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POLISH THEORY OF HISTORY AND METAHISTORY IN TOPOLSKI, POMIAN, AND TOKARCZUK

FROM HAYDEN WHITE AND BEYOND

Jan Pomorski



Polish Theory of History and Metahistory in Topolski, Pomian, and Tokarczuk

This book traces the development of the Polish theory of history, analysing how Jerzy Topolski, Krzysztof Pomian, and Olga Tokarczuk have both built upon and transgressed the metahistorical theories of American historian Hayden White.

Poland's reception of White's work has gone through different phases, from distancing to a period of fascination and eventual critical analysis, beginning with Topolski's methodological school in the 1980s. Topolski played a major role in international debates on historical theory in the second half of the 20th century. The book's second study is a rare opportunity for English-speaking audiences to engage with the thoughts of Pomian, a philosopher and historian of ideas who has both complemented and developed theories of historical cognition independently from White. In the final chapter, the book presents a study of the historical imagination in 21st-century Central and Eastern Europe through the work of novelist Tokarczuk, the winner of the 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature. In considering the contributions of these three thinkers, the book explores the active process by which past becomes history and thus motivates contemporary actions and realities.

By deconstructing and reconstructing contemporary theories of history, this research is a unique contribution to the fields of historiography and the philosophy of history.

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Acknowledgements

This book is the result of many years of my reading and researching the work and writings of Jerzy Topolski, Krzysztof Pomian, and Olga Tokarczuk. I feel privileged to have met all three of them on my intellectual quests. To Krzysztof and Olga, I address additional words of gratitude for being the first critical readers of the chapters devoted to them. I am also deeply thankful to Danuta Topolska and Anna Topolska, the wife and daughter of professor Topolski, who, throughout my work on this book, graced me with kindness and support, not only in browsing through the private archives left by the Professor.

The results of my earlier studies on Topolski, Pomian, and Tokarczuk have been published in Polish, and these texts, properly reworked for the English-speaking audience and expanded with new threads, were the starting point for writing *Polish Theory of History and Metahistory*. The final outline of my book benefited a lot from the advice offered by peer reviewers who were the first to evaluate my proposal. I am certain that their opinions contributed greatly to the final positive assessment by the Editorial Committee, resulting in my book being now published as part of the prestigious Routledge Approaches to History series.

This book would not be possible without financial support from the Polish Ministry of Education and Science. The grant awarded for winning the “Excellent Science” – a government programme for international promotion of the top Polish scientific achievements – allowed me to cover the costs of translation into English. I am deeply thankful to my translators: Karol Kasproicz and Konrad Żyśko with whom I engaged in long discussions and (sometimes) fierce disputes in order to work out the best possible way to express in English both the depth and the tone, or true colours, of the thinking, not so much mine, but rather of the three protagonists of my narrative, whose first language was/is Polish, after all.

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Translators' Foreword

Translating Jan Pomorski's *Polish Theory of History and Metahistory in Topolski, Pomian, and Tokarczuk: From Hayden White and Beyond* has proved equally a truly remarkable challenge and a highly responsible task, especially in the face of the magnitude and significance of the authors and works discussed therein. In particular, the intellectual landscape of the monograph has been shaped by the concepts and notions such as *historia*, *dzieje*, *pamięć*, and *poznanie*, fundamental for the construction of each of the chapters and vital for the understanding of the thoughts presented therein. In fact, they, as well as their lexical environment, are so vital for the comprehensive exploration of the ideas promoted by Jerzy Topolski, Krzysztof Pomian, and Olga Tokarczuk that they, undoubtedly, can be juxtaposed with Stanisław Barańczak's *semantic dominant*¹ or Anna Wierzbicka's *keywords*².

It is precisely for those reasons, that is, the heavy semantic load carried by the keywords, as well as due to discrepancies between the lexical systems of the Polish and English languages, whereby a particular lexeme in one language could be rendered in multiple ways in the other, that the translation of the monograph needed to be approached with the utmost caution so that its intricate, nuanced, and oftentimes interwoven meanings are not lost. During the process, we encountered numerous translatory problems and issues that, for the sake of clarity and conceptual order, could and should be divided into certain categories.

Firstly, a category that needs to be put under scrutiny is the narrowing of the quite general and capacious senses of the Polish lexemes. This is best epitomised by the potential variety of meanings which can be attributed to the Polish *historia*. In the light of the assumption that meanings of words are not stable, intersubjective, and uncontested but are activated contextually, it should come as no surprise that the renditions of *history* into English encompass senses such as *history*, *tale*, or *story*. However, the text itself makes a crucial distinction between *historia* and *dzieje*, the latter being consequently rendered by us in the sense of *res gestae*. This is further underscored by Jan Pomorski himself, recognising the distinction between history spelt with the capital "H" (synonymous with history/past reality – *res gestae*) and the one spelt with the lowercase "h" (synonymous with knowledge/science/talk about the past – *rerum gestarum*) – understanding

history as what happened (*dzieje*), on the one hand, and history as what is written or said about history (the past), on the other. History is perceived here in the spirit of *Annales* school tradition as “human” past – history is about humans and their actions, whether we are talking about *historiae res gestae* or *rerum gestarum*. Jan Pomorski refers to the European (especially Marc Bloch in *Apologie pour l'histoire ou métier d'historien*) and Polish (works of the nestor of Polish methodology of history Marcei Handelsmann) way of thinking about the past. This distinction is rather absent in contemporary theory of history (or methodology in the nomenclature of Topolski and Pomorski), but it is still important to acknowledge how the past is being reflected in the present and how it affects the future. Pomorski and *cognising cultures*, which he examines, are therefore the starting point for developing his own concepts. Recognising the community-forming potential of history as a tool to raise awareness of the possibility of humans to change in the world means to be able to make/create history and influence the surrounding reality.

Staying within the broad category of *history*, we follow the translation of *historia powszechna* as *universal history*, relying on the title of Pomian's article: “World History: Global History, Universal History”, published in *Le Débat* in 2009. Such a lexical choice is also in agreement with the titles of other published and well-acclaimed books, for example, the series published in 1966 by Goldenkraft. As for *narracja historyczna*, its rendition *historical narrative* can be traced back to Hayden White.

Yet another major field of translatory challenge concerned the rendition of the Polish lexeme *poznanie*, together with all its derivatives (*poznawczy*, *poznający*, *poznawać*), with *kultura poznająca* standing at the forefront of the list and holding a central position throughout the text. After much deliberation with the author of the monograph, we resolved to rely on the term *cognising culture*, accentuating the dynamic nature of the process under discussion as well as its psychological, deeply conceptual dimension³. Thus, we go beyond the epistemologically rooted term knowledge or knowing, which possibly could be encountered in the works pertaining to the discipline of philosophy. We also discard its more vernacular equivalent, that is, *meeting*, simultaneously offering a contrast to the term *cognitive culture*, previously used in the English abstract of Pomorski's article “Abrazja i sedymantacja w roli historycznych metafor fundamentalnych” or article “Jerzy Topolski's Theory of Historical Narrative. On the Trail of Professor's Lost Book”, which was previously translated and published in *Historyka. Studia metodologiczne* in 2021. In the light of this approach, we consequently render *sposoby poznania* as *ways of cognising* and *osoba poznająca* as *the cogniser* (the latter having been used, among others, by James J. Gibson in 1979 in “The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception”).

Secondly, a series of challenges emerged relating to the identification of the concepts holding a steadfast position in the Anglo-Saxon scientific/academic world. One of such conceptions, *historiozofia*, is rendered by us as *philosophy of history*, despite an easily accessible equivalent in the form of *historiosophy*, offered by dictionaries yet not widespread in the available literature.

Another culturally entrenched concept is the one of *pamięć*, where, while our standard, strategic choice seems to be *memory*, we opted for the term *culture(s) of remembrance* (*Erinnerungskultur*) to render *kultury pamięci*, as it refers to the way in which a society deals with its past history. This term has also been well established in the literature on philosophy of history, having been used by Pomian himself. The distinction between *memory* and *remembrance* often correlates to a difference in socio-temporal scale: with remembrance being deeply rooted in time and collectivity and memory relating to the more recent past and individual experience. *Culture of remembrance* corresponds with the cultural approach propagated by Pomian and emphasises its character as an act of meaning-making in the present. Remembrance is important for Pomorski and how he ponders on Pomian's thought, because it can be conceived as a cultural force that helps to redefine social frameworks and to create links between hitherto unconnected *cognising cultures*.

Finally, it should be pointed out that while delving into the English versions of the source works discussed in the subsequent chapters of the monograph, we have encountered several shortcomings in their translations. For instance, the translator of "Collectors and Curiosities. Paris and Venice, 1500–1800" rendered the French phrase *spectateurs virtuels* as *potential audience*, while a faithful rendition would suggest *virtual spectators*. It is this term that we adopted in our translation, motivating us also to maintain *spectator(s)* in the sense of *widz* or *widownia* throughout the text.

Another section of meanings struggling not to "get lost in translation" concerns Jennifer Croft's translations of *Flights* and *The Books of Jacob* by the Nobel Prize winning-author Olga Tokarczuk. It should be pointed out that the Polish text *nigdy nie stałam się prawdziwą pisarką czy – lepiej powiedzieć – pisarzem, bo w tym rodzaju to słowa brzmi poważniej* has been rather scantly rendered as *But I never became the real writer* (*Flights*, p. 18), and it is this official form that has been used in this monograph. However, as a word of clarification, we are obliged to mention that the English agentive morpheme *-er* in *writer* does not specify the gender of the agent, while the Polish *pisarka* clearly points to a female writer, with Tokarczuk commenting on her impression that the Polish *pisarz* (male writer) sounds more serious than *pisarka*.

Furthermore, in *The Books of Jacob*, Tokarczuk's views are expressed by Jacob Frank when he points out: "*for women are to a considerable extent slaves of this world, knowing nothing of the freedom, having not been taught how to be free*". This is a rendition of the Polish passage "*kobiety są w większym stopniu niewolnicami świata, bo nic nie wiedzą o swojej wolności, nie uczono je być wolnymi*", where a suggestion arises that women are to a greater extent slaves of this world than men are, a suggestion completely lost in Croft's rendition, thus triggering a different conceptualisation of the world of males and females inherent in Tokarczuk's writing.

Another example of the transformation of the source text in *The Books of Jacob* is the omission of the last phrase in: *Pozwala im na chwilę obcować ze sobą, poświęca uwagę tym postaciom, które pojawiły się w jej życiu, i teraz, odsunięte przez śmierć na drugi plan, są jak ci weterani z Częstochowy, o których zapomniał król i zapomniała*

armia i którzy żebrzą teraz o odrobinę uwagi since the English text: *She permits them these relations for lifetime, and now, having receded into the background upon their deaths, they are like those veterans in Częstochowa whom the king and the army forgot* does not offer any equivalent to *i którzy żebrzą teraz o odrobinę uwagi* [begging for a little attention].

The entire text of the translation has profited greatly from mutual criticism and consultation among the translators, as well as from intellectual debates with Professor Jan Pomorski, who proved an invaluable help and guiding spirit in the process. We both thank him for making this project possible.

Karol Kasprowicz, Ph.D., and Konrad Żyśko, Ph.D.

Notes

- 1 Discussed in detail in his “Mały, lecz maksymalistyczny manifest translatologiczny” [A Small but Maximalist Translatological Manifesto] in: Idem. *Ocalone w tłumaczeniu. Szkice o warsztacie tłumacza poezji z dołączeniem małej antologii przekładów* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo a5, 1992), 7–66.
- 2 Explicated in her *Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- 3 The term *kultura poznająca* [cognising culture] was introduced by Jan Pomorski in his famous article *Historiografia jako autorefleksja kultury poznającej* [Historiography as Autoreflexion of Cognising Culture], published in a book dedicated to Professor Jerzy Topolski on the occasion of his 70th birthday: *Świat historii* [The World of History], edited by Wojciech Wrzosek (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 1998), 375–379.



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Introduction

The year 2023 will mark exactly 50 years since *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*¹ was published by Hayden White (1928–2018). Like only few other works, this book and its author – considered by many as the most important figure in the theory of history of the past half-century – have had a profound impact on contemporary theory of history and historiographical inquiries around the world.² The Polish theory of history also owes much to the inspiration drawn from Hayden White's ideas. I have written about it extensively in the monographic study *Hayden White in Poland: Facts, Criticism, Reception*.³ But the Polish theory of history is also a constant transgression of White's thoughts, in the theory of historical narrative itself, in the theory of historical cognition, and in the theory of historical imagination. Therefore, although I will refer to Hayden White's concepts many times in this book, primarily I would like to present the English reader with the original Polish contribution to contemporary theory of history. In the following three chapters, I will reconstruct and deconstruct the *metahistorical thoughts/concepts/ideas* of:

- 1 Jerzy Topolski – the founder of the Polish school of methodology of history, actively present in all the major international debates on historical theory in the second half of the 20th century;
- 2 Krzysztof Pomian – a Polish philosopher and historian of ideas, disciple of Leszek Kołakowski, and one of the most eminent living European intellectuals, for whom Europe, as he himself writes, is “a fragment of biography and an intellectual adventure”, and the historicity of the Being, which he has been studying for over 50 years, constitutes the greatest cognitive challenge; and
- 3 Olga Tokarczuk – a Polish historical writer, winner of the 2018 Nobel Prize for Literature, whose historical imagination knows no bounds, as she has proven time and time again in her works, with her phenomenal historical epic *The Books of Jacob* topping the list, the English translation of which was published in 2021, becoming an instant global bestseller.

What these highly original cognising cultures of history – Hayden White, Jerzy Topolski, Krzysztof Pomian, and Olga Tokarczuk – have in common is *metareflexivity*, a way of having an internal conversation about their own theoretical

2 Introduction

reflection and research/narrative practice. It is worth adding that *metareflexivity* is recognised by the British sociologist Margaret Archer as the highest form of human action.⁴ She admits that the way people engage in internal dialogue is crucial both for their personal and social identities and for the effectiveness of the actions they take within a range of social practices. The experience of continuity and discontinuity of the context of action, considered both in systemic and biographic dimensions, is relevant especially in science. The community of experience shared with significant others (e.g., authorities in a scientific discipline) enables cognising culture to maintain contextual continuity resulting in “repetitive situations, stable expectations, and durable relations”⁵, and particular varieties of internal conversation emerge “at the nexus between contexts and concerns”.⁶ This is often accompanied by an uncompromising pursuit of a recognised cultural ideal (e.g., some ideal of historiography if the self-reflecting agent is a historian, or an ideal of the historical novel if the reflecting agent is a writer). These are the issues that we will be dealing with when we meet the cultures as proposed by Jerzy Topolski, Krzysztof Pomian, and Olga Tokarczuk.

To practise historiography or the historical novel is also to participate, more or less consciously, in the cultural game that plays out between the culture being studied and the culture doing the studying, and also between the latter and the culture of the “audience” targeted by the historical narrative. This is why Chris Lorenz was of the opinion that “although all scientific historians are bound by the rule of reality, they are also bound by what might be called the rule of audience”.⁷ This cultural game with the audience is also a common leitmotif of the analyses presented here. The cognising cultures that Topolski, Pomian, and Tokarczuk create and study bear the stamp of their “today”: the place and time in which they were created. And at the same time they show us, the recipients of their texts, how the past can be present – actively present – in our Contemporary. They demonstrate what causative power it has, both in motivating people to act and in ultimately and directly affecting their collective actions – past as history. This is what distinguishes their approach to history from the metahistorical reflection of Hayden White, who, by default, avoids posing ontological questions. In the case of Topolski, Pomian, and Tokarczuk, the man pondering on history – *homo metahistoricus* – constantly asks himself such questions, being aware that the ultimate addressee and recipient of their reflection will be *homo historicus* (the maker of History). In this sense, the work of expanding the boundaries of the reader’s historical imagination is a prospective activity: a struggle for the future shape of History (*res gestae*).

A critical dialogue with Hayden White’s work began in Poland in the 1980s in the circle of Jerzy Topolski’s methodological school. Interestingly, for many years, Topolski himself remained critical of the thought of the author of *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, and it was not until the 1990s that he began to rediscover White and appreciate the

importance of historical narrative theory. The reception of the American meta-historian's thought in Poland has gone through different phases: from distancing, through sympathetic interpretation, a period of fascination (mainly thanks to Professor Ewa Domańska), to critical analysis and a kind of dialectical *Aufhebung*, as I will try to show in Chapter 1, devoted to the methodological thought of Jerzy Topolski. The oeuvre of this world-famous Polish methodologist and theoretician of history impresses with the sheer breadth of its subject matter (from economic history, through the methodology of history and the history of historiography, to historical syntheses)⁸ and its voluminous character: 30 books and over 1,100 publications. Similar to Hayden White's, Topolski's circle of reception and influence was global, though never as spectacular as the former. They were contemporaries – Topolski was born in August 1928, and White a half of year earlier – and though they grew out of different philosophical traditions (nonorthodox Marxism in the former case, analytic philosophy of history in the latter), they were able, at some point, to recognise the limitations of their backgrounds and develop their own theories, which brought them international recognition. I consider it a symbolic confirmation of this view that at the same time, in 1990, they both entered the editorial committee of the prestigious journal *History and Theory. Studies in the Philosophy of History*, which for years has been regarded as the most important periodical in the world for historical theorists. No wonder then that the work of Jerzy Topolski, who died in 1998 in the fullness of his creative powers, is worthy of recognition and international promotion⁹, all the more so because toward the end of his life he was working on a *New Theory of Historical Narration*, whose assumptions have recently been reconstructed, thanks to the notes found in the professor's archives.

Krzysztof Pomian, a Polish philosopher and cultural historian of Jewish descent, whose theory of historical cognition and history of the past as an object of belief, knowledge, and science – on a metahistorical level – is, in a sense, a complement to Hayden White's famous 1973 study, has been developing his epistemology of historical cognition parallel to White, though completely independent of him. Pomian (b. 1934), barred from teaching at the University of Warsaw in Poland after 1968, emigrated to France, where he was a professor at the CNRS (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*), Paris, until his retirement. White, who read Pomian in French, regarded him as one of the greatest minds of the 20th century and dedicated one of his last texts to him.¹⁰ And in his "Foreword", dated 9 February 2014, to *Przeszłość praktyczna* [The Practical Past] – a third volume of the anthology of White's articles and book's chapters, edited especially by Ewa Domańska for the Polish-speaking audience, Hayden White mentions Krzysztof Pomian as the final link in a chain of philosophical reflection on history as a science. The chain that leads from Droysen through Heidegger, Collingwood, Popper, and Koselleck.¹¹ Unfortunately, the Polish philosopher of history is practically absent in the English-speaking world, since he wrote and published almost exclusively in Polish, French, and Italian. This study is, therefore, an attempt at offering a synthetic presentation of and a lecture on his concepts, written especially for the English-speaking audience.

As is well known, Hayden White was particularly interested in the *historical imagination* as an object of study.¹² After all, he tested his theory of historical narrative on texts written by historians, philosophers, and writers alike. Therefore, he would probably particularly enjoy a study of the historical imagination in 21st-century Central and Eastern Europe, of which the 2018 Nobel Prize for Literature winner, Polish historical novelist Olga Tokarczuk, is the “bearer”. Her *reading of the world* is rooted in Central and Eastern Europe. It grows out of that culture. In the third and final study, we will delve into Tokarczuk’s world of historical imagination. This is the world of the cognising culture of history viewed from the perspective of a man of the Anthropocene epoch¹³, reflecting on the fate that his contemporaries have inflicted on the world, aware that she herself – Olga Tokarczuk – is a link in a long chain of predecessors and successors, who *on their pilgrimage* – this category has an epistemic significance for the Nobel laureate, which will be elaborated on in Chapter 3 – reflect on the world, history, and human nature, searching for meanings.¹⁴ Tokarczuk – similarly to Beverley Southgate¹⁵ – treats literature as a method of cognition, and as a tool of communication, creating a story about what she herself – while cognitively wandering through different times and cultures – has experienced. I hope that this meeting with the Nobel Prize winner – on the metahistorical level – will turn out to be equally (or even more) revealing and inspiring for the international community of historians and history theorists as the meetings with Jerzy Topolski and Krzysztof Pomian. I think that the latter two would also agree with Olga Tokarczuk’s thesis and mine that our experience of the past can only be understood and expressed by the multiple historiographic and aesthetic forms – cognising cultures of history, through which the past (*res gestae*) is turned into history (*historia rerum gestarum*).

Jan Pomorski

Notes

- 1 Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).
- 2 In this context see: Richard T. Vann, “The Reception of Hayden White”, *History and Theory*, vol. 37, no. 4 (1998): theme issue *Hayden White: Twenty-five Years On*, 143–161, and *Philosophy of History After Hayden White*. Edited by Robert Doran (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013). See also recent articles on Hayden White’s global influence: Jörn Rüsen, “A Turning Point in Theory of History: The Place of Hayden White in the History of Metahistory”, *History and Theory*, vol. 59, no. 1 (2020): 92–102; Paul A. Roth, Xin Chen, Veronica Tozzi Thompson, and Kalle Pihlainen, “Globalizing Hayden White”, edited by Ewa Domańska and María Inés La Greca, *Rethinking History*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2019): 533–581.
- 3 Jan Pomorski, “Hayden White a polska metodologia historii i teoria historiografii” [Hayden White and Polish methodology of history and theory of historiography]. In: *Hayden White w Polsce: fakty, krytyka, recepcja* [Hayden White in Poland. Facts, criticism, reception]. Edited by Ewa Domańska, Edward Skibiński, and Paweł Strózyk (Kraków: Universitas, 2019), 67–102.
- 4 See Margaret S. Archer, *Being Human: The Problem of Agency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

- 5 Eadem, *Making our Way through the World: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49.
- 6 Eadem, *Structure, Agency and Internal Conversation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 344.
- 7 Chris Lorenz. "Towards a Theoretical Framework for Comparing Historiographies: Some Preliminary Considerations." In *Theorizing historical consciousness*, edited by P. Seixas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 47.
- 8 A brief overview in English of Topolski's main achievements in these subdisciplines of historical science can be found in Marian Drozdowski, Jan Pomorski, Andrzej Wyczański, and Andrzej Zybertowicz, "Jerzy Topolski – For a New Shape of the Historical Science." Translated by Olgierd Wojtasiewicz. In: *Między historią a teorią: refleksje nad problematyką dziejów i wiedzy historycznej*, edited by Marian Drozdowski (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1988), 50–64.
- 9 An anthology of Topolski's work in theory and methodology of history has recently been published in English: *Jerzy Topolski. Theory and Methodology of Historical Knowledge: An Anthology*, edited by Ewa Domańska and Anna Topolska (Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University Press, 2022), 432.
- 10 Hayden White, "Krzysztof Pomian's Modernist Theory of Culture." In *Wśród ludzi, rzeczy i znaków. Krzysztofowi Pomianowi w darze* [Among People, Things and Signs. In honour of Krzysztof Pomian], edited by Andrzej Mencwel, Jacek Migasiński, Paweł Rodak, and Małgorzata Szpakowska (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2016), 319–331.
- 11 "First, the research phase of historical inquiry has been the primary basis for conceptualizing a history of historiography since the time of Ranke and Hegel. Not only that: philosophers have been debating the question of history's status as a science since the time of Droysen and down to Heidegger, Collingwood, Popper, and Koselleck and Pomian" [in:] Hayden White, "Przedmowa" [Preface], in: idem, *Przeszłość praktyczna* [The Practical Past], edited by Ewa Domańska (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Universitas, 2014), 7.
- 12 Herman Paul, *Hayden White: The Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2011).
- 13 On this kind of approach see: Julia Adeney Thomas, Mark Williams, and Jan Zalasiewicz. *The Anthropocene: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020), and Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Anthropocene Time," *History and Theory*, vol. 57, no. 1 (2018): 5–32.
- 14 As Jörn Rüsen used to say, *evidence* and *meaning* are the two main categories of historical studies. See his *Evidence and Meaning: A Theory of Historical Studies* (New York – Oxford: Berghahn, 2017). Probably, Tokarczuk would say: of historical novels, too.
- 15 See: Beverley C. Southgate, *'A New Type of History': Fictional Proposals for Dealing with the Past* (New York – London: Routledge Approaches to History, 2015). The author shows us, on the examples of the work of 19th- and 20th-century novelists, how to create historical worlds alternatively to – and additionally more personal, colourful, imaginative, and ethically oriented – how scientific historians do it.

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