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How to Translate κοινός [koinos] and What Constitutes Its Opposite? The Purity and Impurity in Mark 7:15–23 and in Ancient Latin Translations

Abstract: The research of Andrzej Wypustek on ancient scatology demonstrates how the use of the terms purity and impurity employed in the Gospels differs from their understanding in common language of the Roman civilization. The New Testament concepts of purity and impurity had not only to be translated, but also exposed to the Latin reader as to what constitutes the essence of the content of Jesus' teaching. The study of the Latin translation tradition of Mark's Gospel is an important part of the interpretation of the text. In fact, St. Jerome's interpretation contains a reinterpretation of the motive of (im)purity in the sense which is different from the ritualistic direction of Mark's text.

Keywords: Gospel of Mark, purity, impurity, early Christian exegesis, Bible translations

1. Purity and Filth: Hygiene and Religion

In Rome, the Augustinian era resulted in a great interest in hygienic issues.¹ Nevertheless, it is the erotic overtone of this fact and the addressing of his works to the aristocracy of the City that made Ovid ignore the most intimate hygienic activities, partially considering them to be *pudenda*.² Thus, the hygienic issues were understood as a cultural and civilizational element, concerning *cultus*.³ Not only

¹ Miazek-Męczyńska, "Do mycia twarzy," 25.

² Drekopeł, "Higiena osobista," 27–36, esp. 36.

³ Miazek-Męczyńska, "Do mycia twarzy," 16–18.

love but eating as well is linked with care for hygiene. Already the heroes of the Trojan War considered washing before a meal a way of transition from the hardship of battle to the delight of feasting.⁴ However, this is by no means a determinant of the essential contents that are associated with the concept of purity and its opposite in classical antiquity. The following statement is true in the Hellenic culture: To undergo cleansing treatments was an indispensable condition for contact with the realm of *sacrum* which was being established during the feast through prayer and sacrifice in the form of libations in honor of the gods – most commonly Zeus, Dionysus, and the goddess of health Hygiea.⁵

This approach reveals an utterly different dimension of hygiene practices. Hector cannot offer a sacrifice to Zeus “with unwashed hands” (χερσί δ’ἀντίπτουσιν)⁶ or address him with plea while being dirty (αἴματι καὶ λύθρῳ πεπαλαγμένον εὐχετάασθαι)⁷. Włodzimierz Lengauer emphasizes that it is not so much the action itself that constitutes a smear, but rather its context, the situation in which it is carried out. That is why the physical dirt of the body after ordinary work, sweat and dust on the face and on hands, is a stain that excludes from possibility of contact with the deity. These are all elements of *profanum*, from which *sacrum* must be visibly separated. A dirty man cannot accede to prayer or sacrifice, because dirt remains a trace of his activities from the realm of *profanum*.⁸ The sacral character of the feasts also excluded the defecation practices while they lasted, although it was acceptable or even in a good tone during ordinary meals.⁹

Thus, the smear comes from a subjective factor, not from a mechanical contact with a certain substance or a characteristic. It derives from the division of the realms of *sacrum* and *profanum*. “Human nature, when compared to the divine, is incurably

⁴ Cf. Homerus, *Il.* 10, 574–578.

⁵ Stuligrosz, “Higiena,” 37–48, esp. 37.

⁶ Homerus, *Il.* 4, 266.

⁷ Homerus, *Il.* 4, 268.

⁸ Lengauer, *Religijność*, 121.

⁹ Cf. Salza Prina Ricotti, *Meals*, 10–11; Stuligrosz, “Higiena,” 47.

contaminated.”¹⁰ The human condition presumes inevitable pains¹¹ as a sign of human imperfection. Hence, in the popular religious thought of Hellas, represented by poets and mythological works, that have its Asian roots, impurity is not considered as a parting from the normal character of human affairs. The cleansing rites in the Greek world, in which it is not water but blood that plays a key role, are associated with the Semitic influence on the cult of Apollo not without reason.¹² Thus, it is not surprising that Jacob Neusner, in his study of ancient understanding of purity in Judaism, makes a very similar distinction between dirt and impurity.¹³

It is rather purity that is a state achievable only by the graciousness of the gods, who set conditions on which a man can, though an act of cult, enter the divine realm, as it is pure, i.e., free from the filth related to human toil. A pure mystery revelation requires the purity of the initiate.¹⁴ Plutarch of Chaeronea argued that through some sort of initiation and purification men achieve access to the divine realm: “once purified, they believe, they will go on to playing and dancing in Hades in places full of brightness, pure air and light.”¹⁵ A scene of purification – this is the way in which Walter Burkert interprets the scene from Lovatelli Urn (Augustinian era, Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome) – a representation of an initiated person with a covered head, thus “staring” at the invisible, divine world.¹⁶ Karl Kerényi thought he same artifact to be a scene of purification of Heracles, and he links the purification to the sacrifice of a ram that made it possible.¹⁷

The subject of ritual purity seems to be characteristic for some religions, e.g., Judaism, while it is considered marginal in others, e.g., Christianity. In Christianity understood as a moral religion¹⁸ there

¹⁰ West, *Wschodnie oblicze*, 179.

¹¹ West, *Wschodnie oblicze*, 181.

¹² Cf. Rosół, *Wschodnie korzenie*, 69–76.

¹³ Cf. Neusner, *The Idea of Purity*, 1.

¹⁴ Cf. Plato, *Phaedr.* 250c.

¹⁵ Plutarch, *Suav. viv.* 1105b.

¹⁶ Cf. Burkert, *Starożytne kultury*, 167–168.

¹⁷ Cf. Kerényi, *Eleusis*, 91–92.

¹⁸ Cf. Kant, *Religia*, 75–76.

is no place for such a ritual category. The religious significance of purity and filth was often considered foreign to Christianity. Is this a relevant reception of Christianity – as religion that effectively undermined the understanding of purity and impurity as religious categories? This question refers as well to the matter of continuity, or the lack of it, between Christianity and Judaism.

It is important to examine to what extent the complexity of the issue is present in the New Testament, as it constitutes a good indicator of the presence of ritual issue in early Christianity. Wypustek labeled Jesus' views in Mark 7:1–23 as “moderate” and reduced them to the following statement: “Jesus expressed his conviction that what ‘comes out of a man’ cannot be a source of impurity.”¹⁹ It is a simplified approach, as e.g., it does not refer to the statement that Jesus “purified all foods” (Mark 7:19).

We shall seek the answers to these questions in Mark 7:1–23 and its Latin translations. The first step of our research will consist of the analysis of the matters related to the place of this passage in the whole of the gospel and to the relation between verses 1–13 and 14–23. We will build upon this basis a semantic analysis of the concept of *κοινός* and its potential cultural background.

2. Mark 7:1–23 or 1–13.14–23?

For the interpretation, the delimitation of the texts of a certain semantic autonomy (pericopes) remains important. Approaches focused on the text as a whole or supra-textual approach (e.g., hypertextuality) on the one hand, and the deconstructionist approaches on the other hand, have weakened the notion of the importance of delimitation. However, if we acknowledge a short form as a sign, which has both its place in the whole of the text and its internal structure, we always need to embrace the problem of delimitation as demanding a serious consideration. It is not sufficient to arbitrarily adopt a division of the text that already exists or to designate one's own. We want to take the definition of the pericope from the study of Roland Meynet dealing

¹⁹ “Jezus dał wyraz przekonaniu, że to, co ‘na zewnątrz się wydala’ nie może być źródłem nieczystości”. Wypustek, *Imperium szamba*, 88.

with biblical rhetoric. According to this author “passo è la prima unità separabile, capace di autonomia,” and “[i]l passo corrisponde, se non sempre nei suoi limiti precisi, almeno in linea di principio, a ciò che in liturgia viene detta ‘pericope.’”²⁰

In our specific case we need to consider the complex character of Mark 7:1–23. Through this complexity we understand two main phenomena: bipartite character of the text (the conversation with the narrow group of people and teaching addressed to a wide audience), as well as the interweaving of narration, explanatory remarks (ethnographic) and religious teaching in an argumentative and gnomic form. William A. Beardslee noted that after the research of Rudolf Bultmann²¹ even German exegete’s students, in majority, would not study the gnomic material as independent forms.²² The focus of the researchers has shifted to narrative units in which short forms such as proverbs or parables function in a subservient way in relation to the significant entity.

The most simple solution is to determine the boundaries of the pericope as Mark 7:1–23 in reliance to the common theme of disputes with the Judaism traditions.²³ Indeed, James R. Edwards speaks of Mark 7:1–23 as the longest “conflict speech” in Mark.²⁴ A more complex solution is to determine two separate pericopes: Mark 7:1–15 and 7:17–23²⁵ or Mark 7:1–13 and Mark 7:14–23.²⁶ Those proposals are, however, based on very simplified divisions. As a more serious reflection leads to the consideration of the two-stage division. Joachim Gnilka referring to the achievements of historical-critical exegesis points out²⁷ that Mark 7:1–23 constitutes a single pericope, although

²⁰ Meynet, *L’analisi retorica*, 224.

²¹ See Bultmann, *Die Geschichte*. 84–113.

²² Cf. Beardslee, *Literary Criticism*, 34.

²³ Cf. for example Léon-Dufour, “I Vangeli sinottici,” 9–224, esp. 43; Kudasiewicz, “Ewangelie synoptyczne,” 37–273, esp. 108; Harrington, “Ewangelia według Świętego Marka,” 981–1033, esp. 1005; Howard – Peabody, “Ewangelia według św. Marka,” 1206–1238, esp. 1221; Czerski, *Księgi narracyjne*, 131.

²⁴ Cf. Edwards, *The Gospel*, 214.

²⁵ Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 439–461

²⁶ Cf. Malina, *Ewangelia według Świętego Marka*, 414–432.

²⁷ Gnilka, *Marco*, 383.

with a necessity to take into account the distinctiveness of the first part (Mark 7:1–13), containing the discussion with adversaries, and the second part, that incorporates two distinguishable elements: teaching addressed to the people (Mark 7:14–15), which is then explained to the disciples at home by Jesus (Mark 7:17–23).

A similar solution has been adopted before by Hugolin Langkammer, who indicated the existence of the pericope Mark 7:1–23 parallel to Matt 15:1–20²⁸ He does, however, separate lower-level units: Mark 7:1–13 (parallel to Matt 15:1–10), where the juxtaposition of customs with the Law of God is mentioned,²⁹ while in Mark 7:14–23 (without a Matthean parallel this time) “Jesus’ definition of purity” is the leading theme.³⁰ On the basis of the internal criteria, Norman R. Petersen distinguishes Mark 7:1–13.14–15.17–23 as well.³¹

From the examples given above, it follows that while the beginning of the new unit in Mark 7:1 and its ending in Mark 7:23 are unquestionable, the problem lies in the internal division of the passage. The questions concerns: (1) the existence of an internal division, (2) the place of this division, and (3) the rank and nature of the established division.

The first issue has already been partially raised. James R. Edwards points out to Mark 7:17 as a typical feature for the evangelist consisting in a transfer of the action from a wider audience to a narrow group of the disciples, as he does also in Mark 2:1; 3:20; 4:10; 9:28; 10:10.³² It is not, however, a solution that could be adopted without any further reservations. We will speak about certain similarities to Mark 3, although they require a much more subtle approach than a simple enumeration of similar situations. J. Marcus states that Mark 7:15 is the final answer to the question of the meaning of purity and impurity mentioned in Mark 7:2ff.³³ On this basis, the scholar sets the beginning of the next pericope to Mark 7:17, considering the character of Mark 7:16 as secondary, that can be interpreted – by analogy with

²⁸ Cf. Langkammer, *Ewangelia według św. Marka*, 188.

²⁹ Cf. Langkammer, *Ewangelia według św. Marka*, 190–193.

³⁰ Cf. Langkammer, *Ewangelia według św. Marka*, 193–194.

³¹ Petersen, “The composition,” 185–217.

³² Cf. Edwards, *The Gospel*, 204.

³³ Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 446.

Mark 4:9.23 – as a gloss introduced by a copyist.³⁴ This is a conclusion based on a premise that the key plot twist is marked by Jesus’ departure from the crowd and taking up the teaching of the apostles at home. It does not consider, however, the analysis of the story in the text in question. Because the course of narration indicates that from Mark 7:14 the situation changes, as a new collective protagonist and Jesus’ interlocutor appears: the crowd (ὁ ὄχλος)³⁵ which Jesus “called again (πάλι).” The teaching at home is the consequence of this plot twist.

Neither the crowd nor its calling by Jesus appear in the immediate context preceding Mark 7:14 in any meaningful way. The crowd is present with Jesus since Mark 2:4 and often presents a problem in His activity, as it masses around Jesus (Mark 3:9.32; 5:24) or interfere during the time of the meal (Mark 3:20). Jesus’ attitude towards the crowd was positive: He teaches it and cares for it (Mark 6:34), nevertheless never before Mark 7:14 does He call it or in any other way does He encourage it to follow Him. Hence, the word “again” does not refer to any previously mentioned calling of the crowd by Jesus. When it comes to the participle “having called” (προσκαλεσάμενος), the verb that it derives from, functions in Mark 3:23 in a similar way to Mark 7:14. While the first part of the discussion (Mark 3:22) is initiated – just like in Mark 7:1–13 – by a narrow and elite group of interlocutors, the further explanations are meant to reach a wider circle of addressees (Mark 3:22–29; cf. Mark 7:14–15). Those two episodes seems, however, unrelated. Besides, Mark 7:17–23 does not have its counterpart in Mark 3, and this is exactly the part that includes the teaching intended for the disciples and delivered at home, after the crowd has departed (Mark 7:17). Still, Mark 3:31–35 suggests that Jesus is at home, since his relatives remain “outside” (ἔξω). Nevertheless, in Mark 3:32 the crowd is with Jesus in the house, and it is precisely ὁ ὄχλος that constitutes the closest circle of Jesus’ listeners, to whom the teacher gives priority over His relatives, including his mother. Hence, “again” in Mark 7:14 does not serve to build relations in Mark, but rather must be read as having a function of a separator between semantic units. In Mark 7:14–23, the crowd

³⁴ Cf. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 95.

³⁵ Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 452.

and the disciples constitute two different circles of recipients to which two different types of teaching are addressed. This reminds rather the case of Mark 4:10–13, where Jesus reserves the explanation of the parable and – if not above all – the motifs of the teaching in parables only to a small group of the disciples. This narrowing of the circle of listeners has a sense only if the fragment of the text that it designates remains included in a bigger whole. It seems to be otherwise in the case of the calling of the crowd, as it gives a motif for a change of the subject of Jesus' teaching. Thus, we can say that the separator in Mark 7:14 marks the beginning of a new pericope that is bound rather loosely with the preceding one (Mark 7:1–13) through a thematic *homoioteleuton*. Both pericopes begin with a definition of impurity (κοινός: Mark 7:2.5 and 7:15.18.20), though the definitions differ. The discussion concerning the meanings of ritual impurity is complemented by the motif of the unclean spirit (πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον, Mark 7:25), which is later called τὸ δαιμόνιον (vv. 29.30). J. Marcus believes that the adjective ἀκάθαρτος would be more precise to describe impurity as the counterpart of the Hebrew לִטְמָה,³⁶ yet it does not occur in Mark 7:1–23 during the discussion concerning the subject of ritual impurity. Thus, the motif of impurity has been introduced in the pericope Mark 7:24–30 intentionally, though with the use of a different vocabulary than in Matt 7:1–23, what gives this text composed of two pericopes distinctness and makes it a twofold study on the meanings of the concept of κοινός. Compositionally, these two pericopes form a sequence³⁷ and remain in a relation of complementarity as long as they describe two meanings of one term. They are not, however, devoted to two aspects of one term, one concept of impurity. Therefore, the focus of the sequence Mark 7:1–23 on the term κοινός delimitates it and gives it coherence.

³⁶ Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 440.

³⁷ Meynet, *L'analisi retorica*, 245–248.

3. Reasons for the distinction concerning impurity in Mark 7:1–23

Herodotus, while writing about the customs of Egyptians, that he truly admired, noted that they are a mirror image of the habits of the Hellenes: “Just as the Egyptians have a climate peculiar to themselves, and their river is different in its nature from all other rivers, so, too, have they instituted customs and laws contrary for the most part to those of the rest of mankind.”³⁸ One of the paradigms of the distinctiveness of the country on the Nile is the reversal of the female and male roles which also concerns the issue of excretion: “Women pass water standing, men sitting. They ease their bowels indoors, and eat out of doors in the streets, explaining that things unseemly (αἰσχρά) but necessary (ἀναγκαῖα) should be done alone in private (ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ), things not unseemly (μὴ αἰσχρά) should be done openly (ἀναφανδόν).”³⁹ This reversal of habits that might shock and amuse a Hellenic reader is, according to Herodotus, a manifestation of an ancient and respectable culture from which the Hellenes drew a lot: the names of deities⁴⁰ and numerous customs,⁴¹ whereas the differences speak in favor of the Egyptian culture. This barbaric, though a very respectable culture, according to Herodotus, considers excretion unseemly, but only in the moral sense. The act of excretion and the excrements should be hidden at home from the sight of people, but they do not make the house filthy. This text is of interest to us not because we should take the information transmitted by Herodotus at face value – as our historical and archaeological knowledge contradicts it⁴² – but since it is an expression of Herodotus’ views on the classification of excrements as not polluting the household. It is definitely a rationalist approach that does not take into account religious criteria. This text constitutes a good point of reference for approaching the issue of purity in Mark 7:1–23. While Jesus is in accord with Herodotus concerning the matter of classification of the

³⁸ Herodotus, *Hist.* II, 35, 2.

³⁹ Herodotus, *Hist.* II, 35, 3.

⁴⁰ Herodotus, *Hist.* II, 50.

⁴¹ Herodotus, *Hist.* II, 51.

⁴² Cf. Malecka, “Łazienki,” 97–110.

excrements and excretion as *pudenta*, though not belonging to the category of *impura*, since they are a result of a natural necessity, one can hardly deny the religious context of Jesus' utterance.

In his most recent book, *Imperium szamba, ścieku i wychodka. Przyczynek do historii życia codziennego w starożytności*, Andrzej Wypustek presented *inter alia* the scatological issues in biblical and post-biblical sources. According to the author, one can infer from this overview that whereas for the majority of the Jews from the Second Temple Period excretion as such was not considered taboo, and human excrements did not cause ritual impurity, in the opinion of minority groups, e.g., for the Essenes, the excrements constituted a source of smear.⁴³ He also distinguishes the stance of different groups of the diaspora in late antiquity and in early medieval times after 70 CE. While both in the Babylonian and in the Palestinian Talmud the use of public latrines was acceptable, in the case of priests this issue was controlled by separate and rather strict regulations. It can be also observed that in the Babylonian Talmud a reservation towards the use of shared toilets, due to demonological beliefs of this milieu, is present.⁴⁴ Persian⁴⁵ or – more likely – Parthian influences could affect the views of the Qumran community and Talmudic opinions concerning this matter.

In order to verify those conclusions, we shall analyze the way the terms κοινός and κοινώ function in the text that is of a great importance for the Christian understanding of purity and impurity. It occurs in two versions within the canonical gospels: Matt 15:1–20 and Mark 7:1–23. We will consider, above all, Mark as a more distinctive text⁴⁶ and a text less interested in seeking compromises with the observation of the food regulations of Judaism. The juxtaposition of Mark 7:19b: “*Thus He declared all foods clean (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα)*” and Matt 15:20, where – just as in the beginning of the fragment – the issue of washing of hands is the subject (τὸ δὲ ἀνίπτους χερσὶν φαγεῖν οὐ κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον), speaks in favor of

⁴³ Wypustek, *Imperium szamba*, 84.

⁴⁴ Cf. Wypustek, *Imperium szamba*, 89–91.

⁴⁵ Cf. Wypustek, *Imperium szamba*, 91–93.

⁴⁶ Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 446.

this conclusion. Thus, we can say that in the last verse of the pericope Matt answers the accusation brought against Jesus' disciples in 15:2, and the leading motif of the discussion until the end remains the issue of tradition and its understanding. In Matt 15:1–20 the motif of Jesus' departure from the crowd is also absent. Peter's question (Matt 15:15) is asked with no connection with the change of scenery that does not occur in this passage. Those differences highlight the originality and complexity of Markan narrative. Furthermore, Mark has already exhibited very clearly before the differences between the views and the attitude presented by Jesus on the one hand, and commonly practiced devotion on the other hand, what has been shown in relation to the community in Mark 2:15–17, in relation to fasting in Mark 2:18–22, and in relation to Sabbath in Mark 2:23–28.⁴⁷

4. The terms κοινός i κοινώω in Mark 7:1–23

For our research, the issue of the main subject of Mark 7:1–23 is of importance – it can be both purity and tradition. While initially the discussion is related to the issue of cleanness of hands, its succeeding part is continued on a more general level. Which theme is more important? – this is the subject of the discussion originally shaped by historical-critical analysis. In the study on form criticism Martin Dibelius expressed his view that the main topic of this pericope is the issue of responsibility for parents and the implementation of the Fourth Commandment.⁴⁸ R. Bultmann thought Mark 7:1–13 to be the original element of the pericope,⁴⁹ hence brought the issue of purity to the fore. It is this view that ultimately prevailed, and we will build upon it.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Cf. Lane, *The Gospel*, 244.

⁴⁸ Cf. Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte*, 222–223.

⁴⁹ Cf. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte*, 15–16.

⁵⁰ Cf. Gnllka, *Marco*, 378–380.

4.1. Impurity in Mark 7:1–13

The subject of impurity in Mark 7:1–13 is represented only by the adjective κοινός which remains in a permanent idiomatic expression” κοινᾶς χερσίν that is combined with the verb ἐσθίουσιν in affirmative form (what is important, because in Mark 7:3.4 the verb in the same form is employed with a negation). The expression occurs twice (Mark 7:2.5), the first time along a definition of the impurity at stake – which is reduced to the lack of washing and with an indication that it concerns eating of, broadly understood, food: κοινᾶς χερσίν, τοῦτ’ ἐστὶν ἀνίπτοις, ἐσθίουσιν τοὺς ἄρτους. Thus, impure (κοινός) is unwashed (ἀνίπτος), what with certainty should be considered a ritual, technical and narrow definition in relation to the colloquial meaning (“common” or “impure”⁵¹) but impurity is closely related to food purity. This, in turn, is based on the tradition (παράδοσις) associated with ancestors (τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, v. 5), people (τῶν ἀνθρώπων, v. 8), or a group of Jesus’ interlocutors (ὕμῶν, v. 9). The juxtaposition of Mark 7:2–5 with Matt 15:2–3 confirms this interpretation. Here, the question concerning a violation of the tradition of the elders (οἱ μαθηταὶ σου παραβαίνουσιν τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων) arises in the subject of eating not preceded by the washing of hands (οὐ γὰρ νίπτονται τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν ὅταν ἄρτον ἐσθίωσιν, v. 2). The ongoing conversation in Matt 15:3–9 refers to the theme of tradition of the elders and its opposition to God’s commandments. The terminology of impurity (not only κοινός) does not occur in Matt 15:1–9. Thus, the subject of impurity is present only in Mark, hence, it constitutes a distinguishable element of this episode of Jesus’ discussion about the role and importance of the tradition. The specificity involves the definition of the adjective κοινός as related to the lack of ritual act of washing, because in this case it does not signify “dirty.” The hands of the disciples are “impure” (κοινᾶί), as they have not been washed (ἀνίπται), although it does not mean that they are covered in dirt. The preliminary washing was necessary to maintain the purity ritual action of eating, because – as the understanding of this pericope goes – it is with hands that one eats. The fact of not washing hands

⁵¹ Cf. e.g., Hauck, “κοινός κτλ.,” 789–809, esp. 789–797; Schattenmann, “κοινός κτλ.,” 495–499.

(οὐ γὰρ νίπτονται τὰς χεῖρας) constitutes a problem in Matt 15:2 as well. The tone of Markan and Matthean narration is therefore, in this respect, coherent: in the juridical tradition of Judaism of the turn of the era, the purity of eating is not restricted to the issue of the food consumed but also includes a dynamic aspect (the action of eating must be carried out in the proper way). However, Mark incorporates this situation in the semantic scope of the adjective κοινός, what is absent in Matt. Impurity of the disciples is not related to a smear understood materially, but to a failure to complete the ritual act that makes eating an activity excluded from the space of secular affairs, which take place in the agora (Mark 7:4) – a common space for people of different cult status (“pure” and “impure”). Thus, the act of washing constitutes a rite of transition from the realm of *profanum* to the realm *sacrum*, to which a meal belonged. The catalogue of the objects that were washed is rather peculiar. It is constituted of categories ruled by diverse criteria. Ποτήριον is the first term on the list, a term related to the function of a vessel: everything that serves drinking. The second term is quite enigmatic: ξέστης. Apart from Mark 7:4, it does not occur (*lectio varia* adding this term also in Mark 7:8 is rather an explanatory gloss) in the New Testament nor in the Greek Bible as a whole, because the Septuagint knows only the adjective ξεστός, that refers to a certain building material – a treated stone (Amos 5:11; Sir 22:17; 1 Macc 13:27⁵²). The noun ξέστης is thought to be etymologically connected with the Latin term *sextarius*.⁵³ Therefore, the noun and the adjective cannot be considered derivatives of the same word-forming family. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* defines this word as a measure of volume (approx. 0,5 l), not a type of vessel.⁵⁴ This measure is considered to be the equivalent of the *log* (לֹג) occurring in Lev 14:10.12.15.21.24, i.e., 1/72 of the *ephah* or the *bath*. Josephus gives the conversion rate: 1 bath equals to 72 sextaries

⁵² Cf. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 480. Although J. Lust, E. Eynikel and K. Hauspie (*A Greek-English Lexicon*, 321) refer only to the last of these texts, since in Amos 5:11 and in Sir 22:17 a collateral form ξυστός occurs.

⁵³ Cf. e.g., Schulte, *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 295; Zorell, *Lexicon Graecum*, col. 887.

⁵⁴ Cf. Baltz – Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary*, 486.

(ὁ δὲ βάτος δύναται ξέστας ἐβδομήκοντα δύο⁵⁵). This measure has been described in a more detailed way in an anonymous fragment preserved in the *Palatine Anthology*.⁵⁶ There we find an expression that a jug or a bottle (λάγυρος) contains 30 ξέσται, i.e., ½ quart (a pint). *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus* 921 from the 3rd century A.D. in the line no. 23 has ξέσται β, as one of the items on the list, what is interpreted by the editor as “two cups.”⁵⁷ It is the definitive proof that it is possible to consider the words ποτήριον and ξέστης synonyms. However, it is worth noting, that the term ξέστης understood as “a drinking vessel” is attested only in the material related closely to spoken and colloquial language, not a literary one.

Another category, that is subjected to washing, consists of χαλκίοι (Mark 7:4). Again, we are dealing here with a term that does not occur in the New Testament besides this place. It does, however, appear in 1 Sam 2:14, though this text is very terminologically muddled. The Hebrew Bible introduces there a series of four nouns, designating cooking utensils, of a very similar meaning. The Septuagint is, in this case, clearly focused on rendering the text less complicated and clearer.⁵⁸ It is for this reason that in the Greek text a shorter list, limited to three nouns, is present. As a compensation, the first noun is accompanied by an adjective “great,” that has no counterpart in Hebrew. This is probably the reason, why in the *Concordance to the Septuagint* χαλκίων is considered the equivalent of the Hebrew term חַלְבָּן,⁵⁹ the third in order in the MT of 1 Sam 2:14, and not חַיִּיךְ – the previous noun that comes as the second term. The issue does not seem, though, to be of a great importance, as both nouns are synonyms. Moreover, the noun חַלְבָּן that occurs also in Mic 3:3 is translated there by the Greek λέβης, the most common noun employed in the Septuagint to determine a pot or a cauldron, the one that in 1 Sam 2:14 (LXX) occurs in the first place. Thus, we can see that the accumulation of the nouns in MT and LXX does not aim to

⁵⁵ Flavius Josephus, *Ant.* VIII, 2, 9 [57].

⁵⁶ Cf. *Anth. pal.* XI, 298, 5.

⁵⁷ Cf. Grenfell – Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, VI, 284.

⁵⁸ Cf. Caird, “Homoeophony,” 74–88, esp. 82; Walters, *The Text of the Septuagint*, 48.

⁵⁹ Cf. Hatch – Redpath, *Concordance*, II, 1453.

create a precise classification of the items used for the preparation of meals. Individual terms do not refer to different kinds of pots and cauldrons depending on their shape, specific use, or material. The later distinction may concern only (and this only with a certain degree of probability) the Greek term κύθρα that is not attested in any other text known to us,⁶⁰ which meaning we can infer from a related, though lately attested (4th century), noun χύτρα.⁶¹ It refers to ceramic vessels (“earthen pot”). However, if it ought to correspond the Hebrew פָּרוּר, the relation of the term with the material of the Hebrew noun is no longer applicable.⁶²

As for Mark 7:4, one can draw a conclusion that what connects the vessels enumerated in this verse is the fact of being related to eating, and what distinguished them is their size and the role in the process of preparation and consuming food (small ones are for drinking, big ones serve for cooking or, more broadly, for preparation of meals). It is interesting, however, that bowls, plates, or trays do not appear on the list. The tableware intended for drinking could be passed from hand to hand, as it was the case during the supper described in the gospels (Matt 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20, where ποτήριον is in singular). Pots were also touched by different persons. The pericope, then, refers to items of common use or touched by many people (just as the hands or whole body in the public space of crowded agora).

Some rather significant critical-textual differences occur in Mark 7:4.⁶³ We wish to draw attention only to those that are directly connected with the issue of impurity. These are: (1) the verb denoting the action of purifying (βαπτίζονται with the variant βαπτίζωνται or ῥαντίζωνται) and (2) the presence or absence of the words καὶ κλινῶν. Marcus’ remark that there is a strong relation between the occurrence of the verb form βαπτίζονται and the presence of καὶ κλυνῶν is legitimate.⁶⁴ The version that has both of those traits is better attested. Hence, the correct way of formulating the problem

⁶⁰ Cf. Lust – Eynikel – Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 270.

⁶¹ Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon*, 695, 1176; Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 738.

⁶² Cf. Koehler – Baumgartner – Stamm, *Wielki słownik*, II, 50.

⁶³ Cf. Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum*, I, 284.

⁶⁴ Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 442–443.

is to ask why \mathfrak{P}^{45} (*Chester Beatty I*, ca. 250 r. CE, Egypt), Codex Sinaiticus (\aleph) and Codex Vaticanus (B) do not have $\kappa\alpha\iota \kappa\lambda\upsilon\tilde{\nu}\omega\tilde{\nu}$ and use the verb $\rho\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$. Due to its state of preservation, \mathfrak{P}^{45} does not have the expression $\kappa\alpha\iota \kappa\lambda\upsilon\tilde{\nu}\omega\tilde{\nu}$. This lack is evident in 4) \aleph^{th} century, London), B (4th century, Vatican), L (9th century, Paris), Δ (9th century, St. Gall), and in the original version of 028 (dated to 969 CE, Vatican). It is hard to issue a clear verdict concerning the shape of the sentence, because the oldest witness is uncertain, and numerous documents are late. Two codices from the 4th century remain the documents of great importance. Personally, however, we believe that the expression $\kappa\alpha\iota \kappa\lambda\upsilon\tilde{\nu}\omega\tilde{\nu}$ was an integral part of Mark 7:4. While the importance of the manuscripts which speaks in favor of the lack is greater, the majority of the old documents⁶⁵ argues for the authenticity of the longer version. It is probable, because the longer version of the text poses semantic problems and *lectio difficilior potior faciliore*.

At first glance, the reading that includes $\kappa\lambda\acute{\iota}\nu\eta$ among the items subjected to washing seems to be a random addition inspired by Lev 15.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, here it is worth to take into consideration the meaning of the term, that is quoted, e.g., in the *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*: „the bed [...] for eating,” which is illustrated by a single biblical example (Ezek 23:41⁶⁷). While quite numerous extrabiblical witnesses of this meaning are quoted in Henry G. Liddell’s and Robert Scott’s *A Greek-English Lexicon*.⁶⁸ Moreover, it is explicitly attested by the fact that it is precisely this word that entered Latin, for example, in the term *triclinium*, that etymologically means a room with three $\kappa\lambda\acute{\iota}\nu\eta$ that serves for eating meals.

In Ezek 23:41 the combination of food with the use of a bed is rather an image of salaciousness⁶⁹ than of foreign cultural influences, what is attested by such texts as Amos 3:12; 6:4 and 1 Sam 28:23.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ E.g., A (5th century, London), D (5th century, *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis*), W (4th/5th century, Washington), Θ (9th century, Tbilisi), and others.

⁶⁶ Cf. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 93–94.

⁶⁷ Cf. Baltz – Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary*, II, 300.

⁶⁸ Cf. Liddell – Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 961.

⁶⁹ Cf. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, I, 492; Rumianek, *Motyw miłości*, 151; Homerski, *Księga Ezechiela*, 185.

⁷⁰ Cf. Rumianek, *Motyw miłości*, 151; Rumianek, *Księga Ezechiela*, 204.

The care for purity of the place that one takes while eating harmonizes with the care for washing hands (Mark 7:2) and purifying oneself before the meal after contact with people of questionable purity, that occurs easily on the agora (Mark 7:3), and washing of the dishes (Mark 7:4).

Thus, the pericope Mark 7:1–13 speaks about impurity which source lies in the contact with people who do not observe the rules of purity. It marks in its content one of the common grounds for many of the presented situations. It refers to items for mixed use (those who are not exclusively consecrated to God, but that have contact with religious realm). Another common ground consists of the way in which the commandment concerning the reverence towards parents is observed. The rules of purity illustrate a way in which oral tradition is, at first, employed to secure God's commandments (the Talmudic "fence" around the Torah), but later it obscures them or even deforms. The comparison of practices, that in Mark 7:6.13a Jesus condemns in people contemporary to Him as abandoning the Law for the tradition, has its counterparts in the ablution practices in Qumran (esp. 1QS 3:4–6) and above all in the separatist ideology and in the ideology that highlights individual norms related to cult⁷¹ at the expense of righteous relationships, even family ones. Nevertheless, the *Letter of Aristeas* shows prevalence of religiously motivated ablution practices also amongst the Jews in the diaspora (para. 305), what reaffirms the 3rd Sibylline Book 591–593.⁷²

In Mark 7:1–13 impurity is related to interpersonal contacts, and Jesus in His teaching demonstrates that the norms of the oral Torah, that uphold ritual purity, lead eventually to the deformation of essential elements of the Law, to which the commandments of the Decalogue belong – one of which Jesus quotes and confronts with the norms of the oral Torah (Mark 7:10–13). Jesus plays here the role of a defender of the written Torah against its oral additions and deformations. The concept of impurity that results from contacts with others is not criticized by Jesus as such, but due to its exaggerated appreciation in

⁷¹ Cf. Edwards, *The Gospel*, 205.

⁷² Cf. Lane, *The Gospel*, 245.

comparison with interpersonal duties (here: children towards parents) that are based on positive values (respect, i.e., reverence, care).

4.2. Impurity in Mark 7:14–23

In the second pericope (Mark 7:14–23) of the Markan sequence concerning impurity (Mark 7:1–23), the terminology similar to the one that was employed in the first pericope (Mark 7:1–13) is attested. It is based on the etymological family build on the stem κοιν-, although in the place of the adjective characteristic for the first pericope, which is absent here, the verb κοινῶ is used in the personal form (*ind. praes. act.* 3 sg., Mark 7:20.23) and in the impersonal forms (*inf. aor. act.*, Mark 7:15.18; and *part. praes. act.*, Mark 7:15). This vocabulary is distributed throughout various parts of the pericope that has a rather clear structure. It consists of the introduction (Mark 7:14), the logion (Mark 7:15) and its explanation (Mark 7:17–23) that has its own introduction (Mark 7:17) along with two sections: the negative one (what does not defile a man: Mark 7:18–19) and the positive one (what does defile a man: Mark 7:20–23). Hence, the terminology related to impurity is present in every part of the pericope except for the introduction. It is represented notably in the main thesis (Mark 7:15) and in the last unit (Mark 7:20–23), i.e., when Jesus describes the understanding of impurity.

Thus, logion is the main element of the pericope. It has its parallel, though not an exact one, in Matt 15:17–18, just like the way of introducing the logion is different in both texts. Logion Mark 7:15 in v. 17 is defined as a παραβολή, which is consistent with the definition of the term: *juxtapositio*⁷³ based on Isocrates' speech of *Euagoras* (9:34) or Plato's dialogue *Gorgias* (472c). The juxtaposition of what cannot make man impure (οὐδέν [...] ὁ δύναται κοινῶσαι) and what can result in impurity (τὰ κοινοῦντα) is overlapped with another juxtaposition, parallel to the first one: the juxtaposition of what enters the body of a man from the outside (ἐξῶθεν εισπορευόμενον εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον) and what comes out of a man (τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενά ἐστιν). The structure of two parallel juxtapositions is

⁷³ Zorell, *Lexicon Graecum*, col. 984.

repeated in the explanation of the logion: the first parts of both are quoted verbatim in Mark 7:18, and the second parts appear in Mark 7:20. It is a carefully prepared exposition of Jesus' words, which defines the concept of impurity, with which He argues and which He is using here. In the parallel text of Matt 15:17–18 this symmetry is absent; the whole man from Mark is substituted in Matt with mouth, what does not constitute a synecdoche, but is a conscious reduction of the problem to the issue of the purity of food. Matt introduces mouth as way for what comes out from the heart (15:18). Hence, in this text the juxtaposition is based on the direction “into the mouth” – “out of the mouth.” The conclusion already reached by Origen is the consequence of this approach: “so that, if they did not come out of the heart, but were retained there somewhere about the heart, and were not allowed to be spoken through the mouth, they would very quickly disappear, and a man would be no more defiled.”⁷⁴ It is worth noting that although Matt 15:15 uses the term παραβολή, it is not referred to logion, but to Matt 15:13–14, because logion in Matt 15:15 is only a part of the explanation of what Matt calls παραβολή. Those are premises that allow for the recognition of the Markan version as an independent text, and that in all likelihood a text primary to Matt 15:10–20.

Hence, on the one hand a conviction that certain things external to man (e.g., food) are capable of rendering him impure are false. Jesus does not assert, however, that those things are not impure, but that they do not have contact with man, as they do not enter his heart (οὐκ εἰσπορεύεται αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν, v. 19). The heart is juxtaposed with the term κοιλία, that denotes after all a neighboring organ or a set of organs. Therefore, further proof that eating food considered to be unclean causes impurity, is necessary. The place where food eventually goes is ὁ ἀφεδρών: a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament. Besides, in the Greek Bible occurs only the feminine form (ἡ ἀφεδρής) for the designation of menstruation or menstrual bleeding.⁷⁵ Apart from Matt 15:17 and Mark 7:19, we find this term only in the Pergamon inscription (*OGI* 483.233–234) from the times

⁷⁴ Origenes, *Comm. Matt.* XI, 15.

⁷⁵ Cf. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 106.

of the Principate.⁷⁶ Kolbe described this term as *vox rara, quae in litteris Graecis vix alibi reperitur*.⁷⁷ The inscription speaks about city officials (οἱ ἀστυνόμοι), who are responsible for city toilets (ἀφερώνων ἐπιμέλεια). Hence today, the interpretation of this word as “a latrine,” “a toilet” and not “a sewer” or “a cesspool” is certain.⁷⁸ It is this meaning that Walter gives in the first place in his dictionary.⁷⁹

Thus, the separation of a person from the effects of metabolism is full, and the stomach or, more broadly, the whole digestive system does not constitute man’s interior. Man does not identify in any way with what he eats, though it enters his interior (εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, Mark 7:18). The proof for this thesis is conducted with the use of anatomical arguments and not through, for example, of soul and body dichotomy. The image of man and views concerning the functioning of man’s body are not specific for Jesus’ teaching or for the New Testament. Aristotle was well aware that air and blood are delivered to the heart, what determines its specificity.⁸⁰ The heart remains, according to the Stagirite, related with the organs of respiration,⁸¹ and he separates in a radical way respiration from nutrition.⁸² When it comes to gastrointestinal tract, Aristotle writes that for all animals – taking into account their diversity – mouth, stomach and intestine ending with an anus are necessary⁸³: “Thus there must be one receptacle for the ingoing food and another for the useless residue.”⁸⁴ “All these parts have been so contrived by nature as to harmonize with the various operations that relate to the food and its residue.”⁸⁵ The views concerning the relation between the heart and digestive and excretory system are, thus, present in

⁷⁶ Cf. von Prott – Kolbe, “Die Inschriften,” 44–151, esp. 56; *OGI*, II, 92.

⁷⁷ Cf. von Prott – Kolbe, “Die Inschriften,” 105.

⁷⁸ See Lenski, *The Interpretation*, 592.

⁷⁹ Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*, 250; similarly also Zorell, *Lexicon Graecum*, col. 198; Baltz – Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary*, I, 180.

⁸⁰ Aristoteles, *Hist. an.* 496b.

⁸¹ Cf. Aristoteles, *Resp.* 478a–b.

⁸² Cf. Aristoteles, *Resp.* 473a.

⁸³ Cf. Aristoteles, *Hist. an.* 507a.

⁸⁴ Aristoteles, *Part. an.* 674a.

⁸⁵ Aristoteles, *Part. an.* 675b.

the scientific literature for a period of time sufficient to allow their pervasion of the popular culture and gaining of influence in everyday thinking. They are also reflected in the text of the gospel, although it does not mean that we are aiming at proving Mark's dependance on physiological research of Aristotle, but merely at illustrating the secondary nature of such views and their rooting in Hellenistic culture. A completely different kind of attitude towards food can be found, for example, in the Gnostic texts, where it is stressed that the substance of food becomes the substance of the body. Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 315–403), while referring to the views of the Borborites, states: "And whatever we eat – meat, vegetables, bread or anything else – we are doing creatures a favour by gathering the soul from them all and taking it to the heavens with us."⁸⁶ The reliability of this testimony is accepted even by K. Rudolph, whose attitude towards Epiphanius is usually critical.⁸⁷ Augustine of Hippo confirms this approach towards food in his *Confessions*: "Insensibly and little by little, I was led on to such follies as to believe that a fig tree wept when it was plucked and that the sap of the mother tree was tears. Notwithstanding this, if a fig was plucked, by not his own but another man's wickedness, some Manichean saint might eat it, digest it in his stomach, and breathe it out again in the form of angels. Indeed, in his prayers he would assuredly groan and sigh forth particles of God, although these particles of the most high and true God would have remained bound in that fig unless they had been set free by the teeth and belly of some 'elect saint'! And, wretch that I was, I believed that more mercy was to be shown to the fruits of the earth than unto men, for whom these fruits were created. For, if a hungry man—who was not a Manichean—should beg for any food, the morsel that we gave to him would seem condemned, as it were, to capital punishment."⁸⁸

What causes impurity (Mark 7:21–22) is catalogued on a long, twelve-item, list of an arrangement that seems rather chaotic at first glance. Nevertheless, J. Edwards proposes to describe it as two symmetrical sets: six classes of deeds (in plural) and six stances

⁸⁶ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 26, 9, 4.

⁸⁷ Cf. Rudolph, *Gnoza*, 238.

⁸⁸ Augustinus, *Conf.* III, 10.

(in singular).⁸⁹ This list is not an effects of Markan own invention, because its pre-Christian provenance is being pointed out. For example, the attention is drawn to a parallel with IQS IV, 9–11,⁹⁰ though it seems to be very remote, because the texts have different character. The fragment of the *Rule of the Community* is a part of the juxtaposition of the advices of the Spirit to the Sons of Truth (IQS IV, 6b–7) with a parallel list of the traits of the Spirit of Perversity. The editor of a Polish translation connotes this list with Rom 1:21–24, *Didache* 5 or the *Epistle of Barnabas* 20.⁹¹ Matt 15:19 shortens this list to seven items, and puts the deeds in such an order that, besides the extreme ones, they correspond to the commandments: you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness.⁹²

The Law in Mark 7:14–23 is presented as inapplicable. Jesus proves its pointlessness by referring to medical facts of the current state of physiological knowledge. Here, the Torah (precisely the regulations concerning pure and impure foods, as for example in Lev 11) is explicitly rejected in favor of a moral code, implicitly present in Jesus' teaching, the effect and illustration of which is the catalogue of wrong states and deeds that make a man impure. Thus, the idea of (im)purity has been transformed considerably by Jesus. It is true that the assertion of cancellation of the division of food into pure and impure (Mark 7:19b) constitutes narrator's comment, and not the words of Jesus Himself, nevertheless, it is an element of the teaching of the gospel. Matt 15:10–20 tries to de-escalate the meaning of this act of Jesus through the composition of the catalogue of the crimes that bring moral impurity as imitating the pattern of the Decalogue.⁹³

⁸⁹ Cf. Edwards, *The Gospel*, 213–124.

⁹⁰ Cf. Lane, *The Gospel*, 257, n. 46.

⁹¹ Cf. Tyloch, *Rękopisy*, 92.

⁹² Cf. Morris, *The Gospel*, 398–399; France, *The Gospel*, 586.

⁹³ For the moral meaning of purity recently see Krawczyk, *The Paradox of Purity*, 222–227.

5. Mark 7:1–23 in the Vulgate

While arguing with the Manichaeans, Augustine of Hippo comments extensively on Jesus' logion concerning the things that make a man impure in the Matthean version.⁹⁴ In the center of his interest are the issues of the purity of foods and washing of hands before eating. This shows to what extent those issues were up to date in his times, what is reflected also in Manichaean doctrine and asceticism. "Certe enim, si verum est, non coinquinare illa quae ingrediuntur in hominem, cum magno errore immundas esse dicunt escas Manichaei, cum homines carne vescuntur"⁹⁵ – Augustine says. It is evident that he quotes Matt 15:11 and, according to the spirit of this text, he refers to the issue of the purity of foods. The Matthean text is far more useful and pertinent for this purpose than Mark 7:15. In this context, the approach of St. Jerome, the most prominent exegete of the 4th–5th century, towards the issue of purity should be considered. For him and his contemporaries it was by no means an outdated subject or a matter of an academic discussion. It is confirmed by the analysis of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, dated usually to ca. 380 and associated with the Church in Syria (Antioch on the Orontes). Book VII comprises an attempt to present a Christian interpretation of the Mosaic Law based on the *Didache*. It is, above all, a proof that the way of life for Christians is "the one that is lead (διαγορεύει) by the Law."⁹⁶ Hence, it is a question of demonstrating that the Law of God is still morally binding and constitutes the basis of Christian ethics (ἠθικαὶ παραίνεσις κυριακῶν διατάξεων συμφωνοῦσαι τῇ παλαιᾷ παρακελεύσει τῶν θείων νόμον).⁹⁷ On the other hand, however, the novelty of the hermeneutical perspective drawn by Christianity is being demonstrated. In this context the quotation from Matt 15:11a appears as a basis for the relativization of the regulations concerning food in Judaism. An appendix to the main text of the *Apostolic*

⁹⁴ Cf. Augustinus, *Contra Adimantum* 14,1–15,1, esp. 15,2; Augustinus, *De actis cum Felice* I, 7.

⁹⁵ In Polish, "Z pewnością, jeśli jest prawdą, że nie to czyni człowieka nieczystym, co wchodzi w człowieka przez usta, to manichejczycy popełniają wielki błąd, gdy mówią o pokarmach nieczystych." Augustinus, *Contra Adimantum* 15, 1.

⁹⁶ *Const. ap.* VII, 2, 1, my own translation.

⁹⁷ *Const. ap.* VII, 2.

Constitutions, containing fragments of the *Canons of Pamphilos* preserved in Origen's library in Caesarea, consists of a list of what should determine the identity of Christianity and distinguish them both from Jews and gentiles. The fifth element of this list reads as follows: “τοῦ μὴ ἐξομοιοῦσθαι χριστιανοὺς Ἰουδαίοις ἔνεκεν ἀποχῆς βρωμάτων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑείων ἀπογεύεσθαι, τοῦ κυρίου θεσπίσαντος, ὅτι «τὰ εἰσπορευόμενα εἰς τὸ στόμα οὐ κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐκπορευόμενα ἐκ τοῦ στόματος, ὡς ἐκ τῆς καρδίας ἐξερχόμενα»” (por. Matt 15:11.18).⁹⁸ It is clear that in both cases the Matthean version is concerned, because mouth is mentioned – an element absent in Mark 7:1–23. In both cases the text is recalled as an important element of building Christian identity in the context of Judaism.

Having said about the main reasons for the bishop of Hippo and the Church in Syria interest in the issue of food, we shall look in detail at the views of the Monk from Bethlehem, while taking as a starting point the terminological difference concerning the category of impurity and/or filth in the Vulgate in Mark 7:1–23.

Vetus Latina approached the subject of impurity in Mark 7:1–23 rather freely. *Codex lat. 254 (Codex Colbertinus)*, kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, skips “impure hands, that is” and preserves only *non lotis manibus* in Mark 7:2, what is repeated in Mark 7:9.⁹⁹ In Mark 7:15–23 it employs constantly the verb *communicare*.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, in Mark 7:23 this text has an addition based on its proper lection of Matt 5:20: *Non lotis autem manibus manducare: non coinquinat hominem*.¹⁰¹ In Matt 15:1–20 in this codex we find a great variety of expressions: *non lavant manus suas* (Matt 15:2), *communicat hominem* (Matt 15:11), *coinquinant hominem* (Matt 15:18.20c), *non lotis autem manibus* (Matt 15:20b).¹⁰² In Matt 15:2 the edition of Adolf Jülicher has *non lavant manus suas*,

⁹⁸ In Polish, “by chrześcijanie nie byli podobni do Żydów w powstrzymywaniu się od pokarmów, lecz jedli także wieprzowinę, bo Pan głosi, że ‘to, co wchodzi do ust, nie kała człowieka, lecz to, co z ust wychodzi, jako że pochodzi z serca’”: *Didascalia et Constitutiones*, II, 144.

⁹⁹ Vogels, *Evangelium Colbertinum*, II, 81.

¹⁰⁰ Vogels, *Evangelium Colbertinum*, I, 65.

¹⁰¹ Vogels, *Evangelium Colbertinum*, I, 66.

¹⁰² Vogels, *Evangelium Colbertinum*, I, 30.

in Matt 15:11 it has (*non*) *inquinat hominem*, and in vv. 18–20a – *coinquinare* with the minority use *communicare*.¹⁰³ The pericope ends with the sentence: *Haec sunt, quae coinquant hominem: non lotis autem manibus manducare, non coinquant hominem* (Matt 15:20).

The gospels were included in the scope of translatory works of Jerome before he left for Palestine. He has begun their translation in Rome and corrected it for a long time, just like the Psalter.¹⁰⁴ For the translation of κοινόω and its derivatives Jerome uses two Latin terms. The primary is *communicare*, and the adjective is translated by the expression *communibus manibus*. Only in Mark 7:15 he introduces a different verb: *coinquinare*, with which Jerome translates the first use of κοινόω, while for the second one he employs his usual term *communicare*. Thus, the sentence: *Nihil est extra hominem introiens in eum, quod possit eum coinquinare, sed quae de homine procedunt, illa sunt quae communicant hominem* equates the two verbs as synonyms. The definition of impurity being the effect of passing from one hand to another is presented as the only one in the sequence Mark 7:1–23, in both its pericopes. Whereas in Matt 15:10–20 he uses only the expression (*non*) *coinquinat hominem*, hence, one can assert that the synonymy of the verbs finds its validation.

The New Vulgate resolves this problem in a different manner because it translates κοίνος in vv. 1–13 as *communis* and in vv. 14–23 as *coinquinatus*. Our deliberations on Mark 7:1–23 demonstrate that this differentiation does not consist merely in stylistics. The distinction is not introduced in the parallel text of Matt 15:1–20 by the continuators of the work of the exegete from Bethlehem either, because already the Greek text limits the issue of impurity to the second part of the argument (vv. 10–20), while in vv. 1–9 the question concerns only the unwashed hands. What are the motifs and the consequences of this distinction?

The answer to this question is not facilitated by the fact that in his correspondence, vast and often concerning exegetical issues, Jerome does not address the question matter of impurity in Mark 7:1–23. If he

¹⁰³ Jülicher, *Itala*, I, 104–107.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Cimosà, *Guida*, I, 44.

did address the issue in the homilies to the Gospel of Mark,¹⁰⁵ it is this particular fragment that has not been preserved, for in those who were he does not refer to the text in question. Jerome touches upon this text in the *Letter to Geruchia on monogamy*,¹⁰⁶ though only in the context of the commandment concerning the reverence towards parents. We can identify the allusion to Mark 7:10–13 on the basis of the word *Corban* (Mark 7:11), absent in the parallel text of Matt. When it comes to this parallel text (Matt 15:1–20), he touches upon the issue that is of interest to us only in a voluminous *Letter to Algasia*. In this collection of eleven short exegetical treatises, in the penultimate one concerning Judeo-Christian elements in Col, Jerome interprets Col 2:20–23 and the issue of the obligatory character of Jewish regulations and taboos concerning food for Christians. He makes there a reference to Matt 15:1–20 and quotes the verse Matt 15:11, or rather paraphrases it. Although in the letter he uses the phrase from the gospel quite freely and interprets, for example, *quod procedit ex ore* (Matt 15:11) as *ea quae de nobis exeunt*,¹⁰⁷ he describes the state of impurity with the verb *coinquinat*, that occurs in Matt 15:11 also in the Vulgate. In his commentary on Matt, Jerome expresses a belief that he has in mind the problem of impure foods (*communes cibos*) and Jewish food regulations.¹⁰⁸ Jerome approaches the issue of the purity of foods in a twofold perspective. The first approach is theological and derives from the adoption, as a premise, of the Pauline settlement of the early-Christian conflict over the consumption of the meat offered to idols. While the foods as such are pure, their impurity is caused by *idolorum ac daemonium invocatio*.¹⁰⁹ The second approach to this issue is medical and refers to a simple lecture on the beliefs about the course of the digestion processes, in order to defend the Lord against an accusation of ignorance in the field of the laws of nature (*Dominus physicae disputationis ignarus*). Thus, he proves, on the basis of medical arguments, that only extracted liquid substances

¹⁰⁵ Hieronymus, *In Marci Evangelium*.

¹⁰⁶ Hieronymus, *Epist.* 123, 5.

¹⁰⁷ Hieronymus, *Epist.* 121, 10.

¹⁰⁸ Hieronymus, *Comm. Matt.*, col. 15–219, esp. col. 107.

¹⁰⁹ Hieronymus, *Comm. Matt.*, col. 108.

can spread throughout the body, and the mass of food travels along the path described by the text of the gospel.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile in the New Testament, Matt 15:1–20 – as we have proven above – does not go beyond the issue of food purity and man’s defilement caused by the eating of food. The same issue can be found in Rom 14:1–23, where Paul discusses it in the context of tensions within the roman community that were caused by the difference of tradition between local Judeo-Christians and those believers coming from a milieu other than the Jewish one. In the letters of Jerome of Stridon, Rom 14:1–23 does not play any important role besides vv. 4 and 5, that are being employed in numerous dispute situations, in which he participated, or in defense from the accusations that, also, were not seldom in his life. When he refers to Rom 14:2 in the *Letter to Furia*, he does so in order to consider the issues placed on the verge of ascetics and medicine: does the vegan diet really help in maintaining purity?¹¹¹ He does not elaborate on the issue of purity and impurity of the foods. In the translation, however, the state of impurity due to eating impure foods is described in the following words: *quia nihil commune per seipsum, nisi ei, quid existimat quid commune esse, illi commune est* (Rom 14:14). This opinion is based on Jesus Christ (οἶδα καὶ πέπεισμαι ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ, what the New Vulgate translates as follows: *scio et certus sum in Domino Iesu*), what allows us to presume that Paul knew the tradition of the Church referring to the teaching of the Lord, that has been later, or simultaneously, reflected in the synoptic tradition (Mark 7:15.19 and par.¹¹²). Although in the translation of Rom 14:14, New Vulgate employs a different vocabulary than the one used in Mark 7:14–23 or Matt 15:10–20. On the other hand, the vocabulary is consistent with its translation of Mark 7:1–13, along with Jerome’s one that has here: *nihil commune per ipsum, nisi ei qui existimat quid commune esse, illi commune est*.

¹¹⁰ Hieronymus, *Comm. Matt.*, col. 108–109.

¹¹¹ Hieronymus, *Epist.* 54, 10.

¹¹² Cf. Romaniuk, *List do Rzymian*, 264–265.

Conclusions

The analysis carried out leads to the conclusion that Mark 7:1–23 consists of a sequence of two pericopes, which has as their leading topic (in the first one being at least the starting point, and in the second one – central) the understanding of the terms κοινός and κοινώω. Those are pericopes: vv. 1–13 and vv. 14–23. The first one touches upon the purity of foods, precisely the purity of the action of eating. What has its parallel in Matt 15:2–3, where, however, the adjective κοινός is absent.

In Mark 7:1–13 the concept of impurity is related to a defilement due to a contact with people not observing the regulations concerning purity. This contact is often indirect – various items that are in common use constitute the *medium*. Impurity refers to the way of eating meals and has a social dimension. In Mark 7:14–23 impurity is related to a distinction of the foods to clean and unclean. Jesus challenges both forms of impurity, although the second one is not opposed by Him to the Law. Nevertheless, Jesus shows its groundlessness based on the way of perceiving man as a living organism. Thus, He carries out a rational critique of a precept of the Torah. As such, it stands in the opposition to Mark 7:1–13, where Jesus defends the Torah written before the traditions that deform it.

In the reading of Mark, Jerome does not perceive the difference between those two approaches. He does introduce, however, a terminological differentiation, which will be later used by New Vulgate to highlight the independent character of pericopes forming the sequence Mark 7:1–23. One-sided perspective of Jerome is reflected not only in the translation, but in his other texts, belonging to the category of exegetical writings, as well. His exegetical sensitivity is related to the problems he had to face in his time: Manichaean interest in dietary issues, important not only ascetically, but soteriologically as well, and the need for specifying the relationship between Christianity and Judaism, a relation which could neither be a complete rupture, nor a simple continuation.

While Mark 7:1–23 derives the term (im)purity from the area of ritualism in order to give it a moral and rational character, in Jerome's texts it is noticeable that a certain movement in a different direction is present. He prefers the form of this episode from Matt 15:10–20,

distinctly less radical than Mark 7:14–23, and recalls the Decalogue as a key point of reference for Jesus' teaching. Jerome, in his translatory work, is more of an ecclesiastical publicist or an opinion-forming figure, than a theologian of a philologist. The work on the New Vulgate was an opportunity to drive the text out of the context of the theological dilemmas of Christian antiquity, and to refine both its philological and theological nuances. Yet, the text of Jerome's translation reveals him as an attentive and involved participant in the life of the Church, who spoke on current and important issues from his seclusion.

Jak tłumaczyć *koinós* [koinos] i co jest jego przeciwieństwem? Źródła czystości i nieczystości w Mk 7,15–23 oraz w starożytnych tłumaczeniach łacińskich

Abstrakt: Badania Andrzeja Wypustka nad skatologią starożytną pokazują, jak używane w Ewangeliach pojęcia czystości i nieczystości odbiegają od potocznie używanych w świecie rzymskiej cywilizacji. Nowotestamentalne pojęcia czystości i nieczystości należało więc nie tylko przełożyć, ale też przybliżyć łacińskiemu czytelnikowi to, co jest istotą treści nauczania Jezusa. Studium łacińskiej tradycji translatorskiej Ewangelii Markowej jest ważną częścią interpretacji tego tekstu. Interpretacja św. Hieronima zawiera w istocie reinterpretację motywu (nie)czystości w sensie, który różni się od rytualistycznego kierunku Markowego tekstu.

Słowa kluczowe: Ewangelia Marka, czystość, nieczystość, egzegeza wczesno-chrześcijańska, tłumaczenia Biblii

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