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“...THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE FOLD,  
ONE SHEPHERD”

RELECTURE OF JOHN 10,16  
IN AN ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

**Abstract.** The presented article makes a proposal of the relecture of John 10,16 in an ecumenical perspective. The text of John 10,16 says about “other sheep,” which Jesus have to lead so that may arise one flock. The point of departure is an exegetical analysis of John 10,16 in the context of the whole discourse about good Shepherd. The new fold will be composed of two groups, which have been presented figuratively as two groups of sheep. The first group—sheep from the flock (Gr. ἀὐλή [*aulē*]) embodies Jesus’ disciples of Jewish origin. The second group—“other sheep” are Christians originate from Gentiles. Both groups will make the one fold. Considering the whole Johannine Gospel, we may say that the beginning of the unification of the fold is the exaltation of Jesus (i.e. His passion, death and resurrection). Since then the incorporation of Christians of pagan origin have begun. The force unifying the new fold will be hearing of the Shepherd’s voice, i.e. acceptance the Revelation brought by Jesus, which will lead to faith in Him.

Looking at the text John 10,16 from the ecumenical perspective we may constate: firstly, making the one fold will be a process stretched over time. The way to the unity is long. It has been expressed by the verb γίνομαι [*ginomai*], which points out the process of making the one fold. Secondly, lots and lots is dependent on how the sheep hear the Shepherd’s voice. Therefore all Christians have to make a permanent reflection about ability to hear the voice of Jesus, i.e. the reflection about ability to understand revelation brought by Jesus. Right cognition and understanding of this revelation is related to serious treatment of biblical research. Since the Bible contains it, what once the voice of the Shepherd annunciated. Right understanding of the Bible makes it, that the Shepherd’s voice is reviving anew in a sense and it draws the next sheep to the one fold.

**Key words:** Gospel of St. John, ecumenism, Good Shepherd, fold, unity.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The best-known text of the Johannine Gospel referred to the ecumenical issues are the words taken from so called *The High Priestly Prayer of Jesus*: “may they all be one” (John 17,21; cf. 17,11).<sup>1</sup> This is not the only text of the Fourth Gospel which contains an idea of the unity of Jesus’ disciples. In the similar perspective one may consider Jesus’ statement contained in so-called the *Discourse on Good Shepherd* (John 10,1–10) and strictly speaking in Jesus’ announcement, that “there will be only one fold, one Shepherd.” In the opinion of many scholars the pericope of John 10 is the climax of the debate on Jesus’ identity contained in John 7–10.<sup>2</sup> Therefore it seems to be extremely important to understand suitably the Discourse which crowns the debate above mentioned.<sup>3</sup> The presented article makes a proposal to read the verse John 10,16 in an ecumenical perspective.

## 2. ONE FOLD—WHO DOES IT INCLUDE?

In the *Discourse on Good Shepherd* placed in John 10 we can find a mention about one fold and one Shepherd. Thereby, two questions arise. First: who has to be included in this fold? And second: how will the fold come into being? The reading of the whole pericope of John 10 let us draw a conclusion that it is about two groups strictly interrelated. The former have been determined as “sheep” (Gr. πρόβατα [*probata*]). This group (and especially its origin) stands in the centre of the whole discourse. In turn, the latter group includes “other sheep” mentioned in the verse 10,16. Thus “the one sheep” will come into being at the moment when the “sheep” (mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> More about the sense of Jesus’ prayer in John 17,1–26 see: Henryk Witczyk, “‘Aby byli jedno.’ Sens modlitwy Jezusa w J 17,1–26,” in *Biblia podstawą jedności*, ed. Adam Ryszard Sikora (Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, 1996), 85–115.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gary T. Manning Jr., *Echoes of a Prophet. The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John and in Literature of the Second Temple Period* (Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 270) (London, New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2004), 100.

<sup>3</sup> John 10 is one of the most commented texts of the Johannine Gospel. The bibliography on this subject gives Stanisław Mędała, *Ewangelia według świętego Jana. Rozdziały 1–12* (Nowy Komentarz Biblijny IV/1) (Częstochowa: Święty Paweł, 2010), 768. It is also worth to pay attention to collected essays on this subject in: *The Shepherd Discourse of John 10 and its Context* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 67), ed. Johannes Beutler and Robert T. Fortna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

John 10,1–15) will unite the “other sheep” mentioned in John 10,16. In order to specify both groups we should examine the whole pericope of John 10,1–21 more precisely. First of all, we ought to notice, that the “sheep” is closely related to the “fold.” This fold has been defined by the Greek term ἀύλή [*aulē*]. It may be surprising, because in Greek it is the noun μάνδρα [*mandra*] commonly used to denote “sheep pen,” whereas the noun ἀύλή [*aulē*] has a much wider meaning. Above all it means a “yard,” “an enclosure,” open from above. It is not out of question, of course, that sheep were held on this space (so is e.g. in Homer, *Iliad* 4,433), but ἀύλή [*aulē*] in such a meaning doesn’t often occur. However, in Septuagint it is striking accumulation of the noun mentioned above in reference to the court of the Dwelling/Temple. We may mention here such texts as e.g. Ex 27,12–19; 37,13–18; Lev 6,9,19; 1 Kings 6,35; 7,12; 8,64; Ez 40,17,27,37.<sup>4</sup> In the Septuagint there are other terms for naming a shed for sheep: e.g. ἐπαύλεις προβάτων [*epauleis probatōn*] (Nu 32,16,36) or ἐπαύλεις ποιμνίων [*epauleis poimniōn*] (Isa 65,10). Ignace de la Potterie examining the text of John 10 have noticed that theological terms which have to be interpreted figuratively, dominate in the language of this pericope. Such interpretation is proper so much the more for the initial verses of John 10 are described as παροιμία [*paroimia*] (“dark saying,” “figure of speech with a hidden meaning”). In such a situation Johannine “fold” is to be viewed in the Old Testamental context as a metaphor of Jerusalem’s Temple, which was the most sacred place of Judaism. In other words, it embodies the whole people of Israel, who used to assemble on this courtyard in the time of sacrifice. Such understanding is yet strengthened by the term “sheep” itself, which has a rich Old Testament background. In these texts, it was referred to the people of Israel (cf. Ez 34,31; Jer 23,1; Ps 95[94], 100[99]) and this understanding is continued in the New Testament (cf. Mt 10,6; 25,32).

In the light of the observations made above, we can state that the term “sheep of the fold” designates in John 10 a community of Jesus’ disciples which derive from the Judaism. The next stage of our analysis will be searching for significance of the expression “the other sheep” which appears in John 10,16.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ignace de la Potterie, *Studi di cristologia Giovannea* (Genova: Marietti, 1986), 90, states, that in the Greek Bible the term ἀύλή [*aulē*] occurs 177 times, but it is never related to a shed for sheep. On the other hand, it appears approximately 115 times in the context of the Temple in Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> Some scholars claim that verse 16 is a later gloss. They justify their view in the way that in the nearest context there aren’t any mention on the subject of unity. There aren’t either any remark on the subject of the origin of sheep from beyond Israel. Furthermore, there appears the

The “other sheep” are not from the fold designated as αὐλή [aulē]. We have mentioned above that this term implicates community of Jews. Jesus says that the “other sheep” are not from this fold. Therefore they must come from other environment than Jewish one. However it hasn’t been specified from where they originate. It may reflect Jewish look of that time, which divided the humankind into two groups: (Jewish) people (Gr. λαός [laos]) and other nations (Gr. ἔθνη [ethnē]). Therefore this verse is one of the essential texts in which appears the universalism in the understanding of Church community.<sup>6</sup> Verbs in *futurum* which occur here point out that this unity will come to fruition only in future. Anyway it will be really so. The entry of pagans to the Church will take place after the death and resurrection of Jesus. It will be accomplished by the missionary activity of Jesus’ disciples. We have an allusion to this in John 17,20 where Jesus prays for those, “who through their [disciples’] teaching will come to believe in Him.”<sup>7</sup>

It is noteworthy that coming into being one fold is strongly established in the will of God. It is expressed by impersonal verb δεῖ [dei], which has the meaning ‘it is necessary.’ It refers to what must be done, that is indispensable. Thus in the New Testament, in texts where the verb δεῖ [dei] occurs, more or less directly the will of God is suggested. Suffice it to say that this verb occurs in theologically essential places of the Fourth Gospel (e.g. 3,14: “The Son of Man must be lifted up” or 9,4: “we must carry out the work of the one who sent me”; cf. also: 3,7.30; 4,24; 20,9). Thence we can say that the creation of one people comprising all children of God was situated in divine plans concerning the world and the humankind from the very beginning.<sup>8</sup>

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term ποιμνῆ [poimnē], which is *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament. Such view presents e.g. Eduard Schweizer, *Ego eimi... Die religionsgeschichtliche Herkunft und theologische Bedeutung der johanneischen Bildreden, zugleich ein Beitrag zur Quellenfrage des vierten Evangeliums* (Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, II. Reihe, 36) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), 150. However, it seems, that there is no need of discerning here a latter addition. Cf. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium 5-12* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament IV/2, Sonderausgabe) (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2001), 376. De la Potterie (*Studi di cristologia Giovannea*, 103) claims that this verse, though it is authentic, can be an evidence for renewed redaction of the Fourth Gospel.

<sup>6</sup> This idea isn’t a strange one in the Fourth Gospel. A similar suggestion is contained in two other texts: 11,51–52 (Jesus was to die not for the nation only, but also to gather together into one the scattered children of God) and 19,23–24 (pericope about non-divided tunic).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. De la Potterie, *Studi di cristologia Giovannea*, 104.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Wiard Popkes, “Δεῖ,” in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd, 1990), 279. Popkes states: “Δεῖ

## 3. JESUS' ROLE IN THE RISING ONE FOLD

Jesus' role have already been indicated by the term "Shepherd" (Gr. ποιμήν [*poimēn*]). In the background of this title, there are two texts from the Old Testament. These texts are Nu 27,16–23 and Ez 34. The connection between John 10 and two texts mentioned above are confirmed by numerous verbal parallels. The former text says about the appointment of Joshua to be the leader of Israel. This appointment have been presented like establishing a Shepherd over flock. Therefore Jesus presents himself here as the new Joshua who has to lead the people. The text Nu 27 served as legitimation of Joshua as the leader over Israel.<sup>9</sup>

Thereby the whole discourse about good Shepherd may be consider in the same context—it serves to the confirmation of Jesus' authorization to gather His flock. The text of Ez 34 contains the polemic against the Shepherds of Israel, who were most of all the kings of these people. Their sins brought the people to the disaster. Therefore God will take over their role. He will become the subject of activities which normally performed Shepherd (cf. Ex 34,12–13). In turn in John 10 this divine role will be overtaken by Jesus. He will be the one who will gather dispersed people.<sup>10</sup>

John 10,3 says, that the good Shepherd with whom Jesus identifies himself (cf. 10,11) leads out (Gr. ἐξάγει [*exagei*]) sheep from the fold above mentioned. This leading out is preceded by "calling sheep by name" (Gr. κατ' ὄνομα [*kat'onoma*]). In the Hellenistic language "a name" often means "a person", e.g. in 3 John 14 the expression κατ' ὄνομα [*kat'onoma*] means "personally". An instrument of this personal calling sheep is "the voice" (Gr. φωνή [*phōnē*]). In Fourth Gospel this term is often referred to Jesus' teaching (e.g. John 5,25; 18,37).<sup>11</sup>

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designates the way given by God, to which there is no alternative. There is only the one way to enter into relationship with God (e.g., 4,20.24), to fulfill his commission (e.g., 9,4), and to allow him to determine one's destiny."

<sup>9</sup> In the text of Nu 27,20 appears the motive of hearing Shepherd's voice by sheep. Gary T. Manning Jr (*Echoes of a Prophet*, 104) has noticed that there is a unique occurrence of this motive in the Old Testament.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Manning Jr, *Echoes of a Prophet*, 100–119.

<sup>11</sup> Stanisław Mędała (*Ewangelia według świętego Jana. Rozdziały 1-12*, 753) notices that the voice of the Shepherd has a Messianic character. It's about those who are being called by Him personally. Next Jesus says about following Him, and finally about sheep's obedience toward the Shepherd's voice. It is expressed by the verb ἀκολουθεῖω [*akoloutheō*], which extends an idea of being disciple. It is pointed out by such texts as: John 1,37.43; 8,12; 10,27; 12,26.

This voice is being listened to (Gr. ἀκούω [akouō]) by sheep. The verb ἀκούειν [akouein] often occurs in the context of acceptance of Jesus' teaching (cf. John 4,42; 5,24; 5,25). Similarly the expression "they know his voice" (Gr. οἶδασιν τὴν φωνήν [oidasin tēn phōnēn]).<sup>12</sup> Therefore the voice of Shepherd heard by sheep causes coming into being of the bond between that who proclaims and those who are hearing. It has been expressed by the possessive pronoun "his" (Gr. τὰ ἴδια [ta idia]; cf. 13,1).<sup>13</sup>

The activity of the Shepherd—Jesus causes that called sheep are leaving out the fold. The Evangelist uses here the verb ἐξάγω [exagō], which in the Old Testament occurs in the context of Exodus—departure from Egypt (Ex 3,10; 6,27; cf. Acts 7,36; 13,17; Hb 8,9). This leading out means therefore exit to the freedom. Another aspect of this exile reveals the verb ἐκβάλλω [ekballō] occurring in the following verse. It has a meaning "expel with greater or smaller force." In John 9,34–35 this verb means activity of Jews who in such way treat a healed blind man. In the opinion of many scholars, the Evangelist underlined in this matter coming into being of the division between Jews and Christians (i.e. those who have believed in Jesus). So at the beginning of the community of Jesus' disciples there is a split between them and Jews.<sup>14</sup>

The sheep that have gone out of the fold make a new community. Jesus' decisive role in this action expresses the adjective "good" (Gr. καλός [kalos]) too, which specifies the noun "Shepherd". In the Johannine Gospel this adjective does not mean the usual goodness, which is comprehended in moral or ethical dimension. Referring in this Gospel only to Jesus (or to realities connected to Him) it indicates a welfare, in which the people participate through Jesus<sup>15</sup>. In our text this welfare is connected to the gift of life, which

<sup>12</sup> Ignace de la Potterie (*Studi di cristologia Giovannea*, 312–315) stresses that the verb οἶδα [oida] means „a strong faith”. Strong faith is an absolute one, imperturbable, who is possessed for keeps. Such faith becomes later a basis of testimony. This „knowledge/cognition” means not so much something what is to be comprehended in intellectual dimension, but it indicates coming into being a profound community between that, who is a subject and that who is an object of cognition.

<sup>13</sup> It is noteworthy that this bond between Shepherd and sheep is established by Father's acting. He "gives" disciples to Jesus (cf. 6,37.39; 17,2.6.7.9.24).

<sup>14</sup> Another term used in this context is ἀποσυναγωγός [aposynagōgos], which literally means „expulsion from the synagogue.” More on this subject see Mirosław Wróbel, *Synagoga a rodzący się Kościół* (Studia Biblica 3) (Kielce: ITB Verbum, 2002). Besides such division between Jews and Jesus' disciples is indicated by the noun σχίσμα [schisma], which occurs three times in the Gospel of John, always in the context of the debate about Jesus (cf. John 7,43; 9,16; 10,19).

<sup>15</sup> Jerome H. Neyrey, "The «Noble Shepherd» in John 10: Cultural and Rhetorical Background," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120 (2001): 267–291, makes following thesis concerning the meaning of adjective καλός [kalos] (instead of ἀγαθός [agathos]), which he translates as

good Shepherd lays down, so that the sheep have their life. In 10,11 it appears the expression τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων [*tēn psychēn autou tithēsīn hyper tōn probatōn*]. The life of the Shepherd have been laid down for the sake of sheep. The verb τίθηται [*tithēnai*] occurring here is typical of John and it means the gift of Jesus' life made by Him (10,11.15.17.18; 13,37.38; 15,13). Therefore it point out the Passion of Jesus, which will become for the sheep the source of their life.<sup>16</sup>

The significance of Jesus' death is in addition stressed by another text of Fourth Gospel—John 11,51–52. These words are the comment made by John to the prophecy said by the highest priest, that it will be better that one man will die for the people, rather than that the whole nation should perish. Evangelist adds that Jesus “was to die not for the nation only, but also to gather together into one the scattered children of God.” The text of John 11,51–52 shows some parallels to John 10,1–18. These are: the mention about death for men/sheep (cf. 10,15), the mention about scattered sheep/men (10,12) and the idea of unity (10,16: “one fold” and 11,52 “into one”). It is apparent, that the Jesus' death is connected to the act of uniting children of God. The expression “children of God” is placed here in opposition to “the people” (implicitly: Jewish). This idea was not strange to the Judaism. Eschatological hopes of Israel were bound to the expectation of renewed gathering scattered children of God by the Messiah in the Promised Land. However, one should remember that the expression “children of God” was related to Jews in the Diaspora. On the other hand, we should remember that the prophetic literature often presented the migration of other nations to the Mount Zion in Jerusalem, toward the Temple located there. This temple was called a house of prayer for all people (cf. Isa 56,7). In John 11,51–52 the title of “children of God” will be applied not only to Jews but to the whole human-kind. In connection to John 1,12 we can say that there is one main condition for belonging to the community of the children of God. It is the faith in Son of God, i.e. acceptance of the Word (Λόγος [*Logos*]), who came to the World<sup>17</sup>.

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“noble”: “the labeling of the Shepherd as ‘noble’ reflects the rhetorical topos of ‘noble death’ in the rhetoric of praise in the Hellenistic world. When John 10:11–18 is compared with this topos, we shall see that it is carefully structured according to the topos of noble death” (p. 268).

<sup>16</sup> It is expressed by the pronoun ὑπὲρ [*hyper*], which has basic meaning: “for, for sake of.” It differs from the meaning of the pronoun ἀντί [*anti*] („instead of”). In our text the matter is not the idea of substitutive suffering (giving life instead of the sheep), but it is about salvific fruits of Jesus' passion, that are accessible to the sheep. Cf. de la Potterie, *Studi di cristologia Giovannea*, 100.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Andreas Köstenberger, *John* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament) (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 352.

The observations made above show that Jesus' role in coming into being the new fold can be doubly defined. Firstly, this role means Jesus' teaching activity, what is pointed out by the terminology connected to the idea of teaching (the verb "call", the noun "voice"). Secondly, the central event, by which it will be possible raising one fold is Jesus' passion. This is the moment when Jesus draws all people to himself.

#### 4. HEARING THE VOICE OF SHEPHERD AS A FORCE JOINING ONE FOLD

In this place it is worth specifying, what a factor will be, uniting the new fold composed of the "sheep lead out of ἀυλή [aulē]" and of the "other sheep." This factor will be "hearing the voice of Jesus" mentioned above. Thus we can say: close "vertical" relationship of the sheep with Jesus will be a basis for the unity in its horizontal dimension (unity within fold). The "hearing the voice" is mentioned twice in examined text. At first in reference to the sheep lead out of fold (10,3), and next in reference to the "other sheep" (10,16). The first group is being led out (Gr. ἐξάγειν [exagein]) of courtyard. The second group is being led (Gr. ἄγειν [agein], implicitly: from the dispersion) in order to hear the voice of the Shepherd.

The idea of hearing is one of the fundamental ideas in the whole Gospel of John. The verb ἀκούειν [akouein] occurs in it about 60 times. Most of these texts have an essential significance for the theology of the Johannine Gospel. In John 4,42 Samaritans say, that they no longer believe in Jesus because of what she told them, but that they heard Jesus themselves and they know that Jesus is indeed Saviour of the world. At first there is hearing (Gr. ἀκούω [akouō] in perfect tense), and then the faith (Gr. οἶδα [oida]). This statement point out the huge power of Jesus' words<sup>18</sup>.

In the light of Jesus' words contained in John 5,24 we may say that hearing His words means at the same time an approach in faith to God, which sent Jesus (cf. John 8,26, where Jesus says, that he declared to the world what He had learnt from the Father). The result of it is an eternal life, which is accessible to these who hear (v. 25: οἱ ἀκούσαντες ζήσουσιν [hoi

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium 1-4* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament IV/1, Sonderausgabe) (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2001), 490; Köstenberger, *John*, 164.

*akousantes zēsousin*]). The texts of the Fourth Gospel show that there is exact bond between hearing and believing. That will not do, to listen solely superficially. On the other side it is worth stressing the role of the Holy Spirit in this process of hearing. It is evident in Jesus' speech about the bread of life. Some disciples say: "This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?" Thereupon Jesus answers: "It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life" (6,60.63). To believe is able only that man, who unites in himself the Spirit with the Jesus' Words.<sup>19</sup>

Such listening that leads to belief is necessary to belong Jesus' fold. In the light of the texts above we can see too, that only suchlike hearing opens access to eternal life. Thereby we may conclude that only being in the one fold grants an eternal life.

Hearing of the voice of the Shepherd by both groups of sheep will lead to arising one community. Furthermore one should add, that there is another factor that unites this community—one Shepherd. Two groups of sheep, of different origin are assembling around one (and only one) Shepherd—Christ. This idea have been stressed still better in Jesus' prayer, where He asks, that those who believe in Him "may be one" (17,21.23). In the light of this text it is apparent, that the unity in its horizontal dimension (between members of community) is conditioned by the unity in its vertical dimension. "believers make one, because in Spirit they remain in communion of the Son, and with Him—in His communion with the Father."<sup>20</sup>

This unification of the two groups, the causal power of which is hearing Jesus' voice (words) will be accomplished from the moment of His death and resurrection<sup>21</sup> and it will be a long-lasting action. It is worth underlining, that Jesus, speaking about arising one fold, uses the verb γίνομαι [*ginomai*]

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ignace de la Potterie, "Wiara w pismach janowych," *Verbum Vitae* 5 (2004): 113.

<sup>20</sup> Witczyk, " "Aby byli jedno'," 115; cf. Idem, *Kościół Syna Bożego. Studium Eklezjologii Czwartej Ewangelii* (Biblioteka „Verbum Vitae” 3) (Kielce: Biblioteka „Verbum Vitae”, 2012), 425.

<sup>21</sup> In J 12,32 Jesus says, that he will draw all people to himself, when he will be liftem up from the earth. It has been used here the verb ὑψόω [*hypsōō*]. Gerd Lüdemann says so on the subject of meaning of this verb in Fourth Gospel: "ὑψόω occurs 5 times in John and exhibits there a pronounced theological sense. In all 5 instances it possesses double meaning, referring to Jesus' being raised up on the cross, which simultaneously means his exaltation into heaven (3,14 bis; 8,28; 12,32.34). John no longer speaks of a suffering Son of man who goes to his death, or of the scandal of the cross in the Pauline sense; his view thus allowed for a docetic christology of glory" (Gerd Lüdemann, Ὑψόω, in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, ed. Horst Balz, Gerhard Schneider (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd, 1990), 409).

in future tense, what may be translated: “they will become.” This verb has in Johannine Gospel a dynamic character—it means a progressive development and deepening of the faith in Jesus (e.g. 4,4; 8,32–33; 12,36; 15,7–8). It means that the sheep have to make progress on this way in order to achieve ability to listen more and more intently the voice of the Shepherd.

##### 5. ECUMENICAL IMPLICATIONS OF JESUS’ TEACHING ABOUT THE ONE FOLD

Analyses made in presented article let us make some conclusions of theological and ecumenical nature. Firstly, referring to the teaching of Second Vatican Council, which in Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio* noticed that “There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart” (No. 7) and declared that the efforts leading to the unity of Christian Community have to build on conversion, both individual and commune, we can stress that the point of departure of this conversion shall be a self-examination concerning the ability to “hear the voice of the Shepherd.” Coming “the one fold” composed of “sheep from courtyard” and “other sheep” is conditioned by that all the sheep hear the voice of the Shepherd. This voice denotes the Revelation brought by Him, that is today accessible to all Christians as the New Testament. There is a need for continuous appreciation of square biblical research which are made by complex of scientific methods. Among them in the first place there is still a historic-critical method, which helps to find intentions that biblical authors had. However one should remember that this method cannot be treated exclusively, but one have to take into account results of research made by means of other scientific methods (so called new exegetical methods).<sup>22</sup> When the Bible is being read and interpreted fairly, the Shepherds’ voice speaks over again to contemporary generations of Jesus’ disciples. Hearing of this voice causes, that the bond between the Shepherd and sheep becomes more and more closer.

Pope John Paul II in his encyclical letter *Ut unum sint* said: “Each one ought to be more radically converted to the Gospel and, without ever losing sight of God’s plan, change his or her way of looking at things” (No. 15).

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Pontifical Biblical Commission, “The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church,” n. III.C.1., [http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC\\_Interp.htm](http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC_Interp.htm) [20.01.2014].

Secondly, one should be aware of it, that the formation of the one fold is an dynamic process, who is spread over time. It was clearly said by usage of the verb γίνομαι [*ginomai*] (“become”) instead of the verb εἶναι [*einai*] (“be”). As mentioned, this verb means making progress on the way of faith toward its plenitude. This process is long-lasting and exacting. The one fold is a reality which continuously „becomes”.

Thirdly, in the Centre of this process the Person of Jesus Christ and His Paschal Mystery have to be, i.e. His passion, death and resurrection.

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## „NASTANIE JEDNA OWCZARNIA, JEDEN PASTERZ”

RELEKTURA J 10,16

W PERSPEKTYWIE EKUMENICZNEJ

## Streszczenie

Prezentowany artykuł zawiera propozycję releksury wersetu J 10,16 w perspektywie ekumenicznej. Tekst J 10,16 mówi o „innych owcach”, które Jezus ma przyprowadzić, aby nastąpiła jedna owczarnia i jeden pasterz. Punktem wyjścia jest analiza egzegetyczna J 10,16 w kontekście całej mowy o Dobrym Pasterzu. Nowa jedna owczarnia będzie się składać z dwóch grup, które przedstawione zostały za pomocą metafory owiec. Pierwsza grupa – owce z owczarni (gr. *αὐλή* [*aulē*]) – uosabia uczniów Jezusa, którzy pochodzą z wspólnoty żydowskiej. Druga grupa – „inne owce” – to uczniowie pochodzący ze środowisk pogańskich. Obie grupy utworzą jedną owczarnię. W kontekście innych tekstów Janowych można powiedzieć, że początkiem owego dzieła jednoczenia owczarni jest wywyższenie Jezusa, czyli Jego męka, śmierć i zmartwychwstanie. Od tego momentu rozpoczyna się przyłączanie do nowej owczarni chrześcijan pochodzenia pogańskiego. Dynamizmem spajającym owczarnię będzie słuchanie głosu Pasterza, tzn. przyjmowanie objawienia przyniesionego przez Jezusa, które będzie prowadzić do wiary w Niego.

Patrząc na tekst J 10,16 z perspektywy ekumenicznej, trzeba stwierdzić, że, po pierwsze, zaistnienie jednej owczarni będzie procesem rozciągniętym w czasie. Droga do jedności jest długa. Wyraża to czasownik *γίνομαι* [*ginomai*], który wskazuje na proces stawania się jednej owczarni. Po drugie, wiele zależy od tego, jak owce słuchają głosu pasterza. Z tego powodu wszyscy chrześcijanie powinni dokonywać ciągłej refleksji nad umiejętnością słuchania głosu Pasterza, tzn. nad umiejętnością percepcji objawienia, które On przyniósł. Poznanie i zrozumienie tego objawienia wiąże się z rzetelnym podejściem do badań nad Biblią, która zawiera to, co niegdyś zwiastował „głos Pasterza”. Poprawne odczytywanie Biblii sprawia, że głos Pasterza niejako na nowo ożywa i przyciąga kolejne owce do jednej owczarni.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Ewangelia św. Jana, ekumenizm, Dobry Pasterz, owczarnia, jedność.