

# Ethnology with a Grain of Salt

*The paper compares „Mediterranean studies“, as they have come to be known in social anthropological research, with the practice of national ethnology. By comparing these two academic traditions the author makes an attempt to explain why national ethnology did not incorporate into its research agenda concepts widely proclaimed in works dealing with the Mediterranean. The author indicates the research perspectives and possible directions that national academic traditions can take to approach these fields.*

**Key words:** Mediterranean studies, defining the discipline

Ethnology's subject of study is not society but culture although there is always a contribution made by one branch of the humanities (or any other science) which sheds light on its society. Such a contribution does not have to do with the knowledge obtained but rather with how this knowledge was obtained. Neither is the manner we perceive physical givens represented by maps a self-explanatory endeavour. Because of the firm grip of the political hegemony of the Northern hemisphere we feel wonder at Braudel's upturning of the geographical perspective to the miniature Mediterranean of the Adriatic sea. Neither is the positioning of the Old continent between its East and its West, a procedure similar to what the decedents of the Middle Kingdom do on the other side of the world, physically self-explanatory. Furthermore, neither does such unquestionableness pertain to the Mediterranean which from its northern shores is not even conceived as a „sea“ but as the Mediterranean, „the middle territory“ – the Mediterranean area.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it is not unusual that with such aberrations of vision inbred on the oldest cultural sites and within their very own cultural investigations a lengthier deconstructive narrative arose. These are the reasons why in the issue of the journal „Etnološka istraživanja“ (Ethnological Investigations) devoted to the Mediterranean we are making an attempt to distinguish the practice of Croatian humanities within the socially examined Mediterranean and within Croatian society.

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<sup>1</sup> This problematization of the Mediterranean in many authors of Mediterranean studies can be recognized in the use of the expression „circum-Mediterranean area“ (disregarding the area of the Alps, the Black Sea and Sahara), which would designate the Mediterranean as a mere maritime zone or an island area.

Ethnologies of Mediterranean countries do not exist in Mediterranean studies.<sup>2</sup> Scholars of the Mediterranean have wholly ignored objects of study that are not characteristic for British and American anthropology, such as material culture, eating habits, magic or religion or healing practices (Albera 2006: 119). The title of Albera's and Blok's introduction to the collection of papers from the 1997 conference in Aix-en-Provence leaving the impression of paying only nominal tribute. In a new authoritative review this is explained by „partial omission [which] is due essentially to the fact that, unlike the anthropology of the Mediterranean societies, these disciplines lack a comparative project and their research is focused solely on their own national societies [sic] without taking into consideration other countries“ (Giordano 2012: 27). Concerning the book „Mediterranean breviary“ a scholar of the Mediterranean writes that „Matvejević's approach is part of the Eastern European ethnological preoccupation with maps, linguistic phenomena, and culture traits“ (Driessen 2001: 528). This is not even due to the incompatibility of the continental school of ethnology itself as it is derived from the German academic tradition. In their introduction to the collection of studies dealing with the Mediterranean, Dionigi Albera and Anton Blok write that French ethnology „remained for the most part alien to the construction of the anthropology of the Mediterranean area, watching the controversies which have shaken the 'Mediterraneanist sea' as a somewhat bewildered spectator“ (Albera and Blok 2001: 27). During the preparatory period during which Mediterranean studies were articulated, the researchers did not exclusively come from Western departments but they were invited to formative scholarly gatherings according to the affiliation with their research projects. Today, for one such conference held in 1966 it is said that it was „a small working conference within a collaborative group; it is hardly surprising that researchers of other kinds (such as historians or native ethnographers) were not included“ (Silverman 2001: 52). This relation was mutual. When the Mediterranean was directly present in the curriculum of ethnology studies, including the ethnology studies in a Mediterranean country such as Croatia, it usually pertained to „the ethnology of Mediterranean peoples“. In *Mediterranean anthropology* what was emphasized was the interpretative difference enfolded into the social-anthropological tradition and not the the methodological connection which could have been obtained by the designation *Mediterranean ethnography* (Herzfeld 1984: 440).

The direction researchers in the emerging „Mediterranean studies“ took was less connected to native cultures and more to political and disciplinary activities. Whether studies of the Lika region, of Adjara, of Galilee or of Algarve were incorporated into the Mediterranean corpus did not depend on the Mediterranean nuances of their culture. Because of this, today in collections devoted to the Mediterranean the most successful research project dealing with the Adriatic fork of the Mediterranean is to be found in Halpern's study of Orašac in Serbia which in 1953, after Yugoslavia's distancing from the USSR and its armament with American jet planes, became more alluring than the more easily accessible coastline or the more immediate hinterland (Kayser 1986., see also Silverman 2001: 45). For anthropologists, who had previously gone to do field work by way of the offices of the

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<sup>2</sup> Writing in Croatian language (and inside of Mediterranean) „Mediterranean“ studies denote research done in the Mediterranean and „Mediterraneanist“ studies those concerned with some aspect of Mediterranean region. „Mediterranean studies“, instead of their „Mediterraneanist“ iteration, pinpoint their academic genesis outside of the Mediterranean.

colonial staff, the Mediterranean after 1950's became a region more practical to research than the more turbulent decolonizing countries, foremost in Africa. Arrival at the Mediterranean was possible more easily because previous research experiences like those from literate and urban Muslim communities of North Nigeria or detecting cultural change in urban settlements of miners in South Africa. Africa was attractive because of virtual academic monopoly enjoyed by anthropologists up to economists's and sociologists's engagements from 1950's on. The colonial governments were committed to the cash economy, but social anthropologists often acted for preservation of "his tribe", isolated from trade, government, and Christianity (Kuper 1973: 135 i 141).

In this sense „Mediterranean studies“ is a legitimate academic offspring of the British Africanist studies. Rituals of appropriating one's own discipline dictated work in inapproachable, remote places (Giordano 2012: 14, Albera 2006: 113) while the form of research results had to be a monograph devoted to an isolated community (Giordano 2012: 15). It cannot be said that researchers were not conscious of arriving into a different milieu marked by literacy, cities, by important roles that states played and the presence of native professionals (Silverman 2001: 53), but the interpretative repertoire of the subdiscipline was not interested in native theoretical apparatuses and the communities that were described appeared to be tribal. „Social anthropologists are traditionally concerned more with rural communities than with cities and national cultural traditions“, Julian Pitt-Rivers explained the departure point of a conference he was preparing in 1959 to the endowment financier and thusly eliminated the anthropological approaches that by that time were producing results not only from cities but from the continental ethnological academic tradition on whose precincts tents ought to have been spread (ibid. 45).<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, „even during this period of confidence in the future of the anthropology of the Mediterranean, this research agenda never managed to catalyze the majority of anthropological work carried out in the Mediterranean“ (Albera 2006: 112).<sup>4</sup>

Because of these reasons an „ethnology of the Mediterranean“ (not an „ethnology in the Mediterranean“) as a „local ethnology relevant for Anglo-American, as well as for French and other anthropologies of the Mediterranean“ (Čapo Žmegač 1999: 34 i 49) was not initiated nor was it at all possible on the foundations of „Mediterranean studies“. An ethnologist and a social anthropologist are academic children of two theoretical worlds. The social anthropologist attempted to understand the functioning of society so that he traversed social upheavels interested in the betterment of the social organism (Kuklick 1991: 124), a concern of interest to the state administration, while in such a position the ethnologist's attention could be aroused eventually only by the curiosity of people embracing some relict symbolism.<sup>5</sup> Social anthropologists themselves were accused as culprits for the epistemological crisis of Mediterranean studies for being bearers of the theoretical faults of functional structuralism unrejuvenated to meet the challenges of urban and literate sites (Boissevain 1979: 82, Davis 1977: 2, Herzfeld 1984: 449-50), but Pitt-Rivers harshly res

<sup>3</sup> However, Peristiany himself preferred the participation of native researchers (Albera 2006: 118).

<sup>4</sup> Compare the non-Mediterranean concept in Bennet's 1974 and the 1995 exploration of Suvivan.

<sup>5</sup> In Spain it is supposed that the cultural-anthropological interest shown in the US for the Mediterranean was motivated by the need to familiarize themselves with the cultural origins of the immigrant communities, see Pina-Cabral 1989: 401.

ponded how „on the contrary, we were all aware that we are doing something that the traditionalists in anthropology disapproved of“ (Pitt-Rivers 1979: 89).<sup>6</sup> „By detaching itself [from former archeological and classicist studies of the Mediterranean past], social anthropology in the Mediterranean made an important step toward into the study of complex societies“ (Lopašić 1994: 304, see also Albera and Blok 2001: 26). With its theoretical fleet and apparatus social anthropology sailed into the Mediterranean interested in the sea of culture but facing native scholars of humanistic affiliations its ship logs were inscribed with the difficult to comprehend scripts of the social sciences.

The said desired ethnological relevance, which is to be found in the only Croatian scientific publication whose key words include the expression „Mediterranean studies“,<sup>7</sup> belongs to another interesting moment. It had already been noted by Dunja Rihtman Auguštin at the same scholarly conference devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the Zagreb Institute for Ethnology and Folklore – and it is contrastive. Scholars and politicians share it in defining and redefining social missions. The lesson is simple: people did not either nominally or programatically turn to the sea or to the transoceanic perspective when conjunctural possibilities were on offer but when they symbolically wanted to draw a line and emphasize their coming of age and the turning of a new leaf. The illustrations Dunja Rihtman Auguštin provided are connected to the proclaimed „Adriatic orientation“ from the political time of the Croatian Spring and from recent times it is easy to add the same declarations from the time of the establishment of the democratically elected Croatian government in 1990.<sup>8</sup> Such a rejuvenating Adriatic discourse is historically conditioned by thalassophobic regimes concerning which Jonas Frykman spoke at the Zagreb conference in 1998 – ideologies of creating national states always looked upon littoral folk with suspicious eyes, loyal cadre had its eyes fixed on the center and its back to the sea (Frykman 1999: 285). How much good a rejuvenating research program could bequeath to the scientific domain and how much is to be obtained from a declaration of an anniversary theme (even if from the Institute for Ethnology and Folklore whose opus is intensively engaged on the Adriatic) remains a question of pragmatic assessment.<sup>9</sup>

Efforts to legitimate a Croatian „ethnology of the Mediterranean“, that is, samples of a comparatively potent native expertise, have not succeeded in sailing far out before they

<sup>6</sup> Peristiany's mentor Evans-Pritchard did not approve his choice of the Mediterranean terrain after he had done research in eastern Africa believing that he ought not to work in an area that was not wholly foreign to him, because Peristiany was a Cypriot Greek (Albera 2006: 127).

<sup>7</sup> Internet portal of scientific journals Hrčak; hrcak.srce.hr, assessed June 1, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> The mayors of Split and Zagreb signed the declarative and nonbinding „Jadranska povelja“ (Adriatic Charter) as early as June 29, and on September 10, the Day of Sailors, it was signed by the mayors of ten Croatian coastal cities. In the opening words of his speech on June 29, the first Croatian minister of the sea prof. dr. sc. Davorin Rudolf succinctly formulated a program which even today can be seen as a series of Adriatic ambitions; it was published July 1 on the front page of the daily newspaper „Slobodna Dalmacija“ under the headline „Values of the Adriatic“.

<sup>9</sup> An impressive result of a research project from the second half of the 1970ies, the ethnological collection of research papers about the island of Zlarin in its short introduction, excepting a number of general contentions, does not offer a contextualisation of this kind of island monograph along other comparable endeavours in the professional practice up to that time (Rihtman Auguštin 1982.). Much later a book of native documentation by the local initiator of this project was edited by Ivan Lajić and published by the Institute for Migrations and Peoples (Dean 2004.).

run aground on the sandbanks of paleomediterraneanization (Gavazzi 1978: 69, 73, 193, 204 etc.). Traditional building practices can be taken as an exemplary instance. Within the ethnological repertoire rustic techniques such as pseudocupola simply cannot be torn away from the conceptual embrace of the ancient Mediterranean which as a consequence has produced also some burlesque readings.<sup>10</sup> The „Mediterraneanization“ of traditions presupposed that the ancient origin of these techniques be emphasized without a word being said about their quantitative spread and formation at the end of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth century. On the model of Said's „Orientalism“, Michael Herzfeld accused *Mediterranean studies* of exoticized mythologization, coining a distinct ethnocentric „Mediterraneanism“:

„These arguments are characterized by a form of literalism – the implicit suggestion that the relationship between a particular symbol and its referent is unproblematical, invariant, and therefore capable of cross-cultural generalization. (...) Ancient-modern likenesses are vital to the rhetoric of nationalistic ideologies, where they form the basis of territorial claims and where their very resistance to critical analysis serves those goals well. By contrast, in ethnographic analysis such likenesses are potential traps. The absence of documentation is critical.“ (Herzfeld 1984: 448-9)

Simultaneously with the spread of paleomediterraneanizing opinions and the associated cultural industry (Škrbić Alempijević and Mesarić Žabčić 2010.) the Adriatic face of Croatia was transformed by a social program and cultural practices that ethnology viewed with a blind eye, not approaching the Mediterranean interests for the social levers of cultural practices an iota.<sup>11</sup> The period of tumult in studies of the Mediterranean from the end of the 1970ies and during the 1980ies would later be most clearly recognized in the caesura that occurred in the Zagreb workshop on Mediterranean studies as part of the 12th Congress of the ICAES in 1988. The Congress in Zagreb was organized by the Institute for Anthropology and the Croatian Anthropological Society which later selected for publication, from amongst the hundreds of various sessions, precisely a collection of presentations from this workshop (Lopašić 1994.). In his presentation, which was published next year in the journal *Current Anthropology* (Pina-Cabral 1989.), the Portugese social anthropologist João de Pina-Cabral engaged earlier polemics and asked a seemingly banal question:

<sup>10</sup> Such a „paleomediterraneanization“ could be divided into its archaizing and its Mediterraneanizing component. Evidence for the native antiquity of this technique (archival, archeological and structural) are analyzed in Kale 1998. The bypassing of ethnography with mystifications such as “a field farm-stead of the Illyrian type” (Skrivaneli 1978: 28, to refer to a complex from the end of the XIXth century) or serious ethnographic omissions which leave out descriptions of fields as wholes whose rustic parts are too easily accounted for by emphasizing prehistoric origins contribute to the dilettantism of the discourse. Despite well-known disseminations, the Mediterranean designation is routinely assigned to thusly archaized material. The strained paleomediterraneanizing of heritage carries its part of responsibility for its market bastardization, in the case of this kind of building practice using form as the authentication of the conversion of the cultural landscape into a thematic park ranging from pseudocupola-saunas to designed „Dalmatian villages“ in which architectonic details are laid out *à la carte*.

<sup>11</sup> It could be said that during the 1970ies and 1980ies the most vital folk custom in Adriatic Croatia was *nalivanje deke*, that is, pouring concrete on various structures of tens of thousands of unregulated buildings along the coast which the individual was unable to perform alone because of the material. I am unaware of any mention connecting this kind of work with collaborative patterns such as *moba* in Croatian ethnological literature, nor of any kind of ethnological attention paid to this kind of event.

what makes a Sicilian tavern different from an Irish pub? The implications of the systematically put question later justified calling him „gravedigger of Anglophone Mediterranean anthropology centered on the idea of honour“ (Albera 2006: 120). Although the moderator of the workshop Aleksandar Lopašić<sup>12</sup> maintained that the presentation in fact had not brought forth any unknown elements, the concocted soup was strong enough to cook the whole of „Mediterranean studies“ in it up to the end of the next decade when they were rehabilitated through the master reinterpretation and recapitulation of the abundant Mediterranean material in the writings of two historians (Horden and Purcell 2000.).<sup>13</sup>

Within the historical ambience of the Mediterranean it appears that historians and anthropologists stimulate each other by turns, first in 1949 with Braudel before Pitt-Rivers's research among the mountain folk of Andalusia (Pitt-Rivers 1954.), and later with the inspiration Horden's and Purcell's work gave to scholars whose writings followed in the new millennium. This huge volume provided anthropologists (and ethnologists dependent on encompassing anthropological theories) with the desired counterpart to some hundred introductory pages of a historical book devoted to questions of the natural surroundings and the environment of the Mediterranean (Boissevain 1979: 83) written under the influence of the theoretical school of human ecology and to entire voluminous chapters dealing exclusively with anthropological material (Driessen 2001.). Until the publication of this rehabilitation of the anthropological Mediterranean, Pina-Cabral's question had succeeded in derogating the archconcept of Mediterranean studies, the syndrome of honour and shame, undermining, alongside the earlier polemics, the conceptualization of a unified Mediterranean so effectively that in the 1990ies one could read about the anthropological conception of the cultural region of the Mediterranean, about the syndrome of honour and shame or about the relation of the patron and the client in the culture of clientelism, in updated theoretizations only under quotation marks. This ferment did not impact on the Croatian scientific scene because this archconcept of the study of the Mediterranean was neither deemed essential in ethnology (Rihtman Augustin 1999: 106, 1974: 310), nor in the social sciences. We have already underlined that this was due to a simple oversight – for painting such a work of the disciplinary landscape of the Mediterranean the ethnologist simply did not possess an appropriate brush nor was he allured to making one.

At the same ICAES event a more fruitful framework for use on native grounds could be recognized in the presentations of two native participants in the workshop. The framework was archival and the speakers were two rare female ethnologists holding PhDs who were in good command of Adriatic archives: Vesna Čulinović Konstantinović (from Ethnographic Museum at Split, till the end of the century the only Croatian ethnologist holding a PhD who was employed outside Zagreb) and Đurdica Petrović (from the University of Belgrade, by way of Montenegrin defters gradually drawn to the State Archive

<sup>12</sup> Educated ethnologist from Zagreb University, later a curator in Africa and a Mediterranean studies scholar at the University of Reading.

<sup>13</sup> However disastrous might appear discussions in one's own back yard, authors on their Mediterranean mission were inspired by anthropology because „anthropology is the discipline in which contemporary discussion of the region's integrity is probably at its liveliest“ (Horden i Purcell 2000: 515).

in Dubrovnik). Regarding the reconstruction of the historical duration of material continuities, patterns of behavior and ritual practices (such as lamenting), both authors were inclined to connect ethnography with archival data and historical-artistic monuments (Vesna Čulinović Konstantinović 1990., Petrović 1974.). The Mediterranean ambience of literacy, particularly pronounced in Dubrovnik, initiated also the second distinctive moment of the transformation of ethnology into a relevant contribution to studies of the Mediterranean: this was literature (Gulin Zrnić 1999.). It is no accident that it was precisely these two research centers, the one in Split and the one in Dubrovnik, that in time produced amongst historians working on local sources individual scholars who with their interest for microhistory and the culture of the everyday came closest to anthropological theories and to ethnologists (the foremost being Nevenka Bezić-Božanić from Split and a number of historians at the Institute for Historical Sciences in Dubrovnik).

Where ethnology can go with one of its feet in the subdisciplinary sea of studies of the Mediterranean in the Croatian example can be seen in the Croatian Rule Book for Designating Scientific Domains from 1997. It stipulates that in the domain of the humanities, the fields of ethnology and anthropology are constituted by the branches of anthropology, ethnology and folklore studies. Although, according to the criteria of the humanities, one would suppose that this proscribes the more familiar example from the philosophically apt French academic tradition of the humanist branch,<sup>14</sup> in practice this *de facto* pays respect to the theoretically dominant American social science wherein biological, cultural and linguistic anthropology are presupposed to be incorporated into the anthropological branch of the ethnological and anthropological field of the humanities. The same holds for social anthropology whose only chair has traditionally been a part of the study of sociology at the University of Zagreb. After three years the Rule Book was implemented into university life by the establishment of a separate study of anthropology alongside existing studies of ethnology and cultural anthropology. In the beginning without its own staff, today it is the only independent chair of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb offering cultural-anthropological, social-anthropological, biological-anthropological, linguistic-anthropological and ethnological courses. The study course in Zadar, which from the first elaboration of the initiative to establish it was expected to provide a recognizable Mediterraneanist curriculum, has underwent interesting changes since it began in 2005. In accord with the pre-Bologna program proposal from 1999, in preparation for the implementation of the Bologna reform, a „Department of Ethnology and Socio-cultural Anthropology“ was established in 2003 while in the finalized proposal it was designated as the „Study of Ethnology and Anthropology“. The continuously unfolding discussion concerning the name of the study course recognized the possibilities that the status of officially classified anthropology opened up, but for reasons of mobility and national uniformity in 2007 it was decided that the name be changed to „Study of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology“ – in accordance with the change of name of the greatest number of university departments abroad (Killiánova 2012: 116).

First dozen years of the Rule Books's use has not confirmed an interest in studies of the Mediterranean, including a national, ethnology. Even nominally, such an ethnology would

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<sup>14</sup> Of the fifty universities in France where our profession can be studied at, approximately half of them and among these half the diplomas are nominally „anthropological“ (Rogers 2001.).

It would be expected to be practiced paying respect to the social-anthropological approaches without which research in „Mediterranean studies“ cannot be conceived. Of course, in the academic perspective the research interests of the prolific scholars have a greater importance. The example of Moreška, a pliant example of a historically sensitive Mediterranean ethnology, is interesting in that sense (Lopašić 1996.). Relics that Croatian ethnologists were interested in because of Korčula are explained from the theoretical positions of the anthropology of dance but no longer by taking sides like *Grenzlandvolkskunde* practised with „us“ among „them“ along with the establishing of chronological primacy but rather as theoretically rejuvenated *border studies* (Baumann 2001.) in which, immediately behind the first hill rising on the coastline, the project of Croatian historians „Triplex confinium“ showed its relevance.

The story concerning the scholarly soup into which national ethnology can pour its narrative grain of salt can benefit from *Mediterranean studies*. The retrospective accusations mounted against social anthropologists who in gaining a generational professional self-confidence (Boissevain 1979: 82) erected boundaries and generalized to the benefit of their formal profiling and the founding of regulatory powers in the profession are particularly instructive in assessing the implications of classificatory endeavours. Appadurai's citing of the professional degeneration of *gatekeeping concepts* amongst which as a textbook example, alongside Hinduistic castes and the Confucian cult of filial piety, was the Mediterraneanist syndrome of honour and shame (Appadurai 1986., citing after Albera 2006: 127) left a bitter taste in the mouth of each person who respected and was interested in Mediterranean cultures. The classification and canonization that send pins and needles through the academic offspring in Croatian ethonological history provides an example which occurred at the same time as the movement into the codification of a unified Mediterranean – I have in mind the area elaborations from the 1950ies (Gavazzi 1978: 184-94).<sup>15</sup>

„This is a dangerous procedure: it gives the impression that the objective of anthropological analysis is to generalize about the cultural characteristics of particular regions, rather than to synthesize the results of a far more intensely localized form of ethnography into a globally effective portrait of humankind.“ (Herzfeld 1984:439)

In both cases the founding of cultural domains – in the case of national ethnology and of social-anthropological *Mediterranean studies* – was anachronous at the very moment when it occurred. Cultural areas tailored with archival ethnographies are still used in national ethnology. Which ethnographical horizon should be valid, for example, concerning communities of Croats emigrated from Kosovo with their mixture of old coastal traits and contemporary adaptations? Is it an ethnography stemmed out of social science or humanities? Projected to the Mediterranean, neat area resembles a field designation of an Africa, complying more with the synchronous Nuers than with the diachronic Sanusis from the very Mediterranean shore of Cyrenaica (Evans-Pritchard 1940., 1949.; v. Boi

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<sup>15</sup> „Neither the broad identification of a culture area (a certain kind of agriculture, a certain respect for towns, a climate, a type of plough and a couple of syndromes) nor the arbitrary charms of doing it with mirrors are appropriate ways to identify whatever it is that ‘the mediterranean’ [sic] may be“ (Davis 1977: 10-11); see also Silverman 2001: 48.



ssevain 1979: 83).<sup>16</sup> That is why, instead of cultural practices, as food for today's cultural industries for the creation of collective identities and tourist consumption we have cultural stereotypes biting their own tail and making for themselves places on the souvenir shelves, in carnival processions or in social institutions (Herzfeld 1984: 440 i 450, compare in Bonifačić 1999: 276). It comes to be that the most vitally defined Mediterranean is the one in tourist brochures which canalize the production of cultural meanings connected with heritage and identity (Albera 2006: 117).

This is why historicity is essential in the Mediterranean games ethnologists and anthropologists play amongst themselves. It has a nature of methodological enrichment of an authentic humanistic endeavour. As the end point of the intellectual spread of the Mediterranean one can posit an ethnologist of a Mediterranean site who shrugs entering the archives. Although he should not be made into a social historian (Boissevain 1979: 83), ethnological history incorporates the spaces of human experience and of collective memory (Giordano 2012: 25). The anthropologization of the history of the XXth century (having foremost in mind the way of French anthropology, see also Burke 2001: 101) lends powerful support to this kind of expertise. Local researchers are „much more integrated with history and even archaeology than the earlier efforts by foreigners“ (Davis 1992.). In this connection, the singularity of the domain or the singularity of the narrative (Horde and Purcell 2005: 374) is not demarcated but rather contextualized by the research. The ethnology of the anthropological Mediterranean floats somewhere on these latitudes.

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<sup>16</sup> Mary Douglas later asked herself and gathered French Africanists: „What would we know of the Nuer if they had been in the French Sudan – and of the Dogon if they had been on the banks of the White Nile? It is hard to imagine because the Dogon now seem so unmistakably French, so urbane, so articulate, with such philosophical insight (...), the Nuer seem only apt for the discoveries in primitive politics and kinship which interest the British“ (1999: 116-117).

