

INTERPRETING THE PAST - TIME PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIAL HISTORY*

JOEL MARTIN HALPERN
Department of Anthropology
University of Massachusetts
01003 Amherst, MA, USA

UDK 39+301. 17
Izvorni znanstveni rad
Original scientific paper
Primljeno: 01. 08. 1988.

Cultural anthropological writings have tended to focus on an examination of repetitive events in a cyclical chronological pattern. Historical descriptions are usually concerned with unique sequential events in a linear time frame. While these viewpoints are distinct, they are sometimes combined in an individual's writings. The works of three East European scholars are examined - two anthropologists (Milenko Filipović, Yugoslavia; Joseph Obrebski, Poland; and an economist, Rudolf Bičanić). They share common interests in peasant societies and their relationships to national groups. The objective is to explore the implications of these distinct understandings and the ways in which they integrate their knowledge of socio-cultural processes.

Introduction

In preparing this paper my initial plan, as indicated in my abstract, was to compare the writings and embedded methodologies of a selected group of anthropologists-ethnologists with historians. I have decided instead to look at different approaches to the study of historical phenomena and implicit time frames linked to the study of peasant societies and their urban counterparts in Eastern Europe in the pre-war period. I will be concerned with the careers of three men; the Pole Jozef Obrebski, and two Yugoslavs, an agricultural economist from Croatia Rudolf Bičanić and the Serbian ethnologist, Milenko Filipović.

Anthropology and History - Cyclical and Linear Time Frames

All three manifest in their writings historical as well as social science approaches. Each is concerned with their own respective people and their records of historic development. It is thus appropriate to begin by discussing, in general terms, the relationships between social history and anthropology. Historical descriptions are usually concerned with unique, sequential events within a linear time frame linked to some

* Paper presented at The Cultural Anthropology and Social History Symposium 12th ICAES Congress, Zagreb, Croatia; July 1988.

combination of preceding political, religious, economic and social events. These events being unique are therefore not readily predictable. By contrast, socio-cultural anthropological accounts tend to focus on, as the center of concern and the ultimate reality, happenings in a cyclical temporal dimension-events which are recurrent and can be foreseen within the context of the system.

While anthropological accounts are concerned with culture in the cumulative sense and events in the historic and even prehistoric record (especially among preliterate peoples) describing a culture has much to do with the articulation of cycles as, for example, in the life course and associated familial developmental frames. Since much of anthropological research has tended to focus on non-urban settings, for both preliterate and peasant folk, there is often concern with the annual seasonal round either for subsistence among band and tribal peoples, or primarily tied to urban centers and a market system, as in peasant agriculture. There are also linkages to life course stages where there are associated crises rites tied to expectable individual biological changes associated with growth, maturity and senescence. These are, in turn, correlated to changes in family-household structures. Thus for both preliterate peoples and peasants there are yearly celebrations linked to the annual cycle of subsistence activities. The sanctification through celebration of these activities is a reinforcement of the structure of cyclicity as basic to the operation of human culture. When events in a linear time frame become sanctified they, of necessity, become part of a cyclical time frame. Frequently they are associated with seasonal markers, thus May Day as a Workers Holiday, initially a secular event, replaces St. George's Day and, to some extent Easter, as a marker of spring. Established focii of interest within cyclical frames in socio-cultural anthropology have, in the course of this century, been reflected in part of the set curriculum - courses in kinship and social organization, religion, preindustrial economic systems, peasant societies, pastoral peoples, hunters and gatherers, and associated culture area surveys. While this hardly exhausts the curricula inventory e. g. courses in politics and changes and those dealing with theory and method, the contrast with offerings in history are clear. The emphasis of anthropology courses on cyclical time permits them to exist apart from constraints of time and space, for those not concerned with a specific culture area. In this connection, cyclicity is taken as a dominant expression of human culture.

Just a cyclical time is a dominant factor in anthropology - specifically bounded linear time segments, within a given spatial dimension, are the key orienting factors in a history curriculum. A specialization in the Italian Renaissance is not easily overlapped with an interest in Colonial America, although anthropologists can move from fieldwork e. g. among the Eskimo to a study of a neighborhood in Naples. There are some indications that, for a variety of reasons, this flexibility is beginning to lessen within American and Western European anthropology.

Anthropologists and Ethnologists

In the early 1970's Tamas Hofer wrote a series of articles contrasting the intellectual world and career patterns of socio-cultural anthropologists and European (especially East European) ethnologists (e. g. Tamas Hofer, *Anthropologists and Native Ethnographers at Work in Central European Village*, *Anthropologica*, N. S. Vol. XII, No. 1, 1970, p.

5). The latter were characterized by their firm ties to a single cultural tradition and to its historical context and documentary record. This places them much closer to the historian's mould. Since Western anthropologists can no longer freely range over the non-western world and the anthropological profession has a surplus of experienced personnel and the publication record is full of accounts on various aspects of culture x, a much higher degree of specialization has become both necessary and appropriate.

Another aspect relating to the reproachment of ethnology and anthropology is that as more finely tuned methodologists become essential for innovative scholarship there is an imperative for the anthropologist to be increasingly concerned with the documentary record and for ethnologist to conceive of using his familiar resources in new ways. This is especially true in Europe where restrictions have been relatively less or non-existent for foreign fieldworkers and consequently more anthropologists have been attracted to the region. It is also here that the documentary record is well preserved and more complete than in most other world areas. Thus it assumes a greater pertinence to a variety of researches.

Ethnologists and social historians have, at the same time, increasingly seen the usefulness of conceptual frameworks derived from the study of culture in a diversity of settings. The comparative framework of anthropology has proven useful to historical studies, at least to some historians, no longer concerned primarily with elites and their associated political records whether in town or country. In fact, the argument has been successfully made that it is this comparative framework which can be a part of a useful methodology for relating historical studies. It is, of course, not only anthropology which has proven useful but the whole array of social sciences. An increasing number of journals e. g. *The Journal of Family History* have been launched with this basic policy.

Linear and Cyclical Time Perspectives Defined

The concern with kinds of temporal phenomena also tends to relate to the increasing overlap now taking place as between the field of European ethnology and social-cultural anthropology. Although they still do maintain a significant measure of their former distinctiveness, as in research objectives and forms of publication. But some theoretical frameworks and methodologies now more closely relate as do ways of conceptualizing cultural processes.

Notions of linear and cyclical time were initially considered. It is appropriate here to briefly define these concepts. Cyclical events are replicable, linear time occurrences being unique are not. (Since linear time does occur in a more restricted way in preliterate /non fossil fuel using/ societies, the term technical linear time is used to apply state level cultures, especially those in the period with the industrial revolution). Thus the former are absolutely predictable within defined limits, the latter are never predictable in an absolute sense, even when limits are defined. As Baily noted, these temporal frameworks really refer to different sorts of processes. Within the cyclical framework events are primarily linked to the natural and biological worlds where related cycles function. (J. M. Halpern and Richard A. Wagner, *Time and Social Structure: A Yugoslav Case Study*, *Journal of Family History*, Fall, 1984, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 232-233).

Random and chaotic events are, of course, also part of the natural world - e. g. earthquakes, tidal waves, natural floods and forest fires but these events are replicable even though they may not be clearly predictable. Evolutionary trends are not, in a restricted sense, cyclical they are linear but here again there is a degree of predictability. Similarly, as noted above linear time events within a cultural setting do occur in preliterate societies but they are not part of sequential recorded history so that changes or developments occur but their consequences are delimited and so analogous changes may occur again at some future period. It is only when archeologists, whose frameworks are in linear time, use modern technology to do excavations that technical linear time chronologies are established to replace origin myths in mythic time. In terms of process these are what Levi-Straus has called *cold* societies where change is measured by contrast to *hot* societies where culture alters at a rapid rate.

A hot society is complex in terms of co-existing classes and some degree of urban and rural sub-cultures, and has a recorded history, in this case the term, technical linear time, is appropriate. While technical linear events are certainly culturally embedded and do relate to cumulative cultural dynamics as is the case with linear time in preliterate societies unique change occurs as the archeological record attests. Unlike most linear time happenings in preliterate societies the consequences of technical linear time always become a part of world history. One can distinguish, for example, the use of the arch by the Eskimo for their igloos as opposed to the invention of movable type or gunpowder or a mythologized tribal leader as contrasted with European voyages of exploration.

Cycles are similarly distinct. Thus the process of maturation is a constant component of the life course but the cultural context varies depending on the historical period and the particular culture concerned. The working out of these temporal dynamics can be seen in the writings of these three scholars.

Reconciling Differing Temporal Frames

It has been art of pan human experience to simultaneously reconcile various temporal dimensions. Pocock writes of a caste group, the Patidar, in Gujerat, India which had, in the course of recent generations, risen above those who were now their inferiors. In the process they changed aspects of their customs and life style. Yet, during a ceremony, which depend for its effect upon the status of the Brahmin, they could call that status into question by suggesting that they were recently achieved Brahmins or, in effect, pseudo-Brahmins. (David F. Pocock, *The Anthropology of Time Reckoning*, in John Middleton, ed., *Myth and Cosmos*, American Museum Sourcebooks in Anthropology, The Natural History Press, Garden City, N. Y., 1967, pp. 303-314).

Pocock poses the question (p. 314) as to how it is possible to reconcile the Patidar experience of (linear time) change with, what he implies is the cyclicity inherent in their religious structure, *their adherence to a set of values which denies change*. He examines this question in terms of, *the repetitive eternal to the unique event*. He deals with them both by using the term *duration* as an instance of experience as contrasted to time-reckoning which is social and conceptual. His notions of duration can be related to the interacting of linear and cyclical time frames with the periodicity or duration of the reformulated cycle formed by this interaction.

Perspectives Provided by Writings on Time

Attempting to put together these co-existing temporal systems we can note that Evans-Pritchard referred to the differences among four kinds of temporal structures; time reckoning systems, abstract conceptions of temporal process, operational time i. e. temporally oriented behaviour and history - those linear colligates which bind past and present. Thus he noted that ecological time is cyclical although its unit is not the year, in a sense of mathematically divided time, but the elapsed period between two markers i. e. the full cycle of an elapsed period between any two qualitatively similar patterns of human activity. Thus as Nilsson noted earlier in 1920 this is *discontinuous* time where, *The moons or harvest are not units and are not interconnected by other units with which they are considered to be equal. What is counted is the event.*

Social cyclicity can be seen in longer periods. Thus in his discussion of cycles in domestic groups Fortes pointed out that existential processes of birth, maturation and death have their analogs in the lineal, successional stages of households. He noted that this structural replication in the subsequent generation ensures a cyclical return, a resurrection of the group (Laird Christie and J. M. Halpern, *Linear and Cyclical Time Constructxsts and Inuit Mental Health*, paper prepared for ICAES Conference in Zagreb, July, 1988 session on Arctic Health, to be published in *Social Science and Medicine*).

In an earlier paper the author has discussed the notion of social cyclicity with respect to South Slav kin groups (J. Halpern and Wagner, *Time and Social Structure: A Yugoslav Case Study*, *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 9, No. 3, Fall, 1984; pp. 229-244). Empirical demographic indicators point to significant changes in familial structures through time. In this case, however, the persistent stem family tied together by agantic links offers a counterpoint to the perceived flow of irreversible change. The cycle persists but its periodicities alter as demographic parameters change within a technical linear time frame as was the case for the ritual alteration noted by Pocock above.

For many philosophers, psychologists and natural scientists the fundamental human perception of time is linear i. e. what is basic is the series of unique, non-repetitive events which are not readily predicted. Bergson perceived *duree vecu* as a primal human intuition. For Kant *time (was) the form of our inner sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves*. Piaget distinguished between *intuitive* time and *operational* time. The latter is learned, while the former is, *limited to successions and durations given by direct perceptions*. From this brief sampling it can be seen that succession and duration are widely regarded as 'primes' with respect to the categorizing process and in structuring of cognitive temporal systems. Linear time succession and duration then are Evans-Pritchard's *structural time*, (cited in Christie and Halpern op. cit.).

Time Depths in Histories and Linearity

Pertinent to the structure of peasant societies considered in this paper Christie notes (in Christie and Halpern, *ibid*) that the Berens River Ojibwa tied their oral history to the life events of individuals and like that of the Nuer, it was a shifting rather than a fixed record: *So long as the names, personal characteristics and activities of deceased individuals are carried in the memories of living persons, a useful, although*

non-quantitative and unformalized, frame of reference for past events is maintained. Oral history of this sort is short. Evans-Pritchard suggest that fifty years might be the extent of Nuer historical recollection, Hallowell considers Salteaux time depth at about 150 years. Beyond this point *history* becomes dream time, the mythic past which is atemporal.

Linearity is then the vertical dimension of temporal construction. It has its analog in aspects of the personal autobiography. Its markers may be successive human generations or the lives of significant persons or memorable events. While its span for preliterate peoples is typically short, in dealing with peasant societies as in this paper the links to a nation state with a recorded history are crucial. But a cyclically based oral history can exist with recorded (technical) linear time history. Thus the Kosovo epic, based on events of the Battle of Kosovo in the 14th century, is an example of history become atemporal, a kind of dream time in a mythic past but one which is still recalled and reaffirmed in the present and specifically linked to contemporary events. This is the case for Yugoslav oral epic based on events of the Second World War where there are specific analogs linked to previous heroic pasts such as that of Kosovo.

At a more personally immediate and proximate time level, a genealogy provides ties to the past; *a charter* as Fortes noted, *by which any particular person presents himself as the descendent of a specific ancestor.* In a paper on genealogies Barnes suggested a distinction between a 'pedigree' and a 'genealogy'. The former references the kin links as perceived by the informant and the latter represents the *actual* lineage that the ethnographer ultimately reports. Pedigrees, like autobiographies, are subject to redaction and are, of course, like history, *history for*, the stuff of oral history in a cyclical frame.

Since Evans-Pritchard broached the subject of Nuer time reckoning and temporal notions a bewildering taxonomy of *times* has accumulated - not a few of them, as Barnes has noted, products of the poetically fecund mind of Claude Levi-Strauss:

He frequently contrasts synchrony with diachrony, the axis simultaneity with the axis of successiveness and discontinuity with continuity... reversible and irreversible time and there are also straight circular, progressive, empty, non-cumulative, statistical, visceral... as well as macro time and micro time.

In a useful review Hallpike has pointed out that 'time' as an abstract entity is not a characteristic of pre-literate peoples, an observation made earlier by Evans-Pritchard, and many others. More pertinently, the metaphors made in reference to 'time' are actually *process markers* (as in named seasonal and monthly frames) and *process classifiers* (as in recurrent cycles). To use notions of cyclical and linear time we need to be aware that they can be regarded as existential coordinates not only for individuals but also for groups. We also need to be conscious of the fact that the vertical axis (linear time) links together present and past through kin and genealogical links related oral history. The horizontal axis time represents not only recurrent annual events, and the biological bases of culture such as the life span but the existence of society itself in its cultural processes.

Chronopolitics - Time and Power

In *Time and the Other, How anthropology Makes Its Object*, Johannes Fabian (Columbia University Press, 1983) is basically concerned with what he calls chronopolitics.

This he defines as,

...the expansive, aggressive, and oppressive societies which we collectively call the West needed Space to occupy. More profoundly and problematically, that required Time to accomodate the schemes of a non-way history: progress, development, modernity (and their negative mirror images; stagnation, underdevelopment, tradition). In short, geopolitics has its ideological foundations in chronopolitics.

...Neither political Space nor poloticial Time are natural resources. They are ideologically constructed instruments of power (p. 144).

One does not need to accept this version of history, especially with regard to the East European data considered in this paper. For Fabian is primarily concerned with interaction of anthropology and the other i. e. foreign, especially non-western, rather than the consequences of studying one's own society which is the focus of concern here. His idea of power structuring time concepts is, however, important.

But his concluding statement does introduce an important element that needs to be considered in understanding the full context of anthropological-ethnological work,

... I (have) wanted language and communication to be understood as a kind of praxis in which the Knower cannot claim ascendancy over the Known (nor, for that matter, one Knower over another). ... the anthropologist and his interlocutors only know when they meet each other in one and the same contemporality. If ascendancy - rising to a hierarchical position - is precluded, their relationships must be on the same plane... If we can show that our theories of their societies are our praxis - ... They are ways to meet the Other on the same ground, in the same Time (p. 165).

Working this matter out in the context of analyzing the writings of the East European scholars on their own societies considered here is one of the challenges of this paper.

The East European Context:

Obrebski was originally trained as an ethnologist in Poland but he subsequently studied with Malinowski in London so he can also be considered as a social anthropologist. After the Second World War he left Poland and did research in Jamaica, worked at the United Nations and subsequently taught in the NYC area. He died in 1967. Rudolf Bičanić, a Croat from Zagreb began his career as an agricultural economist and was associated with the Croatian Peasant Party before the Second World War. During the war he was in exile in England. At the end of the war he returned to Yugoslavia and built a prominent career as an economist prior to his death in 1968. The second Yugoslav, Milenko Filipović is a Serb, originally from Bosnia. He worked mainly in Belgrade, although he lived for a time before the war in Skopje and prior to retirement he worked in Sarajevo. He died in 1969. While their ages are not identical all three men worked in the same period, beginning their work in the 1930's and their careers ended in the 1960's.

Bičanić

Bičanić began his publishing career with a pamphlet documenting the severe economic conditions among the Croatian peasantry at the time of the world-wide depression in the 1930's. In a chapter in this pamphlet, *How the People Live*, written for the Croatian peasant party and published in 1935 he has a chapter, *The Tyranny of Custom*, where he expounds the myth of the timeless peasant society. He subsequently modified his views after he became an academic, professor at the University of Zagreb, but the flavor of his early approach which is articulate, if not profoundly analytical, is well reflected in the following:

People will tell you that every village has customs of its own. It would be equally true to say that every age has customs of its own - customs formed and moulded by time, many of them reaching back to the remotest antiquity. The peasants cherish them, for they still preserve their significance and symbolism in the ideas and beliefs of the people. The peasant's relationship to nature, the essence of his life, has not changed for a thousand years. His customs are therefore no more empty forms and ceremonies; the life of the village informs them and gives them authority.

His main concern, of course, was with a political but non-revolutionary program which, on behalf of the Croatian Peasant Party, sought an improved living standard for the village folk through democratic means. He advocated a kind of economic rationality with respect to the most effective use of their limited resources so that an improvement in the villagers' standard of living might thus be possible at least partially through their own efforts. It was for this reason that he was strongly opposed to *irrational* expenditures for items such as crisis rite feasts, ceremonial costumes and other forms of conspicuous consumption which obviously served a role in reinforcing certain key values in the society. While there is some perception in his approach in that he talks of *customs formed and moulded by time*, he obviously chose to totally ignore ecological factors when he talks of the peasant's relationship to nature not having changed for millenia (*How the People Live: Life in the Passive Regions, Peasant Life in Southwestern Croatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina: Yugoslavia in 1935*, edited by Joel M. Halpern and Elinor Murray Despalatović, Research Report No. 21, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, September, 1981, p. 118). Elsewhere he does acknowledge rather directly that patterns of land use are changing as in his section on *Land Holding and Cultivation*. There he states that it is clear that there is intense pressure on available arable land. *Land is scarce and human being grow more numerous. The farms get split up and average size of the peasant holding diminishes in size (p. 43).*

Filipović

By contrast, Filipović's ideas about temporal processes are totally embedded in his descriptive data. He was not concerned with changing peasant life, in this he echoes the point made by Tamas Hofer above. As a national ethnographer, (to use Hofer's phrase when he compared styles of European ethnologists and American anthropologists) he is very much concerned with precise data and the use of verified facts. Filipović obviously had a point of view, for he was certainly concerned with affirmatively documenting

Serbian cultural history. By contrast, for Bičanić, who was then a political activist, temporal problems were related to resource management and land use as in the case cited above. In Filipović's writing the emphasis is on developmental historical process. In his article on, *Some Elements of Byzantine Origin*, which is fairly representative of his approach to historical data, he deals with cultural processes such as diffusion e. g. *Distance in both space and time caused this (Byzantine) influence to decrease gradually. (Among the People, Native Yugoslav Ethnography, Selected Writings of Milenko S. Filipović, ed. by E. A. Hammel et. al., Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Papers in Slavic Philology 3, 1982, p. 260).*

He is also concerned with the processes of cultural modification through adoption, as in his observation, *Many borrowings from the Greeks still survive, especially those relating to legal procedures or customs, either taken over in toto or allowed to influence earlier Slavic customs.* Importantly, his view of national history is not exclusivistic but one which considers cultural process as multi-dimensional.

The editors of the volume of Filipović's essays note that he conceived it his personal mission to salvage as much ethnographic information on the Serbs as possible before it was *irretrievably lost* (p. xiv). Implicit in this statement is the idea of the ethnologist as the preserver of culture, a kind of secular priest of national heritage establishing a canon of cultural history, a temporal base line for the future.

This is the inverse of the concerns that Bičanić had which focused on the present, as an agricultural economist he was concerned with establishing the current situation by a kind of ethnographic fieldwork on which future political action would be based. Bičanić looked at the present, in part, as a product of the past but he stressed the need for future action.

Filipović was driven to complete a knowledge of the past to be carried into the future. In his writings Filipović sought to explain in historical terms the context of the institutions and customs that he recorded. He was constantly concerned with the kinds of modifications that the cultural items that he recorded had undergone in terms of economic, social, cultural and technical influences (ibid, xiv). One of his focii was the detailed mechanics of process. His painstaking effort was certainly motivated, in part, by a need to establish the validity of what he recorded. While certainly part of the purpose was for scholarship in the broadest sense of expanding knowledge, Filipović was also a devoted Serb. As such he was very dedicated to preserving the identity of his folk. Bičanić was concerned with material well being as his primary goal while Filipović saw his as validating an identity.

The Context of Fieldwork:

From the perspective of temporal processes how can he assess the meaning of Filipović's work? Certain of the relationships are, of course evident. First, is the act of doing field work within the context of European ethnology represents a going to the people, a seeking out of their heritage, their wisdom, for preservation for future generations. This is a kind of structurally conceived writing of a family history writ large for neighbours and kin in the generic sense. Thus in his article on, *Types of Domestic Cooperatives*, from his collected papers (p. 35), Filipović cites data from field-work,

About 1860 a certain Sarafijanović moved from Derventa in northern Bosnia to Smizovac in the Sarajevo region. Immediately prior to the occupation of Bosnia by the Austrians, his son Spasoje, moved to Kralupe near Visoko. Since he had some valuable property or possessions, the Miložić brothers accepted him into their zadruga 'as a third brother'. His children adopted the Miložić surname, and by 1923 there were five households of his offspring.

Filipović uses this data to document the occurrence of households composed of non-kin and to take issue with the observations of an earlier ethnologist who had also based his observations on data obtained from the folk. The above observation is introduced by Filipović, *However, during my own stay in the area I found evidence to the contrary* and so cites the above case.

First, in this case, it seems clear that we are dealing with oral tradition which is linear in that it reflects a part of family, community history and cyclical in terms of its integration into an established, replicable process which Filipović is documenting. In this sense, it is analogous to the process involved with historical memory among the Nuer and Salteaux referenced earlier. In this case, there is a relatively modest time depth of approximately sixty years.

Second, from Fabian's perspective, there is an aspect of encapsulated history resulting from an unequal encounter. It is certainly not a colonial or imperial situation but one, principally of class, where *the professor* the learned, young city man while of the folk (Filipović was born near Visoko where his father worked for the railroad - he was subsequently honored by the local government for his ethnographic work in the region) comes to the villagers with a validated status of authority which certainly aids in the procuring of information.

Third, the act of recording this oral information and its subsequent publication does remove it from the realm of folk embedded cyclical and linear time on the level of the kin group and the community. It places the data in the realm of technical linear time, as an artifact of Yugoslav ethnography. Clearly, this is what Filipović spent his life's energies doing. He had a multiple role - on one hand he was a scholar of internationally recognized repute (these cited results are from an English version of his work) but as a Yugoslav or, more specifically put, a Serbian ethnologist he was also a chronicler of his folk. Fabian doesn't deal with this situation directly but Pocock's earlier comments about the Patidar are applicable. Filipović dealt with change and, at the same time he adheres to a set of values which denied change. That is, as noted above a principal motivation that he had in recording this data, apart from his true scientific curiosity, was to preserve the heritage of his people. Filipović wanted to establish a context of folk life apart from technical linear time, even though, to cite Barnes' terms noted above it was his job to turn a 'pedigree' into a genealogy.

His simultaneous involvement in multiple temporal worlds is well set forth in a letter he wrote to the author a little more than a decade before his death in 1956 (in Hammel et. al, 1982, op. cit, xvi, xvii):

Only today do I have the possibility to write you in more detail due to the fact that I have been travelling for more than three months. In the beginning I was on an

excursion with students. We travelled across Yugoslavia, from Baranja to Split. After that I spent a month working with a large medical survey team in the area of Sarajevo near Treskavica mountain. This was the first time in our country that ethnologists have worked intimately with the preventive medicine service. It was very interesting experience but I have only begun to arrange my notes. I worked on the origin of the population and social organization. I also covered religion. After that I was in Takovo where I continued gathering notes on social organizations and collected new materials for my work on suicide in that region. I will certainly be completing that work in the coming months. I hope that this work will be a useful contribution.

From Šumadija I went to Eastern Hercegovina where I travelled and became personally acquainted with the area of Nevesinje, Gacko and Bileća where I had not been earlier. This is necessary for me in connection with my future work with students. But I am also working on the organization and anthropological-geographic and ethnological studies in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Following that I was at the (Yugoslav) Congress of Folklorists in Montenegro. Besides those of us from Yugoslavia, the Congress was attended by scholars from the USSR, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Hungary.

Rereading this account some twenty years later, where I am now at the stage in my life course that Filipović was then, it is powerfully impressive to me that Filipović was on a mission, a kind of secular pilgrimage that had no clear end. As discussed above, he was certainly a scholar with a strong international orientation, specifically Western (he did also note in the letter that, *I am now the focus of criticism as a representative of /Western/ 'functionalism'*. An interesting historical note in this time of *glasnost*.) This motive to go out among the folk and seek, to collect clearly overwhelmed even his real scholarly commitment which is evident in his extensive and distinguished publication record.

I recall discussing, and even unsuccessfully pleading, with him to use his retirement to sit and write up the voluminous data he already had and not go out and collect more. The boxes of his notes then lined the walls of his study. He continued his fieldwork almost up to the end when severe illness forced him to stay at home. As a consequence, at his death he left an enormous quantity of unedited manuscript.

But it now seems to me that the act of collecting, *before it is all gone*, even more than the act of writing, represented, on his part, an attempt to escape from the demands of technical linear time, or at least to partially exist apart from its imperatives. If he couldn't exist in the time of the folk, he could at least play a part in its recreation. Oral tradition even, some aspects of what has been referred to as *dream time*, was an important reality for Filipović. Certainly this is a form of nationalism but in a specifically creative and personally consuming sense. Writing was, of course, important to Filipović but to him it lacked the personal dimension of fieldwork.

Bičanić and Filipović Compared:

Despite the differences in their careers and in their professional foci and the fact that Bičanić was a Croat and not a Serb, there is much that unites them. In a work that appeared a year before his death in 1968 (they died within a year of each other), Bičanić, who had a much more international focus to his life and work (his wife was English), comments in much more abstract way about the processes of change. In contrast to his earlier work of advocacy in the 1930's at an international conference in 1965 he spoke of analyses from an academic perspective. His concern was with the *antagonism of agriculture versus industry, where each is considered as a separate subset with some interconnections.*

He felt it more appropriate to discuss traditional agriculture and *traditional industries based on physical labor and financial capital - and modern agriculture and modern industries based on scientific research and development.*

At that time the term postindustrial society was coming into vogue and Bičanić felt that it was obvious that in such a society and abundance of material goods *will not be considered as the final state of human happiness.* He saw both urban and rural lifeways developing new perspectives and new values and that progress in development *should enable all to return to nature and enjoy its immeasurable riches.*

Thus, *The dilemma of agriculture versus industry already belongs to the past,* with new avenues opening up for exploration and development. While no one would make such a statement today, it is clear that in terms of future projections Bičanić then seemed conscious of the myth of modernization in the postindustrial state as representing an ultimate achieved state of development. Specifically, with respect to his prewar statement about the unchanging nature of certain aspects of peasant society, Bičanić at the end of his career significantly modified his views.

He presented a detailed definition of the term *peasant* relating it to a rural based familistic enterprise. He noted that by analyzing the different components of peasant culture derived from this perspective we obtain a *rationalized picture,* which is a composite concept *far from the romanticized idea of an 'eternal peasant'.* His concept of process, or view of history does not provide for complexity. It does not assume a fixed form of developmental evolution linked to achieved stages which he notes had earlier been part of a unilinear Marxian analysis. (*Comment, in Soviet and East European Agriculture, Jerzy F. Karcz ed., University of California Press, Berkeley, 1967, pp. 382-384.*) Here Bičanić treats peasant society in abstract terms in seeming contradistinction to Filipović.

Bičanić and Constancy of Relationships in Historical Process:

In a volume of his essays published posthumously, *Economic Policy in Socialistic Yugoslavia* (Cambridge University Press, 1973), the ways in which he operates within two time frames is clearly evident. Bičanić's ideas as a Croatian nationalist operate along with his concept as an analytical economist. His critical evaluation of the new Yugoslav state, which emerged as a result of the First World War, are evident in the following comment:

In the new territory Zagreb became the strongest financial centre, as well as the biggest industrial and commercial centre, but it lost both its administrative position and its political power and could not reconcile itself to this. Political and military power were concentrated in Belgrade, which tried to compensate for its economic disadvantages by becoming the leading political centre (p. 4).

Bičanić then goes on to cite the advantages for Croatia in the pre World War I period when her goods could be sold throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire without tariff restrictions. He then goes on to detail the economic disadvantages of the new Yugoslav state from a Croatian perspective (pp. 13-15). Surveying the situation over forty years later in the mid-1960's in socialist Yugoslavia, he finds it essentially unchanged:

Bicentral or bipolar concepts of development in Yugoslavia start from the standpoint that the country has two poles of development which correspond to the two large industrial zones. One is in the west, centred round Zagreb and the other in the east, with its centre round Belgrade. ... The western zone is economically the more developed and industrially the more powerful. The eastern zone, including the capital of Yugoslavia, is politically stronger (p. 203).

While he does discuss this separation with respect to bicentral systems of development and does cite analogous examples from Italy for political and economic centers such as Rome and Milan, Moscow and Leningrad for the Soviet Union, Madrid and Barcelona, Ankara and Istanbul and Amsterdam and the Hague he presents this information following a section entitled, *Development by Domination (p. 199-200)*.

I do not mention these ideas here to argue their merits rather I suggest them as an attitude of mind. There seems to be implicit the idea of a simultaneous concern with technical linear time as concerns measures and processes of economic development along with an internalized cyclical, recurrent view of the status and role of Zagreb and Croatia within the Yugoslav state - a perspective that two elapsed generations, a war and socialist revolution had done nothing to change. His comments represent a consistent ability to operate simultaneously on several levels of time perception. This is, of course, an attitude of mind that has been rather frequently commented on. What we are concerned with here is the ways in which these temporal perceptions interact and, in this case, produce an analysis of economic development. While one might not characterize his statements as modeling an eternal past, or even a mythic dream time - still it does seem justifiable to note that some sort of internalized model is operating here.

If Filipović was constantly seeking a reunion with the folk, Bičanić after his initial work with the Croatian Peasant Party in the prewar period, was never again engaged primarily with rural affairs. But his Croatness (if that is quite the right term) remained undiminished. Clearly like Filipović, he was nationalist and specifically Croat rather than Yugoslav ideals were at the centre of his thoughts. Bičanić could hardly be seen as a pilgrim in search of a *dream time* but yet as his book on *Economic Policy and Socialist Yugoslavia* makes clear the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was preferable to what followed,

The political changes of 1918, when Yugoslavia was created, meant the creation of new economic entity different in both size and structure from previous political

formations. ... There was a qualitative change... Instead of the more or less liberal industrial capitalism of pre-war Austro-Hungary, the stage was set for the creation of a new monopoly capitalism... the capital was to a large extent foreign domination and the state was multinational.

To the non-Yugoslav both systems seemed to be foreign dominated. The earlier one was formally colonial while the latter seems, in fact, to have been dominated by foreigners. But it is not so much the precise facts of the situation but rather their interpretation. The Austrians and, in the Croat case especially the Hungarians, were other peoples relatively distant and higher in status than the Serbs in nearby Belgrade. Filipović, of course, did not do research among the Croats or in Croatia proper as such. Serbs were his folk along with their neighbors, Moslems and Albanians. For both scholars space-time correlates were prime.

Obrebski:

Joseph Obrebski in his, *The Changing Peasantry of Eastern Europe* (edited by Joel and Barbara Halpern, Schenkman Publishing Co., Cambridge, 1976), dealing with the prewar Polish peasantry, is the most explicit about his approach to temporal processes.

There is no history with change and little change which may not be historically noted. But I am not a historian and do not propose to present a synthetic historical account of all the relevant changes which peasantry underwent in this part of Europe. As a social anthropologist I am interested in studying the very process of change, not in registering its final results. My aim is to show the social mechanism of change in the life and culture of Eastern European peasants as it exemplified by the Polish peasantry.

This concern with *studying the very process of change*, is perhaps what implicitly unites these three scholars although they come up with rather different conclusions.

A good example of what we might now call Obrebski's ethnomethodological approach concerns his description of village communities in the area of Polesie in what was then eastern Poland. The social memory of the village community he studied there divided all past history into two defined periods, that of the era of serfdom and the subsequent time of freedom. The former was pictured as a dark time of oppression and exploitation by the landlord and his representatives. According to Obrebski there were parallel myths of the landlords's aggression and the peasants' resistance. Their history of change began only with the emancipation (*ibid*, p. 28).

While Obrebski presents this as the peasants' view it is also a view that he endorses, *The constancy of peasant life in the semi-slavery conditions of serfdom is a fact confirmed by documentary evidence*. One, of course, does not have to be a believer in serfdom to be reserved about this view. There certainly were population movements. A series of ecological adaptations occurred relating to changing resource utilizations e. g. the forests. There were also changes brought about by wars and modifications in the system of feudal tenure, which was hardly a fixed one. But here we see a myth of cyclical time implicit in Obrebski's statement. There is the implication that technical linear time only began to operate with the cessation of serfdom.

The Period of Serfdom as a Mythical Past:

There is certainly an aspect of folk memory possibly contributing to status enhancement regarding the view held of the period of serfdom as almost a mythical past which is atemporal. Obrebski also seems to suggest two time frames based on class differentiation. Perhaps there is an aspect of Fabian's ideas of asymmetrical power relationships implicit as well. For Obrebski saw as the dominant feature of prewar Polish society the existence of two different and mutually exclusive cultural worlds. There was that of the upper class *living in a national civilization, and that of the peasantry, leading their life within the village boundaries and under the sway of its local culture* (pp. 24-25). They shared, *almost common institutions, few common activities and almost no common interests*. These distinctions occurred regardless of the degree of wealth or national origin of the upper class. There was also not much change, according to Obrebski, when the old landed aristocracy was replaced at the end of the nineteenth century by a more numerous and, in income standards, almost proletarian intelligentsia. He sees this as the replacement of an aristocracy of birth by one of education and culture.

Given this discrepancy he devotes a section of his book to, Spontaneous Changes in the Culture of the Village Community, implying, interestingly, that it was the villagers themselves who opted for another time phase going from one of predominantly cyclical time to entry into the world of technical linear time. As Obrebski discusses this was also accomplished through the process of emigration. It seems to imply that here he sees the peasants taking control of time as an act of assertiveness, of affirmation of identity - to innovate in the village community and simultaneously move through world space beyond the village.

INTERPRETIRANJE PROŠLOSTI VREMENSKE PERSPEKTIVE I DRUŠTVENA POVIJEST *Sažetak*

Kulturno-antropološke rasprave su često usmjeravale pažnju čitatelja na ispitivanje događaja koji se ponavljaju u obliku jednog cikličkoga kronološkog obrasca. Povijesni opisi se obično bave jedinstvenim slijedom događaja u linearnom vremenskom okviru.

Iako se gledišta razlikuju, mogu se ponekad kombinirati u raspravi jednog autora, pa su tako proučavani radovi trojice istočno-europskih znanstvenika, dva antropologa (Milenka Filipovića iz Jugoslavije i Josepha Obrebskog iz Poljske) i jednog ekonomista (Rudolfa Bičanića).

Sva trojica su se bavila seljačkim društvima i njihovim odnosima prema nacionalnim grupama. Cilj im je bio istražiti dublji smisao ovih različitih poimanja i načina na koje oni upotunjuju njihovo znanje o sociokulturnim procesima.

Prevela J.P. Vlahinić