Simonic Peter (Ljubljana, Slovenia)

POLITICS AND MANAGEMENT OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE: ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

Abstract:
Transition in Eastern Europe raised questions about appropriate methodologies and tools for management of material and informational resources on different social levels. An important influence on reshaping of leadership and objectives had the concepts of civil society, liberalisation and marketing. Author tries to elaborate these concepts in the light of post-modern anthropological paradigm. He also gives some outlines on the ethics of development anthropology, concerning especially the region Pore~e (Republic of Macedonia).

In November 2003 I was invited by Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Skopje to give a Seminar on Cultural Management. They wanted to find out how can ethnologists and other social scientists evaluate and develop ideas and information collected on the field of research. Evaluation and development should always be made due to and for a specific region. Macedonian professors and students of ethnology were especially concerned about the region Pore~e, approximately 60 kilometres South-west of Skopje. Beautiful valley has been strongly depopulated during the last 50 years. The region misses good suggestions, examples and general will to change its peripheral destiny.

But now new dam has been built on the near by river Treska and water capture will make a large lake appropriate for tourists activities. This of course is a great opportunity for Pore~e to get involved and sell some of it's well preserved cultural and natural heritage. Underdevelopment of the region could be an advantage.

7-days seminar was held in Samokov for 25 students and professor dr. Ljup~o Risteski. There really was a short time to inform participants about the basics of management in culture and particularly to evolve few projects for soft-economical revitalisation of region Pore~e.

I believe the participants will write about the teaching methods, outputs of the seminar and reactions of local communities to their efforts. I have decided to summaries here some basic questions and concepts of cultural management and applied anthropology, which will hopefully serve the reader to analyse and take part in the construction of modern political, organisational and marketing order in culture.

***

I started to analyse and develop an applied field of anthropology under the name "cultural management" in 1999. It was my goal (and my employers wish) to show the students how useful their knowledge can be in producing projects or programmes of culture. This was especially important since because of the government policy, the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology was faced with increased number of students. Chances to get a job in the narrow or traditional field of their education (museums, protection of cultural heritage, archives etc) got even smaller. It was this new situation, which made it reasonable for collegium to except the strange subject of cultural management to be a part of the curriculum.

On the other hand, everywhere in "transitional part of Europe" (east and south-east) the end of the 20th Century emphasised economic activities in societis. Some big and important Slovenian enterprises have had to close down and new private initiatives were stimulated to pull the nation out of negative financial balance. It was obvious that much more effort is expected from every individual to survive and also develop an idea, knowledge or product to be sold on the (international) market. State was withdrawing on a level of assistance to civil society. As people were trying to fulfil this goal, they lost time and interest for culture. Therefore agents of culture were forced to think about (new) ways of marketing and surviving in competitive society.

***

Scientific field of contemporary (cultural) anthropology is very broad because "human studies" imply all kinds of aspects (special subfields and interpretations) of human activities: legal, economic, political, psychological, symbolic, cognitive, medical etc (Keesing and Strathern 1988: 4-5) But no matter how enriched anthropology might be, it is still focus on small-scale communities, places or regions which distinguishes it remarkably from other sciences. Interviews, participation and observation in or about people's everyday activities are believed to give more adequate insight into their social and cultural relations. This should not be a sociological and economical perspective from outside or from the point of view of (national, international) centre but direct involvement in local or regional way of life. Applied anthropology should therefore also be connected to the very same frame of social and cultural activities: minorities, subcultures, tribal societies, regions and other small-scale communities and their development or revitalisation. Like anthropological commitment to ethnographic field research (grassroots), revitalisation and marketing plans of applied anthropology cannot approve pure top-down management principle but must also take local experiences and visions into account [1] (Suber, 1998: 29)

---

[1] Grassroots principle of anthropology is not completely equal to management bottom-up strategy. The first is trying to understand the way of life of societies by observing and interviewing agents. The second actually means development plans of middle-level or low-level management. First is oriented directly toward society (practitioners of culture) and the other toward programmes "developed and implemented by employees and volunteers" (Suber 1998: 29). I will come back to applications of this dichotomy at the end of article.

Adaptations of the curriculum at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology[2] overlaps with the paradigmatic turn in anthropology. Self-reflection, subjectivity and partiality of truth shake the cornerstones of this science about human-animal (Descola and Palssons 1996). *Truth* has become multiple, a matter of representation and creation of social and cultural environment. Ethnography is just a special way of representing the "reality"(Clifford and Marcus 1986).

Beside this partiality, *rationality* of an individual is limited. Even though is seems that he can project the outcome of an enterprise and he has control over its processes, he has to adjust, has to be pragmatic (one can not predict everything). On the other side, individuals *reproduce objective structures* (Bourdieu 1998), which of course put rational individuality into question. Irrationality and symbolism are essential parts of individual and social life.

To overcome the abstract notion of these objective structures, anthropology likes to think of them as nation-states and their material and ideational reproduction. To be even more concrete and contemporary, we mean the subjects (agents) of state administration and citizens. What do they do, how and why? (Kurtz 2001)

Political power reflects the concentration and accumulation of the control over resources (material and ideational). First as humans, land, tools of production and taxes, and the second in the form of control over flow of information, ideology and symbolism. Power (and terror) as a matter of concern of postmodernist anthropology implies two directions: one toward centre (centralisation) and the second outwards (entrenchment and fragmentation - decentralisation) (Murši~ 1999). Again these directions are two sides of the same coin. (Kurtz 2001: 32-38)

How can we then explain the contemporary conviction about destructed power relations and hierarchical organisation? Can civil society, a great project of modernity, exist and function without (national) government on the opposite or complement side? Bourgeois *deconstruction* of king's *mana* and its hierarchical gradation (Freud 1950: 33) in American and French revolution, and secular processes afterwards (declaration on civil and human rights) has changed the focus of science. We can see this political democratisation of *mana* in *agents*-driven anthropology (Bourdieu 1998) – as *processual paradigm* (Kurtz 2001: 99-112). Postmodern anthropology analyses (comm)unity as "radical internal diversity" (Murši~ 1999).[3] (Kroeber, 1972; Ervin, 2000)

---

[2] Besides Cultural Management, students are also encouraged to attend courses in other applied fields of anthropology to be able to find a job in education, conservation tourism, culture policy, journalism, publishing, social planning, urbanism, rural development, handcrafts, diplomacy, promotion, advertising and marketing.

[3] Applied anthropology today is therefore not necessary and directly incorporated into state administration (Kroeber 1972) but can make research and development plans separately or in the network with other non-governmental associations (Ervin 2000), which still keep science serviceable.

This diversity is manifested in confrontations and associations between participants (institutions). Individuals and institutions are competing for *hegemony* and seeking for social *order* at the same time. Power relations are measured by control over material and ideational resources (symbolic capital; Bourdieu 1998).

National governments and agents hold the most power: national capitols are hegemonic to other sub-regions and some other institutions can play similar role on the international level (headquarters and administrations of UN, WMF, NATO, EU). By framing and putting in context all other members and institutions and society, representatives of nation-state become members of "zero institution" (Mo~nik 1999). The same goes for other world centres (globalisation).

It is therefore necessary to the set cultural management (and applied anthropology) into bigger frame. Museums, galleries, theatres and all forms of sub-cultures operate in relation to "zero institutions" – objective structures. After religious cultural policy in Middle Age and Enlightenment revision in 18th Century, *Nations* have become sacred entities (territorial identities) to be reproduced (Roth 2000: 85). No longer should have Church been the place for institutionalised socialisation. School(s) took over as a dominant centre for shaping individuals for accommodation to (civil, consumerist) society and its maintenance.

In Slovenia, quite similar to other parts of Eastern Europe, we have gone through different stages of the management of (national) culture. Slovenian national cultural policy was institutionalised in 1918, after the declaration of The State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs.[4] From that time we have saw cultural and political struggle between liberal and conservative position, left and right wing. Under the communist's rule and explicit abandonment of religion, Slovenia has undergone strong movement for literacy, secularisation, additional (accommodative) institutionalisation and centralisation of culture. Last ten transitional years have brought liberalisation and marketing of culture (as a nation-state structure). (~opi~ and Tomc 1997)

Beside political, cultural and educational institutions, there are also other "ideological apparatus" of state, all depending partly on economic conditions: legal, kinship, media, and trade unions. They all have material existence as codes: constitutions, performances, publications, behaviour, symbolism etc. (Mauss 1996; Althusser 1980; Foucault 1984). Cultural management as a *tehne* of culture is trying to rich the objectives of this apparatus by combining different (symbolic) codes. Contemporary objectives of Slovene cultural policy go alongside with European directives: decentralisation [5],

---

[4] A lot of "basic institutions" (assurances, cultural associations, political parties etc) existed before this new political reality.
[5] Tendencies for decentralisation must be as old as centralisation it-self.

multiculturalism [6], regional framework [7], gender equity [8], cultural and natural heritage [9] (Simonic, 2003: 72), and European exchange [10] (Strauss L., 1989).

***

Cultural management implies at least three meanings. Culture can be understood as "society" (different that nature), "civilisation" (different than savage) or "ideological apparatus of the state" (as distinct to other administrations). It depends on how we distinguish nature and culture, rank societies among each other or how we operate the nation-state cultural sub-system(s).

Other part of the subject – *management* was introduced to the Balkans in the rise of transition from socialist to capitalist society and state. All kinds of managers occurred during the last ten years, incorporating mainly liberated culture policy. Since some kind of *leadership* (heads) of different institution is common (even for most tribal or socialist societies), we assume that new name and praxes of culture have to do something with their objectives. Various vocabularies always appear as constitutional part of ideological structures. Management integrates organisational and marketing side of contemporary culture. *Marketing* is one of key words of modern (western) society.

Putting (cultural) institutions on the market can be painful.[11] For institutions to work properly or succeed in civil society, market has to be developed first to support non-governmental and non-profit activities. But it is also true that state representatives usually pay more respect to the members of cultural, educational and many times informational apparatus (as they are influential opinion and decision makers).

We have already mentioned some historical paradigms in cultural management (management of culture): religious, enlightenment and national. To understand the changes in objective structures accompanied by concept of cultural management in Europe, we should mark another distinction inside the latest paradigm. After the First World War and October revolution, new means of cultural management have been invented or entrenched in Russia. Trocky knew, people could not identify with the new communist ideology without seeing it at work at its best (ritualised materialisation). Coordinating body of experts (artist, directors, producers) and politicians were giving directions how to organize state celebrations and other initiation all over Soviet Union.

---

[6] As minorities, sub-cultures, and global system of differences (human rights).

[7] To avoid national ideology, European cultural policy builds its unity by integrating sub-national territories government, identities).

[8] As employment, culture and sports, transvestism and homosexuality (human rights)

[9] Nature and Culture are *inhabited* and should be managed *sustainable*: for the sake of ancestors; but they must also be *exploited* as a *resource* (Simoni~ 2003: 72).

[10] European Union encourages exchange of goods, ideas and people, which reminds a bit on division of exchange made by Levi Strauss (1989: ideas, goods and wives).

[11] State puts it-self on a market.

Political education (entrenchment) went down to municipalities, factories and schools. In their stories, workers have become heroes, avant-garde of the joined socialist nations (Lane 1981; Roth 2000).[12]

Across the ocean, Roosevelt has been trying to stop the communist ideology from entering American hearts. The result was the programme called New Deal, which incorporated another programme "Federal One": it was a mass cultural project for keeping civil society busy with artistic activities. Intellectuals without work, faced with general social crisis (market breakdown, prohibition etc) could have unpleasant influence on society. Roosevelt didn't want to provoke the appearance of new Lenins in the United States. Huge audio-visual collections on everyday life of the commons were produced. Again workers were declared for heroes (Calabrese 2000).

After The Second World War this half-liberal, protectionist approach to culture encouraged by state ("paradr•avni model kulturne politike"; Dragićević šešić and Stojković 2000: 23-24) was adopted in western Europe. Marshall plan wanted to rebuilt Europe economically and socially. Good experiences from the programme Federal One in USA were imported in destroyed Europe.

Western hemisphere was influential also during the last transition in Eastern Europe and Balkans. Liberal model of cultural policy (Dragićević šešić and Stojković 2000: 23) needed appropriately talented, educated and motivated individuals to serve as a mediator. All over Eastern Europe we could find networks and projects, wanting to establish civil society, specific representation of reality. " … The transition is not simply the flow of resources, but also the export of models, that is, of representations« (Sampson 1996: 121-122).

In *evolutionist societies*, social institutions are emerging (are successful) as a *niche*, they fill-up the empty space in objective structure[13] (Max H. Gluckman) Bourgeois consumer society force *agens* and *institutions* to be *supplementary* (intelligible, useful, accommodative) (Mo~nik 1999): they think of themselves as a *social need* and *market opportunity*.[14] Most of them "evoke" and "heal" needs of the individual and "target groups". Ideas construct fashion, trends. Since advertisement is presumably selling a

---

[12] In its totality and tools the Soviet approach was similar to religious system: centralised control of place, time, agents, rites (Lenin and Stalin as sacred figures). Yugoslav cultural system was also based on cult of Tito and his respect toward proletariat and liberation during the Second World War. Because of the politics of non-alignment, Yugoslavia have balanced between the Western and Eastern model of cultural policy.

[13] By evolutionist society, I mean for example Great Britain and other "traditionalist society" in contrast to France, with revolutionist significance in the popular culture and social sciences. Revolutions tend to change the whole system, rapidly giving new directions to social relations. See for example the classical study by Max H. Gluckman on *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa*.

[14] Regular *Mission statement* of an institution or project gives the definition of its supplementation (or supply).

way of life (personal and social context or satisfaction of the product itself) (Dragićević šešić and Stojković 2000: 193), we may assume that this is a *dream world* of needs and sort of imagined freedom of humankind (where the society is fulfilled, liberated).

***

Anthropological understanding of market and marketing is different than in specialised economical field of marketing. *Market* is a mode of exchange for anthropology: buyers and sellers under competitive conditions (Dannhaeuser 2000: 222-223). While for economic institutions on the other side marketing is a performance of business activities that directs the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user (Kotler 1991). Distribution is emphasised.

Modern economical relations are a part of all other social and cultural relations. Substantive economy is embedded (Plattner 2000: 3-4), material exchange is surrounded by other kinds of environmental representations (kinship, gender, myth, science, etc). *Impersonal exchange* is characteristic for urbanised (modern) communities: society is atomised with a short-term trade among participants. Personal exchange on the other hand is more evident at the (traditional) market place. The additional information about actors involved, transactions and goods are required (state of mutual trust and dependency). Trade is on long term.(Plattner 2000: 209-221)

But no matter which kind of exchange and approach to it we approve, that of political economy (*What people should be doing to succeed?*) or that of economic anthropology (*What people are actually doing?*), there are always two actors or two sides: multiple sellers and multiple buyers. Production and consumption are segmented, fragmented or even personalised. Styles appear.
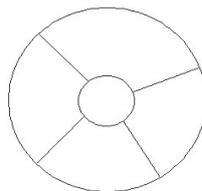
Again we imagine the horizontal structure, which is centre-oriented and is trying to avoid hierarchical relations. The centre is our position (personal, institutional or of project); and it can also be a position of the "other". We become a part of his or her world, as he/she/it is a "section" in our life. The same visualisation can be applied to already mentioned partiality of truth and representations, embedding of economy, and, in the field of cultural management for organisational structures, all kinds of "partners", media and public. For the seller the contemporary market is divided into *target groups*, who are being addressed to exchange.

In civil society people are member of different networks, which enable them to overstep the atomised social relations, get personal, gain some "additional information" and secure them-self a long-term (social) exchange. We know this is not always the case, that some are not included. Some are unable to overcome atomisation of the modern society. Others cannot fulfil the supplementation. All these people are *outsiders*.[15]

It is more important to see this networking not as another "reification", since we have remained decision-making and agency of individuals. For anthropology the concept of *network* is a tool for analysing social relations while for economy (marketing goods, ideas, people) networking is the key to one's success.[16] The concept of networking can be actually used for analysing the dichotomy mentioned above: between what informants *say* as distinct to what they *do* (Rapport and Overing 2000: 292).

***

The main question for Centre "Pore~e" is what to sell and to whom. How can such a centre survive in an "empty environment" (depopulation, bad infrastructure, lack of regional investment etc)? Can centre fill the gap, can it make a difference? What has region to offer (healthy and peaceful environment, local products)? What kinds of activities for tourists (education, sport, entertainment) are exactable to surrounding Nature and Culture?

Applied anthropology for regional development has to combine two techniques. One is ethnographic (what people do): field research should provide as much data as possible. A lot has been done in that sense during the last four years in Pore~e. Material, social and spiritual culture have been systematically analysed and a huge archive is available. This is of course the basic and never-ending task for ethnologists/ anthropologists.

Second step of applied anthropology translates collected data into market opportunities. Cultural management can be of great help. Knowing and manipulating the political and social conditions, legal frame, financing, organisational structures, motivation of local communities and employees, marketing of culture etc., is necessary to be competitive and successful (what people should do?). This is an exciting construction of new reality.[17]

---

[15] "Success" depends on objective and personal conditions.

[16] At it's roots, anthropological analysis of market and management is west-oriented, since political economy first appeared there. But on the other hand, those anthropologists, who made a field research in Amazonia and New Guinea, suggested the concept of social network as well. They have argued that western vocabulary of social relations (kinship) is imposing western concepts into anthropological fieldwork. *Network* provides a way to construct the social realities from individual point of view.

[17] Different segments of this "cultural-marketing constructivism" have been discussed during the seminar in Samokov. A questionnaire was distributed among participants, which served as a guide for building a cultural project.

Anthropologists must be aware of the fact that we are not such experts for every step of the project. Therefore we cooperate with economists, lowers, biologists, architects, computer experts and others, who can make this construction faster and better. But we also have to appreciate and evaluate our efforts: we are the one who've discovered special identities and products; we deliver data for the marketing of (forgotten) way of life. Regional underdevelopment becomes a market opportunity.

Let me at the end go back to the distinction made between anthropological grassroots approach and bottom-up approach of management. Let's just say that for now, revitalisation of Pore~e is in the hand of ethnologist from the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Skopje, more precisely, it depends on the Students Ethnological Society. We can say that at the moment ethnologist are practicing bottom-up approach, since members of the programme board have all been part of the same *marginal group of ethnologist* (representatives). When or if they succeed to establish a permanent cooperation with local communities (other marginal groups in the region), and when residents alone will join and produce the ideas for revitalisation of the region, this change might give an example for fruitful cooperation between ethnology (anthropology) and cultural management. Applied anthropology is a market opportunity.

Regions are not a playground or ownership of ethnologists or any other prophets of development. Experts are always just newcomers, permanent "others": it is polite to learn about the local ways of life.

References:

Althusser, L. 1980

Althusser, L. (1980) Ideološki aparati dr•ave. *Ideologija in estetski u~inek* (ur. Skušek-Mo~nik, Z.). Ljubljana: Cankarjeva zalo•ba

Bourdieu, Pierre 1998

Bourdieu, Pierre (1998) *Practical Reason*. On the Theory of Action. Cambridge: Polity Press

Calabrese, Andrew 2000

Calabrese, Andrew (2000) *Governing culture: Cultural Policy in USA*. Public lecture at Faculty for Social Sciences. Ljubljana: 14. december 2000

Clifford, James; Marcus, George E. 1986

Clifford, James; Marcus, George E. (1986) *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press

~opi~, Vesna; Tomc, Gregor 1997

~opi~, Vesna; Tomc, Gregor (1997) *Kulturna politika v Sloveniji*. Ljubljana: FDV

Dannhaeuser, Norbert 2000

Dannhaeuser, Norbert (2000) Marketing in Developing Urban Areas. *Economic Anhropology* (Plattner, S. – ed.). Stanford. Stanford University Press, pp. 222-252)

Descola, Philippe; Palssons, Gisli 1996

Descola, Philippe; Palssons, Gisli (1996) Nature and Society. Anthropological Perspective. London and New York: Routledge

Ervin, Alexander M. 2000

Ervin, Alexander M. (2000) *Applied Anthropology: Tools and Perspectives for Contemporary Practice*. Allyn & Bacon: University of Saskatchewan

Foucault, Michel 1984

Foucault, Michel (1984) Nadzorovanje in kaznovanje: nastanek zapora Ljubljana: Delavska enotnost

Freud, Siegmund 1950

Freud, Siegmund (1950) *Totem and Taboo*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company

Gluckman, M. 1963

Gluckman, M. (1963) *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa*. London: Cohen & West

Keesing, Roger M., Strathern, Andrew J. 1998

Keesing, Roger M., Strathern, Andrew J. (1998) *Cultural Anthropology*. A Contemporary Perspective (3rd edit.) New York, London etc.: Hartcourt Brace College Publishers

Kotler, Philip 1991

Kotler, Philip (1991) *Principles of Marketing*. 5th edit. Engelwood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

Kurtz, Donald V. 2001

Kurtz, Donald V. (2001) *Political Anthropology*. Paradigms and Power. Colorado: Westview Press

Lane, Christel 1981

Lane, Christel (1981) *The Rites of Rulers*. Ritul in Industrial Society. Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press

Mauss, Marcel 1996

Mauss, Marcel (1996) *Esej o daru in drugi spisi*. Uvod v delo Marcela Maussa. Ljubljana : šKUC: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete

Mo~nik, Rastko 1999

Mo~nik, Rastko (1999) *3 teorije*. Ideologija, Nacija, Institucija. Ljubljana: cf*

Murši~, Rajko 1999

Murši~, Rajko (1999) Postmodernity, Postmodernism and Postmodern Anthropology: Cycling Around Decentredness. *Mess: Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School*, vol. 3. Piran 1997, 1998 (šmitek, Zmago; Murši~ Rajko – ed.) Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo, pp. 11-28

Plattner, Stuart 2000

Plattner, Stuart (2000) *Economic Anthropology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Rapport, Nigel; Overing, Joanna 2000

Rapport, Nigel; Overing, Joanna (2000) *Social and Cultural Anthropology*. *The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge

Roth, Klaus 2000

Roth, Klaus (2000) Praznici i rituali u socialisti~koj Bugarskoj. *Slike u glavama*. Beograd: 20. vek, pp. 85-112

Sampson, S 1996

Sampson, S (1996) The social life of projects, Importing civil society to Albania. *Civil society – Challenging Western Models* (Hann, Chris; Dunn, Elizabeth – ed.). London: Routledge

Simoni~, Peter 2003
Simoni~, Peter (2003) Antropologizacija naravovarstva. *Glasnik SED*, let. 43, št. 3-4. Ljubljana: Slovensko etnološko društvo, pp. 67-73

šeši~ D., Milena; Stojković, Branimir 2000
šeši~ D., Milena; Stojković, Branimir (2000) *Kultura, menad•ment, animacija, marketing*. Beograd: Clio

Levi Strauss, Claude 1989
Levi Strauss, Claude (1989) *Strukturalna antropologija*. 2nd edition. Zagreb: Stvarnost

Suber, Charles (ed.) 1998
Suber, Charles (ed.) (1998) *Dictionary for Artists and Performers and Managers*. Simon & Schuster Custom Publishing