CULTURAL THEORY AND HISTORY: SIGN AND CONTEXT

Dorota Jewdokimow
Karolina Kizińska

CULTURAL THEORY AND HISTORY: SIGN AND CONTEXT

WYDAWNICTWO NAUKOWE WYDZIAŁU NAUK SPOŁECZNYCH UAM
Poznan 2014

Scientific Review
Prof. dr hab. Maciej Jabłoński

Translation
Katarzyna Turska (Dorota Jewdokimow)
Karolina Kizińska (Karolina Kizińska)

Proofreading
Colin Philips

Cover Design
Adriana Staniszewska

Typset and Edit
Michał Staniszewski

The publication founded by Narodowe Centrum Nauki
(Projekt został sfinansowany ze środków Narodowego Centrum Nauki)

ISBN 978-83-64902-02-4

Editors adress
Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wydziału Nauk Społecznych
Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu
60–568 Poznań, ul. Szamarzewskiego 89c

Printed
Zakład Graficzny UAM
61-712 Poznań, ul. Wieniawskiego 1

Contents

Introduction

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

Dorota Jewdokimow presents the text dedicated to the consequences of semiotic conceptions proposed by Moscow-Tartu School, mainly by Yuri Lotman, for historical study of culture. Her text emphasises the temporal dimension of semiotic processes and the mechanics of the social transmission of signs, using the example of the semiotics of shame and thanks to this offering, somewhat additionally, a historical study on the subject matter of this particular emotion. Karolina Kizińska, although following different methodological traditions coming from the cultural studies and the American New Musicology remains close to the very same topic of the social construction of meaning, particularly the sets of meaning connected with gender within musical culture of the West. Both authors follow then a shared basic question, concerning the processes connected with the construction of meaning in communicational phenomena within a changing, dynamic society.

Krzysztof Moraczewski

Chapter I

Study of culture as a historical study under the approach of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School (shame as a pattern of culture)

Introduction

The Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School might be analysed as a historical phenomenon, limited within a certain time and space; a phenomenon which is changeable and dynamic, multilayered and complex, but subject to a finite description. The spatial and time frame will be conventional by nature and will describe only a certain stage of the development of the/its semiotic theory, which has its source in ideas put forward earlier and in its many references to approaches to cultural reality created when the school was active, and then continued in the semiotic reflection developed subsequently. Thus, when we speak about the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School, we concentrate only on a selected part of a complex, multilayered and dynamic phenomenon.

The preliminary aim of this work is to reconstruct the theoretical premises of the School and pinpoint their main sources. My reflections will focus, to a great extent, on the issue of history which emerges from the works of the representatives of the discussed trend. This text addresses essentially historical issues and methods of historical research, which results from the fact that the Tartu-Moscow researchers' group devoted their intellectual efforts to this particular topic area, and consequently, at times,

transformed culture semiotics into the semiotics of culture history. The article which clearly and significantly reflects this (*Semiotics and history*) was published in the twenty fifth volume of the publishing series: "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" ("Sign System Studies"), issued in 1992, edited by Yuri Lotman. In the introduction, Lotman explicitly defines an inseparable connection between semiotics and history, which is an inevitable result of many years of reflections:

> Semiotics has changed during the past decades. One of its accomplishments on this rough road was its liaison with history. Studying history has become semiotic, and historical considerations acquired semiotic features. Classical historical study presumed that history deals with the finite past. Historical matter was placed in the past, a historian – in the present day and a reader – in the future. History turned out to be static or at least brought to a standstill when the historical work was being written. The semiotic approach wants to avoid halting the historical process. Therefore, a perspective taken by a historian-semiotician is one of the objects of his own reflection as belonging to the historical process. This does not refer to a system of ideological or political superstitions, which, according to Pokrowski, define the very essence of history. Including a historian's perspective into the historical process changes the very nature of a historical fact. The fact or event becomes the only possible, unavoidable and casually conditioned event. If such a perspective from the past is carried over to the future, the future starts to seem predictable and thus redundant.
>
> Hegel's opinion that history finishes when he starts reflecting it on paper is not a mistake or inconsistency, as it was frequently pointed out; on the contrary, it is an absurd consistency which requires a greatness of mind.
>
> The combination of history and semiotics induces us to examine such fundamental notions as causality. The currently experienced revolution of scientific thought does not stand in opposition to the currently experienced social revolution. There is a far-reaching, although not immediately obvious, connection between them.
>
> The only conclusion drawn from what we have said is that each generation has linguistic means to describe yesterday, but not to describe tomorrow.[1]

I will often address the issues presented in the fragment of Lotman's opinion quoted above due to the weight they carry for the whole Soviet semiotic tradition. The views, which this fragment presents, stem from a certain change in the way of perceiving the phenomenon of culture, a transition form the static to the dynamic approach. The notion of culture, whose perception was changing, was directly connected with such notions as a sign, a text and memory, whose comprehension, as we will find out later on, leads directly towards *Historia sub specie semioticae*.

[1] Y. Lotman, *Ot redkolegii,* "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 25, Tartu 1992, p. 3–4.

Hence, understanding the significance of the theoretical directions of semiotics for historical research will require a detailed explanation of the key words mentioned above.

In an attempt to determine the level of vitality of the assumptions put forward by the Tartu-Moscow School, I will apply them to a specific area of cultural and historical reality. Determining the vitality of all assumptions without limiting the scope of their functioning would be impossible, thus, we will make a preliminary choice of the specific theses proposed by representatives of the School, in order to confront them further with a particular fragment of reality. The initial thesis analyzed further in this study will be based on Lotman's statement: "Shame is one of the most powerful driving forces of culture."[2] Comprehension of this statement will require determining the meaning scope of the notion of shame as such in the European culture and then focusing on the process of the transformation of this meaning in the historical background and linking it with other notions (guilt or honour, to name a few); it will also involve examining the ways of expressing shame in cultural texts. While ordering our reflections, we will set apart several grounds (being aware of the dynamics of the relations between them, or even their inseparability) on which the mechanism of shame functions: the social, which refers to collective issues, and the mental, which refers to individual ones, with a particular emphasis on physicality, and further sexuality, where the mechanism of shame seems to be particularly active. Determining a particular role of the mechanism of shame in the sphere of sexuality and an attempt to approach it in a diachronic manner, within the European culture, directs our attention towards a historical moment of the changing of the ground on which it functions and the consequences resulting from that. A significant turning point would be marked by the transformations connected with the phenomenon of the "sexual revolution," which determined, according to Anthony Giddens, a "deep transformation of intimacy" and essential transformations in the sphere of morals.

While concentrating on the issues related to shame, we will use the tools developed by the Tartu-Moscow School, enhancing and expanding our reflections by using the methodology developed by other semiotic systems, distinctive from the Soviet one, and also other methodologies

[2] Y. Lotman, *Rosja i znaki. Kultura szlachecka w wieku XVIII i na początku XIX*, transl. B. Żyłko, Gdansk 1999, p. 7.

developed within other schools (such as hermeneutics). In our opinion, these approaches are not mutually exclusive, but by cooperation they may lead to creative solutions.

1. The Tartu–Moscow Semiotic School. History and theoretical assumptions

Before we address the actual subject of our considerations, which is the problem of using the methods of Soviet semiotics in historical and cultural studies, it should be preliminarily explained what phenomenon, or rather a series of phenomena, is understood as the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. It seems also crucial to follow the consecutive stages of development of a given line of reflections, taking into consideration the inspirations involved in them and showing the path leading a group of researchers towards the issues of our interest.

Let us begin this consideration by stating that the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School is a term used with reference to the group of Soviet scientists gathered around the publishing of a series of articles by Tartu University which was issued under the title: "Trudy po znakovym sistemam." This publication was closely connected with scientific symposia which took place from 1964 onwards in the university centre nearby Tartu, known as "Letniye shkoly po wtorithnyh modeliruyushthim sistemam." The beginning of this School dates back to 1962, when a symposium organised jointly by the Slavic Institute and Cybernetic Society was held in Moscow. It was devoted to research into the structures of sign systems, whose visible result was the publication containing the main theses of the meeting. Simultaneously, a group of researchers who started working at the Department of Russian Literature of the Tartu University, focused on the issues related to the methods of analysis of a poetic text. One of the leading members of the Tartu group was Yuri Lotman, who initiated the series of lectures devoted to structural poetics in 1960/61. The contents of Lotman's lectures entitled *Lekcii po strukturalnoy poetike* (*Lectures on Structural Poetics*) was published in 1964 as a first volume in a publishing series known as "Trudy po znakovym sistemam." On familiarizing himself with the theses of the Moscow symposium, Lotman noticed their convergence with the views represented by the Tartu researchers, which led to the establishing of scientific contacts and long-running cooperation on

the grounds of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. The moment which is thought to have marked the end of the School was the publishing of the XXV issue of the publishing series (1992) and Lotman's death (1993).

The scholars who participated in the semiotic symposia which were held in the area of today's Estonia manifested a diversity of research interests and represented various fields, which from the beginning gave the School a non-homogenous character, which is revealed in its multiple approaches and the variety of issues it addressed. Among many figures connected with the School, there were such persons as: Piotr Bogatyrev (a folk expert, ethnographer), Boris Gasparov (a linguist, literature scholar, music expert), Vyacheslav Vsevolodovich Ivanov (a linguist, anthropologist), Vladimir Toporov (a philologist), Alexander Piatigorsky (a philosopher), Boris Uspensky (a philologist), Peeter Torop (a literature scholar), Zara Minus (a literature scholar). Naturally, the list is incomplete. It could be extended by adding also those persons who are not defined directly as members of the Soviet semiotic group, and who were invited as guests to participate in its works (i.e. Aron Gurievitch), or who inspired it (i.e. Roman Jacobson, who took part in the sessions of the second "summer school" of 1966). The leading member of the research team was clear enough, however, and it was definitely Yuri Lotman, mentioned above, who was the main organizer of the summer sessions and the chief editor of the publishing series entitled *Semeiotike*. Lotman had graduated from the Philology Department at Leningrad State University, where he had attended the lectures of Vladimir Propp, among others. Since 1954 he had lectured at the Department of Russian Language and Literature of Tartu University where he was subsequently in charge.

Linguists and literature scholars dominate among the persons representing the Soviet Semiotic School, which was of particular importance as regards its developing theoretical background, particularly in the first stages of establishing the semiotic line of thinking in the 1960s. This literary and linguistic core of the group consisted of two wings, distinguished already in the name of the school itself. According to Boris Uspensky, the Moscow wing represented linguistic traditions, whereas the Tartu one, coming from Leningrad circles, fostered the rich traditions of literary studies. Uspensky wrote:

> [...] the Tartu-Moscow School unites the representatives of two cities – Moscow and Tartu. [...] It is a community of two cultural trends and two directions of philological ideas. Us, of Moscow origin, are usually linguists and we approached semiotics through

> linguistics. Later on, some of us, in a more or less meaningful way, started to study literature; however, the linguistic basis and interests have always been the focus of our attention. We perceived the world through the eyes of linguists. Y. Lotman and Z. Mints are literature scholars who addressed the same issues but from a different perspective. If those of Moscow origin are linguists who started studying literature, to some extent, then, on the other hand, the representatives of Tartu are rather literature scholars who started studying linguistics.[3]

The situation in which the participants of the Summer Schools represented many scientific disciplines raised the need to create one language which would incorporate all the various fields and, at the same time, give the impression of unity between these fields. In 1987, a Moscow mathematician and literature scholar Yuri Lewin wrote the following words:

> [...] the most important achievement stemming from the emergence and development of semiotics in our country was the influence exerted by semiotic research on the whole field of humanities. The result of this influence led to raising awareness of the unity between all science divisions belonging to this field, namely they all conduct research into culture and the increase of interest in interdisciplinary studies.[4]

In the given perspective, culture appeared to be a whole consisting of many different fields, which could be described by means of a coherent and precise language. At the beginning, it was the language of linguistics extrapolated to all other fields that achieved this. However, the extrapolation of this kind turned out ineffective and hence purely linguistic methodology was abandoned.

The Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School, at the onset of its development, on one hand, could be perceived in the context of a worldwide phenomenon known as structuralism, but on the other, as a direction of research completely distinct from the European and American one. This was the direction of research which had its source in the earlier Soviet intellectual tradition (such as the formal school of Mikhail Bakhtin).

The fact that the described achievements of the group of Soviet scholars is written into the trend of structural studies, during its preliminary creation, can be supported at least by the title of the work by Yuri Lotman *Lectures on structural poetics*. The initial pursuits of semioticians, who concentrated on attempts to formulate the basic assumptions of the humanities, were accompanied by a specific form of scientism and the

[3] B. Uspiensky, *K problemam genezisa tartusko-moskowskoy semioticheskoy shkoly*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 20, Tartu 1987, pp. 18–19.

[4] Ibidem, p. 8.

orientation towards the developing of tools and research methods within the humanities which were similar to those used by the natural sciences. In one of his first articles Lotman writes as follows:

> A modern literature scholar remains a researcher, who inevitably manages the acquired empirical material by himself and, at the same time, he is equipped with methods of deductive thinking developed by the natural sciences. He should be a linguist (if nowadays linguistics "precedes" other humanities and it develops a methodology of a general scientific nature) equipped with methods of using other modelling systems. [...] He should learn how to apply mathematics, and ideally combine the skills of a literature scholar, a linguist and a mathematician.[5]

These words postulate that the humanities should apply the methods of the natural sciences, and hence that there are similarities between the former and the latter. Furthermore, it was suggested that linguistic methods derived from the natural sciences or patterned on them should be expanded to other fields of the humanities. This significant supremacy of linguistics can be justified by the fact that the background of the science of signs was originally constituted by the linguistic research which laid a basis for the fundamental concept of Ferdinand de Saussure. Boris Uspensky mentions the time when Soviet semioticians initially followed in the footsteps of de Saussure, making a preliminary significant distinction between the "semiotics of signs and the semiotics of language as a sign system."[6] The former is called a logical direction in semiotics and is derived from the concept of Morris and Peirce, where the attention of the researcher is focused on the sign itself and its relation to meaning. The latter direction, known as a linguistic one and derived from the concept of Ferdinand de Saussure, would focus on "language as a mechanism that conveys meaningful content and uses a specific selection of elementary signs,"[7] where language is defined as a text generator. These ideas described, according to Uspensky, an early direction of research interests of the Tartu-Moscow group. Further, we can read as follows: "Although we were first and foremost interested in the system of signs and structural relations between them, not a sign as such, we were much more absorbed by studying the form than the content. The content of a sign boiled down to its structural meaning (*valeur value*), defined by its place in the system

[5] Y. Lotman, *Literaturowedenije dolzhno stat' naukoy*, "Voprosy Literatury" 1/1967, p. 100.

[6] B. Uspensky, *K problemam genezisa*..., p. 25.

[7] Ibidem.

[...]. We were not preoccupied with another meaning, out of the context."[8] Initially, researchers focused solely on the directly accessible form, which established a connection with the structural linguistics rooted in the concepts of the author of *Course in General Linguistics*.

In his reflections Ferdinand de Saussure announced the emergence of a science which would encompass a broad area of social life.

> One may conceive of a science which would study how signs function in social life; it would belong to the field of social psychology and hence general psychology, we would call it semiology. [...] This will allow us not only to explain linguistic issues but also – as we presume – it will throw a different light on studying traditions, customs etc. as signs; we will perceive them from a different perspective and feel the need to gather them under the auspice of semiology and explain them by applying the laws of this science.[9]

These hopes, expressed when the science of signs started to emerge, were updated, to a great extent, in the concepts of the Tartu-Moscow School at the initial stage of its development. However, not all of them would be pursued and the initial enthusiasm would be confronted with research experience and verified. The basic assumptions of de Saussure's ideas, which were then transferred to the ground of the Soviet semiotics, were expressed in the *Course of General Linguistics* as two opposing notions, namely: language (*la langue*) and speech (*la parole*), as well as synchrony and diachrony. The first opposition assigns the dominant role to language (*la langue*), which is the main object of linguistic analyses, and renders speech acts peripheral (*la parole*), or as individual utterances which are random as regards the structure of language. According to de Saussure, language (*la langue*) was "a precisely defined object in the chaos of all speech facts. [...] a social field of speech, which is independent of an individual, who is not capable of creating or modifying it on their own. [...] Language is different from speech and it is an object which may be studied separately. We do not speak dead languages anymore, but we can, to a great extent, adopt their linguistic system. Linguistics may not only exist without other elements of speech; on the contrary, it is possible only when we exclude these elements from it."[10] When developing the latter of the oppositions mentioned above, the researcher indicated the definite

[8] Ibidem, pp. 25–26.

[9] F. de Saussure, *Kurs językoznawstwa ogólnego*, transl. K. Kasprzak, Warsaw 2002, pp. 44–45.

[10] Ibidem, pp. 41–42.

supremacy of synchrony over diachrony, and which actually required focusing solely on the synchronic aspect of the text, which is a carrier of the relational aspects of language, defining its very nature. Synchrony contains structural features and, thus, it should be an object of linguistic interest.

> Language is a system whose parts in their entiretymay and should be considered within their synchronic unity. Since changes never occur throughout the system, but only in one or two of its elements, they can be studied only outside the system [...] if a linguist takes a diachronic perspective, he perceives no longer language as such, but an array of phenomena which change it.[11]

De Saussure's opinions clearly excluded the diachronic approach from the linguistic research, and all elements which were individual and random, which did not fit into the frame of the general structure and disturbed its coherence, were considered as peripheral. These presumptions, being the basis for semiotic research, would be significantly verified by the followers of de Saussure's ideas.

The theoretical assumptions of the author of *Course in General Linguistics* contributed to the development of structural linguistics, enriched by consecutive research methods. In the 1950s cybernetics and mathematical linguistics took the lead, which allowed linguistics to gain a status equal to that of the natural sciences, and added the "scientific" aspect, hence *linguistic science*. It became the queen of the humanities, imposing an imperative on other fields to follow in its footsteps; and just so, the researchers from the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School in the 1960s also adopted this direction of development.

The semiotic theory of the late Soviet period, apart from being situated in the broader context of structuralism, and its initial inspirations derived from the concept of structural linguistics, developed mostly in reference to the native tradition, whose main element was Russian Formalism. The formalists were connected with the Moscow Linguistic Circle which had been active since 1915[12] as well as with OPOJAZ (Society for the Study of Poetic Language) established in 1916 in Peterborough.[13] The theoretical background of formalism was shaped in a way in response to the crisis of symbolism, which was criticised for its detachment from reality. Symbol-

[11] Ibidem, pp. 111–114.

[12] The Works of the Moscow Linguistic Circle were attended by such scholars as Roman Jacobson (his initiative), Piotr Bogatyriew, Grigorij Winokurow.

[13] The works of OPOJAZ were attended by Wiktor Szkłowski, Osip Brik, Yuri Tymianow, Borys Eichenbaum and Wiktor Winogradow.

ism, as its critics claimed, had turned away from language and abandoned it for some abstract ideas. Such an onset of formalism as outlined here was described by Boris Eichenbaum: "We started to fight with symbolists in order to snatch poetics out of their hands and, after releasing it from connections with subjective aesthetic and philosophical theories, redirect it to the path of the scientific examination of facts."[14] From the formalists' perspective, it was "how," not "what" that mattered in the analysed work of art. But they did not separate the form from the content entirely. The connection between language and reality was conducted by introducing the notion of measure (*prijom*). The category of "measure" captures the very essence of language, namely, its literary character. The basic function of a measure was – as formalists put it – to overcome a widespread perception of reality. And consequently the goal of a form (poetic one) was not to "present reality but rather 'create it by means of the presentation of various possible depictions of reality which allow perceiving its new aspects.'"[15] Formalism, at a later stage of its development, placed literature in a historical context, in the context of its references to other texts, and connected it with history. Tymianow together with Jacobson, already in the 1920s, decided that "pure 'synchronism' becomes an illusion from now on."[16] similar breakthrough in the thinking about a literary text, which manifested itself by its historical setting, is observable also in the studies of the Tartu-Moscow School. The formal method was perceived in the Soviet Russia as ideologically hostile for many years. Its basic assumptions, both those put forward in the early period of its development and those which went beyond the preliminary principles, came to life under the influence of the ideas proposed by the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. Besides the elements of convergence, mentioned above, the following notions were also updated: the concept of structure, binary oppositions, and also the postulate for the scientific precision of research. The practice of analysing a literary text as a closed system was renewed, which took place under the auspices of separating ideology from literary studies.

The representatives of the School followed a significantly different direction of intellectual tradition, namely the concept presented by Mikhail

[14] B. Eichenbaum, *Teoria metody formalnej*, transl. R. Zimand, in idem, *Szkice o prozie i poezji*, Warsaw 1973, p. 168.

[15] See A. Burzyńska, M. P. Markowski, *Teorie literatury XX wieku*, Cracow 2006, p. 121.

[16] R. Jacobson, J. Tymianow, *Problemy badań nad literaturą i językiem*, "Nowyj Lef" 13/1928, transl. E. Korpała-Kirszak, in J. Tymianow, *Fakt literacki*, Warsaw 1978, p. 9.

Bakhtin, based on completely different assumptions than those of the formal school.[17] Bakhtin made a breakthrough in thinking about literature, dominated by the formalist approach, which extended the understanding of the notion of literature, for it postulated defining the connections between the fact of a literary work as a cultural fact with its psychological, social, ideological and, finally, historical background. All these elements, perceived as an outer context of a literary work, would constitute, as Bakhtin understood, the components of its internal structure. Bakhtin thought that "separating literature from other domains of culture is unacceptable [...]"[18] and he considered the boundaries separating individual domains of culture as problematic, but at the same time life-giving. The notion of the boundary would be at the very centre of the researcher's pondering upon the issues of culture, the key to understanding his concept of culture. Explaining his perception of culture he wrote: "One should not perceive culture as a whole, which has its borders, but also its inner territory; culture is placed on boundaries. Boundaries go everywhere, cross every point of culture, while the systemic unity of culture permeates the atoms of cultural life and reflects in its every drop like the sun. Existence of a cultural act actually happens on boundaries: here lies the gravity and significance of such an act, when it is removed from boundaries, it loses the ground, becomes void, arrogant, degenerates and dies."[19] The category of boundary would become a vital inspiration for the Soviet semioticians, it would be frequently recalled by them and, finally, it would be fully developed into the concept of semiosphere coined by Lotman.

Updates of Bakhtin's concept and numerous references to it in the works of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School, turned out to be extremely productive in terms of research and are still considered vital nowadays. Turning to Bakhtin's concept would contribute to overcoming the initial "formalisation and mathematisation" of semiotic research and would lead

[17] Wiaczesław Iwanow attempts to erase this dissonance between two source concepts in his text entitled *Znacheniye idey M. M. Bakhtina o znake, wyskazyvanii i dialoge dla sovremennoy semiotiki*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 6, Tartu 1973, pp. 5–44. In this text Iwanow points out the similarity between the semiotic theory and Bakhtin's theory by analyzing key points in the latter.

[18] E. Czaplejewicz, E. Kasperski (ed.), *Bachtin: dialog – język – literatura*, Warsaw 1983, p. 284.

[19] M. Bakhtin, *Problemy literatury i estetyki*, transl. W. Grajewski, Warsaw 1982, pp. 26–27.

to discovering the shortcomings in the methods of linguistic analyses, divesting them of illusions about working out one universal research method, based on logic. The representatives of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School would become fully aware of the limitations pointed out by one of the founders of their concept. Mikhail Bakhtin, indicating the shortcomings of linguistics as such, wrote:

> Language – the word means almost everything in human life. However, one should not think that this overwhelming and multifaceted reality may become a subject of only one science, namely linguistics, that it can be understood only by using linguistic methods. The subject of linguistics is not language interaction, the essence of the utterance and the connections (such as a dialogue) binding it, the forms of linguistic communication or types of speech, but only the material used, solely the means serving the purpose of this communication.
>
> Linguistics barely analyses the relations between the elements in a language system, it does not investigate the connections between utterances or the reference of these utterances to reality and to the speaker (author).[20]

The problem with initial "formalization and mathematization" of semiotics was clearly indicated by Y. Lewin during the recapitulation of the School's activity on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. By proving the inadequacy of mathematical and logical apparatus to describe any manifestations of cultural activity, he constructed a scheme of relations within which X (the researcher) is not capable of adopting Y (logic and mathematics) to describe the entirety of Z (culture). Lewin asks himself a question: who is to blame for such a state of affairs? Lack of competence on the part of X? Inability of X to use Y? Or perhaps, the "excessive" complexity of Z? It occurs that the Y apparatus is to blame, as it does not have enough capacity to capture the whole of Z, with its complex nature. After comparing mathematics and logic with culture, it turns out that they develop in a specific way, operating only in particular domains (e.g. chess) and they can be used to depict these domains.

> An attempt to confer meaning and provide a full description of Z by means of Y, will be no different from an attempt to build a spaceship by using parts from a fridge or a vacuum cleaner (although they turn out to be quite useful in their respective domains); we notice that this example shows that the "mutual inadequacy" of Y and Z is not as relative as it may seem; one may say that a vacuum cleaner is not suitable for

[20] M. Bakhtin, *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, transl. D. Ulicka, ed. E. Czaplejewicz, Warsaw 1986, p. 424.

a space flight ("mathematics" to "culture" respectively), but one may not say that the space is not "suitable" to be explored by using a vacuum cleaner.[21]

The same author describes precisely (but carefully) the initial "hopes" of the School; hopes requiring a significant transformation in the course of the school's development; and the hopes that, in the context of the later development of science, seemed rather naive, but, as we have tried to prove, fit precisely into their contemporary humanistic research. What unfulfilled hopes are these? Well, they are the "hopes (if such existed) of finding a semiotic philosopher's stone i.e. a universal key (method, apparatus, etc.), which would lead to describing and understanding, from a single perspective, at least some classes of objects having a sign nature (a myth, poetry, etc.), if not all semiotic phenomena and objects. [...] Also the hopes of creating a sufficiently neat, rich and actually adequate model of 'culture as such' which remained unfulfilled. [...] The hopes (again if such existed) of creating one conceptual apparatus and, appropriately, only one discipline as regards the methods used and the studied matter (the 'theory of secondary modelling systems')"[22] which were also forlorn. The expectations of the universalist nature also failed. However, their failure did have a certain positive aspect, which was revealing the complex character of cultural phenomena and the inability to describe them fully and unambiguously.

The transgressing of the primary universal pursuits and hopes constructed on the basis of the enthusiasm towards the linguistic research methods is manifested, to a great extent, in the recapitulation presented by Yuri Lotman himself, who grants the first research inspiration the status of an initial incentive that stimulated the School's development. "The direction of de Saussure and Prague linguistics and the experience of the Russian formal school were beneficial as an initial stimuli but they soon stopped to play the role of a single basis for structural and semiotic research."[23] The change of direction in the thinking of the representatives of the Soviet semiotic school was greatly convergent with changes occurring in the humanities, first and foremost in linguistics. Lotman perceives that the change of direction consisted mostly in "shifting the interest from the

[21] *Results and problems of semiotic researches*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 20, Tartu 1987, p. 11.

[22] Ibidem, pp. 10–11.

[23] Ibidem, p. 13.

description of general structures (languages and codes) to the issues of a text, and individual texts," which is directly connected with the change in the concept of a text as such. Another change meant abandoning a strict synchronic approach (resulting from de Saussurean tradition) for the benefit of a historical approach. This change of the research perspective of the Tartu-Moscow School would make it even more interesting, considering the possible applications of its methods in historical and cultural research.

The importance of this moment of transition from perceiving cultural texts in their synchronic dimension, towards their analysis taking into consideration both the diachronic and synchronic dimension in their mutual dynamics, will be of a particular importance to us. For the time being, let us explain, following Lotman, what underlay the shift in the concept of a text as such. Initially, according to Lotman, semiotic research was based on a conviction that code was primary to text, "it was natural to assume that a code was an embodiment of a text."[24] The logical consequence of this approach led to the following assumptions:

"1) a code (language) is primary to a text, whereas the text is its product;

2) from a semiotic perspective, there is nothing in a text which was not earlier present in a code;

3) the process of communication can be presented as the following scheme, a message ('meaning') is processed by a coding device and receives a material form as a text. The recipient decodes the text and discovers the message. Thus, a text becomes only a wrapping for meaning."[25]

The developing science of signs noticed that the above scheme can be applied only to artificial languages, and it loses its power outside of a semiotic lab. Its incapacity became particularly noticeable in the field of studying artistic texts, whose function is not solely limited to preserving and conveying information, but relies on creating new information. In the field of artistic creation, a text "(1) precedes a language (an artist creates a text in a language not known for recipients, and actually 'teaching' this language remains an artistic innovation); (2) a text is richer than a language as far as semiotics is concerned, if it can be decoded in a few codes (or many, including non-existent ones). [...]; (3) a text is not just a passive 'wrapping,' a generator of information."[26] Such understanding of a text, whose function is not limited to conveying information, but emphasizes its power for gen-

[24] Ibidem.
[25] Ibidem.
[26] Ibidem, pp. 13–14.

erating information (its creative function) requires turning to its history. It renders the opposition of diachrony and synchrony meaningless and "naturally transforms researchers of semiotic systems into their historians."[27]

Several parts of Lotman's statement quoted above areparticularly interesting from our perspective, namely: the transition from a synchronic analysis of a text to an analysis encompassing its synchronic and diachronic dimension, which in turn requires taking into consideration the memory mechanism in culture i.e. a change in perspective of perceiving textual reality from a static to a dynamic one, transforming semioticians dealing with systems into their historians. These outlined parts call for a further, more detailed analysis, which will involve explaining basic notions, formulated in the Tartu-Moscow School, and the reconstruction of the concept of culture, initially perceived statistically as a bundle of secondary modelling systems, and later on conceptualized in ponderings about the dynamic phenomenon of semiosphere.

2. Basic notions of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School

One of the basic notions of semiotics as a science of signs would be the notion of meaning. Thus, it will be a starting point for the presentation and explanation of other basic terms used by the Soviet semiotics. A sine qua non of all "meaning" would be the presence of two various, mutually translatable systems, one of which is a plan of expression and the other the plan of content. In the process of coding one system into the other, pairs of equivalent elements appear at their convergence point. The convergence of the two points of different systems is known as a sign, while one element of the systems – "the one which is responsible for conformity will be understood as content and the other as expression. It implies that the problem of content is always the one of recoding."[28] Establishing the meaning is in this case the process of looking for corresponding elements. While meaning can be created as a result of internal recoding within one semiotic system, (i.e. in the case of an algebraic expression "a = b + c, where b + c is the content of a"[29]) or an external one (i.e. in the case of translation from one natural language into the other, e.g. cendre = ash). The process

[27] Ibidem, p. 14.

[28] Y. Lotman, *O probleme znatheniy vo vtorithnyh modeluruyushthih sistemah*, "Trudy po znakowym sistemam" vol. 2, Tartu 1965, p. 23.

[29] Ibidem, p. 24.

of external recoding is not always limited to finding one pair of equivalent elements; this refers particularly to secondary modelling systems (i.e. literature, painting, etc.) which abound in "numerous external recoding procedures, contact points between not two but many distinct structures in which a sign does not constitute a pair of equivalents but a bundle of equivalent elements from various systems."[30]

The signifying part of a sign (*signifiant)* is its material shape perceived by the senses, whereas the signified (*signifié*) one defines a sign in relation to the reality existing beyond the sign system by which it is expressed. As Ivanov argued:

> More precise defining of the notion of a sign itself assumes examining the relations between various levels inside a given system and the relations between systems at various levels. The meaning of a sign i.e. the signified, without which a sign does not exist, may be defined either by indicating equivalent signs, which belong to the same level in a different system, when the equivalence is determined by the same relation to the signs of a higher level.[31]

A sign, as the above indicates, functions and is possible only in the context of a broader system. The system of signs would constitute a collection of signs combined according to certain rules. "Sign system consists of signs and rules which determine the repetition of the relations occurring between them."[32] Rules establishing relations between signs and defining the combinations between the elements of the system are determined by a code.

The most highly developed sign system is natural language, which constitutes matrixes for other systems. Natural language is defined as a primary modelling system, whereas structures patterned on it and built on it would be secondary modelling systems, according to the Soviet semioticians. Natural language contains an image, it creates models referring to certain segments of reality which, combined, determine the shape of the "global world model." A model, in Lotman's definition is "the analogue of the perceived object replacing it in the process of perception."[33] It is created by activity modelling a human being, whose results "should be subject to certain rules of analogy (established intuitively or consciously)

[30] Ibidem, p. 25.

[31] W. Iwanow, *Rola semiotyki w cybernetycznym badaniu człowieka i społeczności*, in *Semiotyka kultury*, Warsaw 1975, p. 85.

[32] D. Ziemiańska-Sapija, *Z historii semiologii radzieckiej*, in T. Kostyrko, D. Ziemiańska-Sapija, A. Zeidler (eds.), *Studia z historii i teorii kultury artystycznej*, Warsaw 1983, p. 54.

[33] Y. Lotman, *Tezisy k probleme "iskusstvo v riadu modelirujushchih sistem*," "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 3, Tartu 1967, p. 131.

and consequently refer to one or the other modelling system."[34] The primary modelling system, i.e. natural language, constitutes the structure of elements and rules which combine them, remaining in the "state of an established analogy" in relation to the field of recognized and perceived objects. "Systems based on natural language which take the shape of additional structures, creating secondary languages, are conveniently defined as secondary modelling systems."[35] Art is just such a structure, based on natural language, perceived as a secondary modelling system (literature, fine arts and film).

> Consequently art is always an analogue of reality (object), translated into the language of a given system. [...] The content of art as a modelling system is constituted by the real world, translated into the language of our consciousness and then into the language of a given artistic genre. Thus, the processes of perception and awareness of art can be analyzed as phenomena of recoding, observing the rules of semantic equivalency typical for every stage.[36]

Structures built on natural language, i.e. preserving the status of modelling systems, are also such fields as religion, law, etc. and such semiotic structures such as games, dance and rituals. All of them remain in the focus of attention of researchers from the Tartu-Moscow School, which tries to define their specifics and organizational structure. "Secondary modelling systems" create models of reality or its parts and constitute a realization of a given world model. This world model, built within particular semiotic systems and according to their rules, can be an expression of the individual awareness or a structure shared by the collective human awareness. Explaining the nature of the key phenomenon discussed here, Segal introduces the term of the "global world model," distinguishing it from the terms such as "culture" and "the system of values." It defines "culture" as "historically determined ways of existence characteristic for big social and ethnic communities,"[37] whereas "the system of values" is defined as an "ideal collection of ways of behaviour and their motivations, crucial for a group or an individual in an ethical dimension."[38] The "Global world model" according to Segal is a "model shaped individually (or collectively

[34] Ibidem.
[35] Ibidem.
[36] Ibidem.
[37] D. M. Segal, *Zametki ob odnom tipe semiotichieskich modeliruyushchikh sistem*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 2, Tartu 1965, p. 61.
[38] Ibidem.

for people belonging to the same communities) in the process of daily and common experiencing."[39]

The distinction between primary and secondary modelling systems is of particular importance in the research carried out in the 1960s and leads to the creating of a complex but very static vision of culture as a collection of modelling systems. The kind of forgery underlying such a perception of culture was observed by researchers themselves in the course of the development of the science of signs. Lotman writes as follows "heuristic purposefulness (facilitating analysis) starts to be understood as an ontological property of the research object itself, which seems to have a structure leading from a simple, clear atomic elements towards their gradual complication. A complex object is thus boiled down to a sum of simple ones."[40] This is particularly important as regards reflections over the phenomenon of culture, which evolved from the primary approach, perceiving it as a sum of secondary modelling systems, into the direction which takes its dynamics into consideration.

3. Culture

The term culture, according to Yuri Lotman and Boris Uspensky, stands for "a derivative of certain types of culture: every historically shaped culture produces a certain inherent model of understanding culture."[41] Initial attempts to define culture aim at creating its general universal depiction, which would go beyond the difference observable in all typologies of culture. Lotman distinguishes two types of them. In both cases a reference point will be one's own culture and hence the language of description will be the one created within the culture laying the basis for a given typology. The typologies presented by Lotman are based on an opposition. And so in the first case an opposition puts forward a distinction between "one's own" and "the Other" culture, while this "other" culture adopts a status of "non-culture." Additionally, the contraposition "one's own" culture and "the other" occurs in the context of a confrontation between "organized"

[39] Ibidem.

[40] Y. Lotman, *O semiosferie*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 17, Tartu 1984, pp. 5–6.

[41] Y. Lotman, B. Uspiensky, *O semioticheskom mekhanizme kul'tury*, "Trudy po znakowym sistemam" vol. 5, Tartu 1971, p. 146.

– "disorganized." Taking the perspective of the culture which is perceived as a norm, systems contrasted with it appear to be not other types of organization but rather, non-organizations.[42] Phenomena which are beyond one's own culture do not undergo any differentiation, but they constitute a homogenous domain which goes beyond the organizational order.

The next typology of culture presented by Lotman assumes the existence of many separate and independent intrinsic cultures, but the language used to describe them is still the language of the researcher's own culture.

> The metalanguage of typological description is established depending on where the person describing it is positioned i.e. to which culture he eventually belongs: it is based on oppositions of a religious, psychological, national, historical or social nature.[43]

The language of description is inextricably connected with the culture of the person describing it, and thus it tells a lot about this person and about the material which is being described.

In selected approaches to culture, it is this difference that occupies the central position, which, according to Lotman, makes it impossible to arrive at "general universalities of human culture," and to work out a consistent system of metalanguage. This convinces Lotman to develop a programme for studying culture directed at discovering its common properties. The programme is based on the premise to capture the diversity of cultural texts within one homogenous system with a defined organizational structure. According to the author of *Universe of the Mind*, when we compare different texts representing one type of culture "in the end we will obtain a text-construct which will represent invariants of all texts belonging to a given culture, and these texts will constitute its realization in sign structures of various types."[44] A researcher will refer to a similar text-construct as a "cultural text" and it will include an abstract "model of the world" used by a given culture. "An inherent feature of a cultural text remains its universality: the model of the world encompasses the whole world and includes basically everything."[45] The model of the world mentioned here includes, first and foremost, spatial characteristics. A cultural text answers the question how the world operates; it describes its structure. Moreover, it

[42] Y. Lotman, *O metayazyke tipologicheskikh opisaniy kul'tury*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 4, Tartu 1970, p. 460.

[43] Ibidem, p. 462.

[44] Ibidem, p. 463.

[45] Ibidem.

involves also assessment categories; the image of an axiological hierarchy. Such notions as "top – bottom," "right – left," "inclusive – exclusive," express a spatial orientation of the world and also model the system of values. "The space of a cultural text represents a universal multitude of cultural elements, i.e. it constitutes a model of everything. It implies that one of the basic structural features of a cultural text is its division – boundaries separating its internal space."[46] A culture model expressed in the text which contains its interpretation, created by "means of spatial modelling, particularly of a topographic character" is characterized by a boundary dividing the domain of culture into two distinct parts. Lotman mentions several types of divisions. Dividing a two-dimensional space into two parts means that the boundaries are of a closed curve separating the inside, consisting of a limited number of points, from the outside consisting of an infinite number of points. Thus, the internal space is closed, whereas the external one is open. This type of division generates an array of oppositions expressed in cultural texts. Lotman mentions the following oppositions: one's own people (family, tribe) – foreign peoples (families, tribes), the sacred – laymen, culture – barbarity, intelligentsia – common people, the universe – chaos. The above mentioned division overlaps with the opposition – this world vs. that world, where "this world" is an invariant of such notions as "the world, the earthly world, the world of the living," whereas "that world" corresponds with such notions as "afterlife, the world of non-humans (gods or the dead, without differentiation) not the earthly world."[47] The reconstructed model gets complicated if "that world," the outer one, falls apart again into two sharply separated parts which have clear systems of values, positive and negative ones, "external good ones" and "internal bad ones." The external ones do not necessarily represent chaos; in this case, they often express a different order, sometimes valued higher than the earthly order, the order of "this world" or "the inner world."

Lotman claims that "narration is created in a struggle with the structure of the world,"[48] as an attempt to transgress boundaries. The protagonist moves towards transgressing a boundary and this movement differs dramatically from the space entering the boundaries of the external world. In this place Lotman makes a significant distinction between "fictional collision (penetrating the boundary of space) – and non-fictional – striv-

[46] Ibidem, p. 465.
[47] Ibidem, p. 468.
[48] Ibidem, p. 471.

ing of the internal space for self-defence by strengthening the boundary, and the external space for destroying what is inside, for destroying the boundary."[49] Fictional collision – is established here by the movement of the protagonist, and the non-fictional one by the movement of space, which tends to strengthen the boundary or transgress from the external to the internal one, depending on how the model is orientated.

Asking about the relations between cultural models and cultural texts, Lotman points to human isomorphism in relation to the world model: "the idea that the world is divided into an organized (cosmic) and a disorganised (chaotic) sphere remains totally isomorphic in relation to a human being who also includes these two elements."[50] This kind of belief contains an assertion that the model of the world corresponds to the model of a human being, where the model of a human being becomes the model of the world or its part. Limiting the world and its dichotomy will correspond with the limiting and dichotomy of a human being (contraposition of passion, instinct, heart and mind).

The division of space into the internal (IS) and external (ES) will constitute a basis for the distinguishing and description of various types of culture models. The first model is determined by incompatibility between IS and ES, being totally different, non-homogenous spaces, which are typical for a text in a fairy tale, according to Lotman. In another model, IS reflects in ES, which is typical for Medieval symbolism in which the "material world is a sign, an expression of an absolute idea."[51] In the last culture model, ES remains a part of IS. Lotman perceives the last type of relation "in Hegelian historicism (ES constitutes a universe of absolute ideas, whereas IS is a material realization of this or yonder historical stage) or in a contemporary scientific view, analysing Euclidian geometry and Newtonian physics as special cases of other systems, recognized by modern day science."[52] The above typology is based on generalizations and can be only a reference point for further, more detailed and complex analyses.

The key category in reflections on the description of culture is that of "a boundary." "A boundary remains an essential element of the spatial metalanguage of cultural description."[53] A boundary defines the structure of all culture models. This very characteristic will be crucial but also

[49] Ibidem.
[50] Ibidem, p. 472.
[51] Ibidem, p. 473.
[52] Ibidem, p. 475.
[53] Ibidem, p. 470.

changeable, as far as the development and transformation of the concept of culture in the view of the Tartu-Moscow School is concerned. Thus, discussing a different approach to culture we will not speak about abandoning earlier assumptions for the benefit of completely new and different ones. We will rather notice a reformulating of the earlier concepts towards those approaches considering the dynamics which is typical for cultural phenomena. This dynamism focuses mostly on "boundaries."

Culture, under the approach of the Tartu-Moscow School, "never constitutes a universal class but a certain organized subclass. Culture never encompasses everything but it constitutes a particular separated subclass. Culture is understood only as a segment, a closed space in the background of non-culture, [...] where culture appears as a sign system."[54] According to the presented approach, the central position in culture is occupied by natural language, whose derivatives are secondary modelling systems. Natural language is closely intertwined with culture, and it plays a role of a structural "moulding device" in culture. "The Primary 'function' of culture is to structurally organize the world surrounding a human being. Culture is a generator of structures and, therefore, it creates a social sphere around a human being, which similarly to the biosphere makes life bearable, social life not organic life though."[55] "Culture as a system which preserves and conveys human experience" is of a concentric character. Its centre is filled with strictly ordered structures, whereas quasi-structures, "not quite organised" are found on its peripheries. The latter ones, due to their openness, are the factor that potentially livens up culture. The phenomenon of the biosphere mentioned above in order to describe how culture works and the reflections about the dynamic role of peripheries and boundaries lead us directly to the concept of the semiosphere put forward by Yuri Lotman.

The springboard for the concept of the semiosphere is excluding the possibility to draw conclusions about the nature of complex communication and semiotic processes on the basis of isolated communication acts. The impossibility of making generalizations on the basis of a single communication act which consists of a speaker, a recipient and a binding channel, is caused by its immersion in semiotic space and the fact that this space is primary to all semiotic acts. This space "is not a sum of individual languages but it constitutes a condition of their existence and function-

[54] Y. Lotman, B. Uspensky, *O semioticheskom mekhanizme...*, pp. 147–148.
[55] Ibidem, p. 149.

ing, in a way, it precedes them and cooperates with them constantly."[56] A constitutive feature of semiotic space is its dynamics, and it manifests itself by a constant change in the number of elements creating it and also their axiological assessment and place in the hierarchy. Separate languages create a semiotic space function only within its boundaries. Therefore, in Lotman's opinion, "one inseparable mechanism – a semiotic unit – should be perceived not as a single language but the whole semiotic space inherent to a given culture."[57] Lotman further refers to this "semiotic space" as the "semiosphere," due to its analogy to the "biosphere." "Similarly to the biosphere, which is a whole and organic unity of living matter [according to Wladimir Wiernadski] on one hand, whereas on the other – a condition necessary to prolong the existence of life – the semioshere is both the result and the condition of cultural development."[58]

When specifying the semioshere, Lotman creates a catalogue of its basic features, among which the first is heterogeneity, manifested in the diversity of nature and the varied level of the translatability of languages which create the semiotic field. This heterogeneity is noticeable in modelling a literary (cultural) process, which marks the subsequent stages of literary development as models of individual epochs (the enlightenment, romanticism, baroque, etc.). Such models incorporate only a fragment of a broader space of the semiosphere, including elements belonging to various epochs and traditions (preceding or following) and also texts from separate cultures whose "intrusions" destabilize the "inner structure of the 'world view' in a given culture."[59] "Thus, [as Lotman argues] various languages and stages of their development clash in a random synchronic cross section of the semiosphere. Some texts turn(ed) out to be immersed in irrelevant languages and there could be no deciphering codes as such."[60]

The notion of evolution, derived from life sciences, cannot be used in reference to cultural development. Using this notion to describe culture would lead to a misconception that "only what is synchronic in reference to the researcher is alive,"[61] while the elements of culture belonging to even the distant future, remain active in the presence of the researcher,

[56] Y. Lotman, *Uniwersum umysłu*, transl. B. Żyłko, Gdansk 2008, p. 198.
[57] Ibidem, p. 199.
[58] Ibidem.
[59] Ibidem, p. 201.
[60] Ibidem.
[61] Ibidem.

"in the history of art, works which refer to cultural periods distant in time remain active participants in the development of culture."[62]

Another feature of the semiosphere mentioned by Lotman is its asymmetry of structure, which manifests itself primarily by the mutual non-translatability of languages. The asymmetry of individual languages, or the inability to express a given content by using various means of expression, causes that languages do not multiply meanings, but create new content in the process of translation, whereas "the semiosphere as a whole may be seen as a generator of information."[63] Asymmetry is situated in the relation between the centre and peripheries. The centre is characterized by a high level of organization of the languages creating it, with its "organizational core," namely a natural language, at the forefront. On the other hand, the peripheries are filled by "partial languages which are applied only to describe individual functions of culture and semi-language structures, partly organized, which could carry semiosis, when they are incorporated into a semiotic context."[64] Every object becomes meaningful in connection with the function subscribed to it, and thereby becomes a carrier of a given meaning.

The highest form of central structures organization is manifested by their ability of self-description by means of grammars or the strict codification of customs or legal regulations. This level of internal organization remains necessary because of the system's inner homogeneity. However, it involves a loss of certain indefiniteness which facilitates dynamics and development. Grammars and codifications created in this way, actually referring only to one fragment of the semiosphere, tend to generalize the inherent norms to other domains of the semiotic space. "Partial grammar of one cultural dialect becomes a metalanguage describing culture as such. Hence, in the Renaissance the dialect of Florence becomes a literary language of Italy, the Rome jurisdiction establishes the law system of the whole Empire and the etiquette in the court of Louis XIV is a paragon for courts of the whole of Europe."[65] Descriptions of norms and directives determining the way of pursuing these norms, found in the literature of a given period, lay a basis for describing a segment of historic reality, which makes an illusory impression of the uniformity of the semiotic practices used at that time. This illusion of homogeneity is enhanced

[62] Ibidem, p. 202.
[63] Ibidem.
[64] Ibidem, p. 203.
[65] Ibidem.

by the contemporaries who emphasize the elements conforming to the norms in their descriptions and perceive the proceedings which do not conform to the norms imposed by a given code as unimportant. Cultural texts created at such a society's very centre contain a model of behaviour dominating in a given time, but they also influence this behaviour, they contain a description of the semiotic practice and simultaneously shape it. This peculiarity of codifications and grammars created within their self-description is illustrated by Lotman, who uses an example from the code of the love rituals found in the treaty *De arte amanci* by Andreas Capellanus. The author of the treaty, on one hand "imposed a strict code on noble love and demands from lovers, faithfulness, discretion, attentive *servir*, purity, courtship, etc.; on the other hand, he does not object to a rape of a peasant girl because she 'does not seem to exist' in this view of the world, and thus deeds committed against her are beyond semiotics, so they 'practically do not occur.'"[66] With the advent of colonialism, sexual behaviours towards women from beyond the European culture are treated likewise, as if their bodies were "a peculiar colonial imaginarium"[67] situated on the peripheries or basically beyond the boundaries of culture;[68] not existing within its framework but creating a separate, strongly semiotic area. The semiotic space of carnality, because of its semantic saturation and complexity, would require a separate analysis, considering the function of the shame which regulates the division between culture and its opposing areas such as anti-culture and non-culture.

The representations of the world created by means of self-description, with a strictly defined inner structure, are experienced by the participants of a given culture as reality and then adopted by representatives of the next generations as an idea, reconstructed on the basis of cultural texts, that "everyday reality was exactly like that."[69] However, an image of semiotic unification generated on a metalevel is in contradiction to the semiotic "reality" which undergoes deep diversification. "Although a map of the upper level is painted in a homogeneous colour, the lower level map vibrates with many colours and is crossed by many boundaries."[70] The

[66] Ibidem, p. 204.

[67] See *Histoire du corps*, vol. 2: *De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre*, ed. A. Corbin, Paris 2005.

[68] In Eurocentrism the only form of culture was European culture.

[69] Y. Lotman, *Uniwersum umysłu*, p. 204.

[70] Ibidem, p. 205.

relation between a metalevel of the semiospere and its actual semiotic "map," and also the "reality of everyday life" is complex and ambiguous.

> First of all, if in the core structure, where the self-description was created, it was really an idealization of a certain real language then, on the peripheries of the semiosphere, an ideal norm contradicted the semiotic reality "beyond it" and did not stem from it. In the centre of the semiosphere a description of texts created norms, whereas on the peripheries of a norm, actively intruding into "improper" practice, they created "proper" texts which corresponded with them. Secondly, whole layers of peripheral (from the perspective of a given metastructure) phenomena of culture were not connected whatsoever with its idealized image.[71]

All these elements were considered as non-existent. Thus described by Lotman, a relation between a cultural self-description, an authentic "map" of the semiosphere and everyday life practices, is of fundamental importance for historical studies of culture, as it indicates the areas in which a culture historian may perceive an idealized image as reality and mistake historical description for historical reality. This also indicates a task for historical and cultural studies, which is rediscovering areas hidden in silence and oblivion, revealing an "unknown world" and apparently "non-existent, as it does not fit into the norms defined by a given period." A culture historian becomes a witness of the changing perspective, its normative change, which allows him to perceive the earlier covered elements.

> The perspective is moved and suddenly, "the unknown" is revealed. It is recalled that a year after Wolter's death "an unknown philosopher" Louis Claude de Saint-Martin was already 35; that Restif de la Bretonne had already written 200 volumes which literary historians find difficult to situate and they call their author "a small Rousseau" or "the Balzac of the 18th century;" that Wasyl Nariezhny lived in the period of Romanticism in Russia and he had written about 25 novels, "unnoticed" by his contemporaries.[72]

Moreover, the whole spectrum of behaviour patterns and social practices occurring in the cultural peripheries of a given period, beyond its centre, not documented in texts, is suddenly revealed by the work of a culture historian. The consequence of this brings about a varied and also more realistic representation of the period, and an awareness of self-descriptions created by it and their place on the map of the "real" semiosphere.

In order to introduce the topic discussed in the second part of this work, it should be emphasized here that historians of culture perceive an

[71] Ibidem, pp. 204–205.
[72] Ibidem, p. 205.

asymmetry of the centre and peripheries which is manifested in the Europe of the times of the *Ansien Régime* in the area of sexuality and carnality. The body and sexual practices from the 15th to the 18th centuries were presented in Europe from the perspective of the dominating powers and the codes of conduct established by them, as well as normative convictions in the given area. According to Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, the "collective perception as well as subjective experience of the body and sexuality" were determined by cultural ideals such as "courtly love and romantic love, or religious and social taboos against homosexual relations."[73] This meant that all the sexual practices which did not conform to the codes of conduct, often expressed by legal regulations, such as adulterous relationships, homosexuality, masturbation, and generally sexual acts not intended for procreation, were considered as peripheral "seemingly non-existent" and were overlooked, unnoticed by the cultural texts of a particular period. However, the analysis of court archives, personal accounts or iconography prove their existence in the real life of people from the period.

> In these documents there are inevitable discrepancies between macrostructure (institutional ideologies and cultural norms) and micro-histories (subjective experiences and individual strategies) which finally reveal the complexity of the contexts for experiencing sexuality and carnal issues in everyday life.[74]

The notion of "macrostructure" will correspond here with Lotman's notion of "self-description," whereas "micro-history" would be filled with the peripheral aspects of culture, making the culture varied, heterogeneous and asymmetric.

A similar mechanism of isolating a self-description of culture and non-justified popularization of norms connected with it, in culture as a whole, is described by Mikhail Bakhtin, when speaking about the relation between "one's own word" and "the Other's word." According to Bakhtin, the human consciousness is based on "splitting the content of a word into a whole array of one's own words (understood as one's own) and a huge limitless number of the Other's words."[75] However, often the Other's word, despite its diversity and vastness, is reduced to the minimum, pushed away and neglected, overlooked and forgotten, whereas the array

[73] S. F. Matthews-Grieco, *Ciało i seksualność w Europie w czasach Ancien Régime'u*, in G. Vigarello (ed.), *Historia ciała*, vol. 1, Gdansk 2011, p. 151.

[74] Ibidem, p. 151.

[75] M. Bakhtin, *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, p. 491.

of "words perceived as one's own words" receives a status of a universal and commonly binding one, aiming for wiping off the polyphony of reality for the benefit of ideological homophony. Limiting oneself to "one's own word" allows avoiding contact with "the Other's word," which leads to reducing the individual's awareness and also, by carrying over some considerations from the anthropological to the cultural ground, to creating a phenomenon of reduced culture. "One's own word," embracing and monopolizing the cultural space, transforms its meanings, according to the rules imposed by this word, or it hides certain content of the cultural space. An extreme example of such a process can be the historical policy shaped by totalitarian regimes, based on a one-sidedness of normative views, which selects and twists historical facts according to these views.

An attempt to explain this process of an extremely selective approach to historical experience generated by totalitarian systems, directs us again towards the semiotic concept of culture. Understanding such a phenomenon becomes possible by evoking the concept of culture as the memory of society, a collective memory explained in a classic text by Yuri Lotman and Boris Uspensky from 1971 *On the semiotic mechanism of culture*.[76] According to the idea presented in this work, culture should be understood as the "non hereditary memory of society which is expressed by a system of bans and commands,"[77] which bears a whole array of consequences. This approach to culture leads to perceiving it as a social phenomenon and considering it to be "historically derivative." It coincides to a great extent with Bakhtin's ideas, which reject the autonomy of an individual in their "ideological environment" established by signs such as things, words, symbols, religious beliefs, works of art, etc. Bakhtin rejected the perception of a human as "a sovereign territory;" he opposed the substantiality of the soul, claiming that "a soul does not exist as a whole present in me and filled with values."[78] Furthermore, perceiving culture as memory introduces a necessity to connect it with "past historical experience. So nothing can be said about the existence of culture as such in the moment of its creation because its existence becomes real only *post factum*."[79] Approaching culture as a collective memory leads to considering the mechanism of creation, and the organization and storing of information in

[76] Y. Lotman, B. Uspensky, *O semioticheskom mekhanizme...*, pp. 144–166.

[77] Ibidem, p. 147.

[78] M. Bakhtin, *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, p. 149.

[79] Y. Lotman, B. Uspiensky, *O semioticheskom mekhanizme...*, p. 148.

this collective memory. In each of these stages shame plays an important role as a mechanism selecting information in terms of its conformity with the content and norms binding in a given culture. Historical experience is transformed by text, and this transformation occurs according to the effective system of regulations.

> In order to place a historical experience in a particular space, it should be perceived as the existing one, i.e. it should be identified with a given element in the language of the mnemonic device. Later on it should be assessed relative to all hierarchic connections of this language, i.e. it should be written down, and hence become an element of memory text and an element of culture.[80]

At this stage of creating memory, a process of transforming an experience into a text can be stopped and the experience may be placed beyond the memory's space and thus beyond culture. The hierarchy of the importance of texts is shaped at the level of the organization of the social and individual memory, and at this stage non-texts can become texts by changing their place in the hierarchy. Texts which are beyond the boundaries of culture may enter its space. This implies that the collective memory is relatively flexible, dynamic and undergoes constant transformations. The most interesting mechanism for us here, which defines the shape of the collective memory, is the mechanism of forgetting. "Transformation of facts into a text is connected with an inevitable selection, i.e. writing down some events translated into the elements of a text, as well as forgetting others which are perceived as non-existent. In this sense every text facilitates not only remembering but also forgetting."[81] The selection of facts which are situated in the collective memory occurs according to the specific semiotic norms defined by a given culture, and thus identifying a historical experience with a historical text is not justified, as has been mentioned earlier. "A text is not a reality, but merely a material that allows reconstructing it."[82] Forgetting as a pattern of culture is decidedly different from forgetting as "a means to delete memory," as Soviet semioticians argue.[83] The purposeful deletion of a historical experience, an imperative to cancel it from the collective memory, leads directly to "historical regression" and the disintegration of culture.

[80] Ibidem.
[81] Ibidem, p. 150.
[82] Ibidem.
[83] Ibidem.

Recognizing different aspects of forgetting, both in the individual and in the collective sense, can be also found in a hermeneutic work of Paul Ricoeur. When studying how forgetting may be abused, Ricoeur refers to a preliminary typology basing on two classification rules that bind "what lies at the deepest level with what remains visible, and the most passive with the most active."[84] This typology distinguishes between three different types of forgetting such as blocked memory, manipulated memory and mandatory memory. Each type of forgetting mentioned above in its individual aspect enters into complex relations with collective forms, according to Ricoeur. The first type of forgetting, connected with blocked memory, is a subject to psychoanalytical studies. A suppressed traumatic experience belongs to its content. Suppressed and temporarily inaccessible content which manifests itself as disguised symptoms, would undergo a restoration, interpretation and revival, thanks to the cooperation between a psychoanalyst and a patient. Due to the conviction of the duration and indestructibility of an experience "psychoanalysis is for a philosopher [...] the most reliable ally supporting the thesis of the impossibility to forget."[85] Oblivion under this approach is of a temporary and reversible character. It is a mechanism which protects an individual from a content which can be unpleasant for them. Besides the blocked memory, with its protective function, there is also oblivion and manipulated memory, which is a form of abuse. However, abuse is a consequence of "an inevitably selective character of the story."[86] Different narrative strategies ("one may always tell a story differently – highlighting and meaningfully translocating tones, creating different protagonists and consequently the outline of the plot"[87]) enable adding ideological undertones to memory. "The main danger stems from manipulating the authorized, imposed, celebrated and commemorated history – namely the official history. Then narration as a means becomes a trap, since higher powers overtake its fictional composition and impose canonical narration by intimidation or infatuation, fear or flattery."[88] Individuals become deprived of the power to spin their own yarn, which often happens with their consent, and it means neglecting and avoiding the knowledge, the desire, to sink into forgetting and

[84] P. Ricoeur, *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, transl. J. Margański, Cracow 2006, p. 586.
[85] Ibidem, p. 587.
[86] Ibidem, p. 590.
[87] Ibidem.
[88] Ibidem, pp. 590–591.

an approving of the memory deficit. The only form of resistance against this kind of forgetting is, according to Ricoeur, a paraphrased motto of the Enlightenment: "*sapere aude!* Dare to be wise! Dare to tell your own story!"[89] because one's own story is the only defence against the abuse of memory, remaining at the same time a kind of obligation.

The characteristics of Lotman's semiosphere reconstructed above, combined with references to the earlier concepts of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School complementing it, have allowed us to draw several conclusions about the nature of culture itself and its connections with history, and further it has given us an opportunity to establish methodological guidelines which are important from the culture history perspective. Despite closing this part of our considerations, we remain in the scope of the issues which are defined by the relation between culture and history, and this relation will always render cultural research as historical research.

4. Synchronic and diachronic dimension

The synchronic dimension of culture constitutes, according to Lotman, "an organizational structure which unites people living in the same time."[90] However, culture, assuming that "previous experience remains preserved,"[91] will always inextricably intertwine its synchronic and diachronic dimension determined by its historical connections and references. Both these aspects seem inseparable, and distinguishing between them may be only conducted as a research procedure for the purpose of systematization. As Lotman claims "culture is memory;"[92] it constitutes a non-hereditary collective memory, which inextricably binds it with history and, consequently, studying the culture expressed by texts and symbols becomes simply studying history. Lotman argues that culture "will always be connected with the moral, intellectual and spiritual continuity of human life, social life and the life of humanity. Therefore, when we speak about our contemporary culture we also speak, even without noticing it, about the long way that this culture went through. This way,

[89] Ibidem, p. 591.
[90] Y. Lotman, *Rosja i znaki*..., p. 6.
[91] Ibidem, p. 8.
[92] Ibidem.

through millennia and historical epochs, immerses us into one culture – the culture of humanity."[93]

Modern times reveal their meanings and become significant in the context of the past, as an Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben argues. Agamben, during his lecture inaugurating the course of theoretical philosophy in the academic year of 2006/2007 at the Faculty of Arts and Design of IUAV University in Venice asks a question which is crucial at this point of our considerations: "What is modernity?" Based on the premise of the Nietzschean self-definition of incohesion with one's own epoch which is revealed by its aiming for "relevance," Agamben wrote:

> The one truly belongs to his epoch and is genuinely contemporary who does not feel comfortable in it and does not adjust to its requirements and hence, could be considered as irrelevant. However, thanks to this deviation and anachronism this person is more than others apt at perceiving and understanding their times.[94]

Modern times become, according to the Italian philosopher, an ambivalent approach to one's own time, both belonging to it and living at a certain distance from it. "Speaking more precisely, it is such a connection with time that belongs to it by shifting stages and anachronism."[95] Perception of the synchronic aspect of time is inevitably connected with immersing in its diachrony. What is contemporary becomes what has not occurred yet and what has already passed; it simultaneously connects things that have not come with those that have gone; it is a coexistence of the past, the future and things that follow subsequently; it can be captured in a sense of simultaneity and consecutiveness, synchrony and diachrony. Modern times are constantly connected to the past by "quotations," updating any moment from the past which could be recalled and revived. This connection is expressed by the personalization of what is archaic by modern times, of what is close to *arche*, the beginnings.

> But the beginnings are not located in the chronological past, they are contemporary to historical occurrences and they are active in them, similarly to an embryo active in the tissues of an adult organism and a child active in the mentality of an adult person. Deviation – and closeness together with it – which defines modern times, is rooted in this proximity to the dawn of time which is throbbing most lively in the present time.[96]

---

[93] Ibidem.

[94] G. Agamben, *Czym jest współczesność*, in idem, *Nagość*, transl. K. Żaboklicki, Warsaw 2010, p. 16.

[95] Ibidem, p. 16.

[96] Ibidem, p. 23.

Understanding literature and contemporary art is connected with understanding what is embedded in them, what remains of their beginning: "the key to modernity is hidden in things which are immemorial and prehistoric. As the ancient world in the twilight of its time turns to its dawn in order to find its roots, the lost avant-garde looks for primitivism and archaism."[97] Agamben calls contemporary a person who seeing "the darkness of the present time [...] can transform it, connect with other time and interpret history in the way unknown before,"[98] who can experience in the past what the past did not experience itself, either due to the fact that the experience had happened too recently or it was too traumatic.

The connection between the diachronic and synchronic dimensions of culture, the presence of history in modern times and vice versa, and the coexistence of the word from the past with the current word were expressed in Mikhail Bakhtin's theory, which is an inherent element of inspirations for the concepts established within the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. Julia Kristeva, one of the most important promoters of Bakhtin's ideas in the West, points out that "introducing the status of a word as the smallest unit of structure, Bakhtin places a text in history and in society, both of which [are] also perceived as texts interpreted by an author who subsequently joins them by rewriting them. Diachrony is transformed into synchrony and from the perspective of this transformation the linear history appears to be something abstract."[99] The meaning of a word can be perceived only in context; it does not have a meaning in itself, an existing one, but a dynamic meaning that was assigned to it. Bakhtin introduces a concept according to which a word is not a point (an established meaning), but rather an area of overlapping texts, a dialogue of several texts: "of a writer, a recipient (or a protagonist), of the current or past cultural context."[100]

Kristeva, following Bakhtin, distinguishes three dimensions of a textual space: "the subject of writing, the recipient and external texts (three elements incorporated into a dialogue). A status of a word is then defined in two ways a) horizontally: a word in a text belongs both to the writing subject and to the recipient, b) vertically: a word in a text is oriented towards the past or present literary corpus."[101] The horizontal dimension of a word

[97] Ibidem.

[98] Ibidem, p. 25.

[99] J. Kristeva, *Słowo, dialog i powieść*, transl. W. Grajewski, in E. Czaplejewicz, E. Kasperski (ed.), *Bachtin: dialog – język – literatura*, p. 395.

[100] Ibidem.

[101] Ibidem, p. 395.

or a text determines its references to history, its connections with past texts which constitute the context for reading its meaning. Distinguishing the horizontal and vertical dimension of a text[102] determines a space for intersubjectivity and intertextuality and, hence, it leads directly towards establishing one of the key notions in the contemporary humanities, namely, the notion of intertextuality. Kristeva claims that it was Bakhtin who discovered that "every text consists of a mosaic of quotations, it absorbs and transforms another text."[103] The text contains history and remains in a dialogue with other texts, and simultaneously is incorporated into history.

The importance of Bakhtin's discoveries in the field of historical studies was explained and specified by the Russian medievalist Aron Gurievitch, who remained in close intellectual contact with the researchers from the Tartu-Moscow School. Elements of the ideas put forward by Bakhtin and their importance for historical and cultural studies are presented by Gurievitch as part of a wider reflection devoted to changes occurring within historical studies. These changes consist in considering the subjective aspect of the historical process, which led directly to the emerging of the outline of "a new face of history as historical anthropology, and a study of a human being."[104] Focusing attention on the subjective aspect in historical research leads to a different approach to a historical source, which, being a creation of the human psyche, ceases to be a passive object of research. Under this approach the task of historians is not merely limited to gathering facts, which would boil them down to the role of mere "rug collectors," as Ch. Seignobos puts it, "because, in their opinion, the more facts they gather, the faster they discover historical laws, which 'by themselves' and 'almost unnoticeably for a historian' emerge from facts."[105] The task of a historian would be to "recreate the images of the world typical for various epochs and cultural traditions and, thereby, to reconstruct the subjective reality which underlay the awareness of people from a given epoch and culture and determined the style and content of the latter, the approach

[102] The crossing point of the vertical and horizontal axes of the word (text) is a moment in which another word (text) is revealed to the recipient, the word (text), which the subject refers to in his text.

[103] Ibidem, p. 396.

[104] A. Gurievitch, *Historian and Historical Anthropology*, "Konteksty. Sztuka Ludowa" 1–2/1997, p. 13.

[105] Ibidem, p. 14. See also: N.D. Fustel de Coulanges, *Histoire des institutions politiques de l'ancienne France*, vol. 4, Paris 1922, pp. 32–33.

of those people towards life and their self-awareness."[106] A historian is, then, to some extent, forced to take into consideration something which is called mentality, according to the "new French history" (*mentalité*). Sources such as texts are still at the centre of attention of historical studies, but their status changes together with the manner of their perception and interpretation. According to Mikhail Bakhtin "a text constitutes a primary fact (reality) and a starting point for every humanistic discipline."[107] The attention of historians, as well as representatives of other disciplines, is focused on a text, but it is not a proper object of studies, for, as Bakhtin argues further, "a real object is a human being in his/her social essence who expresses himself/herself by speech or other means."[108] It requires introducing "a rule of understanding" into the framework of reading a text, exploring the meaning included in the text, its hermeneutics. Any assumption about the distinctness of culture that produced the text is a prerequisite for understanding it. This assumption renders the method of "getting into the spirit" of the text, ineffective as it is when burdened with a risk of projecting the ideas of the researcher onto the object of their studies; it is "the risk of an unintentional and involuntary transition from the studied culture to the culture of the researcher."[109] The act of understanding a text is connected with creating a field for a dialogue between one's own culture and the alien culture, the past and the current culture; it is an encounter of two "intelligent structures." The "Exopy" of the one who understands and their awareness of being distinct enriches the text, discovers new meanings in it and triggers its creative function. The following words of Bakhtin quoted by Gurievitch describe this:

> Alien culture is revealed only in the eyes of a different culture [...]. Meaning reveals its depth only by encountering another, alien meaning, when they meet they start a dialogue which tears open the seclusion and one-sidedness of these meanings and cultures. [...] As a result of the encounter in a dialogue, these two cultures do not blend and mix but on the contrary, each of them preserves its wholeness and open fullness – they actually enrich each other.[110]

A historian directs his questions to the text from a perspective of his own times; according to Febvre he asks "the dead on behalf of the alive and for

[106] Ibidem, p. 13.
[107] M. Bakhtin, *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, p. 418.
[108] Ibidem.
[109] A. Gurievitch, *Historian and Historical Anthropology*, p. 14.
[110] M. Bakhtin, *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, pp. 474–475.

the alive."[111] The questions asked by him are directly connected with what is crucial from the perspective of his time. New questions directed to texts generate new unexpected answers, give rise to new meanings and, thereby, exhibit the living and active aspect of the text. "By enriching their own culture with the knowledge of the semantic richness of other cultures, historians and culture experts in one reveal new content of the alien culture studied by them, of which this culture was not aware and which was not captured by historians in earlier stages of the development of historical studies."[112]

Culture of the past becomes an alien culture. The act of studying texts of a given culture constitutes the act of communication between the culture of a researcher and the studied culture, hence it becomes a communication act of an intercultural character in which "the rule of understanding" plays a crucial role, as it goes beyond "getting into the spirit. The act of understanding the past is inextricably connected with the act of understanding the present, as it happens from the contemporary perspective. This reveals another dimension of the relations between the synchronic and diachronic aspects of culture. A historian becomes here a culture expert, out of necessity, whereas a culture expert becomes a historian at the same time. Studying culture, and the texts in which it is revealed, becomes the studying of history.

The same process of producing new meanings by a text can be described in terms used by Yuri Lotman in his fundamental work *Universe of the Mind*. A text being a semiotic object can be dubbed, according to Lotman, "an intelligent structure," due to its functions – such as: conveying meaning, establishing meaning, and the capability to store and reconstruct information (memory). The first function of a text mentioned above, i.e. conveying a message is performed by artificial languages only. Fulfilling this function assumes that "informative content does not change qualitatively or quantitatively: a recipient decodes the text and receives the initial message."[113] From our perspective, the function of creating information and generating meanings remains the key one. It occurs only if another "intelligent structure," another "text," appears which is an initial partner for the dialogue. The smallest unit for generating new messages is "a parallel pair of languages which are mutually non-translatable but still connected

[111] A. Gurievitch, *Historian and Historical Anthropology*, p. 14.
[112] Ibidem.
[113] Y. Lotman, *Uniwersum umysłu*, p. 70.

by a block of translations."[114] A recipient, a "sender" and "a subject of writing" use different codes which intersect but do not follow the same paths. "A combination of translatability and non-translatability (with a varied degree of these factors) determine the creative function [of a text]."[115] In the process of the text's transformation during its translation into the code of the recipient "the growth of meaning" occurs. This "surplus," this new meaning, becomes an element which enriches and revives culture.

Texts from the distant past enter the present time, interfering with it and transforming it. Being a reservoir of new meanings, at the same time they refer to tradition by updating memory about it, which is connected with the third function of a text mentioned above.

> If these texts did not have their own memory and could not create a certain semantic aura around them, all these interventions would be only rare museum pieces beyond the main cultural process. In fact they turn out to be quite important factors provoking further development of culture. It stems from the fact that a text – like a grain which is programmed for further development – is not dormant and always equal factually. Inner vagueness of its structure is established under the influence of other contexts, which creates a margin for its dynamics.[116]

Every text comes alive in a discourse with what is different from it; a historical text comes alive when confronted with modernity. It is enriched by modernity and enriches it too, and it constitutes an integral part of experiencing the current time and at the same time referring to the past. Culture as a whole is defined by a mutual transgression between the past and the present, the "mutual understanding between ages, millennia, peoples, nations and cultures, it guarantees a complex wholeness of the whole of humanity and all human cultures (a complex community of universal human culture)."[117]

5. Shame as a mechanism of culture under a semiotic approach

The issues related to shame which are situated in the center of further considerations require a certain limitation due to their vastness. I do not

[114] Ibidem, p. 60.
[115] Ibidem, p. 74.
[116] Ibidem, p. 78.
[117] M. Bakhtin, *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, p. 520.

intend to present the subject of shame, which is the focus of many disciplines in the humanities, in a comprehensive and exhaustive way. This text is merely an attempt to present the anthropological and axiological category of shame within the framework of semiotic description. The aim of this text is to present the role which is played by shame in culture, the role which controls behavior patterns of its representatives. I will present shame as a mechanism which constitutes the inner content of culture, which divides the areas of culture, non-culture and anti-culture. In order to do so, I will use the notions developed by the Tartu-Moscow School which were presented in the first part of this study. Applying the semiotic theory, as I mentioned above, I will also derive from the concepts put forth under different approaches to culture, to an extent which will allow me to develop my considerations. A crucial role will still be played by Bakhtin's idea of culture which laid the basis for the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School.

My reflections will be preceded by the introductory placement of a given notion in the lexical and semantic space, and then I will review the selected conceptualizations of this notion in texts of the European culture.

On lexical and semantic grounds, the notion of shame connects with an array of notions related to it, thus creating a dynamic and complex network of meanings. Among the notions related to shame we can mention such concepts as honour, infamy, disgrace, ignominy, embarrassment, discredit, confusion, humiliation and, also, a bit more distant in terms of meaning, concepts such as guilt, blemish and fear. The collection of similar ideas and relations between them differs in terms of the lexicon of particular national languages.[118] Additionally, the boundaries between the semantic fields of individual notions are difficult to capture; it is impossible to define them unambiguously, as they manifest historical changeability and instability of usage in individual speech acts. These notions, remaining in a specific relation of semantic closeness, "co-occur in various configurations, replacing, substituting and overlapping with each other, which creates new semantic values."[119] It is impossible to establish a model which would profoundly define the relations between individual notions. Each model of such relations, independently of its detailed character, will only

[118] For example, a relation between the meanings of shame and honour will be completely distinct in Polish and in French. French uses one word – *honte* to name shame and honour, which depending on the context of use May have different meanings, closer to understanding shame or honour.

[119] K. Termińska, *Mozaistyczna koncepcja wstydu*, in E. Kosowska (ed.), *Wstyd w kulturze. Zarys problematyki*, Katowice 1998, p. 117.

describe the meaning of given notions and the relations between them without exhausting them. Thus, it can only perform an auxiliary function and by no means can it be treated as an ultimate description of genuine relations. A more effective way to capture the meaning of a given notion seems to be the analysis of speech acts combined with their contextual examination, which takes into consideration historical, cultural, social and individual circumstances.

Regarding the specific character of the notion of shame, it seems to be definitely insufficient to limit oneself to its linguistic analysis. Ewa Jędrzejko writes about the limitations of linguistic methods as regards analyses of the notion of shame as follows:

> [...] structuralist concepts of verbal signs semantics [generative theories of semantic syntax or the theory of the lexical-semantic field, among others] apparently complement each other. Their premises and methodology facilitate a more accurate characteristics of linguistic expressions and the language itself as a system of signs and rules of combining them, from various perspectives. However, these concepts have a certain weakness – although they do not question the connections between language, history and culture, or socially and individually conditioned reasoning of its users, they say barely anything about the nature of these connections.[120]

From our perspective, these connections with history and culture are of primary importance, thus we are forced to transgress the boundaries of purely linguistic analyses.

The semantics of an individual word depends on the wider context of its use. Meanings overlap in the individual uses of a given notion, which thus becomes "polyphonic."

> Each member of a speaking community inherits a word not as a neutral particle of language free from alien interpretations and assessments, non-inhabited by alien voices. On the contrary, he takes a word from an alien voice full of alien sound. The word arrives in his context from another context, carrying a burden of interpretations. The thought of the speaker, who takes possession of the word, finds its former inhabitants within.[121]

The word contains traces of meanings which arose during the acts of its individual uses, and it contains the memory of its earlier uses. Thereby, each new use of the word shame will contain the traces of earlier uses, both on the socio-cultural and individual level. The metalinguistic perspective

[120] E. Jędrzejko, *Wstyd po polsku – czyli o czym „mówią" słowa. Kategorie kulturowe z perspektywy współczesnej lingwistyki*, in E. Kosowska (ed.), *Wstyd w kulturze*..., p. 31.

[121] M. Bakhtin, *Problemy poetiki Dostoyevskogo*, Moscow 1963, pp. 270–271.

tells us to analyze every new usage of a given word regarding the "archaic" aspects involved in it, its own history, and also the specific circumstances of the communication process in which it was used; it will trigger the coexistence and inseparable character of synchrony and diachrony. The "Archaic aspect" of the word shame, here, is based on the framework of the European culture tradition, which constitutes in its texts the contents accumulated in this word.

One of the first semantic descriptions of the phenomenon of shame is found in the works of Aristotle, who in his *Rhetoric* defines it as "a kind of nuisance and anxiety resulting from our present, past or intended misdemeanors which, as we imagine, lead to our disgrace; whereas shamelessness [according to Aristotle] is a kind of disdain and indifference towards misdemeanors of the same nature."[122] Aristotle calls "acts and their manifestations" shameful when they stem from ethical vices, such as: cowardice, dishonesty, promiscuity, greed, flattery, effeminacy, pusillanimity, meanness and boastfulness. Shame under this approach is varied and gradable, dependent on the source of intentions leading to the "misdemeanor," and a deed becomes stronger when it results from the intention of the acting subject himself; it is altogether different when an individual becomes an object of the action provoking shame, "when we become, already became or are about to become victims of deeds which result in disgrace and infamy."[123]

Shame is usually of a public nature; it appears "only towards persons whose opinion we appreciate."[124] Stagirite reminds us of the saying "shame inhabits the eyes," explaining that shameful acts occur in the presence of others, explicitly, "before our very eyes," particularly before the eyes of those who can "spread the word" about our shameful deeds. The fact that shame is "in the eyes of others" is illustrated by the gesture of Penelope, who covers her face – which is a focus of the story connected with the Ajdos statue (Modesty), located near Sparta.[125] According to the story

[122] Aristotle, *Retoryka. Poetyka*, transl., introduction and commentary H. Podbielski, Warsaw 1988, p. 161 [1383b 10].

[123] Ibidem, p. 167 [1384a 15].

[124] Ibidem [1384a 25].

[125] Comp. Pausanias, *Wędrówka po Helladzie. W świątyni i w micie*, transl. from Greek, introduction and commentary J. Niemirska-Pliszczyńska, Wroclaw 1973, pp. XX, 11; R. Graves, *Greek Mythology*, transl. H. Krzeczkowski, Warsaw 1968, 160e; P. Grimal, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, transl. J. Sachse, Wroclaw 1987, p. 160.

told by Pausanias, Penelope was confronted with the choice between following her husband Odysseus or returning to Lacedaemon, where her father Icarius lived. She responded to this choice by covering her face, which her father understands as a decision to leave with her husband. Penelope's shame seems to be connected with her sense of betraying the ties of kinship, disobedience towards her father, which is in contradiction to the marital bond. Penelope's refusal takes place "before her father's eyes," hence the gesture of covering her face.

According to Aristotle's interpretation, shame does not concern only one's own deeds, or those that we are inadvertently subjected to, but also those deeds committed by or towards people who are close to us. Additionally, shame involves both actions and their manifestations such as words and gestures. Under such an approach, shame remains in close connection with the violation of the established cultural norms or the transgressing of the boundaries of the "accepted custom," and, thus, it assumes a knowledge of these norms and customs. Aristotle defines promiscuity as: "having a sexual intercourse with persons with whom it is forbidden, in the place where it is forbidden and at the time when it is forbidden,"[126] which assumes the existence of such cultural norms that define the time, place and subject of the sexual behaviour and whose violation stirs up the anxiety known as shame. Shame under this approach would be directly connected with a self-description generated by a given culture in terms of the codification of behaviour patterns. This would involve those practices which are not included in a particular codification.

The relative and public character of shame, its connection with being familiar with the binding norms and customs, as presented by Aristotle, will be expressed also in other cultural conceptualizations, the most important of which, in the circle of Jewish Christian culture based on Greek philosophy, remains the Biblical story of original sin. This very story will remain one of the most important reference points for all consecutive attempts to define the phenomenon of shame in the European culture.

The history of shame, according to the Jewish Christian tradition, begins when a human commits the original sin, when they dramatically break their connection with God. After discovering that nakedness belongs to evil, they try to cover it before the eyes of those who are looking at them. "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that

[126] Ibidem, p. 161 [1383b 20].

they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves." (Gen. 3,7) The Biblical description of the fall of man introduces an important connection between shame and nakedness into the European culture. Nakedness and exposure will be situated not only in the background of experiencing carnality, as a literal reading of the Biblical story implies, but also in the realm of mental experience, which will make shame an important psychological issue.

The connection between shame and purely physical nakedness is preserved in the theological interpretation of the original sin. Theology distinguishes between the nakedness of Adam and Eve before and after committing the sin. The factor distinguishing both these states is actually the shame itself. Its occurrence signals an important change in human nature. St. Augustine locates this change directly to the sphere of sexuality. Theological interpretation of the original sin by St. Augustine binds the nakedness of the first parents with sin, whereas sin is connected with carnality, and more precisely sexuality, covering the latter with shame. In *The City of God* St. Augustine writes:

> Their condition was different before sin. For as it is written, "They were naked and were not ashamed," not that their nakedness was unknown to them, but because nakedness was not yet shameful, because not yet did lust move those members without the will's consent; not yet did the flesh by its disobedience testify against the disobedience of man. [...] Their eyes, therefore were open, but were not open to this, that is to say, were not observant so as to recognize what was conferred upon them by the garment of grace, for they had no consciousness of their members warring against their will. But when they were stripped of this grace, that their disobedience might be punished by fit retribution, there began in the movement of their bodily members a shameless novelty which made nakedness indecent: it at once made them observant and made them ashamed.[127]

After committing their sin Adam and Eve, according to St. Augustine, lose control over their sexual organs which become independent of their will, since then they have been stamped with the fall of man and as such they must remain covered. In this moment a close connection between sexuality and shame is established, as well as the perception of the body as a source of sin. So established a connection is even more deeply rooted; in the pre-Christian reflection, it has its source in the Platonic thought, which was a reference point for the first Fathers of the Church.

[127] Augustine (St.), *The City of God*, transl. M. Dods, New York 1950, Book XIV, Chapter 17.

Negative meanings connected with carnality in the text of St. Augustine, are merely a repetition of the content included in the early Christian texts. Ryszard Przybylski, when examining the beginnings of monastic life and the emergence of monastic mysticism, notices the rudimentary opposition of the body and the spirit which is presented there; it is a deep experience of a contradiction determining the existence of man.

> Thus monks were convinced that man sins because he thinks in the body. As a snail carries its own shell, likewise the soul carries its own brothel. It is continuously defiled and it must continuously prostitute itself, because it "has" a body. A human being is sinful because he is human and as long as he remains one, until thought escapes from the cathouse of his body, he is forced to live in existential shame.[128]

Man's carnality makes shame an inseparable and constitutional element of human life. The conflict between body and soul, matter and spirit, defined a basic opposition on which the model of the world rests, the model shaped by the texts of the Fathers of the Desert; the division into the sphere of the matter and spirit constituted there was directly connected with their appropriate evaluation, it created an image of axiological hierarchy. The world of matter, including carnality, turned out to be flawed by sin; "the matter, as it was perceived then, was born from sin, false and ignorance."[129] The world of matter along this interpretation remains the evil world in its very nature, contrary to the spiritual world, which is identified as supernatural, unchangeable, not subject to disintegration, "the genuine" and Divine one. Contempt towards this matter constituted a fundamental stimulus to escape into the desert, which further revealed the rooting of man's thought in the matter, which made it a battlefield of a ruthless fight undertaken by the Anchorites against the their carnal desires. The attitude to the body, included in the texts of the first Fathers who laid the basis for the Christian philosophy, was deeply ingrained in the "Platonic scheme;" Platonic philosophy, "pagan" towards Christian thought, became in this way a source of rudimentary opposition repeated in the texts of Christian culture and European culture. As Ryszard Przybylski argues, the "old Platonic concept of the body as a prison of the soul enjoyed a particular popularity among monks. Besides, hermits often spoke about the soul's imprisonment in three dungeons, namely: the world i.e. a material cosmos; in 'a city,' i.e. the civilization established by society, and finally

[128] R. Przybylski, *Pustelnicy i demony*, Cracow 1994, p. 26.
[129] Ibidem, p. 25.

the body i.e. bad desires."[130] The texts of the Fathers of the Dessert and the "prejudice against the body" included in them, which was directly derived from Platonic thought, would be, then, a proper source of the connection between shame and carnality as established by St. Augustine, and as regards the carnality itself between evil and sin.

Situating shame within the realm of sexual experience will return also in the phenomenological ponderings of Max Scheler, according to whom shame was "a vital feeling" which allowed to harness sensual impulses and direct the attention of an individual towards spirituality. According to Scheler, "libido shame" appears already in the first years of childhood, restraining early autoerotic impulses. As the philosopher espouses "shame which takes part in creating a regular sexual drive, is of particular importance not only for the early period, but also for the whole life already as "a libido" shame. Even later in human life, it remains a condition for gaining the freedom of devoting the spirit and work to the objective content and values, and limiting a strong and omnipresent inclination to indulge in libido impulses."[131] Shame prevents an individual from "sensual drive impulses" protecting its inner integrity, which is proved by the decline of shame due to mental disorders. Such a perception of shame is confronted by Scheler with the approach presented by Freud, for whom shame is a form of inner censorship which pushes away indecent contents. The distinction between a psychoanalytical and phenomenological approach would lie, in Scheler's opinion, in a different perception of the relevant meanings of human life; under a phenomenological approach, these would be spiritual ideas, whereas under the psychoanalytical one the libido's impulses. "Freud sees in these impulses, which are overshadowed by shame, a proper content and real meaning of our life, and in the subconscious life only a more subtle and complex symbolism of this reality, i.e. pure 'epiphenomenon.'"[132] This way of thinking will assume a negative role of shame in the human psychological development; it perceives in shame a pattern of hypocrisy opposed to genuine self-perception. On the other hand, Scheler sees shame as a factor defying the "deceptive power" of sensual impulses and leading an individual towards their "deep existence and being;" according to his conviction "shame is not a form of hypocrisy but

[130] Ibidem, pp. 68–69.

[131] M. Scheler, *O wstydzie i poczuciu wstydu*, in M. Grabowski (ed.), *Wstyd i nagość*, Torun 2003, p. 83.

[132] Ibidem, p. 86.

actually a factor that removes it: it is what paves our way to 'ourselves.'"[133] The phenomenological analysis of shame conducted by Scheler is deeply ingrained in the reflection that shame is connected with the sexual drive, which assumes a certain interpretation of the Biblical story where the sin of the first man entails the change leading to the emergence of an uncontrolled sexual drive.

The history of the fall of the first man includes a description of a dramatic change in the existence of a human being. However, this change will not be limited solely to the emerging human sexuality covered by shame, it would also have a much wider dimension. The nakedness noticed and hidden by the ashamed Adam evokes a whole array of meanings which are important for the European culture and which have been updated in its consecutive texts.

The fragment from the Bible which describes the transgression of the Divine rule in the Garden of Eden, apart from the interpretation indicated earlier, establishes the connection between shame and the gaining of the knowledge of good and evil, but also experiencing human distinctness from the Creator who, from this moment on, looks at him from the outside. The gained distinctness is the result of the violent breaking away from the state of being-in-someone-else, in this case being-in-God, the state which constitutes unity in multiplicity. The relation of the primary unity, coexistence and conformity, is replaced by the relation of multiplicity and difference of being-with-someone-else. Having experienced this separation, man gains a perspective of perceiving themselves as a separate and exposed entity. The feeling of exposure leads further to the impulse to cover their intimacy and then to a complete hiding "from God among the Garden." (1 Gen. 3,8) The first man wants to hide not only his deed but also himself as a whole, which leads to a conclusion that his shame is not only limited to the deed, or a particular part of carnality, but it involves the whole person.

The history of the fall of man understood in this way indicates the connection between experiencing shame and the sense of the autonomy of an individual who gains self-awareness; it also indirectly determines the reason for shame, which is the ability gained by a human to distinguish right from wrong. It also points to the reaction to shame, which means the willingness to hide all what is shameful, and the range of shame. As Rüdiger Safranski claims: "The one for whom shame is the reason to

[133] Ibidem, p. 87.

vanish off the face of the earth, wants to live down not only his deed but also disappear himself."[134] Rafał Nahirny affirms: "A man who feels shame wants to disappear because when he is exposed to the looks of others in this particular situation, he experiences a kind of 'self' disintegration."[135] This experience of "self" disintegration may be characterized as a sense of disparity between the desired picture of oneself and the real picture, and thus the sense of incohesion.

In Ricoeur's interpretation "The nakedness of the innocent couple and the shame felt after committing their sin express the purely human transformation of all forms of communication which will from then on remain restrained."[136] From the moment of the fall, human relationships will be ambiguous, stemming from the very nature of the fallen man who was created to be good and became bad, and they will be also held back, hidden under clothes "which will involve all the disguises and masks that make social life possible."[137] A variety interferes into the former unity; the former unity becomes disintegrated. In the story of Adam, human existence becomes split, and from this time onwards "each dimension of a human being carries a double overlapping stamp: the destination to be good and the inclination to be bad."[138]

A commandment given to Adam by God, which sets the creative boundary, becomes alienated, and the boundary is transformed into a ban. God's commandment "suddenly becomes Other than me, while so far it indicated my *Direction*.[139] In this moment an abrupt breakup of the unity between God's will and man's will occurs. Since then, God's commandments have become something external towards a human and take on the character of a threat, a limitation and an obstacle. Divine law goes beyond the boundaries of human nature, it becomes external and, at the same time remains something internal through God's image ingrained in human nature during the act of Creation, which constitutes a duality underlying humanity. The moment of the fall and committing of the sin by the first man is a specific kind of emancipation, a somehow necessary stage in his development. According to Ricoeur "sin constitutes a certain

[134] R. Safranski, *Zło*, transl. I. Kania, Warsaw 1999, p. 18.

[135] R. Nahirny, *Wstyd jako reakcja moralna*, in R. Tańczuk, D. Wolska (ed.), *Aksjotyczne przestrzenie kultury*, Wroclaw 2005, p. 107.

[136] P. Ricoeur, *Symbolika zła*, transl. P. Cichowicz, M. Ochab, Warsaw 1986, p. 293.

[137] Ibidem.

[138] Ibidem.

[139] Ibidem, pp. 300–301.

way for promoting self-awareness. There is no return from the adventure outlined in this way, a crisis which leads to humanization, and which is resolved only at the final stage of justification."[140]

At the moment of the fall the earthly story of shame starts, a shame which becomes one of the factors controlling social life and one of the main patterns of human cultural creation. The sense of shame, next to the sense of guilt and, according to Lotman, also the sense of fear, as contemporary social life theoreticians claim, are the main factors motivating an individual to obey the rules established by the community, which are external to him or her. And furthermore, thanks to the factors mentioned above, these rules are obeyed. However, shame differs from guilt as regards the scope of its relation towards the other that it involves. According to Giddens:

> Guilt concerns directly identity because it basically means anxiety whether the narration, which allows an individual to maintain a coherent biography, corresponds with reality. There is a view that as far as the sense of guilt is a private state of anxiety, shame has a public dimension.[141]

Shame under this approach is directly connected with the integrity of the narration of identity and its relevance to the standards developed under the perception of reality proposed by a given culture and then demonstrated by one of its members. Only interiorized standards that are adopted as one's own may become a reference point in the process of the self-assessment of an individual and verification of particular elements against the holistic structure of the "self." The source of shame is a negative result of this verification and later on the lack of self contentment. According to Giddens: "Shame should be seen in the context of integrity of the 'self,' whereas guilt refers to an individual's sense of wrongdoing."[142] Shame has a public dimension, it appears in confrontation with the other, spreading to the whole person guilt, on the other hand, involves only one particular deed and is of a private nature. The difference between shame and guilt observed here was noticed by Ruth Benedict in her classical work *Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, which addresses the issues of Japanese culture and introduces a dichotomy of the "culture of shame" and "culture of guilt." As Benedict claims:

---

[140] Ibidem, p. 301.

[141] A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. "Ja" i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności*, Warsaw 2001, p. 113.

[142] Ibidem, pp. 92–93.

> Appropriate behavior of man in genuine "cultures of shame" stems from external sanctions, not as in genuine "cultures of guilt," from the inner sense of sin. Shame is the reaction to criticism from others. Man is ashamed because he was openly derided and rejected or because he imagined that he became the object of derision. In both cases the pressure is very strong. However, it requires the existence of the public, at least imaginary public. Whereas guilt does not.[143]

The prerequisite for the sense of shame and the sense of guilt will be self-awareness, directly connected with the awareness of being distinct from others. In the case of shame, when diagnosing its public character, the key factor is the moment of adopting a perspective of the other, the one in whose presence I feel ashamed. This moment connects feeling shame with a whole array of ambiguities which stem from the inability to explicitly mark the boundary between "self" and "the other," and as a consequence, between what is internal and external, private and public. This obliteration of boundaries becomes particularly real in the situation of the man confronted with himself, standing in front of a mirror where self-awareness culminates. In this situation, the number of participants multiplies and their mutual relations get complicated. Mikhail Bakhtin in a short text entitled *Chelovek u zerkala* (*Man in front of a Looking Glass*) wrote as follows:

> It isn't me who is looking at the world with my eyes and looking at myself with the eyes of the world, the other's eyes; I am possessed by the other. There is no naïve wholeness between the inner and the outer. Take a peep at myself in my own absence. The naivety of fusion between the self and the other in a mirror image. An excess of the other. I have no point from which to contemplate myself from the outside. I have no way to approach my own internal self-image. There are somebody else's eyes gazing at me from my eyes.[144]

When a disintegration occurs between the man looking at his self image in a mirror, where the "self" and its observed image become separate elements, a possibility of making them a whole is excluded and the thought of it is rather naïve. The image of man as a consistent and uniform monad must be in this situation rejected. However, when rejecting this option, one should also resign from perceiving this situation in binary categories. A binary model, which involves using a dichotomy such as Self – the Other, or Identical – the Other, seems to be as naïve

[143] R. Benedict, *Chryzantema i miecz. Wzory kultury japońskiej*, transl. E. Klekot, Warsaw 1999, p. 208.

[144] M. Bakhtin, *Sobraniye sochineniy*, vol. 5, Moscow 1996, p. 71.

as the thought about the wholeness of both these elements. Further, in his notes entitled *K voprosom samosoznaniya i samoocenki* (*Problems of self-consciousness and self-assessment*) Bakhtin wrote as follows: "This is how I perceive myself when I think about myself. I put myself on the stage, but I do not stop experiencing me in myself."[145] Taking an external position for self-observation, he still remains inside himself‖ he does not become someone completely different.

> There is an inability to experience oneself completely beside oneself, in the outside world and not on the borderline with this outside world. An umbilical cord aims for this borderline. The connection between a specific lack of faith in one's death (Pascal's thought). I do not know this body, which is completely external and placed completely in the outside world, the body that will become dead some day; it can be the subject of thought but not a live experience.[146]

In Bakhtin's reflection, taking a position of someone else towards myself, a completely external position, is impossible to experience, as this position is possible only in the sphere of the imagination and thought. We can imagine a picture of our dead body in which we do not exist anymore, and we can become one of the witnesses of our death, but its direct experience is inaccessible to us. This implies that adopting the perspective of a complete separation from oneself by means of self observation remains inaccessible to our experience. When we become the Other for oneself, we always preserve a part of the self.

Then how to trace this position in which one can experience self-assessment and consequently feel shame which results from inconsistency, contradiction and dissonance in the structure of the "self"? When adopting a stance of being equal with the Other or being united with the Other, shame becomes impossible, as in such a situation we completely lose the outside perspective that makes the person's assessment possible. When taking the stance of being-in-the-other I do not do anything that would contradict the Other because then it would mean cancelling this stance. The first man seems to have experienced such a situation before committing the original sin. As Paul Ricoeur writes: "In Adam we are a whole and everything, a mythical figure of the first man focuses, at the beginning of the human history, a manifold wholeness of man."[147] Adam is a symbol of a "particular universality," the wholeness with the other, but most of all,

[145] Ibidem, p. 72.
[146] Ibidem.
[147] P. Ricoeur, *Symbolika zła*, p. 290.

the wholeness with God. His being-in-the-other, being-in-God, meant the union of his thought and will with the Divine thought and will. Therefore, shame and also fear of God appear in the moment of his emancipation and consequently the breaking up of the primary bond with the Creator.

Shame is also impossible when a binary model of the "self" is assumed where we willingly can switch from the position of "self" to the position of "the other," completely alien to me. Inconsistency with the other, towards which my existence is autonomous, does not violate the structure of the wholeness of my "self," whereas any transgression of the other into me is a violent act, leading rather to a rebellion and an attempt to eliminate the other, or a fear of it, than to a sense of shame. From an ontological perspective, my being is completely independent from the being of the otherł the coexistence of Self and the Other is possible but it means distinctness, being despite each other.[148] This ontology becomes a sphere free from all dependencies and obligations towards each other and consequently the sphere without any morals, where shame, approached as a moral impulse, loses its meaning.

Shame appears only in the area which can be called after Bakhtin a "contact" zone where the self and the other personalize at the same time, and simultaneously preserve their autonomy. In the ontological perspective, this will mean being-through-the-other which becomes possible by adopting a particular semiotic perception of a human being, which assumes his symbolism/textuality that – according to Wojciech Kalaga – "causes the way of our existence being in part its interpretation from the outside and self-interpretation, which allows shaping the identity and maintaining its existence."[149] The narration of identity consists of a sum of all self-interpretation acts and adopted external interpretations. "Me means my body plus the synthesis of interpretational relations that reach chronologically till the moment of my birthday."[150] Under such an approach, identity of an individual is shaped by consecutive self-interpretation acts performed by distinctiveness from the Other, but also introjections of the Other, which is a manifestation of the possible world. The Other living in me constitutes a noticeable difference or possibility, which ruins the concept of self as a separate monad. As Kalaga claims the "Self must be perceived not as an

[148] W. Kalaga, *Obowiązek Innego. Trzeci*, in W. Kalaga (ed.), *Dylematy wielokulturowości*, Cracow 2004, p. 45.

[149] Ibidem, p. 51.

[150] Ibidem.

existentially isolated entity but as a nebular structure with a formed and recognizable identity but deprived of clearly marked boundaries separating it from the Other. The self to a great extent (in the way of its existence) results from the Other."[151] My identity is greatly shaped by the Other who, in turn, being a non-homogenous entity, contains in his structure his own other, which is the third for me.[152]

Looking at myself, looking at a mirror, I see being myself and all the time experience myself as myself, simultaneously looking through the eyes of the world, the eyes of others, the third ones, as far as I am concerned. The number of participants of this situation multiplies and the boundaries between them get erased, creating nebulas of contact zones which constitute my identity. The plethora creates an integral whole which allows maintaining inherent consistency of the "self." When a dissonance appears, some kind of inherent inconsistency in this structure, the visible "other," having discovered the deed which had been kept in the dark, rejects it or the particular element that is a part of me, and shame arises. The only way to erase this shame is to get rid of the Other, consider him to be outside myself or covering from him what is shameful. Covering from the Other the element which causes shame, assuming that the Other is a part of me, will also mean holding it back from myself, which the mechanism of denial is all about, leading eventually to creative biography. At the level of social life, oblivion or modification of specific events takes place, and consequently the forging of history. In a given moment a role of forgetting is revealed as a pattern of culture which shapes its inner content by rejecting those texts which would violate its inherent consistency. It is also a moment, in which forgetting may become a tool for manipulation and abuse, the means for "conscious memory deletion," behind which there is an intention of avoiding the contents which do not fit into the framework of the dominating self-description of culture. In the case of the incapability to hide before the Other or to delete him from the sphere of one's own identity, shame becomes an element that paralyses the whole self, withholds its dynamics, renders it immobile and leads to its disintegration.

Shame would be simultaneously a given stage of human development, and culture development the element which expresses its inner dynamics, only when the boundaries of shame are transgressed. It will be of a de-

[151] Ibidem.

[152] Ibidem, p. 58.

velopmental nature only when it is treated as a kind of moral reaction. Shame, understood as a sign of self-awareness and the ability of disclosure or insight, is a prerequisite for development, it is a reaction which enables development. Retrospective self-perception, insight into the future, is an inner glance of the Other at oneself. Seeing the future from the perspective of the present, I can see myself already being the Other. Every look at oneself in the past contains an element of assessment from the perspective of oneself but already the Other, it contains the moment of disclosure.

Lack of shame, shamelessness, considering the perspective developed above, may mean either the lack of awareness of cultural rules, the lack of understanding of social rules, or the lack of self-awareness. This is characteristic for childhood. It may also stem from the denial of self-awareness, hiding the content of one's own identity connected with the fear of losing the integrity of the "self." Shame is not merely a moral reaction towards a specific situation, but it wholly defines a relative approach towards the world, towards the Other and towards oneself. Shame constitutes the basis which is conditioned by this relation, being at the same time a factor defining it. Shame is possible only in a given relation.

Thus, shame, on one hand, can be considered as an aspect of the holistic approach to the world, the Other and oneself, and, on the other hand, it can be analyzed according to particular cultural norms as an expression of being familiar with them and then respecting or rejecting them. In this sense, by making a selection of what constitutes the content of culture, it will determine the culture's boundary and, furthermore, by the changeability of the range of the content to which it refers, it establishes the dynamic character of this very boundary. Shame, under this approach, is connected with the familiarity with the norms and directives of a given culture. Bearing in mind various approaches to culture, which were applied by the representatives of the Tartu-Moscow School, we may refer shame to most of these approaches without losing its meaning as a pattern which shapes the inner content of culture, a pattern which establishes a changeable and dynamic boundary between culture and non-culture. Let us consider the most significant attempts, for the given school, to conceptualize culture.

> CULTURE is, above all, a collective notion. An individual may be a carrier of culture, he may actively participate in its development, but culture by nature, similarly to a language, is a social phenomenon. [...] Culture is something common for a given community, a group of people living in the same time and connected by a particular social organization. [...] Culture is a form of communication between people and it

> is possible only in such a group in which people communicate with each other [...]. Every structure which serves the purpose of human communication is a language. This means that it creates a given sign system used according to the rules which are known to the members of a community. Signs are material items (words, drawings, things, etc.), which are important and thus may serve the purpose of conveying meaning.[153]

When perceiving culture as a communication community, shame determines the borderlines of non-culture and anti-culture, comprising the contents which are non-communicated, non-uttered and hidden, but also the contents communicated according to different rules than the ones which are obeyed in a given culture. One should bear in mind that the Tartu-Moscow semioticians contrasted culture with both non-culture and anti-culture, defining the latter two in a distinct way. Non-culture was contrasted with culture perceived as a system of rules which generates a rudimentary opposition of "ordered – disorderly." In contrast anti-culture was an opposition of culture perceived as a collection of standardized texts which created an opposition known as "proper – improper." In the latter case "culture is not opposed to chaos [as it would be in the former case], but to a system charged negatively."[154] The sphere of communicating ideas related to human physiology, particularly involving sexuality, would be an example of determining the boundaries between culture, non-culture and anti-culture. As regards this sphere, in the official language of a given culture, there would be no names or texts referring directly to human sexual behaviour, which would not imply the lack of such an activity, but rather the fact that it is situated beyond the rules of culture, in the sphere of non-culture. On the other hand, there is a rich collection of vulgarisms, beyond the official language, which constitutes an internally ordered sphere of anti-culture. Human sexuality may be incorporated into the system of culture as medical professional vocabulary. A counterpoint for both medical language and vulgarisms is a sophisticated system of terms and symbols that transform the physiological aspect of sexuality in its cultural form, which is directly connected with transforming sexuality, common for the world of humans and animals, into eroticism, typical for the human world. In this case shame would serve as a pattern transforming physiology into culture.

The problem of transforming sexuality into culture and the role of shame in the process was thoroughly examined by Georges Bataille. Ac-

[153] Y. Lotman, *Rosja i znaki*..., p. 6.

[154] Y. Lotman, B. A. Uspiensky, *O semioticheskom mekhanizme*..., p. 154.

cording to him "eroticism is a sexual activity, as much as it is different from animal sexuality. The sexual activity of man does not have to be erotic. It becomes erotic when it ceases to be elementary animal sexuality."[155] When characterizing the transformation of an animal into man, which can be also approached in the category of the transition from nature to culture, Bataille pays attention to two crucial moments. The first would be the emergence of tools which serve man to fulfill his needs and to work. Along with work, which distinguishes man from animals, there are also some bans. Initially, these bans refer to the area of death and determine, among others, the rules of burial of the dead, but then the sexual bans appear. Man broke free from his animal nature by "working and realizing that he is mortal, but also by moving from shameless sexuality to the shameful one, whose derivative is eroticism."[156] Shame appears here as a culture producing a pattern which overlaps with the insights of the Tartu-Moscow semioticians, who saw it as a forcing drive of culture, and one of its most crucial mechanisms, Bataille finds "an antinomic experience of ban and transgression"[157] in the sphere of experiencing eroticism and limitations related to it, which constitutes the very core of his considerations. Transgression is a moment in which a ban is lifted, but not completely abolished. Thus, "it is something else than a return to nature." Experiencing a ban is, according to Bataille, the essence of humanity, the basis for its rooting in culture after leaving the animal nature.

> The truth about bans is the key to our human nature. We must and we can realize that bans were not imposed on us from the outside. We discover it with fear when we transgress a ban, particularly in a moment of suspension, when the ban is still in force and yet we follow an impulse which the ban opposes. If we obey the ban, when we are obedient, we do not come to this realization. But in the moment of transgression, we feel fear without which there would be no ban: this is how the experience of sin works. Experience leads to transgression, a successful one which maintains the ban, only to indulge in it. Inner experience of eroticism requires from the one who goes through it an equally big sensitivity to fear, from which the ban results, as to the desire to violate the ban.[158]

The nature of transgression is such that the violation of a ban simultaneously maintains it, restores it and re-imposes it. Basic bans on which

[155] G. Bataille, *Erotyzm*, transl. M. Ochab, Gdansk 2007, p. 31.
[156] Ibidem, p. 32.
[157] Ibidem, p. 40.
[158] Ibidem, p. 42.

human nature rests will be such commandments as "Thou shall not kill" or "Thou shall not commit adultery." Sexual activity, contrary to the realm of work, is violent, hence an impulse to fulfill the desire immediately disturbs work, which results in the necessity to limit the sexual freedom. "The sexual behavior of man will always be subject to some rules and certain limitations, some particular restrictions. [...] the ban which opposes sexual freedom is universally effective; particular bans are its changing aspects."[159] Existence of the global ban on sexual activity does not mean that it is totally respected, "it means a practice which is also a transgression,"[160] i.e. violating the ban and re-imposing it due to the fear experienced in the moment of violation. Primitive animal nature is something that man is ashamed of after breaking away from it, and this shame keeps him in the sphere of culture. "This is the human world, created by negating animal behaviour or nature, which then denies itself and in this denial transgresses itself, but it does not return to what it had denied earlier."[161]

The problem of transforming natural functions of sexual behaviour into cultural ones, which results from conforming to additional bans, as it was addressed by Bataille, will appear directly in the text by the Tartu-Moscow semioticians devoted to the issue of shame. This transformation is explained within the scope of understanding culture "as a system of additional restrictions imposed on natural human behavior" which has its source in the concept of Lévi-Strauss. Limitations imposed on members of a given culture – according to Lotman – can be regulated by fear and shame, which would boil down to a distinction between legal and moral norms of behaviour. Under this approach, shame regulates obeying moral norms of behaviour. When explaining the mechanisms of shame and fear as those regulating culture, Lotman further defines the boundaries of their scope. Distinguishing a group that is controlled by shame in society and a group that is controlled by fear overlaps with the division between "us" and "them." The restrictions imposed on "us" and on "them" are in this perspective fundamentally different. "The cultural 'us' – means society, inside which the norms of shame and honour are binding. Fear and coercion regulate our attitude towards 'others.'"[162] Thus, "if the noble

[159] Ibidem, pp. 54–55.

[160] Ibidem, p. 76.

[161] Ibidem, p. 87.

[162] Y. Lotman, *O siemiotikie poniatij "wstyd" i "strach" w mechanizmie kul'tury*, in *Tiezisy dokladow IV letniej szkoly po wtoricznym modielirujuszczim sistemam*, Tartu 1970, p. 98.

community of the 18th century, in its ideal shape is organized by norms of honor, whose transgression brings about shame, then in the case of the external peasant community it imposes bans by using fear."[163] The text quoted here is the only one which comes from the Moscow-Tartu School wholly devoted to the analysis of the notion of shame. Due to its scope, this is only an outline of the problem and, at the same time by revealing a crucial meaning of shame in culture, it proposes a wider analysis of the phenomenon which I have attempted to present in this text.

The tools developed by the Tartu-Moscow School, enriched by the elements of hermeneutics, allow conducting a historical and cultural analysis of shame in its axiological, psychological and theological dimension. They make it possible to determine how the mechanism of shame functions as a culture-producing pattern. Further research would require an analysis of particular cultural texts in order to determine the scope and way of their functioning in a given category as well as their historical background, since, as we established earlier, following the thought of Soviet semioticians, any study of cultural phenomena is a historical study. However, this task should be conducted in separate texts.

6. Shame in culture: between pornography and eroticism

In the closing fragment we will resign from a detailed analysis of particular texts of culture and will only attempt to observe a mechanism of shame in the sphere of human sexuality of the European culture so as to indicate certain moments of transformation noticeable in the cultural representations of sexuality. Applying historical perspective to review the issue of shame in culture will allow us to verify the preliminary thesis put forward by Soviet semioticians, namely: "Shame is one of the most powerful driving forces of culture."

Human sexuality, as an inseparable element of human nature is becoming a great cultural issue, the subject of reflection and art in Europe. However, expressions of sexuality and its representation in texts of the European culture will always be determined by certain conditions. The borderline between acceptable and unacceptable forms of expression of

[163] Ibidem, p. 99.

sexuality is also the borderline between erotic art, eroticism and pornography. The last will always be an inseparable element of culture, or rather anti-culture, due to its inherent contradiction of the rules dominating the official culture. The meaning of the word "pornography" could be derived from its entomology (*porne* = a prostitute, *graphein* = write[164]), but a precise definition of its semantic area seems impossible, despite many attempts that have been undertaken. This impossibility to a great extent stems from cultural and historical changeability of the approaches to what pornography is and what it is not. Such changeability will be taken into consideration mostly by cultural studies which are able to recognize the phenomenon of cultural relativism.

> Cultural studies are dominated by [...] the awareness of changeability of human nature throughout ages and its various perceptions in different cultures. Pornography is not an isolated phenomenon here, i.e. a pathology which suddenly haunts the society, but an element of the cultural system, a part of a symbolic whole. Therefore, pornography acquires cultural peculiarity and can be studied as a specific cultural text. Pornography uses styles of expression, genres, fiction patterns and the manner of constructing characters, etc. which are characteristic for a given culture. Hence, what is acceptable in one culture may appear to be an extreme pathology in another. Similarly, pictures which were perceived as decidedly pornographic in one epoch could have been perceived as acceptable in another.[165]

What is considered a pornographic text depends every time on cultural, social and political context. A text including a content which is considered pornographic in a given culture receives a special status. It is, to some extent, excluded from the stream of official culture, it is situated on the borderline, where it can be either engulfed by the official culture or totally eliminated from it, i.e. forgotten. From this perspective literary texts with the content perceived as pornographic by dominating public discourse, but on the other hand representing an esthetic value typical for works of art, seem to be the most interesting. In the history of the world literature there were such texts as *Tropic of Cancer* by Henry Miller, *Memories of a Woman of Pleasure* by John Clelan, and *Lady Chatterly's Lover* by D. H. Lawrence, among others. *Ulysses* by James Joyce occupies a special place among texts from the borderline, and nowadays this text is perceived as a masterpiece of European art. This very work, eleven years after being published (1922), was considered in the United States as obscene and

[164] See H. Montgomery Hyde, *A History of Pornography*, London 1964.

[165] L. M. Nijakowski, *Pornografia. Historia, znaczenie, gatunki*, Warsaw 2010, p. 36.

therefore banned from printing. A litigation pending in New York District Court was supposed to finally resolve the dispute as to the obscenity of *Ulysses*. Morris L. Ernst, who conducted the proceedings, consulted several persons of high authority trying to prove the thesis on changeability of obscenity criteria and invalidity of the criteria applied to evaluate Joyce's novel. He argued that Joyce's book is too complex and sophisticated to be read by wantons searching for indulgence.[166] Final ruling was adjudged by Judge John Monro Woolsey on 6th December 1933. The judgement decreed by the American Judge, preceded by a thorough analysis of the controversial work, was as follows:

> But in *Ulysses*, in spite of its unusual frankness, I do not detect anywhere the leer of the sensualist. I hold, therefore, that it is not pornographic. [...] As I have stated, *Ulysses* is not an easy book to read. It is brilliant and dull, intelligible and obscure by turns. In many places it seems to me to be disgusting, but although it contains, as I have mentioned above, many words usually considered dirty, I have not found anything that I consider to be dirt for dirt's sake. Each word of the book contributes like a bit of mosaic to the detail of the picture which Joyce is seeking to construct for his readers. [...] I am quite aware that owing to some of its scenes *Ulysses* is a rather strong draught to ask some sensitive, though normal, persons to take. But my considered opinion, after long reflection, is that whilst in many places the effect of *Ulysses* on the reader undoubtedly is somewhat emetic, nowhere does it tend to be an aphrodisiac. *Ulysses* may, therefore, be admitted into the United States.[167]

The decision of judge Woolsey made it possible for the book to enter American publishing market, thereby contributing to its immense success. This decision was a reflection of transformations with respect to moral issues and indicated the changeability and ambiguity of obscenity criteria. The book by James Joyce and the controversy which arouse around it make a question of the borderline between pornography and art a significant one; the former is essentially negatively evaluated by culture and the latter constitutes its ideal form of expression.

Before moving on to the issue of the borderline between art and pornography, it is necessary to emphasize an important detail. *Ulysses* by Joyce was accused of pornography and obscenity, but these notions, albeit related, are not synonymous. Jerzy Ziomek when analyzing the etymology of the word writes:

> In Latin *caenum* means simply dirt, thus obscene equals dirty, ugly, repulsive or indecent. Indecency may, but does not have to, include eroticism. Obscenity lies

[166] See R. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, Oxford 1959.

[167] Ibidem.

> mostly in language as an ingredient of private opposition of the two connotations. In a given semantic field, obscenity is a prerequisite of "no-obscenity" and the other way round. Obscenity cannot be removed from a language without detriment to systemic opposition and without the resignation from a possibility of choice and interplay between a strong and a weak expression, or a positive and a negative one. One may only condemn inappropriateness of using the word *obscenum*, which is determined by the rules of social coexistence.[168]

The above quoted comment clearly indicates that the term obscenity has a broader scope of meaning than pornography, it refers to a wider range of phenomena. Not everything which is obscene is connected with eroticism, but if such a connection occurs then we are dealing with pornography. Pornography would constitute the part of eroticism which is considered indecent and obscene, i.e. "dirty," "ugly," "repulsive" and "shameful." Following this stream of thoughts we could conclude that in the field of eroticism, pornography is a necessary part of the opposition, it is a prerequisite of acceptable and recognized eroticism. In a wider plan it would be a reflection of the opposition between culture and anti-culture or non-culture, depending whether the domain of pornography is considered to be internally ordered, according to the rules of culture, or non-ordered. Pornography which is banned from public presentation remains beyond the domain of the official culture, and at the same time, it determines its borders.

The problem of pornography was first and foremost discussed as a social and psychological problem which was described as a kind of malfunction, and rarely an aesthetical problem.

> At least in England and in America scientific analysis and evaluation of pornography is strictly limited to discussions conducted by psychologists, sociologists, lawyers, professional ethicists and social publicists. Pornography is treated as an illness which should be diagnosed. [...] It appears to be a collective pathology, an illness of the whole culture, whose reasons are unanimously determined. A growing production of lubricious books is attributed to the Christian inheritance of sexual inhibitions which is degenerating and also lack of awareness.[169]

Pornography is not a problem of art, art and pornography are considered to be mutually exclusive fields. Narrowing the problem down to literature we might say that pornography is not a problem of literature either. Pornographic texts are excluded from the domain of literature,

[168] J. Ziomek, *Kto jest pornografem?*, "Teksty" 1(13)/1974, p. 150.

[169] S. Sontag, *Wyobraźnia pornograficzna*, transl. I. Sieradzki, "Teksty" 2(14)/1974, pp. 37–38.

and hence their esthetic value does not undergo any evaluation, "because if we define a pornographic book as something that does not belong to literature (and the other way round), then analyzing particular books does not make sense."[170] Opposition between literary and pornographic texts lies on several premises. Firstly, different functions of the contrasted texts are taken into consideration, assuming that anticipated literary goals are incommensurate with the function of a pornographic work which lies in sexual arousal of the reader. Secondly, literature, contrary to pornography develops a complex thematic line, and constructs a plot which should have some compositional value. Moreover, pornography is characterized by negligence of expression means, "its aim is to evoke non-verbal images; language is degraded and plays only a subsidiary role."[171] The last of the reconstructed arguments put forward by Susan Sontag in favour of contrasting pornography with literature takes into consideration a degree of inner complexity of characters and relations between them. Pornography appears here as a mean of depersonalization and reduces an individual to her or his bodily functions.[172]

Sontag decidedly rejects the postulate to exclude pornographic texts from the domain of literature, considering that they fully deserve the status of an artistic work. According to her, a question regarding the opposition between literature and pornography requires establishing the essence of art as a field including literature.

> If one has to ponder over the issue whether pornography and literature are indeed in opposition, if it is really necessary to assume that pornographic works may belong to literature, then such assumption must contain a general idea about the nature of art. Generally speaking, art (and artistry) is a state of consciousness; abundance of various forms of consciousness constitutes the material for art.[173]

As much as the implementation of any form of consciousness in everyday life might endanger social order, the expression of the variety of these forms lays basis for literary creation. Moreover, a task of an artist would be to show these states of consciousness which are unattainable in everyday life. Artist's vocation involves showing reality from a perspective which is not commonly accessible.

---

[170] Ibidem, p. 39.
[171] Ibidem, p. 40.
[172] Ibidem, pp. 40–41.
[173] Ibidem, p. 42.

> His toil involves finding some peculiarities in his experiences – objects and acts which fascinate and captivate, and not only (as the old concept of an artist assumed) enrich or amuse. He fascinates mainly by moving further in the dialectics of horror. He tries to make his work repulsive, incomprehensible and inaccessible, shortly speaking he wants to offer something which is (or seems to be) undesirable. A model artist is a salesman who sells madness.[174]

Under such approach the task of an artist involves transgression, crossing the border between the possible and probable, and transgressing the border of shame. He becomes essentially shameless by using an exposure as his tool, by expressing what is beyond expression and by revealing what is hidden.

The author of *The Pornographic Imagination*, contrary to the opposition of literature and pornography reconstructed above, attributes a status of literature to pornographic texts, pursuant to the "disturbed" consciousness found in them, which is inherent to artistic creation.

> A pornographic work grows bigger than trash and becomes a part of literary history, not because of a distance or imposing a common life consciousness on the "disturbed consciousness" of an erotomaniac. Contrary, this originality, astuteness, authenticity and power of the disturbed consciousness embodied in a work of art contribute to this merit. From this perspective, the unique character of consciousness preserved in pornographic books is as such neither immoral nor non-literary.[175]

Sontag rejects these explanations of pornography which appeal to the thesis about deforming natural human sexuality throughout the centuries of domination of the western Christianity morality which connected natural instincts with the sense of guilt and shame. Such thesis would be connected with the belief that "human sexual desire, if not disturbed, is a natural pleasant function and the category of obscenity is a convention, a fiction imposed on nature by society convinced that sexual function includes something vicious."[176] Sontag, referring to European literature argues that "obscenity" is something more than the effect of limitations imposed on an individual by society. She perceives in sexual behavior something which is ambiguous in terms of source, defining this experience as "extreme," it is connected with ecstasy, "sexuality is one of demonic forces of human consciousness."[177]

---

[174] Ibidem, p. 43.
[175] Ibidem, p. 45.
[176] Ibidem, p. 49.
[177] Ibidem.

> Reality which is created by a pornographic imagination is a total reality. It is able to absorb, transform and explain everything included in it and boil it down to one common currency of an erotic imperative. All actions are presented as a set of sexual activities.[178]

Religious awareness is another form of awareness creating total reality, as it describes any accessible materials in categories of sacrum and profanum. Sexuality often meets religiosity and sexual ecstasy encounters religious ecstasy, which was proved by Bataille, quoted repeatedly. The oeuvre of de Sade, which will be discussed later in this text, is an example of creating total reality in reference to sexuality.

Distinguishing between a work of art, a literary work and a pornographic text is often conducted by referring to goals pursued by them. An appropriate goal of pornography would be sexual arousal and every text which achieves this and only this goal might be perceived as pornographic. Erotic motifs present in literature do not account for its pornographic character if their occurrence serves other purposes than sexual ones, if they are necessary to obtain higher goals such as expressing a certain opinion regarding human condition. Sexuality would be in such case only a tool to express higher values. However, such explanation although often used by artists to justify their exploitation of erotic content, would not be quite sincere and depreciating sexuality as such.

> It is partly right but also very inconsequent, inconsequence lies in a silent assumption that eroticism does not create an additional value itself, that it is, at best, neutral and harmless, like *vehiculum* or *massa tabulettae* deprived of any active ingredients.[179]

Taking a closer look at the representations of human sexuality in the European culture, presented below, we will concentrate mainly on distinguishing between acceptable behaviors and those defined as shameful and beneath human dignity, inconsistent with convictions about the proper realization of a natural, but embarrassing inclination. We will start examining representations of sexuality in the long time perspective from the place considered to be a cradle of the European culture, namely ancient Greece. Ancient Greece, at various stages of its development,[180] in a precise and explicit, albeit rather complex manner, indicates which sexual behaviours

[178] Ibidem, p. 53.

[179] J. Ziomek, *Kto jest pornografem?*, pp. 150–151.

[180] The first written words in Greek come from the 8th century B.C., whereas the end of culture of the ancient Greece dates back to the 6th century A.D. Greek antiquity thus

should be perceived as shameful or disgraceful and which do not violate human dignity. The area of what is disgraceful or shameful is determined by a status in social hierarchy. Dominant or submissive position in a sexual relationship should, according to Greek sources, reflect the position in the social hierarchy. Thus a man will always occupy a dominant position towards a woman as well as a slave.

> It is naturally accepted that slaves are at the master's disposal: their fate makes them sexual objects. [...] Whereas natural subordination and position requires a woman to be passive, although it does not tarnish her behavior because it is in accordance with what the nature dictates and what determines her status. On the other hand, whatever in sexual behavior of a free man – and more importantly a man who due to his birth, estate and prestige occupies or should occupy a superior position – could indicate subordination, acceptance of dominance or voluntary slavery, will always be perceived as shameful: the bigger the shame if a man agrees to become a submissive object of someone's ecstasy.[181]

Sexual behavior disturbing "natural order" will be considered in ancient Greece as shameful and disgraceful.

Greeks were fully aware of a variety of human sexual behaviors including homosexual ones although in their language we do not find words distinguishing between homosexual and heterosexual behavior. As Kenneth J. Dover argues:

> Greek culture differed from ours but it accepted without reservations some alternation in human sexual attitudes, thus *implicite* contradicting that such alternation should pose any problems to an individual or a society; it very kindly reacted to any verbal or non-verbal manifestations of homosexual desire and enjoyed addressing homosexual issues in literature and art. So it left us with many examples of openness in this respect and we rather do not find such works of Greek writers, artists or philosophers in which homosexuality would be described in a latent or suppressed manner. Overt homosexuality was a common phenomenon at the beginning of the 4th century B.C.[182]

Nowadays we have access to many Greek texts of culture containing some evidence of homosexual behavior,[183] which allow a partial recon-

---

comprises 1300 years. See K. J. Dover, *Homoseksualizm grecki*, transl. J. Margański, Cracow 2004.

[181] M. Foucault, *Historia seksualności*, transl. B. Banasiak, T. Komendant, K. Matuszewski, Warsaw 2000, p. 346.

[182] K. J. Dover, *Homoseksualizm grecki*, p. 13.

[183] These are numerous paintings on Greek vases and literature among which Dover distinguishes five sources: "a) late archaic poetry and early classic poetry; b) attic comedy,

struction of the meaning of relations between Greek men. In the face of a fully acceptable "alternation" in ancient Greece there was a problematic issue of a free young man, whose social status was ambiguous, which situated him in the field of play between shame and honor. Not being entitled to all rights of a free individual, he did not remain subordinate in the manner that slaves and women did. Texts indicate clearly that he was not included in any sexual ban, he could participate in a sexual relationship, although it was determined by particular rules. One of such behaviors which was considered to be against the law and deprived a man of a possibility of performing numerous civic functions was "prostitution," among others. It was understood as having many sexual partners without any selection and deriving material benefits from thereof. But Greeks believed that even more scandalous was a consent to adopt a "submissive and humiliating position of an object of pleasure for others."[184] A young man that was at the same time an object of suitors who, according to nature pursue his beauty, should simultaneously avoid a passive position of an object of pleasure which creates "an antimony of a boy."[185] The only acceptable form of sexual relationship in which a young man remains passive was an intercourse with an elderly free man, who remained in a dominant position towards a youth, as having full rights and social prestige. However, such a relationship, as Michel Foucault writes on the basis of Greek sources, requires certain behavioral patterns on both sides.

> A boy cannot identify himself with the role which he has to play, he should refuse, resist, escape and meander and when he finally surrenders he should take into consideration the position of the one that he surrenders to (his value, status, virtues), and benefits that he can count on (rather shameful when it is all about money, but honorable when it is about being trained in male obligations, future support in society or long lasting friendship).[186]

Sexual relationship between men which would soon receive a status of a disgraceful behavior inconsistent with nature,[187] was indirectly expressed

particularly by Aristophanes and his contemporaries; c) Plato; d) the speech of Aischynes against Timarchos; e) homosexual poetry from the hellenic period" (K. J. Dover, *Homoseksualizm grecki*, p. 21).

[184] M. Foucault, *Historia seksualności*, p. 349.

[185] Ibidem, p. 351.

[186] Ibidem, p. 355.

[187] In *Nicomachean ethics* Aristotle writes: "Sexual intercourses between men also belong here; this inclination is inborn in some of them and in others it stems from a habit, like in those that have been in disgrace since their youth. [...] Surrendering to any of these

by using phrases suggesting it, such as "do it" (*diaprattesthai to pragma*), "surrender," "give in," "provide services."[188] The sphere of sexuality in Greek texts is morally questionable, but sexual behaviors are not determined by the imposed legal code, they are regulated directly, according to the author of *The History of Sexuality*, by establishing a "dominating individual."[189] Ancient Greece was a place where the notion of sexual abstinence was born, which arose from a conviction that "sexual activity as such is dangerous and costly, it is too strictly connected with losing life substance."[190] Sexual morality based on abstinence constitutes an element of individual self-fulfillment, aiming at "finding the most beautiful and perfect shape for one's existence."[191]

> A reflection on sexual behavior as a moral issue was for them [Greeks] not a way of interiorization, justification or establishing as a rule general bans binding on everyone; it was rather a way of creating an esthetics of existence, a wise art of freedom understood as a power play for a small part of population consisting of adult and free men.[192]

The question of the "boy's honor," as the most complex and the least obvious issue, constituted one of the central topics of the Greek reflection on sexuality. In the history of the European culture in the long-term perspective the topic of sexual relationship between men gave way to other topics leading to a transformation of the perception of human sexuality and the rules governing it. The way of approaching sexuality have been changeable throughout ages. One of the fundamental changes in this field involving shifting the emphasis from a boy figure to a female figure was recorded by Michel Foucault:

> One will be able to notice that in the course of a gradual evolution the focal point is shifting: slowly a woman becomes an issue. Naturally, it does not mean the end of making love with boys but it would not be discussed anymore and no one would ponder over it. However, a woman and the attitude towards her would determine the tone of moral reflection about sexual pleasures: be it in a form of the virginity motif, the importance of marital behavior or the values of symmetry and reciprocity between a married couple.[193]

inclinations lies beyond the borders of meanness, similarly to savagery." Aristotle, *Etyka nikomachejska*, transl. D. Gromska, in Aristotle, *Dzieła wszystkie*, vol. 5, Warsaw 1996, p. 220.

[188] See M. Foucault, *Historia seksualności*, p. 353.

[189] Ibidem, p. 376.

[190] Ibidem.

[191] Ibidem.

[192] Ibidem, p. 378.

[193] Ibidem, p. 379.

Next to this significant change we are dealing with an array of transformations in the field of intimacy which constitute an element of changes occurring within the European culture. As we are aware of the broadness of the topic we will mark only the most important thematic dominants in European texts devoted to sexuality, we will indicate only some of the transformations of the approach to sexuality.

The issue of sexuality is a major problem of the Medieval ages which put forward an image of a woman seen as a root of all evil and temptations awaiting for a faithful Christian believer. A woman for Medieval authors is an embodiment of infernal temptations and appears as a "servant of the devil, a witch, a pagan in her very nature."[194] As Jean Delumeau indicates, antifeminism was not an invention of Christian writers, it was present earlier, it was expressed in the vision of a woman as the one who brought evil to the earth (Greek Pandora, Jewish Eve). Christianity only contributed to the development and implementation of the conviction, present in the European culture, about the sinister nature of a female, which existed in the European thought in various forms until the 20th century.[195] This conviction developed against the text from the New Testament, in which a woman is represented as equal to a man, because Jesus was often surrounded by women and perceived them as worthy companions equal with men, which was a novelty in comparison with the Greek and Roman approach as well as the Jewish one.

> Equality fostered by the Gospels would surrender to the fact born in the cultural context in which Christianity spread. Patriarchal structures of Jews and Greek-Romans will jointly play against the subversive "annunciation of equal dignity" of both spouses and a long intellectual tradition which since Pythagoreanism to stoicism through Plato promulgated separation from earthy reality and contempt towards manual work and body ("Tota mulier in utero").[196]

In Christian awareness a woman would be burdened with guilt for the original sin. Thus, Tertulian writes:

---

[194] A. Gurievitch, *Problemy średniowiecznej kultury ludowej*, transl. Z. Dobrzyniecki, Warsaw 1987, p. 153.

[195] See S. de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe*, Paris 1949.

[196] J. Delumeau, *Strach w kulturze Zachodu XIV–XVIII w.*, transl. A. Szymanowski, Warsaw 1986, p. 291 [orig. J. Delumeau, *La Peur en Occident (XIVe-XVIIIe siècles)*, Paris 1978].

> You should always wear mourning, be covered in rags and full of remorse to redeem the sin of bringing the humankind to destruction [...]. Woman you are the gate of the devil. You touched the tree of the Devil, you were the first to violate Divine law.[197]

The blame for the sin is put mainly on female sexuality, which made virginity the greatest virtue. According to the 16th century statement: 'virginity and virtue populate paradise.[198]

A woman is expected to be shy and cover her sinful sexuality. Manifestations of extreme misogyny of the Medieval ages were contrasted with the cult of Virgin Mary and the ideal of courtly love which elevates a female figure. However, neither the cult of Virgin Mary nor songs of the troubadours were able to contradict the phenomenon of diabolization of a woman.[199]

Radical approach in the Medieval Ages suppressed sexual representations, simultaneously aiming for full limitation of its manifestations. Penitentials which listed an extensive and detailed catalogue of forbidden sexual behaviors remain the best source of knowledge about the Medieval sexuality. *Libri Poenitentiales* by Burchard of Worms is an example of them containing a list of all possible sexual relationships, the author lists precisely and knowledgeably various sexual "offences" and penances pertaining to them. Sexual life of Medieval Europe was mainly regulated by the Church which first and foremost, according to the research of Aron Gurievitch, introduced a ban on marriages between persons who were related. Another goal of the Church was to establish a conformity between sexual relationships and "social tradition and Christian teaching,"[200] with the latter allowing such relationships only as a way to preserve the species. This led to creating an opposition which existed within the Medieval outlook on life: "pleasure – preserving human kind."[201] The Church was obliged to protect its followers from temptations awaiting them, which manifested itself in the full control of marital intimacy. Lust and pleasure connected with it became the biggest enemy of a Christian.

> The Church always saw in sexual relations a threat of an undisciplined element that will not relent to the control of reason, hence alarming. Eroticism evokes undesired

[197] Tertulian, *De cultu Feminarum*, in *Corpus Christianorum*, vol. I, Turnhout 1954, p. 343.

[198] J. Delumeau, *Strach w kulturze Zachodu*..., p. 293.

[199] Ibidem, p. 295.

[200] Ibidem, p. 152.

[201] Ibidem.

> states of soul. Christian authorities taught that sexual intercourse pulls a human away from God.[202]

Bodily eroticism resulted in isolation from God and caused undesired states of a soul, thus it was necessary to control it in a strict manner. Sexuality is situated in a close connection with sin, guilt and shame, pushed into the realm of the world which is seen as unordered, evil, chaotic, unpredictable, deprived of rules and dangerous. Procreation which takes place in marriage should avoid risky flushes of lust and passion. Similarly as in ancient Greece, an element of sexual abstinence and self-control appears here as a prerequisite of pursuing perfection, which makes us reject a repeated thesis about Christian sources of the idea of sexual abstinence.

The uncontrolled explosion of human sexuality suppressed on a daily basis took place during the carnival period when binding rules and laws were suspended. Referring to the theory of Georges Bataille we will consider this explosion only a kind of a riot which strengthened the laws temporarily suspended. Periodical negation of cultural norms was used to restore and strengthen them. This led us to a conclusion that the carnival culture actually served the official culture, at least in two ways, on one hand, it enforced it and made it stronger and on the other, by a mechanism of criticism and exposure, livened it up. As Mikhail Bakhtin argued:

> It can be stated, with certain reservations, that the Medieval man led a double life: one was official, stiff, sinister and serious, tamed by the reins of a severe hierarchical order, full of fears, dogmas, humbleness and respect for authority, whereas the other was streetbound and carnival one, uninhibited and full of ambivalent laughter, blasphemy and profanation of all sanctity, demythologizing obscenity and familiar contact with everyone and everything. Both of these elements were sanctioned, only strictly separated in time. Without understanding that both these systems of living and thinking (the official one and the carnival one) followed one another and they made each other even stranger, one cannot explore a typical cultural mentality of the Medieval man.[203]

The words of Bakhtin quoted above suggest that the official culture was closely interlinked with the carnival culture, the latter could be defined as anti-culture, as it builds its own ordered system of rules by negation of the officially binding system of rules. Both spheres mutually condition each other and define each other by mutual reference. Gurievitch directly indi-

---

[202] A. Gurievitch, *Problemy średniowiecznej kultury...*, p. 153.

[203] M. Bachtin, *Problemy poetyki Dostojewskiego*, transl. N. Modzelewska, Warsaw 1970, p. 198.

cates the dialectics of the "top" and the "bottom" in the Medieval culture captured by Bakhtin, "carnival exposing official, 'serious' values to laughter, thereby acknowledged them by 'playing with them,' it incorporated them into its own universe."[204] Gurievitch, by referring to Bakhtin's theory at the same time criticizes it. The sharp opposition between the official culture and the carnival culture in the Medieval ages established by the author oft *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics* remains a target of the most severe criticism: "A violent and rebellious element of folk culture of laughter was contradicted by static, solemn and heavenly religious culture. Opposition of the two cultures appears to the scholar as an opposition of movement and stillness, life and numbness."[205] Gurievitch maintains that the official culture was not properly analyzed under such approach, and its whole complexity was thereby overlooked. Lack of balanced characteristics of both cultures hinders, in the opinion of the medievalist, the comprehension of their mutual dependence in the consciousness of the Medieval man. Their mutual relationship cannot be boiled down to a simple opposition as Bakhtin himself indicates by introducing a category of ambivalence, which is then developed in the critical works and continuation of Gurievitch.

> This dialogue of both cultural patterns within the Medieval culture can be understood when we do not restrict ourselves to postulating their separation and antithesis-based relation but begin with the hypothesis of their mutual internal influence. Dual character of the Medieval culture should be approached not as a dispute between two metaphysically contradictory uniformities, not as "an argument of the deaf" but as a presence of one culture in the thought and the world of the other, and vice versa.[206]

The theses formulated by Gurievitch on the ground of Bakhtin's concept tell us to reject the simplified construction of contrasting the official culture with the non-official one and official eroticism with pornography stemming from the above, one should consider a mutual relationship which conditions the dynamics of culture.

Pornographic representations in its proper, recorded form[207] appeared in the 16th century in Italy.[208] They spread thanks to the invention of print. Initially, they were based on a language code which was connected with

[204] A. Gurievitch, *Problemy średniowiecznej kultury*..., p. 266.

[205] Ibidem, p. 267.

[206] Ibidem, pp. 268–269.

[207] Sources containing frivolous and obscene content were present in European culture also in the Medieval ages, but in the form of stories passed on in verbal form.

[208] Earlier in the mid 14th century, *Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio was considered obscene.

powerful textualization of senses. It was a word not a picture that constituted the main medium for conveying the erotic content. Both direct message containing vulgar language and sophisticated metaphors were used here. Obscenity and triviality was combined with sophisticated social and political criticism as well as philosophical reflection. Pornographic literature from the Renaissance skillfully combined low and high culture,[209] the "top" and the "bottom," "the official culture" and "the carnival culture." Incorporating "a logic of look" into the world presented was another feature of this literature.

> A reader had an opportunity to "peep" at other people in intimate situations. Thus pornography was voyeuristic at its onset. Oftentimes voyeurism was a subject of pornographic representation, e.g. when it showed a person peeping at a couple engaged in sexual pleasures.[210]

An element of peeping and secret participation in an intimate situation will become a constant element of a pornographic representation, which builds a tension between a secret and an exposure, the shame and the shamelessness. Experiencing the violation of the border of intimacy indicates the awareness of such border, it somehow recognizes the border, hence violation paradoxically means restoring. One of the most significant creators of pornographic representations in the Renaissance was Pietro Aretino. Aretino, born on the 19th April 1492 in a family of a shoemaker, after receiving mediocre education, worked as a bookbinder and a painter and finally tried his hand at writing. His career thrived after he arrived in Rome in 1517, where at the beginning he became famous as an author of brilliant satires. Aretino, who enjoyed the favors of Romans, including the papal court, gained popularity becoming a very influential person. He wrote 22 *Sonetti lussuriosi* (*Licentious Sonnets*), which were a kind of commentary to frivolous drawings made by Giulio Romano, engraved by Marcantonio Raimondi, and representing the scenes of sexual intercourses. As far as *Sonetti lussuriosi* are concerned, we are dealing with the phenomenon of double coding, a viewer or a reader will be stimulated both by the word and the picture. Aretino, after leaving Rome resided in Venice which was a particular place at that time. In 1509 it was inhabited by 11 654 courtesans for the total number of inhabitants of 300 000. They

[209] See L. M. Nijakowski, *Pornografia*..., pp. 108–109.
[210] Ibidem, p. 107.

were called *Le nostre benemerite meretrici* (*Our honourable prostitutes*)[211] by the Senate of Venice. Venetian courtesans who were thoroughly educated set the tone for social and cultural life of the city. They actually became the heroes of the most famous texts by Aretino, namely *Ragionamenti*, which took the form of dialogues illustrating social life at the end of the Renaissance. Placing sexual pleasures in salons of courtesans stabilized the double standards in perceiving sexual pleasure and procreation, ecstasy of love and marriage. Moreover, pornography was connected with "freethinking and heresy, science, philosophy and criticism of absolute monarchy,"[212] thereby displaying significant features of the modern culture. Pornography contradicted the official culture not only at the level of morals but also at the level of rules governing social order.

Modern pornography which originated in Italy will reach its peak in France. Prerevolutionary publications were full of criticism towards public life institutions, which came across more severe reprisals than the erotic content of the texts. Development of the pornographic market was connected with political criticism at that time. In 1806 the word pornography was for the first time used not to earmark the texts against morality but, most of all, against social order.[213] Pornography faithfully accompanied the element of revolution becoming a popular genre.[214] The growing audience caused internal diversification of erotic literature, this diversification regarded mostly the level of complexity of the published texts. The most complicated and simultaneously controversial were the texts by Donatien A. F. de Sade which have been the subject of fervent debates till this day. Marquis de Sade, was by some people perceived as degenerate and by others as a creator of an astute and deep but radical insight into the human nature. His writings contain all possible and impossible to imagine representations of sexual relationships often involving violence. Under the extensive description of sexual excesses, which by their accumulation sometimes seem funny, we find a projection of an individual who is absolutely independent, indicating extreme consequences of implementing this projection.

---

[211] See more: E. Boyé, *Od tłumacza*, in P. Aretino, *Żywoty kurtyzan. O łajdactwach męskich*, transl. E. Boyé, Cracow 2003, p. 17.

[212] L. M. Nijakowski, *Pornografia*..., p. 112.

[213] L. Hunt (ed.), *The Invention of Pornography. Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity 1500–1800*, New York 1993, p. 303.

[214] In 1789–1792 about 200 pornographic publications were issued in France. See ibidem, p. 310.

> According to the Marquis opinion, an integral man (complete) by realization of integral atheism (drawing all the consequences from "God's death," i.e. questioning everything which would constitute a foundation for thought in the ontological and epistemological dimension, in the axiological dimension – a value worthy this name, whereas in the anthropological dimension any obstacle for self-fulfillment and limitation of freedom) obtains integral independence (absolute or metaphysical freedom), and thereby the level of integral monstrosity (an analogon of Nietzsche's Overman), hence he transgresses the boundaries of humanity.[215]

An "integral" human being on the way to realization of his independence transgresses one by one all boundaries such as God, Nature, the Other and own Me.[216] Independence of an individual who is not subject to the God's law or the Nature law, pushes him eventually to negation of the Other whom he makes a victim of his pleasure.

> A central point of the sadistic world" is, as Maurice Blanchot says, "demanding independence expressed by limitless negation." Untamed freedom opens emptiness in which a possibility responds to the strongest urge that neglects all secondary urges; a peculiar cynical heroism makes us free of all obligations and feelings without which we usually cannot stand ourselves.[217]

Negation of the Other leads to negation of self for the benefit of an independent act of crime, free from all dependence on personal pleasure. An "integral" man is completely independent and must surrender to "apathy," a cold indifference as interpreters of de Sade claim.[218]

The 19th century in Europe brought significant changes as far as human sexuality is concerned. Democratization of pornography progressed rapidly and thereby it became more intellectually diversified. Pornographic representations lost most of the burden of political and social criticism inherent to them and began to fulfill a function of mass entertainment. Despite a universal ban on obscene publications, they were becoming increasingly popular. This was accompanied by the atmosphere of fear of masturbation which led to a conviction of fatal physiological consequences of onanism.

> Loss of semen entails firstly nutrition disorders. A masturbating man eats but does not assimilate food. He decays. He is tormented by diarrhoea, hence very thin. Then

---

[215] B. Banasiak, *Markiz de Sade – filozof XX wieku*, in D. A. F. de Sade, *Julietta*, transl. B. Banasiak, K. Matuszewski, Cracow 2003, p. 36.

[216] See L. M. Nijakowski, *Pornografia*..., p. 134.

[217] G. Bataille, *Erotyzm*, p. 169.

[218] See P. Klossowski, *Sade mon prochain*, Paris 1947.

> breathing disorders occur. Unfortunate onanist speaks in hoarse voice. He coughs and suffocates. The disorder of the nervous system is even worse as it gets weaker from repeated convulsions. In some cases he gets carried away and then madness or epilepsy occur. [...] During the 19th century this image was constantly spreading and furcating.[219]

In connection with the outbreak of this epidemic and its fatal consequences, several avoidance tactics were developed. Youth were strictly controlled and subject to various practices such as "showers, pressing of the crotch area, tying up, cauterizing, electrifying penis, a tube in urethra, imbibing belladonna or even bromine."[220] Medicalization of human sexuality was progressing, hygienists and educators were the main guardians of its proper development, according to the norms established by representatives of medical science. Changes in morals of the 19th century Europe moved towards extending the area under the framework of shame, despite a simultaneous development of the pornographic market. The advancing process of controlling sexual practices implemented by medical institutions, the Church, police, judiciary system and regulated by priests, psychiatrists, hygienists and educators was directly connected with the development and emancipation of middle-class which opposed "immorality of the noble class."[221] The 19th century coincides with the onset of psychoanalysis which would emphasize the issue of human sexual development, thereby initiating an extended reflection regarding children's sexuality. Life of an individual revolves around controlling the sexual drive which is located in the dark zone of the Id. Its element should be regulated by mechanisms which enable efficient satisfaction of urges, according to the rules governing social life. Sublimation, one the basic mechanisms described by Freud, allows channeling the energy that stems from sexual drives into pursuing artistic or intellectual creation.[222] Freud makes a sharp contraposition between the oppressive and ordered sphere of Culture and the chaotic sphere of Nature, between which an individual is suspended and forced to constantly negotiate the needs and requirements defined by these two spheres, satisfying one's dark urges within the framework of social and cultural norms. The theory of psychoanalysis drastically changed the perception of human

[219] A. Corbin (ed.), *Historia ciała*, transl. K. Belaid, T. Stróżyński, vol. 2, Gdansk 2013, p. 152.

[220] Ibidem, p. 153.

[221] L. M. Nijakowski, *Pornografia*..., p. 153.

[222] See P. Freud, *Kultura jako źródło cierpień*, in idem, *Pisma społeczne*, Warsaw 1998, pp. 165–227.

sexuality and placed it in the center of human life, it claimed that an efficient satisfaction of sexual drive as the indication of healthy development.

The last dramatic stage of shaping human sexuality in the contemporary form coincides with the 20th century and is marked by an array of "sexual revolutions." The 20th century brought changes in three areas of sexuality which were connected with particular limitations, namely the issue of sexual abstinence, marital faithfulness and sexual relationship between individuals of the same sex. Transformations of sexuality constituted a part of more complex social and moral changes occurring in the West.[223] This complexity could be oversimplified by only a brief presentation thus, we will omit an extensive description of subsequent events and publications which are jointly referred to as "sexual revolution,"[224] and we will limit ourselves to indicating only some effects of this revolution, which are significant from the perspective of the history of shame in the western culture. Brian McNair in his book: *Striptease Culture: Sex, Media and the Democratisation of Desire* puts forward a thesis on sexualisation of the contemporary culture and calls it *Striptease Culture*. It is characterized by "availability of sex, nudity for show and exhibitionism in media whose abundance was glaring in capitalist societies of the twentieth century."[225] Postmodernity abolishes shame in its function as a regulator of social life perceiving it commonly as a kind of prudery. "Postmodernist culture tries to deny shame as a sign of weakness. We are ashamed to be ashamed."[226]

For ages the shame has been used in the European culture as an efficient tool of controlling the Nature, whose taming turns out to be a symbol of progress. Shame by opposing the element of Nature performed a culture creating function. It was pointed out by Norbert Elias, among others, "who consequently connected the notion of shame with a set of social norms, more overtly manifested in elite circles, aiming at increasing the limitation of behavioral liberty whose source was mostly physiology. The rules of courtesy described by him stressed intentional abolishing of the bonds between human and nature. The feeling of shame was for Elias connected with a conviction of the necessity to hide or modify

[223] They included also the area of the USA.

[224] See more: J. Escoffier (ed.), *Sexual revolution*, New York 2003.

[225] B. McNair, *Seks, demokratyzacja pożądania i media, czyli kultura obnażania*, transl. E. Klekot, Warsaw 2004, p. 5 [orig.: B. McNair, *Striptease Culture: Sex, Media and the Democratisation of Desire*, London 2002].

[226] K. Woźniak, *Seks i seksualność w dobie ponowoczesności*, Opole 2012, p. 102.

natural needs and physiological behaviours in the presence of others. According to him this peculiar escape from nature is at the same time the shame of nature, and the shame of somatic constraints and, at the same time, a manifestation of the need to break free from the determinism of physicality."[227] *Striptease Culture* would suggest moving in the opposite direction, from the repressive culture towards natural freedom. Lack of shame would be connected with freedom and divesting of embarrassing social limitations when expressing oneself. Pornography typically used to disturb the existing social order and transgress the boundary of shame, expose what was hidden. The feeling of shame determined the boundary between the "decent" and the "indecent," "eroticism" and "pornography." This boundary was, as we established earlier, historically and culturally changeable, depending on the context. Its systematic shift indicated in the European culture is directly connected with shifting the threshold of shame actually. According to Elias this "lowering of the threshold of shame and embarrassment"[228] is equally important for the development of the western civilization as "rationalization" of behaviours. Nowadays a human having abandoned shame by lowering its threshold regained his "natural" freedom. However, this freedom seems to be ostensible, considering the preservation of strict control over sexual sphere which is conducted this day by applying different means and institutions than before. The 'carnival' in the form of "sexual revolution" ended in restoring order in the area of human sexuality, and led to its reregulating. Sexual life is examined by professionals, such as sex therapists and "experts" who write self-help books setting standards for sexual life. Increasing sexual freedom is accompanied by the regime of hygiene and healthy lifestyle which entails the need of full satisfaction of the sexual urge as a condition of mental health, but preserving necessary safety precautions as a protection from sexually transmitted diseases. In such conditions virtual sex becomes an ideal solution, i.e. arousal without a direct bodily contact.

The Other being an object of pleasure simultaneously becomes a stranger, the relationship with him o her will be the one excluding shame, the relation of being-with-the-Other, of being-next-to-the-Other. Yuri Lotman diagnosing culture of his time wrote:

---

[227] E. Kosowska, *Wstyd. Konotacje antropologiczne*, in E. Kosowska (ed.), *Wstyd w kulturze*..., p. 56.

[228] N. Elias, *Przemiany obyczajów w cywilizacji Zachodu*, transl. T. Zabłudowski, Warsaw 1980, p. 450.

> [...] the culture at the end of the 20th century sharpened the contradiction between man experiencing oneself as a part and as a whole (separate). On one hand, a human feels the pressure exerted by social relations, depriving him of the possibility to reveal his individuality and reducing him to the level of a recipient of orders. On the other, a hand a high level of individualization and specialization of the whole lifestyle suppresses all impulsive and direct bonds, hinders all kinds of communion, even symbolic ones, and creates the effect of alienation and disturbed communicativeness. Spontaneous outbursts of passion, ecstatic experiencing art and destructive rebellions occur in such cases as therapeutic means. On one hand, they disturb daily routine of a human and put him in extremely simplistic situations. They allow experiencing an illusion of emancipation and individual independence. On the other hand, they directly strengthen intuitive and impulsive bonds with other people. Simultaneously two contradictory psychological states are experienced: "I am doing what I want to do" and "I am the same as everyone else," "as one drop you pour with masses."[229]

One of the creators of the Tartu-Moscow School, when judging modern times, expressed the most severe criticism about the results of "sexual revolution":

> Sex refers to the physiological aspect of practical life; all experiences of love and centuries-old symbolism connected with them, conventional rituals – all what Antoni Czechow called "elevating the sexual urge" belongs to culture. Therefore, the so called "sexual revolution," occurring under the banner of eliminating "superstitions" and, seemingly, unnecessary "complications" in the field of one of the most important human impulses, in reality turned out to be one of the most powerful rams with which the anti-culture of the 20th century hit the old building of culture.[230]

Nakedness and its primary connection with shame stems from the fact that a human is situated between two poles – the Nature and the Culture. We appear to be animals who were dressed to cover their proper condition, according to Leszek Kołakowski, "thus we assume that nakedness is an inherent condition of a human, whereas clothes are just a misleading outfit. [...] Therefore nakedness is a shameful stamp and clothes are a cover for persisting animal character of a human, it hides the shameful truth about man."[231] There is a conviction, contradictory to such approach, which "determines humanity by culture, perceiving clothes as a part of human condition, similarly as the ability to walk on two legs, laugh, speak an articulated language and make tools; in this perspective culture is inherent to human nature, pre-culture, hence nakedness as such is either a type of

[229] Y. Lotman, *Uniwersum umysłu*, p. 139.
[230] Y. Lotman, *Rosja i znaki*..., p. 8.
[231] Ibidem.

clothing or pre-humanity."[232] Ambiguity in the approach towards humanity presented here introduces a certain complication within the Culture and Nature opposition. The Culture and the Nature become not only antonyms but also synonyms, which stems from "an incurable duality experienced by us as regards our body, which is dominated by culture and known in a civilized shape, and simultaneously known as the anti-culture, the pre-culture and the animal instinct."[233] Duality involved in experiencing one's own body also involves sexuality which cannot be perceived only as a physiological phenomenon, and is not solely a cultural one. Sexual arousal is never a merely physiological condition, it will always occur in a certain cultural framework. "Sexual revolution," despite its efforts, never managed to smash "the construction of culture," contrary to Lotman's conviction, it did not destroy it completely because then it would have to abolish the duality of human nature described by Kołakowski, restoring its primary animal instincts, its condition before culture. Its only achievement was a redefinition and transformation of the cultural framework of experiencing physicality and sexuality, reordered and controlled by regulations.

[232] Ibidem, p. 19.
[233] Ibidem.

Chapter II

Gender as a problem of the history of culture (illustrated through the example of the tradition of research in the history of music)

Gender, as one of the elements of the mosaic of identity, but most of all a phenomenon shaped by culture and society, takes (or should take) a central focus in the research spectrum of numerous scientific disciplines, including my field of interest, the history of culture. It turns out, however, that although in sociology, anthropology or, in the broad sense of the term, gender studies, this category has become one of the basic ones (also within the framework of intersectional research), it is rarely deployed in cultural history (artistic, included), and, if used, it is done so in quite a chaotic fashion. The lack of coherent methodological assumptions, or the universalist deployment of the concept of gender in relation to radically different problems, results in oversimplification and a growing reluctance of many researchers towards including this category into their field of consideration. In this article, I would like to refer to gender as a history of culture problem, by focusing on the research on the artistic history of culture – more precisely – music. First, I will give examples of research in the history of culture which deploys gender as one of the main research categories. Then, I will briefly describe the tradition of incorporating the category of gender into non-European musical cultures' research (thus,

the ethno-musicological tradition), and subsequently I will outline the ways in which gender is applied in the Western-European artistic music research (i.a. through gender musicology, a more recent historical musicology). Finally, I will relate more broadly (descriptively and critically) to a specific example of using the category of gender in the field of feminist musicology: in the piece *Dove io credea* by the composer Francesca Caccini analysed by the American researcher Suzanne Cusick.

Before I get to the motif of the problematic nature of using gender as a category of analysis I will, first, explain my understanding of the term. Tadeusz Paleczny, formulating his deliberations in the field of sociology, emphasises that from many perspectives gender and race are the most crucial elements shaping the psychological characteristics of people which determine their place in a given society and culture.[1] He also turns our attention to the cultural dimension of the modern concepts of gender identity, thus to a fact that "femininity and masculinity is not as much determined by biology, as the characteristics of psyche and culture in which gender identification takes shape."[2] This reference is to socialization, especially methods of upbringing. Paleczny defines the terminological differences between sex, gender and gender identity, and thus, a longer quote is perhaps in order here: Three terms function in the contemporary social sciences: sex, gender and gender identity. The first term functions as an equivalent to the social category, a statistical construct, deriving from biological traits. The second is a culturally and socially formed phenomenon and it marks the existence of a dynamic, normatively determined definition of the role of a man and a woman. [...] The third term, "gender identity" encompasses both the cultural and psychological characteristics of an individual, pushing the biological basis to the background.[3]

Hence three aspects emerge: biological, personality-based (psychical), and cultural,[4] and that is why it is so difficult to conduct research on gender, especially if it is not regarded as a phenomenon requiring constant adjustment to circumstances but as a statistical construct, a permanently set category. Jane Boydston draws special attention to this problem; according to her, indeed, this seemingly clear division presented above is no longer obvious when we stop theorizing on the subject of gender

[1] T. Paleczny, *Socjologia tożsamości*, Cracow 2008, p. 27.
[2] Ibidem.
[3] Ibidem.
[4] Ibidem.

(treating it fluidly), and instead we want to create a fixed and permanently set category of analysis.[5] This is a result of, inter alia, a fact that although it is frequently emphasised that gender is a historical process, researchers deploy this category in a non-historical fashion, applying it in an almost unchanged manner to analyse various societies.[6] The thesis of this text is contrary – treating gender as a historical issue functioning differently, dependent on time and place, hence not imposing a predetermined, fixed understanding on the analysed phenomena. Boydston suggests to stop perceiving gender as a collection of more or less universalised assumptions, and, instead, to treat it as a set of relatively open questions applied to a discrete time and place of inquiry.[7] The problem noticed by the author is not the fact that gender might not be a good category of analysis, but rather that the process of categorization simplifies it,[8] depriving it of research force, and as a consequence of a fresh and attentive approach to the examined culture. It does not change the classical definition of gender by Gayle Rubin: "in every society there is a set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation (sex) is shaped by human, social intervention (gender)."[9] However, depending on the specific historical time and culture, this intervention looks differently, is caused by different factors, and has different effects. Why is it then that gender is so often "deployed" as a universal category of analysis? It stems from the fact that being one of the most crucial experiences, for both men and women, gender has a universal meaning.[10] It does not justify deploying gender as an invariable category. Boydston notices the approach taken by the patriarchal theory, where gender was treated as a universal phenomenon, assuming a consistent or inherent meaning for the physical differences between males and females, providing endless variations on the unchanging theme of fixed gender inequality (which is, clearly, a simplification).[11] In contrast, Marxists "had trouble formulating

[5] J. Boydston, *Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis*, "Gender & History" vol. 20, 3/2008, p. 559.

[6] Ibidem.

[7] Ibidem.

[8] Ibidem, p. 560.

[9] Ibidem, p. 561.

[10] See J. Wallach Scott, *Gender: A Deployful Category of Historical Analysis*, "The American Historical Review" vol. 91, 5/1986, pp. 1053–1075, http://www.ekologiasztuka.pl/think.tank.feministyczny/readarticle.php?article_id=238 [3.08.2014].

[11] J. Boydston, *Gender as a Question...*, p. 562.

any independent analytical status for gender at all."[12] The challenge was to create a concept of gender that could be used as a category of analysis, and yet was not grounded in "the binary opposition of male and female as the only possible relationship and as a permanent aspect of the human condition."[13] Joan Wallach Scott offered a definition of gender as "a constitutive element of social relationship based on perceived differences between the sexes."[14] Boydston, however, did not consider such a complication of the notion of gender as sufficient. Of course, she appreciated the emphasis made by Scott that within the gender research there are four main simultaneously operating but with changing and culturally distinct aspects: culturally available symbols, normative concepts that interpret those symbols, politics and social institutions, and organisations that structure these normative concepts in daily life and subjective identity.[15] Distinguishing these aspects did not, however, alter the binary structure of gender. Due to such an approach, all societies not based on the binary opposition of male-female become *non-gendered Others* – which means that it is impossible to adequately analyze them within the category of gender.[16] Oyèrónké Oyewùmí explains this problem clearly:

> If gender is socially constructed, then gender cannot behave in the same way across time and space. If gender is a social construction, then we must examine the various cultural/architectural sites where it was constructed, and we must acknowledge that variously located actors (aggregates, groups, interested parties) were part of the construction. We must further acknowledge that if gender is a social construction, then there was a specific time (in different cultural/architectural sites) when it was "constructed" and therefore a time before which it was not. Thus, gender, being a social construction, is also a historical and cultural phenomenon. Consequently, it is logical to assume that in some societies, gender construction need not have existed at all.[17]

Oyewùmí means those societies in which "perceptions of sexual difference are not always enlisted as the basis for social classification"[18] – due to the fact that in different cultures the structures of social hierarchies may

[12] Ibidem.

[13] Ibidem, p. 563.

[14] J. Wallach Scott, *Gender...*, p. 19.

[15] J. Boydston, *Gender as a Question...*, p. 564.

[16] Ibidem.

[17] O. Oyewùmí, *Visualizing the Body: Western Theories and African Subjects*, in O. Oyewùmí (ed.), *African Gender Studies: A Reader*, New York 2005, p. 11, as cited in ibidem, pp. 564–565.

[18] J. Boydston, *Gender as a Question...*, p. 565.

differ in nature (e.g. may be classified not by sex, but by seniority, class, race), and, moreover, they may "enter numerous configurations, overlap, strengthen or interfere."[19] As Boydston concludes, it can be said that when we exclude such societies from the analyses, we reinforce the ethnocentricity of gender as a category of historical analysis.[20] This is the reason (why) she postulates treating the binary of femininity and masculinity as a product of a discrete historical moment, not as universalism. In her opinion, researchers ought to talk about the histories of "particular processes of gendering, resulting in distinct cultural meanings with distinct social and cultural formations."[21] A new question should be posed – *were* male and female important social/cultural markers for the subjects for our work, whether individuals, communities or events?[22] To answer – it is about gender as a cultural process changing in time; it is about the understanding that a standalone, permanently set and named "gender" does not exist.[23] Another issue that needs to be emphasized is the constant concurrence and relationship between gender and other identities, in other words – intersectionality. Leslie McCall defines intersectionality as "the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations."[24] Boydston again hits the mark, claiming that there is no person whose experience is solely constructed through the processes of gender (however we define it) or whose continuing sole identity is gendered.[25] "In one moment or one era or one social setting, gender may seem to rise to primacy as an expression of social position [...] [it is always] mingled with and inseparable from the cluster of other factors socially relevant in a given culture."[26] Thus, hierarchy by gender is not always the most crucial – we should remember that an individual functions in a society, in which different types of hierarchies intertwine – with hierarchization by gender, class, race, economic status, etc. Hence, talking only of gender (even if it proves to be a key criterion of social

[19] M. Bobako, *Gender jako technologia kolonialnej władzy? Afrykańska krytyka zachodniego feminizmu jako inspiracja do feministycznej autorefleksji*, "Kultura i Historia" 23/2013, http://www.kulturaihistoria.umcp.lublin.pl/archives/4610 [20.10.2013].

[20] J. Boydston, *Gender as a Question...*, p. 566.

[21] Ibidem, p. 576.

[22] Ibidem.

[23] Ibidem.

[24] L. McCall, *The Complexity of Intersectionality*, "Signs" 30/2005, p. 1771.

[25] J. Boydston, *Gender as a Question...*, p. 576.

[26] Ibidem.

division and defining a place of an individual in the culture of a given place and time) is insufficient. Every time gender hierarchization may be reinforced or weakened by other factors – in 17th-century Italy a woman from a higher middle class functioned differently in society (and one of the same social status but born to a family of artists also differently), to an aristocrat or a lower-class woman. Thus, when speaking about the situation of, e.g. female artists, we must constantly define precisely the specific situation of a given person, and not treat female artists as a uniform social group. There are many theories that help us in conducting research sensitive to social hierarchizations, established by historians, sociologists and philosophers, i.a. those of Karl Marx, Fernand Braudel, Michel Foucault or Pierre Bourdieu. I have dedicated a separate article to their thought on the subject,[27] but I will briefly give several examples. The Marxist historiography constitutes a starting point in the subject of social divisions – Marx treated social divisions as a foundation for social relations: "the history of all hitherto society is a history of class struggles."[28] Braudel emphasised an omnipresent existence of hierarchization: "let us return to the preferred term 'hierarchy'. In its essence it finds application without much trouble in the whole history of heavily populated societies: none of them develops horizontally, on equality. They are all hierarchized in an obvious way."[29] He proposes a model of historical research which he defines as "global history," which, on the basis of the notion of long or deep time (*longue durée*) (a theory of the Annales School, which Braudel was a member of) remained sensitive to a variable, multi-dimensional character and a "zonality multiplicity" of the social reality.[30] In contrast, Foucault, focused on the discursive practice, and was interested in the system of relations ("hierarchy, domination, stratification, univocal determination, circular causality"[31]), especially in relation to power. His three

[27] K. Kizińska, *Powiązania muzyki i społeczeństwa – koncepcje hierarchizacji społecznych jako punkt wyjścia dla kulturoznawczych badań nad muzyką*, in D. Dolata, K. Kizińska (eds.), *Sztuka i jej społeczne konteksty*, Lublin 2012.

[28] K. Marks, F. Engels, *Manifest komunistyczny*, as cited in A. F. Grabski, *Dzieje historiografii*, Poznan 2006, p. 601.

[29] F. Braudel, *Kultura materialna, gospodarka i kapitalizm XV–XVIII wiek*, vol. I, Warsaw 1992, p. 139, as cited in K. Moraczewski, *Refleksje o teoretycznych podstawach historii kultury*, "Filo-Sofija" 12(1)/2011: *Wokół idei filozoficznych i kulturoznawczych Jerzego Kmity*, p. 243.

[30] A. F. Grabski, *Dzieje...*, p. 755.

[31] M. Foucault, *Archeologia wiedzy*, Warsaw 1997, p. 28.

models illustrating the relations of power and knowledge – the model of madness, criminality and sexuality connected to the strategies of power – the power of the fiction, exclusion, normalization and appropriation of discourse – show "ways of overcoming the social body by power,"[32] thus entangling individuals in social dependencies. He remains open to the changeability of these dependencies in different times and places:

> In short, in any given era the set of practices gives rise, on a given material point, to a unique... countenance, [...] but what takes shape at that same point in another era will have its own unique and very different countenance and, conversely, a countenance vaguely similar to the earlier one will take shape at some other point. [...] dissimilar elements [...]will be expressed in very different practices and objectivized through these practices in very different guises.[33]

In contrast again, Pierre Bourdieu, a sociologist, similarly to Foucault, is interested in the questions of domination and power, but symbolic violence as well. In his writings, he emphasises the importance of discovering the social differences (through an experience of living in a boarding-school, which he defined as "a terrifying apprenticeship in social realism: opportunism, servility, denunciation, betrayal, etc."[34]), where he analyzes "connections between the social origins, school career, social organization of education, the current hierarchy of disciplines, the status of a scholar within the discipline, specificity of the relation of the observer to the observed object and the shape of the scientific activity.[35] Thus, he precisely defines the influence of all these crucial factors on the examined matters. Moreover, Bourdieu also attends to the question of gender (Foucault speaks rather about sexuality), discussing in this field of interest the Kabylie society.[36] These briefly presented examples of the research theories sensitive to social hierarchization and its complexity remain connected to the frequently emphasized uniqueness and specificity of a given time and place. It is, then, necessary to discuss the main assumptions of the

---

[32] A. Ostolski, *Dyskurs u władzy. Filozofia polityczna Michela Foucaulta*, "Etyka" 36/2003, pp. 2–3, http://www.ekologiasztuka.pl/seminarium.foucault/pdf/k001ostolski.pdf [3.08.2014].

[33] P. Veyne, *Foucault rewolucjonizuje historię*, Torun 2007, pp. 66–67.

[34] P. Bourdieu, *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse*, p. 130, as cited in K. Sztandar-Sztanderska, *Teorie praktyki i praktyka teorii. Wstęp do socjologii Pierre'a Bourdieu*, Warsaw 2010, p. 15.

[35] Ibidem.

[36] P. Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, Warsaw 2004.

discipline, engaged as it is in the analysis of culture (including the past cultures) of a specific time and place – the history of culture (and cultural history, as well).

An outline of an understanding of the history of culture and cultural history is, then, in order. For some time now, these two terms have functioned in the discourse in Poland, but the researchers rarely define specifically what they have in mind when using them. Dorota Skotarczak sees the basic difference between the two types of cultivating history in the breadth of the definition of culture.[37] According to her, the history of culture engages in the understanding of culture as a "broadly defined human artistic activity."[38] Therefore, it is quite a narrow understanding. But in the case of the cultural history, the definition of history is much broader, as it encompasses "everything that is connected to a human being" ("except for their purely biological aspect"),[39] (hence, such constructs as the "culture of poverty" or the "culture of fear" coined nowadays are not surprising[40]). However, this division has been used only sometimes in Poland, which means that certain research within the field of the history of culture show features of the cultural history, i.e. a history close to historical anthropology – i.a. the research inspired by the abovementioned Annales School, where culture is not comprehended as a synonym for art. In this work, I will not continue to use this terminological differentiation, I only wish to point out that although the examples I am referring to are connected to the artistic culture (art), I understand culture in a wider sense, and thus my definition is similar to that assumed by cultural history. I examine the past of culture (my examples concern the music of a 17th-century female composer), trying to outline the ways to use the category of gender for such analyses. Of course, the previously posed thesis, that the foundation for an adequate examination of the functioning of gender in the past is to acknowledge its historicity and changeability, thus discredits a belief that such a construct as a fixed and permanent category of gender grounded in the male-female binary exists (it seems this simplification can be seen in the review analysis of Francesca Caccini's work *Dove io credea* – by Suzanne Cusick). The 17th century itself provides a splendid example, with a group of castrates as a sui generis "third" sex. Let us, though, return to the

[37] D. Skotarczak, *Wprowadzenie od redaktora naukowego*, in P. Burke, *Historia kulturowa. Wprowadzenie*, Cracow 2012, p. XVIII.

[38] Ibidem.

[39] Ibidem.

[40] P. Burke, *Historia kulturowa...*, p. 2.

history of culture. Above, I have used an example of the Annales School. I should therefore note that the French tradition found yet another way to break the binary division to the history of culture and cultural history. It completely omits the term "culture," substituting it with such terms as civilization, collective consciousness, and social imagination (Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre cultivate the history of mentalities, emotions and "collective representations," Jacques Le Goff, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and Alain Corbin – a history of mentality and the social imagination, and the abovementioned Fernand Braudel – a history of material culture).[41] In general terms, it is a socially-oriented history. Thus, when referring to gender within the framework of the history of culture, this is the meaning I will have in mind. I will also mention the beginnings of the differentiating between the genders within the research on the history of culture – the first inspirations spring from feminism, which, "exposing male prejudice [...] revalued the women's contribution to history, practically invisible in the traditional grand narrative."[42] Initially, a sub-discipline called "women's history" emerges – within which *The History of Women*[43] was written, among others (to this day, the Polish translation of the series edited by Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot is unavailable). Only when gender studies come to life does gender become the focus of the field, and then not necessarily women themselves.

Constructivism and deconstruction gives an interesting insight into the problem of gender. Of course, when we speak of "constructivism," we mean "a process of creation" (in this case, of history). As Peter Burke reminds us, even Einstein believed that our views and theories influence the way we observe reality.[44] Schopenhauer claimed that "the world is my representation," and Nietzsche argued that the truth is not discovered, but created.[45] This is an unusually important shift in comprehending history and its writing – the taking into consideration that every history is an interpretation, and each time presents a different conjunction of available information. Therefore, "different people may perceive the same event or structure from entirely different perspectives"[46] – scholars included. Burke emphasizes: "the question of whether, or rather to what degree

[41] Ibidem, p. 4.
[42] Ibidem, p. 56.
[43] G. Duby, M. Perrot (eds.), *The History of Women*, Cambridge – London 1992–1994.
[44] P. Burke, *Historia kulturowa...*, p. 90.
[45] Ibidem.
[46] Ibidem.

and in what ways, the scholars construct the objects of their research in their own right transformed into an autonomous field of research."[47] Obviously, constructivism does not consist in "searching for" problems non-existent in the past, thus, let us call it, in manipulating facts in order to prove the existence of something which was not there. It is also a process of creative thinking about the past, noticing the aspects which had not been considered before and an attempt to examine them. Such an understanding of constructing, i.a. class or, in this case, gender, corresponds to my assumptions and relates to, e.g. a different perception of them. Once in time treated as invariable social categories, today they seem more fluid.[48] For instance, "historians and anthropologists interested in India do not take 'caste' as an obvious phenomenon. On the contrary, they encompass it as a cultural construct which has its history, political history, intertwined with the history of imperialism."[49] It is similar with the terms "tribe," "ethnicity" or "gender."[50] Hence, masculinity and femininity ought to be examined as social roles, "assigned by different scenarios in various cultures or sub-cultures [...]."[51] Burke includes in these scenarios, among others, attitudes, gestures, clothing, language or sexual conduct, and gives an example: "For instance in Italy in the period of the Renaissance, a man... was allowed to make dramatic gestures which a decent woman could not take the liberty of making. Exaggerated gesticulation indicated that a woman is a courtesan."[52] Furthermore, a distinction between male and female views on femininity should be made.[53] These are examples of the sensitivity to the nuances characteristic of a given time and place. Apart from constructivism, this is where I would like to mention deconstruction (being an inversion of the process of construction). For if we assume "an active role of historians in the creation of social categories," then we must allow a possibility of the rise of, for instance, myths (the "Myth of the Renaissance" is a good example).[54] A term "mythistory" was even coined – which describes such a phenomenon (Hayden White). Deconstruction aims at exposing such constructs. However, I do not see

[47] Ibidem, p. 91.
[48] Ibidem, p. 96.
[49] Ibidem.
[50] Ibidem, pp. 96–97.
[51] Ibidem, p. 97.
[52] Ibidem.
[53] Ibidem.
[54] Ibidem, pp. 113–114.

it as necessary to follow up on this thought. At this point, I would like to go to a description of gender research methods, or the inclusion of the category of gender within the research in music (both non-European and Western-European. Due to the fact that I have been attending to this subject for quite a while, I will largely refer to two of my own articles: *Gender a kultury muzyczne – kulturoznawcze spojrzenie na badania etnomuzykologiczne i historyczne*[55] and *Rola płci kulturowej w badaniach muzykologicznych – zarys pola badawczego muzykologii feministycznej*[56]). Finally, I will use a practical example from Western-European music – with analyses of the abovementioned Suzanne Cusick.

Ethnomusicology, otherwise referred to as the anthropology of music, is a field in musicology within which we find references to the question of gender or acknowledging of the category of gender as one of the most important elements of the analysis of musical cultures,[57] with references made by pioneers of the field – Alan Merriam, John Blacking and Jeff Titon. When examining non-European musical cultures (simultaneously predicting transmission of the employed methodology to the research on the Western-European musical culture – i.a. Blacking), the aforementioned pioneers assumed that if one wants to appropriately interpret a given musical culture, one ought to first comprehend its integrity with the society which created it (that is why they also accentuate the interdisciplinarity of their field: Merriam notes: "Ethnomusicology, [...], makes its unique

[55] K. Kizińska, *Gender a kultury muzyczne – kulturoznawcze spojrzenie na badania etnomuzykologiczne i historyczne*, "Przegląd Kulturoznawczy" 4(14)/2012.

[56] K. Kizińska, *Rola płci kulturowej w badaniach muzykologicznych – zarys pola badawczego muzykologii feministycznej*, "Kultura i Edukacja" 1(94)/2013.

[57] There was even a subfield of ethnomusicology created to accentuate this importance: "feminist ethnomusicology." Ellen Koskoff used this term in her newest book *A Feminist Ethnomusicology: Writings on Music and Gender* (2014), but was writing about it (without using the term) as early as in 1989, in the book she edited – *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Urbana – Chicago 1989). Among other issues she mentioned in its introduction some studies dealing with subjects important to feminists: "One result of the conceptual linking between gender, music, and other cultural domains is, in many societies, a separation between male and female performance environments, genders, and/or performing styles. Separation, although perhaps the result of gender ideologies that stress contamination or other putative destractive female forces, can also act as a positive catalyst for female bonding. Sally Price (1983, 1985), in her studies of a so-called women-dominated society (the Suriname Maroons), discusses the concious desire of many female singers to present their own song as 'reflection[s] of their self-image' and as explanations of the gaps they perceive between the way they see themselves and the way they are seen by others (1983: 468)." Ibidem, pp. 8–9.

contribution in welding together aspects of the social sciences and aspects of the humanities in such a way that each complements the other and leads to a fuller understanding of both. Neither should be considered as an end in itself; the two must be joined into a wider understanding"[58]). Therefore, social relations, including any hierarchizations, e.g. by gender, are considered key elements when an attempt is made to define the ways of functioning of the musical practice in a given culture. Let's look at the excerpt of the description of the University of Pittsburgh's Ethnomusicology seminar "Music, gender, and sexuality," that introduces issues of gender in the fields of musicology and ethnomusicology: "This course aims to understand how social, economic, and political processes influence gender-related behavior and formulate differing understandings of gender and sexuality within a variety of musical contexts."[59] One might think it's a new "fashion" to see gender and gender relations as important to ethnomusicology. Not at the least. Ellen Koskoff reminds us that it has always been a key issue and that the questions "to what degree does a society's gender ideology and resulting gender-related behaviours affect its musical thiught and practice?"[60] and "how does music function in society to reflect or affect inter-gender relations?"[61] were being asked. She also notices (based on the authors she studied) that in many societies musical activities of men and women differ, that "women and men do appear to occupy separate expressive spheres, creating not necessarily two separate and self-contained musical cultures, but rather two differentiated yet complementary halves of culture."[62] It is also regarding this statement that she cites other ethnomusicologists (reminding us at the same time that, as I have mentioned above, the issue of gender is not a novelty to the field):

> Jonathan Hill (1979) in describing the male performance genre *jaqui*, states that this rite symbolizes a "relation of dialectical opposition between the sexes as groups" (418) and that performance "models the sexual division of labour and the opposition between insiders and outsiders" (430). Mary Coote (1977), in discussing the tradi-

[58] A. P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, Evanston, IL 1964, p. 7.

[59] A. Helbig, *Description of the Ethnomusicology seminar "Music, gender, and sexuality,"* University of Pittsburgh, http://www.adrianahelbig.com/ZHelbigPublications/Helbig%20-%20Music,%20Gender,%20Sexuality%20Syllabus,%20Fall%202010.pdf [15.07.2014].

[60] E. Koskoff (ed.), *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Urbana – Chicago 1989, p. 1.

[61] Ibidem.

[62] Ibidem.

tional division of Serbo-Croatian songs into "heroic" and "women's songs," relates this primary division to binary contrasts noted in other social domains: public/private, actions/feelings, socially positive/negative acts, and so on. Timothy Rice (1980), discussing the Macedonian *sobor*, relates women's participation in this celebration to the basic division in Macedonian society between, the religious observers, and men, the celebrants. Feld among the Kaluli (1982), Kaeppler in Tonga (1970; 1971; 1972), Sakata in Afghanistan (1976), McLeod and Herndon in Malta (1975), and Anthony Seeger among the Suyá Indians of Brazil (1980) have all noted that the division of the musical roles and responsibilities is conceptually linked to other culture-specific, gender-related domains. These range from the most common associations: male:female = public:private, to those of insult:compliment = inner world/outer world (McLeod and Herndon 1975: 88); urban:rural = variety:homogenity (Sakata 1976: 13); weeping provoked by song:weeping provoked by loss = little text:extended text (Feld 1982: 94), and so on. [...] Auerbach [...] notes that laments, performed solely by women and linked to their assigned female role as mourner, are conceptually tied to other female domains that have implications for musical performance[63]: individualism, fixed musical formulae, and elaboration of tects. Jones, in discussing the slave-girl tradition in Tunisia, notes that the dichotomus oppositions between men and women are rooted in basic religious and class structures, linking male and female musical domains to traditional dualisms, such as sacred:profane, holy:sordid, monied:slave, instrumental perforem:singer-dancer. Cohen, Koskoff, and Sakata also notice, among orthodox Jews and also among musicians in Afghanistan, the clustering of male and female musical activities with instrumental/vocal traditions and with sacredness and profanity.[64]

Let us go back to the three ethnomusicologists I mentioned above – Merriam, Blacking and Titon. Music, treated as a social practice, must be analyzed both from an anthropological standpoint as well as a sociological one. As Allan Merriam says: "I believe that music can be examined not only from the standpoint of musicians and humanists but from that of social scientists as well, and that, further, it is at the moment from the field of cultural anthropology that our primary stimulation is coming for

[63] The musical performance is a big arena for mirrorying gender relations. As Koskoff notices: "Music performance can and often does play an important role in inter-gender relations, for the inequalities or asymmetries perceived in such relations may be protested, mediated, reversed, transformed, or confirmed through various social/musical strategies, through ritual behaviour, disguise, secret language, or social 'deceptions' involving music. Four categories of music performance thus emerge in connection with inter-gender relations: (1) performance that confirms and maintains the established social/sexual arrangement; (2) performance that *appears* to maintain established norms in order to protect other, more relevant valuse, (3) performance that protests, yet maintains the order (often through symbolic behaviour); and (4) performance that challenges and threatens established order." E. Koskoff (ed.), *Women and Music*..., p. 10.

[64] Ibidem, p. 8.

the study of music as a universal aspect of man's activities."[65] Merriam assumes that since music is a part of the human behavioural processes, it must be examined via culture.[66] And according to him, this is the aim of ethnomusicology as such: "In order to understand why a music structure exists as it does, we must also understand how and why the behavior which produces it is as it is, and how and why the concepts which underlie that behavior are ordered in such a way as to produce the particularly desired form of organized sound."[67] Hence it is reasonable to include the category of gender into the research on music. In his field – research in the African community of Venda[68] – John Blacking shows the application of the theoretical assumptions of ethnomusicology in practice. He agrees with Merriam that a more adequate step than performing formal music analysis would be to study a given musical culture anthropologically[69]:

> We can no longer study music as a thing in itself when research in ethnomusicology makes it clear that musical things are not always strictly musical, and that the expression of tonal relationships in patterns of sound may be secondary to extramusical relationships which the tones represent. We may agree that music is sound that is organized into socially accepted patterns, that music making may be regarded as a form of learned behavior, and that musical styles are based on what man has chosen to select from nature as a part of his cultural expression rather than on what nature has

[65] A. P. Merriam, *Ethnomusicology Discussion and Definition of the Field*, "Society for Ethnomusicology," p. 112, http://www.hugoribeiro.com.br/biblioteca-digital/Merriam-Ethnomusicology_discussion_definition_of_the_field.pdf [15.01.2014].

[66] A. P. Merriam, *The Anthropology*..., p. 6.

[67] Ibidem, p. 7.

[68] There are not that many ethomusicologists that, as Blacking does and as Koskoff reminds us, "make an attempt of a fuller cultural description of women's musical activities." E. Koskoff (ed.), *Women and Music*..., p. 2. In her notes Koskoff mentions some of these studies: "Typical of these are studies surrounding such life events as puberty/initiation (see, for example, Balcking's studies among the Venda, 1962 and 1970); courtship, love, and weddings (Becker in Java, 1964; Gerson-Kiwi among the Jews of Bokhara, 1950; Olivella in Latin America, 1967; and Wade in North India, 1972); women's genres, such as lullabies (List in Central Thailand, 1961; Hawes in the United States, 1974); laments (Quereshi among Moslems in India, 1981; Szirma in Hungary, 1967; Caraveli-Chaves in Greece, 1980; Hampton among the Ga, 1982; Simon in West Irian, 1978); and specific genres associated with healing, shamanistic practices, or spirit possession (see again, Blacking among the Venda, 1962 and 1970; Gourlay in Uganda, 1970; Kartomi in Central Java, 1973; Kealiinohomoku in a comparative study of Hopi and Polynesioan dance, 1967; Nketia among the Akan, Ashanti, and Ga, 1957; Soedarsono in Java, 1969; Vander among the Shoshone, 1982; and Huhm, 1980; Harvey, 1980; and Kenda; in Korea, 1985)." Ibidem, p. 16.

[69] K. Kizińska, *Gender a kultury muzyczne*..., p. 383.

> imposed on him. But the nature from which man has selected his musical styles is not only external to him; it includes his own nature – his psychophysical capacities and the ways in which these have been structured by his experiences of interaction with people and things, which are part of the adaptive process of maturation in culture.[70]

Blacking notes the changes occurring between the composer/musician and their composition. (Of course, the terms: "composer," "composition" or even "music" are deployed in a general sense, with the reservation that they might not be used by an analyzed community). "The sound may be the object, but man is the subject; and the key to understanding music is in the relationships existing between subject and object."[71] He is directly interested in the audience of the music and the performer in a given musical culture.[72] Seeing that in the Venda community certain songs are performed by (or celebrations intended for) only men, others only by women (and employing different musical styles), he tries to understand the reason for this.

> From what I have said about shared experiences in Venda music, it should be clear that tshikona is valuable and beautiful to the Venda, not only because of the quantity of people and tones involved, but because of the quality of the relationships that must be established between people and tones whenever it is performed. Tshikona music can be produced only when twenty or more men blow differently tuned pipes with a precision that depends on holding one's own part as well as blending with others, and at least four women play different drums in polyrhythmic harmony. Furthermore, tshikona is not complete unless the men also perform in unison the different steps which the dance master directs from time to time.[73]

Finally, in his analyses he admits that the answer is hidden in the social organization of the Venda – that culture deploys specific musical styles in order to illuminate the dissimilar identities of different social groups.[74] This is the reason why music during boys initiation will sound differently than the girls' initiation, and differently still at the *domba* initiation and the "national" dance – official celebrations.[75] Does only the question of social division and different music at initiations speak for the importance of the category of gender in Venda? Not in the least. Apart from separate songs for boys and girls resulting from the ritual of initiation (in the

[70] J. Blacking, *How Musical Is Man?*, Seattle – London 2000, p. 26.

[71] Ibidem.

[72] Ibidem, p. 32.

[73] Ibidem, p. 51.

[74] K. Kizińska, *Gender a kultury muzyczne*..., p. 383.

[75] J. Blacking, *Venda Children's Songs: A Study in Ethnomusicological Analysis*, Chicago – London 1967, p. 21.

case of girls these are the so-called *vhusha*, *tshikanda* and *sungwi*) there are also the girls' dance *tshigombela*, the boys' communal dances, boys' reed-pipe dances, and the different songs and instruments accompanying the rite of circumcision of boys and girls.[76] Moreover, gender differences and their significance in analyzing the musical culture of the Venda can also be seen at the level of the importance of music to the Venda people, depending on whether it is performed by a man or a woman, how it is performed, and what instruments are used (which is particularly obvious in common celebrations for men and women). For instance, in the case of the *domba* initiation and the national dance, it is the woman that plays the bass drum and it is the traditional use of this instrument which has a ritual meaning. However, if there is a need to employ the bass drum for another celebration, for example the possession dance, then, in order to avoid an implication of a close relationship with traditional rituals, it is a man who plays the bass drum and in an entirely different fashion (especially in relation to rhythm and technique).[77] It is probably easier for us to understand the natural character of using the category of gender in ethnomusicology when we see how Blacking employs it in order to understand the way music functions in the community of the Venda. The need to deploy gender is similarly obvious for the last of the abovementioned pioneers of the discipline – Jeff Titon. Postulating the study of music not "in" culture, but "as" a culture,[78] Titon regards ethnomusicology as a field that examines people making music. Hence, he does not merely recognize, as Merriam or Blacking, that the sociological or anthropological approach is useful – he also claims that without these contexts an adequate study of cultures is impossible.[79] Furthermore, he was the first to refer in his theoretical assumptions to the question of historicity – looking for answers to the posed questions in the biographies of composers (various, not only with respect to individual experiences, but also with respect to the differences in times and places in which the individual composers functioned).[80] Is gender significant here, as well? Titon, for instance, asks: "What is it like in a given music-culture to experience music as a teenage girl, a young male urban professional, or a rural grandmother of Swedish ethnic herit-

[76] Ibidem, pp. 21, 23.

[77] Ibidem, p. 21; K. Kizińska, *Gender a kultury muzyczne*..., p. 384.

[78] J. T. Titon (ed.), *Worlds of Music. An Introduction to the Music of the Worlds Peoples*, Belmont, Ca 2009, p. xvii.

[79] Ibidem, p. xviii.

[80] Ibidem, p. xix.

age who lives on a farm?"[81] Whether the composer or the listener is male or female is of an equal significance as their social status, age or origins.

At the beginning I mentioned that Blacking predicts the applicability of the ethnomusicological assumptions in the Western-European music analysis. Such a transmission indeed occurs, although in a version free from ideological assumptions only with an American music historian – Richard Taruskin and his *The Oxford History of Western Music*[82] which amounts to five volumes. Initially the category of gender has arisen with the establishment of women's studies and feminist musicology, fields that are very often ideologically burdened. Let us briefly see how music was examined (and how the category of gender was deployed) within this segment of musicology. Therefore, let us move from non-European regions to the more culturally familiar Western-European music.

Margaret Sarkissian wrote about feminist musicology:

> In recent years, some of the most exciting, challenging, and ground-breaking work in historical musicology has been done by feminist musicologists. Their work is exciting because it has brought to light a new cast of characters--long-forgotten women who composed and made music; challenging because it has precipitated a thorough reevaluation of the ways we think about music, musical talent, and the musical canon; and ground-breaking because its emphasis on music as a sociocultural phenomenon has had a long-overdue impact on the discipline of musicology as a whole. In a little over two decades this subdiscipline has come of age, its maturity marked not only by a critical mass of significant publications (e.g. Bowers and Tick 1986; McClary 1991; Citron 1993; Marshall 1993; Solie 1993; Brett, Wood, and Thomas 1994; and Cook and Tsou 1994) but also by a number of reflective retrospectives penned by some of its leading exponents (e.g. Bowers 1989-90; Cook 1989; Wood 1992; Citron 1993; McClary 1993; and Solie 1997).[83]

What actually is feminist musicology Sarkissian is so excited about? It arose as branch of the "new" musicology – an immense field incorporating any new trends which became impulses for research to musicologists from the 1970's. The "new musicology" (also referred to as cultural musicology[84]) "is a term applied to a wide body of musicology with the focus

[81] Ibidem, p. 21.

[82] R. Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Oxford – New York 2005, 2009.

[83] M. Sarkissian, *Thoughts on the Study of Gender in Ethnomusicology: A Pedagogical Perspective*, "Women & Music Journal" 3/1999, http://www.questia.com/read/1G1-70636830/thoughts-on-the-study-of-gender-in-ethnomusicology [15.07.2014].

[84] M. Clayton, T. Herbert, R. Middleton (eds.), *The Cultural Study of Music. A Critical Introduction*, New York 2003, p. 125.

upon the cultural study, analysis, and criticism of music, with influences from feminism, gender studies, queer theory, and postcolonial studies. New musicology is a non-integrated movement in the musicology field, and widely practiced in musicology research centers worldwide within musicology, ethnomusicology and cultural studies traditions. "New musicology" is continually being reconstructed, and some would argue that new musicology has definitively become current musicology (Williams 2001). New musicology seeks to question the research methods of traditional musicology by displacing positivism, working in partnership with outside disciplines, including the humanities and social sciences, and by questioning accepted musical knowledge (Beard and Gloag, 2005, 123)."[85] It is best reflected in the statement by the musicologist Rose Rosengard Subotnik: "For me [...] the notion of an intimate relationship between music and society functions not as a distant goal but as a starting point of great immediacy [...] the goal of which is to articulate something essential about why any particular music is the way it is in particular, that is, to achieve insight into the character of its identity."[86] This approach is familiar to feminist and gender musicology (in Poland these two terms are used interchangeably, as was the case until recently in the United States. The difference lies mostly in the political and ideological engagement of the researchers representing these two branches – whereas feminist musicology analyses are by definition closer to the social postulates of women and, e.g., the fight for the equality of rights – including music, the gender musicology is sometimes silent about these aspects and focuses only on the question of gender and its application in music research – also within formal analyses – or the history of music. Nonetheless, the chaos and inconsequence when applying these terms prevents us from making an unequivocal division, thus I will also use these two terms interchangeably). However, it does concentrate on the question of gender. Some areas of interest of the feminist musicology include: the discovering and reminding us of female musicians in the history of European music; dealing with the Western musical canon (asking if and how it represents women); showing

[85] *Encyclopedia*, http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/New_musicology [15.01. 2014]. See also: J. P. E. Harper, J. Samson (eds.), *An Introduction to Music Studies*, Cambridge 2008, p. 89.

[86] R. R. Subotnik, *On grounding Chopin*, in R. Leppert, S. McClary (eds.), *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception*, Cambridge 1987, pp. 105–131.

the value of female musician's compositions (e.g. through conducting analysis, making recordings or publishing sheet music); incorporating female musician's biographies into analysis; using the gender perspective; exploring the ways and reasons for the exclusion of women from many aspects of musical life throughout history as well as for the statements that women lack creativity and musical talent, etc.[87] Hence, such aspects most often appear in the research within this discipline. Susan McClary is invariably considered a pioneer in the field; in her book *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender & Sexuality* published in 1991, she challenged traditional musicology by noticing gender entanglements in the music of "the great composers" (i.a. Beethoven or Wagner). On the one hand, this publication resulted in a wide wave of criticism; on the other, many new initiatives arose within the feminist musicology: for instance, Marcia Citron began critically to analyze the classical musical canon[88] and, similarly to McClary, study music with respect to how it reflects gender relations;[89] Ruth Solie engaged in the question of "difference" in opera;[90] Mary Ann Smart – sexualization of the female body in opera;[91] Elisabeth Wood[92] and Philippe Brett[93] – sexuality (including, predominantly, homosexuality); whereas Judith Tick, Jane Bowers, Carol Neuls-Bates, Julie Dunbar, Julie Sadie, Rhial Samuel, Sylvia Glickman, Martha Schleifer, and Karin Pendle[94]

[87] *Grove – The New Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, http://grove.knihovnahk.cz/subscriber/article/grove/music [1.11.2009]; K. Kizińska, *Rola płci kulturowej...*, pp. 24–25.

[88] M. J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, Urbana – Chicago 2000; eadem, *Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon*, "The Journal of Musicology" vol. 8, 1/1990.

[89] M. J. Citron, *Feminist Approaches to Musicology*, in P. C. Cook, J. P. Tsou (eds.), *Cecilia Reclaimed. Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*, Urbana – Chicago 1994.

[90] R. A. Solie, *Introduction*, in R. A. Solie (ed.), *Musicology and Difference. Gender and sexuality in music scholarship*, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1993.

[91] M. A. Smart (ed.), *Siren Songs. Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera*, Princeton – Oxford 2000.

[92] E. Wood, *Lesbian Fugue: Ethel Smyth's Contrapuntal Arts*, in R.A. Solie (ed.), *Musicology and Difference...*, pp. 164–183.

[93] P. Brett, *Britten's Dream*, in R. A. Solie (ed.), *Musicology and Difference...*, pp. 259–280.

[94] J. Bowers, J. Tick (eds.), *Women Making Music. The Western Art Tradition, 1150–1950*, Urbana – Chicago 1987; J. A. Sadie, R. Samuel (eds.), *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, New York – London 1995; S. Glickman, M. Furman Schleifer (eds.), *From Convent to Concert Hall. A Guide to Women Composers*, Westport – London 2003; J. C. Dunbar, *Women, Music, Culture. An Introduction*, New York – London 2011; C. Neuls-Bates (ed.), *Women in Music. An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle*

(among others) – all wrote books and dictionaries devoted to the history of women in music. Let us now look briefly at most of the above examples.

Marcia Citron argues that the canon of classical music (the way it was formed and functions), is one of the main reasons for excluding women from the history of music. It supports an erratic assumption that female composers (or important female composers) were absent – after all they were considered too unimportant to be included in the canon, thus in history. Citron exposes all the aspects connected to the rise of the canon, depicting that it is an artificial construct, historically changeable, which cannot be treated as a determinant of the "artistry" of the favoured composers. It is a construct which certainly needs to be subject to change. In another publication, Citron discusses a problem of the gender study of sonata. Perceiving difficulties resulting from analyzing purely instrumental music in relation to gender, Citron nonetheless decides to stick with the structure of the work in the analysis of the sonata. Thus, she tries to prove that this form has its own "rhetoric, ideology, and symbolism, a powerful cultural force."[95] According to Citron, the status of privilege it enjoyed (remember that Charles Rosen defines sonata as "the most prestigious of musical forms"[96]) reflected similarly privileged social groups and thus it became a form predominated by men,[97] concealing fundamental gender associations. "The rhetoric of the sonata form centers on masculine metaphors, notably power, hegemony, opposition, and competition"[98] (as examples one may mention: the prevalence of the tonic over the dominant, or the contrast of themes defined as principal and secondary and their nature, which may have reflected the contrast in the social life – a struggle between the sexes, etc.).[99] However, Citron's interpretations yielded to a wave of criticism (often concerning methodology and argumentation more than the direction of the study and the posed questions).

Ruth Solie chose "difference" as a focus of her interests, and she asks "what pieces of music can express or reflect on the people who make and use them, and thus of the differences between and among those peo-

Ages to the Present, Boston 1996; K. Pendle (ed.), *Women & Music. A History*, Bloomington – Indianapolis 1991.

[95] M. J. Citron, *Feminist Approaches...*, pp. 18–19, 35.

[96] Ch. Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, p. 1, in M. J. Citron, *Feminist Approaches...*, p. 19.

[97] M. J. Citron, *Feminist Approaches...*, p. 19.

[98] Ibidem, p. 35.

[99] Ibidem, pp. 19–22.

ple."[100] The "difference" is, according to her, constructed, and thus such a precise definition how we understand and define this difference (she herself notices, i.a., biological, psychological, political or philosophical aspects) significantly influences the research process in which we try to describe a given musical culture (thus its members, as well) or a specific music composition (the composer, performer, audience). Mary Ann Smart concentrates her attention on gender relations and conflicts between the sexes in opera, starting from its origins. She finds this analysis [despite whether it is conducted on the basis of a text from libretto, the music itself or all components occurring in an opera – because as Smart herself admits, "some essays (Feldman, Auner, the Hutcheons, Brett) turn to facts and principles of political history as the foundation for their readings of gendered meaning; others (Parker, Hadlock, Smart, and the Hutcheons again) locate a sense of history in documents that lie closer to the musical text: literary sources, a composer's letters, staging manuals. Yet another group (Brooks, Bergeron, Kramer) aims to interpret operatic texts of the later nineteenth century through the specific filter of psychoanalysis."[101] This is enormously important, allowing to discover mechanisms governing e.g. the musical process and choreographic creation of characters, and therefore musical meanings. In this context, she considers the male-female binary very interesting (known to us as being considered almost unconditional when applying the category of gender). Smart notes that this opposition is most frequently visible in analyzing male and female opera roles, but also in questions about the relation between a female singer (female opera character) and the composer (a man).[102] However, Smart finds one direction in particular which the research on opera takes interesting, and this is analysis of the body and corporeality (including the sexualization of a woman's body in the opera).[103]

Feminist musicology also presents certain clear themes referring to the social hierarchization theories outlined previously, inter alia, in the research by Leo Treitler and John Shepherd. Especially the latter, emphasizing the importance of using the intersectional method, i.e. analyzing "difference" in music not only by gender, but any other social entanglement of an individual, such as social class, economical status, age or origin, is

[100] R. A. Solie, *Introduction*, pp. 3, 28.
[101] M. A. Smart (ed.), *Siren Songs...*, p. 11.
[102] Ibidem, p. 7.
[103] Ibidem, p. 10.

a great example. This does not change the fact, however, that the category of gender was crucial to Shepherd. As he claimed: it is impossible to understand the music practice of the modern western societies without simultaneously examining how this music practice, understanding and management attract specific and powerful forms of "gendering."[104]

At this point, I would like to present a specific example of deploying the category of gender in music composition analysis. As I mentioned earlier, this will be an analysis of *Dove io credea* by Francesca Caccini prepared by an American musicologist – Suzanne Cusick. Cusick, being a professor at the University of New York, devoted most of her professional career to the 17th-century Italian female composer Francesca Caccini[105] and her work. Hence, Cusick's emotional and personal attitude both to the history of Caccini's life, as well as her music, should not come as a surprise. Perceiving Francesca as a prominent female persona of the musical culture of the 17th-century Florence (nearly completely dominated in those times by male artists), Cusick sees her work through the lenses of the feminist musicology, and thus with a view that gender leaves an imprint on the music created by her. It is worth quoting Cusick herself when she explains her approach to the conducted analyses (it is a quotation which to a certain extent constitutes an introduction to the gender analysis of the aria *Dove io credea le mie speranze vere*, which shall be presented later).

> I feel honourbound to state that my thoughts are as firmly rooted in a feminist consciousness as in a musicological one. By invoking the increasingly unfashionable word "feminist" in this context, I mean to admit the two biases that I have knowingly brought to these essays [106]. First, "feminist" means to me an ongoing concern to

---

104 J. Shepherd, *Difference and Power in Music*, in R. A. Solie (ed.), *Musicology and Difference*..., p. 47.

105 See S. Cusick, *"Thinking from Women's Lives": Francesca Caccini after 1627*, "The Musical Quarterly" 77(3)/1993, pp. 484–507; eadem, *Francesca among Women: A Seicento Gynecentric View*, in T. LaMay (ed.), *Musical Voices of Early Modern Women: Many-headed Melodies*, Burlington 2005; eadem, *Francesca Caccini: Questioni per una biografia tra gender e musicologia*, "Teatro e storia" Anno XXI, 28/2007, pp. 339–351; eadem, *This Music Which Is Not One: Inaudible Order and Representation of the Feminine in Francesca Caccini's Primo libro delle musiche (1618)*, "Early Modern Woman" 2/2007, pp. 127–162; eadem, *"Who is this woman...?" Self-presentation, Imitatio Virginis and Compositional Voice in Francesca Caccini's Primo Libro of 1618*, "Il Saggiatore Musicale" 5(1)/1998, pp. 5–41; eadem, *Performing/Composing/Woman: Francesca Caccini Meets Judith Butler*, in P. Macarthur, C. Poynton (eds.), *Musics and Feminisms*, Sydney 1999, pp. 87–98.

106 I refer to the essay S. Cusic, *Re-Voicing Arianna (And Laments): Two Women Respond*, "Early Music" vol. 27, 3/1999: *Laments*.

> advocate the greatest possible freedom and self-awareness for living women, and the men with whom we live and work. Second, it means to me a continuing intellectual quest to understand the ways that systems of representation (and performance) have interacted with the power-regime called gender, the regime by which social power is distributed among people whom it is convenient to identify as either "women" or "men." I believe that intellectual understanding of how gender has worked in the past, or in other cultures, can contribute to understanding how it works now, and can therefore contribute to our ability to change the system better to suit our needs. There is always something "presentist" about a "feminist" response; a feminist is always aware of the impact that her or his historical interpretations might have on contemporary readers' experiences of themselves as gendered beings. As a musician and scholar with these feminist concerns, I see the central set of questions surrounding laments[107] in early-modern Europe to be questions about gender, and specifically about the representation of women's sexuality, women's voices and women's subjectivities. And it is as a feminist that I will follow my own presentist responses with those I believe to be implicit in one 17th-century invocation of Arianna's voice, Francesca Caccini's *aria sopra la romanesca* "Dove io credea le mie speranze vere."[108]

Before I get to the critical summary of the method of analysis of the aria used by Cusick, I will emphasize that the attitude assumed by Cusick outlined in the above quotation is present in all of her publications, including the most prominent of her works, a book entirely dedicated to Francesca Caccini, *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court. Music and the Circulation of*

[107] Let's remember that laments are one of the central study subjects not only to feminist musicology, but also to ethnomusicology (Quereshi among Moslems in India, 1981; Szirma in Hungary, 1967; Caraveli-Chaves in Greece, 1980; Hampton among the Ga, 1982; Simon in West Irian, 1978 – after Koskoff; Alexiou, 1974; Feld, 1982; Rosenblatt, 1976 – after Auerbach). Susan Auerbach titled her study *From Singing to Lamenting: Women's Musical Role in a Greek Village* (it is one of the textes included in Elene Koskoff's *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, pp. 25–43). She writes about Greek women's vocal expression and how it becomes "a vehicle both for catharsis and commentary in response to their position in a male-dominated society" [E. Koskoff (ed.), *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, p. 25]. That is because they are enjoined from playing instruments (we're talking about traditional Greek villages, rural areas). So women "preserve folk songs as the keepers of traditional lore and perform laments in their capacity as chief mourners" (ibidem). Auerbach's conlusion (after analyzing specifically Kalohori women) is that "the regulation of women's musical choices in Kalohori reflects appropriate connections between emotion, gender, and expression that order village musical life. [...] Women's prescribed musical roles as singers and lamenters may [...] be viewed generally as gender behaviour, that is, models of and for their ideal home-centered gender role" (ibidem, p. 40). It is interesting to compare the way laments are analyzed by ethnomusicologists and feminist musicologists. Let's look at Suzanne Cusick's study of Francesca Caccini's lamenting Ariadna with that thought in mind.

[108] S. Cusick, *Re-Voicing Arianna*..., p. 437.

Power.[109] For instance, when analyzing the preserved compilation of songs for one and two voices – *Il Primo Libro delle musiche* – incorporated in the book, the musicologist unchangeably interprets individual works included in it as reflecting a female approach to the question of teaching singing. To her mind, pupils who carefully studied Caccini's handbook could learn more than innumerous musical tricks; they could also learn, by controlling their bodies (hands, breath and voice) how to release both their physical and metaphorical/symbolic[110] voice (the female voice, a voice allowing to express themselves as women). According to Cusick, Caccini's handbook "presents paradoxes of gender and problems of musical technique as interrelated dilemmas to be simultaneously resolved."[111] Therefore, Cusick perceives *Il Primo Libro* as a characteristic introspective vocal course directed simultaneously towards vocal problems and problems related to womanhood (or being a woman).[112] Teaching her students methods to release their voices, she at the same time taught them to free themselves from an "excessive obedience towards conventions of femininity which may have paralysed and silence them (deprived them of their voice)."[113] Thus, as you can see, Cusick yet again relates all the perceived musical characteristics in Caccini's compilation to the question of femininity and gender. However, she seems to forget that not every composition in the compilation was meant to be performed by women only (i.a. *Rendi alle mie speranze*). Hence, it is hard to treat her analyses as exhaustive or resilient to criticism. Let us now discuss an analysis of the aria *Dove io credea le mie speranze vere* which Cusick makes in the abovementioned article *Re-Voicing Arianna (And Laments): Two Women Respond*.

We are all familiar with the myth of Arianna, who helped Theseus escape the maze. Not all of us, however, know what happened next. One available version of the aftermath says that after having killed the Minotaur, Theseus promised to marry Arianna but on the way he left her on the Island of Naxos (presumably on orders from Dionysus who himself wanted to marry her). Another, more common version says that Theseus

[109] S. Cusick, *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court. Music and the Circulation of Power*, Chicago 2009.

[110] Ibidem, p. 93.

[111] Ibidem, p. 114.

[112] A. Dell'Antonio, *Review Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court: Music and the Circulation of Power, by P. G. Cusick*, "Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music" vol. 16, 1/2009, par. 5.1, http://www.sscm-jscm.org/v16/no1/br_dell'antonio.html [18.11.2013].

[113] S. Cusick, *Francesca...*, p. 114.

deserted Arianna in her sleep on the island (for unknown reasons), and Dionysus, who passed by, fell in love and married her.[114] Either way, the love story of Theseus and Arianna has an unfortunate ending, thus composers in their music "versions" of the myth incorporate a lament of the abandoned Arianna. The aria *Dove io credea le mie speranze vere* refers to this lament. According to Cusick, Caccini's work is a response (the only one by a woman) to Monteverdi/Rinuccini's *L'Arianna* (cloaked in the connotations of a *romanesca*).[115] Offering a female perspective of a centuries-old tradition of the lamenting Arianna, Caccini shapes her voice anew[116] [thus Cusick's title of the article – *Re-Voicing Arianna (And Laments): Two Women Respond* (i.e. Caccini's and Arianna's)].

Referring to construction aspects of the form applied by Caccini, Cusick claims that, for one, the aria *Dove io credea le mie speranze vere* is not a lament (Example 1). She explains this observation in an interesting way: "Despite her text's ample borrowings from Ruccini, Caccini's Arianna does not rehearse the stages of loss articulated so brilliantly by Monteverdi and Ruccini; we hear no suicidal depression, no futile entreaties for Teseo's return, no outrage, no curses hurled after his retreating sails [...]."[117] Illuminating these matters, Cusick focuses on Caccini's way of creating the character of Arianna, not the form, as one might expect from the initial statement. Her desire is to show that Arianna as presented here is not a "typically" feminine character, overflowing with emotions, lamenting, immersed in despair after a lost man: "Indeed, anyone hoping to hear in this Arianna's voice a vicarious outpouring of intense, all but uncontrolled emotion will find *Dove io credea* oddly dry. Rather, the text Caccini chose to set presents Arianna as a thinking woman caught in the act of reflecting – in voice – on the conceptual errors that led to her situation."[118] Then, Caccini's Arianna is a woman who is closer to the contemporary feminist criteria – she is not blinded by love, and able to assess her mistakes, conscious of the deceitful behaviour of her beloved. At this point, Cusick focuses predominantly on the text of the aria, which she interprets in accordance with her assumptions. Is a statement that Caccini

[114] Q.v. i.a. J. Parandowski, *Mitologia. Wierzenia i podania Greków i Rzymian*, Cieszyn 2006; http://mitologia.klp.pl/a-7277.html, http://www.starozytnosc.info/mitologia-grecka-rzymska/streszczenia-mitow-greckich/mit-o-tezeuszu [18.11.2013].

[115] S. Cusick, *Re-Voicing Arianna...*, p. 442.

[116] Ibidem.

[117] Ibidem.

[118] Ibidem.

created, as a unique and strong female personality of the 17th century, a similarly strong character of Arianna which could constitute a model for other women too much? Or perhaps, if not a model, a warning? Maybe. Certainly, the main thesis of this text is being compromised – a necessity for the researcher to adjust to the worldview of a given epoch. It seems Cusick imposes a contemporarily desired female behaviour towards the treason and lies of a man of a culture from the past. Of course, such an operation would be justified if the authoress indicated that she would apply such a modern and quite casual interpretation. However, in this instance, the authoress theoretically takes consideration of the reality of the era: "Able to embody both the conventional and the unconventional, the acquiescent and the antagonist sides of Everywoman's response to the strictures of early-modern heterosexuality, Caccini's Arianna is a woman who retains control of the relationship between her acquiescent and antagonist selves and the world, a woman who reserves the right to exceed convention and even to mock it. Almost alone among early-modern fictive women, Caccini's Arianna is unbroken, the subject of her own life, a woman whose skilful play among contradictions creates a space whence she can have a voice of her own."[119] However, following her line of argumentation we might have a problem noticing that Cusick actually retains (and explains her understanding of) "early-modern heterosexuality" or whether she applies this in her analysis. Cusick rather attempts to "discover" the appropriate meaning of the work (assuming that such exists) by the application of modern "filters" – ways of understanding womanhood, treason, etc.

First, it is worth looking at the original of the composition (from the compilation *Il Primo Libro delle Musiche*[120]) from which Cusick creates a transcript of two fragments (Examples 1 and 2 presented later on):

[119] Ibidem, p. 447.

[120] F. Caccini, *Il Primo Libro delle Musiche*, photocopy of the Estense Universitaria Library of the 1618 copy from Florence (Zanobi Pignoni), through: Petrucci Library, http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9f/IMSLP29719-PMLP32886-Caccini_Francesca_-_Il_Primo_Libro_delle_Musiche_1618_.pdf [18.11.2013].

IL PRIMO LIBRO

DELLE MVSICHE A VNA, E DVE VOCI

DI FRANCESCA CACCINI

NE' SIGNORINI

DEDICATE

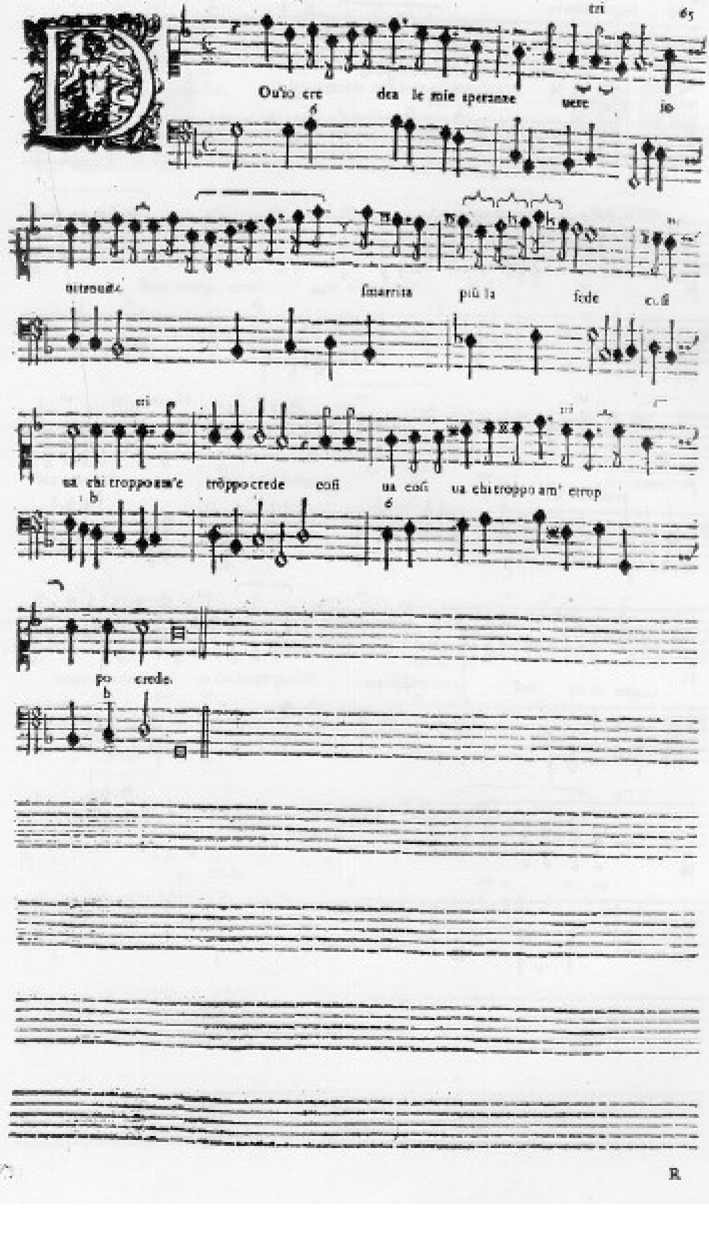
ALL'ILLVSTRISS. E REVERENDISSIMO

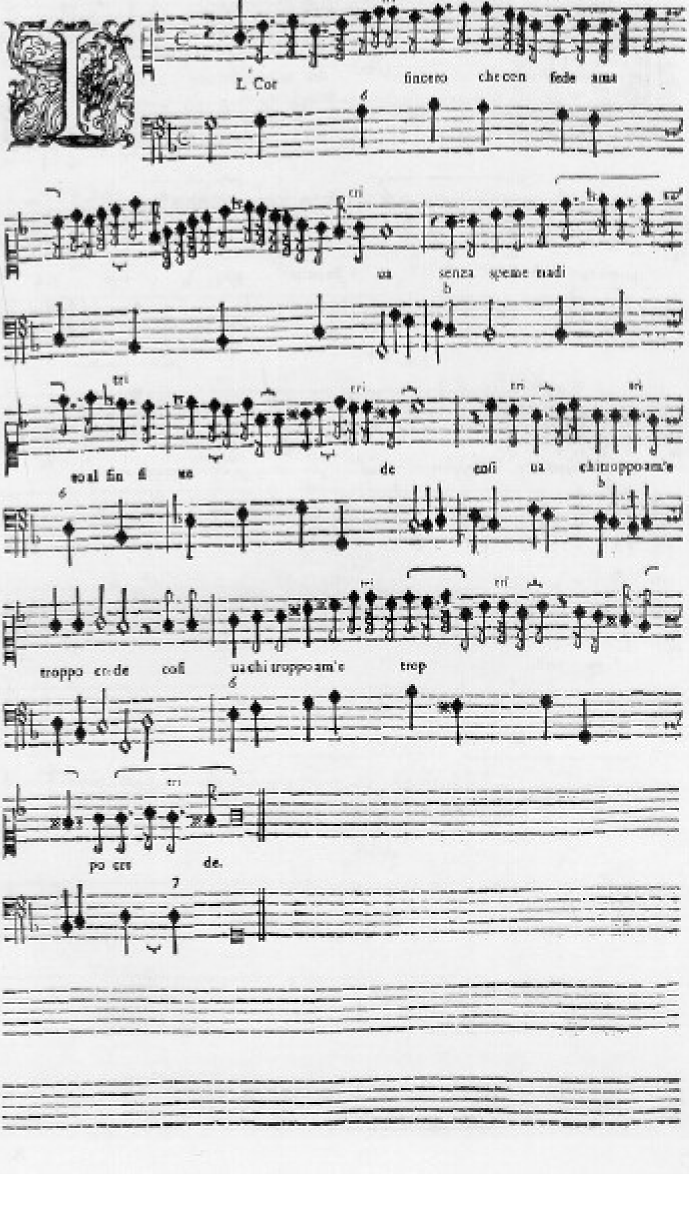
SIGNOR

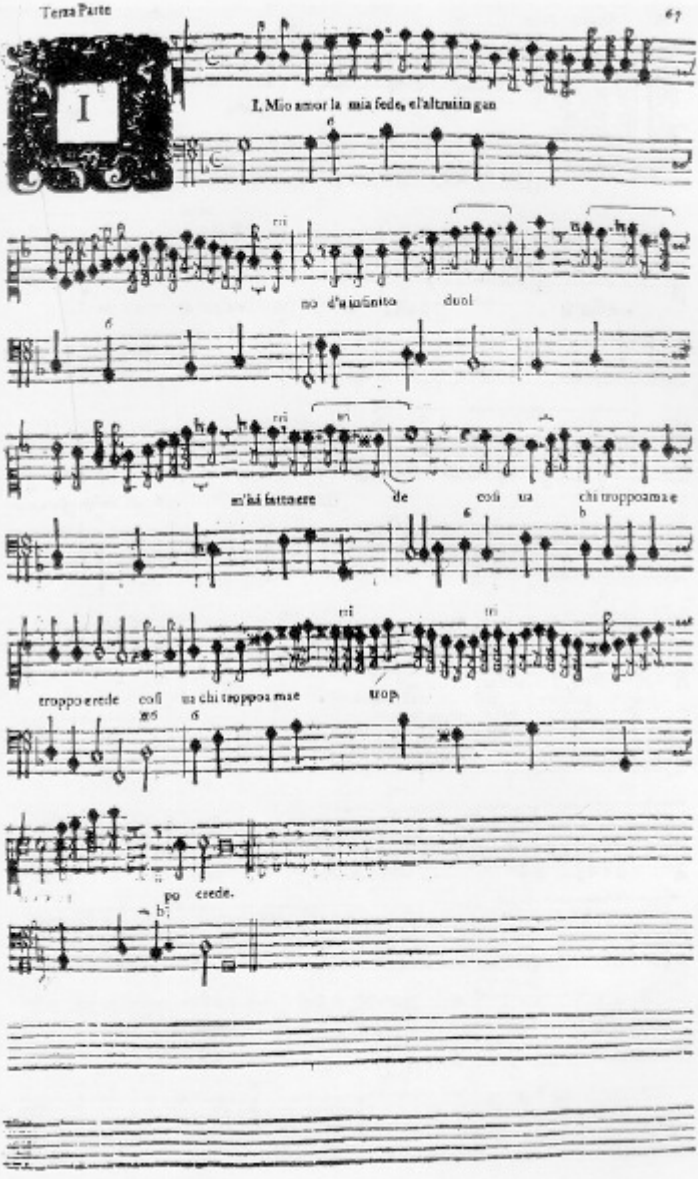
CARDINALE DE' MEDICI.

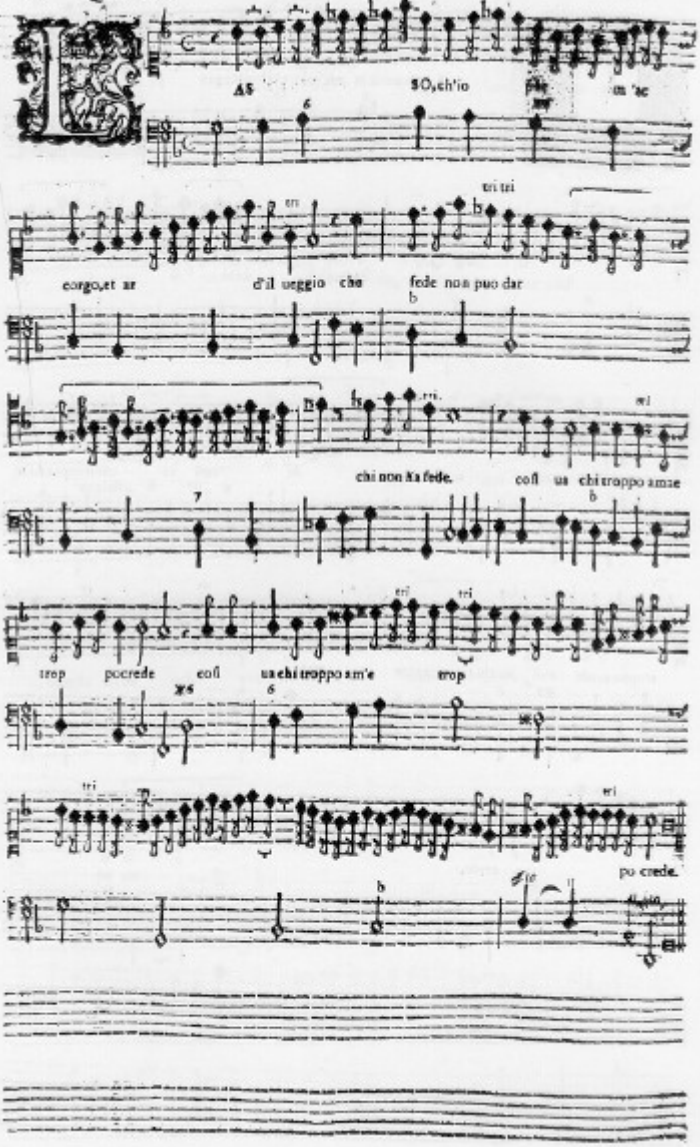
In Firenze, Nella Stamperia di Zanobi Pignoni. 1618.
Con Licenzia de' Superiori.

Aria sopra la Romanesca Prima Parte.




I
L Cor sincero che con fede ama
ua senza speme nadi
to al fin si ua de
cosi ua chi troppo am'e
troppo cr de cosi ua chi troppo am'e trop
po cre de.


I
I. Mio amor la mia fede, el'altruiin gan
no d'u infinito duol
m'ha fatto ere de cosi ua chi troppoama e
troppo crede cosi ua chi troppo mae trop
po crede.


AS SO,ch'io m 'ac
tri tri
corgo,et ar d'il ueggio cho fede non puo dar
chi non ha fede. cosi us chi troppo amae
trop pocrede cosi us chi troppo am'e trop
po crede.

Let us now examine the text of the aria in more detail – as for Cusick it is the text (only later the music) which has a primary significance in her attempt at interpretation.

Dove io credea le mie speranze vere,
io vi trovai smarrita più la fede:
così va chi troppo ama e troppo crede,
così va chi troppo ama e troppo crede.
Il cor sincero che con fede amava,
senza speme tradito al fin si vede:
così va...
Il mio amor, la mia fede, e l'altrui inganno
d'un infinito duol m'han fatto erede:
così va...
Lasso, ch'io pur m'accorgo et ard'il veggio
che fede non puo dar chi non ha fede:
così va...

[*Where I believed my hopes to be true/ there I found my faith most blotted:/ so it goes for one who loves and trusts too much.// A sincere heart that loves with trust,/ In the end sees itself betrayed, without hope:/ so it goes...// My love, my trust, and another's life/have made me heir to infinite sorrow:/so it goes...// Alas, I now realize and dare to see,/ that the untrustworthy cannot make promises:/ so it goes...*

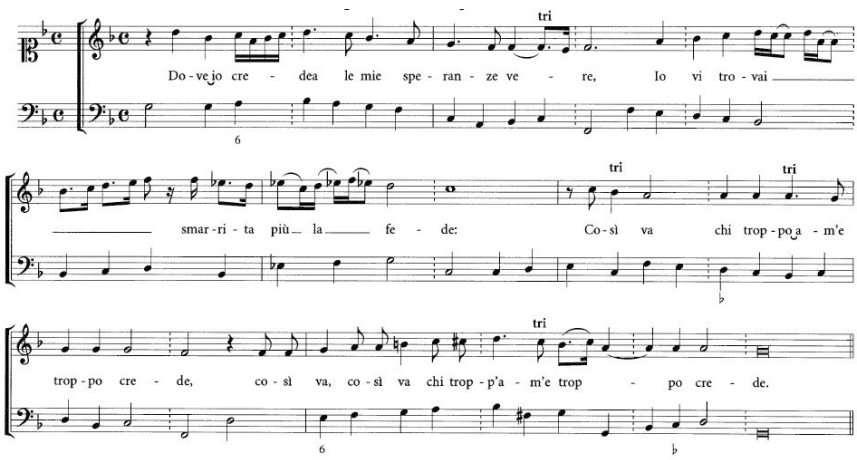
Mirate di che duol m'han fatto erede
l'amor mio, la mia fede e l'altrui inganno.
Così va chi troppo'ama e troppo crede.

[*see of what sorrow I have been made the heir/ by my love, my trust, and another's life/ So it goes for one who loves and trusts too much.*]

Indeed, the undertone of the text seems more reflective than lamenting, but Francesca Caccini is not the authoress of it (the author remains anonymous and there are no hints, even the slightest, to the reason that the composer might have written this text). Thus, resting so firmly on the text in an attempt to prove that it was Francesca Caccini who created the "new" Arianna is quite risky. This is especially so when, as Cusick herself admits, musically the aria relates to Monteverdi's *L'Arianne* in many aspects. Cusick gives the first example of notation (below) as portraying *Dove io credea le mie speranze vere* as an aria which is not a lament. However, Cusick does not explain which elements we should pay attention to, what

it is that "musically" indicates her statement (although in her article she gives a comprehensive outline of the tradition of lament – the practical applications of this information in specific musical examples taken from Francesca's work is missing). Therefore, in this respect, the reader is basically left to themselves. Let us examine an example provided by Cusick:

Example 1



Source: S. Cusick, *Re-Voicing Arianna (And Laments): Two Women Respond*, "Early Music" vol. 27, 3/1999, *Laments* (Aug.), p. 443.

Only when she is explaining why applying the form of a romanesca instead of a lament is confusing, and elaborating its significance for the interpretation of the work, does Cusick turn towards more music-related aspects, not founded on text analysis. Before she does this, however, she calls on two examples of connotations of the form of the romanesca from Caccini's times impinging on the expectations of the audience:

> Caccini's setting of this text as an "aria sopra la romanesca" strikes me as deliberately confusing, yet just as deliberately an envoicing of Arianna's self-control. Her choice confuses because it gives Arianna [her] voice through two contradictory connotations of the romanesca. On the one hand, to Florentine musicians working within the aesthetic norms that Gulio Caccini had attributed to the "Camerata" [the so-called Florentine Camerata, a group of musicians and theorists gathered under the patronage of Giovanni de'Bardi, who postulated discarding a complicated polyphony in favour of

> the prevailing of the text over music and the renaissance of the Greek theatre – note by K. K.], the romanesca doubtless evoked Vincenzo Galilei's notion of the aria as characteristically concitato [concitato style (stile contitato) – agitated style, developed by, i.a., Claudio Monteverdi – note by K. K.], the utterance of an agitated, even angry heart. On the other hand [...] to women in the courtly circle of the Grand Duchess Christine of Lorraine, the heir and favourite grandchild of Cathrine de Médicis, the romanesca could also have evoked an aura of widowlike, chaste constancy.[121]

Similarly, Cusick notices two ways in which romanesca governs musical structure of *Dove io credea*: "the melodic/harmonic pattern associated with the romanesca seems audible only in the second statement of the refrain. Thus Caccini might seem simultaneously to reinforce the song's moral and to render it commonplace, as much a cliché as the ubiquitous romanesca itself."[122]

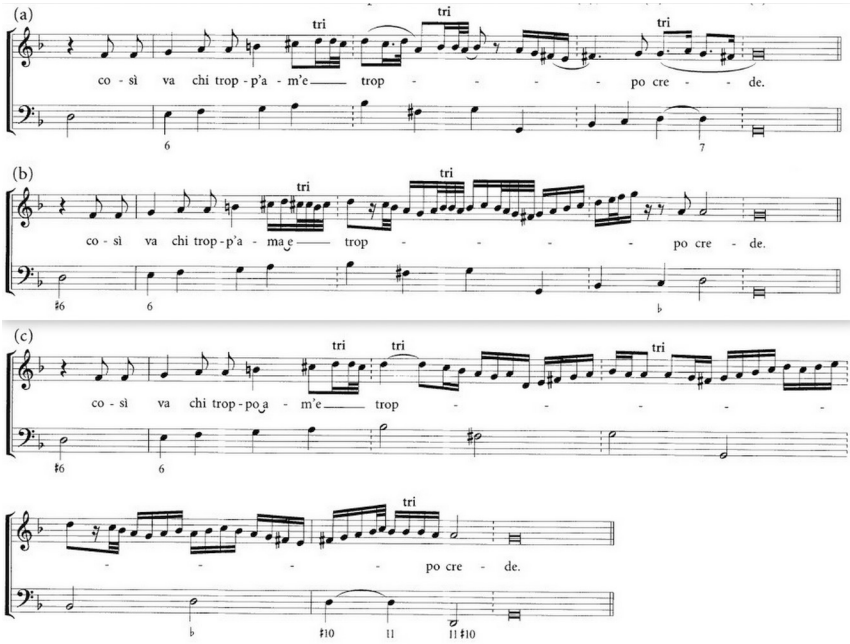
This short description of a melodic schemata, unfortunately, lacking in specificity, is immediately applied to the question of womanhood: "The romanesca phrase envoices Arianna's self-objectifying warning to other women [...]."[123] It is, according to Cusick, visible in a certain "excess" audible in the refrain, an excess also understood as a concentration of fanciful ornaments (e.g. for the word troppo, i.e. Italian for "too much") (Example 2). Obviously, this excess refers to the text and its meaning:

> It is as if her Arianna were wittily, perhaps mockingly, performing the very excesses of "voice" (and therefore of the body, of sexual agency) against which this line might be supposed to have warned. [...] For when Caccini's Arianna sings herself as an emblem of constant excess and excessive constancy she sings her refusal to renounce the very qualities against which her words would warn. Thus, within this slightly complicated interpretation, we return again to metaphorical questions, as Cusick concludes: "Unlike Monteverdi's Arianna, Caccini's has refused to silence or chastise her own subjectivity. Instead, one might easily hear this Arianna as using the romanesca to sing a constancy to herself, sung as a steadfast refusal to cede to the restrictions of conventional morality."[124]

Before we investigate the second musical example presented by Cusick, let us quickly return to the elements Cusick indicates as a proof that Caccini treats the form of romanesca differently than convention would impose. Apart from the already mentioned lack of stile concitato, a "chaste,

[121] Ibidem, p. 444.
[122] Ibidem.
[123] Ibidem.
[124] Ibidem, p. 445.

Example 2



Source: S. Cusick, *Re-Voicing Arianna (And Laments)*..., p. 445.

widowlike constancy" or mocking application of the refrain, Cusick also notices the lack of tonal stability characteristic for the romanesca. Instead of a tonally balanced structure of the stanzas of the aria (considered by e.g. John Whenham a "discipline of romanesca") we hear a purposeful exceeding of the tonal boundaries.[125] Arianna, and therefore Caccini, consciously rejects the conventional ways of performing the romanesca. Yet again, Cusick refers her perception to the metaphorical "side" of the character of Arianna: "Caccini's Arianna performs herself as a woman who controls the tonal space in which her thoughts will unfold. [...] She can retreat from cultural intelligibility to a romanesca-based space where she can give voice to her own experience; and she can return, over and over again, to wield the familiar, self-objectifying Rinuccini refrain in its most

[125] Ibidem, p. 447.

banally audible romanesca form, as if it were a carnival mask."[126] When speaking of a retreat from cultural intelligibility, Cusick means that the audience, who expect certain characteristic elements of the romanesca, are being forced to abandon their cultural expectations and to follow a musical thought which Caccini's Arianna proposes, despite the fact it is unknown to that audience of those times.[127]

Let us turn our attention to the final connection by the researcher of the questions of musical form and metaphorical meaning in this composition, treating it as a conclusion:

> *Dove io credea* seems to me a fully realized example of the hope [...] that the intersection between romanesca and the tradition of lamenting women might reveal a space where women's subjectivity might find voice. Further, Caccini's creation in this aria of an alternative, non-lamenting voice for Arianna seems to me to constitute a historical precedent for the tonally exploring, sorceress-like "women who don't lament."[128]

In this way, Cusick assumes that the aspects she indicated are enough to state that Caccini's phenomenon is reflected in the musical creation of the fictional Arianna – although indeed she enumerates only two of those musical endeavours (ornaments and the question of tonal balance). It is clear that sometimes the objectives of feminist musicology researchers impact upon the processes of analysis to a degree that prevents the separation of a worldview from the scientific conclusions, which to a certain extent is evident in this case. It does not change the fact that Cusick poses many interesting questions worth answering, thus expanding research methods and the understanding of music compositions in the context of their origin, the composer, or within a given genre. Hence, Cusick contributes to enriching the history of music with her research, proposing an innovative approach to the subject, simultaneously emphasizing the aspect of gender. Therefore, it seems that the ending of this article with an example of analysis authored by her is both adequate and valuable – as it shows both innovative and discussion-related aspects of this type of research.

[126] Ibidem.
[127] Ibidem.
[128] Ibidem.

Bibliography

Chapter I

Agamben A., *Czym jest współczesność*, in idem, *Nagość*, transl. K. Żaboklicki, Warsaw 2010.

Aristotle, *Etyka nikomachejska*, transl. D. Gromska, in Aristotle, *Dzieła wszystkie*, vol. 5, Warsaw 1996.

Aristotle, *Retoryka. Poetyka*, transl., introduction and commentary H. Podbielski, Warsaw 1988.

Augustine (St.), *The City of God*, transl. M. Dods, New York 1950.

Bakhtin M., *Estetyka twórczości słownej*, transl. D. Ulicka, ed. E. Czaplejewicz, Warsaw 1986.

Bakhtin M., *Problemy literatury i estetyki*, transl. W. Grajewski, Warsaw 1982.

Bachtin M., *Problemy poetyki Dostojewskiego*, transl. N. Modzelewska, Warsaw 1970.

Bakhtin M., *Sobraniye sochineniy*, vol. 5, Moscow 1996.

Banasiak B., *Markiz de Sade – filozof XX wieku*, in D. A. F. de Sade, *Julietta*, transl. B. Banasiak, K. Matuszewski, Cracow 2003.

Bataille G., *Erotyzm*, transl. M. Ochab, Gdansk 2007.

Benedict R., *Chryzantema i miecz. Wzory kultury japońskiej*, transl. E. Klekot, Warsaw 1999.

Beauvoir S. de, *Le Deuxième Sexe*, Paris 1949.

Boyé E., *Od tłumacza*, in P. Aretino, *Żywoty kurtyzan. O łajdactwach męskich*, transl. E. Boyé, Cracow 2003.

Burzyńska A., Markowski M. P., *Teorie literatury XX wieku*, Cracow 2006.

Corbin A. (ed.), *Historia ciała*, transl. K. Belaid, T. Stróżyński, vol. 2, Gdansk 2013.

Czaplejewicz E., Kasperski E. (ed.), *Bachtin: dialog – język – literatura*, Warsaw 1983.

Delumeau J., *Strach w kulturze Zachodu XIV–XVIII w.*, transl. A. Szymanowski, Warsaw 1986.

Dover K. J., *Homoseksualizm grecki*, transl. J. Margański, Cracow 2004.

Eichenbaum B., *Teoria metody formalnej*, transl. R. Zimand, in idem, *Szkice o prozie i poezji*, Warsaw 1973.

Elias N., *Przemiany obyczajów w cywilizacji Zachodu*, transl. T. Zabłudowski, Warsaw 1980.
Ellmann R., *James Joyce*, Oxford 1959.
Escoffier J. (ed.), *Sexual revolution*, New York 2003.
Foucault M., *Historia seksualności*, transl. B. Banasiak, T. Komendant, K. Matuszewski, Warsaw 2000.
Freud P., *Kultura jako źródło cierpień*, in idem, *Pisma społeczne*, Warsaw 1998.
Fustel de Coulanges N. D., *Histoire des institutions politiques de l'ancienne France*, vol. 4, Paris 1922.
Giddens A., *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. "Ja" i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności*, Warsaw 2001.
Graves R., *Greek Mythology*, transl. H. Krzeczkowski, Warsaw 1968.
Grimal P., *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, transl. J. Sachse, Wroclaw 1987.
Gurievitch A., *Historian and Historical Anthropology*, "Konteksty. Sztuka Ludowa" 1–2/1997.
Gurievitch A., *Problemy średniowiecznej kultury ludowej*, transl. Z. Dobrzyniecki, Warsaw 1987.
Histoire du corps, vol. 2: *De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre*, ed. A. Corbin, Paris 2005.
Hunt L. (ed.), *The Invention of Pornography. Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity 1500–1800*, New York 1993.
Iwanow W., *Rola semiotyki w cybernetycznym badaniu człowieka i społeczności*, in *Semiotyka kultury*, Warsaw 1975.
Iwanow W., *Znacheniye idey M. M. Bakhtina o znake, wyskazyvanii i dialoge dla sovremennoy semiotiki*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 6, Tartu 1973.
Jacobson R., Tymianow J., *Problemy badań nad literaturą i językiem*, "Nowyj Lef" 13/1928, transl. E. Korpała-Kirszak, in J. Tymianow, *Fakt literacki*, Warsaw 1978.
Jędrzejko E., *Wstyd po polsku – czyli o czym „mówią" słowa. Kategorie kulturowe z perspektywy współczesnej lingwistyki*, in E. Kosowska (ed.), *Wstyd w kulturze. Zarys problematyki*, Katowice 1998.
Kalaga W., *Obowiązek Innego. Trzeci*, in W. Kalaga (ed.), *Dylematy wielokulturowości*, Cracow 2004.
Klossowski P., *Sade mon prochain*, Paris 1947.
Kosowska E., *Wstyd. Konotacje antropologiczne*, in E. Kosowska (ed.), *Wstyd w kulturze. Zarys problematyki*, Katowice 1998.
Lotman Y., *Literaturowedenije dolzhno stat' naukoy*, "Voprosy Literatury" 1/1967.
Lotman Y., *O metayazyke tipologicheskikh opisaniy kul'tury*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 4, Tartu 1970.
Lotman Y., *O probleme znatheniy vo vtorithnyh modeluruyushthih sistemah*, "Trudy po znakowym sistemam" vol. 2, Tartu 1965.
Lotman Y., *O semiosferie*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 17, Tartu 1984.
Lotman Y., *O siemiotikie poniatij "wstyd" i "strach" w mechanizmie kul'tury*, in *Tiezisy dokladow IV letniej szkoly po wtoricznym modielirujuszczim sistemam*, Tartu 1970.

Lotman Y., *Ot redkolegii,* "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 25, Tartu 1992.
Lotman Y., *Rosja i znaki. Kultura szlachecka w wieku XVIII i na początku XIX*, transl. B. Żyłko, Gdansk 1999.
Lotman Y., *Tezisy k probleme "iskusstvo v riadu modelirujushchih sistem*," "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 3, Tartu 1967.
Lotman Y., *Uniwersum umysłu*, transl. B. Żyłko, Gdansk 2008.
Lotman Y., Uspiensky B., *O semioticheskom mekhanizme kul'tury*, "Trudy po znakowym sistemam" vol. 5, Tartu 1971.
Matthews-Grieco S. F., *Ciało i seksualność w Europie w czasach Ancien Régime'u*, in G. Vigarello (ed.), *Historia ciała*, vol. 1, Gdansk 2011.
McNair B., *Seks, demokratyzacja pożądania i media, czyli kultura obnażania*, transl. E. Klekot, Warsaw 2004.
Montgomery Hyde H., *A History of Pornography*, London 1964.
Nahirny R., *Wstyd jako reakcja moralna*, in R. Tańczuk, D. Wolska (ed.), *Aksjotyczne przestrzenie kultury*, Wroclaw 2005.
Nijakowski L. M., *Pornografia. Historia, znaczenie, gatunki*, Warsaw 2010.
Pausanias, *Wędrówka po Helladzie. W świątyni i w micie*, transl. from Greek, introduction and commentary J. Niemirska-Pliszczyńska, Wroclaw 1973.
Przybylski R., *Pustelnicy i demony*, Cracow 1994.
Results and problems of semiotic researches, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 20, Tartu 1987.
Ricoeur P., *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, transl. J. Margański, Cracow 2006.
Ricoeur P., *Symbolika zła*, transl. P. Cichowicz, M. Ochab, Warsaw 1986.
Safranski R., *Zło*, transl. I. Kania, Warsaw 1999.
Saussure F. de, *Kurs językoznawstwa ogólnego*, transl. K. Kasprzak, Warsaw 2002.
Scheler M., *O wstydzie i poczuciu wstydu*, in M. Grabowski (ed.), *Wstyd i nagość*, Torun 2003.
Segal D. M., *Zametki ob odnom tipe semiotichieskich modeliruyushchikh sistem*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 2, Tartu 1965.
Sontag S., *Wyobraźnia pornograficzna*, transl. I. Sieradzki, "Teksty" 2(14)/1974.
Termińska K., *Mozaistyczna koncepcja wstydu*, in E. Kosowska (ed.), *Wstyd w kulturze. Zarys problematyki*, Katowice 1998.
Tertulian, *De cultu Feminarum*, in *Corpus Christianorum*, vol. I, Turnhout 1954.
Uspiensky B., *K problemam genezisa tartusko-moskowskoy semioticheskoy shkoly*, "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" vol. 20, Tartu 1987.
Woźniak K., *Seks i seksualność w dobie ponowoczesności*, Opole 2012.
Ziemiańska-Sapija D., *Z historii semiologii radzieckiej*, in T. Kostyrko, D. Ziemiańska-Sapija, A. Zeidler (eds.), *Studia z historii i teorii kultury artystycznej*, Warsaw 1983.
Ziomek J., *Kto jest pornografem?*, "Teksty" 1(13)/1974.

Chapter II

Blacking J., *How Musical Is Man?*, Seattle – London 2000.
Blacking J., *Venda Children's Songs: A Study in Ethnomusicological Analysis*, Chicago – London 1967.
Bourdieu P., *Masculine Domination*, Warsaw 2004.
Bowers J., Tick J., *Women Making Music. The Western Art Tradition, 1150–1950*, Urbana – Chicago 1987.
Boydston J., *Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis*, "Gender & History" vol. 20, 3/2008.
Burke P., *Historia kulturowa. Wprowadzenie*, Cracow 2012.
Citron M. J., *Gender and the Musical Canon*, Urbana – Chicago 2000.
Citron M. J., *Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon*, "The Journal of Musicology" vol. 8, 1/1990.
Clayton M., Herbert T., Middleton R. (eds.), *The Cultural Study of Music, a critical introduction*, New York 2003.
Cook P. C., Tsou J. P. (eds.), *Cecilia Reclaimed. Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*, Urbana – Chicago 1994.
Cusick S., *Francesca among Women: A Seicento Gynecentric View*, in T. LaMay (ed.), *Musical Voices of Early Modern Women: Many-headed Melodies*, Burlington 2005.
Cusick S., *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court. Music and the Circulation of Power*, Chicago 2009.
Cusick S., *Francesca Caccini: Questioni per una biografia tra gender e musicologia*, "Teatro e storia" Anno XXI, 28/2007.
Cusick S., *Performing/Composing/Woman: Francesca Caccini Meets Judith Butler*, in P. Macarthur, C. Poynton (eds.), *Musics and Feminisms*, Sydney 1999.
Cusick S., *Re-Voicing Arianna (And Laments): Two Women Respond*, "Early Music" vol. 27, 3/1999.
Cusick S., *"Thinking from Women's Lives": Francesca Caccini after 1627*, "The Musical Quarterly" 77(3)/1993.
Cusick S., *This Music Which Is Not One: Inaudible Order and Representation of the Feminine in Francesca Caccini's Primo libro delle musiche (1618)*, "Early Modern Woman" 2/2007.
Cusick S., *"Who is this woman...?" Self-presentation, Imitatio Virginis and Compositional Voice in Francesca Caccini's Primo Libro of 1618*, "Il Saggiatore Musicale" 5(1)/1998.
Dolata D., Kizińska K. (red.), *Sztuka i jej społeczne konteksty*, Lublin 2012.
Duby G., Perrot M. (eds.), *The History of Women*, Cambridge – London 1992–1994.
Dunbar J. C., *Women, Music, Culture. An Introduction*, New York – London 2011.
Foucault M., *Archeologia wiedzy*, Warsaw 1997.
Glickman S., Furman Schleifer M. (eds.), *From Convent to Concert Hall. A Guide to Women Composers*, Westport – London 2003.

Grabski A. F., *Dzieje historiografii*, Poznan 2006.
Harper J. P. E., Samson J. (eds.), *An Introduction to Music Studies*, Cambridge 2008.
Kizińska K., *Gender a kultury muzyczne – kulturoznawcze spojrzenie na badania etnomuzykologiczne, i historyczne*, „Przegląd Kulturoznawczy" 4(14) 2012.
Kizińska K., *Rola płci kulturowej w badaniach muzykologicznych – zarys pola badawczego muzykologii feministycznej*, "Kultura i Edukacja" 1(94) 2013.
Koskoff E. (ed.), *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Urbana – Chicago 1989.
McCall L., *The Complexity of Intersectionality*, "Signs" 30/2005.
Merriam A. P., *The Anthropology of Music*, Evanston, IL 1964.
Moraczewski K., *Refleksje o teoretycznych podstawach historii kultury*, "Filo-Sofija" 12(1)/2011: *Wokół idei filozoficznych i kulturoznawczych Jerzego Kmity*.
Neuls-Bates C. (ed.), *Women in Music. An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present*, Boston 1996.
Paleczny T., *Socjologia tożsamości*, Cracow 2008.
Pendle K. (ed.), *Women & Music. A History*, Bloomington – Indianapolis 1991.
Sadie J. A., Samuel R. (eds.), *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, New York – London 1995.
Smart M. A. (ed.), *Siren Songs. Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera*, Princeton – Oxford 2000.
Solie R. A. (red.), *Musicology and Difference. Gender and sexuality in music scholarship*, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1993.
Subotnik R. R., *On grounding Chopin*, in R. Leppert, S. McClary (eds.), *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception*, Cambridge 1987.
Sztandar-Sztanderska K., *Teorie praktyki i praktyka teorii. Wstęp do socjologii Pierre'a Bourdieu*, Warsaw 2010.
Taruskin R., *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Oxford – New York 2005, 2009.
Titon J. T. (ed.), *Worlds of Music. An Introduction to the Music of the Worlds Peoples*, Belmont, CA 2009.
Veyne P., *Foucault rewolucjonizuje historię*, Torun 2007.

Internet sources

Bobako M., *Gender jako technologia kolonialnej władzy? Afrykańska krytyka zachodniego feminizmu jako inspiracja do feministycznej autorefleksji*, „Kultura i Historia" 23/2013, http://www.kulturaihistoria.umcp.lublin.pl/archives/4610 [20.10.2013].
Caccini F., *Il Primo Libro delle Musiche*, photocopy of the Estense Universitaria Library of the 1618 copy from Florence (Zanobi Pignoni), accessed through: Petrucci Library, http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9f/IMSLP29719-PMLP32886-Caccini_Francesca_-_Il_Primo_Libro_delle_Musiche_1618_.pdf [18.11.2013].
Dell'Antonio A., *Review Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court: Music and the Circulation of Power. By P. G. Cusick*, "Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music" vol. 16,

1/2009; par. 5.1, http://www.sscm-jscm.org/v16/no1/br_dell'antonio.html [18.11.2013].

Encyclopedia, http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/New_musicology [15.01.2014].

Grove – The New Dictionary of Music and Musicians, http://grove.knihovnahk.cz/subscriber/article/grove/music [1.11.2009].

Helbig A., *Description of the Ethnomusicology seminar "Music, gender, and sexuality,"* University of Pittsburgh, http://www.adrianahelbig.com/ZHelbigPublications/Helbig%20-%20Music,%20Gender,%20Sexuality%20Syllabus,%20Fall%202010.pdf [15.07.2014].

Merriam A.P., *Ethnomusicology Discussion and Definition of the Field*, „Society for Ethnomusicology," http://www.hugoribeiro.com.br/biblioteca-digital/Merriam-Ethnomusicology_discussion_definition_of_the_field.pdf [15.01.2014].

Ostolski A., *Dyskurs u władzy. Filozofia polityczna Michela Foucaulta*, "Etyka" 36/2003, http://www.ekologiasztuka.pl/seminarium.foucault/pdf/k001ostolski.pdf [3.08.2014].

Parandowski J., *Mitologia. Wierzenia i podania Greków i Rzymian*, Cieszyn 2006, http://mitologia.klp.pl/a-7277.html, http://www.starozytnosc.info/mitologia-grecka-rzymska/streszczenia-mitow-greckich/mit-o-tezeuszu [18.11.2013].

Sarkissian M., *Thoughts on the Study of Gender in Ethnomusicology: A Pedagogical Perspective*, "Women & Music Journal" 3/1999, http://www.questia.com/read/1G1-70636830/thoughts-on-the-study-of-gender-in-ethnomusicology [15.07.2014].

Wallach Scott J., *Gender: A Deployful Category of Historical Analysis*, "The American Historical Review vol. 91, 5/ 1986, http://www.ekologiasztuka.pl/think.tank.feministyczny/readarticle.php?article_id=238 [3.08.2014].