

**LANGUAGE, CULTURE, INDIVIDUAL, AND SOCIETY**  
(Basic Concepts and Their Relationships)

***Interpretative Essay***

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## Introduction.

Anyone interested in the comparative institutional analysis (analysis of variability of human social order in time and space) cannot avoid discussion and definition of basic conceptual tools he/she intends to use. It is an important problem because in the domain of social sciences and humanities one can encounter great quantity and diversity of concepts (these concepts are often contradictory) which different scholars employ to describe and explain socio-cultural phenomena. The results of the multitude of these cognitive efforts were many times described in literature.

Considering the problem of development of science Thomas Kuhn has introduced the concepts of "normal science" and "paradigm". The basis for these concepts was a conviction about necessity of commitment "to the same rules and standards for scientific practice" (T. Kuhn, 1970: 11) among all members of the scientific community. In the *Postscript* to the second edition of his well known book he has written: "A paradigm is what the members of a scientific community share, (...). A scientific community consist, on this view, of the practitioners of a scientific specialty. To an extent unparalleled in most other fields, they have undergone similar educations and professional initiations; in the process they have absorbed the same technical literature and drawn many of the same lessons from it. (...). As a result, the members of a scientific community see themselves and are seen by others as the men uniquely responsible for the pursuit of a set of shared goals, including the training of their successors. Within such groups communication is relatively full and professional judgment relatively unanimous. (...). Communities in this sense exist, of course, at numerous levels. The most global is the community of all natural scientists. At an only slightly lower level the main scientific professional groups are communities: physicists, chemists, astronomers, zoologists, and like" (T. Kuhn, 1970: 176, 177). In this sense, according to Kuhn, we can talk about social character of science. It means, universal acceptance of the results of the scientific research.

Kuhn denies social sciences the status of the "normal science". He puts more emphasis on paradigm in natural sciences. In the course of their development social sciences are far from accomplishment of paradigmatic stage. Other scientists are more cautious. John Ziman (1968 and 1976) prefers to argue that in social sciences there is an ideal of unanimity, although the intellectual technics to reach it are difficult to render.

I guess, to understand the situation of social sciences as "pre-paradigmatic" one we should stress not only the special (people as creatures and creators of their domain), complex, multidimensional and multifaceted character of cultural, social or individual "reality" (to mention only some of the most often encountered

general orientations) . Not less important are intellectual technics and our capabilities to cope with that artificial reality. Among them the most important seems to be the linguistic dimension.

Looking, for example, at the debate on an individual versus culture (as at others debates in social sciences such as: evolution vs. diffusion; conflict vs. integration; substantive vs. formal economy; cultural vs. social anthropology - to mention only a few hot issues) we can see an interesting linguistic phenomenon. The representatives of a given orientation have formulated their theoretical position in the language of general assumptions and in opposition to other orientation. Those assumptions reflected not only methodological attitude of their authors but also specific *Weltanschauung*, philosophy of history and attached to it ideas and values. In my opinion, and I would like to emphasize this, scholars have focused much more on general assumptions of a given theory (let's say, on some general meaning or general model) than on specific content of assertions of the theory. In result, they are not able to realize that under different theoretical concepts and linguistic formulations there may be hidden similar hypotheses, positions and statements. They are eager to perceive theories other than their own through the prism of conflict and contradiction rather than cooperation and complementarity.

I would say that the language of socio-cultural theories has generated definite cognitive predispositions and has led to conceptual conflicts. It shaped directional way of thinking. It means that some bits of information have been preferred to others. These others have been missed or rejected. I agree with the hypothesis of J. Bruner (1979) - which in fact is a modification of Sapir-Whorf hypothesis - that language creates some mental options toward specific ways of thinking. In other words, as we have seen, people (and specially people of science) have tendency to put reality in order. They usually do it by giving some meanings to reality. Thus, they create some subjective reality of a given linguistic community. However, in the process of "translation" of the concrete empirical domain into scholarly or common sense terms they use such ambiguous (meaningful) tool like human language, that besides its meaning potential carries first of all a contextual, specific meaning. Of course, there is some overlapping of meanings but at the same time there are many situational factors (learning, social standing, group of reference, linguistic experience, and so on) which affect our linguistic choice. Besides, there is also an institutional structure of social, political, etc. sciences (which is based on the institution of scientific school) and definite interests.

Thus, social scientists work not only with different than natural scientists kind of reality but with different languages. Because of human limited cognitive capabilities we can only grasp some segment of reality. Using different languages we can talk about different problematical aspects of that segment of reality. These

aspects are usually rather complementary than contradictory. However, language in context can create not only intellectual consensus but also conceptual conflict. I would like to say that there is a need (necessity) to negotiate and pinpoint the concepts of theoretical language. When we are discussing different theories of individual, social or cultural "reality" we should remember to treat them not only as things but first of all as signs. We should remember that our choices are made all the time not only on an empirical or theoretical level but also on the linguistic one (let's say, the contrast and combination of meanings). To explain our world we are using linguistic tool which is neither neutral nor antiseptic one.

I guess more and more scholars have realized that fact. It does not mean that social sciences and the humanities are close to reproduce unanimous community of scholars. I do not think it is possible and necessary (or it will be possible in the future). At the present stage of development of reflection on human condition the necessity is to negotiate meaning to accomplish linguistic and theoretical complementarily. My deepest conviction is that it is the most important task for the future. We can see some evident tendencies leading to this goal. I would say that although the institution of the school is still present on the institutional map of social sciences (and I am not sure if it should be absent) there are some visible integrative trends. In my opinion, there is now wide integrative theoretical stream among scholars concerned with the human condition. On the one hand, opposite and mutually exclusive points of view are rather absent and representatives of different orientations are willing to treat other theories more in complementary than conflicting terms (or even to combine approaches which in the past were considered to be exclusive and contradictory). On the other hand, and it is because of peculiarity of social and human sciences (the problem of values), there are approaches to different aspects of human condition which are growing from their traditional scientific/scholarly roots and exert strong pressure on their point of view.

To avoid misunderstandings in describing science and scholarly enterprise as a social activity (that is realized by using human language) everyone should first define concepts he/she will use and the goal of his/her cognitive efforts. Thus, in my present discussion emphasis will be put on the relationships between language and culture (also an individual and society) and their role in the constitution of human social orders. However, according to the above, I will have to introduce some definitional distinctions. Some basic epistemological positions and different theories of culture will be discussed briefly to present specificity of different important theoretical orientations of contemporary cultural anthropology. Every orientation implies a specific conceptual approach to the human language.

Language.

Language is an attribute of all human beings. Let me stress here that language is defined as a system of learned rules that organize our speaking and other kinds of communication based on particular categories of symbols. That system of rules creates a general plan for any kind of communication (verbal and written). This means that human language is based on arbitrary imposed and conventional constrains. These constrains determine what a person can say. In other words, they are imposed on every person and they somehow put limits on an individual. But accepting these constrains (they are usually and largely not realized) people are able to communicate with one another. Accepting some limits an individual is extending his/her capabilities and possibilities. Let me quote here to illustrate my point: "Language is full of regulations and interdictions; yet it is freeing. Through learning the rules, I am enabled to communicate with others, I am free to express myself and often to achieve ends which I could not otherwise reach. I am not hampered by the rigid taboo against using a singular verb for a plural subject; I am not outraged when I am commanded to add *ed* to *wash* when I refer to yesterday. And I do not feel that all my originality is submerged through the need to conform to regulations" (D. Lee, 1959: 2,3).

Language has to be considered as a carrier of meaning. In this sense language (as culture) is often defined as symbolic meaning system. Language as a system is composed largely of arbitrary symbols (words) that are used to communicate meaning from one mind to another. The members of given speech community using symbols and common rules are able to communicate almost unlimited number of different messages and ideas. It is impossible to talk about culture and society (or such parts of society as community or association) without social bond. That social bond can exist only on the basis of symbolic communication. Thus, language is the most important medium of human communication (in horizontal and vertical dimensions). This general communicational function of language has gotten in Vincent Ostrom's approach two major contextual meanings. In other words, language serves two major (interrelated and mutually dependent) functions: (1) language is a carrier of specific content of learning; and (2) language is a critical factor creating, reshaping and binding social relationships.

The first function means processes of cultural transmission in time and space. Considering the language as a fundamental element of culture we can say that culture is learned (anthropologists and sociologists to describe that process of learning commonly use such terms as *socialization*, *enculturation*, or in case of intercultural learning *acculturation*) and transmitted via symbols. Language is a specific vehicle to the transmission of particular content of culture from generation to generation, person to person, group to group, one culture to another. I guess Ostrom thinks about these processes when he writes, for example: "The triangulation between: (1) events and relationships; (2) words or symbols; and (3) ideas,

images, or thoughts means that words in serving as media of communication can be used to transmit learning from one individual to another in contemporary or succeeding generations. So long as ideas and chains of thought can be translated into words, the learning acquired by one individual can be transmitted to other individuals and become available for them to use. Now knowledge or new discoveries can be acquired by those who have access to a common language without being required to make each discovery anew from individual experience" (V. Ostrom, 1992: 7). This function of language, as a tool of learning, implies a lot of problems Ostrom characterizes in his work. There is evolutionary and adaptive perspective; the problem of relationships between language and knowledge; very interesting question of corrosion of language; and finally, the capital problem of social and individual (public and private) features of language. This leads us to the second function of language.

With regard to second function Ostrom writes that language is "the basis for stipulating rules so that disparate individuals can act with an expectation that others will behave in accordance with those rules. (...). Decision rules use language to introduce constraint into human relationships and establish the basis for social organization. (...). Rules, thus, provide the basis for a first order of selection that takes account of the interdependent interests of others" (V. Ostrom, 1992: 15,17).

I guess anthropologists are thinking in a similar way, when they consider that an individual learns the rules of culture in order to meet the standards of other people (W. Goodenough, 1981). Let me say at this point in more general terms, that culture creates and establishes socially shared ground of common understanding.

In every society there always exists a set of general notions which create a specific *Weltanschauung*. It gives people answers to some ontological questions about the rules of order in their social and natural universe. And here function of language seems very important. "The very morphology of language inevitably begs far-reaching questions of metaphysics and of values. A language is not merely an instrument for communication and for rousing the emotions. Every language is also a device for categorizing experience. The continuum of experience can be sliced very differently. (...). No human organism can respond to all the kaleidoscopic stimuli which impinge upon it from the external world. What we notice, what we talk about, what we feel as important is in some part a function of our linguistic patterns. Because these linguistic habits tend to remain as unquestioned 'background phenomena', each people tends to take its fundamental categories, its unstated basic premises for granted. It is assumed that other will 'think the same way', for 'it's only human nature'. When others face the same body of data but come to different conclusions, it is seldom thought that they may be proceeding from different premises" (C. Kluckhohn and W. Kelly, 1983: 243).

Thus thanks to culture people know who they are, who are their kins, what are the rules of their social order (these rules are more often recognized and formulated in terms of mutual expectations). As we have seen culture is not only a kind of linguistic index that contains general directives of human actions. At the same time culture helps to define concrete kinds of situations of human behavior. It provides specific rules which allow people to act appropriately in almost every (and often in completely new) situation. Let me quote above authors once again: "Naturally, the immediate situation as well as past experience is reacted to, not in purely rational objective fashion but in terms of the situation as meaningfully defined by the participant. (...). Culture is - among other things - a set of ready-made definitions of the situation which each participant only slightly retails in his own idiomatic way" (C. Kluckhohn and W. Kelly, 1983: 234). I would like you to keep in mind the phrase: "only slightly retails in his own idiomatic way". We will come back to it while discussing the question of cultural determinism of human behavior. Now let me say only that between culture (cultural rules) and situation certain tensions and frictions may occur.

No doubt that shared, common understanding introduces an order into human relationships. People know how to act in a given situation and what kind of expectation is bound to them and to other people. In other words people's actions and relations receive a feature of predictability. That feature has impact on people's choices which are then not chaotic. In that sense culturally shared understanding is the most important factor for human existence. However this common, cultural understanding has also its own reverse. This means, that inside every human group (not to mention differences among societies) culture is differentially shared. Let say, there is always some degree of cultural variation within a given social group (it does not matter whether it is society, community or family).

We were talking that language is conventional but open social tool invented to produce and transmit information. In the processes of transformation and combination of diverse human experiences, thoughts, ideas and imaginations different meaningful messages are created.

We can say that inherent feature of language is the diversity of semantic domain: existence of many semantic distinctions and socially different systems of meaning. There is no doubt that different vocabularies and semantic domains reflect and create different people's interests. At that point I would like to emphasize the fact, that despite of these semantic distinctions human language is basic prerequisite of common human understanding. Remembering "that political relationships are sensitive relationships" and "that human beings might aspire to organizing their relationships with one another in mutually productive ways" (V. Ostrom, 1992: 18,25), I would like to distinguish an important



subfunction within Ostrom's second function of language. Assuming that the role of dialogue is a crucial feature for productive rule-ordered relationships, I would call that subfunction a negotiative one. I would support the thesis that negotiation of meaning in process of social dialogue has fundamental implications for the process of common understanding.

In this sense we could talk about the culture of dialogue and discourse and the culture of monologue and misconception. The second one can lead either to the culture of dialogue and polycentric political system or to the centralized, command-oriented system. In the latter kind of systems it is possible to talk about political process of monologization when the power of arguments is changed to the argument of power. The social process of negotiation of meaning takes usually extralinguistic, drastic, rapid and towering form of protest. That process can be built in the political system (as in the case of imperial China where peasants had a customary right to rebellion).

If we agree that language is a system of conveying the meaning, so there is an important problem of relationships between language, culture and society. But first we have to say what we understand by the term culture and society.

### **Culture.**

Let me assume that there is a consensus among the majority of linguists and anthropologists on the above general definition of the nature of language. Probably they would also agree that language is a corner-stone (in evolutionary sense) of culture. Unfortunately this kind of agreement is hardly attainable with regard to the nature and notion of culture.

In American anthropological literature there is hundred of definitions and their different classifications (see, for example: A. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, 1952; or G. Weiss, 1973). We will use some concepts describing the relationships between language and culture later. What we need now is some general concept of culture delineating the area of our discussion. At this point we do not propose a strict definition of culture. It is enough to make a reference to the global, anthropological concept of culture. In most general terms and for the most of anthropologists culture means all human phenomena which are transmitted in "nongenetic", "extrasomatic", "metabiological" or "symbolic" way, to quote only expressions which are used most often. I guess, this the way Ralph Linton thinks when he writes: "A culture is the configuration of learned behavior and results of behavior whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society" (R. Linton, 1945: 32). In word, culture is a pattern of human behavior. It is not difficult to observe that there is a close

relation between culture defined in such a way and the language. We will talk about language-culture relationships in a moment. At this point I would like to make two additional, interrelated comments. The first is concerned with a systemic character of culture. The second will be devoted to the problem of relationships between individual and culture (or socio-cultural system). In fact, it will be concerned with human behavior.

*Culture as a system.*

First, up to now we have stated that culture enables people to attach meaning to human actions, that culture is learned and transmitted in symbolic way, that besides common there are also differentiated meanings within every culture, that culture is kind of guide for human situational behavior providing people with sets of rules.

I would like to add, that culture defined in such a wide way is also very often treated in systemic terms. In my opinion, the systemic feature of culture has been up to now approved by majority of anthropologists as one of the most important characteristics of culture. To take, for example, one of the most popular and influential definition according to which culture is "a vast apparatus, partly material, partly human and partly spiritual, by which man is able to cope with the concrete, specific problems that face him.(...). Culture is an integral composed of partly autonomous, partly coordinated institutions. It is integrated on a series of principles such as the community of blood through procreation; the contiguity in space related to cooperation; the specialization in activities; and last but not least, the use of power in political organization. Each culture owes its completeness and self-sufficiency to the fact that it satisfies the whole range of basic, instrumental and integrative needs" (B. Malinowski, 1964: 36,40).

There are two interesting things for us: first, that culture is treated as a tool, instrumental apparatus (let us say, problems-solving instrument) which is used by people in the process of satisfaction of their different needs (we will discuss that problem in a moment); and second, that culture "is a system of objects, activities, and attitudes" and "it is integral in which the various elements are interdependent" (B. Malinowski, 1964: 150). Thus culture is a systemic, integrated whole. The systemic approach (Malinowski, as we will see, was only one of its many followers) seems to be the most popular in anthropology, sociology, and so on. At the first glance, the conviction that culture is a system and a tool helping people to solve their problems bears a strong structural and functional similarity to human language. One should however remember that the relation between culture and language is of the same kind as the relation between a whole and its part.

According to the systemic approach the major subsystems of culture usually are: language, society, technology and ideology (there are, of course, also more elaborated divisions of culture not necessarily connected to the concept of system, like for example: C. Wissler, 1923). Then every subsystem contains its major structural components. Linguistics components are: phonology, morphology, semantics, etc. Society comprises: institutions (rule-ordered relationships), roles and statuses, different groups, etc. Basic elements of technological subsystems are: tools, techniques, appropriate knowledge, etc. Ideology comprises: ideas, beliefs, images, values, etc. At the bottom of these elements - or, let us say, in the center of a cultural system - there is or should be (let me emphasize that) a human individual with his/her behavior and action. In this way we can talk, for example, respectively about acts of speech, organizational behavior, technical skills, and so on. This means, human beings and their activities encompass (or should encompass!) all those elements, components and subsystems as one system of culture. In other words human artisanship manifests itself in every domain of culture. At this point we have a problem of relationships between an individual and the system (his/her culture). Very often this problem has been formulated: individual **versus** system instead individual **and** system.

*The individual and the system (culture or society).*

That "eternal" problem can be expressed in the following way: assuming that human beings are creators as well as creations of culture, or that culture is an artifact that contains their own artisans (V. Ostrom, 1980), there is a question of mutual influences and interdependencies.

To respond to this problem let me distinguish at the beginning two models or two ideal approaches to the problem of the relationship between an individual and the system (culture). Let me call them individualistic (nominalistic) and realistic (holistic) approaches respectively. These two approaches, of course, do not exist in epistemological reality (or should not exist) in such ideal, "pure" form. However believers in and adherents to these approaches are frequently excessively eager to treat an individual or a system as clauses of single alternative. They are striving to achieve exclusiveness and the scientific legitimacy for their approach but instead they reduce scientific discourse to absurdity. These efforts are accompanied by different linguistic monsters created with intention to defend and legitimize their position. Let me say, at this point, that according to an individualistic approach society is only a number of interacting individuals, and culture does not exist outside its individual carriers. On the other side, according to the realistic approach culture is treated as a process *sui generis*, an external and independent to individuals. It is kind of supra-individual reality. These two perspectives have created a lot of epistemological (methodological and ontological) problems.

*-The individual and society in philosophy of ancient Greece and later social thought.*

These problems and puzzles have accompanied people at least for 2500 years, if we agree that social thought of classical Greece was focused on the problem of social order and the role and place of individual in the society. The problem of autonomy of individual was strengthened, for example, by Sophists who had introduced the distinction between natural and normative laws. The former are beyond human beings power and control. The normative laws are specific results of individual actions, decisions or social conventions or covenants. For the Greek social philosophers it was evident that rules and regularities of nature are totally different than rules and laws created by people. In other words, there is an order of nature and order of culture. The latter, however, was approached from two opposite points of view. Culture and sociopolitical order were perceived either the domains of immemorial custom and traditional institutions or the domains of individual's activities and new institutional rules. To make my point more clear let me stress specificity of that period of Greek history.

The most visible processes which influenced Greece (between 5th and 1st century B. C.) were: institutionalization of private property of land and the development of commercial freedom combined with mercantile economy. Greece was one of these civilizations which "possessed either a locally developed or a borrowed technology, and contrasted structurally with empires based on irrigation. Because of the general availability of the ore and the simplicity of the conversion process, iron-working techniques could be diffused without limitation, permitting widespread use of metal tools. (...). Dissemination was further facilitated by the perfection of sailing ships and wagons or carts. Phonetic writing promoted literacy, which had been previously restricted to the priesthood, with a resulting increase in all types of knowledge. Coinage made possible a monetary economy, and this in turn greatly expanded the horizons of foreign trade. Together, these developments created a freer type of society that stimulated individual achievement and provided enterprising persons with ample opportunities for enrichment. This civilizational process derived its major impetus from mercantile economy, which linked hundreds of communities by sea or land, bringing to each the internal modifications necessary to advance them from production for subsistence to production for trade. In the principal cities of each Mercantile Slavistic Empire, there was a proliferation of craft shops organized like *ergasterions*, and encompassing a wide range of craftsmen, including carpenters, cabinetmakers, boatbuilders, metalworkers, coppermiths, brickmakers, potters, glassblowers, tanners, jewelry makers, saddlemakers, leatherworkers, and shoemakers. In such institutions tens or even hundreds of craftsmen, the majority of them slaves, produced standardized articles for sale. (...). Generalization of these economic procedures destroyed the last

surviving forms of communal property (*ager publicus*) and the remaining institutions based on kinship relations. Classificatory kinship (in which collateral and lineal relatives are called by the same terms, thus creating large groups with close solidarity) was transformed into descriptive kinship, which employs special terms to distinguish lineal relatives and, in so doing, reduces the boundaries of family solidarity and restricts inheritance. Subsequent steps toward the rationalization of conduct included the secularization of a number of aspects formerly under religious control, and the individualization of social relations. Usury became institutionalized, and the concept of a land mortgage was created, which led to the practice of enslavement for debt. Inheritance was legalized through wills. Ultimately, the entrepreneur emerged supreme in every sector, with the capacity to subordinate even the power of the State to his interests" (D. Ribeiro, 1968: 65, 66, 67.). I have quoted extensively from Ribeiro because it is a convenient starting point for explanation of our problems.

First of all we encounter here a relatively general description of a vast evolutionary process. That process combined many more particular processes: political, economic, ideological, social, and so on. These processes were run by different individuals pursuing different ideal and material interests, acting (more or less) appropriately to different (constitutional and operational) sets of rules, and creating different social groups, associations and communities. It would be impossible for these processes to go without individuals (the real, "ontological" carriers of the above processes). On the one side, however, focusing on some processes and describing them (using specific linguistic convention) we can talk sometimes about them **as if they were** autonomous processes. On the other side, interacting individuals create something new (let us say - new quality), which regularly overcomes every human being. Those are some new opportunities, expectations, rules, norms, etc. which modify, influence, condition, determine individual's behavior. In this sense of a word we can say that different (social, economic, political, etc.) processes encompass single individuals or groups of individuals. The most important are, of course, groups which assume the conscious or semi-conscious attendance of their members. We can, of course, talk about or distinguish a group of all Greeks in 5th century B. C. as bald as a coot. From our point of view, however, it seems to be more important to belong to the group of philosophers or traders.

Second, this vast evolutionary process is important for us because it describes the emergence of new kind of civilization (individualistic or privatistic) as opposed to previously existed and dominant collectivistic civilizations. That means, that we have witnessed here the birth of a new kind of civilizational order. To avoid misunderstanding I would like to emphasize that "individualistic" is not only a feature of civilizations. Anthropologists use the above term as a tool for the classification

of cultures not so elaborated as Greek civilization (M. Mead, 1961). In my opinion, the existence of individualistic and collectivistic types of culture is one of the most intriguing questions of human history awaiting an explanation.

Third, the Ribeiro's description of civilizational processes suggests that at the time the Greek society was in deep process of transformation. The age-old ways of life were eroded, new rules and institutions were created during the course of continuous social conflicts. I would say (using well known historical analogy) that these very complex phenomena were also a kind of specific intellectual "Drang und Sturm Periode". The central problem of that period was the problem of social order. With regard to it we can distinguish, as we have suggested above, at least two major orientations: one oriented toward individual and its innovative capabilities, the second one oriented toward community and tradition.

First intellectual orientation flourished in the second half of the fifth century and was connected to the sophists. Their favorite style was a public debate. Their basic interest was the development of rhetorical skills and capabilities. "The sophists - the term is a blanket one, and covers a wide range of approaches and opinions - were itinerant professors. Their subject was the one most in demand, how to achieve success as this world knows success; how to adapt oneself to the conditions in which one is forced to live, how to make friends and influence people. They were international, they were peripatetic and charged high fees. They were the first professional philosophers. Although they were prepared to teach anything relevant to their main aim, the central subject was, of course, rhetoric. They claimed to be able to teach their pupils to speak persuasively on any theme, and to argue both sides of case. Some of them were reputable teachers, others were charlatans. Some saw rhetoric as a genuine adjunct to public life and worthy of serious study, others saw it only as a handy tool for working one's own way, and argued that the end justified the means; any dubious tactic, any deliberate distortion of the facts was permissible if it achieved the desired results. Their belief was that the goal of man is the living of a successful and civilized life. This is the standard by which all things are judged. 'Man is the measure of all things', and religion and morality are man-made customs, set up by individuals or groups to satisfy their immediate needs. When the need has departed the institution may be allowed to lapse also. Expediency is the criterion" (P. Arnott, 1968: 197, 198).

Thus, some sophists presented the attitude of extreme individualism, which I would call "unbridled" individualism. They were convinced that their era is an age of the individual, that the man is the most important creature, much more important than custom, religion, community, and so on. Just here we meet in the most visible form - so characteristic for the Greek and than for the European liberal political thought - antithesis of the

individual and the state. Also here we encounter the problem of language, which can be used as a tool for *strict* private advantage. These abuses of language were dangerous because the power of spoken words combined with a mob could give unexpected results. I guess it was one of the reasons that persons who were preoccupied with their own personal affairs were called idiots in Greece.

But in general we should remember that sophists have introduced a new intellectual climate in which people were able to think about themselves as individuals. All Greek philosophers independently of their political or theoretical orientation were convinced that politics is a matter of human beings, that human reason can counteract and reshape the present condition of chaos. The best way to overcome the social crisis and to amplify potential of human reason was to conduct the public debate according to clearly formulated and codified rules of rhetoric (the appropriate use of words, the length and balance of sentences, the definite modes of delivery) and rules of external performance. No wonder that when Aristotle was designing an ideal of democracy he paid so much attention to the problem of the size of the city. This size was determined by condition that all citizens are able, at the same moment, to hear the voice of the crier to come and to debate commonly. But Aristotle draws our attention to the second intellectual orientation of the Greek political philosophy.

In comparison to the sophists let me call the second orientation traditional and anti-individualistic one. It does not mean, however, that such well known philosophers like Plato or Aristotle did deny the role of individual and his creative ability in almost all domains of human activity. However, the increasing individualization undermined the fundamentals of existing order and required more solid base for social life. Looking for this base Plato and Aristotle focused their attention on more durable forms of social and political organization. The durability of these forms should be warranted by tradition and custom. Thus the vision of the relationship between an individual and society differed from that of the sophists'. In this sense above philosophers were in opposition to the "unbridled" individualism of the sophists. The social order should not be built on the such unstable elements as individual will or changing individual desires. The state, as a systematic, on purpose organized whole with clearly definite internal structure was designed as effective panacea to this dangerous individualistic disease. A comment is necessary here.

Let me stress that classical Greece consisted of one hundred and fifty-eight distinct settlements and city-states. Their political arrangements were different. Some of them remained monarchical, highly centralized and ruled from above (for example, Sparta or Macedon). Others, after the long period of Mycenaean domination, took the long way to democracy. The best known example is Athens. It was precisely Athens that provoked Plato's critical remarks and later his analysis of democracy and his project of Utopia. That

ideal state was a kind of an organic unity (all its parts were subordinated to the whole). On the other side, the Plato's disciple, Aristotle of Stagira, saw *polls* as a kind of a moving equilibrium ("the nature of a state is to be a plurality"). He put great emphasis on the cooperation among all the parts of the state. Each part acting according to its nature supports at the same time harmonious functioning of the *polis*. For Aristotle the city-state was also kind of organism which functions on principle of variety and complementarily of interdependent parts. This cooperation contributes to self-sufficiency which is the most important attribute of the state. Self-sufficiency, for Aristotle, meant satisfaction of the totality of needs of all members of community. As we remember the author of *Politics* was giving different meanings to the term of state. However very often state meant for him community of individuals and groups which depend on each other and are united by common striving for virtue. Thus the state should to be a moral community which shares common values. These attributes according to Aristotle should counteract the visible collapse of the Greek city-state and civilization.

Let me add at this point, that communal aspect of the city-state, so strongly underlined by Aristotle, is presently confirmed by detailed research of historians of ancient Greece. The most distinguished among them has recently challenged the usefulness of the Weberian concept of the "legitimate domination" for the analysis of the Greek city-state. According to M. Finley the Weberian scheme of the legitimate charismatic *Herrschaft* does not fit in this analysis because "everything we know about Greek history indicates that Athens was an exceptional polis (until it lost its independence in the third century B C), and that any attempt to generalize from Athens requires proper defence, which Weber does not offer. (...). Even in Athens alone, furthermore, the demagogue in Weber's sense was far from omnipresent. (...). The Greek city-state was, to be sure, a rather curious and in a way ephemeral institution. (...). Legal historians have not perhaps been sufficiently alert to the fact that most civil actions in Athens (and in other Greek city-states, though our information is too restricted) were preceded by more or less compulsory attempts at public or private arbitration. (...). The *polis* was a *koinon*, a community in the strict sense. That is the background of the tenacity of the old institution of arbitration long after a formal system of courts had been introduced. (...). The first function of the arbitrator is to conciliate, to suggest concessions and to have them accepted. (...). That the city-state was particular and probably a unique kind of political organization is, at the least, a reasonable working hypothesis. Only the late medieval communes of Italy and northern Europe offer possible parallels, and it is notorious that neither medieval and Renaissance historians nor ancient historians have pursued the possibilities seriously" ( M. Finley, 1986: 94, 95, 99, 102, 103, 107). Because Finley is a renowned authority in the social, political and economic issues of



ancient Greece, I think the above passage is interesting and is worthy to be remembered.

Here are several major conclusions from the Greek "lesson": (1) classical Greece has been one of the most important foundations of Western civilization; the process of individualization has been deeply rooted in Greek experience; (2) classical Greeks recognized the importance of the role of language in the constitution of human order; they knew that language can play constructive role in process of reconstruction of society but they also realized that language as a tool of policy can be abused (negative consequences for the whole community); and last but not least (3) in the social thought of the classical Greek civilization there are clearly two opposite approaches to the problem of the relationship between an individual and a system: the first one gives priority to the individual's freedoms and pleasures, and the second to the community of individuals (and other sociopolitical entities, like for example, the state).

These two approaches are found in the history of social thought and in contemporary social sciences. They carry interesting consequences for the logic of explanation of human history and for the description of patterns of social order. I do not intend to write history of these approaches in social science but let me introduce some examples to illustrate my point.

According to the individualistic approach the human history is a specific result of individual (personal) human actions. For example, in the first half of eighteenth century Thomas Carlyle (1840) has announced his "great man theory of history". The substantial thesis of his political philosophy was: distinguished individualities are basic dynamic elements of processes of human history. That means that great individuals are considered as major causative forces (let say, determinants) of human cultural (political and historical) realm. It is important to emphasize that for Carlyle culture and its history does not create any kind of a whole or a system. It is simply a vast stream (a continuous flow) of cultural events which are created and animated by deeds and actions of the Heros (great personalities). Ernst Cassirer is right when he writes: "Carlyle's political theory is, at bottom, nothing short of a disguised and transformed Calvinism. True spontaneity is reserved to the few elect. As to the others, the mass of the reprobates, they have to submit under the will of these elect, the born rulers" (E. Cassirer, 1961: 193).

Let me notice that at the same time there were also other extreme visions of history. According to that approach history has its own structure and logic and that historical structure determines the thoughts and actions of individuals. It is the general assumption of the Marxist approach to the problem of the relationship between an individual and the system. When, for example, F. Engels (1970) has analyzed the problem of the Reformation in Germany and the role

of religious leaders of that period he was convinced that such personalities as Martin Luther and Thomas Muntzer originated in deep structures (primarily economic and political in character) of history. In other words, according to Engels, such individuals as "conservative" Luther or Thomas Muntzer as "leader of popular reformation" only expressed some social tendencies rooted, in fact, in material conditions of life. In this kind of approach, activity of individuals (their thoughts, ideas, images) is completely determined by supraindividual reality and ideology becomes exclusively a dependant variable of material conditions of life.

No wonder that this approach provoked Max Weber to write his renowned *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. In this work devoted to the analysis of relationships between ideology (religion) and social and economic exigencies of people's life he wrote at the turn of our century: "One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling, was born - that is what this discussion has sought to demonstrate - from the spirit of Christian asceticism. (...). The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. (...). But it would also further be necessary to investigate how Protestant Asceticism was in turn influenced in its development and its character by the totality of social conditions, especially economic. The modern man is in general, even with the best will, unable to give religious ideas a significance for culture and national character which they deserve. But it is, of course, not my aim to substitute for a one-sided materialistic an equally one-sided spiritualistic causal interpretation of culture and history. Each is equally possible, but each, if it does not serve as the preparation, but as the conclusion of an investigation, accomplishes equally little in the interest of historical truth" (M. Weber, 1976: 180, 181, 183).

Let me add at this point that Erich Fromm tried to execute Weber's scientific testament. In his *The Fear of Freedom* (1950) he wanted to reconcile Marxist's and Weber's approaches discussing, among other things, origins and role of Reformation from the point of view of human individual and his society (for the reconstruction of the Fromm's theoretical approach especially important is his discussion in Appendix: Character and the Social Process pp. 239-253).

Let us now move back to the problem of individual and culture. In nineteenth century the standpoints were not always as extreme as those described above (Carlyle, Engels). They did not put individual and culture *au rebours*. For example, British anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (who is commonly considered a founding father of American cultural anthropology) did not accept

one possibility only. He saw individual and culture as two different but interconnected sides of the same process of human and cultural progress. For him "Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (E. Tylor, 1970: 1). Immediately after formulation of the above definition of culture (which is presently considered as classical one) Tylor continues on the same page: "The condition of culture among the various societies of mankind, (...), is a subject apt for the study of laws of human thought and action". Thus, we have here two different and complex variables: (1) culture, which creates a kind of external to individual "reality" (defined in terms of habits, customs and other institutions); and (2) human being as thinking, pursuing and acting individual. Tylor combines these two variables using a concept of human nature as a binding chain.

In other words, Tylor designed his science of culture on the psychological basis. The laws of psychology are necessary condition to understand history of human culture, its change and development. Tylor's positivistic and evolutionist approach to the culture is rooted in nominalistic and individualistic tradition. His basic assumption is that culture is created by rational individual, who is driven by his/her egoistic desires and is using appropriate means to achieve intended goals. This means that to understand the cultural dynamics we should look for laws of human thinking which explain "great intellectual movement" or evolution of culture. Thus science of culture is at the same time the mental history of mankind. Culture as an attribute of human species is, in fact, the result of individual's creativity, because "collective social action is the mere resultant of many individual actions" (E. Tylor, 1970: 13). That creativity means the fulfillment of people's needs. In this way such institutions as language, government, knowledge or law were only the products of rational thought of human beings striving to improve conditions of their life. The basic function of each institution is its utility. Institutions as rational creations of human activity serve special goals in the process of problems-solving which are imposed by conditions of human existence. For example, analyzing institution of religion Tylor considers "religious doctrines and practices (...), as belonging to theological systems devised by human reason, without supernatural aid or revelation" (E. Tylor, 1970a: 11). In the same way are explained other institutions and cultural traits. For example, "language, so far as its constitution is understood, seems to have been developed like writing or music, like hunting or fire-making, by the exercise of purely human faculties in purely human ways. (...). Their cause evidently lies in natural operations of the human mind (...). The study of savage and civilized life alike avail us to trace in the early history of human intellect, not gifts of transcendental wisdom, but rude shrewd sense taking up the facts of common life and shaping for them schemes of primitive philosophy" (E. Tylor, 1970: 68, 233, 234).

Thus, we can say that Tylor explains the development of cultural institutions appealing to laws and principles of psychology. Doing this he is able to describe mental and intellectual processes of people and their results - new cultural traits, institutions, social arrangements, technological innovations, and so on. These intellectual processes are on the one side determined by common to every human being elements of human nature (using them human being is creating his/her culture), and on the other side these intellectual processes are conditioned by some psychological processes. These psychological processes are, in part, results of external, already existing cultural environment, that is to say, all the human tradition. It is a domain of habit and custom. To this tradition Tylor ascribes some kind of autonomy. It is external phenomenon which has an impact on the human beings' way of thinking and acting. We can say, that institutions created by men to resolve their specific existential problems often bear features that seem to be anti-intellectual. They just create this traditional, passive and external for individual cultural "reality".

"It is quite wonderful, even if we hardly go below the surface of the subject, to see how large a share stupidity and unpractical conservatism and dogged superstition have had in preserving us traces of the history of our race, which practical utilitarianism would have remorselessly swept away. The savage is firmly, obstinately conservative. No man appeals with more unhesitating confidence to the great precedent-makers of the past; the wisdom of his ancestors can control against the most obvious evidence of his own opinions and actions. We listen with pity to the rude Indian as he maintains against civilized science and experience the authority of his rude forefathers. (...). The nobler tendency of advancing culture, and above all of scientific culture, is to honour the dead without groveling before them, to profit by the past without sacrificing the present to it. Yet even modern civilized world has but half learnt this lesson, and an unprejudiced survey may lead us to judge how many of our ideas and customs exist rather by being old than by being good" (E. Tylor, 1970: 156, 157) .

Thus in history of humans there is a tendency to overcome cultural traditionalism which seems to be a result of the thoughtlessness and obedience to custom and tradition. That tradition means for Tylor negation of human reason and inborn capability for progress. That conservatism and tradition is defined as dysfunctional area of culture. And that dysfunctional is treated by Tylor as autonomous system, which to the great extent determines human behavior. In this approach culture is deprived of its psychological, intellectual content. It is a process *sui generis*. These problems were not presented in Tylor works in a systematic and complete way. We want to emphasize the fact that Tylor operates and uses two different concepts of culture. When he explains processes of cultural evolution he appeals to the intellectual, psychological features of human being. He treats human being as a rational creature and talks about utilitarian concept of culture. Cultural

institutions are created to serve human needs, the origin and development of institutions is explained in rational terms, according to reductionist methodology. However, inside that broad evolutionary vista we can find assertions about conservatism of cultural institutions. That conservative traditionalism means, that institutions based on custom become specific determinant of humans; they channel and limit humans' thoughts. In this sense they are autonomous, external systems which bind human reason and impede human progress. Thus Tylor's approach to the culture is together nominalistic and realistic. It has become a point of departure for different solutions of the problem of the relationship between an individual and the cultural system.

Similar tensions and frictions between individualistic and anti-reductionist methodology exist, for example, in Herbert Spencer's (1880) theory of society. They are even more visible than in Tylor's case, because Spencer was, on the one side, a devoted organicist (society was for him superorganic whole, a kind of organism, which cannot be explained in terms other than social) and simultaneously, on the other side, society meant for him only a collective name for a number of individuals. "There is an evident inconsistency in his sociology: He was tempted by the Bentham-style utilitarian anthropology, which made it possible to explain all social activities by characteristics vested in individuals, at the same time he refused to accept this anthropology because it simply destroyed his entire theory based on assumption that human characteristics emerge as a result of the influence of society. (...). The only solution to the dilemma was to accept the formula of mutual interaction: characteristics of the whole are derived from those of its units, which, in turn, are molded under influence of the whole and of the changes that it is undergoing" (J. Szacki, 1979: 223).

*-Individualism and realism in American cultural anthropology.*

Moving back to the problem of culture I would like to say, that in American cultural anthropology there has been a strong tendency to overestimate the role of culture (the most fundamental concept of anthropology) in understanding of human actions and behavior. There were also two orientations: one realistic and anti-reductionist (for example A. Kroeber, R. Lowie or L. White) and second one individualistic (for example E. Sapir, R. Benedict or M. Opler). I want to characterize them shortly because they are relevant to our problems.

Let me say that problem has begun in 1917 when A. Kroeber published his *The Superorganic*. He was looking for the subject matter of anthropology. According to him to understand a human being is to look for his/her attributes. These attributes are created by people and conveyed by people from one generation to another. This means that culture is a prime determinant of human action. The major aim of an anthropologist is to reconstruct the traits of this "new

factor (...) which was to work out its own independent consequences, slowly and of little apparent import at first, but gathering weight, and dignity, and influence; a factor that had passed beyond natural selection, that was no longer wholly dependent on any agency of organic evolution, and that, however rocked and swayed by the oscillations of the heredity that underlay it, nevertheless floated unimmersed upon it" (A. Kroeber, 1917: 49). Thus Kroeber was interested in culture regardless of individuals because "a thousand individuals do not make society. They are the potential basis of a society; but they do not themselves cause it, and they are also the basis of a thousand other potential societies" (A. Kroeber, 1917: 38). The anti-reductionist tenor of Kroeber is evident. Human beings should be treated only as carriers of cultural information. Individuals are much less important for understanding the society than the culture. The role of individuals is minimal because it is a culture that creates society. We will not understand society or culture by referring to the biological or psychological traits of individual. Culture means for Kroeber the configuration of autonomous, objectified traits which have to be studied independently from its carriers.

The response to this program came immediately from the nominalistic and psychologically oriented approach of American anthropology. One of its representatives has argued: "It is true that the content of an individual's mind is so overwhelmingly moulded by the social traditions to which he is heir that the purely individual contribution of ever markedly original minds is apt to seem swamped in the whole of culture. (...). And yet it is always the individual that really thinks and acts and dreams and revolts. Those of his thoughts, acts, dreams, and rebellions that somehow contribute in sensible degree to the modification or retention of the mass of typical reactions called culture we term social data; the rest, though they do not, psychologically considered, in the least differ from these, we term individual and pass by as of no historical or social moment. It is highly important to note that the differentiation of these two types of reaction is essentially arbitrary, resting, as it does, entirely on a principle of selection. The selection depends on the adoption of a scale of values. Needless to say, the threshold of the social (or historical) versus the individual shifts according to the philosophy of the evaluator or interpreter. I find it utterly inconceivable to draw a sharp and eternally valid dividing line between them. (...). One has only to think seriously of what such personalities as Aristotle, Jesus, Mahomet, Shakespeare, Goethe, Beethoven mean in the history of culture to hesitate to commit oneself to a completely non-individualistic interpretation of history. I do not believe for a moment that such personalities are merely the cat's-paws of general cultural drifts" (E. Sapir, 1917: 442, 443).

Thus we have here a quite different (than in Kroeber's case) approach to the nature and meaning of culture and also a distinct design of subject matter of cultural anthropology. For Edward Sapir it is impossible to understand culture without a human being. Anthropology should focus its attention on a man. Only achieving better understanding of a man we can at the same time attain better understanding of human being's attribute: culture. The reason for this strategy of research is evident: in fact, culture exists only in and is inseparable from human personalities.

"The true locus of culture is in the interactions of specific individuals and, on the subjective side, in the world of meanings which each one of these individuals may unconsciously abstract for himself from his participation in these interactions. Every individual is, then, in a very real sense, a representative of at least one sub-culture which may be abstracted from the generalized culture of the group of which he is a member. Frequently, if not typically, he is a representative of more than one sub-culture, and the degree to which the socialized behavior of any given individual can be identified with or abstracted from the typical or generalized culture of a single group varies enormously from person to person. It is impossible to think of any cultural pattern or set of cultural patterns which can, in literal sense of the word, be referred to society as such. There are no facts of political organization or family life or religious belief or magical procedure or technology or aesthetic endeavor which are coterminous with society or with any mechanically or sociologically defined segment of society" (E. Sapir, 1932: 515).

Thus, according to Sapir culture and its human carrier are inseparable. In fact, culture exist only in human personalities. There is only psychological reality of cultural patterns (we can say that Sapir personalizes culture). As a result, culture means an arrangement of common and characteristic traits of individual attitudes or personalities that cannot be separated from these individuals. The reason is, "that vast reaches of culture,(...), are discoverable only as the peculiar property of certain individuals, who cannot but give these cultural goods the impress of their own personality. (...). As soon as we set ourselves at the vantage point of the culture-acquiring child, the personality definitions and potentials that must never for a moment be lost sight of, and which are destined from the very beginning to interpret, evaluate, and modify every culture pattern, sub-pattern, or assemblage of patterns that it will ever be influenced by, everything changes. Culture is then not something given but something to be gradually and gropingly discovered. We then see at once that elements of culture that come well within the horizon of awareness of one individual are entirely absent in another individual's landscape. This is an important fact, systematically ignored by the cultural anthropologist" (E. Sapir, 1934: 594, 595, 596) .

Culture can be regarded as a complex set of norms and values. Sapir (see, for example, 1924, 1931) was willing to treat culture as an arrangement of norms and values which were customarily established and traditionally inherited (inter-generationally transmitted). But for him central problem was that individual reacts to these norms in his own personal way (affirming or denying them). During this process individual can express or enrich his/her personality (thoughts and feelings). Being a true locus of culture each individual stands always (in every culture) in the face of many perceived possibilities and choices which have impact on his/her personal experience and existence. Thus for Sapir such terms as perception and meaning should be given an important place in ethnographic research and anthropological theory.

In the area of ethnolinguistics and in some areas of psycholinguistics we can find an interesting relationship between language and culture. This approach at its point of departure assumes that language (and specially the structure of language) has a great impact on the cognition and the world view of people using the language. This approach is well known as Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. According to it, different languages produce different (let's say, divergent) patterns of thought. Lexicons and grammars of particular languages can make their speakers think about their own experience and aspects of their world in specifically distinctive ways. In fact, according to Sapir, for example, people are kind of linguistic prisoners. In his well known programmatic article on linguistics Sapir wrote:

"Language is a guide to 'social reality'. Though language is not ordinarily thought of as of essential interest to the students of social sciences, it powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. Human beings do not live in objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached" (E. Sapir, 1929: 162).

Sapir's ideas have been expanded by his student B. Wharf. The latter conducted studies of the Hopi language of the American Southwest. Whorf realized, for example, that there are differences between the tense systems of Hopi and English languages. English divides time into: past, present and future. Hopi does not. Grammar of Hopi language distinguishes rather between events that



indisputably exist or have existed (for which present and past tenses are used in English) and those that do not exist (English future events, along with imaginary, hypothetical and fanciful). Then Whorf argues that those grammatical differences (which lead Hopi and English speakers to different perception of time and reality) result in differences in the Hopi and English thinking. "Users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of observations and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent as observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world" (B. Whorf, 1956: 221).

In general Whorf's position assumes that human thought results to a large extent from categories of a given language. Thus, different languages organize the world of peoples in different ways. For Whorf "it means that no individual is free to describe with absolute impartiality but is constrained to certain modes of interpretation even while he thinks himself almost free. The person most nearly free in such respect would be a linguist familiar with very many widely different linguistic systems. As yet no linguist is in any such position. We are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated" (B. Whorf, 1956: 214).

According to Sapir-Whorf, lexicon (language's names for things) can also produce different perception of reality and thus cause differences in human thought and action. The Eskimo have three distinct words for different types of snow (that in English are all called "snow",) and the Nuer have an elaborate vocabulary for cattle. The argument runs that the Eskimo recognize, think about and respond to differences in snow that English speakers cannot even see because English language provides them with just one word. Other anthropologists, however, argue that language reflects only Eskimo or Nuer environmental needs. When needs arise English speakers can also elaborate their appropriate (snow or cattle) vocabulary. Vocabulary and lexical distinction are linguistic areas which change very fast.

Thus Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is a controversial one and we can see the problem. According to them language is something more than a medium for expressing ideas. It is specific generator of our thoughts and actions. I would agree that language can channel and limit our way of thinking. However, as we know, changes of language also result from changes of other subsystems of culture (see, for example, R. Lakoff [1975] on differences between female and male American vocabulary of color terms). We can say that human thoughts, language and culture are interrelated (they even have to be). Languages create some ways of categorizations of human experience and these categorizations can have impact on human communication. However, it is an exaggeration to say that language

is a major and basic determinant of human thought. I would say that language plays a very important role in setting up people's world view but it is not only the language that takes part in this process.

I have presented two above approaches as examples of different research strategies. The basic distinction was created by attaching the major causal role in human history to either an individual whose mind was an exclusive owner of his/her culture or *sui generis* cultural reality external to the individual. Tills *sui generis* cultural reality has been a basic determinant of behavior of the (volitionless) individual. These two approaches are ideal examples of scholarly attitudes, which David Bidney (1953) has called "nominalistic and culturalistic fallacies".

I would say that from the forties on the realistic and anti-reductionist approach to the culture has started to dominate in American anthropology. Resulting from that culture has been recognized as the only omnipresent and omnipotent determinant of human behavior. In effect, (this is my deep personal conviction) the majority of American anthropologists have used the overculturalized (please forgive me this unfortunate term) concept of individual. Let me make my point more precise by appealing to some important tendencies.

#### **Systemic (evolutionary-ecological) concept of culture.**

I would like to start from the statement, that despite her historical (and less visible humanistic) orientation the twentieth century American anthropology has always presented nomothetic (scientific) and naturalistic bias. Due to space limitations I cannot discuss here the reasons of this "strange" mixture. It is more important to say that these scientific tendencies were strengthened by holistic, functional-structural approach. In other words, the culture becomes now more structuralized as autonomous and external to and independent from an individual. In this approach, as it was previously the case, the concept of cultural causality is limited to cultural factors only (it is unscientific and unjustified to refer to extra-cultural variables to explain processes running in cultural domain). But, in addition, this approach assumes that the structure of the system imposes its own logic of explanation, that is to say, culture creates impersonal organized whole, "eternal" systemic entity, a closed system perfectly impregnable from human influence. Resulting from this there is one way strong determinism, ruthless cultural impact upon an individual and his society.

As we remember, the concept of the system (social or cultural) is not quite new (suffices to mention Plato and Aristotle or Spencerian "a society is an organism" and all organicistic

orientation in the nineteenth century social sciences). However, for the American historically and particularistically oriented anthropology of the first half of the twentieth century the systemic approach of the British social (functional-structural) anthropology was very attractive. The concept of system promised not only a solid framework for gathering and ordering cultural material (A. Radcliffe-Brown, 1952). Also, the efforts to shape social anthropology as a natural science looking for scientific laws (A. Radcliffe-Brown, 1948) had to be tempting for more generally and theoretically oriented anthropologists. We have seen that the concept of culture (as integrated system) was the central point of Malinowski's theory. Radcliffe-Brown was more interested in society (or rather such systems of society as kinship or politics), but always as an integrated, interrelated whole or functional, systemic unity. This holistic approach implied a specific method of analyzing cultural institutions or social facts which created definite system (for example, B. Malinowski 1922 or A. Radcliffe-Brown 1958). There were two assumptions which underlie the above systemic approach: (1) that each element of a given system performs a special function, important for its survival; and (2) that description of this function is an explanation of an element or institution (the role which given element plays in the system, the function fulfilled by a part for the whole). In more general terms, the systemic approach was concerned with relationships among parts (elements, institutions, subsystems) of the system and with relationships between the parts and the whole (system).

The combination of the functional and systemic approach with the realistic assumption about culture as *sui generis* phenomena has generated delicate and troublesome problems. How, for example, to reconcile the assertion that culture is an instrument serving human needs and resolving human problems with the anti-individualistic and anti-reductionist conviction about autonomy of culture, about the fact that "culture traits act and react among themselves in accordance with the principle of cause and effect. Thus, culture determines and causes culture; culture is to be explained in terms of culture. (...). As a biological datum, man lies outside the cultural process; he enters it as a human being, but as a human being he is a constellation of cultural elements, a capsule of culture. The belief that man can control his culture, like other illusions, is made possible and nourished by a profound and comprehensive ignorance of the nature, structure, and behavior of cultural systems. The situation is like that of rain dances: the belief that man could bring rain by dancing was possible only because of ignorance of meteorological phenomena" (L. White, 1975: 6, 9).

There are several reasons for quoting White here: (1) he is a founding father of a new discipline, a science of culture - "culturology" which treats culture - as we have seen above - as a distinct from an individual and society order of phenomena, as a

class of events and things which depend upon human ability to symbol (he has called them symbolates) and in the same time determines totally human behavior; (2) he was a major representative of realistic, systemic approach to the culture who has influenced in great extend American cultural anthropology in the second half of our century; (3) his theory of evolution of culture has introduced into cultural anthropology the issue of cultural adaptation that perceived a culture as materialistic, adaptative system; (4) in his major works (1949, 1959, 1959a, 1973) and many important articles he presented a functional thesis that culture is an instrument used by people to resolve their existential problems. "The function of culture is to serve the needs of man: to provide him with food and other materials from his habitat, to provide shelter from the elements and defence from his enemies, to divert him with art, to give him courage and consolation in the crisis of life, and so on. In short, the function of culture is to make life secure and continuous for the human species, and, if possible, to make it seem significant and worthwhile" (L. White, 1987: 215).

Thus, the contradictory statements have existed in White's theory for many years. Its major problem might be signalled in the following question: how an autonomous and independent from individual culture that determines human behavior can serve human needs and "make life secure and continuous for the human species". One possible alternative solution to the assumption about individual as an artificer of culture is to accept the existence of metaphysical cultural reason and to reify culture. White preferred to keep his anti-individualistic assumptions about autonomy of culture and cultural determinism of human behavior when he realized that his theory of culture is based on contradictory assumptions. In his last (posthumously published book) he has again referred to the concept of cultural system. At that time, however, he redefined the concept of function of cultural system.

Defining the function of culture in terms of actions of the system instead of the human adaptation he wrote: "Cultural systems, like all other kinds of systems, are made up of parts that are integrated into a coherent whole. Cultural systems, like all other kinds of systems, behave, i. e., they do things. (...). It is self-evident that if a system is to persist it must do certain things: it must hold its parts together in a network of interrelationships and interdependence; it must subordinate part to whole; it must coordinate its parts and regulate the role of each, and finally it must exercise control over the system as a whole" (L. White, 1975: 20, 21). Thus, changing the meaning of the concept of function White has achieved consistency among major assumptions of his theory. However, at the same time referring exclusively to the systemic categories to explain cultural phenomena he has given to his theory unequivocally anti-individualistic, radically anti-voluntaristic and methodologically anti-reductionist or nomothetic shape. This put him, of course, in opposition to anthropological

historicism and psychoculturalism. White's explanation of cultural phenomena (for example, cultural evolution) is formulated in the language of scientific laws but proposed description is largely a positive one.

White is convinced that in the cultural system all the forms of human activity are interconnected, interrelated and subordinated to the whole. "In any normal or 'healthy' system, component parts are subordinated to the whole. But there are imperfect systems in which autonomy of a part may overcome subordination" (L. White, 1975: 167). The use of this kind of terminology does not mean that White thinks in the Platonian way about the unity of the system. As we remember the relations of subordination were essential for Plato's Utopia. For him social organism could achieve unity only in the way of subordination of all its parts to one center. I guess, White would not accept this kind of vision of system. On the same page he writes, for example, "cultural evolution has not yet produced a highly developed national system. The monolithic, one-party nations give the appearance of having reached the stage where syntheses are made at the top. But it is widely claimed that this is achieved at the expense of free expression and synthesis on lower levels. (...). The point I wish to make is that syntheses of diverse parts and interests should not be made at the top of the system but at lower levels (...). For maximum effectiveness - in an ideal system - syntheses should be effected in all areas and at all levels leading to the top of the system" (L. White, 1975: 167).

Thus, to look for the sources of White's understanding of the system we should turn our attention to the functional-structural approach (especially Radcliffe-Brown). However, more important seems to be a biological and organicistic terminology and tradition. It looks like White substituted the concept of an organism by the concept of a system. These naturalistic tendencies applied to and combined with assumption about autonomy of culture have, of course, their specific methodological consequences: "If culture must be explained in cultural terms, (...), then cultural systems must be explained in terms of themselves, in terms of their components, their structure. They are explained in terms of the intrinsic properties of their components and integration of these parts in a unity - all in accordance with the principle of cause and effect. (...). The proper study of mankind is not *man*, but culture" (L. White, 1975: 36, 129). I cannot accept the last statement. In my opinion, to understand mankind we have to focus our attention on the dynamic relations between man and culture. To do this we should attached priority to neither of them.

All above, of course, touches upon human behavior. For White, for example, all human behavior - according to his logic - is determined by culture. This behavior (based on symbol) is unique to the human world. White assumes that symbolic abilities are major attributes of human being and the phenomenon of symbolization is a

necessary condition for culture to originate. Let me quote from White:

"The 'institutions', habits, and knowledge that the first human beings took over from their prehuman antecedents were important, but they were crude, simple, and meager. And, without articulate speech, the possibility of progress on a merely primate level seems to have been extremely limited if, indeed, it existed at all. It was symboling - particularly articulate speech - that changed all this: it created cultural systems and launched them upon a course of development. In the Word was the Beginning. Without articulate speech human social organization would be impossible. Codes of law, ethics, and etiquette would be impossible. Without speech there could be no mythologies and theologies, no gods to worship, no hells to go to" (L. White, 1975: 22, 23).

White is not interested in historical process of the origin of language. For him the most important thing is that symbolic ability (to speak and to think) triggers the development of culture. White's approach to the origin of culture is similar to the position of scholars of neo-Kantian orientation such as E. Cassirer, S. Langer or c. Levi-Strauss. For them also symbolic thinking means the emergence of culture. This way of thinking determines then all dimensions of human world. Simply, all human cultural forms "are symbolic forms".

However, according to White, there is also the other kind of behavior of Homo sapiens. This behavior is independent of symbolizing and is determined by biological makeup of human species. He is willing to talk about this kind of behavior of human being as mammalian or primate behavior. Thus relationship between the culture and human behavior is expressed in simple and deterministic terms. The human behavior is always a dependent variable of cultural system. For me it is an overculturalization of a human being.

For Leslie White human language is an important factor only in the process of the emergence of culture. Later it is culture that is responsible for human behavior. White is more interested in relationships between different subsystems of culture (technology, social organization, ideology) in processes of adaptation than in the role of language in culture and adaptation. Marvin Harris is the other influential anthropologist who considers culture as adaptative system. He alike accepts importance of language for the human communication but excludes language as a distinct area of consideration. In his materialistic theory of culture he writes:

"One conspicuous omission from above scheme is the category 'language'. (...). Communication, including speech, serves a vital instrumental role in coordinating infrastructural, structural, and superstructural activities; hence it cannot be regarded as belonging exclusively to these divisions. Moreover, communication

in the form of speech acts is also the very stuff out of which much of the mental and emic superstructure is built. Hence language per se cannot be viewed as an exclusively infrastructural, structural, or superstructural component, nor as an exclusively behavioral or mental phenomenon. Another important reason for not including language as a separate component in the universal pattern is that cultural materialism makes no claims concerning the functional relationship between infrastructure and the *major* phonemic and grammatical features of particular families of languages. Cultural materialism does not hold, for example, that particular modes of production and reproduction cause people to speak Indo-European rather than Uto-Aztecan languages" (M. Harris, 1979: 54, 55).

It seems, that because language does not fit in the analytical schema elaborated by Harris and even disturbs its conceptual clarity, Harris accepts its existence but denies language's important role in cultural analysis. The consequences of this systemic approach are evident. Language is treated as transparent medium of communication, neutral carrier of symbols and ideas. In result, materialistic interpretation of culture and human condition becomes oversimplified and extremely deterministic. I appreciate some Harris' anthropological accomplishments (especially his works 1966, 1968) but his cultural materialism does not look very sophisticated.

White and Harris are representatives of the materialist, developmental approach that takes cultures as adaptive systems. This approach has reigned in American cultural anthropology in the second part of the twentieth century (at least in the first three decades). There are several features that make this approach a distinct one. Let me enlist them together: First, culture as a system determines human social behavior. Thus, given culture is treated as a socially transmitted pattern of behavior. Human language is a major carrier of this pattern. However, its role as a carrier is only auxiliary. Second, every culture system is placed in particular ecological setting. It means that humans can function in their natural (and social) environment because they use medium of culture to solve their problems. Third, cultural change and development is, in fact, a process of adaptation of people to their environment by using cultural tools. The major impulses of cultural change are located in ecosystem. Fourth, approaching cultures as adaptations to ecological and demographic pressures implies specific nexus between subsystems of cultural system. The subsystems that are immediately related to the environment (techno-economic) are considered crucial to every culture. Simultaneously, the ideational subsystems are denied of their causal role in the process of adaptation. They fulfil only a secondary role being, in fact, totally dependent on techno-economic factors.

Let me make clear that some scholars who have shown their support for this dominant model made intellectual efforts to modify its uncompromised determinism and materialism. According to them the

ideational subsystems of culture can play important role in adaptive processes. Roy A. Rappaport who prefers "human ecology" approach (as oppose to "cultural ecology") writes in his well known book:

"The adoption of populations and ecosystems as units of analysis, it should be stressed, does not require any sacrifice of anthropology's primary goal of elucidating cultural phenomena. (...). A population may be defined as an aggregate of organisms that have in common certain distinctive means for maintaining a set of material relations with the other components of the ecosystem in which they are included. The cultures of human populations, like the behavior characteristic of populations of other species, can be regarded, in some of their aspects, at least, as part of the 'distinctive means' employed by the populations in their struggles for survival. (...). It should be made explicit perhaps that the operation of ritual as a regulating mechanism is not necessarily understood by the Tsembaga. (...). It would be possible to elucidate the regulatory functions of Tsembaga ritual without references to Tsembaga conceptions, but it is reasonable to regard the conceptions of a people as part of the mechanism that induces their behavior. Native views of the rituals will therefore be included in this study. The inclusion of natives views in a description of ecological relations, moreover, permits us to ask some important questions concerning ideology. We may, for example, ask whether or not actions undertaken in reference to understandings that are not empirically valid are, nevertheless, appropriate to the actual situation in which the actors find themselves." (R. Rappaport 1984: 6, 7).

Rappaport concerns have been focused on ritual and social aspects of ideational culture he called "cognized models" (R. Rappaport, 1979). However, his interests missed completely the problem of the individual in culture. In his most recent works Rappaport, one of the most influential American anthropologists, tries to reconcile both individualistic and systemic (realistic) approaches represented by other renowned American anthropologists. According to him:

"Earlier analyses in ecological anthropology, reflecting a general deficiency in cultural and social anthropology, did not pay sufficient attention to the purposes motivating individual actions, actions which, when aggregated, constitute group events; nor did they pay sufficient attention to behavioral variations among individuals, to differences in the understanding of the world entertained by individuals, to individuals as adaptive units, or to conflicts between individual actors or between individuals and the groups to which they belonged. (...). Although the development of what is being called 'practice theory' may ameliorate deficiencies now apparent in earlier anthropological accounts, some questions concerning it must be raised. (...). First, it may be asked what the choices and actions of individuals are meant to account for in



anthropological analyses. Human choices and actions are informed by understandings which are culturally constituted. Most of this understandings have an assumed or explicit public core, a core of understandings upon or around which there is general agreement. Individual variations are expressed in details or, more importantly, in differences among the conclusions that different individuals may derive from what they take to be the same sets of facts or differences in the strategies employed by individuals standing in varying relationships to the same facts. Accounts of events should, of course, take into consideration the individual variations that are implicated in precipitating them. (...). Of more interest and importance than the extent to which individual actions and decisions account for events is the extent to which they can account for conventions and institutions and for changes in them. To put this differently, to what extent may practice account for structure and changes in it? An older anthropology which took action to be largely the enactment of culturally-prescribed rules would have replied 'very little'. More recently, however, interest in the ways in which practice may modify or transform social and cultural forms has grown" (R. Rappaport, 1990: 62, 63). I guess the above quotation is a very good example of trends and tendencies I have described earlier.

Let me add that other anthropologists (even some representatives of psychoculturalism) who see the relationship between individual and culture as more complicated (for example, R. Linton, 1936: 470-475) seem to accept the dichotomy of behavior and culturally determined behavior. For them human behavior should "include all activities of the individual, whether overt or covert, physical or psychological. Thus for the purposes of this definition learning, thinking, and so on are to be considered quite as much forms of behavior as are the coordinated muscular movements involved in technological processes" (R. Linton, 1945: 33). The "overt behavior" means behavior which pattern can be described by carriers of a given culture. "The covert behavior" is the patterned behavior but people do not realize this pattern. The other distinction by Linton refers to "ideal culture" (cultural prescriptions what people should do) and "real culture" (description what people actually do in different situations). However, these two promising distinctions lose their explanatory value by Linton using his global definition of culture. In other words, every kind of human behavior or all human behavior, important from the point of view of the constitution of the rule-ordered relationships, is for Linton a culturally determined behavior. In other words, whatever individual would do he was acting either according to the overt and covert pattern of culture or according to ideal and real culture. Always, however, the individual's behavior was *in toto* dependent on and caused by culture.

Let me add that some visible changes appearing in the last ten years among representatives of ecological and evolutionary anthropology who have approached culture as an adaptive system

(works by R. Rappaport are good example here) should be seen as a reaction to a quite different model of anthropology that has also existed in the second part of the present century. That model has looked for a description of culture and explanation of culture change in different areas (and tradition) of social sciences and the humanities. That model has considered culture more an ideational system than a materialistic (evolutionary-ecological) one.

### **Ideational concepts of culture (culture as a system of ideas).**

There is the other strategy to search the relationship between individual and culture. Instead of identifying human behavior and culture we can try to divide them (logically) and then to describe their relationships. The best way to start doing that is to accept (not to reject, as White did) an assumption of functional character of culture. No doubt that culture is extrasomatic, learned and transmitted, and has the great influence on human behavior. Moreover, we can talk about human behavior (when we behave customarily or habitually) and human action (when we use cultural means to achieve some intended goals). In the latter sense of the word we are simultaneously cultural both users and artisans (to use V. Ostrom wording) or we are manufacturing culture (M. Freilich, 1972).

We should be careful, however, in using functional language when we compare culture with a tool or instrument. No doubt, culture as the tool that an individual uses to cope with his/her existential problems is much more complex than a particular tool used for a specific operation. Analogy to the cultural tool suggests that every situation in human life has appropriate well defined cultural solution. Culture is not only the most complex but also the most general tool. Moreover, it has to be so. Although culture is the most complex tool, the complexity and diversity of situations which human life consists of significantly exceed the detailed inventory of every culture.

The relationship between individual and culture as an individual's instrument for problems-solving is analogous to the relationship between a hiker and his hiking schedule mapped out after the guidebook. No matter how precise the guidebook is your real hiking will be different from that scheduled one. First of all, you can pay more attention than your guidebook to certain features of the landscape (you will react in your own personal way to guidebook information) or even during your hiking you can see that there is other place (let say, a beautiful valley) you would like to stop by before you move on to follow your beforehand prepared schedule. Second, your kids can get tired (their organisms cannot afford such an effort) and you will not get to the intended place. Third, your wife would prefer to stay at an enchanting spot (let say, she has

reflexive personality) and not to go any further. Forth, there may be a rapid change of weather (tornado, terrible rain and flooding) and you will have to abandon your hiking all together. Fifth, you can meet other hikers coming your way who can give information which will modify your schedule. All I would like to say is that although you wanted to accomplish certain goals (I am not asking why) using sources of reliable and condensed information your action could be influenced by factors and situational circumstances other than a guidebook, quite a basic tool that determines your hiking behavior.

Moving back to culture we can say that culture is not only determinant of human behavior. Although it is strong and important determinant of human action (it is culture that enables individuals to interpret and to attach meaning to particular human actions) there are also other factors that influence individual's behavior such as: biological drives, structure of individual's personality or the natural environment which is, in fact, a set of external impacts. Thus, by focusing our attention on human behavior and separating culture from it we can easily come to the conclusion that older anthropological approach (that treated culture as omnipotent ruler of human behavior and individual as an obedient object of cultural rules) obfuscated the nature of problem to a significant extent. We know, for example, that, on the one side, every culture gives the people some ideas (let say behavioral patterns) about what is appropriate in a given situation. On the other side, we know that people not always act properly, that they break the cultural rules and norms of acceptable behavior because of many different reasons. I would say that an individual who more or less often breaks earlier established rules is one of the major causes of the cultural change. Before we answer the question why people break existing rules we should go for a moment to the definition of culture.

I guess that the global, anthropological definition of culture holds but some important aspects should be emphasized. Let me combine these aspects with Vincent Ostrom's approach to the problem of the constitution of order in human societies (V. Ostrom, 1992a). I guess that in his thinking about culture, among other things, very important terms are "choice" and "information". V. Ostrom writes for example:

"The phenomena of choice - of being able to consider alternative possibilities and to select a course of action from among a range of possibilities - is a fundamental part of the human condition. Choice is a basic form of adaptive behavior. (...). Given constraints in the environment and a capacity to perceive a potential act or moves in relation to those constraints, we can now conceive of learning as depending upon the generation and selection of images, different moves, actions, possibilities. The association of successful actions with condition and consequences is retained in memory and informs future actions in like circumstances. (...).

Norms imply standards or criteria of choice: principles of selection. (...). Choice implies selection, evaluation. What are sometimes referred to as 'values' are - criteria of choice, principles of selection and the emergent states of affairs which are derived from using principles of selection as criteria of choice. (...). Great varieties of information may be organized as knowledge and transmitted from generation to generation by spoken language. (...). Culture can be defined as that which is learned or derived from learning. (...). New concepts and new terms may be introduced by individuals, but they become a part of a language only when the meaning and use of new terms are shared as a basis for communication with others" (V. Ostrom, 1992a: 1, 5, 6, 8, 11).

Let me now refer to the beginning of the present discussion where I quoted the point made by C. Kluckhohn and W. Kelly that culture is "a set of ready-made definitions of the situations which each participant only slightly retails in his own idiomatic way". By culture authors "mean all those historically created designs for living, explicit and implicit, rational, irrational, and nonrational, which exist at any given as potential guides for the behavior of men." (C. Kluckhohn and W. Kelly, 1983: 240)

Let me emphasise the fact that as early as in 1945 (when the above article was published first time) there was a concept of culture as "design for living" (pattern for behavior) and not as a dominant "pattern of behavior". That concept escapes strict deterministic approach and suggests that individual is not a mechanical puppet energized only by power of culture. I think that the central problem here is the relationship between culture as a set of definitions (informations) and particular situation which also has an impact on individual. We can say that individual disposes very often relatively general cultural information which must be used in a specific individual's situation. That situation also affects the individual's actions. It means the individual is always in a position of choice. Behind the individual's choice (action!) there is always an interpretation of a different (cultural and situational) information. In this sense the individual is an artifact and artificer of culture.

An approach to culture as informational system is not specially new (see, for example, J. Roberts, 1964) and is rooted in cybernetics. Of course, first of all, the anthropological approach to culture as symbolic system assumes that culture carries, stores and transmits information. Culture is a special kind of system of information (plans, guides, maps, designs, and so on.. Its specificity depends largely on two major interrelated dimensions: informational functional and prescriptively general one.

First, to treat culture in functional terms as a problem-solving instrument, we can say that cultural information is a kind of information which helps human beings to solve the problems (material, intellectual, moral, political, social, etc.) associated

with people's existence. To cope with these problems people have to make culture. They have created and transmitted (using a language as a major carrier) amount of information which enhanced chance of their survival. In this sense it was tested, reliable and useful information.

Second, fact that cultural information serves to solve human problems does not mean that there always exists one-to-one relation between the content of information and human behavior. Cultural information as prescriptive one (it is prescriptive because it was tested in the past, it worked previously) is more or less general in its character. It must be relatively general because of enormous diversity of human existence. There cannot be a specific description-prescription for every particular human behavior. Cultural informational advice has to operate on some level of generality. Thus culture is a system of general rules and guides which human being are using in order to solve particular problems in specific situations. Let say that: cultural rules, instructions, guides, plans which govern individual's behavior are socially established, generally formulated and stiffly kept; individual behavior which is governed and directed by cultural prescriptive information must also respond to other (than cultural) guides of his/her actions and thoughts and must be flexible in different specific situations. We can say that culture, individual and social situation as well as biological imperatives all interact and affect individual behavior and human action.

We can say that human beings from their origins tried to solve their problems in cognitive way and at the same time they experienced "the burden of existence". Created in this way culture has become one of the most important determinants of human behavior (however, not the only one). It has solved human problems by providing more or less general instructions, rules, guides for human behavior and action. They were given to the individual in the process of social communication and socialization. In these processes of social learning human thought and perception of the world have been shaped, some values, beliefs and norms of ethics have been socialized, some role models have been formulated, some types of personalities arose.

Although this cultural information and knowledge have shaped behavior of humans it has been precisely some cultural traits that were deserted by individuals (when they were losing their usefulness) and then shaped in a new way. To put it a little bit more precisely: cultural information often flows to the people as rules and guides of behavior, however rarely, it takes the shape of rigid, inflexible rules determining individual's thoughts and actions. There always exists a margin for individual's innovative behavior that modifies culture. That behavior is based on possibility of choice (individual or group) and interpretation of cultural information.

If we treat culture as a system of rules and guides of human behavior we will easily notice relationship between an individual and culture as well as the double role the individual plays as a creator and creature of culture. Culture provides rules (guidelines) for human behavior. They are: (1) general (at least relatively) and (2) good and proper (because are blessed and sanctified by tradition). An individual, however, does not act only in the stream of tradition but also in specific, everyday situations, in particular social milieu and natural environment. These particular situations require from individuals ingeniousness how to reconcile the general rules with current exigencies of life. We can say that to solve this problem an individual must be imaginative, innovative and creative. To use other expression, an individual has to manipulate cultural norms and values and at the same time avoid to violate social rules. He/she may be a deviant but this deviancy cannot be dangerous for social order must be accepted socially as a smartness or cleverness (in human history there were, of course, dangerous deviants who jeopardized existing social order but still they were important for future course of civilization). To stay at this daily perspective of individuals we can say that on the one side people want to feel they behave in good and proper way and they have ideas what is appropriate to do in a given situation but on the other side people break their own rules. Moreover, the individuals who are acting exactly accordingly to the rules are often considered deviants. To use psychological wording, individual acting in a particular situation has at the same time "approach-avoidance conflict" with the cultural rules.

Let me quote from Morris Freilich who wrote on above problems in perfectly clear way. According to him: *"Modern man was born out of an informational transformation. The 'operation' consisted of changing social information into cultural information. (...). The smart was transformed into the proper. (...). To live effectively anywhere (in simple 'primitive' societies, or in modern complex systems), man requires the aid of at least two guidance systems: culture and social information. Culture, the guides that come from the past, satisfies man's needs for propriety. (...). Social information, the guides that are currently considered smart, help man in solving his immediate environmental problems - how to get into college, how get a job, how to stay out of an unjust war, how fast to drive, how to get elected to public office, etc. Social information assist man in living more creatively by providing alternatives to the culture; social information provides the 'raw material' out of which future culture will be manufactured. (...). Man constantly creates new social information - 'the smart'. Man processes constantly and transforms the smart into the proper - 'the culture'. Man is a manufacturer and processor of information. Man is a scientist. In doing science, he utilizes several strategies. Some humans follow agreed-upon information: information that is 'correct by consensus'. Such 'reliability testers' follow 'rules rather than guides'. Some humans are 'more individualistic': if a guide seems correct to them, they will*

follow it. All humans, like all good scientists, worry about *validity* - about what is 'really true'. (...). Man as a scientist is hungry for information: irrespective of what his 'rules' say, he will therefore be constantly probing for more knowledge. Freedom to travel the path of self-enlightenment is then more than a gift of a 'liberal' government: it is a basic need for this big-brained animal we call *Homo sapiens*" (M. Freilich, 1972: 286, 287, 290, 323, 324).

There is, of course, the question about the role of language in the process of reshaping the smart into the proper. I think, that role is very important (let me say, central) and relates to two aspects (or functions) of language. The first one I would call an expressive function. Language expresses new ideas, provides new meaning. They result from individual's innovativeness or creativity. New ideas and/or thoughts are given names in a language (I will not discuss now the relationship between ideas and language). Ideas find their linguistic expression.

In this context M. Halliday discusses the "ideational" function of language. With regard to linguistic behavior of every adult person "the ideational element in language is present in all its uses; no matter what he is doing with language he will find himself exploiting its ideational resources, its potential for expressing a content in terms of the speaker's experience and that of the speech community" (M. Halliday, 1977: 29). We can say that this function describes how language as structured human phenomenon is related to the "external" world, how linguistic structures represent things, events, people and their actions and psychological states. In other words, this function refers to the problem how people perceive their world and how they think about their experiences. Here also is the problem of the role of language in human thought and perception.

Language plays also social or "interpersonal" function as a source for creating meaning. This function is fulfilled largely in direct interactions (let's say, face-to-face relations) of people. It informs us how our intentions and meanings find response among other people. New idea expressed in language has to find followers, must be understood and accepted as guide for action. In this case we have the problem of mutual understanding. "Meanings intended and meanings received in interactions can sometimes be the same but at other times they need to be negotiated, especially if people come from different backgrounds or are in unequal relationship to one another. Perfect mutual understanding is a dream that is seldom fulfilled but a rough approximation carries most of us through our daily dealings with others" (R. Andersen, 1988: 40). The creation of new meanings and the question of mutual understanding are usually interwoven in particular situations of human actions.

Almost seventy years ago B. Malinowski (1923) found that language may create kind of behavior potential, it is a number of linguistic

possibilities that are available for individual. Malinowski has distinguished two contexts of language which were then called "context of culture" and "context of situation". We can say that the context of culture means potential for total linguistic possibilities and options that are open for users of language. However, language is always used in particular situation. It is a result of a choice (or selection) among linguistic possibilities. Usually, it is actual (situational) language not potential (cultural) one. Meaning is created in specific situation. It is particular, contextual meaning. It results from transformation of meaning potential into concrete situational meaning. To understand better the role of language in process of change of "smart" into "proper", or guides into rules, let me quote once again from Halliday:

"Learning one's mother tongue is learning the uses of language, and the meanings, or rather the meaning potential, associated with them. The structures, the words and the sounds are the realization of this meaning potential. Learning language is learning how to mean. (...). If we regard language as social behaviour, therefore, this means that we are treating it as a form of behaviour *potential*. (...). The potential of language is a meaning potential. This meaning potential is the linguistic realization of the behaviour potential; 'can mean' is 'can do' when translated into language. The meaning potential is in turn realized in the language system as lexicogrammatical potential, which is what the speaker 'can say'. (...). Considered as behaviour potential, the language system itself is open-ended, since the question whether two instances are the same or not is not determined by the system; (...); creativity does not consist in producing new sentences. The newness of a sentence is a quite unimportant - and unascertainable - property, and 'creativity' in language lies in the speaker's ability to create new meanings; to realize the potentiality of language for the indefinite extensions of its resources to new context of situation (...). Our most 'creative' acts may be precisely among those that are realized through highly repetitive forms of behaviour" (M. Halliday, 1977: 16, 42, 43).

The above leads to the more general problem of possible relationships between language and culture. I have discussed above two different approaches to this problem (Sapir-Whorf and White). However, this problem has been undertaken in more interesting and elaborate way by the cognitive anthropology. Cognitive anthropologists approach cultures as systems of knowledge.

#### *Cognitive concept of culture.*

Cognitive anthropology as a subdiscipline of cultural anthropology is concerned with relationships between language, culture and cognition. It adopts the insider's point of view to describe the world of other peoples in their own terms. Thus, the major subject of cognitive anthropology is mental phenomena of human beings (this



is the most important feature of cognitive anthropology). Cognitive anthropology has originated in the fifties of the twentieth century as the cumulative development of two earlier created anthropological orientations: linguistic anthropology (especially Sapir-Whorf approach) and "culture and personality approach". Cognitive anthropology displays some similarities and shares its interests in the role of human mind in social life with other subfields of anthropology like structural anthropology (C. Levi-Strauss), symbolic anthropology (C. Geertz), ethnography of speaking (D. Hymes). For cognitive anthropology culture is an internal conceptual system of knowledge that is responsible for human actions and other observable things and events.

The existence of humans and their surrounding world exhibit both diversity as well as variability. Human beings deal with this reality using special "tools". The most important and complex set of tools is culture. The achievement of that level of development extremely enlarged adaptive capabilities of humans. In other words, cognitive anthropologists are interested in the evolution of the system of knowledge or "belief system" that is understood in general as invisible intellectual/emotional (mental) kind of activity of human beings (M. Black, 1973).

Considering the evolution of the capacity for human knowledge or belief systems and referring to the latest findings of anthropology one can come to the point that a number of indispensable capabilities characterized some animal species (higher primates) long before the emergence of hominids. According to Ward Goodenough (distinguished cognitive anthropologist) the following animal capabilities preceded the beginnings of the hominid line:

"(1) categorization of experience; (2) perception and categorization of things in structural arrangements; (3) abstraction of higher-order categories from lower-order ones on the basis of common features, while overlooking a perceived difference; (4) potential for analogizing, largely undeveloped in the absence of language; (5) intuitive grasping or perceiving of relationships that would, if expressed in language, constitute propositions; and (6) the ability to act on these perceptions in the definition and pursuit of goals. (...). They are all prerequisite to the emergence of beliefs. What language allows us to objectify as propositions, however, can, in its absence, be no more than subjective or intuitive understandings. An additional prerequisite for the emergence of beliefs, one that is peculiar to humans, is a system of manipulable signs capable of representing categories of thing (including self and other) and categories of feeling, quality, act, and relationship." (W. Goodenough 1990: 599)

Thus, Goodenough perceives language as the most important factor in the processes of origin of human beings and their culture. He discusses two major stages in the evolutionary development of language: first, phonologically segmented verbal signs, and,

second, constitution of grammar and syntax. The process was slow and gradual. He assumes that the advent of grammar and syntax coincided roughly with the emergence of *Homo sapiens*. It is worthy to emphasize that according to the contemporary research language did not evolve in connection with toolmaking. The major reason of the emergence of linguistic capabilities was the pragmatic of social interaction of hominids (the family and coresidential group) and the coordination and planning of activities by members of such groups. As Goodenough writes:

"Language began as a kind of tool for implementing intentionality in social interaction. Its expanded use increased the content of memory storage, and its elaboration made possible the formulation in words of propositions. This, in turn, made it possible to plan for contingencies in the future, to imagine things, to develop beliefs and systems of beliefs. An eventual by-product of these developments was the greatly elaborated tool kit and the materially attested symbolic behavior we associate with the Upper Paleolithic era. Thus language, in its grammatically elaborated form, became the prime tool on which most else that we think of as peculiarly human depends." (ibid.: 608)

In this context I will make a comment related to the human language and the problem of "individualism versus realism (holism)". Let me say that language is the *most important attribute* of human beings and a *significant factor of individualization* of human beings. At the same time one should remember about the *evolutionary* and *social* nature of language. I have emphasized these four features of language to reiterate the fact that we should be very careful in formulating statements on individuals and culture (or society). Especially, when we are working in a "matter of language" (to make my intentions more clear let me convert the French saying *noblesse oblige* to *langue oblige*).

I think that at the present stage of development of social sciences and the humanities (and methodology of these science) one should avoid extreme ontological statements. For example, I cannot accept the realistic anty-reductionist and deterministic assertion that "relative to the culture process, the individual is neither creator nor determinant; he is merely a catalyst and a vehicle of expression." (L. White, 1987: 294) On the other side, I cannot also accept some kind of individualistic statements with strong ontological connotations. However, I would accept moderate (methodological) realism and methodological individualism. Let me develop my argument just in relation to language.

We have seen that human language is not only a social phenomenon because it is a medium of communication and basis of social bonds (without these bonds it is impossible to talk about society) but also that its genesis had social character. Moreover, the process of evolution of human language was not only a very long and gradual, but, first of all, a very complex one. It has been, in

fact, a coevolutionary process: biological (genetic), psychological (mental), social (collective, joint), and cultural (proto-cultural) factors have been involved. In a word, there have been feedbacks between biological and cultural evolution. To support my point I quote the Polish physical anthropologist (his article was reprinted several times in the American anthropological readers). The author writes:

"It would be, of course, naive to assume that such two-way relationships between genotype and culture were characteristic only of early phases of human phylogeny. True, some feedbacks which brought about the transition from ape to man, and which determined the direction and tempo of early hominid evolution, seem no longer be operative; some others have probably lost much of their significance; but certainly new ones began to operate (e.g., new link: genetic resistance to infectious diseases increasing population density). The point is that in different phases of its history a species may rely on quite different types of feedbacks as 'sources of energy' for evolutionary change. The mode of evolution is undoubtedly something which itself undergoes evolution." (T. Bielecki, 1977: 73)

The phenomenon of coevolution illustrates that it does not make sense to talk about the individual as something ontologically distinct and different. However, at the same time it does not mean that methodological individualism is invalid. In my opinion, methodological individualism is the most promising perspective for social sciences and the humanities. I agree that methodological version of individualism takes a form of the general prescription: to study human society one should treat individuals as a kind of "rock bottom explanations" (S. Lukes, 1977). It means that to analyze and explain social fact or any other phenomenon of social life one should concentrate on the individual's motives, goals, choices, preferences which underlie human actions. In other words, we should always make assertions about actual or potential social actions of individual persons. There is no social order that is independent of individuals while plans, incentives, instructions, standards, goals, etc. for individual actions are taken from culture (moderate realism) in the process of learning (broadly understood).

The instance of language is appropriate here because human language is "the most entirely unique, the most completely diagnostic characteristic of *Homo sapiens*." (G. Simpson, 1969: 124) As I have said above language is the attribute of humans and simultaneously it is an individualizing factor. It means that language as a common human property is a basic element of the social solidarity among people and between different kinds of social groups. It is a major medium of communication and cultural transmission. It has enormous role in the psychological growth of personality that is created in the process of socialization. Language is a symbol of social solidarity and separate feature of different groups as well as it

is a distinct trait of every human being (individual speech) . Every individual despite possession of language or dialect (as a social attribute) can express his/her individuality by his/her only own specific language.

Linguists call this individual language an *idiolect*. Every social group using its language is, at the same time, a group of individuals speaking in a quite different (variant) way. Every human language is, at the same time, an aggregate of distinct and unique idiolects. This linguistic variability is a result of individual diversity. In other words, it is impossible to explain language change and evolution without the concept of idiolect. Every individual as a bio-psycho-socio-cultural entity thinks always in his/her language. This language was socially transmitted but individually modified. We know that the linguistic variability is one of the major factors in explaining the linguistic change. Analogically, the individual variability is important in explaining the cultural change. In this sense the methodological individualism seems to be the most promising explanatory strategy in socio-cultural sciences.

I have made the above extended comment because cognitive anthropology deals with mental phenomena. It also tries to resolve the problem of individual and culture.

Coming back to the basic concepts of cognitive anthropology let me say, that in a very long process of biological evolution (adaptation) the hominid mind has been endowed with a new conceptual cognitive capabilities. The evolution of cognition has become the supreme adaptive feature of humans. The specific results of neurological evolution were such traits as complex communication through language and conceptualization of the world. In the process of evolution of symbolization and propositional thinking human beings have achieved distinctive ability to order chaotic data of their external environment in a coherent system (the conceptualization of experience). In this way "cognitive matrix" was established in human brain as the domain of "cognitive imperative". The imperative to order human experience in a meaningful manner was accomplished by using terms of space, time, quantity, quality, causality, correlation, similarity, etc. It has increased adaptive advantages of humans. It was the last step in the process of origin of human culture. According to some anthropologists who do not accept the assumption of autonomy of culture and undertake efforts to overcome traditional alternative "nature versus culture":

"(...) culture arose - necessarily arose - from the simultaneous presence in the human species of the basic drives, the social imperative, and the cognitive imperative, once the last of these evolved to the point of using symbolization and propositional thinking. (...) human speech frees itself from the exigencies of the immediate environment and hence becomes the first vehicle in

the history of the world appropriate for both the formation and transmission of culture. (...) human language formally represents the highest level of integration of the cognitive matrix, and insofar as it is expressed and understood, it constitutes the essential input for the optimal function of the cognitive matrix. In word, language and culture, though theoretically distinguishable, are absolutely inseparable." (E. D'Aquili, 1972: 10,23)

In other words, humans with their cognitive abilities have started built and gather cultural knowledge about themselves, their environment and the universe. Precepts in process of abstraction and categorization were transformed into concepts. They mediated between the organism and environmental stimuli. The next most important step in the development of human cognition was the creation and use of symbols. Knowledge was removed further from the immediate closeness of sensory experience.

Symbol is a specific kind of sign. It assumes arbitrary association between stimulus and referent. Because of its arbitrary character symbol implies a rule for attaching it to a particular referent. The emergence of symbols has extended to a large degree human abilities to communicate and to learn. It also reduced their dependence upon immediate sensory experience. In other words, humans have become capable to generate and transmit new knowledge. The increase of adaptive advantages is tremendous and evident. It is a major factor in cultural evolution.

Let me add at this point that this new knowledge can have some specific character. According to such features of the linguistic coding system as "arbitrariness", "displacement", "productivity" or "openness" (C. Hockett, 1977) humans cannot only manipulate concepts of their language to create further concepts (for example, more and more abstract: setter, dog, animal) but also form conceptual arrangements never actually perceived (for example, mermaid or Pegasus). It means that human thought (and some forms of it like imagination or fantasy) and language can generate superstitious appraisal of reality that sometimes may bring about negative results. But adaptive advantages of human behavior based on cognition and knowledge that is not determined by environmental stimuli overweighed these negatives.

Thus in the process of cognition humans through different mental operations have been looking for the cognitive order in their reality. They have done this by referring and creating systems of meaning. These systems of beliefs (knowledge) can assume different forms (magic, religion, science, etc.). Problem solving capabilities of human brain required to impose order on the variability of observations which human creatures experienced in their life (by classifying, categorizing and explaining). I would say that humans constantly felt pressure (need) for mental order. Thus, human beings in continuous effort to search for mental order

created magic, religion, science, and so on. By definition, cognitive order has to deal with the particular and the general. It has to translate the relationships between these two. One of the major function of different kinds of knowledge is explanation of variability that humans have experienced in their existence.

We can, of course, treat social sciences (with their different concepts of culture) as a result of the above tendencies. Scientific and scholarly efforts are, above all, oriented to express the particular in the general (in language of a different kind of generalizations or in language of universal principles and laws). It does not mean that concerns with particular culture or language are unjustified. However, the basic tendency of human knowledge is to overcome the particular (what is in agreement with principles of human mind I have just mentioned above). The cognitive concept of culture as well as adaptive-evolutionary one are examples of efforts to create a knowledge of general application while based on different premises.

Hitherto I have discussed the function of language in evolutionary perspective (focussing on its role in the culture building processes). At that point I would like to consider the role of language as a basic element of culture (and also as a source of inspiration for cognitive anthropology).

In the 1957 Ward Goodenough has published an article that is considered a specific point of departure of cognitive anthropology. Author has proposed quite different concept of culture than systemic-adaptive one. His conceptualization of culture has had tremendous impact that extended far beyond cultural anthropology. According to Goodenough:

"A proper definition of culture must ultimately derive from the operations by which we describe particular cultures. (...). As I see it, a society's culture consist of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as a distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge, in a most general, if relative, sense of the term. By this definition, we should note that culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, 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. As such, the things people say and do, their social arrangements and events, are products or by-products of their culture as they apply it to the task of perceiving and dealing with their circumstances. To one who knows their culture, these things and events are also signs signifying the cultural forms or models of which they are material representations, (...). Given such a definition, it is obviously impossible to describe a culture

properly simply by describing behavior or social, economic, and ceremonial events and arrangements as observed material phenomena. What is required is to construct a theory of the conceptual models which they represent and of which they are artifacts. (...). Ethnographic description, then, requires methods of processing observed phenomena such that we can inductively construct a theory of how our informants have organized the same phenomena. It is theory, not the phenomena alone, which ethnographic description aims to present". (W. Goodenough, 1964: 36)

In his later works culture "(...) consists of standards for deciding what is, standards for deciding what can be, standards for deciding how one feels about it, and standards for deciding how to go about doing it." (W. Goodenough 1981: 62).

Let me develop this briefly. According to Goodenough, culture embraces four major elements: (1) Percepts and concepts. Concepts are anchored in language. They are tools by which people organize their experience. People perceive world in terms of shapes, colors, sizes, etc. In this way, by learning language people develop a means of orientation toward world (they are able to organize human experience in selective way). Of course, different cultures and languages can make it (and usually do) in different way. (2) Relationships that describe how things and events in the phenomenal world are related to one another. In other words, people organize their experience by giving it structure and causal relations. To do this they formulate propositions and beliefs. The latter may refer to the natural as well as supernatural world. (3) Values and sentiments that define goals toward which people should strive. (4) Rules that together with norms define the way of behavior that is consonant with values of given culture.

All above four elements are, of course, interrelated and one follows another. It means that language plays a special role in the Goodenough's concept of culture. First of all, a given language is an aspect of a given culture. Author reiterates that the relation between language and culture is that of a part and a whole. Second, language in Goodenough approach is not only a part of culture. It is also the major human equipment for cultural learning. People acquire their culture (at least significant part of it) in process of learning their language. Finally, language gives some plan for culture (and, in the Goodenough's approach, language becomes a useful model for the description of culture).

"People who deal recurringly and frequently with one another develop expectations regarding the manner of conducting these dealings. They make some of their expectations explicit and formulate some of them as rules of conduct. (...). The people who deal with one another and who have these expectations of one another do not necessarily agree on all the details of what they expect in their mutual dealings. But the variance in their individual expectations must be small enough so that they are able

to accomplish their purposes with and through one another reasonably well most of time. (...)• The expectations one has of one's fellows may be regarded as a set of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating, and acting. These standards constitute the culture that one attributes to one's fellows; (...). In this respect a people's culture is like a language. For an account of a set of standards for speaking whose application results in speech within the variance Frenchmen accept as properly French is a satisfactory representation of the French language. If we wish to learn French, it is exactly what we want a grammar and dictionary of French to present." (W. Goodenough, 1970: 98, 99)

Thus, cultures are epistemologically located in the domain of language. They create ideational codes that stay behind human behavior we can observe. Culture is something analogous to Saussure's *langue* or Chomsky's *competence*. That comparison suggests that methods and models of linguistics seem to be appropriate for the analysis of different aspects of culture. In other words, the external world we observe as institutions or social arrangements is, in fact, a product of culturally constituted systems of knowledge. Culture is not a pattern of behavior. Culture is rather a system of ideational patterns for behavior, an arrangement of conceptual standards whereby people structure their experience in process of perception, thinking (arraying alternatives and making choices) and acting.

"The ideational order is a property not of the community but of its members. The ideational order, (...) is nonmaterial, being composed of ideal forms as they exist in people's minds, propositions about their interrelationships, preference ratings regarding them, and recipes for their mutual ordering as means to desired ends. (...). People use their standards as guides for all decisions, little as well as big, which they must make in the course of everyday life. As the members of community go about their affairs, constantly making decisions in the light of their standards, the patterns characterizing the community as a whole are brought into being and maintained. Thus, the phenomenal order of a community, its characteristic 'way of life,' is an artifact of the ideational order of its members." (W. Goodenough, 1964a: 11, 12)

The above approach does not mean that culture can be reduced to individual's point of view. What is important in the Goodenough's approach is not only his emphasis on the individual actor's intellectual differences (he introduces the term *propriospect* to embrace cognitive and affective orderings of individual's experience) or subcultural differences. More important is the fact that he relates cognitive worlds of individuals to collective ideas of societies. He has distinguished seven meanings of culture that have direct relations to the different kind of societies (collective, public, shared ideas) and the behavior of populations. He distinguishes, for example, "a society's culture pool, being the sum of the contents of all of the *propriospects* of all of the



society's members, including every system of standards of which any member happens to have knowledge. This sense of the term pertains to culture as a reservoir of resources in knowledge and skills carried by the membership of a society." (W. Goodenough, 1981: 111)

The above approach seems to be very promising. It looks at culture and society as a consequences of purpose-oriented individuals. In other words, one can see here the effort to answer the old question posed by Hobbes: How does behavior of individuals create the characteristics of group? More and more scholars are convinced (as Goodenough) that it is impossible to answer that question without conceptual analysis of relations between individual, society and culture. The linguistic knowledge gives here a convenient starting point.

The cognitive concept of culture is, of course, not only one that approaches culture as a system of ideas. I have mentioned above the structuralist approach (Levi-Strauss) or symbolic approach (Geertz).

In this paper I have focused on several different types of relations between culture and language. There is more approaches to that issue than I discussed above. For example, there is a descriptive approach that focuses on language as one of the elements of culture. Scholars are not so much concerned with relationships between culture and language as with the description of a specific language, say, Navaho Indians language (C. Kluckhohn and D. Leighton, 1964) that is treated as a system of signs. It is one of the systems of culture which deserves a separate analysis.

We can also talk about semiological orientation. Here language plays the role of code in the process of communication. That process is the most important feature of culture. According to the representatives of that approach (U. Eco, R. Barthes and partly C. Levi-Strauss) we cannot distinguish between symbolic and nonsymbolic behavior because culture is first of all a system of signs and all its phenomena should be treated and conceived as signs. Everything means something.

## Conclusions

All the approaches I have discussed above assume that the emergence of a system of symbols capable of transmitting and storing information means that "as compared with the other animals man lives not merely in a broader reality; he lives, so to speak, in a new dimension of reality." (E. Cassirer, 1944: 24) Susanne Langer is right when in her well known statement she says that "the sign is something to act upon, or a means to command action; the symbol is an instrument of thought." (S. Langer, 1942: 63) To say it briefly, in the process of "symbolic transformation" not only the new world

of ideas arose but also the new social world of communities of thinking and dialogue where individuals are capable to understand each other.

At the beginning of the present paper we have discussed the problem of relationships between individual and culture. We have distinguished two major approaches to that problem: realistic (anti-reductionist) and individualistic (reductionist, psychoculturalistic). To illustrate specificity of both of them, I have referred to the works of two distinguished representatives of both realistic and individualistic orientations (A. Kroeber and E. Sapir). These orientations have had their continuations (discussed in detail above, for example, the White's approach that has introduced a vivid theses of cultural determinism to the area of cultural anthropology denying the role of individual in cultural processes and also the Goodenough's approach that has claimed the opposite).

The discussions, debates and contestations among followers and supporters of each orientation have created a vast body of literature. To only cursorily review it would take, I guess, much more space than for this paper. The polemics have been conducted many years. Some convergent points have been accomplished. Methodological tools for problems-solving have been more elaborated. The distinction between methodological and ontological statements was introduced. We can say, that some meanings were negotiated and some common understanding was accomplished. Moreover, all these processes of conceptual reconciliation were emerging mainly (and almost exclusively) during scholarly arguments. In the course of the debate, theoretical concepts and terms were treated more precisely with visible linguistic effort to clarify their meanings. Resulting from that more careful answers to the question about the relationship between an individual and culture were also given. However, besides this arena of conceptual war (that sometimes led to negotiated peaceful treaty among theoretical meanings) the representatives of both orientations have further promoted their theoretical solutions expressed in their scholarly language. Also today (after many years of negotiating meanings of theoretical notions) we can easily point out those scholars who are deeply convinced that their point of view on cultural reality (formulated in theoretical language of given orientation) is the only tenable one. They wrongly think that giving priority to one variable only (usually terribly complex) they explain the whole thing. In fact, they grasp only one aspect of the cultural "reality" that, on its ontological level, is extraordinarily rich and multidimensional.

In that context the Workshop approach to the problem of social order looks promising in heuristic terms. I think that you combine all necessary dimensions of analysis: rational (potentially) and creative individuals that always are a human part of their environment (ecosystem); situational, social and cultural context;

institutional rules (that result from economic, political and epistemological processes while these processes create new qualities that exceed individual actions); language as a communicational and pragmatic tool (under the assumption that the individual is not only an intellectual artisan of culture but also a specific "effect" of complex human relationships). It is a complex conceptual model that enriches our understanding of human social order.

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