

Summary

BEATA LEJMAN / Bruegel – a sociologist

Applying an interpretative mode of a paradox, used by Jürgen Müller (*Das Paradox als Bildform. Studien zur Ikonologie Pieter Bruegels d.Ä.*, München 1999), I'm sketching a reflection on social life included in Bruegel's 30 paintings. I'm looking at them mainly through the *Bible* and its lecture included in Erasmus of Rotterdam's writings. Since the painter translated into the language of painting a form of depicting the *New Testament* based on a paradox. His early *Landscape with Parable of the Sower* (1557, Washington) seems to confirm the conscious choice of a communication method, coherent with Erasmus' rule of accommodation, i.e. possibility of reading the *Bible* on different levels dependent on the knowledge of the whole of *Holy Scripture*. This was the way of understanding similar to St. Paul (1 Cor 9, 20–23), Origen, Augustine or Erasmus of Rotterdam's. Therefore we can compare looking at Bruegel's paintings with reading the *Bible* – the comprehension of the pictures appears parallel to deepening the knowledge of his whole *œuvre*, the explanation of the dark parts is provided only by comparison with the other parts which cast a light on them.