

THE ANIMAL AS A SUBJECT: META-STRATEGIES OF COLONIZING NATURE

Joanna Bednarek, in reconstructing a definition of the subject as proposed by Rosi Braidotti, writes in the introduction to her *Po człowieku* [*The Posthuman*] as follows:

Braidotti proposes a vision of a world where communicating that which is mutually irreducible is the norm, and the subject, which is no longer defined through a narrowly understood self-consciousness, reflexivity or rationality, but through its ability to create connections – common to humans and animals – ceases to be an anthropocentric category. (Bednarek 29)

This definition of what constitutes a subject is close to me, all the more so if it is based on Paul Ricoeur's (2007) considerations, which emphasize the role of recognizing the interlocutor as a subject who is to be regarded as an equal and worthy partner of interaction. Accepting these types of assumptions allows us to recognize animals as subjects. This, however, can happen only within the context of wider social changes curtailing man's domination of nature, which can be approached in terms of postcolonial processes manifesting themselves as a protest against the colonization of the world – the world of nature. In this regard, undertaking studies about animal-subject can be understood as a more specific consideration of a much wider discourse dealing with the topic of the human condition and its relation with the non-human condition.

This question is aptly put by Charles Taylor:

Once society no longer has a sacred structure, once social arrangements and modes of action are no longer grounded in the order of things or the will of God, they are in a sense up for grabs. They can be redesigned with their consequences for the happiness and wellbeing of individuals as our goal. The yardstick that henceforth applies is that of instrumental reason. Similarly, once the creatures that surround us lose the significance that accrued to their place in the chain of being, they are open to being treated as raw materials or instruments for our projects. (Taylor 5).

Taylor's perspective is precarious, because if actions are to be justified only on the basis of their instrumentality (their use value in achieving a given aim), then everything can be permitted. If we allow ourselves to treat an animal that way, then what is to stop us also from mistreating humans or handicapped children? This is the rhetorical question Peter Singer (2009) poses, continuing Taylor's considerations.

Although colonial, and especially postcolonial, discourse in contemporary humanities is undoubtedly directed at an analysis of questions regarding cultural dominance, we can nonetheless discern an interesting current whereby already developed theoretical apparatus are adapted to an old-new area: the colonization of nature. The classic works of Edward Said (2003) and Franz Fanon (2004), regarded already as canon in postcolonial discourse, aimed to destabilize the intellectual groundwork providing support for the kind of approach Western culture has had towards the rest of the world. These works have found a new application, being as they are "transferred" to the discussion of colonizing nature. Postcolonial theories attempt to account for the domination of one type of discourse, which in this case happens to take on a Eurocentric perspective imposing itself on the rest of the world. It is in this way that postcolonialism, constituting an opposition to this Eurocentric, dominant point of view, creates the conditions for establishing equilibrium between what is European and what remains outside of Europe.

What these abovementioned writers have aptly recognized is that a considerable portion of European cultural dominance of non-European areas is carried out by means of language and narratives which objectify the Other. I researched this problem elsewhere (Mamzer 61–79) not only by analysing this phenomenon from a linguistic standpoint, but by treating it, in the spirit of the linguistic turn in the-

ory, as an expression of broadly understood cultural texts. Every cultural product, and thus every “text”, represents a particular perception of reality, which, by means of that ‘text’, is then communicated outside. It is in this context that I was interested in how the language of a cultural text reflects the relationship with the Other, as defined by Emmanuel Levinas (1993).¹

In the text discussed I attempted to identify the strategies employed in relation to the cultural (ethnic) Other, which reduces it to an object. These strategies include: divesting it of its name, representing the person not as an individual subject but as a representative of a group, using a group of people as a background for one, distinctive individual; keeping people unaware of what is about to happen to them (e.g. photographing them and later using those photographs without their consent), etc. More strategies could be enumerated; suffice it to say that they all gravitate towards depersonalization and depreciation. Devaluing another person and depriving them of their individuality form the basis on which to realize behavioural practices that lead towards exploitation and therefore colonization.

What is more, within the category of colonization, if it is to be realized either through linguistic, cognitive or more direct and practical strategies, it is necessary to create binary oppositions based on hierarchies, thereby allowing one to define the difference between the colonizer and colonized. Creating this opposition constitutes a condition *sine qua non* for carrying out the process of colonization. These strategies are established in much the same way in relation to cultural differences as to any “different world, which is to be colonized”. Later in the essay I hope to identify the significance of the increasingly visible tendency of adapting an already established postcolonial conceptual apparatus for the purpose of approaching questions connected with gender. If one would want to view traditionally understood social roles as connected with biological differences resulting from sex, one will notice a nod to the biological elements in this particular tangent of the discussion. I mention this because it is worth remembering

¹ In this text I presented visual citations – fashion photography which was presented by white models in ethnically diverse cultural contexts – in India or African countries where the indigenous population was treated as the background for the white model and the well-known designer clothes she was presenting. These types of practices inspired me to critically consider the question of how to talk about cultural differences in order not to lose the central perspective of treating representatives of ethnic groups as subjects.

that colonization, as a process of conquering and appropriating territories outside the borders of one's country, or, more broadly speaking, outside one's territory (in all aspects of the word), began with the aspirations of superpowers, based on the desire to dominate and exploit nature, understood here broadly, but especially as a source of natural resources.

In this context I would like to refer to a certain kind of turn, one that is open to a linear analysis, i.e. an analysis of the processes of colonization carried out in terms of how dominion over nature is established; next, we will move to an analysis of colonization as cultural domination, which would lead to an analysis of colonization understood in terms of "post", i.e. postcolonialism. This I would like to approach broadly – as a protest against colonization, understood as usurping domination in general or over culture, societies or social categories (or many other dimensions, such as postcolonializing language), as well as over nature. In this regard, the process of postcolonialization acquires a multidimensional aspect in relation to the "subject of colonization".

I think that today we are dealing with a trend in colonial and postcolonial studies which imposes a kind of holistic, or perhaps universalist, approach when talking about the human being as such. Apart from the various forms of domination of one group over another, or over particular social, cultural, and natural areas, what also emerges is the human/nature binary opposition. When applied, this opposition introduces another kind of optics: here a person devoid of any concrete identification becomes the perpetrator of colonization over the natural world. This presents us with a wider perspective which defines the "genetic" characteristics of a human determining our propensity to conquer something or someone. It is worth recalling in this context the notion of speciesism. This notion, introduced by Richard Ryder (2005) and disseminated by Peter Singer (2009), refers to a critical approach to the domination asserted by humans of other species. The considerations based on this notion aim to provoke discussion and bring awareness of the baselessness of what for many people is a justified prejudice founded on the membership to a particular species, and finally to change the social attitudes and improve the living conditions of animals co-existing with humans. The term speciesism allows for a systematic approach to the moral law held by *homo sapiens* to exploit other species for their benefit. Treating animals like

objects constitutes, as stated earlier, one of the symptoms of a broader current of thought concerning the environment, with particular attention given to a balanced development of the human race, i.e. a development that will take responsibility for conserving the currently accessible recourses for future generations. In other words, a state in which fulfilling the needs of the present generation does not in any way diminish the chances of future generations fulfilling their needs.

It is at this point that I would like to notice the following shift. The first stage of drawing attention to the existence of colonizing practices in the relations between representatives of the European culture and cultures outside Europe took the form of a critical consideration of how Western culture treats people who are not its representatives. This initial stage of reflection, inaugurated by Franz Fanon (1985), Edward Said (2003), continued by Gayatri Spivak (1990), should be treated as the first significant attempt within the humanities to address the topic of cultural oppression in rational-scientific terms. Certainly one can search for the roots of this trend in The Frankfurt School (particularly in *Der autoritäre Charakter* by Theodor Adorno), which dealt with the ethic relations practiced by the Nazis. The first impulse to reflect on the oppressive nature of colonization was, therefore, directed towards the relation between a dominating group and a dominated group.

I would treat this incipient awareness of social inequality as a trigger activating an evolutionary mechanism of awakening and reinforcing empathy that can be transferred to specific actions meant to change the negative apprehension of a given situation. That is why critical reflection was able to raise awareness in a broader group of recipients to the fact that people were treated differently and that these differences were used as the basis for legitimizing morally reprehensible, or at least dubious, behaviour.

The second stage of challenging broadly understood colonization could be referred to as the tendency to promote the eradication of all sorts of discrimination in an effort to equate the opportunities of discriminated people. Postcolonial discourse often draws attention to the oppressive treatment in Western culture of women and the LGBT community.

After the second wave of critical thought about colonization, which took place in the 1960s in America, there appeared a third current which brought about a realization that the meaning of coloniza-

tion goes beyond the acquisition of territories inhabited by people and that it transcends the cultural-social-economical dimension. This current aims to raise awareness of the fact that the initial process of colonization involved the conquest of nature, its exploitation and destruction. Elżbieta Pośluszna draws attention to this observation in her excellent publication about ecological extremism:

It was then that for the first time the conviction that there is a correlation between expanding the exploitation of nature and the rise of prosperity was questioned. At the same time, broader circles of society (mainly in USA) became increasingly aware of an impending ecological crisis endangering every living thing on Earth. As a result, organizations whose aim it was to lobby on the part of the natural world began mushrooming across the country. (Pośluszna 9)

This is, in my view, the third, deeper wave of critical thought on the subject of how humans behave towards not only the human world but the natural world as well. I treat this third stage as an expression of a higher level of moral and ethical development, which sees the world surrounding humans (construed now as a species) as acquiring the characteristics of a subject. What is more, this subject is to be understood in a particular sense, as we become aware of the responsibility for what is colonized, particularly because it is unable to actively resist colonization. I allow myself to regard that kind of perception as an indication of a higher moral status, as it is inextricably bound to the fulfilment of the basic needs constituting the base of Abraham Maslow's (1970) pyramid of needs. Only after fulfilling all the physical needs, safety, affiliation and self-realization, can one think about fulfilling one's meaning of life, which seems to include the concern not only for one's self and one's needs, but also the desire to expand that concern to other human and nonhuman beings. It comes as no surprise then that ecological awareness and animal rights are realized particularly intensely in those countries where the standard of life, measured by economic standards, is high and where people do not have to worry about survival.

What can cause doubt is placing the human being in opposition to nature. In my opinion, a human being is inextricably bound with the rest of the natural world in the same way as other animals. I treat *homo sapiens* as a species, with the same rights as other species of animals (this is an approach propagated by many researchers dealing with Charles Darwin's (2013) and Frans de Waal's (2006, 2013) etho-

logy). This is why I think the classic philosophical dilemma which concentrates on where to demarcate the difference between nature and culture is, in essence, baseless, as culture should be treated as a distinctive product of the natural capabilities of humans who are developed and able to think abstractly. Culture as a product of unique aptitudes of the human intellect constitutes a specific aspect of the species, but that does not give us license to grant ourselves more expansive rights and privileges. My approach would construe the human being as an element coproducing the natural world. In this sense, the exploitation of nature, which is the basic motivation for colonization, is so difficult to accept that it succeeds only in provoking concrete actions on an empirical level that aim towards limiting the negative consequences of its exploitation².

At this point it is worth noticing an element that is ignored by those who feel that humans are entitled to more rights. The fact that humans are capable of abstract thought, advanced planning, predicting the future and other similar abilities related to cognition entails certain responsibilities: the more developed our thinking, the greater are the expectations to take responsibility for our actions. If we are to place humans on a pedestal above other animals, if we are to accord it greater abilities and potential, then automatically we ought to demand more responsibility for their actions. If we accept what in my opinion is an illegitimate thesis that humans have the right to unlimited use of natural resources, then what follows automatically is a moral responsibility to take care of what one uses. Treating humans as a species with an equal claim to use the natural world does not exempt them from assuming responsibility for how they use it.

In the context of the abovementioned considerations regarding the colonization of nature, Eric Baratay's work, aptly titled *Animal Point of View*, is of particular interest. Baratay should be regarded as a pioneer of this new discipline in the humanities advocating that history be

² Pop-cultural texts are particularly interesting in this context. A perfect illustration of this is a commercial for cleaning appliances: a lonely castaway is walking along the shore and comes across a box with a vacuum cleaner. He turns it on and begins "cleaning" the plants on the island and gradually he uncovers a beautiful concrete sidewalk, lovely new garden furniture, outdoor ceramic stairs leading to a house occupied by a beautiful young woman, a cultural icon of attractiveness. Such constructed messages reinforce the binary opposition: human-colonizer in relation to nature, the colonized world (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH9HpdOaTWE> (access date: 12.27.2014)).

written from the point of view of animals. In this work, the author attempts to prove that history has been written from a predominantly human point of view. Even when animals were mentioned, they were relegated to a side note, a marginal theme, appearing in the background of the main narrative which exclusively revolved around human events. Baratay argues that this perspective on the world is extremely anthropocentric and indicates how changes in our human world and our human way of life impact the history of animals:

Another consequence of the West enriching itself during the course of the nineteenth century is the increased amount of free time, which allowed people to indulge in leisure and entertainment which increasingly gained in importance and a century later became a part of everyday life. In some of these activities animals are used, for example in hunting, riding, various 'spectacles': circus, zoo, animal fights and fights with humans. One such sport, bullfighting, has achieved success and notoriety in intellectual and artistic circles as well as in the media. (Baratay 31)

To quote an African proverb: "As long as lions have no historians of their own, Safari stories will keep glorifying the hunter" (Baratay 33). Baratay decisively indicates that every author of history depicts it from his point of view. Because there are many authors, there are many points of view. He also notices that:

An interesting thing is that the pursuit of achieving this conceptual turn, this shift in perceiving animals is gaining momentum. When I began work on this subject in 2007, I could only rely on a few, fairly new philosophers and anthropologists [...]. In 2011, when I was editing this chapter before publication, this turn is under way in many disciplines: in zootechnics [...], in ethnology and sociology, wanting to portray the status of such animals as cows and dogs as individualized actors. (Baratay 3)

It should not go without mention that work is already under way in the fields of archaeology, historiography and methodology of history in an effort to demonstrate that history is never represented, but is instead created by the discoverer, who interprets the discovered artefacts through his or her cultural lens, thereby imposing on these artefact meaning that is rooted in their native (i.e., familiar) culture. Ian Hodder wrote about this as early as in the 1980s. His *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology*, co-written with Scott Hutson, was published for the first time in 1986. In this

work the authors draw attention to “reading” and not “discovering” history, revealing the indispensable role of interpretation which is grounded in the unique and individual situation of the historian that bears on how historical and archaeological artefacts are read. This current of thought was developed in Poland by Jerzy Topolski’s school of historiography and methodology of history.

After citing many statistics, Baratay attempts to write history from the animal’s perspective. The author emphasizes how difficult it is to adopt a perspective according to which people would at least have to concede that an animal’s point of view exists, that animals communicate and do so differently than humans. “Differently” does not mean “worse”; in fact, in many situations it actually means “better”. Just like in the case of history created by historians, so here we are dealing with a process of (often times unconscious) projection.

People notice only a portion of experiences and signs, interpreting them with ease according to their own codes, but a problem occurs in relation to all the Others. What does a European ethnologist understand when researching another population? We know that he balances between applying his own interpretations, even the most developed, for example structuralism, and the desire to capture their reality; the whole history of ethology and ethnology is marked by this dilemma. (Baratay 273)

Baratay’s work attempts to show how the human desire to retain supremacy over the living world finds its representation in the employed strategies of depreciating the world. This is to be found in Claude Lévi-Strauss’s statement, as quoted by Baratay: “Every man was, is and will be one of a kind. But a man does not differ in that regard from any other living creature, not even the smallest whose unique status he does not even deign to respect” (Baratay 327).

Baratay believes that supporters of thinking about animals in an objectifying mode are inspired and inspire Bruno Latour’s (2004) work regarding the active role of objects, which, when treated as actors, alter their social relation and interaction. Classifying animals as “objects” surrounding humans allows Latour to confer on them the status of actors actively affecting them. The actor is not only regarded as a subject, but is also seen to have the power to affect the observer. This type of thinking, although initially evoking resistance, finally allows us to grant animals the status of active and conscious actors.

Baratay proposes a broadened definition of the Levinasian "Other":

As of yet, researchers have situated among Others merely a handful of the human population: women, slaves, societies living outside established borders, under the influence of ethnocentrism often referred to as barbarian or primitive, and not only in Europe, but everywhere else. (Baratay 39)

Treating animals as an Other emphasizes their hitherto negated subject position, comparable to the same kind of change that took place in relation to how we think about people of non-European descent: "The portrait of an animal is subjected to environmental variations: an organism trained to react, a genetically conditioned living being, a machine processing various problems, a conscious being endowed with subjectivity. . ." (Baratay 46). That is to say, in our behaviour towards animals, we should implement the achievements of cultural relativism, stemming out of anthropology, ethology and philosophy. Employing the category of "Other" in our relations with animals opens up a different perspective: empathetic, humanitarian and subject-oriented.

It is here that we arrive at the point where it would be worthwhile to look at the problem from a meta-level. I am drawing closer to approaching the issue indicated in the title of this paper, i.e. meta-strategies of colonizing nature. I view them as a coherent and interrelated system of three meta-strategies, allowing us to create a construct that I would call the "colonizer's stance". The term "stance" already functions in sociology and psychology and is defined as a permanent construct consisting of three components: affection, behaviour and cognition (often referred to as ABC). I would propose to accept the existence of these three meta-strategies allowing us to create, maintain and realize the colonizing stance. This model is general enough that it can be utilized not only in the process of colonizing nature, but also in relation to any other example of colonization. That is why I am referring to the mentioned strategies as "meta-". The difficulty that arises when one has to unequivocally indicate which of the discussed three meta-strategies is primary and which are derivative. It is beyond doubt that all three take part in an interactive, dynamic relationship. The more they are aligned, the more permanent and resistant to modification is the final construct as a stance.

The linguistic meta-strategy makes it possible to describe the world. It has a cognitive dimension, making it possible for us to for-

multitude of judgments and opinions; also, it does not contain an affective element, though it can be used to name emotions. Ludwig Wittgenstein duly established that the limits of our language determine the limits of our world (Wolniewicz: 1970). Although linguists, translators and philosophers are still embroiled in debates on how exactly this opinion should be interpreted, its point is quite clear: language determines the limits of our perception. The richer, more diverse is our language, the richer and more diverse is our experience of our environment. The simpler our language, the simpler our understanding of our world. In support of the thesis that the linguistic frame of describing the world influences other meta-strategies constituting the post-colonial stance, a second concept should be mentioned: the concept of performative speech acts developed by John Austin (1962). This concept refers to a particular type of speech which is also an act. Here we are dealing not only with naming the world and conferring onto it meaning, but also with bringing into motion particular actions which result in perceptible changes. Apart from the logical aspect, what also appears here is a concept of language that exerts a direct influence on the reality encountered by the knowing subject. This concept is especially important in the context of this paper, as it traces the relationship between the colonizing meta-strategy of language and behavioural meta-strategy.

A perfect exemplification of this kind of language, one which also lends itself well to Wittgenstein's and Austin's approach, is the language used by hunters. The way in which the hunting community functions will be also used below for the purpose of illustrating the next two meta-strategies: behavioural and affective.

Distancing yourself from your prey takes on an extreme dimension here. The animal is treated as an object, providing entertainment for humans. This approach, which effectively strips the animal of its dignity and position as a subject and denies it the possibility of being recognized as an actor, finds its reflection in language. Blood is "paint". The heart is only an "organ". The shot animal is "game" etc. By erecting a verbal barrier, the hunter is able to separate himself from the animal's feelings, thus allowing the person to kill without guilt. These types of practices are used in everyday life, for example when we refer to animal entrails as "offal" or when we say that an animal "dies", whereas a person "passes away". A dead animal is a "carcass", whereas a dead person is referred to as a "corpse". These

examples speak to the same convention that makes it possible to distance oneself by means of a particular language. Using this language is related to a particular cognitive strategy, allowing one to look at the living world in a hierarchical manner. The perception of the world is primary, whereas using a particular language and then activating particular behaviour is secondary.

The behavioural meta-strategy stems from the linguistic meta-strategy; it strengthens and legitimizes it. Accepting Austin's concept of performative utterances goes some way towards explaining behaviour acts. Calling an animal an "object" automatically puts into motion the process of objectifying it. This allows us to exploit and instrumentalize such objects – after all, that is what they are there for. The example of the particular language use by hunters, mentioned earlier in the paper, apart from dividing the surrounding world into subjects and objects, reinforces this activity in yet another way, i.e. by indicating the existence of a group. Knowing the particular language used by a community (the more closed it is, the more hermetic and arcane their language appears to outsiders) constitutes proof of membership to that particular group. The sense of belonging to a community activates psychological processes proper to group mentality, specifically conformism and diffusion of responsibility. The first makes it possible for members of a group to live in a subjectively created, and socially reinforced, conviction that certain behaviours are appropriate and others are not. Even if an individual might not agree internally with a particular behaviour or judgment, the existence of a group exerts social pressure on that individual to comply with the majority. The second mechanism allows individuals to avoid responsibility for their actions ("I'm doing what others are doing" or "there are so many people, so let someone else speak out"). There is, however, yet another mechanism at work here: adopting the language of a group also allows the individual to describe the surrounding world and feel a sense of community with others, which, in turn, allows people to reinforce the conviction that their behaviour is appropriate (psychologically: rationalization). Behaviour is regarded appropriate, as it is explained by tradition, ethos, social proof of appropriateness (based on the fact that others behave in a similar way). It is, therefore, not only language that objectifies the natural world; the fact of belonging to a social group that sees the world identically (similarly) also legitimizes one's approach to the state of things. The example of the hun-

ting community is especially poignant in this regard. For example, for many hunters drinking alcohol during hunting is a legitimate ritual. The quote below exemplifies the presence of the abovementioned meta-strategies:

For me hunting without drinking (in Polish: "oblewiny"), is like a wedding reception without music. I drink after shooting every animal. If I shoot a bull, it's a wedding reception. I'm not ashamed to write about this, because I don't consider this indecent. I've never seen anyone after a hunt standing in a circle with other hunters drinking juice. Celebrating with alcohol integrates hunters and I see no reason to condemn it. If there is alcohol, the celebration lasts until the morning and that's the whole point; and if women are involved, then there's nothing missing from happiness. I add that I'm not addicted. Best regards to everyone who can't drink. Don't be ashamed for this. DB. ("Dziennik Łowiecki")

In this quote we can see language which instantiates emotional distance (e.g. "I shoot a bull" and not "I'll kill a bull"); rationalization of behaviour (e.g. "hunting without "oblewiny" is like a wedding reception without music) and objectification (alcohol and women: equating these "objects" as indispensable for a good time).³

Finally, we arrive at the third meta-strategy: affective. It is obvious that by linguistically categorizing and classifying objects we set in motion the process of rationalization (thinking about an object in terms of the categories we imposed on it), and, consequently, particular behaviours and emotions. Using language that distances itself and classifies, e.g. animals, as objects, and not subjects, allows us to "shoot" them and not "kill" them; it allows us to celebrate taking a trophy (object), instead of crying over a lost life (subject). I would argue that it is impossible to unequivocally indicate the order in which these meta-strategies are triggered, as it is ultimately variable. I would also propose that we accept their interactive characteristics in creating a stance, which I would call "colonizing stance". I predicate my argument on the assumption that the differentiated three meta-strategies can be activated in a different order, which can be defined as a result of a particular situation (e.g. stepping on an insect. "It's only a bug". First we have an affective strategy, which fulfils the pur-

³ Clear evidence of how language triggers certain behavior is proposed by Basil Bernstein's concept of sociolinguistic codes, which linguistically define social situations and consequently set in motion certain behaviors among people: B. Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control*. Vol.1. *Theoretical Studies Towards Sociology of Language*, London 1971.

pose of distancing oneself from killing the insect, but appears as a result of the event. "It's a bug", so I can kill it, because it will bite me – categorizing the insect as an object, in addition a dangerous one, justifies killing it). The second factor influencing the activation of these meta-strategies is the process of socialization and the resultant internalized values and actions.

The hunting community was used here to exemplify these three meta-strategies, but an identical processes can also be observed in other professions, e.g. among doctors and veterinarians, social workers, therapists, and laboratory workers conducting experiments on animals. These professions are particularly vulnerable to the negative process of absorbing emotions that appear during their work in relation to the people and animals who are recipients of their services or are directly exposed to their activities (experiments). Establishing distance from them as well as from their problems constitutes a method of creating emotional barriers, which are to result in improved effectiveness and the possibility, for instance, of carrying out painful procedures. In these cases we are also dealing with a stance that I call colonizing and which hierarchizes the world, conferring its elements a particular place in a subjectively created order, sanctioned by subjectively selected rationalizations.

Conclusion

The 1960s and early 1970s saw attempts to reverse the man/world relation. Various groups attempted to emphasize that further unfettered colonization of nature will lead to irreversible ecological consequences, followed by social consequences, which is why they claimed it is necessary to exhort society to embrace conscious consumption, moderation and rationalization: "The turning point in the creation of green extremism was the decision prompted by the decision made by the United States Forest Service [...], to allot 36 million acres of forestland for commercial exploitation" (Pośluszna 9). This decision reflected a lack of pro-ecological thinking on the part of the US government and also became the clarion call for radical social movements fighting for conservation and restrictions on the exploitation of natural resources. From that time forward, we can observe a dynamic rise in the amount of ecological and animalist organizations and their

radicalization. However, on the other hand, we can also see this resistance towards the colonization of nature being propagated by more moderate means.

Another interesting issue connected with discrimination has emerged from within the debate on postcolonialism and it is one that I will only signal here – it is that of environmental injustice. This recently discovered aspect of colonization and its attendant consequences are expressed in the form of discrimination. It has been observed that colonizing nature entails negative repercussions for humans, particularly those who live in economically deficient conditions. These and other discriminated groups are in danger of living in areas devastated ecologically. Apart from other negative consequences of colonizing nature, there is here yet another problem that has been hitherto ignored. It should be added that discriminated social groups usually have more difficult access to financial resources, and their economical potential is much lower than is the case with more privileged groups. Racial, ethnic, gender, and age discrimination is compounded by the subpar living conditions to which these groups are consigned.

It is not difficult to notice that the meta-strategies of colonizing nature coincide with the strategies used for the purpose of colonizing culturally defined territories, and, as I have indicated above, they can also be employed for every process of colonization. The three meta-strategies distinguished earlier are: the linguistic/cognitive strategy, the behavioural strategy, and the affective strategy. The cognitive aspect can be located in the production of discourses that depreciate the animal world, developing scientific discourses which legitimize such practices (the above mentioned story can serve as an example), legitimizing actions of an instrumental nature that serve the purpose of exploitation. Furthermore, depersonalizing and depreciating particular animals, refusing them the status of actors, objectifying and reducing them to the level of passive objects facilitates the construction of cognitive barriers between what is human and what is inhuman. It is not only my opinion that this distinction is artificial and perhaps even false; however, it is one that allows people to maintain certain judgments, justify their actions and to colonize. Creating separate languages to describe the animal world, or, more broadly, to describe the natural world and to speak about the human world, allows us to reinforce that cognitive barrier (Kruczyński 21-29). Objectifying language is used here, i.e. a language that uses cultural depreciative

words (“dying” instead of “passing away”; “carcass” instead of “corpse”; “meat” instead of “body”) and a language that transmutes the subject into an object: (“tree” – “lumber”, “pig” – “livestock”, etc.). Looking at this situation from an anthropological-ethnological perspective allows us to discern clear analogies (civilized man-barbarian, primitive societies-developed societies). It is worth remembering what Ludwig Wittgenstein claimed about the mutual relationship between language and the world: that the limits of language determine the limits of knowing. Labelling by means of linguistic categories is here an important exemplification of how using language organizes our perception of the world. The second meta-strategy, behavioural, is realized thanks in part by the existence of the first, by means of dividing the world into elements that are worthy of consideration and those that are not; by using separate names in one case we are proposing a world of subjects and a world of objects in the second case. And finally the third meta-strategy, affective, allows us to build emotional barriers, thereby severing ourselves from the “object” being acted upon.

The three strategies undoubtedly are meta-strategies. The same way they were applied to the cultural Other, they are now being applied to the natural Other. Using and maintaining them is the basis for the colonizing stance, which grows in power and permanence through the mutual support of the constituent meta-strategies.

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