the first stop at Mara), then the laws on the lamb (12:43-51: it is the second speech of God, concerning only the law of the Passover banquet: the command to circumcise the participants, **the ban on taking the lamb meat out** of the place of its eating).

This literary technique – the parallelism of the two parts – shows the equal importance of both events and the two groups of laws! In the Passover, the second one, ‘pastoral,’ is applied in the second part of the rite (eating a lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs). The first one, ‘agricultural,’ is applied in the third part of the rite (eating unleavened Afikoman as a sign of leaving the place of eating a lamb, passing to the sea and between its waters, divided by God, to the shore of freedom).

Since in order to achieve the goal of writing a theological explication, the hagiographer used such a complicated structure for this separated part of the law pericope, it is challenging to understand this part during a cursory reading. It is the reason why many exegetes concluded that this part is a compilation of fragments from various ‘pastoral’ and ‘agricultural’ sources.

Summary.

The present article aims to show, on the one hand, the danger of applying in scientific exegesis the proofs in which the logic of the circular reasoning links the premises and thesis. On the other hand, the aim is to show the value of obedience to methodological rules which Magisterium of the Church gives as essential to read the truth revealed by God as the Author of the Holy Scriptures.

On the example of the established in many scientific circles conviction that the Passover rite is the effect of the gradual process of merging of formerly separate two holidays, pastoral and agricultural, the article has shown such a belief as being for two reasons unfounded.

First, it shows that biblical proof of the truthfulness of such a view is entangled in the logic of circular reasoning. Secondly, it shows that the canonical text Ex 1-18 is a treaty of the covenant made between God as sovereign and Israel as a vassal in four stages required by an ancient ceremonial. These stages, being at the same time the four successive elements of the plan according to which God led Israel out of captivity, are, as it were, hidden under the ‘military’ layer of description, and therefore are not easy to see.

One should notice that two texts, that appear identical while superficial reading, may contain details indicating that they describe some two different events. An insightful reading is, therefore, necessary to understand the course of events and the division⁹² of the text into

⁹¹ Cf. Ibid, p. 330-342.

⁹² The issue of division of the text accordingly with the hagiographer’s intention is at the center of the rhetorical analysis that R. Meynet has been proposing for many years. This author emphasizes the necessity of respecting the Hebrew way of thinking and composing literary works, different from the classic patterns of Greek rhetoric. This literary analysis of Exodus 1-18 is based on the three principles laid out by this author: 1. Biblical texts have been composed and well composed; 2. There is specific biblical rhetoric; 3. First and foremost, let us trust the text, and very carefully take into account the amendments put forward by representatives of the historical-

the main parts (pericopes) as intended by the editor-hagiographer working under the influence of the Holy Spirit⁹³.

Finally, in order to strengthen the belief in the value of the canonical method⁹⁴ in discovering the origin of the Passover rite, it is worth mentioning that there are vitally interesting numerical relationships which, according to the logic of Hebrews' thinking⁹⁵, link the individual parts of the canonical, final text Ex 1-18. One of them is the relationship between the six main pericopes of Ex 1-18⁹⁶: they constitute the chiasm A B C C' B' A' in terms of both the central message of each of pericope, and also of the frequency of past tense forms in relation to the future tense forms in a given pericope: 62%, 56%, 35%, (100-34)%, 56%, 62%. The existence of such a mathematical relationship between pericopes, the separation process of which in the text was carried out according to a method independent of such relationships, confirms the correctness of this method.

critical method: cf. R. MEYNET, *Wprowadzenie do hebrajskiej retoryki biblijnej* [An Introduction to Biblical Rhetoric], translated by K. ŁUKOWICZ, T. KOT, Kraków 2001, p. 179-193.

⁹³ Cf. POPE LEO XIII, Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus. On the Study of Holy Scripture*, No. 20. Number 20 according to Vatican numbering: http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_18111893_providentissimus-deus.html

⁹⁴ Cf. POPE BENEDICT XVI, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, 34.

⁹⁵ Cf. T. JELONEK, *Znaczenie mistycznej tradycji żydowskiej dla chrześcijańskiego rozumienia Biblii na tle nauczania kościelnego* [The Meaning of Mystical Jewish Tradition for the Christian Understanding of the Bible in the Light of Church Teaching], "Polonia Sacra" 9/53 (2001), pp. 161-163.

⁹⁶ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy*, op.cit., p. 391-393.