

English, Russian and Hungarian Metaphors of Morality and Immorality

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Abstract: Lakoff and Johnson claim in *The Philosophy of the Flesh* that our moral reasoning goes along the metaphors MORALITY IS LIGHT, IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS and MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS. However, the study of colloquial expressions taken from English, Russian and Hungarian shows a somewhat different picture. The paper looks at a number of expressions in the three languages, consider the similarities and differences between the English, Russian and Hungarian systems of metaphors relating to morality and immorality, claims that along with MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS there exists another metaphor, IMMORALITY IS DIRT, demonstrates that the *cleanliness/dirt* metaphors seem to be more elaborated than the *light/darkness* metaphors, and discusses the mappings between the source domains *cleanliness/dirt* and the target domains *morality/immorality*.

Keywords: metaphor, morality, immorality, cleanliness, dirt

Lakoff and Johnson present an outline of our moral cognition in *The Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*. They give an analysis of metaphors of morality and immorality and give a relatively small number of examples taken only from the English language. My aim in the present paper is to present, discuss and compare English, Russian and Hungarian colloquial expressions of morality and immorality and to find out which of the metaphors MORALITY IS LIGHT, IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS (Lakoff et al. 311) and MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS (Lakoff et al. 307) they belong to. Based on my examples, I show that the metaphor MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS seems to have its negative counterpart IMMORALITY IS DIRT and together they have a considerably larger number of linguistic expressions than the metaphors MORALITY IS LIGHT and IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS. Finally, I discuss the mappings between the source domains *cleanliness/dirt* and the target domains *morality/immorality*. (For metaphor, source domain and target domain, see Barcelona 3.)

At the beginning of my work when I studied examples of the metaphors MORALITY IS LIGHT, IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS and MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS I soon realized that Lakoff and Johnson's analysis does not mention the metaphor IMMORALITY IS DIRT. However, I hypothesised that I would find expressions that are manifestations of this metaphor. The other hypothesis I had was that I would find certain words recurring in linguistic expressions of morality and

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immorality. So I decided to collect and discuss expressions² containing the terms *light*, *dark*, *clean* and *dirty* in English and their Russian and Hungarian counterparts, *светлый*, *тёмный*, *чистый* and *грязный*, on the one hand, and *világos*, *sötét*, *tiszta* and *piszkos*, on the other hand, respectively. All these terms are adjectives, however, in certain expressions we use words belonging to other parts of speech, mainly verbs and nouns derived from the above adjectives. (Throughout the paper I give the meanings of Russian and Hungarian expressions in square brackets.)

LIGHT, DARK

In spite of the fact that the notions of light and darkness are clearly associated with morality and immorality I have found only a few linguistic expressions in English, Russian and Hungarian coined with the terms *light* and *dark* and their Russian and Hungarian equivalents.

Consider:

light woman [loose/easy woman]

dark powers/influence [evil]

In the expression *light woman*, I think, *light* does not stand for the opposite of *dark* but *difficult* and it stands for *easy*, in other words, a *light woman* is a woman a man gets easily without making a lot of effort, which means that the woman in question does not lead a proper life, she does not follow strict moral rules. Therefore the term *light* does not represent here some positive value but, on the contrary, it refers to a morally unacceptable behaviour of the person described. However, in *dark powers*, *dark influence* the term *dark* represents negative evaluation and refers to immorality. (The same meaning is used in the film series *Star Wars* when it tells about the ‘dark side of Force’. It is the character Darth Vader who uses his knowledge and the dark side of Force for evil aims and in the meantime his heart is filled with aggression, hate and malevolence. So clearly he stands on the side of immorality.)

In Russian and Hungarian the corresponding equivalents of *light* and *dark* refer to the notions of light and darkness, (give positive and negative evaluation) and are associated with morality and immorality respectively:

светлая личность [light personality]

тёмная личность [dark personality]

тёмное дело [dark matter]

² In the present paper, I discuss colloquial expressions taken from English, Russian and Hungarian monolingual and bilingual dictionaries because being set expressions they reflect the way English, Russian and Hungarian speakers conceptualize morality and immorality. (It must, of course, be noted that novel expressions, new coinages may be manifestations of the same metaphors as colloquial expressions covered in dictionaries but they are out of the scope of the present paper.)

sötét alak [dark person]

sötét ügy [dark matter]

The expressions *светлая личность* [light personality, person of blameless character] and *тёмная личность* [dark personality, man of blame] denote morally good and bad people, just like *тёмное дело* [dark matter] means suspicious matter, whose moral propriety one cannot be sure of. The expressions *sötét alak* [dark person] and *sötét ügy* [dark matter] have practically the same negative meanings and uses in Hungarian: wicked/evil/suspicious person and suspicious matter, respectively.

In the above expressions we associate light with positive values, whereas darkness with negative ones. When it is light, things are visible, when it is dark, things are invisible. If we can see things, we are most likely to understand them, but if we cannot see things, it is the opposite. When we understand things, we feel good, when we do not understand what is going on around us, we become uncertain, which often feels bad and dangerous. Not surprisingly, we usually think of *dark powers*, *тёмная личность* [dark personality] and, *sötét alak* [dark person] as dangerous or harmful characters. Their darkness and being dangerous are often rooted in their immorality. I think the above expressions containing the English, Russian and Hungarian counterparts of *light* and *dark* are all manifestations of the metaphors MORALITY IS LIGHT, IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS.

CLEAN

So far we have studied *light/dark* metaphors of morality and immorality. However, a large number of expressions collected from English, Russian and Hungarian dictionaries contain the terms *clean* and *dirty*. Below I will show that the metaphor MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS (Lakoff et al. 307) may have varieties within a culture, that is, “a culture uses a set of different source domains for a particular target domain” (Kövecses 67) and that the mappings of the same metaphor “may be different across any two languages” (Kövecses 123). First, consider the English saying:

Cleanliness is next to godliness.

This example shows the close relation between physical and spiritual cleanliness as if being physically clean were the starting point or the basis of moral purity. Consider the expressions coined with the term *clean* below:

as clean as a whistle

be squeaky clean

keep one's nose clean

If something or someone is called *as clean as a whistle* or *squeaky clean*, they are clean indeed, they have not done anything bad or morally unacceptable. And, of course, one can make sure to stay clean by keeping his/her nose clean, that is, by not interfering with morally suspicious matters.

If/When someone happens to appear as not pure morally, moral purity must be re-established. There are several different ways to do so. Consider the following phrases (*clear* is a verb in the first three examples, a noun in the fourth and an adjective in the last one):

clear somebody of something/ all charges/ guilt

clear one's name (of suspicion)

clear oneself (of charge)

be in the clear

have a clear conscience

One way is that another person does the cleaning for the wrongdoer as in *clear another person of something*, for example *of all charges*, *clear one's name of suspicion*, while the other way is to *clear oneself of charge*. No matter which way is chosen, the result is the same, that is, the former sinner or wrongdoer *is in the clear/has a clear conscience*, that is, he/she is in the position to appear (at least seemingly) morally clean. In the expressions above, there is no allusion to how clearing someone or something is done. In the expressions below, we can see that the clearing is done by the person in question confessing his/her sin:

come clean about something

make a clean breast of something

So it looks, once one has talked about his/her sin/wrongdoing, he/she has got rid of it therefore can be considered morally clean.

The above metaphorical expressions represent the following varieties of the *cleanliness* metaphor:

A PERSON'S CLEAN BODY/NOSE/BREAST IS A PERSON'S MORALITY.

A PERSON'S CLEAN NAME IS A PERSON'S MORALITY.

The most important mappings of the above metaphors are

CLEANING ONE'S BODY/NOSE/BREAST IS RESTORING ONE'S MORAL PURITY.

CLEANING ONE'S NAME IS RESTORING ONE'S MORAL PURITY.

I find that the highest level of abstraction (or the greatest level of metaphorisation) is present in the following expressions:

wipe the slate clean

(with) a clean sheet/slate

These expressions only make sense if we think of our sins/wrongdoings as leaving traces on a surface. In our thinking about our sins, they are stains on a slate/sheet, which means it is not clean. Because sins are unacceptable (often not forgettable) and dirt is considered bad the stains must be removed, the slate/sheet must be cleaned so that the person can be considered morally pure (again). So the metaphor A CLEAN SLATE/SHEET IS MORALITY has the following metaphorical mappings:

A PERSON'S CLEAN SLATE/SHEET IS A PERSON'S MORAL PURITY.

A STAIN ON ONE'S SLATE/SHEET IS A PERSON'S MORAL IMPURITY.

CLEANING ONE'S SLATE/SHEET IS RESTORING ONE'S MORAL PURITY.

In Russian there are a lot of expressions with the Russian counterpart of *clean*, *cleanse* and *cleansing*. Consider:

чистая работа [clean job]

чистые конкуренты [fair competitors]

чистая конкуренция [fair competition]

In Russian an 'illegal job' is called *чёрная работа* [black job], whose opposite is *чистая работа* [clean job]. In the field of work or sports one can have *чистые конкуренты* [fair competitors], and the situation can be described as *чистая конкуренция* [pure or clean competition].

Talking about morally pure people we often use the following expressions in Russian:

чистая совесть [clean conscience]

у него совесть чиста [his soul/conscience is clean]

он чистый перед кем [be clean in front of someone]

с чистой совестью/по чистой совести [with a clean conscience]

с чистым сердцем [with a clean heart]

от чистого сердца [from a clean heart]

It is interesting to note that the Russian adjective for *clean* is used to describe not only the morally clean person himself/herself but also his/her heart and soul/conscience. A morally pure person does and says things following his/her pure motives:

чистые побуждения [clean motives]

нравственная чистота [moral cleanliness]

чистосердечность [clean heartedness]

Just like in English, moral purity must be restored in Russian by washing oneself, too:

очищаться/очиститься [clean oneself]

очищать/очистить себя [clean oneself]

очищать/очистить совесть признанием [clean one's conscience with a confession]

для очистки совести [in order to clean up conscience]

выйти чистым из чего [get out of something clean]

The expression *очищать/очистить совесть признанием* above means that one cleans one's conscience by making a confession (and not by cleansing himself/herself in general), while the phrase *для очистки совести* [in order to clean up conscience] suggests that there may be other things one can do to restore his/her moral purity. In the last expression *выйти чистым из чего* [get out of something clean], on the other hand, we do not know how the cleaning is done, however, we see that one gets out of something as being clean. Let me note that a true confession is called in Russian *чистосердечное признание* [a clean-hearted confession].

In Russian we find two varieties of the metaphor MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS:

A CLEAN SELF IS MORAL PURITY.

A CLEAR CONSCIENCE IS MORAL PURITY.

And their metaphorical mappings are

CLEANING ONESELF IS RESTORING MORAL PURITY.

CLEARING ONE'S CONSCIENCE IS RESTORING MORAL PURITY.

In Hungarian we can see very similar imagery in expressions coined with *tiszta* [clean]. Things that we do and think are clean if they are in harmony with shared moral rules. Consider:

tiszta munka [clean job]

tiszta ügy [clean matter]

tiszta élet [clean/moral life]

tiszta szándék [clean intention]

A morally pure person is described with the following expressions:

tiszta jellem [clean/pure character]

tiszta a lelkiismerete [his conscience is clean]

tiszta, mint a patyolat [he is as clean as cambric/driven snow]

If one has sinned or committed something morally unacceptable, the person's moral purity must be restored. Consider the expressions below containing the verb *tisztáz* [cleanse] and the adverbial form + verb combination *tisztára mos* [wash until clean]:

tisztáz vkit vád/gyanú alól [clear someone of a charge/suspicion]

tisztára mos vkit [wash someone until he/she is clean]

tisztázza magát [cleanse oneself]

tisztára mossa magát [wash oneself until he/she is clean]

tisztára mossa a nevét [wash one's name until it is clean]

Finally, consider

tiszta lappal indul [start with a clean sheet]

The phrase gives evidence that the idea 'our sins and wrongdoings leave traces on a sheet' is not unfamiliar to Hungarian speakers. The expression may remind us of the English expression *with a clean slate/sheet*. To sum up, the following variations of the metaphor MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS lie behind the Hungarian expressions discussed above:

A CLEAN SELF IS MORAL PURITY.

A CLEAN NAME IS MORAL PURITY.

A CLEAN SLATE/SHEET IS MORAL PURITY.

A CLEAR CONSCIENCE IS MORAL PURITY.

Looking through the above expressions, it is interesting to note that in all three languages one can clean/wash oneself, one can clean one's name in English and Hungarian, whereas one *clears* one's conscience in Russian but one *has* a clear conscience in Hungarian.

DIRTY

The opposite of *clean* is *dirty*. *Dirty* and its Russian and Hungarian equivalents are used in a large number of expressions related to immorality or moral impurity. The adjective *dirty* describes morally weak or improper people, behaviour, actions and things. It is interesting to note that we usually think of men when we use the expressions below. Consider:

dirty fellow/dog/lot

be dirty mean

We usually describe men of age, who have an unhealthy interest in sex, by using the following expressions:

have a dirty mind

dirty old man

In our culture we call books and other things *dirty* if they tell about sex in an unpleasant or offensive way:

dirty joke/book/story

dirty language

Even a weekend can be called a

dirty weekend

when it refers to a time spent with one's lover (and often disguised as a business trip).

Illegal actions like taking part in a robbery or some other crime may be rewarded by

dirty money

Of course, there are a lot of ways one can behave unethically or do harm to other people. Consider:

do a dirty deed

play someone a dirty trick

do/play the dirty on someone

treat someone like dirt

dish the dirt on someone

The expressions above refer to actions in which the doer of the action cheats, betrays, takes advantage of another person or damages another person's reputation as in the last example of the list above.

have dirty linen

wash/air one's dirty linen/laundry in public

It is easy to damage someone's reputation if he/she has unpleasant personal affairs, that is, *he/she has dirty linen*. So, one should keep his/her dirty linen out of sight of other people. The problem arises when one *washes/airs his/her dirty linen in public*, that is, he/she discusses personal or family affairs in front of other people.

In Russian, the opposite of *чистый* [clean] is *нечистый* [unclean]. It is used in expressions related to immorality, however, based on the data I have collected *грязный* [dirty, muddy] is also used in a large number of expressions.

In the following two expressions *нечистый* is coined with abstract things. Consider:

нечистая совесть [unclean conscience]

нечистые помысли [unclean ideas]

In expressions related to jobs or business both Russian adjectives *нечистый* and *грязный* are used, referring to unethical or illegal things. Consider:

грязное/нечистое дело [muddy/dirty thing/deed]

грязная/нечистая работа [dirty/unclean job]

исполнять/исполнить грязную работу [do a dirty job]

грязная/нечистоплотная сделка [dirty transaction]

нечистоплотные приёмы [dirty methods]

An obvious sign of being involved in dirty jobs, illegal or unethical matters is having dirty hands, consider:

грязные руки [dirty hands]

The English expression *dirty linen* has its Russian equivalent

грязное бельё [dirty linen]

which can be used to refer to some unpleasant personal or family affair that one does not normally wish to share with people. If one gossips about unpleasant private things, we can say in Russian

рыться/копаться в грязном беле [rummage around someone's dirty linen]

If we compare the English and Russian phrases containing [dirty linen], we can see that their verbs refer to different actions (compare *wash/air* and *рыться/копаться* [turn over, rummage]). The English phrase means 'discuss unpleasant personal things in public', which can be done by people involved in the unpleasant affairs or outsiders, whereas the Russian phrase means 'gossip about unpleasant personal things', which is usually done by outsiders. The result is the same, that is, strange people learn unpleasant information about someone, which destroys someone's reputation.

People can tell dirty jokes, which involves speaking about sex in an ugly way, or one can make allusions, that are not nice:

грязный анекдот [dirty anecdote]

грязный намёк [dirty allusion]

Morally lacking people can be called

грязная личность [dirty personality, wicked person]

грязное лицо [dirty personality, wicked person]

грязный/нечистый/нечистоплотный человек [dirty/unclean/wicked person]

People who wish to impair someone's reputation can do it in the following ways:

втопать кого в грязь [tread someone into dirt]

смеиать кого с грязью [spread dirt over someone/smear someone with dirt]

The latter Russian expression resembles the meaning of the English expression *dish the dirt on someone*.

Now let us see Hungarian expressions with *piszkos* [dirty]. Let me note that other words meaning ‘dirty’ are also used in certain expressions. People (typically men) who do not behave fairly or do morally unacceptable things are often called *dirty* just like in English and Russian:

piszkos alak [dirty fellow]

mocsok fickó [dirty fellow]

piszok fráter [dirty cad]

piszkos gazember [dirty villain]

piszkos csaló [dirty trickster]

Dirty people are not necessarily involved in criminal things, however, they may only think of ‘dirty things’, and often show an unhealthy interest in sex:

piszkos fantáziája van [have a dirty imagination]

mocsos vénember [dirty old man]

More often what dirty people do (very often for a living) is also *dirty*, consider:

piszkos munka [dirty job]

piszkos ügy [dirty thing/matter]

piszkos üzlet [dirty business]

piszokság [caddishness, dirty trick]

Dirty fellows can get dirty money for their dirty jobs:

piszkos/nem tiszta pénz [dirty/unclean money]

People who do not behave fairly can be described by the things they do to other people:

piszkoskodik vkivel [have a slanderous tongue about someone]

besározza/bemocsolja vki nevét [make someone’s name dirty]

piszkol vkire/mocskolódik [slander someone]

All these actions do harm to other people by damaging their reputation. A person’s reputation is also damaged if his/her ‘dirty linen is hung in public’:

kiteregeti a szennyését [hang out one’s dirty linen]

Another expression to talk about damaged reputation is

folt esik a becsületén [a stain falls/has fallen on one’s reputation/honesty]

I find that all the above expressions are manifestations of the metaphor IMMORALITY IS DIRT (I present the mappings below), which is the opposite of MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS (Lakoff et al. 307) As it is pointed out above Lakoff and Johnson do not mention the *dirt* metaphor in *The Philosophy of the Flesh*, however, they make a contrast of the metaphors MORALITY IS LIGHT and IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS (Lakoff et al. 311).

CLEANSING DIRT/STAINS

As can be seen *cleanliness* and *dirt* are key notions in our moral reasoning. Cleanliness is good, while dirt is bad. If something or someone has become dirty, the dirt must be removed and cleanliness must be restored. Cleanliness can be regained by an act of washing. Consider what English expressions we have for cleansing:

wash one's hands

whitewash someone

In our everyday life we wash our hands whenever they get dirty. Metaphorically speaking, *washing hands* means refusing responsibility for something. Think of Pontius Pilate from the *Bible* (Matthew 27:24), demonstrating his innocence of the death of Jesus Christ. (Another famous example of hand-washing is in scene 1 act V of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Shakespeare 941), where Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking and imitating washing her hands after the death of King Duncan.) As can be seen hand-washing is a way to restore one's own moral purity. However, *whitewashing someone* is used to mean clearing another person of the charge or suspicion that one has done something that is against the community's moral expectations.

Consider the following Russian expressions related to washing and washing hands:

умывать/умыть руки [wash one's hands]

умываться/умыться [wash oneself]

умывание [washing]

отмываться/отмыться [wash oneself]

отмывать/отмыть кого [wash someone]

рука руку моет [a hand washes a hand]

The last expression in the list above *рука руку моет* [a hand washes a hand] refers to a situation, in which several people are involved and they share responsibility so when it comes to cleansing one hand washes another person's hand. In other words, people involved clear each other of anything that may destroy or tarnish their reputation.

The aim of washing or cleansing is to become clean, metaphorically to reach a state of moral purity. However, it is a challenge to whitewash something really dirty and similarly it is (almost) impossible to remove responsibility of someone who has violated moral rules. Consider:

отмыть кого-нибудь добела [wash someone until they are clean]

отмыть чёрного кобеля добела [whitewash a black male animal/ male dog]

чёрного кобеля не отмоешь добела [it is impossible to whitewash a black male dog]

The saying in the last line above captures the impossibility of making someone who has done something wrong or illegal look innocent.

In the world of financial crimes and black economy it is usually money that needs washing. Consider:

отмывать/отмыть деньги/денег [launder money]

отмывание деньги [money laundering]

The phrase *money laundering* is used in English, too, for a method to legalize money gained in criminal situations.

In Hungarian very similar images are used to describe cleansing oneself or someone else:

mossa a kezét [wash one's hands]

kéz kezét mos [a hand washes a hand]

mosakszik [wash oneself]

mosakodás [washing]

tisztára/fehérre mos valakit [wash someone until he/she is clean]

szerecsenmosdatás [washing of a blackamoor]

Kéz kezét mos [a hand washes a hand] means exactly the same as *рука руку мою* in Russian, that is, a hand washes another person's hand. To put it differently, those who have committed something wrong together try to help each other to appear morally clean again. The last expression *szerecsenmosdatás* [washing of a blackamoor] calls our attention to the impossibility of the action just like the Russian saying *чёрного кобеля не отмоешь добела* [it is impossible to whitewash a black male dog] does.

Above we have seen that moral cleansing is metaphorically expressed by washing, washing hands and whitewashing. We may ask the question what we want to get rid of when we wash ourselves or wash our hands. The straightforward answer is that we want to remove dirt from ourselves and from our hands. But how do we conceptualize the dirt we need to remove? To answer this question let us consider the following expressions:

The sandal left a dark stain on his reputation. (McIntosh 799)

wash/wipe the slate/sheet clean

The phrases above suggest that we conceptualize our reputation as a slate or a sheet, on which things we are involved in leave traces. Bad things, unpleasant events, mistakes, wrongdoings, sins leave stains on our slate or sheet. That is, our reputation is conceptualized as a surface (slate/sheet) and our wrong actions as stains on the surface. Because good reputation is thought of as a clean surface stains have to be removed from it. (Let me note briefly that the term *dark* being associated with immorality in the example sentence emphasizes that having a stain on one's reputation is a really bad thing.)

I think, the Russian imagery is the same as the English:

у него репутация/честь запятнанная [his reputation/honesty is stained]

пятно на его репутации [there is a stain on his reputation]

пятнать/запятнать репутацию кого [to stain someone's reputation]

запятнать своё имя/свою честь [to stain one's own name/reputation]

это не запятнало его честь [this has not stained his reputation]

All the above expressions differ only in their grammatical structures, they contain participles, noun and verb forms of the word *пятно* [stain] in Russian.

Finally, the Hungarian expressions below show a very similar picture:

folt esett a becsületén [a stain has fallen on his honesty]

foltot ejt vki jó hírnevén/becsületén [drop a stain on someone's reputation/honesty]

foltot ejt a saját nevén/becsületén [drop a stain on one's reputation/honesty]

beszennyezi a saját nevét/becsületét [let one's name/honesty get dirty]

Based on the examples taken from English, Russian and Hungarian we can say that the system of *cleanliness/dirt* metaphors of morality/immorality seems to be rather elaborated. It has a large number of linguistic expressions. On the other hand, *light* corresponds to *clean*, while *dark* to *dirty* in expressions of morality and immorality, respectively.

In relation to the idea of cleansing the metaphors MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS and IMMORALITY IS DIRT are based on the following sets of mappings (see Kövecses 123-127) between the source domains *cleanliness* and *dirt* and the target domains *morality* and *immorality*:

(a)

CLEAN HANDS BELONG TO MORALLY PURE PEOPLE

DIRTY HANDS BELONG TO MORALLY IMPURE PEOPLE

WASHING HANDS IS RESTORING MORAL PURITY

(b)

ONE'S NAME IS ONE'S REPUTATION

ONE'S CLEAN NAME IS ONE'S GOOD REPUTATION

ONE'S DIRTY NAME IS ONE'S BAD REPUTATION

CLEANING ONE'S NAME IS RESTORING GOOD REPUTATION

(c)

A SLATE/SHEET IS HUMAN CONSCIENCE

A CLEAN SLATE/SHEET IS MORAL PURITY

DIRT/A STAIN ON THE SLATE/SHEET IS A SIN/IMMORAL ACTION

CLEANING THE SLATE/SHEET IS RESTORING MORAL PURITY

CONCLUSION

In the above discussion we have seen that (a) in addition to the three metaphors presented by Lakoff and Johnson there is a fourth metaphor, namely IMMORALITY IS DIRT that has a large number of linguistic expressions in English, Russian and Hungarian, (b) the metaphors MORALITY IS CLEANLINESS and IMMORALITY IS DIRT seem to be significantly more elaborated than MORALITY IS LIGHT and IMMORALITY IS DARKNESS in all the three languages, (c) there are variations (Kövecses 67-68, 89) of these metaphors (hand, name, slate/sheet). It must be noted that similarities may be explained by the fact that all the three languages belong to cultures that have the

roots of their moral reasoning in the Bible setting the basic rules of what we consider moral and immoral.

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