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The *Przemyśl Meditation* in relation to *Catena aurea* by St. Thomas Aquinas*

1. Introduction

Recent years have seen a growing interest in the sources of Old Polish apocrypha, a development sparked primarily by the Freiburg edition of the *Przemyśl Meditation* (*Rozmyślanie przemyskie*, RP) [Twardzik, Keller, eds. 1998–2004] and the research carried out at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań under the direction of Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska supported by a grant from the National Science Centre. As a result of many years of work, an online tool was created to support interdisciplinary research on the texts of nine New Testament apocrypha written in Old Polish (www.apocrypha.amu.edu.pl). Users have access to, among other things, a set of sources of the Polish apocryphal works (both those known earlier and those discovered in the course of work on the project). These texts include extensive passages from books of the Old and New Testaments, other apocryphal works (such as *Legenda Sanctissimae Matronae Annae*), and writings of the Fathers and Doctors

* The research was carried out under a grant from the National Science Centre Poland (project no. 2017/26/E/HS2/HS2/00083) entitled *Beginnings of the Polish Language and Religious Culture in the Light of Medieval New Testament Apocrypha. A Universal Tool for Research on Polish Apocryphal Texts*, under the direction of Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska.

of the Church. It is not possible to definitively establish the provenance of the passages quoted in the apocrypha because their sources, including patristic works, may have been recorded both in “monographic” codices (such as those containing the preachings of St. Augustine or St. John Chrysostom) and as parts of larger collections (such as catenae or florilegia [Liere 2014: 144]). Moreover, the authors of those works may themselves have been identified, for example, by the inclusion of the author’s full name or initials [Liere 2014: 148–149].

Compiled texts pose a particularly difficult task for researcher-editors, in particular the *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* [Przemyśl Meditation] [see RP] which is the most extensive Slavonic apocryphal work. Despite the efforts of numerous linguists, including Tadeusz Dobrzeniecki [Dobrzeniecki 1969: 196–521], Waław Twardzik, Roman Mazurkiewicz [Mazurkiewicz 2004: 544–546; 2007: 198–201], and Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska [see e.g. Rojszczak 2007a: 276–284; Rojszczak-Robińska 2012], it has still not been possible to identify sources for many parts of this text. However, even those places in the manuscript that have an identified translation source have been found by editors to be problematic. This is because the compilers, while often referring to specific authors, rarely mentioned the title of the work being quoted. Further, even if academic editors ever succeeded in locating the source of a quotation, they could not be sure that a given text fragment originated from a specific individual treatise, particularly since – as has been proved – copyists quite frequently made errors in citing authors, titles, or book numbers.¹

- 1 In recent years, D. Rojszczak-Robińska has written primarily about the ways in which a copyist works with sources and the style and competence of a translator. In this article, I refer to the following works by her: *Święty Augustyn w “Rozmyślaniu przemyskim”* [Rojszczak 2007b], *Jak pisano “Rozmyślanie przemyskie”* [Rojszczak-Robińska 2012], *Staropolskie pasje. “Rozmyślanie przemyskie”, “Sprawa chędogo”, “Karta Rogawskiego”. Źródła – język – fabuła* [Rojszczak-Robińska 2016], *Strategies for Quoting the Holy Scriptures in the Old Polish Biblical-Apocryphal Narrations* [Rojszczak-Robińska 2020: 271–291], *Średniowieczna mozaika ze słów. O używaniu cudzych tekstów w staropolskich apokryfach* [Rojszczak-Robińska 2021: 79–97] *Writings and the Authority of the Church Fathers in Old Polish Apocryphal Texts* [Rojszczak-Robińska 2023: 198–222].

In the third volume of the Freiburg edition of RP [Twardzik, Keller, eds. 2004: 544–546], Roman Mazurkiewicz published further sources of this Old Polish apocryphal work. He listed *Catena aurea* among the texts from which they originated. Furthermore, in a paper containing additions to the list of sources for RP, he again suggested that the texts may come from *Catena aurea* [Mazurkiewicz 2007: 199]. Interestingly, in the list contained in his paper, Mazurkiewicz did not locate quotations within Thomas Aquinas' work, but he did provide the names of particular authors and the titles of their works (for example: Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*) with reference to the appropriate place in the published series *Patrologia Latina* [Mazurkiewicz 2007: 199–201].

The goal of this article is to identify fragments in RP that are potentially based on the text of *Catena aurea*, to analyse the way in which they functioned, and to attempt to determine the reason for their use. This will allow us to indicate the possible uses of the ideas, layout, and text of *Catena aurea* in RP. Consequently, an additional objective is to consider how, given the findings, the investigation of the sources of Old Polish biblical apocryphal narrative ought to be conducted.

2. Research Material

The article concerns the relationship between the Old Polish Apocrypha and its probable Latin source. It is not concerned with the text of *Catena aurea* as an independent text, nor will it discuss its position in the literary, theological and cultural circulation of medieval Poland. This does not change the fact that St. Thomas Aquinas' *Glossa continua super Evangelia* (*Catena aurea*) was one of the most important accomplishments of medieval biblical exegesis.²

- 2 For more on the *Catena aurea*, see: Aquinas and "Alcuin": a New Source of the *Catena Aurea* on John [André, Sharp, Shaw 2016: 3–20], *Tomasz z Akwinu – człowiek i dzieło* [Torrell 2008], *Tomasz z Akwinu. Życie, myśl i dzieło* [Weisheipl 1985], *Tomasza z Akwinu Lectura super Matheum cap. 1–11: studium historyczno-krytyczne i edycja tekstu* [Gałuszka 2011], *Na początku było Słowo. Komentarz do Prologu Ewangelii św. Jana = Super Evangelium S. Ioannis Lectura cap. 1, lec. 1–XI* [Thomas Aquinas 2001], *Ewangelia Ojców Kościoła* [Salij, sel. and trans. 2001], *Święty Tomasz*

It followed the old tradition of compiling collections of commentaries on the text of the Bible written by various of the Church Fathers [Thomas Aquinas 1841–1845; Smalley 1978; Wielgus 1990: 27; Stanula 2000: 1072–1073; Baglow 2004]. The innovative nature of the work by the *Doctor Angelicus*, arising from its use of texts by writers outside the circle of Latin theology, made possible a more detailed interpretation of the Holy Scripture [Milcarek 2007].³ The layout of the work was also innovative – verse by verse – allowing the Gospel to be read in sequence and, when possible, to identify individual authors before quoting them [Torrell 2008: 170]. In the introduction to *Catena aurea*, its author admits that, in order to prevent his text from becoming too wordy, he removed extensive sections of cited sources, and also changed their order to achieve continuity [Torrell 2008: 170]. In addition, he allowed himself to specify the meaning of some words, and, when necessary, omitted others [Torrell 2008: 170]. The value of this work of Aquinas is evidenced by the fact that it appeared later in numerous copies, both in manuscript and print. [Milcarek 2007: 4]. This makes it all the more justified to consider the possibility that *Catena aurea* was used as a source for the Old Polish religious texts, including the apocrypha. RP is a work that deserves particular attention in the context of the use of Aquinas' catena, it being a compilation of translations of many different sources, mostly Latin, including the rhymed apocryphal *Vita beatae virginis Mariae et Salvatoris rhythmica*, Petrus Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, and the Bible. Also frequently quoted in the Old Polish text are the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, including St. Augustine, the Venerable Bede, and St. John Chrysostom. We may ask, however, whether these were quotations taken from the separate works, or whether perhaps extensive passages of RP were produced based on Aquinas' compilation. It appears probable that they were in fact extracted from *Catena aurea*.

z Akwinu [Salij 2021]. On Thomas' concept of the exegesis of the Holy Scripture see, e.g. *Rola Pisma Świętego w średniowiecznej teologii* [Roszak 2018: 71–84].

³ For the development of biblical exegesis in the Middle Ages see, e.g. *Medieval Hermeneutics* [Liere 2014: 110–140], *The Commentary Tradition* [Liere 2014: 141–177].

3. Analysis of the Material

Compilations (of which RP is an example) were regarded as inferior texts, requiring of their authors mechanical work with the sources that involved simply combining them into a cohesive and logical whole [Adamczyk 1996: 40–41]. However, recent research on the relationship between RP and its sources shows that its author made thoughtful use of the source texts, changing specific passages, combining sources or omitting passages, and also paraphrasing them. More than 40 quotations that may originate from *Catena aurea* have been identified to date. The fact that the author of RP most likely made use of the collection compiled by Thomas Aquinas, and not of diverse single works, is evidenced by the occurrence of numerous quotations from works included in that collection. They usually appear in groups over the space of several pages, as in RP622–631, RP637–645, RP649–650, RP665–674, RP719–722, RP763–766, but there are also examples of single uses: RP593/18–594/4, RP637/2–5, RP655/3–14, RP689/1–4, RP725/12–15, RP771/3–12, RP845/2–6. They are often separated by quotations from other texts (such as the Bible) or by commentary added by the compiler himself. Moreover, the quotations from Aquinas' work sometimes appear in a different order from that in which they occur in his text (one example is a passage from *Expositio in Ioannem*, cap. XVIII, lectio 5).

We shall first discuss the ways in which the Old Polish writer used the source. An analysis will be made of the passages of RP⁴ and *Catena aurea*⁵ that correspond in terms of content. Only selected passages will be analysed as there are many such chapters.

4 All quotations from RP are taken from the following website *Staropolskie Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu* [see SA 1].

5 The article uses quotes from the digital edition of *Catena aurea* published on the website *Corpus Thomisticum S. Thomae De Aquino Opera Omnia* [see CT], after the website *Staropolskie Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu* [see SA 2], which compiles the sources of Old Polish apocrypha. It is based on the edition by Angelico Guarienti [see Guarienti 1953]. There are also newer editions, such as *Catena aurea deutsch. Die ostmitteldeutsche Übersetzung des Katenenkommentars des Thomas von Aquin* [Thomas von Aquin 2008–2012]. In addition, digital projects are being implemented, e.g. *Thomas d'Aquin, Expositio continua super evangelia sive Catena aurea* (*Editio scientifica media, textu optimis manuscriptis selectis collato, fontibusque reper-*

The criterion adopted for the selection of fragments was their specificity in that they represented one of the ways of using the source in the Old Polish text identified by the author of the article (they contained exegesis or were a source of instruction for the faithful or a source of authority for the writer). Moreover, the selected quotes from Thomas Aquinas' *Catena* show that the Old Polish translator worked with them in a precise and methodical manner. This could only be shown by providing the reader with those fragments of the *Catena aurea* that follow each other on several consecutive pages of RP. Accordingly, the translator's method of working with the source (the method of translation and the presence and subject of any commentary) will also be commented on.

4. The Use of *Catena aurea* in RP

Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska wrote the following about the use of the authority of the Church Fathers in the Old Polish apocrypha:

If we look at apocrypha in the same way as we look at paraphrases of the Bible, we will notice that the writings of the Church Fathers served to explain all the four meanings, in line with the principles of noematics, specifically, "Littera gesta docet, quod credas allegoria; moralia quid agis, quid speres anagogia." And here a difference can be seen – all the four meanings appear primarily in *Rozmyślanie przemyskie*, while in the other texts, the literal, historical meaning prevails. This can be due to the different purpose each of the preserved texts served. [Rojszczak-Robińska 2023: 221]

In referring to the works of the Church Fathers, the author's purpose might therefore have been, on the one hand, to explain the scripture, but also to shape the moral attitudes of the faithful. Moreover, the Old Polish author used the authority of the patristic writers

as support for his own commentary. Such a procedure is also visible in those parts of RP that may have been based on *Catena aurea*.

4.1. *Catena aurea* as a Source Containing Exegesis

Quaerit autem non ut volens scire: nam utique noverat omnia quae ventura erant super eum: sed ostendere volens quoniam cum praesens esset, ab eis videri non poterat vel discerni; nam sequitur dicit ei Iesus: ego sum. In medio enim eorum existens, excaecavit eorum oculos: quoniam enim non tenebrae causa errant, indicavit Evangelista dicens, quoniam habuerunt lampades. Si vero lampades non essent, a voce saltem debebant eum agnoscere. (*Expositio in Ioannem*, cap. XVIII, lectio 2)

Potem miły Krystus, wiedząc wszystkie rzeczy, które nań miały przyć, a też chcąc ukazać swą moc, iż dobrowolnie miały być, poszedł przeciw im, jakoby gotowy ku śmierci, i ofiarował się wolnie przeze wszystko strachu, i rzekł: „Kogo szukacie?”. **To rzekł nie jako nie wiedząc, co by chcieli, ale by wiedzieli pewnie, iż on jest, którego szukają. Między imi będąc, oślepił ich oczy, iż go nie poznali. A też iż są jego nie poznali, nie była wina w tem, czyż aby omacnie z nimi mówił, bo jako mówi ewangelista, iż świce, pochodnie, latarnie mieli, że we wszem ogrodzie śmy nie było, a też aczby świec ni mieli, ale po jednym głosie mieli jį poznać[y].** (RP622/1–21)

The first part of the extract from RP is a paraphrase of the Gospel of John (18:4) that refers to the scene of Jesus' capture after he prayed in Gethsemane. The excerpt above in bold is a paraphrase from Theophylact ("To rzekł [...], którego szukają").⁶ In turn,

6 This part of the events in Gethsemane is presented in a very similar way in *Żywot Pana Jezusa Krysta* ["Life of Lord Jesus Christ"] by Baltazar Opec. This could raise suspicions about the common source of both texts, which would not necessarily have to be the *Catena* of St. Thomas. However, there are few such parallel passages, which does not ultimately rule out the possibility that both authors used this *Catena*. It should also be noted that many other *Catena aurea* fragments cited

the author of RP further quotes John Chrysostom (“Między imi będąc, [...] ji poznać[y]”). Words from the Holy Scripture and the Church Fathers appear here because of the need to explain the reason for Jesus’ asking “Whom are you seeking?” Theophylact’s words were paraphrased by the Old Polish translator. Both authors convey the same content, but emphasise the utterances differently. Theophylact explained that Jesus did not pose his question out of a desire to learn the answer, but did so because the soldiers were not able to distinguish him from his disciples by appearance (this is implied by the commentary from John Chrysostom later in the text). The writer of RP, however, emphasised the fact that Jesus asked the question so that they would recognise him by his voice. While the quotation from Theophylact is not an exact translation, the words of John Chrysostom are translated literally. Chrysostom began by explaining that the soldiers’ failure to recognise Jesus did not result from the darkness shrouding the place, since they all carried candles, torches, and lanterns; it was Jesus who blinded the eyes of the people who had arrived, so that they would not recognise him. This was because the soldiers were to identify Jesus, when he asked the question, by his voice. The author of RP thus supported the biblical quotation with the more extensive explanation proposed by the Byzantine writers, as recorded in *Catena aurea*. This commentary is followed by a further excerpt from the Gospel of John (18:5).

In the above fragment, the Old Polish writer, apart from quoting directly, also paraphrased, adding certain elements of his own, expanding and interpreting the text of the Holy Scripture and the commentary on it by the Church Fathers on an ongoing basis. He does the same as St. Thomas in the *Catena aurea*, as noted in Torrell [Torrell 2008]. The writer thus imitates the style of St. Thomas, and the question is whether this is premeditated, or does it come naturally as a result of the education and experience he has acquired? It is impossible to discern, however, it must be noted, because if this action of the compiler is indeed intentional,

in RP do not have parallel citations in *Żywot Pana Jezusa Krysta*. This could be evidence that one author used a given source more willingly than others.

then the RP in its formal layer becomes, at least to a certain extent (in some fragments, because the entire text cannot be prejudged), a catena.

4.2. *Catena* as a Source of Instructions for the Faithful

Chrysostomus in Matth. Discipuli autem, qui quando detentus est dominus permanserunt, quando locutus est haec ad turbas, fugerunt; unde sequitur tunc discipuli omnes, relicto eo, fugerunt; sciebant enim quoniam iam non erat possibile effugere, eo se voluntarie illis tradente. Remigius. In hoc tamen facto demonstratur fragilitas apostolorum: qui enim de ardore fidei promiserant se mori cum eo, nunc timore fugiunt immemores suae promissionis. Quod etiam videmus impleri in his qui pro amore Dei magna se promittunt facturos, et postmodum non implent: non tamen desperae debent, sed cum apostolis resurgere et per poenitentiam resipiscere. (*Expositio in Matthaeum*, cap. XXVI, lectio 15)

Agdyż ji tako twardo i tako nielaskawie jęli, tedy to widząc, zwolennicy opuścili ji myślą i ciałem, wszyscy strachem uciekli. Kakokolwie nie było im podobno uciec, bo są dobrowolnie szli i dobrowolnie się podali, wszakoż potem uciekli. A tym się ukazuje krewkość apostolska, iż gorącością wiary obiecowali z nim umrzeć, tedy zapomniawszy obietnice strachy, które widzimy i dziś pełniąc się w tych, którzy prze miłość Bożą wielkie rzeczy obiecując uczynić, a potem i namniejszej nie pełniąc, wszakoż ni mają rozpaczać, ale z apostoły wstać a przez świętą pokutę napelnić. (RP655/3–14)

Again we see the use of a quotation from the writings of the Church Fathers, but this time the author's intention is not to cite an authority to support his own words. The purpose of this quotation from *Catena aurea* was to provide a description of the attitude of the Apostles, who made emotional vows to remain at God's side, but then fled out of fear of the consequences of Jesus' capture. Remigius, from whose writings the quotation comes, used the Apostles

as an example to show that in contemporary times too (from the perspective of Remigius, and later from that of the author of RP, and indeed from ours) there are people who for various reasons fail to fulfil promises that they have given to God. For them, however, like for the Apostles in earlier times, there is an opportunity for salvation – it will be sufficient to make repentance. The view of the scripture taken by Remigius (and by Thomas Aquinas after him) is connected to a moralistic reading of the Bible, this being one of the elements of exegesis [see also Levy 2018]. The Gospel of Matthew frequently underlines the possibility of salvation on condition that the sinner meets God's demands, and some of the situations used as examples concern the Apostles.

4.3. *Catena aurea* as a Source of Authority

Ubi nunc militum cohors, ubi terror, et munimen armorum?
Una vox turbam odiis ferocem armisque terribilem sine telo
ullo percussit, repulit, stravit. (*Expositio in Ioannem*, cap. XVIII,
lectio 2)

Takież miły Krystus na tem świecie był barzo pokorny i śmierny, ale wszędzie przeciw swym nieprzyjacielom będzie barzo roztropny i barzo [pokorny i] przykry. A to ukazał tym, iż swe nieprzyjaciele jednym śmiernym słowem porzucił [a tako ukazał tym, iż swe nieprzyjaciele]. Przetoż mowi: Poszli wznak, czuż od oblicza Bożego, od(w)racając swe lice, podług Dawida proroka: „Odwroceni będziecie wznak myślący mnie źle”. I padli są na ziemię. O, mowi święty Augustyn: **Bo idźcie przed Bog wojska rycerzow i oprawienie czynow! Jeden głos tłuszcza rzewniwą, czynem strasliwą prze swzej broni zaraził, odpędził i porzucił.** (RP626/7–627/2)

In the above example, the Old Polish author interwove different sources with his own commentary. The part from “Takież miły Krystus [...]” up to “[...] porzucił” is a statement by the translator of RP. The following lines of text contain a quotation from John 18 (“Poszli wznak [...]”. I padli są na ziemię”) and one from Psalms 34 (“Odwroceni będziecie wznak myślący mnie źle”).

These two biblical excerpts were supplemented by an explanation from the author ("czuż od oblicza Bożego, odwracając swe lice, podług Dawida proroka"). The Old Polish writer made the observation (whether independently or otherwise) that the words from the Gospel of John alluded to that psalm. The quotations served as examples to describe Jesus' attitude to his enemies. The whole chapter of RP from which this excerpt comes is devoted to that topic. The long initial part, as has already been mentioned, is a commentary from the author of the apocryphal work, constituting the main framework of the chapter. The quotations from the Bible and from the Church Fathers provide confirmation for his words. Apart from the Gospel and the Book of Psalms, the compiler also cited the words of St. Augustine concerning the power of God (the underscored part). Quoting the words of this Father of the Church, he explained that God with a thunderous voice frightened, drove off, and abandoned the cruel and terrible crowd. On the one hand, these words served as a commentary to the Gospel, while on the other, they confirmed the Old Polish writer's view concerning Jesus. In the above excerpt, the names of the ancient authors (David and Augustine) are mentioned, which may suggest that the author of RP wished on the one hand to indicate the precise Old Testament source to which the Gospel alludes, and on the other to support his own position using the authority of Augustine of Hippo [Rojszczak 2007b].

5. Addition of Commentary to Quotations from *Catena*

It was shown above to what purpose the author of RP may have used quotations from Thomas Aquinas' *Catena*. Consideration should be given, however, to the way in which Aquinas' work functioned in the apocrypha. This will make it possible to establish the Old Polish author's attitude to the source text.

Origenes in Matth.: Sequitur Petrus autem sequebatur eum a longe: non enim poterat de proximo eum sequi, sed de longinquo; nec tamen omnino recedens ab eo. Chrysostomus in Matth.: Multus enim erat fervor Petri, qui cum alios fugientes

vidisset, non fugit, sed stetit, et intravit. (*Expositio in Matthaeum*, cap. XXVI, lectio 3)

Szymon Piotr, apostoł jego, czuż Jesukrysta, ⟨naśladował ji⟩, ale z daleka, aby widział skonanie, i iny apostoł albo zwolenik, czuż Jan Ewanjelista. **Mowi Orygenes, iże przeto z daleka naśladował, iże nie mógł blisko przystąpić przed silną tłuszcą luda, ale z daleka naśladował, a wszakoż jego nie odstąpił. Mowi: Święty Piotr wielikigo gniew(u) i barzo gorącego miłowania napelnion, bo kiedy widział ine uciekając, nie uciekał, ale stał z daleka**, le przeto, iże miał Boga zaprzec, bo by mógł był nikakiej Boga zaprzec, by był blisko Boga przystał. (RP665/1–17)

The first sentence is constructed by combining biblical quotes from the Gospels of Matthew and John. It recounts that St. Peter did not renounce Jesus, but kept his distance (“Szymon Piotr, apostoł jego, [...] ⟨naśladował ji⟩, ale z daleka, aby widział skonanie”), as did St. John (“i iny apostoł albo zwolennik [...]”). The elided parts of these quoted sentences are commentary by the author of RP. The two following sentences, in turn, are a quotation from *Catena aurea*. The first contains words of Origen, who explained that St. Peter could not have appeared before such a large crowd as a disciple of Christ as no doubt because he would be putting himself in danger. Nevertheless, he stayed with his teacher, unlike most of the disciples. Next came the words of John Chrysostom, who stated that Peter was affected by the anger caused by the events at Gethsemane, and was full of love for Jesus, and for that reason he did not flee, despite seeing others do so. This quotation was combined with commentary from the Old Polish copyist, who noted that Peter did not flee because he could not (dared not) renounce Christ while standing close to him. This is the first of the examples I shall give where the Old Polish writer commented on quotations from the Church Fathers that he drew from.

Another example concerns the introduction of comments to fragments of the *Expositio in Ioannem*.

Unde sequitur erat autem Caiphas qui consilium dederat Iudaeis, quia expedit unum hominem mori pro populo: tanta enim est veritatis superabundantia, ut et inimici eam personent. (*Expositio in Ioannem*, cap. XVIII, lectio 4)

I pisze dalej święty Jan, wtore wspominając, iż **był ten Kajfasz, jen radę dał Żydom rzekąc**: „Podobniej jednemu człowieku umrzeć za wszytek lud”. Ale mamy baczyć, czemu tako pilnie święty Jan wspomina to słowo: przeto, aby niektorzy mdłej wiary nie rozpaczali we śmierci Jesukrystowej, ktegoż nieprzyjacieli, kakokolwie nie wiedząc, wszakoż prorocstwem rzekł, iż jego śmierć była zbawienie wszemu ludu i wszemu światu. Bo rzekł ten istny nieprzyjacieli: „Podobno jednemu człowieku umrzeć”, czuż prze zbawienie wszego świata. **Bo taka moc jest prawdy, jako mowi święty Jan Złotousty, iż nieprzyjaciele muszą ją mowić, jakoby tą istną prawdą przypędzeni.** (RP670/1–21)

In the above passage, the commentary of the author of the apocrypha was interwoven with text from the Bible and from *Catena aurea*. The main point of the reference is a quotation from the Gospel of John: “Podobniej jednemu człowieku umrzeć za wszytek lud” (John 18:4). This is introduced by words of the author of RP (“I pisze dalej święty Jan, wtore wspominając, iż [...]”), after which followed a translation of the previously mentioned passage from the Bible (John 18:14) or *Catena* (“był ten Kajfasz, jen radę dał Żydom rzekąc”).⁷ The translator’s commentary is continued after the high priest’s words as quoted from the source (biblical or patristic). Next, however, came a quotation from John Chrysostom

7 This is one of the examples that show that sometimes it is not possible to decide which source text the author of RP used. This applies not only to scripture and commentary to it, but also to quotations from the Bible itself. This demonstrates that one should be especially cautious when drawing conclusions about the work of Old Polish copyists (compilers, “mutators”), taking account of different views and carefully analysing existing research. This does not mean, however, that it is not worthwhile to formulate research hypotheses containing specific interpretative proposals.

(taken from *Expositio in Ioannem*, caput XVIII, lectio 4). The first part of Chrysostom's commentary coincided with the biblical quotation, while the second part supplemented the explanation provided by the Old Polish writer. Moreover, the Polish copyist paraphrased what Chrysostom wrote ("był ten Kajfasz, jen radę dał Żydom rzekąc || Bo rzekł ten istny nieprzyjaciół"). In the same chapter of RP the author cited the opinion of the Venerable Bede on the location of the houses of Annas and Caiaphas and noted the fact that bonds of blood would also link them in the sin against Jesus: "Unde sequitur erat autem Caiphas qui consilium dederat Iudaeis, quia expedit unum hominem mori pro populo" (*Expositio in Ioannem*, cap. XVIII, lectio 4 – RP667/20–668/2). This is another passage where the Old Polish writer used the text of *Catena aurea* in a creative manner.

6. The Order of Quotations from the Church Fathers as Evidence of the Use of *Catena aurea*

In studies of the manner in which the source text was used in RP, the focus thus far has largely been on the Bible, particular treatises of the Church Fathers, and biblical paraphrases (such as the *Historia Scholastica* as Rojszczak-Robińska has written). It has been pointed out that the way in which the author of the new text used the words of others is not accidental – he used the Gospels and the Book of Psalms differently from *Vita Rhytmica* and *Historia Scholastica*, as Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska has shown. A tabulation of quotations from particular Church Fathers cited in *Catena aurea* alongside their translations in RP leads to the conclusion that it may have been Thomas Aquinas' anthology that was the direct source used by the author of the Old Polish apocryphal work. It is evident that quotations from particular Church Fathers appear in groups in close proximity. This is particularly visible in RP763–766, where the subject is the high priests' use of the returned thirty pieces of silver to purchase land for the burial of pilgrims.

As table 1 shows, four pages of the apocryphal work contain commentaries from John Chrysostom, Hieronymus, Origen (a gloss being added in this case), and Augustine. The words of

Table 1. Comparison of Parallel Passages from the *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* and the Gospel of Matthew

No.	Polish Passage (RP)	Latin Passage (Gospel of Matthew)	Location
1.	Tedy biskupowie, mieniać, aby tym cześć uczynili, rzekli: „Wszystki ty istny pieniądze nie jestci podobno wrocić w karbanę”, [...] Przetoż rzekli: „Nie jestci podobno tamo ich wrocić, skądesmy je wzięli, boć jest myto krwi przelania”.	Quia principes sacerdotum noverant, quod occisionem emerant, a propria conscientia condemnati fuerunt: et ad hoc ostendendum subdit Evangelista principes autem sacerdotum acceptis argenteis dixerunt: non licet eos mittere in corbonam, quia pretium sanguinis est.	RP763/1–5; RP763/7–9; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2
2.	O, zaprawdę, mowi święty Jeronim, pełni sie słowo Jesukrystowo, ktore był rzekł o tych biskupiech rzekąc: „Cedząc komora, a wielbłąda pogłytając” – mieniać grzech wrocić pieniądze w skarb, ale nie grzech zabić stwórcy wszegego świata.	Vere culicem liquantes, et camelum glutientes; si enim ideo non mittunt pecuniam in corbonam, hoc est gazophylacium, et dona Dei, quia pretium sanguinis est, cur ipse sanguis effunditur	RP763/9–16; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2
3.	A takóž wszedszy w radę, kupili za nie rolę figulową, tako rzekącego <figuły>, bo figulusz może tu być włoszcze imię tej roli albo tego człowieka, ktorego była ta rola, i dali ją na pogrzeb pielgrzymom;	usi sunt pretio sanguinis Iesu ad comparationem agri figuli alicuius, ut in eo peregrini sepeliantur, non secundum votum suum in monumentis paternis; unde sequitur consilio autem inito, emerunt ex illis agrum figuli in sepulturam peregrinorum.	RP763/16–22; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2

Table 1. Comparison of Parallel Passages from the *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* and the Gospel of Matthew (continued)

No.	Polish Passage (RP)	Latin Passage (Gospel of Matthew)	Location
4.	które się stało Bożem przeźrzeniem. Mówi święty Augustyn, aby myto krwi zbawiciela naszego nie grzesznym dało potrzebną, ale pielgrzymom odpoczynek gotowało.	Providentia autem Dei factum puto ut pretium salvatoris non peccatoribus sumptum praebeat, sed peregrinis requiem subministret;	RP763/22–764/2; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2
5.	Tęgodla wezwana jest rola ich żydowskim językiem „Acheldemach”, to jest „rola kupiona mytem k(r)wie niewinnej”, aż do siego dnia –	unde sequitur propter hoc vocatus est ager ille Hacedama, hoc est ager sanguinis, usque in hodiernum diem.	RP764/2–6; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2
6.	[...] to rozumiej do tego dnia, kiedy święty Maciej Ewanjelią pisał. Tedy się napełniło, choć w tem uczynku, co było rzeczono przez Jeremiasza proroka rzekącego: „I wzięli, choć książęta kapłańskie, z karbany trzydzieści pieniędzy sibirnych myta zakupionego, choć od Judasza i od jego towarzyszów, i dali je na rolę figułową, tako rzekącego figuły, jako mi ustawił Bog, choć jako mi zjawił być ustawiono”.	Quod referendum est ad tempus quo Evangelista hoc scripsit. Deinde confirmat idem propheta testimonio, dicens tunc impletum est quod dictum est per Ieremiam prophetam, dicentem: et acceperunt triginta argenteos pretium appetiati, quem appetiaverunt a filiis Israel, et dederunt eos in agrum figuli, sicut constituit mihi dominus.	RP764/6–18; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2

No.	Polish Passage (RP)	Latin Passage (Gospel of Matthew)	Location
7.	<p>A to jest rzeczono z rozuma świętego Macieja Ewanjelisty, bo tego w niejednych księgach prorockich nie najdzie.</p> <p>Ale kako by to mogło być, iżby Jeremiasz mówił, a tego nie czciemy w Jeremiaszu, ale w Zacharyjaszu? Mowi święty</p> <p>Augustyn, iż Duchem Świętym sie to stało, aby ukazano, iż prorokiem jeden Duch jest mówiącym: co jeden mowi, wszyscy k temu rozumu mówią. Inako a lepiej możemy rzec, iż to jest częścią w Jeremiaszu. Zacharyjsz[u] mowi nie o kupieniu rolej, ale telko o mycie, tako rzekąc: [...] Ale Jeremiasz mowi ⟨n⟩i⟨e⟩ o t⟨y⟩m mycie, ale o rolej kupi⟨en⟩i⟨u⟩, tako rzekący: [...] wszakoż święty Maciej podobniej chciał położyć Jeremiasza niżli Zacharyjasza prze dwojaką rzecz: prze to, iż pierwszy jest między proroki, a też prze to, iż wyprawniej i jaśniej słowem i uczynkiem wypisuje mękę Jesukrysta. Ale to isto dalej mowi ewanjesty: „Ktoregom najął albo ktorego są najęli, czuż</p>	<p>Si quis ergo putat ideo fidei Evangelistae aliquid derogandum, primo noverit non omnes codices Evangeliorum habere quod per Ieremiam dictum sit, sed tantummodo per prophetam. Mihi autem haec non placet defensio: quia et plures codices habent Ieremiae nomen, et antiquiores; et nulli fuit causa cur adderetur hoc nomen, et mendositas fieret. Cur autem tolleretur, fuit utique causa ut hoc audax imperitia faceret, praedicta quaestione turbata. Potuit autem fieri ut animo Matthaei Evangelium scribentis, pro Zacharia Ieremias occurreret, ut fieri solet: quod tamen sine ulla dubitatione emendaret saltem ab his admonitus qui ipso adhuc in carne vivente haec legere potuerunt, nisi cogitaret recordationi suae, quae spiritu sancto regebatur, non occurrisset aliud pro alio nomen prophetarum, nisi quia dominus hoc ita scribi constituit. Cur autem constituerit, prima causa est, quia sic insinuatur ita omnes prophetas uno spiritu locutos, mirabili inter se consensione constare, ut</p>	<p>RP764/18–765/7; RP765/13–15; RP766/11–25; Matth cap. XXVII l. 2</p>

Table 1. Comparison of Parallel Passages from the *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* and the Gospel of Matthew (continued)

No.	Polish Passage (RP)	Latin Passage (Gospel of Matthew)	Location
	mytem kupili, synowie israelszczy alboż ci, którzy byli urodzeni od synow israelskich”, ni w jednym proroce nie stoi albo nie pisano, niż ewangelista mowi sam, ktory to poznał Bożem znamieniem.	hoc multo amplius sit quam si omnium verba prophetarum uno unius hominis ore demonstrentur; et ideo indubitanter accipi debet, quaecumque per eos spiritus sanctus dixit, et singula esse omnium, et omnia singulorum. Si enim hodie quisquam volens alicuius verba indicare, dicat nomen alterius a quo dicta sunt, qui tamen sit amicissimus illius cuius verba dicere voluit, et continuo recordatus, alium pro alio se dixisse, ita se corrigat ut tamen dicat: bene dixi, nihil aliud intuens nisi inter ambos esse concordiam: quanto magis de prophetis sanctis hoc commendandum fuit? Est et alia causa, cur hoc nomen Ieremiae in testimonio Zachariae sit manere permissum: vel potius sancti spiritus auctoritate praeceptum sit. Est apud Ieremiam quod emerit agrum a filio fratris sui, et dederit ei argentum, non quidem sub hoc nomine pretii, quod positum est apud Zachariam, triginta argenteis. Quod autem prophetiam de triginta argenteis	

No.	Polish Passage (RP)	Latin Passage (Gospel of Matthew)	Location
		<p>ad hoc interpretatus sit Evangelista quod modo de domino completum est, manifestum est; sed ad hoc pertinere etiam illud de agro empto quod Ieremias dicit, hinc potest mystice significari, ut non hic Zachariae nomen poneretur qui dixit triginta argenteis, sed Ieremiae qui dixit de agro empto; ut lecto Evangelio, atque invento nomine Ieremiae, lecto autem Ieremia, et non invento testimonio de triginta argenteis, invento tamen agro empto, admoneatur lector utrumque conferre, et inde sensum enucleare prophetiae, quomodo pertineat ad hoc quod in domino completum est. Nam illud quod subiecit huic testimonio Matthaeus cum ait quem appretiaverunt a filiis Israel, et dederunt eos in agrum figuli, sicut constituit mihi dominus, nec apud Zachariam, nec apud Ieremiam reperitur; unde magis ex persona Evangelistae accipiendum est, et mystice insertum, quia hoc ex domini revelatione cognoverit, et ad hanc rem quae de Christi pretio facta est, huiusmodi pertinere prophetiam.</p>	

the Church Fathers are interwoven with biblical quotations and commentary by the apocryphal author himself. He presented commentaries to a passage from the Gospel of Matthew (27:6–10), and did so in the order suggested by *Catena aurea*. This may be a further argument for the thesis that it was Thomas Aquinas' compilation that was the source used by the writer of RP.

Further evidence for this comes from other passages in the apocryphal work (see table 2).

This passage contains commentaries to three of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). Interestingly, the biblical quotations therein are also taken from three Gospels, those of Matthew (26:55–56), Luke (22:53), and John (3:20). The commentary which in *Catena aurea* referred to the Gospel of Mark was appended in RP to the exegesis of the relevant passage of the Gospel of Matthew.⁸ This was done because *Expositio in Matthaeum* does not contain commentary on that particular passage. This indicates that the writer of RP had excellent knowledge of the content of *Catena aurea*. It may also be evidence of the great authority that Aquinas' compilation represented to the Old Polish scribe: he did not seek other sources, but remained with the one that was familiar to him, and made use of the material that was available there.

It is also observed that the Old Polish writer made use of passages from one part of *Catena* over several consecutive pages. This is seen, for example, on the following pages: RP622/12–21, RP626/21–627/2, RP630/10–13, RP631/7–15; RP670/17–20, RP671/6–10, RP671/17–672/1, RP672/22–673/2 (in both cases *Expositio in Ioannem* is used); RP719/26–720/2, RP720/22–25, RP721/23–722/3, RP722/14–19 (*Expositio in Matthaeum*). Of the aforementioned passages, particularly interesting are those in RP630/10–13 and RP631/7–15. The source for the content conveyed in both of these were Gregory the Great's *Sermon IX* concerning the book of Ezekiel. The ranges of verses already indicate that the translations differ, but this difference is best shown by the text itself:

8 This is interesting because, as Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska writes, the author of RP avoided referring to the Gospel of Mark [see Rojszczak-Robińska 2012: 24; 2021: 87].

Table 2. Comparison of Parallel Passages from the *Rozmyślanie przemyskie* and the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke

No.	Polish Passage (RP)	Latin Passage (Gospel of Matthew, Mark, or Luke)	Location
1.	A to sie wszystko stało, aby sie napelniło pismo prorockie, ktore było przepowiedane o jego jęciu, o jego wiedzieniu, o jego męce. O jego wiedzieniu przepowiedał Izajasz prorok rzekąc: „Jako owca wiedzion ku ubiciu. Kiedy trudno siepan, nie otworzył ust swoich”.	quando autem ipse voluit, tunc tradidit seipsum, ut adimplerentur Scripturae: quia tamquam agnus ad occisionem ductus est, non clamans neque vociferans, sed voluntarie patiens.	RP649/25–650/8; Mc cap. XIV l. 9
2.	O jego męce rozmaite prorocтва przepowiedana, przetoż ewanجليści opuścili to.	Quia enim omnes prophetae praedixerunt Christi passionem, ideo non posuit fixum testimonium, sed generaliter dicit impleri vaticinia omnium prophetarum.	RP650/8–11; Matth cap. XXVI l. 15
3.	„To jest godzina wasza i noc ciemności”. Jakoby rzekł: Mały czas pożyczon jest wam ukazować pychę waszą nade mną. Też mowi, iż ta moc ciemności dana dyjabłu a Żydom zakamiałym, iżby przeciw jemu byli.	Idest, parvum tempus concessum est vobis exercendae in me vestrae saevitiae, patre votis meis favente. Dicit etiam quod haec potestas est tenebris data, idest Diabolo et Iudaeis, insurgendi in Christum, et hoc est quod subditur et potestas tenebrarum.	RP650/13–20; Lc cap. XXII l. 13
4.	Jakoby rzekł: Przetoście sie zebrali przeciw mnie we ćmach tego świata, iż moc wasza, którąście sie przeciw światłości bronno przybrali albo przyprawili, jest we ćmach.	Quasi dicat: ideo adversum me in tenebris congregamini, quia potestas vestra, qua sic contra lucem mundi armamini, in tenebris est.	RP650/20–651/1; Lc cap. XXII l. 13

Padają dobrzy i padają źli przed Bogiem, ale dobrzy padają na swe oblicze i modlą się Bogu. (RP630/10–13)

Ten padnie wznak, jen nie widzi – także i źli, naśladując poprzednich rzeczy, nie widząc ani bacząc, k czemu przydą; ale jen padnie na oblicze, ten padnie, gdzie wie – także i dobrzy we wszem obeżreniu swej myśli bacząc skonanie, co tego koniec będzie. (RP631/7–15)

Quid autem hoc est quod electi in faciem, et reprobi retrorsum cadunt, nisi quod omnis qui post se cadit, ibi cadit ubi non videt; qui vero ante se ceciderit, ibi cadit ubi videt? Iniqui ergo quia in invisibilibus cadunt, post se cadere dicuntur, quia ibi corruunt ubi quod tunc eos sequitur, modo videre non possunt: iusti vero, quia in istis visibilibus semetipsos sponte dei ciunt ut in invisibilibus erigantur, quasi in faciem cadunt, quia timore compuncti videntes humiliantur. (*Expositio in Ioannem*, cap. XVIII l. 2)

The first quotation merely signaled the thought expressed by St. Gregory. However, the second paraphrased the Pope's words. Dorota Rojszczak-Robińska has described the situation where a source appeared several times in the Old Polish text but was translated differently. However, she was referring to a biblical text that was referred to multiple times in RP. The above example confirms that the Old Polish author – depending on the origin of the passage, the place in the text, and the purpose of the whole paragraph or chapter – sometimes translated both biblical text and the commentary to it in multiple ways.

7. Conclusions

From the list of all uses of *Catena aurea*, we see that it was a source primarily for those segments of RP that recounted the story of Jesus from his capture to his questioning by the high priest. The main biblical source for this part of the apocrypha was the Gospel of John. It is not surprising, then, that when writing his treatise

on Jesus' life, the translator-compiler made use of existing commentaries to the New Testament. The best-known such medieval compendium containing a collection of commentaries to the Gospels was the work by St. Thomas Aquinas. This has already been pointed out by Roman Mazurkiewicz, who identified source texts for particular passages of RP. More precise analysis of the quotations given by Mazurkiewicz gave credibility to that assumption. The commentary texts may have come from a single work, as is evidenced by, among other things, the fact that they appeared in the same order as in Aquinas' work. Further proof may come from the occurrence of quotations in groups in close vicinity in the text, within a single chapter, or even several chapters sharing a common source, i.e., the Gospel of John.

When one considers the ways in which the translator worked with the source, one's attention is drawn to the combination of humility and boldness in his approach to the material. Not only did he refer to the exegesis of distinguished commentators as authorities supporting his interpretation, but he also sometimes provided his own commentary to the explanations of the great interpreters of the Bible, or paraphrased their words so as to obtain the meaning that he desired. Of course, the conventional use of quoted commentaries is also visible, that is, in making an interpretation of a biblical passage which served as a starting point for the considerations of the Old Polish writer, in accordance with the way in which the same passage was understood by the Church Fathers.

This study has shown that Thomas Aquinas' *Catena aurea* may have been one of the sources for RP. That thesis is confirmed by analysis of an (apparently) small section of the apocryphal work. It may be assumed, indeed, that *Catena aurea* also served as a starting point for a certain number of other parts of the Old Polish compilation for which source texts have not yet been identified. We may hope that the present work will lead to the further development of research in this direction.

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**The *Przemysł Meditation* in relation to *Catena aurea*
by St. Thomas Aquinas**

The purpose of this article is to identify parts of the *Przemysł Meditation* (*Rozmyślanie przemyskie*, RP) that are potentially based on the text of *Catena aurea*. Another important component of the work is the analysis of the way in which these parts of the text functioned and of the purpose for which they were used in the Old Polish apocryphal work. It is first indicated for what purpose the author of RP may have made use of the text of Thomas Aquinas' compilation. Analyses are then conducted concerning the way in which the translator worked with the source text. This is followed by an indication of the arrangement of the source in the apocryphal text. The ordering of quotations from the Church Fathers is not accidental, but corresponds to the ordering found in *Catena aurea*, and this may serve as confirmation of the assumption that Aquinas' anthology was indeed one of the sources for RP. This work has not only proved the relatedness of the Old Polish apocryphal work to Aquinas' text, but also draws attention to the need for continued research in this area.

Keywords: *Rozmyślanie przemyskie*, *Przemysł Meditation*; *Catena aurea*; source; Old Polish language; Old Polish literature; biblical exegesis.

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