

Izabela Skórzyńska

Dr. Hab., AMU professor at the Faculty of History, where she earned her Ph.D. and her post-doctoral degree. She was a post-doc student at Laval University in Quebec (Canada). She has worked as a history and Polish language teacher, journalist and theatre reviewer. Since 1992, she has worked continuously as a researcher and academic at the Department of History Didactics, AMU Faculty of History, where she conducts research in the field of memory and performance teaching, women's memory, and history. She carries out numerous projects in cooperation with students in partnership with external institutions, including the Poznań Heritage Centre and the Zamek Culture Centre in Poznań. Member of the executive committee of the World Center for Women's Studies.

Conrad's Congo. Colours of Congo

Introduction

In the autumn of 2021, Poznań hosted an exhibition of unique nature in Poland: *The Self-Portrait of the Congolese. Congolese Paintings 1960-1990*.¹ It was held in collaboration of Prof. Bogumił Jewsiewicki from Laval University in Quebec, Canada, Wojciech Luchowski from the ZAMEK Culture Centre Poznań and the Adam Mickiewicz University Faculty of History, represented by the undersigned and Dr. Justyna Budzińska.

Bogumił Jewsiewicki, the exhibition curator, is a historian and anthropologist. He began research and lecturing in Congo in the 1960s and then continued it in Canada. He is one of the most important Franco-phone scholars of memory and history, has sponsored numerous exhibitions on the subject in America and Europe, and is a collector of Congolese painting, in which he has been interested for years as a historical and socio-cultural phenomenon. The collection he amassed in the Congo was handed over in its entirety to the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, Belgium, from where it came to Poznań in 2021 as a temporary exhibition².

The involvement of the Adam Mickiewicz University Faculty of History in the holding of the 2021 show has its roots in the ongoing long-term collaboration with Bogumił Jewsiewicki³ and consisted in the organisation

» 1 *Kongijczyków portret własny. Malarstwo kongijskie 1960–1990 (The Self-Portrait of the Congolese. Congolese Paintings 1960–1990)*, CK ZAMEK, Poznań, 16.10.-19.12.2021, <https://ckzamek.pl/wydarzenia/7276-kongijczykow-portret-wasny-malarstwo-kongijskie-19/>, virtual tour of the show: https://www.skanowanie.xyz/ckzamek_malarstwo_kongijskie [access: 05.08.2022].

» 2 More on Professor Bogumił Jewsiewicki, see M. Forycki, I. Skórzyńska, *Nieodmiennie w kierunku światów wykluczonych. Z biografii naukowej Bogumiła Jewsiewickiego*, [in:] B. Jewsiewicki, *Praca pamięci i historii. Studia z antropologii historycznej pamięci*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii UAM, 2016, p. 9-19.

» 3 As part of this collaboration, paintings by Congolese and Haitian painters who participated in a research project under the financial support of the Prince Claus Fund, carried out at the Department of Comparative Studies of History and Memory at Université Laval, Quebec, headed by the professor arrived at the AMU Faculty of History in 2017, as a gift from Bogumił Jewsiewicki. The project was carried out in conjunction with Dr. Carlos Célius, who specialises

of accompanying events within the project titled “Congo: Memory – Image – Interpretation”, contributed to also by the Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts through Magdalena Parnasow, Marc Tobias Winterhagen and Jan Wasiewicz. The project’s beneficiaries were both the students of the two universities and the exhibition’s audience: children, young people and senior citizens from Poznań and its environs, participants of the artistic creativity workshops. In the months leading up to the exhibition, the students participated in a series of preparatory workshops, including didactic and research workshops on storytelling, participatory observation and field diary work, in order to then prepare, conduct and document the course of the four workshops (*Art-Based Learning*). In other words, to enhance knowledge, skills and competences in the field of social circulation of knowledge, taking into account the performative dimension of learning in action (*Action-Based Learning*)⁴.

In this article, I share what, in carrying out the project, we did to understand the memory of Congo in Poland and what was to help us develop action scenarios, namely the results of a comparative analysis of Polish-language literature on Central Africa in terms of colour semantics. The project “Congo: Memory – Image – Interpretation” necessitated analysis of nineteen, and ultimately twenty-one literary texts in the Polish language written between the 19th and the 21st centuries, of different genres: letters and journals, novels and reportages, fairy tales and comic strips. I have biased the empirical data acquired in the course of the quantitative but, above all, qualitative analysis (content analysis in terms of the semantics of the colours of the Congo in its literary images), for the purposes of this article, by analysing four of the twenty-one works in more depth. For these four works, the common denominator is Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski’s *Heart of Darkness*⁵ and its interpretations by: Christian Perrissin and Tom Tirabosco, *Kongo. Józefa Konrada Teodora Korzeniowskiego podróż przez ciemności (Congo. Józef Konrad Teodor Korzeniowski’s*

in the history of Haitian painting. The workshop, which took place in 2005 in Port-au-Prince (Haiti), involved three Congolese and six Haitian painters. The aim of the workshop was to offer an opportunity for collaboration and exchange in the same place and time to artists representing two different (post)colonial cultures, one of which, Haitian, contributed to the drama of the other, Congolese, both remaining victims of colonialism. This attempted exchange, as Jewsiewicki himself said, was not particularly successful, but the whole project was worthwhile as it produced original works which, years later, found their way to Poznań and aroused substantial interest and were exhibited in 2019 at the ZAMEK Culture Centre. Thanks to the aid of Bogumił Jewsiewicki, in 2020 contacts were begun with the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, Belgium and work on an exhibition of one of the most intriguing phenomena of contemporary African art, i.e. popular Congolese painting.

» 4 An extensive documentation of the project, edited by students, is an integral part of this issue of “Zeszyty Artystyczne” and is titled *Congo in Action*.

» 5 J. Conrad, *Jądro ciemności*, Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska, <https://wolnelektury.pl/katalog/lektura/conrad-jadro-ciemnosci/> [access: 03.11.2022], [in:] J. Conrad, *Młodość i inne opowiadania*, transl. A. Zagórska, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1956.

journey through darkness)⁶, Catherine Anyango, David Zane Mairowitz in the translation of Magda and Wanda Heydel, a novel *Jądro ciemności*⁷ and the translation of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* by Jacek Dukaj titled *Serce ciemności*⁸.

My interest in African literature with a clear Congolese theme arose from the fact that, in planning a participatory project involving students, we touched on a subject that I thought we had already familiarised ourselves with, namely, the existence of a Polish *imaginarium* of the Congo, which, although selective, fragmentary, mediated, and distorted, is at the same time well established, especially thanks to Conrad, who has been on the school reading list for years⁹. The project thus dug deeper into this *imaginarium* in order to find inspiration for a scenario for a future visual arts workshop¹⁰. Our “probing” overlapped with the experience of the exhibition of Congolese painting in Poznań, which we saw as a challenge posed by Congolese painters to us to hear them and remember that their art was originally addressed not to us but to their compatriots and that this art must be viewed from the perspective of the original audience¹¹.

» 6 T. Tirabosco, C. Perrissin, *Kongo. Józefa Konrada Teodora Korzeniowskiego podróż przez ciemności*, transl. K. Umiński, Warszawa, Kultura Gniewu, 2017.

» 7 *Heart of Darkness* [graphic novel], based on Joseph Conrad's novel, illustrations by Catherine Anyango, adaptation by David Zane Mairowitz, transl. Magda Heydel in collaboration with Wanda Heydel, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Lokator, 2017. 2017 was announced the Conrad Year by the Polish Sejm to mark the 160th anniversary of the writer's birth. The celebrations culminated in Krakow during the Conrad Festival <http://conradfestival.pl/p/72,sladami-conrada-rok-conrada> [access: 20.04.2022].

» 8 J. Conrad, *Serce ciemności*, spolszczenie J. Dukaj, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2017.

» 9 Literary images of the Congo are, of course, not the only ones that inform Polish perceptions of that distant world. With the development of new technologies and media, including graphics, photography, photoblogs, and films about the Congo, we have the country at our fingertips. The point is that, like the literature under scrutiny, these images are mediated by someone else's, mostly non-Congolese, experience. This is of colossal importance for understanding which, and whose, Congo we are interacting with, especially when our ambitions extend a little further than the attractions we are fed on a daily basis by holiday travellers and 'extreme' tourists. Another source of perceptions about the Congo, although it would be safer to say about Africa, is the broadly construed images of the African-American diaspora, whose proliferation and appeal in Western popular culture effectively replaces images of Africa in situ. The situation is different when it comes to academic discourses and African studies in Poland, where regular congresses have been held since 2007 (<http://www.kongresafrykanistyczny.pl/archiwum.html>). This is because, although this research has been successfully conducted for years, it is not clear how its findings impact on the society's knowledge about the Congo, although we also reached out to such studies during the preparatory phase of the project. For more on this topic of the Polish imaginary of Africa, see M. Ząbek, *Współczesne stereotypy, postawy i zachowania Polaków wobec Afrykanów*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo DiG, 2007 and P. Średziński, *Afryka i jej mieszkańcy w polskich mediach. Raport z monitoringu polskich mediów 2016*, Fundacja Republika Kultury, http://afryka.org/afryka-i-jej-mieszkanicy-w-polskich-mediach-afryka_in_814460672305084551200.jph/ [access: 20.08.2022].

» 10 See J. Trzebiński, *Narracyjne konstruowanie rzeczywistości*, [in:] *Narracja jako sposób rozumienia świata*, ed. J. Trzebiński, Gdańsk, GWP, 2002, p. 17-42.

» 11 See B. Jewsiewicki, W. Luchowski, in this issue of “Zeszyty Artystyczne”.

By drawing on the literary images of Congo and thematising their reading, in this paper I pose the question of the semantics of colour as related to its human protagonists. The study in question is therefore not only biased (the choice of the Conrad tradition) but also selective, for I wanted to find out how our reading experience of *Heart of Darkness* in its various renditions might translate into the visual experience of the exhibition, and how the two might interact.

***Heart of Darkness* and its interpretations**

It is no secret that when asked about Congo, almost all Poles unanimously refer to Conrad. After all, *Heart of Darkness* has for years been compulsory reading in Polish schools. It was therefore obvious to invoke Conrad's tradition in order to prepare for an encounter with contemporary Congolese painting, even though the tradition itself is not obvious for various reasons.

Writing about nineteenth-century Congo, Józef Korzeniowski, remained a child of his era, though also a master of his own experience¹². The former made him believe in the idea of the white man's civilising mission to the peoples of Africa, while the latter made him look in disbelief at the darkest face of colonialism. Regarded as one of the progressive writers who were not indifferent to the fate of the Congolese, one hundred years after the publication of *Heart of Darkness*, Korzeniowski is viewed by many very critically¹³. This is because over the past century our approach to colonialism has changed radically. During this time, and in response to this change, Conrad was also 'rewritten' on a number of occasions and his *Heart of Darkness* has been reinterpreted both as an original in new translations and as a graphic novel or comic book¹⁴.

As far as the graphic novel or the comic book are concerned, these have been penned, respectively, by Christian Perrissin and Tom Tirabosco as well as by Catherine Anyango, David Zane Mairowitz and Magda and Wanda Heydel. Their form helped to bring to justice the perpetrators of the colonisation of Congo even more unequivocally as Korzeniowski did.

» 12 See P. Czapliński, *Niebezpieczne arcydzieło. O Jądrze ciemności Josepha Conrada*, Project: *World Literature*, September 2009, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333634300_Niebezpieczne_arcydzieło_O_Jądrze_ciemności_Josepha_Conrada_A_Dangerous_Masterpiece_On_Joseph_Conrad%27s_Heart_of_darkness [access: 21.01.2022].

» 13 A scathing critique by C. Achebe, who undermined the greatness of Conrad's text due to its racist message. Chinua Achebe, *An image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*, "The Massachusetts Review", vol. 57, no. 1 (2016), p. 14-27. An interpretation of *Heart of Darkness* was offered likewise by P. Czapliński, *Niebezpieczne arcydzieło... Defending Conrad* was J. Franczak: *Conrad i (post)kolonializm*, "Twórczość", no. 8 (2008), <https://culture.pl/pl/artykul/conrad-i-postkolonializm> [access: 05.07.2022].

» 14 See J.B. Bednarek, *W gruncie rzeki. Jądro ciemności Josepha Conrada*, <https://www.zamekczyta.pl/w-gruncie-rzeki-jadro-ciemnosci-josepha-conrada/> [access: 12.10.2022].

This effect was achieved primarily by remediating the text of the novella and using graphics to visualise the drama of the Congolese in colonial times. It is different in Dukaj's case, because the writer's aim was also different. First and foremost, his translation of *Heart of Darkness* was intended to modernise the language of the novella, including, as the writer himself declared, making the story of the Congo more comprehensible, vivid and evocative, and to better appeal to contemporary readers¹⁵. Dukaj drew attention to the archaic nature of the 'old', 'school' translation of Korzeniowski by Aniela Zagórska, a translation that left him bewildered 'that he doesn't understand something here' and resisting the 'verbal Styrofoam that clogs and stumps imagination'. A gate into Korzeniowski's work was offered by reading his prose in the original. "It was as if you had met a friend," Dukaj explained in an interview, adding that this was an impulse to tackle the translation of *Heart of Darkness* considering contemporary knowledge of the cognitive processes accompanying reading, including the readers' creative, active, subjective participation in establishing the work's meaning, in which language influences the viewer's imagination to a great extent. The aim of translating *Heart of Darkness* was therefore to "repeat the author's path of experience through the senses", in order to hypnotise the reader so that they may "not so much read words but see these images [...]"¹⁶.

Where light coexists with darkness

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a story within a story spun by a narrator¹⁷, who gives voice to the protagonist, Charlie Marlow, so that he might point to four problems of colonialism, succinctly summed up by Przemysław Czaplński as the problems of: (1) "Europeans' presence in Africa"; (2) their close "contact with Negroes"; (3) meeting "Kurtz, an ivory tradesman" and finally of (4) Europe seen by Marlow in the context of his African experience¹⁸. As Czaplński goes on to prove, "Heart of Darkness owes a lot to the African experience, which however cannot be reduced to it. Similarly, the story cannot be limited to Kurtz's case"¹⁹. The message of *Heart of Darkness*, therefore, is more universal, and multidimensional

» 15 J. Dukaj, an interview with Katarzyna Trzeciak and Michał Sowiński, podcast of "Tygodnik Powszechny", 26.06.2018, <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/jacek-dukaj-serce-ciemnosci-153627> and S. Kloska, *Być jak Joseph Conrad*, "Tygodnik Powszechny", 11.09.2017, <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/byc-jak-joseph-conrad-149710> [access: 12.06.2022].

» 16 *Ibidem*.

» 17 The 19th-century Congo seen through Marlow's eyes is not the same as the Congo of the personal narrator of *Heart of Darkness*, and that narrator is not Conrad the author.

» 18 P. Czaplński, *Niebezpieczne arcydzieło...*, p. 1.

» 19 *Ibidem*, p. 1-2.

in reference to people, which we owe to Conrad's decision to set the text in a less obvious space where, as Czapliński indicates, light coexists with darkness and where "no place is exclusively bright or exclusively dark. The coming together of the two qualities has the character of a dramatic struggle, happening constantly and everywhere. In a world of complete brightness or complete darkness, man would be flat"²⁰.

One of the significant elements of the literary image of Congo in *Heart of Darkness* is the colours ascribed to our culture mediated through language. As Iwona Benenowska observes, "perception of colour and the language defining colour are closely interlinked" in that language is secondary to perception in particular theoretical approaches different due to the socio-cultural conditions of its use and understanding²¹. This is the case in that colour equivalents such as objects, phenomena and states are objective, unlike their names and related significance. When it comes to colours, language is primarily a "symbolic culture guide"²², revealing how people call what they see and how they interpret it in specific historical, social and cultural circumstances²³. Anna Wierzbicka sees it the following way: "what appears in the retina and in the brain is not directly reflected in language. [...] our mind, on the other hand, is partly moulded by a particular culture"²⁴. Each culture therefore creates its own language for describing colours and ascribes its own meanings to them in the sense that certain colours and their meanings are perpetuated in a particular culture as narrative scripts that operate in our minds. They contribute to the interpretation of the meanings of objects, phenomena or states of affairs in such a way that they contain ready-made linguistic constructs for naming images, which, in understanding the world, we use without undue reflection. As Magdalena Karkowska notes, narrative scripts are a matter of socio-cultural notation that takes place in the long process of upbringing and socialisation; they are implemented and actualised in everyday life through rituals and routines and influence the lives of those who are subject to them²⁵. "The script is, then, a 'cage', a thought pattern 'embedded' in our heads" only to emerge from there in response to a par-

» 20 *Ibidem*.

» 21 I. Benenowska, *O kolorach w języku (na tle różnych perspektyw badawczych)*, [in:] *Silva verborum*, ed. B. Afeltowicz, J. Ignatowicz-Skowrońska, P. Wojdak, Szczecin, Wyd. Volumina, 2011, p. 50.

» 22 R. Tokarski, *Semantyka barw we współczesnej polszczyźnie*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2004, p. 8.

» 23 A. Narloch, *Postrzeganie i kategoryzacja barw (świat ludzi i zwierząt)*, "Scripta Neophilologica Posnaniensia", no. XVI (2016), p. 69.

» 24 A. Wierzbicka, *Semantyka. Jednostki elementarne i uniwersalne*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2006, p. 329. Quoted after: Narloch, *Postrzeganie...*, p. 69.

» 25 M. Karkowska, *Skrypty, opowieści i narracje w perspektywie pedagogicznej. Ku świadomości wychowania*, Kraków, Wyd. Impuls, 2020, p. 173.

ticular experience²⁶. In quantitative terms and in the context of *Heart of Darkness*, embedded in our heads are the colours white and black, both used primarily in reference to people. Are both caged by scripts?

Whitening whiteness and blackening blackness...

Ryszard Tokarski and Anna Wierzbicka claim that white and black are perfectly antithetical, their first and strongest equivalents being day and night, with the reservation that they are as much a matter of colour as of light or the lack thereof. Furthermore, night and day, as equivalents of the two achromatic colours, are referred to as their quantitative qualities and, as such, are responsible for, among other things, “the widespread in language pair of terms ‘white race - black race’”²⁷. At the same time, there is no consensus among researchers of colour semantics in Polish as to the degree of referentiality of white and black in relation to their quantitative and qualitative features. Magdalena Czachorowska, for instance, claims that “The colour white is a synthesis of all hues and therefore is associated with wholeness. It is the hue of light, identified also with perfection, purity and innocence, hence the prototypical references connoting these qualities, as in the comparison ‘white as a lily’ or ‘white as water’”²⁸. “The colour black is often seen as a negation of colour and an opposite of whiteness. Blackness has negative connotations and is linked to darkness: ‘black as night’; death, mourning and misery – ‘black as a veil, raven, grave’; dirt and impurity – ‘pitch black, black as the earth’”²⁹. However, as Tokarski observes, although black connotes night and can be almost perfectly black, whiteness does not have this property, because although it is quantitatively linked to day, the whiteness of day is not as white or as universal as the blackness of night. Whiteness in Polish is therefore associated not with day, but with snow. The same cannot be said of black, which is only to a very limited extent associated with, for example, soot or raven, still less with earth. Thus, writes Tokarski, the first and strongest semantic connotation for the word ‘black’ remains ‘night’, but for the word ‘white’ ‘snow’. The semantic spectrum of the night is semantically more extensive than the semantic spectrum of snow, but the connotations of blackness/night/darkness established in the culture of the Polish language are almost always negatively referential, involving “broad associations with ‘evil’

» 26 *Ibidem*, p. 172-173.

» 27 R. Tokarski, *Semantyka barw...*, p. 40, A. Wierzbicka, *Semantyka...*, p. 69.

» 28 M. Czachorowska, *Porównania prototypowe barw w języku polskim*, “Białostockie Archiwum Językowe”, no. 9 (2009), p. 28, <https://czasopisma.filologia.uwb.edu.pl/index.php/baj/article/view/1019> [access: 04.11.2022].

» 29 *Ibidem*.

and ‘ugliness’³⁰. Furthermore, in the spectrum of ‘evil’ with ‘death’, in the spectrum of ‘death’ with ‘mourning’ and in the same spectrum with ‘sorrow’ and ‘despair’³¹. To conclude, the use of the colour black to describe a human being makes someone who is ‘black’ nearly always ‘evil’ or ‘ugly as the night’, even if they may also be ‘sad’, ‘in despair’ or ‘in mourning’. A white person is a very different thing, because although no one is white as snow, everyone is bright enough to be ‘perfect’, ‘pure’ and ‘innocent’. Already at this stage one can see how our culture, with the development of language, falls into a certain exaggeration of ‘whitening’ white people and ‘blackening’ black people. Note, however, that appropriately used in the Polish language, whiteness also indicates a semantic deviation, when, for example, a person ‘white as chalk’ is associated with illness and death, and ‘pale as a wall’ with fear³². It is more difficult to find such deviations in the case of blackness, especially in relation to people, since ‘black character’, ‘black magic’, or ‘black death’ still operate in the semantic field of ‘evil’, ‘sadness’ or ‘mourning’.

Tainted white

As I have already mentioned, the colours black and white dominate in *Heart of Darkness*, both in Conrad’s text and in its interpretations; the word ‘white’ appears there a total of 190 times and the word ‘black’ as many as 143 times.

Two comic books based on *Heart of Darkness* are literally black and white, which is particularly true of Perrissian and Tirabosco, who, in creating the book, used black and white with a strong, thick line to convey the realism of Korzeniowski’s novella. A slightly different approach was used by Anyango, Mairowitz and Heydel, who opted for more subtle imagery, placing Conrad’s story in a space where black and white intermingle, as if the characters of *Heart of Darkness*, and with them emotions, nature and objects were just emerging, still not clearly enough, from the darkness of ignorance and understatement. It is not difficult to guess that when it comes to graphics, the words ‘white’ and ‘black’ are scarce in comics and graphic novels. In the former, the word ‘white’ is used several times and quite generally to describe white people in the Congo, elaborating on their visual characterisation; in the latter, their whiteness is exaggerated by pointing to a person in astonishingly exquisite clothing and to whites appearing to the wild as supernatural creatures. In both visual forms of *Heart of Darkness*, the word ‘black’ is equally rare and refers

» 30 R. Tokarski, *Semantyka barw...*, p. 43-44.

» 31 *Ibidem*, p. 44.

» 32 *Ibidem*, p. 43-44.

to “six blacks bound by chain”, “human shadows of sickness and hunger”, humans “savage, counting for no more than a grain of sand in an hourglass”, bush dwellers or “black forms of human shapes persisting in complete stillness”³³.

As is evident from the above, and as my analyses have confirmed, the vast majority of references to the colours white and black in all the four versions of Conrad's novellas, refer to people. Thus, although there are many more colours in the texts, they appear less frequently, and often only once, relating primarily to things, animate and inanimate nature and emotions. The only difference of use in the representation (also graphically) of people concerns the two colours in the black spectrum, namely grey and brown, less often red, and quite rarely blue, pink or yellow, which will be discussed further.

Before I move on to an in-depth analysis of the colour words ‘white’ and ‘black’ to describe the human protagonists of *Heart of Darkness*, I propose to take a look at the word Murzyn (Negro), unique to the Polish language, which neither Conrad nor Dukaj (in his translation) avoids; on the contrary, it appears repeatedly in both versions of the novella. According to the “Dictionary of the Polish Language” (“Słownik Języka Polskiego”), the word *Murzyn* comes from the Latin word “Maurus, denoting an inhabitant of northern Africa, i.e. a person having a slightly darker complexion than we do”³⁴. A borrowing from Old Czech, it originally had no negative connotations³⁵. However, with the racist argumentation of slavery and exploitation, which served to emphasise the differences in skin colour, it acquired a negative meaning. At the same time, the experts of the Polish Language Dictionary, did not exclude it from the Polish vocabulary, referring to its historical meaning. Still, they too stressed that at present it is not semantically neutral and argue that in the opinion of the Africans living in Poland, the word *Murzyn* is oppressive³⁶. It may come as a surprise since the word *Murzyn* is not the same as the word *czarnuch* (Nigger), which is seen as racist not only in Poland and its public use is penalised³⁷. What, then, is the problem with the word *Murzyn* (Negro)?

» 33 See Tirabosco, Perrissin, *Kongo...: Heart of Darkness* [graphic novel]...

» 34 Poradnia Języka Polskiego, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/poradnia/haslo/Klopotliwy-Murzyn;17473.html> [access: 12.07.2022].

» 35 *Ibidem*.

» 36 A. Wądołowska, Czy ‘Murzyn’ obraża? Zapytaliśmy czarnoskórych Polaków, językoznawców, historyka i aktywistkę, portal Notes from Poland, 12.06.2020, <https://notesfrompoland.com/2020/06/12/czy-murzyn-obraza-zapytalismy-czarnoskorych-polakow-jezykoznawcow-historyka-i-aktywistke/> [access: 05.09.2022], also: E. Gietka, *Nie mów do mnie Murzyn*, “Tygodnik Przegląd”, 07.08.2005, <https://www.tygodnikprzeglad.pl/nie-mow-do-mnie-murzyn/> [access: 12.06.2022].

» 37 Poradnia Języka Polskiego, The word *czarnuch* (Nigger) commonly denotes a “man of black complexion or black hair, contemptuously a Negro”. See “Słownik Języka Polskiego”

Well, in the Polish language they are linked by a number of phrases that inform narrative scripts unfavourable to black people. The script, which is milder in its expression, is linked to slavery and concerns such statements as: “The Negro has done his job, the Negro can leave” (*Murzyn zrobił swoje, Murzyn może odejść*), “being the Negro” (robić za Murzyna) or “White Negro”. Sharper in its tone and linked to racism, it concerns statements such as: “You can’t wash a Negro”, “Lazy like a Negro” or “100 years behind the Negroes” (respectively, *Murzyna nie umyjesz, Leniwy jak Murzyn* and *100 lat za Murzynami*). Binding the ‘Negro’ script in both cases is the linking of skin colour, firstly with hard physical labour, free or poorly paid, typical of black people and unfair to whites, and secondly, with the naivety, laziness, savagery or backwardness attributed to blacks, which for centuries justified their dehumanisation³⁸. Although it is in vain in *Heart of Darkness* to find the scripts in question quoted in extenso, many of the descriptions of Negroes echo the notion that they are childish and naïve, and that being a Negro also usually prejudices being a slave. Essentially, then, and the word “Negro” is a good example of this, the verbal play of colours is not about quantity but about quality, that is, who and how in the works analysed is a “Negro” or more broadly, for that is what I am getting at: who and how (in what script) is black or white there. This is a fundamental question in the context of the subjectivity of the protagonists of Conrad’s novella and the limits of this subjectivity as defined by the writer/narrator/Marlow.

Let us begin, then, with Conrad’s text as translated by Aniela Zagórska. The Whites include here: the steamboat captain, the station employee,

PWN, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/szukaj/czarnuch%20.html> [access: 11.07.2022]. On the subject of hate speech and the punishment for its use in public life see A. Kwiecień, *Poradnik Obywatela. Co możemy zrobić, gdy zetkniemy się z mową nienawiści?*, *Otwarta Rzeczpospolita*, <https://www.mowanienawisci.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Poradnik-obywatela1.pdf> [access: 04.11.2022]. However, the word *Murzyn* (Negro) has in Poland still other, more local relations and can be linked with the verb *murzyć* or get soiled or blacken. In selected practice of folk culture it is part of the living tradition in the region of Wielkopolska of *murzyć* maidens or doorframes to bring good fortune. On the opposite extreme, we have the universally condemned practice of the *blackface*, originating in the US, as an attractive form of parodying Blacks via, e.g. Whites painting their faces black. More on this: A. Jełowicki, *Muradyny, żandary, siwki... – zwyczaj (nie)znane*, portal Wielkopolska. Kultura u podstaw, 23.04.2019, <https://kulturaupodstaw.pl/muradyny-zandary-siwki-zwyczaj-nieznane-wielkanoc-w-wielkopolsce-arkadiusz-jelowicki/> [access: 31.08.2022]; A. Łuksza, *Aszanci w Warszawie. Wyobrażenia ‘czarności’ w społeczeństwie polskim przełomu XIX i XX wieku – przyczynek do polskiej historii kolonialnej*, “Widok. Teorie i Praktyki Kultury Wizualnej”, no. 29 (2021), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2021/29-obrazy-i-wyobrazenia-rasy-historie/aszanci-w-warszawie> [access: 21.08.2022].

» 38 See M. Ohia-Nowak, *Słowo ‘Murzyn’ jako prelokucyjny akt mowy*, “Przełęcz Kulturoznawczy”, no. 3 (35) (2020), p. 195-212. The common usage of the word *Murzyn* in contemporary Polish is testified to by the 2016 report: *Africa and its residents in Polish media. It indicates that in the monitoring period [2016], the media, especially online and social media, used the term Murzyn (Negro) far more often than the word Afrykanin (African)*. The figures look as follows: 153,781 records of *Murzyn* and 14,396 of *Afrykanin*”, quoted after: Średziński, *Afryka i jej mieszkańcy...*, p. 49. See also: A. Wądołowska, *Czy ‘Murzyn’ obraża?...*

the adventurous wanderer or Marlow's travelling companion whom he calls a pilgrim, as well as the Whites treated as a collective or described by their body parts, including white hands. Already at the beginning of the story we are introduced to a ship's captain who is the victim of his own cruelty when, flogging "an old Negro mercilessly" (*bez litości starego Murzyna*) in the presence of "petrified locals" (*skamieniałych krajowców*), he does so with a vengeance so that "until at last one of them [...] listening in despair to the old man's screams, threw a spear at the white man for a test - and of course the spear got trapped with ease between the shoulder blades" (*aż wreszcie jeden z nich [...] słuchając z rozpaczą wrzasków starca, rzucił w białego włócznią dla próby — i oczywiście włócznia uwięzła z łatwością między łopatkami*)³⁹. At another place, Whites are people who are "very similar to one another at a distance" (*na odległość bardzo do siebie podobni*)⁴⁰. Not all, however, as there is a white man who strolls close to the station, dressed "with unexpected elegance": "a high starched collar, white cuffs, a light alpaca jacket, snowy trousers, a bright tie, and lacquered shoes. [...] His hair was parted, combed and groomed, and he carried a green-lined umbrella in his large white hand. He was astonishing" (*z nieoczekiwaną elegancją: wysoki, nakrochmalony kołnierzyk, białe mankiety, lekka alpakowa kurtka, śnieżne spodnie, jasny krawat i lakierki. [...] Włosy jego były rozdzielone, wyczesane i wypomadowane, a w dużej białej ręce niósł parasol z zieloną podszeawką. Był zdumiewający*)⁴¹, says Marlow; at the same time, the man is completely unreal, as a vision of a flawless white, in place of his dirty deeds. Multiple such deeds are attributed to whites in *Heart of Darkness*. Whites, then, are a quarrelsome people, for whom a special "round table" in a "separate house" was created to curb conflicts over who among them will occupy what position in the local hierarchy⁴². Furthermore, Whites are the grotesque men who move by the land: "in front of each unit marched a donkey on which sat a white man in new clothes and dark yellow shoes, bowing from this elevation to the right and left to the moved pilgrims" (*przed każdym oddziałem stąpał osioł, na którym siedział biały w nowym ubraniu i ciemnożółtych trzewikach, kłaniając się z tego wzniesienia na prawo i lewo poruszonym pielgrzymom*)⁴³. Another white person would stand on the river bank "under a hat the size of a circle" (*pod kapeluszem wielkości koła*)⁴⁴. Still another proved "a lonesome white

» 39 J. Conrad, *Jądro ciemności...*, p. 6.

» 40 *Ibidem*, p. 11.

» 41 *Ibidem*, p. 12.

» 42 *Ibidem*, p. 15.

» 43 *Ibidem*.

» 44 *Ibidem*, p. 36.

venturing into the depth of the wilderness, towards his empty and desolate station” (*samotny biały [...], który zdąża ku głębiom dziczy, ku swej pustej i opuszczonej stacji*)⁴⁵. Another is a man drunk, camping “on the path with an armed escort made up of skinny Zanzibaris” (*na ścieżce ze zbrojną eskortą złożoną z wychudłych Zanzibarczyków*)⁴⁶. There is also an obese and weak white, fainting “on flared hillsides, miles away from the smallest patch of shade and water” (*na rozpalonych zboczach, w odległości całych mil od najmniejszego skrawka cienia i od wody*)⁴⁷. The trading stations are inhabited by Whites who “make a strange impression *dziwne — jakby czar jakiś trzymał ich tam na uwięzi*”⁴⁸. Some of Marlow’s steamer crew are white, too, differentiated from the black people by their better position, but also more timid than them, not understanding what was going on: “the whites, obviously very anxious, looked rather peculiar at the same time, as if they were greatly aggrieved by this shrill shriek” (*biali, oczywiście bardzo zaniepokojeni, wyglądali przy tym dość szczególnie, jakby wielce ich gorszył ten przeraźliwy wrzask*)⁴⁹.

In the above context, we must differently read Conrad’s phrase about the enduring conviction “that we whites, at the level of development we have attained, must by nature appear to them (the wild ones) to be supernatural beings – ‘we approach them with the power, as it were, of a deity’” (*my, biali, na osiągniętym przez nas szczeblu rozwoju musimy z natury rzeczy wydawać się im (dzikim) istotami nadnaturalnymi — ‘zbliżamy się do nich z potęgą, jak gdyby bóstwa’*)⁵⁰. Otherwise, on closer inspection, Conrad’s white person is soiled and tainted and only the naive eye of blacks can discern any divinity in him or her⁵¹.

White Fathers of Blackness

The unique human whiteness in Conrad must be read with references to his descriptions of Black people. Rowers are black, recognisable thanks to the “shining whites of their eyes” (*połyskujące białka oczu*)⁵², but first of all slaves, dying of exhaustion and hunger: “a group of people, mostly black and nude, swarming like ants” (*gromada ludzi, przeważnie czarnych i nagich, rojąca się jak mrówki*), among them “six Blacks go-

» 45 *Ibidem*, p. 22-23.

» 46 *Ibidem*, p. 14.

» 47 *Ibidem*.

» 48 *Ibidem*, p. 24-25.

» 49 *Ibidem*, p. 28.

» 50 *Ibidem*, p. 35.

» 51 *Ibidem*, p. 44.

» 52 *Ibidem*, p. 9.

ing along the path in single file, trudging their way uphill. They walked slowly, upright, carrying small baskets full of soil on their heads, and the clanking accompanied their steps steadily. Around their hips they wore headbands made of black rags, the short ends of which wobbled behind like tails” (*sześciu czarnych [...] idących ścieżką gęsiego, dążąc z trudem pod górę. Szli powoli, wyprostowani, niosąc na głowie małe kosze pełne ziemi, a brzęk towarzyszył miarowo ich krokom. Wkoło bioder mieli przepaski z czarnych łachmanów, których krótkie końce chwiały się z tyłu jak ogony*)⁵³. The fate of the Blacks, euphemistically called workers, was a forgone conclusion: “black shapes crawled, lay and sat among the trees, leaning against the trunks. Death, Sickness and Hunger huddled on the ground, both visible and obscured by a cloudy twilight, in all possible poses expressing pain, despondency and despair” (*czarne kształty czółgały się, leżały siedziały między drzewami, opierając się o pnie, Śmierć, Choroba, Głód tuliły się do ziemi – to widzialne, to przesłonięte mętnym półmrokiem – we wszelkich możliwych pozach wyrażających ból, zgnębienie i rozpacz*)⁵⁴. Further on: “They were dying slowly, that was certain. They were no enemies or criminals. There was nothing earthly left in them, mere black shadows of sickness and hunger, lying inert in the greenish gloom. Pulled from all corners of the coast under legal contracts, thrown into unsound conditions, fed on inadequate food, they weakened, became unfit for work [...] and were finally allowed to crawl away and rest” (*Umierali powoli – to nie ulegało wątpliwości. Nie byli nieprzyjaciółmi, nie byli zbrodniarzami, nie zostało w nich już nic ziemskiego – były to tylko czarne cienie choroby i głodu, leżące bezwładnie w zielonawym mroku. Ściągnięci ze wszystkich zakątków wybrzeża na podstawie legalnych kontraktów, rzuceni w nieodpowiednie warunki, żywieni nieodpowiednią strawą, osłabli, stali się niezdolni do pracy [...] pozwolono im wreszcie odpełznąć i wypoczywać*)⁵⁵.

This, however, is not the end of the torture of the Blacks as seen through Marlow's eyes. Equally poignant is the scene of the fire, when the Blacks are first accused of sluggishness: “black figures wandered around carelessly, pouring water on the glowing coals, from which a hissing sound was heard” (*czarne postacie wałęsały się wkoło niedbale, lejąc wodę na rozżarzone węgle, od których rozchodził się syk*)⁵⁶, and when one of them of was accused and punished for arson, “beaten up, he was moaning somewhere” (*zbity, gdzieś jęczał*)⁵⁷.

» 53 *Ibidem*, p. 10-11.

» 54 *Ibidem*, p. 12.

» 55 *Ibidem*.

» 56 *Ibidem*, p. 17-18.

» 57 *Ibidem*.

Generally anonymous and alike, Conrad's Black characters gain in close-ups, as when Marlow meets a young man/boy: "a black skeleton [...] stretched out on the ground, leaning with his shoulder against a tree; his eyelids lifted slowly and his sunken eyes looked at me, huge and unconscious [... in the depths of the sockets a kind of blind white light shone and went out slowly. The man in question looked young; he was almost a boy. But you know it's hard to make sense of them. I had no idea what I could do for him, and just handed him a rusk [...]. The poor man's fingers closed slowly around the rusk and held it; it was the last movement I noticed, his last gaze" (*czarny szkielet [...] wyciągnięty na ziemi, opierając się ramieniem o drzewo; powieki jego podniosły się z wolna i zapadły oczy spjrzały na mnie, olbrzymie i nieprzytomne [... w głębi orbit zatliło się jakby ślepe, białe światelko i gasło powoli. Ów człowiek wyglądał na młodego — był to prawie chłopiec — ale wiecie, że trudno się w nich polapać. Nie miałem pojęcia, co bym mógł zrobić dla niego, i tylko podałem mu suchar [...]. Palce biedaka zamknęły się powoli wokół suchara i trzymały go — był to ostatni ruch, jaki dostrzegłem, ostatnie spojrzenie*)⁵⁸. We also get a closer look at Marlow's helmsman in the tragic moment of his death: "The black fool dropped everything to open the shutter and shoot from the Martini-Henry standing in the corner. He lumbered in front of the wide opening and bulged his eyes, and I righted the ship's sudden turn by shouting for him to return to the helm" (*czarny dureń rzucił wszystko, aby otworzyć okiennicę i strzelić ze stojącego w kącie Martini-Henry. Tkwiał przed szerokim otworem i wybałuszył oczy, a ja naprostowywałem nagły skręt statku krzycząc, żeby wrócił do steru*)⁵⁹. The carelessness of the "black fool" eventually brought him to his death, much to Marlow's regret "for the wild man who counted less than a grain of sand in the Sahara. Don't you understand that this Negro was doing something, that he was steering; for months he was stuck behind my back, as a resource, or a tool" (*za zdikusem, który nie znaczył więcej od ziarenka piasku w czarnej Saharze. Czyż nie rozumiecie, że ten Murzyn coś robił, że sterował; przez całe miesiące tkwił za moimi plecami — jako pomoc, jako narzędzie*)⁶⁰.

The image of black people changes in Conrad's text as he emerges from a world inaccessible to whites, from the precipitous jungle on the shores of the Congo or from villages and encampments hidden in the scrub, which is where, as Marlow proves, "they did not need to seek a pretext to be alive" (*nie musieli szukać pretekstu dla swojej obecności*)⁶¹. These people, free and dangerous, "swirl", "clap their hands", "stomp their

» 58 *Ibidem*, p. 12.

» 59 *Ibidem*, p. 32.

» 60 *Ibidem*, p. 35.

» 61 *Ibidem*, p. 25.

feet” (*wirują, klaszczą w ręce, tupią nogami*), their bodies are “rocking” (*rozkołysane*) and the “eyes shine with the whites” (*oczy świecą białkami*) “under the heavy and immobile foliage” (*pod nawisłym listowiem, ciężkim i nieruchomym*)⁶². Their bodies grow in the flames of fires; “far in the woods red, shaky glows showed precisely where the encampments were and where Kurtz’s worshippers celebrated their restless vigils” (*daleko w głębi lasu czerwone, chwiejne błyski [...] wskazywały dokładnie miejsce obozowiska, gdzie czciciele Kurtza odbywali swe niespokojne wigilie*)⁶³, and they themselves became recognisable as “a black figure who rose and with a great stride walked on long legs through the brightness coming from the fire, waving her long black arms. She had horns on her head, antelope horns, I think. It was certainly some kind of sorcerer, some kind of enchanter: he looked quite devilish (*czarna postać [która] podniosła się i wielkim krokiem przeszła na długich nogach przez jasność padającą od ognia, machając długimi, czarnymi ramionami. Miała na głowie rogi — zdaje mi się, że antylopie. Był to z pewnością jakiś czarownik, jakiś zaklinacz: dość szatańsko na to wyglądał*)⁶⁴. Just in the passages quoted, which are triggered by Conrad’s use of the word “black”, one is puzzled by the coupling of the image of people with the image of wild nature, which makes it impossible for whites to see the former to such an extent that the people emerging from the jungle, coastal thickets or huts hidden in the bush are merely their shapes, and the black colour of their skin is a projection of whites who, seeing little, succumb to the fantasies of blind reason⁶⁵.

The presence of black people in Conrad’s prose also provides a strong interpretative framework for his story of Kurtz and the effects of the racism he embodies. The story opens with pure cruelty, the sight of the skulls of the agent’s black victims: “I slowly returned to the first head I had noticed and it was there, black, withered, sunken, with closed eyelids - seeming to sleep at the top of that pile, and the pursed, dry lips, showing a narrow and white line of teeth, smiled, smiled endlessly into some perpetual, playful dream in the midst of that perpetual slumber” (*wróciłem powoli do pierwszej głowy, którą dostrzegłem — i oto tkwiła tam, czarna, zeschnięta, zapadła, z zamkniętymi powiekami — zdająca się spać u szczytu tego pala, a ściągnięte, suche usta, ukazujące wąską i białą linię zębów, uśmiechały się, uśmiechały bez końca do jakiegoś nieustannego, żartobliwego snu wśród tej wieczystej drzemki*)⁶⁶. The story closes with the

» 62 *Ibidem*.

» 63 *Ibidem*, p. 45.

» 64 *Ibidem*, p. 46.

» 65 Por. P. Czaplirski, *Niebezpieczne arcydzieło...*, p. 12.

» 66 J. Conrad, *Jądro ciemności...*, p. 40.

law of retribution with pure contempt - the voice of the black deck boy announcing: "Mister Kurtz... he die" (*Pan Kurtz... on umrzeć*)⁶⁷.

The morbid fascination of whites with the ferocity of the Congo, which could not be tamed but only looted, also takes the form in Conrad of a cruel lesson taught to blacks in the name of their own survival, as in the case of one "convert" who leads his black brothers at gunpoint⁶⁸. And another, a "savage" rower, prepared to kill blacks in the name of his own hunger, which Marlow does not fail to comment on as short-sightedness expressed in his failure to secure food for the long journey along the Congo River. Whites do not suffer from hunger during this time. Blacks, on the other hand, unable to recognise the time and not understanding the circumstances, eat spoiled hippopotamus meat. The helmsman on the steamer commanded by Marlow, who dies at the hands of a black warrior he has decided to shoot, also finds himself in a similar role⁶⁹.

More tainted whiteness

It is slightly different in Jacek Dukaj's *Serce ciemności*, where, as announced, he uses words in such a way as to strongly stimulate the senses, imagination and emotions of contemporary readers, and where he sometimes tries to discuss the narrative scripts inherited from Conrad using irony, grotesque and sarcasm.

Dukaj's gallery of white men opens with the same gentleman who showed off in Conrad, "in dazzling elegance: white cuffs, starched collar, alpaca sports jacket, an impeccable tie, trousers whiter than snow, and shiny shoes! Without a hat but under a green umbrella" (*w oślepiającej elegancji: bielutkie mankiety, wykrochmalony kołnierzyk, sportowa marynarka z alpaki, krawat nieskazitelny, spodnie bielsze od śniegu, a buty! – wyglansowane na połysk. Bez kapelusza za to pod zielonym parasolem*)⁷⁰. However, in Dukaj this is no longer a vision of the white man, an unapproachable paragon of a "civilisation model", but his "white phantom" (*biały fantom*)⁷¹, a model or, worse yet, phantom pain of lost humanity in the clash with the atrocity of whites in Africa. In this context, "the tipsy white man camping on a path, flanked by lanky Zanzibaris. He immediately invites you for a shot" (*niedopity biały obozujący na ścieżce, w obstawie tyczkowatych Zanzibarczyków. Z miejsca zaprasza na kieli-*

» 67 *Ibidem*, p. 49.

» 68 *Ibidem*, p. 24-25.

» 69 *Ibidem*, p. 35.

» 70 J. Conrad, *Serce ciemności...*, p. 37.

» 71 *Ibidem*, p. 37.

cha)⁷² seems more human, like the grotesque Manager, fearfully avoiding Congolese villages and living on “canned food, like all whites” (*konserwami, jak wszyscy [...] biali*)⁷³. The same Manager and other “whites on deck reflect themselves in the faces of the white people on the bank” (*biali na pokładzie [...] przeglądają się [też] w twarzach białych z brzegu*), living in “shacks nearly devoured by the secret element of the country” (*w rudkach prawie już strawionych przez tajemny żywioł kraju*)⁷⁴. The association of the white man with ruin appears again in Dukaj’s work when, inviting him and Marlow into an abandoned hut on the edge of the jungle, he describes it as a “dumpster of someone’s life; a white man lived here but all that’s left is a waste of matter, a table like half a table on two legs, a pile of crap and decay, masses of shapes stained in the darkness” (*śmietnisko po czyimś życiu, żył tu biały, ale pozostały tylko odpadki materii, stół jak pół stołu na dwóch nogach, kupa baracha i zgnilizny, masy kształty plamy w ciemności*)⁷⁵. Dukaj misses no opportunity, created by Conrad, to describe the absurdity of the white presence in the Congo, giving expression to their continuing fears of a world they have supposedly taken possession of but do not understand. As in the scene of the encounter with Kurtz’s black followers, where the whites are “shaken, exasperated, shocked” (*roztrzęsieni, wytrzeszczeni, wstrząśnięci*)⁷⁶; and in the scene of the helmsman’s death, when one of the pilgrims “saw the helmsman in agony and was dumbstruck” (*zobaczył sternika w agonii i zatkało go*)⁷⁷.

Like Conrad, Dukaj does not shun close-ups, as in the scene of death of the helmsman: “one savage more, one savage less, the black seed in the hourglass was spilled; but, you see, he was my tool, he steered, I looked after him” (*jeden dzikus więcej, jeden dzikus mniej, przesyłało się czarne ziarenko w klepsydrze – kiedy widzicie on był moje narzędzie, on sterował, ja się nim opiekowałem*)⁷⁸. Like Conrad, Dukaj demonstrates Kurtz’s atrocities, symbolised by the very collection of skulls, which is however described more graphically and more poignantly: “Like a fist against my temple, the image hit me in the eyes and stayed in my eyes, the poles with their heads impaled on them, each facing the barracks, each but one, dried out, blackened, mangled, with lowered eyelids and upturned lips, a line of teeth bared in a smile, whitening between the lips” (*Jak pięść w skroń, obraz uderzył mnie w oczy i w oczach pozostał, tyczki*

» 72 *Ibidem*, p. 43.

» 73 *Ibidem*, p. 77.

» 74 *Ibidem*, p. 80.

» 75 *Ibidem*, p. 85.

» 76 *Ibidem*, p. 89.

» 77 *Ibidem*, p. 97.

» 78 *Ibidem*, p.101.

z nabitymi na nie głowami, każda zwrócona twarzą ku barakowi, każda prócz jednej, zasuszonej, szerniałej, skłęsłej, z opuszczonymi powiekami i odwiniętymi wargami, między wargami bieleje linia zębów wyszczerzonych w uśmiechu)⁷⁹. Similarly, following Conrad, Dukaj announced Kurtz's death, but does not mince words when he writes about a "Black boy trained in parlour impertinences" (*czarny chłopak wyszkolony w salonowych impertynencjach*), who "sticks inside his ebony head and, as if spitting out a caustic phlegm of disdain: Mister Kurtz – his cadaver" (*pakuje do środka swoją hebanową głowę i – jakby odpluł żrącą flegmę pogardy: – Pana Kurtza – jego zdechło*)⁸⁰.

Black sheep of white fatherhood

Just as it is impossible to understand the relationship between white people and black people in Conrad's text without out reading one through the other, it is impossible to understand them in Dukaj's, except that Dukaj puts more emotion into their description than Conrad does. The procession of black people is opened by rowers described as fit, dynamic, authentic people: "they shout, they sing, streams of sweat oil their graphite musculature, their faces harden into masks of the grotesque see? The muscles, the bones, the life, the explosive energy of movement: all true to nature, like that foam of the surf. This was their place! This was their world! They needed no justification for living. A man looked at them with relief! A boat full of black rowers, and for a moment the world was again back to simple and tangible terms" (*pokrzykują, śpiewają, strumienie potu oliwią grafitową muskulaturę, twarze tężeją w maski groteski widzicie? – mięśnie, kości, życie, wybuchowa energia ruchu: wszystko prawdziwe naturalne jak ta piana przyboju. To było ich miejsce! To był ich świat! Nie potrzebowali usprawiedliwienia, że istnieją. Z jaką ulgą człowiek tak na nich patrzy! Łódź pełna czarnych wiosłarzy – i na moment świat znów wracał do kategorii prostych i namacalnych*)⁸¹. Rowers are followed by Kurtz's worshippers, who emerge from behind "reed walls, pointed grass roofs, a tangle of black limbs, clapping hands, stomping feet, rocking torsos, rolled eyeballs, under an overhang of heavy, immobile vegetation" (*trzciniowych ścian, spiczastych dachów z trawy, płatanina czarnych kończyn, klaszczących dłoni, tupiących stóp, rozkołysanych tułowi, oczu wywróconych białkami, pod nawisem ciężkiej, nieruchomej zieleni*)⁸². Since the authenticity of black people and their being in their place also

» 79 *Ibidem*, p. 114-115.

» 80 *Ibidem*, p. 161.

» 81 *Ibidem*, p. 28.

» 82 *Ibidem*, p. 82.

stands on the side of freedom in the translation into Polish of *Heart of Darkness*, enslaved people are their complete negation - mindless, frightened, hungry, weak, sick, suffering and as such expendable. They are thus tools in the hands of whites as long as they can be productive and as long as they remain useful, as long as they have the strength to work as slaves: "They lie squat die, dark shapes in the dark – out of the ground, in the ground, huddled to the ground, grafted in, they flow out into the twilight – the face of pain, the meat of despair – and out of the twilight into the darkness - where they are just black forms of disease and hunger – they die die die. Contracted, transported, inducted into procedures, lost in the strangeness and alienation, fed with indigestible food - they get sick - their productivity declines – inefficient – useless – they have the right to crawl away and rest and rest they have" (*leżą siedzą kucają konają, ciemne kształty w ciemności – z ziemi, w ziemi, do ziemi przytuleni, wczepieni, wypływają w ciemności w półmrok – oblicza bólu, mięso rozpaczy – i z półmroku w ciemność – gdzie są już tylko czarnymi formami choroby i głodu – oni konają konają konają. Zakontraktowani, przetransportowani, wdrożeni do procedur, zagubieni w dziwnościach obcościach, karmieni strawą niestrawną – więc chorują – więc maleje ich wydajność – więc – niewydajni – nieprzydatni – mają prawo odpelznąć i spocząć, spoczęli*)⁸³. Translating Conrad into Polish, Dukaj deliberately uses the corporate language and uses this language game, where the foreshadowing of the tragedy of some (Black people) "sweetens" the cynicism of others (Whites), as in the touching scene of death of the black youth/man described with the use of the word "biscuit" (a rusk in Conrad): "a face emerged from the darkness beneath my hand - a man's? a boy's? Stretched inert along the trunk, he was black skin and bones alone. His lifted eyelids and huge eyes sunk into the cage of the skull stared blindly at me. The last flashes of life; it was going out under my hand. I reached into my pocket and handed him a biscuit. He takes the biscuit: he extends his arm slowly, his fingers open, his fingers touch the biscuit, his fingers close – He has it, he has the biscuit. On his black neck - a white ribbon" (*twarz wyloniła się z ciemności pod moją dłońią – mężczyzny? chłopca? Rozciągniętego bezwładnie wzdłuż pnia, sama czarna skóra i kości. Unoszą się powieki i ogromne oczy zapadnięte w czaszce – klatce spoglądają na mnie ślepo. Ostatnie przebłyski życia; gasło to życie pod moją dłońią. Sięgnąłem do kieszeni i wręczyłem mu biszkopcik. On bierze ten biszkopcik: wyciąga powoli ramię, rozwierają się palce, palce dotykają biszkopcika, palce się zamykają – Ma, ma biszkopcik. Na jego czarnej szyi – biała wstążeczka*)⁸⁴. In the continuation of the scene of the black man's starvation and

» 83 *Ibidem*, p. 35.

» 84 *Ibidem*, p. 37.

agony, Dukaj's Marlow steps out of his role as an observer and becomes a witness to the crimes committed against other black people: "I stand like this, paralysed by silent horror, as another dark figure, liquefied from air and pain, lifts himself onto all fours and on all fours drags himself towards the river. He gulps water from his hands. Then he sits there in the sun. And he sits, having folded the sticks of his tibia into a cross, he sits until his head, a black ball of curls, falls helplessly on his breast" (*stoję tak sparaliżowany niemą grozą, gdy inna ciemna postać skroplona z powietrza i bólu dźwiga się na czworaki i na czworakach ciągnie ku rzece. Chłepcze wodę z dłoni. Potem siada tam sobie w słońcu. I siedzi, złożony w krzyż patyki piszczele, siedzi, póki głowa czarny baranek nie opadnie bezsilnie na piers*)⁸⁵.

When black is brown, do white fathers disappear?

There are two other colours operating in the colour field of white and black, whose presence in the various versions of the *Heart of Darkness* has been confirmed by research. These are the colours grey and brown.

Grey is treated as a "mélange of white and black", a transparent and passive colour, semantically "closer to the name black", which means that its connotations also remain more dark, morbid and sad⁸⁶.

Like grey, the colour brown, which is formed from the combination of chromatic primaries such as yellow or red and achromatic black, is usually dominated by blackness. In this way, brown is non-black, but neither is it red or yellow. Therefore, as Tokarski notes, this colour also fits into the semantic field of "ugliness" and "sadness"⁸⁷.

It may be comforting to know that both grey and brown also come in metallic shades of graphite, silver, lead, tin, mercury, gold, platinum, and copper⁸⁸, which generally makes them more luminous, noble and precious⁸⁹. However, the estimation of metallic colours is rather derived from their market value, while in the language itself, lightness and darkness and warmth and coldness still come into play. Thus, copper or gold, as they are closer to yellow and red, are warmer than silver or lead. Lead, on the other hand, which occurs in the area of greyness, is darker than silver and less luminous than mercury⁹⁰.

» 85 *Ibidem*, p. 37.

» 86 R. Tokarski, *Semantyka barw...*, p. 76.

» 87 *Ibidem*, p. 142-143.

» 88 *Ibidem*, p. 142.

» 89 *Ibidem*, p. 70-72.

» 90 *Ibidem*.

Operating in the spectrum of black, grey and brown play significant roles in *Heart of Darkness* and its reinterpretations. In Conrad and Dukaj, grey connotes old age and human anxiety, and in Dukaj also fear: “dreams greying with horror” (*sny posiwiale ze zgrozy*)⁹¹. Dukaj also uses graphite – “rowers’ graphite muscles” (*grafitowe muskuly wioślarzy*). Even if closer to blackness, it is an allotrope of coal which, like diamond, has more noble connotations.

Greyness is an essential colour in the graphic novel, emerging every now and then from the overlapping whites and blacks, like a fog that shrouds a distant story, making it haunting and ugly. Misty drawings in a graphic novel, therefore, breathe “black” sadness and anxiety.

But here is the colour brown, which, although also connoting sadness and ugliness in its association with black, is also used differently in Conrad, and especially in Dukaj, as a “alloyed copper and other metals” (*stopionych ze sobą miedzi i innych metali*)⁹². Which makes it more luminous, shinier and nobler. This is the case with Conrad when he writes of the Congolese warriors that they shone with bronze: “I discerned in the depths of the gnarled, dark thicket naked breasts, arms, legs, and burning eyes; the bushes had become overgrown with human members in motion, shiny and brown” (*rozróżniłem w głębi skłębionego, mrocznego gąszczu nagie piersi, ręce, nogi, gorejące oczy — zarośla zaroily się od ludzkich członków w ruchu, połyskujących, brązowych*)⁹³. Also about them, when “two bronze figures of warriors, propped on tall spears, stood in the glare of the sun, as calm as statues” (*dwie brązowe, wojownicze postacie, wsparte na wysokich włóczniach, stały w blasku słońca spokojnie jak posągi*)⁹⁴. The same noble bronze works in Dukaj, when he looks through Marlow’s eyes on Kurtz’s worshippers and says that “their figures were cast of dark bronze” (*ich figury odlano z ciemnego brązu*)⁹⁵ or that they “dance, and pant, and wave, bodies of flesh, a thousand brown bodies” (*tańczą, i dyszą, i falują, ciała ciała ciała, tysiąc brązowych ciał*)⁹⁶.

Apart from the “brown of statues”, Conrad’s and Dukaj’s texts feature also a red which is a warmer variation of brown, and sometimes purple used to describe the bodies of warriors, covered with red clay⁹⁷. Nothing of the sort is to be found in the description of the whites who only occa-

» 91 J. Conrad, *Serce ciemności...*, p. 114.

» 92 *Ibidem*, p. 142.

» 93 J. Conrad, *Jądro ciemności...*, p. 31.

» 94 *Ibidem*, p. 47.

» 95 J. Conrad, *Serce ciemności...*, p. 120.

» 96 *Ibidem*, p. 142.

» 97 J. Conrad, *Jądro ciemności...*, p. 47.

sionally blush, betrayed by the lancet blue of their eyes or a face yellowed with grief⁹⁸.

Black droplet, white marble...

There are few women in *Heart of Darkness*, still fewer those described through the prism of their skin colour. It is good, one might say. However, the reality of the prose of Korzeniowski and his interpreters are more complicated.

The parade of female characters opens with those who, like Marlow's aunt, contributed to his expedition to the Congo. However, since they operate from Europe, their description through the prism of their skin complexion makes no sense. We know that they are white just as it is known that they uncritically believe in the civilising mission of the white man mastered by the thought of *le progrès de la civilisation* mixed with *naïve la charité*. The next two heroines are employees of a trading company who, both in Conrad and later in Dukaj, act as "doorkeepers at the gates of Darkness", spinning a black thread.

Both in the original and in Conrad's interpretations, meanwhile, two women appear to whom the authors pay more attention. These are Kurtz's European fiancée and his African mistress. The former lives to attest to Kurtz's greatness, the latter proudly accompanies his downfall. The former drowns in sad greyness, adorned with the marble whiteness of her hands: "The fair hair, the pale face, the clean forehead was, you would say, surrounded by a halo as grey as ash, from which dark eyes looked towards me. Their gaze was open, deep, calm, and trusting" (*Te jasne włosy, ta blada twarz, to czyste czoło były, rzekłbyś, otoczone szarą jak popiół aureolą, z której patrzyły ku mnie ciemne oczy. Spojrzenie ich było otwarte, głębokie, spokojne i ufne*)⁹⁹. The other shines in the "scarlet flames" (*w szkarłacie płomieni*), a black droplet of passion and desire (*czarna kropla pasji i żądź*)¹⁰⁰ with a brown skin "washed with the waters of hell" (*obmytej wodami piekła*)¹⁰¹. In the first case, grey/pale/marble quality refers to qualities such as haughtiness and coldness, and to values such as chastity and fidelity, eliciting primarily male sympathy. Otherwise, Kurtz's mistress is described as wild and proud, endowed with a secret power and arousing male desire. Meanwhile, both are stuck in a patriarchal script, in its two nineteenth-century variations, the one originating in Victorian England, where the white woman was cast in the role of an asexual wife,

» 98 *Ibidem*, p. 99, 109.

» 99 J. Conrad, *Jądro ciemności...*, p. 52.

» 100 J. Conrad, *Serce ciemności...*, p. 122-123.

» 101 *Ibidem*, p. 167.

and the one created by the colonial chroniclers of exotic Africa, where a Black woman was cast in the role of a hypersexual lover¹⁰².

Conclusions

To sum up; although white people outnumber black people in Korzenio-wski's text, the author rarely portrays them favourably. Thus, in the novella, white people are cruel, crazy, lonely, quarrelsome, drunk, driven by lust for possessions, and physically and mentally feeble. Conrad can also be ironic towards them, for example when he describes white men wearing dark yellow boots and riding donkeys, or when he creates a grotesque portrait of Kurtz's white servant, dressed in harlequin's coloured rags. At the same time, although Conrad questions the moral qualifications of whites to rule over blacks, he remains 'excited' by their achievements, treating their presence in the Congo as an unpleasant if necessary stage in the white man's civilising mission. Conrad-Marlow's doubts about the moral qualifications of the whites who sow fear and terror in the Congo also pale in the face of the paternalistic attitude towards blacks and disappear altogether when they are treated as 'tools' in the colonisers' hands. Only slightly different is the case of the black free people, whom Conrad-Marlow describes as being at home but also as savage and dangerous, demonising their roles and attributing to them a lack of rationality. A similar, yet more evocative picture of whites and blacks in the Congo, marked by a variety of emotions, jarring and less obvious, emerges from Jacek Dukaj's translation of *Heart of Darkness*. Conrad's testimonies cannot be denied, Dukaj seems to say, but they are testimonies of horror, which he gives expression to by eschewing old scripts or, more often, by recreating them in a new guise, dense with meaning. In this sense, Dukaj's *Serce ciemności* relives the journey to *Heart of Darkness* much more than Conrad's, although this is only a matter of 'words in colour', still predominantly black and white. Ultimately, then, both in Conrad and in Dukaj, naïve, wilful and irrational or, conversely, savage, possessed and threatening, black people are held at least partly responsible for their own misfortune. And yet, in *Heart of Darkness* whites are victims of their own culture, while blacks are victims of their own nature. This is how the long shadow of racism mixed with sarcasm (whites), paternalism mixed with the grotesque (blacks) and patriarchy mixed with desire and compassion (women) works. In this sense, comic books and graphic novels are no dif-

» 102 See A. Gromkowska-Melosik, *Ciało, moda i tożsamość kobiety epoki wiktoriańskiej – dyskursy piękna i przemocy*, "Kultura – Społeczeństwo – Edukacja", no. 2 (2012), p. 17-30 and M.M. Grąbczewska, *W kraju młodych boginek*, "Widok. Teorie i Praktyki Kultury Wizualnej", no. 7 (2014), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2014/7-postkolonialne-archiwa-obrazow/w-kraju-młodych-boginek> [access: 12.01.2022].

ferent from prose. However, they help us see more clearly what we have long known/read about, but which we may not have been able to see clearly enough, that the literary language of the testimonies of colonialism does not always bear its atrocities, although it does see them.

* * *

The question of skin colour is visibility par excellence. Yet white and black, as well as brown and graphite, glossy or dull, subjected to the pressure of language and culturally shaped perceptions (scripts) tell us plainly: there is no such thing as an innocuous colour. There are only its more or less established meanings, from the primordial ones, where black is night and white is day, to the ones steeped in darkness, ugliness, evil, sadness, and mourning. Or, on the contrary, they are bathed in purity, innocence and perfection, taking care, however, that people are all these things at the same time, regardless of the colour of their skin¹⁰³.

Meanwhile, the two artists with whom I was able to work on the project “Congo: Memory – Image – Interpretations”, Magda Parnasow-Kujawa and Marc Tobias Winterhagen, while preparing for the artistic creativity workshop preceded by a joint viewing of the exhibition *The Self-Portrait of the Congolese. Congolese Paintings 1960–1990*, we decided to invite children, young people and seniors to the workshop, and to provide them with a white and black canvas stretched on a loom. In this way, we went back to the beginning, to night and day, light and dark, in order to draw on Congolese literary images and the visual creativity of the Congolese themselves, guided by their own choice, intuition and sensitivity, to bring the Congo to life with or without its painters. The painters won – multicoloured figures of people, things, animals and nature emerging from white and black, light and dark, to defy their obviousness.

“In a world of complete brightness or complete darkness, man would be flat”¹⁰⁴. ●

Izabela Skórzyńska

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2549-8592>

DOI: 10.48239/ISSN1232668241164189

» 103 On this subject the monograph issues of the periodical “Widok. Teorie i praktyki kultury wizualnej”, *Postkolonialne archiwa obrazów*, no. 7 (2014), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2014/7-postkolonialne-archiwa-obrazow/postkolonialne-archiwa-obrazow>; *Obrazy i wyobrażenia rasy. Historie*, no. 29 (2020), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2021/29-obrazy-i-wyobrazenia-rasy-historie> [access: 07.11.2022].

» 104 P. Czapliński, *Niebezpieczne arcydzieło...*, p. 2. A more profound analysis from the perspective of the exhibition itself was offered by Magdalena Parnasow-Kujawa in the following text of this issue of “Zeszyty Artystyczne”: *Not everything can be organised*.

Bibliography

Achebe C., *An image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*, "The Massachusetts Review", t. 57, no. 1 (2016), s. 14-27.

Bednarek J.B., *W gruncie rzeki. Jądro ciemności Josepha Conrada*, <https://www.zamekczyta.pl/w-gruncie-rzeki-jadro-ciemnosci-josepha-conrada/> [access: 12.10.2022].

Benenowska I., *O kolorach w języku (na tle różnych perspektyw badawczych)*, [in:] Conrad J., *Serce ciemności*, spolszczenie J. Dukaj, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2017.

Conrad J., *Jądro ciemności*, "Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska", <https://wolnelektury.pl/katalog/lektura/conrad-jadro-ciemnosci/> [accessed: 03.11.2022] from the volume: *Conrad Joseph, Młodość i inne opowiadania*, tłum. A. Zagórska, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1956.

Czachorowska M., *Porównania prototypowe barw w języku polskim*, "Białostockie Archiwum Językowe", no. 9 (2009), <https://czasopisma.filologia.uwb.edu.pl/index.php/baj/article/view/1019> [access: 04.11.2022].

Czapliński P., *Niebezpieczne arcydzieło. O Jądrze ciemności Josepha Conrada*, "Project: World Literature" (September 2009), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333634300_Niebezpieczne_arcydzieło_O_Jądrze_ciemności_Josepha_Conrada_A_Dangerous_Masterpiece_On_Joseph_Conrad%27s_Heart_of_darkness [access: 21.01.2022].

Dukaj J., *Jacek Dukaj w rozmowie z Katarzyną Trzeciak i Michałem Sowińskim*, podcast in "Tygodnik Powszechny" (26.06.2018), <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/jacek-dukaj-serce-ciemnosci-153627> [access: 12.06.2022].

Forycki M., Skórzyńska I., *Nieodmiennie w kierunku światów wykluczonych. Z biografii naukowej Bogumiła Jewsiewickiego*, [in:] Bogumił J., *Praca pamięci i historii. Studia z antropologii historycznej pamięci*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii UAM, 2016, p. 9-19.

Franczak J., *Conrad i (post)kolonializm*, "Twórczość", no. 8 (2008), <https://culture.pl/pl/artykul/conrad-i-postkolonializm> [access: 05.07.2022].

Gietka E., *Nie mów do mnie Murzyn*, "Tygodnik Przegląd" (07.08.2005), <https://www.tygodnikprzeglad.pl/nie-mow-do-mnie-murzyn/> [access: 12.06.2022].

Grąbczewska M.M., *W kraju młodych boginek*, "Widok. Teorie i Praktyki Kultury Wizualnej", no. 7 (2014), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2014/7-postkolonialne-archiwa-obrazow/w-kraju-mlodych-boginek> [access: 12.01.2022].

Gromkowska-Melosik A., *Ciało, moda i tożsamość kobiety epoki wiktoriańskiej – dyskursy piękna i przemocy*, "Kultura – Społeczeństwo – Edukacja", no. 2 (2012), p. 17-30.

Heart of Darkness [graphic novel], based on Joseph Conrad's novel, illustrations by Catherine Anyango, adaptation by David Zane Mairowitz, transl. Magda Heydel in collaboration with Wanda Heydel, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Lokator, 2017.

In silva verborum. Prace dedykowane profesor Ewie Pajewskiej z okazji 30-lecia pracy zawodowej, ed. Beata Afeltowicz, Jolanta Ignatowicz-Skowrońska, Piotr Wojdak, p. 47-62, Szczecin, Wyd. Volumina, 2011.

Jelowicki A., *Muradyny, zandary, siwki... – zwyczajne (nie)znane*, "Portal Wielkopolska. Kultura u podstaw" (23.04.2019), <https://kulturaupodstaw.pl/muradyny-zanda->

ry-siwki-zwyczajne-nieznanne-wielkanoc-w-wielkopolsce-arkadiusz-jelowicki/ [access: 31.08.2022].

Karkowska M., *Skrypty, opowieści i narracje w perspektywie pedagogicznej. Ku świadomości wychowania*, Kraków, Wyd. Impuls, 2020.

Kloska S., *Być jak Joseph Conrad*, „Tygodnik Powszechny” (11.09.2017), <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/byc-jak-joseph-conrad-149710> [access: 12.06.2022].

Kwiecień A., *Poradnik Obywatela. Co możemy zrobić, gdy zetkniemy się z mową nawiści?*, „Otwarta Rzeczpospolita”, <https://www.mowanienawisci.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Poradnik-obywatela1.pdf> [access: 04.11.2022].

Łuksza A., *Aszanci w Warszawie. Wyobrażenia ‘czarności’ w społeczeństwie polskim przełomu XIX i XX wieku – przyczynek do polskiej historii kolonialnej*, „Widok. Teorie i Praktyki Kultury Wizualnej”, no. 29 (2021), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2021/29-obrazy-i-wyobrazenia-rasy-historie/aszanci-w-warszawie> [access: 21.08.2022].

Narloch A., *Postrzeganie i kategoryzacja barw (świat ludzi i zwierząt)*, „Scripta Neophilologica Posnaniensia”, no. XVI (2016).

Ohia-Nowak M., *Słowo ‘Murzyn’ jako prelokucyjny akt mowy*, „Przegląd Kulturoznawczy”, no. 3 (35) (2020), p. 195-212.

“Poradnia Języka Polskiego”, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/poradnia/haslo/Klopotliwy-Murzyn;17473.html> [access: 12.07.2022].

Średziński P., *Afryka i jej mieszkańcy w polskich mediach. Raport z monitoringu polskich mediów 2016*, Fundacja Republika Kultury, http://afryka.org/afryka-i-jej--mieszkancy-w-polskich-mediach-afryka_in_81460672305084551200.jph/ [access: 20.08.2022].

Tirabosco T., Perrissin C., *Kongo. Józefa Konrada Teodora Korzeniowskiego podróż przez ciemności*, transl. K. Umiński, Warszawa, Kultura Gniewu, 2017.

Tokarski R., *Semantyka barw we współczesnej polszczyźnie*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2004.

Trzebiński J., *Narracyjne konstruowanie rzeczywistości*, [in:] *Narracja jako sposób rozumienia świata*, ed. J. Trzebiński, Gdańsk, GWP, 2002 p. 17-42.

Wądołowska A., *Czy ‘Murzyn’ obraża? Zapytaliśmy czarnoskórych Polaków, językoznawców, historyka i aktywistkę*, Portal Notes from Poland (12.06.2020), <https://notesfrompoland.com/2020/06/12/czy-murzyn-obraza-zapytalismy-czarnoskorych--polakow-jezykoznawcow-historyka-i-aktywistke/> [access: 05.09.2022].

“Widok. Teorie i praktyki kultury wizualnej”, *Postkolonialne archiwa obrazów*, no. 7 (2014), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2014/7-postkolonialne-archiwa-obrazow/postkolonialne-archiwa-obrazow> [access: 07.11.2022].

“Widok. Teorie i praktyki kultury wizualnej”, *Obrazy i wyobrażenia rasy. Historie*, no. 29 (2020), <https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2021/29-obrazy-i-wyobrazenia-rasy-historie> [access: 07.11.2022].

Wierzbička A., *Semantyka. Jednostki elementarne i uniwersalne*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2006.

Ząbek M., *Współczesne stereotypy, postawy i zachowania Polaków wobec Afrykanów*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo DiG, 2007.

