

Introduction

The book presented here belongs to the series documenting different topics discussed during the seminary that was held in The Institute of Cultural Studies (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) in the period 2011–2013. The seminary itself was dedicated to the study of the theoretical consequences of the different methodologies and approaches engaged by historians in the particular field of the theory of cultural change. The seminary consisted of young scholars belonging to various intellectual traditions, working within different specialities and different, sometimes mutually exclusive, methodologies. Not the common point of view, but a shared interest in the problem of change and its possible theoretical solutions united the seminary.

Two texts presented here deal with separate but still deeply connected issues. Firstly, Magdalena Kamińska concentrates her study on the relationship between innovation and change, particularly researching the conditions under which the innovation may or may not provoke sociocultural change. Being a media specialist, Kamińska chose the history of media technology and its social consequences as her primary research material. Secondly, Olga Urban, being mainly interested in the threshold of broad, superindividual structures, like language or culture generally and the individual participation in these structures, follows her scholarly interest strictly. She has dedicated her study to the place of the individual within the social processes of change, involving the conceptual apparatus of the theory of participation in culture.

The link between two study areas may seem obscure at first glance, but it is deep and important. The studies follow, one can say, opposite trajectories: one going from individual creativity to the change of superindividual

structures, the second – from the regulatory functioning of such structures to the conditions and variety of individual participation. Although following slightly different but not contradictory methodological approaches, both studies emphasise different aspects of the very same process.

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