

R. Bartnicki – K. Klósek, *Metody interpretacji Nowego Testamentu. Wprowadzenie* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo “Petrus” 2014). Pp. 291. PLN 49,90. ISBN 978-83-7720-047-6.

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The Pontifical Biblical Commission in the document *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993) presents methods and approaches of interpretation of the Holy Scripture. The authors of this document states: “The historical-critical method is the indispensable method for the scientific study of the meaning of ancient texts. Holy Scripture, inasmuch as it is the ‘word of God in human language,’ has been composed by human authors in all its various parts and in all the sources that lie behind them. Because of this, its proper understanding not only admits the use of this method but actually requires it” (A, 1). But even if the historical-critical approach is so important, the members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission are aware that no scientific method of the study of the Bible is fully adequate to comprehend the biblical texts in all their richness. This is why they present in the document also other methods and approaches of the interpretation of the Holy Bible. They pay attention to new methods of literary analyses, especially to narrative analysis.

The publishing house “Petrus” has published recently (Kraków 2014) the book co-authored by R. Bartnicki and K. Klósek, entitled *Metody interpretacji Nowego Testamentu. Wprowadzenie* (*The Methods of the Interpretation of the New Testament. Introduction*). The authors decided to present in detailed way two methods of Bible interpretation, still very useful in exegesis: historical-critical method and narrative analysis. The book by Bartnicki and Klósek can be called a handbook; its recipients might be theology students as well as biblical scholars and researchers. R. Bartnicki, the author of the first part of the book, helped himself with three important and quite new books, which were published in German: T. Söding, *Wege der Schriftauslegung. Methodenbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1998), M. Ebner – B. Heininger, *Exegese des Neuen Testaments. Ein Arbeitsbuch für*

*Lehre und Praxis* (Paderborn 2005) and W. Egger – P. Wick, *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament* (Freiburg im Breisgau 2011). The authors used mainly English handbooks for the presentation of the narrative analysis.

The first part of the book contains thirteen chapters (p. 9-186) and three annexes (p. 187-202). R. Bartnicki gives here essential knowledge of biblical criticism and presents also some aspects of history of described methods and approaches. Presenting historical criticism, method that requires a good knowledge of the ancient languages, customs, idioms, geography, archaeology, etc., the professor of University of Card. Stefan Wyszyński in Warsaw gives readers a list of lexicons, biblical encyclopaedias, dictionaries and introductions to the New Testaments (p. 17-29). Highly specialized area of research is textual criticism. In the chapter dedicated to textual criticism rules of seeking of 'best reading' of biblical text are presented very clearly (p. 40-56). Chapter VI (p. 62-77) concerning form criticism can be very useful for students who start working on biblical text. Form criticism (*Formgeschichte*) may be defined as historical, literary and theological methodology for analysing 'forms' used in New Testament, especially in the Synoptic Gospels. During the eighteenth century some investigators applied this method to other books of the Bible. In chapter IX the author describes briefly the origin of this kind of methodology and main thesis of its founders and others writers (Bultmann, Dibelius, Zimmermann, Strecker, Berger, Aune, Dormeyer). This part of the book shows also the reception of this method in biblical sciences until nowadays. Without doubt form criticism remains a central discipline in Synoptic Gospels studies. It is still one of the most important methods in the New Testament investigations, even if it has its own limitations. In the book of Bartnicki and Kłósek probably it would be better to place chapter IX (genre criticism) just next to chapter VI, because presentation of genres (or 'forms') we can find inside the Gospels (parable, miracle story, infancy narrative, passion narrative, apocalyptic saying, wisdom maxims, prophetic saying, anecdotes, legends, etc.) is closely connected to the form criticism. In the chapter dedicated to redaction criticism (p. 126-157) reader can find some practical samples of using this method in individual work on biblical texts (Matthew 9:35; Mark 2:13-22; 6:6b; Luke 8:1-2a; 5:27-39). The annexes in the end of the first part of the book might be very useful for biblical students. We can find here three essays: presentation of the history of historical criticism, the list of New Testament methodologies and principles of preparing bibliography and footnotes in papers concerning biblical studies.

The second part of the book (p. 203-243), authored by K. Kłósek, is dedicated to narrative analysis. This part contains three chapters. In the first one Kłósek presents communicative model, which embraces such elements

as real author, implied author, narrator, narrate, implied reader and real reader. According to narrative analysis each narration is composed of two elements: story and discourse. The second chapter presents story as factor of each narration. The author pays attention to events, plot, characters, and settings (topographical or geographical, chronological, locative, durative, and typological). In the third chapter discourse of narration is presented. Discourse is influenced by such elements as point of view of narrator and rhetoric (repetitions, omissions, irony, symbolism, dialogues and rhetoric figures). Kłósek concludes her study with the statement that narrative analysis helps to read New Testament in life-changing way.

The book *Metody interpretacji Nowego Testamentu. Wprowadzenie* is intended for Polish language reader, therefore it is very important that along with the presentations of the biblical works of American, German, English, French, Italian and Spanish scholars, Polish names are also present (p. 20; 23-24; 33-35; 37; 94-96; 113; 156; 177; 179-180; 194). It is a little pity that in the first part of the book the author based mainly on German literature, but on the other side we have to admit that German biblical studies on methods of interpretation of the Bible are probably the best from the methodical point of view. The language of the entire work is competent, scientific and communicative as well. From an editorial standpoint the work of Bartnicki and Kłósek was carefully prepared. It is featured with the list of abbreviations (p. 6) and footnotes (p. 245-284). Reader of the book can easily notice that the footnotes for the first part contain discussion on content of each chapter, but in the footnotes for the second part we have only bibliographical indications.

With great joy we can welcome to Polish biblical libraries this book; the book which doesn't omit any of the important issues concerning the modern methods of the interpretation of the New Testament. Polish students and biblical scholars receive very useful tool for their research and investigations; they receive good compendium of modern knowledge concerning the approaches to the text of the New Testament as well.