

Leo Tolstoy's Urban Anthropology

Andrzej Dudek

ABSTRACT: The article tackles the issue of Leo Tolstoy's attitude towards the city, perceived as a *sui generis* organised space affecting behaviour of human beings. It analyses the literary works by the author of *Anna Karenina*, which either conjure up urban images or set their scenes in cities. Literary evocations are confronted with Tolstoy's non-fictional works and his own view on cities. The images of cities in Tolstoy are read by means of the apparatus typical of urban semiotics, developed mostly in the works by Yuri Lotman and Vladimir Toporov.

In this paper, basing on Tolstoy's works, images of Western cities are confronted with those of Russian ones, with a special emphasis put on the writer's private opinion on city as human environment. Tolstoyan vision of Saint Petersburg is analysed with regard to poetics of "the Petersburg text of Russian Culture." The article also hints at Tolstoy's inclination towards Rousseau's view on urban spaces.

KEY WORDS: Leo Tolstoy, anthropology, space, the Petersburg text of Russian culture, anti-urbanism

Urban motives appear very often in the texts of Leo Tolstoy. On every stage of his literary evolution images of cities or small provincial towns played a substantial role in the structure of Tolstoy's texts. By means of that motive the author of *War and Peace* attempted to express his attitude towards the fundamental questions of the 19th century civilization and to general notions of man. The author of *Anna Karenina* applies urban motives in both fictional and nonfictional texts. The narrator, or protagonist, reveals strong emotional reactions or believes connected with this said motive. The city, as seen by Tolstoy, appears in his texts as a form of space, social organization or a way of living.

Among the cities described or mentioned in Tolstoy's works we can come across not only two Russian capitals, many provincial towns like Kiev, Saratov, Sevastopol, Stavropol, Arzamas, Penza, but also some European and Asian

towns like Paris, London, Dresden, Eisenach, Tilzit, Austerlitz, Vienna, Lucerne, and Jerusalem.

The first town images appeared in Tolstoy's early short stories such as *Казачи* [*The Cossacks* — 1852], *Два гусара* [*Two Hussars* — 1856], *Севастопольские рассказы* [*Sevastopol Sketches* — 1856], *Из записок князя Д. Нехлюдова*. *Люцерн* [*Lucerne* — 1857], *Альберт* [*Albert* — 1858]. All of them differ from later works in as far as the way of presenting the town is concerned. Daguerreotypical registration of details and the domination of descriptive forms of narration are characteristic signs of the visible influences of the aesthetic principals associated with the natural school attempting to overcome a romantic subjectivity of presentation by virtue of the genre of the physiological sketch¹. On the other hand, the objectivity of urban descriptions in these cases is limited by distinctly emphasized personal opinions, ones expressed by the sensitive narrator.

The individualized, exceptional character of the town impressions is stressed by information about the observer being in motion or within circumstances undergoing natural changes. The movements of the narrator, season, time of day, light, the fact of elapsing time, the physical state and mood of man watching the town surroundings are the main factors influencing the shape and contents of the images of the town expressed. We come across such terms as “to the left”, “to the right”, “ahead”, “behind”, “far”, “closer”, “I can't see”, “it was warm”, “the first impression”. All of them pass on momentary and subjectively true information about the reality perceived by eyewitness:

Первое впечатление ваше непременно самое неприятное: странное смешение лагерной и городской жизни, красивого города и грязного бивуака не только не красиво, но кажется отвратительным беспорядком; вам даже покажется, что все перепуганы, суетятся, но знают, что делать².

[Your first impression is, doubtless, a disagreeable one; the strange amalgamation of town life, of elegant city and a dirty bivouac, strikes you like hideous incongruity. It seems to you that all, overcome by terror are acting vacuously; but if you examine the faces of those men who are moving about you, you will think differently³.]

Он надел шинель и вышел на улицу. Солнце уже спряталось за белые дома с красными крышами; наступали сумерки. Было тепло. На грязные улицы тихо падал хлопьями влажный снег⁴.

¹ Cf. V.I. Kuleshov: *Naturalnaia skola v russkoi literature XIX veka*. Moskva 1965, pp. 115—118.

² Cf. L. Tolstoy: *Sevastopol v dekabrie mesiace*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii*, v 22 tomakh. T. 2. Moskva 1979, p. 89.

³ L. Tolstoy: *Sevastopol in December*, 1854. In: Idem: *Sevastopol*. Trans. F.D. Millet. Harper & Low 1887, pp. 19—20.

⁴ L. Tolstoy: *Dva gusara*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii*..., t. 2, p. 245.

[He put on his cloak, and went into the street. The sun had just sunk behind the white houses with their red roofs. It was already twilight. It was warm. The snow was softly falling in big, damp flakes, in the muddy streets⁵.]

The discernible tendency to fill in the descriptions with details of the townscape's physical dimensions, the desire to orientate it by measures and categories primordially implied by the human body, indicate that the town was perceived as a space requiring adjustment and familiarization.

Yi-Fu Tuan — a specialist in the field of human geography, points out that people used to perceive open space in opposition to a place⁶. Usually, space bears the notion of freedom and danger, whereas place is associated with safety, with values being carried out, and with stability. Tolstoyan urban descriptions pass on a reversed evaluation. On the contrary to archetypal patterns of human perception, the town, like open space, is alien, strange, and dangerous. It requires an attitude typical for a man traversing the desert. In order to survive in such circumstances, space must be orientated. The human body gives one a hint in such a situation. The uncertain heroes within the urban spaces of Tolstoy's early works refer very often to terms that are directly related to the human body. Despite the people in the streets, buildings, institutions and distinct limits, Tolstoyan town images resemble rather space than place:

Беспре­станно, неволь­но мой взгляд стал­кивался с этой ужасно прямой линией на­бережной и мысленно хотел оттолкнуть, уни­чтожить ее, как черное пятно, которое сидит на носу под глазом; но на­бережная с гуляющими англичанами оста­валась на месте, и я неволь­но старался найти точку зрения, с которой бы мне ее было не видно⁷.

[Constantly, though against my will, my eyes were attracted to that horribly straight line of the quay; and mentally I should have liked to spurn it, to demolish it like a black spot disfiguring the nose beneath one's eye. But the quay with sauntering Englishmen remained where it was, and I involuntarily tried to find a point of view where it would be out of my sight⁸.]

Apart from the archetypal subtext of realistic descriptions of city landscapes in the early stories we can discover another interesting feature of the author's attitude towards town space. Some of the towns are presented in a way suggesting that they are living organic entities. Their life rhythm is determined

⁵ L. Tolstoy: *Two Hussars*. In: *Russian Proprietor and other Stories by Count Lyof N. Tolstoi*. Trans. N.H. Dole. London 1888, p. 200.

⁶ Cf. Yi-Fu Tuan: *Space and Place*. I refer to the Polish edition: Yi-Fu Tuan: *Przestrzeń i miejsce*. Warszawa 1987, pp. 13—14.

⁷ L. Tolstoi: *Iz zapisok Knazia Nekhludova. Lucern*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii...*, t. 3, p. 8.

⁸ L. Tolstoy: *Lucerne*. In: *Russian Proprietor and Other Stories by Count Lyof N. Tolstoi*. Trans. N.H. Dole. London 1888, p. 89.

both by nature and culture, the latter represented by the most spiritual, passing away, elusive elements (e.g., the sounds of church bells):

От церкви разносятся звуки колоколов и, колыхаясь над спящим городом, поминают об утре⁹.

[Only the sound of bells, borne over the city from the church towers, suggests the approach of morning¹⁰.]

Night and day in Tolstoyan descriptions are perceived as natural controllers of the activity of some towns¹¹. Because of recognizable manifestations of life, some cities in the early works of Tolstoy are presented with visible fascination, a positive or at least neutral attitude. Usually after a short period of initial interest the observer expresses his disillusionment or even disgust, resulting from a disclosed way of living typical for the town. The city in its attempts to overcome the natural rhythm of night and day appears an ugly and artificial environment.

In *Записные книжки* [*Notebooks*] Tolstoy put down, I believe, the only definitely positive in his works, but extremely short remark on the city, this being written in 1857: „Эйзенах — Дрезден. В 9 приехал. Нездоров. Город мил”¹² [“Eisenach — Dresden. I’ve arrived at 9. The town is nice”¹³]. Any other utterances, even though at times pointing out to some positive aspects of city life, especially a beautiful landscape (e.g., Lucerne) or an atmosphere warm and familiar (e.g., Moscow), are accompanied by many negative opinions and ill emotions.

Life, its presence, or lack of the life symptoms become the main category of Tolstoy’s evaluation of a city as a human habitat. That tendency develops gradually in the 1860s, to reach its most expressive forms in his late essays (*В чем моя вера?* [*What is My Faith?*], *Так что же нам делать* [*So, what shall we do then?*]) and in the diary [*Записные книжки*] covering the last 10 years of the writer’s life.

On the next stage, marked by the novels *War and Peace* (1863—1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877), the main focus of interest, as far as urban motives are concerned, is a critical look at the city, perceived as the cluster of high society, mainly in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. The proper names of both of the Rus-

⁹ L. Tolstoi: *Kazaki*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii...*, t. 3, p. 151.

¹⁰ L. Tolstoy: *The Cossacks*. Trans. L. Shanks Maude and A. Maude, Project Gutenberg Release #4761, online: <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/4/7/6/4761/4761.txt> [10.10.2015].

¹¹ Yi-Fu Tuan stated that “the city becomes progressively artificial as it ignores the distinction between day and night”. Yi-Fu Tuan: *The City: Its Distance from Nature*. “The Geographical Review” 1978, № 1, p. 8.

¹² L. Tolstoi: *Dnievniki*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii...*, t. 21, p. 189.

¹³ If not otherwise stated the translations of Tolstoy’s texts are my own — A.D.

sian capitals in the above mentioned novels very often obtained the meaning of the synecdoche *totum pro parte*, sarcastically evoking aristocracy:

Марью Дмитриевну знала царская фамилия, **знала вся Москва и весь Петербург**, и оба города, удивляясь ей, втихомолку посмеивались над ее грубостью, рассказывали про нее анекдоты; тем не менее все без исключения уважали и боялись ее¹⁴.

[Marya Dmitrievna was known to the Imperial family as well as to all Moscow and Petersburg, and both cities wondered at her, laughed privately at her rudeness, and told good stories about her, while none the less all without exception respected and feared her¹⁵.]

Tout Moscou ne parle que guerre¹⁶.

[All Moscow talks of nothing but war¹⁷.]

В первое время по получении известия об Аустерлицком сражении **Москва пришла в недоумение**¹⁸.

[On the first arrival of the news of the battle of Austerlitz, Moscow had Bern bewildered¹⁹.]

гордился тем своим домом, в котором она принимала **весь Петербург**²⁰.
[(...) been proud of my house, in which she received all Petersburg²¹.]

That literary device, on the one hand, points to one of the main problems, engaging Tolstoy: a critical appraisal of Russian high society, rejection of its way of living and mentality²² affected the writer's perception of the town, regarded to be the typical habitat of that sort of people. Because of this attitude towards the aristocracy, Moscow and Saint Petersburg appear as artificially limited forms of space, consuming human energy, restricting man's activity and spiritual development. The inhabitants of both cities are unhappy, alienated people, prevented from the feeling of belonging to the universe. Prince Andrei sensed the city's wreaking of havoc on man's inner life very well:

¹⁴ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii...*, t. 4, p. 75. Typeface mine — A.D.

¹⁵ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace*, book 1, trans. L. and A. Maude. Chicago—London—Toronto—Geneva, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 1952, p. 31.

¹⁶ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir...*, p. 115.

¹⁷ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace...*, book 1, p. 49.

¹⁸ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir...*, p. 18. Typeface mine — A.D.

¹⁹ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace*, book 4, trans. L. and A. Maude, Chicago—London—Toronto—Geneva, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 1952, pp. 170, 177.

²⁰ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir...*, p. 33. Typeface mine — A.D.

²¹ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace...*, book 4, p. 177.

²² M.S. Stanoyevich: *Tolstoy's Theory of Social Reform. I*. "The American Journal of Sociology", Vol. 31, No. 5 (March 1926), p. 581.

Механизм жизни, распоряжение дня такое, чтобы везде успеть во время, отнимали большую долю самой энергии жизни. Он ничего не делал, ни о чем даже не думал и не успевал думать, а только говорил и с успехом говорил то, что он успел прежде обдумать в деревне²³.

[The mechanism of life, the arrangement of the day so as to be in time everywhere, absorbed the greater part of his vital energy. He did nothing, did not even think, but only talked, and talked successfully, of what he had thought while in the country²⁴.]

Aristocratic heroes dwelling in Saint Petersburg, in order to become accustomed to the mechanism of city life must present a new attitude towards time, clearly different from the natural one. According to Tolstoy, the striking feature of a city dweller is one's illusion of time control. An eventful life, a long list of planned meetings, a desire to arrange every moment of the day, gives the impression of a constructive making use of time. That ability in the opinion of the high society is regarded as necessary for a civilized man, but according to Tolstoy it narrows the time consciousness, limiting it to a very short, momentary perspective, resulting in the conviction of meaninglessness, an empty, passing away of existence.

И с приемами петербургской деловой барыни, умеющей пользоваться временем, Анна Михайловна послала за сыном и вместе с ним вышла в переднюю²⁵.

[And like a practical Petersburg lady who knows how to make the most of time, Anna Mikhaylovna sent someone to call her son, and went into the anteroom with him²⁶.]

Tolstoyan protagonists are very often confronted by sudden events, sounds, images that trigger a flash of the illumination, enabling them to notice things and features previously imperceptible. Such an insight reveals the city's ugliness, makes them consider the fascinating busy town space in the context of signs, pointing out the absolute, permanent, long-lasting values, mainly of a natural origin. That kind of experience usually leads to a rearrangement of the value orientation²⁷. As a result of that process, the town, previously regarded as a lively and appealing form of social organization, appears to be only a delusion of life. Such an illumination usually begins with raising one's eyes above the dark streets and contemplating the night sky or with observing the difference between the clear natural light of the operating sun, contrasted with the dim and artificial street lights. Protagonists (like Pierre Bezukhov) or the storyteller

²³ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir...*, t. 5, p. 175.

²⁴ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace*, book 6, trans. L. and A. Maude, Chicago—London—Toronto—Geneva, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 1952, p. 242.

²⁵ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir...*, t. 1, p. 63.

²⁶ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace...*, book 1, p. 25.

²⁷ Cf. C. Kluckhohn: *Values and Value-Orientations in the Theory and Action*. In: T. Parsons, E. Shils (eds.): *Toward General Theory of Action*. New York and Evanstone: Harper & Row 1962, p. 411.

in *Sevastopol Sketches*, *Lucerne*, *Albert*, illuminated by natural physical light, experience a momentary flash of insight, which brings knowledge about the boundless and timeless space of the universe.

In the texts written in the period of 1860s and 1880s the author presents a different evaluation of Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Both city images in Tolstoy's works are marked by the author's visible dislike for each. In both cases Tolstoy pays attention mainly to the behaviour and habits of the aristocracy, but equally the causes and manifestations of the narrator's negative opinion are different in each case.

The images of Saint Petersburg stress the artificial space arrangement of the city. Due to unnaturally regular streets and squares, the huge scale of the urban design, the Tolstoyan heroes feel alienated from life, lonely, lost in a vast space which despite the visible signs of creative human will is experienced mainly by means of specific natural phenomena (mist, light, white nights, sun sets, darkness). Vladimir Toporov noticed that Tolstoy applies to the descriptions of Saint Petersburg a point of view typical for works establishing the so-called "Petersburgian text of Russian culture". As in the works of Pushkin and Gogol — the predecessors of that tradition, Tolstoy shows man affected by the contaminated factors of extreme natural phenomena and rationally regular, symmetrically arranged urban space. Both groups of factors change human behaviour, causing such emotion as irritation, nervousness, insomnia, the feeling of loneliness and helplessness²⁸.

Уже был второй час ночи, когда Пьер вышел от своего друга. **Ночь была июньская, петербургская, бес сумрачная ночь.** Пьер сел в извозчиью коляску с намерением ехать домой. Но чем ближе он подъезжал, тем более он чувствовал невозможность заснуть в эту ночь, походившую более на вечер или на утро. **Далеко было видно по пустым улицам**²⁹.

[It was past one o'clock when Pierre left his friend. It was a cloudless, northern, summer night. Pierre took an open cab intending to drive straight home. But the nearer he drew to the house, the more he felt the impossibility of going to sleep on such a night. It was light enough to see a long way in the deserted street³⁰.]

According to Jurij Lotman, one of the main characteristics of Saint Petersburg, revealed by "Petersburgian texts" is the phenomenon of theatricality. The artificial arrangement of the newly constructed urban space forces incomers to play upon the city stage. Lotman shows, that huge complexes of buildings devoid of history, resemble theatrical decorations, dividing the space into stage

²⁸ V. Toporov: *Peterburgskii tekst russkoi literatury*. Sankt-Peterburg: Iskusstvo-SPb 2003, p. 37.

²⁹ L. Tolstoy: *Voyna i mir...*, pp. 41—42. Typeface mine — A.D.

³⁰ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace...*, book 1, p. 15.

and wings³¹. That kind of space arrangement strengthens the feeling of illusion and quasi-existence. Quasi-life realized by prince Andrei seems to be an aspect of that issue. The story *Family Happiness* [*Семейное счастье*] is another example of people changing their behaviour and rearranging a hierarchy of values after arriving in Petersburg.

Aristocratic Moscow, on the contrary, gives an impression of familiar connections between people, well known places, an established schedule of events, providing the feeling of safety and the slow passage of time. Pierre Bezukhov, on his coming back to Moscow, experienced that kind of emotions:

Ему стало в Москве покойно, тепло, привычно и грязно, как в старом халате³².

[In Moscow he felt at peace, at home, warm and dirty³³] as in an old dressing gown³³.]

Doctor Lorrain, having arrived from Petersburg, discovered similarities between Moscow and the countryside³⁴. The heroes of *War and Peace* used to repeat that gossiping is the main occupation of Moscow high society (“Москве больше делать нечего, как сплетничать”³⁵ [“Moscow is chiefly busy with gossip”³⁶]). A closed circle of acquaintances passing on the news, resemble the village mentality. In the novel *Decembrists* [*Декабристы*] the narrator estimated this style of life as a sign of provincialism³⁷. However, Tolstoy, in his diary, underlines the difference between the real village and Moscow — regarded the quasi-village. According to the writer, any of his arrivals to the capital used to experience unpleasant psychological and somatic reactions:

1862, 27 декабря. [Москва.] Мы в Москве. Как всегда, я отдал дань нездоровьем и дурным расположением³⁸.

[1862, 27 December. (Moscow). We are in Moscow. As usual I have paid with sickness and bad mood.]

³¹ Ju. Lotman: *Simvolika Peterburga i problemy semiotiki goroda. Semiotika goroda i gorodskoj kultury*. „Trudy po znakovym sistemam”, t. 18, Tartu 1984, p. 39. In 1907, Georg Simmel in his essay *Zur Philosophie der Kunst. Philosophische und kunstphilosophische Aufsätze* raised similar ideas of theatricality, artificial space arrangement of Venice. Cf. S. Turoma: *Semiotika gorodskogo prostranstva Ju. M. Lotmana. Opyt perieosmyslenija*. „Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie” 2009, № 98, online: <http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2009/98/tu8.html> [10.09.2015].

³² L. Tolstoj: *Voina i mir...*, t. 5, p. 306.

³³ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace*, book 7, trans. L. and A. Maude, Chicago—London—Toronto—Geneva, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 1952, p. 303.

³⁴ L. Tolstoj: *Voina i mir...*, p. 90.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 71.

³⁶ L. Tolstoy: *War and Peace...*, book 1, p. 29.

³⁷ Cf. L. Tolstoj: *Dekabristy...*, t. 3, p. 376.

³⁸ L. Tolstoj: *Dnevnik...*, t. 21, p. 243.

It is noteworthy that a similar pattern of reactions and attitudes towards Moscow is revealed by Kontantin Levin. This hero of *Anna Karenina* — favoured by the writer with many autobiographical features³⁹, having arrived in Moscow used to feel annoyance, haste, shyness, an impression of inner emptiness and being lost. Levin reacts just like Tolstoy, reporting in diaries his Moscow moods⁴⁰.

The final period of Tolstoy, one shaping his concept of urban anthropology, began in the mid 1880s. The writer's views of the city influence on man became staunchly negative, dispelled of any illusions or moderating subtexts. That idea is expressed in the form of coherent system of beliefs and judgements, revealed in essays *What is My Faith?* [*В чем моя вера?* — 1884], *So What Can We Do, Then* [*Так, что же нам, делать?* — 1885], *The Kingdom of God is Within You* [*Царство божие внутри вас* — 1893] diaries and fictional works such as *Resurrection* [*Воскресение* — 1899], *The Kreutzer Sonata* [*Крейцерова соната* — 1890].

According to Tolstoy the truth about city life is written on the faces of city inhabitants. Their faces look ill, tired and full of fear. Interpretation of the information encoded in faces leads one to the conclusion of an inhuman hostile environment causing such an effect. The overwhelming power of the town is to be blamed for the unnatural behaviour of its inhabitants. City inhabitants used to invent new, harmful needs and direct all their energy to fulfil them, or worse still — to minimize the losses and damages caused by the fulfilment of newly invented needs. By means of this long-lasting process man creates for himself another artificial nature:

Люди эти видят только ткани, камни, дерево, обделанное людским трудом, и то не при свете солнца, а при искусственном солнце; слышат они только звуки машин, экипажей, пушек, музыкальных инструментов; обоняют они спиртовые духи и табачный дым; под ногами и руками у них только ткани, камень и дерево; едят они по слабости своих желудков большей частью несвежее и вонючее⁴¹.

[That people used to see nothing but cloth, stones, wood, made by human work, still worse — not by sunlight, but the light of artificial sun; they used to hear the sounds of machines, carriages, cannons, musical instruments; they used to smell perfumes and tobacco smoke; there are only cloth, stone and wood under their legs and hands; due to the weakness of their stomachs they used to eat mainly the off and decaying.]

The city appears to the writer as a moloch filling life or replacing it. Because of that artificially arranged space it is inhabited by miserable dwellers. The nar-

³⁹ Cf. V. Shklovskii: *Lev Tolstoj*. I refer to the Polish edition: W. Szklowski: *Lew Tolstoj*. Warszawa 1982, p. 380.

⁴⁰ Cf. R. Porter: *The City in Russian Literature: Images Past and Present*. "The Modern Language Review" 1999, Vol. 94, № 2, April, p. 476.

⁴¹ L. Tolstoj: *V chem moia vera?*, online: http://az.lib.ru/t/tolstoj_lew_nikolaewich/text_0152.shtml [10.09.2015].

rator of the *Kreutzer Sonata* stated that the town attracts unhappy people, who more easily can manage there with their own tragedies and disasters because of an important feature discovered within the boundaries of town space. Due to the predominant way of living and the specific inhabitants' time consciousness, the town appears a reality deprived of memory. The place becomes a pause between significant remembered events of biography⁴². Concentration on present moments cuts off the city dwellers from past experiences, resulting in their being unaware of the flow of time:

В городе несчастным людям жить лучше. В городе человек может прожить сто лет и не хватиться того, что он давно умер и сгнил. Разбираться с самим собой некогда, все занято [...]⁴³.

[A man may live a hundred years in the city without perceiving that he has long been dead and decayed. There is no time to balance one's own accounts, — one is too busy [...]⁴⁴.]

[In the city the wretched feel less sad. One can live there a hundred years without being noticed, and be dead a long time before anybody will notice it. People have no time to inquire into your life. All are absorbed. [...]⁴⁵.]

Tolstoy's attitude towards urban spaces at the beginning of the 20th century, in comparison with his early utterances, reveal new aspects. The writer focuses his attention on large groups of town dwellers, previously not mentioned in early texts. The poor, beggars, vagrants, jammed in night shelters, people living in dreadful conditions far beyond the level of human dignity are pricks of conscience for the society⁴⁶. Even that aspect of social criticism becomes an occasion for Tolstoy to compare village beggars with the poor living in towns, in order to prove the superiority and advantages of village life:

⁴² Cf. Yi-Fu Tuan: *Przestrzeń i miejsce...*, p. 245.

⁴³ L. Tolstoj: *Kreicerova Sonata*. In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii...*, t. 12, p. 163.

⁴⁴ L. Tolstoy: *The Kreutzer Sonata*. In: *The Complete Works by Count Tolstoy*. Trans. L. Wiener. Boston, D. Estes & company, 1904—1905, p. 367. The translator omitted the first sentence quoted.

⁴⁵ Cf. L. Tolstoy: *The Kreutzer Sonata, and Other Stories*. Trans. B. Ricketson Tucker. Project Gutenberg Release #689, online: <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/6/8/689/689.txt>.

⁴⁶ Lack of Tolstoy's sensitivity to the situation of the poor became a source of criticism raised by first Russian Marxists and populists in the 1970s. The book by Bervi-Flerovskii *Положение рабочего класса в России* [*The Situation of the Working Class in Russia — 1869*] was regarded one of the most expressive forms of polemics with Tolstoy's social concepts. Boris Eichenbaum stated that Bervi-Flerovskii's independence and authenticity of thought confirmed by his life, not marked by dissonance between words and deeds (due to the writer's poverty) was a prick of conscience for Tolstoy in the 1970s. Cf.: B. Eichenbaum: *Lev Tolstoj. Semidesiatyie gody*. Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaia literatura 1974, p. 28.

Московские нищие это нищие без сумы и без Христова имени. Московские нищие не носят сумы и не просят милостыни⁴⁷.

[Moscow beggars are beggars without either a bag or Christ's name. Moscow beggars carry bags and don't beg for alms.]

Having conducted a sort of sociological investigation, Tolstoy discovered that big cities are poverty generators. Moscow's indigent people migrated from villages in search of a chance to feed themselves. For Tolstoy that discovery is astonishing, a great paradox of civilization:

В словах «кормиться в городе» есть что-то странное, похожее на шутку [...]. Москва не сеет, не жнет, а богато живет⁴⁸.

[There is something strange, resembling a joke in the words 'feed oneself in the city'. [...] Moscow doesn't sow, nor does it reap, but it lives wealthy.]

The poor in Moscow, especially those met in night shelters are simply hungry people. Their existence is limited mainly to the fulfilment of biological needs, whereas in the case of village beggars — poverty very often turns out to be the chosen way of life, inspired by Christian teachings.

New problems discovered by Tolstoy in the city space on the turn of the 19th century are significant for the writer's interest in Marx's *Capital*. By that time Tolstoy, having thoroughly read the treaty, used to say that he is ready to sit for the examination comprising knowledge about *Capital*⁴⁹.

Having raised the problem of the poor in Moscow, Tolstoy not only noticed another large group of city dwellers, neglected in his early works, but once again attempted to show the deteriorating power of city life.

According to the author of *Воскресение* the "rotten city" deprives itself from the basic features of human existence. That idea was not exceptional one among conservatively orientated currents of Russian public opinion, especially in the second half of the 19th century.

Noticeable increase of peasant's migrations to cities after the reforms of 1861 encouraged opinions about the harmful influence of city life style on peasant's morality, integrity of village communes and corruption of typical characteristics usually associated with peasant' mentality, such as "sobriety, modesty, submission to authority and willingness to work hard"⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ L. Tolstoi: *Tak, chto zhe nam delat'?* In: Idem: *Sobranie sochinenii...*, t. 16, p. 167.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 211.

⁴⁹ Cf. V. Porudominskii: *O Tolstom*. Sankt-Peterburg: Aleteia 2005, p. 34.

⁵⁰ B. Alpern Engel: *Russian Peasant Views of City Life, 1861—1914*. "Slavic Review" 1993, Vol. 52, №. 3, Autumn, p. 450.

To sum up the analyses of Tolstoy's urban anthropology we should notice that:

1. the writer's negative attitude towards the town is visible throughout the entire period of his literary activity;
2. detailed descriptions of particular towns in the early works are gradually replaced by conceptual images of city space in the later ones;
3. the anti-urban doctrine voiced clearly in the utterances of the last 30 years of the writer's life became an aspect of the general doctrine of Tolstoyism;
4. by means of urban motives Tolstoy expresses his attitude toward the fundamental issues of the 19th century civilization (e.g., such problems as the opposition of nature vs. culture, the questions of axiological authenticity, the possibility of intercultural communication, the experience of culture crisis, the dangers of alienation);
5. Tolstoy's urban anthropology should be seen in the context of the anti-urban thought of such thinkers as Tacitus, St. Augustine, Francesco Petrarca, Michele Montaigne, which was to reach its sharp expression in J. J. Rousseau's criticism of civilization. The common current visible in the above-mentioned tradition right up to the notions raised by Tolstoy himself, is the firm conviction as to the destructive influence of the town, the degrading of the human consciousness, its morals, and condition. Very often a traceable allusion or direct indication of Tolstoy's fascination with these thinkers are visible in the works of this Russian philosopher.

Andrzej Dudek — dr hab., kierownik Zakładu Antropologii Kultury Rosyjskiej na Wydziale Studiów Międzynarodowych i Politycznych Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Zainteresowania badawcze: zagadnienia antropologii kultury rosyjskiej, religijne inspiracje w kulturze rosyjskiej, europejskie i rosyjskie koncepcje kultury, obraz kultury w literaturze, Wiek Srebrny w historii kultury rosyjskiej, rosyjska literatura emigracyjna. Najważniejsze publikacje — monografie: *Modele romantyzmu i realizmu w liryce rosyjskiej lat czterdziestych XIX w.* (Kraków 1992); *Wizja kultury w twórczości Wiaczesława Iwanowa* (Kraków 2000); współautorstwo podręcznika akademickiego: *Rosjoznawstwo. Wprowadzenie do studiów nad Rosją*, pod red. L. Suchanka (Kraków 2004); współautorstwo skryptu (współautor: Lucjan Suchanek): *Poezja rosyjska pierwszej połowy XIX wieku*. Część II: *A. Puszkina, M. Lermontowa* (Kraków 1990, ss. 192); redakcja naukowa: *Z polskich studiów slawistycznych*, seria X, „Literaturoznawstwo. Kulturologia. Folklorystyka” (Warszawa 2003); *Картина мира и человека в литературе и мысли русской эмиграции. Образ świata i człowieka w literaturze i myśli emigracji rosyjskiej* (Kraków 2003); *Idea i komunikacja w języku i kulturze rosyjskiej* (Kraków 2010); *Rosyjskie dzieciństwo* (Kraków 2015, współredakcja: K. Duda).