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MNEMOHISTORY OF *EXODUS* AND APOCALYPTIC IN PAUL'S PICTURE OF CHRISTIANS' NEW EXISTENTIAL CONDITION IN THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

Abstract

It seems unquestionable today that the tradition of the *exodus* recurrently appears in the form of reminiscences, or theological reflection in some books of the OT, however, there are numerous hypotheses that this motive could have also been used in NT texts. In the present article, the author formulates a hypothesis that St. Paul in his Letter to the Galatians uses in the mnemohistoric manner the topos of theological *exodus* when he presents the picture of the new, existential condition of Christians, and that he simultaneously employs the apocalypics as a form of expression representative of his epoch and appropriate for the context of his argumentation.

Keywords: suffering, apocalypics, *exodus*, St. Paul, Biblical Theology, NT ethics, Galatians, Gal. 3, Mnemohistory

MNEMOHISTORIA *EXODUSU* I APOKALIPTYKA W PAWŁOWYM OBRAZIE NOWEJ KONDYCJI EGZYSTENCJALNEJ CHRZEŚCIJANINA W LIŚCIE DO GALATÓW

Abstrakt

Rzeczą oczywistą jest dzisiaj to, że tradycja *exodusu* jest tą, która pojawia się w postaci reminiscencji, refleksji teologicznej w niektórych księgach ST, ale – według licznych hipotez – jest ona także motywem, który mógł zostać wykorzystany w NT. Autor artykułu stawia hipotezę o mnemohistorycznym wykorzystaniu przez św. Pawła w kontekście przedstawiania w Liście do Galatów obrazu nowej kondycji życia chrześcijanina toposu teologicznego *exodusu* przy jednoczesnym posłużeniu się apokaliptyką jako formą wyrazu adekwatną dla epoki i kontekstu argumentacyjnego.

Słowa kluczowe: cierpienie, apokaliptyka, *exodus*, św. Paweł, teologia biblijna, etyka NT, List do Galatów, Ga 3, mnemohistoria

INTRODUCTION

Today, it is difficult to deny the use of some Old Testament traditions, which in various ways penetrate the books of the New Testament. This is due to the fact that the authors of the latter collection originated from among the People of the First Covenant and those traditions in a way constituted a “cultural code” defining their identity. Such an assumption primarily concerns St. Paul, the Hebrew of the Hebrews, and his *epistolarium*. It seems unquestionable that the tradition of the *exodus* is the one that recurrently appears in the form of reminiscences, or theological reflection in some books of the OT, however, according to numerous hypotheses the motive could have been used in the NT as well¹. Regardless of this, in numerous works of exegetes researching the epistles of the Apostle of the Gentiles at the end of the 19th century, there appear references to the apocalypics and conclusions about its inspirational influence on the thought expressed by Saint Paul in his epistles. The themes of suffering and hope, which appear in several letters of the Apostle Paul seem to be a keystone of both contexts (Gieniusz 1999, 89-130; Sztuk 2019, 18-40). One example here is the Letter to the Galatians, which allows to draw conclusions about mnemohistoric reminiscences of the *exodus* presented within the framework of the apocalypics².

1. TRADITION OF THE *EXODUS* IN PAUL'S EPISTOLARIUM

In 1948, William D. Davies referring to the letters of St. Paul contended that in some threads of his theological reflection (Rom. 6; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; 10:1; 15:20; 2 Cor. 3:1-11) the Apostle, when comparing Christian life to the Passover, used the motif of the *exodus* as the “prototype of the mighty act of God in Christ” (Davies 1980, 105). The Passover of Christ as the Lamb sacrificed (1 Cor. 5:6-8) is, according to Davies, a constitutive event marking the point when Christians become the “New Israel”: “Paul was the preacher of a New Exodus wrought by the ‘merit’ of Christ who was obedient unto death, but this New Exodus like the Old

¹ Particular interest in the topos of the *exodus* can be noted in the scientific research of exegetes from the mid-nineteenth century, when the term “new exodus” appears and is used with reference to Isaiah's prophecy about returning from exile, which was perceived as a new act of salvation of God Himself and was thus associated with the Departure of the Israelites from Egypt (Cfr. Alexander 1847; Barstand 1989). To this day, many authors trace the topos or tradition of the *exodus* in the gospels as well as in other books of the NT. Such is the line of interpretation of the reflective quotation from Hos. 11:1, contained in Math. 2:15, the Herod-Pharaoh comparison in Matthew 2:16 or the perception of Jesus as the new Moses in Matthew 1-5. (Cfr. Davies 1964, 25-93; Allison 1993, 140; Manek 1957, 8-23; Pao 2000; Mathewson 2003).

² In such a direction of mnemohistory presented in the light of apocalypics can be found in the interpretation of Rom 8,18-25 in *Pomiędzy mnemohistorią i apokaliptyką. Pawłowy obraz kondycji „wyjścia” w Rz 8,18-25. Studium egzegetyczno-teologiczne* [Between Mnemohistory and the Apocalyptic. Paul's Image of the “Exodus” Condition in Rom. 8:18-25. Exegetical and Theological Study].

was constitutive of community, it served to establish the New Israel; it also led to the foot of a New Sinai, and Paul appeared before us as a catechist, the steward of a New Didache that imposed new demands. ‘Torah’, ‘Obedience’ and ‘Community’ then are integral to Pauline Christianity no less than to Judaism” (Davies 1980, 323). It was Davies who introduced the concept of the “new Exodus” to the study of Paul’s epistles, however, unlike the exegetes of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, rather than relating it to the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, he referred it to the act of Salvation, i.e., the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is in this sense that, as Davies puts it, Christians who die and rise in Christ, partake in the “new Exodus” (Davies 1980, 146; Cfr. Sanders 1977, 511-515).

The same line of argument was followed by James K. Howard, for whom the “new Exodus”, initiated by Christ’s death and baptism, sealed the end of the old world and the beginning of the new one (Howard 1969, 104).

Ignace de la Potterie, referring in particular to Rom. 8, also pointed to the leading role of the *exodus* topos in St. Paul’s argument. The author distinguished here three leitmotifs, namely, liberation from slavery (v. 15: οὐ γὰρ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα δουλείας), adoptive sonship (vv. 14-17: υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν - υἰοθεσίας - τέκνα ἔερο) and inheritance (v. 17: κληρονόμοι). In addition, De la Potterie noted that the verb ἄγονται, which in the Septuagint is the terminus technicus describing the leading of the people by God Himself, was used in Romans in a similar context of leading and accompanying believers by the Holy Spirit.³

William J. Webb in his study on 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 concluded that this pericope, perceived by some exegetes only as an insertion, coincided with the entire Second Corinthians. Webb stated that the common theme and at the same time the foundation of unity in this case is “the use of the tradition of the New Covenant and return from exile” (Webb 1993, 14). However, the author, did not trace the sources of inspiration of Paul’s reflection back to the event of the Israelites’ exodus from captivity in Egypt, but linked it with the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah about the “new Exodus” (Webb 1993, 133).

Nicholas T. Wright, on the other hand, based his theory of the “new Exodus” on the belief that Israel’s exile still continued during the Second Temple period. Consequently, the Jews at that time were still hoping for a “new Exodus” seen as a return from exile: “Many if not most second-Temple Jews, then, hoped for the new exodus, seen as the final return from exile. The story would reach its climax; the great battle would be fought; Israel would truly ‘return’ to her land, saved and free; YHWH would return to Zion. This would be, in the metaphorical sense, the end of the world, the ushering in at last of YHWH’s promised new age” (Wright 1996, 209). Wright expanded on his theory on the “new Exodus” in his numerous

³ Cfr. De la Potterie 1976, 209-278. However, the author perceives the Rom. 8: 14-17 pericope as detached from the context of the immediately preceding verses, which mention putting to death the deeds of the body with the help of the Spirit. De la Potterie’s intuitions were confirmed in later research and in the in-depth analysis presented, among others, in the publication of Zvonir Herman (Herman 1987, 26-84).

publications. The author, assuming that the remission of sins is in fact another way of expressing the truth about the return from exile, sees the text of Jeremiah 31:31-34, which mentions the act of making a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah and returning from exile as “a new Exodus” which at the same time should be associated with the renewal of hearts, interiorization of the Torah and remission of sins (Wright 1996, 268-269). Wright’s controversial view of the “new Exodus” as a return from exile, due to the powerful message of hope related to the times of the Second Temple, was referred by the author himself to the content of the gospel, including the Last Supper. Wright contended that “Jesus’ central actions during the meal seem to have been designed to reinforce the point of the whole meal: the kingdom-agenda to which he had been obedient throughout his ministry was now at last reaching its ultimate destination. Passover looked back to the exodus, and on to the coming of the kingdom. Jesus intended this meal to symbolize the new exodus, the arrival of the kingdom through his own fate. The meal, focused on Jesus’ actions with the bread and the cup, told the Passover story, and Jesus’ own story, and wove these two into one” (Wright 1996, 558-559). Wright interpretes Paul’s description of Christians in Rom. 8:12-17 as “God’s people of the new Exodus” (Wright 1999, 29), and he is convinced of the primary role of the motif of the “new Exodus” Rom. 38 -chapters.

Special attention here is due to publications of Sylvia C. Keesmaat, who devotes the first of them to Rom. 8:14-30 (Keesmaat 1994, 29-56). The author, conducting both intertextual and intratextual research, writes about St. Paul that “Unlike the authors of the book of Jubilees, the Qumran commentaries, or the Targums, he is not involved in an intentional and explicit systematic retelling of the biblical story or a systematic exegesis of a given text. Paul’s use of the Old Testament tradition in these verses is more implicit: it works on the level of echo or allusion” (Keesmaat 1994, 32). When assessing the degree to which OT texts were used in the analyzed fragment, i.e., Rom. 8:14-30, Keesmaat refers to seven criteria previously indicated by R. Hays. These are: Availability, Volume, Recurrence, Thematic Coherence, Historical Plausibility, History of Interpretation, Satisfaction, i.e. determining whether a given reading of the text is accurate and whether it sufficiently explains its context (Hays 1989, 29-32). In this publication, Keesmaat traces some intertextual references between the analyzed passage of the Letter to the Romans and Lev 32, Is 63, Jeremiah 38 and Gen 3. Answers to the questions asked according to the seven above-mentioned criteria allow to confirm the use of the *exodus* tradition in Rom. 8:14-30, which the author expressed in the following words: “The language formerly applied to God leading Israel is now characteristic of those in Christ led by a suffering spirit; he applies Israel’s role of son to Jesus Christ and those in him; and, as I said earlier, he transforms the exodus narrative of bondage-groaning-liberation so that it is no longer only the story of Israel, but the story of the whole people of God, the story of the whole of creation, indeed, nothing less than the story of God’s very self” (Keesmaat 1994, 49). Sylvia C. Keesmaat expands on her conclusions presented

in the article in her book, *Paul and His Story: (Re) Interpreting the Exodus Story*, where she assumes that “creative rewriting and reworking of biblical traditions” is characteristic of the writings of Israel (Keesmaat 1999, 24). Such creativity in relation to the Old Testament and its traditions was to be characteristic also of St. Paul, who neither avoided these traditions nor simply copied them, but in a way reinterpreted them in the view of the event of Jesus Christ. Particularly valuable are the chapters of the discussed publication, where Keesmaat analyzes the texts of the OT and indicates terms which, as she claims, will become crucial in finding the convergence of Paul’s arguments with the tradition of the *exodus*. In the context of Chapter 7 of the Letter to the Romans, the key factor is the use of a whole range of terms (ἄγω, πνεῦμα δουλείας, υἱοὶ θεοῦ, υἰοθεσία, τέκνα θεοῦ, κληρονόμοι) that are used to describe the situation, condition of believers, and at the same time point to challenges faced by them. In her analysis, Keesmaat indicates the passages of Lev 32, Is 63 and Jer 38, showing that the authors of the Book of Wisdom, the Book of Baruch, 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch used the *exodus* motif and then states that the Christians to whom the Apostle Paul addressed his letter, were set free, regained their freedom and became τέκνα θεοῦ as did the *exodus* generation. Based on these semblances, the author argues that Rom. 8:14-17 is a recontextualization of the *exodus*. Keesmaat develops her ideas further and claims that Paul’s argumentation is continued in the literary unit of Rom. 8:18-39, where the binding motif is the theme of the suffering of creation: “In using the same language to speak of the Spirit’s wordless groans in the midst of believers’ prayer, Paul is evoking the Old Testament tradition wherein God enters into the suffering of God’s people. Such a tradition is rooted in the *exodus* account and is linked to the new *exodus* which God will enact. The language of suffering throughout this passage, culminating with the groaning of the Spirit, provides depth for the identification of the sons of God with Christ, the first-born Son” (Keesmaat 1999, 134). However, as Keesmaat argues, this suffering is not the final stage as the description of creation in which St. Paul uses the pain of childbirth theme leads to a surprising solution: καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται ἀπὸ τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ (Rom. 8:21). In other words, creation will also experience liberation, that is, a “new Exodus”.

In view of the above-presented hypotheses claiming that the *exodus* plays an important role in the argumentation of Paul’s epistles, it can be concluded first of all that the cited authors adopted varying approaches. In her in-depth study in which she took into account a wide range of OT texts embodying the *exodus* tradition, Keesmaat refers here to a “creative reworking” of biblical traditions.

While it seems that the tradition of the *exodus* does not appear in St. Paul in the entire extent of his historical, multi-threaded description, it can hardly be called just an allusion. The intention to include it in the arguments of individual letters indicates that the Apostle drew a broader plan. It seems plausible here to refer to the idea of Ronald Hendel (Hendel 2001, 601-622), who, referring to the theory of Jan Assmann, views the history of Israel’s *exodus* from Egypt through the

prism of an approach to cultural memory, which has been defined as *mnemohistory* (Assmann 1997, 8-9)⁴. Hendel juxtaposed the biblical threads of the history of the *exodus* with extra-biblical texts, concluding that the history of the *exodus* served as a paradigm for the next two and a half thousand years: “The memory of the *exodus* is not just a memory of historical events, but a conflation of history that suits the conditions of different qualities of time” (Hendel 2001, 622). Hendel decided to name this history as “mnemohistory of the *exodus*”, as it is essentially a “Story of various pasts as they converge in the interesting times of ancient lives, a particular people, and humanity writ large” (Hendel 2001, 622).

2. MNEMOHISTORY AND APOKALIPTICS

The publication on Rom. 8:18-25 (Sztuk 2019) follows the direction set by Hendel, which, apart from stating the parallels between this pericope of Paul and specific texts of the OT where terminology or content either directly represent or echo the *exodus* event, it was also possible to establish that the Apostle Paul refers to some extent to the entire intertextual motif of the history of the *exodus*, starting from the slavery and suffering experienced in Egypt, through the wandering in the desert, to the announcement of the Promised Land. The above-mentioned motif appears both in the texts of the OT and in the intertestamental literature, but also in other books of the NT, which, even without proving their mnemohistoric overtones, may point to a kind of common intuition and conviction shared by the authors about the paradigmatic value of the *exodus*. At the same time, the proposed approach to the subject of presenting the existential condition of Christians in Rom. 8:18-25, suggests that St. Paul used apocalypics as a form of expression adequate for his times as well as for the argumentative context of the Letter to the Romans (Sztuk 2019, 244-251). It is the example of Rom. 5:12-21, that allowed to understand how Paul combined simultaneously two sources to develop his concept of the history of salvation, that is when he paralleled Adam and Christ as protagonists of two periods of history known from the apocalypics. Adam is the first creation, the present age and he remains under the rule of evil, sin and death. At the same time, however, he is a type of Christ portrayed as “the firstborn of the new creation” (Col. 1:15), “from among mortals” (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5), among many brethren (Rom. 8:29). Adam foreshadowed Christ, because it is He, Christ, who is the centre not only of history, but also of all reality created in Him, for Him and through Him (Cfr. Col. 1:15-18). Adam foreshadowed Him as a Man

⁴ Assmann provides the following descriptive definition of mnemohistory: “Unlike history proper, mnemohistory is concerned not with the past as such, but only with the past as it is remembered. It surveys the story-lines of tradition, the webs of intertextuality, the diachronic continuities and discontinuities of reading the past. Mnemohistory is not opposite of history, but rather is one of its branches or subdisciplines, such as intellectual history, social history, the history of mentalities, or the history of ideas... Mnemohistory is reception theory applied to history” (Assmann 1997, 9).

in the fullest sense of the word, while the Scriptures foretold Him in a prophetic sense as the Messiah. St. Paul, by presenting the crucified Jesus as the fulfilled Messiah, introduced perhaps the most radical innovation in the schemas of the apocalyptics. The expectations fulfilled by the apocalyptics presented the Messiah as a condottiere, the victorious commander of the Lord's armies overcoming the eternal and contemporary enemies of Israel, as exemplified in the Qumran scriptures. Meanwhile, Paul portrays Jesus as crucified and bereft (Rom. 6:9-10; Phil. 2:5-11). The fact that He rose from the dead on the third day did not subdue the shock of the cross, but on the contrary, made Christ the cause of scandal for the Jews and the object of mockery for the Greeks (Sztuk 2019, 248)⁵.

Another prerogative of Christ in St. Paul is His second coming (Greek *parousia*, 24 times the NT, 14 times Paul). The day when this happen will be the Lord's Day and *His Day* (1 Thess. 5:2; 1 Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:6; 3:12-21; Rom. 14:7-12.17-18; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:20-28.50-58). It will be the day of Christ's revelation (1 Cor. 1:7). In the First Testament and in the apocalyptics it was reserved to Yahweh (Cfr. Am. 5:18-20; Zech. 1:14-16; Joel 2:2). The Second Coming of Christ will be aimed at the recapitulation of history and the judgment of the world that God entrusts to Christ as the final task in the history of creation and at the same time, the ultimate act in the history of salvation. What is important, is not only the judgement of the lives of individual people, their behavior, faith or lack of faith (detailed judgment), but, on the moral and spiritual level, the need to take responsibility for one's own life. They should not be indifferent to *how* they live, because God Himself is not indifferent to people's ways of life redeemed by the blood of His Son. That is why, He calls them to believe in the act of love of the Son who gave His life for us when we were still sinners (Rom. 5:8-10). From the perspective of Paul's writings, the idea of judgment involves moreover recapitulating everything in *Christ* (Cfr. Eph. 1:10), and in this idea we can also discern the influence of the apocalyptics.

3. PICTURE OF THE EXISTENTIAL CONDITION OF A CHRISTIAN IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

It is not difficult to notice that in the Letter to the Galatians, St. Paul recurrently uses terminology related to the revelation in which prevails the Greek root ἀποκαλυπ (Ga 1:12.16; 2:2; 3:23). This terminology is used by the Apostle primarily with reference to the revelation of the Son of God and the message of the Gospel that the Apostle preached among the pagans in the later part of his life and ministry. J. Louis Martyn says that St. Paul's gospel does not describe "directing mankind toward blessing, but God's invasion aimed at delivering the

⁵ A slightly different model of intertextual interpretation, in which the Christ-Word is placed at the centre as the interpreter, was proposed in the in-depth hypertextual analysis of the Letter to the Romans and the Book of Wisdom in Mateusz Krawczyk's publication (Krawczyk 2020).

world” (Martyn 2000, 246-266). This “invasion of God” is best expressed in the Letter to Galatians 4:4: ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον. According to St. Paul, the sending of the Son of God marked the end of the era of “this present evil world” (Gal. 1:4) and at the same time the beginning of the “new creation” (Gal. 6:15). The Apostle, as if following the convention imposed by the History of Salvation, whose Author and Creator is God Himself, wishes to maintain the dichotomy between two eras: the “already” and the “not yet” (Dunne 2015, 8). Therefore, in the doctrinal part of the letter (chap. 3–4) the Apostle speaks of the salvation that was earned through Christ’s death and resurrection (1:1; 2:20), while in the parnetic part of the letter (chap. 5–6) he presents the addressees with images referring to the judgment, to the time of the final harvest (cf. Gal. 5:2; 5:10; 6:5.7–9). On the one hand, Paul speaks of the time of submission to the Law (3:23), and on the other, about the challenges of the freedom that believers find in Christ (5:1). These states and challenges are assigned to philological categories described by *indicativus salutis* – salvation already fulfilled, and by *imperativus ethicus* as the challenges for the existence of the letter’s addressees, i.e., the Galatians and all Christians⁶. If, then, the Apostle places Christ’s Passover, His death on the cross, and His resurrection (1:1–4; 2:19–20; 6:14) at the centre of the argument presented in this letter, he does so by revealing the truth about *Christ’s exodus* to show the profound meaning of a Christian’s existence that draws hope from communion of life with Christ (2:10–20). Paul thus places the salvation event, which is Jesus, the Son of God, the Wisdom and Power of God at the centre of mortality (1 Cor. 1:18.24). It is His death and resurrection that “divides” mortality into these two stages, i.e., הָיָה עוֹלָם (Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:6), which is “evil” (Gal. 4), subjected to principalities and powers (1 Cor. 2:6–7) and אֲנִי עוֹלָם (Eph. 1:21; 2:7). While *this* world seems to be ruled by “principalities and powers” the coming world will be fully ruled by Christ, who will give to God the work of creation restored by His saving act (“submission under His feet”) as His property, that he “may be all in all” (cf. 1 Cor. 15:24–28; cf. Eph. 1:20–23). Christ’s centrality as a historical and theological event *par excellence* is beyond question in St. Paul’s apocalypics. There remains, however, a certain “detail”, namely, that not everything seems to be subjected to Christ, the present time is therefore an “open time” of decisions and declarations, which a Christian makes by his or her actions and attitudes rather than words. That is why, Paul speaks of salvation, which is *already* a fact, and at the same time this fact remains for Christians in the order of hope, a future that has already come but is not *yet* seen. Hence our acts constitute acts in the light of faith.

John A. Dunne, in his article *Suffering and Covenantal Hope in Galatians*, accuses other authors of not including the subject of suffering and persecution in the apocalyptic reading of the Letter to the Galatians (Dunne 2015, 9–12). Dunne claims

⁶ To see more on the topic of the relation between *indicativus-imperativus* in St. Paul’s letters cfr. Adinolfi 1977, 626–646; Schnackenburg 1981, 250–258; Strecker 1987, 60–72.

that interpretation of this letter by St. Paul, should take into account the content and terminology used by the Apostle, who refers to his own past behaviour ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, when he persecuted the Church of God (1:13), or to the present situation in which he himself experiences persecution (5:11: τί ἔτι διώκομαι), and to the persecution of those born according to the Spirit (4:29), as well as to avoidance of persecution for the sake of Christ's Cross (6:12). It should be noted, however, that despite emphasizing in the letter the conflict aroused by the plotting of the so-called *iudaizzantes*, the Apostle himself does not use the above-mentioned terminology to describe this situation as persecution. The Letter to the Galatians mentions suffering understood as bearing the pains of birth (4:19: ὠδίνω), suffering associated with co-crucifixion: with Christ (Gal. 2:20), for the world (6:14) and the suffering of Paul himself τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι (6:17). The only place where the Apostle uses the verb πάσχω is in v. 3:4, where in a passionate dialogue he asks the addressees of the letter: τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῇ. The aorist 2 plural, interpreted by some authors as "you have suffered", would refer here to the sufferings of the Galatians associated with the acts of *iudaizzantes*⁷. It seems, however, a better solution to render the aorist ἐπάθετε by the neutral in meaning "you have experienced", although elsewhere in St. Paul's *epistolarium* πάσχω appears in the sense of negative experiences, sufferings (1 Cor. 12:26; 2 Cor. 1:6; Phil. 1:29; 1 Thess. 2:14) (Buscemi 2004, 245-246). In fact, the context of the Letter to the Galatians suggests that in 3:4 the aorist ἐπάθετε refers both to the fact of liberation from the custody of the Law (2:19), or from the bondage of "the elements of this world", and to the fundamental experience of the Holy Spirit, the action of His charisms, whose addressees experienced from the moment they embarked on the path of faith in Jesus Christ, the path of freedom of the children of God. It is their freedom in Christ that seems to be threatened by the insidious intrigues of *iudaizzantes*.

The above-mentioned experience of the Galatians should be placed in the broader context of the entire letter, which reiterates the themes of slavery-submission and freedom-adopted sonship (4:1-7) referring to the theological topos of the *exodus*. In the layer of terminology, St. Paul in 4:1-3 uses the words: νήπιός (juvenile), ἐπιτρόπους (steward), οἰκονόμους (steward), προθεσμίας (appointed time), which can be related to the time of Israel's captivity in Egypt (Scott 1992, 165-167). The Apostle here presents his argument against the background of the known *milieu* of the OT and transposes the images of the *exodus* into the specific situation of the Galatian communities (Cfr. Ex. 4:22; Hos. 11:1; Amos. 2:9-10; 3:1-2) to finally express the truth that, thanks to the saving act of God completed in Christ's death on the Cross, the Galatians are "no longer" subjected to the Law and can "live for God" (2:19). Following the same line of arguments concerning the Law, St. Paul uses the term κληρονόμος (4:1.7) – κληρονόμοι (3:29) to make Galatian Christians aware that, by being "descendants of Abraham"

⁷ Cfr. Dunne 2015, 12-13: The author in his arguments expresses the conviction that the context of the Letter to the Galatians corresponds to historical apocalypses, which emerged as resistance literature to the actions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Such a comparison is rather difficult to accept in this case for the reasons presented above.

and in union with Christ, they are heirs of God's promises (cf. 3:18.29: ἐπαγγελία), resulting from the Covenant (3:17: διαθήκη)⁸. Additionally, all this terminological context seems to indicate a reading of the Old Testament הַלְחָץ⁹ in the Christological key, which was probably supposed to encourage the Galatians to acknowledge the saving act of God in Christ and, as "sons of God in Christ" (3:26), to follow the Spirit (5:16.25) along the paths of the new *exodus*¹⁰. The reference to the *exodus* suggested in another publication (Sztuk 2019) is also justified here. It is in the layer of terminology used in the Letter to the Galatians that one can find mnemohistorical references to that first exodus and to the challenges facing the People of the First Covenant. The use of such terms as release from slavery, adoption as sons or inheritance are decisive in this regard. These references juxtapose, on the one hand, "suffering" and "pain", and on the other, the hope of fulfilment towards which man is striving¹¹, and which at the same time mobilizes him to pursue with all commitment the promised inheritance, i.e., ζωὴ αἰώνιος (Gal. 6:8). It seems that the thematic convergence of the Letter to the Romans and the Letter to the Galatians, suggested by many authors, also applies to the means of expression used by the Apostle in both writings. One of them is, in my opinion, the use of apocalyptic forms of expression, which allowed St. Paul to adopt an adequate and dynamic approach as regards the presentation of Christians' existential condition in the Letter to the Galatians.

⁸ The intimacy that began with baptism is called by St. Paul υιοθεσία. Since Christians as children of God put themselves under the guidance of the Spirit, they share in the Father's inheritance, joint-heirship with the Firstborn (cf. Rom. 8:17), and can be formed in His likeness (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:28-29; Rom. 4:16-18). The sequence of the above-mentioned texts allows to relate them to the theme of the choosing Israel and calling it the "son" by God Himself in the narrative of the *exodus*: "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says the LORD: «Israel is My son, My firstborn»". (Ex. 4:22: בְּנִי בְלִדִי יִשְׂרָאֵל). This motif returns recurrently both in the OT and in the intertestamental literature, where the *exodus* is referred to, and it is a designate of the privilege reserved for Israel as the people of God, who was liberated from slavery in Egypt and is under God's special protection.

⁹ Both the verb הָלַחַץ and the nominal forms relate to ownership, possession, inheritance. Especially important are OT passages related to Israel as the property of the Lord, who led His people out of Egypt (Lev. 4:20: הָלַחַץ לְךָ לְעַם נִחְלָה. Por. Lev. 9:26-27; Ps. 28:9; 33:12; 74:2). It was the Lord who made the people of Israel His property (1 Kings 8:53; Ps. 33:12), thus fulfilling the pleas of Moses (Ex. 34:9: וְעַרְבָה הָאֵלֹהִים וְסִלְחָתָהּ לְעוֹגְגֵינוּ וְלַחֲשָׁאֲתָנוּ וְנִחַלְתָּנוּ). Terminology related to the Hebrew root נָחַל also appears in OT passages related to taking possession of/inheriting Kanaan (Cfr. Num. 26:55; 33:54; 34:13; 36:2). Cfr. Lipinski 1998, 319-335; Buscemi 2004, 377.

¹⁰ It is also significant that St. Paul in the parenetic part of the Letter to the Galatians uses verbs imbued with moral dynamism: περιπατεῖτε (5:16), ἀγεσθε (5:18). In Septuagint, the verb ἄγω (with its derivatives) became a technical word in the terminological treasury related to the *exodus*. While extending the context slightly to Gaul 5, where St. Paul speaks of being led by the Spirit, it should be noted that the verbs appearing in the above-mentioned context seem to echo Deut. 32. In fact, the so-called *Song of Moses*, contains a characteristic of the people of Israel as children of God - sons and daughters (Deut. 32:19: παρωξύνθη δι' ὀργὴν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ θυγατέρων), God is their Father who, despite their many trespasses, was the only one who lead them through the desert (Deut. 32:12: κύριος μόνος ἦγεν αὐτούς).

¹¹ This juxtaposition also appears in the message of OT books (cf. Is. 40:1-5, Dan. 7:21-22; 12:1-4) and in apocryphal literature (cf. 1 Hen 102-105; Jub 23:23-31; 4 Esd 6:25-28; 2 Bar 25).

CONCLUSION

In scientific exegeses of Old Testament writings, researches make multifaceted interpretations of the exodus: as a story written down by authors and providing an almost mirror image of past events, or, contrarily, as a specific kind of historical reflection, drawing from manifold sources, various historical levels or numerous past generations, and thus being an elaboration of the so-called collective memory of the People of the First Covenant. That is why, also in later texts, any references to the event and tradition of the *exodus* take on mnemohistoric features. In this context, it is possible to confirm the correctness of the hypotheses formulated by both Assmann and Hendel, who saw justification for such a perception of the *exodus* in palimpsestic combination of numerous stories. It can be assumed that the Apostle Paul, likewise, used such motifs and images of the *exodus*, which in his theological reflection and presentation of the History of Salvation were to constitute a certain *continuum* and at the same time complement his line of argument. As the author of the Letter to the Galatians conveyed in his work the message of freedom (Gal. 5:1) grounded in the imperative to live a moral, holy life “in Christ”, then, by transposing the apocalyptic way of perceiving and presenting the reality, which at the same time was immersed in the light of the revelation rooted in the work and testament of Christ, this imperative received in Paul’s approach a sound basis and justification.

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