

MICHAŁ LUDEWICZ

*HOSTIS FRAUDULENTUS, SEPRENS DIRUS, SUGGESTOR
SCELERIS. THE OPPONENTS OF HUMAN SALVATION IN
ADAM'S OF ST VICTOR SEQUENCES**

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In a catechesis delivered in the autumn of 2024, Pope Francis drew attention to the paradox of being aware of the presence of personal evil in the world:

Today we are witnessing a strange phenomenon concerning the demon. On a certain cultural level, it is recognised that he simply does not exist. He is supposed to be a symbol of the collective subconscious or alienation, in short a metaphor (...). Yet our technological and secularised world is teeming with magicians, the occult, spiritualism, astrologers, sellers of spells and amulets, and, unfortunately, actual satanic sects. The devil driven out the door, has re-entered, one might say, through the window.¹

In his reflections, the Pope noted the dichotomy between the declared disbelief in the existence of The Devil and the practice of life, which contains elements expressing conviction of his existence and actually opening man up to his action. This state of dichotomy seems to indicate that awareness of the nature and modes of action of

Rev. MICHAŁ LUDEWICZ – John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; correspondence address: Al. Raławickie 14, 20-950 Lublin; e-mail: mludewicz@wp.pl; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9473-7745>.

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¹ FRANCIS, “Catechesis delivered at the General Audience 25.09.2024,” General Audience, accessed January 27, 2025, <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/pl/audiences/2024/documents/20240925-udienza-generale.html>.

the evil spirit is disappearing in our times. Indeed, in the same catechesis, Francis stated that “the cleverest trick of Satan, is to believe (...) that he does not exist.”² After outlining the ambivalent attitude of people living today, the Pope pointed out in his reflection that the saints were those who had the awareness of the danger caused by the evil spirit. It seems that this assertion by Francis can be extended not only to people formally recognised as saints, but also to people who, through their profound spiritual life, developed a sense of supernatural reality. Such figures include the twelfth-century author – Adam³ from the sub-Parisian abbey of St Victor.⁴ The purpose of this paper, therefore, will be to demonstrate how the struggle with evil is depicted in the sequences written by this author.⁵ It should be noted that although the question

² FRANCIS, “Catechesis delivered at the General Audience 25.09.2024.”

³ On the life of Adam of St Victor see, inter alia, Margot E. FASSLER, “Who was Adam of St Victor? The Evidence of the Sequence Manuscripts,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 37 (1984):233-269; Łukasz LIBOWSKI, “Adam ze św. Wiktora, Egregius versificator [Adam of St Victor, A Magnificent Poet],” in *Mądrość wiktorynów. Z kultury intelektualnej szkoły św. Wiktora*, eds. Marcin Jan Janecki, Wanda Bajor, Dominique Poirel, and Łukasz Libowski (in print); Agnieszka STRYCHARCZUK, “Adam ze Świętego Wiktora i jego dorobek poetycki [Adam of Saint Victor and his poetic output],” in *Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, Sekwencje*, transl. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2023), 20-34. According to Ł. Libowski, Adam was born in the second half of the 11th century. In 1098 he was a subdeacon at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. In a document of 1107, he appeared as *praecentor* and thus leader of the cathedral choir. In 1133-1134, he joined the Canons Regular living at the Abbey of St Victor outside the walls of Paris. He died in 1146. He is credited with the authorship of 58 sequences. Cf. LIBOWSKI, *Adam of St Victor* (in print).

⁴ The origins of the later *Congregatio Victorina* are linked to the figure of William of Champeaux, a Parisian master of the liberal arts, who left the city in 1108 with a group of disciples and settled outside the walls on the slope of the Hill of St Genevieve. In 1113, King Louis VI granted the community the status of a royal abbey. The time of successful development of the congregation lasted until the end of the 15th century. The monastery was suppressed during the French Revolution. The congregation was renewed in 1968. Cf. Eugeniusz ZIEMANN, “Wiktoryni, Congregatio Victorina [Victorians, The Congregation of St Victor],” in *Encyclopedia Katolicka*, vol. 20, 583.

⁵ A sequence is a liturgical chant performed during the celebration of Mass before the proclamation of the Gospel. It emerged in the ninth century from the chanting of the alleluia as a festive song, being the climax of the singing during the Eucharist. Cf. Mariusz KONIECZNY, “Sekwencja [Sequence],” in *Encyclopedia Katolicka*, vol. 17, 1378. Sequence, occurring in the liturgy between the Epistle and the Gospel, created an opportunity to prepare for the reception of the good news. Sequences, through the richness of their content, at the same time reminded the faithful that God is ineffable, so that He cannot be encompassed in words. Cf. Monika NOWAK, “Treść teologiczna obowiązkowych sekwencji mszalnych oraz ich zastosowanie w liturgii posoborowej [The theological content of the obligatory Mass sequences and their use in post-conciliar liturgy],” *Anamnesis* 57 (2009):53. Cf. also Ruth Ellis MESSENGER, *The Medieval Latin Hymn* (Washington: Capital Press, 1953), 35-48.

of belief in the existence of demonic entities and the conviction of their sinister activity found in authors of antiquity and the Middle Ages is a topic not infrequently taken up in research,⁶ this issue has not yet been studied in relation to Adam's poetic works. This article attempts to fill the existing gap. The first part of the text will present selected fragments of Adamic sequences,⁷ which describe the condition of mankind experiencing the overwhelming power of evil. The second part will characterise the names with which the author described the opponents of human salvation and the actions he attributed to them. In the third part, the reactions of Christ and the saints towards the perpetrators of iniquity will be presented. Before beginning to consider the question of how the perpetrators of iniquity are depicted in the sequences, it is still necessary to note the obvious fact that the main emphasis in these works rests on the joyful praise of Christ and His saints for the great deeds done for man.⁸ The enemies of human salvation are by no means the main focus of the composer of these works. Their presence serves to emphasise the value of Christ's act of salvation, to highlight the greatness of the hardship borne by the God-Man and the saints who followed Him for the sake of the people. The characterisation of the human condition itself was also subordinated to the chief aim, which was to extol the virtues and achievements of the heroes of the sequences.

⁶ Cf., inter alia Jeffrey Burton RUSSELL, *The Prince of Darkness. Radical Evil and the Power of God in History* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), 93-156; Michał LUDEWICZ, "«Zazdrośnik ten bezustannie usiłuje szkodzić tym, którzy szukają Boga»". Wpływ bytów demonicznych na losy jednostek i społeczności w Historiach Grzegorza z Tours ["The envious one relentlessly seeks to harm those who seek God." The influence of demonic entities on the fate of individuals and communities in the Histories of Gregory of Tours," *Vox Patrum* 75 (2020):299-316; Michał LUDEWICZ, "«Bóg wszechmogący chciał to pokazać dla poprawy żyjących»". Wychowawcza funkcja przestróg przed wieczną śmiercią w IV księdze «Dialogów» Grzegorza Wielkiego ["God Almighty wanted to show this for the betterment of the living." The educational function of warnings against eternal death in Book IV of the "Dialogues" of Gregory the Great," in *Motyw śmierci w dziełach kultury – ujęcie literaturoznawcze i kulturoznawcze*, vol. 2, eds. Paulina Pomajda, and Joanna Jędrzejewska (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Tygiel Sp. z o.o., 2022), 137-154; Kraków 2013; Roman ZAJĄC, *Przewodnik po niebie, piekle i ich mieszkańcach* [A Guide to Heaven, Hell and their Inhabitants] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo M, 2014).

⁷ In this paper the Latin-Polish edition of the sequences was used: *Adam ze Świętego Wiktora, Sekwencje*, transl. Tadeusz Gacia, Łukasz Libowski, Marta Helena Nowak, Agnieszka Strycharczuk, Adam Wilczyński, and Piotr Wilk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Academicum, 2023). This edition contains 58 sequences.

⁸ Cf. Bogusław NADOLSKI, "Sekwencja [Sequence]," in *Leksykon liturgii*, ed. Bogusław Nadolski (Poznań: Pallottinum, 2006), 1459: "It is believed that the Celtic-Germanic mentality may have found expression in the sequences, in contrast to the severitas of the Roman liturgy. The development of the sequences is linked precisely to this element of spontaneity, informality, and their melodic character facilitated congregational singing."

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE HUMAN CONDITION

In Adam's of St Victor poetic compositions, man was repeatedly portrayed as a sinner experiencing the overwhelming power of evil: In the sequence *Ave Virgo singularis*, for the Octave of the Assumption of Mary, the poet wrote: "Robbed of the robe of life,/ man is condemned to death/ by the sin of mother Eve."⁹ In another Marian sequence, *O Maria, stella maris*, we can read the words of lament: "(...) sinning, we experience punishment/ and fall into/ the various snares of the hunters./ We, so entangled,/ cannot resist them/ either by strength or forethought."¹⁰ Similarly to the human condition, the state of the whole world is depicted. In the already quoted piece *O Maria stella maris*, the world is called the valley of tears, where there is nothing nice, and everything is disturbing, and where man cannot be sure of victory.¹¹ In turn, in the sequence *Ave, mater Iesu Christi*, it can be read that: "The weakness of the world – this is its sin,/ Above this weakness nothing is worse,/ It destroys it like a morass."¹² The images given can be supplemented by the expressions present in the sequence *Iubilemus Salvatori, quem*, intended for the Octave of Christmas, where man is described as "guilty" (*reus*),¹³ and where human misery (*miseria hominis*) is mentioned.¹⁴ Moreover, in the sequence *Iubilemus Salvatori/ qui spem*, for the festivity of the Conversion of St Paul, reference is made to darkness (*tenebrae*),¹⁵ as a state of the human spirit, or mind (*mens*).¹⁶ Also in the same text, the faithful ask for eternal death (*nex aeterna*) which they

⁹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Ave Virgo singularis/ porta 43-45, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 199: *Eva mater per reatum/ stola vitae spoliatum/ morti dedit hominem.*

¹⁰ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *O Maria, stella maris 19-21, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 270: *Tot et tantis irretiti,/ non valemus hiis reniti/ nec vi, nec industria.*

¹¹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *O Maria, stella maris 7-12, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 269: *In hac valle lacrimarum/ nihil dulce, nihil carum,/ suspecta sunt omnia./ Quid hic nobis erit tutum,/ cum nec ipsa vel virtutum/ tuta sit victoria?*

¹² Cf. ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Ave, mater Iesu Christi 13-15 Sekwencje* [Sequences], 296: *Mundi languor error eius,/ Quo languore nihil peius,/ Nihil tam pestiferum.*

¹³ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Iubilemus Salvatori, quem 5, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 72: *Ut ascendat homo reus,/ condescendit homo Deus/ hominis miseriae.*

¹⁴ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Iubilemus Salvatori, quem 5, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 72, *ibid.*

¹⁵ Cf. the remarks of J.B. RUSSELL: "Blackness and darkness are almost always associated with evil, (...) Blackness has an immense range of negative and fearful associations: death, the underworld, the void, blindness, night stalked by robbers and ghosts. Psychologically it signifies the fearful, uncontrollable depths of the unconscious." Cited from: RUSSELL, *The Prince of Darkness*, 10.

¹⁶ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Iubilemus Salvatori/ qui spem 25-28, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 94: *Ergo Paule, doctor gentis,/ vas electum, nostrae mentis/ tenebras illumina!*

apparently felt threatened by, to be removed from them.¹⁷ The examples given show that in Adam's poetry, man (and more broadly: the whole world), is depicted as an entity experiencing its own adventitiousness. He carries within him the legacy of the sin of the first parents (Adam and Eve),¹⁸ so that his life, passing amidst error, and darkness, deserves to be described as "misery." Man experiences his weakness above all in his confrontation with sin, the force of which he himself is unable to resist. Without the help of the saints, whose intercession he calls upon in the words of the hymns, his life could end in eternal death. The picture of the dramatic nature of the human predicament presented above is completed by the presence in the world of entities opposed to God and aiming to harm man.

2. OPPONENTS OF HUMAN SALVATION AND THEIR HOSTILE ACTIONS

In his religious poetry, Adam portrays the Evil Spirit, demons, as well as people committing iniquity, wishing to dissuade believers from their faith, as enemies of human prosperity. The author uses multiple terms to describe these characters. The Evil Spirit¹⁹ is described, inter alia as: *hostis fraudulentus* (deceitful, perverse enemy)²⁰, *hostis vetus* (ancient enemy)²¹, *hostis infestans* (harassing enemy)²², *hostis ferus* (wild enemy)²³, *subdolos hostis* (cunning, deceitful enemy)²⁴ *praedo*

¹⁷ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Iubilemus Salvatori/ qui spem* 28-30, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 94: *Et per tuam nobis prece[m] presta vitam atque necem/ aeternam elimina.*

¹⁸ Cf. Rom 5:12: *Propterea, sicut per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit, et per peccatum mors, et ita in omnes homines mors pertransiit, eo quod omnes peccaverunt.* Quotations from The Bible derive from *Nova Vulgata Bibliorum Sacrorum*. "Nova Vulgata Bibliorum Sacrorum," accessed January 27, 2025, https://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/nova_vulgata/documents/nova-vulgata_index_lt.html.

¹⁹ On the terms that the adversary of human salvation was given, cf. Jeffrey Burton RUSSELL, *The Devil. Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (London: Cornell University Press, 1977), 228-229. Cf. also: Jeffrey Burton RUSSELL, *Satan. The Early Christian Tradition* (London: Cornell University Press, 1981).

²⁰ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *In natale Salvatoris* 38, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 50: *Tantae rei sacramentum/ latet hostem fraudulentum,/ fallitur malitia.*

²¹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Gaude Syon et laetare* 53, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 65: (...) *vetus hostis propulsatur.*

²² ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *O Maria, stella maris* 16, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 270: *Hostis instat nos infestans (...).*

²³ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laudes crucis attollamus* 5, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 283: (...) *hostem ferum superamus/ vitali victoria.*

²⁴ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Gaude prole Graecia* 23-26, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 238: *Gallorum apostolus/ venerat Lutetiam/ quam tenebat subdolos/ hostis velut propriam.*

(plunderer)²⁵, *auctor malitiae (maliciae)* (creator, perpetrator of wickedness)²⁶, *princeps nequiciae (prince of iniquity)*²⁷, *princeps mundi (ruler of the world)*²⁸, *rex sceleris* (king of sin)²⁹, *serpens dirus* (dangerous serpent,³⁰ malignant evil)³¹. It should be pointed out that an accumulation of terms associated with the adversary of salvation occurs in the sequence in honour of St Michael the Archangel *Laus erumpat ex affectu*.³² Names such as *draco vetus* (the ancient dragon)³³, *turbator* (the troublemaker)³⁴, *accusator* (the accuser)³⁵, *suggestor sceleris* (the instigator of crime)³⁶, *dyabolus* (the devil)³⁷ appear therein. When considering the meaning

²⁵ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Lux illuxit dominica* 32, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 104: *Praedam captans illicitam praedo privatur licita*.

²⁶ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Salve dies dierum gloria* 17-18, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 108: *Insultabat nostrae miseriae/ vetus hostis, auctor maliciae (...)*.

²⁷ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Sexta passus feria* 34-36, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 112: *Principem nequiciae/ per arma iusticiae/ devincendo*.

²⁸ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Mundi renovatio* 15-18, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 116: *Gelu mortis solvitur,/ princeps mundi fallitur et eius destruitur in nobis imperium*.

²⁹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Mane prima sabbati* 4, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 289: *Victo rege sceleris (...)*.

³⁰ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laetabundi iubilemus* 58-60, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 187: *Hostis nequam, serpens dirus,/ qui fundendo suum virus/ Evae, nobis nocuit*. The serpent was an image of Satan, sin, evil, hell, death, temptation, deceit, carnal pleasure. Quoted from Stanisław KOBIELUS, *Bestiarium chrześcijańskie* [Christian Bestiary] (Warszawa: Pax, 2002), 327.

³¹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Gratulemur in hac dies* 40-42, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 209: *Quod sua nos pietate/ a maligni potestate/ potenter eripuit*.

³² According to the Book of Revelation, it was the Archangel Michael who fought the battle with the Dragon, in whom Satan was seen. Cf. Rev 12:7-9: *Et factum est proelium in caelo, Michael et angeli eius, ut proeliarentur cum dracone. Et draco pugnavit et angeli eius, et non valuit, neque locus inventus est eorum amplius in caelo. Et proiectus est draco ille magnus, serpens antiquus, qui vocatur Diabolus et Satanus, qui seducit universum orbem; proiectus est in terram, et angeli eius cum illo proiecti sunt*.

³³ ADAM OF SAINT VICTOR, *Laus erumpat ex affectu* 13-15, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 229: *Draco vetus exturbatur/ et draconis effugatur/ inimica legio*. In Christian literature of the ancient and medieval periods, the dragon was the personification of hostile forces, above all Satan, its figure being linked with the abysses and their darkness. Cf. KOBIELUS, *Bestiarium chrześcijańskie* [Christian Bestiary], 296.

³⁴ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laus erumpat ex affectu* 16, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 230: *Exturbatus est turbator (...)*.

³⁵ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laus erumpat ex affectu* 17, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 230: (...) *et proiectus accusator (...)*.

³⁶ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laus erumpat ex affectu* 25-26, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 230: *Suggestor sceleris,/ pulsus a superis (...)*.

³⁷ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Gaude prole Graecia* 31-34, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 238: *Adorabat ydolum/ fallacis Mercuriil/ sed vicit dyabolum/ fides Dyonisii*. The term *diabolos* means 'a slanderer, someone

contained in the terms cited above, it should be noted that in their semantic meanings they contain connotations related to power (*princeps, rex*), dangerous animals (*draco, serpens*), evil influence (*hostis, suggestor, turbator*), force (*hostis ferus; praedo*). The Evil Spirit was thus portrayed as a powerful figure, possessing a certain authority, perniciously affecting people; explicitly called their ‘enemy.’ The characteristics of this adversary of human salvation are complemented by descriptions of the actions attributed to him by the author of the analysed sequences. In the hymn *Laetabundi iubilemus*, on the Transfiguration of the Lord, the poet wrote that the dangerous serpent harmed (*nocuit*) humans by infusing its poison into Eve.³⁸ In the sequence *Salve dies dierum gloria* for the Octave of Pascha, reference is made to the fact that the ancient foe urged, mocked, or taunted (*insultabat*) human misery with no hope of forgiveness of sins.³⁹ In the hymn *O Maria, stella maris*, the poet pointed out that the harassing enemy (*hostis infestans*) invades or oppresses (*instat*) people.⁴⁰ In the sequence *Sexta passus feria*, Adam said that before the Resurrection of Christ the impious one (*impius*) triumphed.⁴¹ And in the sequence *Gaude prole Graecia*, it is said that before St Dionysius came to Lutetia (Paris) the wily or deceitful (*subdolos*) enemy had held that city as his own property.⁴² Moreover, the hymn *Ave, mater Iesu Christi* recounts his possession of the whole world: “The enemy had the world in his possession,/ for it was all crumbling,/ Going into an abyss of terrible guilt.”⁴³ From the references cited, a picture emerges of the Evil Spirit as an entity that, as a result of Eve’s sin, held dominion over the world.⁴⁴ The Devil was then able to taunt and oppress people, presumably by taking away their hope of a change of fortune and the possibility of receiving forgiveness of sins.⁴⁵

who defames, casts slander, introduces division.’ Cf. ZAJĄC, *Przewodnik po niebie, piekle i ich mieszkańcach* [A Guide to Heaven, Hell and their inhabitants], 307-308; Cf. also: RUSSELL, *The Devil*, 189.

³⁸ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laetabundi iubilemus* 58-60, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 187: *Hostis nequam, serpens dirus, qui fundendo suum virus/ Evae, nobis nocuit.*

³⁹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Salve dies dierum gloria* 17-20, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 108: *Insultabat nostrae miseriae/ vetus hostis, auctor maliciae, quia nulla spes erat veniae/ de peccatis.*

⁴⁰ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *O Maria, stella maris* 16-18, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 270: *Hostis instat nos infestans, nunc se palam manifestans, nunc occultans rabiem.*

⁴¹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Sexta passus feria* 22-24, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 112: *Sanguinis effusio/ abluit nos, impio/ triumphato.*

⁴² ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Gaude prole Grecia* 23-26, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 238: *Gallorum apostolus/ venerat Lutetiam/ quam tenebat subdolos/ hostis velut propriam.*

⁴³ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Ave, Mater Iesu Christi* 16-18, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 296: *Hostis totum possidebat, Quia totus difluebat/ Per abrupta scelerum.*

⁴⁴ Cf. 1Jn 5:19: *Scimus quoniam ex Deo sumus, et mundus totus in Maligno positus est.*

⁴⁵ Cf. the description in the Gospels of the Devil’s action towards Judas: Jn 13:2 [*Et in cena, cum Diabolus iam misisset in corde, ut traderet eum Iudas Simonis Iscariotis (...)*]; and the description

In addition to The Devil, also demons (*daemonia*)⁴⁶ were mentioned more than once in the sequences by Adam.⁴⁷ They were described as false deities⁴⁸ and forces waging war against man.⁴⁹ In addition to these unclean spirits, the protagonists of the Victorian poet's works were also exposed to evil coming from people opposed to the true faith. For in the texts of the sequences in honour of the holy martyrs, their tormentors were mentioned more than once. One example is the hymn in honour of St Stephen, *Heri mundus exultavit*, in which the author writes of the deacon's enemies that: "They roar, therefore, like beasts,/ these enemies of light (...)." ⁵⁰ Another example can be found in the hymn *Ecce dies praeoptata*, in honour of St Vincent, the Deacon, in which it is written that: "The hatred of the governor,/ of the zealous idolater,/ is severe on the Church."⁵¹ Moreover, in the sequence *Roma Petro glorietur* for the Octave of the Feast of St Peter and Paul, two collaborating opponents of Peter are mentioned: Simon Magus⁵² and the Emperor Nero: "Having heard of Christ,/ Simon Magus and Nero together/ are frightened by this speech/ and do not give way to the Apostles."⁵³ The examples given show that the enemies of Christians were not only evil spirits, but also people committing evil. In his works, the poet indicated that these were individuals of prominence (the emperor, the governor), followers of

of Judas' death in Mt 27:3-5: (*Tunc videns Iudas, qui eum tradidit, quod damnatus esset, paenitentia ductus, rettulit triginta argenteos principibus sacerdotum et senioribus dicens: "Peccavi tradens sanguinem innocentem." At illi dixerunt: "Quid ad nos? Tu videris!" Et proiectis argenteis in templo, recessit et abiens laqueo se suspendit*).

⁴⁶ Cf RUSSELL, *The Devil*, 237-238.

⁴⁷ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Gratulemur ad festivum 25, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 60: *Vim veneni superavit,/ morti morbis imperavit/ nec non et daemonibus*.

⁴⁸ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laudemus omnes inclita 9-12, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 213: *In istius praesentia/ obmutescunt daemonia,/ Christi sonante buccina/ falsa terrentur numina*.

⁴⁹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Supernae matris gaudia 9-12, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 263: *Mundus, caro, daemonia/ diversa movent proelia./ Incursu tot fantasmatum/ turbatur cordis sabbatum*.

⁵⁰ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Heri mundus exultavit 13-14, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 53: *Fremunt ergo tanquam fere/ quia victi defecere/ lucis adversarii*.

⁵¹ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Ecce dies praeoptata 22-24, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 88: *Saevit in Ecclesiam,/ zelans ydolatriam,/ praesidis invidia*.

⁵² Simon the Magus, active in the second half of the first century, is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 8:9-24) as an adept in black magic who wanted to buy from the apostles the power to dispense the Holy Spirit for money (hence the sin of "simony"). He was considered the first heretic, or even an "arch-heretic." Cf. Rosamond MCKITTERICK, *Rome and The Invention of the Papacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 80.

⁵³ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Roma Petro glorietur 61-64, Sekwencje* [Sequences], 177: *Facta Christi mentione,/ Simon magus cum Nerone/ conturbantur hoc sermone/ nec cedunt apostolis*.

the secret arts (Simon Magus) as well as, people characterised by their vehemence and fierceness in persecuting the true faith.

The examples cited above indicate that in the sequences, the Evil Spirit, demons and people committing evil were portrayed as figures posing a real threat to the faithful. After the sin of the first parents, the world was to be in the possession of the Evil One, and people committing sins were heading into the abyss. Also in a later era – in the time of the Church – the followers of Christ experienced evil. They were the victims of hostility on the part of those who did not accept the true faith and wished to prevent its development. The actions of the opponents of salvation thus depicted showed the real burden of the struggles waged in earthly life by Christ's disciples. Above all, however, in keeping with the nature of the sequence, i.e. hymns praising Christ and the saints, the references to the opponents of salvation provided a backdrop against which the greatness of the victory of Christ and his followers could be all the more clearly demonstrated.

3. THE RESPONSE OF CHRIST AND THE SAINTS TO THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE WORK OF EVIL

Although evil and its perpetrators were portrayed as powerful, the overall message of the sequences remains positive. In his works, Adam of St Victor pointed out that the knowledge of the Evil Spirit is limited and for that reason he must lose. As an example, one can point to a passage from the Christmas sequence *In natale salvatoris*: “This is the secret of this thing,/ it is hidden from the wily enemy,/ and evil will be deceived.”⁵⁴ In this passage Adam seems to be referring to the view first expressed by St Ignatius of Antioch (+107), who wrote in his *Epistle to the Ephesians* (19,1): “The virginity of Mary and her giving birth eluded the ruler of this age, likewise also the death of the Lord – three mysteries of a cry which were done in the stillness of God.”⁵⁵ Included in these words was the idea that the Evil Spirit did not know the most important mysteries of Christ's life – those related to His Incarnation and Death.⁵⁶ Adam thus reminded

⁵⁴ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *In natale Salvatoris* 37-39, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 50: *Tantae rei sacramentum/ latet hostem fraudulentum,/ fallitur malitia.*

⁵⁵ Cited from: *Ignatius of Antioch. A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, eds. William R. Schoedel, and Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 87.

⁵⁶ Cf. also contemporary theological reflection: Czesław S. BARTNIK, *Dogmatyka katolicka* [Catholic Dogmatics], vol. 1 (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2009), 500: “Satan (...) because he lacks the grace of communion with God does not have (...) a proper, positive and deeper discernment of salvific values with regard to humanity, thus with regard to the Messiah, the Incarnation, Our Lady, the Eucharist, the Church, the sacraments, supernatural faith, the word of God.”

his audience that although the adversary of salvation is powerful, he nevertheless remains “only” a limited creature. The limitedness of evil was also mentioned by the poet when glorifying the resurrection of Christ. In the sequence for the Octave of Pascha *Mundi renovatio*, Adam notes: “The ices of death are thus melting,/ the Ruler of the world deceived,/ and in us His reign/ is already devastated.”⁵⁷ In the verses quoted, the poet expressed the idea that Christ, through his resurrection, has “deceived” the ruler of the world, that is, The Devil.⁵⁸ According to St Ephrem, the Deacon, the “deception” in question, to which Adam seems to refer, consisted in the fact that Christ voluntarily accepted death. By willingly submitting to its dominion, he ‘disarmed’ it from within. For when he rose from the dead, he overcame its power, showing that life is stronger than death.⁵⁹ Thus, from the moment of Christ’s resurrection, death ceased to be an endless state and became a passage to new life.⁶⁰ According to the Letter to the Hebrews, the one who had power over death was The Devil. By overcoming death, Jesus thereby overcame the one who held power over it, that is, the Evil One.⁶¹ It should also be added that in praising Christ’s victory in his work, Adam furthermore emphasised its circumstances by pointing out, in the text *Laudes crucis attolamus* that it was

⁵⁷ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Mundi renovatio* 15-18, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 116: *Gelu mortis solvitur,/ princeps mundi fallitur/ et eius destruitur/ in nobis imperium.*

⁵⁸ As “The ruler of this world” (*princeps huius mundi*) the Devil is named in the Gospel according to St John: cf. Jn 12:31-32: *Nunc iudicium est huius mundi, nunc princeps huius mundi eicietur foras (...).*

⁵⁹ Rom 6:9-10: (...) *Christus suscitatus ex mortuis iam non moritur, mors illi ultra non dominatur. Quod enim mortuus est, peccato mortuus est semel; quod autem vivit, vivit Deo.* 1Cor 15:54-55: (...) *Absorpta est mors in victoria. Ubi est, mors, victoria tua? Ubi est, mors, stimulus tuus?*

⁶⁰ Cf. Ephrem: *Sermon on Our Lord: Death threw Christ to His feet, He, however, trampled on it as one tramples on a road. He voluntarily embraced death and surrendered to it, in order to annihilate it against itself (...). Death killed the Lord in His human body, but with the same weapon He gained victory over it. It hid the Deity under the veil of humanity and so faced death, and it killed and was itself killed: it killed the natural life, but in turn the supernatural life killed it. Since death could not devour Him without a body, nor could the abyss consume Him without a body, the Lord descended into the womb of the Virgin, so that the humanity taken from her could carry Him into the abyss. He descended there in the flesh He had assumed, and scattered and plundered the treasures He had accumulated there (...). And death approached, sensing nothing, in order to take what belonged to it as usual. But behold, in the fruit that she was about to pluck was hidden the Life that nullifies death. So when death swallowed up the Lord without any fear, it liberated life, and with it many people.* Quoted from: *Liturgia Godzin. Codzienna modlitwa Ludu Bożego* [Liturgy of the Hours. Daily Prayer of the Faithful], vol. 2, Poznań 1984, 579.

⁶¹ Cf. Heb 2:14-15: *Quia ergo pueri communicaverunt sanguini et carni, et ipse similiter participavit iisdem, ut per mortem destrueret eum, qui habebat mortis imperium, id est Diabolum, et liberaret eos, qui timore mortis per totam vitam obnoxii erant servituti.*

achieved on the cross: “For on the cross is our triumph/ and life-giving victory,/ the savage enemy defeated.”⁶² Repeatedly pointing out that Christ had triumphed, and that He had proved Himself wiser than the Enemy of human salvation, was intended to inspire faith and hope among the faithful that, with God’s assistance they also would be able to achieve victory over evil and its perpetrators.

Alongside the triumph of Christ, the author of the sequence also extolled the victory won by the Virgin Mary and the saints. In the hymn *Ave mater Iesu Christi*, Adam proclaimed: “Thus is the woman chosen,/ on whose heel/ the serpent is seeking to strike her,/ and she, brave and wise,/ will not listen to her enemy’s counsel,/ and his venom will be of no avail,/ and she crushed the serpent’s head,/ and in her body the infinite Son of God was clothed.”⁶³ In the passage quoted, the author, following the Latin translation of the Bible (The Vulgate), glorified Mary as the Woman foretold in Genesis (Gen 3:15) who was at enmity with the serpent,⁶⁴ in the form of which Christian tradition has seen The Devil.⁶⁵ At the same time, in his work the poet emphasised the closest bond between Mary and Christ, writing that God’s Son had “clothed himself” (i.e. was incarnated) in her (Mary’s) body. It can therefore be assumed that ultimately Adam was once again pointing to Christ as the one who came on this world to defeat The Devil. The victory won by Christ was also shared by his followers. The author of the sequences indicated more than once that, at the words of the holy men, the evil spirits had to give way. For example in the sequence in honour of St Stephen *Heri mundus exultavit* Adam wrote: “He drives away sicknesses and demons/ with his very fragrance/ he is worthy of eternal remembrance,/ worthy of glory and honour.”⁶⁶ Moreover, in the hymn *Genovefae sollempnitas*, the au-

⁶² ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Laudes crucis attolamus* 4-6, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 283: *Nam in cruce triumphamus/ hostem ferum superamus/ vitali victoria.* Cf. also St Paul’s words on Christ’s victory in Col 2:14-15: (...) *delens, quod adversum nos erat, chirographum decretis, quod erat contrarium nobis, et ipsum tulit de medio affigens illud cruci exspolians principatus et potestates traduxit confidenter, triumphans illos in semetipso.*

⁶³ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Ave mater Iesu Christi* 25-33, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 296: *Mulier eligitur,/ Cuius serpens nititur,/ Pungere calcaneum;/ Sed fortis et sapiens,/ Hosti non consentiens,/ Praecavet aculeum,/ Caput anguis haec contrivit,/ Cuius carni counivit,/ Se maiestas filii (...).*

⁶⁴ For more on the interpretation of the verse Genesis 3:15 see Stefano M. MANELLI, *All Generations shall call me blessed. Biblical Mariology*, trans. Peter Damian Fehlner. New Bedford: Academy of the Immaculate, 1995), 21-33.

⁶⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, “Original Sin Causes a Fundamental Change in Mankind,” General Audience, accessed January 27, 2025, https://web.archive.org/web/20061106105445/http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/alpha/data/aud19860910en.html.

⁶⁶ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Heri mundus exultavit* 71-74, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 56: *Solo fugat hic odore/ morbos et daemonia, laude dignus et honore/ iugique memoria (...).*

thor wrote of the patroness of Paris that: "At her first words of prayer,/ demons are frightened,/ peace returns to the possessed,/ hope to the sick, forgiveness to the guilty."⁶⁷ In order to complete the picture of the fight for salvation, it is worth pointing out at the end a passage expressing the desire that those who pray to Christ with the words of the Adamic sequences would also experience His power in their lives: "Jesus, child immortal,/ temporal though from eternity,/ You deliver us with power from the evils of this life."⁶⁸

It seems that although there are many references to evil and its perpetrators in the texts of Adam's poems, the overall message of these works remains positive. For the author emphasised that Christ is more powerful than enemies, over whom He had gained victory through his death and resurrection. The Devil and the demons, though powerful, nevertheless remain limited creatures with no access to God's greatest mysteries: the incarnation and the resurrection of the Son of God from the dead. In addition to Christ, Mary and the saints share in his victory. Praising these figures and invoking their adiuvalance was intended to give the faithful hope that they also, with God's help, would overcome the power of evil.

CONCLUSIONS

The sequences by Adam of St Victor are works in which the poet praises the achievements of Christ, Mary and the saints. The importance of Christ's work of salvation was emphasised by the author by showing that it was the victory of the Son of God over evil and its perpetrators, i.e. the Devil and demons. In the texts of the Adamic sequences, various terms were used to describe the opponents of human salvation, including *hostis*, *serpens dirus*, *praedo*, *dyabolus*, *daemonia*. The author did not elaborate on the nature of these entities, but pointed out their sinister activity towards humans. The message of Adam's works was that man and the world, after the original sin, were heading for destruction, a path from which they could not escape by their own efforts. Highlighting the tragedy of human fate served the author to emphasise the greatness of Christ's saving work. It was He who, through the victory over the old enemy, gave people new life. In the face of God, The Devil proved to be only a limited creature who did not recognise God's mysteries. According to the author, Mary and the saints also shared in Christ's victory. Praising the deeds of the Son of God and His followers

⁶⁷ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *Genovefae sollempnitas* 33-36, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 80-81: *Ad primam precem virginis/ contremiscunt daemonal/ pax datur energuminis,/ spes aegris, reis venia* (...).

⁶⁸ ADAM OF ST VICTOR, *In excelsis canitur* 51-54, *Sekwencje* [Sequences], 77: *Ihesu, puer immortalis/ ex aeterno temporalis, nos ab huius vitae malis/ tu potenter erue* (...).

represented the hope of people that they too would be victorious over the enemy. The content of Adam's of St Victor sequences captures a picture of the mentality of twelfth-century Christians. At the same time, it exemplifies a deeper reading of reality – viewing human life in the light of faith. In this perspective, the life of a Christian appears as a struggle against the enemies of salvation. Although they are strong and deceitful, they must succumb when confronted with Christ and his followers.

ABBREVIATION

Encyklopedia Katolicka – *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, edited by Wincenty Granat, Feliks Gryglewicz, Romuald Łukaszyk, Zygmunt Sułowski, Ludomir Bieńkowski, Jan Walkusz, Edward Gigilewicz, et al. Vol. 1-20. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1973-2014.

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HOSTIS FRAUDULENTUS, SEPRENS DIRUS, SUGGESTOR SCELERIS.

THE OPPONENTS OF HUMAN SALVATION IN ADAM'S OF ST VICTOR SEQUENCES

Summary

This article attempts to explore how the enemies of human salvation were depicted in the Sequences composed by Adam of St Victor. The author did not dwell closely on the nature of these entities, but mentioning them was an important part of the composition of many sequences. By pointing out that man easily experiences the power of evil after the sin of Adam and Eve, the author was able to show more clearly the power of Christ, who defeated the Devil. Compared to the Son of God, the Devil and the demons prove to be limited creatures. The fact that the Son of God and his followers have defeated evil gives reason to praise them in the words of the sequences, and at the same time provides Christians with the hope that they too will be victorious over the enemies of salvation.

Keywords: Adam of St Victor; Sequences; evil; The Devil; spiritual warfare

HOSTIS FRAUDULENTUS, SEPRENS DIRUS, SUGGESTOR SCELERIS.

PRZECIWNICY LUDZKIEGO ZBAWIENIA W SEKWENCJACH ADAMA ZE ŚW. WIKTORA

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł stanowi próbę uchwycenia, w jaki sposób w sekwencjach ułożonych przez Adama ze św. Wiktora przedstawieni zostali przeciwnicy ludzkiego zbawienia. W poematach wiktoryńskiego twórcy odnaleźć można wzmianki na temat złych duchów. Autor nie zajmował się bliżej naturą tych bytów, jednak ich wspomnianie stanowiło istotny element kompozycji treści wielu sekwencji. Poprzez wskazywanie, że człowiek po grzechu pierwszych rodziców łatwo doświadczał mocy zła, autor mógł wyraźniej ukazać moc Chrystusa, który pokonał diabła. W porównaniu z Synem Bożym diabeł i demony okazywali się ograniczonymi stworzeniami. Także święci mieli udział w Chrystusowym zwycięstwie. Fakt, że Syn Boży i Jego naśladowcy pokonali, zło dawał powód do chwaleń ich słowami sekwencji. Zarazem stanowił też dla chrześcijan nadzieję, że także i oni odniosą zwycięstwo nad wrogami zbawienia.

Słowa kluczowe: Adam ze Świętego Wiktora; sekwencje; zło; diabeł; walka duchowa

