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## Selection of Methodological Principles for Actual Research on Culture

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*Culture studies become more popular at the current stage of development of science. The object of some researchers is theoretical development of problematics of culture; the others intend to deal with applied investigations of new spheres of human life. But in spite of the very essence of investigations on culture (theoretical or empirical) and its object, selection of methodological principles remains one of the most important problems for every concrete program of research on culture.*

*A brief historical survey of the problem of selection of methodological principles for research on culture, carried out in the article, allowed us to draw a conclusion that the program of contemporary culture studies is based on the principle of necessity for direct observation of various forms of social correlations; and a concrete program of scientific investigations on culture is stipulated by selection of methodology for study of social interrelations. On the one hand, selection of the basic form of social interrelations depends on subjective intentions of a researcher carrying out his investigations on culture; on the other hand, selection determines concrete objects and methods of culture studies based on direct observation of people's social life.*

*Consideration of the genesis of the West-European and American investigations on culture on the base of studying of K.H. Marx's, I.A.M.F.X. Comte's, B.K. Malinowski's, A.R. Radcliff-Braun's, and L. A. White's conceptions allowed us to examine the process of formation of methodology of culture studies. Its starting point was K.H. Marx's discovery of economic relations as the only possible foundation of social relations, according to his conception. There appeared a fork in the further development of methodology: one of its branches still remains determined by economy and the other is a progressive alternative of formation of methodology of culture studies initiated by I.A.M.F.X. Comte, who had turned metaphysical speculations to positive scientific control over social processes. B.K. Malinowski kept on with that vector of development; the step he made towards formation of methodology of culture studies is a turn from speculative theorizing to study of social reality in field condition.*

*A.R. Radcliff-Braun confirmed the methodological thesis on division of approaches of research on culture into speculative, or ethnologic, and functional, or socio-anthropological, ones. According to A.R. Radcliff-Braun, socio-anthropological method is of more importance, for it allows us to deduce general functional principles of existence of culture on the base of the phenomena of social life directly observed. L.A. White's desert is synthesis of historical and functional methods carried out and enriched, each taken separately.*

**Keywords:** *Culture studies, methodology, A. Comte, K.H. Marx, B.K. Malinowski, A.R. Radcliff-Braun, L. White, social determinism*

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### Point

If we consider genesis of European and American investigations on culture, we can point out the fact that the type of scientist changes at this sphere of science in the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The outstanding thinkers such as Herbert Spencer, Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, and even James Frazer were the representatives of so-called «bench scientist» type though the program they had suggested oriented its adherents to direct observations of social interactions. Though Auguste Comte being recognized as a founder of positivism with its thesis of methodological autonomy of social sciences as such as science as a whole, he was a model of scientist and philosopher: universal logic of scientific construction, i.e. philosophical logics, was of the greatest importance for him.

But the program of scientific research on human society put forward by the great «bench scientists» was of more importance for the posterior human and social sciences rather than their own style of scientific constructions. Herbert Spencer's and Auguste Comte's works have a thoroughly reasoned demand for dependence of social studies on empirical material of the social correlations directly observed. The fundamental **principle of necessity for direct observations** of methods and forms of social life as a base of culture studies comes to European and American investigations from A. Comte and H. Spencer.

Emile Durkheim worked out the first methods of direct observation of social interactions and simultaneously he was an outstanding theorist who suggested genial schemes of comprehension of the most important social facts, for instance, that one of religion. Though his conceptions were put to strong critique, the theory of religion as essential social «cement» bringing along the collective ideas fundamental for an individual seems to be suddenly spicy and promising for methodology.

The scientific charm of Sir James George Frazer's book «The Golden Bough» is difficult to overestimate, for it is possible to correlate classical mythology of the ancient Greeks, Romans, Celts, and Germans with the facts concerning social life of the traditional cultures in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which Frazer knew. For many years, the outstanding representatives of British social (cultural) anthropology had been working out the program of field studies of the traditional cultures starting with studying of one of many theses of J. Frazer's book «The Golden Bough». There are to be mentioned Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski, Alfred Reginald Radcliff-Braun, Franz Boas, and their prominent disciples – M. Glackman, R. Benedict, E.E. Evans-Pritchard, M. Mead, and many other European and American scientists.

Thus, there is a change of the model of researcher on culture at scientific activity of the British scientists such as B.K. Malinowski, A.R. Radcliff-Braun, American scientist Franz Boas, and their followers. Henceforth fieldworks are the base of profound scientific investigations. The model of anthropologist studying culture is a person who managed «to be dissolved» in the space of his investigations and, first and foremost, to become a member of the community demonstrating the unique local culture he studies. Such field investigations on culture have been naturally transferred from colonial spaces to modern cities, flats, and mini-communities. For the first time, human sciences became sciences of human social behaviour directly observed, and that could not only satisfy scientists' direct interest, but also became a base for scientific control of social life and for working-out of the most humane and advanced social technologies of «everyday» life for people.

Having worked out the model of field investigations on culture 30-50 years ago, today British and American scientists are to be admired for their work, who were able to form an

adequate program of research on culture of social life of the traditional communities in the British colonies, but the universal principles of social life and so-called «civil» communities were found out only owing to inhabitants of the Trobiand and Andaman Islands.

For the recent years, Russian culture studies has been under the process of self-determination, and there are lot of discussions on the subject of this science: if culture is something different from social interrelations or if it is no more than abstraction of no considerable importance for the true researchers investigating on human society by the way of direct observation. The authors, who prove that there is a specific system quality of social life, which could become a subject of direct scientific observation, turn to Leslie White, the possible discoverer of «culture studies» term, in their search for support. The paradox is that the author of «culture studies» term was rather of the second opinion and he thought that «culture studies» were only categorical abstraction necessary for theoretical modeling of some social phenomena.

Thus, resuming the brief survey of the history of question, we can point out the following conceptual thesis: **the program of contemporary culture studies is based on the principle of necessity for direct observation of different forms of social interactions; a concrete program of scientific investigations on culture is connected with selection of methodology for social interactions studies. SELECTION OF THE BASIC FORM OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS 1) DEPENDS ON SUBJECTIVE INTENTIONS OF THE SCIENTIST CARRYING OUT INVESTIGATIONS ON CULTURE; 2) DETERMINES CONCRETE SUBJECTS AND METHODS OF CULTURE STUDIES ON THE BASE OF DIRECT OBSERVATION OF PEOPLE'S SOCIAL LIFE.**

The conceptions of Karl Heinrich Marx, Isidore Marie Auguste François Xavier Comte, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski, and Alfred Reginald Radcliff-Braun are to be considered as examples of scientific models of the basic forms of social interactions. The choice of these names is stipulated by their unsurpassed role in formation of investigations on society and culture conveyed in formation of fundamental and acknowledged conceptions of social interactions. Anyway, the conceptions of these thinkers are the base of methodology of all the investigations on culture without exceptions based on the principle of necessity of direct observations on facts of social life for social and human sciences.

### Example

#### *1. Absolute economic fundamentalism of K.H. Marx's social doctrine*

Karl Heinrich Marx's social determinism is very well known to Russian human and social sciences, for the very K.H. Marx's doctrine has been determining the universal methodological vector of investigations for the vast majority of Russian scientists. The scientific community expected a lot of the ideological reorientation in 90s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But on the whole the miracle hasn't been accomplished. Being closed for any exterior influences because of group narcissism and inner conceptual and methodological helplessness, Russian human and social sciences, having lost its ideological censorship, on the contrary, were far from being glad to the «long-awaited freedom» and offered solid opposition to the new doctrines and methodological capacities European human and social sciences had stored for a hundred years of its rapid development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One has only to compare a large amount of scientific journals published in Russia and in the world with a number and subject-matter of special authorial courses in human and social studies at American, European, and Russian universities. The

prosperity of investigations on society and culture can be verified by both a number of the students taking special courses and a number of magistral programs on one or another subject. The matter is not of content or utility, but of a NUMBER of the research topic suggested to the public attention.

Marxism is applied as the basic methodological precondition at human and social sciences especially in the provinces as before. Nevertheless Marxist ideology has profound recognition in the world science, but without direction to it as the only reality and universality for all the times and nations.

If we speak on the very subject of the article, social determinism of human and social studies is clearly and definitely represented in K.H. Marx's conception:

«The preconditions we are to start with are not optional and they are not dogma, but they are the real preconditions which can be estranged only in imagination. Those are real individuals with their activity and material conditions of their life, those ones the individuals find at hand as well as those ones the individuals produced in the process of their activity. Thereby those preconditions can be found out only by empirical way» [16, p. 3-4].

For many years all the scientists directly or indirectly concerned in the problems of investigations on culture as the absolute truth had been studying the following theses:

«Consciousness, religion, and any other thing make difference between human beings and animals. Human beings start distinguishing themselves from the animals only when they start producing the means necessary for their living – that is a step stipulated by their material organization. People implicitly produce the very material life by producing the means necessary for their living.

The way people produce the means necessary for their living depends chiefly on the qualities

of the very means of living they find ready for reproduction» [16, p. 4].

Thus, we wouldn't discover anything new if we said that the specific feature of Marx's social determinism theory is a choice of only economic and property relations as a base of social interactions.

If we digress from the ideological specific features of Marxism in Russia of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we should note that the British anthropologists thoroughly discussed the potentialities of methodology of K.H. Marx's economic and social determinism as a conceptual base of their applied research. Among investigations of Marxist anthropologists, the most interesting ones are of Peter Worsley and Morris Bloch [18, p. 302]. A.A. Nickishenkov points out that Marxism of the British anthropologists was displayed in modification of the traditional structural and functional terms: «society» word was substituted with «formation», «structure» word with «mode of production», «clan and lineage systems» with «class structures» [18, p. 302]. The anthropologists of Marxist orientation were characterized with disputes about the essence of «relationship system» – if it were basis or superstructure at social system.

The researcher says that the interest in Marxist methodology passes away almost without any serious conceptual consequences at the beginning of 80s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

«Mode of production is not to be considered only from the point that it is a reproduction of physical life of individuals. It is a certain way of action of those individuals, some kind of their life activity and *modus vivendi*. The individuals are represented to be their life activity. Their essence they represent coincides with their production – both with *what* and *how* they produce. **The essence represented by individuals consequently depends on the material conditions of their production**» [16, p. 5].

The words italicized are the cornerstone of Marxist methodology in analysis of all the phenomena at society and culture, which is quite characteristic of interpretation of religion.

«The base of irreligious critique is that *a human being produces religion*, but religion doesn't produce a person. Videlicet, religion is self-consciousness and self-sensation of an individual who either hasn't found himself yet or has already lost himself again. But *a human being* is not an abstract entity nestling somewhere out of the world. A human being is *his world*, state, and society. That state and society bring forth religion, *changeful world outlook*, for they are *changeful world*. Religion is a general theory of that world, its encyclopaedic pantology, logics given in a popularized form, spiritualistic point d'honneur, enthusiasm, moral sanction, solemn replenishment, and the universal ground for consolation and justification. It converts a human entity into *fantastic reality*, for *a human entity* doesn't have true reality. Therefore the struggle against religion is indirectly a struggle against *the very world* where religion is a spiritual *oblectation*.

*Religious* meanness is an aspect of *meanness* of reality and *a protest* against that meanness of reality at the same time. Religion is a sigh of downtrodden creature, a heart of the heartless world like it is a spirit of heartless forms. Religion is *opium* for people.

Annihilation of religion as *illusive* blessedness of people is a requirement for their *real* happiness. The demand for denial of illusions about one's state is *a requirement for denial of such state which is in need of illusions*. Hence, in its first stages, critique of religion is critique of *the life of grief and weep* with religion as its *holy aureole*» [17, p. 414-415].

We would like to pay attention to the passion of Marx's critique of religion. Kant's calm and dispassionate comprehension of «critique» as an

investigation turns into Marx's critique-negation and critique-disclosure.

It seems that the subsequent Marxists generations were infected with the sincerity and passion of Marx's disclosures of the reality contemporary with him. But that very pathos of negation makes Marxism be an odious doctrine, far from everyday diligent labour of the contemporary researchers investigating on culture, who consider direct human life under the «microscope» of their field studies by application of methodological taboo to discuss the past or the possible future of the culture being under study.

The choice of economic «cell» as the only real base of culture has led culture studies to a certain dead-end. It is fair to say that A. Comte and H. Spencer created an absolutely different methodology with «social organism» and «social aggregate» notions applied in their works in parallel with Marx's methodology of studies on society from the point of some definite basis and superstructure absolutely derivative from that basis. The elementary level of straight meanings of those notions pointed to the necessity for comprehension of the whole amount of social interactions as integrity, different elements «grounded-in» with each other, interconditionality of various parts of the integrated social organization, and vital correlation of different parts of social aggregate.

As history of science proved, this approach has turned out to be more productive for scientific control over social processes than that one mentioned above.

## 2. Positivistic scientific sociologic determinism of Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Xavier Comte

Marx's notions «mode of production», «social and economic structure», and «basis and superstructure» were thoroughly described by Russian scientists. It seems that K.H. Marx as

a sociologist was concerned with searching for «the only» true basis of social relations. Then social control is added up to regular influence on that basis. We can expect total changes in the whole social structure according to the form and content of political influence on the economic basis. Here, K.H. Marx is remarkably traditional in the statement of the ONLY and CENTRAL base. There wasn't any real revolution at human and social sciences and Marx's works. It happened very close and, first of all, it consisted of almost imperceptible methodological change: «The true positivistic mind is mainly a substitution of study of the primary or final causes of phenomena for study of their fundamental *laws*; in other words, it is a change of «why» for «how» [3, p. 81].

That is exactly the way of the change at European natural science, which took place in the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Isaac Newton put methodological taboo in science. He started with the statement «There are the forces in action in nature» and simultaneously «refused» to solve the problem of the source and nature of those forces having kept «metaphysical» questions of the origin of philosophy and theology.

Immanuel Kant made methodological discovery of the absolutely same form in regard to epistemology in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In his great «Critiques», he researched the very human cognition without raising and solution of the question of the nature of cognition. Human thinking is to be considered in its immediate reality and described as some Here and Now in action. This very philosophical method was called «Critique» by I. Kant – that is research on the real reason.

We can find out this position at religion, philosophy, and psychology of Buddhism as one of the world religions. There are various versions of the number of questions in the famous list of questions Buddha doesn't answer. First and foremost, those are the questions of the prime

cause of the world and fundamental consequences of following the way of Buddha («Is that one, who has seen the truth, immortal? Or is he mortal and immortal all at the same time? Or is he neither mortal nor immortal all at the same time?», – Buddha keeps silence).

I.A.M.F.X. Comte calls this methodological position «positive» and substantiates the radical need in it for studies on society: «The fundamental nature of positive philosophy is in acknowledgement that all the phenomena are subordinated to the constant *natural laws*» [4, p. 6].

Comte considered investigations on society to be the end of natural science. The object of social studies is reorganization of social reality according to the requirements of reason, regulation of the most sophisticated sphere of reality – that is of human and social life, – and direct action upon history from the point of the principles fixed by reason.

Comte simultaneously brings into effect a number of methodological preconditions of the greatest importance for the further human and social investigations: 1) the necessity of direct observations on social correlations for a scientist; 2) methodological «levelling» of individual aspects of a human being in favour of social ones; 3) on the one hand, distinction of social functioning as «static» state of society «Here and Now», on the other hand – fixation of permanent social progress submitted to the universal panhuman objective laws and «dynamic» development of social aggregation on the basis of permanent self-enrichment, development and amplification of human knowledge.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of methodological change made by Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Xavier Comte at social and human studies. Even his apparently naïve ideas of the necessity for conscious implementation of positivistic religion as a cult of social system embodied in the «Absolute Essence» mark a

new era at scientific research on religion as an attributive function of social order in contrast to chaos and regress.

*3. The change at methodology of culture studies:*

*Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski*

Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski is an English ethnologist and sociologist recognized as one of the founders and leaders of the English functional school at British anthropology. He considered culture as integral and coordinated system with its parts tightly connected with each other, and a single phenomenon of culture and its aspect is to be considered only from the point of the whole and as a component of a system, and qualities of every separate component are predetermined by the whole. B.K. Malinowski demanded every aspect of culture to be considered not merely as a component of a system, but as a functioning part of the cultural context. Therefore the main object of the investigations carried out by B.K. Malinowski and his disciples is comprehension of mechanism of culture and its function displayed in functioning of every concrete institution. According to B.K. Malinowski, institutions are the forms of mechanisms of culture sensuously represented; moreover, those mechanisms cannot be represented without institutions, for this reason, the researches investigating on sphere of culture should take field studies as a base. And B.K. Malinowski insisted on the fact that, as far as mechanism of culture can be represented by no any other way than institutions, scientific hypotheses about those mechanisms requiring practical verification are to be advanced by that very field. It is worth mentioning Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski's merits as the change of cabinet kind of investigations for field studies and investigation on impoderabilia of real life at history of culture studies. «There is no any real process including the process of cultural modification, which can

be explored only in documents and reports. Only that one, who personally worked with all the three spheres forming modification of ... culture, can reckon on true knowledge about the sense of cultural modification and its real nature» [13, p. 379-380].

Having carried out field studies in the Mayil (1914), the Trobdians Islands (1915-1918) and Oachaka state in Mexico (studies on the sapothecs in 1940-1941), B.K. Malinowski constantly returned to the collected material to confirm the hypotheses arising on the way to discovery of the maximally universal principle and mechanism of culture. And, according to Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski, such maximally general principle of culture is the statement that culture is an apparatus for satisfaction of human wants. «In its essence, culture is a tool apparatus due to which a man is able to manage with those concrete problems he comes across in the process of satisfaction of his wants in natural environment» [14, p. 142]. Hence we may assert that Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski's conception is cultural determinism conception.

According to B.K. Malinowski, the necessities are to be divided into three basic forms: primary («every culture is to satisfy the system of biological requirements determined by metastasis, reproduction, physiological temperature conditions, the need in protection from wet and wind, and direct adverse effect of climatic and weather conditions as well as from dangerous animals and other people» [14, p. 158]), derivative (requirements of organization, order and harmony), and integrative (spiritual requirements: science, religion, ethics, and art) necessities. The kinds of the necessities represented here are hierarchized: first of all, human activity is directed to satisfaction of the basic or biological needs, and after they are satisfied, one can attend to the secondary ones. This idea characteristic of not only

Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski's view was concretized by American psychologist and the founder of humanistic psychology Abraham Harold Maslow in his famous Human Wants Diagram.

A human being is to be subjected to the principle of cultural determinism not only as some entity but as a group: «The activities, points, and objects organized by the vital aims form such institutes as family, clan, local community, tribe, and also give birth to some organized groups integrated by economic cooperation and political, legal and educational activities» [14; p. 142]. Having summarized the results of various field investigations, Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski draws a conclusion that the ways of satisfaction of needs can be different, firstly, in different cultures and, secondly, at different stages of their development, and that is to be taken into consideration while different cultures are in contact with each other. Having concretized this proposition, B.K. Malinowski asserts: «The statement that the tribal Africans are submitted to their own special cultural determinism means that there can be simply arisen a conflict and disorganization when we intend to inculcate some new gastronomic habits, agriculture methods or status and laws, and if that process is out of consideration of the existing forces, for we inevitably try to substitute some cultural realia. The persecutions of voodoo and unreasoned conversion to Christianity; the urge to inculcate education in the Africans without preliminary consideration of the things education would destroy and consequences for the nationality and potentialities; the attitude towards lobola as «a savage custom of bride-selling» – these are the examples of neglect of the principle of African cultural determinism in practice» [13, p. 376].

Culture forms a system in the process of satisfaction of human needs, and each part of

that system has its own predetermined place, and the system is so hierarchized and well-organized that the whole functional balance would be disharmonized and the whole system would be destroyed if one of its elements, which doesn't seem to have any important connection with the system, were removed. As for an example for such situation, Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski told of the «headhunt» held on the Initiation Day in one of the islands of New Guinea and put under a ban by the English. The aboriginal society found itself on the brink of complete destruction very soon after the ban: the elders lost their authority, the invalids were refused to be given any help, the fields and granaries were unkept, because the people left their home place. As it turned out, the «headhunt» was some kind of guarantee of responsibility for agricultural work keeping the cohesion of the families responsible for the stores of rice. But the whole system of cultural and agricultural connections was brought to a standstill after the «headhunt» ban. Moreover, the «headhunt» was an indispensable part of the very Initiation rite, the rite of consecration to the adult life; hence the «headhunt» ban disorganized hierarchical structure of the society. This principle when every object or idea has its vital function inside the organic whole is called universal fundamentalism.

Thus, if Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski's ideas of culture as an apparatus of satisfaction of human needs and the ideas of hierarchical system of needs can be criticized, the methodological way put forward and tested by B.K. Malinowski is undoubtedly positive; that is a change from desk study on culture to field investigations on imponderabilia of real life. Field investigations are to guide a researcher and they are to be material for verification of the scientific hypotheses advanced by a researcher.



*4. Structural fundamentalism methodology  
at Alfred Reginald Radcliff-Braun's  
investigations on culture*

Alfred Reginald Radcliff-Braun, a British anthropologist and a founder of structural-functional approach at anthropology, differentiates such two sciences as ethnology and social anthropology in his works («Methods at ethnology and social anthropology», «Comparative method at social anthropology», «Historical and functional interpretation of culture and practical use of anthropology for control over the aborigines»). The main criterion for the differentiation is the basic method applied to the investigations carried out by ethnologists and social anthropologists.

A.R. Radcliff-Braun suggests that the basic method applied by ethnologists is appropriate to be called historical method. Its main point is that the method applied in practice allows a researcher to interpret some concrete institution of a society, to observe its formation, to reveal the factors which have influence on the changes the institution has undergone. As a matter of fact, A.R. Radcliff-Braun asserts that ethnologists observe temporal causality of some concrete institution by application of historical method. «A concrete element or a state of culture is explained by its origin to another element tracing back to the third one and so on until we are not able to retrace anything. The method can reveal real temporal connections between some concrete institutions, events or states of a civilization» [23, p. 605].

A.R. Radcliff-Braun points at complete or partial lack of the empirical data necessary for research as the general problem ethnologists have to deal with. In the first place, at the time of A.R. Radcliff-Braun's scientific activity, the main object of study both for ethnologists and anthropologists was «traditional societies» which couldn't be studied without basing on any authentic material concerning the history

of those societies. Hence there wasn't to be mentioned objectivity of the process of gradual determination of some social institutions restored by scientists, and the investigations had pure hypothetic nature. A.R. Radcliff-Braun says of it as follows: «The thing usually called ethnology is generally a sum of hypothetic reconstructions, i.e. hypothetic history» [23, p. 605].

Having found out subjectivity of historical method, A.R. Radcliff-Braun turns to social anthropology and its functional approach with induction laid in the base. «Logical induction is based on the postulate that all the phenomena are subjected to the natural law and whereupon general laws could be discovered and proved; the general laws (with more or less degree of generality) are the statements, every one is to be attributed to a certain sort of facts or events», i.e. application of this method allows a general law to be discovered; its particular case would be a concrete institution being under consideration.

Having pointed out the object of social anthropology, A.R. Radcliff-Braun returns to ethnology seeking to give some sense to construction of hypothetic histories of origin of many concrete cultural phenomena, which seems to be useless from scientific point of view. The pointlessness of application of purely historical method consists of two main aspects: firstly, it is the impossibility of observation of the chain of the determinants of every cultural phenomenon because of the endless number of those phenomena; secondly, it is the uselessness of the established stages of development of some certain institutions taken out of their connection with the stages of development of other institutions, and, as a matter of fact, it is construction of hypothetic history for the very hypothetic history. Just functional method, which allows us to discover functional laws of culture and society as a whole, is to have an efficient function at ethnology studies, and «it will be possible to conceive those

gradual stages of development properly only when we find out the laws bringing them about» [23, p. 608].

Thereby A.R. Radcliff-Braun doesn't deny ethnology to have its own right to exist, on the contrary, he admits that it is essential but only in connection with social anthropology, and he claims that correctness of every step of the process of discovering of a general law carried out by logical induction is to be empirically verified, i.e. by historical method of ethnology. It means that A.R. Radcliff-Braun thinks that scientifically the process of ideal is a constant interchange of functional and historical methods for the advanced hypotheses could be mutually corroborated. If we turn to A.R. Radcliff-Braun's theoretical working-out applied in practice and represented in his work «Historical and functional interpretations of culture and practical appliance of anthropology at control over the aborigines», we can find out its implicit concordance with the principle of statistic determinism lying in the fact that there is a possibility of various effects for one and the same reason within the possible limits; and nevertheless it is seen from the fact that we can discover general laws of the system when we consider cultural phenomena not very much identical with each other (we mean the relations between the phratries based on the principle «falcon – crow» or «White cockatoo – Black cockatoo»).

According to A.R. Radcliff-Braun, neither deduction of stadial development of a concrete phenomenon of culture nor the striving for discovery of functional laws explaining a concrete element of one or another culture is the final cause of science. The results of a research work applied in practice are of great value for A.R. Radcliff-Braun, in particular, he thinks that the topical sphere of appliance of social and anthropological knowledge is scientifically grounded control over a group of phenomena in non-European

communities, for «we will be able to predict the results of any premeditated and unpremeditated influence on culture if we comprehend culture as a functioning system. ... Hence, if anthropology is about to give any assistance in solution of the practical problems at administration and education, it is to refuse the tries to divine historical past and it is to be devoted to functional approach of culture studies» [22, p. 635].

##### *5. Synthetic evolutionary determinism of Leslie Alvin White*

As Leslie Alvin White, one of the leading American anthropologists, believed, culture is a complex extrasomatic mechanism used by a human being in his struggle for existence and passed over another man through social mechanisms, not with biological means; «culture can be called a form of social heredity» [31; p. 388]. According to Leslie Alvin White, culture consisting of interactive elements – tools, utensils, amulets, beliefs, actions realized in symbolic context – is an integrated system with its subsystems inside. In particular, he distinguishes three important subsystems: technological, social, and ideological. «The technological subsystem consists of material, mechanic, physical, and chemical tools with technology, which allows a human being as a representative of the animal kingdom to get into contact with the environment. ... The social system consists of interpersonal relations conveyed in collective or individual patterns of behavior. ... The ideological system consists of ideas, beliefs, and knowledge, expressed by articulate speech or some other symbolic form» [31, p. 388-389].

L.A. White thinks that the subsystems of culture are hierarchized: the technological subsystem is the most important and, as a matter of fact, determinative of the other two ones. Leslie Alvin White's position can be named technological determinism. It is necessary to

mention that, thinking of the technological aspect of culture to be the base and foundation of the structure of culture as a whole, L.A. White doesn't deny the possibility of the other two aspects to have influence on each other, but he notes that to influence and to determine are absolutely different ways. «The technological system plays the leading part. ... And there is no any other way. A human being as a biological species and the whole culture accordingly depend on material things and mechanic ways of adaptation to the natural environment. Social systems really have secondary and auxiliary nature regarding technological systems. Roughly speaking, social system can be defined as organized people's efforts bent to the use of means of subsistence, shelter, defence and attack. The social system is a function of the technological system. Ideological or philosophical systems are an organization of beliefs interpreting human experience. But both experience and its interpretation are considerably stipulated by technology. Every kind of technology corresponds to a certain philosophical model... Thus, technological factor is a determinant of cultural system as a whole. It determines the form of social systems, and technology together with society determine content and trend of philosophy» [31, p. 390-391].

Leslie Alvin White took the point of view of natural science for consideration of the problems of culture. And if he, first of all, considered a human being as a biological species in the passage mentioned above, on the whole, his ideas are not a stranger to Darwin's Theory of Evolution and thermodynamic laws he applies to explain the processes taking place in the space of culture. Thus, «according to the second thermodynamic principle, Cosmos as its whole is being destroyed, and organization of the system is being brought to destruction more and more, and diffusion of the energy is increasing. But there is another process in the tiny sectors of Cosmos, namely

in living material systems: the organization is being strengthened, and the energy is being concentrated. Life is a constructive process. But living organisms have to take free energy from inorganic systems and use it in order they could maintain their life and resist the cosmic stream. From this point of view, life is a struggle for free energy». And culture is to extract energy and use it for the humankind's good; at this idea, L.A. White comprehended culture as a complex mechanical thermodynamic system; its technological aspect is the most important for its functioning while the other two aspects are just its supplement and reflection.

According to L.A. White's view, the energy is a factor determining development of culture. But he notes that, in substance, the pure energy existing in the Universe is not concerned with culture at all. Only the energy a human being involves in his life is important, as well as degree of perfection of the technology used in that involving and volume of cultural products, which is possible to produce by involving some energy and using it by means of the technology available at a certain stage. L.A. White distinguishes three factors of any cultural system on the base of this conclusion: «(1) quantity of the energy consumed per head a year; (2) effectiveness of the technology used for extraction of the energy and giving it to a human being; (3) volume of products and services produced for satisfaction of human wants» [28, p. 393]. L.A. White scientifically conveys the correlation of the mentioned factors in the formula  $ExT \rightarrow C$  (E – quantity of the energy consumed per head a year; T – degree of effectiveness of the tools used; C – level of development of culture). The next step Leslie Alvin White made was formulation of the law of cultural evolution which runs as follows: «other things being equal, culture is in progress as quantity of the energy consumed per head a year is increased or as effectiveness of the tools involved in consumption of the energy

grows» [31, p. 394]. In order to prove the efficiency of his law, L.A. White considers development of the humankind's culture from its start up to date distinguishing three principal stages: agricultural, fuel, and atomic or nuclear; first and foremost, the root of differences between them is a sort of the energy consumed and the ways of its involvement in the human existence. Thus, Leslie Alvin White finds deductive verification of his technological determinism law in the history of development of the humankind's culture.

Thereby Leslie Alvin White can be considered as a continuer of the traditions brought in culture studies by K.H. Marx: the technological component is selected as determinative of development of culture. And if following K.H. Marx's theory implies investigations on some concrete cultures from the point of economic connections of the cultures considered, L.A. White's methodology presupposes the necessity of analysis of concrete cultures in order the present stage of evolution of culture to be defined, which is developed by leaps and bounds according to L.A. White: qualitative change – discovery of a new source of energy, quantitative change – development of technology for consumption of energy, and there is a stage of qualitative leap again after a long stage of quantitative change; the other object of the research based on L.A. White's methodology can be a prognostic object concerning the further development of culture. Carrying out his investigations in the period, when nuclear working-out was at its elementary stages, L.A. White couldn't accurately surmise the consequences for culture brought about by that. It will be either total and complete collapse of human culture or a solution leading to succeeding unprecedented active restoration of culture and even overwhelm the present level of development. Critique of law of cultural evolution advanced by L.A. White and proved

through history of the humankind's development can be based on the fact that White levels specific characters of some concrete cultures for the sake of general tendencies of evolution of culture.

But after we criticize some of L.A. White's ideas, we should specify the positive character of his approach to culture studies. In particular, L.A. White bechanced to make a very productive step at working out of methodology of culture studies as an effort to combine two different approaches. So L.A. White distinguishes historical and functional methods in previous and contemporary research works; the first method studies time process, the second one is formal-and-functional. The first method is applied in investigations on history of customs and ideas; the second one is for study of social structure and functions. L.A. White insisted on combination of these two methods in one evolutionary method oriented to formal-and-temporal process and applied in study of evolution of cultural features, institutions, and culture as a whole.

According to L.A. White, the very evolutionistic method is to eliminate the contradictions arisen among the researchers dealing with culture studies; the contradictions are connected with differentiation between cabinet and field researchers, for L.A. White claimed that true results are unachievable if only one method is applied; both the methods are to be integrated. «The thesis that «field studies shattered and refuted theory of evolution of culture» has been a perfect base for antievolutionists for many decades. ...Theory of evolution was represented as a pure speculation bordering on fancy. And then field research work came, and so did empiricism and facts, facts, and facts... Of course, there is no any incompatibility of theory and practice; a fact is dead and pointless without theory; theory is a breath of life in science. ...As far as we are concerned, there is no any of adherents of the thesis on field studies and theory of evolution

who has pointed at any example of the fact how field studies would refute theory of evolution; they were used just as pretext. Now there are some signs of the fact that antievolutionistic period is up to its end at cultural anthropology. ... The precious time has been wasted in opposition to that fruitful scientific conception, but theory of evolution will take its place again and prove its significance at cultural anthropology as it has already happened at other spheres of science» [34, p. 555].

It should be mentioned in conclusion that, if L.A. White's deductions reached through his particular investigations can be criticized, then the methodological ways suggested by him are of apparent value. It turned out that he had to synthesize two approaches dominating in culture studies: pure theoretical method practiced by «bench» scientists and field studies method. L.A. White made an attempt to integrate historical and functional approaches.

### **Resume**

The study of conceptions of social determinism of K.H. Marx, I.A.M.F.X. Comte, K.B. Malinowski, A.R. Radcliff-Braun, and L.A. White, which specify methods of applied cultural investigations, allows us to observe the process of formation of methodology of culture studies. The starting point of the process K.H. Marx's discovery of the only possible foundation of society; from his point of view, that is economic and property relations, and if there is an influence on them, it is possible to modify the whole social structure. There is a fork further on the way of development of methodology; one of its branches held by the Soviet researchers in culture and continued by the scientists of post Soviet space is purely Marxist and determined by economics; the dead state of this branch is displayed very well in comparison with the second and progressive variant of formation of methodology of culture

studies. It is possible to point out the main milestones of that formation.

The foundation of development of methodology of culture studies was laid by I.A.M.F.X. Comte, who made a turn from metaphysical speculations on the possibility to change society through influence on its basis to positive scientific control over social processes. The possibility of such turn is caused by comprehension of a sum of social interactions as an integrated wholeness akin to that one of a living organism, in which interrelations of the parts are of vital importance.

The vector of development preset by I.A.M.F.X. Comte was prolonged by B.K. Malinowski, who conceived culture as an integrated and homeostatic system with its parts studied only as components of the system, moreover, as functioning ones. That is why the chief object of the investigations carried out by B.K. Malinowski and his disciples was comprehension of mechanism of culture and mechanism of its functioning revealed in functioning of every concrete institution taking its certain place as an object of study at culture studies starting from B.K. Malinowski's time. Thus, the step on the way of formation methodology of culture studies made by B.K. Malinowski can be fixed as a turn from purely hypothetic construction of theories carried out by bench scientists to direct study of concrete social reality in the field environment.

A.R. Radcliff-Braun admitted that the turn in methodology of culture studies made by B.K. Malinowski is productive. In point of fact, he stated and cemented the methodological position on differentiation between hypothetic, or ethnological, and functional, or social and anthropological, approaches to culture. And as far as ethnological method of culture studies is not always effective because of the lack of necessary historical materials, social-and anthropological method is more important according to A.R.

Radcliff-Braun, for it is possible to draw general functional laws of existence of culture from phenomena of social life being under direct observation. The topicality of discovery of those general laws lies in application of them in control over non-European communities. Later on, when there was a change of the object of study and when attention was switched over from so-called traditional societies to study of subcultures of the society a researcher was living in, there was no any levelling of topicality of the approach advanced by A.R. Radcliff-Braun, but then discovery of general laws became necessary for harmonious intercourse not between some concrete nations, but between some concrete social strata.

L.A. White's merit is synthesizing of historical and functional methods, which

were separately worked out and enriched after methodological turn made by B.K. Malinowski. L.A. White insisted on the necessity of integration of theoretical speculations, hypothetic ideas and facts discovered in field studies. Thus, starting from B.K. Malinowski, the formation of methodology of culture studies passed through analytical period with its point as extension of efficient individual characteristics of each method taken in their particularity; and it was replaced by synthetic period when separate approaches worked out in their particularity were integrated in the only one; its efficiency turned out to be higher than that one of syncretic method, which had been existing in its indivisibility before B.K. Malinowski.

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