

The summary of doctoral dissertation by
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Africa in the Works of Christina Hachfeld-Tapukai and Ilona Maria Hilliges

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The Summary

In my dissertation I reconstruct the picture of Africa presented in the works of German writers Christina Hachfeld-Tapukai and Ilona Maria Hilliges. The first author went to Kenya, married Samburu warrior and settled in his village. The second spent a few years in Nigeria and became involved with a man from Yoruba people. Their publications, of which large portion are autobiographical, can be counted among popular literature. My dissertation fits in the context of spatial research in the literature and refers to selected sociological and anthropological theories of space.

The goal of the dissertation is to substantiate two claims: the images of Africa depicted in the analyzed works differ significantly due to the motives which brought the authors to Africa as well as the experiences gathered by them on this continent; application of the concept of space as an interpretation tool effectively identifies and emphasizes the cultural differences and facilitates their in-depth analysis.

The dissertation consists of six parts. The first covers an introduction and methodological reflections where I present selected theories of space. From the realm of philosophy I refer to theories of Aristotle, Descartes, Immanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Roman Ingarden. From the domains of sociology and anthropology I draw upon the works of Émile Durkheim, Alfred Schütz and Edward Twitchell Hall. Moreover I present selected concepts of urban sociology and reflections concerning the idea of a home. Another section of the work is devoted to phenomena that have significant influence on the perception of space. There I summarise the spatial aspects of religion, magic and ritual, relying mostly on the publications of James George Frazer and Bronisław Malinowski. The first part of my

dissertation concludes with a review of the state of research and reception of the works of the two authors.

The second part of the dissertation is devoted to the analysis of works of Christina Hachfeld-Tapukai. I begin with a biographical note and review of her literary output. Next I reconstruct the african spaces encountered in her books including a village, Samburu huts, home, nature, city and road.

The third part has an analogical structure and is dedicated to the works of Ilona Maria Hilliges. After summarising the life of the author, I analyse the connections between perception of space and religious and magical practices. Furthermore I reconstruct following spatial structures: home, village, nature, city and road.

In the fourth part I summarise my analyses, juxtapose motivations that had made the authors come to Africa and the specific character of their perception of the world. I point out that these factors are reflected in the authors' literary output. Next I compare the african spaces presented in the previous parts of the dissertation. I close this part describing the similarities and differences in the creation of african spaces in the publications of Christina Hachfeld-Tapukai and Ilona Maria Hilliges.

The fifth part summarises my investigations. The dissertaion ends with a listing of publications utilized in my research.