CULTURAL THEORY AND HISTORY: THE CHANGE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

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Contents

Introduction

The book presented here belongs to the series documenting different topics discussed during the seminary that was held in The Institute of Cultural Studies (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan) in 2011–2013. The seminary itself was dedicated to the study of the theoretical consequences of different methodologies and approaches engaged by historians in the particular field of the theory of cultural change. The seminary consisted of young scholars belonging to various intellectual traditions, working within different specialities and different, sometimes mutually exclusive methodologies. Not the common point of view, but a shared interest in the problem of change and its possible theoretical solutions united the seminary.

Three texts presented here deal with separate but still deeply connected issues connected with theoretical problems discussed in previous books of the series. A n d r z e j B e ł k o t concentrates his study on the historical dimension of the structures of everyday life, following and modifying the solutions indicated both by historians and cultural theoreticians. The main frame of his considerations is formed by the theory of cultural participation as developed in Poznan University. The article proposed by S t a n i s ł a w K a n d u l s k i reaches back to the main topic of the first book in the series, once again discussing the relationship between historical concept of mentality and the socio-pragmatic theory of culture. Still the author approaches the topic differently and achieves new results. The third study, proposed by M a r t a K o s i ń s k a, introduces a new point of view and an intellectual tradition not yet discussed extensively within this series. Her effort is to confront the theoretical achievements of cultural historians with the paradigm of British cultural studies and contemporary poststructuralist humanities.

The text presented in this volume are diverse and follow different theoretical principia and different methodologies, while remaining within our main field of interest and researching the problems of cultural change and the relationship between culture and time. We did not try to artificially unite them as our goal was rather to trace different theoretical possibilities than to propose finite solutions.

Krzysztof Moraczewski

Chapter I

Everyday life history(-ies) in the context of the individual's participation in culture

> You who celebrate bygones!
> Who have explored the outward, the surfaces of the races – the life that has exhibited itself;
> Who have treated of man as the creature of politics, aggregates, rulers and priests;
> I, habitant of the Alleghanies, treating of him as he is in himself, in his own rights,
> Pressing the pulse of the life that has seldom exhibited itself (the great pride of man in himself);
> Chanter of Personality, outlining what is yet to be,
> I project the history of the future.
>
> Walt Whitman, *To a historian*

Two fundamental contexts are involved in the issues related to everyday life history(-ies), namely: the theoretical and methodological context, and the context of the subject and (sub-)discipline. The former refers to the general condition of historiography – as a field of research and description (oral and written) of the "past," the latter is connected with the question of dimension (scope) of "everyday life" as such – as the subject of study. To begin with, it should be stated that institutionally sanctioned histori-ography has a social approval (consent and also a privilege) for delivering

"true stories"[1] about the "historical past."[2] One of the simple and common intuitions about history stands behind this view. John H. Arnold was one of the researchers who decided to conduct its reconstruction. According to this English researcher, there is a common belief that history is "a true story about something what happened a long time ago, recalled in the present day. The past gets revived one more time, and the imbalanced relation between 'then' and 'now' is re-established."[3]

However, the mere understanding of "true stories" has its historic context of origin. Early modern time was characterized by the advantage of aesthetic form over the explanatory and descriptive context – the Ciceronian rhetoric style dominated over the imitative verismo. Historiography of the Enlightenment frequently recreated events connected with personified "great concepts," such as Mind, Nature, Man, Spirit and even Progress,[4] which frequently exemplified the fortunes of "great men." History was approached from different perspectives, such as follows 1) the anthropomorphic one, e.g. by using such notions as genesis, progress, maturation or end; 2) the one concerning outlooks on life, e.g. by considering a supernatural

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[1] According to J. H. Arnold "in the true story there is a necessary tension: history is 'true' because it must be compatible with the evidence and facts which it refers to but it also has to show that given facts are wrong and they require renewed compilation. At the same time it is 'a story' because it interprets facts placing them in a wider context or including it in the course of narration." J. H. Arnold, *Historia*, transl. J. Jaworska, Prószyński i S-ka, Warsaw 2001, p. 25. According to Hayden White this term contains *contradictio in adiecto*. He thinks that there is nothing like "true stories." "Stories are told or written, but not found. When it comes to the notion of a 'true' story, it is a contradiction in terms. All stories are fictional. It means that they can be 'true' but only in a metaphorical sense or in the same way as a rhetorical figure is true." H. White, *Proza historyczna*, ed. E. Domańska, Universitas, Cracow 2009, p. 34.

[2] One of the definitions of the "historical past" is proposed by H. White, after M. Oakeshott. He understands it as "a construction and highly selective version of the past approached as a whole comprising all events and beings, which occurred in the past and mostly left the evidence of their existence. Therefore, historians are always forced to specify the subject of history (a state, a nation, a class, a place, an institution etc.) which could be described by a story based on facts (contrary to an invented one). In other words, the historical past should be distinguished from the past as a constantly changing whole of which the former is merely a small section." H. White, *Proza historyczna*, p. 15.

[3] J. H. Arnold, *Historia*, p. 15. It involves a mythopoeic element because it reminds one of a process of updating of a mythical event described by Mircea Eliade in *Sacrum, myth, history*.

[4] The work by Jean Antoine Nicolas de Condorcet *Outlines of a historical view of the progress of the human mind* illustrates this trend.

intervention (providentialism) of the historical sprit (historicism); 3) the didactic one, e.g. by evaluating persons and events using moral categories; 4) the commonsense one e.g. by using colloquial categories. "True stories" were supposed to provide answers to universal questions connected with the human condition and the regularities of its timeless existence.[5]

Political history in the parade of "great men" and in the atmosphere of "great events" threw a long lasting shadow onto the topics and objectives of historiography. Despite the fact that its 19th century direction was guided by the truly Aristotelian, concise sentence coined by Leopold von Ranke "to tell only how it really was" (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*),[6] the concept that a historian should deal only with the events and persons worth attention was not rejected. Each time, the verification of authenticity and the quality of *historie rerum gestarum* was carried out under the auspices of the workshop criteria current in a given moment of dealing with *res gestae*.

The task of a historian was to focus on the critical review of evidence and a controlled reconstruction of "how it really was." An important feature present in all directions of classical historiography was to aim for the synthetic and holistic approach to the subject of study, with the emphasis on the case connection between the presented actors and phenomena. The "Divine Eye" perspective made history a phenomenon which was easy to capture and evaluate. Michel Foucault in his considerations points out that "traditional methods of historical research are based on describing reasons and consequences of great political or social events, or creating some lines of continuation and development which connect particular historical facts in a logical and understandable whole, and also on looking for common sources, beginnings, omnipresent motifs and the ultimate meaning, at the same time trying to provide an 'objective' description of history."[7]

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[5] This view was proclaimed by an outstanding representative of the Enlightenment – David Hume. "People are the same to such an extent, regardless of time and place, that history will not tell us anything unusual in this matter. Its main benefit stems from the fact that it discovers constant and common elements of human nature." D. Hume, *Badania dotyczące rozumu ludzkiego*, transl. J. Łukasiewicz, K. Twardowski, PWN, Warsaw 1977, p. 101.

[6] According to Jerzy Topolski we are dealing with a transition "from history (as a narrative about the past), whose aim is *utilitas* (being beneficial and effective) to history oriented for discovering the truth [for it is] the evolution of historical research from *utlilitas* to *veritas*." J. Topolski, *Historia i życie*, Wyd. Lubelskie, Lublin 1988, p. 6.

[7] D. Leszczyński, L. Rasiński, *Introduction*, in M. Foucault, *Filozofia – Historia – Polityka. Wybór pism*, Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warsaw – Wroclaw 2000, pp. 19–20.

Abandoning this "Thucydides tower," as Arnaldo Momigliano puts it,[8] took historiography a lot of time. Departing from the vision of history based on events and individuals for the benefit of an extensive research of historical processes, which are complex and difficult to verify, took place gradually. The beginnings coincided with a precise analysis of the source language, which could date back to the first studies by Lorenzo Valla on "Constantine's donation."[9] His studies were coupled with considerations about the complex relations between society (structure, relations, kinship), the economy (production, trade, consumption), geography (location, climate) and culture (in understanding the "entity" or "spirit" of a given nation, their language and art).

Later on, the transformation of the cognitive perspectives and conceptual apparatus related to them facilitated the development of historiographic research awareness. Discovering new ways for the articulation of history became as important as the antiquarian search through the archives to find new, unknown sources or the archaeological exploration of new and old excavations. The classical model of historiographic analysis was thoroughly scrutinized. This was explicitly expressed by an exquisite researcher of the Annales School – Ferdinand Braudel:

> Hi-story, which is so dear to Ranke, may offer us [...] lights, but without brilliance; facts, but dehumanized. It is worth noticing that history-story always puts forward a claim to describe "how it really was." [...] Actually it secretly reveals itself as an interpretation, as an authentic philosophy of history. Under this approach, hi-story reflecting on human life involves dramatic events, a game of exceptional individuals, who control their own fate and even more significantly control ours. But when it tells about "common history," it is a chain of exceptional vicissitudes, as every protagonist must take into account another protagonist. We all know what an unreliable illusion that is.[10]

As a consequence of the above criticism, simple causality theories were contrasted with structuralist determinations, the subject-conscious approach with the object-unconscious one, and methodological individualism with anti-individualism. The rational-choice conditioning preferred under the traditional approach is extended to comprise alternative or complementary functional and functional-genetic conditioning.[11] Next to

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[8] J. H. Arnold, *Historia*, p. 45.

[9] J. Pomian, *Przeszłość jako przedmiot wiary. Historia i filozofia w myśli średniowiecznej*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warsaw 2009, p. 10.

[10] F. Braudel, *Historia i trwanie*, transl. B. Geremek, Czytelnik, Warsaw 1999, p. 29.

[11] This terminology is applied by Poznan school of cultural studies. The primacy of subjective and rational conditioning within the methodological individualism in earlier

the previous actors of history, namely: "great men," "historical processes," "states," "civilizations," "cultures," and "societies,"[12] other aspects appeared, such as "anonymous masses," "ordinary people," things, cities, villages and sometimes even nature.[13]

Considering the above, historical studies were enriched by theories and research in the following fields: religious, political, anthropological, geographical, economic, linguistic, sociological, legal, demographic and biological, and many others, even more professional.[14] "However, historians know – as the author of *Forms of Life in Europe* claims – that nothing remains unchangeable, so they must set out to find changes of lifestyles in time and space. Anyway the lifestyle is connected not only with the economy but also with the state, the law and the religion."[15] This resulted in experiments with new methods of studying the "historical past." And so, the analysis of letters and last wills may be as equally important as the statistics of marriages and divorces (in a given time period, for a given population) to gain knowledge about something seemingly as elusive as "mentality."[16]

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studies was observed by W. Reinhard. He claims that "here the floor is taken by market economy ideology which originates from the *rational-choice* theory, but it goes too far, as it underestimates unconscious and not considered dimensions of cultural behavior. [However] [l]ately culture has not been perceived as a system but as a process of continuous negotiation with a high degree of individual choice." W. Reinhard, *Życie po europejsku. Od czasów najdawniejszych po współczesność*, transl. J. Antkowiak, Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2009, p. 22. "Behind the gestures of those who seemed to direct the game of events, now a tough collective reality of every society and every culture emerges – M. Bloch the cofounder of the Annales School comments on the above change – we moved from the level of an event to the level of hidden but efficient and continuously functional infrastructures." M. Bloch after J. Le Goff, *Czy historia polityczna jest nadal 'kręgosłupem historii'?*, in idem, *Świat średniowiecznej wyobraźni*, transl. M. Radożycka-Paoletti, Volumen – Bellona, Warsaw 1997, p. 10.

[12] Wojciech Wrzosek lists three traditional idols of history: politics, the individual and chronology. W. Wrzosek, *Stosunek jednostkowe – społeczne jako dylemat współczesnej historiografii*, in K. Zamiara (ed.), *Humanistyka jako autorefleksja kultury*, CIA Books, Poznan 1993/95, p. 58.

[13] Here it is worth mentioning the work of E. Le Roy Ladurie entitled *Montaillou: Village occitan 1294–1324*, P. Chaunu *Seville and Atlantic* and a famous work by F. Braudel *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*.

[14] F. Braudel, *Historia i trwanie*, p. 48.

[15] W. Reinhard, *Życie po europejsku...*, p. 387.

[16] Other, equally mysterious events of historical research are the "incommensurate degrees of the rationality of knowledge" (Bachelard), the "framework of thinking" (Koy-

The aims of the new historiography have become far-reaching. As Wojciech Wrzosek points out "Contemporary historiography abandons the descriptions of the world perceived by an individual, it departs from the world of events in which an individual is the agent, the world appealing to its ordinary understanding and feeling. Contrary to traditional history, new history explores the world beyond human existence, the reality of objectively perceived processes and phenomena. It describes the past of society as a kind of mechanism in which different kinds of reality coexist, including natural surroundings of a human being, economy and social and cultural phenomena of various kinds. 'Nouvelle histoire' means studying the entire historical reality, starting with living conditions, through various walks of human life and finally all dimensions of civilization created by man."[17] The trend which particularly promotes this kind of "total strategy" was the above mentioned famous Annales School.[18]

The above mentioned trends to gather and pursue the achievements of other scientific disciplines does not support the idea about the scientific progress advancing in historiography. Among its creators one might notice a growing "constructive sensitivity" (once described as rhetorical sensitivity), constructive or even eristic to some extent, towards "true stories." As J. H. Arnold writes, this is connected with the fact that "if historians spin a yarn of stories, they do so in order to convince us (and themselves) about something. Their methods of convincing are based on the presumption that they are telling the truth, that nothing is conceived or twisted – and, at the same time, history is conveyed in an interesting, cohesive and educative narrative form. The past as such does not create a narration. As a whole it is as chaotic, incohesive and complex as life is. The task of history is to order the mess, to find some regularities within it or to create certain patterns, meanings and stories."[19] Their construction creates only a certain version of "true stories," as nobody has a monopoly on them. There are no criteria of generating them either, as these are rather

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re), the "structural patterns of perceiving the world," "mental endowment" (Febvre), and *episteme* – "the system of thinking" (Foucault).

[17] W. Wrzosek, *Stosunek jednostkowe – społeczne...*, p. 60.

[18] It is directly announced by F. Braudel when he writes about aiming for studying "social reality in the 'total' dimension." S. Bednarek, *Pojmowanie kultury i jej historii we współczesnych syntezach dziejów kultury polskiej*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wroclaw 1995, p. 5.

[19] J. H. Arnold, *Historia*, s. 25.

their outcome. And all this combined is the subject of a constant revision from different perspectives. J. H. Arnold shares this agonistic manner of perception. For him:

> [...] history is mainly a dispute. The dispute between various researchers, but also, perhaps, between the past and the present, between what really happened and what is going to happen.[20]

In the early stages of the development of historiography everyday life issues and problems did not constitute a subject worth addressing. Dealing with the past posed an intellectual challenge which was supposed to establish significant "historical facts." Everyday existence is a mass of similar, or closely related, and constantly repeated human behavioural reactions, technical and practical activities and symbolic expressions (language and customary ones). This banal provenience and tedious repetition made them a matter which was on one hand too light, when it comes to their historical importance, and on the other hand, too heavy in their factual scope to be analyzed thoroughly and to lead to valuable conclusions for a traditional researcher of *res gestea*. "Historians were not interested in everyday life – J. H. Arnold says – at least no more than great painters were interested in portraying peasant women."[21] This stemmed from a more or less conscious, metaphysical and later positivist, ground of historical reflections. Their strong pattern-creating role caused that the latter option tried to confer a universal and nomothetic meaning on the research. "Generally speaking – as Damian Leszczyński, Lotar Rasiński writes – traditional historical research is imbued with metaphysics and its desire for objectivity remains an 'unfulfilled dream' about the unity of humanity, an individual and history, because the uniform scheme imposed on history obliterates its fragmentary, incoherent and accidental character."[22]

The objection against giving history a more philosophical character was uttered by Lucien Febvre, among others. He expressed this in his famous motto "Philosophizing is the capital crime of a historian." However, this concerns its metaphysical shape – as the philosophical reflection over the "historical consciousness" constitutes an inspiration for many approaches, not only of a historiographic character. Its importance was emphasized

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[20] Ibidem, p. 24.
[21] Ibidem, p. 38.
[22] D. Leszczyński, L. Rasiński, *Introduction*, in M. Foucault, *Filozofia – Historia – Polityka...*, pp. 19–20.

by Hans-Georg Gadamer, to name one scholar, who wrote that "the role of humanities for Europe's future relies on [a] historically-effected consciousness."[23] The influences of Nietzsche played a great role here, which was developed by M. Foucault, among others, in his genealogy. This view "does not object to history as a rarefied and deep insight of a philosopher contradicts a down-to-earth perspective of a scholar; but it does object to a metahistorical development of ideal meanings and vague theologies. It objects to looking for 'a source.'"[24]

Abandoning the history of philosophy practised from a metaphysical perspective for the benefit of relatively understood historicism (Szacki) is characterized by the historic relativity of the truth, departing from the invariability of the subject which is beyond history and the vision of the continuity of history and the accumulation of human knowledge. The important contribution was made here by French philosophy and the history of science (Duhem, Meyerson, Milhaud). M. Foucault became its faithful student, who replaced the "metaphysical history" with "true history." In his opinion the latter "tries to depart from describing only high and the most noble moments in history, the most impeccable people or the most prevailing ideas"[25] to deal with such events as the idiosyncratic births, developments and temporary declines of discursive formations having a regulatory character. The words of M. Foucault are distinctive here: "noticing events, slight deviations or, contrary, complete downturns, mistakes, misjudgments, off-the-mark calculations, which underlay what exists and what is of some value to us, results in discovering that the nature of our existence is based not on the truth and being but on the external character of an accident."[26]

In professional historiography (the scientific creation of history – as long as we do not question the scientific character of this research disci-

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[23] H.-G. Gadamer, *Dziedzictwo Europy*, transl. A. Przyłębski, Spacja, Warsaw 1992, p. 13. In another place he wrote directly about historical cognition that it ideally means "understanding the same phenomenon in its unrepeatable context." H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Bloomsbury Academic, Oxford 2004, p. 38.

[24] M. Foucault, *Filozofia – Historia – Polityka*..., p. 113.

[25] D. Leszczyński, L. Rasiński, *Introduction*, in M. Foucault, *Filozofia – Historia – Polityka*..., p. 29. The above change is also observed by Sven Lindqvist. "During the past decades the history of elites is increasingly replaced by the history of societies. Since the main protagonists of history are not the rich winners but the defeated poor." S. Lindqvist, *Terra nullius*, transl. I. Kawadło-Przedmojska, W.A.B., Warsaw 2010, pp. 202–203.

[26] M. Foucault, *Filozofia – Historia – Polityka*..., p. 119.

pline) special formulas are applied which are built on the narration about the "historical past," e.g. metatextual footnotes, references to the sources and explicit workshop declarations (which give an insight into the theoretical and methodological consciousness of the researcher). Thus, this is a two-level expression in the subjective and theoretical language. Then the need occurs to justify oneself for creating "true stories," and because of its literary affiliations, the constant fear of creating fiction patterned on it.

Hayden White claimed that classical historiography used for this purpose the avoidance "of all explicit rhetorical figures and means typical for poetic style [and closing oneself] in the idiom of transparently told narrations."[27] Classical historiography maintained that "true stories" recreate the reality from the past by recalling it faithfully. The past seemed to speak for itself via the mouth (or rather hands) of a historiographer. As W. Wrzosek points out "A historian describing events gets involved in the reality of the events. Appearing in the role of a viewer and participant, a historian yields to a suggestion of traditional historical sources. The chronicler's convention 'tells him' to participate in the heat of events."[28]

This metaphysical, realistic and representational opinion came across increasingly stronger opposition with time. All methods of the reification of the vision of the "historical past" were revised. Relativist, non-metaphysical and non-realistic tendencies came into focus. The opinion expressed by H. White is symptomatic for this trend of historiographic reflection: "the notion of 'history' is not a reference to a material thing but is a *signifier*. The *signified*, of the notion of 'history' could be either 'the past' or 'a temporal process,' but they are merely notions not things and none of them exists in a material form. They can be recognized only through 'traces' or material forms of the existence which created them, if 'certain things' happened in a given place or were conducted in a given place. However, 'what happened,' or 'what was conducted,' will remain a mystery whose nature is alleged and its discovery, which relies on conclusions and intuitions, must remain merely a possibility and thus fiction."[29]

As it can be noticed, the other side of the objective and disinterested discovering of "the past in itself" is constituted by histories written on the basis of idiosyncratic interest, selectively collected sources and literary

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[27] H. White, *Proza historyczna*, p. 14.

[28] W. Wrzosek, *Stosunek jednostkowe – społeczne*…, p. 58.

[29] H. White, *Proza historyczna*, p. 11.

invention, i.e. "history for oneself and others."[30] This is because history is always some kind of choice "of what [has] already finished (and what will not happen again)," "of what passed," "of what is gone (and will never return, will not be repeated)" but, at the same time, of what is worth noticing, preserving and memorizing.

1. Everyday life history(-ies) in historiography

The answer to the basic research issue seems to be problematic, namely, what is the category of everyday life? "Everyday life" often constitutes a subject of sociological research. And so a French representative of this discipline – Henri Lefebvre – claims that everything originates in everyday life, which in turn is a manifestation of everything.[31] This statement, indeed tautological, seems to be too general and insufficient, although the closest to intuitions connected with understanding everyday life. So too is the definition developed by Piotr Sztompka: "Everyday life is the most obvious thing, present in direct experience, the most realistic form of existence overwhelmingly imposed on our perception."[32]

Everyday life is not quite in opposition to non-everyday life because the latter may constitute a part of the former; however, the opposite case is not possible. For example, calendar holidays, although imbued in an uncommon time of the *sacred,* create, together with the usual *profane,* a continuous cycle of perception of various forms of existence. Similarly the places of worship – temples, the places of epiphany, *hierophany* and *theophany,* surrounded by ritual care – together with the *profane*

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[30]   And again over to J. H. Arnold: "Every historian carries his own load of interests, moral and philosophical convictions, views on the world and human behaviour [...]. However, in a sense, historians are always wrong. It is because there is no such thing as complete certainty in every field. There are gaps in every historical account, there are problems, contradictions and spheres of doubts. We are wrong also because we do not always agree with each other so we have to be mistaken, each of us in his own way, [it serves the purpose of the dispute] between various researchers but also, perhaps between the past and the present, between what really happened and what will happen." J. H. Arnold, *Historia*, pp. 23–24.

[31]   P. Sztompka, *Życie codzienne – temat najnowszej socjologii*, in P. Sztompka, M. Bogunia-Borowska (ed.), *Socjologia codzienności*, Znak, Cracow 2008, p. 26. This is probably the simplest explanation of the importance of the research into the phenomenon of everyday life.

[32]   Ibidem, p. 25.

architecture, create the perception of the cultural countryside. However, in the opposite case, the arbitrarily proclaimed holiday connected with a single event e.g. a victory over the enemy, becomes a distinctive feature of non-everyday life; and so is the case of destroying a very important, from a social point of view, building (not only a temple), despite its possible further existence as a ruin (reminding one of the historical event and gaining new meanings).[33]

Non-everyday life a is figure which is outlined in the background of everyday life. This background cannot be reduced to a dimension of the private domestic life of the subjects of historical research. Everyday life is rather the most widely understood context, both regulated culturally and idiosyncratically, which does not transgress the threshold of a historical "event." Classical history tells the story of non-everyday life in whose footsteps everyday life faithfully follows. Causative power is attributed to "events" which impose the "conditions of necessity" on all possible "perceptions of existence."

Continuing with the next issue – everyday life history – one should answer a vital question – what is everyday life? According to the simplest characteristics, it would be one more, labelled, product of historiography. From the conceptual point of view, everyday life history seems to be *contradictio in adiecto* (or in a literary sense an oxymoron). "Everyday life" should involve all aspects of the "historical past," from material to symbolic ones, whereas history is its selection and synthesis. It is not able to comprise "everyday life" as a whole because then it would have to transform from a map to its prototype. Addressing the issues related to everyday life is connected in the contemporary perspective of historiography with the transfer of research interests. Moving from the hi-story based on political history, historical account and event-related history towards the "functioning of the background" was connected with developing new tools (techniques) of interpretation and procedures of presenting results.[34] Here anthropology comes to one's aid as it provides topics and research tools for studying everyday life, and also ideological support.

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[33] As H. White notices: "the trace of the past which survived in the present is something else. As in its very essence it is not the past, even though it carries traces of the past or it indicates past actions or processes." H. White, *Proza historyczna*, p. 12.

[34] It is also confirmed by J. H. Arnold: "The past requires interpretation, not only presentation. By placing the story in a wider context we are trying to find out not only what happened but also what was the importance of the events." J. H. Arnold, *Historia*, p. 19.

This is described by Clifford Geertz. "Studying the world in another place leads to a very similar result, no matter if this is a place from a distant past or far away from here."[35] W. Reinhard put forward an interesting proposal in this field in his version of historical anthropology which is as "a field of research whose issues are inspired by ethnology. It studies the behavior of ordinary human beings in the first place trying to discover behavioral patterns referring to a given culture in order to establish the rules which underlie its everyday life."[36] Thus, everyday life history is transformed into the history of everyday life culture which analyses behavioural styles, patterns of problem solving or lifestyles (and so does Martin Dinges).

Ethnological methods are also applied by microhistory, which is called a "sister of everyday life history" by Hans Medick.[37] On the basis of available sources, e.g. court documents, it thoroughly and multidimensionally vivisects a given research issue concerning a small territory in a strictly specified frame of time. Thus, one of the main demands of experimental anthropology is fulfilled by the research into indigenous societies. The analyzed issues concern "ordinary people" in ordinary situations; however, they often abound in dramatic conflicts, twists or tragic endings which are too insignificant to be recorded in the annals of classical hi-story which focuses on events and processes. Such less important issues gain historical significance only coupled with other similarly perceived and deprived of accidents "non-events," elevated to the rank of "an event" or "a process" by means of generalization, according to the law of large numbers.

The performances of ordinary people on the stage of everyday life are observed not for their acting skills but to distinguish the rules which they follow. Thus, microhistory is closer to the history of mentality than to the historical version of a dramaturgic approach. As Ewa Domańska proposes, it is an "alternative history;"[38] microhistory is a certain thematic orientation without any common research tools and uniform terminology. Being antisystemic, it is attributed the postmodernist predilection – be-

[35] C. Geertz, *Historia i antropologia*, in idem, *Zastane światło. Antropologiczne refleksje na tematy filozoficzne*, transl. Z. Pucek, Universitas, Cracow 2003, pp. 153–154.

[36] W. Reinhard, *Życie po europejsku...*, p. 22.

[37] H. Medick, *Mikrohistoria*, in W. Schulze (ed.), *Historia społeczna, historia codzienności, mikrohistoria*, transl. A. Kopacki, Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, Warsaw 1996, p. 67.

[38] E. Domańska, *Mikrohistorie. Spotkania w międzyświatach*, Wyd. Poznańskie, Poznan 1999, p. 20.

cause it does not create a specific microhistorical cognitive perspective, but only a conglomerate of studies of a given character and certain common features. Everyday life history in this version would become a collective name for varied effects of this type of practicing historiography, and not an alternative for an official trend, or a counter proposal.

Everyday life history fits into the issues related to the balancing or focusing of two perspectives: a synchronic and a diachronic one. The former provides a cross-sectional explanation of the interrelations (functional connections) between the specified or possible to generate elements which fill in a structure which is limited in space and time.[39] The latter transgresses one structural categorization indicating the vertical character of changeability, transformations, decline and relations (functional and genetic connections) between the phenomena chosen for the research (their aspects). Two possible research approaches seem feasible here. One is represented by L. Febvre, among others, in a comparative approach to holistically perceived, closed structures; the other is represented by Marc Bloch in analyses of not horizontally stabilized, "semi-flowing" structures. This alternative contains different cognitive accents. The difference between a "structural-synchronic" approach and a "process-related and diachronic" one reflects, on one hand, a pursuit for a synthetic stability, whereas on the other, a realization of the potential modality of structures.

Besides the research practice, there is also a question of the social role played by history as a "teacher of life." As W. J. Burszta points out "A human being is a unique creature, the only one that exists for himself as he gets to know himself."[40] He gets to know himself always through the history of himself. The sentence *historia magistra vitae* in everyday life, which is the closest to the omnipresent matter of life, paradoxically does not have to refer to it at all. Since there is a conviction that if "history is supposed to teach anything," then this lesson must be based on "historical facts" of great significance. In the discursive dimension, it should take a form of a skillful narration preferably uttered as slogans or instructions. It is also inherently spectacular and unusual. Contrary to this, everyday life history aims for close relations to and immersion in the vernacular and mundane praxeological life experience of "ordinary people." Can the or-

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[39]   The examples are both a monumental work by Jakub Burckhardt *The culture of the Renaissance in Italy* and a microhistorical study by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie *Montaillou. Village occitan 1294–1324.*

[40]   W. J. Burszta, *Introduction*, in W. Reinhard, *Życie po europejsku...*, p. 12.

dinary tedious life of average people teach anyone anything? Can it decide about the history of "a human who constantly gets to know himself" in the process of important changes?

Only "life" as a universal phenomenon *conditio humana* transgresses the borders of temporal and spatial existence. There are certain objective conditions of humankind's existence, such as the necessity to find food or to reproduce, which unite human beings into one timeless community. This transcendence is confronted with the discontinuity of social practice and symbolic formations[41] because both historical and ethnological research shows that they always take some substantial forms, whose internalization is conducted in a symbolic and communicative dimension through enculturation (ideological regulations) and in a corporal dimension through socialization (psycho-social coercion apparatus).

A moderate version is proposed by the social and regulatory concept of culture. Under this approach "historical cuts" involve changes in social practice which entail transformations in the regulatory layer of the social consciousness i.e. culture. The latter is a set of forms of social consciousness which regulate the types of social practice belonging to it. These forms consist of normative convictions which define the aims of human activity and directive convictions which define the methods of implementing them. They are reconstructed in a subjective and rational mode. However, the aims of these activities and methods of implementing them are conditioned functionally by the entire social practice which creates the structural context for these convictions. In the technical and utilitarian culture there are relations of an objective character which refer to direct and practical activities and the objects which result from these activities. This involves those features which "render these objects consumable

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[41] Contemporary history shares this awareness with anthropology. According to one of the representatives of the latter – Wojciech J. Burszta – "the whole tradition and the present day of anthropological reflection, [...], is expressed by the following paradox: the unity of human symbolic thought and the multitude and variety of cultural ideas concerning life." W. J. Burszta, *Introduction*, in W. Reinhard, *Życie po europejsku*..., p. 12. Discontinuity appears in the moments of the so called historical cuts. Their analysis was conducted by M. Foucault, among others. His studies on the "history of madness" or the "history of sexuality" are widely known. The idiosyncratic nature of transformations within "discursive formations," the "bio-power" apparatus, is reflected by the epistemic ways of their perception. Although the author of the *History of Madness* rejects all attempts to categorize by using "isms," in terms of philosophical consideration, it would be an extreme constructivism.

in the way which does not require respecting convictions concerning norms and directives applied when producing them."[42] In the case of other fields, these dependencies are of a social and subjective character (conscious-orientated). Their convictions concerning norms and directives are characterized by the fact that the effects of activities regulated by them are 'non-consumable;' in fact, they are not realized if their consumption is not accompanied by respecting these convictions as the ones motivating relevant activities.[43] The symbolic character of these senses is constituted on the basis of the common respect towards semantic rules, or in other words, their conventionalization.

Each type of social practice has two kinds of functional determinants: 1) the direct one (regulated in the social and subjective mode) and 2) the indirect one (providing the response to objective needs functionally determining a relevant type of practice). The primary role is attributed to the latter. As the author of the "Social and regulatory concept of culture" writes: "by indicating the functional conditioning of proper human activities we always refer to [...] a certain global state (tendency) of their structural context. But such a state is not permanent. It must be every time hypothetically assumed in order to show that in a given case only this particular action must have occurred to cause the assumed continuation of a given state."[44] Social practice is directed to the constant reconstruction and transformation (simple or extended reproduction) of its own objective conditions. Hence, individual types of practice satisfy the demand of a given global state by generating relevant components (convictions) in the social consciousness.

However, they are not directly "materially" required. This is confirmed by the words of Jerzy Kmita.

Anyway, functional determination is ambiguous; the predictable response to a given demand is a framework. Thus, we may only predict what kind of a specific set of convictions will be commonly respected, i.e. it will receive a social acceptance sooner or later (this term means common respect, functional conditioning, but not conscious individual acceptance), because of the occurrence and intensification of a given demand; each of the distinguished (by belonging to this type) sets of convictions presents the so called historical possibility, whereas the social necessity is only when one of them gets socially accepted [...]. There is never a demand on only one specific set of convic-

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[42] J. Kmita, *Kultura i poznanie*, PWN, Warsaw 1985, p. 29.

[43] Ibidem, p. 31.

[44] G. Banaszak, J. Kmita, *Społeczno-regulacyjna koncepcja kultury*, Instytut Kultury, Warsaw 1991, pp. 35–36.

tions, rather this demand refers to a random set of convictions of a given type. Each of these sets is functional, each of them would satisfy a given demand equally well.[45]

Transformations in time are explained on the basis of the functionally-genetic determination. This means that in response to the change in the objective order, also the social and subjective regulator, i.e. culture, will be changed.

> We will determine the intellectual connection between a given state of a certain form of social consciousness and its historically former state as a genetic relation, [...] the fact of social acceptance of a given set of convictions creating a particular form of social consciousness is determined in two ways: 1) this set of convictions is more functional in relation to needs than the set of convictions which has constituted this form so far, i.e. it 'serves' a wider scope of these needs; 2) there is a genetic relation between the former and the latter set of convictions. This statement can be shortly expressed in other words: each next state of a given form of social consciousness is determined in a functionally-genetic way.[46]

It is indicated how a modification of normative and/or directive convictions contributes to a better continuation of a constant tendency in a given macrostructural context so that functional reasons of replacing some convictions by others are defined. Actually two versions of changes come into play: 1) "partial change" – the macrostructural context generates the same global state, whereas the activities upholding it, regulated by earlier convictions of a normative and/or directive character, as less effective, are being replaced by subsequent ones having a greater functionality; 2) "fundamental change" (dramatic) – a change of macrostructural context occurs which entails accepting a different hypothesis as far as the global state is concerned, and its continuation leads to constituting a new set of convictions concerning norms and directives different from the previous ones.[47] However, even in the case of a dramatic transformation of the structural organization of the context and its global state, the connections of the new systems (their elements) with the earlier ones may be indicated (often thanks to detailed historical research). This means that in response to the change in the objective order, these new altered components will still remain in a specific relation with the previous convictions.[48]

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[45] J. Kmita, *O kulturze symbolicznej*, COM UK Ministerstwa Kultury i Sztuki, Warsaw 1982, pp. 69–97.

[46] Ibidem, p. 70.

[47] G. Banaszak, J. Kmita, *Społeczno-regulacyjna koncepcja kultury*, pp. 37–41.

[48] J. Kmita, *Kultura i poznanie*, p. 10.

When studying a phenomenon in the objective manner, both within the functional determination as in the functionally-genetic one, various alternative explanations are acceptable. According to J. Kmita "indicating one functional determinant does not explain a particular phenomenon, but only one of its features."[49] The ambiguous character of this conditioning allows a simultaneous and various ways of understanding the role of the phenomenon (at least because a different aspect is chosen for the subject of research). It should be remembered that these functions may be understood in various ways, both in the macrosocial context presented above or in another context, and (that) in (their) global states (they are) conceived differently (in both cases). This is included in the scope of the radical functionally-genetic explanation because the change of the macrostructural context occurs here, together with the adopting of a new assumption in reference to the global state generated by it.

Discontinuity of the contents in the cultural heritage in the course of cultural transmission (radical change) is a characteristic feature for the highly revisionist tradition-related process of post-traditional societies. In the discussed context, the emphasis should be placed on a differentiation between a-historical and historical societies ("cold" and "hot" according to Claude Lévi-Strauss). According to common knowledge, the past historical state of the cultural heritage, or rather its social consciousness, is the main issue for historiographic studies. Hence, it is noticeable that only the interest in the past, also by applying institutional professionalization, constitutes a distinctive dimension differentiating the types of societies. For the "cold" type, everyday life is always present and never passes, whereas non-everyday life is neutralized by special rituals. These were described in detail by Victor Turner in his concept of a ritual process which constitutes part of the "social drama" theory.[50]

2. Individual participation in culture

The historiographic perspective varied from that tending to view an individual as making history, to the rejection of different forms of anthropomorphism characteristic of the ideological and descriptive historiography

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[49] J. Kmita, *O kulturze symbolicznej*, p. 96.

[50] V. Turner, *Czy istnieją uniwersalia widowiskowe w micie, rytuale i teatrze*, transl. G. Janikowski, "Polska Sztuka Ludowa – Konteksty" 3–4/2002, Instytut Sztuki PAN, Fundacja Kultury, Warsaw.

for the sake of a rediscovery of the importance of the individual (no longer, however, in terms of the individual's greatness). Aron Gurevich identifies two aspects of the question of the individual in a historical perspective:

> On the one hand, it involves the investigation regarding the emergence of the human ego, the individual who is moulded within the group but, who at the same time, is aware of what sets him or her apart, that is, the independence of the individual in relation to the group, and who can become engrossed in his or her own individual existence. On the other hand, attempts made by historians to investigate the self-determination of the individual and the type of the individual's self-awareness characteristic of a particular society, constitute for all intents and purposes a search for what makes a given culture unique, for what lends the culture [...] its historic "individuality." [51]

As for the former, this is an ontogenetic process of the development of the individual's awareness of their very participation in culture; as for the latter, this is a process of the development of specific forms of the individual's participation with reference to the distributive culture variants.

From the perspective of culture studies, it is worthwhile to note the position treating the history of everyday life as a history of everyday culture. It is then studied from the point of view of either the culture norms of a given social context, or an individual's participation in culture. Historical analyses of the regulations of the culture of everyday life, i.e. within the scope of the studies of "mentality" or "discursive forms," are widely known. It is important to grasp to what extent the history of everyday culture should also be the history of the individual's participation in culture.

The key issue here is the answer to the question of what "participation" in culture involves. Within the Poznan school of culture studies, this answer has been provided by Krystyna Zamiara, who identified two types of concepts of participation in culture: "cultural studies-related" and "psychological." [52] Rejecting ideas of extreme psychologism that assume that participation in culture is in principle psychological, she describes three anti-psychological positions: moderate, relatively radical, and extreme.

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[51] A. Gurevich, *The Origins of European Individualism*, transl. K. Judelson, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford – Cambridge 1995, p. 3.

[52] According to the author, the former refers to the "concept of participation in culture as advanced in different culture sciences," the latter to "equivalents of these concepts put forth by psychology." K. Zamiara, *Kulturoznawcze a psychologiczne badania nad uczestnictwem w kulturze*, in J. Kmita, K. Łastowski (ed.), *Biologiczne i społeczne uwarunkowania kultury*, Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warsaw – Poznan 1992, p. 39.

The first of these assumes that "only some extra-biological phenomena related to the individual have their partial ultimate determinants in social phenomena." The second approach assumes that "all extra-biological phenomena related to the individual have their partial ultimate determinants in social phenomena," while according to the third one "all extra-biological phenomena related to the individual have their full ultimate determinants in social phenomena."[53]

The first two approaches allow the combination of the humanistic and psychological perspectives. Both psychologism combined with methodological individualism and anti-psychologism combined with methodological anti-individualism rule out the above possibility. According to K. Zamiara, both approaches are inadequate since a correct approach to the question of the individual's participation in culture should address the aspects of the individual and the object. This allows to simultaneously take into account the features of individuals participating in culture and the "determinants of the features, which define the adequate properties of the very process of participation in culture" as well as the features of culture in general (its fields) and the "determinants of the features, which define (other than the above) properties of the participation process."[54]

The "optimal" approach in the study of participation in culture should, therefore, be based on anti-psychologism combined with a moderate or relatively radical version of methodological individualism. This allows the separation of the objective zone of culture from the individual's participation in it.[55] The process of the analysis of individual participation in

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[53] Ibidem, pp. 40–41. As the Poznań scholar observes on another occasion, "They stress the differences between culture and natural phenomena or, conversely, obliterate the differences between the natural and the cultural, at the very level of culture, of the process of participation in culture or else at the level of the properties of individuals participating in culture. Some take into account only one direction of determination (from culture to individuals, or the other way around), others allow a certain kind of interaction between culture and individuals participating in it. In the former case are generated ideas that subordinate individuals to the culture that is the object of their participation and that see those individuals as 'culture constructs,' or, conversely – excessively stress the subjective properties of individuals seen naturalistically, treating culture as an 'extension' of biological organs, or tools allowing adaptation to the environment. In the latter case generated are ideas that allow the construction of an entire system composed of culture and the individual participating in it, in a way that disregards neither." K. Zamiara, *Introduction*, in K. Zamiara (ed.), *Skrytość kultury*, Wyd. Fundacji Humaniora, Poznan 2001, p. 9.

[54] K. Zamiara, *Kulturoznawcze a psychologiczne badania...*, p. 41.

[55] Ibidem, pp. 41–42.

culture is made difficult by the identification of its determinants, i.e. the mental characteristics of individuals and the cultural context. The former component seems especially cumbersome in the field of historical analyses. While the contemporary social sciences, in particular psychology, have at their disposal a whole array of tools for the diagnosis and description of all kinds of "mental profiles" of the actors of social and private life, in the case of "temporal regress" we can speak at best only about approximate "psycho-cultural profiles." The difficulty is compounded when we turn back the clock and have limited sources, since then there are not sufficient criteria for describing the mental condition of individuals in a situation of insufficient data concerning his or her hypothetical state. A psycho-cultural reconstruction of the features of participation in culture can be carried out on the basis of reconstructable patterns of behaviour; a possible mental structure is deduced from them. This was carried out by Johan Huizinga in *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*[56] in an attempt to reconstruct the emotional structure of the representatives of individual social groups of the historical period under his scrutiny.

Individual participation in culture may, moreover, be considered in the context of the concept of culture seen through social regulations. However, it cannot be limited to a reduction of psychologically determined phenomena of the individual's participation in culture to the field of norms and directives. According to K. Zamiara, the psychological understanding of the cultural-studies approach to participation must be "in terms of respecting and conscious acceptance of cultural norms and directives and psychological patterns that determine such participation in culture of any individual: the process taking place under normal circumstances and the process of learning to participate."[57] Such a study must factor in both the uniqueness of mental determinants and the unique impact of individual fields of culture on the human psyche. It differentiates the manner and experience of participation. It must, moreover, focus on indicating the differences between passive respect and active acceptance of culture norms. It demonstrates development, stability and the potential possibility of their change precisely due to the individual, voluntary factor.

As K. Zamiara observes, an analysis of the psychological component facilitates a determination of "the psychological factors which impact an

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[56] J. Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1967.

[57] K. Zamiara, *Kulturoznawcze a psychologiczne badania...*, p. 49.

intra-individual variability of forms of participation in culture, i.e. among others a transition from respecting to deliberately accepting a particular type of cultural convictions."[58] It also offers a chance to examine the conditions of the "depth" of individual participation in a specific area of culture, from superficial respect to a "complete" acceptance of the culture norms. What is debatable is the question whether the individual is capable of interfering in the transformation of norms and directives and the scope of the subjective and rational conditions of the individual's actual activity, as we can also in a psychoanalytic sense deal with a "rationalisation" taking place. The above and other psychological factors may determine the alignment between an individual's actions and the cultural scenarios of actions to be taken in a particular situation. According to the Poznań scholar, another important analysed element is that the "question of compatibility with the culture norm also applies to the content of particular culture fields and in the content aspect of an individual's consciousness under scrutiny – what kind of psychological factors determine the degree of alignment of an individual's convictions and cultural norms and directives as well as with other judgements in the field of social awareness (e.g. with those that constitute common social experience or those being a product of social scientific practice)."[59]

From the perspective of the methodological anti-individualism of the theory of culture, the individual seen through the prism of culture studies is treated as a conveyor of convictions about the norms and directives of many fields of culture. "In other words it is the factor that makes a given type of social practice occur in a manner regulated by convictions about norms and directives that belong with a culture field that is functionally linked with this practice."[60] The individual is incapable of grasping the entire culture. It remains in large measure unconscious ("covert").[61] However, it must be emphasised at this point that this "unconsciousness" is not seen, as in psychoanalysis or depth psychology, as a separate biological (ontological) structure, with its own structural properties, but as a psycho-cultural category. According to K. Zamiara: "Certain covert cultural patterns may thanks to a creative reflection of an individual acquire the

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[58] Ibidem, p. 50.

[59] Ibidem.

[60] K. Zamiara, *Konstrukcja podmiotu w społeczno-regulacyjnej koncepcji kultury*, in K. Zamiara (ed.), *Humanistyka jako autorefleksja...*, p. 67.

[61] K. Zamiara, *Introduction*, in K. Zamiara (ed.), *Skrytość kultury*, p. 19.

(hypothetical) value of overtness."[62] This means that they are potentially ready for (re)updating. The advancement of the process depends on the intensity of the individual's (deep) participation in the culture.

Therefore, similarly to the degree of acceptability of judgements related to norms and directives, we can speak about a degree of participation (in culture), or the acquisition of a greater or lesser cultural competence.[63] At this moment we discover a marked superiority of the social and regulatory concept of culture over its behavioural versions. Within the latter, we cannot logically explain the appearance of a particular type of conduct (culturally-significant activity) without its earlier acquisition. Decisively opposing this naturalistic approach to culture, we must stress – invoking the theoretical assumptions adopted here – that the convictions about norms and directives operative in the social consciousness allow the individual to generate new types of conduct (activities of socially recognisable communication significance) without the behavioural correlative.

An analysis of the individual's participation in a culture requires the consideration of Florian Znaniecki's humanistic coefficient, or a feature of "cultural phenomena, objects of the study of the humanities, their principal property, that as objects of theoretical reflection they are already objects, given to others in experience, or someone's conscious activities."[64] The meanings of ideas invariably operate within some historical form of social experience. Taking the above into account, a study of the individual must always factor in the theoretical reconstructions of the part of social consciousness where given socio-cultural phenomena are located. Only this defines (explains) their particular structure of meanings. The interpretation of the humanistic coefficient in the perspective of communication culture "socialises" it, treating it as a "set of assumptions of semantics correlating this phenomenon with a particular communicative unit as its objective referent; what is at stake are certain judgements that

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[62] Ibidem, p. 22.

[63] J. Kmita, *Wykłady z logiki i metodologii nauk*, PWN, Warsaw 1976, p. 31.

[64] F. Znaniecki, *Wstęp do socjologii*, PWN, Warsaw 1988, p. 25. As the Polish sociologist observes on another occasion, "If the humanistic coefficient were left out and a scholar attempted to study a culture system the way one does a natural one, i.e. as existing independently of human experience and activity, the system would disappear and the scholar would deal instead with a host of unrelated natural objects and processes, of no resemblance to the reality which he or she started to study." F. Znaniecki, *Humanistyczny współczynnik faktów kulturowych*, in J. Szacki, *Znaniecki*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warsaw 1986, p. 239.

operate in a particular mode in the practice of cultural communication in individual communities."[65]

The cultural status of participation on the one hand consists in respecting such regulations, and on the other in becoming aware of them. It is crucial at this point to stress the difference between respecting and accepting convictions about norms and directives. The former occurs "only in connection with someone's systematically recurring action or conduct. We say that a given individual respects a particular conviction if he or she systematically (at an appropriate time) undertakes a particular activity, invariably as if he or she has accepted this conviction as a subjective and rational reason for this activity."[66] The above observation does not mean that the individual will not accept a given conviction (judgement) leading to a particular action. Respect is tied in with taking particular actions which allow making inferences about the existence of this respect, while acceptance can only be mental, through the approval of a given conviction (judgement). When the individual takes "a given activity fully aware of the objective determined by a normative judgement p, which objective is, according to the individual's fully conscious conviction q, to be achieved by this activity, we can say that the individual accepts judgement p and accepts judgement q, or – accepts convictions p and q. It may happen, however, that the individual accepts only conviction p or only conviction q, exclusively respecting the relevant other conviction. Finally, the individual may exclusively respect both convictions."[67] Furthermore, acceptance can vary, i.e. be "less or more conscious."[68]

In the perspective of social regulations, the reconstruction of convictions concerning norms and directives should logically precede the attempts at recreating the subjective and rational conditions of the individual's participation in culture. This participation consists of descriptive knowledge and value judgements.[69] When subjective and rational explication is used, it is necessary to make an assumption about the actor's

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[65] J. Kmita, *Kultura i poznanie*, pp. 44–45.

[66] G. Banaszak, J. Kmita, *Społeczno-regulacyjna koncepcja kultury*, p. 46.

[67] Ibidem, p. 45.

[68] Ibidem, p. 46.

[69] This is borne out by an observation of a historian related to the Poznań school, W. Wrzosek. "The presentation of a human being's objectives is irreplaceable from constant references to his or her value system, which has an impact on his or her choices." W. Wrzosek, *Stosunek jednostkowe – społeczne*…, p. 58.

consistence as to his respected convictions, i.e. an assumption of rationality. According to J. Kmita:

> Only when we (idealistically!) assume that each human being invariably takes action that is at any given moment based on 1) the fact that at this moment he is focused on the implementation of a relevant value identified with the state of affairs adequately articulated by him, 2) the fact that at this moment he respects the knowledge that 'prompts' him that in order to implement this value one only needs to take this and that action (and thus it is necessary to take these and those components of this action) will we deal with explication.[70]

The greatest role in the consciousness of the individual is played by the "ultimate" values, or normative convictions (norms) that make up a worldview system (a worldview). According to Kmita this is a "set of convictions which, while reflecting a particular vision of the 'entire' reality, in each case: 1) determine a set of positive superior values, i.e. actual states that play the role of the 'ultimate' objectives of human activity (rather than serving the purpose of attaining such objectives); 2) determine all kinds of correlations between superior values and practically tangible values, i.e. 'life' values adhered to by particular individuals participating in different fields of social practice. The above correlations may be of different types, as it were. They may consist in that the implementation of particular practical, direct values leads unconditionally to the implementation of relevant superior values; they may only facilitate this implementation (to a lesser or greater extent); they may not be conducive to it, may prevent it, or be impartial in this respect."[71] When an individual makes an evaluation of activities or their effects, the worldview is a kind of set of axiomatic judgements which make their evaluation possible in the first place.

On the basis of available sources, study tools and the ways of building historical narratives, it is possible to research: 1) to what extent the kind and quality of content in the first area impact the unique choice of particular values in the other (a question about the entire condition of culture); 2) what external factors impact the development of knowledge and valuations in particular social groups (this concerns stratifying and differentiating factors); 3) who uses particular kinds of knowledge and values (the problem here is posed by both the social distribution of various

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[70] J. Kmita, *O kulturze symbolicznej*, p. 27.
[71] J. Kmita, *Światopogląd nauki – światopogląd naukowy*, in J. Lipiec (ed.), *Nauka i światopogląd*, KAW, Cracow 1979, p. 299.

components of social consciousness – worldviews and common social experience); 4) who uses them, how and to what ends (at stake here is the question of respecting or accepting convictions concerning norms and directives, or the "depth" of participation in culture); 5) how they impact historical psycho-cultural profiles on the basis of the required individual features of the participation in culture.

3. Individual participation in culture and its historical aspect

All the above aspects of participation in culture are at the same time the object of interest of the history of the culture of everyday life. This applies both to the reflection aiming at reconstructing mental features via the psycho-cultural dimension inferred from behaviour patterns and to that related to "deep" participation in the zone of the cultural regulations of different culture disciplines and social awareness and common social experience. In the first instance, the identification of the determining context requires a thorough analysis of source material to find proof of certain patterns of behaviour, then their extrapolation to the mental and then psychic levels. At this last level they are made comprehensible thanks to tools and psychological descriptions. However, this is tied in with a highly speculative way of constructing a "mental profile" because of the relevant a-historical allegations which arise from the logic of making inferences from today's cognitive perspective of particular scholarly disciplines and of the entire contemporary background of social consciousness and common social experience.

This dilemma is not alien to Aron Gurevich, who needs to be quoted *in extenso*:

> The crux of the matter is that all attempts by the individual to describe himself or herself are inevitably profoundly subjective. Attempts to define the essence of a given individual on the basis of his or her direct utterances about him or herself pose a great risk since to believe and to disbelieve such utterances unquestioningly would be equally risky. Much more can be learned from what was not said directly but remains 'at bottom' of utterances and deeds, deciphering meanings that one has in mind when speaking or that subconsciously surface in an utterance. During direct personal interaction the observer can reach a definite judgement about an individual. This, too, will be subjective, but it will be based, not merely on the words uttered but also on many other signs – behaviour, expressions, the person's whole appearance.

Our knowledge of any other person depends to an enormous degree upon outward factors. Our knowledge is, of course, shaped by our ideas and feelings, as it is also by judgements that have been made by other people about the person. Do we not, in the final analysis, project our own selves, complete with our criteria, tastes and prejudices, onto the "screen" of the other individual?

The historian, however, is in a more complicated situation: he or she has no chance to observe at first hand the personality of an individual who lived centuries earlier. Dialogue, that is always presumed to be part of any human interaction, is severely limited within the framework of historical investigation. The only possible dialogue is through texts, and the immediacy of direct contact between two persons is missing. All that the historian can, at best, hope to have at his or her disposal are the individual's own utterances or information provided by other people. The unravelling of the utterances and information is made even more difficult by the fact that historians first need to immerse themselves in the language of the source material and to make the transition from an unfamiliar system of concepts to another (their own).

In historical studies on the individual, the scope of manoeuvre is limited by an entire system of clichés, all kinds of *loci communes* and patterns that texts abound in. Frankly, reaching out to an authentic personality is uneasy, if not impossible [...] Consequently, the language through which the individual expresses himself or herself constitutes the essence of this individual. It is futile to search for anything beyond the text; there is nothing left to be concealed behind it.[72]

A. Gurevich's and W. Wrzosek's observations confirm an increasing interest of historiography in the individual's participation in culture. The former writes as follows:

The question of the individual is a key issue in modern historical writing with its anthropological slant, i.e. with its emphasis on humanity in all its diverse manifestations, as historically concrete human beings subject to change in the course of history. Historians have devoted a great deal of time and effort to fruitful study of society from the economic, social and political angles. Yet the human being, the 'atom' of the social structure, is something about which we know little [...]. Extensive materials have been amassed concerning revelations of men and women through their actions and everyday behaviour: we have at our disposal statements and ideas expressed by many different people in the past. Historians of ideas have uncovered diverse aspects of the picture of the world on which people based their thinking in a particular society and, in this way, they put together hypothetical reconstructions of the sets of values within which that thinking operated. Yet what they were dealing with was mainly collective psychology, the extra-personal aspect of individual consciousness, the general attitudes that are shared by members of large and small social groups, while the unique constellation made up of elements of a world picture in the mind of a given, specific individual escapes our attention in the vast majority of cases.[73]

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[72] A. Gurevich, *The Origins of European Individualism*, p. 244.

[73] Ibidem, p. 2.

The Polish historian, in turn, observes:

A historian, leaving aside the individual as non-scientific, deals with a reality above the level of the individual. He thus rejects the field of motivation and intention (i.e. the individual's consciousness) and excludes it from the zone of scientific investigation. The unique and exceptional individual remains, therefore, beyond history. The mysterious game taking place between the individual and the world, between the unique contribution of the individual and the power of culture, community and process eludes the modern historian. A historian leaves to a philosopher the problems that occur at the intersection of the individual and the universal and concerns himself with a science that "recalculates" a particular empirical reality.[74]

As is evident in the observations of the Russian scholar, in large measure they have an anthropocentric focus.[75] After a period of creating a hi/story of a great importance of processes and events, the time has come to create a history of "atoms." However, it is created on the basis of the "material concerning accomplishments and activities" and the "acts of everyday life" of a community. This is in line with the requirements of collective psychology, which focuses on what is shared and recurrent. Only because of this is it able to meet the scientific criteria of an inter-subjective communicativeness and verification of statements. The author of *The Origins of European Individualism* bemoans the impossibility of capturing "a unique constellation of consciousness of a particular individual." However, for a historian trying to reconstruct "semantic fields," invariably created by social interactions and cultural regulations, it is extremely difficult to leave out the social and subjective "humanistic coefficient," or the collective symbolic and cultural meanings of human actions.

According to Stefan Bednarek, the categories that "reach out beneath the surface of phenomena, to the level of invariables that govern events and behaviour" are those that are the strongest rooted in the culture of everyday life.[76] They can be related to "deep structures" (Duby), "culture categories" (Gurevich), "inner reality" (Suchodolski), "unconscious culture currents" (Sapir), "archetypes" (Jung), "symbolic paradigms" (Eliade), "metaphors" (Ricoeur), or "deep structures" (Lévi-Strauss). Their principal

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[74] W. Wrzosek, *Stosunek jednostkowe – społeczne...*, p. 61.

[75] Historical anthropocentrism corresponds with the anthropological one. This is addressed e.g. by W. J. Burszta: "The human person is a unique being, the only which exists for itself as it gets to know itself." W. J. Burszta, *Antropologia kultury. Tematy, teorie, interpretacje*, Zysk i S-ka, Poznan 1998, p. 12.

[76] S. Bednarek, *Pojmowanie kultury i jej historii...*, p. 63.

objective is to develop the most fundamental thinking about the world and human beings. Within the approach of culture theory, the common aspect of the world of individuals is reflected on at a meta-level, where their cultural status is revealed. Making use of cultural regulations, common experience and diverse kinds of social consciousness, individuals live in a complex environment of symbols, worldviews and values which are directly, practically, available. Each of them has a semantic, axiological and praxeological context. All generate certain mental features arising from the participation in a given culture field. For instance, participation in a play, which belongs to the ludic custom, generates psychophysical states of relaxation, pleasure and joyfulness. In turn, participation in rites such as a Mass should trigger reflection, contemplation and a moderate number of gestures.

It seems that the descriptions most useful from the point of view of historical studies on the forms of participation in culture are contained in analyses of a subjective and rational criteria. An adequate reconstruction of the context of knowledge and valuation may lead to a description of individuals' rational actions. Naturally, the rational is historically relative and it is seen as such at a given moment of social timespace. The above observations demonstrate that while the kinds and scale of respect for convictions concerning norms and directives are inter-subjectively communicable and verifiable,[77] attempts at reconstructing the scale and "depth" of participation, i.e. awareness or acceptance of them, poses problems. How can we infer the actual status of particular regulated social actions? Are reconstructions of "psycho-cultural profiles" helpful in this respect?

Analysis of the interconnections between the "tangible substrates" of cultural activity and the resultant mental states helps infer an authentic commitment to the acceptance of regulations governing certain culture fields. For example, the "festivals of fools" and "carnivals" studied by Jacques Heers[78] in a given temporal and spatial framework are composed of numerous descriptions of all kinds of ludic activities, accompanied by

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[77] An articulated normative conviction becomes a normative judgement, or a norm; a conviction concerning a directive becomes a directive judgement, or a directive. Both the norm and the directive are logically derivative with respect to the prime convictions. A culture historian tries to reconstruct judgements which are assumed to constitute interpretations of the convictions about the norms and directives of a given time.

[78] J. Heers, *Święta głupców i karnawały*, transl. G. Majcher, Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, Warsaw 1995.

psycho-cultural features of participation in those humanistic structures.[79] It can be, then, assumed that they faithfully reflect the "depth" of participation under the regulations in force in the then existing societies. These relations may be fallacious, though. The patently evident "Dionysian" forms such as laughter, joy, playfulness, and emotional arousal seem to be "convincing," "authentic" or "frank," so much so that they are seen as a token of the acceptance of superior regulations. How about the "Apollonian" forms, then? The through sources identifiable "tangible substrates" of the participation in rituals interpreted as pious attention, contemplation, humility, etc. could be equally well understood as respect or acceptance – especially if one takes into account the power of social conformism that makes individuals perform a ritual action in customary communication as messages sent and received rather than as strictly related to the worldview. Each and every time the individual's world of an anonymous participant in culture is a universe whose reconstruction is the subject of historical speculations and also a wistful longing in the field of personal aspirations, as A. Gurevich observes.

Tapping into the above legacy of the Poznań school of methodology, one may seek all kinds of proposals of historical studies of the kind and scale of participation in the culture of everyday life in terms of subjective quality and objective quantity. The former is subjectively rational and the latter functional and genetically-functional. The social and regulation concept of culture is the binding element. As a result, it does not indicate the value of either of the study processes, the subjective nor the objective one. They are regarded as complementary.

The subjective approach stresses the importance of the conscious performance of cultural activities. Within the technical and usable culture,

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[79] It arises as a set of complex subjective and rational actions focused on the implementation of a value as the ultimate objective. As J. Kmita observes, "There is a relation of i n s t r u m e n t a l s u b o r d i n a t i o n between a given complex subjective and rational action, or a humanistic structure, and its direct components, i.e. particular actions. This relation consists in that to the best of the individual's knowledge the particular actions as [the] component of a relevant complex action combine to make up this action. Therefore the performance of all of these actions suffices to constitute a complex action that furthers a relevant objective. Besides, each of the component actions is relatively (i.e. contingent on the performance of the other component actions) necessary for the furtherance of the objective by this action." J. Kmita, *O kulturze symbolicznej*, p. 44. The humanistic structure may be also a product of the above actions, i.e. a work of art, and have a high level of hierarchy.

the relations between actions and their meanings are objective. In the case of symbolic culture, they are typical activities focused on interpretation, i.e. they have particular communicative meanings. They vary with the particular society and the period of time. This is borne out by Jan Grad's observation: "The relation between relevant behaviours and their meanings is not a natural (objective) relation but a socially subjective one, or more precisely symbolically cultural."[80] Historical studies of the culture of everyday life in the aspect of an individual's participation, apart from the above analysis of the general and attributive manner of respecting/accepting cultural regulations in a given society, should also indicate the individualising and distributive ways and circumstances of taking part in cultural activities.

It seems that the reconstruction of the subjective and social aspects of participation in the technical and usable field, due to its "objectivism," can be better explored. The efficiency of such activities does not depend on respect or acceptance. The evaluation of this field and its results is a different worldview issue. It relates, however, to societies after Weber's "first disenchantment of the world," and even more so after the "second disenchantment of the world." During the first stage we deal with the so-called transition from magic to religion resulting in a separation of the practical from the symbolic and the necessary valorisation of the worldview concerning cultural activities. At the second stage we deal with the so-called transition from religion to science, or the dominance in culture of purpose-related and rational activities, previously characteristic of the technical and usable field. In turn, taking into account the objectives of symbolic cultural activities one may try and recreate individualised, unique receptions of the "semantic fields" of convictions concerning norms and directives in different historical contexts.

Such a development of culture brings about a system of disciplines whose formation leads to what A. Gurevich termed a development of an individual's consciousness, uniqueness and self-reflection in the process of participation in culture. Relevant research helps identify how the type and "depth" of participation impacts the uniqueness of a culture of a given historical period. While the socio-pragmatic image of culture stresses a temporary stabilisation of cultural regulations beyond the level of the

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[80] J. Grad, *Obyczaj a moralność. Próba metodologiczna uporządkowania badań dotychczasowych*, Wyd. Naukowe UAM, Poznan 1993, p. 15.

individual, it is the historical study of participation that can demonstrate its fluctuations and a dynamic of change. The subjective factor comes into play again during the analysis of e.g. the semantics of custom, which is a frequent object of interest of the history of everyday life.

Available sources and study tools help identify the scale of consciousness (acceptance) or respect of worldview beliefs (myths) and those arising from common social experience. Both sources of developing the semantics of custom precede it genetically, but a historical interpretation of custom-related activities each time calls for invoking particular myths or common knowledge. Incidentally, one may examine to what extent we deal with non-conventionalised and with conventionalised semantics.[81] A reconstruction of an individual's participation in custom calls for an adequate interpretation of: 1) the knowledge providing information about the circumstance and ways of performing custom-related activities; 2) the knowledge of worldview images or convictions from common social experience constituting the assumptions of the semantics of custom. In turn, an analysis of "tangible substrates" of custom-related actions helps infer the psycho-cultural states generated.

A historical reconstruction of an individual's participation in customs is a complex process of departing from the ideological through the mental to the practical, without losing, blowing out of proportion or, as K. Zamiara pointed out, disregarding any of the aspects. The assumed optics may intensify selected components to the detriment of others. Equally hard to assess are the psycho-cultural states of participation in a custom, especially if it composes a complex humanistic structure such as a ritual. Such idealisations are, however, valuable from the cognitive point of view since they are based on an enhanced methodological awareness, which is conscious of its tools and of the "resistance of matter."

A study of participation in the culture of everyday life may also be conducted in an objective manner. As W. Wrzosek indicated, it would take the form of "empirical recalculating." It is often applied in statistical computations of particular aspects of tangible, material culture. Within the functional and genetic mode it is possible to indicate the role of a lot of activities from the area of everyday culture, whether technical and usable

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[81] In the practice of customary communication, unconventionalised semantics means that a customary activity (its set) has a number of meanings, while under conventionalised semantics it has only one meaning.

or symbolic to sustain a given global state of a certain structural context. Naturally, this context does not look like a humanistic, but a functional structure. In principle, then, the subjective and rational activities undertaken within it unconsciously generate a certain desired tendency.[82]

This approach and the above functional and genetic mode is in no way innovative and it has many prior variants in historiography. The benefits here arise rather from the fact that, as the Poznań culture scholar observes, "making use of a new set of terms, we may formulate new issues which may elude even our intuition."[83] This idea should be the priority of the study of participation in the history of the culture of everyday life, allowing the identification and exploration of ever new subjects. The above concepts and proposals in the field of the theory of methodology against the background of the history of historiography are to be a kind of building material, incentive and inspiration.

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[82] As J. Kmita maintains, "a functional factor is selected via a relevant state continuously retained via its attendant structural context. The individual who performs an action need not know about the context. He or she need not know about its retained state, in particular the tendency (dynamic state), or about the reasons that help maintain this state, or about which of its possible causes (in the form of relevant actions) come into play exclusively in a particular case." G. Banaszak, J. Kmita, *Społeczno-regulacyjna koncepcja kultury*, p. 32.

[83] J. Kmita, *Wykłady z logiki i metodologii nauk*, p. 152.

Chapter II

Defining history of mentalities

Introduction

L'histoire des mentalités is widely known as the history of mentalities and also as the history of representations (*histoire des représentations*). Its origin dates back to the publishing of Lucien's Febvre book about Martin Luther in 1929 and also his book about François Rabelais in 1937. In both books the author astounds the reader with his innovative approach, asking about the mental inclinations of the behaviour of various historical characters. This proposition of the French historian was a huge step forward in opening up new ways of writing about history.

Before Febvre historians were usually interested in an extremely narrow understanding of their subject that was mostly based on "the cult of the source" and fact-stating descriptions. This kind of way of looking at history was burdened by its nationalistic traditions dating back to the 19th century, together with other limitations (essentialist theories of culture, ethnocentrism, colonialism, etc.), although it is also important to state the fact that there were historians who had tried to overcome these tendencies. The first signs of trying to break through these barriers can be found in the books of Jacob Burckhardt, Edward Gibbon and Leopold von Ranke, who tried to introduce a cultural approach to the way of viewing history. Although each of them had their own methodological, they are treated as those who first dealt with the problem/they may be considered as the forerunners in dealing with the problem of how to look at history, helping the approach to history to bloom with new forms.

The first movement, or school, that is usually connected with the topic of the history of mentalities is the so called Annales School, which started the conception of a "new history," whose new fragments and descriptions occurred on the pages of the magazine "Annales d'Hisotire Economique et Sociale," starting from the 15th of January 1929. The committee responsible for editing the journal consisted of Albert Damangeon, Maurice Halbwachs, André Siegfried, Carles Rist, André Piganiol, Georges Espinaz, Henri Hauser, and Henri Pirenne. Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch were chosen as the chief-editors, and after fighting through many difficulties they were also approved as lecturers in the College de France, in the 4th section of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes.[1]

The concept of this "new history" defined history as a "science about constant change" and repeated human accustoming to synchronically connected conditions of social existence (like politics, the economy, religion, or intellectuals/or the intelligentsia). One of the important inspirations was the writings of Henri Berr, who treated history as a multi-layer structure influenced by rhythms of change. Other big/significant names constituting the new perspective were Ernest Labrousse (whose input is usually mentioned when discussing the economical and geographical determinations, including the *longue durée*), François Simiand (who argued for nomological statements regarding social change supported with economical explanations) and Paul Valéry (who spoke of the necessity of creating history founded on a neutral axiological approach).

Although no one doubts that this genre of history has gained popularity all over the world, it is extremely difficult to explain what does this term really refer to. Some believe that it is one of the most popular definitions concerning the history of non-intellectuals or call it the "history written from below." Others tend to think that in some way this sub-discipline is connected with the history of ideas, the history of representations, the history of collective representations or intellectual history. The terminological chaos seems to be a result of the fact that many investigators, when dealing with the details of the problem, try to find a solution to their dilemmas without first concentrating on the necessity of establishing any theoretical order within the whole genre. This situation seems to be an outcome of two perspectives presented by these investigators. The first group usually tries

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[1] A. F. Grabski, *Dzieje historiografii*, Wyd. Poznańskie, Poznan 2008; M. Harsgor, *Total History: The Annales School*, http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/260089?uid=3738 840&uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4&sid=21104389386973 [10.01.2014].

to produce case (or practice) studies. They seem to struggle with historical sources and try to come up with solutions (that are actually) dictated by their own investigations. One may have an impression that they are like sailors rebuilding a ship on the open sea. In this group one can especially find works like those of Philippe Ariès. The other investigators usually try to define the subject first, but they seek theoretical solutions lacking the backing of empirical work. This group could be compared to those who create tools, yet never use them. Amongst their representatives one can find the works of Ewa Domańska or Tomasz Wiślicz. Of course, it would be unjust not to mention those who try to combine both these tendencies, mixing their theoretical reflections with proper historical investigation, like Jacques Le Goff, Pierre Nora, or Natalie Zemon Davis.

The main issues discussed in this article are the source-based dilemmas of historians, who try to come to terms with the history of mentalities. The subject itself poses numerous scientific problems. First and foremost is the question of whether there are any possibility for historians to trustworthily present the way people used to think in the past (and even if it is possible, then would their statement be anything more than a lucky guess or mere assumption?). The second is how to deal with the historical sources and what are the strategies of approaching them? The third, when talking about mentalities, are we speaking about collectives, or individuals, the popular, or the elite, etc.? Furthermore, what ontological status does the "mentality" have? Have we got any artefacts thanks to which we can confirm its presence?

I intend to shed some light on these difficulties by achieving three aims. The first is to present the history of mentalities in order to show the origins of different solutions presented in the history of mentalities (in this way the reader may get to know the definitions and the somewhat problematic field of the topic). The second is to acquaint the reader with the socio-pragmatic definition of culture. The third one is to propose a new definition of the history of mentalities (which includes some of the achievements mentioned in the two first goals and is an outcome of combining the socio-pragmatic definition with the concept of *mentalité*).

All these problems, as difficult as are, were often the main reason for many researchers, finding the topic full of unsolvable problems, losing their interest in the topic altogether. The most interesting fact, however, is that even though the *mentalité* was often shunned by the theoretical approach of any particular faction, everybody seemed to end up practicing it. Hence

comes a paradox: it is easy to find a history of mentality (i.e. the history of death, sex, violence, family, childhood, gossip), yet it is difficult to find someone who might want to reflect on the methodological issues regarding it – and this is exactly the area which I intend this article to relate to.

1. Material and methods

For a proper apprehension of the problem I have chosen the following theoretical approaches: relativism, constructivism and historical anthropology.

The tradition which is the most important for me in this article is historical anthropology. My main interest in this discipline regards the cultural perspective concentrated on the social practices of the historical everyman. Hence, in my opinion, the mentality can be understood in a Gurevich manner as:

> The conceptions and feeling of people in a given society about life, their beliefs, ways of thinking, social and aesthetic values, attitude to nature, experience of time and space, ideas about death and the other world, their interpretation of ages in human life, etc., which in every epoch are interconnected, form a kind of a whole. This "model of the world" or "world picture," is conditioned into the objective relations of production and of society. "Subjective reality," how people think of themselves and their world, is an integral part of their lives as is its material substance. The 'world picture' determines the behavior, individual and collective, of people.[2]

Mentality, or as Gurevich likes to put it the "world picture," is nothing more than the total amount of perspectives presented (by numerous individuals) towards the (many) different dimensions of life. In this way the notion is not mixed up in any (specific) psychological or psychoanalytical inclinations and in its totality is placed on the cultural level of the consciousness, accessible through anthropological investigations. When trying to discover it, one must concentrate on the social strata of the subjects reality and try to recreate their ways of perceiving the world, related to the norms and values of historical individuals.

Every cultural subject possesses a total amount of perspectives which helps him to understand and interpret stimuli coming into his mind, allowing him to form his experience in a collectively understandable way.

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[2] A. Gurevich, *Historical Anthropology of the Middle Ages*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1992, p. 48.

What is it, then, that makes this theoretical approach so characteristic and important in treating the concept of culture?

One answer is that it changes the optics from classifying the political and object-centered relations towards the ways of reading and perceiving the world. If one would like to look for the predecessor of such an approach, it would probably take one back to Immanuel Kant's theory of *a priori* categories, which, as pre-experience frames of reference, divide reality into the unrecognizable objective of noumena and phenomena unaffected by the human senses. When speaking about these categories Kant places them in our mind as if they were a filter helping us to distinguish different categories of the world (like time, space, quantity, placement, etc.), accordingly to the Aristotelian inspiration. In such a situation one can say that the historical anthropologist, like Gurevich, takes the Kantian concept to the extreme, claiming that not only does the category shape the reflection, but also that the culture shapes the categories.

In this way the key assumption placed in this article is that of historical and cultural relativism, which besides the standard assumption of the contextualization of the analysed situation in the social-historical background, also demands a constructivist approach. These conceptions are connected with the presupposition that knowledge about the world, together with cognitive forms, has its firm foundations not in the objective conditions related to the human organism, but rather within the social rationalization of one's experience and within the ways of its being formulated.

Is this the proper approach? – It is hard to say, yet such a perspective allows to explain a lot of phenomena, and at least start a discussion on the themes of mental diversity, logic, or analysing of the causes, effects and their justification. Furthermore, the connection of these two disciplines may establish a good passage between the social sciences and the philosophical founding of the basis of knowledge about the world.

Another advantage comes with specifying the historical field of interest of the history of mentality, thanks to which the notion acquires the status of a theory and not only of a declaration. Different conceptions of mentality are usually enclosed in definitions that, as catchy as they seem to be, usually are not followed by theoretical reflection. The construction of the term in its anthropological sounding way, makes it very similar to semiotic definitions of culture, comparable to the Geertzian "thick description," to Goodenoughs definition of culture as knowledge or the already mentioned socio-pragmatic theory of culture.

How and on what assumptions may the term of culture enhance our understanding of mentality and its empirical application in historical and cultural investigations, is what I will discuss in forthcoming parts of the text. In the final words of this chapter, meantime, I would like to emphasize that the concept of mentality may be classified and used as a theory when turned into theory thanks to the concept of culture. But it is also important to remember that as worthy as anthropological achievements may be, it is still the history of mentality itself that produces and specializes in bringing up the strangeness and oddness of differences, which later on are subject to thorough examination.

2. Mentality and culture

One of the most popular references regarding the concept of *mentalité*, which one can find in historical literature, is an explanation provided by members of the Annales School, as they:

> [...] made the first attempt to historicize the relationships between an author, his works, and his times. By introducing the concept of mental equipment (*utillage mental*), Lucien Febvre sought for a specific way to reconstruct the tools, mentalities and representations of a given civilization. He conceived of mental equipment as a collective entity that created the framework for individual thought and practices exemplified in his biographies of Martin Luter and François Rabelais.[3]

The first histories of mentalities, created by Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, were strongly inspired by historical psychology (in the way favoured by Charles Blondel) and ethnology (in a way exemplified by the works of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl).[4] Today's investigators often put those people into the same current, backing their convictions with Bloch's statement – who spoke of his work in the following words:

> In particular, my colleagues Lucien Febvre and Charles Blondel, will recognize so much of themselves in certain of the following pages that the only way to thank them is to indicate to them those borrowings taken, in all friendship, from their thought.[5]

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[3] D. Cahan, *From Natural Philosophy to the Sciences: Writing the History of Nineteenth-Century Science*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2003, p. 79.

[4] Needless to say, usually Marc Bloch is indicated as the follower of Lévy-Bruhl, while Febvre is often connected with Blondel. The broader perspective shows us that this situation is much easier to handle when treating them as a team in general.

[5] S. W. Friedman, *Marc Bloch, Sociology and Geography: Encountering Changing Disciplines*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004, p. 116.

From today's perspective, it is hard to tell if he was telling the truth. When trying to compare the books and the notions of mentality used in them, one could find oneself in a strange situation. Blondel and Lévy-Bruhl treated about something totally different than defining the problem of mentality. The first used the term to refer to collective factors incorporated inside the individual. In other words the history-related question would sound: how does the socially created order reflect itself in the individual? On the other hand, Lévy-Bruhl would be the one to ask the question about how does a primitive mind find itself in the lower stadium of development? How does that mind connect facts and explain the world, with all its reality, without science, inventions, writings and – the most important – logic.[6] From the historical perspective, the posed question asks for progress. No doubt either of these attitudes influenced the two historians, who, on their behalf, reciprocated with an inquiry about the historicized ways of rationalizing the actions and deeds of everyday life.[7] It was their contribution to the problem which later on was undertaken by Marcel Mauss and Émile Durkheim. The history of science remembers these men gathered in the name of the French school of sociology, which strongly investigated the issues of the collective consciousness and the rules of its participation, leading them usually to the claim that all of our reactions are shaped by the society's "spirit," known otherwise as the collective consciousness.

On the basis of this sociological and psychological background, the two historians started investigating the past in order to present it in new terms, based on the social perspective – describing the probable world of the historical past depicted from the scope of the individual and not the political scope. This breakthrough was soon recognized by other investigators following the same path. The first one to mention it is the famous Philippe Ariès, who in his books tried to describe the history of childhood, family and death.[8] He redefined the term mentality, treating it as the collective unconsciousness, which was available for historical research through the artefacts of social rituals and institutions reflecting the social needs.

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[6] This seems to have in his writings a very distinct and noble place.

[7] D. B. Baker, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Psychology: Global Perspectives*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012, p. 242.

[8] For example: P. Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, Vintage Books, New York 1965; idem, *The Hour of Our Death: The Classic History of Western Attitudes Toward Death over the Last One Thousand Years*, Vintage Books, New York 1982; P. Ariès, A. Bejin, *Western Sexuality: Practice and Precept in Past and Present Times*, Blackwell, Oxford, New York 1986.

But as easy as it is to trace the problem of definition in its beginning, it becomes much more difficult to follow its lead in later stages, since most of the investigators use the term in a somewhat different way, emphasizing different accents and nuances, writing about mentality in a way where the details of their specification actually change the meaning as i.e. as in Robert Darnton's case, who wrote about the genre in the following words:

> It is a sort of intellectual history of nonintellectuals, an attempt to reconstruct the cosmology of a common man or, more modestly, to understand the attitudes, assumptions, and implicit ideologies of specific social groups (their *utillage mental*, according to Lucian Febvre, the great prophet and practitioner of this kind of history). Mentality is more a subject than a discipline.[9]

These differences are very well encapsulated and described by Michel Vovelle, who treats of an almost indistinguishable passage from the level of mentality to the level of practices (when a subject executes his or her actions respecting the social motivations by choice or unconsciously):

> [...] we have progressed from a history of mentalities, which, in its beginnings, essentially stuck to the level of culture, or of clear thought [...], to a history of attitudes, forms of behavior and unconscious collective representations. This is precisely what is registered in the trends of new research – childhood, the mother, the family, love, sexuality and death.

It is hard not to agree with the French writer, who, when noticing the differences, speaks of them loudly and distinctly – the history of mentality, indeed, is a discipline without proper definition, not grasped by any form of theoretical reflection, and being undertaken by various investigators it is dispersed, becoming intellectual history, the history of the non-intellectual, social history, history of the idea, the history of representations, etc. Amongst the different definitions of mentality and the ways of understanding it, the one presented by Michel Vovelle is the closest to my own theoretical convictions:

> The history of mentalities can be defined as the study of the mediations and of the dialectical relationship between the objective conditions of human life and the ways in which people narrate it, and even live it. [...] The exploration of mentalities, far from being a mystifying process, can ultimately lead to an essential widening of the fields of research, not as a venture into foreign, exotic territory, but as the natural extension and the cutting edge of all social history.[10]

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[9]　R. Darnton, *The history of mentalities*, in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York 1991, p. 261.

[10]　M. Vovelle, *Ideologies and mentalities*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1990, p. 12.

In the negated element of the above last sentence, the historian seems to opt against the psychological and psychoanalytical interpretation of mentalities, especially in the way Ariès used to express it. Although the author of *Human and death* never showed his fondness for psychoanalysis, his tendency towards essentialist analysis was actually proved by many. Furthermore, Vovelle points to a dialectical connection between man and reality, which is understood as the social and collective vision of the perceived objective conditions. One can never tell what objective reality really is, but he surely can provide testimonies about his impressions regarding it.

Vovelle's transgression is very important because it takes us directly to the field of social practices, to which the perspective of sociology becomes an analytical point of entry. It is the field of social practices and rituals that is the very residuum of individuality. The most interesting for us would be the psychological approach, but since we have neither the proper cognitive apparatus, nor the necessary data, we cannot even trustworthily presume about the motivations of (private) individuals. We also have to remember that, all in all, human behaviour comprises of different attitudes, which in their broad meaning do not have to be communicable.

Following its definition, the theoretical elements filling Vovelle's approach are the contributions taken from the French school of sociology, whose close cooperation with historians was one of the elements establishing the theoretical background of the first generation of the Annales School. The collaboration of Febvre and Bloch with Durkheim, Mauss and Blondel, resulted in the conviction that the diversity of cultural approaches to reality may be treated as rational regardless of their accordance with the investigators own logic. In this way an anthropologist examining certain tribes noticed that the vision of the world presented by various inhabitants may be treated by the scientist as naive or even "primitive" (as Lévy-Bruhl often puts it), but, nevertheless, in its own terms and in that particular social order, it may be not only functional but also effective and efficient. As relative as this statement may seem, one must remember that the first thoughts on the topic presented in the works of Lévy-Bruhl often stated that the mind of a "primitive" may evaluate the world in different way; it may even suffice for him, but still both the logic and the science of the west are much more advanced and stand on a higher level of social development. As strong as Lévy-Bruhl was in his scientific issues, he still lacked the capability of escaping ethnocentrism.

This reflection was particularly taken up by Durkheim, who placed the bonding of a society in its morality. By the term morality Durkheim

understood the number of values (norms) derived from the society's religion, which is defined by him in a very specific way. First, it is understood as synonymous to the hierarchy, governed by its "highest idea," "god" or other providential force within an established ontological status. With time (and also societies development), the divinity was reduced to those ideas or common convictions shared by the community. In this way the group was treated as the highest ideal and it presented the pattern of the social order of principles which it was necessary to obey. Durkheim likes to express this quite directly when saying that particular deeds are treated as desirable or as punishable, not by their implicit (objective) value, but because of the social judgement behind their acceptance or decline. As Durkheim puts it: "The individual is the source of particular actions and particular impressions while performing the general and shared techniques of *habitus*."[11]

What is important, not only did religion influence the morality but also the division of labour. In the beginning, societies were united under the banner of religion, having their social stratification horizontal; and hence, remaining under the influence of religious authority, the group was undifferentiated and homogenous. Every unit participating in a society's actions and everyday life usually fulfilled the same duties and obligations to the group. It was not until the society's development caused new specialties that professions occurred and changed the communities specifics from the mechanical to the organic. As the process of this change started, similarity was replaced with diversity, helping to meet the new expectations and requirements by creating specialized institutions.

Additionally, the sociological typology proposed by the French scientist concentrated on another important aspect. Besides presenting the term of collective representation and proposing its regulations, the typology also emphasized two dimensions of human existence, the conception of which was introduced as *homo duplex*, which served to underline the mental and biological levels of human practices.

Collective representations were to be localized on the social level, but the consequences of their functioning – in the somatic. This is the point in which the conception shuns from the Blondelian theory of synesthesia and directs itself towards the theory of autosuggestion. It was thanks to Mauss and his works regarding magic and the phenomena of thanatomania that we owe the discovery of the connection between the power of subjects con-

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[11] C. Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 2010, p. 50.

victions and their role in the effectiveness of "miracles." The best modern situation parallel to those taken from the tribal traditions is perhaps that of the medical method of treating a patient by means of a placebo. The method is based on doctors lying to or presenting their patient with a false diagnosis, making that patient believe in his fast recovery. Such a treatment is sometimes combined with false medication treatment (i.e. with sugar pills) which, combined with the doctors authority and the patient's trust, may result in the patient's healthy progression and recovery. Hence, truth is created by the human mind (especially when speaking of mind-body related situations), causing negative (death as a result of a spell that is cast) or positive (a good charm of the doctor's opinion) effects. The results of scientific investigations provide us with one outcome. Our psychic level (mentality) is the final instance of a human's appeal when regulating his habitus and behaviour. There is no objective reality or conditions to which one can relate in a way other than the constructivist way. An evil deed is not evil because of its objective relations, but because a society has regulated it in a final way. A charmed person dies not because of magic, but because of his own beliefs:

> The universality and the *a priori* nature of magical judgments appear to us to be the sign of their collective origin. It follows, therefore, that it is only those collective needs, experienced by a whole community, which can persuade all the individuals of this group to operate the same synthesis at the same time. A group's beliefs and faith are the result of everyone's needs and unanimous desires. Magical judgments are the subject of a social consensus, the translation of a social need under the pressure of which an entire series of collective psychological phenomena are let loose. This universal need suggests the objective to the whole group. Between these two terms, we have an infinity of possible middle terms (that is why we have found such an extreme variety of rites employed for the same purpose). Between the two terms we are allowed a degree of choice and we choose what is permitted by tradition or what a famous magician suggests, or we are swept along by the unanimous and sudden decision of the whole community. It is because the result desired by everyone is expressed by everyone, that the means are considered apt to produce the effect. It is because they desired the healing of feverish patients that cold water douches and a general theory of magic.[12]

The influence of such theories on scientific opinions are obvious and observable in the manner of constructing descriptions. The positivistic or scientific way of describing social reality was created as the behavioural depiction of an observed agent and "their" conducted actions. Later, new proposition presented by American anthropologists, is called theoretical,

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[12] M. Mauss, *Theory of magic*, Routledge, London 2001, p. 154.

as it no longer spoke of resembling the reality, but transferring reflection to the level of the depicting of the agent executing the actions. Mauss, Durkheim and the Annales historians came to the conclusion that there is no such thing as "particular or individual human being" in the biological meaning of the term. If we are able to self-mutilate or disturb our instinct for self-preservation, then surely the social strata of the individual is much stronger than the biological one.[13]

Such a point of view, combined with its cognitive dilemmas, can be found presented in Marc Bloch's work regarding miracle working, attributed by the society of the Middle Ages to the institution of kings. In his work, Bloch creates a synchronic analysis of the kings' institution and its alleged power of healing:

> There are two traditional ways of explaining each religious phenomenon. The first one [...] sees in the examined phenomenon the conscious work of the individual, aware of themselves. The other one is looking for deep and fairly known social forces. [...] So that some institution – which serves aims established by the individual will – could work amongst a broader circle of people, it must find itself reflected in the underneath streams of the collective unconsciousness. Although it maybe also the opposite: so that some fairly specified faith could transform itself in to a concrete, regular ritual, help from a few wise people would have been required. If we take the hypothesis presented by me for granted, the history of the beginnings of the kings ritual of touching, deserve to be placed amongst such prominent historical phenomena which are influenced by both these mentioned elements.[14]

This phenomena appearing in the society was connected with the identification of the king, and his power with miracle-working and the conviction that the ruler was directly representing the divine influence, which anointed him with such wonderful power. This belief, when translated into practice, displayed itself in the form of the king's audiences,

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[13] "Thus, to the primitive mind, the omen is primarily a cause, but at the same time it is a sign because it is a cause. As the characteristics peculiar to his mentality grow proportionately weaker, the mystic type of causality ceases to dominate it almost entirely, time and space come to be felt less as qualities, and realized more as ideas, and finally, the attention fastens more and more closely upon the objective series of cause and effect. By an inevitable consequence the omen tends to conform to these changes of idea. It becomes more and more of a sign and less and less of a cause, until at length the primitive no longer understands how it could ever be a cause." In L. Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive mentality*, George Allen and Unwin, The Macmillan Company, London – New York 1923, p. 88.

[14] M. Bloch, *Królowie cudotwórcy: studium na temat nadprzyrodzonego charakteru przypisywanego władzy królewskiej zwłaszcza we Francji i w Anglii*, Volumen – Bellona, Warsaw 1998, p. 102 (my own translation).

during which the ruler touched with his healing hands people infected with scrofula, for instance. However, sceptics would object – claiming that this was nothing more than a mischief and pure example of charlatry, though this does not explain the fact that those who met the king quickly rejuvenated. Sometimes it took one visit, sometimes two or five, yet – as the chronicles report – they tended to work.

The historical explanation provided by Bloch brings the information that those who treated themselves for "scrofula" were not actually always carrying its virus. They often could have been suffering from illnesses with very similar symptoms, which were diagnosed with regards to the miraculous power of the king. This situation, combined with the fact of numerous plagues and peoples eagerness to jump to conclusions (on the other hand – who when standing in the face of death would not?), evolved into the shape of such a recognition and autosuggestion. Possibly the patients restoration was just a coincidence, because driving the disease away would succeed even without a "miraculous intervention." However, if the king was lucky enough, his time of reign would converge with a large number of recoveries (i.e. when the alleged scrofula was in fact a malignant flu), and then the situation resulted in a rapturous increase of the king's popularity, as he was identified with the wave of miraculous recoveries. Such a spreading of his fame has a few important aspects. The first was recognition of the king as a true and god sent ruler. Accordingly to the popular demands of the epoch, a real king should possess the power of healing, by definition. An interesting aspect of this situation is the fact that we do not have any confirmed statements claiming that the subjects inquired into or investigated the conviction that the power of healing was predestined only for the Capetian dynasty (meaning not-British dynasty which used the power with the same commitment as the British one). Probably rivalry between two houses was the origin of the wonderful development of the healing power of Henry II with his great skill of creating enchanted cramp-rings (or special necklaces called the Angeles created from a coin with the emblem of an angel) that protected its owner from epileptic fits. Needless to say that amongst those people quickly exposed, there were also those who very cynically abused the naivety of their neighbours in need. In this time it was easy to find a "fencer" who after a few standings in long lines at the kings court came into possession of a number of coins and rings, which later on he resold to the highest (or maybe the most desperate) bidder. The blessed coin was gaining value quickly and could have been sold even a few times in its second circulation. Of course, in

the broad perspective such an understanding of the king's healing touch helped found the church's own instances of miraculous cures, as those of highest regards, which not only enthrone, but also constitute the king.

Notwithstanding the fact that no matter how many convictions were connected with this phenomena, or what mightbe the best way of describing it, still the perspective treating the institution of the king as both divine and manipulative, as well as a source of hope, would remain cognitively "actual" and productive. The scientific movement of historical anthropology started by Bloch would develop for a long time and would remain prosperous, resulting in adaptations for the next generations in the Annales School. Among the next generation, one who would contribute to the research and development of the history of mentalities would be Philippe Ariès. Not only did he dedicate his works towards investigating the problems of childhood, family and death in its historical development through the ages, but also it is his insight that remains connected with the term *mentalité*, to which he referred as the collective unconsciousness:

> Presumably it should better be called the collective nonconscious. Collective because it is common to an entire society at a specific point in time. Nonconscious, since contemporaries take little or no notice of it. It is self-evident and part of the unalterable givens of nature. It encompasses ideas handed down over generations or that lie suspended in the air. Commonplaces, rules of behavior and moral codes, conformities or prohibitions, permitted, forced or forbidden expressions and feelings and phantasms. [And also it – S. K.] forms the elementary psychological tendencies such as self-assurance or the desire for power – or, conversely, the feeling of community and solidarity.[15]

Whilst recalling Ariès in this article, I would like to emphasize that for me the importance of his works is combined with his biggest critic and colleague Michel Vovelle, whose politics of investigating the historical problems of mentality is quite often defined by him with a negative reference towards the writings of Ariès. Already in the above mentioned citation, one can easily notice a psychological (or even psychoanalytical) trap, of which Ariès is unjustly charged. It is unjustly so because with all the problems of his works and accusations of essayism and doubtful methodology, one cannot blame him for referring to Sigmund Freud or Carl Gustav Jung.[16]

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[15] A. Lüdtke (ed.), *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1995, p. 78.

[16] S. Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/f/freud/sigmund/general-introduction-to-psychoanalysis/ [29.06.2014]; C. G. Jung, *On the nature of the psyche*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1973.

In his works Ariès describes the transformations of the western civilizations worldview through the centuries, but also constantly attracts readers attention with two elements. The first one, so well distinguished by him, is the adaptations of social rituals, or rather such readings and investigating of them, which leads us towards recognizing the actual agent's motivation. The second is that most of the analysed social practices are practiced behaviourally (automatically), and not respectfully (with an awareness of the social rules). This explains that not always does an individual have to understand and bear in mind all the rules he must respect in order to execute an action. Sometimes one does it automatically, i.e. when speaking, where no one usually wonders about all the grammatical obligations related to their spoken statements. The difference between actions governed by behaviour and respect shows us the necessity of realizing the values and justifications of an agent undertaking their action.

Vovell's critical reference towards Ariès relies on Ariès failing to meet the very methodological obligations which the author of *Human and death* declares in his works. One of the basic accusations is focused on *longue durée*, which refers to the perspective of the centuries which need to pass, and which have to be taken as a cognitive perspective, if one wants to deal with the topic of historical change. When examining the history of death, Ariès depicts a number of cultural changes that came to happen in the times close to the 15th century period. The author of *Human and death* presents us with a large variety of examples, claiming that each change in exercising death customs was founded on cultural or civilizational change. Vovelle undermines this approach, claiming that during the aforementioned period only one change occurred in history, and it was just after the enlightenment, which presents a borderline to the religious interpretations of the world. It was just then, at that time, when people shunned Christianity and cut the thread connecting each social practice (including celebrating death) with the divinity. In the practices surrounding death, it is a graspable moment, in which peoples started to treat death as the end of their existence, and not as the rite of a passage towards another part of their existence. This situation is best described in the following citation:

> It is clear, if we pass from the history of cultures or of clear thought to the new field of history of mentalities, which deals with the domain of attitudes, behavior and what some scholars call "the collective unconscious," that the longest time frame is undeniably necessary. The are no struggles nor even, strictly speaking, sudden changes ore

events in the history of the family, of attitudes to childhood, collective sociability or death, to list almost haphazardly the new fields which have been opened.[17]

Such cognitive dilemmas were also presented in *Cheese and worms* by Carlo Ginsburg. The author, after reading the documents of the Inquisition, tried to recreate the perspective of everyday life (of the religion, god, world) in the middle ages based on the testimony of the miller who tried to defend himself before the Inquisition. The curious thing about this examination is the fact that everything he did or spoke of was quite shocking not only because it varied so much from the investigators point of view, but also because it seemed quite odd in relation to each of his neighbours. In general terms, his personality was much closer to being eccentric than to that of the "typical" peasant, which led Ginsburg's thesis to reconstruct middle age popular culture on the basis of the trials documents...well...quite... impossible.

What is important is the fact that not everyone is lucky enough to base their investigations on a complex source material, as it was in the case of Ginsburg, Vovelle or Ladurie, whose in their researches had the possibility of creating a historical analysis of a whole village, founding his research on a complete source material. This question gains importance especially when one tries to merge the history of mentalities with the serial history.

Emmanuel le Roy Ladurie, François Furet, Pierre Chaunu – all associated themselves with researches devoted to big serial events, treated as a total amount of quantified factors. Although they analyzed historical issues through the lens of large numbers (prices, statistics, conjunctures, etc.), they tended to avoid deriving conclusions that would inform the reader about something more than the "amount of burned wax" (as Darnton likes to ironically express it). I think that his questions, similarly to the definitions of serial history (treating examination as computer processed data), defeats their own purpose. Big series of historical sources are essential material for noticing the cultural change and rendering social practices. History's biggest enterprise, to meet and explain the social dilemmas of that which is alien and foreign, to define and translate, to contextualize, must always undergo the process of falsifying its own thesis (maybe its own perspective is erroneous at its very basis). In the context of Ginsburg's investigations regarding the social status of the miller, after careful consideration – was his case adequate for deducting the content of popular culture? Would

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[17] M. Vovelle, *Ideologies...*, p. 5.

not he bring us to the conclusion that his Etruria village was full of the apostles of private cosmogonies? Is not the source material too narrow? In this case a serial approach would help us analyse the trends and precise the currents and the events defining a particular historical period, and for sure, his justification – which should be settled in a wider scope.

Not every change is a matter of cultural change, and not in every social movement does one find a transformation of civilization. Vovelle draws this conclusion whilst interpreting a collection of over one thousand testaments, which helps him to write a map of convictions and ways of thinking of their authors. The place of cultural change is marked by him in at a point when the document left by the deceased is no longer his last will and farewell to the world, becoming a formal document sharing the inventory without any eschatological, moral or ethical connotations.

In this moment it would be very useful to remind the reader of Vovelle's definition of mentalities:

> The history of mentalities can be defined as the study of the mediations and of the dialectical relationship between the objective conditions of human life and the ways in which people narrate it, and even live it. [...] The exploration of mentalities, far from being mystifying process, can ultimately lead to a essential widening of the fields of research, not as a venture into foreign, exotic territory, but as the natural extension and the cutting edge of all social history.[18]

In Vovelle's approach, the significance of the definition is placed on the leading role of source material understood not only as the epoch evidence of historical actions and activities, but also as a collection of documents, whose large number contributes about tendencies connected with mental currents of the era. The quantity is also a testimony to commonness that informs us about the state of things and their social range, whose time range allows to deduct potential changes, conjunctures and other factors.

This is how we come about to another important moment in investigating the topic of mentalities named culturally oriented historical anthropology and the most convenient theory of "world views" created by Aron Gurevich. The investigation not only broadens the way of understanding the mentalities, but also adapts and connects them with his own conception. This is what he writes in his definition of the "vision of the world":

> The conceptions and feelings of people in a given society about life, their beliefs, ways of thinking, social and aesthetic values, attitude to nature, experience of time and

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[18] Ibidem, p. 12.

space, ideas about death and the other world, their interpretation of ages in human life, etc., which in every epoch are interconnected, form a kind of a whole. This "model of the world" or "world picture," which is conditioned into the objective relations of production and of society. "Subjective reality," how people think of themselves and their world, is as integral part of their lives as is its material substance. The "world picture" determines the behavior, individual and collective, of people.[19]

And of mentality:

> *Mentalité* implies the presence of a common and specific intellectual equipment, a psychological framework shared by people of a given society united by a single culture enabling them to perceive and become aware of their natural and social environment and themselves. A chaotic and heterogeneous stream of perceptions and impressions is converted by consciousness into a more or less ordered picture of the world which sets its seal on all human behavior. The subjective side of the historical process, the manner of thinking and feeling particular to people of a given social and cultural community, thus becomes part of the objective process of history.[20]

Mentality in Gurevich's understanding is similar to the total amount of categories, which taken all together constitute the complementary vision of the world. In this case, historians enterprise (especially when one takes into consideration Vovelle's critical remarks regarding interpretation and processing historical sources) the most visible aspect is his theoretical approach derived from culture concentrated anthropology, which under the additional consideration of the achievements of various researchers, can provide an entry point for recreating *mentalité* into a theoretical tool.

The Kantian definition spoke of the impossibility of mastering knowledge of the objective world. This thesis redirected investigators to the necessity of concentrating on *a priori* categories of human forms of cognition of observed phenomena. In the case of Gurevich's scope, those categories originate not from the metaphysical constitution of the world, but are determined socially and culturally. We learn the world by means of socially communicative ways of capturing the experience and ways of interpreting it. These ways remain communicative and reproduced in a creative way. This means that agents who participate in social receipt of the world not only repeatedly recreate their actual order of the world, passing it from generation to generation, but also they transform it. This perspective allows us to treat the cultural agent or unit as a free entity, an active moderator, who can consciously act, change, reinterpret and disobey

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[19] A. Gurevich, *Historical Anthropology*..., p. 48.
[20] Ibidem, p. 4.

the social order. Gurevich seizes this deterministic approach, proposing a definition of the subject as an active interpreter and free moderator proposing either his recognition or change of the world picture.

Quite a different (although not so methodologically precise) perspective remains in the works of Clifford Geertz, whose conceptions were used by his colleague, Robert Darnton. The Geertzian description comprises of two parts – thick and thin. The second one touches a strict phenomenal description of the actions or gestures which were undertaken by the agent. On the other hand, the first one concentrates on the cultural interpretation of the action, treating it as a cultural sign, together with its symbolical superstructure requiring interpretation. Geertz provides us with an example of winking at somebody. The physical aspect is quite simple, because somebody just closes an eyelid, but if one is aware of cultural symoblisms he knows that the amount of social senses connected with it (from social conspiracy, to joke) changes the action radically.

In Darnton's adaptation, the anthropological assumptions of the American investigator find place in the moment of encountering strange and unexplainable social phenomena. This basic amazement remains a rudimental amalgam of cultural difference often based on applying different values to the same situation. Such investigations are usually started with a physical description, and later on are followed by the values connected with them.

In Geertz's case such a description found realization in cock fights on Bali, which were a manifest of typical men's qualities like aggression and bustle. In Darnton example, the most interesting analysis regards historically related (hence: different) ways of traders and middle man work, the social functioning of distributors, etc. Another interesting work of his remains his ironic (in the understanding of Hayden White's *Metahistory*) interpretation of the film *Danton* directed by the Polish director Andrzej Wajda, which shows the genealogy and critiques both of totalitarian and democratic political systems. The most famous works of Darnton[21] ori-

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[21] Amongst them one should mention R. Chartier, *The cultural origins of the French Revolution*, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C. 1991; idem, *Forms and meanings texts, performances, and audiences from codex to computer*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1995; R. Chartier, L. G. Cochrane, *Cultural history: between practices and representations*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y. 1988; R. Darnton, *The kiss of Lamourette: reflections in cultural history*, Norton, New York 1990; idem, *The great cat massacre and other episodes in French cultural history*, Basic Books, New York 2009; N. Z. Davis, *Fiction in the archives: pardon tales and their tellers in sixteenth-century France*, Stanford

ented him towards investigating case studies, especially when they were in some way connected with the French Revolution. He presents us with the problems of transmitting information in the time of the Jacobean terror, and acquaints us with the problems of perceiving the revolution both from today's and the 18th century perspectives and shows us the backstage scene of the brothers Grimm fairytale workshop.

3. Socio-cognitive conception of culture[22]

As I mentioned earlier in the part dedicated to methodological aspects of the current article, I find the historical anthropology the best theoretical strategy for creating the history of mentalities. It is also important to underline that this term results in innuendo demanding explanation of either the anthropological or historical elements. The concept of historical anthropology defines such an examination of past events, which relies on a culturalistic approach towards the diachronic analysis of the social constitutions of world views and their transformations. In this part of the text I would like to undertake the examination of the concept of culture, which would help to bring a more precise scope towards the scientific examination and present the socio-cognitive element of this endeavour.

The first important information regarding the socio-cognitive conception of culture is the fact that it relates to thought instruments, which are implied in the reality of the individual together with the members of his culture. Such an idea was inspired by the anthropological conceptions of Ward Goodenough, who defines culture as follows:

University Press, Stanford 1987; J. Delumeau, *History of paradise: the Garden of Eden in myth and tradition*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana 2000; J. Delumeau, J. Moiser, *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: a new view of the Counter-Reformation*, Burns and Oates, Westminster Press, London – Philadelphia 1977; P. Nora, L. D. Kritzman, *Realms of memory: Rethinking the French past*, Columbia University Press, New York 1996; P. Nora, L. D. Kritzman, *Realms of Memory: Conflicts and divisions*, Columbia University Press, New York 1996.

[22] The below chapter is based on the following works of J. Kmita, G. Banaszak, *Społeczno-regulacyjna koncepcja kultury*, Instytut Kultury Warsaw 1994; J. Kmita, *Kultura i poznanie*, PWN, Warsaw 1985; idem, *Problems in historical epistemology*, D. Reidel Pub. Co.; Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Distributors for the U.S.A. and Canada, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht – Boston – Warsaw – Norwell, Mass., 1988.

The term culture [refers to] what is learned, [...] the things one needs to know in order to meet the standards of others.

And further:

Therefore, if culture is learned, its ultimate locus must lie in individuals rather than in groups. If we accept this, then cultural theory must explain in what sense we can speak of culture as being shared or as the property of groups at all, and it must explain what the processes are by which "sharing" arises.[23]

Culture in its totality relates to the mind, the mental and ideal order which, later, when implied in reality, allows to experience and interpret it. Such a statement perfectly fits the propositions brought about by mentality investigators, which when approaching the historical agent (or collectiveness), they relate to its cognitive forms, knowledge or thoughts. Furthermore, Kmita's theory is a multilevel concept allowing to examine social reality from the scope of social practices.

J. Kmita defines culture as a number of functionally determined forms of social consciousness which regulate different types of social practices engaged in the given objective conditions[24]. The number of social practices is equal to the number of forms of social practices.

The social practice depends on the objective conditions that are repro-duced in a simple or extended way. In this way each social practice can be defined as a two level diachronic functional structure. The first level proposes that each social practice renders its objective conditions in such a way that the practice itself can maintain its original, global shape. The second – each social practice not only is determined by its global shape, but also functionally determined by its forms of social consciousness, the subjective behaviours of people, by providing them with judgements defin-ing values (aims) and directives (means). Each cultural subject acquainted with those means and aims determines them in a subjective-rational way.

Although this definition seems very mysterious, its quite easy to under-stand when explained through an example. Nearly every man that is born in a society is being brought up by his parents, but also by its social context (like school or the work place, for instant). The process of education and socializing provides us with a system of judgements (called norms and

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[23] W. Goodenough, *Cultural anthropology and linguistics*, in D. Hymes (ed.), *Language in culture and societ: a reader in linguistics and anthropology*, Harper & Row, New York 1964, pp. 19–20.

[24] The system of production forces and class-differentiated relations of production.

directives) that guides us in different social situations. In this way when we want to express our gratitude (a norm), we know that we must smile and shake hands with somebody (a directive), and when a man wants to show his sympathy to a woman (norm) he brings, say, flowers (directive). As easy as it is to understand this, we must also remember that usually we pass those judgements on to the next generations when telling our children how they should behave and participate in society. This is the moment when the first level of determination reaches its borders – each culture reproduces its global state.

Of course, not everyone is a perfect gentlemen, and even if we behave properly, we may somehow influence the execution of a directive or poorly understand the norm (in reference to the above examples, if we shake the hand too roughly or hand the flower turned upside-down). This is why we say that not only people of a given culture are determined functionally by that culture, but also that they determine it in a subjective-rational way (the second level), because they may understood something badly, and invent a new value or directive instead of the older one. This is also why we say that the culture is reproduced in a simple (when exercising the previous state and copying it) or in an extended way (when we change or invent something new).

It is important (here) to mention a few things.

First and foremost. All the subjects are treated as rational. This term comes from Max Weber, and it informs us that each person knowing its means and aims will execute them in the best known way, dictated by its cultural hierarchy, but always understanding its social situation and determination.

The second thing is that when talking about social practices (forms of social consciousness expressed in the judgements called norms and directives), we must remember that they are comprised only of those judgements that are common to everyone who participates in the culture. This means that the social consciousness is much broader than it is assumed in the definition of culture, and includes elements of everyday and common experience. The best way to show this situation is by referring to an example.

When one is seeing his neighbour each day he usually greets him by saying "Hello" or by a firm handshake. This simple gesture defines a good behaviour and a respect which one shows to other people. To this moment the norms and directives are obvious and communicative. But if we change

something i.e. when evading the neighbour or by mumbling, we can show something exactly opposite.

Such a way of understanding the culture has very significant consequences. The first one is that the culture stops being understood as a group of physical objects. As Goodenough says:

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members. Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them.[25]

Culture is more like a mental system of organizing the world and its elements than any physical feature that can be perceived or noticed in the object. In this way when an investigator approaches the problem, he is dealing with peoples values, judgements, convictions and prejudices – that possess a cultural subject and not a social phenomenon. When engaging a scientific enquiry, we reconstruct a composition of judgements about a world, and not a physical reality. In this way the outcome picture of a society has all the qualities of an idealistic model – a reconstruction of norms and directives distilled form the social behaviour. In such an understanding the created model is an ideal type of action, which can be attributed as the best, and most perfect example of the presented kind. Weber describes it in the following words:

> For the purposes of a typological scientific analysis it is convenient to treat all irrational, affectually determined elements of behavior as factors of deviation from a conceptually pure type of rational action. For example a panic on the stock exchange can be most conveniently analysed by attempting to determine first what the course of action would have been if it had not been influenced by irrational affects; it is then possible to introduce the irrational components as accounting for the observed deviations from this hypothetical course...Only in this way is it possible to assess the causal significance of irrational factors as accounting for the deviation of this type. The construction of a purely rational course of action in such cases serves the sociologist as a type (ideal type) which has the merit of clear understandability and lack of ambiguity. By comparison with this, it is possible to understand the ways in which actual action is influenced by irrational factors of all sorts, such as affects and errors, in that they account for the deviation from the line of conduct which would be expected on the hypothesis that the action were purely rational.[26]

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[25] W. Goodenough, *Cultural anthropology*..., p. 167.

[26] M. Weber, *Basic sociological terms*, in *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, University of California Press, California 1978, p. 6.

Of course, a cultural subject does not always reflect on his patterns of behaviour. The best example is the usage of language. When somebody wants to speak, he "just" speaks and does not reflect about all the rules, adjectives and tenses. In addition, most people would have big problems or even find it impossible to reconstruct the rules of the language they are speaking.

Hence comes two ways of defining the subjects action. If we are acting like in the language example mentioned above, we are respecting the rules by following them unconsciously, and that's why we call it respecting them. When a subject would do it on purpose, consciously recalling the rules and pattern, we may rather call it accepting.

Such a theory of culture in its general structure has been divided by Kmita into two parts. The first one is called the technical-useful culture and comprises of three processes (exchange, production, consumption), which for their effectiveness do not require an understanding of the aims. This means that they have only a directival dimension which is necessary for technical functioning (i.e. one does not need to be an electrician and understand the electrical circuits to turn on a lamp). The second type of culture distinguished by Kmita is the symbolical one, which is based on the process of understanding and interpretation of the norms, and also requires knowledge about directives (i.e. painting, religion, etc.). Without such a distinction, it would be impossible to understand the fact of using different technical devices without having the knowledge of, say, the engineer or artist, etc. On the other hand, there is no point in praying if we do not believe, and hence we do not respect the norms (values). Elements of symbolical culture are necessary if we want to discuss the problems of people's worldviews and those elements of culture that are not palpable practically (i.e. magic, god and other elements that provide the semantics for communication).

There is no point in summarizing all the elements of Kmita's writings, and as ambitious as this article is, one must also remember about the sketchy character of the work of his presented below, so without further delay I would like to stress some important facts implemented in Kmita's theory that I find useful in discussing the topic of mentality.

The first one is the fact that the theory deals with one of the basic problems of mentality. The term mentality is usually depicted with a few simple sentences describing the phenomena, which later on is used for empirical applications. From the perspective of Kmita's theory, such de-

scription does not have a scientific status and has only a status of behavioral description. This means that till the theoretical breakthrough there is just a visible depiction of a given situation. When one uses the socio-pragmatic theory for their analysis, one usually uses the process of ideation, which reverses the investigating process. When starting the investigation, the scientist should start from the end, thus from the very behaviour of the cultural subject. After identification and describing, when one wants to explain the social phenomena one has to describe the situation and later find the elements that preceded it, and hence constituted it. The direction is reversed and helps to provide the analysis from the outcome backwards towards the causes of the situation and to hence find the motivation of the cultural subject. Such a method is called reproductive and ideistic.

When the scientist is able to reconstruct the above mentioned judgements, he has to assume that even when they seem illogical, or their motivations and justifications are not communicative, in the alien culture they may be not only reasonable but shared, and to construct the complex vision of the world. The element that combines the individual convictions with that vision is the assumption about the rationalism of the unit undertaking the action, which is really an output theory helping us to understand the analysed behaviour and to treat it as comprehensive (this means, that every alien to our own cultural behaviour will be treated as a consequent realization of the culture related vision of the world).

This assumption allows us to examine the world together with the possibility of a vision of the world existing that is different to our own and to explain actions different to our own. This means that each culture segregates, orders and furnishes the world in its own, separate way – creating its own social reality. Consequently, this means that the effect of the examination provided by the scientist is his own evidence of the world. Kmita used to call this the cultural imputation, which informs us about the necessary cultural minimum which is always transmitted into the outcome of the investigation.[27] This is also the place which displays some ambiguities. During my talks with Krzysztof Moraczewski, I heard from him that, in

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[27] "First and foremost – there is the external logic of culture, which in our case means at least: zero order logic as a fundament of language. Second, surely temporality and spatiality, which are implemented in the sense areas inscribed in the researched reality. Furthermore, especially important for us, elements that are connected with them – historiographical metaphors, ideas, categories, symbolical paradigms or – if one likes it – stereotypes of historical thinking." W. Wrzosek, *Historia – kultura – metafora: powstanie*

his opinion, the minimal amount of categories brought into the examination is probably the category of perceiving the subject and the relation between the members of society, for always does the subject have some kind of self-awareness and ways of establishing relations between himself and others members of society (in every other case one could not speak about culture, mentality, a group or any other form of human existence).

4. What is mentality?

When speaking about the scientific term "mentality" I think about culture oriented historical analysis aiming at describing a part of the human mental everyday functioning (thought), which is bordered by the particular historical timing and whereabouts.

The first obligation that the investigator needs to fulfil is to determine and express what are the historical, political, geographical and timing limitations of his enterprise. It is impossible to describe mentality "in general," as even the peasants of Languedoc changed their attitudes towards life between the VII and XI centuries, not to mention other members of the social strata. The historians foreword should also mention the exact historical data he is going to address, as he may draw different conclusions from various historical sources.

The gathered historical material provides us with all sorts of information regarding human behaviour, life and thinking. Therefore, one may treat the historical set of sources not only as a sign informing us exactly and strictly about its function, but also as a signum of other tendencies the subject involuntarily communicates. When a Viking buries his treasures, he places them in the soil not for protection or safekeeping but for enriching his soul (in another case, why did the Norman warriors burry their gold in the most forsaken places, never to take them out again?) The explanation is derived from the Scandinavian sagas, in which the reader is informed how important it was to take care about the grounds one owned. Therefore, the physical state of the ground reflected the owners soul – if he was good, the soil would be fertile; if he was a bad person – the ground would turn in to a wasteland. In this context, buried gold would

nieklasycznej historiografii, Wyd. Leopoldinum Fundacji dla Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wroclaw 1995, p. 20 (my own translation).

be treated as a donation or kind of "fertilizer" one could use to promote one's ground, and therefore the warrior's own, status.

The signum character of the historical source informs us also about the theory of cultural imputation, which informs us about the impossibility of there being acts free of cultural determination. As Kantian theory informs us about the impossibility of perceiving the noumenon and only recognizing the phenomena determined by the strengths and weaknesses of our senses, the imputation takes this thought a step forward, claiming that all of our theories, behaviours and acts are culturally determined. In this way we can recognize the social influence on the perception of the reality, and hence have the possibility of examining it.[28]

We must also remember that when we talk about historical or social phenomena, the content we reflect on is usually noticed by the scientist because of its oddness. Why did some crazy monk, who threw stones at a local church, become recognized as wise, saintly and respectful, while others who only threw harsh language in the same direction were accused of blasphemy, trialled and sentenced? It took investigators quite a lot of time to understand the difference between foolishness for Christ (so called юродивый) and simply the irrational behaviour of the excluded or eliminated. This situation is clear and distinct, easy to notice, and intrigues today's investigators. Nowadays, no one would understand the justifications of such behaviour and would simply equate it with insanity. This basic difference, or moreover – a feeling of total strangeness and alienation of the social practice of "saintly fools" – fascinates and draws scientific attention, being recognized as an archaic element of society. In modern[29] times and epochs, when we tend to think that there is little difference between us and surrounding nations or – closer – generations, "the grasp of attention may occur," when we try to understand people, who act in the same way as us, yet justify their means and motivations in a totally different manner (i.e. we may raise a dog and provide him with all their comforts because we like pets; the Eskimo may raise dogs treating them as part of his survival, necessary for transportation and hunting; we cry when a member of our family dies and we remain in mourning; the Inuit also cries, but the place

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[28] E. Leach, *Culture & communication: the logic by which symbols are connected: an introduction to the use of structuralist analysis in social anthropology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1986.

[29] C. Wodziński, *Św. Idiota: projekt antropologii apofatycznej*, słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdansk 2009.

of the dead man is exchanged immediately by somebody else who can pick up the empty place in the family and continue his role).

Usually the hardest venture is to find such a situation, that "little" cultural detail, which we may grasp, examine, and which will bring us the necessary deepness connected with the cultural heart of the examined society. Usually the historian is presented with a behavioural outcome being introduced with how somebody acted, having the hard evidence without motivation and explanation, which he must find. All social facts are *implicite* determined by the worldview and also the epistemological assumptions which the subject had been previously equipped with by his culture. He always perceives the time, space, human relations within a particular scope and addresses them. This mental equipment (or mentality as historians like to put it) is unconsciously executed by the individual, who does not realize the influence of all the above mentioned factors, treating them as an objective state of the world (i.e. we do not think about the language's grammar – we just speak; what is more – merely a few people can explain the grammar rules they use every day). The investigator witnesses testimonies of the historical subject, trying to discover his intentions, or more likely – his way of thinking. This is not an easy situation, especially when nobody is able neither to confirm or falsify the full truth of the outcome of their investigations. That's why we say that the researcher usually tends to ask the dead on behalf of the living, trying to guess or point out the hypothesis which provides the proper explanation for his enquiries.

This is also the moment when the socio-cognitive conception of culture can be used, as it focuses not on fact stating but searching for values or norms that the subject obeyed when executing their action. Furthermore, in this endeavour its important not only to find out the norm (aim) and directive (means) but also to find statements that would explain the motivation standing behind the norm. There is a big difference between people who partake in a holy mass believing in salvation and those who do it because it is considered a duty by them to their community. Kmita's theory likes to limit culture to norms and directives excluding the field of societies common (or everyday) experience. In my opinion[30] widening Kmita's scope could bring a lot of lucrative information and explanations regarding the motivations of the everyday man. This is the very moment in which the investigator can match or exchange elements between idealistic

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[30]   And also after a large number of consultations with dr hab. Krzysztof Moraczewski.

conceptions of culture and the history of mentalities, as the latter provides methodological order to material brought by the former.

In this perspective the history of mentalities would be nothing more than the total amount of judgements (a chain of: justifications – norms – directives or simply: motivations – aims – means) which the researcher can justify by the given historical and cultural context. Such a collection has, obviously, a methodological status of a hypothesis whose trustworthiness (or simply intersubjectivity) is provided by the amount of information connecting the hypothesis with existing knowledge about the context and surrounding fields of the interrogated issue or category (as Gurevich liked to express it). In this way all the judgements should be divided into social categories of existence reflecting the way a given historical man perceived the cultural categories that helped him to interpret the sensual data, rationalise it and form a comprehensive world picture.

In such a situation, knowing the status and the procedure, one must still recall and present in detail the exact subject of his endeavour.

When speaking about the individual there is always a problem stating whether that individual was a genius, a madman or simply an every-day-man? When Febvre treated about Rabelais or Luther, it was clear that he was speaking of great people, whose strength changed eras in the historical development of European culture. If we want to avoid glorying them, we could say that historical change had its scope placed inside their works and activities, through which they remain recognizable even after five hundred years' time. One could say that they were larger than the times in which they lived, hence comes their greatness; but when we compare them with every other simple or regular man of their times, they probably would have nothing in common.

Exactly the opposite example is recognizable in the figure of Menochio[31] or Campanella,[32] whose politics, behaviour and large mouth place them under the category of mad men, whose activity remains everything but comprehensible even in the context of their times. But can their actions be still useful for mentalities reconstructions? In my opinion – yes, they can...but in a negative understanding. The sin of the nonconformist can only be forgiven if history has remembered the individual and followed

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[31] C. Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1992.

[32] J. Delumeau, *Campanella*, "Znak" march 2010, http://www.miesiecznik.znak.com.pl/3557/calosc/campanella [18.12.2013].

his footsteps and Menochio and Campanella provide examples of how a historical man of their time should not behave. Their individuality marks the place of societies exclusion, negation in the exact way as it was presented in the case of Karl Rudolph's *Gnoza*[33] who used the teachings of St. Paul to reconstruct the gnostic worldview.

On the other hand, when one would like to examine the mentality of collectiveness, one needs either to identify individuals social background (i.e. treat Menochio's testimonies as irrelevant and research the witnesses, the holy inquisition and everyone who opposed him) or to present large series of evidence exactly like Vovelle did. One must remember that the sphere of culture remains communicable to most members of society not only because they recognize the norms and directives (which, by the way, may not remain understandable between the popular and elite stratas of society) but because all the members are immersed in a common experience. This is why the "big artefacts" of history, even if they are produced by the elite, provide us with some information about the "normal" people. The best example is the art presented in different churches and cathedrals. Whilst nearly all of them were created by the elite, it was the everyday common man that understood them. If we read the books of Beda the Venerable,[34] we also have some clues of how to translate difficult theological sentences and issues to popular preaching.

High art and elite works are the best sources, because most of them have been preserved from destruction in museums, or galleries, which combined with comments (dialogues, programmes, discussions, manifestos) tend to shed more light on the situation of historical collectivities. Yet, as rich and as numerous as they have survived, it is always uncertain what investigator can deduct from them.

Summary

My proposition regarding implementing a socio-cognitive conception of culture should be understood as an entry point to a discussion regarding the future of "mentality." As "solid" as the term remains, one must remember that the theory should always correspond with the exact situation of

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[33] K. Rudolph, *Gnoza*, transl. G. Sowiński, Nomos, Cracow 2003.

[34] A. Gurevich, *Jednostka w dziejach Europy*, transl. Z. Dobrzyniecki, Marabut – Volumen, Gdansk – Warsaw 2002.

the historian and his work. In my opinion, the most common mistake is made when one fits a general theory to extremely diverse material, to which the historian is bound to investigate. I write here "bound" because usually the historian has to work with the things he has found and not the sources he probably would like to possess in order to get-to-know the things he would like to know.

In this context, the conception of culture provides only some theoretical background which should be always correlated with the historical sources. The theory itself is not perfect, but it does give a glimpse of how a scientist can investigate the societies mental (idealistic) background, and how to reflect about it in the proper terminology provided by a strong methodology and logic.

The problem which have I presented in the text above is nothing more than a culture orientated reflection regarding historical (anthropological) work. One should also remember that such an undertaking should also be backed up with proper philosophical arguments presenting the constitution of the historical facts and the proper intuitions regarding the construction of the world.

Chapter III

Durée as reproduction. Cultural-historical analysis

1. An object and a tool

> The recent and the more or less distant past thus combine in the amalgam of the present. Recent history races towards us at high speed: earlier history accompanies us at a slower, stealthier pace.[1]
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> F. Braudel, *The History of Civilizations*, trans. R. Mayne, A. Lane, The Penguin Press, New York 1994, p. xxxvi.

Uses of the Literacy by Richard Hoggart (1957),[2] *Culture and Society* by Raymond Williams (1958),[3] and the further elaboration of its themes in *The Long Revolution* (1961),[4] as well as Edward Palmer Thompson's, *Making of the English Working Class* (1963)[5] – these are the works that have been commonly treated as the founding curriculum for the cultural

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[1] F. Braudel, *The History of Civilizations*, trans. R. Mayne, A. Lane, The Penguin Press, New York 1994, p. xxxvi.

[2] R. Hoggart, *Uses of Literacy. Aspects of Working Class Life with Special Reference to Publications and Entertainment*, Chatto & Windus, London 1957.

[3] R. Williams, *Culture and Society 1780–1950*, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York 1960.

[4] R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, Chatto & Windus, London 1961.

[5] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Vintage Books, New York 1966.

studies.[6] They have all grown out of a historical reflection, providing the new arena for the cultural-historical analysis. These writings, crucial for the establishing of a new Centre for Cultural Studies, as Stuart Hall has indicated, were the sign, and, at the same time, the answer for a "decisive historical conjuncture."[7] They have inscribed themselves into the logics of challenge and response, and not only registered the social, cultural and economical changes that have been crucial for the British society, but they were also events of a historical break, shift, discontinuity and intervention. They were crucial for the establishment of the outlines of the cultural analysis, which cannot consider itself differently than, as Fernand Braudel has suggested, in the same breath, a historical analysis. "History is the study of society, of the whole of society, and thus of the past, and thus equally of the present; past and present being inseparable."[8] Their socio-cultural historical tools have been turned into the problem of the cultural change of the post-war British society: the social and political transformations, the changes in the capitalist production, the new settlements of the welfare state. Yet, as Stuart Hall has pointed out, what was decisive for them was "a qualitative break with the past": the shifts in the class relationships, changes in the process of class formation, the economic conditions of labour, and, resulting from these, the new cultural tendencies.[9]

The spirit of the modern historiography has been recognized by Michel de Certeau, and after him by Gabrielle M. Spiegel, as "the decisive differentiation between the present and the past,"[10] the cartographic act (the historian has to *draw the line*, to write a history *within a space of lan-*

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[6] See S. Hall, *Cultural Studies and the Centre: Some Problematics and Problems*, in *Culture, Media, Language. Working Papers in Cultural Studies 1972–79*, Routledge & Taylor & Francis, London – New York 2005.

[7] Ibidem, p. 4.

[8] F. Braudel, *History and Sociology*, in idem, *On History*, trans. S. Matthews, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1969, p. 69. This statement of Braudel is the transposition of, on the one hand, the famous sentence of Lucien Febvre's (*History, science of the past, science of the present*), and on the other, of Claude Lévi-Strauss' (*For everything is history, what was said yesterday is history, what was said a minute ago is history*). See C. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. C. Jacobson, B. Grundfest Schoepf, Basic Books, New York 1963 p. 12.

[9] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies and the Centre...*

[10] M. de Certeau, *The Writing of History,* trans. T. Conley, Columbia University Press, New York 1988, p. 5, quoted in G. M. Spiegel, *The Task of the Historian*, "The American Historical Review" 114(1)/2009, p. 3.

guage[11]) of the delineation between life (the present) and death (the past). For Raymond Williams in his *Culture and Society* a similar cartographic decision has been made: the task was to discern the moment of the Industrial Revolution, from which the idea of modern culture came to life. This was indeed a historical analysis undertaken in the mode of the logics of the challenge and the response – for Williams the modern British culture could not be understood without a comprehension of the "responses in thought and feeling"[12] to the eighteenth century changes. Yet, at the same time, the theoretical enterprise of *Culture and Society* has been pointed out as an elaboration of a new general theory of culture, and what is the most important, the theory considering the meaning of culture not yet seen in the anthropological terms: as a whole way of life, but as a theory of the *relations* existing between the elements of the whole way of life. For sure, the early understandings of Williams of the concept of culture have laid an emphasis on its quality being seen as a process of a historical kind, a constant transformation in time, and simultaneously, as a historically conditioned order of given relations. From the very beginning, the dialectics of culture as a *process* and culture as a *product* has been present in culturalism's proposition.[13] And from the very beginning the necessity of an elaboration of the history of culture has been supplemented with the programme of an elaboration of the historical cultural analysis.

The foundational conceptions for the British cultural studies have been developed in the trajectories, full of breaks, shifts, disruptions, and regroupings, situated around a new "set of premises and themes."[14] Researchers from the Birmingham Centre simultaneously chronicled the cultural changes and were a part of its particular logics. They were a part of a cultural order and its mechanisms of dealing with change. They put in motion the mechanisms through which cultural, traditional meanings do not proceed as the regulators of an established order, but as the tools of its reformulation. In the case of such authors as Raymond Williams, the theoretical developments were, as Stuart Hall has reminded, the result of

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[11] Ibidem.

[12] R. Williams, *Culture and Society*..., p. v.

[13] On the dialectics process-product see D. Hebdige, *Subculture. The Meafning of Style*, Routledge, London – New York 2002, p. 6 (first published in 1979 by Methuen & Co.).

[14] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, "Media, Culture and Society 2," Academic Press, London 1980, p. 57.

the awareness of "the manner in which real historical developments and transformations are appropriated in thought, and provide Thought, not with its guarantee of 'correctness' but with its fundamental orientations, its conditions of existence. It is because of this complex articulation between thinking and historical reality, reflected in the social categories of thought, and the continuous dialectic between 'knowledge' and 'power' [...]."[15] As a consequence, within the cultural studies the implicit programme of the sociology of knowledge has been developed, and within its boundaries – also the new theory of the historical cultural analysis. Thus, the indispensable mutual relations between the programme of the history of culture and the historical cultural analysis resulted from this metatheoretical awareness of the conditions of the rise of modern culture and, at the same time, the theory of modern culture. According to Hall, it was also an awareness of the new direction for the theory of culture. This new course in Raymond Williams' analysis took the direction of the unitary theory of "culture-and-society."[16]

The historical analysis of the modern relation of culture-and-society in Williams' *Culture and Society* resulted from the fourth stage, as already discerned by him, of the development of the meaning of *culture* – seen as: "a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual."[17] Its historical analysis has been considered as interrelated with the changes that take place in democracy, industry, class, and art. What was indeed the subject of this historical analysis were not, however, only the changes of the material conditions of life in the spheres of democracy, class, industry and art, but most of all – their meanings in their linguistic, historically conditioned use. Williams was inquiring about "a general pattern of change in these words," and delineating "a special kind of map by which it is possible to look again at those wider changes in life and thought to which the changes in language evidently refer."[18] According to Williams, the changing meanings of *culture* can be understood, on the one hand, as a set of reactions to the changes in the economic and political life, but on the other, as "a special kind of map by means of which the nature of the changes can be explored."[19] Thus, a culture reveals itself as a structure of meanings, but

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[15] Ibidem, p. 57.
[16] Ibidem. See also S. Hall, *Cultural Studies and the Centre...*
[17] R. Williams, *Culture and Society...*, p. xiv.
[18] Ibidem, p. xi.
[19] Ibidem, p. xv.

the structure which is lived, understood, used, and can be reconstructed in the "general movement in thought and feeling."[20] Primary is the system of meaning witnessing the trajectories of the economic, social, political and artistic changes. All of them have to be considered as necessarily interrelated, for Williams was opposed to the simplistic versions of the materialist determinism ("culture was not a response to the new methods of production, the new Industry, alone"[21]). The structure of meaning and its historically interrelated patterns were thus analyzed as a response to the historical changes, and simultaneously, as their witness; as the object and the tool. Both were translated into the structures of feeling and living in the historical trajectories of the whole ways of lives. The analysis of the latter, at least in the time of Williams' *Culture and Society*, yet had to wait for its methodological elaboration.

2. Culturalism and history

The writings of Williams, Hoggart, and Thompson have all worked toward the progress of one of the general paradigms of cultural studies: the culturalist paradigm.[22] Interpreted in terms of their historical analysis, these literary works have broken with the dichotomy of the high and low culture, with its technological evolutionism, reductive economism, and organizational determinism. Hoggart's *Uses of Literacy* has inscribed itself into the tradition of Leavis' "cultural debate" and continued the consideration of the political, social and cultural changes. As Stuart Hall has reported, Hoggart's method has still been presented in the form of "practical criticism," thus the tendency "to 'read' working class culture for its values and meanings as embodied in its patterns and arrangements – as if it presented certain kinds of 'texts.'"[23] Yet, this attitude has found its finer appreciation in the course of the historical reinterpretations of the cultural studies. In his "Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* and the Cultural Turn," Hall described Hoggart's conceptualization of the category of culture as an indispensable, revolutionary break, similar and parallel to Williams' elaborations, since in *Uses of Literacy* the meaning of culture as marking practices "making sense"

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[20] Ibidem, p. xi.
[21] Ibidem, p. xvi.
[22] See S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*.
[23] Ibidem, p. 57.

was introduced. Consequently, in the course of the socio-cultural inquiry, culture could be analyzed as the ways in which the "working-class people spoke and thought, what language and common assumptions about life they shared, in speech and action, what social attitudes informed their daily practice, what moral categories they deployed, even if only aphoristically, to make judgments about their own behavior and that of others – including, of course, how they brought all this to bear on what they read, saw and sang."[24] Indeed, the parallels with Raymond Williams' proposition were striking. Again, in Hall's reinterpretations, culture as a sphere of communally shared meanings (in Williams and Thompson interpretations) has been an indispensable element of the historical analysis. Cultural meanings interwoven into social practices, conventions, and institutions are strongly built into the order of everyday life: "the meanings that are valued by the community are shared and made active, then there is no way in which this process can be hived off or distinguished or set apart from the other practices of the historical process."[25]

In the history of the culturalist paradigm one of the most important shifts refers to Raymond Williams' elaboration of the concept of culture between his *Culture and Society* (1958) and *The Long Revolution* (1961). This move has been usually analyzed also in relation to the publication of E. P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class* (1963). Williams was inspired by the polemics around *Culture and Society* and delineated the programme of *The Long Revolution* comprehensively, not excluding from it the matters of historical analysis. He has developed the "questions in the theory of culture, [the] historical analysis of certain cultural institutions and forms, and problems of meaning and action in our contemporary cultural situation."[26] Thompson, continuing his cultural analysis in the field of English Marxist historiography and economic and labour history,[27] has interpreted the "making" of the working class as a historical, "active process, which owes as much to agency as to conditioning."[28] Both of these propositions, Williams' and Thompson's, were crucial for the possibility of an evocation of the most important theoretical problems in the cultural studies field, especially in its culturalist version.

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[24] S. Hall, *Richard Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy and the Cultural Turn*, in S. Owen (ed.), *Richard Hoggart and Cultural Studies*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2008, pp. 24–25.

[25] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 59.

[26] R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, p. 9.

[27] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 58.

[28] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 9.

Within the culturalist paradigm, two formative, analytically discerned, theoretical moments consolidate the concept of culture. The first one, (1) ideative, pays attention to the meaning of culture as "the sum of the available descriptions through which societies make sense of and reflect their common experiences."[29] According to the commentaries of Stuart Hall, this understanding does not refer to the sphere of ideas understood as the "best that has been thought and said," but to the commonly and democratically shared order of ideas and meanings. The last mentioned, described also as "descriptions," can be understood as shared justifications: giving sense to the common practices and making them reflective. The sphere of ideas and descriptions is understood not only as commonly shared, but also as "giving and taking meanings," thus, it cannot be considered separately from the practices of communication: "since our way of seeing things is literally our way of living, [and] the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the sharing [of] common meanings, and thence common activities and purposes; the offering, reception and comparison of new meanings, leading to tensions and achievements of growth and change."[30]

The second conceptual moment in the British culturalist tradition – (2) anthropological – pays attention to the ordinariness of culture as a sphere of all "human activities" and "human energy." It introduces a more documentary, ethnographic model of the cultural analysis, describing and inquiring into the variety of social practices. It was this moment in which the accent was laid on the wholeness of the lived and shared culture – culture as the whole way of life.

In this early culturalist conception of culture, meanings have not yet been considered as a possible tools of the social distinction, inequality or subordination. According to Hall, the general tone of Williams' *The Long Revolution* directed itself against vulgar materialism and economic determinism, and thus resigned from the distinction of the base and the superstructure on behalf of a "radical interactionism" – of the "interaction of all practices in and with one another, skirting the problem of determinacy."[31] It paid attention rather to the democratization of culture than to its internally competitive dynamics of conflict. What was also diminished in Williams' perspective was the problem of the conditions

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[29] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 59.
[30] R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, p. 55.
[31] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 60.

of the ways of life and their changes in the historical course. Differently
to E. P. Thompson, Williams has not kept the distinction between what
is culture and what is not culture, and as Stuart Hall has denounced, he
"totally absorbed 'definitions of experience' into our 'ways of living.'"[32]

E. P. Thompson, on the other hand, constructed his cultural-historical
analysis as based on human agency on the one hand, and its condition-
ing on the other. His analysis is openly anti-structuralist. He replaces the
synchrony of a possible structuralist analysis of class (its "fluency evades
analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomise
its structure"[33]) with a "notion of [a] historical relationship,"[34] based on
the dialectics of class experience and class-consciousness. If the class is
considered as a (historically changing) mode of a social relationship, its
experience is determined and conditioned by the already existing "giveness"
of structural conditions. Class-consciousness consists of non-determined
(and not ahistorically presupposed) ways of dealing with the class experi-
ences, yet in cultural terms: "embodied in traditions, value systems, ideas,
and institutional forms."[35] Thompson has actually understood the cultural
process as an inherently historical one. Considering the experience of the
social subjects as half way between the structural conditions of living and
a social consciousness, he enhanced the logics of the historical analysis in
the terms of challenge and response, and ultimately helped to determine
the culturalist concept of culture. Stuart Hall defines this as "as *both* the
meanings and values which arise amongst distinctive social groups and
classes, on the basis of their given historical conditions and relationships,
through which they 'handle' and respond to the conditions of existence; *and*
as the lived traditions and practices through which those 'understandings'
are expressed and in which they are embodied."[36] As a consequence, the
pair culture-consciousness is the most formative in the culturalist paradigm,
and the category of a creative and historical agency is introduced.

As Stuart Hall yet concludes, this conception is rather humanistic than
anthropological. From its two moments, ideative and anthropological, the
first mentioned is crucial – it underlies the meaning of the concept of cul-
ture as a historically conditioned order of relationships between elements

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[32] Ibidem, p. 63.

[33] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 9.

[34] Ibidem.

[35] Ibidem.

[36] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 63.

in the whole ways of life: "Culture is not *a* practice; nor is it simply the descriptive sum of the 'mores and folkways' of societes – as it tended to become in certain kinds of anthropology."[37] It is rather an ideative moment of the conception of culture that gives sense to the anthropological one; it accents the relational order of culture: "culture cannot be reduced to the sphere of social practice, it is threaded through *all* social practices, and is the sum of their inter-relationship,"[38] it consists of the patterns of organization which can be the subjects of historical shifts and distortions, "discontinuities of an unexpected kind."

The problem of the history of cultural change has been undertaken by Raymond Williams in his *Culture and Society.* He has explicitly derived the problem of cultural change from the assumptions of Marxism.[39] Later, at the time of *Marxism and Literature*, he has diminished the role of his earlier divagations and the quality of "impoverished Marxist tradition" commonly known and accessible for British scholars in the 1950s from which he took his inspirations for his early interpretations. Between *Culture and Society* (1958) and *Marxism and Literature* (1977) the "alternative Marxist tradition" vividly discussed within the New Left circles became a new possibility for Williams to rework the problem of cultural change.[40]

In *Culture and Society* Williams has already rejected the simplistic understanding of the historical process in terms of the base-superstructure determination. He has paid attention to the highly complex character of a superstructure and its always historical character. Yet "historical" meant for Williams a process which includes "continuities from the past as well as reactions to the present."[41] Reworking Engels' commentaries to Marks from Engels letter to J. Bloch, Williams has paid attention to the complexity of relations between the economic, social, political and cultural elements

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[37] Ibidem, p. 60.

[38] Ibidem.

[39] See R. Williams, *Marxism and Culture*, in idem, *Culture and Society*.

[40] Raymond Williams had been recalling: "I found also, and crucially, Marxist thinking which was different. in some respects radically different, from what I and most people in Britain knew as Marxism. There was contact with older work that had not previously come our way – that of Lukacs and of Brecht, for example. There was new contemporary work in Poland, in France, and in Britain itself. And while some of this work was exploring new ground, much of it, just as interestingly, was seeing Marxism as itself a historical development, with highly variable and even alternative positions." R. Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford – New York 1977, p. 3. For the impoverished and alternative Marxist traditions see S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*.

[41] R. Williams, *Marxism and Culture*, p. 284.

within the wholeness of society, and on the possible superstructural influences and determinations of the economic order in the course of the historical transformation of society.[42] He regarded relations between the elements of society in the context of Time, but turning the theory of culture not in the direction of a cultural change problem, but rather entering the field of a cultural reproduction: of a mechanism of a constant *production and reproduction of the real life*. "We arrive at a different model, in which reality is seen as a very complex field of movement, within which the economic forces finally reveal themselves as the organizing element."[43] As a constructive element of the cultural reproduction Williams has regarded the problem of interaction.

As it was mentioned before, in Stuart Hall's interpretation of the culturalist paradigm, Williams' early conception of culture has been understood as a "radical interactionism." Williams indeed has followed the Plekhanov' commentaries about the social interaction searching for the possibility of going beyond the base-superstructure dialectics:

> Interaction exists [...] nevertheless, by itself it explains nothing. In order to understand interaction, one must ascertain the attributes of the interacting forces and these attributes cannot find their ultimate explanation in the fact of interaction, however much they may change thanks to that fact. The qualities of the interacting forces, the attributes of the social organisms influencing one another, are explained in the long run by the cause we already know: the economic structure of these organisms, which is determined by the state of their productive forces.[44]

As Stuart Hall has reported, the insistence within the culturalist tradition on the problem of interaction has coincided with the developments of

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[42] F. Engels, *Letter to J. Bloch*, 21 September 1890, in *Selected Correspondence*, p. 475, quoted in ibidem, pp. 286–287: "According to the materialist conception of history, the determining element in history is ultimately the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into the statement that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc. forms of law and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the combatants: political, legal, and philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form."

[43] R. Williams, *Marxism and Culture*, p. 286.

[44] G. V. Plekhanov, *The Development of the Monist View of History*, trans. A. Rotnstein, London 1947, p. 207; quoted in ibidem, p. 286.

the social interactionism, especially of the very influential work of How-ard Becker and subcultural theories.[45] With this area, an interest in the ethnographic methods became the important source of data and opened access to the lived meanings and values, to the qualities of everyday life.[46] With these also the concept of the "definition of the situation" became important and evaluated, also in the historical mode of research.

If at this point the course of the cultural-historical analysis can be un-derstood as an "attempt to discover the nature of the organization which is the complex of these relationships"[47] in time, it can be compared to the relational analysis of the historical patterning, yet in this model also the anthropological moment becomes visible: what is indeed patterned is the structure of feeling. Orders and relationships between cultural patterns has to be analytically delineated, but with regard to the question of how these patterns are experienced, lived and understood. The "structure of feeling" is the category derived from Lucien Goldman's genetic structuralism, of study-ing the social conditioning of the facts of literature, and homologies between literature and the structures of the empirical consciousness of given social groups. Williams has reworked these categories under the influence of E. P. Thompson's critique in "The Base and Superstructure" and *Marxism and Literature*. He has not excluded literature from the other forms of social practice, he has argued "against the structuralist emphasis on the specifics and autonomy of practices, and their analytic separation of societes into their discrete instances,"[48] reworked the problem of determination and hegemony, and maintained the dialectics of a variety of social *practices* (ethnographically documented) and the totality of sensuous human *practice*.

According to Stuart Hall, the tension between ethnographic-experi-ental accounts and structural and the historical determinations "has been a pivotal site of Centre theorizing and debate since then."[49] It opened up cultural studies, on the one hand, in the social anthropology, and on the other, in the "history from below" – the new social history.

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[45] See H. Becker, *Outsiders*, The Free Press, Glencoe 1963.

[46] In this area especially important were the works of Paul Willis, see P. Willis, *Profane Culture*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1978; idem, *Learning to Labour*, Saxon House, Farnborough 1977; also works gathered in T. Jefferson (ed.), *Resistance through Rituals*, Hutchinson with CCCS, London 1976.

[47] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 63.

[48] Ibidem, p. 61.

[49] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies and the Centre*..., p. 11.

3. Anthropology and history

The thesis of Frederic W. Maitland:

> [...] by and by anthropology will have the choice between being history and being nothing," has been elaborated on during the XXth century in many sinuous and rough ways. The reconstruction of the most important of them should be held in a plural modality. There is no one anthropology, and there is no one history: "we have a variety of anthropolog*ies* appropriating a variety of histor*ies*, making any one-sentence invocation of the intersection of anthropology and history simplistic and naïve.[50]

One of the most criticized trends in anthropology with regard to its historiographic assumptions was that started by the evolutionist and neo-evolutionist school. They assumed the Western type of historical consciousness, determining a linear and teleological course of the evolution of societies, from the most primitive ones to the most advanced. At the core of Claude Lévi-Strauss' criticism of the evolutionist school was the arbitrary character of its assumptions. According to these "Western civilization thus appears to be the most advanced expression of the evolution of societies, while primitive groups are 'survivals' of earlier stages, whose logical classification reflects their order of appearance in time."[51] The logic of the evolutionist interpretation is thus based on the assumption of a dual organization of a given stage of the social development, and on the discerning of a simple, observable form as a manifestation or survival of its historical predecessor. According to Lévi-Strauss, this type of selection is necessarily arbitrary "and makes of this type the model from which one attempts, through speculation, to derive all the others."[52] A similar objection has been formulated for the diffusionism – its mode of selection[53] and

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[50] W. Roseberry, *Anthropologies and Histories. Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy*, Rutgers University Press, New York 1994, p. 5.

[51] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction: History and Anthropology,* in idem*, Structural Anthropology*, trans. C. Jacobson, B. Grundfest Schoepf, Basic Books, New York 1963, p. 3.

[52] Ibidem, p. 10. The polemics of Franz Boas with evolutionism in F. Boas, *History and science in anthropology: a reply*, "American Anthropologist" vol. 38, 1936.

[53] C. Lévi-Strauss describes the diffusionist mode of selection as a choice of the "observed types, usually the most developed and complex, as representing the archaic form of the institution and would attribute its origin to that region of the world where it is best documented, all other forms being considered the product of migrations and borrowings from the common cradle." Ibidem, p. 10.

deduction of diffusionist trajectories is no less arbitrary and speculative. Yet, according to Lévi-Strauss, some results of the diffusionist analysis can be acknowledged as valuable, especially on the level of micro-history, if the inquiry refers to the, usually two, populations under consideration with a documented contact between them.[54]

The functionalist school analyzed the wholeness of the societal system and its inherent functional patterns. The functionalist research has been focused rather on social roles than on the motives and intentions of human actions. Yet, the functionalism of Bronisław Malinowski, as it has been turned against "evolutionist and pseudo-historical diffusionist reconstructions"[55] (especially the postulates of G. Elliot-Smith), reserved much more interest in peoples' and societies own conceptions of time and history, focusing the analysis on the elements of their oral traditions.[56] The reinterpretations of this analytical tendency, before the relativist turn, have introduced the distinction of the "ideological" and "objective" history. Ideological history, as Ariane Deluz-Chiva has referred to it, was "the expression of a fraction of society (a particular social group, for instance) or a sign of the nascent historical consciousness in a changing society. But it will be only an ideological history, objective from the standpoint of that society alone. In considering the relationship between anthropology and history, we are thus faced with a dilemma: objective history according to our civilization, but exterior to the society studied, or ideological history based on the internal logic of that society, but non-objective by our standards."[57]

For a long time historians have perceived one/the object of anthropological analysis as dealing with the "problems of social change in

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[54] See A. Deluz-Chiva, *Anthropology, history and historiography*, "History and Social Science. International Social Science Journal" vol. XVII, 4/1965.

[55] Ibidem, p. 573.

[56] A. Deluz-Chiva has inscribed some of the functionalist attitudes to the French tradition of historians, referring their research to the diffusionist and evolutionist schools, yet conveying the historical analysis of the unwritten languages: Ch. Monteil, *Les empires du Mali*, Larose, Paris 1930; M. Delafosse, *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, Larose, Paris 1912; L. Tauxier, *Histoire des Bombara*, Geuthner, Paris 1942. The documents left by them strengthen an interest in the research of a "subjective history" in Sudanese Africa see ibidem. See also B. Malinowski, *Myth in primitive psychology*, W.W. Norton and Co., New York 1926.

[57] A. Deluz-Chiva, *Anthropology, history*..., p. 576. The distinction of the ideological and objective history has been introduced by S.F. Nadel, *A Black Byzantium*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1942.

underdeveloped countries,"[58] and later as also turning its attention to the study of "advanced societies." Societies under research have been often qualified as in the state of a structural equilibrium. These have been interpreted in the field of social anthropology as "healthy societies" and opposed to those societies internally conflicted and in the state of anomaly.[59] The dominant categories here were those of the social structure, social organization and social equilibrium. The course of the social change has been often considered as a deviation from the norm and as an idiosyncrasy, unless it has became organized in a new kind of pattern. Many socio-anthropological writings "were concerned with the functions and interrelationships of institutions, not with the problems of social change."[60] The terrains of history and anthropology seemed to be opposed to each other to a vast extent. The study of so called "primitive societies" demanded a synchronic analysis as "the only scientifically valid method which could be used in the study of societies with no written records."[61] Also the tools of anthropological study in terms of the analysis of myths and traditions seemed not to have any real access to the historical past. "Myths and traditions ma y have some factual basis, but in the absence of contemporary evidence it is impossible to determine what that basis was."[62] According to Crozier, a great impulse for the analysis of cultural change has resulted from colonialism and cultural contact and this gave an impulse for the development of the social and historical anthropology.

For Alfred Radcliffe-Brown in his *Method in Social Anthropology*, the most important aim of the anthropological method is the capacity of its scientific generalization.[63] Thus he has insisted on the necessity of there being a distinction between the historical and comparative methods, when only the latter are able to offer "the general propositions." His project of social anthropology, inspired by the comparative sociology, has been thus clearly distinguished from the – especially conjectural – historical method.

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[58] D. Crozier, *History and Anthropology*, in *History and Social Science*, "International Social Science Journal" vol. XVII, 4/1965, p. 561.

[59] See W. E. Washburn, *Against the Anthropological Grain*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ,1998.

[60] D. Crozier, *History and Anthropology*, pp. 562–563.

[61] Ibidem, p. 562.

[62] Ibidem.

[63] A. Radcliffe-Brown, *Method in Social Anthropology*, ed. M. N. Srinivas, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1958.

Defining, at its best, history as a discipline of "an authentic account of the succession of events in the particular region over the particular period of time"[64] can still only lead to satisfactory outcomes when combined with the comparative potential of the social anthropology.

According to Ariane Deluz-Chiva, the first visible moment of the rehabilitation of historical analysis among the British anthropologists has followed between 1950–1961, especially in the field of African studies. This critical decade has been undoubtedly opened by Edward E. Evans-Pritchard's Marett Lecture on *Anthropology, Past and Present* (1950).[65] Assumptions about the anthropology belonging rather to the field of history than to the natural sciences were elaborated upon in 1961 in his *Anthropology and history*.[66] Evans-Pritchard refused Radcliffe-Brown's distinction of the historical and comparative methods with the generalization abilities of the latter: "the functionalist critics and diffusionists [...] dropped the history and kept the pursuit of the laws, which was often precisely what made the history bad [...] and rejected historical explanations of any kind. They justified this by a methodological distinction between generalizing sciences [...] and particularizing sciences like history. This would be legitimate were history merely a record of a succession of unique events and social anthropology a set of general propositions; but in practice social anthropologists today generalize little more than historians do."[67] Evans-Pritchard saw the anthropology and history as having the same aim: going beyond the passages of a narrative history ("history is not a succession of events, it is the links between them"[68]) and abstractions of the philosophy of history. The common aim for anthropology and history was thus the pursuit of an analysis able to grasp intelligible wholes: "organisms, patterns, complexes, networks, relations."[69] This is the sociological history of "regularities, tendencies, types, and typical sequences; and always within a restricted historical and cultural context."[70] It was Evans-Pritchard who

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[64] Ibidem, p. 128. The concept of an "authentic history" has been opposed to the "pseudo-history" as arbitrary generalizations about the unknown past.

[65] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Social anthropology, past and present*, "Man" vol. 198/1950.

[66] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Anthropology and history*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1961.

[67] Ibidem, p. 2.

[68] Ibidem, p. 3.

[69] Ibidem.

[70] Ibidem.

with this statement made the strict connection between anthropology and the historical work of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre in the Annales School, and who not only confirmed the role of the sociological history, but also silently announced the coming of the historical anthropology.

One of the most resonant ideas, as much so in the field of anthropology as in the field of history, evoking the possibility of cooperation between these two, was the concept of structural anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss. The important point of departure for Lévi-Strauss was an explicit articulation of a paradox of ethnology, coming from the writings of Franz Boas. Ethnology for Boas was a science dealing with the relation between the "objective" world and "subjective" world of man. Demanding a scrupulous method of research of the "subjective world," Boas reveals at the same time the variety of historical processes, which hardly can be reduced to a common denominator. "Boas introduces the standards of the physicist in tracing the history of societies for which we possess only documents that would discourage the historian. When Boas is successful, his reconstructions amount to true history – but this is a history of the fleeting moment, the only kind of history that can be captured immediately – in other words, a *microhistory*, which can no more be related to the past than can the *macrohistory* of evolutionism and diffusionism."[71] Lévi-Strauss poses the problem of there being a divergence between anthropology and history differently: rather as a matter of their mutual relationships than the difference of their subject, their goal, or their methods. These are the same for both disciplines, and can be subsumed as the joint trial of a better understanding of man. The difference then is in their (complementary) perspectives: "History organizes its data in relation to conscious expressions of social life, while anthropology proceeds by examining its unconscious foundations."[72] The subject of an anthropological analysis is then common for anthropology and history: "The anthropologist goes forward, seeking to attain, through the conscious, of which he is always aware, more and more of the unconscious; whereas the historian advances, so to speak, backward, keeping his eyes fixed on concrete and specific activities from which he withdraws only to consider them from a more complete and richer perspective. A true two-faced Janus, it is the solidarity of the two disciplines that makes it possible to keep the whole road in sight."[73]

[71] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction: History and Anthropology*, p. 8.
[72] Ibidem, p. 18.
[73] Ibidem, p. 24.

In the 1970s historical anthropology entered a new field under the influence of the semiotic conception of culture of Clifford Geertz. For William Roseberry "in the most restricted understanding," there was no relationship between history and anthropology until Geertz's publication of *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1971).[74] Despite the incautious negligence of even Franz Boas' historicism tradition, an opinion quoted by Roseberry points out the critical role of Geertz's writings. These works, continuing the anti-universalist spirit of Boas' conceptions, and at the same time distancing themselves from the completeness of Boas' method of induction, have conceptualized anthropology as neo-Kantian historical science, and equipped the anthropologist with the tools of the critique of positivism. Cultural analysis in anthropology after the interpretative turn has connoted the historical process with a process culturally situated,[75] and had introduced the semiotic conception of culture into the anthropology through the hermeneutic door. It inspired the historical writing of Robert Darnton,[76] and Natalie Zemon Davis.[77]

Robert Darnton summarizing the enormous career of the French history of *mentalities* rigorously points out the probable reasons for its decrease. He sees in it "an overcommitment to the quantification of culture and an undervaluation of the symbolic element in social intercourse."[78] He also engages himself in the polemics dealing with the "French formula" of sometimes simplified versions of Marxism, rhetorically asking: "How many of our books begin by sketching the social background of the subject and by filling in the culture?"[79] An answer followed ironically, uncovering "an unspoken assumption that if we can get the social setting right, the cultural content will somehow follow."[80] With these arguments Darnton situates his analysis rather not in the area of the French history of *Mentalities*, but of the American cultural anthropology. Distancing himself from the newer inspirations of Jacques Le Goff, Jean-Claude Schmitt, Roger Chattier found

[74] W. Roseberry, *Anthropologies and Histories...*, p. 5.

[75] Ibidem, p. 6.

[76] R. Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, Basic Books, Philadelphia 1984.

[77] N. Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1983.

[78] R. Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre...*, p. 258.

[79] Ibidem.

[80] Ibidem, p. 259.

in the field of anthropology (according to Darnton "restricted within the structuralist system of Claude Lévi-Strauss or the functionalism derived from Émile Durkheim"[81]), he derives his inspirations from the Weberian strain followed by Clifford Geertz. "While Americans tend to ignore systems of relations, the French generally neglect systems of meaning."[82]

Yet, the arguments of Robert Darnton are of the double-edged kind, and have been used with the same obstinacy against Clifford Geertz's cultural analysis. Aletta Biersack has pointed out that time in Geertz's *Negara* "is merely another mode of displacement, a further estrangement. Meaning is described, never derived. [...] The webs, not the spinning; the culture, not the history; the text, not the process of textualizing – these attract Geertz's attention."[83] In consequence, "Geertz's cultural analysis is as static as any structuralism,"[84] and in spite of its attention to the symbolical communicative surface, it goes too far by saying nothing about the "historical and institutional settings." For the possible interlink between the history and anthropology, considered (as for Biersack) in the light of a subtle analysis of Michel Foucault and its "ubiquity of the political function," at the time of a "Marxism softened with new culturalism," it would be hard to point to Geertz's writings as providing the crucial tools plotting the nodes of anthropology, history and cultural studies into the one multidisciplinary analysis.

According to Nicolas Dirks, it was Marshall Sahlins who had carried out one of "the most dramatic interventions" in the field of anthropology. He had introduced the vivid reinterpretation of the French structuralism, thus making a place in the field for the semiotic conceptions of culture (he "had locked himself into a far more formal cultural semiotics than the fluid Weberianism of Clifford Geertz"[85]), and implemented it into the context of the historicity of cultural forms, structures and events. For William Roseberry, Marshall Sahlins was one of the three most important

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[81] Ibidem, p. 282.

[82] Ibidem.

[83] A. Biersack, *Local Knowledge, Local History: Geertz and Beyond*, in L. Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History*, University of California Press, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1989, p. 80.

[84] Ibidem.

[85] N. Dirks, *Is Vice Versa? Historical Anthropologies and Anthropological Histories*, *Transformations. Comparative study of social transformations*, CSST Working Papers, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 1990, p. 4.

anthropologists (next to Clifford Geertz and Eric Wolf) who had taken the trial of introducing the mode of historical inquiry into the field of anthropological analysis.[86] Yet, the most important accomplishment of Sahlins, according to Alletta Biersack, was his choice "to employ Braudel's term *long durée* to mean Lévi Strauss' 'structure,'"[87] when he considered Braudel's long "run" rather in categorical terms than as an example of geographical or geohistorical structures. "Braudel rebaptized his geohistory 'structural history' to affiliate himself with the structuralism of Levi-Strauss. Meanwhile, Sahlins, many years later, cites Braudel to ground anthropology in history as a prelude to refashioning structuralism in historical terms."[88] Thanks to these decisions, Sahlins undertakes the task of the structural anthropology in a moment, whilst Claude Lévi-Strauss left it to further elaborations when he was explaining: "It is unnecessary to refer here to the problem of diachronic structures, for which historical knowledge is naturally indispensable. Certain developments of social life no doubt require a diachronic structure."[89] For Biersack, Sahlins intervention brings about the shift from the structural anthropology (through the elaboration of historical structuralism) to the historical anthropology, taking its inspiration from the social history of Fernand Braudel.

4. The *longue durée*

Thinking about history as a field interrelated with many other disciplines, Fernand Braudel has introduced its possible categorization with regard (1) to method, or (2) to time. The categorization with regard to method discerned, for example, the "traditional history," and the history of events with its "dramatic, breathless rush of narrative."[90] Braudel's proposition of thinking about historical analysis first in terms of time, and then in

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[86] See W. Roseberry, *Anthropologies and Histories...* The strong position of Marshall Sahlins among the anthropologists dealing with the historical analysis is unquestionable even for scholars, who evidently reject any trials of implementation of the neo-Marxist conceptions into the field of anthropology, and disregard the work so valued by William Roseberry of Eric Wolf.

[87] A. Biersack, *Local Knowledge, Local History...*, p. 72.

[88] Ibidem, p. 73.

[89] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction: History and Anthropology*, p. 21.

[90] F. Braudel, *History and the Social Sciences. The Longue Durée*, in idem, *On History*, trans. S. Matthews, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1980, p. 27.

the terms of method, pointed out at least three various time-space plans of historical sight: the short time span ("proportionate to individuals, to daily life, to our illusions, to our nasty awareness"[91]); the cyclical time spans characteristic of new economic and social history (the time of conjunctures); and the long time span (the time of long lasting patterns of organization, "coherent and fairly fixed series of relationships between realities and social masses"[92]). In the Preface to *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Braudel delineated the architecture of his historical analysis. The three kinds of time-method categorization have been treated as complementary levels of the one monumental narrative: from the "history of man in relation to his sur-roundings," existing almost "out of time" (long span); through the history of the "gentle rhythms," "groups and groupings," "states, societies and civ-ilizations" (cyclical span); to the traditional history of events (short span).

The history of events in the perspective of Fernand Braudel was yet not unproblematic, or needless in historical analysis ("we do not seek to deny the reality of events"[93]). Just the opposite, he was fully aware of the necessity and subtlety of the changing time-method perspective when one analytically travels between long and short spans of history. "To put things more clearly, let us say that instead of a history of events, we would speak of a short time span."[94]

According to Braudel, events belong to a complex, intermeshed social reality, which cannot be reduced to, or flattened by, the one dominant factor: "neither the conflict between races, [...] nor powerful economic rhythms, [...] nor constant social tensions."[95] Yet, Braudel seemed to think about the category of *event* from two different perspectives: (1) as about an element of the complex reality of daily life, "social facts" of the "real" time,[96] (2) as about, made by the historian, the historical analytical cate-gorization of a fluid reality. As the first mentioned, events as facts are of

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[91] Ibidem, p. 28.

[92] Ibidem, p. 31.

[93] F. Braudel, *The Situation of History in 1950*, in idem, *On History*, trans. S. Mat-thews, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1980, p. 10.

[94] F. Braudel, *History and the Social Sciences...*, p. 29.

[95] F. Braudel, *The Situation of History...*, p. 10.

[96] S. Kinser admits Braudel's tendency over an assimilation of the historical event to fact and not fully understanding the constructed character of events. He also points out that the opposition between structural and event history is false and leads to simplifica-tion. "An event is a site of change, a construction developed by historians because they seek to understand structures and conjunctures, not despite their larger goals." See S. Kinser,

an "explosive" nature, they are "the matter of the moment" and exist as a vast mass of diverse facts, which yet do "not make up all of reality" and, in consequence, create "almost a horror of the event" for the social sciences.[97] As the second mentioned, events/an event as a tool of the historian's categorization has often created "a mere abstraction,"[98] unable to touch the plasticity and rhythm of the time in the history. Events are the dust of the history. Braudel has not rejected the short span perspective in the historical analysis, reversely, he has appreciated its problematic potential: "the short span is the most capricious and the most delusive of all."[99] If the short time span is the domain of events, the *longue durée* is the matter of structures. This dialectics of structure and events will return in an anthropologically elaborated way in the conception of Marshall Sahlins.

Braudel has seen the possibility for the great historical social science as encompassing many social disciplines (sociology, ethnography, ethnology, anthropology, communication science, geography, economics, political science, etc.) for all the three time spans. Its task had been thought of as depicting the "social realities" taking the forms of "collective life, economies, institutions, social structures, in short and above all, civilizations."[100] All the elements of these social realities are of a different and constantly changing pace and duration, thus the most fundamental explanatory force, according to Braudel, should be directed toward their underlying principles, "a slow-paced history of civilizations, a history of their depths, of the characteristics of their structure and layout."[101] This was not a proclamation of a reductive principle in the historical analysis to the level of the structures of the *longue durée*, but rather a trial of maintaining a constant, explanatory dialectics between the structure and the event. Braudel's stress on the necessity of this dialectics is the most visible in his trial of the reconciliation of Jean-Paul Sartre's and Marxist's perspectives without the gesture of a reduction the one into another. His attitude has been rather solidly embedded into the constant move "from event to structure, and then from structure and model back to the event."[102]

Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism of Fernand Braudel, "American Historical Review" 86/1981, p. 96.

[97] F. Braudel, *History and the Social Sciences…*, p. 28.
[98] F. Braudel, *The Situation of History…*, p. 10.
[99] F. Braudel, *History and the Social Sciences…*, p. 28.
[100] F. Braudel, *The Situation of History…*, p. 11.
[101] Ibidem, p. 12.
[102] F. Braudel, *History and the Social Sciences…*, p. 50.

The dialectical analytical rule *from structure to event and back to the structure* was yet expressed in slightly different terms in Braudel's *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Samuel Kinser analyzing the changing concept of Braudel's structure had shown that it hardly could be explained in the terms of the one, structural paradigm.[103] In *The Mediterranean* the structural history regarded as a geohistory had carried a great ambition of *restoring everything*. This early version of Braudel's geohistorical historiography placed itself between the Scilla of Marc Bloch's patterns of agricultural production and the Charybdis of Lucien Febvre's mental patterns of cultural activity.[104] The only two principles that the geostructures of Baudel shared were the spirit of Annales analysis: considering the structure as a given form of order, and the methodological interdisciplinary openness for the structural analysis. In *The Mediterranean* the geohistorical structure is built of a countless number of "structural facts," organized in a way of, as Kinser defines, organic coding, working out the shape assumed by Braudel of an organismic structure of a unitary historical *everything*.

Yet, the final outcome of Braudel's structural analysis and the actual course of his analytical procedure were finally not closed into the shape of the one, united and closed structure. It rather took a form of "the display of spatial patterns whose parts act and react to each other in ways that cannot be totalized, because new associations – subparts and superior parts – constantly form and dissolve."[105] From the two heuristic procedures undertaken by Braudel in his analysis, the first one referred to the interwoven "concrete reality" of "how one kind of activity led to another in ways that were quite beyond the consciousness of any particular group [...]"[106], and the second, of orchestrated various tendencies occurring in the different time and space as running parallely.

In consequence, Braudel's structure has preserved a basic resemblance to Gaston Roupnel's conception of structure in its "descriptive concreteness above systematicity and abstract rigor."[107] But, what is the most important, and what Samuel Kinser has revealed, in the course of the historical analysis resulting from the two heuristic procedures, in *The Mediterranean* the two contradictory meanings of structure have glimmered: the first

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[103] S. Kinser, *Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism...*
[104] Ibidem.
[105] Ibidem, p. 80.
[106] Ibidem, p. 78.
[107] Ibidem, p. 73.

as an apparent framework referring to the actual, sensorial and physical entity; and the second one, as the generating law. If before the 1950s the first meaning was dominant: of the structure as a pattern in the sensorially perceived reality, after this period the anthropological-structural meaning of Lévi-Strauss came onto the scene. The term "social structure" referred not to the social reality itself, but to the model implied over it; and in the terms of Lévi-Strauss and his structural anthropology expressed in the context of the diachronic methods of analysis, to the "logical framework for historical developments,"[108] or as Phillip Rousseau called it, to the "changing patterns of a kaleidoscope."[109]

In Braudel's elaboration of the structuralism, these two appeared as the mechanical and statistical models for the social realities or as a (1) "sensorially referential sense" of (2) a structure as a model of social relations,[110] without (after the reservation of Lévi-Strauss) the possibility of a reduction of the one to the other, yet with the possibility expressed by Braudel of the control, verification and comparision one through the other.[111] From these two meanings of structure, the first one referred to the operation of discerning the visible and documentable patterns of social action, the second to the conceptual model – a structure – implied by the variety of orchestrated patterns.

Following Kinser's analysis of Braudel's historical structuralism one has to discern the methodological writings of Braudel from his actual historical analysis. According to Kinser, what Braudel has actually achieved in his *The Mediterranean* is not a structural analysis itself, but a mere "patterning." If Braudel repeats after Lévi-Strauss the postulate of discovery of the general structural laws on the microsociological level of analysis, at the same time he inclines toward the sensorially referential sense of a structure, thus toward a patterning. Combating a social-scientific structuralism, Braudel treats the dichotomy between pattern and structure as

[108] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction: History and Anthropology*, p. 24.

[109] P. Rousseau, *Structure and Event in Anthropology and History*, "New Zeeland Journal of History" 9/1975, p. 34.

[110] See F. Braudel, *History and the Social Sciences*..., p. 40.

[111] "The procedure of this research is clear: to get past superficial observation in order to reach the zone of unconscious or barely conscious elements, and then to reduce that reality to tiny elements, minute identical sections, whose relations can be precisely analyzed [...]. It seems to me that research is a question of endlessly proceeding from the social reality to the model, and then back again, and so on, in a series of readjustments and patiently renewed trips." Ibidem, pp. 44–45.

between the material life (and its concrete history) and the ideal life (and its abstract and vague analysis). As a consequence, as Kinser summarizes, "from the point of view of twientieth-century structuralism, Braudel's structures are long-enduring patterns, associated groups of activities that change their mutual relations but slowly."[112] The processes reconstructed by his geohistorical structure have been also elaborated on rather in the paradigm of exchange than production. Braudel was focused mostly on the forms of the commercial exchanges of long-distanced trade and the strategic role of the cities, and as Samuel Kinser has pointed out left aside the questions of production, distribution and consumption.[113]

Nothing shows better the ambiguity of the term structure in Braudel's writing than his edition of *The Mediterranean.* Braudel's turn to the structural analysis inspired changes in its second edition. Yet, as Kinser paradoxically admits, no one from the indeed structuralist moments in *The Mediterranean* is really labelled as structuralist in the same way as the geohistorical analysis from the first edition, which was indeed nothing more than a practice of patterning.[114] The theoretically elaborated meaning of structure and pattern in the course of historical analysis "is implicit, but unexplored."[115]

Kinser admits that the opposition between structural and event history is false and leads to simplification. "An event is a site of change, a construction developed by historians because they seek to understand structures and conjunctures, not despite their larger goals."[116] He suggests to consider the historical analysis as starting not from the collection of events or facts, but from the conceptually discerned situations, and later, the derived from them hypotheses of patterns and conjunctures. On this basis the structural (in the systemic paradigm), conjunctural and eventful analysis (in the chronological paradigm) can be undertaken with the necessary reference to each other.[117]

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[112] S. Kinser, *Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism*..., p. 83.

[113] Kinser writes about Braudel's exchangism inspired mostly by the economic history of Henri Pirenne. See ibidem, p. 75.

[114] Ibidem, p. 88.

[115] Ibidem, p. 85.

[116] Ibidem, p. 96.

[117] "Historians can discover when a pattern changes by reference to the concerted flow of conjunctural curves, long and short, which measure shifts in the relation of one kind of human activity to others. And they can discover why and how a pattern changes by analyzing the systems in play (the other patterns associated with the pattern in question and the structures implied in them) at the moment when conjunctural curves change

In this light Braudel's fallacy has consisted in the treatment of events as mere "atoms," or "dust." In consequence Braudel has considered them in terms of their autonomy and not as factors possibly breaking patterns and thus setting in motion the dynamics of historical change. The theoretically elaborated dialectics between the structure and event has thus been flattened and disrupted in the course of actual analysis. As Kinser concludes: "just as there can be no adequate patterning without structural analysis, there can be no adequate conjunctural analysis without theorizing about 'breakpoints' or 'events.'"[118]

5. Structuralism and history

> One of the more poignant aspects of the current postmodernist mood is the way it seems to lobotomize some of our best graduate students, to stifle their creativity for fear of making some interesting structural connection, some relationship between cultural practices, or a comparative generalization. The only safe essentialism left to them is that there is no order to culture.
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> M. Sahlins, *Waiting for Foucault…Still*, Prickly Paradigm Press, Chicago 2002, p. 48.

The analysis of the social systems "in play," the cultural patterns in the course of their change, as Kinser has suggested, meant in the field of cultural studies, as of cultural anthropology, to go back to the Claude Lévi-Strauss' statement that: "we must work on meanings."[119] Gabrielle M. Spiegel has named this moment as a "semiotic challenge" posed "to the practice of historiography by the rise of structural linguistics."[120] Under this sign, the new impulse appeared for the development of the anthropological history. In the field of British cultural studies, the so far

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their course – that is, at the moment when 'productivity' of one form of human activity or another, insofar as such activity is quantifiable, grows or declines massively. Finally, analyzing particular times and places allows historians to construct the 'events' – the breaks in routines, customs, ideas, technologies – that disrupt patterns, sometimes massively enough to indicate that a structure has been displaced from its dominant position or has disappeared completely." Ibidem, p. 97.

[118] Ibidem.

[119] C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Scope of Anthropology*, trans. S. Ortner, P. and R. A. Paul, Jonathan Cape, London 1967, p. 23.

[120] G. M. Spiegel, *The Task of the Historian*, p. 2.

posed questions and proposed resolutions regarding the cultural-historical analysis have found themselves in the trap of the structural-functionalist theories; as Stuart Hall has denounced – cultural-historical analysis has been "evading the dialectic between agency and conditions: its thought 'structures' as uncontradictory, integrative, functionalist in an evolutionary and adaptive sense."[121] The rescue from this trap, the "decisive second break" in cultural studies came with the "alterative" Marxism tradition and with the structuralism.[122] For Marshall Sahlins in the field of cultural anthropology, the elaboration of structuralism enabled him to move to the terrain of historical anthropology.

Sahlins in his reinterpretation of structuralism goes far beyond the "giveness" of the social and cultural realities, reinforcing the (1) structuralist privilege of the system over the event, and (2) an exclusion from the structural analysis of the agency of individual action. For him the applications posited so far of the structuralism into the field of anthropology have left its basic theoretical assumptions intact. The most important of them were not those referring to the diachrony of the cultural and social process, to the history and cultural change, but to the human practice, "human action in the world."[123] In the structural linguistics, according to Sahlins, "action entered into account only as it represented the working out of an established order, the 'stereotypic reproduction' (Godelier's phrase) of existing cultural categories."[124] The dialectics between structure and event elaborated earlier by Braudel in his project of structural history reappears in Sahlins' interpretation first in his *Culture and Practical Reason*.[125] For Sahlins, anthropological theory and practice is the most privileged site of elaboration of "practical reason," and goes far beyond the old dichotomies of materialism-idealism, mind-matter, and subject-object. He treats these dualisms as a bad symptom of the modernity: "the contest between the practical and the meaningful is the fateful issue of modern

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[121] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies and the Centre...*, p. 12.

[122] Hall enumerates within the second break the works of G. Lukács,' L. Goldmann's *Hidden God*, W. Benjamin's, the early texts of the 'Frankfurt School', and J.-P. Sartre's *Question of Method*. Ibidem.

[123] M. Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities*, The University of Michigan Press, Michigan 1995.

[124] Ibidem, p. 6.

[125] M. Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London 1976.

social thought."[126] At the same time, these dichotomies have reappeared in the structuralism-Marxism historical relations, and according to Sahlins, touched the heart of the anthropological conception of culture.

One of the most sharp critical arguments of Marshall Sahlins' cultural anthropology points out the lack of a well elaborated conception of culture. Nicolas Dirks has no illusions that Sahlins hasn't managed to develop a comprehension of the semiotic conception of culture in the field of anthropology. As he nastily points out, "Sahlins may be correct to assert that we should attempt, 'to explode the concept of history by the anthropological experience of culture', but by leaving his concept of culture unexploded by history he has merely reproduced the tendency for interdisciplinary formulations to swing only in one direction. If history should be explored by culture, then culture should likewise be explored by history."[127] This argument has been repeated after... Roseberry, for whom the Sahlins' definition of culture almost completely overlaps with the conception of structure. The problem thus recognized regards Sahlins' objects of symbolic structures: they belong as much to the realm of the social determination, as to the orders of ideas, signs, meanings, and beliefs. Thus, what strikes one in this conception is the vagueness of the difference between structure and culture. Translated into the terms of the historical analysis, so formulated a problem as the unclearly delineated dialectics between structure and event has reappeared. Dirks points out that in Sahlins' interpretation events take the form of a disruptive force, and thus, on the one hand, they are challenging "structuralist assumptions about reproduction,"[128] and on the other, they are problematic for historians. As we have already seen, even in Braudel's structural history, events are the mere dust of the history (or as Nicholas Dirks followed Braudel: "for historians events are everywhere"), and the meaning of events in the context of a long time span have been not elaborated as disruptive for patterns and as factors of the cultural change. Dirks' reservations regard basically the anthropological and historical understanding of the processes of the cultural and social reproduction: Sahlins' events are merely a "periodic, if occasional check on the steady reproduction of cultural systems," and cultural systems of meaning are formulated prior to and autonomously

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[126] Ibidem, p. ix.
[127] N. Dirks, *Is Vice Versa? Historical Anthropologies...*, p. 5.
[128] Ibidem, p. 5.

from the moment of risk or determination."[129] The mechanisms of cultural reproduction yet remained untouched.

The reason for this may lay in the structuralist interpretation of the dialectics of event and structure. As Philip Rousseau has written: "it is not, in any case, events that are determined. Only structures are necessary: events are contingent. Moreover, although there may be an overall system, that does not rule out a 'local' logic, existing in its own right, governing particular links, for example, in a chain of social adaptation."[130] Yet, the disparity between the structure and event posed a much more general problem touching very deeply the concept of culture. Claude Lévi-Strauss has expressed it as a task, one could even say, a "task of the historian": "We shall have the hope of overcoming the opposition between the collective nature of culture and its manifestations in the individual, since the so-called 'collective consciousness' would, in the final analysis, be no more than the expression, on the level of individual thought and behavior, of certain time [and space] modalities of the universal laws which make up the unconscious activity of the mind."[131] In other terms, one of the most important simplifications coming from the structuralist paradigm is the assumption that the structure is the matter of being and continuity, and the change is the matter of rupture and event. As Philip Rousseau has admitted, "Structural anthropology seems to have been able to reconcile, with less anxiety, continuity of structure and the reality of change."[132] It was the effort of this reconciliation that bothered as the field of British cultural studies, as Marshall Sahlins' historical anthropology, in their elaboration of the method of the historical-cultural analysis.

In the field of cultural studies the postulate expressed in such a way moved the concept of culture from "a set of texts and artifacts" (cultural objects), from the "ideal order" (of what the best have been ever said and written) to the anthropological moment in the theory of culture – to the understanding of culture as cultural practices, or speaking more specifically, to the questions about the processes of ordering culture, of how these orderings are produced and sustained, and how they are the result of given practices and relations. These issues, which according to Stuart Hall are thanks to Claude Lévi-Strauss' structuralism "offered a promise

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[129] Ibidem, p. 4.
[130] P. Rousseau, *Structure and Event…*, p. 34.
[131] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p. 65.
[132] P. Rousseau, *Structure and Event…*, p. 34.

to the human sciences of culture a paradigm capable of rendering them scientific and rigorous in a thoroughly new way."[133] And thanks to Louis Althusser's work, the promise expressed in such a way could be realized with the Marxist spirit and within the linguistic paradigm (posed as a possibility to "read" the modes of production as they were expressed in language[134]). The list of concrete analytical questions arising in such a described area Hall described as problems of "the circumstances and conditions of cultural reproduction," and he enumerated them in the following questions: (1) "what were the processes by means of which a dominant cultural order came to be 'preferred'? (2) "who preferred *this* order rather than that?" (3) "what were the effects of a particular ordering of the cultures of a social formation on the other hierarchized social arrangements?" (4) "how did the preferred cultural order help to sustain 'definite forms of life' in particular social formations?" (5) "how and why did societies come to be culturally 'structured in dominance'?"[135] In the perspective of the historical-cultural analysis, these questions interrogate a "universality of the anthropological meaning," posing it in the context of "social formation, cultural power, domination and regulation, resistance and struggle."[136] They also enable to treat cultural texts and objects as documents and evidence of the cultural reproduction and change.

What has been considered by Stuart Hall as the most important difference between the proposition of Lévi-Strauss' and Althusser's, was that Lévi-Strauss "gave up the question of the relation *between* signifying and non-signifying practices – between 'culture' and 'not culture,' to use other words – for the sake of concentrating on the internal relations within signifying practices by means of which the categories of meaning were produced."[137] In consequence, he "left the question of determinacy, of totality, largely in abeyance."[138] He left the historical logics of determinacy for the sake of the structuralist causality ("of the articulation of parts within a structure"[139]).

[133] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 64.
[134] Ibidem.
[135] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies and the Centre...*, p. 15.
[136] Ibidem.
[137] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 65.
[138] Ibidem.
[139] Ibidem.

In Althusser's reinterpretation of structuralism, the unconscious ide-ologies replace the unconscious structures. In consequence, differently than in the culturalist paradigm, the cultural subject does not create their lives through their ground "experience," but their experience is an effect of "the categories, classifications and frameworks of the culture."[140] As ultimately Stuart Hall has admitted, "experience was conceived, not as an authenticating source but as an effect: not as a reflection of the real, but as an 'imaginary relation.'"[141]

If for the cultural studies turning to the structuralist and Marxist par-adigms was the matter of, as it was said before, "the questions about the processes of ordering culture, of how these orderings are produced and sustained, and how they are the result of given practices and relations;" Sahlins from his *Culture and Practical Reason*, took a very similar direc-tion. He was looking for the relation "between practice and concept as an occasion to reflect on the adequacy of material praxis to account for the cultural order."[142] For Stuart Hall and his colleagues, as for Marhall Sahlins, the divergences between Marxism and structuralism were not impossible to reconcile. They rather problematized the concept of cul-ture, its reproduction in time, the cultural change and its *longue durée*. As Sahlins has commented in 1976, "the love-hate affair raging between structuralists and Marxists," and "still, the usual modes by which the two are opposed, the synchrony of structuralism to the diachrony of Marx-ism, the idealism of the former to the materialism of the latter," "make it difficult to understand why they should even contemplate a synthesis [...]. What structuralism seems to offer, even beyond a conception of the con-tinuity in history that Marx recognized for certain precapitalist societies, is an explicit statement of the culture in the praxis, the symbolic order in the material activity."[143] What he considered then as a common ground between these two paradigms was the relation between the "productive action in the world and the symbolic organization of experience." The point of departure, as much for Sahlins as for the cultural studies, can be thus seen as a structuralist assumption about the priority of the structure over the event. ("Privileging the determinations of the preexisting state,

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[140] Ibidem.

[141] Ibidem.

[142] M. Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, The University of Chicago Press, Chi-cago 1976, p. 17.

[143] Ibidem.

rather than the modifications ensuing from practice, structuralism invokes the action of the past where Marxism demands only the presence of the action."[144]) If for the structuralism the synchrony is the first principle, the diachronic character of structures is thus thought of as a variation of the synchronic order. As Sahlins admits, "in truth structuralism is not so much a theory of simple reproduction as it has been a theory of structures that so reproduce."[145]

The mutual dialogue between cultural studies and anthropology has resulted in the deepening of the conceptualization of the category of culture in the field of anthropology and ethnography, but also in regarding the anthropological conception of culture as one of the most important elements of cultural studies. For many American cultural anthropologists, it was Raymond Williams' adaptation of the anthropological conception of culture that ultimately defined the field of British cultural studies, and his position in the field is no less important than Clifford Geertz's in the anthropological writing.[146] Cultural studies has also supported the anthropological recognition of the political dimension of cultural order, and prepared the comprehensive recognition of poststructuralism. The last mentioned, with the consequences of the crisis of representation, according to Dwight Conquergood enabled the critical rethinking of the key issues for ethnography: the Body, the Boundaries and Borderlands, The Performance, the Rhetorical Reflexivity.[147]

Yet, in the course of the development of cultural studies, the possibilities suggested by Stuart Hall of the reconciliation of the culturalist's and structuralist's strengths and weaknesses into the one programme of elaboration of historical-cultural analysis, appeared to be extremely difficult in its realization. Hall did not believe in the simple synthesis of these two theoretical propositions, yet, at the same time he insisted that neither of them could function as completely autonomous.

According to Hall, one of the most important achievements of a variety of structuralist propositions in the field of historical-cultural analysis has been (1) the thesis of determinate conditions of the historical development, breaking with the naïve conviction that "men and women make their his-

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[144] Ibidem, p. 21.
[145] Ibidem.
[146] N. Dirks, *Is Vice Versa? Historical Anthropologies*...
[147] D. Conquergood, *Rethinking Ethnography: Towards a Critical Cultural Politics*, "Communication Monographs" 58/1991.

tory alone." The human subject of history has been replaced here by a historical agent, already politically and economically placed and conditioned. The awareness of these historically contextualized conditions is considered as an indispensable premise of any political action. Another important premise of structuralisms (2) broke with the "radical interactionism," and placed the human relationships in the centre of the historical processes. Thus (3) a constant development of the theory is required, necessarily oscillating between different levels of abstraction in the analysis of various historical processes. (4) Structuralism's advantage over culturalism lays also in its insistence on the complexity of the unity of the structure, which cannot be simply reduced to particular practices. Hall has expressed this conviction as a belief "that there is always a mediator between praxis and practices, namely, the conceptual scheme by the operation of which matter and form, neither with any independent existence, are realized as structures, that is as entities which are both empirical and intelligible."[148] He also warned against thinking of the cultural and social unity radically in terms of "difference," which loses the concept of the structure, and suggested the direction "towards the problematic [area] of relative autonomy and 'over-determination', and the study of *articulation*."[149] (5) The structuralist elaboration of the concept of ideology in relation to the experience led to the further problematization of the cultural reproduction over time. (6) The structuralist premises should be elaborated according to the culturalist restoration "between the unconsciousness of cultural categories and the moment of conscious organization. (7) An alternative proposition of the development of cultural studies could be derived from the discourse theories by placing not a unified but the decentred and contradictory subject in the centre of diachronic structures, (8) and as adeeper elaboration and return to the "political economy of culture." Above all these possible elaborations, Hall has insisted on the exercising of the "concrete" historical analysis "of particular ideological and discursive formations" in the mode of Foucault and Gramsci.[150]

Regarding the cultural *longue durée* as variety of the processes of the structural reproduction of cultural values and meanings within the complexity of human praxis has been also the core of Marshall Sahlins' programme of historical anthropology. Sahlins, similarly to Hall, neglects

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[148] S. Hall, *Cultural Studies. Two Paradigms*, p. 65.

[149] Ibidem, p. 69.

[150] Ibidem.

the post-structuralist developments and an analytical domination of the processes of the discursive signification over the materiality of human practices. His aim is to reconcile the symbolic and pragmatic conceptions of culture in the context of the historical analysis. Yet, he is also far away from the utilitarian and simplistic political-economical interpretations of culture. In his *Waiting for Foucault*, he writes: "The current Foucault-ian-Gramscian-Nietzschean obsession with power is the latest incarnation of Anthropology's incurable functionalism.[151]

The vivid rise of the performative studies in the 1990s has reopened, as much for anthropology as for the cultural studies, a hope of a return to the question of the material conditioning of the cultural reproduction rather in the terms of performativity than of the processes of significa-tion. Marshall Sahlins passes this field with the old and since his *Culture and Practical Reason* well known dichotomy between the logics of social "structure and practice, system and event, state and process, norm and behavior."[152] His hope for the reconciliation of these is based on an old trouble: "We find it difficult to imagine that at the level of meaning, which is to say of culture, being and action are interchangeable."[153] He operates with the concept of the symbolic production, yet discerns its two types: prescriptive structures and performative structures, "continuously making relationships out of practice,"[154] treated as reciprocal modes of the symbolic production. Performative structures understood similarly to the habitus, or to "structuring structures" involve the sphere of values as reflected or unreflected premises of human action: "being and doing or relationships and conducts, as meanings inhabit the same universe of discourse and are subject to common conceptual operations [...] By a common logic which is virtual to both, action and relation may thus function alternately as signifier and signified to the other."[155] The historical logic of perform-ative structures reveals itself only if their processes became reworked in the moment of signification: the interplay of the structure and praxis. Its course does not occur *ad hoc*, but often *post factum*. Within the logics of performative structures the old sentence of Marc Bloch finds its sense: "al-

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[151] M. Sahlins, *Waiting for Foucault...*, p. 20.
[152] M. Sahlins, *The Islands of History*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1985, p. 27.
[153] Ibidem.
[154] Ibidem.
[155] Ibidem, p. 30.

though men were not fully aware of the change, the old names which were still on everyone's lips had slowly acquired connotations far removed from their original meaning."[156] Marshall Sahlins' proposition, and the actually unrealized programme of the possible reconciliation of culturalist and structuralist paradigms in the field of cultural studies, could be inscribed ascribed to the historical anthropology's and anthropological history's searching for the great synthesizing explanations – abandoned after the latest developments in the field. Interestingly, the entrance of the Annales School into the vast field of humanistics came at a time, when "the old interpretations, the political interpretation, the economic interpretation of history, the 'great man' theory, have all in turn been successfully challenged and discarded, but nothing has been put in their place to give coherence to the study of culture. In consequence, the relevance of a knowledge of history to the understanding of the way in which human society works is becoming increasingly difficult to defend."[157] In consequence, Fernand Braudel's understanding of the history of man and the structural order regulating the cultural, institutional, political and social long lasting orchestrations has rather introduced the "humanistic-naturalistic" ideas, derived from the Enlightenment naturalism, of Space (of ecological systems), Time (of variety of rhythms) and Man (as the intersection of the two).[158] The human subject of historical analysis took the form of an abstract unity. What could serve as a trace of Braudel's cultural analysis is trapped in the fallacy of universalism. The cultural and social realities: science, religion, war, etc., are not reconstructed but treated as already and universally given: "to Broudel these categories are already articulated and ordered; the historian's duty is merely to find them."[159]

This view could not cope sufficiently with the subtlety and variety of social and cultural differentiations, and even less with the *quality* of everyday life. Yet, its further elaborations came back to the core of the historicity of the concept of culture.

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[156] M. Bloch, *French rural history*, trans. J. Sondheimer, University of California Press, Berkeley 1966, p. 90, quoted in ibidem, p. 31.

[157] D. Crozier, *History and Anthropology*, pp. 563–564.

[158] S. Kinser, *Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism...*, p. 67.

[159] Ibidem, p. 101.

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