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DICTIONARY OF THE LIVING CULTURE THEORY

ISBN: 978-83-949339-1-3



WARSZAWA -MILANÓWEK 2018



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

DICTIONARY OF THE LIVING CULTURE THEORY is an original part of the MULTISOURCE DICTIONARY OF CULTURE (MDC) built, since 2013, by the team of Observatory of Living Culture - Research Network Foundation. Entries in the dictionary represent the theory of the living culture created by professor Barbara Fatyga. Dr. Bogna Kietlińska had also taken part in its creation.

The entirety of the MDC consists of:

- DICTIONARY OF GUS TERMS - coming from the Polish Central Statistical Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny - GUS);
- WIKIPEDIA DICTIONARY - with entries drawn from Polish, English, French and Spanish editions of the online encyclopaedia;
- DICTIONARY OF THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF CULTURE RESEARCH;
- DICTIONARY OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY OF CULTURE;
- REGIONAL DICTIONARIES representing the knowledge of culture as gathered by local Polish Institutions;
- INSPIRATION DICTIONARY
- and COMMENTARY.

The idea behind MDC is - as much as it is possible - for each entry to have a place in each of the dictionaries and also to equip it with a commentary. Entries are copied from original sources, always along with a bibliographical address.

Now, we release the Dictionary of the Living Culture in English as a separate text. We hope that it will be an interesting and inspiring reading.

Authors



ARRAY OF NEEDS, as a term within the proposed theory of living culture, is used in a broader sense than the common concept of the hierarchy of needs. Contemporaneously, one can only rarely speak correctly of and interact with hierarchic and stable ordering of individual group needs, and there is no reason to believe that this was not the case in the past. Far more prevalent are the unstable and situationally changing arrays of needs. Depending on circumstances and the array of needs in question, an individual or a group can, for example, put the need to remain loyal to principles over the need to sate hunger or ensure safety. In other examples, those needs may find themselves in conflict, or their fulfillment can become dependent on how the situation unfolds. It should be noted that in such a view “pyramidal” hierarchy of needs is only one of many possible models of empirically occurring arrays and does not strictly regulate human behaviour.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Wednesday, November 27th, 2013.



AVAILABILITY OF CULTURE/ACCESS TO CULTURE is:

- a) on an individual level, a measurable (however not easily) extent to which one can use cultural resources remaining at the disposal of groups and communities that one is a member of;
- b) on a group level, also measurable (also not easily) use of cultural resources remaining within reach of their abilities and needs.

Access to culture is dependent on many factors: biological factors such as individual physical characteristics and disability, demographic factors such as age and gender, social factors such as class and profession, geographic factors such as territorial variance and area of residence, and economic, cultural, educational and emotional factors. All the enumerated factors can influence an individual or a group in its selective access to culture. AnIndividuals or groups follow their own cultural

needs, tendencies, habits, social considerations or even temporary moods. It is, after all, how particular subcultures are created from those versions of a culture understood as a whole, in an official way.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Thursday, November 7th, 2013.



CULTURAL COMPETENCIES are, according to Barbara Fatyga and Bogna Kietlińska, the repository of the capabilities of the mind and body at the disposal of an individual, which have been developed through various activities. They describe the predisposition of an individual to participation in culture, both their own as well as others, and the ways in which they use the knowledge and abilities which they have developed at given points in their lives. Cultural competencies commonly have both imitative and transformative character, and, rarely, also creative character. They do not only enable understanding the content of a given culture, but also the aptitude to utilize and modify it. Traditionally, social sciences assume that the basis of all competencies are cognitive competencies and that the most important kind of cultural competencies are linguistic ones. However, it should be pointed out that acquiring cultural competencies does not necessarily happen through conscious learning based on language. It can also happen through absorption of certain patterns of behaviour through participation and imitation, without language serving as an intermediary. Furthermore, such cultural competences as, for example, taste for art can be conceived of as a personal characteristic which does not have to be specifically trained to be present at a high level.

Source of the definition: BK, authorial definition for the OoLC, modified by BF, 2014.

Updated: Thursday, July 10th, 2014.



CULTURAL EDUCATION is the process of absorbing values, models and needs which legitimize traditional, often anachronistic preconceptions and ways of acting. It also, through discussion and search, and not through symbolic violence, shows to individuals and groups the possibilities and consequences of choice, often drawing from the reservoir of tradition.

It is absolutely key to accept the statement that cultural education is pointless unless it is based on the model of politeness that is accepted in a given society, social group or local community. That is the model of such relationships between varied social groups such as the young and the old, men and women, the rich and the poor, people with power and their subordinates. Acceptance of such rule of politeness leads to:

- respecting the right to speech of the weaker or less numerous;
- respecting the right to choose values and cultural goods;
- respecting social diversity;
- respecting the rule of multilateral and not necessarily equivocal exchange (*DO UT DES – I give you so that you give me*).

Those are the absolute minimum conditions of cultural education. Without them, it is more appropriate to speak of training or disciplining.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Sunday, November 3rd, 2013.



CULTURAL HERITAGE is the totality of those cultural goods which remain at the disposal of a given community and which are – *ex definitione* – positively valued. However, it also includes such cultural goods as material testimonies, resources of communal memory and individual memory which either have been found anachronistic and unnecessary or are viewed as unwanted, shameful or dishonourable. Both cultural goods and negative cultural resources constitute a

heritage which is constantly created and reinterpreted, both in the past in which they functioned and came to be and in the present in which they are also coming to be and functioning. Particular elements of heritage only rarely make for cohesive total sets and as such require constant attention and work to keep their values and meanings. In other cases, they either stop counting as heritage or start to function as the so-called SEPs.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Monday, July 17th, 2017.



CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS are defined here in an operational fashion, taking into consideration following criteria:

a) Criteria of place – contemporary cultural institutions function both:

- in geographical space – in such a case their geographical determination (mountains, lowlands, climate zones, level of urbanization, etc.) can be described and the range of an institution's influence can be mapped, based on, for example, how easy they can be accessed by road networks, on the development of local public and private transport, on local traditions in use of institutions, etc.

- in virtual space, as on the internet or in a wireless network. In this case, the physical location of an institution is of significantly lesser importance than the technological considerations of network's functioning. The conditions of access are limited by the availability of necessary equipment (computer, cellphone, tablet) and possession of minimal level of competence in the use of the Internet. It should be kept in mind that while cultural institutions of this type function in networks, they are nonetheless created and maintained in concrete, geographical sites;

b) infrastructural criteria – modern cultural institutions require headquarters which can be official and permanent, as well as unofficial and provisional. We can

also separate mono-institutional headquarters such as a theater or library from multi-institutional ones such as a culture center. When an institution functions in a network, its “real” headquarters often diminishes in importance and gravity. Infrastructure of cultural institutions can be characterized by many specific factors, from the technical state and interior space of buildings, through equipment possessed, to internal organization of activity, including the so-called “institution’s services”;

c) personal criteria - cultural institutions, as with all institutions, require personnel. Traditionally, it is divided into several subcategories, such as executive or management personnel, essential personnel and auxiliary or service personnel. One of the measures of the effectiveness of a cultural institution is the ratio of essential personnel to other kinds; if it is too low, we can speak of the over-bureaucratization of an institution. We can observe several such trends today: increase in bureaucracy, and rationalized decrease in non-essential personnel. In institutions of the new type, we also observe the sharing of essential positions with administrative or auxiliary ones. This category should also include recipients and/or cooperators in institutional functioning;

d) functional criteria – cultural institutions are created in order to fulfil certain objectives and sate needs of people who live within their purview. The most important objective of all cultural institutions is to increase quality of life. This objective can be realized through formulating desired values and methods by which an institution can achieve those values in the quasi-educational model, which is based on symbolic violence. Alternatively, quality of life can be improved through finding out the needs and interests of participants of culture and fitting the method of action them in the animative model;

e) identity criteria – whether a given institution, fulfilling above criteria, can be recognized as a cultural institution depends most of all on the assumed definition

of culture and on the consequences of it being put into practice. A misunderstanding stemming from this can be seen in, for example, names such as the Palace of Culture and Sciences, which implies that science is not a part of culture, or the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which likewise implies that the national heritage is not a part of culture.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Thursday, November 14th, 2013.



CULTURAL LIFE is the characteristic way in which the living culture of a given group functions, embodied in specific cultural practices. The practices are not divided into “better” or “worse”. The term itself is supposed to facilitate research on specific configurations of those practices. Therefore, we are attempting to remove the value judgment from the term “cultural life”, which predominantly implies participation in the so-called high culture and in the conservatively understood cultural education which, according to a traditional view, should prepare for such participation.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Friday, November 8th, 2013.



CULTURAL MODEL is, at its most basic, the ideal form of a pattern. The two terms are distinguished mainly by the fact that the model is a cultural construct consisting of only such meanings and values which, due to the consistency of the pattern, became enshrined in the cultural consciousness of an individual or group. To fulfil their social function, models must be reconstructed and made apparent in cultural life as a set of norms. This can happen through a community (e.g. in traditional customs, *savoir vivre*, norms of conduct, etc.), through legal authority and codifications of law, through religion, as with commandments given in sacred texts, or through thinkers and the reconstruction of models through scientific methods. Models create casual configurations such as world-views or ethea.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Saturday, December 14th, 2013.



CULTURAL NEEDS are the needs that result from the definition of the living culture. Therefore, in this view, they are the totality of human needs. They can be regarded analytically on three planes:

- a) in a syntagmatic chain, in narratives of life of a member of a given culture from birth to death;
- b) in a paradigmatic chain representing, above else, the interconnections between needs and the ways they modify each other;
- c) in an imposition of the above, dynamic planes of needs in what Edmund Leach¹ called syntagmatic-paradigmatic transfigurations.

The view presented in point c) is the closest to the observable effect of needs on humans, but is also the most difficult to frame theoretically. The concept of cultural

¹ Edmund Leach, *Culture and communication: the logic by which symbols are connected*, Cambridge University Press, 1976.

needs is built on a more generalized concept of needs by Kazimierz Obuchowski², but it excludes the popular, psychological definition of needs understood as having their source in the **lack** of something.

Source of the definition: Barbara Fatyga, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Sunday, December 8th, 2013



CULTURAL PRACTICES are ordered (that is to say, patterned) forms of human behaviour that create total sets of autotelic or instrumental character. Internally and externally, they are ordered through cultural models, which endow behaviour with values and meanings that are usually very complex. Practices can be divided into:

a) Individual practices, aimed by an individual:

- towards self, including the body as with cosmetic activities. Also, or alternatively, towards sentience, psyche and emotions, through learning, controlling impulses, etc.;
- towards a partner, human or non-human, including such “partners” as abstractions and processes – e.g. in interaction with a fiancé, daughter or a spoon, computer or an idea, one’s own or someone else’s malady, etc.;
- towards a group of humans or other subjects e.g. by a student towards a teacher, by an artist towards an idea;
- towards the world as an imagined whole e.g. when, as individuals, we express our worldview;

² Kazimierz Obuchowski, *Psychologia dążeń ludzkich*, Warszawa: PWN, 1964. See also: <http://ozkultura.pl/wpisy/272>.

b) group practices aimed by a social group:

- towards its own members – e.g. when a group excludes someone;
- towards individual partners, human or non-human, group or individual – e.g. when a group together destroys or produces something;
- towards many different groups, e.g. during a game or a war;
- towards the world as an imagined whole, e.g. when a group organized a mass pro-ecological activity.

Forms of behavior that constitute cultural practices are imbued with value and meaning, as well as more-or-less clear boundaries, with a beginning and an end. In the case of complex practices, also as a beginning or an end of a given cycle, phase or stage of a given practice.

Furthermore, cultural practices are:

a) limited by determinants that can be territorial (geographical-environmental), social (e.g. membership in a given class and/or social strata, or to a concrete, local group), economic (e.g. income limitations or the lack thereof), political (e.g. solutions in regards to central and local socio-cultural policy), somatic (e.g. disability) and psychological (e.g. preference, level of competence and needs).

b) developed and intensified through cultural education and animative efforts in groups and social institutions to which individuals belong.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC, modified 2011-13.

Updated: Wednesday, January 7th, 2015.



CULTURAL SERVICE is a cyclical sequence of actions, usually ordered according to some pattern and model, coming from empirical or ideological understanding of individual or group needs, which is aimed at their fulfilment, either one-time, cyclically or continuously. Cultural service that responds to empirically understood needs is associated with market or animative approach to cultural activity. Cultural service arising from an ideological understanding of needs is usually associated with the phenomenon of symbolic violence, coming from, for example, the state or other subjects (social strata, elites, media, etc.). Before they can be fulfilled, cultural service exists as an offer of services.

Culture services, understood as sequences of actions, have following effects:

- a) permanent – material and measurable (e.g. digitalization of libraries)
- b) permanent – material and unmeasurable or difficult to measure (e.g. arts collections)
- c) permanent – non-material and measurable (e.g. cultural competences)
- d) permanent – non-material and unmeasurable or difficult to measure (e.g. arrays of values, world-views, tastes)
- e) ephemeral – material and measurable (e.g. book fairs)
- f) ephemeral – material and unmeasurable (e.g. digital file transfer)
- g) ephemeral – non-material and measurable (e.g. public opinion)
- h) ephemeral – non-material and unmeasurable (e.g. emotions)

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

See also (external link): Polish classification of products and services (section R)

Updated: Sunday, May 11th, 2014.



CULTURAL REALITY is simultaneously an embodiment, a concrete realization and an empirical manifestation of a system of values ordered into patterns, models and configurations they all create. As such it is a component layer of living culture, in which persons, actions and artefacts create complex and shifting networks. From the researcher's point of view, finding the values and meanings (and so to the abstract, systematic layer or, after Alfred L. Kroeber, "the essence of culture")³ is possible either through speculative thinking or through the analysis of the cultural reality.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014.



CULTURE is – at the most general – the specific life environment of man and also a federation of subcultures, noticeably dominated by the popular culture, both in the qualitative and quantitative sense. Such view goes against notions of culture built on the idea of symbolic violence, according to which the dominating position in a given system is held by the culture of the elite, the so-called high culture.

As a life environment, culture is associated with the ideas of stability and continuity. However, usually any given culture is only relatively stable and/or continuous. In this view culture is a transformed natural environment, endowed with values and meanings, (e.g. bocage), and a social environment created by individuals and groups which are also entangled in a shifting and varied network of meanings and values (see: axiosemiotic process.)

³ Is the polish title of a book by Kroeber. See: Alfred Louis Kroeber, *The Nature of Culture*, The University of Chicago Press, 1965.

As a federation of subcultures, culture is marked with an almost mosaic-like variance, volatile and capable of uniting elements at odds with one another in terms of values and/or meanings within a provisional subcultural totality. Concrete subcultures (folk, high, youth, etc.) maintain a degree of autonomy in this federated array, and thus they can be differentiated. They also constitute niches for specific cultural practices. In spite of often contradictory trends at work within a given culture, its constitutive subcultures remain within a network of mutual, dynamic and usually complex relations, mainly with the dominant subculture and some other subcultures.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Associated terms: Living culture, Culture.

Updated: Thursday, May 15th, 2015.



CULTURAL ANIMATION is a term heavily marked with axiological significance. It refers to a specific way in which a cultural animator works within the space of living culture of particular groups and communities. Animative way of acting in cultural reality is based chiefly on the animator's awareness of various deficits in life of a group or a community. Here, value judgments are made present, taking form of ideals or even ideologies regarding humans and the desired ways in which a society should function to achieve desired goals. Through a shared decision of an animator and the people they work among, perceived deficits are considered to be possible to remove through the use of various cultural tools. For this reason, cultural animation is NOT equal to culture popularization, nor to cultural education, however animative way of acting can contain such elements. Cultural animation in a group or in a society requires a solid diagnosis of deficits,

well thought-through ways of counteracting them based on the idea of liberating and empowering local resources and, usually, longer-term involvement to make sure that the change comes to be and becomes permanent.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Similar term (internal links): Culture animator, Living culture, Participation in culture.

Updated: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014.



CULTURAL ANIMATOR. In contemporary HR practices within cultural institutions such terms as popularization of culture or cultural education are being phased out in favour of the term of “culturalanimation”. WORKERS or INSTRUCTORS employed in cultural institutions are transformed, often without their knowledge and consent or under the rising prominence of a specific jargon, into CULTURAL ANIMATORS. It should be then made clear how big an obligation is carried through a change from a trivial or routine *professional role* into an ANIMATOR’S *calling*.



CULTURAL ANIMATOR is, according to a well known distinction drawn by Max Weber, a *calling* and – let us add – a *social role*, but not a *professional* one. Weber can also be used to create a characterization of a culture animator as a charismatic leader of a local community or group. The specific charisma of an animator stems from his or her authority, which by necessity includes the ability to move oneself out of the spotlight when animative activities start to bear fruit. The most important characteristics of a good animator are: a developed consciousness of aims, which they seek to accomplish, the ability to cooperate with people supported by open-mindedness and empathy, imagination, multifaceted

interest in culture, an unbound desire to learn, self-criticism and the ability to deal with their own authority, thereby preventing the transformation into a *celebrity of the third sector, local guru* or a *shaman*. The principle of culture animator's work should be working by means of the maieutic method and with minimal use of symbolic violence.

Entry prepared specially for the Non-Congress of Culture Animators, March 2014.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Wednesday, March 26th, 2014.



CULTURAL GOODS come to be when objects start to function as non-human partners within networks of social interactions, both within groups and between individual partners. The necessary condition for an object to become a cultural commodity is the agreement of two or more individuals in a given social environment on its values and meanings. Usually, in the concept of cultural goods, two more conditions are implied, though only sometimes explicitly stated: the agreement must concern *exceptional* meanings and values and it must last over an extended period of time. We do not accept such extra conditions. We are more concerned with the *thickness* of values and meanings present in an axiosemiotic web entangling a given thing than with its extraordinary nature or longevity.

Cultural goods are divided between material and non-material ones, including views, ideas, representations, models of behaviour, cultural practices, etc. From this, it can be clearly seen that an item that is valued only by one person and that is important only for this person is NOT a cultural good. Furthermore, individual taste usually comes to be as a result of cultural participation and competence training – few people are capable of imposing their strictly private fondness towards given things onto others through symbolic violence, in process which also creates culture goods.

It should be kept in mind that the cultural good status is not unconditionally lasting: certain objects, in the sense given above, can become relatively permanent cultural goods, while others may lose this quality temporarily or even forever. Some objects may be perceived as cultural goods only by few people or very small groups, while others are seen as such by large communities such as social strata, classes or nations. Others, meanwhile, are understood, at least officially, to be universal cultural goods, valuable to all humankind.

Source of the definition: Barbara Fatyga, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Thursday, November 7th, 2013.



CULTURAL PARTICIPATION, in a broad sense, is the process of inclusion and exclusion of groups, individuals, objects, ideas, behaviours and their configurations into particular, culturally patterned situations, both casual and extraordinary. Participation is made possible by human behaviour – and so *ex definition* it has an active character.

In a more specific sense, cultural participation is a process synonymous with reception, that is learning, using and consuming cultural goods created by others. Contemporarily, we are moving away from such a one-sided and narrow view of participation, usually associated with a situation in communication where one message is sent to many receivers, who then react in a supposedly “passive” manner to its cultural content.

In terms of behaviour, cultural participation is creation and recreation of culture, dissemination and absorption of cultural content, its modification and repurposing, sustaining and excluding from the available resources.

Participation in culture can be seen not only from an instrumental perspective, as a vehicle of the socialization process (as proposed by Marek Krajewski⁴), but also in an autotelic manner, as a complex, dynamic set of cultural practices (as proposed by Barbara Fatyga⁵).

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Friday, November 8th, 2013.



CULTURAL PATTERN describes a regularity that can be directly observed and subsequently reconstructed on the basis of observation, and thus its occurrence can be empirically confirmed. Cultural pattern expresses itself in repeatable, ordered behaviour or in repeatable, ordered elements of the artefacts, both material and non-material, of such behaviour in a given time, in a given territory. Cultural patterns are totalities that can be isolated out due to shifting axiosemiotic structures of meanings and values attributed to them by individuals and groups. Cultural patterns which achieve an ideal form due to having been in use for a long time and/or among many people or due to the strong meanings and values attributed to them, become culture models.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Monday, July 17th, 2017.

⁴ Marek Krajewski, *Uczestnictwo w kulturze, (En toward a relational theory of cultural participation)*, (w:) „Kultura i Społeczeństwo”, nr 1, 2013.

⁵ See: Cultural practices in this dictionary.



EMPÁTHEIA. The typology of play and games by Roger Caillios (agon, alea, mimicry and ilinx⁶) needs – as shown by the results of our research – to be supplemented by one more important category: of games which have their essence expressed in the Greek term of EMPÁTHEIA, meaning “suffering”. Of course this moves partially beyond of the traditional boundaries of the understanding of a game as something that brings pleasure. On the other hand, however, it can relate games to such varied cultural phenomena as, for example, *catharsis*, sadistic and masochistic practices, calculated displays of misery or instrumental treatment of suffering in public image games of socially conscious institutions. Thus, the notion can include games played around suffering as well as those played with suffering, both one’s own and, unfortunately, often the suffering of others. It seems to be one of the more menacing ludic categories, but one worthy of especial attention.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Similar terms (internal link): Game, Play.

Updated: Monday, June 19th, 2017.



FOLK CULTURE is a specific subculture of culture that is understood holistically, that is as a federation of subcultures. Folk culture is a configuration of cultural practices and their material and non-material artefacts, including individuals and groups treated as living signs, attributed with meanings and values. Folk culture exists in a glocalized perspective, converging in a point marked as “home”. It is carried by individuals and social groups which, as Michel Maffesoli describes it, “cross over the boundaries of class, age and space”, but who also need

⁶ Roger Caillios, *Les Jeux et les hommes. Le masque et le vertige*, Éditions Gallimard, 1967.

such a “home” (tamed) culture, suited to fulfilling their ordinary and extraordinary needs⁷.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

See also (external link): web-page FOLK CULTURE, (Kultura ludowa).

Updated: Tuesday, May 20th, 2014.



HOMO EGENS (WANTING HUMAN) is a term that fits in with the theory of lifestyles. Homo egens is a man who suffers from some form of a want, lack and/or poverty. Wanting human is a construct especially useful when applied to cultural analysis of contemporary consumption, because, as the author of the definition notes, in such consumption the need to acquire things dominates over the need of possessing and using them; the want eclipses fulfillment.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC, modified by BF, 2014 and 2018.

Updated: Thursday, November 7th, 2013.



LIBRARY is, in the basic meaning that we are using, a cultural institution with main goals of:

- a) collecting books, journals and other carriers of cultural content (discs, films, digital files, etc.), cataloging them, digitalizing, safe-keeping and making them available to the public;
- b) conducting cultural education for the sake of the local community, or beyond the local scope;

⁷ Michel Maffesoli, *Le temps des tribus. Le déclin de l'individualisme dans les sociétés postmodernes*, Paris: La Table Ronde, 2000.

- c) conducting research and documentation for the sake of the local community, or beyond the local scope;
- d) networking through cooperation with other subjects (from individuals through informal groups, cultural organizations to other cultural institutions) and in doing so increasing the quality of local, cultural life on a given territory.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Sunday, November 7th, 2013.



LIFESTYLE is a culturally conditioned way of realizing one's needs, desires, habits and norms, expressing itself through cultural practices and their artefacts, which function as cultural goods. In lifestyle both practices and their artefacts are subjected to patterning. On a higher level, lifestyle of individuals and groups is regulated through arrays of meanings and values; that is principles, either static or dynamic, distinguishing particular lifestyles. Lifestyle principles as configurations of models enable people, both *hic et nunc* and in other temporal and spatial perspectives, to perceive themselves and their lives as relatively consistent and meaningful. They also enable researchers, to create typologies of lifestyles. From the intentional point of view, lifestyle is one of the constructs providing people with a ground for comparing oneself with others, constructing group identities and distinctions.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Monday, July 17th, 2017.



LIVING CULTURE is a multidimensional environment (*milieu*) of the life individuals and a social groups, in which dynamic processes take place and cultural practices develop, resulting in creation of both permanent and non-permanent results (taking form of both material and non-material artefacts.) Individuals, groups, institutions, processes and practices are all characterized by varied, usually multifaceted and fluid axiological characteristics. They are also characterized by varied, fluid, multifaceted and usually polysemic, meaning.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Sunday, November 17th, 2013.



LIVING CULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE is – in a broad sense – the comparatively stable, material surrounding of individuals and human groups. It appears intentionally in the natural environment as a result of human work, often irrevocably changing that environment and setting humans apart from nature. In a narrow sense, living culture infrastructure consists of assemblies of varied, material objects such as, for example, roads, buildings, bridges, the so-called “small architecture”, *tamed nature*, etc. They constitute basic conditions for the functioning of individuals and groups. Living culture infrastructure is created, changed, used, used up, destroyed and recreated by humans in the process of fulfilling their needs, both the permanent and changing ones, and so also in the process of sating their desires and fancies. There is no simple and stable relationship between permanent needs such as, for example, the need for sustenance and security and their material fulfilment which demands certain infrastructure. However, the main function of each infrastructural object must be maintained. An example here would be consuming a meal which can happen in a

forest, in a house, on a street, in a bar, in a fast food restaurant or an elegant one. Another example would be a house which fulfills the need of shelter, but can also be the *family home*, a *home sweet home* or *gemutlich*. In any case such infrastructure is endowed with networks of meanings and values.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Similar terms (internal link): Bocage.

Updated: Sunday, July 26th, 2017.



LOCAL ENVIRONMENT is a culturally marked space with an unstable, shifting border, which constitutes the source of elementary, everyday experiences of individuals and groups. It underlies the conditions, causes and contexts of action, as well as positions and actions of subjects and things endowed with agency (as understood in the Actor-Network Theory).⁸ This space comes to be filled with permanent and non-permanent, material and non-material results of people's activity, institutions, organizations, phenomena and processes.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Thursday, November 7th, 2013.

⁸ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford, UK; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.



MULTISENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY is a way of practicing ethnography which comes from multisensory experience of the environment and the relations with other subjects functioning in it. The theoretical foundation for such an approach is the paradigm of embodied cognition which argues that the physical qualities of the body have a substantial influence on form and quality of the cognitive process. The physical body and its functions can significantly limit or support cognition. Senses are not only receptors that receive stimuli, but they also play an active role in structuring data received through them. They also influence the process in which individuals endow their environment with meaning. Aside from individual predisposition, a significant role in giving meaning to sensory experience is played by socio-cultural conditions. The role of an ethnographer researching senses is therefore to reach the sensory experiences embodied and emplaced in the field being researched; this includes both the experiences of research subjects and those of the researcher himself. Subsequently, the meaning of such experiences is to be reconstructed. However, the role of the researcher is not limited to reading the existing meanings, but also includes their conscious sharing, renegotiation and, in effect, providing a description of how they relate to the environment and other objects. Multisensory ethnography can use existing ethnographic techniques as well as attempt to work out its own methodology. However, it is imperative that the chosen methods should apply to the multisensory nature of sensory experiences. Reflecting on whether a given methodology enables the researcher to reach into the deep, un verbalized stores of embodied knowledge is of key importance, and therefore the researcher should be keenly aware of the limitations of his/her method during the research process, and be ready to constantly redefine its merits and flaws.

Source of the definition: BK, from "Warszawa jako przedmiot etnografii wielozmysłowej", PhD thesis presented in Warsaw University, October 2015.

Updated: Monday, January 11th, 2016.



RECIPIENT OF CULTURE: To say the truth, this term should be contested due to the traditional and still often used distinction between an active recipient of culture and a passive one. However, a term should not be removed from the dictionary of a theory just because it is associated with an absurd definition. Recipient is a verbal noun describing an activity. A recipient, thus, is someone who RECEIVES something – in our case, culture, or, more precisely, some forms of cultural content. Therefore he cannot be called PASSIVE and calling him ACTIVE is an unnecessary redundancy of meaning resulting in meaninglessness. It should be noted that even when a recipient of culture acts in an apparently passive manner, he or she still *looks, listens, accepts, declines, does not notice, overlooks, misunderstands, etc.* Therefore, he/she always does something with the cultural content.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Wednesday, January 15th, 2015.



SEMANTIC FIELD OF A DEFINITION. In the case of the Multi-source Dictionary of Culture, the semantic field of a definition is created from a collection of definitions of a given term coming from different sub-fields of knowledge and chosen by us. Specific characteristics of this kind of a semantic field are:

- repeatability of certain phrases and formulas (and in some examples, of entire entries) resulting from the use of the same texts: e.g. created on the basis of legal acts and used by GUS or Wikipedia. This phenomenon leads to a multiplication of identical phrases;
- wordiness (a problem similar to the above), resulting in definitions giving an appearance of being different while, as it turns out under closer scrutiny, they are identical or heavily similar in meaning;

- variability of the content of various definitions which either allows to capture multiple aspects of a term or, in cases of too large a rift between different definitions – obscures the fact that we are dealing with the same term.

For this reason, our Dictionary includes Commentaries which are meant to help the user in dealing with such difficulties. However, in an ideal form, the semantic field of a definition should:

- be endowed with a common core, that is a collection of names referring to the most important qualities of a given term.

- in subsequent definitions point towards new qualities associated with the way the term is used in relevant sub-systems of knowledge.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Thursday, November 7th, 2013.



SUBSTITUTIVE CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE consists of the objects and places in public spaces which had not been initially thought as serving cultural functions in a narrow sense of the term. They are of particular importance in such areas where existing and official cultural infrastructure does not sufficiently fulfil integrational and – often – ludic needs of particular social groups, or excludes them from participating in official ways. Such substitutive infrastructure can be seen in front of stores, near the carpet-hangers in city's backyards, on bush-covered benches in parks, near bus-stops or on stairwells occupied by petty swindlers and the youth, in uninhabited, abandoned buildings and ruins, in allotment gardens and the secluded areas of train stations and sewage systems where the homeless dwell.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Friday, December 27th, 2013.



TEMPORAL PATTERNS OF CULTURAL ACTIVITY is a category of cultural patterns describing forms of behaviour and their complex configurations, cultural practices. Temporal patterns of cultural activity take into consideration not only the patterned (in a demonstrable way) and repeatable sequences of behaviour, but also the fact that behaviour takes place in time. Pointing towards the temporal dimension of how behaviour is patterned allows for a better recognition of the patterning itself, and also enables us to track how it changes and to reconstruct the the patterns of the “prototypical” and of the “variant fluidity of behaviours”. Finally, it also allows us to prove that certain patterns, in a form discovered by research, exist in the cultural reality. From this perspective, cultural patterns that are associated with forms of behaviour should be divided into static constructs, a kind of a “photography” capturing the structure in a given sequence of behaviours, and dynamic constructs, which attempt to capture the change in behaviour. It seems that, while the latter view is closer to the empirical, the former does not lose its utility in certain forms of cultural analysis.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Tuesday, December 3rd, 2013.



TIME FOR ONESELF does not necessarily mean solitary participation in culture. This term describes the time that an individual considers:

- a) removed from the larger pressures of life (additional work, chores, shopping.);
- b) remaining at her free disposal.

Such time can nonetheless be subjected to other pressures, such as those associated with cultural habits, snobbishness or the need for self-improvement. It should be noted that this term is narrower, more precise and more useful than the traditional understanding of the term “leisure time”.

Source of the definition: BF, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Thursday, November 7th, 2013.



VISUAL COMPETENCE are, according to Bogna Kietlińska, the ability to read, use and interpret the visual, what we can broadly understand as iconographic communication. Such communication can, but does not have to be synonymous with works of art - they extend far beyond the field of artistic activity. Similarly to cultural competences, visual competences have a creative character. They are associated with the ability to read, and also to use and create images. Thanks to them, seeing becomes visible. Visual competences are one of the kinds of cultural competences.

Source of the definition: BK, authorial definition for the OoLC.

Updated: Sunday, December 1st, 2013.