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A multimodal perspective on metaphors and metonymies in art:

A case study of the artwork *Agora*
by Magdalena Abakanowicz

Abstract. The article is a semiotic study of the artistic installation *Agora* designed by a famous Polish sculptor Magdalena Abakanowicz, based on the theoretical grounds of Cognitive Semantics. Metaphor and metonymy are conceptual processes whose communicative function is discussed in the paper, in particular, their role in deciphering possible meanings of the artwork. The paper also demonstrates how the multimodal analysis of the verbo-visual material can give rise to diverse interpretations of the figures.

Keywords: cognitive semantics, metaphor, metonymy, art.

Introduction

This paper presents a semiotic analysis of the artwork *Agora* created by a renowned Polish artist – Magdalena Abakanowicz. *Agora* is a sculptural installation, located in Grant Park in Chicago in The United States, and it is one of the biggest figural compositions of the artist. The artwork presents 106 iron figures, with the title inscribed on the plate and attached to the stone that is placed in the vicinity of the sculptures.

In the paper the role of cognitive mechanisms of metonymy and metaphor will be discussed, especially their interaction which can lead to different conceptualisations of the installation. The key elements of the artwork that need to be examined to uncover the possible range of meanings are the missing body parts, the composition, and the cultural context. The proposed semantic analysis is divided into two parts: the external perspective that involves the identification of visual metaphors and metonymies of the figural composition, and a slightly different interpretative scenario that results from combining the verbal and visual modalities – an attempt at identifying the multimodal metaphor.

2. Metaphor in other modalities

Although it has long been acknowledged that metaphorical reasoning is a cognitive process present in daily activities (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3), for a long time, the research areas concerning the study of metaphor focused on the verbal modality only. The analyses of metaphor in the pictorial and verbo-pictorial discourse introduced and developed by Charles Forceville (1996), led to the increased attention of the conceptual mechanism in other non-linguistic forms. The conducted research has covered modalities such as gesture (Müller 2008; Mittelberg and Waugh 2009), and music (Górska 2014; Zbikowski 2009), with a special focus on the meanings expressed by juxtaposing different modalities, such as e.g. verbo-pictorial (Forceville 1996, 2008), and verbo-musical (Górska 2014). Multimodal studies have also been developed in film (Rohdin 2009), TV commercials (Urios-Aparisi 2009), and newspaper cartoons (El Refaie 2009). In this article, the semantic potential of the visual and verbo-visual modalities are discussed and, in particular, the interaction of both codes, whose co-occurrence can affect the interpretation of the artwork.

3. Analysis

3.1. The figural composition



Figure 1. *Agora* by Magdalena Abakanowicz¹

The collection of headless human-like sculptures with enlarged bodies, and long legs that support the disproportionately long corpuses can create an impression that the artistic message of what bodily deformations can manifest is of conceptual significance. From a distance the sight of oversized sculptures clustered on a patch of concrete can evoke an image of a mass gathering, which

¹ The included photographs are from the author's collection.

appears to illustrate how a meaning can be expressed via the change of size. The enlargement seems deliberate, and initially, it may suggest the visual manifestation of the conceptual metaphor MORE OF FORM IS MORE OF CONTENT (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 127), or SIGNIFICANT/IMPORTANT IS BIG (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 50). Kwiatkowska (2013: 79-91) addresses the role of size in visual art, as one of the forms via which a message can be conveyed, especially how it determines the interpretation of art: “Such magnification allows us to see the object in a new light, which may evoke new associations” (Kwiatkowska 2013: 84). The size of sculptures is magnified, and to access the entire view of the figures from a small distance, the observers need to look up to them, and the visual confrontation with objects which are so massive in posture can produce a sense of fragility and weakness on the part of the observers. Such impressions may manifest the metaphorical reasoning BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL or FORCE IS DOWN (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 15).

Metaphor and metonymy form a strong conceptual relation in the artwork *Agora*, as the metonymic interpretation provides the contextual foundations via which different metaphors can be construed. This is visible in the interpretation of the missing body parts, in particular, the missing heads, as all the figures are deprived of them. Conceptualising the head as a source of intellect can be an example of the “internal metonymy” (for the latter see Mittelberg and Waugh 2009: 335) HEAD FOR INTELLECT, which is an example of the metonymic structure in which a body part represents an abstract concept (see Radden and Kövecses 1999: 46). This “conceptual contiguity” (Mittelberg and Waugh 2009: 340) appears crucial in the process of meaning construction, as the head naturally motivates the CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED metonymy (Kövecses 2002: 156). By entailment, the headless figures can evoke the opposite meaning, such as: LACK OF HEAD FOR LACK OF INTELLECT. The source domain of the metonymy – HEADS is visually absent, and it refers to the abstract target – INTELLECT. Thus, the interpretation of the headless gathering as lacking intellect, or reasoning is arrived at via the metonymic basis. The conceptualisation is also based on the CONTAINER image schema (see Johnson 1987: 22), which structures THE MIND IS A CONTAINER metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 214).²

Thus, the meaning of the headless figures as manifesting intellectual deficiencies, can dominate in the interpretation. Another conspicuous element in the installation is the visual absence of faces which can indicate an array of meanings as well. First, the face – an indispensable body part involved in a direct act of verbal communication – is not present, which is yet another factor that reinforces the sense of lost ability to communicate and alienation. This property appears important in the context of the artwork, as positioning of the figures in close proximity to each other implies a communicative intention of the gathering. The lack of faces may also signify the lack of individuality, and uniqueness, and the conceptual metonymy in terms of which the meaning can be construct-

² The metaphor has numerous linguistic realizations, such as: “What put that (idea) into your head (= What made you think that)?”, “Use your head (= Think more carefully)!” The examples are from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 653. It should also be noted that in other cultures the head can signal other meanings, e.g. in Tunisian Arabic (see Maalej 2014).

ed is THE FACE FOR THE PERSON (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 37),³ which is an instantiation of A PART FOR WHOLE metonymy (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 36). Therefore, the absence of face can add another aspect of meaning to the interpretation of the depicted contemporary *Agora*, implying anonymity in the crowd, or lack of individuality that results from a double metonymic reading: LACK OF FACE FOR LACK OF INDIVIDUALITY, or LACK OF FACE FOR ANONYMITY.

Other elements of the installation can also reflect particular dysfunctions of human abilities, and they appear to be demonstrated through the missing arms/hands. Arms and hands are typically associated with their physical function, such as grasping, holding objects and also gesturing in communication.⁴ All statues are deprived of these body parts, and this may trigger metonymic reasoning in terms of which the visually inaccessible metonymic source – the hand evokes an activity performed with it, i.e. the metonymy THE HAND STANDS FOR THE ACTIVITY/SKILL (Kövecses 2002: 207).⁵ This metonymic reasoning can be analyzed in terms of the “external metonymy” (Mittelberg and Waugh 2009: 334), and at the same time it is an example of the INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION metonymy (Kövecses 2002: 145).

The absence of hands and arms in the context of the mass gathering may also suggest a failed attempt to build a relation, which implies a strong activation of the LINK image schema (see Johnson 1987: 117). Therefore, the missing limbs can lead to a number of interpretations based on the conceptual mechanism of metonymy such as: LACK OF HANDS FOR LACK OF SKILLS, or LACK OF HANDS FOR LACK OF COOPERATION. Since the lack of the indispensable body parts evokes the lack of mental and physical functions they perform, such metonymic references may imply dysfunctional human relations.

The CONTAINER image-schema (see Johnson 1987: 22), significantly contributes to the meaning of the fleshless statues. A notable element of the sculptural forms is that from the back the casts resemble empty insides, which can give rise to various metaphorical interpretations. According to Kövecses (1990), different emotion concepts are expressed via reference to particular bodily organs which manifests THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR THE EMOTIONS metaphor (Kövecses 1990: 122).⁶ The metaphor has culture-specific realizations, as particular body organs can communicate various emotions, which, in the context of the considered artwork, can be a starting point in the interpretation of the artwork. In Western culture, the heart is considered to

3 The metonymy is often used in language, e.g.: “I was greeted by smiling faces” The example is from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 490.

4 Understanding of this body part is also culture-specific and can manifest a number of other meanings, e.g. in Tunisian Arabic (see Maalej 2014).

5 The metonymy is frequently employed in language: “All these toys are made by hand”, “Rosie, remember you should always hold my hand when we cross the road”. The examples are from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 640.

6 This is a general metaphor which has metonymic basis, e.g. “He got *butterflies in the stomach*” – the bodily organ metonymically evokes a sense of fear and anxiety via the physical location of the emotions. The example is from Kövecses (1990: 72).

be an organ with which a number of emotions is associated, and the feeling of love in particular, and the mention of the bodily organ metonymically evokes the feeling.⁷ A different line of reasoning may adopt an individual who speaks, for example, Swahili, in which the heart is also regarded as the physical location of bravery and enthusiasm (see Kraska-Szlenk 2014: 56-57, 65-66; see also Kraska-Szlenk 2005: 162-166). Yet another conceptualisation of the heart is characteristic of Chinese (see Yu 2009), in which the heart is considered to be an origin of human mental skills (see Yu 2009: 126). Thus, for viewers representing different cultural backgrounds, the empty figures deprived of their organs may signal a lost value of different emotions and features that determine life of an individual, which, in turn, may lead to diverse interpretations of the artwork.

The physical organization of the statues also appears symbolic in this artwork, and elements such as the position of the sculptures and the figural composition can affect the interpretation. According to Feng and O'Halloran (2013), the object of conceptualisation often attracts more attention than the visual context: “cognitive studies of visual metaphor mostly focus on *what* is in the image, instead of *how* the image is represented” (Feng and O'Halloran 2013: 329). In the considered artwork, compositional factors such as the arrangement and orientation of the statues can be particularly important in the process of interpretation. At a distance, the installation looks like a huge gathering, however, on approaching it, the sculptures are at a particular distance from each other, and depicted as if following individuated paths. The spaces between them can mark an individuated existence and be indicative of a distance, either emotional or social/cultural, which can motivate the metaphor AN EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP IS A DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO ENTITIES (Kövecses 2000: 92), and the primary metaphor INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS (Grady 1997: 13; see also Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 50).



Figure 2. *Agora* by Magdalena Abakanowicz

⁷ Such examples are commonly used in language: “He broke her heart (= made her very sad) when he left her for another woman”, “I love you with all my heart (= very much)”. The examples are from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 656.

Bodily reactions are visual illustrators of various emotional states (see Kövecses 2000), and the manner of communication is usually reflected by the distance maintained in the physical space. Kövecses (2000: 26) also emphasizes the significance of proximity as an important source concept in metaphorical construals which describe love relationships.

This is in line with Lakoff and Johnson (1999), who also point to the fact that “our bodies define a set of fundamental spatial orientations that we use not only in orienting ourselves, but in perceiving the relationship of one object to another” (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 34). The physical distance between the statues and their specific positioning can be used metaphorically to imply emotional states or social affiliation, which opens doors to particular metaphorical construals such as: LACK OF EMOTIONAL BONDS/SOCIAL AFFILIATION IS WALKING AN INDIVIDUATED PATH, or ANONYMITY/LACK OF CULTURAL BELONGING IS WALKING IN DIVERSE DIRECTIONS. Bodily orientation of the statues is another important element in the process of interpretation. Regardless of the compacted form of the installation, the lateral or opposite-body orientation of the sculptures can manifest the lack of interest and this can be analyzed in terms of the metaphor LACK OF INTEREST IS THE LATERAL/OPPOSITE BODY ORIENTATION.

The location of *Agora* – the City of Chicago which is famous for the inflow of emigrants can be regarded as the contextual frame for the interpretation of the artwork. Since emotional bonds and the same cultural backgrounds are usually associated with closeness and togetherness, different bodily orientations of the statues depicted in the walking pose can also reflect the lack of cultural belonging, anonymity in a big city, or a sense of alienation experienced by newcomers who seek good fortune in the metropolis. The spatial organization of statues is very dynamic, manifesting directionality and motion, and the whole composition can be understood as a fraction of a scene, as if a photograph was taken to capture a moment of a fast unfolding action. Thus, the visual composition can also be a manifestation of the primary metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 61). The sculptures create an impression as if (they were) traversing individuated paths towards a particular destination, where the PATH image schema (see Johnson 1987: 114) structures the complex metaphor A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 60).

3.2. Integrating the visual and the verbal mode

Despite a rich array of metaphorical construals based on the missing body parts and the physical organization of the statues, the interpretations may vary depending on whether the viewer is familiar with the title or not. Not seeing the name *Agora*, or without being aware of what it signifies, the viewer will simply attempt at deciphering the meaning behind the spatial organization of statues and their missing body parts. On recognizing the sense of the title, the visual composition, as a whole, can also serve as an instantiation of a multimodal metaphor (for the latter see Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 4), where the integration of two different domains leads to a new interpretative form. The knowledge of what the title can activate is a necessary prerequisite to analyse the artwork

from the multimodal perspective. In that case, the meaning of the title *Agora* can provide an organizing frame in a multimodal analysis of Abakanowicz's artwork, as it introduces the other (verbal) modality and activates the transfer of properties between the headless gathering and the title.

The name *Agora* is of Greek origin,⁸ and it means a place where people used to meet to discuss important issues in politics, art and society, and the title of the artwork can be motivated by THE PLACE FOR THE EVENT metonymy (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 39). Thus, for a history-conscious viewer the historical reference of the title *Agora* can naturally cause the transfer of properties from the verbal modality presented by the title – *Agora*, onto the visual modality presented by the human-like statues. The selection of relevant aspects activated by the Greek *Agora* such as: human gathering, intellectual disputes and philosophical discussions are the salient properties for which the Ancient *Agora* was famous. When these aspects are mapped onto the visual modality – the deformed human bodies, a new conceptualisation is possible.

At the same time, the statues depicted as following individuated paths can provide contrast with the most essential feature of the Ancient *Agora*, which was the meeting place. The distance between the figures positioned as if travelling towards different destinations/locations can be understood as a visual representation of the fact that the contemporary *Agora* is no longer a meeting place. This conceptualisation may also imply the concept of loneliness and alienation in a crowd, as the individuated paths and the relative distance between the sculptures may be indicative of a failed attempt to become part of a larger community.

The title may also have a role of “anchorage” (Barthes 1977: 38), as it narrows down the range of interpretations of the figures by identifying their meaning via transferring certain properties of the original meaning of *Agora* onto the sculptures. Removing the verbal component – the title *Agora*, would inevitably affect the metaphorical reading of the artwork, as a different meaning is demonstrated through the visual modality and the one expressed verbally. The two modalities are combined together through the integration of the whole visual context; the historical name *Agora* and the headless statues. It can be assumed that the juxtaposition of the title of the artwork – *Agora*, signalled by the verbal modality, and the sculptures – the visual modality, can be analyzed as a multiple space model in a dynamic meaning creation.

The contiguity relation between the metonymic vehicle and target is of particular significance here; the title *Agora* is the perceivable metonymic vehicle that may provide the point of access to the metonymic target that is the ancient meeting place: AGORA FOR THE MEETING PLACE. Aspects of the Ancient *Agora* which can be evoked via the title, such as intellectual meetings are mapped onto the contemporary installation providing grounds for the metaphorical interpretation of the artwork. The selective mapping of aspects from the title onto the figural composition may give rise to an emergent metaphorical construal which can be rendered as: MODERN AGORA IS A HEADLESS CROWD OF PEOPLE MOVING IN DIVERSE DIRECTIONS.

⁸ See <https://www.britannica.com/topic/agora> (accessed: 22.04.2017).

4. Conclusion

The article discusses the communicative function of verbo-visual metaphors and metonymies in the interpretation of the piece of art *Agora* by Magdalena Abakanowicz. These conceptual mechanisms are employed to analyze the artistic message conveyed in the sculptural installation. The interaction of metaphor and metonymy is examined, especially how the semantic potential of this interplay can result in different interpretative forms. A multimodal perspective is also presented through analysing the semantic content that is expressed by two different modalities. It is claimed that the figural composition may involve different meanings, which can be identified via the conceptual processes that facilitate a better understanding of the artwork.

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Race, space and post- -colonial landscape in Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants*

Abstract. The following article presents strategies for decolonizing complex ethno-racial and social relationships between Jewish and black characters within a restricted, multifaceted area of a decaying tenement in Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants*. This interpretation is concerned with finding features of post-colonial discourse such as the representation of the characters in dichotomous terms: the colonized/colonizer, the observed/the observer, superior/inferior. It focuses on the analysis of the main characters' different methods of dominating the 'space or subjectivity' of each other through surveillance, mimicry and appropriation.

Keywords: stereotype, power, space, colonized, colonizer, writing, Jews, African-Americans.

Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants* is one of the most recognizable and insightful literary cross-studies of relationships between Jews and African-Americans. The novel unveils a competitive nature of the relationships between the representatives of those groups and presents the nomadic lifestyle of the characters in a hostile dilapidated tenement. The decayed house inhabited by two writers: Harry Lesser and Willie Spearment, Jewish and African-American respectively, is not only a contested space challenging the idea of multiculturalism in America, but as this article is going to demonstrate, the tenement becomes a post-colonial space. The aim of the article is to suggest an alternate reading which intends to find the features of post-colonial discourse in *The Tenants* by pointing at the representation of the characters in dichotomous terms: the colonized/colonizer, the observed/ the observer, superior/inferior. In what follows, I will present the writers' tenement as the space of encounter between the colonized and the colonizer, and subsequently depict their relationships in terms of "spatialized" quality with regard to the social and racial order. For the purpose of this analysis, I will borrow John Kenneth Noyes's term of "spatializing practices" which may be attributed to the characters' attitudes. The notion is based on de Certeau's belief that every "space is a practiced place" (qtd in Noyes 1992: 11). In *Colonial Space: Spatiality in the Discourse of German Southwest-Africa 1884-1915*, Noyes investigates the significance of space in establishing and maintaining imperialist order as well as the relevance of territory as the building block in

the colonization process of Africa. He claims that his research is not so much concerned with the socio-historical aspect of this territory. In terms of content, his work can be treated as a continuation of Frantz Fanon's and Edward Said's studies.

In this article, I would like to argue that the mindscapes of both writers seem to be externalized through various forms of post-colonial stereotyping, such as discriminatory spoken and written language as well as socially construed racial practices. Not only will Willie's manuscript be interpreted as Bhabha's colonial symbol of desire and hatred at the same time, but Lesser's attempt at improving Willie's manuscript is, in my interpretation, perceived by Willie as an attempt at colonizing his mind/writing. This reading explores the strategies for decolonizing complex ethno-racial and social relationships between Jewish and black characters within a restricted, multifaceted area of a decaying tenement in *The Tenants*. The article focuses on the analysis of the main characters' different strategies of dominating the 'space or subjectivity' of each other through surveillance, mimicry and appropriation. I will support my point of view with Homi Bhabha's concepts.

At first, Lesser comes upon Willie after being lured by the sound of Willie's typing machine in one of the derelict flats in the tenement where Lesser rents an apartment from another Jew, Levenspiel. Lesser approaches Willie from behind:

In Holzheimer's flat former kitchen, facing the wintry windows, sat a black man at a wooden kitchen table, typing, his back to Lesser. (...)

The man, head bowed in concentration, oblivious of Lesser, typed energetically with two thick fingers. Harry though impatient to be at his work, waited, experiencing at least two emotions: embarrassment for intruding; anger at the black intruder. (...) The black must have known someone was standing there because the open door created a draught and once Lesser sneezed; but he did not turn to look at him or whoever. He typed in serious concentration, each word slowly thought out, then hacked on to paper with piston-like jabs of his stubby, big-knuckled fingers. The room shook with his noise. This endured for five full minutes as Lesser fumed. When the typist turned his head, a goateed man, darkly black-skinned, there seemed in his large liquid eyes poised in suspension as he stared at the writer a detachment so pure it menaced; at the same time a suggestion of fright Lesser felt reflected Lesser's. (Malamud 1972: 26- 27)

In the foregoing scene, the narrator makes a clear distinction between the observed, Willie, who is "oblivious of Lesser," and Lesser, who is the angry observer of the "black intruder." Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note that:

[o]ne of the most powerful strategies of imperial dominance is that of surveillance, or observation, because it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen, and it objectifies and interpellates the colonized subject in a way that it fixes its identity in relation to the surveyor.

(..) For the observer, sight confers power; for the observed, visibility is powerlessness. (2007: 207)

The fact that Lesser is depicted as the observer during the first encounter with Willie imposes the assumption that Lesser is the one who "confers power." Willie metamorphoses into the object of Lesser's colonial surveillance, and his writing, observed by Lesser, becomes enviable. From this

time on, Willie, “the black intruder” is subjected to the “competitive envy” as Lesser admits that he is also a fellow writer struggling to finish his third novel (Malamud 1972: 26). What is more, through a further condescending statement “I am an expert of writing” Lesser also imposes authority over the fellow novice black writer (Malamud 1972: 33). Steve Martinot points out that “race begins with power and never stops making reference back to the power” (2007: 6). Lesser’s statement of being an “expert of writing” is one of many manifestations of Lesser’s position of power and dominance which one may see throughout the novel. Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge rightly observe that since “writing is power” in colonial discourse, then “the pen, metonymically, is the displaced colonial phallus seeking a fulfillment of desire in its relationship with the absent Other” (1994: 283). In *The Tenants* the imperialist dominance seems to be displaced into the competition in writing between Lesser and Willie. Lesser “wants his pen to turn stone into sunlight, a language into fire” (Malamud 1972: 141). The pen is a means by which Lesser seeks to fight and maintain the racial and social order of the world he lives in. Willie contests Lesser’s ambition of dominance in the field of writing to the same extent to which he calls into question social or racial order in the novel. Willie’s act of crossing over Lesser’s direct space of living is a similar act of usurping power.

When Lesser examines Willie’s identity and his surroundings during their first encounter, he is quick to notice Willie’s “soiled manuscript” which gave “an unpleasant odour” (Malamud 1972: 28). Lesser also wonders whether “the sulphurous smell came from the manuscript or the feet on the floor” (28). He morally codifies Willie’s manuscript and Willie himself as evil-like. The scent of sulphur is apparently Biblical as one can read about the devil which was thrown into “the lake of burning sulfur” in the Book of Revelation (20: 10). According to George Yancy, “seeing” is “knowing” what one really is (Yancy 2005:13). In this case “smelling” Willie means getting to know him, ascribing evil to him. The first encounter between Willie and Lesser is indicative of their mutual distrust. Lesser’s disappointment at the fact that Willie does not extend his hand to greet Lesser for the first time is summed up by the third-person limited-omniscient narrator’s remark: “That wasn’t in the Fourteenth Amendment” (Malamud 1972: 30). It suggests that Lesser racializes Willie’s behavior inwardly just as much as Willie racializes Lesser outwardly. Neither of them can escape their mutually inclusive racialization.

1. Noyes’s “spatialized practices” of *The Tenants*

The main characters, Willie and Lesser are literally space-oriented: Lesser occupies the apartment on the fifth floor of the tenement whereas Willie, who is looking for a space to explore his imagination through writing, at first finds a table in the cellar, but then decides to move upstairs due to the lack of light in the cellar. The decayed tenement can metaphorically be interpreted as a microcosm for America in the 1960s with “an almost white” Jewish representative who is significantly higher in the racial hierarchy than his African American friend; and a black representative at the bottom trying to advance in this hierarchy. Lesser describes himself as an only “legal paying tenant” as opposed to Willie who is a squatter in an old building (Malamud 1972: 152).

Foucault states that “space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power” (qtd. in Noyes 1992: 15). The main characters of *The Tenants* may be attributed so called “spatializing practices” which “produce a field of subjectivity as a totalization of diverse positions within a social domain” (Noyes 1992: 20) as both characters in the novel occupy significantly different positions in terms of social and racial order. Willie and Lesser project a certain meaningful model of “spatiality” which allows their “subjectivity to be understood as a socially activated representation” (Noyes 1992: 11). The “socially activated representation” of a black Willie vis á vis a white Jew takes various forms. They range from a black militant activist showing openly his disdain for white Jews, and expressing his anger at whites to the views of a past drug-addict. Willie insults Lesser and his Jewish landlord Levenspiel using various invectives such as “Fartn Jew Slumlord” or “Bloodsucking Jew NiggerHater” (Malamud 1972: 36, 173). The “socially activated representation” of a white Jew, Lesser, in interaction with a black character, is that of a successful writer, mentor, preacher and advisor to Willie. The representation of the two characters is highly stereotypical and one-dimensional. The way in which Willie’s and Lesser’s subjectivity is narrated/seen adheres to Bhabha’s claim that the stereotype is “the primary point of subjectification in colonial discourse, (...) it’s the scene of a similar fantasy and defence” (2004: 107). Bhabha goes further arguing that “the stereotype is not a simplification, because it is a false representation of a given reality” (2004: 107). This false representation turns Willie into the above described degenerate, misfit, an aggressive rebel. Willie’s negative attitudes fulfill the colonialist conditions of Bhabha’s claim that “the stereotype requires, for its successful signification, a continual and repetitive chain of other stereotypes” (Bhabha 2004:110). Willie’s representation as a primitive, abusive, hyper-sexual black writer perpetuates a myth around “black problem” or black “inferiority,” and it becomes Yancy’s “dialectics of mis-recognition” of Blackness by whites (Yancy 2005: 36). However, whiteness itself also undergoes the same process of “mis-recognition” or mis-representation. The depiction of Lesser as a mentor and advisor, “man of habit, order, steady disciplined work” is consciously schematized and ennobled (Malamud 1972:140). It is worth mentioning that one of the black characters, Jacob 32, who is present at the party organized by Willie announces to Lesser that “you see us wrong and you see yourself wrong” (Malamud 1972: 101). He accuses Lesser of using the matrix of clichés through which he sees whiteness and blackness. Willie and Lesser incarnate into George Yancy’s “prisoners” of historically determined myths and fantasies around blacks and whites – they become the prisoners of “historically inherited imaginary” (Yancy 2005: 20). Lesser’s anchoring in “historically inherited imaginary” is corroborated by his continuous remarks about the Jewish past and the references to the glory days of the Israeli people. Lesser compares himself to “King David with his six-string” (Malamud 1972: 42).

2. Post-colonial matrix of clichés

Although the tenants try to maintain an amicable relationship with each other, they tend to push the boundaries of decent behavior every time they spend some time together. In a dream-like

situation, Willie and Lesser sit in the kitchen smoking hashish. The hashish serves as a medium to reveal the subconscious of both writers, who enter into a provocative conversation. In this talk, Willie directly accuses Lesser of trying to steal his “manhood.” Willie states that “I know you are trying to steal my manhood. I don’t go for that circumcise schmuck stuff. The Jews got to keep us bloods stayin weak so you can take everything for yourself” (Malamud 1972: 43). While Willie’s fetishistic sexuality may be enviable to Lesser, his humanity is reduced only to his sexuality. Lesser retaliates through stating that “If you are an artist you can’t be a nigger, Willie” (Malamud 1972: 44). Lesser ostentatiously devalues Willie’s artistic potency and thereby deprives him of the right to mediate his black artistic soul. Lesser’s preconceptions of black people are rooted in Fanon’s “negating activity” in *White Skins, Black Masks*. What Lesser sees in Willie is his blackness and according to Fanon “Wherever he goes, the Negro becomes a Negro” (Fanon 1986: 173). Lesser believes that a black person *cannot be* anyone more than a mere black person. This process of Lesser’s negation of Willie’s black artistic soul as well as Willies’ identification of his fetishistic “manhood” are a part of more ambivalent dramatized colonial scenario. In this scenario “stereotyping is not the setting up of a false image which becomes the scapegoat of discriminatory practices. It is a much more ambivalent text of projection and introjection, metaphoric and metonymic strategies, displacement, over-determination, guilt, aggressivity; the masking and splitting of ‘official’ and phantasmatic knowledges to construct the positionalities and oppositionalities of racist discourse” (Bhabha 2004: 117).

The phantasmagoric representations of the characters’ positionalities in *The Tenants* is best achieved through the use of the abovementioned strategies of projections, “displacement” as well as “metaphoric and metonymic strategies.” In the described scene, Willie feels displaced into the symbol of phallus whereas Lesser is accused of masking his slyness and predatory intentions, trying to castrate Willie. Willie, being a kind of the Black Arts Movement supporter, projects his own open aggressivity on Lesser.

3. Post-colonial discourse

This game of out-insulting each other not only lays bare the truth about the essence of their relationship but it also stresses the importance of communication and language itself. Noyes observes that “language preserves traces of space which has been elided in the establishment of the colonial territory. Language preserves these traces so effectively because it not only describes, but actually participates in the physical acts of colonization” (Noyes 1992: 12). Willie and Lesser try to exert their power through various strategies of control such as surveillance, discriminatory language or competition in writing. When Willie asks Lesser to read his manuscript, Lesser unwillingly agrees thinking however that “[w]riters helped writers. Up to a point. *His* writing came first” (Malamud 1972: 46). After having read the manuscript, Lesser advises Willie to concentrate more on the technique and the form of writing as he claims that: “there has to be more emphasis on technique, form, though I know it’s not stylish to say that. You’ve got to build more carefully” (Malamud

1972: 59). He also suggests that Willie's falling short of "effective form" results in a fact that "there is no order or maybe no meaning" in Willie's writing (Malamud 1972: 61).

Willie replies as follows: "No ofay motherfucker can put himself in *my* place. This is a *black* book we talkin about that you don't understand at all. White fiction ain't the same as *black*. It can't be. (...) It ain't universal if that's what you are hintin up to" (Malamud 1972: 60). Lesser regards Willie's writing as imaginative but very self-focused, anti-normative and non-narrative. For if Willie's writing is chaotic and "universal" in Lesser's view, it is liberating and consciously different from "white writing" in Willie's view. Willie opposes the idea of universalizing art as well as he does not fully comprehend Lesser's obsession with the "form." Willie perceives it as a means of homogenizing art, colonizing the art. He interprets it as a violent act of colonizing himself because he states "You want to know what's really art? Willie Spearmint, *black* man. My form is *myself*" (Malamud 1992: 61). Willie identifies Lesser's attempt at changing the form of his writing as an attempt at manipulating his own subjectivity, an attempt at killing his individuality and uniqueness. Willie tries to polish his writing through improving grammar and memorizing some sophisticated phrases from the dictionary however he discovers that "it killed the life out of language and [he] never referred to it again" (Malamud 1972: 69).

3.1 Appropriation

Willie's writing first undergoes the process of appropriation which can be defined as taking over "those aspects of the imperial culture – language, forms of writing (...), even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis – that may be of use to them [post-colonial societies] in articulating their own social and cultural identities" (Ashcroft et al 2007: 15). However, he quickly decides to reject the standards of correctness and his rejection of "Standard English" is referred to by a post-colonial term of "abrogation." Although Lesser's tips on Willie's writing style are rejected, Lesser presents them as a prevailing norm. Standard English embodies the normative and totalizing power of "the colonizer" in relation to "the colonized" – Willie and his marginalized lingo. Yancy claims that the main feature of whiteness is the "self constructed centrality" (Yancy 2005: 16). Standard English functions as a metonymic expression for whiteness itself. Willie delegitimizes this centrality of Standard English, thus the centrality of whiteness. Alfred Arteaga observes that "The marginal Other autocolonizes himself and herself each time the hegemonic discourse is articulated. The utterance of English (...) reinforces daily the colonizer's presence in the heart of the colonized" (1997: 76). In *The Tenants* the use of Standard English reinforces Lesser's position of power – his being in the position of the colonizer.

3.2 Homogeneity and Mimicry

Furthermore, Willie negates the universal merit of his fiction as it reflects his fear of making it featureless and homogeneous. Noyes observes that "colonial discourse must construct a boundless, featureless, homogeneous space which may serve as the stage upon which colonial desire may produce fantasies. Because of this, the even stronger necessity of establishing a rigid spatial or-

der within the colony gives rise to a conflict within the representational mode” (1992: 182). Since Lesser insists on this rigid unchangeable way of discourse, this produces what Bhabha calls “the regime of truth,” Lesser’s white regime of truth (Bhabha 2004: 101). Lesser encourages Willie to mimic white standards of writing. Willie opposes a regime that has a homogenous predictable way of discourse. Bhabha describes an imperialist regime as “*non-dialogic*, its enunciation *unitary*, unmarked by the trace of difference” (2004: 165). What characterizes Willie’s writing, according to Lesser, is just the converse of a unitary style of discourse: Willie’s writing bears the traces of a “shifting” narrative (Malamud 1972: 58). Lesser’s “regime of truth” is extended beyond the English language and the writers’ manuscripts. Eric Sundquist (2005: 406) points out that “Lesser’s identity is subsumed tautologically into the role of author – “Lesser writes his book and his book writes Lesser” –even to the point of haunting personification wherein the author evaporates and the house of fiction itself assumes authorial consciousness: “There’s his abandoned book on his desk being read by the room.””(Malamud 1972: 151). In this way, Lesser’s white authorial consciousness leaks out, being absorbed by the room and then it is amalgamated into the structure of the decayed tenement. As Lesser’s consciousness of the colonizer is equated with the consciousness of the house, the decaying house encompasses Lesser’s authoritarian and haunting racist system of values. The house traps both Lesser and Willie within its stereotypical framework.

After having received negative comments from Lesser, Willie starts a new novel in which he remakes fictional characters from his previous literary works of art. In his new novel, he decides to use the literary technique of the stream of consciousness disrupting traditional linear narrative and conventional patterns of storytelling. Thereby he decolonizes his writing not only through the use of lingo and experimental stream of consciousness, but mainly through his constant act of re-invention of his exaggerated fictional characters as well as through a seemingly nonsensical “shifting” plot which is full of repetitions. His writing may be treated as a kind of counter-discourse to white Western ways of narration. Likewise his fictional characters, in real life Willie “changes his birthplace every time he talks about it” (Malamud 1972: 91). Willie’s continual creative re-making of himself is a conscious act of performing identity, exercising his agency, it is a symbol of his empowerment. It is a means of re-claiming the position of power. Bhabha, drawing on Fanon, observes that the most important colonial “space of intervention” is the “re-creation of the self in the world of travel” (2004: 12). Similarly, Willie’s act of celebrating his nakedness as he works on the manuscript being completely nude is interpreted by Lesser as a mysterious act of “asserting the power of his blackness” (1972: 127).

On the other hand, Lesser who has been struggling to finish his third novel and perfecting its possible endings for many years, seems to be preoccupied with the sterility and safety of the manuscript which is kept in the box:

Each week, for years, he had placed a copy of the week’s work in a safety-deposit box in a bank on Second Avenue. The box also contained a copy of the first draft of the novel Lesser had been rewriting with unutterably high expectations. Nearing the end of his last draft he had removed the carbon of it from the

box to have on hand when he wrote the last word and was ready to note final corrections on both copies, one for the publishers, one for himself. (Malamud 1972: 136)

In a post-colonial context, Lesser's obsession with keeping his draft sterile, pure and safe in the box may evoke the laws of preserving racial purity in the Jim Crow Era. Samira Kawash aptly observes that "whiteness sustains its own boundedness and exclusiveness by insisting on its own purity and projecting all impurity on blackness" (1997: 151). However, as Lesser's manuscript of the novel is later burned to ashes by Willie in revenge for Lesser's secret affair with Willie's girlfriend, Irene, it may be assumed that the destruction of Jewish manuscript has a broader agenda. Budick comments on this excerpt that "Jewish American achievement may have programmed itself for disappearance" (1998: 16). I would suggest that it is as if whiteness itself through its separatist attitude of not sharing its power and privileges with other ethnic minorities programs itself for annihilation.

This hallucinatory world of misrepresentations and fantasies is best illustrated through the metaphor of a maddening wallpaper in Holzheimer's flat depicting enormous trees as well as "dense ferny underbrush, grasses sharp as razor blades" (Malamud 1972: 15). The description of Holzheimer's "deadly jungle" on the wallpaper foreshadows the final scene in which the two characters take part in a symbolic deadly battle amidst "a grassy clearing in the bush" (Malamud 1972: 173). The surrealistic clash of the characters in the final scene is a result of the continual rift within the colonial frame, within the space of colonial representation of Willie and Lesser, "the representation of the subject[s] in the differentiating order of otherness" (Bhabha 2004: 64).

Conclusion

Although most critics regard the ending of the novel as doomed, leaving no hope for reconciliation between African-Americans and Jews, an unexpected appearance of Levenspiel shouting "mercy" in the final scene can tip the balance towards less radical interpretation of the novel's ending (Malamud 1972: 173). The ending of *The Tenants* attempts at invalidating all those colonialist myths iterated throughout the novel in a way that it does not give a consent to authorize the stereotypical representation of African-Americans and Jews. In fact, the novel turns out to have an anti-colonial overtone despite its seemingly colonial representation of the characters. The brutal duel with axes sinking through Willie's "bone and brain" and Lesser's "balls" symbolizes the violation of post-colonial representational order of social relationships and the subsequent way of stereotyping (Malamud 1972: 173). The axes come in-between the linguistic encapsulations of post-colonial stereotyping: "Bloodsuckin Jew Niggerhater" versus "Anti-Semitic Ape" (Malamud 1972:173). The ending symbolizes getting to the core of the tensions of identity politics. Interestingly enough, it is a white Jewish character Levenspiel who calls for "mercy" at the end of the novel.

"Spatialized practices" of Harry Lesser and Willie, which are symptomatic of a post-colonial microcosm in *The Tenants*, are the driving force towards the dramatic climax in the novel. They effectively reflect Malamud's hidden agenda with regard to the highly racialized representation

of the characters' mindscapes and the novel's landscape. They are suggestive of deeply ingrained stereotyping in the colonization processes. They also uncover other subtleties of the post-colonial mechanisms of surveillance, mimicry and appropriation. However, taking into consideration the ending of the *Tenants* as well as the hints dropped throughout the novel (a repeated statement: "the end") it may be assumed that the whole dynamics of the narrative reverberates with a strong anti-colonial and counter-stereotypic message (Malamud 1972: 23).

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Why is Kwame Anthony Appiah's proposal to dismiss the concept of "The West" premature?

Abstract. This paper is a response to Kwame A. Appiah's article "There is no such thing as western civilisation" published in *The Guardian* of 9 November 2016. Appiah's proposal to dismiss the term 'western civilisation' seems premature since it is strongly established in the humanities and social sciences. Discussing selected models representing systems of civilisations (Spengler, Koneczny, Toynbee, Huntington) as well as Fernand Braudel's concept of *longue durée* history, this paper demonstrates the importance of the term 'western civilisation' in academic and political discourses. Moreover, referring to post-colonial studies, it is impossible to avoid the term because without it, any discussion on the colonial and post-colonial reality would be devoid of substance.

Keywords: the west, western culture, western civilisation, civilisation, term.

Introduction

The terms "western culture", "western world" or just "the west"⁹ are often intuitively accepted without much consideration. "The west" is taken for granted, even though the connotations it evokes may result in a large spectrum of emotions: from pride and admiration to bitter criticism and even outrage. Surprisingly, it is not easy to find a clear definition of the term. Even studies dedicated to the western civilisation evade concise definitions, instead informing readers how to understand the concept. An attempt at such a brief clarification has been made by Gregory S. Brown:

What do we mean by "the West"? Though the West is defined primarily by its physical borders, the term denotes more than a geographical location. For our purposes, the West refers to the peoples and territories of Europe and the lands of the Americas and antipodes (i.e., Australia and New Zealand) settled by Europeans. The territorial heart of the West comprises those lands west of the Ural Mountains (which are traditionally considered the dividing line between Europe and Asia), and the area extending from

⁹ Throughout the article the terms "west" and "western" are not capitalized, in accordance with Appiah's spelling, except quotations of other authors.

Norway in the north to the southern tip of Spain, and to the Turkish border in the southeast. The West generally corresponds to what was once called Christendom. (Brown online n.p.)

Brown emphasises that the west does not only refer to “the peoples and the territories” but it is also “a cultural concept”, comprising a set of values which have developed over the centuries. The cultural elements of the west which he identifies include:

monotheism – the belief in one god, the basis of the Judeo-Christian Tradition (although other major non-Western religions, such as Islam, are also monotheistic)
 separation of political and spiritual authority – often called the separation of Church and State
 empirical investigation and mathematical explanation of the material world, formerly known as “natural philosophy,” now referred to as “science”
 confidence in the capacity of science and technology to transform the human environment, and a general belief in progress based on rational thought (though this confidence has been qualified in recent years by the increasing evidence of human-caused damage to the environment)
 respect for human rights, such as freedom of worship, freedom of expression, and the rule of law (although these rights were extended slowly to different segments of the population)
 codification of political rights, such as the right to enjoy representative government, freedom of assembly, equality before the law, and the right to vote (although these were also gradually accorded to minorities, women, people of color, and the landless)
 a high value on the sanctity of private life, family, and free economic activity, observable in the right to freely accumulate and transfer property without intrusive regulation by political authorities. (Brown online n.p.)

Brown notes that these values developed gradually, in different historical periods. “For example, faith in science emerged in the 17th century, the emphasis on tolerance only in some countries in the 17th century, the idea of human rights and rights of privacy in the 18th century, and the belief in progress and universal political rights not until the 19th century” (Brown online n.p.). The west is, thus, a historical and cultural construct.

The term “western civilisation” is so rooted in the language of present day humanities that hardly anyone sees controversy in, for example, the 9th edition of Jackson J. Spielvogel’s *Western Civilization: A Brief History* (2015), or in several other books with “western civilization” in the title. Arthur Hertzberg and other authors of the entry on Judaism in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2017) discuss “Western philosophy”, “Western Europe”, “Western education” and “Western culture” with no attempt to define them. Moreover, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* itself has no such entry as “the west” or “western civilisation”. Bearing in mind the established status of the term which seems so obvious that hardly anyone has bothered to fully define it, Appiah’s proposal of its cessation, appears both thought-provoking and controversial.

Kwame Anthony Appiah (born in London, 1954) is a Professor of Philosophy and Law at New York University, Laurance S. Rockefeller University Professor of Philosophy, the University Center for Human Values Emeritus at Princeton University, and an Honorary Fellow of Clare College at the University of Cambridge. His wide interests include such fields as the philosophy of language

and African and African-American literary and cultural studies. Among his publications is *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006), where, among other things, he attempts to propose the ways to reconcile respect for cultural differences with the condemnation of atrocious social practices. In October and November 2017, the BBC will broadcast a series of lectures given by Appiah, entitled “Mistaken Identities” (www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles), which illustrate his most recent area of research.

In his article “There is no such thing as western civilisation”, which is an edited version of his BBC Reith lecture recently published in *The Guardian* (9 Nov 2016), Appiah posits the elimination of the term “western civilisation” from public discourse. Notwithstanding the ideological purpose behind this proposal, its implementation seems highly challenging, if feasible at all, since, as a term taken from geography, it must recur whenever that part of Europe is mentioned, or when Europe is perceived from the perspective of Asia. Moreover, this geographic concept is so strongly embedded in academic discourse of history and social sciences, that eliminating it would result in a considerable terminological problem.

Appiah is not the only author who doubts in the validity of “the west” as an intellectual concept. Even those American academicians who teach courses on western civilization seem far from treating it as a concrete entity and a source of identity. On the contrary, many of them underscore the fluidity of the concept. For example, Peter N. Stearns in the conclusion of his *Western Civilization in World History* (2003) asserts:

We need active comparisons, a sense of how global forces and contacts have shaped the West, rather than the West in isolated glory or seen as an independent agent in world affairs. The challenge, in terms of new curricula and new teaching combinations, is exciting. (Stearns 2003: 133)

On the other hand, in his article “What is Western Civilization?” Laurence Birken, critically reviews several proposals of the concept, opting for that reduced to the geographic western Europe and dismissing ancient Greece and Rome (Birken 1992: 453). However, no critic went so far as to dismiss the term itself. For this reason, Appiah’s text has been singled out as the most radical and controversial.

The objective of this article is to discuss Appiah’s criticism of the very concept of “western civilisation”, especially the points which may evoke certain controversies. Being a commonplace term used by historians, sociologists, anthropologists of culture and politicians, and understood practically all over the world, “the west” and its culture or civilisation causes surprisingly little confusion whenever used in academic, political and popular texts. Philosophers of history as well as historians employ the term as a mental shortcut for a complex set of phenomena and factors. Defining its components has never been easy, but hardly anyone, either apologists or adversaries of the political, economic and cultural forces known as “the west”, have ever considered the term problematic. As a working term, it has played a very useful role in several areas, such as sociology and several types of history: political, economic and cultural.

The ideological and, consequently, political purpose of Appiah's proposal seems clear: believing in "the west" implies its superiority, which is ethically unacceptable, and as such should be eradicated as the source of its evil implications. Instead, he suggests thinking in terms of universal human civilisation. However noble and recommendable his idea might be, at the moment, for several reasons, it will be demonstrated why it seems impossible to implement.

In section 3 of the article, I shall briefly discuss certain issues the term "western civilisation" caused, including models proposed by Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, Feliks Konieczny and Samuel Huntington. Moreover, section 5 will present a call for the term in studies of international relations, where it has not apparently been used so far. I shall attempt to dismiss them as insufficiently grounded. Afterwards, however, I shall refer to the position partly based on the approach of the French historians grouped in the well-known Annales School, particularly on Fernand Braudel's theory of *longue durée*, which provides serious arguments for retaining the term "western civilisation".¹⁰ The last part of the article will contain my own observations on the working utility of the concept.

A problem with definition: geography, culture, politics

In his article "There is no such thing as western civilisation", Appiah commenced his criticism of the very concept of western civilisation with a short outline of two different ideas of culture proposed by two British 19th-century authors, Edward Burnett Tylor and Matthew Arnold. Whereas for the latter, culture was the "pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world", Tylor understood it as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). Appiah observes that nowadays these two antagonistic approaches are unthinkingly combined into one idea of civilisation that would have occurred to neither Tylor nor Arnold and proposes "to untangle some of our confusions ... of what we have come to call the west" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

It is important to note that for Appiah, the mutual exclusivity of the definitions of civilisation is a sufficient reason for eliminating the term "western civilisation". He seems to disregard any possible other proposals. In fact, it is difficult to find evidence that those who discuss civilisations or use the concept of "the west" ever refer to Tylor or Arnold.

Geographic confusion

Furthermore, the author of "There is no such thing as western civilisation" points out that as a geographical term, "the west" seems really confusing since it is used for different purposes. He

¹⁰ The Annales School was a group of French historians who emphasized long-term social history. The name of the group comes from the academic journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* founded by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre in 1929. Since 1994 it has been issued as *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*. One of the prominent representatives of the Annales School was Fernand Braudel (1902-85).

lists such usages of the expression as Rudyard Kipling's opposition of Europe and Asia ("east is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet"); NATO versus the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War, where the former was a synonym of democracy and freedom as inherent 'western' values, whereas the other parts of the world seemed irrelevant; and the latest sense of the term, which includes Europe, the United States and Canada. All other parts of the world are treated as "the global south" regardless of the European origins of South American societies. Simultaneously, in such countries as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, 'western' "can look simply like a euphemism for white" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

Appiah then goes on to analyse the sources of the European sense of uniqueness in order to point out further inconsistencies in the concept of Western civilisation. Herodotus, for example, distinguished three continents: Europe, Asia and Libya (Africa). His division had no societal implications since the Greeks dwelled in both Europe and Asia. The ancient Greeks and Romans could use the term 'European' as an adjective and not a noun with a cultural reference (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). In the Dark and Middle Ages, the term "European" appeared as an opposition to the world of Islam, even though when Charles Martel stopped the Arab conquest of western Europe in 732 CE, most of Europe had yet to be converted to Christianity. However, scholars did not use the expression "west" because parts of western Europe (Spain) remained under the control of Muslim rulers.

Islam, in the form of the Ottoman Empire, also annexed vast tracts of Eastern and Central Europe. Its expansion was stopped in 1683 at the battle of Vienna. At that time, the fragile European unity was built around the opposition Islam-Christianity (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). It is worth noting that this European unity was psychological rather than real, since the siege of Vienna was both preceded and followed by a series of wars within the world of Christian powers. Appiah's assertion that "the move from 'Christendom' to 'western culture' isn't straightforward" seems difficult to rebut. On the other hand, the presence of such a category as culture or civilisation manifests in conflicts, where differences between the enemies are not only emphasised but also constructed. Even though in practice the European unity based on Christianity never worked, it was present in the declaratory language of politicians and diplomats building the Holy League in 1571 and the Holy Alliance in 1815.

Another point Appiah makes concerns the role of ancient Greek and Roman inheritance treated by influential European philosophers (e.g. Hegel) as the core of civilization, "a precious golden nugget", as Appiah (2016 online n.p.) likes to call it. Here, he observes that during the collapse of ancient thought in western Europe, it was the Arab Muslims who preserved the ideas of the Greeks, especially those of Aristotle, whose status in philosophy was restored due to Ibn Rushd, the Arab scholar born in Muslim Spain in the 12th century, and better known in Christian Europe as Averroes (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

Appiah points out the weakness of the idea of an essence of culture/civilization on the grounds that any set of qualities changes dramatically over time and no essence can be traced to have passed through the centuries.

What was England like in the days of Chaucer, father of English literature, who died more than 600 years ago? Take whatever you think was distinctive of it, whatever combination of customs, ideas, and material things that made England characteristically England then. Whatever you choose to distinguish Englishness now, it isn't going to be that. Rather, as time rolls on, each generation inherits the label from an earlier one: and, in each generation, the label comes with a legacy. But as the legacies are lost or exchanged for other treasures, the label keeps moving on... Identities can be held together by narratives, in short, without essences. You don't get to be called "English" because there's an essence that this label follows; you're English because our rules determine that you are entitled to the label by being somehow connected with a place called England. (Appiah 2016 online n.p.)

In this way, Appiah actually demonstrates the impossibility of any collective identity, especially an identity that seems to survive over long periods of time. A similar deconstruction of a collective identity can be found in, for example, Shlomo Sand's controversial book *The Invention of the Jewish People* (2009), where the author denies the historical continuity of the Jewish ethnos. Such an operation is possible with reference to any nation, ethnic group or even local community. The problem lies in the fact that the mental constructs of identity are, for so many people, essential and thus resilient.

Appiah is certainly right in claiming that "the very idea of 'the west,' to name a heritage and object of study, doesn't really emerge until the 1890s, during a heated era of imperialism, and gains broader currency only in the 20th century" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). He also cogently observes that Oswald Spengler, one of the first philosophers of history, refused to value the idea of a direct continuity between the ancient Hellenic and Latin cultures and his contemporary western "Faustian" civilization (Spengler 1926: 78). Unlike the former, the civilisation reduced to geographic western Europe is characterised by "a type of Faustian personality overflowing with expansive, disruptive, and imaginative impulses manifested in all the spheres of life". Moreover, "[t]he expansionist dispositions of Europeans were not only indispensable but were themselves driven ... by an intensely felt desire to achieve great deeds and heroic immortality" (Duchesne 2014 online n.p.).

Appiah observes that the difficulties in finding an essence in the concept of "the west" also lie in political and cultural differences in the present day territory defined as such. For example, Franco's regime coexisted with liberal democracy for forty years, while 'non-western' countries, such as India and Japan, embraced democratic systems of government. Moreover, Appiah shows examples of hip-hop in Tokyo as well as the influence of Indian cuisine on the dining habits of British people. Thus, Appiah proposes to abandon organicism, which can be explained as follows:

Well, by fusing the Tylorian picture and the Arnoldian one, the realm of the everyday and the realm of the ideal. And the key to this was something that was already present in Tylor's work. Remember his famous definition: it began with culture as "that complex whole". What you're hearing is something we can call organicism. A vision of culture not as a loose assemblage of disparate fragments but as an organic unity, each component, like the organs in a body, carefully adapted to occupy a particular place, each part essential to the functioning of the whole. The Eurovision song contest, the cutouts of Matisse, the dialogues of Plato are all parts of a larger whole. As such, each is a holding in your cultural library, so to

speak, even if you have never personally checked it out. Even if it isn't your jam, it is still your heritage and possession. Organicism explained how our everyday selves could be dusted with gold (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

Appiah's deconstruction of organicism does not explain much and actually cuts both ways. Thinkers looking for both deep structures behind the surrounding phenomena, as well as webs of connections between them, may easily fall prey to charlatanry or, on the contrary, reach conclusions of scientific value. Since in the humanities there is no universal meta-platform guaranteeing the truth, our only choice is confined to faith, intuition, common sense, critical thinking, or a certain combination thereof. Consequently, Appiah's proposal consisting in the existence of random phenomena, is as credible (or controversial) as the concept of closer interconnections between them.

The approach to such phenomena as civilisations depends on the distance of the observer. One person may compare the process of observation with perceiving a painting, while another may use the metaphor of constellations. The former will sooner or later realise that although close observation reveals nothing more than a great number of brush strokes, a certain perspective allows them to see shapes set in the intended order. The latter would see that the apparent order is just the optical illusion of the flat surface of the firmament, since the celestial bodies are scattered all over space, and their interrelations, if there are any, are of a completely different nature. Moreover, looking at the same picture, even from the same perspective may result in different visual effects.

The west in the mosaic of civilisations in theories of philosophers of history

Discussing the legitimacy of the term "the western civilisation" it seems important to briefly review certain concepts of history as a mosaic of civilisations, which are born, develop and die. In the 20th century civilisations and their relations became a field of interest of several thinkers who proposed their concepts of cultures or civilisations and models in which they placed the west. The criticism they received resulted from their speculative nature, teleological approach to history and treating civilisations as ontological entities. However, their views still have their adherents and therefore in the discussion on the western civilisation, three are worth mentioning: Koneczny, Spengler and Toynbee. The first is interesting insofar as his model demonstrates that even in the conservative system of this 20th century philosopher of history, the geographic concept of the west was treated as accidental rather than essential, since he attributed the most important role in creating civilisations to religion, which is not geographically determined. The others, however, constructed models where the west has an established position on the map.

The Polish pre-war historian, Feliks Koneczny (1862-1949), treated civilisations not as rigid geographical entities, but as a certain set of values which may be distributed in a somewhat sophisticated way. His Latin civilisation generally overlaps the geographical west, but does not have anything to do with a particular race or territory (Koneczny 1962). Collective life embraced a wide

spectrum of components including law and its role in society and the position of a scholar in the community. The Latin civilization, according to him, was characterized by the role of western (Latin) Christianity, which embraced Roman Catholics and also Protestants. The clear distinction between private and public, as well as the priority of ethics before law, were the main qualities making it different from other civilizations. For example, Germany, according to Koneczny, adopted the Byzantine political mentality along with the marriage of Otto II to the Byzantine princess Theophano (Wise 2010: 223). He strongly believed that:

Nations in this meaning exist only, until now, within the sphere of the Latin civilisation, because only here have the conditions for their development been present. Even peoples of alien cultural spheres, which became embraced by the West and in consequence fell under the influence of the formative forces of Latin civilisation e.g. the Finns and the Hungarians—became nations.

A nation must as a cultural entity belong only to one civilisation; it cannot belong to two different civilisations (Koneczny 1962 online n.p.).

Koneczny was not the first thinker who attempted to discover mechanisms determining historical processes. One of the best known representatives of philosophy of history was Oswald Spengler, who expounded his pessimistic vision of the history of civilisations in *The Decline of the West: Form and Actuality* (1926).

The German philosopher of history Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) saw little connection between ancient Greek/Roman civilisation(s) and modern western civilisation. The British historian Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975), on the other hand, built an intricate system of civilisation structures where each element (particular national culture) played a similar, if not the same, role as a parallel culture did in another civilisation. Those ideas were based on a strongly teleological approach with an inevitable faith in progress, which has already been challenged and criticised (Iggers 1958). All of them have little empirical basis and are the results of the authors' personal convictions and prejudices which drew on and reinforced the fundamental tenets of the period in which they lived and wrote their texts.

Much as Toynbee's model of various civilisations, with their life cycles and the roles of smaller cultural entities within them, may be criticised, his analysis of the mutual relations between them shows that certain regularities can be observed not in the existence of ontological units called cultures but in the confrontations of people coming from different regions, for there are certain phenomena that manifest themselves in contexts. Encounters with other systems of values, other mindsets, as well as other approaches to structuring society and economy reveal differences which, as a result, determine definitions. Arnold Toynbee in his work *The Study of History* dedicated a considerable number of pages to encounters of western civilization with particular other cultures (Toynbee 1957: 151-187). If there were no significant differences, there would be nothing to discuss. Be it Peter the Great's Russia or Japan in the period of the Meiji restoration (after 1868), nobody can deny that the models those countries adopted came from western Europe and that they were considerably different from their original lifestyles and social structures.

Appiah's proposal in the context of Said's *Orientalism* and Huntington's *The Clash of Civilisations*

The idea of mutually hostile civilisations was adopted by Samuel Huntington (1927-2008) in his article *The Clash of Civilisations* (1996) which he later extended into a book. Edward Said (1994), on the other hand, strongly opposed creating concepts antagonising inhabitants of different parts of the world. Discussing Appiah's suggestion of eliminating the term "the west" from public discourse, it is inevitable to refer to their approaches when conceptualising the conflict between "the west" and the Muslim world.

The most controversial part of Appiah's article "There is no such thing as western civilization" is the claim that having abandoned organicism we should also renounce the faith in any essence controlling our behaviour. Actually, there would be nothing strange with this statement if not for the example the author uses to illustrate this claim: "No Muslim essence stops the inhabitants of Dar al-Islam from taking up anything from western civilisation, including Christianity or democracy. No western essence is there to stop a *New Yorker* of any ancestry taking up Islam" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). Appiah is right inasmuch as his renouncement of the 'essence' is simply a criticism of hypostatizing or taking an idea for an ontological entity. However, quite a large number of Muslim clergymen would be astonished at this easy permission to convert to Christianity or adopting the idea of liberal democracy, for although the 'essence' does not exist, it is enough that a group of the powerful believe in it and is able to impose this notion upon their followers.

Appiah mentions one of the fundamental concepts present in Islam since its beginning: *Dar ar-Islam* (the home of Islam) and *Dar al-Kufr* (the realm of the heathens). The latter did not, however, particularly embrace Europe or its western part, but everything outside the former. Nevertheless, in the 1980s the concept of the Christian west as the cradle of all the evil that afflicts the Muslim peoples, gained popularity and now is part of radical Islamist propaganda.

The Palestinian-American literary theorist Edward Said (1935-2003), in his "Afterword" to the 1994 version of *Orientalism*, rejecting the title concept as lectured by western academia, literature and politics, warned against developing an analogous approach to the west. In the conclusive paragraph of his milestone work he asserted:

I hope to have shown my reader that the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism. No former "Oriental" will be comforted by the thought that having been an Oriental himself he is likely – too likely – to study new "Orientals" – or "Occidentals" – of his own making. If the knowledge of Orientalism has any meaning, it is in being a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, at any time. Now perhaps more than before (Said 1994: 328).

In this context Appiah's proposal does not seem new and it is hardly possible to challenge both his and Said's noble intention. In the same edition of *Orientalism*, after Samuel Huntington's article *The Clash of Civilisations* (but before the book of the same title was published), Said wrote:

... this was one of the implied messages of *Orientalism*, that any attempt to force cultures and peoples into separate and distinct breeds or essences exposes not only the misrepresentations and falsifications that ensue, but also the way in which understanding is complicit with the power to produce such things as the “Orient” or the “West” (Said 1994: 347).

Insofar as Said was right that the “Orient” included cultures as different as Arab, Indian, Chinese and Japanese, it should also be obvious that serious differences similarly occur between such cultures as German, French, Spanish, Italian and those which developed on the basis of the English language. However, no one can deny the fact that for thousands of years Chinese civilisation developed absolutely free from Greek and Roman cultural influence. It is also true that South Asia is home to several different languages and cultures. However much we would like to deny the existence of one Indian culture, as long as the Gujaratis want to feel an emotional-cultural connection with the Punjabis or inhabitants of Kerala, they should not be deprived of the right to this sentiment. It is also possible to refer this way of thinking to Europeans.

The ontological validity of collective identities may be challenged or even denied, but as long as humans feel an affinity for certain general concepts that give them a sense of belonging, such identities cannot simply be dismissed. The west is not just its “hard core”, which we can understand as the old colonial powers. It has also peripheries, where the affiliation to “western civilisation” is of the highest importance. Poland, Czechia or Hungary, as “cultural clients” or “poor relatives” of the west, may tend to underscore their western tradition even more than the geographic west itself. Potential consequences, such as mutual hostility towards the representatives of different identities, should be defined, discussed and eventually eliminated. Denying the differences may not only fail to solve possible problems but actually deprive us of any discursive tools to achieve this goal.

Samuel Huntington, accused by many, including Edward Said himself, of spreading the idea of conflict between human beings, admits that:

The causes of this unique and dramatic development included the social structure and class relations of the West, the rise of cities and commerce, the relative dispersion of power in Western societies between estates and monarchs and secular and religious authorities, the emerging sense of national consciousness among Western peoples, and the development of state bureaucracies. The immediate source of Western expansion, however, was technological: the invention of the means of ocean navigation for reaching distant peoples and the development of the military capabilities for conquering those peoples. (Huntington 1996: 51)

He quotes Parker (1988: 4), who argues that “in large measure ‘the rise of the West’ depended upon the exercise of force, upon the fact that the military balance between the Europeans and their adversaries overseas was steadily tilting in favour of the former; ... the key to the Westerners’ success in creating the first truly global empires between 1500 and 1750 depended upon precisely those improvements in the ability to wage war which have been termed ‘the military revolution.’” Huntington adds that

The expansion of the West was also facilitated by the superiority in organization, discipline, and training of its troops and subsequently by the superior weapons, transport, logistics, and medical services resulting from its leadership in the Industrial Revolution. The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion ... but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact; non-Westerners never do (Huntington 1996: 51).

When Huntington wrote about the expansion of the west, what did he mean? Whose expansion, actually? Arnold Toynbee could be wrong creating his model of world civilizations throughout the history of humankind, but discussing encounters of the western civilization with Indian or Chinese civilizations, what did he write about?

A call for a conceptualization of the west

The concepts of thinkers believing in civilisations as clearly distinguishable entities endowing their members with a sense of identity (Spengler, Toynbee, Huntington) are still vivid and have their enthusiasts. For example, in her book *Conceptualizing the West in International Relations*, Jacinta O'Hagan proposes introducing the concept of the west into the academic discipline of International Relations:

International Relations primarily theorises the world as one of states. However, the West is not a state, but most commonly conceived of as a civilizational entity. The paradigms of the discipline provide no explicit category into which civilizations can be placed. Consequently, civilizations have been largely absent from International Relations theory (O'Hagan 2002: 2).

Influenced by the champions of conflicting civilisations, the author seems to miss their terminology in the language of her area of interest:

The term 'the West' peppers the language of commentary and scholarship in world politics. It appears in an abundance of books and articles, such as *Islam and the West* (Lewis, 1993), *'The West and the Rest'* (Mahbubani, 1992) and *Twilight of the West* (Coker, 1998). The West is often invoked in antithesis to a similarly broadly constituted 'other' – the East, the Orient, Islam, Asia, the Third World. The West, meaning the antithesis to the communist East, was central to the language of Cold War politics. Despite the collapse of this East, the West remains central to the language of post-Cold War politics, illustrated by references such as those to the West's role in the Balkans, or the West's position on human rights. In the late 1990s, the decision to extend NATO to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was discussed as bringing former Eastern bloc states under 'the protection' of the West. In the 1999 Kosovo conflict, NATO was frequently referred to as 'representing the West'. In media debates, it is not uncommon to hear discussion of how the West should respond, for instance, to the conflict in Chechnya or Central Africa, or other such locations (O'Hagan 2002: 7).

O'Hagan's proposal represents a position exactly opposite to that of Appiah. Being aware of the importance of the term in social sciences, she attempts to convince scholars dealing with international relations to extend their professional vocabulary with "the west" as an important term enriching their discourse and introducing more precision thereto.

In this context, Appiah's arguments referring to the lack of clear borders and definitions of the term in question seem sufficiently cogent to undermine O'Hagan's stance. If international relation studies have been able to operate the terminology based on precisely defined states and their alliances, the term derived from humanities and social sciences seems to add an additional factor of conflict rather than solve international problems.

The western civilisation according to Fernand Braudel

Spengler's vision of the world system of civilisations may be undermined as speculations based on historically ungrounded metaphors, for instance, civilisations being subject to biological processes, such as birth, growth, decline and death (Blackburn 2016: 454). Toynbee, even though he is much better prepared to discuss the world history, posited a model of mutual relations between twenty-one entities called civilisations. Moreover, supported by a great number of historical examples, he also tried to create a scientific system based on "non-scientific, intuitional foundations" (Iggers 1958: 224).

Whereas the philosophies of history proposed by Spengler, Koneczny, Toynbee and others are criticised for their speculative nature devoid of factual foundation, this objection is not applicable to the historians grouped in the Annales School. As researchers, they first examined facts and then formulated general models of historical development.

Fernand Braudel (1902-1985), a leading representative of the Annales, proposed an explanation of the concept of civilisations, including the western one. His model is based on solid studies of economic and social history:

In his major work, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, ...* (1949), Fernand Braudel took as his object a vast geographical area and treated it in terms of three time scales: the long term, the conjunctural, and that of events. The fact that Braudel has, over the years indicated his particular interest in one of these time scales, the long term or long *durée*, has affected the appreciation of his work by critics and admirers alike ... (Santamaria and Bailey 1984: 78).

He elaborated his theory of the long term in his book *A History of Civilizations* where treated historical short-term shifts and political events as accidental and consequently, emphasised the social and economic components of history which lasted a hundred years. It is important to note that Braudel did not treat civilisations ideologically. He was not interested in creating a sense of identity. He also rejected Toynbee's theory of natural determinism of the strength of civilisations, where the degree of difficulty Nature imposed on groups of people decided on the quality of civilisation they established (Braudel 1994: 11). However, he did not dismiss geography as an important factor in creating civilisations. On the contrary:

Every civilization, then, is based on an area with more or less fixed limits. Each has its own geography with its own opportunities and constraints, some virtually permanent and quite different from one civilization

to another. The result? A variegated world, whose maps can indicate which areas have houses built of wood, and which of clay, bamboo, paper, bricks or stone; which areas use wool or cotton or silk for textiles; which areas grow various food crops – rice, maize, wheat, etc. The challenge varies: so does the response (Braudel 1994: 11).

Unlike Spengler, Toynbee or Koneczny, Braudel based his proposal on purely material foundations. He did not reject factors such as religions, ideas or political conflicts, but treated them as secondary in the formation of civilisations.

Western or European civilization is based on wheat and bread – and largely white bread – with all the constraints that this implies. Wheat is a demanding crop. It requires field use to be rotated annually, or fields to be left fallow every one or two years (Braudel 1994: 11).

Having provided the basic criteria determining the category, Braudel outlined the geographic range of the west:

Western civilization, so-called, is at once the ‘American civilization’ of the United States, and the civilizations of Latin America, Russia and of course Europe. Europe itself contains a number of civilizations – Polish, German, Italian, English, French, etc. Not to mention the fact that these national civilizations are made up of ‘civilizations’ that are smaller still: Scotland, Ireland, Catalonia, Sicily, the Basque country and so on. Nor should we forget that these divisions, these multi-coloured mosaics, embody more or less permanent characteristics (Braudel 1994: 12).

Admitting that “[s]ociety and civilization are inseparable”, Braudel went on to explain the concept of western civilisation:

The Western civilization in which we live, for example, depends on the ‘industrial society’ which is its driving force. It would be easy to characterize Western civilization simply by describing that society and its component parts, its tensions, its moral and intellectual values, its ideals, its habits, its tastes, etc. – in other words by describing the people who embody it and will pass it on (Braudel 1994: 16).

Thus, the French scholar based his idea of western civilisation on certain qualities which are passed from generation to generation and are determined by the lifestyles societies adopt to meet their needs. The shared ideals and worldviews are just reflections of the current dynamics of societies’ development. It is worth mentioning Braudel’s observation that “The West’s first success was certainly the conquest of its countryside – its peasant ‘cultures’ – by the towns” (Braudel 1994: 18). Nevertheless, understanding the connection between civilization and society, he asserted that “in terms of the time-scale, civilization implies and embraces much longer periods than any given social phenomenon. It changes far less rapidly than the societies it supports or involves” (Braudel 1994: 18).

Braudel’s approach clearly shows that he treated the west as an extensive term. Based on economic foundations, the civilisation became a concept to which both Christianity and Greek rational thought made essential contributions.

To sum up, it is impossible to deny geographic characteristics of the territories where particular civilisations were born. They determined the way of food production which, in turn, affected the further development of economies, then ideologies initially based on religion but, in the case of the west, also on a secular philosophy. The origins of European societies and civilisations, were simply different from those of China, India or Mali.

The need for the term

The concept of the west as an ontological entity defined by clear solid criteria and borderlines is difficult to defend. However, it would be ridiculous to deny the fact that it was west-European powers that colonized Africa and Asia and eradicated native civilizations in both Americas. Moreover, even though nowadays representatives of Central European countries, such as Poland, can claim that they never participated in the atrocities the western powers committed in their colonies, their ancestors, under the control of foreign invaders themselves, could feel solidarity with the same western powers in opposition to the “savage peoples” of the rest of the world. The Polish 19th century novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz had no doubts about who should rule the Sudan (England!). People in Poland, Czechia, Hungary etc. read French, British and German books. Many of them are familiar with Flaubert’s accounts of his trips in Africa, Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Kipling’s *The Jungle Book* and, once popular with young people, adventures of Kara ben Nemzi by Karl May. They may also know Salman Rushdie’s *East, West*, where the cultural differences are thematised. If they happened to study something Indian or Persian, they looked for exotic elements that reinforced their sense of being fundamentally different. Mostly they read west-European accounts of the adventures of west-European explorers and it was through the eyes of the latter that the former became familiar with other parts of the world. Even though Appiah is right in saying that Europe has never been one homogeneous body, the fact that it was the western part of Europe that was able to impose its narrative on the rest of the continent, all the more demonstrates that the west-European countries were, and still are (having incorporating the United States into “the club”) a force able to persuade their ‘peripheral’ neighbours to acknowledge their point of view in many areas, from pure politics to economics and culture.

Western civilization may be an obsolete concept, even though for many, comprising all those who believe in collective identities, it still matters as a certain ideology or even an ontological entity. Historians (for example the Annales School) use the term all the time. Attempts at creating a philosophy of history based on the idea of a constellation of different civilizations have long been criticized as too intuitive and devoid of a plausible scientific methodological basis (Iggers 1958: 223). Moreover, Toynbee himself revised his views. Initially he believed in his success in finding “fields of historical study which would be intelligible in themselves ... without reference to extraneous historical events”. Later on, however, he had to give up the idea of “self-contained units”, reducing the role of civilisations to serving “the progress of Religion” (Fieldhouse 1958: 132).

The idea of one human civilization is a proposal which sounds obvious in the world of globalization from both practical and ethical points of view. Paradoxically, however, the moment

we abandon terms such as “western civilisation” or “the west”, we have to reinvent them for very practical reasons. Discussing several problems, be they historical, political, cultural, economic or sociological, we need vocabulary to describe certain phenomena. Therefore, a great number of academic disputes are of linguistic nature rather than any other.

Appiah’s proposal and its feasibility

Appiah’s final proposal of universal identity was put in the form of the ancient Roman poet Terence’s maxim which became the motto of Renaissance humanism: “Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto” or “I am human, I think nothing human alien to me”. Optimistic as it sounds, the umbrella term ‘human’ in the popular quote contains as many dangers and unsolved problems as promises of a better future. Atrocities of wars and brutal governments, including ancient tyrannies, slavery and modern totalitarian systems, are all ‘human’ inventions.

The way Appiah proposes his idea (or ideology), implies several problems in both purely academic and practical/political dimensions. For example, if western civilization is to be eradicated from our narrations in favour of a kind of universal human civilization, the points he used to deconstruct the concept of western civilization apply all the more to the general human “universe”. The differences in historical development are so evident that no concept of one universal civilization is able to withstand criticism. Moreover, one can discuss the set of ‘universal’ values proposed by this holistic culture embracing the whole planet in the context of the post-colonial imposition of the western approach to law, politics, ethics, aesthetics etc. upon the subaltern. Within this ‘universal’ civilization conflicts would not only be at the level of individuals, but also at the level of large groups of people who believe in certain sets of principles. In this context, the lexical problem returns for the discussion which inevitably must restore more or less imperfect terms being synonyms or euphemisms for what we now call civilizations. Much as we may detest these terms, without them we simply could not communicate and thus solve problems on a lower level of **Abstraction**. Talking about such things as homosexuality on the one hand, and polygamy or the circumcision of girls on the other, it is difficult to reduce them to each particular case and not to refer them to a broader context. The additional problem is that in the legal aspect of social organization, which requires precise classification of human actions, there is little room for compromise. Finding a universal solution would mean imposing one approach on those who support another. Champions of the supremacy of western civilization have no doubts that theirs is supreme. Therefore they could agree with Appiah’s proposal, provided that western civilization confined geographically to Europe and North America is replaced with itself under the name of universal civilization.

The issues of terminology have inherent aporias, which should inevitably lead to an association with a kōan in Zen Buddhism. The principal problem of the world of western academic thought is occasional ‘discoveries’ of those insurmountable perplexities bringing about conclusions that certain concepts are ‘impossible’. Thus, the impossibility of certain terms makes whole intricate scientifically described areas of knowledge impossible as well. It is enough to deconstruct the se-

mantic field of one term to ruin a vast fragment of what humans believed to be their knowledge. However, in such circumstances arises a fundamental question: why not recognize the Buddhist denial of anything we call reality? Why do we not adopt the general assumption that everything is just an illusion? Is this just *reductio ad absurdum*? Is this more absurd than selecting single terms and depriving them of sense, leaving the public with faith in the validity of all others of the same category? Or maybe the purpose of denying particular concepts is just to keep a great conversation going while everybody cynically realizes that in our postmodern era it is just a linguistic game? On the other hand, if Derrida is right that there is no reality outside the text, what is left to deal with? Therefore, in order to solve real problems, the problems that we ascribe ontological validity, it is not enough to eliminate certain terms and replace them with others of equally dubious validity.

It is good to revise our repository of ideas and terms, and therefore such texts as Appiah's article are necessary to provoke innovative thinking. From the practical point of view, it matters little if western civilization is an ontological unit. It is a fluid idea serving various, often contradictory purposes. Whereas some politicians and ideologists may treat the idea of western civilization as a pretext to enslave or belittle people from other parts of the planet, others may believe it to be the only possible proposal of positive universal values. Observing the terminology used by different political forces in Poland, for example, a certain schizophrenic situation can be noted. On the one hand, nationalists strongly claim their membership in the western, Latin or Christian tradition. On the other hand, they also strongly criticize 'the west' for its departure from Christian values. This seems to support Appiah's argument. Nevertheless, his statement "if western culture were real, we wouldn't spend so much time talking it up" demonstrates that he wants to reduce an idea to the level of pure semantic misconception. The west or any other civilization should be treated as an idea as much as socialism, liberalism or conservatism. We discuss these terms and try to provide them with new meanings along with the changing time. Certain concepts, such as the left wing or the right wing in politics, have come a long way to their present state and differ dramatically from their original meanings. Does it mean the discussion on them is groundless? Several people would not mind if they were replaced with more up-to-date and more precise terms, but the only thing we can do at the moment is to constantly discuss and (re)negotiate their semantic fields so as to be able to understand one another.

If Appiah just criticized the quite common intellectual fallacy of hypostatizing, nothing can be more true than the theses of his article. If his intention was to refute the idea, his position, from a practical point of view, is somewhat vulnerable. Nevertheless, his dismissal of the discussion on western civilization seems premature. The discussion does not mean the issue does not exist. The discussion means that somebody still cares and is ready to manifest the idea, which is nothing else but its performance.

Reducing various approaches to the very term 'the west' to just two – the heritage of the Judeo-Christian tradition and the legacy of the French Revolution – shows quite clearly that the ideology behind the pride of belonging to "the west" may stem from opposite sources. Nevertheless, here lies another insurmountable problem. If any of the universalisms developed in Europe spread over

the world (which, to a high degree has already happened), would it be the dream all-human civilisation or just western ideologies again conquering the rest of the world?

On the other hand, this question may matter to certain groups of descendants of Frantz Fanon, who proposed rejecting anything that was imposed by the west. Speaking of Fanon, it is inevitable to consider the issue of the language of discussion on world history. Without certain terminology, a description of several events and phenomena seems impossible to express. We can see this problem reading certain passages of *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Since the Third World is abandoned and condemned to regression, in any case stagnation, through the selfishness and immorality of the West, the underdeveloped peoples decide to establish a collective autarchy. The industries of the West are rapidly deprived of their overseas outlets (Fanon 1963: 60).

Now, according to Appiah's proposal, we should eliminate the term 'the west' itself. The subjugation and colonization of the African, Asian and American peoples and imposing foreign control upon them suddenly loses the agent. Whose 'selfishness and immorality'? Whose industries are 'deprived of their overseas outlets' if the Third World did establish 'a collective autarchy'?

Although it is unquestionably possible to reject Fanon's ideological notions and dismiss his whole discourse, the problem of the vocabulary for describing colonial and post-colonial reality remains important. Moreover, humanists and social scientists could certainly describe the reality by presenting a great number of specific 'case studies' instead of succumbing to the temptation of developing certain general rules, and searching for regularities and generalizing from specific phenomena is what science is actually about. Divisions, typologies and models of mutual and multilateral relationships require certain abstract terminology which allows researchers to describe every particular case. Nigeria or Kenya were conquered and controlled by Britain, Algeria by France, Cameroon by Germany etc. Should the mental shortcut "western Europeans conquered vast territories of Africa" be rejected as imprecise? Perhaps historical accounts would be more precise if we used the names of particular European countries conquering and colonizing other particular countries in Africa and Asia instead of using such umbrella terms as 'the west' and 'the Third World'. However, whereas the latter in fact means 'the lands and peoples once conquered and humiliated by certain European empires actually not having much in common', colonizing the rest of the world in the name of civilisation was the idea making the powers of western Europe a gang of accomplices.

Conclusion

Appiah sums up his article with the observation:

Culture – like religion and nation and race – provides a source of identity for contemporary human beings. And, like all three, it can become a form of confinement, conceptual mistakes underwriting moral ones. Yet all of them can also give contours to our freedom. Social identities connect the small scale where we live our lives alongside our kith and kin with larger movements, causes, and concerns. They can make a

wider world intelligible, alive, and urgent. They can expand our horizons to communities larger than the ones we personally inhabit. But our lives must make sense, too, at the largest of all scales. We live in an era in which our actions, in the realm of ideology as in the realm of technology, increasingly have global effects. When it comes to the compass of our concern and compassion, humanity as a whole is not too broad a horizon (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

I could not agree more with this statement. However, it is difficult to believe in an easy way to achieve this ideological goal. Reading *The Republic of Wine* by the Chinese novelist Mo Yan (2001), who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012, whenever I came across a reference to a Chinese legend or myth, I had to look for an explanation on the Internet. When reading a book written by a European or American writer there are indubitably fewer problems of this type. There are certain cultural codes that readers educated in a particular culture are able to decipher immediately. In this context “the golden nugget”, however complicated the way it travelled to our minds (mainly through education!), cannot be dismissed. Most people would love to understand all possible cultural codes including African, Indian and Polynesian, but practically this would take more than one human life. Nevertheless, a wise school curriculum could open our minds to the vast wealth of our planet’s legacy. It is also important to bear in mind that “[t]he cosmopolitan impulse that draws on our common humanity is no longer a luxury; it has become a necessity” (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

However we understand the term, be it as a source of pride or a source of shame, it is difficult to imagine any discourse in humanities or social sciences without “the west”. Talking about differences, without which no discussion is ever possible, the west is a useful umbrella term explaining, even though imperfectly, the course of history, and helps us understand the present. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that it is absolutely necessary to approach the subject critically and in terms of ideology and political practice to promote the concept of humanity as one world civilisation based on mutual respect and cooperation.

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Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives of Patrick Leigh Fermor and Ryszard Kapuściński

Abstract. This paper offers a comparative analysis of travel narratives of two key contemporary writers: Patrick Leigh Fermor and Ryszard Kapuściński. Fermor's *A Time of Gifts: On Foot to Constantinople; From the Hook of Holland to the Middle Danube* (1977), *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986), and *The Broken Road* (2015) are compared with Kapuściński's: *Imperium* (1993), *The Shadow of the Sun* (1998), and *Travels with Herodotus* (2007). The figure of a 'parallax' is suggested as being crucial in capturing the key similarities between Fermor's and Kapuściński's travel narratives. The differences between these narratives are explained in terms of the differences in developments of Anglophone and Polish travel writing traditions.

Keywords: travel writing, genre, parallax, Ryszard Kapuściński, Patrick Leigh Fermor.

Travel writing (*podróżopisarstwo* in Polish) is often regarded as a supra-generic category combining all types of texts fictional and non-fictional, narrative and non-narrative, versed and non-versed, of which the main theme is travel (See, for example, Borm 2004: 13-17, Witosz 2007: 11-28). At the centre of the travel writing tradition, both in Anglophone literatures and Polish literature, there exists a referential genre predominantly narrated in the first person and predominantly non-fictional which is known as the travel book (or travelogue) in English and *reportaż podróżniczy* in Polish. Ian Borm's (2004: 17) definition states that the travel book is: "any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming or presupposing that author, narrator and principal character are but one or identical." Traditionally, both these genres, of travel book and *reportaż podróżniczy*, have relied on a retrospective type of narration making both travel books and *reportaż podróżniczy* formally similar to journals and/or diaries. From the perspective of most travel books and most *reportaż podróżniczy* written over the last two centuries, the minor differences which the historians and theoreticians of life narratives postulate to exist between journals and diaries (See, for example, Smith and Watson 2001: 193-196) are of no consequence from the perspective adopted in this paper. It is also of little consequence to what ex-

tent the final version has followed some regularly kept diary or has diverged from it through subsequent re-writing (See Forsdick et al. 2006: 24). Most travel books and *reportaż podróżniczy* are linear, retrospective narratives, usually following the tripartite pattern: of departure, the journey itself, and return. And in most cases, the retrospection does not go back very far, usually extending to a few months, a year or a couple of years at the most. Most travel writers (and particularly professional travel writers) write their travel accounts and publish their travel books swiftly after the journey's end; although some 'artistic' travel books take much longer to complete. Two famous British travel books which followed the journal/diary textualization process described above but took much longer are Alexander Kinglake's *Eothen* (1844) and Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana* (1937). As Jonathan Raban, himself both a major travel writer and a critic, wrote in his Preface to *Eothen*: "The book took Kinglake a decade to write. It was revised and re-revised; its style of bright talk was the product of a long process of literary refinement." (Raban 1982: v) A similar method of rigorous revisions and re-writings administered on the text till it acquired the varnish of apparent off-handed spontaneity was performed nine decades later by Robert Byron.

Although predominant, travel books and *reportaże podróżnicze* following relatively closely in the wake of the real journey, are not the only ways of textualizing journeys. There exists an approach that, from the perspective of life narratives' taxonomy, is much more similar to that of a memoir than of either a diary or a journal. I would like to argue that this type of narrating travel can be best metaphorically captured through the figure of a 'parallax', and that three travel books, each of two very prominent travel book writers, one British and one Polish, reveal striking similarities, particularly when seen through the lens of a memoir-like type of focalization of the past, where memory is used in a much less mimetic and much more creative ways than in the bulk of travel writing. I will apply the figure of 'parallax' to three travel books by Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915-2011): *A Time of Gifts: On Foot to Constantinople; From the Hook of Holland to the Middle Danube* (1977), *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986), and *The Broken Road* (2015).

According to Artemis Cooper (2012: 325), the biographer of Patrick Leigh Fermor, in 1966 Fermor nursed the idea of giving the title of *Parallax* to the book he was working on at that time. Most often used in astronomy, the word alludes to the difference in the appearance of an object seen from two different angles. It seemed a good way to draw attention to the gap between the nineteen-year-old walker and the forty-nine-year-old writer. The initial enthusiasm did not last long, though; Fermor got stuck while writing *Parallax* and abandoned the project. He returned to it in the early 1970s and worked laboriously on it until 1977, when the book finally appeared. However, *parallax*, as the title of the first book to describe Fermor's walk across Europe, was replaced by an intertextual, nostalgic quote from a poem written by Louise MacNeice, *Twelfth Night*: "For now that the time of gifts is gone...". *A Time of Gifts*, was very appropriate for the 'winter journey' of a boy of eighteen through the Europe of 1934, described it from the perspective of a man who was passed sixty when the book finally appeared: "For now that the time of gifts is gone--/ O boys that grow, O snows that melt,/ O bathos that the years must fill--/ Here is dull earth to build upon/ Undecorated; we have reached/ *Twelfth Night* or what you will... you will". As we can see for

ourselves, MacNeice's poem "Twelfth Night" leads directly to more intertexts, the most obvious of which is Shakespeare's play "Twelfth Night", bringing with it evocations of Christmases long past, celebrated with traditional medieval gusto, from the first day of Christmas to the twelfth day (and night) of Christmas, the Eve of the Epiphany, celebrated on January 6. As Artemis Cooper (2012: 325-331) explained, it was Fermor's friend and editor John (Jock) Murray who was not happy with the learned title *Parallax*, and insisted on its change to a title more commercially oriented. I am convinced that 'parallax', abandoned by Fermor and Murray, can nevertheless serve very well as a metaphor as well as a synecdoche for a kind of travel narrative in which the narrator, an experienced traveler, contrasts his/her experienced persona with himself/herself at the beginning of his mind-transforming wanderings.

Patrick Leigh Fermor, after his 'Great Trudge' (as he later referred to his venture) on foot across Europe, from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople (as he, in his heliophilia, insisted on calling Istanbul), undertaken between December 1933 and 1 January 1935, stayed in the Balkans, where he learnt the languages and enjoyed life. When World War II broke out he went to Britain to volunteer. He served with the Special Operations Executive in Crete, occupied by the Germans. He distinguished himself by masterminding and carrying out the kidnapping of German general Heinrich Kreipe, the regional commander of the island, whom Fermor managed to lead all the way through the mountains of Crete to a boat on the southern coast which took them to Alexandria (occupied by the British at that time). Fermor alluded to these events in *A Time of Gifts*, mostly in the intertext of an introductory letter opening this travel book, addressed to a great wartime friend and fellow SOE officer, Xan Fielding.

After the war Fermor led a wandering life and gradually established his reputation (mostly) as a travel writer. His first travel book, *The Traveller's Tree*, which was published in 1950, was a classical travel narrative recounting his travels (with a group of friends) in the West Indies in 1947-1948. Fermor's growing sentiment for his adopted patria of Greece led to prolonged wanderings in all different nooks and crannies of continental Greece. In 1961, with his wife Joan, he bought a plot of land in the remote village of Kardamyli on the Peloponnese coast, and there they built a comfortable house in a quiet bay (to Fermor's own design). Two travel books from this period described the extensive travels which Fermor with his wife undertook in Greece: *Mani: Travels in the Southern Peloponnese* (1958) and *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece* (1966). It was the extended research on Greek civilization, ancient and modern, which led to the writing of these two travel books. The narrative persona of both of them may be placed within the category of 'a gentleman scholar', more typical in the British travel writing of the nineteenth century, and very rare in the twentieth, where the narrative persona is foregrounded as an amateur scholar, expert in the areas of knowledge of his own choice. In Patrick Leigh Fermor's *Mani* and *Roumeli* this expertise is extended into such areas as: the Hellenic past, its literature and language, the Byzantine history of art, the history of Greece under Ottoman rule, and the history of modern Greece. The Greeks the Fermors meet during their wanderings are described with love, care, warmth and humour, while the strata of the past and customs are laboriously revealed in the erudite narration.

Mani and *Roumeli* are distinguished by their passionate erudition, but their structures resemble those of other British travel books, when the ‘scholarship’ of the narrator is allowed to be the centre of focalization: thus the chronologically described wanderings are interspersed with learned essays devoted to specific aspects of Greek history and culture. At times these essays verge on the poetic, fantastic and/or bizarre. For example, there is a passage in chapter three of *Mani*, entitled *Kardamyli: Byzantium Restored*, when Fermor describes a visit to the hut of the Mani fisherman, Estavrios Mourzinis, who is reputed by local hearsay to be the last descendent of the Byzantine emperors. Estavrios behaves humbly and appropriately:

“That’s what they say,” he said, “but we don’t know anything about it. They are just old stories...” He poured out hospitable glasses of ouzo, and the conversation switched to the difficulties of finding a market for fish, there was so much competition. There is a special delight in this early morning drinking in Greece. (Fermor 2006: 41)

With his skilful novelistic narration, utilizing free indirect speech stressing the banal, everyday topic, the conversation quickly switches to “difficulties of finding a market for fish, there was so much competition”, with the delight of the persona in such conversations and situations, especially as they are carried out ornamented with the customary drinking of a strong local liquor, ouzo, even though it is an early-morning visit. Spurred on by ouzo, the narrative persona’s imagination is allowed to run high and wild. The fragment which follows reads:

Old stories indeed. But supposing every link were verified, each skaky detail proved. Supposing this modest and distinguished looking fisherman were really heir of the Paleologi, descendant of Constantine XI and Michael VIII the Liberator, successor to Alexis Comnène and Basil the Bulgar-Slayer and Leo the Isaurian and Justinian and Theodosius and St. Constantine the Great? And, for that matter, to Diocletian and Heliogabalus and Marcus Aurelius, to the Antonines, the Flavians, the Claudians and the Julians, all the way back to the Throne of Augustus Caesar on the Palatine, where Romulus had laid the earliest foundations of Rome?...The generous strength of the second glass of ouzo accelerated these cogitations. (Fermor 2006: 44).

We do get something of a minor parallax here. Long before *A Time of Gifts*, there is a hiatus in perspective between the sober (in both senses of the word) narrative persona describing an early morning visit to the hut of a hospitable fisherman and the figure of Fermor-traveller, fascinated by Greece’s ancient heritage, discernable (even if only through an ouzo-inspired flight of fancy) in modern Greece’s remote villages, willingly succumbing to a chat with the fisherman, who has turned out (even if only in the narrator’s fancy) to be a true descendent of Byzantine emperors. Fermor makes fun of the extended search for documents to demonstrate the imperial lineage all over the post-Byzantine world, and gets even more involved in this vision:

Envoys returned empty-handed from Barbados and the London docks... Some Russian families allied to Ivan the Terrible and the Palaelogue Princess Anastasia Tzarogorodskaja had to be considered... Then all

at once a new casket of documents came to light and a foreign emissary was despatched hot foot to the Peloponnese, over the Taygetus to the forgotten hamlet of Kardamyli... By now all doubt had vanished. *The Emperor* Eustrarius leant forward to refill the glasses with ouzo for the fifth time. The Basilissa shooed away a speckled hen which had wandered indoors after the crumbs. On a sunny doorstep, stroking a marmalade cat, sat the small Diadoch and Despot of Mitra. (Fermor 2006: 45-46)

It all leads to the description of the coronation of Eustrarius, the Emperor-Fisherman, and the splendours and glories of the city of Byzantium re-created in a vision, at the same time tongue-in-cheek and overpowering:

Constantinople appeared beyond our bows, its towers and bastions glittering, its countless domes and cupolas bubbling among pinnacles and dark sheaves of cypresses, all of them climbing to the single great dome topped with the flashing cross that Constantine has seen in a vision on the Milvian bridge. There, by the Golden Gate, in the heart of the mighty concourse, waited the lords of Byzantium; the lesser Caesars and Despots and Sebastocrators, the Grand Logethete in his globular headgear, the Counts of the Palace, the Sword Bearer, the Chartophylax, the Great Duke, the thalassocrats and polemarchs, the Strateges of the Cretan archers, of the hoplites and the peltasts, and the cataphracts, the Silentaries, the Count of the Excubitors, the governors of the Avian Themes, the Clissourarchs, the Grand Eunuch and (for by now all Byzantine history had melted into a single anachronistic maelstrom) the Prefects of Sicily and Nubia and Ethiopia and Egypt and Armenis... (Fermor 2006: 46-47)

“An anachronistic maelstrom” continues for a few more pages with verbal virtuosity, combining historical names with linguistic fireworks, interspersed with the fisherman’s cliffhanging gale story. The ending of the chapter is once again realistic:

The bottle was empty... The schoolmaster’s shadow darkened the doorway. “You’d better hurry,” he said. “The caique for Acropolis is just leaving.” We all rose to our feet, upsetting in our farawells, a basket of freshly cut bait and a couple of tridents which fell to the floor with a clatter. We stepped out into the sobering glare of noon. (Fermor 2006: 50)

I have quoted just some selected passages from the third chapter of *Mani*, hoping to show the lavishness of Fermor’s style, the depth of his research and the intensity of his love of Greece and Greeks. It took Fermor even longer to polish the fragments of *Parallax*, which was to be transformed into the masterpiece *A Time of Gifts*. I believe that his laborious method of numerous corrections and ever new renditions of individual fragments can be compared with one major novelist and master-stylist of the English language: James Joyce, who spent seven years on *Ulysses* (1914-1921) and fifteen on *Finnegan’s Wake* (1924-1939).

As alluded to before, the ‘parallax effect’, so central to *A Time of Gifts*, the dramatic and nostalgic power of the book, lies to a large extent in these shifts of perspectives between the two figures of Patrick Leigh Fermor. One, a boy of seventeen, a drop out from a series of public schools, living on the fringe of the bohemian world of London and inspired by Robert Byron, a young travel writer and a great enthusiast of the ‘Byzantine Achievement’ (which he described in the travel book *The Station* (1928), about his visit to the art treasures of the Holy Mountain of Athos) at the begin-

ning of December 1933, on board a small trade vessel sails from London to the Hook of Holland; hoping to walk all the way across Europe to Constantinople with a small backpack filled with some clothes, a notebook and a copy of the *Oxford Book of Verse*. The other figure in the narrative persona of *A Time of Gifts*, a middle-aged travel writer who over the four decades that have passed since his 'Great Trudge' has accumulated the wealth of experiences and erudition.

In *A Time of Gifts* the final success was achieved by Fermor not only thanks to great care with the poetic, often nostalgic use of English, although this was the feature of the book that was most often discussed by reviewers, but also thanks to a very elaborate combination and intermingling of such disparate elements as: sophisticated intertextuality and the great concern for a harmonious union between the text proper and various paratexts and intertexts (On the importance of paratexts in *A Time of Gifts*, see Moroz 2016).

Poetry as an intertext (and a metatext) joining the two 'parallaxed' aspects of Fermor, aged seventeen and forty-nine, is given a crucial role, starting from the three carefully selected epigraphs-paratexts opening the book. One, as mentioned before, comes from a poem by Louis MacNeice "Twelfth Night". One comes from the metaphysical poet George Herbert and reads: "I struck the board and cry'd 'No more/ I will abroad./ What, shall I ever sigh and pine?/ My life and lines are free; free as the road, Loose as the wind.'" And one is given in the Latin original and comes from a poem by Titus Petronius Arbiter

Linque tuas sedes alienaque litora quaere,
o iuvenis: major rerum tibi nascitu ordo.
Ne succumbe malis: te novelis ultimus Hister,
Te Boreas geldius securaque regna Canopi,
quique ranascentem Phoebum cernuntque cadentem
major in externas fit qui descendit harenas. (Fermor 2005: 3)

Similarly to the other two English epigraphs, it is carefully selected, both for its poetic power and appropriateness for the parallax metaphor employed in *A Time of Gifts*. In Petronius's poem the young Fermor of 1933 ("o iuvenis") is directly asked (be an experienced poet) to embark on a journey to the "ultimus Hister", that is the far-off Danube (the Latin name for the "Danube" was the "Hister") with the promise that "the greater succession of events" ("major rerum") will happen on the way. And, in fact, by the end of *A Time of Gifts* young Fermor is described as he reaches Esztergom, an ancient Hungarian town on the Danube.

At a crucial moment, the narrative personae's expertise in poetry ancient and modern, with the love of poetry of the young Fermor, aged seventeen, carefully described at the beginning with just one crucial book, the *Oxford Book of Verse* in his rucksack, are allowed to merge with the aspect of a persona (only rarely alluded to in *A Time of Gifts*) as a war-hero, thus 'enlarging' the parallax to three, rather than two perspectives. It happens when the narrative persona describes the poets and poems which influenced his younger *alter ego*. When he moves on to Roman poetry, he mentions Lucan, Catullus, Virgil and Horace, and adds that he taught himself "a number of the Odes"

by Horace “and translated a few of them into awkward English sapphics and alcaics. Apart from their other charms, they were infallible mood-changers” (Fermor 2005: 85). And it is in this very moment that Fermor opens the parenthesis to tell this crucial story, adding this third, war-time, perspective:

One of them[odes, G.M]—I ix. *Ad Thaliarchum*—came to my rescue in strange circumstances a few years later. The hazards of war landed me among the crags of occupied Crete with a band of Cretan guerillas and a captive German general whom we had waylaid and carried off into the mountains three days before. The German garrison of the island were in hot, but luckily temporarily misdirected, chase. It was a time of anxiety and danger: and for our captive, of hardship and distress. During a lull in the pursuit, we woke among the rocks just as a brilliant dawn was breaking over the crest of Mount Ida. We had been toiling over it, through snow and then rain, for the last two days. Looking across the valley at this flashing mountain-crest, the general murmured to himself:

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum

Soracte... (See how the deep snow shines on Mount Soracte!)

It was one of the ones I knew! I continued from where he had broken off:

... nec jam sustineat onus

Silvae laborantes geluque

Flumina constiterint acuto,

(The toiling woods can bear the load no longer, and the streams stand still in the sharp ice.)

and so on, through the remaining five stanzas to the end. The general’s blue eyes had swivelled away from the mountain-top to mine—and when I’d finished, after a long silence, he said: “Ach so, Herr Major!” It was very strange. As though, for a long moment the war had ceased to exist. We had both drunk at the same fountains long before; and things were different between us for the rest of our time together. (Fermor 2005: 85-86)

It is difficult to assess to what extent this scene was ‘constructed’ or ‘re-constructed’ from Fermor’s war memories. Definitely, Patrick Leigh Fermor, with a group of Cretan partisans, abducted General Kreipe and took him, across the Cretan mountains, to a little bay in the south from which they were picked up by a motor-boat and transported to Alexandria. And Fermor and General Kreipe definitely met on a friendly footing in a 1972 TV programme on the general’s abduction (Mastorakis 1972). One may hope that the fact of “drinking from the same fountain” was instrumental in arranging this meeting. The exact moment of the mutual recitation of *Ad Thaliarchum* and details of the scenery may just as well be elements of travel-writer’s *licencia poetica*, after all the travel book as a genre, according to Borm (2004), is described as a genre of “non-fictional dominant” (Borm 2004: 17), which means, that although it is predominantly “non-fictional”, “non-fictionality” is only a “dominant”, not an “absolute rule”, and travel writers feel free to construct scenes and conversations with the focus not so much on “re-constructing” the past from memories, as of “constructing” the dramatic, fictionalized versions of memories. And the quoted fragment describing the recitation of Horace’s ode, introduced parenthetically (in a seemingly casual, off-hand manner) may be viewed, I think, as a high point in Fermor’s application of the figure of parallax in travel writing.

For reasons probably both literary and mental, the books on parallax and the ‘Great Trudge’ proved most difficult for Fermor to write. It took him almost a decade to complete the second book *Between the Woods and the Water* (it was finally published only in 1986), and the third and final book was published only posthumously in 2013 (it was edited by Fermor’s biographer Artemis Cooper and a friend of his, the renowned travel writer Colin Thubron, for although Fermor had been working on it on and off for the last two decades of his life, it still had to be extensively edited before final publication).

While looking at three late travel books written by Ryszard Kapuściński *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Suns* and *Travels with Herodotus* I would like to continue to rely on this powerful metaphor of parallax, which has been used to present Fermor’s trilogy of the ‘Great Trudge’, and which can also be detected in Kapuściński’s late work; to look both into the differences as well as the similarities between these key travel narratives of these two writers. Polish and Anglophone travel writing had been developing in clearly different ways in the nineteenth and twentieth century. In the Anglophone tradition, the genre of the travel book, after a dynamic start in the eighteenth century, was developing steadily and, for all the changes and innovations, was becoming more and more established as a genre, clearly differentiated from such (equally dynamically) evolving genres as the novel, the autobiography or the guide-book. This tradition was well known to Patrick Leigh Fermor and he fruitfully had used them in his earlier travel books: *The Traveller’s Tree*, *Mani* and *Roumeli*. Fermor’s trilogy was innovative in the sense of foregrounding the parallax metaphor, but both in its form and content it was firmly entrenched in the long established tradition of the Anglophone travel book. Whereas, in the Polish literary tradition the *podróż* genre, also established in the eighteenth century, disappeared, petered out in the course of the nineteenth century, as it was dynamically replaced by *reportaż podróżniczy*. It might be argued that this ‘generic shift’ was the result of the relative weakness of the book market (especially in comparison with the British and American book markets) and the growing popularity of periodicals, magazines and daily newspapers, in which Polish writers began to publish their travel accounts (often in serialized form), and the growing prestige of journalists/reporters. As I argued in “Ryszard Kapuściński: Between Polish and Anglophone Travel Writing” (Moroz 2015), Kapuściński’s early books, in which he narrated his travels, all the way from *Czarne gwiazdy* [*Black Stars*] (1963) to *Wojna futbolowa* (*The Soccer War*)(1978) were *reportaże podróżnicze* in the strict sense of the term, relying on the tradition of reporting travel that was introduced into Polish literature by such writers as Stanisław Rejmont and developed by such established ‘masters’ of the genre as Ksawery Pruszyński and Melchior Wańkiewicz in the period between the wars. The two books which marked a shift for Kapuściński from the journalistic, dry style of *reportaż podróżniczy* in the direction of a more ‘literary’ approach were *Cesarz* [*The Emperor*] (1978) and *Szakinszach* [*The Shah of Shahs*] (1982). As Kapuściński himself admitted, these changes were partly the result of him, as a writer, being influenced by theoretical and practical achievements of American New Journalism, which he understood as “the description of events through the application of literary tropes” (quoted in Nowacka and Ziątek 2008: 182, translation G.M.).

In August 1980, Kapuściński, who had witnessed and reported on more than twenty revolutions in the Third World countries, was sent by Kazimierz Barcikowski, a friend of his and a Polish Communist Party Politburo member, to report on the strike in Gdańsk shipyard. Kapuściński sided with the striking workers and the nascent Solidarity movement. After the Communists fought back and declared the Martial Law on 13 December 1981, Kapuściński lost his job as a PAP correspondent and “Kultura”, the weekly he had been writing for regularly, was closed for its pro-Solidarity stance. Kapuściński was given a new, unexpected lease of life, when the English translation of *The Emperor* was published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich at the beginning of 1983. It received very favourable reviews in America from such influential reviewers as John Updike in the *New Yorker* and Peter Prescott in *Newsweek*. In the British *Sunday Times* Salman Rushdie named *The Emperor* his book of the year for 1983 and pronounced that Kapuściński’s writing, “always wonderfully concrete and observant, conjures marvels of meanings out of minutiae. And his book transcends reportage, becoming a nightmare of power depicted as a refusal of history that reads as if Italo Calvino had re-written Machiavelli” (Rushdie 1983: 39). Such reviews meant that Kapuściński started to be regarded as a pundit on the Third World issues and a guru of reportage. He was being invited to international conferences, writers’ as well as journalists’ congresses and as a university lecturer. Wiktor Osiatyński, a friend of Kapuściński’s, recalled, that: “he put a lot of work and effort into his new ‘life of a famous writer’. In the course of six months he polished up his English so that he could comfortably give interviews and take part in conferences and meeting with readers without needing an interpreter ... He had his teeth done ... He changed his reporter’s working outfit for a jacket, and sometimes he even put on a tie.” (Domosławski 2012: 292).

When Kapuściński returned to travel writing at the end of 1980s, he was a writer and not a reporter, and he was to rely on the ‘parallax effect’ in all his three final books: *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Sun* and *Travels with Herodotus*. In all these three books the experienced narrative persona recalls the journeys undertaken over many decades, and the hiatus (parallax) created by the erudite narrator and the apprentice traveller described in the opening chapters of these books is an important rhetorical point. In all these three narratives the narrative persona of an experienced traveller, pundit, commentator is foregrounded. Therefore, I would like to disagree with Casey Blanton, who labelled Kapuściński’s late travel narratives (from *The Emperor* to *Travels with Herodotus*) as ‘polyphonic travels’. Blanton stated that

Kapuściński’s rhetorical choice of self-effacing and polyphonic dialogues to represent a foreign culture produces a kind of narrative that can offer as its subject matter both the fragility and the power of self/other relations. Kapuściński’s strategy is to relinquish the authoritative narrative vantage point traditionally occupied by a Western traveler and to offer, instead of one’s narration as the dominant voice, a polyphonic group of other voices in a dialogue with the narrator. (Blanton 2014: 299).

I believe, that the term ‘polyphonic’ renders the narrative of *The Emperor* and *The Shah of Shahs* very accurately. However, I would not call these narratives ‘travels’ because there is almost no ‘travelling’ described in these books, and the narrator in both of them is a ‘reporter’, not a ‘trav-

eler'. On the other hand, in my opinion, in *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Sun* and *Travels with Herodotus* Kapuściński's narrative persona becomes exactly a type of "Western traveler" with "the dominant voice", a voice which subordinates all the other voices. "The parallax effect" is central in *Imperium*, where it is extended from the first chapter entitled Pińsk 39 to the final paratext of an appendix entitled "Książki cytowane w 'Imperium'" ("Books Quoted in Imperium"). This appendix was for some reason not translated and not placed in the English 1994 translation by Klara Gławczewska. This appendix includes sixty books in Polish, Russian, French and English; fictional and non-fictional, on Russia and the Soviet Union, on history, philosophy, sociology and literature. It is not a typical academic type of reference/bibliography, for although it is alphabetical in order as such lists are, the quotes in the text itself are not described in any academic fashion. This appendix shows the depth and width of Kapuściński's readings and his expertise as a Sovietologist, and can be seen as functioning in grave contrast (parallax) with the scene in the first chapter when Kapuściński describes how in the autumn of 1939 his hometown of Pińsk (now in Belorussia) was invaded by the Red Army, annexed to the Soviet Union and Kapuściński as a boy of seven went to school, where Russian was the language of instruction, and the only book in class was entitled "Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma*" (*Studies in Leninism*) (Kapuściński 1998: 4).

Of the three last Kapuściński's travel narratives, the parallax in *The Shadow of the Sun* is the least obvious. However, this rhetorical trope is still there; four decades of Kapuściński's travels in Africa are described, starting in 1958 in Ghana and all the way to the persona's latest visit to this continent at the end of the twentieth century. Whereas, in *Travels with Herodotus* Kapuściński's final book, his *summa* as a traveller and writer, the parallax is extremely important. The book opens in the following way:

Before Herodotus sets out on his travels ascending rocky paths, sailing a ship over the seas, riding through the wilds of Asia; before he happens on mistrustful Scythians, discovers the wonders of Babylon, and plumbs the mysteries of the Nile; before he experiences a hundred different places and sees a thousand inconceivable things, he will appear for a moment in a lecture on ancient Greece, which Professor Biezuńska-Małowist delivers twice weekly to the first-year students in Warsaw University's department of history.

He will appear and just as quickly vanish.

He will disappear so completely that now, years later, when I look through my notes from those classes, I do not find his name. There are Aeschylus and Pericles, Sappho and Socrates, Heraclitus and Plato, but no Herodotus. And yet we took such careful notes. They were our only sources of information, The war had ended six years earlier and the city lay in ruins. Libraries had gone up in flames, we had no textbooks, no books at all to speak of.

The professor has a calm, soft, even voice, Her dark, attentive eyes regard us through thick lenses with marked curiosity. Sitting at a high lectern, she has before her a hundred young people the majority of whom have no idea that Solon was great, do not know the cause of Antigone's despair and could not explain how Themistocles lured the Persians into a trap.

If truth be told, we didn't even quite know where Greece was or, for that matter, that a contemporary country by that name had a past remarkable and extraordinary as to merit studying at university.

We were children of war. High schools were closed during the war years, and although in the larger cities clandestine classes were occasionally convened, here, in this lecture hall, sat mostly girls and boys from remote villages and small towns, ill read, undereducated. It was 1951, University admissions were granted without entrance examinations, family provenance mattering most—in the communist state the children of workers and peasants had the best chance of getting in. (Kapuściński 2007: 4-5)

As pointed out at the beginning of this paper, ‘parallax’ alludes to the difference in perception of an object seen from two different angles. And that was the case with Fermor’s *Between Woods and Water* and in *The Broken Road*, or Kapuściński’s *Imperium* and *The Shadow of the Sun*. But in *Travels with Herodotus*, as is also the case of *A Time of Gifts*, we have three angles. Apart from the narrative persona; experienced and skilful as a writer (opening his narrative with a series of anaphors “before...”, mixing past present and future tenses) and apart from Kapuściński aged nineteen, an undereducated student of history at Warsaw University diligently taking notes during the lecture on Ancient Greece, we get the third angle: that of Herodotus. Herodotus’s *Histories*, in Gérald Genette’s terms, serves as a ‘hypotext’ for *Travels with Herodotus*, which is a ‘hypertext’ (Genette 1997: 5). And Herodotus, from the very beginning is presented as a master traveller and a master story teller, telling his stories with compassion, empathy, wit and skill. The copy of the Polish translation of *The Histories* given to Kapuściński, the young reporter by his boss, becomes a talisman and its contents a yardstick to gauge the world. In the final chapter of *Travels with Herodotus*, entitled poetically “We Stand in Darkness, Surrounded by Light” Kapuściński tells of his trip, a short one, from the Greek isle of Kos, to the town Kapuściński insists on calling ‘Halicarnassus’, although (as he is reminded by a local Turkish policeman) it is called ‘Bodrum’ now. Halicarnassus is the birth place of Herodotus and the description of this ‘in the footsteps of the master’ little trip is used by Kapuściński to sum up his musings on the nature of travel and on the nature of writing. And in these musings Kapuściński’s narrative persona gets skilfully and unobtrusively merged with that of Herodotus. The key features of Herodotus, the man, the historian and the story teller are also alluded to the narrative persona. Both Herodotus and Kapuściński’s narrative persona are “insatiable, spongelike organisms, absorbing everything easily and just as easily parting with it” (Kapuściński 2007: 267-68), unlike the great majority of sedentary people, they are nomads, not capable to stay in one place, they “must walk (or ride) elsewhere, further away.” (Kapuściński 2007: 268), “they do not grow attached to anything, do not put down deep roots” (Kapuściński 2007: 268), and they are both men of peripheries, of Halicarnassus and Pińsk respectively, little towns far away from the centres of civilization; in fact places at the borderlands of civilization, where religions, cultures, languages and races mix breeding empathy and understanding.

Kapuściński’s figure of parallax in *Travels with Herodotus* could also be perceived in terms of hyperbole. For, it seems that in reality the parallax/hiatus he constructs between himself aged nineteen, and himself writing *Travels with Herodotus* was not as huge as he depicted it. In 1951 Kapuściński was not as undereducated as the opening passages quoted earlier suggest. His parents were not peasants or workers, but teachers. Although, originally from the provincial town

of Pińsk, the family moved to Warsaw in 1945. Ryszard Kapuściński had attended one of the best secondary schools in Warsaw—gimnazjum imienia Stanisława Staszica—and in 1950 he had had his two poems published by *Dziś i jutro*, while another weekly called *Odrodzenie*, had recorded a debate on poetry held by students in which Kapuściński's poem "Różowe jabłka" ("Pink Apples") was compared with poetry of Vladimir Mayakovsky and the canonical Polish pre-war poets (Nowacka and Ziątek 2008: 368).

Kapuściński's fluency in English, acquired in the mid-1980s, helped him not only during conferences and lectures, but also in his readings. In 1991 Kapuściński stated that "although the achievements of such writers as Bruce Chatwin, V.S. Naipaul, Paul Theroux are obvious, they had little influence on me" (Kapuściński 2008, translation G.M.). This statement was true in 1991 but this situation was to change when Kapuściński returned to travel writing and wrote three books discussed here. And it was in these three narratives when the influence of the key contemporary Anglophone travel writers became apparent. What Kapuściński took from Chatwin, Naipaul and Theroux, was the conviction that non-fictional travel writing could be very 'literary' in nature and that one of the key aspects of such 'literariness' was an erudite narrative persona employing novelistic tools and relying on various shades of intertextuality. The narrative personae of *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Sun* and *Travels with Herodotus* are centres of focalization, poets and experts.

To the best of my knowledge there is no evidence that Ryszard Kapuściński read Patrick Leigh Fermor's trilogy and it seems that it was a mere coincidence that Kapuściński wrote his narratives in the manner similar to Fermor: the erudite narrative persona looks back at his younger, inexperienced self. Their narratives remain almost unique in non-fictional, referential travel writing, they rely on the type of narration typical of memoirs, with their vantage point, 'backward' recollection of memories and not on linear, chronological narration characteristic of journals, diaries and the vast majority of non-fictional travel writing.

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Understanding Self and Others: Marriage Scenarios in Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*

Abstract. Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* establish a literary and cultural dialogue through the exploration of the individual's private space. The two writers are undoubtedly intrigued by a fluid nature of the individual: marriage appears to reveal inner conflicts, doubts, anxieties, as well as longing for happiness. Although pursuing different agendas when indulgently devising sentimental love stories and outrageous adulteries, Ford and Tolstoy echo each other when delivering their vision of self and other. This essay explores the *topos* of marriage as an element that amplifies the textual double-coding and reveals ethic and aesthetic values Ford and Tolstoy communicate.

Keywords: marriage, fluidity, changeability, anxiety, uncertainty, doubt, sincerity.

Marriage has long been a focus of literary inquiries: the changeability that the marriage topic reveals is rather exemplary in terms of ontological and epistemological instability and uncertainty. Additionally, marriage creates space for narrative maneuvers: humor, irony, sarcasm can easily be intertwined with philosophical, political, moral queries. Among a myriad of marriage stories, two novels stand out due to a variety of peripeteia, subplot mixes, moral confusion and desire to hear one's own self: Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* (1915) and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1877). The two novels, which are notorious for the depiction of adulteries and infidelities, may appear different. *The Good Soldier* is primarily discussed in the context of modernist writing and *Anna Karenina* has long been an inseparable part of the Russian realism discussion. However, the two novels incorporate marriage as an aesthetic device to expose the individual's doubt, anxiety, and emotional confusion. Although demonstrating an adherence to realism, *Anna Karenina* is also described in terms of transitional status: Tolstoy's style fluctuates between realism and mod-

ernism.¹¹ The analysis of aesthetic potential of marriage produces productive perspectives for the exploration of Ford's and Tolstoy's literary and cultural dialogue.

This essay examines the *topos* of marriage as one of the textual elements that appear to establish and maintain a literary bridge between Ford and Tolstoy: based on an array of marriage stories, *The Good Soldier* and *Anna Karenina* reveal the individual's fluid nature, which evokes a sense of uncertainty.¹² Additionally, this essay will attempt to address the question whether uncertainty is presented as destructive and paralyzing, or whether it is conceptualized as unavoidable, and thus it is perceived as acceptable. These inquiries will be explored through the analysis of Dowell's existential journey (*The Good Soldier*) and through the examination of the relationship dynamics between Kitty and Levin (*Anna Karenina*): the development of the two cases is intricately connected with the characters' understanding of and involvement in marriage concerns.

Although literary critics have frequently underlined the overpowering presence of marriage concerns raised by Ford¹³ and Tolstoy¹⁴, literary discussions can benefit from comparative trans-literary investigations. *The Good Soldier* and *Anna Karenina* demonstrate Ford's and Tolstoy's keen interest in the individual and their inner modifications, augmented by the changing environments. Although chronologically separated by more than 35 years, the two novels illuminate doubts and anxieties caused not only by historical and social circumstances but by the individual's seeking spirit as well.¹⁵

11 In *Framing Anna Karenina: Tolstoy, the woman question, and the Victorian novel*, Amy Mandelker details the modernist and realist nuances Tolstoy embraces.

12 As Stephen Lovell points out, Tolstoy struggled to come to terms with age and death: "As he grew older, the only way he found to keep his fear within reasonable bounds was to talk it into temporary submission" (304). This struggle results in Tolstoy's acceptance of self's fluidity: "Tolstoy was more convinced of the self's fluidity than of its wholeness" (304). The notions of fluidity and changeability significantly shape the writer's ethic and aesthetic edifice. On the one hand, this characteristic signals Tolstoy's adherence to realism; on the other hand, existential instability that intensifies spiritual confusion and lostness establishes a link with modernist detachment and isolation.

13 The discussion of Ford's manipulation with the *topos* of marriage is often blurred by the exploration of gender, social, political, religious nuances. Thus, Anne Flanagan, Rose De Angelis and Betty H. Kirschstein explore marriage from the perspective of gender roles. Ford's presentation of marriage encourages the analysis of blurred gender boundaries. As Kirschstein emphasizes, Ford himself crossed gender boundaries, "enjoying 'womanly' activities such as cooking, and seeking comfort in domestic spaces and female companionship" (xi).

14 Tolstoy's interpretation of marriage and family has received more critical attention than Ford's. However, a detailed analysis of Tolstoy's ideas concerning love, marriage, and family is primarily confined to the Russian Tolstoy Studies: Shklovsky, Strakhov, Chernyshevsky, Biriukov, Merezhkovsky, to name but a few. This research is also marked by the blurriness of the marriage focus. Tolstoy's canonical status as "a great Russian writer" requires considering political, social, philosophical, religious, spiritual scopes when addressing the marriage topic.

15 The two novels provide rich material for the understanding of Ford's and Tolstoy's personal vision of marriage. If *The Good Soldier* represents Ford's anxiety regarding gender roles, *Anna Karenina* reflects doubts and anxiety that Tolstoy develops while reconsidering his own marriage. *Anna Karenina* was written during the years when Leo Tolstoy and his wife, Sofia Andreevna, were happy. As Hugh McLean notes, despite some minor fights and quarrels "on the whole the Tolstoy marriage from 1862 up to the completion of *Anna Karenina* in 1877 could be classified as fundamentally harmonious" (66). After that, "came the master's 'crisis'" (66).

At first glance, the marriage topic forms a skeleton of both *The Good Soldier* and *Anna Karenina*. The novels involve the stories of married couples, whose lives appear to be displayed for approvals and judgments, sympathies and condemnations. In *The Good Soldier*, John Dowell, in an aloof and cold-hearted way, describes adulteries, cruelties, suicides that he witnesses. Detailed pictures of dramas and tragedies are provided in *Anna Karenina* by the omnipresent narrator, who encourages the audience to decide who to sympathize with and whom to condemn. Additionally, the ironic tone, imbuing the beginning of the two novels, locates marriage in the realm of reconsiderations and subversions, illuminating the loss of certainty.

The Good Soldier opens with a pathos phrase, introducing incredulity and suspicion regarding the reliability of the unfolding narrative: “This is the saddest story that I have ever heard” (5). A few lines into the story, the narrator subverts the intensity set up at the beginning: “I believe, a state of things only possible with English people of whom, till today, when I sit down to puzzle out what I know of this sad story, I knew nothing whatever” (5). The narrative is shaped by unreliability and uncertainty. On a large scale, “the saddest story,” which involves dramas and tragedies of the married couples—the Ashburnhams and the Dowells—is an illusion of life: Ford employs the *topos* of marriage to emphasize the individual’s loneliness as a mode of existence. The characters of *The Good Soldier* struggle to maintain meaningful connections that can help overcome emotional detachment. Thus, the irony introduced at the beginning of the novel, subverts traditional premises of marriage, defying stability and introducing uncertainty.

Subversion—narrative and ethic—also imbues *Anna Karenina*. It should be noted that, akin to *The Good Soldier*, irony is introduced in the beginning of the Russian novel. The Oblonskys’ undergo a family crisis: “Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys’ house. The wife had discovered that the husband was carrying on an intrigue with a French girl, who had been a governess in their family, and she had announced to her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him” (1). A playful irony, however, is mitigated by Tolstoy’s insightful observation: “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way” (1). Marriage invites the conversation not only about happy families but also about existential confusion, intensified by the loss of certainty and stability. Not only is Darya Alexandrovna’s routine life shattered, her emotional and psychological stability undergoes turmoil.

The Good Soldier and *Anna Karenina* reveal marriage as the individual’s space, which allows the subversion of social stereotypes and the manifestation of the individual’s inherent fluidity and changeability. Ford and Tolstoy devise situations, in which their characters have to face ceaseless ontological fluidity and to construct their epistemic frameworks that will justify their truths and beliefs. The two writers emphasize doubt, uncertainty, and anxiety as key elements of the existential journey. In this light, marriage provides space for self-reflection: changes that the characters undergo lay the foundations for the ability to construct individual worlds out of multiple fragments.

John Dowell, the narrator of *The Good Soldier* who is rather disconnected with the world and with others, laments over the loss of stability and attempts to find the way to restore tranquility and “perfect smoothness” of being: “Isn’t there any heaven where old beautiful dances, old

beautiful intimacies prolong themselves? Isn't there any Nirvana pervaded by the faint thrilling of instruments that have fallen into the dust of wormwood but that yet had frail, tremulous, and everlasting souls?" (11). The answer to these questions is epitomized by the inevitability of loneliness. Dowell confesses: "I know nothing—nothing in the world—of the hearts of men. I only know that I am alone—horribly alone" (13). In *The Good Soldier*, marriage discloses loneliness as a mode of existence, and the struggle with emotional confusion turns into a lonely journey, highlighting the individual's disconnection with others. "It is as if one had a dual personality," says Dowell as "the saddest story" progresses, "the one I being entirely unconscious of the other" (186-187). Observing the outside world, Dowell moves inward: loneliness appears to be accepted as a way of being.

Pointing out Dowell's estrangement, DeCoste states, "Dowell himself reports his fundamental estrangement from other human beings with utter equanimity" (110). Moreover, estrangement becomes pervasive:

Just as the Dowell's marriage is rendered barren by our narrator's flight from vulgar intimacy, left nothing but a loveless tissue of routine betrayals and truths carefully left unspoken, so too is the Ashburnhams' perfection predicated upon an alienation perpetuated by silence. . . . The primary fact of this relationships is its not-expressive character, its being a union in which only separation is possible, precisely because nothing may be said. (111)

Distance and detachment help survive in the environment of undermined certainty: Dowell is deprived of unshakeable belief. In this context, Dowell's marriage, marked by disconnection and the lack of intimacy (the Ashburnhams' marriage is no exception) highlights the utmost loneliness, which can hardly be healed. In light of Dowell's loneliness, John Rodden acutely notes, "Unable to forge a family romance and unable to control his projected objects and thereby himself, Dowell suffers extreme loneliness and paranoid anxiety" (880). Dowell is overwhelmed with loneliness and anxiety; however, his perception of this state is rather ambiguous. While being aware of his emotional lostness, Dowell appears to be ready to embrace instability.

Doubts dominate and control Dowell's life. The narrator seems to be unable (or reluctant?) to see his wife's infidelity, which gestures toward the lack of stamina to resist doubt. However, I would like to suggest that Dowell is indifferent to his wife's affairs, rather than unable or reluctant to accept the fact that numerous adulteries damaged his marriage. For Dowell, indifference is a way to deal with doubt: not being attached to anything liberates and empowers. Detachment and indifference allow Dowell to see and experience the environments from different perspectives. In his narrative, Dowell unveils not only his life but also the life of his wife and the Ashburnhams. This strategy intensifies the narrative's all-inclusiveness, in which a variety of impacts and affects is considered. When narrating the adulteries, in which he himself is involved, Dowell represents multiple viewpoints (his own, Edward's, Leonora's, and Florence's), which disclose a multiplicity of perceptions, subverting any harmonious unanimity. In one of his observations, Dowell laments:

Upon my word, I couldn't tell you offhand whether the lady who sold the so expensive violets at the bottom of the road that leads to the station, was cheating me or no; I can't say whether the porter who carried our traps across the station at Leghorn was a thief or no when he said that the regular tariff was a lira a parcel. The instances of honesty that one comes across in this world are just as amazing as the instances of dishonesty. (64)

The details mentioned in this paragraph—violets which are bought at the bottom of the road and the porter at the station at Leghorn—seem insignificant. However, minor occurrences are followed by more **Abstract** speculations: “After forty-five years of mixing with one's kind, one ought to have acquired the habit of being able to know something about one's fellow beings. But one doesn't” (64). The intermingling of narrative dimensions extends Dowell's loss of certainty to the all-encompassing level. In this context, marriage in *The Good Soldier* is a site of inner, as well as outer, struggles, where the individual is presented in the epicenter of uncertainty and chaos.

In Ford's novel, marital relationships are chaotic and uncertain: Florence manipulates Dowell; Edward and Leonora resemble dishonest business partners; Dowell seems to manipulate everybody, avoiding any kind of ties and connections. Apart from political and social subcontexts that Ford's chaotic marriages may evoke, they also reveal the individual's confusion, which is brought forward by the repercussions of the *fin de siècle* atmosphere. Anxiety and uncertainty pervade Dowell's narrative: his inability to connect with others marks the loss of basis that structures *weltanschauung*. “But upon my word,” says Dowell, speculating on the nothingness of his life, “I don't know how we put in our time, how does one put on one's time? How is it possible to have achieved nine years and to have nothing whatever to show for it? Nothing whatever, you understand” (63). Nothingness seems to be the core of Dowell's life: he does not have a partner, he does not believe in love and friendship, he is incapable of sympathy and understanding. Although overwhelmed with the void, Dowell makes an attempt to find meaning in a meaningless world. Chaotic marriages that do not have space for connection and connectedness emphasize the existential loneliness.

Aestheticizing loneliness, Ford liberates both its destructive and constructive energies. No character in *The Good Soldier* can maintain connection with others; nevertheless, loneliness, at least for Dowell, produces space for inquiries and questions, reflecting not only his anxieties and uncertainties but also his doubts. Dowell's unreliability as a narrator reflects his doubtful soul as well. He seems not to doubt one thing—he has doubts. Doubt keeps the narrative moving back and forth, producing space for liberty and creativity, which nourishes the confused mind.

In *The Good Soldier*, loneliness is an accepted fact of the individual's existence. Tolstoy employs the marriage topic to *deal* with loneliness, to find ways to overcome uncertainty. This conversation about loneliness and uncertainty creates a crossing point between Ford and Tolstoy. In addition, the two writers involve doubt that reflects fluid and changing identity. Although inseparable from uncertainty and from the loss of stability, doubt signals an inquiring spirit, gesturing toward existential freedom. Ford and Tolstoy echo each other in their attempt to reveal an ambiguous nature of uncertainty: as a notion that encompasses both constructive and destructive components.

Tolstoy develops his characters' nature by including doubts into their worldviews: *Anna Karenina*, Darya Alexandrovna, Konstantin Levin, even Stepan Arkadyevitch. However, Kitty's struggles exemplify a painful confrontation with doubts, entailing further spiritual transformations that expose the fluidity of the individual. Refining Kitty's complicated character, Tolstoy masterfully connects spiritual doubts with heart matters and marriage ideals.

Kitty is first introduced as a beautiful young woman who is in love with Alexey Vronsky. (At least she believes she sincerely loves him and dreams to become his wife.) For this reason, she rejects Levin's proposal, hoping to build a happy marriage with Vronsky. Her heart, however, is broken after Vronsky meets and falls in love with Anna: Kitty suffers from depression, which worries and puzzles her parents, who cannot understand the origin of their daughter's physical and emotional ailment. In search for the physical, emotional, and spiritual balance, Kitty opens herself to the world, attempting to come to terms with her pain and discomfort.

After meeting Madame Stahl and Varenka, Kitty believes that she discovers "the new life," in which she will be able not only to recover from the pain caused by Vronsky but also to find spiritual peace and tranquility, deprived of emotional turmoil: "In Varenka she realized that one has but forget oneself and love others, and one will be calm, happy, and noble" (204). Tolstoy portrays Kitty as an independent seeker for her own truth: instead of abiding by the traditions of the aristocratic society in which matchmaking and marriage business are common practices. Kitty does not believe in loveless marriages organized on the basis of financial profit. After her painful experience with Vronsky, Kitty is convinced that the secret to meaningful life lies in the service to mankind and in the wholehearted self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, doubt disturbs Kitty's confidence and seemingly resumed peace: "This doubt poisoned the charm of her new life" (206). Her suspicions concerning the sincerity of Madame Stahl's and Varenka's deeds and intentions are augmented by her father's (prince Alexander Shtcherbatsky) indirect subversion of their generosity and charity: ". . . [I]t's better when [one] does good so that you may ask everyone and no one knows" (210). It may seem that Kitty is influenced by her father's comments; however, her hesitations develop long before the prince's remark. In *Anna Karenina*, doubt is a manifestation of independent thinking and individual choice, accompanying spiritual and existential quest. Kitty's quest also epitomizes the individual's changeability and fluidity, discovered through the emotional confusion.

Kitty's emotional turmoil and her longing for certainty, to some extent, is intertwined with Levin's quest for inner peace. The intersection of the two narrative lines represents the individual's interaction with others as a way to overcome doubt and loneliness, which, according to Tolstoy, disturb inner peace and harmony. As Ford, Tolstoy views uncertainty as an inextricable part of existence. Unlike Ford, however, Tolstoy introduces the idea that doubts can (and should) be processed and reduced through genuine interaction with self and others.

For Levin, marriage is a sacred union, which brings emotional and spiritual stability: "He was so far from conceiving of love for woman apart from marriage that he positively pictured to himself first the family, and only secondarily the woman who would give him a family. . . . For Levin it was the chief affair of life, on which its whole happiness turned" (87). Kitty's rejection shatters his

dreams: “He felt himself, and did not want to be any one else. All he wanted now was to be better than he before. In the first place he resolved that from that day he would give up hoping for any extraordinary happiness, such as marriage must have given him, and consequently he would not so disdain what he really had” (85). To cope with his pain, Levin decides to emotionally detach from the worldly environments and indulge in his isolation: “This lovely spring roused Levin still more, renouncing all his past and building up his lonely life firmly and independently” (137). Although spring brings the sense of resurrection, it primarily emphasizes physical well-being while hiding wounds that still need to be healed. At the moment of resolute decision to never pursue marriage, Levin feels that “in the depth of his soul something had been put in its place, settled down, and laid to rest” (88). However, this state of illusory peace and tranquility, deepened by isolation and seclusion, highlights the loss of hope and despondency. The individual’s strong spirit inspires openness to others: isolation is a sign of a damaged self.

Loneliness which Levin considers blissful reveals its artificial nature as soon as he finds out that Kitty did not marry Vronsky. It is peculiar that Levin’s solitude—physical and emotional—is disturbed when he connects with nature. Nature serves to emphasize the naturalness of seeking connection with others, as opposed to isolation and seclusion. When Stepan Arkadyevitch comes to his estate, Levin attempts to block his fond memories of Kitty. Stepan Arkadyevitch is impressed with his happiness; and Levin seems confident to declare: “Perhaps because I rejoice in what I have, and don’t fret what I haven’t” (147). However, this episode exposes his deliberate self-deception. Discovering that Kitty suffers physically and emotionally, Levin cannot hide his rejoice: “On the way home Levin asked all the details of Kitty’s illness and the Shtcherbatskys’ plans, and though he would have been ashamed to admit it, he was pleased at what he heard” (150-151). Levin experiences emotional resurrection: he still sincerely loves Kitty.

For Tolstoy, sincere love and sincere marriage are steps toward the life grounded in faith and certainty. However, this life transpires when a seeking spirit develops: the individual has to find their own way to existential satisfaction and to gain control over doubt and uncertainty.¹⁶ As Kitty, who is tormented by the necessity to make a choice between prioritizing her own self and serving others, Levin seems to be tortured by doubts regarding the benevolence of his solitude. Tolstoy employs love stories to narrate changes that take place when the individual faces contradictions and ambiguities. The emphasis on the individual brings forth intimacy, which appears to sustain a sincere dialogue with self and others.

After breaking up with Kitty, Levin develops sensitivity, accompanied by vulnerability. When Levin makes his decision to separate himself from Kitty, he is anxious to be honest with himself. Rationalizing his choice, he convinces himself that loneliness is his true path. Choosing detach-

¹⁶ Tolstoy’s *Resurrection* can be rather productive for further transliterary and interdisciplinary explorations of anxiety, doubt, emotional confusion and of the ways to recover from negative experiences in order to modify one’s life. This novel also provides material for the analysis of how damaging experiences shape the individual’s perception of self and others.

ment and isolation, Levin deviates from his sincerity. Although he may have found some serenity, residing in his estate and devoting his time to agricultural business, Levin suffers from anxiety and restlessness, intensified by his doubtful and questioning mind. He unsuccessfully attempts to persuade himself that he follows his “true” voice when choosing a secluded life. His sincere and genuine love for Kitty, as well as his genuine desire to find happiness while being married to the woman he sincerely loves, are reignited the moment Kitty re-enters his life: “No,” he said to himself, ‘however good that life of simplicity and toil may be, I cannot go back to it. I love her’” (252). Sincerity becomes a uniting element for Levin and Kitty. If Levin sustains his sincerity throughout his painful process of coping with the rejection, Kitty discovers sincerity when managing the pain caused by Vronsky’s indifference. Levin and Kitty experience excruciating doubts before they discover a sincere connection that creates space not only for happiness but for doubt and uncertainty as well. While doubt and anxiety constitute part of life and existence, sincerity is a means to turn their destructive energy into a constructive one.

In Tolstoy’s interpretation, sincerity is granted to everyone. However, it is also presented as a choice. Marked by the lack of connection and sincerity, the relationship of Oblonsky and Darya Alexandrovna, for instance, is doomed: the two people are engaged in a show marriage. Anna and Vronsky are also given a chance to develop the ability to hear others and to connect with others while cultivating sincerity and genuineness. Instead, they are trapped in their worlds, which do not have space for others.

In *Anna Karenina*, sincerity signals the individual’s ability and willingness to develop connection with others while expanding one’s own world by integrating a diversity of voices. This ability facilitates the establishment of contact zones where different views and perspectives combine. From this perspective, marriage reveals itself as a dialogue of individuals who are open to hear others and to embrace inherent fluidity of existence.

Do Ford’s marriages include sincerity? Describing Ford’s novel, Walter G. Creed notes, “*The Good Soldier* is a novel of deception. Dowell’s wife deceives him, so do the Ashburnhams. Dowell deceives himself, mostly because he wants to be deceived, and in telling his story, he deceives us as well” (215). At first glance, deceptions—narrative and marital—dominate Dowell’s story. Dowell changes his narrative angles as if following his swinging moods. Nevertheless, this sense of narrative lostness is a trick that Dowell employs to elude certainty and finality.

Scrutinizing the Ashburnhams’ relationship, Dowell at times develops understanding and compassion, followed by scorn, intolerance, and impatience. As far as his wife is concerned, Dowell is not ashamed of revealing his mixed feelings. Florence is a target of intolerance and disdain, as well as pity. Dowell is rather comfortable about his openness regarding inner conflicts that the marriage brings into his life. Whenever his wife is involved, Dowell’s narrative acquires multiple shades: “Florence was singularly expert as a guide to archeological expeditions and there was nothing she liked so much as taking people round ruins and showing you the window from which some one looked down upon the murder of some one else” (68). Avoiding direct criticism, Dowell expresses his irony and sarcasm, exposing bitterness that signals emotional detachment from his

spouse. Their relationship resembles a contract that contains a series of agreements that none of the partners want to follow. Nevertheless, they follow the rules, which they still violate one way or another. Although the violation is rather invisible, it contributes to inner tensions and conflicts. Describing an excursion to the ancient city of M—, Dowell provides a number of details: “I don’t suppose the Ashburnhams wanted especially to go there and I didn’t especially want to go there myself. But, you understand, there was no objection. It was part of the cure to make an excursion three or four times a week, so that we were all quite unanimous in being grateful to Florence for providing the motive power” (63). Although marital relationships in this episode do resemble a show, Dowell does not hide his sarcasm toward his wife. Neither does he conceal his irritation, which is intensified by the presence of his wife and the Ashburnhams. At the same time, being aware of his feelings and emotions, which can hardly be categorized as pleasant, Dowell is rather genuine and sincere revealing his “ugliness.”

Dowell scrutinizes with irony and sarcasm the melodramas that Edward and Leonora are involved into. Through these observations he also discloses himself. On the one hand, Dowell paints a repelling picture of Edward’s and Leonora’s marriage, in which dishonesty, adultery, and manipulation reflect power and dominance play. On the other hand, Dowell’s non-interference demonstrates his detachment and indifference. The characters of *The Good Soldier* question the possibility to maintain connections with others, to have friends, and to cultivate tolerance and understanding. Nevertheless, they seem sincere while maintaining their disbelief in a genuine connectedness. From this perspective, Ford’s novel does contain sincerity, which, however, differs from Tolstoy’s emotional and spiritual sincerity. In *The Good Soldier*, sincerity is shifted toward self, bruised with lostness, detachment, and uncertainty: a traditional happy marriage turns into an illusion. Yet, being sincere with self and others is one the elements of accepting and embracing doubt and uncertainty.

The Good Soldier and *Anna Karenina* conceptualize marriage as a liminal territory where the personal and the communal, subjective and objective, inner and outer combine, bringing forward interrelations and interinfluences, which the individual experiences. Understood as a mediator between multiple dimensions, the marriage *topos* locates the individual in the *in-between-ness* (Gregg and Seigworth 1) of the external and internal, encompassing their changeability and fluidity. Multiple overlapping stories of *Anna Karenina* and a seemingly amorphous structure of *The Good Soldier*, which celebrates fragmentation and disjunction, include marriage as an aesthetic element that produces the effect of double-coding: factual plots encode multilayered texts, creating narrative labyrinths, involving a diversity of emotional and psychological concerns that reveal anxieties, intensified by doubt and uncertainty.

In *The Good Soldier*, emotional and psychological confusion is inevitable. An array of unsuccessful marriages, revolving around infidelities, distance, and disconnection, emphasizes the inner chaos as an accepted fact of the individual’s existence. In *Anna Karenina*, emotional lostness also accompanies the protagonists’ struggles, whose intensity increases as doubt and uncertainty become part of epistemic paradigms. Thus, this conversation about doubt and uncertainty cre-

ates a crossing point between Ford and Tolstoy. The two writers are intrigued by the individual's response to the lack of order and structure. Dowell, who is overwhelmed with the sense of lostness and loneliness, which, however, is masked with irony and with the lack of connectedness with others, may seem to choose aloofness as a way to protect his own self from disintegration. Kitty and Levin, on the other hand, when experiencing doubt and the lack of certainty, strive to re-organize their worlds affected by instability. Orchestrating marriage turmoil, Ford and Tolstoy introduce doubt as an accompanying element of spiritual journey: the two writers reveal the ambiguity of instability, which encompasses destructiveness and constructiveness. This gesture toward blurring the boundaries of conventional concepts is rather characteristic of modernist writing. While Ford advances modernist modifications, contributing to the ethic and aesthetic fluidity, Tolstoy seems to enter a new territory. As a realist, Tolstoy objectively portrays the reality, including a variety of nuances. As a modernist, the writer makes a turn toward representing multiple realities: multiple realities reveal multiple truths, bringing existential confusion. A collection of marriage stories that *Anna Karenina* comprises demonstrates diverse visions of life and reality, foregrounding modernist fragmentation and disintegration.

The Good Soldier and *Anna Karenina*, which may appear different at first glance, share the acceptance of doubt and anxiety as an inextricable part of existence. Moreover, the two novels describe the individual's confusion as natural, as one of the steps toward self-acceptance and inner freedom. Ford and Tolstoy also value sincerity, which is presented as a way to deal with the sense of lostness and uncertainty: being sincere is being able to hear ones' own voice and to engage in dialogue with others. However, as Ford and Tolstoy demonstrate, sincerity has different shades. *Anna Karenina* reveals sincerity that helps establish connection and connectedness. In *The Good Soldier*, sincerity appears to undermine self and others, but this destructive energy does not reach its ultimate level: the undermining potential of sincerity accompanies fundamental existential reinvention. This aspect, however, is open for further literary investigations: a detailed exploration of Ford's and Tolstoy's ethic and aesthetic nuances will broaden the scope of transliterary and trans-cultural studies.

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A multimodal perspective on metaphors and metonymies in art:

A case study of the artwork *Agora*
by Magdalena Abakanowicz

Abstract. The article is a semiotic study of the artistic installation *Agora* designed by a famous Polish sculptor Magdalena Abakanowicz, based on the theoretical grounds of Cognitive Semantics. Metaphor and metonymy are conceptual processes whose communicative function is discussed in the paper, in particular, their role in deciphering possible meanings of the artwork. The paper also demonstrates how the multimodal analysis of the verbo-visual material can give rise to diverse interpretations of the figures.

Keywords: cognitive semantics, metaphor, metonymy, art.

Introduction

This paper presents a semiotic analysis of the artwork *Agora* created by a renowned Polish artist – Magdalena Abakanowicz. *Agora* is a sculptural installation, located in Grant Park in Chicago in The United States, and it is one of the biggest figural compositions of the artist. The artwork presents 106 iron figures, with the title inscribed on the plate and attached to the stone that is placed in the vicinity of the sculptures.

In the paper the role of cognitive mechanisms of metonymy and metaphor will be discussed, especially their interaction which can lead to different conceptualisations of the installation. The key elements of the artwork that need to be examined to uncover the possible range of meanings are the missing body parts, the composition, and the cultural context. The proposed semantic analysis is divided into two parts: the external perspective that involves the identification of visual metaphors and metonymies of the figural composition, and a slightly different interpretative scenario that results from combining the verbal and visual modalities – an attempt at identifying the multimodal metaphor.

2. Metaphor in other modalities

Although it has long been acknowledged that metaphorical reasoning is a cognitive process present in daily activities (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3), for a long time, the research areas concerning the study of metaphor focused on the verbal modality only. The analyses of metaphor in the pictorial and verbo-pictorial discourse introduced and developed by Charles Forceville (1996), led to the increased attention of the conceptual mechanism in other non-linguistic forms. The conducted research has covered modalities such as gesture (Müller 2008; Mittelberg and Waugh 2009), and music (Górska 2014; Zbikowski 2009), with a special focus on the meanings expressed by juxtaposing different modalities, such as e.g. verbo-pictorial (Forceville 1996, 2008), and verbo-musical (Górska 2014). Multimodal studies have also been developed in film (Rohdin 2009), TV commercials (Urios-Aparisi 2009), and newspaper cartoons (El Refaie 2009). In this article, the semantic potential of the visual and verbo-visual modalities are discussed and, in particular, the interaction of both codes, whose co-occurrence can affect the interpretation of the artwork.

3. Analysis

3.1. The figural composition



Figure 1. *Agora* by Magdalena Abakanowicz¹

The collection of headless human-like sculptures with enlarged bodies, and long legs that support the disproportionately long corpuses can create an impression that the artistic message of what bodily deformations can manifest is of conceptual significance. From a distance the sight of oversized sculptures clustered on a patch of concrete can evoke an image of a mass gathering, which

¹ The included photographs are from the author's collection.

appears to illustrate how a meaning can be expressed via the change of size. The enlargement seems deliberate, and initially, it may suggest the visual manifestation of the conceptual metaphor MORE OF FORM IS MORE OF CONTENT (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 127), or SIGNIFICANT/IMPORTANT IS BIG (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 50). Kwiatkowska (2013: 79-91) addresses the role of size in visual art, as one of the forms via which a message can be conveyed, especially how it determines the interpretation of art: “Such magnification allows us to see the object in a new light, which may evoke new associations” (Kwiatkowska 2013: 84). The size of sculptures is magnified, and to access the entire view of the figures from a small distance, the observers need to look up to them, and the visual confrontation with objects which are so massive in posture can produce a sense of fragility and weakness on the part of the observers. Such impressions may manifest the metaphorical reasoning BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL or FORCE IS DOWN (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 15).

Metaphor and metonymy form a strong conceptual relation in the artwork *Agora*, as the metonymic interpretation provides the contextual foundations via which different metaphors can be construed. This is visible in the interpretation of the missing body parts, in particular, the missing heads, as all the figures are deprived of them. Conceptualising the head as a source of intellect can be an example of the “internal metonymy” (for the latter see Mittelberg and Waugh 2009: 335) HEAD FOR INTELLECT, which is an example of the metonymic structure in which a body part represents an abstract concept (see Radden and Kövecses 1999: 46). This “conceptual contiguity” (Mittelberg and Waugh 2009: 340) appears crucial in the process of meaning construction, as the head naturally motivates the CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED metonymy (Kövecses 2002: 156). By entailment, the headless figures can evoke the opposite meaning, such as: LACK OF HEAD FOR LACK OF INTELLECT. The source domain of the metonymy – HEADS is visually absent, and it refers to the abstract target – INTELLECT. Thus, the interpretation of the headless gathering as lacking intellect, or reasoning is arrived at via the metonymic basis. The conceptualisation is also based on the CONTAINER image schema (see Johnson 1987: 22), which structures THE MIND IS A CONTAINER metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 214).²

Thus, the meaning of the headless figures as manifesting intellectual deficiencies, can dominate in the interpretation. Another conspicuous element in the installation is the visual absence of faces which can indicate an array of meanings as well. First, the face – an indispensable body part involved in a direct act of verbal communication – is not present, which is yet another factor that reinforces the sense of lost ability to communicate and alienation. This property appears important in the context of the artwork, as positioning of the figures in close proximity to each other implies a communicative intention of the gathering. The lack of faces may also signify the lack of individuality, and uniqueness, and the conceptual metonymy in terms of which the meaning can be construct-

² The metaphor has numerous linguistic realizations, such as: “What put that (idea) into your head (= What made you think that)?”, “Use your head (= Think more carefully)!” The examples are from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 653. It should also be noted that in other cultures the head can signal other meanings, e.g. in Tunisian Arabic (see Maalej 2014).

ed is THE FACE FOR THE PERSON (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 37),³ which is an instantiation of A PART FOR WHOLE metonymy (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 36). Therefore, the absence of face can add another aspect of meaning to the interpretation of the depicted contemporary *Agora*, implying anonymity in the crowd, or lack of individuality that results from a double metonymic reading: LACK OF FACE FOR LACK OF INDIVIDUALITY, or LACK OF FACE FOR ANONYMITY.

Other elements of the installation can also reflect particular dysfunctions of human abilities, and they appear to be demonstrated through the missing arms/hands. Arms and hands are typically associated with their physical function, such as grasping, holding objects and also gesturing in communication.⁴ All statues are deprived of these body parts, and this may trigger metonymic reasoning in terms of which the visually inaccessible metonymic source – the hand evokes an activity performed with it, i.e. the metonymy THE HAND STANDS FOR THE ACTIVITY/SKILL (Kövecses 2002: 207).⁵ This metonymic reasoning can be analyzed in terms of the “external metonymy” (Mittelberg and Waugh 2009: 334), and at the same time it is an example of the INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION metonymy (Kövecses 2002: 145).

The absence of hands and arms in the context of the mass gathering may also suggest a failed attempt to build a relation, which implies a strong activation of the LINK image schema (see Johnson 1987: 117). Therefore, the missing limbs can lead to a number of interpretations based on the conceptual mechanism of metonymy such as: LACK OF HANDS FOR LACK OF SKILLS, or LACK OF HANDS FOR LACK OF COOPERATION. Since the lack of the indispensable body parts evokes the lack of mental and physical functions they perform, such metonymic references may imply dysfunctional human relations.

The CONTAINER image-schema (see Johnson 1987: 22), significantly contributes to the meaning of the fleshless statues. A notable element of the sculptural forms is that from the back the casts resemble empty insides, which can give rise to various metaphorical interpretations. According to Kövecses (1990), different emotion concepts are expressed via reference to particular bodily organs which manifests THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR THE EMOTIONS metaphor (Kövecses 1990: 122).⁶ The metaphor has culture-specific realizations, as particular body organs can communicate various emotions, which, in the context of the considered artwork, can be a starting point in the interpretation of the artwork. In Western culture, the heart is considered to

3 The metonymy is often used in language, e.g.: “I was greeted by smiling faces” The example is from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 490.

4 Understanding of this body part is also culture-specific and can manifest a number of other meanings, e.g. in Tunisian Arabic (see Maalej 2014).

5 The metonymy is frequently employed in language: “All these toys are made by hand”, “Rosie, remember you should always hold my hand when we cross the road”. The examples are from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 640.

6 This is a general metaphor which has metonymic basis, e.g. “He got *butterflies in the stomach*” – the bodily organ metonymically evokes a sense of fear and anxiety via the physical location of the emotions. The example is from Kövecses (1990: 72).

be an organ with which a number of emotions is associated, and the feeling of love in particular, and the mention of the bodily organ metonymically evokes the feeling.⁷ A different line of reasoning may adopt an individual who speaks, for example, Swahili, in which the heart is also regarded as the physical location of bravery and enthusiasm (see Kraska-Szlenk 2014: 56-57, 65-66; see also Kraska-Szlenk 2005: 162-166). Yet another conceptualisation of the heart is characteristic of Chinese (see Yu 2009), in which the heart is considered to be an origin of human mental skills (see Yu 2009: 126). Thus, for viewers representing different cultural backgrounds, the empty figures deprived of their organs may signal a lost value of different emotions and features that determine life of an individual, which, in turn, may lead to diverse interpretations of the artwork.

The physical organization of the statues also appears symbolic in this artwork, and elements such as the position of the sculptures and the figural composition can affect the interpretation. According to Feng and O'Halloran (2013), the object of conceptualisation often attracts more attention than the visual context: "cognitive studies of visual metaphor mostly focus on *what* is in the image, instead of *how* the image is represented" (Feng and O'Halloran 2013: 329). In the considered artwork, compositional factors such as the arrangement and orientation of the statues can be particularly important in the process of interpretation. At a distance, the installation looks like a huge gathering, however, on approaching it, the sculptures are at a particular distance from each other, and depicted as if following individuated paths. The spaces between them can mark an individuated existence and be indicative of a distance, either emotional or social/cultural, which can motivate the metaphor AN EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP IS A DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO ENTITIES (Kövecses 2000: 92), and the primary metaphor INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS (Grady 1997: 13; see also Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 50).



Figure 2. *Agora* by Magdalena Abakanowicz

⁷ Such examples are commonly used in language: "He broke her heart (= made her very sad) when he left her for another woman", "I love you with all my heart (= very much)". The examples are from the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1997. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 656.

Bodily reactions are visual illustrators of various emotional states (see Kövecses 2000), and the manner of communication is usually reflected by the distance maintained in the physical space. Kövecses (2000: 26) also emphasizes the significance of proximity as an important source concept in metaphorical construals which describe love relationships.

This is in line with Lakoff and Johnson (1999), who also point to the fact that “our bodies define a set of fundamental spatial orientations that we use not only in orienting ourselves, but in perceiving the relationship of one object to another” (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 34). The physical distance between the statues and their specific positioning can be used metaphorically to imply emotional states or social affiliation, which opens doors to particular metaphorical construals such as: LACK OF EMOTIONAL BONDS/SOCIAL AFFILIATION IS WALKING AN INDIVIDUATED PATH, or ANONYMITY/LACK OF CULTURAL BELONGING IS WALKING IN DIVERSE DIRECTIONS. Bodily orientation of the statues is another important element in the process of interpretation. Regardless of the compacted form of the installation, the lateral or opposite-body orientation of the sculptures can manifest the lack of interest and this can be analyzed in terms of the metaphor LACK OF INTEREST IS THE LATERAL/OPPOSITE BODY ORIENTATION.

The location of *Agora* – the City of Chicago which is famous for the inflow of emigrants can be regarded as the contextual frame for the interpretation of the artwork. Since emotional bonds and the same cultural backgrounds are usually associated with closeness and togetherness, different bodily orientations of the statues depicted in the walking pose can also reflect the lack of cultural belonging, anonymity in a big city, or a sense of alienation experienced by newcomers who seek good fortune in the metropolis. The spatial organization of statues is very dynamic, manifesting directionality and motion, and the whole composition can be understood as a fraction of a scene, as if a photograph was taken to capture a moment of a fast unfolding action. Thus, the visual composition can also be a manifestation of the primary metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 61). The sculptures create an impression as if (they were) traversing individuated paths towards a particular destination, where the PATH image schema (see Johnson 1987: 114) structures the complex metaphor A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 60).

3.2. Integrating the visual and the verbal mode

Despite a rich array of metaphorical construals based on the missing body parts and the physical organization of the statues, the interpretations may vary depending on whether the viewer is familiar with the title or not. Not seeing the name *Agora*, or without being aware of what it signifies, the viewer will simply attempt at deciphering the meaning behind the spatial organization of statues and their missing body parts. On recognizing the sense of the title, the visual composition, as a whole, can also serve as an instantiation of a multimodal metaphor (for the latter see Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 4), where the integration of two different domains leads to a new interpretative form. The knowledge of what the title can activate is a necessary prerequisite to analyse the artwork

from the multimodal perspective. In that case, the meaning of the title *Agora* can provide an organizing frame in a multimodal analysis of Abakanowicz's artwork, as it introduces the other (verbal) modality and activates the transfer of properties between the headless gathering and the title.

The name *Agora* is of Greek origin,⁸ and it means a place where people used to meet to discuss important issues in politics, art and society, and the title of the artwork can be motivated by THE PLACE FOR THE EVENT metonymy (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 39). Thus, for a history-conscious viewer the historical reference of the title *Agora* can naturally cause the transfer of properties from the verbal modality presented by the title – *Agora*, onto the visual modality presented by the human-like statues. The selection of relevant aspects activated by the Greek *Agora* such as: human gathering, intellectual disputes and philosophical discussions are the salient properties for which the Ancient *Agora* was famous. When these aspects are mapped onto the visual modality – the deformed human bodies, a new conceptualisation is possible.

At the same time, the statues depicted as following individuated paths can provide contrast with the most essential feature of the Ancient *Agora*, which was the meeting place. The distance between the figures positioned as if travelling towards different destinations/locations can be understood as a visual representation of the fact that the contemporary *Agora* is no longer a meeting place. This conceptualisation may also imply the concept of loneliness and alienation in a crowd, as the individuated paths and the relative distance between the sculptures may be indicative of a failed attempt to become part of a larger community.

The title may also have a role of “anchorage” (Barthes 1977: 38), as it narrows down the range of interpretations of the figures by identifying their meaning via transferring certain properties of the original meaning of *Agora* onto the sculptures. Removing the verbal component – the title *Agora*, would inevitably affect the metaphorical reading of the artwork, as a different meaning is demonstrated through the visual modality and the one expressed verbally. The two modalities are combined together through the integration of the whole visual context; the historical name *Agora* and the headless statues. It can be assumed that the juxtaposition of the title of the artwork – *Agora*, signalled by the verbal modality, and the sculptures – the visual modality, can be analyzed as a multiple space model in a dynamic meaning creation.

The contiguity relation between the metonymic vehicle and target is of particular significance here; the title *Agora* is the perceivable metonymic vehicle that may provide the point of access to the metonymic target that is the ancient meeting place: AGORA FOR THE MEETING PLACE. Aspects of the Ancient *Agora* which can be evoked via the title, such as intellectual meetings are mapped onto the contemporary installation providing grounds for the metaphorical interpretation of the artwork. The selective mapping of aspects from the title onto the figural composition may give rise to an emergent metaphorical construal which can be rendered as: MODERN AGORA IS A HEADLESS CROWD OF PEOPLE MOVING IN DIVERSE DIRECTIONS.

⁸ See <https://www.britannica.com/topic/agora> (accessed: 22.04.2017).

4. Conclusion

The article discusses the communicative function of verbo-visual metaphors and metonymies in the interpretation of the piece of art *Agora* by Magdalena Abakanowicz. These conceptual mechanisms are employed to analyze the artistic message conveyed in the sculptural installation. The interaction of metaphor and metonymy is examined, especially how the semantic potential of this interplay can result in different interpretative forms. A multimodal perspective is also presented through analysing the semantic content that is expressed by two different modalities. It is claimed that the figural composition may involve different meanings, which can be identified via the conceptual processes that facilitate a better understanding of the artwork.

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Race, space and post- -colonial landscape in Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants*

Abstract. The following article presents strategies for decolonizing complex ethno-racial and social relationships between Jewish and black characters within a restricted, multifaceted area of a decaying tenement in Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants*. This interpretation is concerned with finding features of post-colonial discourse such as the representation of the characters in dichotomous terms: the colonized/colonizer, the observed/the observer, superior/inferior. It focuses on the analysis of the main characters' different methods of dominating the 'space or subjectivity' of each other through surveillance, mimicry and appropriation.

Keywords: stereotype, power, space, colonized, colonizer, writing, Jews, African-Americans.

Bernard Malamud's *The Tenants* is one of the most recognizable and insightful literary cross-studies of relationships between Jews and African-Americans. The novel unveils a competitive nature of the relationships between the representatives of those groups and presents the nomadic lifestyle of the characters in a hostile dilapidated tenement. The decayed house inhabited by two writers: Harry Lesser and Willie Spearment, Jewish and African-American respectively, is not only a contested space challenging the idea of multiculturalism in America, but as this article is going to demonstrate, the tenement becomes a post-colonial space. The aim of the article is to suggest an alternate reading which intends to find the features of post-colonial discourse in *The Tenants* by pointing at the representation of the characters in dichotomous terms: the colonized/colonizer, the observed/ the observer, superior/inferior. In what follows, I will present the writers' tenement as the space of encounter between the colonized and the colonizer, and subsequently depict their relationships in terms of "spatialized" quality with regard to the social and racial order. For the purpose of this analysis, I will borrow John Kenneth Noyes's term of "spatializing practices" which may be attributed to the characters' attitudes. The notion is based on de Certeau's belief that every "space is a practiced place" (qtd in Noyes 1992: 11). In *Colonial Space: Spatiality in the Discourse of German Southwest-Africa 1884-1915*, Noyes investigates the significance of space in establishing and maintaining imperialist order as well as the relevance of territory as the building block in

the colonization process of Africa. He claims that his research is not so much concerned with the socio-historical aspect of this territory. In terms of content, his work can be treated as a continuation of Frantz Fanon's and Edward Said's studies.

In this article, I would like to argue that the mindscapes of both writers seem to be externalized through various forms of post-colonial stereotyping, such as discriminatory spoken and written language as well as socially construed racial practices. Not only will Willie's manuscript be interpreted as Bhabha's colonial symbol of desire and hatred at the same time, but Lesser's attempt at improving Willie's manuscript is, in my interpretation, perceived by Willie as an attempt at colonizing his mind/writing. This reading explores the strategies for decolonizing complex ethno-racial and social relationships between Jewish and black characters within a restricted, multifaceted area of a decaying tenement in *The Tenants*. The article focuses on the analysis of the main characters' different strategies of dominating the 'space or subjectivity' of each other through surveillance, mimicry and appropriation. I will support my point of view with Homi Bhabha's concepts.

At first, Lesser comes upon Willie after being lured by the sound of Willie's typing machine in one of the derelict flats in the tenement where Lesser rents an apartment from another Jew, Levenspiel. Lesser approaches Willie from behind:

In Holzheimer's flat former kitchen, facing the wintry windows, sat a black man at a wooden kitchen table, typing, his back to Lesser. (...)

The man, head bowed in concentration, oblivious of Lesser, typed energetically with two thick fingers. Harry though impatient to be at his work, waited, experiencing at least two emotions: embarrassment for intruding; anger at the black intruder. (...) The black must have known someone was standing there because the open door created a draught and once Lesser sneezed; but he did not turn to look at him or whoever. He typed in serious concentration, each word slowly thought out, then hacked on to paper with piston-like jabs of his stubby, big-knuckled fingers. The room shook with his noise. This endured for five full minutes as Lesser fumed. When the typist turned his head, a goateed man, darkly black-skinned, there seemed in his large liquid eyes poised in suspension as he stared at the writer a detachment so pure it menaced; at the same time a suggestion of fright Lesser felt reflected Lesser's. (Malamud 1972: 26- 27)

In the foregoing scene, the narrator makes a clear distinction between the observed, Willie, who is "oblivious of Lesser," and Lesser, who is the angry observer of the "black intruder." Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note that:

[o]ne of the most powerful strategies of imperial dominance is that of surveillance, or observation, because it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen, and it objectifies and interpellates the colonized subject in a way that it fixes its identity in relation to the surveyor.

(..) For the observer, sight confers power; for the observed, visibility is powerlessness. (2007: 207)

The fact that Lesser is depicted as the observer during the first encounter with Willie imposes the assumption that Lesser is the one who "confers power." Willie metamorphoses into the object of Lesser's colonial surveillance, and his writing, observed by Lesser, becomes enviable. From this

time on, Willie, “the black intruder” is subjected to the “competitive envy” as Lesser admits that he is also a fellow writer struggling to finish his third novel (Malamud 1972: 26). What is more, through a further condescending statement “I am an expert of writing” Lesser also imposes authority over the fellow novice black writer (Malamud 1972: 33). Steve Martinot points out that “race begins with power and never stops making reference back to the power” (2007: 6). Lesser’s statement of being an “expert of writing” is one of many manifestations of Lesser’s position of power and dominance which one may see throughout the novel. Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge rightly observe that since “writing is power” in colonial discourse, then “the pen, metonymically, is the displaced colonial phallus seeking a fulfillment of desire in its relationship with the absent Other” (1994: 283). In *The Tenants* the imperialist dominance seems to be displaced into the competition in writing between Lesser and Willie. Lesser “wants his pen to turn stone into sunlight, a language into fire” (Malamud 1972: 141). The pen is a means by which Lesser seeks to fight and maintain the racial and social order of the world he lives in. Willie contests Lesser’s ambition of dominance in the field of writing to the same extent to which he calls into question social or racial order in the novel. Willie’s act of crossing over Lesser’s direct space of living is a similar act of usurping power.

When Lesser examines Willie’s identity and his surroundings during their first encounter, he is quick to notice Willie’s “soiled manuscript” which gave “an unpleasant odour” (Malamud 1972: 28). Lesser also wonders whether “the sulphurous smell came from the manuscript or the feet on the floor” (28). He morally codifies Willie’s manuscript and Willie himself as evil-like. The scent of sulphur is apparently Biblical as one can read about the devil which was thrown into “the lake of burning sulfur” in the Book of Revelation (20: 10). According to George Yancy, “seeing” is “knowing” what one really is (Yancy 2005:13). In this case “smelling” Willie means getting to know him, ascribing evil to him. The first encounter between Willie and Lesser is indicative of their mutual distrust. Lesser’s disappointment at the fact that Willie does not extend his hand to greet Lesser for the first time is summed up by the third-person limited-omniscient narrator’s remark: “That wasn’t in the Fourteenth Amendment” (Malamud 1972: 30). It suggests that Lesser racializes Willie’s behavior inwardly just as much as Willie racializes Lesser outwardly. Neither of them can escape their mutually inclusive racialization.

1. Noyes’s “spatialized practices” of *The Tenants*

The main characters, Willie and Lesser are literally space-oriented: Lesser occupies the apartment on the fifth floor of the tenement whereas Willie, who is looking for a space to explore his imagination through writing, at first finds a table in the cellar, but then decides to move upstairs due to the lack of light in the cellar. The decayed tenement can metaphorically be interpreted as a microcosm for America in the 1960s with “an almost white” Jewish representative who is significantly higher in the racial hierarchy than his African American friend; and a black representative at the bottom trying to advance in this hierarchy. Lesser describes himself as an only “legal paying tenant” as opposed to Willie who is a squatter in an old building (Malamud 1972: 152).

Foucault states that “space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power” (qtd. in Noyes 1992: 15). The main characters of *The Tenants* may be attributed so called “spatializing practices” which “produce a field of subjectivity as a totalization of diverse positions within a social domain” (Noyes 1992: 20) as both characters in the novel occupy significantly different positions in terms of social and racial order. Willie and Lesser project a certain meaningful model of “spatiality” which allows their “subjectivity to be understood as a socially activated representation” (Noyes 1992: 11). The “socially activated representation” of a black Willie vis á vis a white Jew takes various forms. They range from a black militant activist showing openly his disdain for white Jews, and expressing his anger at whites to the views of a past drug-addict. Willie insults Lesser and his Jewish landlord Levenspiel using various invectives such as “Fartn Jew Slumlord” or “Bloodsucking Jew NiggerHater” (Malamud 1972: 36, 173). The “socially activated representation” of a white Jew, Lesser, in interaction with a black character, is that of a successful writer, mentor, preacher and advisor to Willie. The representation of the two characters is highly stereotypical and one-dimensional. The way in which Willie’s and Lesser’s subjectivity is narrated/seen adheres to Bhabha’s claim that the stereotype is “the primary point of subjectification in colonial discourse, (...) it’s the scene of a similar fantasy and defence” (2004: 107). Bhabha goes further arguing that “the stereotype is not a simplification, because it is a false representation of a given reality” (2004: 107). This false representation turns Willie into the above described degenerate, misfit, an aggressive rebel. Willie’s negative attitudes fulfill the colonialist conditions of Bhabha’s claim that “the stereotype requires, for its successful signification, a continual and repetitive chain of other stereotypes” (Bhabha 2004:110). Willie’s representation as a primitive, abusive, hyper-sexual black writer perpetuates a myth around “black problem” or black “inferiority,” and it becomes Yancy’s “dialectics of mis-recognition” of Blackness by whites (Yancy 2005: 36). However, whiteness itself also undergoes the same process of “mis-recognition” or mis-representation. The depiction of Lesser as a mentor and advisor, “man of habit, order, steady disciplined work” is consciously schematized and ennobled (Malamud 1972:140). It is worth mentioning that one of the black characters, Jacob 32, who is present at the party organized by Willie announces to Lesser that “you see us wrong and you see yourself wrong” (Malamud 1972: 101). He accuses Lesser of using the matrix of clichés through which he sees whiteness and blackness. Willie and Lesser incarnate into George Yancy’s “prisoners” of historically determined myths and fantasies around blacks and whites – they become the prisoners of “historically inherited imaginary” (Yancy 2005: 20). Lesser’s anchoring in “historically inherited imaginary” is corroborated by his continuous remarks about the Jewish past and the references to the glory days of the Israeli people. Lesser compares himself to “King David with his six-string” (Malamud 1972: 42).

2. Post-colonial matrix of clichés

Although the tenants try to maintain an amicable relationship with each other, they tend to push the boundaries of decent behavior every time they spend some time together. In a dream-like

situation, Willie and Lesser sit in the kitchen smoking hashish. The hashish serves as a medium to reveal the subconscious of both writers, who enter into a provocative conversation. In this talk, Willie directly accuses Lesser of trying to steal his “manhood.” Willie states that “I know you are trying to steal my manhood. I don’t go for that circumcise schmuck stuff. The Jews got to keep us bloods stayin weak so you can take everything for yourself” (Malamud 1972: 43). While Willie’s fetishistic sexuality may be enviable to Lesser, his humanity is reduced only to his sexuality. Lesser retaliates through stating that “If you are an artist you can’t be a nigger, Willie” (Malamud 1972: 44). Lesser ostentatiously devalues Willie’s artistic potency and thereby deprives him of the right to mediate his black artistic soul. Lesser’s preconceptions of black people are rooted in Fanon’s “negating activity” in *White Skins, Black Masks*. What Lesser sees in Willie is his blackness and according to Fanon “Wherever he goes, the Negro becomes a Negro” (Fanon 1986: 173). Lesser believes that a black person *cannot be* anyone more than a mere black person. This process of Lesser’s negation of Willie’s black artistic soul as well as Willies’ identification of his fetishistic “manhood” are a part of more ambivalent dramatized colonial scenario. In this scenario “stereotyping is not the setting up of a false image which becomes the scapegoat of discriminatory practices. It is a much more ambivalent text of projection and introjection, metaphoric and metonymic strategies, displacement, over-determination, guilt, aggressivity; the masking and splitting of ‘official’ and phantasmatic knowledges to construct the positionalities and oppositionalities of racist discourse” (Bhabha 2004: 117).

The phantasmagoric representations of the characters’ positionalities in *The Tenants* is best achieved through the use of the abovementioned strategies of projections, “displacement” as well as “metaphoric and metonymic strategies.” In the described scene, Willie feels displaced into the symbol of phallus whereas Lesser is accused of masking his slyness and predatory intentions, trying to castrate Willie. Willie, being a kind of the Black Arts Movement supporter, projects his own open aggressivity on Lesser.

3. Post-colonial discourse

This game of out-insulting each other not only lays bare the truth about the essence of their relationship but it also stresses the importance of communication and language itself. Noyes observes that “language preserves traces of space which has been elided in the establishment of the colonial territory. Language preserves these traces so effectively because it not only describes, but actually participates in the physical acts of colonization” (Noyes 1992: 12). Willie and Lesser try to exert their power through various strategies of control such as surveillance, discriminatory language or competition in writing. When Willie asks Lesser to read his manuscript, Lesser unwillingly agrees thinking however that “[w]riters helped writers. Up to a point. *His* writing came first” (Malamud 1972: 46). After having read the manuscript, Lesser advises Willie to concentrate more on the technique and the form of writing as he claims that: “there has to be more emphasis on technique, form, though I know it’s not stylish to say that. You’ve got to build more carefully” (Malamud

1972: 59). He also suggests that Willie's falling short of "effective form" results in a fact that "there is no order or maybe no meaning" in Willie's writing (Malamud 1972: 61).

Willie replies as follows: "No ofay motherfucker can put himself in *my* place. This is a *black* book we talkin about that you don't understand at all. White fiction ain't the same as *black*. It can't be. (...) It ain't universal if that's what you are hintin up to" (Malamud 1972: 60). Lesser regards Willie's writing as imaginative but very self-focused, anti-normative and non-narrative. For if Willie's writing is chaotic and "universal" in Lesser's view, it is liberating and consciously different from "white writing" in Willie's view. Willie opposes the idea of universalizing art as well as he does not fully comprehend Lesser's obsession with the "form." Willie perceives it as a means of homogenizing art, colonizing the art. He interprets it as a violent act of colonizing himself because he states "You want to know what's really art? Willie Spearmint, *black* man. My form is *myself*" (Malamud 1992: 61). Willie identifies Lesser's attempt at changing the form of his writing as an attempt at manipulating his own subjectivity, an attempt at killing his individuality and uniqueness. Willie tries to polish his writing through improving grammar and memorizing some sophisticated phrases from the dictionary however he discovers that "it killed the life out of language and [he] never referred to it again" (Malamud 1972: 69).

3.1 Appropriation

Willie's writing first undergoes the process of appropriation which can be defined as taking over "those aspects of the imperial culture – language, forms of writing (...), even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis – that may be of use to them [post-colonial societies] in articulating their own social and cultural identities" (Ashcroft et al 2007: 15). However, he quickly decides to reject the standards of correctness and his rejection of "Standard English" is referred to by a post-colonial term of "abrogation." Although Lesser's tips on Willie's writing style are rejected, Lesser presents them as a prevailing norm. Standard English embodies the normative and totalizing power of "the colonizer" in relation to "the colonized" – Willie and his marginalized lingo. Yancy claims that the main feature of whiteness is the "self constructed centrality" (Yancy 2005: 16). Standard English functions as a metonymic expression for whiteness itself. Willie delegitimizes this centrality of Standard English, thus the centrality of whiteness. Alfred Arteaga observes that "The marginal Other autocolonizes himself and herself each time the hegemonic discourse is articulated. The utterance of English (...) reinforces daily the colonizer's presence in the heart of the colonized" (1997: 76). In *The Tenants* the use of Standard English reinforces Lesser's position of power – his being in the position of the colonizer.

3.2 Homogeneity and Mimicry

Furthermore, Willie negates the universal merit of his fiction as it reflects his fear of making it featureless and homogeneous. Noyes observes that "colonial discourse must construct a boundless, featureless, homogeneous space which may serve as the stage upon which colonial desire may produce fantasies. Because of this, the even stronger necessity of establishing a rigid spatial or-

der within the colony gives rise to a conflict within the representational mode” (1992: 182). Since Lesser insists on this rigid unchangeable way of discourse, this produces what Bhabha calls “the regime of truth,” Lesser’s white regime of truth (Bhabha 2004: 101). Lesser encourages Willie to mimic white standards of writing. Willie opposes a regime that has a homogenous predictable way of discourse. Bhabha describes an imperialist regime as “*non-dialogic*, its enunciation *unitary*, unmarked by the trace of difference” (2004: 165). What characterizes Willie’s writing, according to Lesser, is just the converse of a unitary style of discourse: Willie’s writing bears the traces of a “shifting” narrative (Malamud 1972: 58). Lesser’s “regime of truth” is extended beyond the English language and the writers’ manuscripts. Eric Sundquist (2005: 406) points out that “Lesser’s identity is subsumed tautologically into the role of author – “Lesser writes his book and his book writes Lesser” –even to the point of haunting personification wherein the author evaporates and the house of fiction itself assumes authorial consciousness: “There’s his abandoned book on his desk being read by the room.””(Malamud 1972: 151). In this way, Lesser’s white authorial consciousness leaks out, being absorbed by the room and then it is amalgamated into the structure of the decayed tenement. As Lesser’s consciousness of the colonizer is equated with the consciousness of the house, the decaying house encompasses Lesser’s authoritarian and haunting racist system of values. The house traps both Lesser and Willie within its stereotypical framework.

After having received negative comments from Lesser, Willie starts a new novel in which he remakes fictional characters from his previous literary works of art. In his new novel, he decides to use the literary technique of the stream of consciousness disrupting traditional linear narrative and conventional patterns of storytelling. Thereby he decolonizes his writing not only through the use of lingo and experimental stream of consciousness, but mainly through his constant act of re-invention of his exaggerated fictional characters as well as through a seemingly nonsensical “shifting” plot which is full of repetitions. His writing may be treated as a kind of counter-discourse to white Western ways of narration. Likewise his fictional characters, in real life Willie “changes his birthplace every time he talks about it” (Malamud 1972: 91). Willie’s continual creative re-making of himself is a conscious act of performing identity, exercising his agency, it is a symbol of his empowerment. It is a means of re-claiming the position of power. Bhabha, drawing on Fanon, observes that the most important colonial “space of intervention” is the “re-creation of the self in the world of travel” (2004: 12). Similarly, Willie’s act of celebrating his nakedness as he works on the manuscript being completely nude is interpreted by Lesser as a mysterious act of “asserting the power of his blackness” (1972: 127).

On the other hand, Lesser who has been struggling to finish his third novel and perfecting its possible endings for many years, seems to be preoccupied with the sterility and safety of the manuscript which is kept in the box:

Each week, for years, he had placed a copy of the week’s work in a safety-deposit box in a bank on Second Avenue. The box also contained a copy of the first draft of the novel Lesser had been rewriting with unutterably high expectations. Nearing the end of his last draft he had removed the carbon of it from the

box to have on hand when he wrote the last word and was ready to note final corrections on both copies, one for the publishers, one for himself. (Malamud 1972: 136)

In a post-colonial context, Lesser's obsession with keeping his draft sterile, pure and safe in the box may evoke the laws of preserving racial purity in the Jim Crow Era. Samira Kawash aptly observes that "whiteness sustains its own boundedness and exclusiveness by insisting on its own purity and projecting all impurity on blackness" (1997: 151). However, as Lesser's manuscript of the novel is later burned to ashes by Willie in revenge for Lesser's secret affair with Willie's girlfriend, Irene, it may be assumed that the destruction of Jewish manuscript has a broader agenda. Budick comments on this excerpt that "Jewish American achievement may have programmed itself for disappearance" (1998: 16). I would suggest that it is as if whiteness itself through its separatist attitude of not sharing its power and privileges with other ethnic minorities programs itself for annihilation.

This hallucinatory world of misrepresentations and fantasies is best illustrated through the metaphor of a maddening wallpaper in Holzheimer's flat depicting enormous trees as well as "dense ferny underbrush, grasses sharp as razor blades" (Malamud 1972: 15). The description of Holzheimer's "deadly jungle" on the wallpaper foreshadows the final scene in which the two characters take part in a symbolic deadly battle amidst "a grassy clearing in the bush" (Malamud 1972: 173). The surrealistic clash of the characters in the final scene is a result of the continual rift within the colonial frame, within the space of colonial representation of Willie and Lesser, "the representation of the subject[s] in the differentiating order of otherness" (Bhabha 2004: 64).

Conclusion

Although most critics regard the ending of the novel as doomed, leaving no hope for reconciliation between African-Americans and Jews, an unexpected appearance of Levenspiel shouting "mercy" in the final scene can tip the balance towards less radical interpretation of the novel's ending (Malamud 1972: 173). The ending of *The Tenants* attempts at invalidating all those colonialist myths iterated throughout the novel in a way that it does not give a consent to authorize the stereotypical representation of African-Americans and Jews. In fact, the novel turns out to have an anti-colonial overtone despite its seemingly colonial representation of the characters. The brutal duel with axes sinking through Willie's "bone and brain" and Lesser's "balls" symbolizes the violation of post-colonial representational order of social relationships and the subsequent way of stereotyping (Malamud 1972: 173). The axes come in-between the linguistic encapsulations of post-colonial stereotyping: "Bloodsuckin Jew Niggerhater" versus "Anti-Semitic Ape" (Malamud 1972:173). The ending symbolizes getting to the core of the tensions of identity politics. Interestingly enough, it is a white Jewish character Levenspiel who calls for "mercy" at the end of the novel.

"Spatialized practices" of Harry Lesser and Willie, which are symptomatic of a post-colonial microcosm in *The Tenants*, are the driving force towards the dramatic climax in the novel. They effectively reflect Malamud's hidden agenda with regard to the highly racialized representation

of the characters' mindscapes and the novel's landscape. They are suggestive of deeply ingrained stereotyping in the colonization processes. They also uncover other subtleties of the post-colonial mechanisms of surveillance, mimicry and appropriation. However, taking into consideration the ending of the *Tenants* as well as the hints dropped throughout the novel (a repeated statement: "the end") it may be assumed that the whole dynamics of the narrative reverberates with a strong anti-colonial and counter-stereotypic message (Malamud 1972: 23).

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Why is Kwame Anthony Appiah's proposal to dismiss the concept of "The West" premature?

Abstract. This paper is a response to Kwame A. Appiah's article "There is no such thing as western civilisation" published in *The Guardian* of 9 November 2016. Appiah's proposal to dismiss the term 'western civilisation' seems premature since it is strongly established in the humanities and social sciences. Discussing selected models representing systems of civilisations (Spengler, Koneczny, Toynbee, Huntington) as well as Fernand Braudel's concept of *longue durée* history, this paper demonstrates the importance of the term 'western civilisation' in academic and political discourses. Moreover, referring to post-colonial studies, it is impossible to avoid the term because without it, any discussion on the colonial and post-colonial reality would be devoid of substance.

Keywords: the west, western culture, western civilisation, civilisation, term.

Introduction

The terms "western culture", "western world" or just "the west"⁹ are often intuitively accepted without much consideration. "The west" is taken for granted, even though the connotations it evokes may result in a large spectrum of emotions: from pride and admiration to bitter criticism and even outrage. Surprisingly, it is not easy to find a clear definition of the term. Even studies dedicated to the western civilisation evade concise definitions, instead informing readers how to understand the concept. An attempt at such a brief clarification has been made by Gregory S. Brown:

What do we mean by "the West"? Though the West is defined primarily by its physical borders, the term denotes more than a geographical location. For our purposes, the West refers to the peoples and territories of Europe and the lands of the Americas and antipodes (i.e., Australia and New Zealand) settled by Europeans. The territorial heart of the West comprises those lands west of the Ural Mountains (which are traditionally considered the dividing line between Europe and Asia), and the area extending from

⁹ Throughout the article the terms "west" and "western" are not capitalized, in accordance with Appiah's spelling, except quotations of other authors.

Norway in the north to the southern tip of Spain, and to the Turkish border in the southeast. The West generally corresponds to what was once called Christendom. (Brown online n.p.)

Brown emphasises that the west does not only refer to “the peoples and the territories” but it is also “a cultural concept”, comprising a set of values which have developed over the centuries. The cultural elements of the west which he identifies include:

monotheism – the belief in one god, the basis of the Judeo-Christian Tradition (although other major non-Western religions, such as Islam, are also monotheistic)

separation of political and spiritual authority – often called the separation of Church and State

empirical investigation and mathematical explanation of the material world, formerly known as “natural philosophy,” now referred to as “science”

confidence in the capacity of science and technology to transform the human environment, and a general belief in progress based on rational thought (though this confidence has been qualified in recent years by the increasing evidence of human-caused damage to the environment)

respect for human rights, such as freedom of worship, freedom of expression, and the rule of law (although these rights were extended slowly to different segments of the population)

codification of political rights, such as the right to enjoy representative government, freedom of assembly, equality before the law, and the right to vote (although these were also gradually accorded to minorities, women, people of color, and the landless)

a high value on the sanctity of private life, family, and free economic activity, observable in the right to freely accumulate and transfer property without intrusive regulation by political authorities. (Brown online n.p.)

Brown notes that these values developed gradually, in different historical periods. “For example, faith in science emerged in the 17th century, the emphasis on tolerance only in some countries in the 17th century, the idea of human rights and rights of privacy in the 18th century, and the belief in progress and universal political rights not until the 19th century” (Brown online n.p.). The west is, thus, a historical and cultural construct.

The term “western civilisation” is so rooted in the language of present day humanities that hardly anyone sees controversy in, for example, the 9th edition of Jackson J. Spielvogel’s *Western Civilization: A Brief History* (2015), or in several other books with “western civilization” in the title. Arthur Hertzberg and other authors of the entry on Judaism in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2017) discuss “Western philosophy”, “Western Europe”, “Western education” and “Western culture” with no attempt to define them. Moreover, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* itself has no such entry as “the west” or “western civilisation”. Bearing in mind the established status of the term which seems so obvious that hardly anyone has bothered to fully define it, Appiah’s proposal of its cessation, appears both thought-provoking and controversial.

Kwame Anthony Appiah (born in London, 1954) is a Professor of Philosophy and Law at New York University, Laurance S. Rockefeller University Professor of Philosophy, the University Center for Human Values Emeritus at Princeton University, and an Honorary Fellow of Clare College at the University of Cambridge. His wide interests include such fields as the philosophy of language

and African and African-American literary and cultural studies. Among his publications is *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006), where, among other things, he attempts to propose the ways to reconcile respect for cultural differences with the condemnation of atrocious social practices. In October and November 2017, the BBC will broadcast a series of lectures given by Appiah, entitled “Mistaken Identities” (www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles), which illustrate his most recent area of research.

In his article “There is no such thing as western civilisation”, which is an edited version of his BBC Reith lecture recently published in *The Guardian* (9 Nov 2016), Appiah posits the elimination of the term “western civilisation” from public discourse. Notwithstanding the ideological purpose behind this proposal, its implementation seems highly challenging, if feasible at all, since, as a term taken from geography, it must recur whenever that part of Europe is mentioned, or when Europe is perceived from the perspective of Asia. Moreover, this geographic concept is so strongly embedded in academic discourse of history and social sciences, that eliminating it would result in a considerable terminological problem.

Appiah is not the only author who doubts in the validity of “the west” as an intellectual concept. Even those American academicians who teach courses on western civilization seem far from treating it as a concrete entity and a source of identity. On the contrary, many of them underscore the fluidity of the concept. For example, Peter N. Stearns in the conclusion of his *Western Civilization in World History* (2003) asserts:

We need active comparisons, a sense of how global forces and contacts have shaped the West, rather than the West in isolated glory or seen as an independent agent in world affairs. The challenge, in terms of new curricula and new teaching combinations, is exciting. (Stearns 2003: 133)

On the other hand, in his article “What is Western Civilization?” Laurence Birken, critically reviews several proposals of the concept, opting for that reduced to the geographic western Europe and dismissing ancient Greece and Rome (Birken 1992: 453). However, no critic went so far as to dismiss the term itself. For this reason, Appiah’s text has been singled out as the most radical and controversial.

The objective of this article is to discuss Appiah’s criticism of the very concept of “western civilisation”, especially the points which may evoke certain controversies. Being a commonplace term used by historians, sociologists, anthropologists of culture and politicians, and understood practically all over the world, “the west” and its culture or civilisation causes surprisingly little confusion whenever used in academic, political and popular texts. Philosophers of history as well as historians employ the term as a mental shortcut for a complex set of phenomena and factors. Defining its components has never been easy, but hardly anyone, either apologists or adversaries of the political, economic and cultural forces known as “the west”, have ever considered the term problematic. As a working term, it has played a very useful role in several areas, such as sociology and several types of history: political, economic and cultural.

The ideological and, consequently, political purpose of Appiah's proposal seems clear: believing in "the west" implies its superiority, which is ethically unacceptable, and as such should be eradicated as the source of its evil implications. Instead, he suggests thinking in terms of universal human civilisation. However noble and recommendable his idea might be, at the moment, for several reasons, it will be demonstrated why it seems impossible to implement.

In section 3 of the article, I shall briefly discuss certain issues the term "western civilisation" caused, including models proposed by Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, Feliks Konieczny and Samuel Huntington. Moreover, section 5 will present a call for the term in studies of international relations, where it has not apparently been used so far. I shall attempt to dismiss them as insufficiently grounded. Afterwards, however, I shall refer to the position partly based on the approach of the French historians grouped in the well-known Annales School, particularly on Fernand Braudel's theory of *longue durée*, which provides serious arguments for retaining the term "western civilisation".¹⁰ The last part of the article will contain my own observations on the working utility of the concept.

A problem with definition: geography, culture, politics

In his article "There is no such thing as western civilisation", Appiah commenced his criticism of the very concept of western civilisation with a short outline of two different ideas of culture proposed by two British 19th-century authors, Edward Burnett Tylor and Matthew Arnold. Whereas for the latter, culture was the "pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world", Tylor understood it as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). Appiah observes that nowadays these two antagonistic approaches are unthinkingly combined into one idea of civilisation that would have occurred to neither Tylor nor Arnold and proposes "to untangle some of our confusions ... of what we have come to call the west" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

It is important to note that for Appiah, the mutual exclusivity of the definitions of civilisation is a sufficient reason for eliminating the term "western civilisation". He seems to disregard any possible other proposals. In fact, it is difficult to find evidence that those who discuss civilisations or use the concept of "the west" ever refer to Tylor or Arnold.

Geographic confusion

Furthermore, the author of "There is no such thing as western civilisation" points out that as a geographical term, "the west" seems really confusing since it is used for different purposes. He

¹⁰ The Annales School was a group of French historians who emphasized long-term social history. The name of the group comes from the academic journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* founded by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre in 1929. Since 1994 it has been issued as *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*. One of the prominent representatives of the Annales School was Fernand Braudel (1902-85).

lists such usages of the expression as Rudyard Kipling's opposition of Europe and Asia ("east is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet"); NATO versus the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War, where the former was a synonym of democracy and freedom as inherent 'western' values, whereas the other parts of the world seemed irrelevant; and the latest sense of the term, which includes Europe, the United States and Canada. All other parts of the world are treated as "the global south" regardless of the European origins of South American societies. Simultaneously, in such countries as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, 'western' "can look simply like a euphemism for white" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

Appiah then goes on to analyse the sources of the European sense of uniqueness in order to point out further inconsistencies in the concept of Western civilisation. Herodotus, for example, distinguished three continents: Europe, Asia and Libya (Africa). His division had no societal implications since the Greeks dwelled in both Europe and Asia. The ancient Greeks and Romans could use the term 'European' as an adjective and not a noun with a cultural reference (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). In the Dark and Middle Ages, the term "European" appeared as an opposition to the world of Islam, even though when Charles Martel stopped the Arab conquest of western Europe in 732 CE, most of Europe had yet to be converted to Christianity. However, scholars did not use the expression "west" because parts of western Europe (Spain) remained under the control of Muslim rulers.

Islam, in the form of the Ottoman Empire, also annexed vast tracts of Eastern and Central Europe. Its expansion was stopped in 1683 at the battle of Vienna. At that time, the fragile European unity was built around the opposition Islam-Christianity (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). It is worth noting that this European unity was psychological rather than real, since the siege of Vienna was both preceded and followed by a series of wars within the world of Christian powers. Appiah's assertion that "the move from 'Christendom' to 'western culture' isn't straightforward" seems difficult to rebut. On the other hand, the presence of such a category as culture or civilisation manifests in conflicts, where differences between the enemies are not only emphasised but also constructed. Even though in practice the European unity based on Christianity never worked, it was present in the declaratory language of politicians and diplomats building the Holy League in 1571 and the Holy Alliance in 1815.

Another point Appiah makes concerns the role of ancient Greek and Roman inheritance treated by influential European philosophers (e.g. Hegel) as the core of civilization, "a precious golden nugget", as Appiah (2016 online n.p.) likes to call it. Here, he observes that during the collapse of ancient thought in western Europe, it was the Arab Muslims who preserved the ideas of the Greeks, especially those of Aristotle, whose status in philosophy was restored due to Ibn Rushd, the Arab scholar born in Muslim Spain in the 12th century, and better known in Christian Europe as Averroes (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

Appiah points out the weakness of the idea of an essence of culture/civilization on the grounds that any set of qualities changes dramatically over time and no essence can be traced to have passed through the centuries.

What was England like in the days of Chaucer, father of English literature, who died more than 600 years ago? Take whatever you think was distinctive of it, whatever combination of customs, ideas, and material things that made England characteristically England then. Whatever you choose to distinguish Englishness now, it isn't going to be that. Rather, as time rolls on, each generation inherits the label from an earlier one: and, in each generation, the label comes with a legacy. But as the legacies are lost or exchanged for other treasures, the label keeps moving on... Identities can be held together by narratives, in short, without essences. You don't get to be called "English" because there's an essence that this label follows; you're English because our rules determine that you are entitled to the label by being somehow connected with a place called England. (Appiah 2016 online n.p.)

In this way, Appiah actually demonstrates the impossibility of any collective identity, especially an identity that seems to survive over long periods of time. A similar deconstruction of a collective identity can be found in, for example, Shlomo Sand's controversial book *The Invention of the Jewish People* (2009), where the author denies the historical continuity of the Jewish ethnos. Such an operation is possible with reference to any nation, ethnic group or even local community. The problem lies in the fact that the mental constructs of identity are, for so many people, essential and thus resilient.

Appiah is certainly right in claiming that "the very idea of 'the west,' to name a heritage and object of study, doesn't really emerge until the 1890s, during a heated era of imperialism, and gains broader currency only in the 20th century" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). He also cogently observes that Oswald Spengler, one of the first philosophers of history, refused to value the idea of a direct continuity between the ancient Hellenic and Latin cultures and his contemporary western "Faustian" civilization (Spengler 1926: 78). Unlike the former, the civilisation reduced to geographic western Europe is characterised by "a type of Faustian personality overflowing with expansive, disruptive, and imaginative impulses manifested in all the spheres of life". Moreover, "[t]he expansionist dispositions of Europeans were not only indispensable but were themselves driven ... by an intensely felt desire to achieve great deeds and heroic immortality" (Duchesne 2014 online n.p.).

Appiah observes that the difficulties in finding an essence in the concept of "the west" also lie in political and cultural differences in the present day territory defined as such. For example, Franco's regime coexisted with liberal democracy for forty years, while 'non-western' countries, such as India and Japan, embraced democratic systems of government. Moreover, Appiah shows examples of hip-hop in Tokyo as well as the influence of Indian cuisine on the dining habits of British people. Thus, Appiah proposes to abandon organicism, which can be explained as follows:

Well, by fusing the Tylorian picture and the Arnoldian one, the realm of the everyday and the realm of the ideal. And the key to this was something that was already present in Tylor's work. Remember his famous definition: it began with culture as "that complex whole". What you're hearing is something we can call organicism. A vision of culture not as a loose assemblage of disparate fragments but as an organic unity, each component, like the organs in a body, carefully adapted to occupy a particular place, each part essential to the functioning of the whole. The Eurovision song contest, the cutouts of Matisse, the dialogues of Plato are all parts of a larger whole. As such, each is a holding in your cultural library, so to

speak, even if you have never personally checked it out. Even if it isn't your jam, it is still your heritage and possession. Organicism explained how our everyday selves could be dusted with gold (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

Appiah's deconstruction of organicism does not explain much and actually cuts both ways. Thinkers looking for both deep structures behind the surrounding phenomena, as well as webs of connections between them, may easily fall prey to charlatanry or, on the contrary, reach conclusions of scientific value. Since in the humanities there is no universal meta-platform guaranteeing the truth, our only choice is confined to faith, intuition, common sense, critical thinking, or a certain combination thereof. Consequently, Appiah's proposal consisting in the existence of random phenomena, is as credible (or controversial) as the concept of closer interconnections between them.

The approach to such phenomena as civilisations depends on the distance of the observer. One person may compare the process of observation with perceiving a painting, while another may use the metaphor of constellations. The former will sooner or later realise that although close observation reveals nothing more than a great number of brush strokes, a certain perspective allows them to see shapes set in the intended order. The latter would see that the apparent order is just the optical illusion of the flat surface of the firmament, since the celestial bodies are scattered all over space, and their interrelations, if there are any, are of a completely different nature. Moreover, looking at the same picture, even from the same perspective may result in different visual effects.

The west in the mosaic of civilisations in theories of philosophers of history

Discussing the legitimacy of the term "the western civilisation" it seems important to briefly review certain concepts of history as a mosaic of civilisations, which are born, develop and die. In the 20th century civilisations and their relations became a field of interest of several thinkers who proposed their concepts of cultures or civilisations and models in which they placed the west. The criticism they received resulted from their speculative nature, teleological approach to history and treating civilisations as ontological entities. However, their views still have their adherents and therefore in the discussion on the western civilisation, three are worth mentioning: Koneczny, Spengler and Toynbee. The first is interesting insofar as his model demonstrates that even in the conservative system of this 20th century philosopher of history, the geographic concept of the west was treated as accidental rather than essential, since he attributed the most important role in creating civilisations to religion, which is not geographically determined. The others, however, constructed models where the west has an established position on the map.

The Polish pre-war historian, Feliks Koneczny (1862-1949), treated civilisations not as rigid geographical entities, but as a certain set of values which may be distributed in a somewhat sophisticated way. His Latin civilisation generally overlaps the geographical west, but does not have anything to do with a particular race or territory (Koneczny 1962). Collective life embraced a wide

spectrum of components including law and its role in society and the position of a scholar in the community. The Latin civilization, according to him, was characterized by the role of western (Latin) Christianity, which embraced Roman Catholics and also Protestants. The clear distinction between private and public, as well as the priority of ethics before law, were the main qualities making it different from other civilizations. For example, Germany, according to Koneczny, adopted the Byzantine political mentality along with the marriage of Otto II to the Byzantine princess Theophano (Wise 2010: 223). He strongly believed that:

Nations in this meaning exist only, until now, within the sphere of the Latin civilisation, because only here have the conditions for their development been present. Even peoples of alien cultural spheres, which became embraced by the West and in consequence fell under the influence of the formative forces of Latin civilisation e.g. the Finns and the Hungarians—became nations.

A nation must as a cultural entity belong only to one civilisation; it cannot belong to two different civilisations (Koneczny 1962 online n.p.).

Koneczny was not the first thinker who attempted to discover mechanisms determining historical processes. One of the best known representatives of philosophy of history was Oswald Spengler, who expounded his pessimistic vision of the history of civilisations in *The Decline of the West: Form and Actuality* (1926).

The German philosopher of history Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) saw little connection between ancient Greek/Roman civilisation(s) and modern western civilisation. The British historian Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975), on the other hand, built an intricate system of civilisation structures where each element (particular national culture) played a similar, if not the same, role as a parallel culture did in another civilisation. Those ideas were based on a strongly teleological approach with an inevitable faith in progress, which has already been challenged and criticised (Iggers 1958). All of them have little empirical basis and are the results of the authors' personal convictions and prejudices which drew on and reinforced the fundamental tenets of the period in which they lived and wrote their texts.

Much as Toynbee's model of various civilisations, with their life cycles and the roles of smaller cultural entities within them, may be criticised, his analysis of the mutual relations between them shows that certain regularities can be observed not in the existence of ontological units called cultures but in the confrontations of people coming from different regions, for there are certain phenomena that manifest themselves in contexts. Encounters with other systems of values, other mindsets, as well as other approaches to structuring society and economy reveal differences which, as a result, determine definitions. Arnold Toynbee in his work *The Study of History* dedicated a considerable number of pages to encounters of western civilization with particular other cultures (Toynbee 1957: 151-187). If there were no significant differences, there would be nothing to discuss. Be it Peter the Great's Russia or Japan in the period of the Meiji restoration (after 1868), nobody can deny that the models those countries adopted came from western Europe and that they were considerably different from their original lifestyles and social structures.

Appiah's proposal in the context of Said's *Orientalism* and Huntington's *The Clash of Civilisations*

The idea of mutually hostile civilisations was adopted by Samuel Huntington (1927-2008) in his article *The Clash of Civilisations* (1996) which he later extended into a book. Edward Said (1994), on the other hand, strongly opposed creating concepts antagonising inhabitants of different parts of the world. Discussing Appiah's suggestion of eliminating the term "the west" from public discourse, it is inevitable to refer to their approaches when conceptualising the conflict between "the west" and the Muslim world.

The most controversial part of Appiah's article "There is no such thing as western civilization" is the claim that having abandoned organicism we should also renounce the faith in any essence controlling our behaviour. Actually, there would be nothing strange with this statement if not for the example the author uses to illustrate this claim: "No Muslim essence stops the inhabitants of Dar al-Islam from taking up anything from western civilisation, including Christianity or democracy. No western essence is there to stop a *New Yorker* of any ancestry taking up Islam" (Appiah 2016 online n.p.). Appiah is right inasmuch as his renouncement of the 'essence' is simply a criticism of hypostatizing or taking an idea for an ontological entity. However, quite a large number of Muslim clergymen would be astonished at this easy permission to convert to Christianity or adopting the idea of liberal democracy, for although the 'essence' does not exist, it is enough that a group of the powerful believe in it and is able to impose this notion upon their followers.

Appiah mentions one of the fundamental concepts present in Islam since its beginning: *Dar ar-Islam* (the home of Islam) and *Dar al-Kufr* (the realm of the heathens). The latter did not, however, particularly embrace Europe or its western part, but everything outside the former. Nevertheless, in the 1980s the concept of the Christian west as the cradle of all the evil that afflicts the Muslim peoples, gained popularity and now is part of radical Islamist propaganda.

The Palestinian-American literary theorist Edward Said (1935-2003), in his "Afterword" to the 1994 version of *Orientalism*, rejecting the title concept as lectured by western academia, literature and politics, warned against developing an analogous approach to the west. In the conclusive paragraph of his milestone work he asserted:

I hope to have shown my reader that the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism. No former "Oriental" will be comforted by the thought that having been an Oriental himself he is likely – too likely – to study new "Orientals" – or "Occidentals" – of his own making. If the knowledge of Orientalism has any meaning, it is in being a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, at any time. Now perhaps more than before (Said 1994: 328).

In this context Appiah's proposal does not seem new and it is hardly possible to challenge both his and Said's noble intention. In the same edition of *Orientalism*, after Samuel Huntington's article *The Clash of Civilisations* (but before the book of the same title was published), Said wrote:

... this was one of the implied messages of *Orientalism*, that any attempt to force cultures and peoples into separate and distinct breeds or essences exposes not only the misrepresentations and falsifications that ensue, but also the way in which understanding is complicit with the power to produce such things as the “Orient” or the “West” (Said 1994: 347).

Insofar as Said was right that the “Orient” included cultures as different as Arab, Indian, Chinese and Japanese, it should also be obvious that serious differences similarly occur between such cultures as German, French, Spanish, Italian and those which developed on the basis of the English language. However, no one can deny the fact that for thousands of years Chinese civilisation developed absolutely free from Greek and Roman cultural influence. It is also true that South Asia is home to several different languages and cultures. However much we would like to deny the existence of one Indian culture, as long as the Gujaratis want to feel an emotional-cultural connection with the Punjabis or inhabitants of Kerala, they should not be deprived of the right to this sentiment. It is also possible to refer this way of thinking to Europeans.

The ontological validity of collective identities may be challenged or even denied, but as long as humans feel an affinity for certain general concepts that give them a sense of belonging, such identities cannot simply be dismissed. The west is not just its “hard core”, which we can understand as the old colonial powers. It has also peripheries, where the affiliation to “western civilisation” is of the highest importance. Poland, Czechia or Hungary, as “cultural clients” or “poor relatives” of the west, may tend to underscore their western tradition even more than the geographic west itself. Potential consequences, such as mutual hostility towards the representatives of different identities, should be defined, discussed and eventually eliminated. Denying the differences may not only fail to solve possible problems but actually deprive us of any discursive tools to achieve this goal.

Samuel Huntington, accused by many, including Edward Said himself, of spreading the idea of conflict between human beings, admits that:

The causes of this unique and dramatic development included the social structure and class relations of the West, the rise of cities and commerce, the relative dispersion of power in Western societies between estates and monarchs and secular and religious authorities, the emerging sense of national consciousness among Western peoples, and the development of state bureaucracies. The immediate source of Western expansion, however, was technological: the invention of the means of ocean navigation for reaching distant peoples and the development of the military capabilities for conquering those peoples. (Huntington 1996: 51)

He quotes Parker (1988: 4), who argues that “in large measure ‘the rise of the West’ depended upon the exercise of force, upon the fact that the military balance between the Europeans and their adversaries overseas was steadily tilting in favour of the former; ... the key to the Westerners’ success in creating the first truly global empires between 1500 and 1750 depended upon precisely those improvements in the ability to wage war which have been termed ‘the military revolution.’” Huntington adds that

The expansion of the West was also facilitated by the superiority in organization, discipline, and training of its troops and subsequently by the superior weapons, transport, logistics, and medical services resulting from its leadership in the Industrial Revolution. The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion ... but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact; non-Westerners never do (Huntington 1996: 51).

When Huntington wrote about the expansion of the west, what did he mean? Whose expansion, actually? Arnold Toynbee could be wrong creating his model of world civilizations throughout the history of humankind, but discussing encounters of the western civilization with Indian or Chinese civilizations, what did he write about?

A call for a conceptualization of the west

The concepts of thinkers believing in civilisations as clearly distinguishable entities endowing their members with a sense of identity (Spengler, Toynbee, Huntington) are still vivid and have their enthusiasts. For example, in her book *Conceptualizing the West in International Relations*, Jacinta O'Hagan proposes introducing the concept of the west into the academic discipline of International Relations:

International Relations primarily theorises the world as one of states. However, the West is not a state, but most commonly conceived of as a civilizational entity. The paradigms of the discipline provide no explicit category into which civilizations can be placed. Consequently, civilizations have been largely absent from International Relations theory (O'Hagan 2002: 2).

Influenced by the champions of conflicting civilisations, the author seems to miss their terminology in the language of her area of interest:

The term 'the West' peppers the language of commentary and scholarship in world politics. It appears in an abundance of books and articles, such as *Islam and the West* (Lewis, 1993), *'The West and the Rest'* (Mahbubani, 1992) and *Twilight of the West* (Coker, 1998). The West is often invoked in antithesis to a similarly broadly constituted 'other' – the East, the Orient, Islam, Asia, the Third World. The West, meaning the antithesis to the communist East, was central to the language of Cold War politics. Despite the collapse of this East, the West remains central to the language of post-Cold War politics, illustrated by references such as those to the West's role in the Balkans, or the West's position on human rights. In the late 1990s, the decision to extend NATO to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was discussed as bringing former Eastern bloc states under 'the protection' of the West. In the 1999 Kosovo conflict, NATO was frequently referred to as 'representing the West'. In media debates, it is not uncommon to hear discussion of how the West should respond, for instance, to the conflict in Chechnya or Central Africa, or other such locations (O'Hagan 2002: 7).

O'Hagan's proposal represents a position exactly opposite to that of Appiah. Being aware of the importance of the term in social sciences, she attempts to convince scholars dealing with international relations to extend their professional vocabulary with "the west" as an important term enriching their discourse and introducing more precision thereto.

In this context, Appiah's arguments referring to the lack of clear borders and definitions of the term in question seem sufficiently cogent to undermine O'Hagan's stance. If international relation studies have been able to operate the terminology based on precisely defined states and their alliances, the term derived from humanities and social sciences seems to add an additional factor of conflict rather than solve international problems.

The western civilisation according to Fernand Braudel

Spengler's vision of the world system of civilisations may be undermined as speculations based on historically ungrounded metaphors, for instance, civilisations being subject to biological processes, such as birth, growth, decline and death (Blackburn 2016: 454). Toynbee, even though he is much better prepared to discuss the world history, posited a model of mutual relations between twenty-one entities called civilisations. Moreover, supported by a great number of historical examples, he also tried to create a scientific system based on "non-scientific, intuitional foundations" (Iggers 1958: 224).

Whereas the philosophies of history proposed by Spengler, Koneczny, Toynbee and others are criticised for their speculative nature devoid of factual foundation, this objection is not applicable to the historians grouped in the Annales School. As researchers, they first examined facts and then formulated general models of historical development.

Fernand Braudel (1902-1985), a leading representative of the Annales, proposed an explanation of the concept of civilisations, including the western one. His model is based on solid studies of economic and social history:

In his major work, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, ...* (1949), Fernand Braudel took as his object a vast geographical area and treated it in terms of three time scales: the long term, the conjunctural, and that of events. The fact that Braudel has, over the years indicated his particular interest in one of these time scales, the long term or long durée, has affected the appreciation of his work by critics and admirers alike ... (Santamaria and Bailey 1984: 78).

He elaborated his theory of the long term in his book *A History of Civilizations* where treated historical short-term shifts and political events as accidental and consequently, emphasised the social and economic components of history which lasted a hundred years. It is important to note that Braudel did not treat civilisations ideologically. He was not interested in creating a sense of identity. He also rejected Toynbee's theory of natural determinism of the strength of civilisations, where the degree of difficulty Nature imposed on groups of people decided on the quality of civilisation they established (Braudel 1994: 11). However, he did not dismiss geography as an important factor in creating civilisations. On the contrary:

Every civilization, then, is based on an area with more or less fixed limits. Each has its own geography with its own opportunities and constraints, some virtually permanent and quite different from one civilization

to another. The result? A variegated world, whose maps can indicate which areas have houses built of wood, and which of clay, bamboo, paper, bricks or stone; which areas use wool or cotton or silk for textiles; which areas grow various food crops – rice, maize, wheat, etc. The challenge varies: so does the response (Braudel 1994: 11).

Unlike Spengler, Toynbee or Koneczny, Braudel based his proposal on purely material foundations. He did not reject factors such as religions, ideas or political conflicts, but treated them as secondary in the formation of civilisations.

Western or European civilization is based on wheat and bread – and largely white bread – with all the constraints that this implies. Wheat is a demanding crop. It requires field use to be rotated annually, or fields to be left fallow every one or two years (Braudel 1994: 11).

Having provided the basic criteria determining the category, Braudel outlined the geographic range of the west:

Western civilization, so-called, is at once the ‘American civilization’ of the United States, and the civilizations of Latin America, Russia and of course Europe. Europe itself contains a number of civilizations – Polish, German, Italian, English, French, etc. Not to mention the fact that these national civilizations are made up of ‘civilizations’ that are smaller still: Scotland, Ireland, Catalonia, Sicily, the Basque country and so on. Nor should we forget that these divisions, these multi-coloured mosaics, embody more or less permanent characteristics (Braudel 1994: 12).

Admitting that “[s]ociety and civilization are inseparable”, Braudel went on to explain the concept of western civilisation:

The Western civilization in which we live, for example, depends on the ‘industrial society’ which is its driving force. It would be easy to characterize Western civilization simply by describing that society and its component parts, its tensions, its moral and intellectual values, its ideals, its habits, its tastes, etc. – in other words by describing the people who embody it and will pass it on (Braudel 1994: 16).

Thus, the French scholar based his idea of western civilisation on certain qualities which are passed from generation to generation and are determined by the lifestyles societies adopt to meet their needs. The shared ideals and worldviews are just reflections of the current dynamics of societies’ development. It is worth mentioning Braudel’s observation that “The West’s first success was certainly the conquest of its countryside – its peasant ‘cultures’ – by the towns” (Braudel 1994: 18). Nevertheless, understanding the connection between civilization and society, he asserted that “in terms of the time-scale, civilization implies and embraces much longer periods than any given social phenomenon. It changes far less rapidly than the societies it supports or involves” (Braudel 1994: 18).

Braudel’s approach clearly shows that he treated the west as an extensive term. Based on economic foundations, the civilisation became a concept to which both Christianity and Greek rational thought made essential contributions.

To sum up, it is impossible to deny geographic characteristics of the territories where particular civilisations were born. They determined the way of food production which, in turn, affected the further development of economies, then ideologies initially based on religion but, in the case of the west, also on a secular philosophy. The origins of European societies and civilisations, were simply different from those of China, India or Mali.

The need for the term

The concept of the west as an ontological entity defined by clear solid criteria and borderlines is difficult to defend. However, it would be ridiculous to deny the fact that it was west-European powers that colonized Africa and Asia and eradicated native civilizations in both Americas. Moreover, even though nowadays representatives of Central European countries, such as Poland, can claim that they never participated in the atrocities the western powers committed in their colonies, their ancestors, under the control of foreign invaders themselves, could feel solidarity with the same western powers in opposition to the “savage peoples” of the rest of the world. The Polish 19th century novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz had no doubts about who should rule the Sudan (England!). People in Poland, Czechia, Hungary etc. read French, British and German books. Many of them are familiar with Flaubert’s accounts of his trips in Africa, Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Kipling’s *The Jungle Book* and, once popular with young people, adventures of Kara ben Nemzi by Karl May. They may also know Salman Rushdie’s *East, West*, where the cultural differences are thematised. If they happened to study something Indian or Persian, they looked for exotic elements that reinforced their sense of being fundamentally different. Mostly they read west-European accounts of the adventures of west-European explorers and it was through the eyes of the latter that the former became familiar with other parts of the world. Even though Appiah is right in saying that Europe has never been one homogeneous body, the fact that it was the western part of Europe that was able to impose its narrative on the rest of the continent, all the more demonstrates that the west-European countries were, and still are (having incorporating the United States into “the club”) a force able to persuade their ‘peripheral’ neighbours to acknowledge their point of view in many areas, from pure politics to economics and culture.

Western civilization may be an obsolete concept, even though for many, comprising all those who believe in collective identities, it still matters as a certain ideology or even an ontological entity. Historians (for example the Annales School) use the term all the time. Attempts at creating a philosophy of history based on the idea of a constellation of different civilizations have long been criticized as too intuitive and devoid of a plausible scientific methodological basis (Iggers 1958: 223). Moreover, Toynbee himself revised his views. Initially he believed in his success in finding “fields of historical study which would be intelligible in themselves ... without reference to extraneous historical events”. Later on, however, he had to give up the idea of “self-contained units”, reducing the role of civilisations to serving “the progress of Religion” (Fieldhouse 1958: 132).

The idea of one human civilization is a proposal which sounds obvious in the world of globalization from both practical and ethical points of view. Paradoxically, however, the moment

we abandon terms such as “western civilisation” or “the west”, we have to reinvent them for very practical reasons. Discussing several problems, be they historical, political, cultural, economic or sociological, we need vocabulary to describe certain phenomena. Therefore, a great number of academic disputes are of linguistic nature rather than any other.

Appiah’s proposal and its feasibility

Appiah’s final proposal of universal identity was put in the form of the ancient Roman poet Terence’s maxim which became the motto of Renaissance humanism: “Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto” or “I am human, I think nothing human alien to me”. Optimistic as it sounds, the umbrella term ‘human’ in the popular quote contains as many dangers and unsolved problems as promises of a better future. Atrocities of wars and brutal governments, including ancient tyrannies, slavery and modern totalitarian systems, are all ‘human’ inventions.

The way Appiah proposes his idea (or ideology), implies several problems in both purely academic and practical/political dimensions. For example, if western civilization is to be eradicated from our narrations in favour of a kind of universal human civilization, the points he used to deconstruct the concept of western civilization apply all the more to the general human “universe”. The differences in historical development are so evident that no concept of one universal civilization is able to withstand criticism. Moreover, one can discuss the set of ‘universal’ values proposed by this holistic culture embracing the whole planet in the context of the post-colonial imposition of the western approach to law, politics, ethics, aesthetics etc. upon the subaltern. Within this ‘universal’ civilization conflicts would not only be at the level of individuals, but also at the level of large groups of people who believe in certain sets of principles. In this context, the lexical problem returns for the discussion which inevitably must restore more or less imperfect terms being synonyms or euphemisms for what we now call civilizations. Much as we may detest these terms, without them we simply could not communicate and thus solve problems on a lower level of **Abstraction**. Talking about such things as homosexuality on the one hand, and polygamy or the circumcision of girls on the other, it is difficult to reduce them to each particular case and not to refer them to a broader context. The additional problem is that in the legal aspect of social organization, which requires precise classification of human actions, there is little room for compromise. Finding a universal solution would mean imposing one approach on those who support another. Champions of the supremacy of western civilization have no doubts that theirs is supreme. Therefore they could agree with Appiah’s proposal, provided that western civilization confined geographically to Europe and North America is replaced with itself under the name of universal civilization.

The issues of terminology have inherent aporias, which should inevitably lead to an association with a kōan in Zen Buddhism. The principal problem of the world of western academic thought is occasional ‘discoveries’ of those insurmountable perplexities bringing about conclusions that certain concepts are ‘impossible’. Thus, the impossibility of certain terms makes whole intricate scientifically described areas of knowledge impossible as well. It is enough to deconstruct the se-

mantic field of one term to ruin a vast fragment of what humans believed to be their knowledge. However, in such circumstances arises a fundamental question: why not recognize the Buddhist denial of anything we call reality? Why do we not adopt the general assumption that everything is just an illusion? Is this just *reductio ad absurdum*? Is this more absurd than selecting single terms and depriving them of sense, leaving the public with faith in the validity of all others of the same category? Or maybe the purpose of denying particular concepts is just to keep a great conversation going while everybody cynically realizes that in our postmodern era it is just a linguistic game? On the other hand, if Derrida is right that there is no reality outside the text, what is left to deal with? Therefore, in order to solve real problems, the problems that we ascribe ontological validity, it is not enough to eliminate certain terms and replace them with others of equally dubious validity.

It is good to revise our repository of ideas and terms, and therefore such texts as Appiah's article are necessary to provoke innovative thinking. From the practical point of view, it matters little if western civilization is an ontological unit. It is a fluid idea serving various, often contradictory purposes. Whereas some politicians and ideologists may treat the idea of western civilization as a pretext to enslave or belittle people from other parts of the planet, others may believe it to be the only possible proposal of positive universal values. Observing the terminology used by different political forces in Poland, for example, a certain schizophrenic situation can be noted. On the one hand, nationalists strongly claim their membership in the western, Latin or Christian tradition. On the other hand, they also strongly criticize 'the west' for its departure from Christian values. This seems to support Appiah's argument. Nevertheless, his statement "if western culture were real, we wouldn't spend so much time talking it up" demonstrates that he wants to reduce an idea to the level of pure semantic misconception. The west or any other civilization should be treated as an idea as much as socialism, liberalism or conservatism. We discuss these terms and try to provide them with new meanings along with the changing time. Certain concepts, such as the left wing or the right wing in politics, have come a long way to their present state and differ dramatically from their original meanings. Does it mean the discussion on them is groundless? Several people would not mind if they were replaced with more up-to-date and more precise terms, but the only thing we can do at the moment is to constantly discuss and (re)negotiate their semantic fields so as to be able to understand one another.

If Appiah just criticized the quite common intellectual fallacy of hypostatizing, nothing can be more true than the theses of his article. If his intention was to refute the idea, his position, from a practical point of view, is somewhat vulnerable. Nevertheless, his dismissal of the discussion on western civilization seems premature. The discussion does not mean the issue does not exist. The discussion means that somebody still cares and is ready to manifest the idea, which is nothing else but its performance.

Reducing various approaches to the very term 'the west' to just two – the heritage of the Judeo-Christian tradition and the legacy of the French Revolution – shows quite clearly that the ideology behind the pride of belonging to "the west" may stem from opposite sources. Nevertheless, here lies another insurmountable problem. If any of the universalisms developed in Europe spread over

the world (which, to a high degree has already happened), would it be the dream all-human civilisation or just western ideologies again conquering the rest of the world?

On the other hand, this question may matter to certain groups of descendants of Frantz Fanon, who proposed rejecting anything that was imposed by the west. Speaking of Fanon, it is inevitable to consider the issue of the language of discussion on world history. Without certain terminology, a description of several events and phenomena seems impossible to express. We can see this problem reading certain passages of *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Since the Third World is abandoned and condemned to regression, in any case stagnation, through the selfishness and immorality of the West, the underdeveloped peoples decide to establish a collective autarchy. The industries of the West are rapidly deprived of their overseas outlets (Fanon 1963: 60).

Now, according to Appiah's proposal, we should eliminate the term 'the west' itself. The subjugation and colonization of the African, Asian and American peoples and imposing foreign control upon them suddenly loses the agent. Whose 'selfishness and immorality'? Whose industries are 'deprived of their overseas outlets' if the Third World did establish 'a collective autarchy'?

Although it is unquestionably possible to reject Fanon's ideological notions and dismiss his whole discourse, the problem of the vocabulary for describing colonial and post-colonial reality remains important. Moreover, humanists and social scientists could certainly describe the reality by presenting a great number of specific 'case studies' instead of succumbing to the temptation of developing certain general rules, and searching for regularities and generalizing from specific phenomena is what science is actually about. Divisions, typologies and models of mutual and multilateral relationships require certain abstract terminology which allows researchers to describe every particular case. Nigeria or Kenya were conquered and controlled by Britain, Algeria by France, Cameroon by Germany etc. Should the mental shortcut "western Europeans conquered vast territories of Africa" be rejected as imprecise? Perhaps historical accounts would be more precise if we used the names of particular European countries conquering and colonizing other particular countries in Africa and Asia instead of using such umbrella terms as 'the west' and 'the Third World'. However, whereas the latter in fact means 'the lands and peoples once conquered and humiliated by certain European empires actually not having much in common', colonizing the rest of the world in the name of civilisation was the idea making the powers of western Europe a gang of accomplices.

Conclusion

Appiah sums up his article with the observation:

Culture – like religion and nation and race – provides a source of identity for contemporary human beings. And, like all three, it can become a form of confinement, conceptual mistakes underwriting moral ones. Yet all of them can also give contours to our freedom. Social identities connect the small scale where we live our lives alongside our kith and kin with larger movements, causes, and concerns. They can make a

wider world intelligible, alive, and urgent. They can expand our horizons to communities larger than the ones we personally inhabit. But our lives must make sense, too, at the largest of all scales. We live in an era in which our actions, in the realm of ideology as in the realm of technology, increasingly have global effects. When it comes to the compass of our concern and compassion, humanity as a whole is not too broad a horizon (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

I could not agree more with this statement. However, it is difficult to believe in an easy way to achieve this ideological goal. Reading *The Republic of Wine* by the Chinese novelist Mo Yan (2001), who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012, whenever I came across a reference to a Chinese legend or myth, I had to look for an explanation on the Internet. When reading a book written by a European or American writer there are indubitably fewer problems of this type. There are certain cultural codes that readers educated in a particular culture are able to decipher immediately. In this context “the golden nugget”, however complicated the way it travelled to our minds (mainly through education!), cannot be dismissed. Most people would love to understand all possible cultural codes including African, Indian and Polynesian, but practically this would take more than one human life. Nevertheless, a wise school curriculum could open our minds to the vast wealth of our planet’s legacy. It is also important to bear in mind that “[t]he cosmopolitan impulse that draws on our common humanity is no longer a luxury; it has become a necessity” (Appiah 2016 online n.p.).

However we understand the term, be it as a source of pride or a source of shame, it is difficult to imagine any discourse in humanities or social sciences without “the west”. Talking about differences, without which no discussion is ever possible, the west is a useful umbrella term explaining, even though imperfectly, the course of history, and helps us understand the present. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that it is absolutely necessary to approach the subject critically and in terms of ideology and political practice to promote the concept of humanity as one world civilisation based on mutual respect and cooperation.

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Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives of Patrick Leigh Fermor and Ryszard Kapuściński

Abstract. This paper offers a comparative analysis of travel narratives of two key contemporary writers: Patrick Leigh Fermor and Ryszard Kapuściński. Fermor's *A Time of Gifts: On Foot to Constantinople; From the Hook of Holland to the Middle Danube* (1977), *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986), and *The Broken Road* (2015) are compared with Kapuściński's: *Imperium* (1993), *The Shadow of the Sun* (1998), and *Travels with Herodotus* (2007). The figure of a 'parallax' is suggested as being crucial in capturing the key similarities between Fermor's and Kapuściński's travel narratives. The differences between these narratives are explained in terms of the differences in developments of Anglophone and Polish travel writing traditions.

Keywords: travel writing, genre, parallax, Ryszard Kapuściński, Patrick Leigh Fermor.

Travel writing (*podróżopisarstwo* in Polish) is often regarded as a supra-generic category combining all types of texts fictional and non-fictional, narrative and non-narrative, versed and non-versed, of which the main theme is travel (See, for example, Borm 2004: 13-17, Witosz 2007: 11-28). At the centre, of the travel writing tradition, both in Anglophone literatures and Polish literature, there exists a referential genre predominantly narrated in the first person and predominantly non-fictional which is known as the travel book (or travelogue) in English and *reportaż podróżniczy* in Polish. Ian Borm's (2004: 17) definition states that the travel book is: "any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming or presupposing that author, narrator and principal character are but one or identical." Traditionally, both these genres, of travel book and *reportaż podróżniczy*, have relied on a retrospective type of narration making both travel books and *reportaż podróżniczy* formally similar to journals and/or diaries. From the perspective of most travel books and most *reportaż podróżniczy* written over the last two centuries, the minor differences which the historians and theoreticians of life narratives postulate to exist between journals and diaries (See, for example, Smith and Watson 2001: 193-196) are of no consequence from the perspective adopted in this paper. It is also of little consequence to what ex-

tent the final version has followed some regularly kept diary or has diverged from it through subsequent re-writing (See Forsdick et al. 2006: 24). Most travel books and *reportaż podróżniczy* are linear, retrospective narratives, usually following the tripartite pattern: of departure, the journey itself, and return. And in most cases, the retrospection does not go back very far, usually extending to a few months, a year or a couple of years at the most. Most travel writers (and particularly professional travel writers) write their travel accounts and publish their travel books swiftly after the journey's end; although some 'artistic' travel books take much longer to complete. Two famous British travel books which followed the journal/diary textualization process described above but took much longer are Alexander Kinglake's *Eothen* (1844) and Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana* (1937). As Jonathan Raban, himself both a major travel writer and a critic, wrote in his Preface to *Eothen*: "The book took Kinglake a decade to write. It was revised and re-revised; its style of bright talk was the product of a long process of literary refinement." (Raban 1982: v) A similar method of rigorous revisions and re-writings administered on the text till it acquired the varnish of apparent off-handed spontaneity was performed nine decades later by Robert Byron.

Although predominant, travel books and *reportaże podróżnicze* following relatively closely in the wake of the real journey, are not the only ways of textualizing journeys. There exists an approach that, from the perspective of life narratives' taxonomy, is much more similar to that of a memoir than of either a diary or a journal. I would like to argue that this type of narrating travel can be best metaphorically captured through the figure of a 'parallax', and that three travel books, each of two very prominent travel book writers, one British and one Polish, reveal striking similarities, particularly when seen through the lens of a memoir-like type of focalization of the past, where memory is used in a much less mimetic and much more creative ways than in the bulk of travel writing. I will apply the figure of 'parallax' to three travel books by Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915-2011): *A Time of Gifts: On Foot to Constantinople; From the Hook of Holland to the Middle Danube* (1977), *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986), and *The Broken Road* (2015).

According to Artemis Cooper (2012: 325), the biographer of Patrick Leigh Fermor, in 1966 Fermor nursed the idea of giving the title of *Parallax* to the book he was working on at that time. Most often used in astronomy, the word alludes to the difference in the appearance of an object seen from two different angles. It seemed a good way to draw attention to the gap between the nineteen-year-old walker and the forty-nine-year-old writer. The initial enthusiasm did not last long, though; Fermor got stuck while writing *Parallax* and abandoned the project. He returned to it in the early 1970s and worked laboriously on it until 1977, when the book finally appeared. However, *parallax*, as the title of the first book to describe Fermor's walk across Europe, was replaced by an intertextual, nostalgic quote from a poem written by Louise MacNeice, *Twelfth Night*: "For now that the time of gifts is gone...". *A Time of Gifts*, was very appropriate for the 'winter journey' of a boy of eighteen through the Europe of 1934, described it from the perspective of a man who was passed sixty when the book finally appeared: "For now that the time of gifts is gone--/ O boys that grow, O snows that melt,/ O bathos that the years must fill--/ Here is dull earth to build upon/ Undecorated; we have reached/ *Twelfth Night* or what you will... you will". As we can see for

ourselves, MacNeice's poem "Twelfth Night" leads directly to more intertexts, the most obvious of which is Shakespeare's play "Twelfth Night", bringing with it evocations of Christmases long past, celebrated with traditional medieval gusto, from the first day of Christmas to the twelfth day (and night) of Christmas, the Eve of the Epiphany, celebrated on January 6. As Artemis Cooper (2012: 325-331) explained, it was Fermor's friend and editor John (Jock) Murray who was not happy with the learned title *Parallax*, and insisted on its change to a title more commercially oriented. I am convinced that 'parallax', abandoned by Fermor and Murray, can nevertheless serve very well as a metaphor as well as a synecdoche for a kind of travel narrative in which the narrator, an experienced traveler, contrasts his/her experienced persona with himself/herself at the beginning of his mind-transforming wanderings.

Patrick Leigh Fermor, after his 'Great Trudge' (as he later referred to his venture) on foot across Europe, from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople (as he, in his heliophilia, insisted on calling Istanbul), undertaken between December 1933 and 1 January 1935, stayed in the Balkans, where he learnt the languages and enjoyed life. When World War II broke out he went to Britain to volunteer. He served with the Special Operations Executive in Crete, occupied by the Germans. He distinguished himself by masterminding and carrying out the kidnapping of German general Heinrich Kreipe, the regional commander of the island, whom Fermor managed to lead all the way through the mountains of Crete to a boat on the southern coast which took them to Alexandria (occupied by the British at that time). Fermor alluded to these events in *A Time of Gifts*, mostly in the intertext of an introductory letter opening this travel book, addressed to a great war-time friend and fellow SOE officer, Xan Fielding.

After the war Fermor led a wandering life and gradually established his reputation (mostly) as a travel writer. His first travel book, *The Traveller's Tree*, which was published in 1950, was a classical travel narrative recounting his travels (with a group of friends) in the West Indies in 1947-1948. Fermor's growing sentiment for his adopted patria of Greece led to prolonged wanderings in all different nooks and crannies of continental Greece. In 1961, with his wife Joan, he bought a plot of land in the remote village of Kardamyli on the Peloponnese coast, and there they built a comfortable house in a quiet bay (to Fermor's own design). Two travel books from this period described the extensive travels which Fermor with his wife undertook in Greece: *Mani: Travels in the Southern Peloponnese* (1958) and *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece* (1966). It was the extended research on Greek civilization, ancient and modern, which led to the writing of these two travel books. The narrative persona of both of them may be placed within the category of 'a gentleman scholar', more typical in the British travel writing of the nineteenth century, and very rare in the twentieth, where the narrative persona is foregrounded as an amateur scholar, expert in the areas of knowledge of his own choice. In Patrick Leigh Fermor's *Mani* and *Roumeli* this expertise is extended into such areas as: the Hellenic past, its literature and language, the Byzantine history of art, the history of Greece under Ottoman rule, and the history of modern Greece. The Greeks the Fermors meet during their wanderings are described with love, care, warmth and humour, while the strata of the past and customs are laboriously revealed in the erudite narration.

Mani and *Roumeli* are distinguished by their passionate erudition, but their structures resemble those of other British travel books, when the ‘scholarship’ of the narrator is allowed to be the centre of focalization: thus the chronologically described wanderings are interspersed with learned essays devoted to specific aspects of Greek history and culture. At times these essays verge on the poetic, fantastic and/or bizarre. For example, there is a passage in chapter three of *Mani*, entitled *Kardamyli: Byzantium Restored*, when Fermor describes a visit to the hut of the Mani fisherman, Estavrios Mourzinis, who is reputed by local hearsay to be the last descendent of the Byzantine emperors. Estavrios behaves humbly and appropriately:

“That’s what they say,” he said, “but we don’t know anything about it. They are just old stories...” He poured out hospitable glasses of ouzo, and the conversation switched to the difficulties of finding a market for fish, there was so much competition. There is a special delight in this early morning drinking in Greece. (Fermor 2006: 41)

With his skilful novelistic narration, utilizing free indirect speech stressing the banal, everyday topic, the conversation quickly switches to “difficulties of finding a market for fish, there was so much competition”, with the delight of the persona in such conversations and situations, especially as they are carried out ornamented with the customary drinking of a strong local liquor, ouzo, even though it is an early-morning visit. Spurred on by ouzo, the narrative persona’s imagination is allowed to run high and wild. The fragment which follows reads:

Old stories indeed. But supposing every link were verified, each skaky detail proved. Supposing this modest and distinguished looking fisherman were really heir of the Paleologi, descendant of Constantine XI and Michael VIII the Liberator, successor to Alexis Comnène and Basil the Bulgar-Slayer and Leo the Isaurian and Justinian and Theodosius and St. Constantine the Great? And, for that matter, to Diocletian and Heliogabalus and Marcus Aurelius, to the Antonines, the Flavians, the Claudians and the Julians, all the way back to the Throne of Augustus Caesar on the Palatine, where Romulus had laid the earliest foundations of Rome?...The generous strength of the second glass of ouzo accelerated these cogitations. (Fermor 2006: 44).

We do get something of a minor parallax here. Long before *A Time of Gifts*, there is a hiatus in perspective between the sober (in both senses of the word) narrative persona describing an early morning visit to the hut of a hospitable fisherman and the figure of Fermor-traveller, fascinated by Greece’s ancient heritage, discernable (even if only through an ouzo-inspired flight of fancy) in modern Greece’s remote villages, willingly succumbing to a chat with the fisherman, who has turned out (even if only in the narrator’s fancy) to be a true descendent of Byzantine emperors. Fermor makes fun of the extended search for documents to demonstrate the imperial lineage all over the post-Byzantine world, and gets even more involved in this vision:

Envoys returned empty-handed from Barbados and the London docks... Some Russian families allied to Ivan the Terrible and the Palaelogue Princess Anastasia Tzarogorodskaja had to be considered... Then all

at once a new casket of documents came to light and a foreign emissary was despatched hot foot to the Peloponnese, over the Taygetus to the forgotten hamlet of Kardamyli... By now all doubt had vanished. *The Emperor* Eustrarius leant forward to refill the glasses with ouzo for the fifth time. The Basilissa shooed away a speckled hen which had wandered indoors after the crumbs. On a sunny doorstep, stroking a marmalade cat, sat the small Diadoch and Despot of Mitra. (Fermor 2006: 45-46)

It all leads to the description of the coronation of Eustrarius, the Emperor-Fisherman, and the splendours and glories of the city of Byzantium re-created in a vision, at the same time tongue-in-cheek and overpowering:

Constantinople appeared beyond our bows, its towers and bastions glittering, its countless domes and cupolas bubbling among pinnacles and dark sheaves of cypresses, all of them climbing to the single great dome topped with the flashing cross that Constantine has seen in a vision on the Milvian bridge. There, by the Golden Gate, in the heart of the mighty concourse, waited the lords of Byzantium; the lesser Caesars and Despots and Sebastocrators, the Grand Logethete in his globular headgear, the Counts of the Palace, the Sword Bearer, the Chartophylax, the Great Duke, the thalassocrats and polemarchs, the Strateges of the Cretan archers, of the hoplites and the peltasts, and the cataphracts, the Silentaries, the Count of the Excubitors, the governors of the Avian Themes, the Clissourarchs, the Grand Eunuch and (for by now all Byzantine history had melted into a single anachronistic maelstrom) the Prefects of Sicily and Nubia and Ethiopia and Egypt and Armenis... (Fermor 2006: 46-47)

“An anachronistic maelstrom” continues for a few more pages with verbal virtuosity, combining historical names with linguistic fireworks, interspersed with the fisherman’s cliffhanging gale story. The ending of the chapter is once again realistic:

The bottle was empty... The schoolmaster’s shadow darkened the doorway. “You’d better hurry,” he said. “The caique for Acropolis is just leaving.” We all rose to our feet, upsetting in our farawells, a basket of freshly cut bait and a couple of tridents which fell to the floor with a clatter. We stepped out into the sobering glare of noon. (Fermor 2006: 50)

I have quoted just some selected passages from the third chapter of *Mani*, hoping to show the lavishness of Fermor’s style, the depth of his research and the intensity of his love of Greece and Greeks. It took Fermor even longer to polish the fragments of *Parallax*, which was to be transformed into the masterpiece *A Time of Gifts*. I believe that his laborious method of numerous corrections and ever new renditions of individual fragments can be compared with one major novelist and master-stylist of the English language: James Joyce, who spent seven years on *Ulysses* (1914-1921) and fifteen on *Finnegan’s Wake* (1924-1939).

As alluded to before, the ‘parallax effect’, so central to *A Time of Gifts*, the dramatic and nostalgic power of the book, lies to a large extent in these shifts of perspectives between the two figures of Patrick Leigh Fermor. One, a boy of seventeen, a drop out from a series of public schools, living on the fringe of the bohemian world of London and inspired by Robert Byron, a young travel writer and a great enthusiast of the ‘Byzantine Achievement’ (which he described in the travel book *The Station* (1928), about his visit to the art treasures of the Holy Mountain of Athos) at the begin-

ning of December 1933, on board a small trade vessel sails from London to the Hook of Holland; hoping to walk all the way across Europe to Constantinople with a small backpack filled with some clothes, a notebook and a copy of the *Oxford Book of Verse*. The other figure in the narrative persona of *A Time of Gifts*, a middle-aged travel writer who over the four decades that have passed since his 'Great Trudge' has accumulated the wealth of experiences and erudition.

In *A Time of Gifts* the final success was achieved by Fermor not only thanks to great care with the poetic, often nostalgic use of English, although this was the feature of the book that was most often discussed by reviewers, but also thanks to a very elaborate combination and intermingling of such disparate elements as: sophisticated intertextuality and the great concern for a harmonious union between the text proper and various paratexts and intertexts (On the importance of paratexts in *A Time of Gifts*, see Moroz 2016).

Poetry as an intertext (and a metatext) joining the two 'parallaxed' aspects of Fermor, aged seventeen and forty-nine, is given a crucial role, starting from the three carefully selected epigraphs-paratexts opening the book. One, as mentioned before, comes from a poem by Louis MacNeice "Twelfth Night". One comes from the metaphysical poet George Herbert and reads: "I struck the board and cry'd 'No more/ I will abroad./ What, shall I ever sigh and pine?/ My life and lines are free; free as the road, Loose as the wind.'" And one is given in the Latin original and comes from a poem by Titus Petronius Arbiter

Linque tuas sedes alienaque litora quaere,
o iuvenis: major rerum tibi nascitu ordo.
Ne succumbe malis: te novelis ultimus Hister,
Te Boreas geldius securaque regna Canopi,
quique ranascentem Phoebum cernuntque cadentem
major in externas fit qui descendit harenas. (Fermor 2005: 3)

Similarly to the other two English epigraphs, it is carefully selected, both for its poetic power and appropriateness for the parallax metaphor employed in *A Time of Gifts*. In Petronius's poem the young Fermor of 1933 ("o iuvenis") is directly asked (be an experienced poet) to embark on a journey to the "ultimus Hister", that is the far-off Danube (the Latin name for the "Danube" was the "Hister") with the promise that "the greater succession of events" ("major rerum") will happen on the way. And, in fact, by the end of *A Time of Gifts* young Fermor is described as he reaches Esztergom, an ancient Hungarian town on the Danube.

At a crucial moment, the narrative personae's expertise in poetry ancient and modern, with the love of poetry of the young Fermor, aged seventeen, carefully described at the beginning with just one crucial book, the *Oxford Book of Verse* in his rucksack, are allowed to merge with the aspect of a persona (only rarely alluded to in *A Time of Gifts*) as a war-hero, thus 'enlarging' the parallax to three, rather than two perspectives. It happens when the narrative persona describes the poets and poems which influenced his younger *alter ego*. When he moves on to Roman poetry, he mentions Lucan, Catullus, Virgil and Horace, and adds that he taught himself "a number of the Odes"

by Horace “and translated a few of them into awkward English sapphics and alcaics. Apart from their other charms, they were infallible mood-changers” (Fermor 2005: 85). And it is in this very moment that Fermor opens the parenthesis to tell this crucial story, adding this third, war-time, perspective:

One of them[odes, G.M]—I ix. *Ad Thaliarchum*—came to my rescue in strange circumstances a few years later. The hazards of war landed me among the crags of occupied Crete with a band of Cretan guerillas and a captive German general whom we had waylaid and carried off into the mountains three days before. The German garrison of the island were in hot, but luckily temporarily misdirected, chase. It was a time of anxiety and danger: and for our captive, of hardship and distress. During a lull in the pursuit, we woke among the rocks just as a brilliant dawn was breaking over the crest of Mount Ida. We had been toiling over it, through snow and then rain, for the last two days. Looking across the valley at this flashing mountain-crest, the general murmured to himself:

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum

Soracte... (See how the deep snow shines on Mount Soracte!)

It was one of the ones I knew! I continued from where he had broken off:

... nec jam sustineat onus

Silvae laborantes geluque

Flumina constiterint acuto,

(The toiling woods can bear the load no longer, and the streams stand still in the sharp ice.)

and so on, through the remaining five stanzas to the end. The general’s blue eyes had swivelled away from the mountain-top to mine—and when I’d finished, after a long silence, he said: “Ach so, Herr Major!” It was very strange. As though, for a long moment the war had ceased to exist. We had both drunk at the same fountains long before; and things were different between us for the rest of our time together. (Fermor 2005: 85-86)

It is difficult to assess to what extent this scene was ‘constructed’ or ‘re-constructed’ from Fermor’s war memories. Definitely, Patrick Leigh Fermor, with a group of Cretan partisans, abducted General Kreipe and took him, across the Cretan mountains, to a little bay in the south from which they were picked up by a motor-boat and transported to Alexandria. And Fermor and General Kreipe definitely met on a friendly footing in a 1972 TV programme on the general’s abduction (Mastorakis 1972). One may hope that the fact of “drinking from the same fountain” was instrumental in arranging this meeting. The exact moment of the mutual recitation of *Ad Thaliarchum* and details of the scenery may just as well be elements of travel-writer’s *licencia poetica*, after all the travel book as a genre, according to Borm (2004), is described as a genre of “non-fictional dominant” (Borm 2004: 17), which means, that although it is predominantly “non-fictional”, “non-fictionality” is only a “dominant”, not an “absolute rule”, and travel writers feel free to construct scenes and conversations with the focus not so much on “re-constructing” the past from memories, as of “constructing” the dramatic, fictionalized versions of memories. And the quoted fragment describing the recitation of Horace’s ode, introduced parenthetically (in a seemingly casual, off-hand manner) may be viewed, I think, as a high point in Fermor’s application of the figure of parallax in travel writing.

For reasons probably both literary and mental, the books on parallax and the ‘Great Trudge’ proved most difficult for Fermor to write. It took him almost a decade to complete the second book *Between the Woods and the Water* (it was finally published only in 1986), and the third and final book was published only posthumously in 2013 (it was edited by Fermor’s biographer Artemis Cooper and a friend of his, the renowned travel writer Colin Thubron, for although Fermor had been working on it on and off for the last two decades of his life, it still had to be extensively edited before final publication).

While looking at three late travel books written by Ryszard Kapuściński *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Suns* and *Travels with Herodotus* I would like to continue to rely on this powerful metaphor of parallax, which has been used to present Fermor’s trilogy of the ‘Great Trudge’, and which can also be detected in Kapuściński’s late work; to look both into the differences as well as the similarities between these key travel narratives of these two writers. Polish and Anglophone travel writing had been developing in clearly different ways in the nineteenth and twentieth century. In the Anglophone tradition, the genre of the travel book, after a dynamic start in the eighteenth century, was developing steadily and, for all the changes and innovations, was becoming more and more established as a genre, clearly differentiated from such (equally dynamically) evolving genres as the novel, the autobiography or the guide-book. This tradition was well known to Patrick Leigh Fermor and he fruitfully had used them in his earlier travel books: *The Traveller’s Tree*, *Mani* and *Roumeli*. Fermor’s trilogy was innovative in the sense of foregrounding the parallax metaphor, but both in its form and content it was firmly entrenched in the long established tradition of the Anglophone travel book. Whereas, in the Polish literary tradition the *podróż* genre, also established in the eighteenth century, disappeared, petered out in the course of the nineteenth century, as it was dynamically replaced by *reportaż podróżniczy*. It might be argued that this ‘generic shift’ was the result of the relative weakness of the book market (especially in comparison with the British and American book markets) and the growing popularity of periodicals, magazines and daily newspapers, in which Polish writers began to publish their travel accounts (often in serialized form), and the growing prestige of journalists/reporters. As I argued in “Ryszard Kapuściński: Between Polish and Anglophone Travel Writing” (Moroz 2015), Kapuściński’s early books, in which he narrated his travels, all the way from *Czarne gwiazdy* [*Black Stars*] (1963) to *Wojna futbolowa* (*The Soccer War*)(1978) were *reportaże podróżnicze* in the strict sense of the term, relying on the tradition of reporting travel that was introduced into Polish literature by such writers as Stanisław Rejmont and developed by such established ‘masters’ of the genre as Ksawery Pruszyński and Melchior Wańkiewicz in the period between the wars. The two books which marked a shift for Kapuściński from the journalistic, dry style of *reportaż podróżniczy* in the direction of a more ‘literary’ approach were *Cesarz* [*The Emperor*] (1978) and *Szakinszach* [*The Shah of Shahs*] (1982). As Kapuściński himself admitted, these changes were partly the result of him, as a writer, being influenced by theoretical and practical achievements of American New Journalism, which he understood as “the description of events through the application of literary tropes” (quoted in Nowacka and Ziątek 2008: 182, translation G.M.).

In August 1980, Kapuściński, who had witnessed and reported on more than twenty revolutions in the Third World countries, was sent by Kazimierz Barcikowski, a friend of his and a Polish Communist Party Politburo member, to report on the strike in Gdańsk shipyard. Kapuściński sided with the striking workers and the nascent Solidarity movement. After the Communists fought back and declared the Martial Law on 13 December 1981, Kapuściński lost his job as a PAP correspondent and “Kultura”, the weekly he had been writing for regularly, was closed for its pro-Solidarity stance. Kapuściński was given a new, unexpected lease of life, when the English translation of *The Emperor* was published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich at the beginning of 1983. It received very favourable reviews in America from such influential reviewers as John Updike in the *New Yorker* and Peter Prescott in *Newsweek*. In the British *Sunday Times* Salman Rushdie named *The Emperor* his book of the year for 1983 and pronounced that Kapuściński’s writing, “always wonderfully concrete and observant, conjures marvels of meanings out of minutiae. And his book transcends reportage, becoming a nightmare of power depicted as a refusal of history that reads as if Italo Calvino had re-written Machiavelli” (Rushdie 1983: 39). Such reviews meant that Kapuściński started to be regarded as a pundit on the Third World issues and a guru of reportage. He was being invited to international conferences, writers’ as well as journalists’ congresses and as a university lecturer. Wiktor Osiatyński, a friend of Kapuściński’s, recalled, that: “he put a lot of work and effort into his new ‘life of a famous writer’. In the course of six months he polished up his English so that he could comfortably give interviews and take part in conferences and meeting with readers without needing an interpreter ... He had his teeth done ... He changed his reporter’s working outfit for a jacket, and sometimes he even put on a tie.” (Domosławski 2012: 292).

When Kapuściński returned to travel writing at the end of 1980s, he was a writer and not a reporter, and he was to rely on the ‘parallax effect’ in all his three final books: *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Sun* and *Travels with Herodotus*. In all these three books the experienced narrative persona recalls the journeys undertaken over many decades, and the hiatus (parallax) created by the erudite narrator and the apprentice traveller described in the opening chapters of these books is an important rhetorical point. In all these three narratives the narrative persona of an experienced traveller, pundit, commentator is foregrounded. Therefore, I would like to disagree with Casey Blanton, who labelled Kapuściński’s late travel narratives (from *The Emperor* to *Travels with Herodotus*) as ‘polyphonic travels’. Blanton stated that

Kapuściński’s rhetorical choice of self-effacing and polyphonic dialogues to represent a foreign culture produces a kind of narrative that can offer as its subject matter both the fragility and the power of self/other relations. Kapuściński’s strategy is to relinquish the authoritative narrative vantage point traditionally occupied by a Western traveler and to offer, instead of one’s narration as the dominant voice, a polyphonic group of other voices in a dialogue with the narrator. (Blanton 2014: 299).

I believe, that the term ‘polyphonic’ renders the narrative of *The Emperor* and *The Shah of Shahs* very accurately. However, I would not call these narratives ‘travels’ because there is almost no ‘travelling’ described in these books, and the narrator in both of them is a ‘reporter’, not a ‘trav-

eler'. On the other hand, in my opinion, in *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Sun* and *Travels with Herodotus* Kapuściński's narrative persona becomes exactly a type of "Western traveler" with "the dominant voice", a voice which subordinates all the other voices. "The parallax effect" is central in *Imperium*, where it is extended from the first chapter entitled Pińsk 39 to the final paratext of an appendix entitled "Książki cytowane w 'Imperium' ("Books Quoted in Imperium"). This appendix was for some reason not translated and not placed in the English 1994 translation by Klara Gławczewska. This appendix includes sixty books in Polish, Russian, French and English; fictional and non-fictional, on Russia and the Soviet Union, on history, philosophy, sociology and literature. It is not a typical academic type of reference/bibliography, for although it is alphabetical in order as such lists are, the quotes in the text itself are not described in any academic fashion. This appendix shows the depth and width of Kapuściński's readings and his expertise as a Sovietologist, and can be seen as functioning in grave contrast (parallax) with the scene in the first chapter when Kapuściński describes how in the autumn of 1939 his hometown of Pińsk (now in Belorussia) was invaded by the Red Army, annexed to the Soviet Union and Kapuściński as a boy of seven went to school, where Russian was the language of instruction, and the only book in class was entitled "Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma*" (*Studies in Leninism*) (Kapuściński 1998: 4).

Of the three last Kapuściński's travel narratives, the parallax in *The Shadow of the Sun* is the least obvious. However, this rhetorical trope is still there; four decades of Kapuściński's travels in Africa are described, starting in 1958 in Ghana and all the way to the persona's latest visit to this continent at the end of the twentieth century. Whereas, in *Travels with Herodotus* Kapuściński's final book, his *summa* as a traveller and writer, the parallax is extremely important. The book opens in the following way:

Before Herodotus sets out on his travels ascending rocky paths, sailing a ship over the seas, riding through the wilds of Asia; before he happens on mistrustful Scythians, discovers the wonders of Babylon, and plumbs the mysteries of the Nile; before he experiences a hundred different places and sees a thousand inconceivable things, he will appear for a moment in a lecture on ancient Greece, which Professor Biezuńska-Małowist delivers twice weekly to the first-year students in Warsaw University's department of history.

He will appear and just as quickly vanish.

He will disappear so completely that now, years later, when I look through my notes from those classes, I do not find his name. There are Aeschylus and Pericles, Sappho and Socrates, Heraclitus and Plato, but no Herodotus. And yet we took such careful notes. They were our only sources of information, The war had ended six years earlier and the city lay in ruins. Libraries had gone up in flames, we had no textbooks, no books at all to speak of.

The professor has a calm, soft, even voice, Her dark, attentive eyes regard us through thick lenses with marked curiosity. Sitting at a high lectern, she has before her a hundred young people the majority of whom have no idea that Solon was great, do not know the cause of Antigone's despair and could not explain how Themistocles lured the Persians into a trap.

If truth be told, we didn't even quite knew where Greece was or, for that matter, that a contemporary country by that name had a past remarkable and extraordinary as to merit studying at university.

We were children of war. High schools were closed during the war years, and although in the larger cities clandestine classes were occasionally convened, here, in this lecture hall, sat mostly girls and boys from remote villages and small towns, ill read, undereducated. It was 1951, University admissions were granted without entrance examinations, family provenance mattering most—in the communist state the children of workers and peasants had the best chance of getting in. (Kapuściński 2007: 4-5)

As pointed out at the beginning of this paper, ‘parallax’ alludes to the difference in perception of an object seen from two different angles. And that was the case with Fermor’s *Between Woods and Water* and in *The Broken Road*, or Kapuściński’s *Imperium* and *The Shadow of the Sun*. But in *Travels with Herodotus*, as is also the case of *A Time of Gifts*, we have three angles. Apart from the narrative persona; experienced and skilful as a writer (opening his narrative with a series of anaphors “before...”, mixing past present and future tenses) and apart from Kapuściński aged nineteen, an undereducated student of history at Warsaw University diligently taking notes during the lecture on Ancient Greece, we get the third angle: that of Herodotus. Herodotus’s *Histories*, in Gérald Genette’s terms, serves as a ‘hypotext’ for *Travels with Herodotus*, which is a ‘hypertext’ (Genette 1997: 5). And Herodotus, from the very beginning is presented as a master traveller and a master story teller, telling his stories with compassion, empathy, wit and skill. The copy of the Polish translation of *The Histories* given to Kapuściński, the young reporter by his boss, becomes a talisman and its contents a yardstick to gauge the world. In the final chapter of *Travels with Herodotus*, entitled poetically “We Stand in Darkness, Surrounded by Light” Kapuściński tells of his trip, a short one, from the Greek isle of Kos, to the town Kapuściński insists on calling ‘Halicarnassus’, although (as he is reminded by a local Turkish policeman) it is called ‘Bodrum’ now. Halicarnassus is the birth place of Herodotus and the description of this ‘in the footsteps of the master’ little trip is used by Kapuściński to sum up his musings on the nature of travel and on the nature of writing. And in these musings Kapuściński’s narrative persona gets skilfully and unobtrusively merged with that of Herodotus. The key features of Herodotus, the man, the historian and the story teller are also alluded to the narrative persona. Both Herodotus and Kapuściński’s narrative persona are “insatiable, spongelike organisms, absorbing everything easily and just as easily parting with it” (Kapuściński 2007: 267-68), unlike the great majority of sedentary people, they are nomads, not capable to stay in one place, they “must walk (or ride) elsewhere, further away.” (Kapuściński 2007: 268), “they do not grow attached to anything, do not put down deep roots” (Kapuściński 2007: 268), and they are both men of peripheries, of Halicarnassus and Pińsk respectively, little towns far away from the centres of civilization; in fact places at the borderlands of civilization, where religions, cultures, languages and races mix breeding empathy and understanding.

Kapuściński’s figure of parallax in *Travels with Herodotus* could also be perceived in terms of hyperbole. For, it seems that in reality the parallax/hiatus he constructs between himself aged nineteen, and himself writing *Travels with Herodotus* was not as huge as he depicted it. In 1951 Kapuściński was not as undereducated as the opening passages quoted earlier suggest. His parents were not peasants or workers, but teachers. Although, originally from the provincial town

of Pińsk, the family moved to Warsaw in 1945. Ryszard Kapuściński had attended one of the best secondary schools in Warsaw—gimnazjum imienia Stanisława Staszica—and in 1950 he had had his two poems published by *Dziś i jutro*, while another weekly called *Odrodzenie*, had recorded a debate on poetry held by students in which Kapuściński's poem "Różowe jabłka" ("Pink Apples") was compared with poetry of Vladimir Mayakovsky and the canonical Polish pre-war poets (Nowacka and Ziątek 2008: 368).

Kapuściński's fluency in English, acquired in the mid-1980s, helped him not only during conferences and lectures, but also in his readings. In 1991 Kapuściński stated that "although the achievements of such writers as Bruce Chatwin, V.S. Naipaul, Paul Theroux are obvious, they had little influence on me" (Kapuściński 2008, translation G.M.). This statement was true in 1991 but this situation was to change when Kapuściński returned to travel writing and wrote three books discussed here. And it was in these three narratives when the influence of the key contemporary Anglophone travel writers became apparent. What Kapuściński took from Chatwin, Naipaul and Theroux, was the conviction that non-fictional travel writing could be very 'literary' in nature and that one of the key aspects of such 'literariness' was an erudite narrative persona employing novelistic tools and relying on various shades of intertextuality. The narrative personae of *Imperium*, *The Shadow of the Sun* and *Travels with Herodotus* are centres of focalization, poets and experts.

To the best of my knowledge there is no evidence that Ryszard Kapuściński read Patrick Leigh Fermor's trilogy and it seems that it was a mere coincidence that Kapuściński wrote his narratives in the manner similar to Fermor: the erudite narrative persona looks back at his younger, inexperienced self. Their narratives remain almost unique in non-fictional, referential travel writing, they rely on the type of narration typical of memoirs, with their vantage point, 'backward' recollection of memories and not on linear, chronological narration characteristic of journals, diaries and the vast majority of non-fictional travel writing.

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Understanding Self and Others: Marriage Scenarios in Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*

Abstract. Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* establish a literary and cultural dialogue through the exploration of the individual's private space. The two writers are undoubtedly intrigued by a fluid nature of the individual: marriage appears to reveal inner conflicts, doubts, anxieties, as well as longing for happiness. Although pursuing different agendas when indulgently devising sentimental love stories and outrageous adulteries, Ford and Tolstoy echo each other when delivering their vision of self and other. This essay explores the *topos* of marriage as an element that amplifies the textual double-coding and reveals ethic and aesthetic values Ford and Tolstoy communicate.

Keywords: marriage, fluidity, changeability, anxiety, uncertainty, doubt, sincerity.

Marriage has long been a focus of literary inquiries: the changeability that the marriage topic reveals is rather exemplary in terms of ontological and epistemological instability and uncertainty. Additionally, marriage creates space for narrative maneuvers: humor, irony, sarcasm can easily be intertwined with philosophical, political, moral queries. Among a myriad of marriage stories, two novels stand out due to a variety of peripeteia, subplot mixes, moral confusion and desire to hear one's own self: Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* (1915) and Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1877). The two novels, which are notorious for the depiction of adulteries and infidelities, may appear different. *The Good Soldier* is primarily discussed in the context of modernist writing and *Anna Karenina* has long been an inseparable part of the Russian realism discussion. However, the two novels incorporate marriage as an aesthetic device to expose the individual's doubt, anxiety, and emotional confusion. Although demonstrating an adherence to realism, *Anna Karenina* is also described in terms of transitional status: Tolstoy's style fluctuates between realism and mod-

ernism.¹¹ The analysis of aesthetic potential of marriage produces productive perspectives for the exploration of Ford's and Tolstoy's literary and cultural dialogue.

This essay examines the *topos* of marriage as one of the textual elements that appear to establish and maintain a literary bridge between Ford and Tolstoy: based on an array of marriage stories, *The Good Soldier* and *Anna Karenina* reveal the individual's fluid nature, which evokes a sense of uncertainty.¹² Additionally, this essay will attempt to address the question whether uncertainty is presented as destructive and paralyzing, or whether it is conceptualized as unavoidable, and thus it is perceived as acceptable. These inquiries will be explored through the analysis of Dowell's existential journey (*The Good Soldier*) and through the examination of the relationship dynamics between Kitty and Levin (*Anna Karenina*): the development of the two cases is intricately connected with the characters' understanding of and involvement in marriage concerns.

Although literary critics have frequently underlined the overpowering presence of marriage concerns raised by Ford¹³ and Tolstoy¹⁴, literary discussions can benefit from comparative trans-literary investigations. *The Good Soldier* and *Anna Karenina* demonstrate Ford's and Tolstoy's keen interest in the individual and their inner modifications, augmented by the changing environments. Although chronologically separated by more than 35 years, the two novels illuminate doubts and anxieties caused not only by historical and social circumstances but by the individual's seeking spirit as well.¹⁵

11 In *Framing Anna Karenina: Tolstoy, the woman question, and the Victorian novel*, Amy Mandelker details the modernist and realist nuances Tolstoy embraces.

12 As Stephen Lovell points out, Tolstoy struggled to come to terms with age and death: "As he grew older, the only way he found to keep his fear within reasonable bounds was to talk it into temporary submission" (304). This struggle results in Tolstoy's acceptance of self's fluidity: "Tolstoy was more convinced of the self's fluidity than of its wholeness" (304). The notions of fluidity and changeability significantly shape the writer's ethic and aesthetic edifice. On the one hand, this characteristic signals Tolstoy's adherence to realism; on the other hand, existential instability that intensifies spiritual confusion and lostness establishes a link with modernist detachment and isolation.

13 The discussion of Ford's manipulation with the *topos* of marriage is often blurred by the exploration of gender, social, political, religious nuances. Thus, Anne Flanagan, Rose De Angelis and Betty H. Kirschstein explore marriage from the perspective of gender roles. Ford's presentation of marriage encourages the analysis of blurred gender boundaries. As Kirschstein emphasizes, Ford himself crossed gender boundaries, "enjoying 'womanly' activities such as cooking, and seeking comfort in domestic spaces and female companionship" (xi).

14 Tolstoy's interpretation of marriage and family has received more critical attention than Ford's. However, a detailed analysis of Tolstoy's ideas concerning love, marriage, and family is primarily confined to the Russian Tolstoy Studies: Shklovsky, Strakhov, Chernyshevsky, Biriukov, Merezhkovsky, to name but a few. This research is also marked by the blurriness of the marriage focus. Tolstoy's canonical status as "a great Russian writer" requires considering political, social, philosophical, religious, spiritual scopes when addressing the marriage topic.

15 The two novels provide rich material for the understanding of Ford's and Tolstoy's personal vision of marriage. If *The Good Soldier* represents Ford's anxiety regarding gender roles, *Anna Karenina* reflects doubts and anxiety that Tolstoy develops while reconsidering his own marriage. *Anna Karenina* was written during the years when Leo Tolstoy and his wife, Sofia Andreevna, were happy. As Hugh McLean notes, despite some minor fights and quarrels "on the whole the Tolstoy marriage from 1862 up to the completion of *Anna Karenina* in 1877 could be classified as fundamentally harmonious" (66). After that, "came the master's 'crisis'" (66).

At first glance, the marriage topic forms a skeleton of both *The Good Soldier* and *Anna Karenina*. The novels involve the stories of married couples, whose lives appear to be displayed for approvals and judgments, sympathies and condemnations. In *The Good Soldier*, John Dowell, in an aloof and cold-hearted way, describes adulteries, cruelties, suicides that he witnesses. Detailed pictures of dramas and tragedies are provided in *Anna Karenina* by the omnipresent narrator, who encourages the audience to decide who to sympathize with and whom to condemn. Additionally, the ironic tone, imbuing the beginning of the two novels, locates marriage in the realm of reconsiderations and subversions, illuminating the loss of certainty.

The Good Soldier opens with a pathos phrase, introducing incredulity and suspicion regarding the reliability of the unfolding narrative: “This is the saddest story that I have ever heard” (5). A few lines into the story, the narrator subverts the intensity set up at the beginning: “I believe, a state of things only possible with English people of whom, till today, when I sit down to puzzle out what I know of this sad story, I knew nothing whatever” (5). The narrative is shaped by unreliability and uncertainty. On a large scale, “the saddest story,” which involves dramas and tragedies of the married couples—the Ashburnhams and the Dowells—is an illusion of life: Ford employs the *topos* of marriage to emphasize the individual’s loneliness as a mode of existence. The characters of *The Good Soldier* struggle to maintain meaningful connections that can help overcome emotional detachment. Thus, the irony introduced at the beginning of the novel, subverts traditional premises of marriage, defying stability and introducing uncertainty.

Subversion—narrative and ethic—also imbues *Anna Karenina*. It should be noted that, akin to *The Good Soldier*, irony is introduced in the beginning of the Russian novel. The Oblonskys’ undergo a family crisis: “Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys’ house. The wife had discovered that the husband was carrying on an intrigue with a French girl, who had been a governess in their family, and she had announced to her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him” (1). A playful irony, however, is mitigated by Tolstoy’s insightful observation: “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way” (1). Marriage invites the conversation not only about happy families but also about existential confusion, intensified by the loss of certainty and stability. Not only is Darya Alexandrovna’s routine life shattered, her emotional and psychological stability undergoes turmoil.

The Good Soldier and *Anna Karenina* reveal marriage as the individual’s space, which allows the subversion of social stereotypes and the manifestation of the individual’s inherent fluidity and changeability. Ford and Tolstoy devise situations, in which their characters have to face ceaseless ontological fluidity and to construct their epistemic frameworks that will justify their truths and beliefs. The two writers emphasize doubt, uncertainty, and anxiety as key elements of the existential journey. In this light, marriage provides space for self-reflection: changes that the characters undergo lay the foundations for the ability to construct individual worlds out of multiple fragments.

John Dowell, the narrator of *The Good Soldier* who is rather disconnected with the world and with others, laments over the loss of stability and attempts to find the way to restore tranquility and “perfect smoothness” of being: “Isn’t there any heaven where old beautiful dances, old

beautiful intimacies prolong themselves? Isn't there any Nirvana pervaded by the faint thrilling of instruments that have fallen into the dust of wormwood but that yet had frail, tremulous, and everlasting souls?" (11). The answer to these questions is epitomized by the inevitability of loneliness. Dowell confesses: "I know nothing—nothing in the world—of the hearts of men. I only know that I am alone—horribly alone" (13). In *The Good Soldier*, marriage discloses loneliness as a mode of existence, and the struggle with emotional confusion turns into a lonely journey, highlighting the individual's disconnection with others. "It is as if one had a dual personality," says Dowell as "the saddest story" progresses, "the one I being entirely unconscious of the other" (186-187). Observing the outside world, Dowell moves inward: loneliness appears to be accepted as a way of being.

Pointing out Dowell's estrangement, DeCoste states, "Dowell himself reports his fundamental estrangement from other human beings with utter equanimity" (110). Moreover, estrangement becomes pervasive:

Just as the Dowell's marriage is rendered barren by our narrator's flight from vulgar intimacy, left nothing but a loveless tissue of routine betrayals and truths carefully left unspoken, so too is the Ashburnhams' perfection predicated upon an alienation perpetuated by silence. . . . The primary fact of this relationships is its not-expressive character, its being a union in which only separation is possible, precisely because nothing may be said. (111)

Distance and detachment help survive in the environment of undermined certainty: Dowell is deprived of unshakeable belief. In this context, Dowell's marriage, marked by disconnection and the lack of intimacy (the Ashburnhams' marriage is no exception) highlights the utmost loneliness, which can hardly be healed. In light of Dowell's loneliness, John Rodden acutely notes, "Unable to forge a family romance and unable to control his projected objects and thereby himself, Dowell suffers extreme loneliness and paranoid anxiety" (880). Dowell is overwhelmed with loneliness and anxiety; however, his perception of this state is rather ambiguous. While being aware of his emotional lostness, Dowell appears to be ready to embrace instability.

Doubts dominate and control Dowell's life. The narrator seems to be unable (or reluctant?) to see his wife's infidelity, which gestures toward the lack of stamina to resist doubt. However, I would like to suggest that Dowell is indifferent to his wife's affairs, rather than unable or reluctant to accept the fact that numerous adulteries damaged his marriage. For Dowell, indifference is a way to deal with doubt: not being attached to anything liberates and empowers. Detachment and indifference allow Dowell to see and experience the environments from different perspectives. In his narrative, Dowell unveils not only his life but also the life of his wife and the Ashburnhams. This strategy intensifies the narrative's all-inclusiveness, in which a variety of impacts and affects is considered. When narrating the adulteries, in which he himself is involved, Dowell represents multiple viewpoints (his own, Edward's, Leonora's, and Florence's), which disclose a multiplicity of perceptions, subverting any harmonious unanimity. In one of his observations, Dowell laments:

Upon my word, I couldn't tell you offhand whether the lady who sold the so expensive violets at the bottom of the road that leads to the station, was cheating me or no; I can't say whether the porter who carried our traps across the station at Leghorn was a thief or no when he said that the regular tariff was a lira a parcel. The instances of honesty that one comes across in this world are just as amazing as the instances of dishonesty. (64)

The details mentioned in this paragraph—violets which are bought at the bottom of the road and the porter at the station at Leghorn—seem insignificant. However, minor occurrences are followed by more **Abstract** speculations: “After forty-five years of mixing with one's kind, one ought to have acquired the habit of being able to know something about one's fellow beings. But one doesn't” (64). The intermingling of narrative dimensions extends Dowell's loss of certainty to the all-encompassing level. In this context, marriage in *The Good Soldier* is a site of inner, as well as outer, struggles, where the individual is presented in the epicenter of uncertainty and chaos.

In Ford's novel, marital relationships are chaotic and uncertain: Florence manipulates Dowell; Edward and Leonora resemble dishonest business partners; Dowell seems to manipulate everybody, avoiding any kind of ties and connections. Apart from political and social subcontexts that Ford's chaotic marriages may evoke, they also reveal the individual's confusion, which is brought forward by the repercussions of the *fin de siècle* atmosphere. Anxiety and uncertainty pervade Dowell's narrative: his inability to connect with others marks the loss of basis that structures *weltanschauung*. “But upon my word,” says Dowell, speculating on the nothingness of his life, “I don't know how we put in our time, how does one put on one's time? How is it possible to have achieved nine years and to have nothing whatever to show for it? Nothing whatever, you understand” (63). Nothingness seems to be the core of Dowell's life: he does not have a partner, he does not believe in love and friendship, he is incapable of sympathy and understanding. Although overwhelmed with the void, Dowell makes an attempt to find meaning in a meaningless world. Chaotic marriages that do not have space for connection and connectedness emphasize the existential loneliness.

Aestheticizing loneliness, Ford liberates both its destructive and constructive energies. No character in *The Good Soldier* can maintain connection with others; nevertheless, loneliness, at least for Dowell, produces space for inquiries and questions, reflecting not only his anxieties and uncertainties but also his doubts. Dowell's unreliability as a narrator reflects his doubtful soul as well. He seems not to doubt one thing—he has doubts. Doubt keeps the narrative moving back and forth, producing space for liberty and creativity, which nourishes the confused mind.

In *The Good Soldier*, loneliness is an accepted fact of the individual's existence. Tolstoy employs the marriage topic to *deal* with loneliness, to find ways to overcome uncertainty. This conversation about loneliness and uncertainty creates a crossing point between Ford and Tolstoy. In addition, the two writers involve doubt that reflects fluid and changing identity. Although inseparable from uncertainty and from the loss of stability, doubt signals an inquiring spirit, gesturing toward existential freedom. Ford and Tolstoy echo each other in their attempt to reveal an ambiguous nature of uncertainty: as a notion that encompasses both constructive and destructive components.

Tolstoy develops his characters' nature by including doubts into their worldviews: *Anna Karenina*, Darya Alexandrovna, Konstantin Levin, even Stepan Arkadyevitch. However, Kitty's struggles exemplify a painful confrontation with doubts, entailing further spiritual transformations that expose the fluidity of the individual. Refining Kitty's complicated character, Tolstoy masterfully connects spiritual doubts with heart matters and marriage ideals.

Kitty is first introduced as a beautiful young woman who is in love with Alexey Vronsky. (At least she believes she sincerely loves him and dreams to become his wife.) For this reason, she rejects Levin's proposal, hoping to build a happy marriage with Vronsky. Her heart, however, is broken after Vronsky meets and falls in love with Anna: Kitty suffers from depression, which worries and puzzles her parents, who cannot understand the origin of their daughter's physical and emotional ailment. In search for the physical, emotional, and spiritual balance, Kitty opens herself to the world, attempting to come to terms with her pain and discomfort.

After meeting Madame Stahl and Varenka, Kitty believes that she discovers "the new life," in which she will be able not only to recover from the pain caused by Vronsky but also to find spiritual peace and tranquility, deprived of emotional turmoil: "In Varenka she realized that one has but forget oneself and love others, and one will be calm, happy, and noble" (204). Tolstoy portrays Kitty as an independent seeker for her own truth: instead of abiding by the traditions of the aristocratic society in which matchmaking and marriage business are common practices. Kitty does not believe in loveless marriages organized on the basis of financial profit. After her painful experience with Vronsky, Kitty is convinced that the secret to meaningful life lies in the service to mankind and in the wholehearted self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, doubt disturbs Kitty's confidence and seemingly resumed peace: "This doubt poisoned the charm of her new life" (206). Her suspicions concerning the sincerity of Madame Stahl's and Varenka's deeds and intentions are augmented by her father's (prince Alexander Shtcherbatsky) indirect subversion of their generosity and charity: ". . . [I]t's better when [one] does good so that you may ask everyone and no one knows" (210). It may seem that Kitty is influenced by her father's comments; however, her hesitations develop long before the prince's remark. In *Anna Karenina*, doubt is a manifestation of independent thinking and individual choice, accompanying spiritual and existential quest. Kitty's quest also epitomizes the individual's changeability and fluidity, discovered through the emotional confusion.

Kitty's emotional turmoil and her longing for certainty, to some extent, is intertwined with Levin's quest for inner peace. The intersection of the two narrative lines represents the individual's interaction with others as a way to overcome doubt and loneliness, which, according to Tolstoy, disturb inner peace and harmony. As Ford, Tolstoy views uncertainty as an inextricable part of existence. Unlike Ford, however, Tolstoy introduces the idea that doubts can (and should) be processed and reduced through genuine interaction with self and others.

For Levin, marriage is a sacred union, which brings emotional and spiritual stability: "He was so far from conceiving of love for woman apart from marriage that he positively pictured to himself first the family, and only secondarily the woman who would give him a family. . . . For Levin it was the chief affair of life, on which its whole happiness turned" (87). Kitty's rejection shatters his

dreams: “He felt himself, and did not want to be any one else. All he wanted now was to be better than he before. In the first place he resolved that from that day he would give up hoping for any extraordinary happiness, such as marriage must have given him, and consequently he would not so disdain what he really had” (85). To cope with his pain, Levin decides to emotionally detach from the worldly environments and indulge in his isolation: “This lovely spring roused Levin still more, renouncing all his past and building up his lonely life firmly and independently” (137). Although spring brings the sense of resurrection, it primarily emphasizes physical well-being while hiding wounds that still need to be healed. At the moment of resolute decision to never pursue marriage, Levin feels that “in the depth of his soul something had been put in its place, settled down, and laid to rest” (88). However, this state of illusory peace and tranquility, deepened by isolation and seclusion, highlights the loss of hope and despondency. The individual’s strong spirit inspires openness to others: isolation is a sign of a damaged self.

Loneliness which Levin considers blissful reveals its artificial nature as soon as he finds out that Kitty did not marry Vronsky. It is peculiar that Levin’s solitude—physical and emotional—is disturbed when he connects with nature. Nature serves to emphasize the naturalness of seeking connection with others, as opposed to isolation and seclusion. When Stepan Arkadyevitch comes to his estate, Levin attempts to block his fond memories of Kitty. Stepan Arkadyevitch is impressed with his happiness; and Levin seems confident to declare: “Perhaps because I rejoice in what I have, and don’t fret what I haven’t” (147). However, this episode exposes his deliberate self-deception. Discovering that Kitty suffers physically and emotionally, Levin cannot hide his rejoice: “On the way home Levin asked all the details of Kitty’s illness and the Shtcherbatskys’ plans, and though he would have been ashamed to admit it, he was pleased at what he heard” (150-151). Levin experiences emotional resurrection: he still sincerely loves Kitty.

For Tolstoy, sincere love and sincere marriage are steps toward the life grounded in faith and certainty. However, this life transpires when a seeking spirit develops: the individual has to find their own way to existential satisfaction and to gain control over doubt and uncertainty.¹⁶ As Kitty, who is tormented by the necessity to make a choice between prioritizing her own self and serving others, Levin seems to be tortured by doubts regarding the benevolence of his solitude. Tolstoy employs love stories to narrate changes that take place when the individual faces contradictions and ambiguities. The emphasis on the individual brings forth intimacy, which appears to sustain a sincere dialogue with self and others.

After breaking up with Kitty, Levin develops sensitivity, accompanied by vulnerability. When Levin makes his decision to separate himself from Kitty, he is anxious to be honest with himself. Rationalizing his choice, he convinces himself that loneliness is his true path. Choosing detach-

¹⁶ Tolstoy’s *Resurrection* can be rather productive for further transliterary and interdisciplinary explorations of anxiety, doubt, emotional confusion and of the ways to recover from negative experiences in order to modify one’s life. This novel also provides material for the analysis of how damaging experiences shape the individual’s perception of self and others.

ment and isolation, Levin deviates from his sincerity. Although he may have found some serenity, residing in his estate and devoting his time to agricultural business, Levin suffers from anxiety and restlessness, intensified by his doubtful and questioning mind. He unsuccessfully attempts to persuade himself that he follows his “true” voice when choosing a secluded life. His sincere and genuine love for Kitty, as well as his genuine desire to find happiness while being married to the woman he sincerely loves, are reignited the moment Kitty re-enters his life: “No,” he said to himself, ‘however good that life of simplicity and toil may be, I cannot go back to it. I love her’” (252). Sincerity becomes a uniting element for Levin and Kitty. If Levin sustains his sincerity throughout his painful process of coping with the rejection, Kitty discovers sincerity when managing the pain caused by Vronsky’s indifference. Levin and Kitty experience excruciating doubts before they discover a sincere connection that creates space not only for happiness but for doubt and uncertainty as well. While doubt and anxiety constitute part of life and existence, sincerity is a means to turn their destructive energy into a constructive one.

In Tolstoy’s interpretation, sincerity is granted to everyone. However, it is also presented as a choice. Marked by the lack of connection and sincerity, the relationship of Oblonsky and Darya Alexandrovna, for instance, is doomed: the two people are engaged in a show marriage. Anna and Vronsky are also given a chance to develop the ability to hear others and to connect with others while cultivating sincerity and genuineness. Instead, they are trapped in their worlds, which do not have space for others.

In *Anna Karenina*, sincerity signals the individual’s ability and willingness to develop connection with others while expanding one’s own world by integrating a diversity of voices. This ability facilitates the establishment of contact zones where different views and perspectives combine. From this perspective, marriage reveals itself as a dialogue of individuals who are open to hear others and to embrace inherent fluidity of existence.

Do Ford’s marriages include sincerity? Describing Ford’s novel, Walter G. Creed notes, “*The Good Soldier* is a novel of deception. Dowell’s wife deceives him, so do the Ashburnhams. Dowell deceives himself, mostly because he wants to be deceived, and in telling his story, he deceives us as well” (215). At first glance, deceptions—narrative and marital—dominate Dowell’s story. Dowell changes his narrative angles as if following his swinging moods. Nevertheless, this sense of narrative lostness is a trick that Dowell employs to elude certainty and finality.

Scrutinizing the Ashburnhams’ relationship, Dowell at times develops understanding and compassion, followed by scorn, intolerance, and impatience. As far as his wife is concerned, Dowell is not ashamed of revealing his mixed feelings. Florence is a target of intolerance and disdain, as well as pity. Dowell is rather comfortable about his openness regarding inner conflicts that the marriage brings into his life. Whenever his wife is involved, Dowell’s narrative acquires multiple shades: “Florence was singularly expert as a guide to archeological expeditions and there was nothing she liked so much as taking people round ruins and showing you the window from which some one looked down upon the murder of some one else” (68). Avoiding direct criticism, Dowell expresses his irony and sarcasm, exposing bitterness that signals emotional detachment from his

spouse. Their relationship resembles a contract that contains a series of agreements that none of the partners want to follow. Nevertheless, they follow the rules, which they still violate one way or another. Although the violation is rather invisible, it contributes to inner tensions and conflicts. Describing an excursion to the ancient city of M—, Dowell provides a number of details: “I don’t suppose the Ashburnhams wanted especially to go there and I didn’t especially want to go there myself. But, you understand, there was no objection. It was part of the cure to make an excursion three or four times a week, so that we were all quite unanimous in being grateful to Florence for providing the motive power” (63). Although marital relationships in this episode do resemble a show, Dowell does not hide his sarcasm toward his wife. Neither does he conceal his irritation, which is intensified by the presence of his wife and the Ashburnhams. At the same time, being aware of his feelings and emotions, which can hardly be categorized as pleasant, Dowell is rather genuine and sincere revealing his “ugliness.”

Dowell scrutinizes with irony and sarcasm the melodramas that Edward and Leonora are involved into. Through these observations he also discloses himself. On the one hand, Dowell paints a repelling picture of Edward’s and Leonora’s marriage, in which dishonesty, adultery, and manipulation reflect power and dominance play. On the other hand, Dowell’s non-interference demonstrates his detachment and indifference. The characters of *The Good Soldier* question the possibility to maintain connections with others, to have friends, and to cultivate tolerance and understanding. Nevertheless, they seem sincere while maintaining their disbelief in a genuine connectedness. From this perspective, Ford’s novel does contain sincerity, which, however, differs from Tolstoy’s emotional and spiritual sincerity. In *The Good Soldier*, sincerity is shifted toward self, bruised with lostness, detachment, and uncertainty: a traditional happy marriage turns into an illusion. Yet, being sincere with self and others is one the elements of accepting and embracing doubt and uncertainty.

The Good Soldier and *Anna Karenina* conceptualize marriage as a liminal territory where the personal and the communal, subjective and objective, inner and outer combine, bringing forward interrelations and interinfluences, which the individual experiences. Understood as a mediator between multiple dimensions, the marriage *topos* locates the individual in the *in-between-ness* (Gregg and Seigworth 1) of the external and internal, encompassing their changeability and fluidity. Multiple overlapping stories of *Anna Karenina* and a seemingly amorphous structure of *The Good Soldier*, which celebrates fragmentation and disjunction, include marriage as an aesthetic element that produces the effect of double-coding: factual plots encode multilayered texts, creating narrative labyrinths, involving a diversity of emotional and psychological concerns that reveal anxieties, intensified by doubt and uncertainty.

In *The Good Soldier*, emotional and psychological confusion is inevitable. An array of unsuccessful marriages, revolving around infidelities, distance, and disconnection, emphasizes the inner chaos as an accepted fact of the individual’s existence. In *Anna Karenina*, emotional lostness also accompanies the protagonists’ struggles, whose intensity increases as doubt and uncertainty become part of epistemic paradigms. Thus, this conversation about doubt and uncertainty cre-

ates a crossing point between Ford and Tolstoy. The two writers are intrigued by the individual's response to the lack of order and structure. Dowell, who is overwhelmed with the sense of lostness and loneliness, which, however, is masked with irony and with the lack of connectedness with others, may seem to choose aloofness as a way to protect his own self from disintegration. Kitty and Levin, on the other hand, when experiencing doubt and the lack of certainty, strive to re-organize their worlds affected by instability. Orchestrating marriage turmoil, Ford and Tolstoy introduce doubt as an accompanying element of spiritual journey: the two writers reveal the ambiguity of instability, which encompasses destructiveness and constructiveness. This gesture toward blurring the boundaries of conventional concepts is rather characteristic of modernist writing. While Ford advances modernist modifications, contributing to the ethic and aesthetic fluidity, Tolstoy seems to enter a new territory. As a realist, Tolstoy objectively portrays the reality, including a variety of nuances. As a modernist, the writer makes a turn toward representing multiple realities: multiple realities reveal multiple truths, bringing existential confusion. A collection of marriage stories that *Anna Karenina* comprises demonstrates diverse visions of life and reality, foregrounding modernist fragmentation and disintegration.

The Good Soldier and *Anna Karenina*, which may appear different at first glance, share the acceptance of doubt and anxiety as an inextricable part of existence. Moreover, the two novels describe the individual's confusion as natural, as one of the steps toward self-acceptance and inner freedom. Ford and Tolstoy also value sincerity, which is presented as a way to deal with the sense of lostness and uncertainty: being sincere is being able to hear ones' own voice and to engage in dialogue with others. However, as Ford and Tolstoy demonstrate, sincerity has different shades. *Anna Karenina* reveals sincerity that helps establish connection and connectedness. In *The Good Soldier*, sincerity appears to undermine self and others, but this destructive energy does not reach its ultimate level: the undermining potential of sincerity accompanies fundamental existential reinvention. This aspect, however, is open for further literary investigations: a detailed exploration of Ford's and Tolstoy's ethic and aesthetic nuances will broaden the scope of transliterary and trans-cultural studies.

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