

Psychobiography of Jesus Christ in view of Władysław Witwicki's theory of cratism¹

ABSTRACT

The article is an attempt at a critical evaluation of applying one of the most original theories of Polish psychology, i.e. W. Witwicki's theory of cratism, to the interpretation of the activities and personality of Jesus Christ. The theory of cratism, though it provides substantial explanation possibilities, has been largely forgotten. W. Witwicki used it to try to interpret many aspects of human activity such as art, social relations, as well as the life of ancient figures, among others, Socrates and Jesus Christ. Thanks to this, he created the first ever in Polish psychology (and also one of the first in world psychology) psychobiography. The proposal to decipher the activity of Jesus of Nazareth through Witwicki, however, raises large concerns, which discouraged many psychologists, and especially religious environments. I would like to indicate the most controversial moments of his work, while drawing attention to the great value of the theory itself also today, at the beginning of the 21st century, particularly in the area of historical psychology.

KEYWORDS: psychobiography, psychobiography of Christ, Lvov-Warsaw school, W. Witwicki, theory of cratism

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Classics and precursors of new achievements in science, in moving away to the shadows of history, generally count on their students to continue their research. However, this does not always happen. Hardly anyone now remembers that one of the fathers of Polish psychology belongs to the top creators of world psychobiography, and his achievements in this field could be compared with the achievements of S. Freud (1939) and E. Erikson (1958, 1969). What's more, he is the creator of an original theory, i.e. the theory of cratism, which ironically did not have any continuers. Władysław Witwicki – of him I speak – built the theory of cratism over a period of nearly thirty years of the first half of the 20th century. He was a student of Kazimierz Twardowski, the founder of the Lvov-Warsaw school of philosophy-logic, the achievements of which in the field of logic, theory of knowledge, and even ethics, are currently known not only in Poland, but also in the world. The achievements of this school were significant already one hundred years ago, when psychology as a science was struggling with defining the subject of its research and methodology. The Lvov-Warsaw School was characterized by methodological rigorism and precision of language, the analytical approach with a very good theoretical background dominated in it (Coniglione F., Poli R., Woleński 1993). During the pre-war period, two important psychological theories originated within the “Lvov school”, i.e. K. Twardowski's theory of acts and products (Twardowski, 1912) and W. Witwicki's theory of cratism (Witwicki, 1907; 1927). The first was continued in the form of T. Tomaszewski's theory of actions (Tomaszewski, 1981), but the latter unfortunately went on the shelf of history. The Polish post-war psychological discourse focused mainly on leading centres of psychological thought, which the United States and Great Britain quickly became, referring to the achievements of Polish achievements only in few publications.

THE MAIN POSTULATES OF THE THEORY OF CRATISM

The origins and development of the theory of cratism are located mainly in three of Witwicki's texts, i.e. in his doctoral thesis entitled *Psychological analysis of ambition*, defended under the direction of K. Twardowski at Lvov University, and published in 1900, then in a short paper with his appearance at the Convention of Physicians and Naturalists in 1907, and finally in *Podręcznik Psychologii [Book of Psychology], Vol. II*, of 1927. Analysis of ambition is universally recognized as the basics of the theory of cratism, for it includes the most important theses, which were then only adequately developed. The theory obtained its most mature form in *Book of Psychology*; it takes up more than two hundred pages of theoretical analysis, and contains numerous life examples. However, the term cratism (from the Greek *κρατος* – strong, full of power) appeared for the first time in 1907, hence the proper moment of announcing the theory is assumed as the year of 1907. In creating his theory, Witwicki was heavily influenced by three sources, namely the Platonic texts, which he himself translated, the evolutionary tradition of C. Darwin and H. Spencer, and of course the works of K. Twardowski. In view of the fact that the theory of cratism and the comments to it are generally available in Polish literature (Witwicki, 1907, 1927; Jadczyk 1981; Nowicki 1982; Rzepa 1991), there is no need to analyze it in detail; I would merely like to cite the most important theses relevant to the given problem here, i.e. the psychobiography of Christ.

The starting point is Witwicki's belief about the instinctive and biological basis of ambition, though he connects it with so-called belief feelings (next to cognitive feelings), and more specifically, with the belief feelings of value. Ambition comes when a person finds he has a certain value. This could be power, knowledge, social skills, self-control, virtue, etc. It always comes to voice in situations when a person claims to possess certain values or finds a lack thereof (then ambition may be e.g. wounded). It is ambition

that is the basis for striving to be more than others, or at least to be able to confirm one's own independence and autonomy. Ambition drives us, so that we can achieve a sense of being more than others, the feeling of being more than one's weaknesses, or non-human forces, e.g. the forces of nature. If one fails to achieve the belief of being "more than", then we strive at least to achieve a state of equality.

The problem of striving to be more than others was developed in 1907; Witwicki then stated directly that human motivation is based on the implementation of so-called cratic efforts. Part of human nature, as it were, cratic aspiration means motivation to achieve a sense of power, but it needs to be added here that in Witwicki's texts, it has the nature of power, very often understood in physical terms. This is testified by numerous examples in the *Book of Psychology*, it is also testified by the terminology contained in the appearance from 1907. The author says simply about striving for destruction, humiliation and oppression on the one hand, and striving for lifting, supporting on the other, but further distinguishes positive (lifting) cratism and negative (demeaning) cratism. In both cases, the individual seeks to achieve a sense of pleasure. It is a fairly surprising prospect, because it includes in the natural mechanism regulating the behaviour of people also something that seems to be in the area of personality pathology. Witwicki classifies the possible social behaviours in four groups: striving to demean others, to demean oneself, striving to lift others or lift oneself. In all cases, however, the person achieves a sense of pleasure, mental satisfaction, although the choice of a given set of behaviours of course depends on his cratic drives. Indeed, it is difficult to expect the scenario that a person with a cratic tendency to demean others, will seek to demean oneself (at least openly and consciously). For example, the cratic type that lifts oneself is characterized by egoism, conceit, or pride, the cratic type lifting others is characterized by altruism, a type who demeans oneself is characterized by a tendency to humiliate oneself, a type who

demeans others is characterized by cruelty. Although the four cratic tendencies can achieve completely different behavioural characteristics, despite this, the same motivational mechanism lies at its base – cratic aspiration. Witwicki argues that e.g. a demeaned person, in losing his sense of power, tries to regain it by demeaning others, by highlighting his own dominance and superiority, or by demeaning himself (by acts of autoaggression, severe criticism, etc.).

Such a perspective has allowed not only for a description of the existing social reality, but also to formulate predictions. In 1927, the first guesses about possible behaviours and interpersonal relationships in view of the theory of cratism appear. These are actually hypotheses, which until now have not been verified empirically. Witwicki posited that the feelings towards encountered people will be intermediated through variables such as the subjective feeling of life force possessed by the person encountered by us, as well as through its hostile or friendly attitude towards us. In this way, six possible constellations of feelings were created, which were called by Witwicki heteropathic, i.e. our feelings towards other people. In fact, we can feel the life force of people as greater / equal / lower than ours both in the case of hostile people and people who are friendly to us. In both cases, a person makes social comparisons, and depending on the final assessment, it bestows such people with a different type of feelings:

- towards stronger friendly people: acknowledgement, admiration, gratitude, willingness to yield.
- towards equal friendly people: solidarity, trust, friendship, kindness, loyalty.
- towards weaker friendly people: pity, mercy, sympathy, desire to support.
- towards stronger enemies: fear, hostility, anger, hatred, envy.
- towards equal enemies: hatred, resentment, hostility.
- towards weaker enemies: revulsion, disregard, mockery, contempt.

In a fairly simple and coherent way W. Witwicki created the basis for describing and predicting interpersonal relationships, and thus the basis for studies on the phenomena of social psychology, which at the time was only making its first steps in the world. The theory of cratism shows great resemblance to A. Adler's theory of striving for a sense of power, although it was most likely established completely independently. Witwicki knew the assumptions of individual psychology (Rzepa, 1991), and what is most interesting, he gave his talk on cratism in 1907, exactly in the year of publishing *Über den Minderwertigkeit der Organen*, A. Adler's first book introducing compensation and a sense of power to the subject. Despite the differences and similarities between them – as it has already been mentioned in literature – I would only like to point out that Adler accepts only one of the possible ways to achieve a sense of life force, i.e. striving to lift oneself and others by building social good. Witwicki does involve himself in a moral evaluation of cratic aspirations, he simply considers all four, recognising that each of them satisfies their psychological function.

WITWICKI'S TRANSLATION OF THE GOSPEL – THE BASIS FOR THE PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY OF CHRIST

The psychological portrayal of Jesus of Nazareth can be found in the translation, as well as the commentary to the Gospel according to Matthew and the Gospel according to Mark (Witwicki, 1958). Translations of Greek texts were Witwicki's specialty, his knowledge of classical Greek elicits great recognition, all the more so that in addition to the Gospel, he also translated the Platonic dialogues, which is itself a unique achievement. The love of language of the ancient philosophers can also be seen in his correspondence with Andrzej Nowicki – in fact the men wrote to one another in Greek (Nowicki, 1982). The world of ancient Greece was a passion for Witwicki. We know, among others, from his

letters, that when working on the translation of Plato's dialogues, he equated himself with Socrates, and even felt a spiritual and mental bond with him. He lent his voice in radio broadcasts as the voice of Socrates. After all, we are familiar with *Przechadzki ateńskie* [Athenian strolls], i.e. reflections and comments on the culture and history of ancient Greece, associated also with his trip to Greece in 1939, published in 1947 in the form of eight fascicles.

In this context, Witwicki comes across as a competent person, well prepared for translating and commenting the Gospel. So what is his translation of the Gospel? Before I try to answer this question, let me note a personal comment. What made a strong impression on me was the *Introduction* to the translation and fragment of his letter to his sister, which reads "...he who writes not completely stupid books honestly serves the Truth. Even if he made a mistake and had no rightfulness. Others will correct it. If not today – then tomorrow." These words clearly show that their author was expecting references, comments, and maybe even the continuation of his work, because he himself – as he claimed – "served the Truth".

And so, *The Good News according to Matthew and Mark* is an unusual translation – for several reasons. First of all, Witwicki as a classical scholar, although he did not have the preparation of a biblical scholar, wanted to get to the original spirit of the Gospel, uninfected by the pathos of tradition of the Church. Therefore, he took up a very difficult and courageous task. Biblical studies in Witwicki's times was a strongly developed discipline of science, in which there were numerous disputes, not so much on individual concepts as on the subject of a uniform methodology. The elaborated theoretical and methodological technique allowed to limit arbitrariness and subjectivity of the translator. For decades, the world of biblical studies was already being cultivated independently of the church dogma, especially when one takes into account German biblical studies, to which Witwicki had easy access (he knew the German language perfectly). Unfortunately,

in his translation and commentary we cannot find any methodological findings for the adopted way of treating the Gospel, no references to the then revolutionary historical-critical school, the findings of which had breakthrough significance for determining the nature of biblical texts. I emphasize this problem deliberately, because the lack of this knowledge sentences the scholar to free interpretation, and knowledge of only the Greek language will not solve this. Neither is a proper methodology to adopt a foreign and completely independent from the Semitic world conceptual set of instruments from psychological literature, e.g. from E. Bleuler's *Lehrbuch der Psychiatrie* or E. Kretschmer's *Geniale Menschen* (1929), as the author of this translation and commentary does.

Secondly, in undertaking to recreate the image of Jesus of Nazareth, Witwicki ended up in the centre of the most serious biblical disputes², the solution of which determined the possibility of studying the consciousness and personality of Jesus. The life of Jesus presented in the Gospels is the interpretation of the evangelists, which is governed by its own rights. These rights cannot be overlooked, and Witwicki ignores them completely. The only exception is the terse statement that he is merely recreating the image of Jesus in the eyes of the Apostles (Witwicki, 1958, p. 17-18). However, in the comment, both realities – the historical Jesus and interpretation of his person – blend into one at a certain point, and the author does nothing to explain the matter. References are missing here to the essential (and already widely known at the time) dispute about Jesus' self-consciousness, which in 1778 literally revolutionized studies on his life. The dispute sparked a heated discussion on whether Jesus impersonated the Messiah at all, whether he wanted to be and in what sense. A psychologist

² There is no room here for even citing them, it is enough to mention that in 1913, the famous Swiss-French paper of the biblical scholar Albert Schweitzer *Geschichte des Leben-Jesu Forschung*, included more than six hundred printed pages of only compilations of theories already available then about the life of Jesus.

in fact does not need to know these problems thoroughly, but when taking up the difficult task of recreating the psychological image of Jesus Christ, Witwicki should not have treated the matter in such an amateurish way, for he was exposed to constructing incredible explanations, which are impossible to maintain in light of the basic knowledge of the New Testament.

Thirdly, the author of the translation does not refer to the Hebrew language when translating many important words, the key language to understanding Semitic thought, on which the entire Greek text of the New Testament thrives. Knowledge of only the Greek language was justified in the case of the psychobiography of Socrates, outlined in the comments to Plato's dialogues. There, Witwicki dealt with the typical Greek, a man speaking and thinking in Greek. But in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, who was raised in the tradition of the prophets, who spoke Aramaic (a form of Hebrew), to whom the Hellenic world was completely strange, the lack of references to the vernacular seems troublesome. This constitutes a major constraint in attempts to reach the world of the psychological experiences of users of this language, let alone in attempts to recreate the personality of one man³. Moreover, the problem of translation is a major problem here, because the semantic scope of the words proposed by him in the translation very often holds no historical context, what's more, it seems to contradict this context. The problem, however, is not in the fact that Witwicki omits the context of Jewish culture and refers us

³ This may sound a little perverted, but Witwicki very well could have been tempted to reconstruct the personality of Jesus based on the Latin translation of the Gospel of Mark and Matthew (Vulgate), from which he so clearly distanced himself. Since the transposition of Semitic categories to classic Greek would not differ greatly from transposing them to early Latin categories from the 2nd century AD. The Greek and Latin versions constitute a translation of the Aramaic words of Jesus, the Latin translations originate already from the 2nd century AD, while the Greek text of the Gospel available to us comes from copies of 2nd, 3rd century AD and later centuries (therefore, they are sources from a similar period).

to the Hellenistic context, but in many significant cases does not refer us to any cultural context of those times. Shifts of interpretation tend to be inevitable, but here, every now and then, the *Sitz im Leben* of the text disappears completely and a new meaning appears, which the reader will not find in the Jewish tradition. Eventually, his translation work shows unusual characteristics, namely:

1. The disappearance of the religious-moral context and focus on a narrow or shifted semantic field, e.g.: Mt 4:16 – [“słońce”] “sun” instead of “light” as the revelation of God; Mk 14:27 – [“przestaniecie wierzyć”] “you will stop believing” instead of “you will fall away/scandalise” as an insult to religious feelings, a sense of blasphemy; Mk 7:37 – [“pięknie”] “beautifully” instead of “well/good” (in Jewish culture “*kalos*” had mostly moral connotations, not aesthetic; Mt 6:2 – [“komedianci”] “comedians” instead of “hypocrites”; Mt 26:27 – [“kubek”] “cup” instead of “chalice” at the Passover meal, etc.
2. The introduction of simplifying forms, sometimes even vulgar, e.g.: Mk 1:25 – [“stul pysk”] “shut your trap” instead of “silence”; Mk 6:13 – [“smarowali oliwą”] “rubbed with oil” instead of “anointed with oil”; Mt 14:5 – [“pospółstwo”] “low life” instead of “people”; Mt 5:11 – [“ścigać”] “chase” instead of “persecute” for religious reasons, etc.
3. Changes in the nature of the dialogues, or descriptions of events, e.g.: the description of the internal struggles of Jesus in Gethsemane involves “suffering”, “fear”, “pain”, “despair” (Mt 26:37; Mk 14:33) – Witwicki completely changes the atmosphere of the event: “it started to be difficult and he started to have enough of everything”; tempted by Satan, Jesus responds: “It is written: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Mt 4:7) – Witwicki gives the event the character of a loose discourse inserting words into the mouth of Jesus “On the other hand, and this is written too: You shall not try the Lord, because he is your God” (the Greek text neither contains “on the other

hand” nor “because”); Jesus drives out *demons* (Mt 12:24) – Witwicki introduces in their place the folk concepts of “devils” and “fiends”.

4. Adding often irrelevant from the point of view of the syntax of personal pronouns or demonstratives, though there are none in the original (e.g. Mk 14:68), as a result of which the nature of the statements and descriptions of events are strongly specified, devoid of generality or universality.

To conclude, it can be said that *The Good News according to Matthew and Mark* is a very free translation. It should rather be considered an own interpretation of the biblical text, or even something like a free paraphrase. Its author, consciously or not, restricts relations with the religious traditions of Judaism, introducing a completely new content to the Gospels. On the other hand, where references to practices and beliefs were originally lively, Witwicki’s pursuit to the secularisation of the text can be seen. It is abundant in simplicity, and, in some cases, vulgarity. Witwicki wants to see in the Apostles mainly simple peasants (Legowicz, 1958), and he describes the wider mass of his followers as simple people, common people and villagers. However, only a fraction of these treatments can be justified the text of the Gospel itself. Therefore, one should posit the question, what caused that his translation has such a character and not different? Was it an unintended over-interpretation, or perhaps a conscious effort of an expert of the Greek language? And so, the changes made in the translation and shift of meaning of the text could create an excellent basis for a new interpretation of the life story of Jesus. A particular role here is the mentioned shift from the level of the abstract to the specificity of description of selected events (cf. Citlak, 2014), as well as to minimize the religious-ethical dimension of the text. We currently know that such an effort at the language level fulfils a key role in sustaining or undermining stereotypical thinking. A lower level of abstraction of the description, e.g. used in the area of religion, politics, or social relationships, facilitates

moving beyond the stereotype, while a higher level of abstraction of the description stabilizes the adopted beliefs (Semin, Fiedler, 1988; 1991), which is due to the fact that at a higher level of generality of the description it is more difficult to undermine its truthfulness. It is certainly more difficult to undermine the assertion that someone is immoral or dishonest (high level of generality), than the assertion that someone does not do certain things, e.g. does not attend church (low level of generality). The same role can be fulfilled by the so frequent in the translation resignation from religious-moral categories, which also constitute a downright diagnostic element of stereotypical thinking (Wojciszke, 1997; Maass, et al. 1989). In other words, the new text could gain a new – independent of the existing, widespread, stereotypical – characteristic, paving the way for a new unprecedented interpretation.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMAGE OF JESUS OF NAZARETH –
COMMENTARY TO THE GOSPEL

The commentary, covering two hundred pages, is an integral part of the translation of the Gospel of Matthew and Mark, and also forms the basis for outlining the psychological image of Jesus Christ. We should add, however, that without this translation into Polish the psychological reconstruction of the figure of Jesus would be unlikely. Witwicki did not use any existing translation of the Gospels at the time, neither in Polish or in any other language, assuming that a new, fresh translation is needed here, free from the influence of the Church. The translation and commentary were created very quickly. Translation work lasted only a few months in 1942, completed in May, while already in July the commentary with the outlined psychological image of Jesus Christ was ready. Due to the work undertaken so early, Witwicki belongs to the precursors of world psychobiography (Runyan, 1984), although

the fact remains that his psychobiography was not the first, it is enough to mention the items A. Hitchcock's *The Psychology of Jesus. A Study of Self-Consciousness* of 1908, A. Schweitzer's *Die psychiatrische Beurteilung Jesu. Darstellung und Kritik* of 1913, or S. Hall's *Jesus the Christ in the Light of Psychology* of 1917. Against the various monographs, the proposal of the Polish psychologist is, to put it mildly, controversial, and for people of faith certainly disturbing. After all, what is most surprising, is the lack of any reference to literature on the subject; literature, which generally provides completely different conclusions than that of Witwicki.

Like other psychologists, Witwicki starts from a short analysis of the family environment. Already at the beginning of the commentary, he concludes that Joseph and Mary are a married couple with serious relationship problems, without love or even friendship. "These are two people who do not live together physically or spiritually. They each have their own closed inner life and their own personal relationship with God, and there is no contact between them" (p. 186). The atmosphere of emotional coldness and mutual isolation was to be typical of relationships between an Israelite and the God of the Old Testament, who treats man without respect as to his person and autonomy. He does not inform him of his inconceivable plans, puts in a difficult, and even desperate situation. Mary has no choice, like Joseph; they are placed before an accomplished fact – that is what God decided. According to Witwicki, it was a brutal world and less humane than the world of ancient Greece, where even the relationships of deities with women assumed reciprocity, mutual decision. The God of Jews did not take into account their lives, he exercises his will authoritatively. Mary does not trust Joseph, she does not confide in him on a matter most important to them, i.e. the fact of being pregnant, while Joseph himself avoids talking to Mary, and finally decides to distance her. Witwicki will say outright that they are "prominently schizotypic features of character" (p. 186). This radical proposal, however, comes as a surprise, because the

text of the Gospel provides very little information on the relationship between Jesus' parents. It omits so many details, that it is clear that the authors of the Gospels had no intention (maybe they were not able) of describing the character of this relationship. The only source is a few short verses Mt 1:18-22, being, as it is now known, an interpretive blend of the events of Jesus' birth and not Joseph and Mary's relationship. Therefore, positing such extreme and unambiguous conclusions on the topic, on which the author and his text do not want to comment, was very risky and not found anywhere else in literature on the subject. In any case, we see schizotypic parents, who could not leave their children without emotional influence. So, what is the schizotypic type within which Jesus is brought up? These are people who are "shy, indirect in reactions, unsocial, humourless, strange, and at times they can be [...] irritable, sensitive to trivialities, loving of [...] nature, nervous, strangely irritated, and at the same time of a hard heart and steel temper, or a kind of emotional coldness, lack of response can be seen in them, while they make the impression of people who are docile, obedient, susceptible – until they are given away by some unheard of, unforeseen behaviour, which does not bear much resemblance to those emotional dispositions, which they manifest on the surface. Therefore, they come close to a schizophrenic type" (Witwicki, 1963, p. 335). In light of the above words, the conclusion about the schizotypic features of Joseph and Mary's characters is not only surprising, but simply shocking. As far as I know, a similar assessment of Jesus' parents has not appeared until now anywhere in biblical or psychological literature.

For Witwicki, the figure of Jesus of Nazareth, embedded in such psychological realities, is a fully historical figure, absolutely real, which no writer was able to create, and certainly not the Apostles. The mind of a schizotypic is internally divided and this seems to most strongly convince Witwicki about the authenticity of the image of Christ contained in the Gospels: "This split

of personality could not be an invention of the evangelists – it is undoubtedly an authentic feature” (p. 202). And this internal division is revealed directly in the sense of being simultaneously a human being and the Son of God. Since the beginning of his activities, Christ reveals two natures (at least this is how theology understands and calls it), which are to mean two contradictions struggling within him: awareness of humanity and sense of divinity. “The psyche of Jesus [...] is not, in any case, the psyche of a common, everyday, balanced human being [...] Here, at every step we are dealing with an internal division [...], with a feeling of his superhuman power and historical mission, with internal obligations, with not taking into account the seriousness and suggestions of the environment, with dysfunction in contact with the environment [...], which leads to an inevitable disaster” (p. 203). Again, the certainty of formulated conclusions surprises us, for they appear in the interpretation of the baptism of Jesus, which is at the beginning of his activity, even before any teaching. Baptism and other events, like the method of teaching, forgiving sins, assigning the authority of God upon oneself, linked together convince the author of the commentary, that the dominating motive in the life of Jesus is a sense of the divine, uniqueness, historical mission, at the heart of which is a “heightened sense of power” (p. 205). “He himself felt a unique being, chosen, designed for power and triumph over the world, although along the way of the cross...” (p. 206). This is mainly why Jesus, in the first phase of his activity, avoids confrontation with religious leaders, for he knows that his power and influence on the surroundings are still too weak; he must wait, reveal himself only after some time, when the sense of power and ability to influence prove to be more real. The Messianic feeling was a motivating force, controlled by a natural, typically human assessment of reality, which Christ was still capable of. Jesus tries to instil the Apostles with the desire to rule over others, when he appoints them the fishermen of the people. According to Witwicki, this is a clear example of treating

potential Christians as beings that are lower, passive, dependent on the grace of the Apostles. The crowd will not have anything to say, but plucked from the cares of everyday life, will begin to pour in a sense of gratitude. "In this comparison there is a view of people from above – from high above. People are not even sheep, they are fish [...] There is clear psychological awareness of the mechanism of missionary activities among the folk masses" (p. 213). Therefore, "cratic motivation", because I think that is what we can call it, constitutes the second basis, next to schizotypic personality traits, for the entire theory structuring the psychological life of Jesus of Nazareth.

However, the "cratically motivated schizotypic" is revealed throughout in the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, considered to be a set of programmatic views of Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7) proclaims comfort to the simple crowd, it gives them hope for a better tomorrow, for according to Witwicki, it is not about salvation in eternal or moral terms, as it is usually interpreted. It is about a better tomorrow in the literal sense, a better life in social, political terms. Jesus' words "opened a view not on a happy afterlife, but on social upheaval [...] Soon it will be better in Palestine, poverty and injustice will end – the masters will be those who are disinherited and despised today" (p. 215-216). Regardless of the validity of the proposed interpretation here, "a better tomorrow", Jesus' attitude towards people seems to be full of concern about their welfare, but over longer analysis, this picture becomes internally contradictory. In confronting the students with the tradition of Moses, Jesus highlights its unique moral rigorism. Demands of the prophets, or the requirements of the Decalogue in the mouth of Jesus become impossible to achieve. So, for example, the prohibition of coveting a neighbour's wife or strange woman includes the realm of thought and feelings, which – as the Polish psychologist claims – a poor peasant from Galilee did not have the slightest impact on. These were the impulses of the body emerging quite naturally, regardless of his

will. Similarly, Jesus' prohibition of experiencing anger as contrary to human nature, could not be maintained. As a consequence, the words of Jesus promising liberation and moral renewal, evoked in the hearts of the crowds feelings of guilt, from which an ordinary man – a disciple of Jesus, was not able to escape. "This new ban could and had to have the consequence that spread in the faithful the continuing sense of sin [...] Every young, healthy believer, from here on, had a reason to be tainted by sin at almost every step of the way" (p. 224). The spiritual/psychological condition of the disciple became increasingly difficult and finally hopeless, therefore, only for them, tainted and guilty, the saviour from Nazareth offers salvation. Although these conclusions seem quite unlikely, Witwicki ideally fits them into the theory of cratism, because such a way of reading the teachings of Jesus shows him as a person who wanted to make others dependent on him, as a man with a psychological tendency to reign over others, a tendency theologically known as a Messianic sense of self.

Domination and dependence was about to come about yet on another level, namely through the social alienation of disciples from the world around them. In addition to restricting "self-preservation instinct" and "reproductive instinct", Jesus forbids divorce "condemning people to empty, dead relationships" (p. 226). It is also prohibited to apply the right of revenge and resisting evil, which in effect was to exclude Christians from developing legal and social order. In practice, therefore, the prohibition to respond to evil, meant consent for "bandits, extortionists and troublemakers", and made his disciples "parasites and beggars", left at the mercy of others (p. 227). One can guess what tension or frustration accompanied his disciples, however, Witwicki himself quickly dispels these speculations, indicating a type of dominant motivation among them: He says to the crowds about practicing religion literally "as a result of calculation", practicing religion due to its profitability, usefulness, due to reward in heaven and tangible benefits. Calculation was not alien to Jesus himself, and

in his case, Witwicki is ambiguous – first he clearly assigns this type of behaviour to him, then he enigmatically says “it wasn’t conscious personal calculation. He served his Father and searched for his Father’s glory” (p. 232).

To conclude, a very clear picture of the relationship of Jesus with people emerges, and at the same time, his personality type. Jesus created a new image of the disciple, necessary to complete his messianic mission. It had to fit “like a gypsum form to a model” (p. 241). I will allow myself here for a longer excerpt concerning the disciple of Jesus: “When these practical, life indications are brought together, then a type of human being comes out of an egocentric, introverted attitude, detached from work to make a living [...], steeped in his inner life, rather autistic, detached from the affairs of this world, surrounded by enemies, who still threaten tarnish and doom. Those enemies are the world, one’s own body and the devil, not to mention the temptations which God himself sets upon man [...] The only rescue for him is the grace of God through the Messiah [...] Among people calm about their fate, busy with the outer life, cheerful, happy, Jesus would not have had any room to act. His sense of grandeur and readiness to fight evil, to judge and forgive sins, to create the Kingdom of God – all demanded from the people a sense of smallness, tarnish, obsessive concerns, submitting to and trusting in him. It was difficult to find such environment. Jesus created it in Galilee with the help of disciples, fishermen” (p. 241). A little further, the author will say that Jesus needed people with a sense of sin to act, who will ask him to release them of their faults. People with a clear, peaceful conscience could not establish any relationship with him. In other words, he treats them as inferior, as the lord and liberator, and they become the tools in achieving his mission, while the mission in practice means the realization of cratic aspirations, striving for dominance now and in the future. The Master from Nazareth accepted the poor, crushed, all with a sense of tarnish, accepting his mission. For those people, he

was full of mercy and forgiveness. However, he did encounter resistance; then he criticized severely, and above all condemned. He demanded absolute acknowledgement. He healed the suffering only when they "accepted humiliation without protest [...] despite his cold rejection" (p. 298).

In the psychobiography of Christ, negative, degrading cratism plays a dominant role. Witwicky devoted a lot of space to it in volume 2 of the *Book of Psychology*, pointing out that very often it is associated with sadistic or masochistic desires, depending on whether it applies to degrading others or oneself. A person with a tendency to degrade others suspects the environment of evil intentions, "he often has a scathing, sarcastic, ironic, envious, cool tone, ruthless, hard expression [...] They do not forgive anybody, they hate resistance, they are relentless in punishment..." (Witwicky, 1963, p. 237). These types tend to see the guilty beyond themselves, as opposed to types with a tendency to degrade oneself, who see the guilty in themselves. Witwicky includes many Christians to these people, for example, Simeon Stylites, Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena. In such a view, Christ and his followers appear as complementing of each other's needs.

The image above is perfectly illustrated by Witwicky's engravings included in the translation. Jesus appears on twenty drawings, on each of them he has quite an off-putting expression, his face is cool, sharp features, he looks at people from above and with contempt, pointing to some with his finger. His facial expressions clearly display feelings of anger, contempt, mistrust and even envy. On all of them, Jesus' attitude towards people is distanced, there is a lack of warmth in them and simple acceptance or openness. It is a figure closed in himself, full of resentment and lack of trust in the environment. When teaching in the synagogue, he does not maintain contact with listeners, arguing with the Pharisees he points his finger at them with a fierce expression on his face. However, when he is talking to a Roman centurion, or deputy of the Pilate, he adopts the attitude of a withdrawn

person, as if a lost and shy boy. Each of the prints (apart from the last two) shows him in the light of cratic aspirations, mainly as someone with a tendency to exalt himself and humiliate others.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF JESUS CHRIST'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT – PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Additionally, I would like to draw attention to the specific characteristics of the translation of Jesus Christ's Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), which is widely considered to be his keynote address. Without getting into theological issues, I shall perform a simple quantitative analysis, in this case – frequency analysis, a method widely used in modern psycholinguistics. Frequency analysis allows to study the basis of language while rendering data that can easily be subjected to statistical calculations. This method is often used to construct frequency indicators or dictionaries. Frequency indicators are defined by comparison of respective linguistic elements with opposing elements present in the studied text (Köhler, Altmann, Piotrowski, 2005). The construction of indicators is based on the assumption that “with regard to superficial expression, more frequent use of a particular class of expressions in comparison to contrasting expressions reveal certain ways of thinking and perception of reality, known as cognitive styles” (Kurcz 1992, p. 294). In this case, I used three indicators, referring in part to the work of the German linguistic-cultural psychologist Suitbert Ertel, who in the 70s and 80s developed a set of indicators to be used in the study of written texts (these indicators allowed him to capture changes in thinking and cognitive perception of the world present in the structure of a text – Ertel, 1986). Jesus' Sermon on the Mount was subjected to three – appropriately modified – indicators: impersonal narrative references, abstractness and dogmatism. The first one is the ratio of the frequency of personal pronouns in third person singular

(he, she, him, her, etc.) to the frequency of first and second person personal pronouns (I, you, me, you, etc.) This determines personal vs impersonal nature of Jesus' narrative (the higher the ratio, the more the conversational I-Thou narration aspect fades). The second indicator is the ratio of the frequency of abstract nouns in the narrative compared to the frequency of all nouns used in the text (the higher the ratio, the higher the abstractness level).

The dogmatism indicator is the ratio of the frequency of so-called "dogmatic" expressions (e.g. every, always, each, none) to the total number of nouns⁴ in the text (the higher the ratio, the more "dogmatic" the narrative; statements are absolute, unequivocal, rule out any exceptions and the style is characterized by a kind of peremptoriness). Construction of the dogmatism refers to the dogmatic personality theory by M. Rokeach (1960). Using this indicator, E. Ertel was able to mark, e.g. distinct changes in its value by analyzing texts of J. Kant before and during the process of writing *The Critique of Pure Reason*, and also in the German press before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 (Ertel, 1986).

These indicators were applied to the original text in Greek, then to the Polish translation by W. Witwicki and, for the purpose of comparison, to two officially recognized Polish translations, i.e. the Benedictines of Tyniec translation (adopted by the Roman Catholic Church in Poland) and the so-called New Translation, officially recognized by most Protestant churches in Poland.

As shown in Table 1, it is evident that W. Witwicki significantly expanded the text of his translation – it is the longest of all Polish translations. The Sermon on the Mount has been expanded by nearly 1/5 the length of the original Greek text. This applies not only to the Sermon on the Mount, but also the first four chapters of the Gospel of Matthew, describing the birth and beginnings of Jesus. No other Polish translation is this long. In short, Wit-

⁴ The choice of nouns instead of all words in the text is the result of low frequency of dogmatic language elements.

Table 1. Psycholinguistic characteristics of Jesus Christ's Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7; for comparison to the length of text for chapters 1-4 of the Gospel of Matthew)

	text length (word count)	impersonal reference indicator	abstractness indicator	dogmatism indicator
original text in Greek	Mt 5-7: 1666 Mt 1-4: 1394 (total: 3060)	Mt 5-7: 0,382	Mt 5-7: 0,247	Mt 5-7: 0,069
translation by W. Witwicki	Mt 5-7: 2174 Mt 1-4: 1672 (total: 3846)	Mt 5-7: 0,527	Mt 5-7: 0,271	Mt 5-7: 0,059
translation by Benedictines of Tyniec (catholic)	Mt 5-7: 1948 Mt 1-4: 1520 (total: 3468)	Mt 5-7: 0,890	Mt 5-7: 0,292	Mt 5-7: 0,053
the new translation Warsaw Bible (protestant)	Mt 5-7: 1950 Mt 1-4: 1538 (total: 3488)	Mt 5-7: 1,094	Mt 5-7: 0,296	Mt 5-7: 0,049

wicki expanded the content of the gospel by new elements, not found in the original (as mentioned earlier). However, the result obtained for the impersonal reference indicator is very interesting, because in this respect Witwicki's translation is the most similar to the original. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Greek has the lowest value for this indicator, with the highest impersonal references found in the Catholic and Protestant translations (the differences are statistically significant between all variants of the text – see Table 2). It is possible that contemporary translations simply require additional stylistic treatments in order to obtain an intelligible language form, which results in increased impersonal nature of Jesus' words, although this treatment is most prominent in the Protestant translation. This would mean that W. Witwicki wanted his translation remain more "rough" and personal, with

Table 2. Significance of the differences between indicators (differences were considered statistically significant at values of > 1.96).

	impersonal reference indicator translation by W. Witwicki	impersonal reference indicator translation by Benedictines of Tyniec	impersonal reference indicator The New Translation – Warsaw Bible	dogmatism indicator translation by W. Witwicki	dogmatism indicator translation by Benedictines of Tyniec	dogmatism indicator The New Translation – Warsaw Bible	abstractness indicator translation by W. Witwicki	abstractness indicator translation by Benedictines of Tyniec	abstractness indicator The New Translation – Warsaw Bible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
impersonal reference indicator original text in Greek	3,27 S ⁵	8,82 S	10,16 S						
impersonal reference indicator translation by W. Witwicki		5,96 S	8,27 S						
impersonal reference indicator translation by Benedictines of Tyniec			2,27 S						
dogmatism indicator original text of Greek				4,04 S	6,50 S	7,86 S			
dogmatism indicator translation by W. Witwicki					2,46 S	3,83 S			
dogmatism indicator translation by Benedictines of Tyniec						1,37 n-S			

⁵ Significance of differences in proportions test was used to evaluate the differences (Sambor, 1972). S – statistically significant, n-S – statistically no-significant.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
abstractness indicator original text of Greek							0,81 n-S	1,45 n-S	1,56 n-S
abstractness indicator translation by W. Witwicki								0,72 n-S	0,82 n-S
abstractness indicator translation by Benedictines of Tyniec									0,10 n-S

Jesus' speech oriented more towards the I-Thou relationship, and less on the "other" discourse.

With regard to the abstractness indicator, Witwicki's translation rendered the lowest value of all Polish translations, although the differences between them are not statistically significant. This result is interesting, if only because of a certain tendency of Witwicki towards a lower level of abstractness compared to the Protestant or Catholic translations. This facilitated different interpretation of Jesus as a character, which I already mentioned earlier. Manipulation of abstractness / concreteness of description plays an important role in maintaining or refuting stereotypical thought, and it was one of Witwicki's goals to move the current image of Christ away from the official and established beliefs. Note that the original text in Greek features the lowest level of abstractness (!).

Finally, the dogmatism indicator in W. Witwicki's translation is closest to the value found in the original Greek text and differs significantly from indicators found in Catholic and Protestant translations. Statistically significant differences are not found only between the Catholic and Protestant translations, although tendency to reduce the dogmatism level is present in the Protestant translation.

To summarize, it must be concluded that, although W. Witwicki clearly expanded the Sermon on the Mount by adding a new content, other aspects of his translation, including the structural

properties of Jesus Christ's keynote address (i.e. dogmatism, abstractness, impersonal narrative), are very close to the structural characteristics of the original. Moreover, we must remember that conscious, intentional change of this type is very difficult to carry out and is unlikely to result from intentional treatment of the text by an interpreter. In this respect, the results are in favor of the Polish psychologist's translation work and against classifying his attempt at recreating psychological portrait of Jesus as entirely biased. Unfortunately, this is not the case for the entirety of his translation, because, as mentioned earlier, his work is heavily dominated by far-reaching changes and interference with the text on the semantic level. Ultimately the cratic, folksy and simplified portrait of Jesus Christ distracts from the nuances of language.

CONCLUSIONS

W. Witwicki's psychology is a descriptive psychology, typical for the Lvov-Warsaw school. The psychobiography written in this spirit has become speculative and practically untrammelled interpretation of psycho-physical products (sources). The author introduces the foundations of E. Kretschmer's typology and theory of cratism in the biblical text. Jesus becomes an egocentric schizotypic on aspirations to reign and humiliate others. He also attributes schizotypic traits to Mary, Joseph and John the Baptist. It is a pity that he did not refer to the doctoral dissertation (already known at the time) by Albert Schweitzer, *Die psychiatrische Beurteilung Jesu. Darstellung und Kritik* of 1913, in which the author came to the conclusion that an attempt to recreate the personality and mental health of Jesus is in some ways an impossible task to complete, due to the nature of the sources and their small number, what is more, the religious image of Jesus, his way of talking about himself cannot be transformed into psychological categories.

Witwicki has made profound changes in the character and form of the Gospel, consciously changing the tradition of many concepts, though, from the linguistic and historical point of view, it is difficult to find justification for it. In this way, the religious-ethical dimension of the Greek original of the Gospel has shifted towards the secular dimension, at the same time reaching primitive terminology (allegedly characteristic of the environment of peasants – the disciples of Jesus). As W. Smereka had once said, in “many cases he sins (Witwicki – A.C.) with too vivid vulgarity, without finding its justification even from the philological point of view” (Smereka, 1961).

The procedure of reducing descriptions and dialogues to the level of an ordinary conversation, sometimes even tale, was very safe; it allowed Witwicki to avoid negative evaluation, or even criticism of his translation work. He applied the same procedure in the case of translating some of Plato’s dialogues and in constructing the psychobiography of Socrates (Rzepa, 2002). W. Witwicki’s translations were generally a little controversial, “they were not specialized” (Kubikowska, 1999, p. 3), or as the mentioned Elzenberg wrote about Plato’s translations “the ingenuity shown here by the translator is worthy of the greatest admiration, but [...] how often to the contrary to Plato, who had never dreamed up such colourful blots (see: Rzepa, 2002, p. 88). The changes made seem not to have much in common with the declared wish to reach the original language of Jesus and the Apostles, separate it from religious pathos of Latin Vulgate. The translation and commentary reduce the Gospel story to the assumptions of the top-down accepted theory of cratism.

It is hard to accept that – like Prof. J. Legowicz wants – “Witwicki’s Good News takes in life, humanizes itself [...] comes closer to the human being [...], the Apostles are again just Judaic peasants [...] Witwicki kind of discovers the original dialect of evangelical figures” (p. 10-11). A pity, because Witwicki creates completely new characters – and unfortunately, it must be

openly concluded – devoid of the typical rooting for them in the then Judaism. These are cratic characters, created on the basis of a controversial translation, which was never seriously treated in the biblicistic environment, but found positive feedback mainly among Church critics. Because indeed, there is no way to express surprise, as after reading the Gospel, one can create such a picture of Jesus of Nazareth. The psychobiography of Christ, in my opinion, moves away from the standards of reliable and objective work of an investigator, promulgated proudly and with faith by K. Twardowski and his students. It is difficult to answer why this happened, whether it resulted from excessive haste or Witwicki's anti-clerical or even atheistic position, or maybe just due to the compelling effort to indicate the value of the theory of cratism, which he so widely used in his social-scientific work. Witwicki also saw cratic aspirations in the prophets of the Old Testament. He used cratism to describe a series of various phenomena, not only religious, but also present in the theory of knowledge, philosophy of science, semiotics and aesthetics.

Despite such serious reservations, W. Witwicki's interpretation may, however, have great significance for grasping the essential mechanism regulating social relations, perhaps not as clearly today as primarily in the ancient world. Appreciation of this mechanism on the basis of ancient culture, is of major importance, and this is probably what contains Witwicki's significant achievement, even if the method of his argumentation is not convincing. One cannot forget that the Semitic world was firmly embedded in the realities of originally tribal structures, subject to change over the next centuries. Relationships between people, their way of thinking, often reveal that in many cases a key role was played by having physical strength and power. The realization of cratic aspirations undoubtedly served an important psychological function, although it was probably subject to change along with social development (Witwicki, 1900). The Psychobiography of Christ – although it seems a theoretical abuse at both the translation level

and commentary itself – allows to see the important mechanism regulating the activity of man. Perhaps one should refer it to the social reality of the ancient world in a more balanced manner, without such brutal interference in the source material. Free digressions on the life of Jesus cannot be justified by the need of an “unclerical” lecture of the Gospel, because that’s not what it is about here. Finally, Witwicki’s conclusions probably do not fit within any interpretive tradition beyond the trends of extreme reductionism, e.g. in the style of Freud’s digressions on Judaism, (Freud, 1939), or – popular at one time, and rejected today – some ideas of critical theory of religion. Which is a pity, because this theory is certainly not deserving of such treatment, especially when it comes to its usability for describing the Semitic world, i.e. the Jewish, early Christian, and even Muslim. This is an important problem, because Witwicki’s assumptions could explain, and perhaps predict, many phenomena of the religious life of man, his attitude towards himself, his body, his experienced relationship with God and with other people. However, this requires to undertake studies verifying the theory itself, for verification in the form of the discussed psychobiography, is in my opinion not very convincing.

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