STUDIA WARMIŃSKIE 59 (2022) ISSN 0137-6624 DOI: 10.31648/sw.7589

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Biblical Sources of Ecclesiology in *Expositio Symboli Apostolorum* by Johannes Marienwerder

[Biblijne źródła eklezjologii w *Expositio Symboli Apostolorum* Jana z Kwidzyna]

Streszczenie: W artykule omówiono znaczenie Expositio na tle pozostałych dzieł Jana z Kwidzyna, następnie poddano analizie relację głównych cech Kościoła do Pisma Świętego. Omówiono znaczenie i metodologię zastosowania tekstów biblijnych w wykładzie na temat artykułu IX Symbolu Apostolskiego i w pozostałej treści Expositio. Podjęto problem relacji prezentowanej przez Jana z Kwidzyna eklezjologii do postulatów reformatorskich obecnych w czeskim środowisku kościelnym i akademickim II poł. XIV w. Istnienie, natura, misja i cel egzystencji Kościoła są ściśle związane ze świadectwami biblijnymi. Według Jana wynikają z nich główne jego cechy: jedność, godność i stałość. Argumenty biblijne służą do korygowania błędów i herezji. Zauważalne akcentowanie znaczenia Biblii jest związane z nową teologią, związaną z prądem odnowy duchowej devotio moderna. Prezentowane studium dotyczy jednego z aspektów eklezjologii Jana z Kwidzyna.

Summary: The structure of the article: the first section discusses the significance of *Expositio* in the light of other work by Johannes Marienwerder. The second section is concerned with the principal qualities of the Church in their relation to the Scripture, so as to examine the ecclesiological element in the interpretation of the Article 9 of the Apostles' Creed and in the remainder of Expositio. That section concludes with findings from the analysis of how biblical texts are used in Marienwerder's ecclesiological disquisition. Finally, attention is drawn to the relation between the conception of the Church in Expositio and the reformatory postulations advanced in the ecclesiastical and scholarly circles of Bohemian Prague in the second half of the fourteenth century. The mission of the Church is closely aligned with the biblical testimonies, which shed light on its nature and the purpose of its existence. The Holy Scripture also provides knowledge about the principal characteristics of the Church: unity, dignity and constancy. The biblical texts also supply a foundation thanks to which the errors and heresies directed against the Church can be repudiated. The considerably emphasized

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importance of the Scripture was characteristic of the new theology deriving from the current of devotio moderna. This study constitutes a preliminary to further research on the ecclesiology of Marienwerder.

Słowa kluczowe: Jan z Kwidzyna; *Expositio Symboli Apostolorum*; diecezja pomezańska; eklezjologia średniowieczna; *via media*.

Keywords: Johannes Marienwerder; *Expositio Symboli Apostolorum*; diocese of Pomesania; medieval ecclesiology; *via media*.

Introduction

Johannes vel Joannes Marienwerder (Jan of Kwidzyn) (1343–1417) belongs among the outstanding figures of medieval Pomesania. Towards the end of the 1960s, Marian Borzyszkowski (1968a, pp. 585–590) published the list of contents (tabula) of Expositio Symboli Apostolorum by that very author. On the initiative of the same, the Prologue to the Expositio came out in print in 1974 (Borzyszkowski M., 1974, pp. 9–61). Another brief fragment of the work, together with a commentary, was published by Julian Wojtkowski (2019, pp. 195–198). These publications are believed to be the only fragments of Expositio Symboli Apostolorum by Johannes Marienwerder published to date worldwide. Currently, work is in progress to prepare the entire treatise for publication².

Expositio by Johannes Marienwerder is rooted in the realities of the Church in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Hence, the idea to draw attention to the relationship between ecclesiology as expounded in Expositio with the Scripture, and explore it by way of pertinent analysis.

The structure of the article is as follows: the first section discusses the significance of *Expositio* in the light of other work by Johannes Marienwerder. The second section is concerned with the principal qualities of the Church in their relation to the Scripture, so as to examine the ecclesiological element in the interpretation of the Article 9 of the Apostles' Creed and in the remainder of *Expositio*. That section concludes with findings from the analysis of how biblical texts are used in Marienwerder's ecclesiological disquisition. Finally, attention is drawn to the relation between the conception of the Church in *Expositio* and the reformatory postulations advanced in the ecclesiastical and scholarly circles of Bohemian Prague in the second half of the fourteenth century.

² The medieval manuscripts were transcribed and translated by J. Wojtkowski.

1. *Expositio* as the principal theological treatise by Johannes Marienwerder

The first current in the opus of Johannes Marienwerder comprises works which seek to further the cult of Dorothea of Montau (cf. Borzyszkowski M., 1968b, 1969a; Kowalczyk M., 2014, pp. 95–107; Kowalczyk M., 2018). Marienwerder was the confessor and spiritual mentor of the Pomesanian Mystic in the declining years of her life, as well as sought to propagate the dynamically expanding veneration of her figure (cf. Wiśniewski J., 2014, p. 610. Noteworthy pieces devoted to Dorothea of Montau include studies of her life and visions, such as Vita Prima (1394–1395), Vita Lindana (Compendium Minor; c. 1398), Liber de Festis (1398), Vita Latina (1398), Septililium (1400). Between 1400 and 1404, Johannes Marienwerder is likely to have written a German version of Dorothea's life, Das Leben der zelygen frawen Dorothee, also known as Vita Germanica. Roughly at the same time, Scriptum de vita et fama et sanctitatae Dorothee was created: an edited version of the life of the Pomesanian mystic, compiled as her canonization was instituted. Two monastic epistles, Epistula Prima 1394 Procuratori Ordinis Teutonicorum Romae missa and Epistula secunda 1394 (vel 1395) Procuratori missa are also cited as writings relating to Dorothea of Montau.

The second body of works encompasses the remaining writings of Johannes Marienwerder (Borzyszkowski M., 1969a, 1969b), dating from his stay in Prague or after his return to Kwidzyn. These include the synodal sermon Expergiscimini hodie, anime deuote (Prague, c. 1384), the paraphrase of the prayer Pater noster (Prague, before 1386), Expositio Symboli Apostolorum (Kwidzyn, 1399/1401), the treatise De Octo Beatitudinibus (Kwidzyn, late 14th century), three preaching speeches (sermons) on the departed (Kwidzyn, c. 1402), and a letter on the superiority of actions (Kwidzyn, between 1394–1417). It is possible that Johannes Marienwerder is also the author of the Annals of the Pomesanian Cathedral Chapter of 1393–1398 (Glauert M., 2003, pp. 490–491). A number of other works, possibly written by Johannes Marienwerder, are referred to in the scholarly debate, yet their actual authorship remains doubtful. These include Oracio post missam dicenda and the text entitled On the Holy Confession. Occasionally, fragments of the writings of St. Brigid, which convey instructions for the clergy, revelations about the life of Jesus and Mary and eschatological questions, are also attributed to the author from Kwidzyn (Krzyżaniakowa J., 1995, p. 103; cf. Rozynkowski W., 2006, pp. 130–131; Wiśniewski J., 2014, pp. 58–59).

Among the writings which are not directly concerned with the Mystic of Kwidzyn, *Expositio Symboli Apostolorum* stands out as the most im-

portant and best-known work of Johannes Marienwerder. The text of Expositio contains a Table³, a Prologue⁴ and twelve chapters expounding the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed⁵. The choice of the latter as the subject of disquisition is anything but accidental. Since patristic times, the Creed had been considered a compendium of knowledge on the truths of the Christian faith (Zurek A., 2017). Since antiquity, there has been no shortage of authors on the history of the Church who wrote commentaries (Expositio) to the Creed in order to defend its orthodoxy.

In the opinion of the author of *Expositio*, the nature of the Apostles' Creed is a singular one: a confession of faith originating with the twelve Apostles themselves, which constitutes the foundation of the entire universal Church (Prologue, c. 12 r b). It reflects the simplicity of the faith of the early Church who, free from heresy and error, gathered without publicity and in secrecy, all filled with ardent zeal (Prologue, c. 13 r b-v d).

The extensive oeuvre of Johannes Marienwerder was intended for the clergy and persons with theological education (Borzyszkowski M., 1974, p. 11; Karczewski M., 2021a, pp. 329–346). The formal paradigms of exposition, debate and polemic are indicative of the superior competence of the author. Johannes Marienwerder sometimes draws on the patristic texts and theological authorities of the Middle Ages, but it is the Scripture which plays a paramount role in *Expositio*. On the one hand, this is perfectly natural for a medieval theological treatise, given that the Scripture was the source of theology and remains strictly associated with it (Roszak P., 2018, p. 71). On the other hand, due to the abundance of biblical references, Johannes Marienwerder is described as a medieval "biblical theologian" (Borzyszkowski M., 1968b). Undoubtedly, in the eyes of Marienwerder, the Word of God was something more than just evidence or argument (Karczewski M., 2021b, pp. 287–304).

In the context of *Expositio*, direct interpretations concerning the Church proceed from Article 9 of the Apostles' Creed, *Credo sanctam ecclesiam catholicam*: "I believe in the holy universal (lit. Catholic) Church" (Art. IX, c. 57 r a-59 r a.; see Prologue, c. 12 v c), whose authorship had been attributed to the Apostle Matthew. In addition, ecclesiology-themed remarks are scattered throughout the commentaries on the other articles of the Creed, though their interpretations prove not to be uniform.

³ C. 5 r a-8 v d.

⁴ C. 8 v d–15 v d.

 $^{^5}$ Art. I – c. 16 r a-22 v d; Art. II – c. 22 v d-24 v d; Art. III – c. 25 r a-27 v c; Art. IV – c. 27 v c-31 r b; Art. V – c. 31 v c-35 v d; Art. VI – c. 36 r a-39 r a; Art. VII – c. 39 r b-46 v c; Art. VII – c. 46 v c-56 v d; Art. IX – c. 57 r a-59 r a; Art. X – c. 59 r a-64 r b; Art. XI – c. 64 v c-67 v c; Art. XII – c. 67 v c-79 r a.

2. The principal qualities of the Church and their biblical justification in *Expositio*

2.1. The Church in Article 9 of the Apostles' Creed

Johannes Marienwerder's disquisition on Article 9 of the Apostles' Creed addresses the three main features of the Church that he highlighted (Art. IX, c. 57 r a.). The term "Church" is aligned with the attribute of unity (*unitas*), the notion of "universal/catholic" is linked to its dignity (*dignitas*), whereas the term "holy" signifies the constancy (*firmitas*) of the Church.

Unity. The first characteristic of the Church is its unity, which the author associates with the unique significance of Christ, the sacrament of baptism and Christian charity. Christ is the sole foundation and the Head of the Church. This is confirmed in 1 Cor 3:11 (the sole foundation); Col 1:18 and Eph 1:22 (the Head of the Church); Eph 5:23 (the Head of the Church)⁶. The salvific act accomplished in the Son of God is fundamental to the existence of the Church, being the centre of the history of salvation. This work had been believed in explicitly or implicitly by those who preceded Him, and is believed by His followers. According to Marienwerder, the Church began with Abel who, according to Matt 23:35, was the first righteous man (Art. IX, c. 57 r b). In arguing for the unity of faith in Christ, the author draws on Distinction 35 in Book Three of P. Lombard's Sentences. However, it seems that its tenor applies to the unity of the Church only indirectly (Wojtkowski J., 2015, pp. 269–271).

The unity of the Church is embodied through baptism and the associated faith. Baptism (Art. IX, c. 57 r b-v c) is the gateway of all sacraments, enabling one's birth anew (cf. John 3:3-7) or spiritual rebirth. According to Eph 4:4, baptism fosters the realization of Christian hope and the attainment of the ultimate reward, which is God Himself. In order to define the magnitude of that reward, Marienwerder refers to Gen 15:1, which speaks of the reward promised by God to Abraham. To emphasize the link between faith and baptism, the author of Expositio cites Eph 4:5—one Lord, one faith, one baptism—but omits to mention the source of the quotation. According to Matt 6:24; Zech 14:9 and Deut 6:4, one should believe in only one Lord through faith in the divinity and humanity of Christ.

Marienwerder draws attention to four characteristics that attest to the unity of baptism, namely the unity of matter, unity of form, unity of agency, and the unity of purpose, linking each of these to a biblical text. The unity of matter is indicated in John 3:5 (rebirth of water and the Spirit),

 $^{^6}$ The matter of unity is also referred to in Art. XII, c. $68\,\mathrm{r}$ a.

while the unity of form is referred to in Matt 28:19 (baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit). The unity of agency is associated with Christ, who baptizes one inwardly according to John 1:33 (true baptism). The minister who dispenses the sacrament of baptism does so ministerially, externally. The unity of the purpose of baptism is stated in Mark 16:16 (the necessity of baptism for salvation). The author underlines that there is only one Church in which salvation can be achieved, as there is no salvation beyond it. Therefore, those who cut themselves off from the church due to mortal sin, heresy or a curse are exposed to danger. To conclude his commentary on Article 9, Jan additionally lists five erroneous attitudes relating to the necessity of remaining with the Church. These include (Art. IX, c. 59 r a) the notion that it is possible to be saved through another faith or sect; identification with the Church of the synagogue; the functioning of the Church of the malignant (ecclesia malignancium); persistence in a heretical community; and the claim that Greeks and Ruthenians are part of the Catholic Church.

Christian charity is another token of unity (Art. IX, c. 57 r b). It involves the work of the Holy Spirit, who enables the members of the Church to serve one God. In the original Church, the believers shared one heart and one soul (Acts 4:22). Unity requires zealous efforts of all, as Apostle Paul preaches in Eph 4:1. The Holy Spirit unites the Church, the mystical Body of Christ, because He dwells in the believers (Eph 4:3; cf. 1 Cor 12:3-31).

Dignity. Another attribute of the Church is its dignity. The author advances a number of arguments to substantiate the exceptional nature of the Church.

First, the Church was founded and endowed with dignity by Christ, His Apostles and their successors (Art. IX, c. 57 v d)⁷, which is affirmed by the missionary injunction contained in Mark 16:15.

The Church is possessed of the true commandments and, according to Matt 19:17, one can attain eternal life by observing them duly. The Church bestows its seven sacraments, which heal one from vices, have the power to instruct and instil humility, and renew one in the image of the Holy Trinity⁸. Just as no one is saved outside the Church, so no one perishes or is condemned within it⁹. The salvific nature of the Church was epitomized by Noah's Ark (cf. Gen 6-8). Those aboard it survived, and those who chose to stay on land were drowned (Art. IX, c. 57 v d - 58 r a).

⁷ Cf. Art. VI, c. 38 r b.

⁸ Cf. Prologue, c. 13 r b.

⁹ Cf. Art. VIII. c. 40 r a.

Another argument supporting the dignity of the Church is its universality and goodness (Art. IX, c. 58 r a-b). The universality of the Church is manifested in the fact that its encompasses all places, times and persons, regardless of gender. The universality of the Church is evinced in Rom. 1:8 (faith proclaimed throughout the world); Mal 1:11 (pure sacrifice offered in every place). Without providing the exact reference in the Bible, Jan also cites Ps 18:5 (the voice spreads throughout the earth). The Church acts throughout time since Abel (cf. Gen 4) until the end of the world. The New Law governs in the Church, applying to every God-fearing person. According to Jan, this follows from Acts 10 (the baptism of Cornelius and his household). The author emphasizes the equality of men and women in their access to the sacrament of baptism according to Col 3:1-17 (unity of those called to faith) and Gal 3:28 (all are one in Christ).

The universality of the Church is also expressed in the three estates of the faithful: the Church Triumphant of the saints in heaven, the Church Militant on earth, and the church of the souls in purgatory, of whom it is certain that they shall attain salvation. The subject of the intercession of the saints and the importance of communing with the souls in purgatory is explored in greater detail when discussing the article of faith regarding the communion of saints¹⁰.

The disquisition on the dignity of the Church concludes with the statement that there is nothing more worthy than the Universal Church below God, as it includes Christ as its Head, the Blessed Virgin and all the saints present, past and future.

Constancy. The third characteristic of the Church is its constancy (Art. IX, c. 58 r b - v c). The Church endures in spite of the difficulties it constantly faces. Marienwerder compares the Church to Peter's boat, which goes under but does not sink. Jesus' words to Peter in Luke 22:32 convey the truth of the Church's extraordinary permanence and power. The promise of Peter's continued faith is tantamount to the promise of the lasting faith of the Church. Relying on Bernard of Clairvaux, notably on his Sermon 33 on the Song of Songs and in his commentary to Ps 90, the author of Expositio distinguishes four periods of ordeal of the Church (Art. IX, c. 58 v c - 59 r a), which include the persecution during the time of the martyrs; the heresies of the early days of Christianity, the present time of bitterness, and the trial at the end of days.

The time of the martyrs involved persecution from tyrants such as Nero, Diocletian and others who tried to annihilate the Church. Jan compares this situation to the ordeal of Israel under the pharaoh (Ex 1:8-22). Just as with the Israelites, the number of Christians swelled as their

¹⁰ See Art. X, c. 60 r b-61 v c.

oppression grew more intense. At the time, killing a Christian was seen as a righteous act and a token of one's worship of God (Jn 16:2). By virtue of faith and patience, the Church emerged victorious from the trial.

The second period of tribulation came with the heretics during the time of the Doctors (Art. IX, c. 58 v c), i.e. the patristic era and the theological disputes it brought about. The Church overcame that ordeal thanks to the Scripture and wisdom. Jan invokes the characterization of the Church in Eph 5:27, where its impeccability and freedom from evil are emphasized.

Johannes Marienwerder saw the Church undergo another trial in his own lifetime (Art. IX, c. 59 v c – d). Drawing on the message in Isa 38:18¹¹, he describes it as a time of particular bitterness despite apparent peace. Jan associates the contemporary problems of the Church with false religiosity, which affects many of its members. The author is much concerned by the gravity of the situation when he writes: "The Church cannot escape them or ward them off and they have multiplied beyond number and incurable is this scourge of the Church" (Art. IX, c. 58 v c). The uniqueness of this ordeal lies in the fact that it originates with the home-dwellers and friends who serve Christ and the Antichrist simultaneously. False religiosity manifests itself in the corruption of mores. Jan speaks of a weeping Church, whose sons have scorned and blemished it by a "heinous profit, hideous life, abominable trade, and a pact walking in darkness" (Art. IX, c. 58 v d). Therefore, the time of the current trial gives rise to more bitterness than the former persecutions and heresies.

The fourth and final period of trial asserted by Bernard concerns the end of days (Art. IX, c. 58 v d) which, according to Matt 24:24, will involve great deception. It will also be a period of severe oppression contrived by the Antichrist and his collaborators. Despite that, the Church will also survive the ordeal (Rom 9:27; cf. Isa 10:22) thanks to Christ, who will defeat the Antichrist with the breath of his mouth (2 Thess 2:8). The ultimate triumph of the Church is foreshadowed in the image of the eternal kingdom of God in Dan 7:27 and 2:44-45. The great stone that destroyed other kingdoms symbolizes Christ's eternal kingdom that spans the earth entire (Dan 2:35).

2.2. The Church in the remainder of Expositio

Vital ecclesiological observations are also made in other chapters of *Expositio*, and remain closely related to the disquisition on the Church in

 $^{^{11}}$ A fragment of the so-called Song of Hezekiah (Isa 38:9-20), which refers to illness and recovery from it.

the explanations to Article 9. However, on many occasions, the issues which those explanations address only concisely are elaborated on elsewhere in *Expositio*. Still, they need to be outlined—albeit briefly—in view of the significance they had in the debate on the renewal of the Church, which was taking place during the lifetime of Johannes Marienwerder.

Spiritual gifts in the Church. In his commentary to Article 9, Marienwerder asserted Church's close relationship with Jesus Christ and His salvific act. The divine nature of the Church inspires confidence that it will stand the tests of time. God works to the benefit the Church (Art. VII, c. 40 r b). Furthermore, the Church is a community of the faithful who partake in God-given spiritual goods (Acts 4:32) (Art. X, c. 59 r b). Each member of the community serves others with a gift that they themselves have received (Art. VIII, c. 53 r a). The Church also sees persons particularly endowed by the Holy Spirit, whose action may prove prophetically significant. However, in order to be deemed genuine, a prophetic action or revelation must take three aspects into account (Art. VIII, c. 54 v d-55 r a). These include: the characteristics of the person who received the revelation, the manner in which the revelation was received, as well as its substance. Among the qualities of a visionary, attention is drawn to their charity, the function they perform in the Church, their relationship to the superiors, moral fortitude and avoidance of vainglory (Art. VII, c. 40 r a). According to Marienwerder, more is to be expected from persons of noble birth, individuals holding ecclesiastical dignities and titles (Art. VIII, c. 55 r a – v c). Arguments to support the outstanding importance of people vested with authority are provided by texts (Rom 13:1) and biblical examples (John 11:45; Dan 2:2-49; Gen 41:1-7). As for those who do not belong to the noble estate, one needs to note whether they have an experienced spiritual advisor whose opinion they respect, whether they are genuinely sincere believers, respect the hierarchy and do not preach fantasy. The ultimate proof in favour of the truthfulness of a visionary is to be found in "evident miracles or numerous fulfillments of what they predict" (Art. VIII, c. 55 v c). Clearly, those criteria had been met by the Pomesanian mystic Dorothea of Montau 12 . In his article on the Holy Spirit, the author of *Expositio* devotes considerable attention to the mystical vision (Art. VIII, c. 56 r a-b); he also underlines that the revelations granted to Dorothea have certainly come from the Holy Spirit (Art. VIII, c. 56 r b)¹³.

The Eucharist and the Church. The theme of the Eucharist occupies a prominent place in *Expositio*, even though it does not arise directly from

¹² Dorothea is mentioned only once in the entire *Expositio*, specifically in Art.. VIII, c. 56 r b.

¹³ Cf. Vita Dorotheae, pp. 13–16.

the Creed¹⁴. Johannes Marienwerder observes that the Sacrament of the Eucharist enjoys much reverence in the Church (Prologue, c. 13 v d) and cannot be reduced to a mere commemoration of the Passion of Christ; instead, it should be associated with Article 9 on the unity of the Church and Article 10, concerning the forgiveness of sins (Prologue, c. 12 v c-d). In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ are realistically present in the shape of bread and wine (Prologue, c. 13 v d-14 r a). Marienwerder rejects the claim that this is merely a metaphorical construct, since the formula of transubstantiation was established by Christ himself. Having been consecrated by the priest, bread and wine are substantially transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, whilst retaining their forms. Christ is present completely, "not descriptively, but sacramentally" (Prologue, c. 14a). One thus receives Christ both sacramentally and spiritually through faith and love. By virtue of a worthy reception of Christ, one is incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ as well as becomes renewed and purified. According to 1 Cor 11:29, unworthy reception of Christ draws the judgment of God. A person burdened by mortal sin, one intending to sin or believing erroneously receives the Sacrament of the Eucharist in an unworthy manner. Invoking the authorities (Augustine, Gratian, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Henry of Segusio) the author of Expositio explains at some length the rules for a worthy celebration of the Eucharist by the celebrant (Prologue, c. 14 r a-15 v d), from which it clearly follows that the Sacrament of the Eucharist was celebrated with great attention and reverence.

The Sacrament of Penance and indulgences. Reflecting on the Church, attention is also drawn to the sanative nature of the Sacrament of Penance. It belongs among the spiritual goods which God, through the Church, makes available to believers. The forgiveness of sins is not possible without true faith, "beyond the Church and the Communion of the Saints" (Heb 11:6) (Art. X, c. 61 v b.). Just as baptism that ushers one into the Church washes all sin away, repentance offers renewal from sin after baptism¹⁵. The author of *Expositio* comprehensively explains the theology of the Sacrament of Penance, gives instructions for its administration, polemicizes with those who reject it, and discusses the disciplinary issues involved in public penance (Art. X, c. 61 v c-64 v b). This sacrament—the fruit of God's mercy—is announced in Isa 49:15-19, Jer 3:1, and Ezek 18:30-32. The Sacrament of Penance demonstrates close kinship with the Sacrament of the Holy Orders. Christ Himself granted the authority to bind and loose to

 $^{^{14}}$ According to the author, the truth about all sacraments of the Church is indeed conveyed in the Apostles' Creed, albeit in its various articles, Prologue, c. 12 v c.

¹⁵ In Marienwerder's words, true penance is a second lifeline after a ship has sunk.

the Apostles and their successors (Art. X, c. 64 r a). As attested by the biblical testimonies in John 20:22-23 and Matt 18:18, holding the Power of the Keys (of distinction and absolution) as well as the jurisdiction of the Church, a priest is "released from sin, returned to the Church and reconciled with Christ" (Art. X, c. 61 v c). The remission of certain sins is reserved to the bishop (Art. X, c. 62 r b).

Johannes Marienwerder rejects the views which negate the significance of confessing before a priest. In the Sacrament of Penance, it is God Himself who forgives sins (Isa 43:25), while the priest is only a servant (Art. X, c. 64 r a). The author also discusses the penance-related practice of indulgences, focusing on the issue of indulgences which result in the foundation of new temples. It is clear to Jan that the act of a clergyman granting it is done for the glory of God and not for any other motive (Art. X, c. 63 v d), while only a person free from mortal sin, prompted by piety and guided by true faith is eligible for indulgence. The saints to whom churches thus erected are dedicated support their founders (Art. X, c. 63 v d-64 r a).

Apology of the Church with regard to doctrinal errors. Polemical statements directed against erroneous interpretations of the Apostles' Creed are relatively frequent in *Expositio*. From a purely ecclesiological standpoint, Marienwerder refers to two groups of errors, the first of which comprises notions which emerged in the patristic period and originated with such figures as Nestorius (Art. III, c. 27 r a), Origen (Art. V, c. 33 r a), Arius (Art. X, c. 61 r a), Pelagius (Art. V, c. 33 r b); Montanus (Art. VIII, c. 54 r b); Helvidius (Art. III, c. 26 r b); Manes (Art. III, c. 26 v d); Valentinian (Art. III, c. 26 v d); Macedonius (Art. VIII, c. 56 v d). In such cases, the author often draws on the arguments presented by the recognized authorities of the Church, e.g. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Richard of St. Victor, etc. The second group consists of errors which are relatively new, though the author is quite sparing in naming them directly. Some erroneous views are mentioned, such as the rejection of the worship of the saints by the Waldensians (Art. X, c. 63 v d), but the author highlights the contradiction between the errors and the interpretation of biblical texts within the church and notions concerning the sacraments and harmful potential from an ecclesiological perspective. Marienwerder does admit discussion but does not accept stubborn persistence in error (Prologue, c. 10 v d). He often speaks of the heretics in general terms, thus emphasizing their separation from the Church, which is the community of salvation. Persisting in heresy is, according to Marienwerder, a sign of hubris. One who persists in error should be instructed and encouraged to improve. However, a person who does not wish to come to their senses should be eradicated by "burning, the sword or in a different fashion" (Prologue, c. 10 r a). Schismatics are different from heretics in that they transgress against obedience (Greeks, Ruthenians) (Art. IX, c. 59 r a); their disobedience also excludes them from the Church (Art. IX, c. 59 r b).

2.3. Interpretation of biblical texts with ecclesiological significance: a characterization

The degree to which ecclesiological interpretations in *Expositio* are supplied with biblical references is uneven. It is undoubtedly much higher in the commentary to Article 9 of the Apostles' Creed. This is due to the fact that Johannes Marienwerder turns his attention there to the foundations of ecclesiology. The ecclesiological observations encountered in other parts of *Expositio* largely derive from Article 9 or relate to other articles of the Apostles' Creed.

In the direct exposition on ecclesiology included in the chapter devoted to Article 9, biblical texts play a primary and fundamental role. The biblical argument employed in the ecclesiological elucidation is often conducive to a polemic against errors and heresies (cf. Roszak P, 2018, pp. 72.81-82). According to the author of *Expositio*, the entire concept of the Church is rooted in the biblical writings of the New as well as the Old Testament. From a formal perspective, two interpretive modalities can be discerned in the applied biblical argumentation: literal and symbolic-allegorical (Bardski K., 2007, p. 14; Karczewski M., 2015, pp. 265–281).

With respect to instances of a literal interpretation of the biblical text, one should mention the arguments concerning the unity of baptism (Eph 4:4; Col 3:1-17; Gal 3:28), its form (Matt 28:19) and matter (John 3:5), evangelical precepts (Matt 19:17; Mark 16:25; Luke 22:32) or disciplinary recommendations (John 20:22-23; 1 Cor 11:29).

Still, Marienwerder gives much greater preference to allegory. Thus, the biblical imagery in which the author recognises symbols of the reality of the Church include Noah's ark (Gen 6-8); the eternal kingdom (Dan. 2) and the boat of Peter the Apostle (Matt 4:18-22, etc.). The promises given to Abraham (Gen 15:1), the persecution of the Israelites by the pharaoh (Ex 1:8-22), the time of bitterness (Is. 38:18) and the great stone (Dan 2:35) are interpreted using the mode of an allegory. Paul's comparison of the Church to the Mystical Body of which Jesus Christ himself is the Head (Eph 1:22; 5:23; Col 1:18; 1 Cor 12:3-31) is also an element of fundamental importance.

As regards the form, the Bible is generally invoked in the form of quotations (cf. Roszak P., 2015, pp. 115–140). Occasionally, biblical depic-

tions and substance are paraphrased without providing relevant passages in the Scripture. This applies primarily to the foremost symbolic imagery of the Church: Noah's ark, the boat of Peter the Apostle and the Mystical Body.

Also, it is with great ease that Johannes Marienwerder draws on the Old Testament. Not infrequently, the biblical argument is based simultaneously on several quotations from the New and the Old Testament. In a manner typical of the contemporary exegesis, the Holy Scriptures are treated as one complementary whole.

In his interpretation of the biblical writings, the author of *Expositio* sometimes refers to ecclesiastical authorities. For instance, when discussing Article 9, the author cites Bernard of Clairvaux in his exposition concerning the four periods in the history of the Church.

3. The concept of the Church in *Expositio* and the Prague reformatory postulations in the fourteenth century

Fourteenth-century Bohemian Prague as a centre of reform. In the latter half of the fourteenth century, Bohemian Prague became one of the important reformatory centres in the Church. The spiritual atmosphere of that milieu was also due to the work of the three great Prague-based preachers at the time. The necessary renewal of church life, the fight against the degradation of the religious and secular clergy, the formalism and splendour of the Church and the pursuit of a more profound religiosity among the faithful were the core issues in the sermons of Konrad Waldhauser (1326–1369) (Gajewski W., 2016, pp. 61–63). The second of the preacher-reformers, Jan Milíč of Kroměříže (c. 1320–1374) (Gajewski W., 2016, pp. 63-66), was even more radical. He ran a home for fallen women, renounced all dignities and lived in poverty. Milíč introduced the custom of frequent Holy Communion under both species and advocated frequent Holy Communion for the laity. He was a vociferous critic of the papacy, the emperor and church dignitaries, called for a universal council, and proclaimed the coming of the end of days and the related manifestations of the Antichrist. In his opinion, the only chance lay in a return to the simplicity and poverty of the early Church according to the biblical model. He also argued for the renewal of preachership and claimed that the spiritual rebirth of Christians was indispensable.

The third great preacher – the reformer Matěj of Janov (1350/1355–1394) – was Jan Milíč's pupil (Gajewski W., 2016, pp. 66–69). He would also denounce the abuses in the Church, particularly the contemporary

papal schism. He saw the way forward for the renewal of the Church in a return to fidelity to the Word of God, with the Bible as the centre of Christian life and the standard to which everything is subject. He also believed that the faithful should be enabled to participate frequently in the Eucharist, because it is in the Eucharist that true communion with God and, among others, takes place.

The history of the first decades of the Prague University, founded in 1348, owes considerable credit to the outstanding intellectuals who came to Bohemia from other academic centres at the time (Bologna, Sorbonne, Oxford and others). This facilitated the exchange of new ideas, philosophical concepts and more or less radical notions of how the Church should be renewed (Szulc A., 2004, pp. 20–33). University professors, especially scholars at the faculty of arts, engaged in debates on such issues as (Krzyżaniakowa J., 1995, p. 95) the essence and role of the all papal authority, the role of the Council, the sacraments of the Church, the place of the faithful in the Church, the just distribution of wealth, usury, the idea of conciliarism, etc.

Henry Totting of Oyta and others. Among the most prominent figures of Prague's arts faculty was Henry Totting of Oyta (c. 1330–1397) (Krzyzaniakowa J., 1995, pp. 97–109), who is regarded as a person who may have had a significant influence on the views of Johannes Marienwerder. Henry himself was a scholar at Erfurt, Paris and Prague and contributed to the establishment of the University of Vienna (1384). His academic career in Prague was associated first with the faculty of arts and subsequently with the faculty of theology. His views were close to those of Jean Buridan and William Ockham, the presumed originator of nominalism. Henry was also influenced by his professors John of Dambach, as well as Jan Moravec, a friend of Tauler and Meister Eckhart (cf. Kwiatkowski S., 1992). Augustinian theologians Johannes Klenkot and John of Brakel were also among Henry's masters. Moreover, Henry's scholarly formation found its major cornerstone in the 1369-1372 dispute with Vojtěch Raňkův of Ježov, an important figure in Bohemian science and the reformatory current (Krzyżaniakowa J., 1995, pp. 92–93). The latter was an opponent of nominalism and Augustinianism whilst siding with the views of John Wycliffe (cf. Gajewski W., 2016, pp. 49–60). The crux of the dispute was Henry's claim that a clergyman living in grave sin should not preach. It is also likely that the dispute had something to do with the tendency to restrict non-Bohemian scholarly activity at the University of Prague. Henry Totting of Oyta himself was an adherent of nominalizing Augustinianism (cf. Dekarli M., 2015): Prague's highly popular movement for Church renewal, which underscored the importance of the Bible and early

Christianity, as well as supported broadly understood *devotio moderna* (Krzyżaniakowa J., 1995, pp. 96–97; cf. Chaunu P., 1989, p. 353). As the reductionist tendencies grew increasingly intense in the Prague milieu, he adopted a moderate path (*via media*). Henry of Oyta promoted at least sixteen bachelors and six masters. Of the latter, Johannes Marienwerder, Matthew of Krakow and Konrad von Soltau went on to play the greatest roles in academic circles.

Throughout his life, Johannes Marienwerder maintained close contact with both Henry Totting of Oyta and Matthew of Krakow. Matthew of Krakow (c. 1345–1410) (Krzyżaniakowa J., 1963, pp. 9–57; Szafrański A., 1967, pp. 25–92) is considered an outstanding theologian and a representative of the movement for the reform of preachership. In his writings, he argued for the renewal of the Roman Curia and a reform of the Church in the spirit of conciliarism (cf. Seńko W., 1970; Kałuża Z., 1977, pp. 51–174). He was also an ardent advocate of the deeper spiritual life of the faithful according to the precepts of *devotio moderna* (Szulc A., 2004, pp. 35–38). Matthew construed theology practically, as a form of medicine for the specific person and approached the mission of priests and sacramental life in a similar fashion. In this respect, frequent reception of the Holy Communion was particularly crucial (Szulc A., 2004, pp. 25–26).

The ecclesiology of Expositio and the Prague milieu. Johannes Marienwerder stayed at the University of Prague between 1365 and 1387, completing successive stages of studies at the faculties of arts and theology, only to reach the position of professor of theology and hold the deanship of the faculty of theology (Hipler F, 1864–1866, pp. 166–299; Borzyszkowski M., 1968b, pp. 111–199; Borzyszkowski M. 1969, pp. 85–171; Wenta J. 1994, pp. 288–289; Glauert M., 2003, pp. 486–494; Mentzel-Reuters A., 2006, pp. 157–175; Kaliszuk J. 2010). He was probably ordained in 1373 and became a priest in the Diocese of Pomesania (Glauert M., 2003, p. 489). As canon at the castle church of All Saints (1377–1386) and synodal preacher, he participated fully in the endeavours to renew the Church and the spiritual life of the believers. He also had the opportunity to listen to the great preachers of Prague and to take part in the debates on church reform. In 1387, which witnessed radical steps taken to resolve the ethnic issue at the university and the culmination of disputes on doctrinal issues, especially on the frequent communion of the laity, Marienwerder left Prague for Prussia. Probably towards the end of his stay there, he became a monastic with the Teutonic Order, henceforth known as "magister Iohannes dictus Marinwerdir, sacra theologiae professor ac canonicus religiosus ordinis beatae Mariae domus theutonicorum ecclesiae Pomezaniensis" (Glauert M., 2003 p. 486; cf. Kwiatkowski K., 2019). At that time, plans were being made to establish a university in Chełmno, but the idea did not come to fruition. He accepted the cathedral canonry in Kwidzyn, and from 1388 until his death on 19 September 1417 held the deanship of the Pomesanian Cathedral Chapter (Glauert M., 2003; Radzimiński A., 2008, pp. 166–167; Biskup R., 2020).

Based on fragmentary analyses of *Expositio*, which may be regarded as the seminal theological work of Johannes Marienwerder, as well as studies concerned with his other writings, it may be readily asserted that he belonged to the moderate current of Church renewal.

Expositio makes no explicit demands for ecclesiastical reforms of structural nature. The reform of the papacy is not addressed, nor is the necessity of convening a council ever mentioned. Jan valued the successors of the Apostles and sacramental priesthood, although he emphasized the ancillary nature of their mission. The Pomesanian rejected the reductionist approach to the sacraments, including the Eucharist, recognizing it to be an exceptional gift of the Church and a spiritual medicine. He did not concern himself with the issue of frequent Holy Communion, although Dorothea of Montau is known to have received it daily, i.e. just as certain Prague reformers would have it (Bylina S., 2001, pp. 91–102). A staunch opponent of heresy, he strongly asserted the truth that salvation was attainable only within the Church.

On the other hand, *Expositio* does demonstrate a number of elements typical of the new theology propagated in Prague. It is clear that the Scripture plays the principal role in the ecclesiological argumentation. However, Marienwerder interpreted it as relying on the recognized church authorities. The renewal of the Church centres around a change of mindset and a more profound spirituality. This renewal takes place within the community of the Church through the deepened spiritual life of the individual, conscious participation in the Sacrament of Penance, as well as striving for a fuller knowledge of God. Johannes Marienwerder knows and recommends greater piety in the spirit of *devotio moderna* (Bylina S., 1984, pp. 113–114; cf. Szulc A., 2004, pp. 35–45; Żukowska K., 2017).

Expositio itself is the Pomesanian's response to the shortcomings and growing doctrinal confusion. Writing the treatise, Jan sees the state of the Church experiencing an inner anguish, similar to that of his contemporaries, the Church reformers. He is, however, very careful in formulating accusations and condemnations. His testimony about his contemporary Church is moving. The Church weeps because her children merely pretend to be the servants of Christ while, in reality, they are servants of the Antichrist. The remark (Art. IX, c. 58 v c-d) about the corruption of mores, the disfigurement of the Church and the disdain it is shown may intimate

the abuses concerning the trade in ecclesiastical offices or the immoral conduct of the clergy whom the Bohemian reformers denounced. Nonetheless, Jan avoids being specific, underlining the destructive influence of false religiosity and the virtually dead-end situation in which the Church has found itself. A time of crisis for the Church produces greater bitterness than previous persecutions and heresies. Therefore, Christocentrism becomes a crucial trait in the portrayal of the Church, suggesting the direction of its renewal. There is another clearly palpable element, i.e. a yearning—characteristic of the Prague reformers—for a return to the sources, i.e. emulation of the faith and the Church of the early Christians.

The ecclesiological views conveyed in *Expositio* may therefore be regarded as consistent with the moderate reformatory line presented by Henry Totting of Oyta and the principal claims advanced by Jan Milicz and Mateusz of Janów. Johannes Marienwerder maintains far-reaching restraint which prevents him from formulating radical reformatory postulates; instead, he seeks to elucidate the truths of faith and rules which govern the Church as well as stresses the need to deepen one's spiritual life.

Conclusions

Ecclesiology is one of the many theological themes which were given attention in Expositio Symboli Apostolorum by Johannes Marienwerder. According to the latter author, the mission of the Church is closely aligned with the biblical testimonies, which shed light on its nature and the purpose of its existence. The Holy Scripture also provides knowledge about the principal characteristics of the Church: unity, dignity and constancy. The Church is similar to the biblical ark of Noah: a vessel which offers deliverance in the face of human sin and its ramifications. The biblical texts also supply a foundation thanks to which the errors and heresies directed against the Church can be repudiated. The fact that Marienwerder often draws on the Holy Scripture may be attributed to various factors, such as the reformatory postulations that he was exposed to while experiencing the ecclesiastical and academic milieus of Bohemian Prague. The considerably emphasized importance of the Scripture was characteristic of the new theology deriving from the current of devotio moderna. This study constitutes a preliminary to further research on the theology of Johannes Marienwerder, given that the limited extent does not allow for findings from a detailed study of the ecclesiology of Marienwerder's writings dedicated to Dorothea of Montau to be included in this paper. Undoubtedly, being a spiritual companion to the Pomesanian Mystic and the efforts to promote her worship are connected with the conception of the Church that Marienwerder envisioned. The Mystic herself was a gift to the Church and a sign of its constant renewal. It is to be hoped that this study will encourage further enquiry into the theological oeuvre of one of the most eminent theologians of Pomesania.

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