Semiotics, anthropology and the analysability of culture

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Abstract. For each culture-studying discipline, the problem of culture's analysability stems from disciplinary identity. One half of analysability consists of the culture's attitude and the ability of the discipline's methods of description and analysis to render the culture analysable. The other half of analysability is shaped by the discipline's own adaptation to the characteristics of culture as the object of study and the development of a suitable descriptive language. The ontologisation and epistemologisation of culture as the subject of analysis is present in each culture-studying discipline or discipline complex. Culture analysts are therefore scholars with double responsibilities. Their professionalism is measured on the basis of their analytical capability and the ability to construct (imagine, define) the object of study. The analytical capability and the ability to construct the object of study also determine the parameters of analysability. Be the analyst an anthropologist or a culture semiotician, the analysability of culture depends on how the analyst chooses to conduct the dialogue between him/herself and his/her object of study.

The proliferation of definitions of culture and their frequent disparity clearly indicate that the principles of defining culture are numerous and sometimes very different. Numerous indeed, as we still cannot speak of the science of culture as a single discipline. The second reason why we still lack a uniform discipline of science of culture is the heterogeneity of culture itself. Culture, as the cause of all its definitions, is such a complex object of study that it is near impossible to list and rank all culture-related disciplines by their importance. Methodologist P. Feyerabend (1993) uses the notion of epistemological anarchism to describe the randomness and lack of hierarchy in

the choice of research methods, i.e. all disciplines and all methods are equally valid for the study of culture and we have no reason to regard one as better than the other. It is not even really possible, since even the strictest scientific analysis is but one approach to culture, which cannot in any case rule out the others. Thus, the study of one and the same culture gives rise to numerous and different views and snapshots of that culture, and the analysis of culture as a fragmented object of study becomes the analysis of cultures. Essentially, we can speak of two fundamental pluralities — the plurality of the scientific research methods is complementary to the plurality of culture as a complex object of study.

However, the notions of culture that are born out of different disciplines and viewpoints can hamper the comprehensive understanding of culture, since the synthesis or complementary linking of those notions is near utopic, as it would be to be aware of all the qualities of culture:

> Culture is the product of interacting human minds, and hence a science of culture will be a science of the most complex phenomenon on Earth. It will also be a science that must be built on interdisciplinary foundations including genetics, neuroscience, individual development, ecology and evolutionary biology, psychology and anthropology. In other words, a complete explanation of culture, if such a thing is ever possible, is going to comprise a synthesis of all human science. Such a synthesis poses significant conceptual and methodological problems, but also difficulties of another kind for those contributing to this science. Scholars from different disciplines are going to have to be tolerant of one another, open to ideas from other areas of knowledge. (Plotkin 2001: 91)

Science of culture and disciplinarities

Thus, there are two discernible tendencies in culture-studying disciplines. On one hand, the scholars try to ascertain what exactly is being studied and how it is being studied when a particular approach is applied; and what can possibly be the proper field of study for a general science of culture. This implies that culture is not merely an existing object of study that is simply "out there", but equally a created or constructed object of study. Thus, culture is an object of study that requires disciplinary adjustment for scientific analysis, i.e. the creation of analysability and therefore culture is both a proto- and

metaobject at the same time; it is both immediate and mediated. On the other hand, scholars seek to establish the principles of meta-discipline or methodology of the science of culture that would permit the description of the research results of various culture-studying disciplines on a uniform basis, and thus their so-called translation into a commonly understood language. In one case, the definition of culture is discipline-bound (culture is what one or the other discipline can analyse), in the other, the disciplinary perceptions of culture are described as the parameters of culture that can be synthesised into a comprehensive understanding of culture (as a theoretical ideal). Even if we concretise this problem on a most basic level by moving from the level of general human culture through ethnic and social culture to the level of individual culture, the complexity of uniting those two tendencies will remain.

If we examine the analysability of culture from the 21st century point of view, we can notice two distinct tendencies. On one hand, culture-studying disciplines interweave on the level of methods and the language of description, and the boundaries between cultural philosophy, cultural sociology, culture studies and their subdisciplines have become blurred. Of course, it is also natural that such an intermingling produces new disciplinary identities. The inevitable consequence of interdisciplinarity is new disciplinarity, after all, sooner or later. These are natural tensions, inherent in the development of science, which can be observed in the effort to clarify the relationship between anthropology, ethnography and ethnology and in the attempt to differentiate cultural anthropology from social anthropology, etc. In addition to differentiations and boundary redefinitions between those disciplines, we can also observe such differentiation that in fact brings disciplines closer together. The fact that reflexive anthropology and reflexive sociology exist side by side independently of each other is an example of this. Therefore a few notions have emerged (reflexivity, symbolism, interpretative etc.) that draw various essentially different trends in science closer together via the language of description (i.e. metalanguage).

A qualitative change seems to be nascent in the development of humanities and social sciences. It is related to changes in the emergence and establishment of disciplinary and interdisciplinary identities. On one hand, humanities and social sciences have demonstrated metadisciplinarity already for a long time, which means that certain

disciplines serve as vehicles of innovation or as methodological generalisers. Among others, this metadisciplinary role has been played by linguistics and literature studies, and also by film studies. During the last few decades, this role has often been attributed to semiotics. Whereas linguistics enters the domain of other disciplines and supports methods based on language analogies (language of movies, language of theatre, language of literature etc.), literature and film studies tend to accept more innovative impulses and are more synthesising in general. Psychoanalysis, colonial or gender studies have enriched those disciplines, but they have also given rise to hybrid knowledge forms and prestige languages. Thus, the heterogeneity of those disciplines has been increased.

On the other hand, we can see a lot of dedisciplinarity, which is the cornerstone of cultural studies. The story of cultural studies is a good example of how culture-oriented analytical activities have been able to make their existence a meaningful one. Since cultural practices often outrun the capabilities of theoretical interpretation, the analysts cannot always avoid transgressing discipline boundaries and using other methods and means. Such an analyst uses all available means to understand the culture and in principle operates on three levels — structuralist, culturalist and receptive. On the structuralist level, cultural processes can be observed and explained in terms of the structure of society, a hegemony of a social class or a dominant ideology. The culturalist level allows you to see the ubiquitous cultural uniqueness and interpret everything pertaining to society as culture — on this level, the in depth analyses of texts employ the widest range of methods (semiotic, post-colonial, feminist etc.). The receptive level interprets everything as cognitive processes, since the actual functioning of culture is determined by its receiver and, for example, the participation of a single work of art in culture depends on how it is received (audience analyses and polls) on one hand and its scale of distribution (the number of copies printed, success at the box office, manner of presentation) on the other. As a result, we have a number of parameters that allow us to analyse various aspects of culture without the desire to elevate these analyses to the status of a scientific discipline. In reality, dedisciplinarity does not oppose science, but supports flexible and transdisciplinary research.

Dedisciplinarity is an attempt to establish ad-hoc research as parameter-based and justify it with the need to understand the modern

culture that immediately surrounds the researcher. Whereas meta-disciplinarity combines different disciplines and creates a language of mediation between them, dedisciplinarity connects the different aspects of the object of study and permits the use of different research methods as means to identify the different parameters of the object. Since the primary object of study for cultural studies is modern culture, dedisciplinarity can be seen as the limitation of disciplinarity arising from the "diversity of the object of study" (Burgass 1999: 100). However, critical theory interprets the same phenomenon as the representation of cultural studies in different disciplines and in their methods, assuming that "[…] culture is based on discursive practices and that the subjectivities involved in making it are themselves socially constructed" (Rowe 1998: 3). The diversity of the object of study in this context is inseparable from the (inter)discursive represen-tation of that diversity, i.e. the analyst is aware of the correlation between cultural diversity and the diversity of disciplinary or hybrid metalanguages that describe it.

As a result, we can interpret the same problems in terms of the diversity of disciplines and methods, aspects of the object of study, or the opinions of scholars. This multi-diversity has both its pros and cons. Pros are related to the notion of competence mastering, which denotes the emergence of the analysability of the symbiosis of diffe-rent competence levels and types. The cons include the proliferation of half-competence or incompetence in education. Harold Bloom has alluded to it in relation to the modern training of philologists:

> Precisely why students of literature have become amateur political scientists, uninformed sociologists, incompetent anthropologists, mediocre philosophers, and overdetermined cultural historians, while a puzzling matter, is not beyond all conjecture. They resent literature, or are ashamed of it, or are just not all that fond of reading. (Bloom 1994: 521)

One reason for amateurism and incompetence in university education is the discrepancy between disciplinary identities and explanation practices (see Woody 2003). Discrepancy between disciplinary iden-tity as methodological homogeneity and explanation practices as discursive or metalanguage heterogeneity is in its turn based on the interpretation of the disciplinary object of study and its dynamics, but first and foremost on the relationship between the terminology

necessary for the description of the scientific model of the object of study and the actual terminology in use.

One solution to the discrepancy is to return to the disciplinary object of study and its clarification or reconceptualisation. The other possibility is the clarification of interdisciplinary relations and movement towards a complex approach. A possible example of the latter development can be the movement of metadisciplinarity and dedisciplinarity towards transdisciplinarity, and it is worth noting that one characteristic feature of "transdisciplinary identity" is precisely the introduction of the "critical imperative" to the interdisciplinary field:

> A different "transdisciplinary" identity appears in interdisciplinary fields that have a strong critical imperative. In the humanities, certain sectors of the social sciences and, in science, technology, and society studies, the term connotes not only wide scope and a new conceptual framework but also radical critique. Any transdisciplinary effort is implicitly a critique of the existing structure of knowledge, education or culture. (Thompson Klein 2000: 51)

Transdisciplinarity can be perceived as an attempt to transcend the diversity (heterogeneity) of both the object of study and relevant disciplines and achieve a balance in the integration of knowledge products and in the integration of knowledge processes. Of course, this balance presupposes answers to the questions, which disciplines are to be integrated, why and how it is to be done, when it will be done, who will do it and where the integrated knowledge can be applied (Sage 2000: 248).

Whereas in the interdisciplinary field integrated knowledge is based on the shared part of the disciplines and thus also, at least partially, on interference, in the transdisciplinary field the disciplines preserve their identity and the integration process consists of the creation of a complementary synthesising framework. In general the synthesising framework depends on the aims of the research and consequently the role of disciplines may change in the integration process. In a most general manner this functional change is expressed in the difference between the descriptive perspective and prescriptive perspective of the problem solution. Thus, knowledge integration or transdisciplinarity is the most important component in modern knowledge management (Sage 2000: 249). Knowledge integration or transdisciplinarity becomes relevant in areas that have developed

within disciplinary constraints up to a certain point, but have then strayed into the interdisciplinary field and together with methodological and methodic enrichment have become heterogeneous and have abandoned their original relation with their object of study. Consequently the discipline needs to be reconceptualised or at least made more coherent. At any rate, the problems related to the ontology of the object of study (the methodology of defining the object of study) and the epistemology of the object of study (the methodology of studying the object of study) of the given discipline will resurface again.

With respect to transdisciplinarity, there is another important historical problem that J. Mittelstrass highlights in his description of the characteristics of transdisciplinarity:

> In other words, transdisciplinarity is first of all an integrating, although not a holistic, concept. It resolves isolation on a higher methodological plane, but it does not attempt to construct a "unified" interpretative or explanatory matrix. Second, *transdisciplinarity removes impasses within the historical constitution of fields and disciplines, when and where the latter have either forgotten their historical memory, or lost their problem-solving power because of excessive speculation* [my italics — *P. T.*]. For just these reasons, transdisciplinarity cannot replace fields and disciplines. Third, transdisciplinarity is a principle of scientific work and organisation that reaches out beyond individual fields and disciplines for solutions, but it is no transscientific principle. The view of transdisciplinarity is a scientific view, and it is directed towards a world that, in being ever more a product of the scientific and technical imagination, has a scientific and technical essence. Last of all, transdisciplinarity is above all a *research principle*, when considered properly against the background I have outlined concerning the forms of research and representation in the sciences, and only secondarily, if at all, a *theoretical principle*, in the case that theories also follow transdisciplinary research forms. (Mittelstrass 2001: 498)

Hence, the history of disciplines and their reconceptualisation should contribute to the definition of disciplinary and interdisciplinary identities. A new interpretation of historical sources also demonstrates that the disciplines defined today may have different sources or the justification of the innovativeness of a discipline is associated with the actualisation of new sources in history. The latter may mean the association of the same sources with different scientific branches.

Semiotics of culture

Thus, R. Posner links the historic development of cultural semiotics to E. Cassirer's symbolic forms (as sign systems) in his comprehensive treatise of tasks of cultural semiotics:

> Cultural semiotics is that subdiscipline of semiotics which has culture as its subject. According to Cassirer, it has two tasks:
> a) the study of *sign systems in a culture* (in the sense of Herder or Tylor) with respect to what they contribute to the culture,
> b) the study of *cultures as sign systems* with respect to the advantages and disadvantages which an individual experiences in belonging to a specific culture". (Posner 2005: 308)

At the same time, J. M. Krois, a leading expert on Cassirer, emphasises that the three-volume and 1162-page opus *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* was envisioned by its author to be a treatise on philosophical anthropology: "Despite its size, it was, in Cassirer's eyes, unfinished. He intended to publish a further, concluding volume that was supposed to include among other things a text on 'The Problem of the Symbol as the Basic Problem of Philosophical Anthropology'" (Krois 2005: 560; cf. also Vandenberghe 2001). From a narrower point of view, G. Ipsen, relying on his attitude towards technology, regards Cassirer as an important source for new historical media semiotics. It is precisely Cassirer whom Ipsen relied on to reach the important conclusion "technology is always the articulation of something already existent in society" (Ipsen 2003: 48). Media development, inseparable from the context of cultural values and practical use, cannot be reduced to technological innovations. The historical interpretation of media thus becomes semiotic due to its very nature and according to Ipsen, we should speak of the complementarity of three branches:

> The first is the *semiotics of the media*, which may be understood as the semiotics of individual media. This branch of semiotics looks into the sign processes that are characteristic for a specific medial form. Its subject matter includes any media, ranging from the computer to the stamp. The second important field is *the semiotics of culture*. Having been established some decades ago, its research has meanwhile covered any aspect of cultural life. The third branch of semiotics important for our project is the *semiotics of history*. Though none of the three approaches deals with the history of the

media specifically, all of them have produced methods that are valuable for analyzing evolutionary medial concepts. (Ipsen 2003: 49)

The synthesis of the semiotics of media, culture and history is essential for the semiotics of culture even outside historical media semiotics, since the dynamics of the cultural environment and the relationship between immediate and mediated study of culture are precisely linked to the historical development of media. A valid insight into these problems is offered by evolutionary cultural semiotics. In 1989 W. A. Koch wrote in the foreword to his series *Bochum Publications in Evolutionary Cultural Semiotics* on the notion of culture that it is

> [...] a phenomenon whose true integrative potentialities have not yet been fully discovered or explored. For a semiotics thus conceived, structure and process are not different phases of reality and/or sciences but rather mere faces of a unitary field. In the view of this series, then, any fruitful attempt at semiotic analysis will be based on premises of macro-integration — or *evolution* — and of micro-integration — *culture*. (Koch 1989: v)

Evolution and culture are joined in the global cultural environment, which evolves from word and picture media, at first, towards printed media and then telemedia. Today we are already surrounded by the environment of new media. In a most general sense, it is a movement from immediate communication towards the diversification of forms of mediated communication. The technological and historical evolution of communication forms has indeed strongly influenced the growth in the value of history.

On the other hand, the importance of history has been emphasised by Tartu–Moscow school of cultural semiotics. Thus, in the foreword of *Sign Systems Studies* vol. 25 (the last one to appear during his lifetime) Juri Lotman writes:

> During the past decades semiotics has changed. One achievement along its difficult path was unification with history. The understanding of history became semiotic, but semiotic thinking obtained historic traits. [...] The semiotic approach tries to avoid the conditional stopping of the historical process. (Lotman 1992: 3)

Building on the notion of semiosphere (coined by Lotman), V. Ivanov already wrote programmatically in the epilogue to his treatise "Outlines of Prehistory and History of Semiotics":

> The task of semiotics is to describe the semiosphere without which the noosphere is inconceivable. Semiotics has to help us in orienting in history. The joint effort of all those who have been active in this science or the whole cycle of sciences must contribute to the ultimate future establishment of semiotics. (Ivanov 1998: 792)

Lotman's treatment of history implicitly also includes Claude Lévi-Strauss's approach to structural anthropology. According to the latter, anthropology and history are very close disciplines, though psychologically different:

> They share the same subject, which is social life; the same goal, which is a better understanding of man; and, in fact, the same method, in which only the proportion of research techniques varies. They differ, principally, in their choice of complementary perspectives: history organizes its data in relation to conscious expressions of social life, while anthropology proceeds by examining its unconscious foundations. (Lévi-Strauss 1968: 18)

The concept of time logically also becomes a focal point for clarifying the disciplinarity issue. In his view, ethnography, ethnology and anthropology do not constitute separate disciplines or lines of investigation: "They are in fact three stages, or three moments of time, in the same line of investigation, and preference for one or another of these only means that attention is concentrated on one type of research, which can never exclude the other two" (Lévi-Strauss 1968: 356).

Anthropology

Lévi-Strauss regarded anthropology as a key concept due to its central location in the interdisciplinary field. To illustrate his point, he provided a diagram (Fig 1). "In the above diagram, the horizontals mainly represent the view of cultural anthropology, the verticals that of social anthropology, and the obliques both" (Lévi-Strauss 1968: 359; see also the chapter "The place of anthropology" in the book: Johnson 2003: 12–30). Juxtaposing geography, anthropology, psychology, sociology, linguistics and archaeology as culture-studying disciplines, Lévi-Strauss emphasised that their difference primarily lies in their perspectives, not in their objects of study, and therefore he also considered the attempt to unify their terminologies to be futile. Lévi-Strauss characterised the special status of anthropology in terms

of three qualities: objectivity, totality and meaningfulness. Whereas totality denotes the observation of social life as systematic, and systematicness in its turn, the identification of a universal structure, the manifestations of which indeed constitute social life, the aspirations towards meaningfulness are primarily associated with the study of social life in oral tradition cultures (lacking written language) (cf. controversy on written language and writing and the comparison of Lévi-Strauss and Derrida: Doja 2006). Objectivity aspirations differ from those in economics or demography, since social sciences employ the methods of natural sciences, but anthropology has closer ties with the humanities. Humanist and systematic interest towards hidden structures and meanings in culture is the reason why Lévi-Strauss predicts the transformation of anthropology into a semiotic discipline: "Anthropology aims to be a *semeiological* science, and takes as a guiding principle that of 'meaning'" (Lévi-Strauss 1968: 364).

Figure 1. Location of anthropology in interdisciplinary field according to Lévi-Strauss (1968: 359).

The notion of semiotic anthropology has indeed surfaced by now and its foundations include those disciplines, where, according to Lévi-Strauss, cultural and social anthropology meet, i.e. linguistics and archaeology: "Perhaps the most striking result of this movement toward the semiotic, in both linguistic and sociocultural anthropology, is the way it has helped to overcome an entrenched (and not particularly useful) division between idealist or symbolic approaches and more materialist forms of analysis" (Merz 2007: 344). Thus, semiotic anthropology possesses a significant methodological value: "A further advantage of semiotic anthropology for today's sociocultural anthropologists is that it supports more flexible and expansive approaches to defining where and how we can do our research" (Merz

2007: 345). In archaeology we can also detect a similar metho-dological partnership with semiotics — belief that semiotics offers "a common language with which we can understand the structure of contrasting interpretative approaches and communicate across these boundaries while at the same time acknowledging the validity of our different theoretical commitments" (Preucel, Bauer 2001: 93).

Although semiotics is perceived as a possibly useful means to bring internal order and coherence to disciplines, to achieve holism and a methodology that understands a common language, at the same time, both humanities and social sciences nevertheless continue to be afraid of inordinate homogenisation and hierarchisation (cf. Chakra-varthy, Henderson 2007). G. L. Ribeiro postulates that "anthropology is a cosmopolitan political discourse about the importance of diversity for humankind" (Ribeiro 2006: 365), and claims, "Monological anthropology needs to be replaced by heteroglossic anthropology" (Ribeiro 2006: 364). The 'world anthropologies' project is founded on the concept of heteroglossia (introduced by M. Bakhtin):

> The 'world anthropologies' project wants to contribute to the articulation of a diversified anthropology that is more aware of the social, epistemological, and political conditions of its own production. The network has three main goals: (a) to examine critically the international dissemination of anthropology — as a changing set of Western discourses and practices — within and across national power fields, and the processes through which this dissemination takes place; (b) to contribute to the development of a plural landscape of anthropologies that is both less shaped by metropolitan hegemonies and more open to the heteroglossic potential of globalization; (c) to foster conversations among anthropologists from various regions of the world in order to assess the diversity of relations between regional or national anthropologies and a contested, power-laden, disciplinary discourse. Such a project is part of a critical anthropology of anthropology, one that decenters, re-historicizes and pluralizes what has been taken as 'anthropology' so far. It questions not only the contents but also the terms and the conditions of anthropological conversations. (Ribeiro 2006: 364)

Since anthropology's object of study is in a state of constant change, another of Bakhtin's concepts — chronotope — has been used to describe the diversity. For example, T. Turner attributes pluralism to the change that has occurred in the transformation of the social space-time or chronotope from linear diachronic chronotope to the chronotope of synchronic pluralism (Turner 2006: 17) or decentralised synchronic pluralism (Turner 2006: 22).

The same philosophy is expressed in the 'systematically eclectic approach' in sociology, which is also based on the realisation that "no one same theory may apply to all aspects of social life, all situations and all historical configurations" (Silber 2007: 226). The language that shapes and controls the theoretical thinking of a particular field is also systematically eclectic:

> Both humanities and the social sciences [...] have been deeply affected by the emergence and diffusion of new 'master metaphors', as I have termed it elsewhere, i.e. metaphors not simply used to adorn or enliven sociological writing, but actually playing a central role in the shaping and controlling of sociological theory and research (Silber 1995). I have in mind, for example, the impact of such potent literary metaphors as 'culture as text' and related ideas (i.e. genres, scenarios, narratives), as well as a whole range of economic (e.g. 'capital', 'market', 'goods'), spatial (e.g. social 'space', 'fields'), and artistic (e.g. 'repertoires') metaphors, combining or competing with older metaphors such as 'organism', 'system' or 'code'. (Silber 2007: 222)

Linguistic shift has also affected the principal concepts of culture and theory. The concept of culture has shifted towards both plurality and adjectivity — culture as cultures on one hand and culture as a collection of certain attributes or 'cultural' on the other:

> Even in the plural, however, cultures were things that could in principle be isolated, analyzed, and ultimately compared — Balinese culture, Navajo culture, American culture, and so on. During the last quarter century, this concept of culture has been further softened and is now more comfortably expressed as an adjective. Questions that so exercised an earlier generation of anthropologists — what was 'a culture', how it could be defined, how coherent or disjunctive it was, how one culture intersected another — seem now anachronistic. But American anthropologists are still quite comfortable with culture as a modifier that denotes the symbolic or subjective dimension of life: 'cultural this', 'cultural that', 'cultural anthropology'. To say that something is 'cultural' still carries theoretical meaning for many, but this meaning is diffuse and not definitive; it depends on the thing that is modified. In the process, 'culture' has become loosely evocative and theoretically fuzzy even as it is deeply sedimented in anthropological sensibility. (Knauft 2006: 412)

The concept of anthropological theory has undergone the same transformation: "First 'Theory', then 'theories', now 'theoretical'. Increasingly, theory in anthropology emerges not in itself but as a

modifier of specific topics and issues to which theoretical articulations are applied, explored, and expressed" (Knauft 2006: 412).

Such dynamics are the result of the constant tension between the theoretical and applied, or theoretical and non-theoretical anthropology. The suggested solution to alleviate the tension between different approaches within one discipline, is the same that disciplines always resort to in difficult times, namely the dialogue within the discipline needs to be increased and, for the dialogue to work, its language must be simplified to the point that it will be generally understood by the parties involved. This process naturally takes place conjointly with methodological dialogue, i.e. striving for clarity of disciplinary thought:

> In prosaic terms, it would help if anthropological writing were simpler and more direct. Much discourse by anthropologists, especially in books and monographs, is heavy with in-house terminology and overwritten evocations — long on innuendo but short on exposition. Clear and concise statements of purpose, implication, and relevance would create more rather than less space for ethnographic illustration through examples that are creative, carefully chosen, and powerfully rendered. Structural and presentational clarity throws anthropological insights into bolder relief and fosters greater rigor as analysis is organized and orchestrated. (Knauft 2006: 423)

At the same time, the internal heterogeneity of anthropology has also increased due to a significant shift within its object of study. Anthropology, which has so far studied alien or other cultures, now studies its own culture or the universal global culture. Such a situation raises questions:

> How is a scientific discipline which was originally designed as a cognitive instrument for the understanding of 'others' (who, in the case of living societies, were always others with no chance of answering back) now transforming itself as a project in the degree to which groups within societies that are the traditional object of anthropological study start to use this cognitive instrument in order to gain anthropological knowledge both of their own sociocultural reality (in the immediate sense) and of global sociocultural reality as seen from their specific, local perspective? What are the distinctive characteristics of these Other Anthropologies when compared to the originals? How do their emergence and presence modify the whole of anthropology, that is, world anthropology? What would have to change within both dominant and emergent anthropologies to allow us to exploit better than we are currently doing their cognitive potential as single yet plural. How can we speed the

renewal of a discipline distanced once and for all from monocentrism and unitarism? (Krotz 2006: 234)

To answer these questions requires significant metatheoretical activity within anthropology, i.e. the anthropology of anthropology (Krotz 2006: 236).

Culture studies

Since anthtropology has close ties with cultural sociology, then it is only natural that cultural sociology is also willing to accept the role of so-called understanding methodology. Understanding of culture in cultural sociology has developed hand in hand with anthropology; the only significant difference is their language of self-description:

> We take for granted here many of the changes in our understanding of culture which have been established in the work of the last twenty years, by contrast with (what have at least been retrospectively constructed as) more static, overgeneralized, functionalist understandings current in the mid-twentieth century. These developments include (a) reaffirmation of a shared under-standing that cultural sociology is not limited to the study of specialized cultural systems such as art, media, or science but rather that it is an analytic perspective on any social arena (b) a shift to analyzing specific meaning-making processes from earlier conceptualizations of culture as an integrated whole (c) increasing focus on cognitions, categories, and practices more than values and attitudes (d) an emphasis on the ways in which power relations — both dominance and resistance — are mediated through discourse (e) the analysis of three different elements of cultural process — practices, dis-courses, and institutionalized cultural production, and (f) a shared under-standing that meaning-making processes should not be reduced to properties of individuals, as in the simple use of aggregated survey data, but rather should be investigated as trans-individual processes. (Jacobs, Spillman 2005: 2)

And in the present situation, cultural sociology wants to be a uniting and balancing force: "Cultural sociology is the disciplinary crossroads where macro and micro, agency and structure, theory and data all meet; bounded by the institutionalized practices of the subdisciplines it gathers together, it is shaped by the very intellectual fields that it helps reshape in turn" (Jacobs, Spillman 2005: 13).

Mention should also be made of one more characteristic change in relation to cultural studies. The industrialising and ideologising inter-

pretation of culture has become the culturifying interpretation of industry and power (culturification: see Lash 2007: 74). So, in order to avoid the ideological burden implicit in the notion of cultural studies, other notions such as cultural research (Lash 2007: 74) or culture studies (Bennett 2007b: 611) have been proposed. For the purpose of the present paper it is also important to mention the attempt by S. Lash to formulate the aspects of disciplinary ontology and epistemology:

> I have spoken of a shift as we moved to the post-hegemonic power regime as hegemony from the symbolic to the real, from semiotics to intensive language, and most of all from epistemology to ontology. Here I have understood the symbolic, semiotics, representation, as basically epistemological and the real, intensive language, and the communication as basically ontological. Epistemology has to do with the understanding of the things we encounter, while ontology and the real have to do with the thing itself that is never encountered. The thing itself, and the real, is never encountered — it is a virtual, a generative force; it is metaphysical rather than physical. (Lash 2007: 71)

Return to the original principles of the discipline and their redefinition under new circumstances is indispensable for the preservation and development of the disciplinary identity. Without constant clarification of ontological and epistemological issues, communication on subdisciplinary levels will be hampered, since the hybridisation of theories and metalanguages will not result in a new synthesis or identity. In a hybrid stage, if we return to original principles and try to clarify them and adapt them to new circumstances, we will, on one hand, have the opportunity to typologically reorganise the discipline from within, irrespective of whether the typology is hierarchical or heterarchical. On the other hand, the history of the discipline, i.e. its self-reflection, will also re-evaluate itself. The situation in various humanities and social sciences today can be understood with the help of science history, the logic of changes in the discipline's historical self-description and of different actualisations of its original sources. The contact of every culture-studying discipline with its object of study is historical and at every point in history this contact has been complicated by contacts with other disciplines studying the same object. And, if on one hand, these contacts fall under the categories of inter-, multi- or transdisciplinarity, then on the other hand, a historical approach, a "radical historisation" of science, is required to understand these contacts. T. Bennet writes, "…our understandings of both culture and the social need to be radically historicized if we are to

produce an adequate basis for understanding the specific contemporary forms of their interrelations" (Bennett 2007a: 43). We can say that the historical dimension is an essential component of analysability and the fact that the notion of globalisation has penetrated culture-studying disciplines indicates the need to consider new historical realities both empirically and theoretically (see, e.g., Bazin, Selim 2006).

Opposite to the trend of globalisation is the pull of localisation. As researchers, we have hardly reached the level of universal, when we already need to consider the local. Whereas anthropology is indeed the history of cultural analysis, then, for example, the history of organisation theory was for a long time "culture-free" (so to speak):

> Traditional organization theories were culture-free because the researcher, the researched and the audience were largely US. Culture was considered to be similar to all and thus had little explanatory power to contribute, except when researching certain ethnic groups or minorities. Now, however, in a globally competitive context, culture is likely to have considerable power (both theoretical and statistical) to explain differences in perception, behavior and action. Its importance is now integral to any effort at theorizing or model building in the international context. (Mukherji, Hurtado 2001: 110)

The eschewal of culture is also present in the history of psychology. In 1996, while presenting his future discipline of cultural psychology, M. Cole pointed out that due to its difficult analysability, culture had been undervalued in psychology up to now and that the mission of the new discipline was precisely the study of the role of culture in the psychic life of humans (Cole 1996). Culture in an organisation and culture in human psyche are rather different matters in themselves, yet there are many similarities in the methodology of their analyses. In both cases the analysability of culture is an important issue. Another important aspect is the relation with environment. In organisation theory it has been described by juxtaposing the high and low degree of analysability and the high and low degree of control (Fig. 2).

In order to understand the diagram of Fig. 2 from the point of view of general cultural analysis we should tie the aspect of analysability with the position of an analyst and the aspect of control with the theoretical position used for analysis and the related terminology. It is difficult to analyse culture in motion, its dynamics. It is far easier to analyse culture statically, since you can rely on (at least operationally) clearly defined units. A high degree of control is linked to proper

research that relies on an established theory or concept and to a supporting metalanguage. A low degree of control is linked to ad hoc analyses, which attempt to deduce the analysability of the object studied and the metalanguage for its description on the basis of the characteristics of the object itself.

Difficult to analyze	*Dynamically emerging environment* *Low analyzability/predictability* *Low perceived ex-ante control*	*Dynamically emerging environment* *Low analyzability/predictability* *High perceived ex-ante control*
	Stable environment *High analyzability/predictability*	*Stable environment* *High analyzability/predictability*
Easy to analyze	*Low control*	*High control*
	Low	*High*

DEGREE OF ANALYZABILITY *(vertical axis label)*

DEGREE OF CONTROL

Figure 2. Dimensions to classify the environment (from Mukherji, Hurtado 2001: 110).

The situation becomes more complicated if we consider that the notion of culture also encompasses its own self-description or cultural worldview that expresses via oral or written communication its individual self-awareness, consensual ideology or cultural perception suggested by the cultural elite (Matsumoto 2006: 35−37). The description of culture of a culture analyst should correlate with this self-description (culture as a system of self-descriptions). Ideally, this would mean dialogue or cooperation between the one who describes and the one described (Chun 2005: 535; cf. also Strauss 2006). Reflexivity-based disciplines have enlisted a new member, autoethnography, which helps to transcend the crisis of subjective authorship in

anthropology: "In autoethnography, the subject and object of research collapse into the body/ thoughts/ feelings of the (auto)ethnographer located in his or her particular space and time" (Gannon 2006: 475). Therefore, the relationship between the self-description and the description of others is an important problem in cultural analysis. Another important problem is the relationship between the describer and the described. That relationship can be either implicit or explicit. It is important for cultural semiotics that the position of the analyst is clearly evident, since the visibility of the observer's position is indicative of the objectivity or the precision of the analysis.

Semiotics and anthropology

A. Piatigorsky, one of the founders of the Tartu–Moscow school of semiotics, has emphasised that the definition of culture cannot be separated from the observer, since culture is a metaconcept, i.e. a concept of description and self-description (Piatigorsky 1996: 55). And understanding the observer is as important as understanding the observed, since "the language of world description cannot exist simply because there is no single natural language that can be used to describe the world as a single object of study" (Piatigorsky 2002: 9). Thus, when in anthropology the problem of the subjectivity of the describer primarily exists in autoethnography and that of the subjectivity of the described in its general theory (Luhrmann 2006; Strauss 2006; Ortner 2005), then in general methodology, description is associated with the use of general qualitative research methods and especially with the concept of participant observation. Participant observation consists of four strategies that may be realised through the direct contact of the observer with the observed, but also as a psychological attitude.

Complete participation may imply an attempt on the part of the observer to influence the processes either on the object-level or meta-level, by his or her behaviour or by publishing analytical writings. A participant as observer behaves in a more reserved manner and is more analytical than a complete participant, often less ideologically-minded. An observer as participant may possess only general behavioural experience and attempts to find theoretical support for it. For an observer as participant, the visibility of his/her theoretical position is

already an important consideration. Complete observation is a theory-based process of relating with the analysed and presupposes the explicity of the attitude towards the object of study and the study methods used. It is probably easier to operate with different observation strategies in cultural semiotics than in anthropology, but the nuancing of observation is important in both disciplines.

It is easiest to observe the progress towards a general science of culture in the synergy of anthropology and semiotics. Here, the foundation has been laid by B. Malinowski, who was among the first to emphasise (*A Scientific Theory of Culture*, 1941) that the flippant attitude on the part of scholars towards the scientificity of the study of culture is both despicable and immoral. According to Malinowski, history, sociology, economics and law studies must come together with other social sciences to combine an intellectual force that would be able to withstand and balance the physical force of the natural sciences. The first step towards scientificity is the definition of the sphere of study. It was precisely the ability to identify the studied phenomena in the course of their observation or comparison that seemed to be lacking in the study of culture at that time. In his functional analysis of culture, Malinowski distinguished three dimensions of the cultural process — artefacts, organised groups or human social relations and symbolism or symbolic acts. On these premises, Malinowski realised that in culture everything must be studied in context and in terms of the function of the object of study. Malinowski formulated the conceptuality of observation in the modern sense: "To observe means to select, to classify, to isolate on the basis of theory. To construct a theory is to sum up the relevancy of past observation and to anticipate empirical confirmation or rebuttal of theoretical problems posed" (Malinowski 1969: 12). Malinowski's attitude towards the object of study is highly relevant today, the need to be constantly aware of the relationship between the discipline and its subject matter: "Our minimum definition implies that the first task of each science is to recognize its legitimate subject matter. It has to proceed to methods of true identification, or isolation of the relevant factors of its process" (Malinowski 1969: 14).

Without attempting a systematic historical overview of the progress towards the science of culture, mention still should be made of two parallel events occurring at the same time. In 1973, *Interpretation of Cultures* by C. Geertz was published and in the same

year cultural semiotics manifested itself as a discipline for the first time — more precisely, the cultural semiotics of the Tartu–Moscow school (Theses 1998 [1973]). Geertz's book was a clear sign of anthropology moving towards semiotics. The author claims that the aim of the semiotic approach to culture is to help us to gain access to that conceptual world where the studied people live and to start a dialogue with them. Geertz believes that the semioticity of his interpretation of culture lies in the desire to reach meanings. Therefore, he represents the interpreting science as meaning-oriented, apart from experimental science, which is law-oriented (Geertz 1973: 5). Geertz's desire is to move from static description to dynamic interpretation, i.e. a thick description. In order to achieve that, culture must be seen as a text, which becomes an acted document in the analysis process, and not a universal structure (Geertz 1973: 9–10).

Looking at the membership and research topics of the Tartu–Moscow school, we can say that this particular cultural semiotics is a semiotic science engaging in cooperation with anthropology. The programmatic *Theses on the Semiotic Study of Cultures* begin with the following passage:

> In the study of culture the initial premise is that all human activity concerned with the processing, exchange, and storage of information possesses a certain unity. Individual sign systems, though they presuppose immanently organized structures, function only in unity, supported by one another. None of the sign systems possesses a mechanism which would enable it to function culturally in isolation. Hence it follows that, together with an approach which permits us to construct a series of relatively autonomous sciences of the semiotic cycle, we shall also admit another approach, according to which all of them examine particular aspects of semiotics of culture, of study of the functional correlation of different sign systems. From this point of view particular importance is attached to questions of the hierarchical structure of the languages of culture, of distribution of spheres among them, of cases in which these spheres intersect or merely border upon each other. (Theses 1998 [1973]: 33)

According to the logic of the *Theses on the Semiotic Study of Cultures*, the essence of culture is semiotic by its very nature, since its foundation is information and communication. On one hand, the study of culture would be possible via the semiotisation of culture-studying disciplines, which would bring them closer to the essence of culture. The birth of the notion of semiotic anthropology is an example of such a development, which, together with disciplinary analysis capability,

would increase the level of analysability of culture. On the other hand, cultural semiotics offers a systematic approach to culture and creates a complementary methodology, which ensures the mutual understanding of different culture-studying disciplines. This is the development prospect of cultural semiotics.

Analysability of culture

Thus, the intersection of culture and culture-studying disciplines raises questions that the new century must attempt to answer, or reformulate. The first set of questions touches upon culture as a complicated object of study and relates to disciplinary possibilities in the culture-studying sciences. Will it be possible to transform culture as a complicated object of study into a single or multiple disciplinary objects of study? Hence the issue of a single complex science. F. Rastier has raised the question about universal transsemiotics and differentiates between two poles with respect to the study of culture: sciences of culture (*sciences de la culture*) is represented by Ernst Cassirer, and the semiotics of cultures (*sémiotique des cultures*) by the Tartu school. Between these two poles lie the questions: one or many sciences? culture or cultures? (Rastier 2001: 163). The second set of questions touches upon the relationship between the culture-studying disciplines. Is it possible to conceive of a hierarchy of culture-studying disciplines; could any of them, cultural semiotics for example, be assigned the role of methodological base discipline? This implies that the culture-studying disciplines themselves, their capability of dialogue with both the object of study and neighbouring disciplines should become separate subjects of analysis. Therefore, the question that needs to be answered is about the nature of relations between disciplinarity on one side and multi-, trans-, inter-, and dedisciplinarity on the other.

With respect to mutual understanding it is characteristic that a methodological and even ethical attitude towards translation, translating and translatability has emerged in different culture-studying disciplines. Already Malinowski used the notion of translation and that primarily in the sense of methodological translation (translatability). Translatability also implied observability for him, when he wrote about the transition from theory to empirics and claimed "that every theoretical principle must always be translatable

into a method of observation, and again, that in observation we follow carefully the lines of our conceptual analysis" (Malinowski 1969: 14). The same principle is still relevant in 2006: "The challenge of cultural analysis is to develop translation and mediation tools for helping make visible the differences of interests, access, power, needs, desires, and philosophical perspective" (Fischer 2006: 363). Yet the notion of translation is also used on the object-level:

> Like a translation, culture is *relational*. Like a translation, culture links a source languaculture, LC2, to a target languaculture, LC1. Like a translation, it makes no sense to talk about the culture of X without saying the culture *of* X *for* Y. […] Culture is a construction, a *translation* between source and target, between LC1 and LC2. The amount of material that goes into that translation, that *culture*, will vary, depending on the boundary between the two. (Agar 2006: 5–6)

From the point of view of methodology, the introduction of the notions of translation and translating into the context of cultural analysis is of crucial importance, since it demonstrates perhaps most eloquently the naturalness of the co-existence of the static and the dynamic (see also Torop 2002b, 2007; Sütiste, Torop 2007). Translating a language-text from one language into another seems to be a most concrete activity that can partially even be subjected to formalised rules, if we recall machine translation. Yet translating the same text as a culture-text into another culture we face indefinability. The competences to evaluate translation into language and into culture differ, since in language the translation is a ready text, but in culture the same text is different for different readers and its so-to-speak average evaluation is largely hypothetical due to the mentality of that text.

For each culture-studying discipline, the problem of culture's analysability stems from disciplinary identity. One half of analysability consists of the culture's attitude and the ability of the discipline's methods of description and analysis to render the culture analysable. The other half of analysability is shaped by the discipline's own adaptation to the characteristics of culture as the object of study and the development of a suitable descriptive language. The ontologisation and epistemologisation of culture as the subject of analysis is present in each culture-studying discipline or discipline complex. Disciplinary ontology

and disciplinary epistemology constitute the methodological foundation of every discipline.

Cultural semiotics also has an important historical dimension. It is safe to say that cultural semiotics has developed from linguistic semiotics via text semiotics towards the semiotics of semiosphere (see also: Portis-Winner 1999, 2002; Torop 1999, 2002a, 2003, 2005). In addition to historical logic, this process also follows theoretical logic. Cultural semiotics started from the realisation that in a semiotical sense culture is a multi-language system, where, in parallel to natural languages, there exist secondary modelling systems (mythology, ideology, ethics etc.), which are based on natural languages, or which employ natural languages for their description or explanation (music, ballet) or language analogisation (language of theatre, language of movies).

The next step is to introduce the concept of text as the principal concept of cultural semiotics. On one hand, text is the manifestation of language, using it in a certain manner. On the other hand, text is itself a mechanism that creates languages. From the methodological point of view, the concept of text was important for the definition of the subject of analysis, since it denoted both natural textual objects (a book, picture, symphony) and textualisable objects (culture as text, everyday behaviour or biography, an era, an event). Text and textualisation symbolise the definition of the object of study; the definition or framework allows in its turn the structuralisation of the object either into structural levels or units, and also the construction of a coherent whole or system of those levels and units. The development of the principles of immanent analysis in various cultural domains was one field of activity of cultural semiotics. Yet the analysis of a defined object is static, and the need to also take into account cultural dynamics led Juri Lotman to introduce the notion of semiosphere. Although the attributes of semiosphere resemble those of text (definability, structurality, coherence), it is an important shift from the point of view of culture's analysability. Human culture constitutes the global semiosphere, but that global system consists of intertwined semiospheres of different times (diachrony of semiosphere) and different levels (synchrony of semiosphere). Each semiosphere can be analysed as a single whole, yet we need to bear in mind that each analysed whole in culture is a part of a greater whole, which is an important methodological principle. At the same time, every whole

consists of parts, which are legitimate wholes on their own, which in turn consist of parts, etc. It is an infinite dialogue of whole and parts and the dynamics of the whole dimension.

Yet the text will remain the 'middle' concept for cultural semiotics, since as a term it can denote both a discrete artefact and an invisible abstract whole (a mental text in collective consciousness or subconsciousness). The textual aspect of text analysis means the operation with clearly defined sign systems, texts or combinations of texts; the processual aspect of text analysis presupposes definition, construction or reconstruction of a whole. Thus the analysis assembles the concrete and the abstract, the static and the dynamic in one concept — the text. These two interrelated aspects can be presented as shown in Table 1.

Consequently, the aspects of the analysability of culture are inseparably related to the interpretation of methodological problems. From the ontological aspect of the methodology of cultural semiotics, the static and dynamic forces are defining factors on all three levels: on the level of language, the important distinction is between discrete (natural language) and continual (iconic-spatial) languages (language of pictures, movies or theatre); on the level of text between textuality and processuality; and on the level of semiosphere between narrative (linearity) and performance (simultaneity). Every further clarification also implies the more precise definition of the object of study and the ontologisation of analysability, i.e. imagination of the object of study as analysable.

From the epistemological aspect of cultural semiotics, the static and dynamic serve as clarifying analysis strategies. On the level of language, on one hand we have the definition of the object of study (disciplinary/ terminological) and its dialogisation (finding a flexible and emphatic language of description) on the other. On the level of text, on one hand we have analysis strategies that are based on the characteristics of the subject matter (structural) and the organisation of the subject matter (compositional). On the other hand, we can speak either of spatio-temporal (chronotope-based) or media-oriented (multi-media etc.) analysis strategies, which do not depend directly on the composition of the text or the subject matter. On the level of semiosphere, the line runs between the levels of narrative and performance, the basis for linear and simultaneous analysis strategies. From the epistemological aspect, analysability is determined by the choice of study strategy.

Table 1. Static and dynamic aspects of text.

TEXT	
TEXT AS TEXTUALITY	TEXT AS PROCESSUALITY
METACOMMUNICATION	INTERCOMMUNICATION
PROTO- AND METATEXTS	IN- AND INTERTEXTS
COMPLEMENTARITY	MENTALITY
MULTIMODAL AND MULTIMEDIAL TEXTS	MENTAL TEXTS
CREOLE TEXTS	INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE MENTALITY
NEW PROTOTEXTS	INTERTEXTUAL, INTER-DISCURSIVE, INTERMEDIAL, INTERSEMIOTIC MENTALITY
METACOMMUNICATIVE MEMORY	MENTAL MEMORY
MEMORY OF TEXT	MEMORY OF SIGN SYSTEMS

Culture analysts are therefore scholars with double responsibilities. Their professionalism is measured on the basis of their analytical capability and the ability to construct (imagine, define) the object of study. The analytical capability and the ability to construct the object of study also determine the parameters of analysability. Culture as the

object of analysis often dictates its own analysability, which is why *ad hoc* theories, as theories based on their object of study, are in a prominent position in culture-analysing disciplines. Culture analysis and also its analysability begin with the understanding of the object of study, the commencement of dialogue with the object of study, and finding a suitable language (scientific or simply analytical) for that particular dialogue. Regarding the thinking of an analyst, Lotman (2000: 143) has said that "the elementary act of thinking is translation". At the same time he has also added that "the elementary mechanism of translating is dialogue" (Lotman 2000: 143). Dialogue in itself does not mean the use of an existing common language, but the creation of a language for communication that suits the purposes of the dialogue: "…the need for dialogue, the dialogic situation, precedes both real dialogue and even the existence of a language in which to conduct it" (Lotman 2000: 143–144). Thus, be the analyst an anthropologist or a culture semiotician, the analysability of culture depends on how the analyst chooses to conduct the dialogue between him/herself and his/her object of study.

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Семиотика, антропология и анализируемость культуры

В науках, изучающих культуру, наблюдаются две тенденции. С одной стороны, видно стремление к уточнению того, как и что в культуре изучается при разных подходах. И что может быть предметом общей науки о культуре. Это значит, что культура — не просто существующий объект изучения. Культура — еще и создаваемый или конструируемый объект изучения. С другой стороны, видны поиски метадисциплины или методологических принципов науки о культуре, позволяющих описывать на единой основе результаты разных культуроведческих дисциплин и так сказать переводить их на общепонятный язык. В одном случае культура определяется дисциплинарно (культурой является то, что в ней может изучать та или другая дисциплина), в другом случае дисциплинарные подходы к культуре описываются в качестве параметров культуры, посредством которых возможно приблизиться к целостному пониманию культуры (как к теоретическому идеалу).

Проблема анализируемости культуры начинается для каждой изучающей культуру науки с дисциплинарной самоидентификации. Одна сторона анализируемости формируется на основе отношения к культуре и «подгонки» культуры для анализа посредством аналитических и дескриптивных средств данной дисциплины. Другая сторона анализируемости формируется на основе приспособления самой дисциплины к культуре как специфическому объекту изучения

и вырабатывания подходящего языка описания. Онтологизация и эпистемологизация культуры как объекта анализа происходит в каждой культуроведческой дисциплине или комплексе дисциплин.

Аналитик культуры является ученым с двойной ответственностью. Его профессиональность состоит в способности как анализа, так и создания (обрамления, представления) объекта изучения. Способности анализа и создания объекта изучения определяют и параметры анализируемости. Таким образом, анализируемость культуры зависит от того, как аналитик развивает диалог между самим собой и своим объектом изучения, будь он антрополог или семиотик культуры.

Semiootika, antropoloogia ja kultuuri analüüsitavus

Kultuuri uurivates teadustes on märgatavad kaks tendentsi. Ühelt poolt püütakse täpsustada seda, kuidas kultuuri või mida kultuuris mingi lähenemise korral uuritakse. Ja mis võiks olla üldise kultuuriteaduse uurimisvaldkond. See tähendab, et kultuur ei ole pelgalt olemasolev uurimisobjekt. Samavõrra on kultuur loodav või konstrueeritav uurimisobjekt. Teiselt poolt otsitakse metadistsipliini või kultuuriteaduse metodoloogia põhimõtteid, mis võimaldaksid kirjeldada erinevate kultuuri uurivate distsipliinide tulemusi ühtsel alusel ja nii öelda tõlkida need arusaadavasse keelde. Ühel juhul määratletakse kultuuri distsiplinaarsena (kultuur on see, mida üks või teine distsipliin suudab kultuuris analüüsida), teisel juhul kirjeldatakse distsiplinaarseid kultuurikäsitlusi kultuuri parameetritena, mille sünteesimise kaudu on võimalik (teoreetilise ideaalina) jõuda kultuuri tervikkäsitluseni.

Kultuuri analüüsitavuse probleem algab iga kultuuri uuriva teaduse jaoks distsiplinaarsest identiteedist. Analüüsitavuse üks pool kujuneb kultuuri suhtumisest ja kultuuri muudetavusest analüüsitavaks antud distsipliini kirjeldus- ja analüüsivahenditega. Analüüsitavuse teise poole kujundab distsipliini enda kohandumine kultuuri kui uurimisobjekti spetsiifikale ning sobiva kirjelduskeele väljaarendamine. Kultuuri kui analüüsiobjekti ontologiseerimine ja epistemologiseerimine toimub igas kultuuri uurivas distsipliinis või distsipliinide kompleksis.

Kultuurianalüütik on seega kahekordse vastutusega teadlane. Tema professionaalsus seisneb nii analüüsivõimes kui uurimisobjekti loomise (kujutlemise, piiritlemise) võimes. Võime luua uurimisobjekti ja analüüsivõime määravad ära ka analüüsitavuse parameetrid. Seega sõltub kultuuri analüüsitavus sellest, kuidas analüütik dialoogi enda ja oma uurimisobjekti vahel arendab, olgu ta siis antropoloog või kultuurisemiootik.