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# **The Concept of Wisdom.**

## **A Qualitative Case Study of St. Faustina in the Light of Interdisciplinary Research**

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The present paper has an interdisciplinary character and is placed at the crossroads of a few disciplines, namely philosophy, theology and linguistics. Philosophy and theology, namely Christian personalism, constitutes the theoretical background for a qualitative linguistics case study of the original source text *The Diary* by a contemporary female Polish Catholic mystic and prophetess, Faustina Kowalska. The direct goal is to describe the concept of “wisdom” embedded in her mystical and prophetic written record. The methods and tools have a mixed-character and come from social sciences and humanities (SSH). Both well-established mainstream perspectives and less obvious, complementary approaches coming from the newly

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emerging sub-disciplines in linguistics, were used. The original, experimental focus is laid upon the qualitative linguistic analysis of the semantic field of a single lexical unit “wisdom” extracted from the original authentic text under the analysis. The results showed the concept of “wisdom” in the spiritual text explored is more extended with comparison with the concepts described by other sciences and that mystical and prophetic spiritual literature, i.e. original source texts are a great source of knowledge of human minds and thinking, in general.

Keywords: wisdom, brain, heart, cognition, revelation, reason, female Catholic mysticism and prophecy, Christian personalism, St. Faustina

In the present times human knowledge and professional expertise is expected to solve all the problems and meet the hottest individual and social, economic, political and other challenges globally. Scientific “manuals” are proposed to the general public as a remedy able to cure the wounds of contemporary societies and lead them to secure, affluent and healthy lifestyles. It seems the everlasting human desire to enter the Promised Land has never left human hearts nor minds of the people seeking paradise lost. Sciences nowadays go in so many divergent paths, opening their so-far hermetic fields with fixed tight methodology to the areas belonging to other investigators and searchers of Truth. The areas of study are widened, the boundaries made more flexible and the methodologies and tools are getting less rigid inviting scholars from the disciplines that have been treated as unworthy to be called scientific. Even very “tough,” “hardcore” sciences, e.g. medicine, economics, technologies, etc. seem to become more humble and admit they need a softer side and touch of colour and light from other disciplines for more in-depth understanding of the contemporary phenomena and the world and for much better results for citizens expecting academics to be more involved and get engaged in solving the real hot problems of our times. The narrow fields and disciplines connect to form wider spaces for scientific explorations, like Social Sciences and Humanities combined. Individual and professional academic experts and their expertise are clearly receding as insufficient and making the way for a bigger expert, i.e. teams of experts, male and female, both professionals and ordinary wisemen equipped naturally with precious wisdom, not just pure knowledge. We seem to be in a transition phase when materialistic sciences guarding their

strongholds allow what is called the spiritual sciences to enter and then go together for much better and truthful results and solutions for the present times. In the opinion of two authors whose book started our personal quest in sciences, Denyse O’Leary and Mario Beauregard, on the present phase of rapid development of various sciences, it seems well-justified to claim that we do not need to make a choice between science and spirituality, however there is still an urgent choice between spirituality and materialism.<sup>1</sup> They expressed their conviction that the studies on conscience in the 21st c. are going to be a very exciting project.<sup>2</sup> The authors set a very good question on the aim of science in general, i.e, if the scientists’ goal is to help understand the existing world, or just support a concrete, specific and narrow view upon the world surrounding us?<sup>3</sup> However, the opposition between the two spheres, the materialistic/physical and spiritual seems to have lost its argumentation especially with the emergence of a very interdisciplinary science itself, i.e. Christian personalism. A contemporary leading Polish personalist, Wincenty Granat claims that personalism can be understood both in a narrow and wide spectrum. In the narrow sense, it refers to philosophy in which a human person constitutes the centre. A strong point of this scientific perspective is that a human person is regarded as a real being (ontology of person) and connection between the metaphysical reflection to the ethical, theoretical and practical.

For this reason, personalism is friendly with both theoretical and practical trends. In a wide sense, however, personalism extends beyond any philosophy and refers to attitudes of the moral, practical and socio-political character which, in order to reveal the higher position of a human person over nature and his/her primate over any ideology makes use of the already existing principles of metaphysics, existentialism, or spiritualism. In Granat’s opinion, personalism as an ethical and political doctrine finds all the criteria of any social assumptions and programmes. It needs to be noted here, that in personalism in general, there is an outstanding concept of Christian personalism which takes its inspirations from Christian revelation and observation of the world of persons, a human person and

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<sup>1</sup> Denyse O’Leary and Mario Beauregard, *Duchowy mózg. Neuronaukowa argumentacja za istnieniem duszy*, trans. Zbigniew Kasprzyk (Kraków: WAM, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 423.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 425.

the Divine Person of Christ. The starting point in the Christian personalism, however, it is not a human person but the Person of Jesus Christ, in whom two natures: Divine and human meet with no confusion, nor any division at all. The full mystery of a human person was revealed in Christ as due to Incarnation, the created nature was united with God to eliminate the division between human and Divine. The Christian personalism has at its disposal two paths to cognition: catalogic and analogic. *Catalogy* means the descending order, from the above down, and the analogic cognition means the ascending order from experience and observation of the materialistic reality to the spiritual, transcendental reality and the universal principles. Both the Divine light and the light of reason permeate a human person—the subject of cognition. Therefore, personalism assumes epistemological multidimensionality which results in complementarity of both philosophical and theological cognition.<sup>4</sup> The detailed and very clear and concise description of Christian personalism can be found in the enormous volume consisting of over 700 pages and the readers are invited to their own in-depth study of the perspective.<sup>5</sup> In general, it seems desirable that philosophy and theology find their meeting points here. Theological sciences constitute a systematic reflection upon Divine revelation whose main concern are the matters of God and a human being as tightly interconnected. Christian anthropology is distinguished from natural, cultural, philosophical anthropologies in that it is based on what Divine revelation speaks on man whose most original feature is reasoning, free will and idiopathy—and all this decides that man is a person existing in the matter, but more than that as a human being is meant for the eternal life.<sup>6</sup> Psychologists and philosophers in the 20th c. re-directed our attention to the subconscious and trans/superconscious and the phenomenology is convinced that the world is both human world and super/supra-human.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Wincenty Granat, *Personalizm chrześcijański. Teologia osoby ludzkiej* (Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne i Drukarnia, 2018), 5–6.

<sup>5</sup> Other works by this author are highly recommended.

<sup>6</sup> Granat, *Personalizm chrześcijański. Teologia osoby ludzkiej*, 11.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

## Man in the Bible and Greek Philosophy. A Brief Background

In the ancient middle-east culture we see two classic explanations upon the existence of man: the Bible and Greek philosophy. The Old Testament, however, does not give a systematic lecture on the nature of man but speaks of his/her relation towards God. Although, the Old Testament does not describe in details the nature of a human being, yet it speaks of one's flesh (*basar*), one's life element, i.e. soul (*nefes*), one's heart (*leb*) and kidneys—these two organs indicate the psychic-internal life of man. Moreover, there is also a spiritual element in man (*ruah*) understood either as a Divine gift, or a higher power in man regulating one's moral attitude towards God.<sup>8</sup> It must be emphasized here that no Old Testament text reveals anthropological dualism in the sense of the internal division to two antagonistic elements in man: spirit and flesh. In the Book of Wisdom there is a division into: the mortal flesh and the immortal soul. The Old Testament is concerned with God and man who is shown as created to His image and likeness, therefore is directed towards one's prototype, is great when connected to Him and abides His laws. The Divine-human relations is of personalistic character—towards, or against God. Especially in the Old Testament prophets are teaching on the direction of man to God and rejection of the evil. A human life directed to God and organised either around the Divine law, or against His laws. The New Testament developed and widened the knowledge on God and man and their mysterious interrelatedness. The Kingdom of God and the earthly goods are in a very close connection, too.<sup>9</sup> The concise conclusions on the biblical anthropology can be found in clarified points in Granat's volume, too.<sup>10</sup> In general, it can be stated that biblical anthropology was an inspiration to the whole Christian ancient times not only for Christians but even nowadays and the Bible is a book not only for Christians but all those outside who are searching the true knowledge on man.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, Wincenty Granat accentuates the influence of the ancient

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 21–25.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 27–28.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 29.

Greek philosophy in the Middle-East mental culture that maintained that the Divine Logos permeates the whole nature and man. Again, a clear brief outline can be found on a few pages.<sup>12</sup> The scope of this paper does not allow to go into more details, however the readers are invited to get acquainted with other works by Wincenty Granat that constitute further anthropological considerations from the point of view of the values that make a human being the most outstanding and mysterious creature on earth. The overall brief outline of the concept of God and a human being in Christian personalism can again be found in Granat.<sup>13</sup>

### **Three Wisdoms: in Philosophy, Bible and Mysticism**

Quest for truth is a phenomenon common to all ancient Eastern cultures. In Ancient Greece there were seven legendary wisemen. The wisdom here has a very practical meaning, provides guidelines to man on how to lead one's life with discretion and resource in order to achieve life goals. It also assumes a specific reflection upon the world and leads to working out a specific morality. In Greece in the 6th c., this kind of wisdom is re-shaped into philosophy. On the outskirts of science in its embryo phase and starting technology, wisdom starts to constitute an important element in civilisation and can be called humanism of the antiquity.<sup>14</sup>

Marie-Dominique Philippe speaks of three wisdoms: philosophical, theological and mystical. An extraordinary thinker and monk has been in dialogue with scientists, psychologists and other intellectuals and publishes his own books on mathematics, arts and medicine. At the same time speaks on his favourite biblical texts, *Song of Songs* and *Revelation* by John. His perspective is marked with a desire to return to the source, i.e. Western philosophy in order to undertake and develop an enormous effort in search of truth initiated by the Greeks; also to the source of faith, i.e. the Gospels up to his own effort to develop mystical theology

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 29–46.

<sup>13</sup> Wincenty Granat, *Fenomen człowieka. U podstaw humanizmu chrześcijańskiego* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Henryk Witczyk (ed.), *Nowy słownik teologii biblijnej* (Lublin-Kielce: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Wydawnictwo Jedność, 2017), 459.

on the basis of St John's writings.<sup>15</sup> His writings inspired the shape of this article in three paths: philosophical questions of someone who wants to understand man and tries to remove all *a priori* and his own prejudices; theological inquiries of a man of faith who aspires to understand the Holy Scripture; and finally search led by a friend of Christ desiring the union with God.<sup>16</sup> Due to a limited scope of this paper, we are just highlighting very briefly certain crucial aspects of those three paths as the background of the overall picture. However, the main focus is on our original part, i.e. the linguistic analysis of the selected texts under the study, i.e. *The Diary* by a Polish contemporary female mystic and prophetess and a canonized Catholic saint, St Faustina Kowalska.

### Wisdom in Philosophy

From a philosophical point of view, a fundamental issue is the important distinction between the concepts of *wisdom* and *knowledge*. In the most general terms, knowledge is the result of cognition as an activity.<sup>17</sup> Thus, cognition can be defined as both the process of acquiring knowledge, the activity of cognition itself, as well as the result of this activity, i.e. specific knowledge about something. Defining cognition as a body of knowledge, and therefore knowledge about a given subject, three types of knowledge are most commonly distinguished—colloquial knowledge, scientific knowledge and wisdom knowledge.<sup>18</sup> Wisdom is therefore not a simple synonym for the concept of knowledge, but is a special kind of knowledge and thus a separate concept with specific characteristics.

Wisdom is not a mere technical accumulation of information, but is a kind of engaged cognition in which the practical dimension plays a major role. This

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<sup>15</sup> Marie-Dominique Philippe, *trzy MĄDROŚCI*, trans. Agnieszka Kuryś (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Karmelitów Bosych, 2008).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Jan Woleński, "Wiedza", in: *Słownik filozofii*, ed. Jan Hartman (Kraków: Krakowskie Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2009), 245.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Mirosław Kiwka, *ABC filozofii* (Wrocław: Atła 2, 2001), 12.

means that wisdom consists not only of specific knowledge, but also of life experience, and therefore how one actually acts on a day-to-day basis based on the knowledge one has. Wisdom is therefore often seen as a state that is most often attained as a person grows older, and therefore also with increasing experience gained gradually over the course of life and accumulated life maturity. On a theoretical level, wisdom is the highest possible stage of knowledge of the surrounding world, man's place in it and an understanding of the deepest order and meaning of life. According to various philosophical currents and positions, the source of this knowledge and understanding can be human reason or religious faith (Revelation).<sup>19</sup> The practical dimension of wisdom, i.e. what most differentiates the concept of wisdom from the concept of knowledge, boils down to the skilful use of the aforementioned knowledge in everyday life, making it better, fuller and more beneficial for the individual.

Philosophy from the beginning, by its very definition, has been the pursuit of wisdom. The Greek term *philosophia* is a combination of two words—*philos* (“friend” or “lover”) and *sophía* (“wisdom”). Therefore, the most common definition of the term *philosophia* is “love of wisdom.”<sup>20</sup> This is one of the reasons why philosophy is very often conceived as a set of general truths about life. Because the philosopher is a “lover of wisdom,” driven by lofty and noble values, he seeks wisdom and truth selflessly. This distinguishes him, for example, from the sophist, who, although he possesses a great deal of knowledge, charges for its transmission and makes it his livelihood.<sup>21</sup> The first to make this kind of distinction and at the same time to claim the title of philosopher was probably Pythagoras. This is mentioned by Cicero in his “Tusculan Disputations” when describing Pythagoras’ meeting with the ruler of Phlius.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>20</sup> Juan Pablo Segundo Espínola, “Etymology of the word «Philosophy»,” trans. Marilina Gary, at Encyclopedia of Humanities, last modified: January 19, 2024, <https://humanidades.com/en/etymology-of-the-word-philosophy/>

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Harry A. Ide, “Sophists,” in: *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, II edition, ed. Robert Audi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 862–864.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Marcus Tullius Cicero, “Tusculan Disputations,” in: *Cicero’s Tusculan Disputations; Also, treatises on The Nature of the Gods, And on The Commonwealth*, trans. C.D. Yonge (New York: Harper&Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square, 1888), 165–166.



The selflessness and nobility expressed in the attitude of the “lover of wisdom” point to another very important aspect of wisdom—wisdom is inevitably linked to moderation and humility. Despite the fact that the “lover of wisdom,” the philosopher has acquired a great deal of knowledge, he remains aware of how many things he will still never be able to fathom, if only for the insurmountable limitations of man’s physical nature. One of the most characteristic examples of this kind of attitude is Socrates, who said that he “knew nothing except the fact that he knew nothing.”<sup>23</sup> This approach is about recognising and accepting one’s limited cognitive abilities and thus the limitations of one’s knowledge. This also encourages people to reflect on their thought processes and to evaluate our beliefs more critically.

Some, concluding that, based solely on limited human capabilities, nothing can be certain, choose to situate the highest, ultimate wisdom only in the domain of the divine. Pythagoras himself believed that wisdom is the domain of the divine and it is only the gods who are wise, while imperfect and mortal man can only desire wisdom and adore it.<sup>24</sup> A similar kind of intuition can be encountered in the famous dialogue by Plato, *The Symposium*, in which Plato places philosophy between wisdom and foolishness:

It’s like this, you see. No god is a philosopher or desires to be wise. He is wise, and if there’s anyone else who is wise, he’s no philosopher either. So with ignorant people: They aren’t philosophers and they don’t desire wisdom. That’s exactly why ignorance is so hard to deal with: An ignorant person is neither good nor intelligent, yet he’s satisfied with himself because he can’t desire what he doesn’t think he lacks.<sup>25</sup>

As can therefore be deduced, the philosopher is situated between the wisdom of the gods and the foolishness of the fools. What makes him different from the gods is “poverty” (ignorance), and what distinguishes him from fools is “resource”

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<sup>23</sup> Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the eminent philosophers*, trans. Pamela Mensch, ed. James Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 79.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Kiwka, *ABC filozofii*, 19.

<sup>25</sup> Plato, “The Symposium,” in: *The Symposium and The Phaedo*, trans. Raymond Larson (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, INC., 1980), 32.

(awareness of his ignorance). However, his awareness of his predicament motivates him to strive to get what he lacks.<sup>26</sup>

What is noteworthy is that, at later stages of history, it was sometimes the case that the approach to wisdom was completely reversed and instead of being seen as a manifestation of humility, it was seen as a manifestation of pride. For instance, at the time of the early Church Fathers, i.e. at the time of the formation of Christian doctrine, wisdom was seen as the hostile opposite of faith and as knowledge of the irrelevant from the perspective of ultimate things. At the time, wisdom was most often linked to the *hubris* of philosophers.<sup>27</sup> Of course, over time, as Christian philosophy developed and deepened its thinking, the understanding and importance of wisdom grew. Nevertheless, this does not change the fact that wisdom (*sophía*) continued to be reduced to an auxiliary role to faith. Practical wisdom, on the other hand, was recognised as one of the essential virtues.<sup>28</sup>

The trend initiated with the development of modern philosophy, according to which the category of wisdom has clearly lost its importance, seems to have continued. Nowadays, the whole depth of meaning of wisdom seems to have been reduced to the level of superficial meanings only, and the term wisdom is sometimes used, for example, to colloquially describe a person who has a great deal of scientific knowledge or is exceptionally sensible.<sup>29</sup>

### Wisdom in the Bible

For the purpose of this article, the perspective described by a Polish scholar Jelonek in the biblical theology is particularly appropriate because, among other tasks of this science, it discovers the phases of development of the thought coming from revelation and protects from introducing contemporary mindsets into the

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Kiwka, *ABC filozofii*, 20.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Jacek Jaśtał, *Mądrość*, in: *Słownik filozofii*, 134.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

biblical material.<sup>30</sup> Within this perspective, the Holy Scripture is speech of God recorded in the written form under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It constitutes a reflection of this very specific dialogue that God has been leading with humanity in order to reveal Himself and teach man on the most important matters, so revelation is also a teaching.<sup>31</sup>

The word “Wisdom” comes from the Hebrew *chokmah* and the Greek *sofia*. The Old Testament brings many other words that are almost synonymical to wisdom: obedience, skilfulness, refinement/polish, justice, law-abidingness, honesty, discretion, knowledge, providence, science (Prov 1,1–7). Therefore, the numerous meanings of the word *wisdom* reveal the semantic richness of the term.<sup>32</sup> In the biblical tradition, *wisdom* represents a certain thinking and theological trend in the religion of Israel developed by a group of wisemen similar to that of priests and prophets who together constituted the elite of the nation. They represented Wisdom as a person persevering with God and prepared the field for teaching on the pre-eternal Word.<sup>33</sup> In the Books of Wisdom many similarities between the teachings of the biblical authors and other ancient non-biblical writers can be spotted. The origin, development and influence of the Jewish wisdom needs to be studied not only in the biblical context but the whole wisdom environment of the ancient East.<sup>34</sup> In the Old Testament, two wisdom directions are distinguished: one that is life wisdom originating from reasoning and experience, and the other one: uppermost wisdom coming from God and shared by Him exclusively. The former one has specific features, i.e. it constitutes pieces of advice and practical reflections for all the people while the wisdom that can be obtained from prophetic writings refers to the commandments of God.<sup>35</sup> The New Testament contains a lot of indications to wisdom, especially in St. Paul the Apostle, the synoptic gospels and St. John. The terms *sofia*, *sofos*, *sofizein* appear frequently in 1 Cor (1–3) with 25 occurrences; then in the gospels, in Mark—1, Matt—5, Luke—7; moreover in

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<sup>30</sup> Tomasz Jelonek, *Teologia biblijna* (Kraków: Petrus, 2015), 8.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>32</sup> Witczyk, *Nowy słownik teologii biblijnej*, 539.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 540.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 541.

Acts—4, in Paul’s letters—13, James—5, 2 Peter—1, Rev—4 times.<sup>36</sup> According to Paul’s letters, a Christian should act wisely and be “wise in the good” (Rom 16,19), “the spirit of wisdom” is a gift from the Father (1 Cor 4,5; Eph 5,15). An exceptionally interesting is the statement that wisdom open to human knowledge yet closed to the Divine shall be rejected (1 Cor 1,17–19; 2,4; 2,13; Rom 1,22) because it pleases flesh only (2 Cor 1, 12) and the world (1 Cor 2,6; 3,19). Human knowledge is unable to grasp and get an understanding of Divine wisdom that is revealed in a mysterious plan (Rom 11,33), wisdom of “the wise” (of this world in the word of the cross sees only nonsense although Divine power is revealed in it (1 Cor 1,18). Consequently, human wisdom (knowledge) that is treating the Divine wisdom as a nonsense becomes a nonsense itself (1 Cor 3,19). Paradoxically, one that aspires to become truly wise, must become “stupid” (1 Cor 3,18) which means to acknowledge the illusions of “this world” as a nonsense because true wisdom comes from God the Father only (Eph 1,17), from Christ (Eph 1,8), from the Spirit (1 Cor 12,8). It deepens the consciousness of the faithful and helps understand more fully the redemptory events, the Will of God and the resulting moral duties (1 Cor 2,7–8; Eph 1,8.17–21; Col 1,9). St. Paul states that Christ is “the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1,24), “the image of the unseen God” (Col 1,15; Wis 7,26) and causes that everything is sustained in existence (Co 1,17; Wis 8,1; 7,27). James shows wisdom as a gift that needs to be asked from God and it will definitely be given (James 1,5), it is practical wisdom from “the above” expressed in impeccable behaviour, prone to consent, full of mercy and good fruits (James 3,13–18). In the synoptic gospels Jesus is shown as a child gifted with wisdom by God (Luke 2,40.52). Expressions that are conventional words of wisdom are referred to Jesus (Matt 23,36; Luke 11,49–51; Matt 23,37–39 and Luke 13,34a). Jesus and John the Baptist are shown as messengers of wisdom (Matt 11,16–19 and Luke 7,31–35), also like Jesus and prophets in Matt 23,34–39). Mark and Luke portray Jesus as a wise teacher and many of His speeches have the style of wisemen (Matt 6,19; 7,27). Nevertheless, the wisdom of Jesus surpasses the wisdom of Solomon (Luke 11,31; Mark 6,2). In Matt 11,2–19 and Luke 7,18–35 Jesus calls Himself “wisdom” (Matt 11,27, Luke 10,22), encourages all the people to follow Him by taking His yoke, by

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 54.

teaching with the words (Matt 11,28–30; Luke 10,21) that the Old Testament placed in the mouth of Divine Wisdom (Prov 8). Paradoxically, the access to wisdom was open by Jesus to “the small”, and not the wisemen and wealthy of this world (1 Matt 11,25). The gospel of John is most interpenetrated with the current of wisdom although the term *sofia* does not appear there, at all. In Revelation (Rev 5,12) wisdom is shown as a gift worthy of the “killed Sheep”. The exceptional rank of true, i.e. Divine wisdom is revealed in the vision (Rev 17,8–18) which speaks of a grace given to Christians to be able to recognize the true meaning of the events. A human being is able to approach wisdom mainly thanks to a Divine grace (John 6,44; Prov 2,6; Syr 39,6; Wis 8,21).<sup>37</sup>

The Divine Wisdom (in Hebrew *chokmah Jahwe*, Greek *sofia tu Theu*, Latin *sapientia Dei*) is the highest category of cognition. In the Old Testament, the subject of Divine wisdom appears mainly in the prophetic, cult and wisdom tradition. The Hebrew *chokmah Jahwe* embraces the contents of other terms, like knowledge, discretion and cautiousness. The Old Testament represents wisdom as an embodied reality (especially in the Book of Proverbs, Book of Wisdom and Book of Ecclesiasticus): a lady, female teacher, mistress, beloved/wife, mother featured by dependence on God, connection to God and communicating His will, (Syr 24,3) who measured and represented Him among people with a great impact. Interestingly, all Old Testament authors agree that wisdom comes from God: it was created at the beginning (Prov 8,22–23); came out of the mouth of the Most Supreme (Syr 24,3), who measured and examined it exactly (Hi 28,27), shaped, made His own property and even inthronised (Wis 9,4; 24,4). Wisdom, having been living with God all along, is accessible only to Him (Syr 1,8; Hi 28,23; Bar 3,31–32) and she is subject to His leadership (Wis 7,15). For people she is only reachable as a graceful gift from God (Wis 8,21, Ba 3,27) given only to those who love Him, seek and pray for her (Prov 8,17; Wis 6,12; 7,7). The Book of Wisdom represents the most mature form of the Old Testament teaching on the Divine wisdom as a waft of Divine power, effusion of the glory of the Almighty, reflection of timeless light, a mirror of Divine activity and image of His goodness (Wis 7,25–

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 542–544.

26). The Divine wisdom incorporates sapiens, omnipotence, holiness and permanence (Wis 7,22–23). As a spirit who is loving a human being is everything that enables him/her a dignified life (Wis 9,9–11). The Old Testament emphasises the universality of Divine wisdom spilled onto all the works of God (Syr 1,9) and it penetrates everything (Wis 7,24), it emblazons in the natural world and history of humankind (Wisdom 8,4; 10–19), inhabits with pleasure among people (Prov 8,31), especially the chosen nation (Ba 3,37; Syr 24,8; Deut 4,6). Wisdom is granted in a very special way to the people called to perform certain works in the Divine economy, e.g. Joseph (Gen 41,39), Daniel (Dan 2,23), Ezra (Ezra 7,25), and especially Salomon (1 Kgs 3,12). In the fullest measure wisdom was intended for Messiah (Isa 11,2) and she is also owned by angels (Sam 14,20). Divine wisdom participated in the creation of the world (Prov 8,27–29), sustains its existence (Prov 3,19; Wisdom 7,27) and leads it (Wisdom 8,1.4), Wisdom also accompanies God in His creation works, brings Him joy (Prov 8,30), is also a Messenger of God as a prophet (Prov 1,20–33; 8,32–36). Wisdom is an intermediary of Divine plans (Wisdom 9,17), forms people to become friends of God (Wisdom 7,27), receive immortality and reigning for all eternity (Wisdom 6,18–21; 8–13; Prov 24,14). Wisdom is a charitable spirit that offers humans life and grace (Prov 8,35) and redemption (Wis 9,18), also changes their fate in the earthly life bringing abundance of wealth (Prov 8,21) but it passes by the perverse and unvirtuous (Wis 1,4). Rulers reign and judge justly thanks to wisdom (Prov 8,15).

In the New Testament the wisdom of God is transmitted by Jesus Christ (Eph 1,8), both in the word proclaimed and His person identified with wisdom (1 Cor 1,21.24.30). A very particular concretization of wisdom is found in the cross of Christ (1 Cor 3,19) with the human wisdom of the wisemen of this world (1 Cor 3,19). The idea of Divine wisdom is also applied to express the pre-existence of the Son of God who is firstborn to all the creatures (Col 1,15—Prov 8,22; Syr 1,4), the Creator of everything (Col 1,16; 1 Cor 8,6 —Wis 7, 21; 9,1–2), the image of God (Col 1,15–20, 2,3—Wis 7,26), reflection of glory and essence (Heb 1,3—Wis 7,25). In St. Paul's writings, the wisdom of God also constitutes the rule of the economy of redemption (Rom 11,33), **the highest cognition** (Col 1,9), revelation of the mystery of God (1 Cor 2,6). The references of Divine wisdom to Jesus Christ also appear in the synoptic gospels where His wisdom surpasses the wisdom of the wisest

wiseman (Matt 12,42) and is represented in Him in the fullest form (Luke 2,40). Wisdom embodied in Jesus is confirmed by His works (Matt 11,19; Luke 7,35), especially His miracles (Mark 6,2). At the same time, the Redeemer is also a giver of Divine wisdom (Luke 21,15) who is asking people to receive it (Matt 11,28). Divine wisdom is worth of enormous labour (Matt 12,42). In the synoptic gospels Divine wisdom occurs interchangeably with the Holy Spirit (Mark 13,11; Luke 21,15) or even tightly connected to the Holy Spirit (Acts 6,3.10). The idea of Divine wisdom is widely used in the gospel of John where Jesus Christ is the immemorial Logos (John 8,42—Wis 7,25, Syr 24,3), loved by God (John 3,35—Wis 8,3), related to Him (John 14,10), participates in His knowledge (John 8,28 —Wis 8,4), cooperates with Him (John 5,17—Wis 7,21.27; 8,1), is free from sin (John 8,46—Wis 7,25), protects from evil (John 17,12—Wis 9,11), dwells among people (John 1,14—Ba 3,38; Syr 24,3.8), makes friends with people (John 15,15—Wis 7,14.27) and is to redeem them (John 3,17—Wis 9,18; 10,1.9), resides in those loving God (John 14,23—Wis 7,27), bestows life in a permanent way (John 6,51—Wis 16,26), is the light of the world (John 8,12—Wis 7,26) and the road to eternal life (John 8,51—Wis 6,18), everything was entrusted in Him (John 3,35, Wis 10,1—11,1), is not recognised and rejected by many (John 1,10–11, Prov 1,24–25). It is John who replaces the Old Testament term with *logos*.<sup>38</sup>

In general, it can be stated that the biblical tradition, both old and new, reserved a very special place for wisdom. It can be the very first expression of the Spirit of the Lord, or a waft of the power of God, outflow of the glory of the Almighty, reflection of the eternal lightness, flawless reflection of the Divine works, or the image of God's goodness, etc.<sup>39</sup> In Christianity Wisdom encompasses something of a noble and exceptional unique royal gift. The authentic wisdom is not exclusively the result of human efforts, intelligent actions, nor hardships, but also a gift granted to a just man or woman with a humble heart by the Holy Spirit. This Divine gift is transmitted by the channels of faith and love which make that **the seat of wisdom is not human reason but one's heart**. And it is the heart in the mystical tradition that has the function of the symbolic centre of human life. The heart is the spiritual seat of faith and love, the centre of undertaking the right, i.e.

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<sup>38</sup> Witczyk, *Nowy słownik teologii biblijnej*, 554–547.

<sup>39</sup> Zdzisław Kijas, *Siła mądrości. Osiem dróg do mądrości* (Kraków: WAM, 2016), 25.

wise, and not only logical decisions. Wisdom by the biblical authors is always embedded in a concrete life and its problems. In order to deal with them, a man needs to be in a close relationship with God as the source of power and a means for the evaluation of what is happening in one's interior and outside. This kind of closeness is a kind of "tasting God," entering a very close and very intimate contact, leading a continuous dialogue with the One who is omniscient and omnipotent. In Christianity, this dialogue means receiving Christ into one's life together with the wisdom revealed by Him. This way, wisdom surpasses the knowledge of the matters of this world and constitutes the entry inside oneself, one's own human mystery. And since then, the knowledge one owns is not just a small "extract," a fragment of a certain bigger whole perceived by the physical senses but tasting the whole sense, meaning of what is happening all around. A Christian empirically enjoys its authentic depthness, sees further and more intensely, gazes out the narrow borders of one's created physical senses. Such a person is able to perceive the so far hidden order and internal logic, the specific depthness and sense/purposefulness of everything all around. Now, one stops evaluating of what one sees with one's eyes and what one experiences deep inside, just on the contrary, one contemplates everything as a fragment of a bigger whole without which it would be incomplete and deprived of harmony.<sup>40</sup> The peak and a perfect model of wisdom is love of two persons where the words in communication become unnecessary. Love as a relation from which a concrete community arises and becomes strengthened. Without cooperation, engagement in the life of other persons and the world, without readiness to take responsibility for others one cannot speak of a mature and sincere love that human beings are taught by God Himself who is Wisdom full of love. He freely shares love with His creature and expects even a more perfect union with Him in eternity. In Christianity, wisdom is connected with a kind of a sacrifice, truth marries wisdom. Whoever desires to own wisdom must be prepared to be a gift of oneself as wisdom is a received gift.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 25–28.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 61–64.



## Wisdom in Sciences

The contemporary philosophy and psychology, but also pedagogy speak frequently about the so-called “spiritual intelligence” (SQ) which is regarded as the highest form of intelligence, surpassing far away the intellectual intelligence IQ. Also, there appears a similar term “cordial intelligence.” While the spiritual intelligence connects and focuses upon the rational and emotional intelligence, the intelligence of the heart is not a mere metaphor. In the light of the recent studies, the heart needs to be regarded as the managing centre and a specific organ of reasoning tightly connected to the brain in one and coherent live cognitive system where the brain is obedient to the signals sent by the heart. The unity of the heart and the mind results in the unity of the spiritual wisdom as the heart is able to understand in a better way what seems inaccessible to the discursive mind. Following the Bible, they regard the knowledge of the Divine and human matters as wisdom of an intelligent heart, kind of “mind-heart” and cordial (hearty) cognition. The heart constitutes the spiritual centre in man that is merging all powers of the human spirit: mind and the ability to love. Christianity is a solid offer as it is an integral religion, the religion of the mind and heart. The power of the human intellect does not base on the logic of reasoning exclusively but it is rather a spiritual skill to penetrate deep inside the mysteries of the world, man and God via “the enlightened eyes of the mind” which is only possible in the spiritual experience tied to the wisdom of the heart.<sup>42</sup>

The authentic wisdom has no just one and clear-cut definition. Each epoch raised the question about wisdom. The aforementioned ancient philosopher Socrates understood wisdom as the ability to discern the good and the bad, while Seneca claimed that wisdom is a perfect state of mind. Cicero, however, as wise regarded the knowledge of the Divine and human matters which, in turn, required openness to both the physical (materialistic) and spiritual realities, to what is seen and unseen, visible and invisible, can be perceived by the human senses but also beyond them; those realities are accessible only to the highly sensitive souls that are open to what is spiritual. St Augustine admired in wisdom the measure of the

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<sup>42</sup> Waław Hryniewicz, *Mądrość serca. 18 rozmów o nadziei i miłosierdziu* (Kraków: WAM, 2016), 16–18.

soul, Rene Descartes (Cartesian) understood use wisdom as skilful of reason and doing the best. Leibniz called wisdom knowledge that teaches man how to reach happiness, Hume thought wisdom was the high peak of knowledge. Kant was close to the above definitions but claimed wisdom was more about individual good rather than communal good. He taught that wisdom is a certain kind of skill in the choice of the means to gain and preserve the highest individual good. A phenomenologist, Max Scheler had a more ethical approach, he taught that wisdom means a kind of direct knowledge of values that need to be applied in one's life. Then, Giambattista Vico claimed that wisdom is a particular ability to use goods in accordance with their nature.<sup>43</sup>

### Wisdom in Mysticism

Mysticism and spirituality are very much interrelated terms in Christianity. *Spirituality* is a well-known word in everyday speech, frequently seen in theological discourses. However, the contents under the term is not univocal, on the contrary, very often it refers to a highly diversified reality. In theology, *spirituality* originates with a very specific reflection on Revelation. This reflection is aimed to dig out the elements referring to the supranatural life and get to know the laws of this kind of life. In such a case, we speak of spiritual life of man raised by grace to one's supranatural state of the union with God understood as God residing in one's heart/centre/interior. In Christianity, the initiative belongs to God and a human being needs just to be open to the Creator and focus oneself and all the matters on Him. A religious person in the Old Testament felt surrendered by the presence of God as by air that constituted a lifegiving atmosphere. "To live in the Divine presence" meant then a simple and basic principle to accept both closeness and distance of God and exist in Divine omnipresence. From mystics we learn that they experienced such happy hours of Divine presence and sad moments when they felt deserted. A Christian who had an experience of an encounter with God knows both of these states. Such an experience of God is participation in His

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<sup>43</sup> Kijas, *Siła mądrości. Osiem dróg do mądrości*, 18–20.

life, i.e. transformation—a person united with God participates in the Divine life without losing one's own human personality. The development of Christian *spirituality* in the modern sense started to crystallise at the turn of the XIX/XX c. when numerous classic writings of the masters of the internal life started to be published and serious theological studies of mysticism were initiated. Since then, mysticism was perceived as living in the Divine reality and a theological problem, as well. This way, mysticism has been freed from the “tabu” and become a notion closer and closer to a contemporary man. We can speak of a great trend of re-birth of mysticism, i.e. theology of spiritual life. In Poland, pioneer and inventive studies have been conducted around the Polish mysticism and Polish schools of spirituality in a few research centres, including the Cardinal Wyszyński University in Warsaw (UKSW). Still, there is a huge gap in the accessible authentic sources, i.e. writings with critical compilations. Such writings constitute a great contribution to building the true Christian spirituality and mysticism.<sup>44</sup>

### Materials, Tools and Methods

Concepts, thoughts, beliefs, values, etc. are investigated in divergent scientific areas under numerous disciplines. As the authors of this paper work in linguistics (Renata) and philosophy (Jakub) the methodology and tools come from those two major disciplines and are also grounded in various theoretical frameworks and paradigms found as suitable for our cutting edge interdisciplinary study. The original part and focus of the paper is on the linguistic study of biblical and mystical writings, therefore the final decision on methodology part was made with reference to linguistics that takes its instrumentalia from social sciences, as well. There is a challenge, however, for those who study, analyse, interpret and translate mystical and prophetic texts as they cannot be compartmentalized in any obvious way. They are definitely not formalized texts that can be analysed with obvious well-established instruments. As mystics themselves live in the liminal spaces between the Divine and earthly realities, their world is located somewhere

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<sup>44</sup> Stanisław Urbański, *Duchowość przełomu wieków* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2000), 7–9.

“in-between” the spiritual and physical realities. Frequently, their language seems naïve, or just ordinary, simple, natural language of a chosen mystic or prophet. Therefore, any researcher who studies mysticism professionally in the mainstream academia, is going to face a lot of challenges in applying the most appropriate theories, methods and tools. However, there are new approaches emerging nowadays complimentary to the grandeur mainstream that can bring solutions in the researcher’s decision-making upon the researcher’s instrumentalia. Moreover, there is a solution coming from the latest fashion to apply mixed-methods and tools, especially in “social sciences and humanities” (SSH) combined. Nowadays SSH are regarded as one field of interdisciplinary, frontier research. Because this paper is immersed in philosophy, theology and linguistics, and the analysed texts are very complex themselves we are here a bit experimenting with our authorian model to design our own set of instrumentalia tool-kit.

In general, Renata is doing her research in translational sciences and in her very niche approach somewhere on the outskirts of the mainstream academic studies where she is trying to determine how the spiritual realities are embodied, embedded in and translated by physical verbal forms in mystical and prophetic language of contemporary female Polish Catholic mystics and prophetesses. At present, translational sciences are mainly interested in networks and relations, but also in the value of certain linguistic elements embedded within a wider context, situation, environment and culture. Renata is driven by her fascination on how minor linguistic elements located in the whole context of a bigger linguistic unit (it can be just phrase, idiom, sentence, expression, association, sentence, synonym, antonym, passage, scene, etc.) contribute to the integral, more complex understanding of extended concepts reflecting a certain spiritual reality represented in the mystical and prophetic language. Concept is the core unit in cognitive linguistics and it is understood as a lingue-philosophical unit. In order to study concepts within this area a researcher may decide to examine the associative and semantic field of the particular concept under the loop.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Kunimzhan Sadirkyzy Abdikalyk et al., “Concept as the Main Research Object of Cognitive Linguistics”, *International Journal of Environmental & Science Education* 11, no. 10 (Summer 2016): 3167, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1114655.pdf> (dostęp: 25.06.2024).

Summing up, the scope of theories, research methods and tools available to linguists nowadays is enormous. Although linguistics as a scientific discipline is focused on one object of analysis, i.e. language, yet nothing is homogenous as far as epistemology and methodology are concerned. On the contrary, the field is heterogenous and very complex at present as far as its theoretical, descriptive and applied perspectives are concerned. Also its research interests related to form, meaning, and context are highly divergent.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, a language can be an instrument itself in the study of concepts, especially under applied linguistics that finds its place in a lot of so-far “hardcore” studies, i.e. medicine, psychology, sociology, economics, technology and so on and so forth.

In general, on her scientific path Renata is mixing a few theories, methods and tools. Her latest interest is in Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) which emerged from post-structuralist theories. Baxter defines it as an approach to analyse intercontextualised discourses in spoken interactions and other types of text. FPDA is based upon the poststructuralist principles of complexity, plurality, ambiguity, connection, recognition, diversity, textual playfulness, functionality and transformation. The *feminist* bias takes into consideration *gender differentiation* among competing discourses when analysing all types of text.<sup>47</sup> FPDA constitutes the newest, therefore least established method and is regarded as a multi-perspectival complimentary perspective that uses mixed-methods and tools challenging the obvious, both in the contents and approach. It is said to allow for more multiple, open-ended readings of a piece of analysis. FPDA itself is “risky” as a post-structuralist, supplementary approach because it encourages several competing readings that can also be contested. So far, a lot of researchers have been experimenting with multi-perspectival and multi-analytic approaches of various kind. FPDA has an ambition to act as a sort of “agent provocateur” to other mainstream perspectives to discourse analysis and pave new paths to less established ways of thinking because it challenges binary thinking that tends to structure thoughts in oppositional pairs (either, or). Rather, it constitutes

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<sup>46</sup> Robert J. Podesva and Devyani Sharma (eds.), *Research methods in linguistics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 163.

<sup>47</sup> Judith Baxter, “Discourse-Analytic Approaches to Text and Talk”, in: Lia Litosseliti (ed.), *Research Methods in Linguistics* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 245.

a kind of interplay between micro- and macroanalysis and puts emphasis on meaning on the micro level and constitutes highly innovative work among linguists who dare to experiment with multi perspectives, methods, tools. It is perceived as a challenge to other mainstream trends because it continuously questions their status as grand narratives seeing them as potentially obstructive to new ways of thinking at all stages of academic career. Generally, nowadays, linguists have a very wide spectrum of analytic resources that they can now freely mix because linguistics is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field characterized by a diversity of theoretical, epistemological and methodological perspectives. Linguists move across numerous subfields, branches and related fields not only in humanities, but also social sciences and even natural sciences.<sup>48</sup>

Another newly emerging discipline that had a powerful impact on Renata's thinking is the so-called genetic translation studies. They are founded by the French School of critique genetique which developed a certain methodology useful for studying drafts, manuscripts and other kinds of "avant-textes," including source and original texts. This science is at its very initial stage of development, therefore genetic scholars usually perform their research outside the well-established field of translation studies, as well. Again, the potential for genetic research is considered as vertiginous, yet, as with every new discipline, there are gaps in the methodology that need to be filled in. "Geneticians" perform a lot of intuitive experimenting, as well. A more detailed description of genetic studies, a brief, concise study presented by Cordingley and Montini is highly recommended.<sup>49</sup>

The authors of this paper found attractive a local perspective that has been developed under the name "JOS" Językowy Obraz Świata (the Linguistic Image of the World), at the crossroads of ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, especially the so-called Polish cognitivism less known worldwide. For a more detailed description we are recommending a few articles by Polish scientists, e.g. Kowalski,

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<sup>48</sup> Litosseliti (ed.), *Research Methods in Linguistics*, 1–5.

<sup>49</sup> Anthony Cordingley and Chiara Montini: "Genetic translation studies: An emerging discipline," *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies* 14 (Winter 2016): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.52034/lanstts.v14i0>

Tokarski, Żuk, Bartmiński, just to mention a few.<sup>50</sup> Another outstanding and recognized scientist working in this school of linguistic and philosophical thought is Anna Wierzbicka. Her book on key-words is of our particular interest for this paper. She is comfortable with combining ethnolinguistics with ethnophilosophy in order to indicate that the key to a precise description of meaning resides in the so-called *semantic primitives* understood as semantic units that can be used for a coherent explanation of all complex meanings. Moreover, Wierzbicka claims that those basic, elementary notions and concepts can be reached by an in-depth analysis of any natural language. In general, in her quest for the *universals*, she has been making attempts to determine universal notions and universal concepts that may allow to leave the Babel Tower. In her assumptions, some basic notions are primal, i.e., universal to all people, and for this reason they remain the same in all kinds of human communities.<sup>51</sup>

The approaches presented above constitute great and powerful inspirations on our own path to the research methodology adequate for our studies. Renata specializes in the qualitative rare case-study of biblical and mystical texts with the use of mixed-methods and tools from various scientific disciplines in frontier research. A rare case is sometimes described as a deviant/extreme case and regarded as particularly valuable as their analysis can shed light on broader issues. Furthermore, “extreme case analysis” examines the value of unusual or atypical cases by first identifying them and then examining them a combination of other methods. Usually, a quantitative research is performed at first, and then more intense, in-depth qualitative analysis is conducted. However, it is possible to do it vice versa, i.e. an unusual case is spotted in a qualitative analysis and only then it is checked how the quantitative data that are available improve our understanding of the case.<sup>52</sup> A case study is highly valued in interdisciplinary and holistic/integrated approaches. A single case study, or multiple case study may be conducted. Case studies, in general, are valuable as “they provide help to tell an important story but

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<sup>50</sup> Their articles are inserted in the bibliography section for reference.

<sup>51</sup> Anna Wierzbicka, *Słowa kluczowe. Różne języki – różne kultury*, trans. Izabela Duraj-Nowosielska (Warszawa: WUW, 2016), 56–60.

<sup>52</sup> Zoltán Dörnyei, *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics (Oxford Applied Linguistics)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 272.

at the same time vividly encapsulate abstract principles as well.”<sup>53</sup> A case-study of any kind has usually an interdisciplinary character and is valued especially in the experiences of “outliers,” or atypical individuals. And mystics and prophets/prophetesses definitely belong as those “rare,” or deviant cases. In the qualitative studies, or mixed method in modern linguistics it is more and more used.<sup>54</sup> A case can be small or big because it means a single bounded unit, entity or even a bigger whole system that is the focus of exploration within a wider context. Although case studies can have both qualitative and quantitative or mixed methods character, in linguistics most frequently they are qualitative. Nevertheless, they may also contain some quantification of data. Most qualitative case studies rely basically on the narrative presentation and interpretation of certain phenomena.<sup>55</sup> A case study is mainly appreciated by linguistic researchers because they deliver more holistic/integrated, contextualized, complex description of a certain phenomenon.<sup>56</sup> Litosseliti claims that case study has gained considerable ground in applied linguistic research recently and it definitely provides exceptional opportunities and will continue to push the field forward into prolific new paths in the future.<sup>57</sup>

In her particular micro-scale analysis, Renata focuses upon the study of the so-called semantic field and its associates of a single lexical unit that is regarded as a “special case” for a few reasons, extracted from the text as the key word embedded in the structure of a given phrase or sentence and then contextualized in yet a wider context, whole scene, or even overall text (e.g. a stanza, poem, chapter, book, etc). So, here the approach is from the smallest item to the biggest whole, from the smallest concept to the overall complex, compound, integrated concept—the procedure that can be compared with the value of a pearl precious on its own, yet entrapped in a shell down in the deep waters which needs an extremely skilful pearl diver to be able to not only spot it but also get hold of it and bring it

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<sup>53</sup> Patricia Duff, “Case Study in Applied Linguistics,” in: *Research Methods in Linguistics*. ed. Lia Litosseliti (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 306.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 308.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 311.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 324.



with care in his/her hands onto the surface to please the eyes of a larger audience before it goes to its owner. In the interpretation of the results in such a rare case qualitative study the researcher's intuition is welcome and much appreciated and constitutes a unique, unprecedented tool itself.

As mentioned above, Renata works in the so-called translational sciences making an effort to uncover the extended spiritual concepts underlying, or hidden in the physical/materialistic verbal forms present in mystical and prophetic language of Polish Female Catholic mystics and prophetesses, especially those called "brides of Christ" or Mystics of Passion. Their mystical and prophetic language constitutes an excellent tool itself to grasp their extended unique female cognition, perception and awareness of the liminal spaces between human and Divine, as well. As the favourite core textual data Renata takes under her investigator's loop the written records (diaries, testimonies, etc.) of their authentic dialogues with Jesus Christ, Mother Mary, saints, or departed souls in the purgatory. For comparison, their texts are usually juxtaposed with the so-called intralingual (Polish) parallel-texts which come from the Polish Millennium Bible used in the Liturgy of the Polish Catholic Church, or other Polish editions of the Bible. Intralingual parallel texts seem frequently to have been underestimated, yet they are very much appreciated by translation and interpretation practitioners. Both interlingual and intralingual parallels have proved to be a very useful source of information related to the specific use and context of terms.<sup>58</sup> "Parallel" in other words means "comparable." In Renata's research two kinds of contemporary Polish (intralingual) parallel texts are used: biblical (Polish editions of contemporary Catholic Bibles) and mystical and prophetic (Polish female spiritual Catholic writings). The task is time and energy consuming because in most cases it has to be done as "a hand-made piece of art" because while the Millennium Bible is accessible in the digital forms, the other ones are not, nor the spiritual texts are accessible online with very few exceptions. The contemporary Polish Catholic Bible and contemporary Polish Catholic religious and spiritual texts are treated as comparable both in time, location, culture and genre, so they may be used for intralingual contrasting. Furthermore, undoubtedly parallel texts offer useful textual databases also as a resource

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<sup>58</sup> Georgios Floros, "Parallel texts in Translating and Interpreting," *TSNM (Translation Studies in the New Millennium 2* (Winter 2004): 1, 33–41.

for terminology and other factors, also creating specialist corpora.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, parallel texts are of a great value for the holistic/integrated studies and acquiring the overall meaning. For this reason, the exploration of intralingual parallels is quite often shown as the best method, especially for translation and interpretation. Generally speaking intralingual parallels are defined as comparable texts of the same language based on the assumption that not only linguistic material, norms and conventions of the texts are comparable to one another, but also contexts and functions.<sup>60</sup> Renata in her approach goes even further that parallel texts are a very reliable and credible source for searching ideas, beliefs, values, notions, and concepts spread within a certain community, or a social circle of a given time and place. Parallels have also become popular in a lot of areas of natural language processing (NLP) and they represent one of the richest and divergent sources of knowledge for example in the semantic analysis of meaning.<sup>61</sup> Concordance is yet another method that can be selected as closest to the classic qualitative discourse analysis as it allows to investigate particular elements in their neighbouring context. The researcher is allowed to use his/her own intuition while selecting the lexical units for the study that are later analysed in a wider context.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, key words are regarded as the focal points around which ideological battles are fought and they need to be of a greater research interest because they constitute elements of research problems.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>61</sup> Rada Mihalcea and Michel Simard, "Parallel texts," *Natural Language Engineering* 11 (3) (Autumn 2005): 239–246, 239, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1351324905003827>

<sup>62</sup> Victoria Kamasa, "Techniki językoznawstwa korpusowego wykorzystywane w krytycznej analizie dyskursu: przegląd," *Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej* 10, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 100–117, <https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.10.2.06>

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 106.

## Selection of Textual Data and Analysis

For the purpose of this paper *The Diary* by St. Faustina Kowalska, a contemporary female Polish Catholic mystic and prophetesses was used. The on-line version was used in order to be able to use electronic concordance and mixed-methods and tools for a qualitative linguistic analysis of the semantic field of a lexical item “wisdom” were applied. In the first step, all the words “wisdom” were selected in their inflectional forms, then the whole sentences were analysed in order to get the meaning of “wisdom” as understood by St. Faustina in the context of a sentence. In the cases where just the sentence was not enough for understanding the overall meaning, then the wider context was analysed, however in most cases the preceding sentence was enough.

The lexical item *mądrość* (*wisdom*) was found in inflectional forms in 8 occurrences in the sentences cited below. The bold print is used by the authors of the paper to highlight the key words:

1. *Oto przyłożyłam usta do tego kielicha woli Twojej świętej, niech mi się stanie według upodobań Twoich, niechaj się stanie ze mną to, co zakresliła **mądrość Twoja** przed wiekami (no. 343).*
2. *Tu zdobyłam się na odwagę, która wypłynęła z pobudki miłości bliźniego, i rzekłam do Pana: Ty, który jesteś miłosierdziem samym, jakoś mi sam powiedział, przeto Cię błagam przez moc miłosierdzia Twojego, zwróć swe łaskawe spojrzenie i na te trzy siostry, a jeśli się to nie zgadza z **mądrością Twoją**, to proszę Cię o zamianę: niech Twoje łagodne spojrzenie w duszę moją będzie dla nich, a surowe spojrzenie Twoje w ich dusze niech będzie dla mnie (383).*
3. *Wszystkie przymioty Boga, takie jak: wszechmoc, **mądrość**, starają się nam odślonić ten jeden największy przymiot, to jest dobroć Boga (458).*
4. *Jezu, **daj mi moc i mądrość**, abym przebrnęła tę straszną puszcze, aby serce moje umiało znieść cierpliwie tęsknotę za Tobą, o Panie mój (885).*
5. *Największa prawdziwa wielkość jest w miłości Bożej, **prawdziwa mądrość jest** – miłować Boga (990).*
6. *+ O Jezu mój, **daj mi mądrość**, daj mi rozum wielki i oświecony Twym światłem, na to tylko jedynie, abym Ciebie, o Panie, lepiej poznała, bo im*

*Cię lepiej poznam, tym Cię goręcej ukocham, przedmiocie jedyny mojej miłości* (1030).

7. *+ O Panie najdobrotliwszy, jakżeś miłosierny, że sądzisz każdego według jego sumienia i poznania, a nie według gadań ludzkich. Duch mój coraz więcej zachwyca się i karmi **mądrością Twoją**, którą coraz głębiej poznają, i tu jeszcze jaśniej mi się odsłania ogrom Twego miłosierdzia* (1456).
8. *Uwielbiam Cię, Stwórco i Panie utajony w Najświętszym Sakramencie. Uwielbiam Cię za wszystkie dzieła rąk Twoich, w których mi się ukazuje tyle **mądrości**, dobroci i miłosierdzia* (1692).

## Results

Each passage contains a different element of the semantic field of “wisdom.” The overall meaning derived from all 8 sentences, can be summarised as follows:

1. “Mądrość Twoja” (Your wisdom) implies that wisdom belongs to and comes from Jesus.
2. “A jeśli to się nie zgadza z mądrością Twoją” shows St. Faustina’s determination in her obedience to the wisdom of Jesus.
3. Wisdom is one of the virtues of God.
4. Wisdom needs to be asked to be given by Jesus.
5. True wisdom is to love God.
6. Wisdom needs to be asked to be given by Jesus and great reason enlightened by the Light of Jesus must be asked for in order only to get to know Him better.
7. Wisdom of Jesus feeds the spirit.
8. Wisdom accompanies goodness and mercy and they are revealed in all the acts of Jesus.

The frequent usage of the personal pronoun “Ty” (You) and its flections implies directly a very close, friendly, intimate even relationship between the mystic and Jesus.

## Conclusion

“Wisdom” in a mystical text by St. Faustina has a few meanings, yet all of them are very close and congruent with the biblical sense. It is a very interesting phenomenon as she was an uneducated, simple nun in a cloister, much contested and even detested. Not only ignored but also persecuted by her own people, i.e. other nuns—the fate of all Christian mystics, those chosen by God as His own beloved souls and close friends to whom He entrusted His own most intimate secrets and messages not only for themselves but also Church and all humanity in general. Those Cinderellas of their own time who spoke the voice of Christ in His Name became martyrs having to stand the trials and hardships just to remain faithful to their only Lord and King. The study revealed a widened concept of “wisdom” than just an idea, or value of wisdom and the spiritual mystical text proved to be a valuable source for acquiring a better understanding of wisdom in general.

Further, international, un-biased studies are welcome, in other Slavonic and not only languages (*The Diary* by St. Faustina is the most frequently translated Polish book into numerous languages) for more universal contents of the concept. It may be just the very infancy first step on the road to a fascinating reality that we may all share as children of the same loving and very close God.

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#### Streszczenie

### **O koncepcie mądrości u św. Faustyny. Jakościowa analiza przypadku w świetle badań interdyscyplinarnych**

Artykuł ma charakter interdyscyplinarny i plasuje się na pograniczu kilku dyscyplin naukowych, a mianowicie filozofii, teologii i językoznawstwa stosowanego. Filozofia i teologia, a konkretnie personalizm chrześcijański, stanowią tło teoretyczne dla jakościowej analizy przypadku dokonanej na podstawie oryginalnego tekstu źródłowego, jakim jest *Dzienniczek* autorstwa współczesnej polskiej katolickiej mistyczki i prorokini, Faustyny Kowalskiej, jednocześnie świętej w Kościele katolickim. Celem jest odkrycie i opis konceptu „mądrość” w tymże zapisie językowym. Metody i narzędzia o charakterze tak zwanym „mieszanym” zaczerpnięto z nauk społecznych i humanistycznych (SSH). Autorzy posłużyli się zarówno zestawem badawczym głównego nurtu cieszącym się już ustaloną pozycją i rangą, jak i komplementarnymi metodami

i narzędziami proponowanymi przez badaczy funkcjonujących w najnowszych, od niedawna wyłaniających się dyscyplinach. Oryginalny akcent eksperymentalny został położony na jakościową analizę tekstu pola semantycznego pojedynczej jednostki leksykalnej „mądrość,” ekstrahowanej z analizowanego tekstu źródłowego. Wyniki wykazały, że pod pojedynczym wyrazem kryje się koncept poszerzony w porównaniu z konceptami opisanymi przez inne dyscypliny, a także to, iż oryginalne źródłowe teksty duchowe stanowią wspaniałe źródło wiedzy dotyczącej ludzkiego umysłu i myślenia.

Słowa kluczowe: mądrość, mózg, serce, poznanie, objawienie, rozum, kobieca mistyka katolicka i prorocstwo kobiet, personalizm chrześcijański, św. Faustyna

### Zusammenfassung

#### **Zum Begriff der Weisheit bei der heiligen Faustina. Eine qualitative Fallstudie im Lichte der interdisziplinären Forschung**

Dieser Artikel ist interdisziplinär angelegt und bewegt sich im Grenzbereich mehrerer wissenschaftlicher Disziplinen, nämlich der Philosophie, der Theologie und der angewandten Linguistik. Philosophie und Theologie, insbesondere der christliche Personalismus, bilden den theoretischen Hintergrund für eine qualitative Fallstudie, die auf der Grundlage eines Originaltextes durchgeführt wird, nämlich des „Tagebuchs“ der zeitgenössischen polnischen katholischen Mystikerin und Prophetin Faustyna Kowalska, die gleichzeitig eine Heilige der katholischen Kirche ist. Das Ziel ist die Entdeckung und Beschreibung des Konzepts der „Weisheit“ in dieser sprachlichen Aufzeichnung. Die Methoden und Instrumente, die als „gemischt“ bezeichnet werden, stammen aus den Sozial- und Geisteswissenschaften (SSH). Die Autoren haben sich sowohl auf einen bereits etablierten und angesehenen Mainstream-Forschungsbestand gestützt als auch auf ergänzende Methoden und Instrumente, die von Forschern aus den jüngsten Disziplinen vorgeschlagen wurden. Der ursprüngliche experimentelle Schwerpunkt betrifft die qualitative Textanalyse des semantischen Feldes der einzelnen lexikalischen Einheit „Weisheit“, die aus dem analysierten Ausgangstext extrahiert wurde. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass sich hinter dem einzelnen Wort ein erweitertes Konzept verbirgt, verglichen mit Konzepten, die von anderen Disziplinen beschrieben werden, und dass ursprüngliche spirituelle Quellentexte eine wunderbare Quelle des Wissens in Bezug auf den menschlichen Geist und das Denken sind.

Schlüsselwörter: Weisheit, Gehirn, Herz, Erkenntnis, Offenbarung, Vernunft, weibliche katholische Mystik und Frauenprophetie, christlicher Personalismus, heilige Faustina



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