

ks. mgr lic. Rafał Bogacki

Summary of a PhD dissertation
prepared under the supervision of Rev. Prof. Artur Malina,
entitled Albert Vanhoye's Literary Structure of the Letter to the Hebrews and Its
Reception in the Years 1964-1976.

The subject of the dissertation is the concept of literary structure proposed by Albert Vanhoye (1923-2021), as well as the discussion on this proposal conducted in the years 1964-1976. Albert Vanhoye, undertaking the work of exegetes of the first half of the twentieth century, rejected schemas based on subjective thematic criteria and proposed his own, original schema. What helped in its development was focusing on the literary layer of the letter and using the five criteria. Thanks to this, he presented a structure based on a concentric schema and shared it with a wide audience, publishing in 1963 the work *La structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux*. It received favorable comments and was considered by many to be one of the most important publications on the exegesis of the Letter to the Hebrews. Other commentators were critical of it and made a number of objections. Albert Vanhoye's answer helped to clarify the literary criteria and refine the developed method.

The dissertation consists of three chapters. The first one presents the thematic and literary schemas of the Letter to the Hebrews, which were published before 1963. It explains issues related to thematic schemas, as well as literary hints present in the text, on the basis of which commentators distinguished the main parts of the letter. The context in which the work *La structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux* was created is also presented. Both biographical threads concerning its author, the situation of Catholic exegesis in the years preceding the Second Vatican Council, as well as an outline of the development of those exegetical tools that turned out to be crucial for the results of Albert Vanhoye's work were taken into account. The chapter ends with a detailed presentation of the concept of structure.

The second chapter presents the reception of the work in the years 1964-1976. The positive reception of the applied methodology is presented in detail. Both reviews published in scientific journals and the adaptation of the schema in commentaries and French editions of the Bible are analyzed. Next, the objections to the presented structure are shown, as well as Albert Vanhoye's response to the criticism. The changes introduced by him are taken into account, including those resulting directly from the allegations, as well as those that, despite the lack of criticism, were introduced as the fruit of many years of reflection. A lot of attention

is devoted to polemics with J. Swetnam's proposals, as well as to the subsequent proposals of the structure published by this exegete.

In the third chapter, an attempt is made to evaluate the reception and to modify the method proposed by A. Vanhoye. Reviews published in scientific journals are analyzed, as well as the reception of the structure in commentaries and French editions of the Bible. Emphasis is given to the deficiencies in the reviews positively evaluating the work of *La structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux*. The subsequent subsections discuss the arguments put forward by A. Vanhoye's critics and evaluate his reaction. Attention is drawn to the lack of response to some accusations, and the application of the criteria in the work *Situation du Christ* – a commentary on the first two chapters of the Letter to the Hebrews – is analyzed.