

## The Theory of the Two-Tiered Model of Culture (from Radić to Gramsci, Cirese and Burke)

### Summary

Radić's concept of two cultures, the "elite" and other, "popular", is built into Croatian cultural and historical ethnology. It creates a closed circle within which one observes the "people", excluding research of any phenomenon which is not "popular" or genuine. Ethnology thus restricts its options for insight into and interpretation of culture.

In this paper Gramsci's concept of a two-tiered model of culture is discussed, and contingently folklore as a concept of the world of subordinated classes. Gramsci is referring to the "folklore" of the subordinated as opposed to official concepts, to expressions of the superior and educated strata of society. According to Gramsci's opinion, the totality of the subordinated classes and strata, are instrumental to every form of society to date. The process of interaction, that goes on in the form of confrontation, is present in modern times as well. Seen in this light, "folklore" is close to a popular philosophy, often termed common sense, and which, to a lesser or greater degree of visibility, always maintains an active position on religion and organized or institutionalized ideologies.

Therefore, in Gramsci's opinion, contradiction is always present in folklore, and the people are not a homogenous community.

In Italian demo/ethnology Gramsci's ideas were formulated by A. Cirese as a correlation between the hegemonistic culture and the subaltern cultures, with which he established the basis of ethnological and folklore analysis. In cultural research the correlation of power is introduced as a variable and this correlation is not treated in a simplified manner. It is assumed, that, contrary to tendencies that are a direct expression of power, several tendencies are more likely to appear rather than a single, or a uniform one, expressing resistance and divergence from the leading ideology, culture, etc. It is also possible to assume various centers of power and their varied cultural interests and activity.

Cirese stresses that in societies that we term "higher", the social differences, division, stratification and conflict are generally echoed by certain cultural differences, divisions, stratifications. This interaction of various social layers is manifested by unequal participation in production and use of cultural goods. In this sense he formulates the concept of "dislivello" in which the leading culture is not being considered from the vantage point of value, but from the vantage point of its position.

Peter Burke also discusses the "variable" of power in his

historical research of popular culture. He accepts Gramsci's hypothesis with a parenthesis on the simplified interpretation of what are, in essence, very complex and interwoven historical processes. Italian ethnology has already pointed this out, when it uses Gramsci's hypothesis as an intellectual backdrop for both historical and for contemporary research of folk culture. The autor of the text agrees with this position.

(Translated by Ellen Elias-Bursać)