

BIBLIOTEKARZ PODLASKI 2/2020 (XLVII) https://doi.org/10.36770/bp.487 ISSN 1640-7806 (druk) ISSN 2544-8900 (online) http://bibliotekarzpodlaski.pl

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# "If you knew how important the word is"<sup>1</sup>: The latest trends in biblical hermeneutics study in the Ukrainian and Polish-language prose of the Baroque period

**Abstract:** The article deals with the main trends of modern biblical studies of ancient literature, in particular the Ukrainian Polish-language prose of the Baroque period. Attention is focused on the universal and individual factors of sacral images and motifs interpretation derived from the Scriptures and designed on the background of fiction. Accordingly, the polycultural character of Polish-language works created on the borders of Ukrainian and Polish literatures is underlined. The author analyzes the creative work of baroque writers such as Meletii Smotryckyi, Ipatii Potii, Andrii Muzhylovskyi, Lazar Baranovych, Petro Mohyla, loanykii Galiatovskyi, Teofil Rutka, Pahomii Woina Oranskyi, etc. In the context of their bible interpretation a special place is dedicated to the quotation of the Holy Scriptures, as well as concord series of biblical images for which numerous references have been given, biblical paraphrases and repositions of evangelical parables, liturgical symbols,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> I. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv u 50-ty tomah* [*Collected works in 50 volumes*], Kyiv 1976, V. 3, p. 172.

and metaphorical constructions derived from the Bible mentioned by ancient authors as works possessing individual and typological characteristics.

**Key words:** biblical hermeneutics, symbol, sacral significance, the Baroque period, Ukrainian Polish-language prose.

#### Introduction

Being deprived of ideological prejudices and restrictions nowadays, contemporary literature study faces the problem of bible interpretation of ancient national works, namely its little-studied areas such as Polish-language prose, where the sacral aspect is most pronounced.

Scholars such as Zoriana Lanovyk<sup>2</sup>, Magdalena Krzysztofik<sup>3</sup>, Northrop Frye<sup>4</sup> and others examined and are still engaged in the study of bible hermeneutics issues in the projection of literary works. However, despite their individual hermeneutical theories and concepts, the biblical material of individual literary pages of both our national and foreign literature is mostly poorly understood, and therefore requires a significant up-to-date actualization and concretization. The problem has been mentioned in a number of significant publications of a monographic nature<sup>5</sup>, but it still seems that the study of the Bible in literary texts is imposed by a taboo. The tendency of desacralization of today's world encouraged us to return to the topic of biblical hermeneutics in

<sup>2</sup> Z. Lanovyk, *Hermeneutica Sacra*, Ternopil 2006.

<sup>3</sup> M. Krzysztofik, Od Biblii do Literatury. Siedemnastowieczne dziela literackie z ksiąg Starego Testamentu [From the Bible to Literature. 17 th century Literary Works from the Books of the Old Testament], Kraków 2003.

<sup>4</sup> N. Frye, *Wielki Kod. Biblia i literatura* [*The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*], Bydgoszcz 1988; N. Frye, *Words with Power: Being a Second Study of the Bible and Literature*, San Diego – New York – London 1990.

<sup>5</sup> S. Sukharieva, *Biblijnyi wymir ukrainskoi polskomovnoi prozy poberestejskoi doby* [*Biblical dimension of Ukrainian Polish-language prose after the Union of Brest*], Lutsk 2008; S. Sukharieva, *Rytorychnyi prostir polskomovnoi prozy XVII st.* [*Rhetorical space of 17th century Polish-language prose*], Lutsk 2015.

the literary space which is widely discussed and studied in the national literary environment and has become widespread. Moreover, we can argue that there is a scientific myth about the abyss between the Bible and literature. Subjects, plots, and artistic means of modern literature rather contribute to the spread of such mythological theory. Thus, the purpose of today's research paper is to explore the sacredness of the literary word based on the example of Baroque Polish-language prose through returning to the origins. Małgorzata Krzysztofik's statement is worth accepting. She states:

Baroque literature becomes deeply rooted in the Bible, yet the process is bidirectional in its nature: the Bible finds its place in literature, whereas literature finds its absolute meaning in the Bible<sup>6</sup>.

The prime objective is to point out the boundaries of the above-mentioned prose, its multicultural nature united into a cohesive whole by bible hermeneutics, and bringing it to the general European level by means of highlighting universal imperatives and, at the same time, emphasizing national achievements. Taking into consideration such motivation, it is impossible to overestimate the value of the studied material.

## Ways of expressing sacredness in the Baroque word

At the very beginning we'd like to point out that the concept of biblical hermeneutics is almost identical both in the field of religion and literature since they originate from an original source and build their structure based on sacred symbolism. Nevertheless, literary variations of biblical hermeneutics are often characterized by their subjective nature and depend on many factors, such as the addressee, the public environment of existence, the education and the area of the author's interests, his literary skills, knowledge of the language, etc. Literature focuses on the artistic dimension of the symbol in the broad sense but it does not always take into account the hidden spiritual meaning emphasized by connoisseurs of theological symbols such as Alexandr Kamchatnov<sup>7</sup>,

<sup>6</sup> M. Krzysztofik, *Od Biblii do Literatury*, p. 369-370.

<sup>7</sup> A. Kamchatnov, *Istoria i hermenevtika slavianskoj Biblii* [History and Hermeneutics of the Slavic Bible], Moscow 1998.

Vasyl Laba<sup>8</sup> and others. Instead, the religious environment provides the biblical material of a confessional nature, focusing on the chosen truths of faith, and the universal dimension of the symbol goes back to the background. These are the danger Holy Scripture confronts when falling into confessional or literary soil, and which should be taken into consideration by researchers who start to analyze biblical hermeneutics at all levels. Nevertheless, Northrop Frye, characterizing biblical archetypes, points to their common semantic purpose. He notes that they are understood by humanity, and the power of their communicative influence is unlimited<sup>9</sup>.

One can find a number of biblical interpretation (hermeneutics) definitions as of a phenomenon, and as we have already noted, the differences depend only on the personal position of the authors. For example, the role of the Christian Tradition and oral tradition in the Protestant Tradition is levelled out, the sacred mission of Mary and the holy Apostles is specially interpreted, and the literal meaning of the metaphorical constructions of Sacred Scripture is transmitted. In the circle of the representatives of Orthodoxy an interpretation of *Credo* is individualized and the issue of St. Peter's Patriarchal primacy is questioned. These aspects need to be taken into account in the analysis of the baroque prose written in Polish since it arose in times of polemical dialogues and polygons, in which the examined issue was given considerable attention.

The definition of biblical hermeneutics proposed by Józef Homerski in the second volume of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* is one of the most universal, clear and consonant with the literary sphere:

Biblical hermeneutics is a methodological knowledge that provides the basis for the knowledge of the true meaning of the biblical utterance conceived by the author<sup>10</sup>.

This type of knowledge about the Word symbol in artistic framing acquires different forms of interpretation beginning from literal meanings to the

- <sup>9</sup> N. Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, Princeton University Press 1957, p. 99.
- <sup>10</sup> J. Homerski, *Hermeneutyka biblijna* [w:] *Encyklopedia Katolicka* [*Biblical Hermeneutics* [in:] *Catholic Encyclopedia*], V. 2, Lublin 1976, p. 464.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> V. Laba, *Biblijna hermenevtyka* [*Biblical Hermeneutics*], Roma 1990.

metaphorical, hidden content of the sacral that needs to be clarified. This level of literalism is expressed in different ways in the works of all Baroque Polishlanguage prose writers. The task of the researchers is to outline the typical and individual traits of individual authors' styles through which the artistic means of ancient literature were formed, while at the same time the levels of used sacred symbolism were manifested. The most accurate definition of this phenomenon is found in the philosophy and poetry of Hryhorii Skovoroda, who called it a philosophy of *Godthought*.

Fathers of the Church conditionally divided the biblical interpretive material into typology and allegory, the former marked by semantic literal use of biblical quotations and paraphrases, and the latter exclusively symbolic in nature. The typological principle was adhered to by the Antiochian hermeneutic school. But the Alexandrian hermeneutic school worked on the hidden meanings of biblical allegories fully presented in fiction. Instead, hermeneutics was also abundantly represented in fiction. Patristic theology being one of the first theories to dare to interpret the Holy Scripture in details was of use, and as a result of which many theological materials have come to this day thanks to the comments and studies of the Church Doctors in the Eastern and Western religions.

Thus, the phenomenon of double interpretation emerged when patristic authors explained each biblical fragment and every word used in the Holy Scriptures referring to the ignorance of the listeners with the original source and in view of their special mission of evangelization. Baroque writers often did not burden themselves with the extra burden of personal deepening in the Bible despite their considerable interest in theological themes and polemical issues since they had hand-written volumes of comments and postilla in which the interpretive field was so deep that its content claimed the status of a sacred source. Such an interpretation of pre-made interpretations suggests that in the old Polish-language prose there were several layers of hermeneutic material which differed considerably in length and originality but was thematically united into one semantic block.

The Brest Union of the Eastern Church with Rome (1596) became the turning point in the public life of the Commonwealth on the road to return to the biblical and patristic symbolism resulting in a new Greek Catholic confession and a long-standing controversy of a religious nature that embraced all of the following XVII century. At the same time the Polish language played a mediating and unifying role in confessional debates that led to many social conflicts. The Bible was supposed to serve as the main source of evidence, and all polemicists without exception resisted it. Thus, Polish-language treatises, apologia, sermons, memoirs, orations, apology and communication of controversial content were created.

One of the first creators of such works on the Ukrainian-Polish literary border was Volodymyr-Volyn Bishop Ipatii Potii, who was entitled to convey to the Pope the desire of the eastern hierarchs to join the Roman Patriarchal throne, together with Kyrylo Terleckyi. The union with Rome aroused the lively polemics of Ipatii Potii with Martyn Bronewskyi, Konstanty Vasyl Ostrogskyi and the Cleric Ostrogskyi based on these events and the subsequent signing in Brest, in which Potii spoke on the side of Catholicism.

Considering Holy Scripture the main imperative of his life position and literary inspiration, the writer turned to his opponents:

You consent to a cursed schism over peace and Christianity, forgetting the Message of God's Son, who says: *After this you will recognize that you are my disciples, that you will save your consent and love among you*<sup>11</sup>.

From the given fragment we see that at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the baroque on the lands of the then Rzeczpospolita was still in full swing, a gradual departure from literality was already observed in polemical prose, and the paraphrase was given as an arbitrary form of biblical text reproduction. This kind of persuasion compared with the quotation was distinguished by the highest artistic level and arbitrariness. At the same time it remained an element of the rhetorical canon in which Adam Karpiński identified the following main functions: the variational (due to the influence of *aemulatio*), the imitative (in accordance with the requirements of canonicality), the interpretive-explanatory (relationships between the original and the addressee), and the utilitarian (in order to reflect the extra-literary reality)<sup>12</sup>. Aleksandr Kam-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> I. Potii, *O przywilejach nadanych od najjaśniejszych królów polskich…* [*About privileges* given by the most distinguished kings of Poland…], Wilno 1605, p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Retoryka a literatura [Rhetoric and literature], ed. B. Otwinowska, Wrocław 1984, p. 119.

chatnov recommends drawing attention to the eidetic nature of the biblical material used in the literature. He explains his position as follows:

All fullness of meaning is given for the purpose of mental observation in eidos, and in the symbol all the completeness of the meaning is given potentially: the meaning in the symbol is not viewed, but is presumed, guessed, or, in the simplest case, mathematically calculated<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, we can argue that biblical hermeneutics gives an iconic nature the literary images of the Baroque period. A system of biblical concepts developed based on the development of this rhetoric type, became the hallmark of polemical prose after the Union of Brest.

In the first stage of the Baroque Polish-language prose development, in addition to Ipatii Potii, the following writers such as Joachym Morochovskyi, Lev Kreuza-Rzevuskyi, Zacharii Kopystenskyi, and Martyn Bronevskyj played an important role in the formation of biblical hermeneutics in literature, although their works were still dominated by documentary, historical and the theological factual.

Meletii Smotryckyi, who initially jealously defended the orthodox faith, gave a special role to the diversification of biblical means. In response to the pogroms in the city of Vilno he created the stylized cry of the Church. Such pitiful mourning had to convince the reader and introduce him into a state of equivalence. It should be recalled that he also urged his appeals from the Episcopal cathedral to the pogroms of the Greek-Catholic shrines, namely, the immediate initiator of Josafat Kuncevych's persecution, who was killed by the angry Orthodox. Nevertheless, the writer sought to cause a sense of regret, shame depicting behaviour of the Uniate when he wrote:

I'm poor, grief stricken, unhappy, everywhere in my riches, looted, my grief, to the disgrace of my body before the world, from the garment, undressed! The trouble to me, the unbearable burdens burdened!<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> A. Kamchatnov, *Istoria i hermenevtika slavianskoj Biblii*, p. 84-85.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> M. Smotryckyi, *Threnos, to jest Lament jedynej Ś. Powszechnej Apostolskiej Wschodniej Cerkwie [Threnos, or the Lament of the One Holy Local Apostolic Eastern Church]*, Kyiv 2015, p. 59.

The polemicist introduced not only an extended version of the lamentation into literary texts, but also fully utilized the elements of the gospel parables, and numerous images and allusions drawn from the Scriptures. At the same time, his quotation and paraphrases have not lost their relevance in his treatise. All biblical material of the works of Smotryckyi was a holistic imaginative complex, which filled polemical works with poetic sound. Through the means of prozopopia researchers unanimously claim that we are dealing with a special author's- poetry in prose.

If we find in the Cleric of Ostrogskyi only attempts at biblical personalization of the Church Mother and certain elements of weeping drawn from Holy Scripture, then in Meletii Smotryckyi we observe holistic lamentation as a separate literary genre, which, in addition to the national – Sarmatian – character, contained numerous biblical parallels, thus pointing to the diachronic character of the biblical metaphor<sup>15</sup>.

Meletii Smotryckyi's work *Threnos* caused a new, even more significant wave of controversy among Christians. In contrast, the Polish-language treaties by Piotr Skarga (*Na Threny and Lament Theofila Ortologa*) and Joachym Morochovskyi (*Paregoria albo utulenie uszczypliwego Lamentu mniemanej Cerkwie Świętej wschodniej*) came out. However, biblical hermeneutics is presented at lower level than the sacred outlook of the opponent. Skarga and Morochowskyi stopped at the traditional typology and did not go further in the direction of the conceptual representation of hierophany.

After the transition to Catholicism, Meletii Smotryckyi published the work *Apologia*<sup>16</sup>, which caused a particularly sharp protest of Orthodox supporters Andrii Muzhylovskyi, who introduced political motives in biblical rhetoric. Along with the sacred content, we trace the motives of incarnation through the Church of the national idea. In this way, the writer departed from the universal character of biblical utterances, narrowing their role not so much to the confessional as the nation-making factor. Nevertheless, the richness of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> S. Sukharieva, Rytorychnyi prostir polskomovnoi prozy XVII st., p. 285-286.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> M. Smotryckyi, *Apologia peregrinacji do krajów wschodnych* [*Apology for travelling to the eastern countries*], Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, 1987.

biblical persuasion of this author is impressive. Paraphrased fragments from Holy Scripture are the answer to each of the opponent's theses: "*Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing*" (p. 1); "*They came from us, but they were not from us*" (p. 2); "*He will give me the crown of justice, the Lord and the judge are just*" (p. 15), etc. Muzhylovskyi adhered to the canonical principle of overcoming the opponent's own arguments. This general rhetorical tendency is peculiar to all, without exception, polemical writings of the studied age.

Andrii Muzhylovskyi appealed to the monk brothers in the afterword, imitating the style of the apostolic letters of St. Paul, which he carefully referred to throughout his apology. In particular, the writer stated:

It is fitting for these sad times to be strengthened by the word of God, to teach each other in brotherly love, so that we all may stand before the Lord as His faithful servants, having received each of their rewards according to their merits<sup>17</sup>.

At the second stage of controversy in the formation of which a significant role belonged to Kasjan Sakowych, Petro Mohyla, etc. through the prism of biblical hermeneutics, numerous elements of the so-called "low style" with the introduction into the text of current speech are viewed. The secularization of biblical symbolism did not aim to level the sacred content of the Bible. Instead, the rhetorical expressions were painted with bright emotions, and induced the individual reading of one or another image. The reason for such transformations of biblical symbols could be a protracted discussion process, which did not stop for decades, but the personal role of the authors also played an important part, such as their spontaneity, radicalism, or irreconcilability with their opponents. The allegorical type of biblical hermeneutics clearly dominated the typological, and the characters acquired diverse interpretations.

The treatise ceased to satisfy the writers in the genre in the classical form. Thus, they resorted to active searches for new ways of expressing polemical ideas. The biblical material in these quests did not cease to occupy a prominent place,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> A. Muzhylovskyi, Antidotum przezacnemu narodowi ruskiemu [Antidote to a noble Russian nation], Kyiv 1629, p. 45.

but somewhat was changed in its forms. The emotional nature of the polemical writings indicated the secularization of the hieratic elements of the works. The literal formants derived from the Bible gradually lost their original metaphorical character, which Frye defined, and acquired formal qualities<sup>18</sup>.

We can draw parallels between the process of the development of conceptual structures and the secularization of the sacred themes of Baroque Polishlanguage prose based on the biblical hermeneutics of various stages in polemics after the Union of Brest. It may seem paradoxical that the more the polemical authors departed from the primary metaphoric words and gave it formal-stylistic functions, the more developed the concept of baroque literature became. First of all, we see it based on an example of a discussion between Kasjan Sakovych and Petro Mohyla ( $E\pi avo\rho v\omega\sigma i \zeta$  abo Perspectiwa, i Objaśnienie Blędów, Herezji i Zabobonów, w Grekoruskiej Cerkwi Disunickiej (1642) – Lithos abo Kamień z Procy Prawdy Cerkwi Ś. Ruskiej Prawosławnej na skruszenie faleczno-ciemnej perspectiwy albo raczej paszkwilu od Kasjana Sakowicza (1644)). The theological themes are presented as a canon in the works of both authors but the transition from the metaphorical to the metonymic method of artistic speech is especially noticeable.

The formal use of biblical material is marked by the Polish prose of Lazar Baranovych to a large extent, especially his apology *Nowa Miara Starej Wiary*<sup>19</sup> in response to a controversial piece by Pavlo Boim. The author gave vocabulary an individual characteristics. Theological themes retreat to the background in their significance and in its place is a game of words. So, in Baranovych's apology we read: *"For each one God has distinguished a measure of faith"* (p. 2); *"Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat fruit?"* (p. 3); *"As the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, so, God, let us all go to heaven"* (p. 23) etc. The writer stylized part of the text for liturgical worship, for example, under the flood of the Holy Ghost. In particular, he wrote, using an anaphora as a sacred appeal:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> S. Sukharieva, Rytorychnyi prostir polskomovnoi prozy XVII st., p. 287.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ł. Baranowicz, *Nowa miara starey wiary* [*New Measure of Old Faith*], Nowogródek 1676.

Let us learn from God the Father of mercy ... Let us learn from God the Son of obedience ... Let us learn from you, Holy Spirit, holy unity<sup>20</sup>.

In addition, the polemical writers used the final doxology prayer everywhere, styled after the letters of St. Paul, but gave it considerable freedom, retaining only certain obligatory elements, such as an introductory address to the Lord, an element of the request, and completion of the *Amen*. Some authors additionally stylized this liturgical stylization graphically with the help of symbolically placed lines of prayer or individual words. The very text of the doxology always had an individual meaning. However, there was always a biblical metaphor of God's name in it.

After a lengthy *Lithos* talk which is still discussed, whether it was created by Petro Mohyla himself under the pseudonym Jevsevii Pimin, or helped by a group of editors and authors, there was a certain calm in the controversy, but it was temporary. Many polemical volumes had already been created, in which each of the controversial theological problems were well discussed. What could Baroque authors do in the final, last stage of polemics on the subject of the Union of Brest? The only thing they could do was to revitalize the existing theses with a new artistic factum and stylized framing, to change the structure of works, to pay more attention to separate groups of the sacral. The work of Teofil Rutka falls on this wave of the Baroque era.

Another question needs to be clarified: who had polemics with Rutka? The circle of his opponents was not as obvious as in the previous times. On the one hand, the work *Goljat swoim mieczem porażony*<sup>20</sup> (1689) was an answer to the performances of contemporary Ioanykii Galiatovskyi (*Miecz Duchowny*, 1666), an explicit supporter of Moscow's influence on Ukrainian religion and culture, who died a year before the publication of the apology of Rutka, in 1688. On the other hand, Teofil Rutka, in the work *Kamień przeciwko Kamieniowi*<sup>22</sup> (1690), objected to *Lithos* by Petro Mohyla, who by then was not alive. So why did the writer meddle with the dead, and what purpose did biblical hermeneutics serve in his writings?

- <sup>20</sup> Ł. Baranowicz, Nowa miara starey wiary, p. 19.
- <sup>21</sup> T. Rutka, Goljat swoim mieczem porażony [Goliath, pierced with his own sword], Lublin 1689.
- <sup>22</sup> T. Rutka, *Kamień przeciw Kamieniowi* [Stone against stone], Lublin 1690.

Apologiasy of the end of the XVII century were less voluminous and usually limited to one theological theme. Thus, the work Goliat swoim mieczem porażony contained information about the origin of the Holy Spirit and used the biblical fact, which had to confirm the thesis "from the Father and the Son comes". Within the limits of the treatise, which can be considered a minitractate due to thematic similarity, the author had the opportunity, with all zeal, to consider biblical symbolism in more details, to draw as much as possible the parallels between the Old and the New Testament, to bring an unlimited number of quotations from the works of the Fathers of the Church and give them an appropriate explanation, etc. Such diversification has become a broad field for the arbitrariness of interpretations. Therefore, we can assert that at the end of the seventeenth century the most allegorical and arbitrary form of biblical hermeneutics appeared on the pages of artistic scriptures. Similar parallels can be made in the work of Teofil Rutka Choragiew zgody i pokoju, to jest Duch Święty od Syna pochodzący (1691). The writer emphasized: "Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not have to give it to him"23. Instead, his Budynek Chrystusow (1689) was written in support of the patriarchal primacy of the Pope as the legitimate successor of St. Peter. An apology, Kamień przeciwko Kamieniowi, became a continuation of this topic a year later. Its author deliberately dropped other theses of Petro Mohyla, but preferred exclusively to the problem of the primacy of the Apostle Peter. In the same way, in the form of a mini-treatisey biblical hermeneutics is represented in the work of Pahomii Woina Oranskyi, Zwierciadło albo Zasłona<sup>24</sup> in and in the apologies of many other authors, whose work the Baroque gradually began to approach the horizons, and at the same time the controversy over the Brest Union ended.

### Conclusion

Thus, after analyzing the development of biblical hermeneutics at various stages of the Polish-speaking polemics after the Union of Brest, we came to the conclusion that its time-spatial characteristics in the Baroque period were heterogeneous. At the beginning of the XVII century, documentary and histo-

<sup>24</sup> P. Wojna Orański, Zwierciadło albo Zasłona [Mirror or Curtain], Wilno 1645.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> T. Rutka, Chorągiew zgody i pokoju, to jest Duch Święty od Syna pochodzący [A banner of agreement and peace, or Holy Spirit from the Son coming], Lublin 1691, p. 1.

rical facts in polemical treatises were much more prevalent in artistic means; therefore, it was primarily a theological perspective with a typological way of representing the sacred sphere and preserving the rhetorically determined canon. Due to the talent of Meletii Smotryckyi, hierophany occupied a significant place in literature and allowed the metaphor and the symbol to outperform the literal sense. A long chain of interchange and complementarily can be traced, which can be schematically depicted as follows: biblical citations - concordation of biblical images - paraphrases - allusions - allegories - stylized texts (lementation, prozopopia, doxology, litania, apostolic messages, etc.) metaphorical parables and nominal metaphors ... The list can not be completed, because each writer approached the use of the Scriptures in literature individually, and imposed on it his own vision of the world, especially the sense of language and the expression of religious beliefs. Over time the canonical text included the current broadcast, which allows the biblical persuasion to study elements of the so-called "low style", as evidenced by works by Kasjan Sakovych, Petro Mohyla, Lazar Baranovych, and others. Conceptual structures of Polish-language baroque prose evolved with the simultaneous loss of the metaphorical content of hierophany. Eventually, at the final stage of the studied period, polemical miniatures on a single theological theme received primacy, for which numerous individual interpretations were inherent. The gradual transition of biblical hermeneutics from the typological to the allegorical sphere can be traced, which allowed literature to gain its independent place among the humanities, to express the artistic means, and to embody the metonymic vision of the world.

This is just one of the stages in the history of writing in which iconic images and motifs derived from the Bible have played a key role. In the long run, the challenge for scholars is to combine all the temporal manifestations of biblical hermeneutics in literature, taking into account its poetic and prose presentation, and the versatility and peculiarities of the author's style. These studies will serve to dispel the myth of the "abyss" between the sacred worldview and artistic literature, and indicate the true weight of, "*how important the word is*".

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