

NOTES

Introduction

1. Voltaire, *Candide and Other Stories*, translated by Roger Pearson, Oxford World Classics, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 48.
2. D. Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I, Part III, section VIII.
3. D. Hume, *The Natural History of Religion*, with an Introduction by John M. Robertson, Freethought Publishing Company, London, 1889.
4. E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (1871), New York, Brentano, 1924, vol. I, p. 477 ff.; S. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, translated by A. A. Brill, New York, Moffat, 1918.
5. D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, University of Chicago, Chicago, 1989. See also D. Freedberg and V. Gallese, "Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Aesthetic Experience," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11, 2007, pp. 197–203; V. Gallese and D. Freedberg, "Mirror and Canonical Neurons Are Crucial Elements in Aesthetic Response," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11, 2007, p. 411.
6. On this see my *Paura e meraviglia. Storie filosofiche del XVIII secolo* (Fear and Wonder. Philosophical Stories of the Eighteenth Century) Rubbettino, Catanzaro 1998.
7. On the notions of "formal connections" and "perspicuous representation," see L. Wittgenstein, "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*," in *Philosophical Occasions* (1912–1951), edited by J. Klagge and A. Nordmann, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1993. See also L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, edited by Rush Rhees, translated by Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White, Oxford, Blackwell, 1975. These concepts have also been examined in A. G. Gargani, *Wittgenstein. Musica, parola, gesto*, Cortina, Milan, 2008, p. 68 ff. and in A. M. Iacono, "Attorno al concetto di rappresentazione perspicua. Spengler e Wittgenstein," in *Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche. Saggi in memoria di Sandro Barbera*, ETS, Pisa, 2012.
8. K. Marx, *Capital*, I 4.
9. See J. Lacan, *Le séminaire de Jacques Lacan, Livre IV: La relation d'objet* (1956–1957), edited by J. A. Miller, Seuil, Paris, 1994. For a detailed discussion of fetishism in the context of the modern world, starting from Marx, Freud, and Lacan, see S. Žižek's *The Plague of Fantasies*, Verso, London–New York, 1997. See also *Figure del feticismo*, a cura di S. Mistura, Einaudi, Turin, 2001; U. Fadini, "Attraverso il feticismo radicale," *Millepiani*, no. 21, 2002, pp. 63–77, where Baudrillard's theorization is also discussed.

10. B.B. Eitelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, Vintage Books, New York, 2010.
11. Camille Tarot, *De Durkheim à Mauss. L'invention du symbolique*, La Découverte, Paris, 1999, pp. 507–508. Tarot notices that my *Le fétichisme. Histoire d'un concept*, PUF, Paris, 1992 does not mention another consideration, besides that of Mauss's "misunderstanding," which is quite pithy in itself. Namely that this "misunderstanding" constituted a "necessary mistake" for social sciences. Apart from the fact that Mauss does not explain his claim, as Tarot rightly notes—whatever the meaning he attributed to it may have been—the risk posed by this ambiguous concept of "inevitability" is that it can become a historical justification. In any case, I would distinguish between what is irreversible and what is inevitable.
12. W. Pietz, "The Problem of the Fetish," *Res*, no. 9, 1985, pp. 5–17; no. 13, 1987, pp. 23–45; no. 16, 1988, pp. 105–123. See Ch. Antenhofer (ed.), *Fetisch als euristische Kategorie*, Transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2011 for a recent debate on the notion of fetish.
13. W. Pietz, *Le fétiche. Généalogie d'un problème*, Kargo & L'Éclat, Paris, 2005.
14. B. Latour, *Petite réflexion sur le culte moderne des dieux fétichés*, Synthékabo, Paris, 1996, p. 23 ff.
15. Latour considers the interpretation made both by me and by Pietz to be still insidit hisi llusion.

One The Theoretical and Historical Assumptions Underpinning the Concept of Fetishism

1. See D. Vieira, *Grande Dicionario Portuguez ou Thesouro da Lingua Portugueza*, edited by Ernesto Chardron and Bartholomeu H. De Moraes, vol. III, Porto, 1873, p. 623. The word "feitiço" is to be found in J. Barros's 1552 *Década I* (liv. 3, Chapter 10; liv. 8, Chapter 4, liv. 10, Chapter 1).
2. *Ibid.* See also V. Valeri, *Feticcio*, Enciclopedia, vol. VI, Einaudi, Torino 1979, p.1 00.
3. Charles de Brosses, *Du Culte des Dieux fétiches ou Parallèle de l'ancienne Religion de l'Égypte avec la Religion actuelle de la Nigritie*, Genève, 1760. van der Leeuw argues that the term "fetishism" had already been used by G. Carolinus in his 1661 *Het hedendaagsche Heidendom of Beschrijving van der Goddienst der Heidenen* (a work cited by Balthazar Bekker in *The World Bewitch'd* where, as we shall see, a comparison is made between practices associated with the "Fetisso" and practices bound to other ancient and modern religions). But van der Leeuw also adds: "It is certain that de Brosses used the word for the first time as a scientific and phenomenological expression. He used fetishism as a general term for the religion of the Negroes. He was also the first to write on the psychological origin of fetishism," G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 1956 (2nd edition), *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, translated by J. E. Turner, Peter Smith, Gloucester (MA), 1967 [1963], 2 vols. with appendices to the Torchbook edition incorporating the additions of the second German edition by Hans H. Penner. As far as the origin of the word "feitiço" is

concerned, de Brosses—albeit using it in the sense of “artificial,” “fictitious” (see Valeri, op. cit., p. 100)—attributes it to the Latin root “fatum,” “fanum,” “fari” (Brosses, op. cit., p. 18). Meiners and Böttiger add to de Brosses’s explanation the one given by Th. Winterbotton in his *Account of the Native Africans in the Neighborhood of Sierra Leone*, printed by C. Whittingham, London, 1803, p. 99. According to Winterbotton the word “feitiço” derives from “feteiceira” (sorceress, witch) or “faticaria” (witchcraft, magical power). See Ch. Meiners, *Allgemeine kritische Geschichte der Religionen*, Hannover, 1806–1807, I Bd., pp. 142–143; C. A. Böttiger, *Ideen zur Kunst-Mythologie*, Dresden und Leipzig, 1826–1836, I Bd., p. 6. In 1888 Alfred Binet also accepted the thesis of the Latin root “fatum” (A. Binet, *Le fétichisme dans l’amour*, in *Études de psychologie expérimentale*, Paris, 1888, p. 2).

4. One of the fundamental essays on the history of the word “civilization” is L. Febvre’s essay “Civilisation: évolution d’un mot et d’un group d’idées” (“Civilisation, le mot, l’idée”), *I Semaine Internationale de Synthèse*, vol. 2, Octave Doin, Paris, 1930, now in *Pour une histoire à part entière*, Service d’édition et de vente des publications de l’Éducation nationale. Abbeville, impr. F. Paillart, Paris, 1962. See also E. Benveniste, *Civilisation. Contribution à l’histoire du mot*, in *Hommage à Lucien Febvre*, Paris, 1954, now in *Problèmes de Linguistique générale*, Gallimard, Paris, 1971. On the complex relationship between “culture” and “civilization,” see Pietro Rossi, “Cultura’ e civiltà come modelli descrittivi,” now in *Cultura e antropologia*, Einaudi, Turin, 1983.
5. B. Bekker, *Le Monde Enchanté ou examen des communs sentiments touchant les Esprits, leur nature, leur pouvoir, leur administration, et leurs opération*, vol. 4, Libraire fur le Vygendam, Amsterdam, 1694 (the original Dutch edition, entitled *Die Betoverde Weereld*, Andries van Damme, Leuwarden, 1691, was translated into German in 1693 in Amsterdam and into English (only the first volume) in 1695 in London. See F. Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1959, p. 313). The edition I am referring to is the one that circulated in de Brosses’s cultural context, and was prepared under the author’s supervision.

On Bekker’s comparative methodology, see F. Manuel, op. cit., in particular, pp. 28–29. See also P. Hazard, *The Crisis of the European Mind, 1680–1715*, New York Review Books Classics, New York, 2013.

6. B. Bekker, *The World Bewitch’d or, An Examination of the Common Opinions Concerning Spirits: Their Nature, Power, Administration, and Operations. As, Also, The Effects Men Are Able to Produce by their Communication*, translated from a French Copy, approved of and subscribed by the Author’s own Hand, printed for R. Baldwin, 1695, vol., I. p. 28, Cornell University Library, The Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Digital Witchcraft Collection.
7. Ibid., p. 29.
8. Ibid.
9. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), *English Works*, printed for Andrew Crooke at the Green Deagon in St. Paul’s Churchyard, London, 1831 (reprint Aalen 1962), vol. III; B. Spinoza, *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (1670), *Opera*, Carl Winter, Heidelberg s.d. (1924), vol. III; *Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata*

(1677). In addition to the topic of “fear” examined in Chapter XII of the *Leviathan*, and the idea expressed in *Propositio LI* of Spinoza’s *Ethics*, according to which superstition originates in the relationship between fear and hope, as well as the discussion on miracles contained in *The Leviathan*, Chapter XXXVII, and *Tractatus*, Chapter VI, it is worth quoting at length the following reflections by Hobbes and Spinoza. Reflecting on the relationship between *sight, imagination, memory, and dream*, Hobbes says: “This nature of sight having never been discovered by the ancient pretenders to natural knowledge, much less by those that consider not things so remote (as that knowledge is) from their present use, it was hard for men to conceive of those images in the fancy and in the sense otherwise than of things really without us: which some, because they vanish away, they know not whether nor how, will have to be absolutely incorporeal, that is to say, immaterial, or forms without matter (colour and figure, without any coloured or figured body), and that they can put on airy bodies, as a garment, to make them visible when they will to our bodily eyes; and others say, are bodies and living creatures, but made of air, or other more subtle and ethereal matter, which is, then, when they will be seen, condensed. But both of them agree on one general appellation of them, demons,” *Leviathan*, printed for Andrew Crooke, 1651, Chapter XLV, “Of Demonology and Other Relics of the Religion of the Gentiles,” p. 399. The author asserts, on the one hand, that demons have no active involvement in the historical acting of people, while, on the other hand, considering them to be exteriorizations of the human brain. This is a central topic in what is to become the concept of “fetishism.”

Reflecting on the introduction of ceremonial laws in Judaism and Christianity, Spinoza affirms: “This, then, was the object of the ceremonial law, that men should do nothing of their own free will, but should always act under external authority, and should continually confess by their actions and thoughts that they were not their own masters, but were entirely under the control of others” (*The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, translated from the Latin with an Introduction by R. H. M. Elwes, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, Chapter V, vol. I, London, George Bell and Sons, 1891, p. 76). The complexity of the historical and conceptual processes is proven by the fact that the Spinozian analysis of the *external* forms of religion as a means for exercising control over people becomes—when transposed into the world of “savages”—a means for justifying colonization. The discovery of the “fetishes” as a central aspect of a religion based on exterior practices became the proof of their primitiveness. This idea was to be endorsed, in particular, by the Dutchman Bosman.

10. A. van Dale, *De Oraculis Veterum Ethnicorum Dissertationes Duae*, Apud Henricum, Amsterdam, 1700 (2nd edition). The first edition (1683) was favorably reviewed by Pierre Bayle (*Nouvelles de la République des Letters*, mars 1684, Amsterdam, 1715, vol. I, pp. 1–18).
11. B. de Fontenelle, *Histoire des Oracles* (1686), in *Oeuvres*, Académies Françaises des Sciences, vol. II, Paris, 1767, p. 201. Some years after the publication of the second edition of van Dale’s *De Oraculis*, and thus after the publication of Fontenelle’s work, Jean Leclerc examined both the Dutchman’s theory of oracles and his other work entitled *Dissertationes de Origine et Progressu*

- Idolatriae*, Apud Henricum, Amsterdam, 1696. Leclerc disagreed with van Dale's (and Fontenelle's) radical assumption that oracles must be *tout court* the result of priests' mendacity. Falsehood, argued Leclerc, is merged with truth, at least in the sense that there must have been a truthful origin in what has subsequently become an object of mendacity: "It is also possible to affirm that Mendacity would never have found a place among men if Truth had not, against its nature, frequently paved the way for it" (J. Leclerc, *Bibliothèque choisie, pour servir de suite à la Bibliothèque universelle*, Henri Schelte, Amsterdam, 1704, vol. III, p. 115; my translation). In 1707 Baltus confuted van Dale in a piece of writing directed at Fontenelle (J. F. Baltus, *Réponse à l'Histoire des oracles... dans laquelle on réfute le système de M. Van D.*, Jean Regnauld Doulssecker, Paris, 1707). In 1685, in the third edition of his *Tractatus philologico-theologicus*, Leipzig, 1657, Moebius had already added a *Cum vindiciis adversus A. van Dale*. Bernard (J. Bernard, *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, juin, 1707, David Mortier, Amsterdam, 1716) and Leclerc (J. Leclerc, *Bibliothèque choisie*, cit., vol. XVII, pp. 309–312) replied to Baltus in their funeral oration after van Dale's death. On the relationship between van Dale and Fontenelle, see Manuel, op. cit., pp. 48–52 and Hazard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 203.
12. Ivi, p. 205.
 13. A. van Dale, *Lettre, Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, mai, 1687, article I, Amsterdam, 1687, pp. 459–487.
 14. Following the theorization of Hobbes and Spinoza, Bekker excludes "diabolic mimesis" from the field of inquiry and does not consider it to be at the origin of idolatry. In actual fact, this topic is of crucial importance in the influential anthropological treatise by the Jesuit José de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, Sevilla, 1590, Book V, p. 303 (anastatic copy, Valencia, 1977) and also in Ahanasius Kircher's complex reflections (see D. Pastine, *La nascita dell'idolatria*, la Nuova Italia, Florence, 1979, pp. 136–158). Nevertheless, and even before the theorization developed by Hobbes, as may be seen for instance in the case of the Neapolitan G. B. Della Porta, "the demonic aspects occupy a marginal place and are similar to those emerging in other contemporaries, such as Campanella" (N. Badaloni, "I fratelli Della Porta e la cultura magica e astrologica a Napoli nel '500," in *Studi Storici*, no. 4, 1959–1960, p. 31).
 15. B. Bekker, op. cit., Book I, Chapter X, p. 115.
 16. Ivi, p. 102. On Carolinus, see footnote 3.
 17. Ivi, p. 104.
 18. W. Bosman, *Voyage de Guinée contenant une Description nouvelle et très exacte de cette Côte où l'on trouve et où l'on trafique l'or, les dents d'Elephant, et les Esclaves*, Marchand Libraire, Utrecht, 1705. This translation into French is quoted by both Bayle and de Brosses. The Dutch edition is entitled W. Bosman, *Nauwkeurige beschryving van de Guinese Good-, Tand- en Slave-Kust*, Isaak Stockman, Utrecht, 1704. The quotations are taken from the English edition: William Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea. Divided Into The Gold, The Slave, and the Ivory Coasts*, a new edition with an introduction by John Ralph Willis and notes by J. D. Fage and R. E. Bradbury, Frank Cass, 1967.

19. Ivi, pp. 147–165. In Letter VI he had already mentioned fetishes made of gold or black earth and gold, or silver, copper, and gold. The European observer's interest in these fetishes is clearly expressed in the following passage: "There are also Fetiches's cast of unalloyed Mountain Gold; which very seldom come to our Hands, because they keep them to adorn themselves: So that if ever we meet with them, those who part with them are obliged to it by necessity, or they are filled with the mentioned black heavy Earth; with which the unskillful are liable to be basely cheated, receiving instead of Gold frequently half the weight in this sort of Earth," William Bosman, op. cit., p. 74.
20. Ivi, p. 146.
21. Ivi, p. 146.
22. Ivi, p. 148.
23. Ivi, p. 156.
24. Ivi, p. 155–156.
25. J. Lubbock, *The Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man*, Longmans, London, 1870. Marx would quote Lubbock's observations in his ethnological notebooks. See *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx*, by L. Krader, Van Gorcum, Assen, 1974, pp. 342–343. As far as the absence of idols is concerned, the source is Lafitau.
26. W. Wundt, *Völkerpsychologie. Eine Untersuchung der Entwicklungsgesetze von Sprache, Mythos und Sitte*, Verlag von Wilhelm Engelmann Leipzig, 1904; *Elements of Folk Psychology: Outlines of a Psychological History of the Development of Mankind*, translated by Edward Leroy Schaub, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1916.
27. J. F. McLennan, *The Worship of Animals and Plants* (1869), in *Studies in Ancient History: The Second Series*, Macmillan, London, 1896.
28. The problematic aspects inherent in the definition of the terms fetish and fetishism are examined in V. Valeri, *Feticcio*, pp. 111–113; J. Pouillon, "Fétiches sans Fétichisme," in *Objets du fétichisme, Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, no. 2, 1970, pp. 135–147; A. Adler, *L'ethnologue et les Fétiches*, ivi, pp. 149–158; B. Bonafre, *Object magique, sorcellerie et fétichisme?*, ivi, pp. 159–192.
29. P. Bayle, *Réponses aux questions d'un provincial* (1704–1706), in *Oeuvres diverses*, La Haye 1737, t. III, I Partie, pp. 970–971 (my translation).
30. Ivi, p. 971.
31. I. Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, in *Werke*, Berlin, 1907, VIB d., pp. 177–180. *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason and Other Writings*, translated and edited by Allen Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.
32. J. F. Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages américains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, Paris, 1724, vol. 1, p. 264, footnote b. The author borrows the notion of the fetish from G. Loyer, *Relation du Royaume d'Issini, Côte d'Or, pays de Guinée, en Afrique*, Charles Estienne Hochereau, Paris, 1714, in particular the description of the purification rite of Guinean women and those of the Gold Coast, p. 168. Like Bosman, Lafitau underlines the similarities between African fetishes and those of the natives of Formosa.
33. J. F. Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, edited by W. N. Fenton and E. L. Moore, 2 volumes, Toronto 1974, vol. I, p. 243.

34. J.F. L. Afitau, *Moeurs*, volume I, p. 383.
35. M. Mauss, *L'art et le mythe d'après M. Wundt* (1908), in *Oeuvres*, vol. II, Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1969, p. 217.
36. J. B. Labat, *Voyage du Chevalier des Marchais en Guinée, Isles voisines et Cayenne*, 4 volumes, Aux dépens de la Compagnie, Amsterdam, 1731 (first edition in 1730, Sangrain, Paris, volume I, p. 296; my translation). In the *Préface* Father Labat affirms that he is quoting from des Marchais's travelogue, who at the time was captaining the expedition on his return trip from Guinea and Cayenne. Involved in the slave trade, des Marchais was well acquainted with indigenous languages (*Préface*, vol. I, p. IV). The peoples he established a relationship with accepted and respected him. This was, according to Labat, crucial in order to obtain substantial commercial advantages. This is how Labat describes the capable and shrewd captain's relationship with the natives: "As is expected of a Captain on these occasions, he was always vigilant and prudent. He could never be taken by surprise and kept his eyes wide open, although pretending to fully trust the people he met. No matter how essential these two features might seem in a captain, they are very difficult to find in the same subject and even more so if the subject is French. The indigenous peoples are naturally sly and cunning, they dissimulate and are greedy, cruel and not restrained at all by honour or religion" (pp. V–VI; my translation). The apologia of the European's dissimulation is based on the assumption that the tendency to dissimulate is natural for indigenous people: the real and principal exchange of communication is the trade of human beings and things. Less pathetically than Labat (as P. Rossi argues in his *I segni del tempo*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1979, p. 263), Mandeville considers dissimulation to be an inborn quality of language. Reflecting on how much there is of Labat and how much of Captain des Marchais in the account, Prévost observes: "Whatever judgment anyone may form on the accuracy and trustworthiness of his observations, it does not seem that the mistrust should be extended to the works he is editing; or, at least, only the observations he could not help himself from including are of a nature to arouse our doubts. But this mistrust must dissolve every time it becomes possible to glimpse someone else's work in his comments. This is much more true for the comments in which his firsthand evidence coincides with that of other travellers," A. F. Prévost, *Histoire générale des voyages, ou nouvelle collection de toutes les relations de voyages*, vol. IV, Book VIII, La Haye 1747, pp. 500–501, footnote (a) (my translation).
37. *Voyage du Chevalier des Marchais en Guinée, Isles voisines et Cayenne*, 4 volumes, Amsterdam, 1731 (first edition in 1730, Paris, volume I, p. 297 (my translation).
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ivi*, p. 297–298.
40. *Ivi*, p. 305.
41. Voltaire, *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, edited by R. Pomeau, Garnier frères, Paris, 1963, vol. I, p. 7; *An Essay on Universal History, the Manners, and Spirit of Nations*, translated into English by Mr. Nugent.
42. On polygenism and monogenism, see G. Gliozzi, *Adamo e il Nuovo Mondo*, La nuova Italia, Florence, 1977. On Voltaire, see pp. 602–603; P. Rossi, *I segni del tempo*, cit., p. 150 ff. D. Pastine, *Le origini del poligenismo e Isaac Lapeyrère*, Miscellanea Seicento, I, Le Monnier, Florence, 1971.

43. On the concept of secularization, see G. Marramao, *Potere e secolarizzazione. Le categorie del tempo*, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1983.
44. On Lafitau see G. Chinard, *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française au XVII et au XVIII siècle*, Hachette, Paris, 1913; A. van Gennep, *Religions, Moeurs et Légendes. Essais d'ethnographie et de linguistique*, V série, Mercure de France, Paris, 1914, pp. 111–113; see also “Pro Ethnographie,” in *Religions, Moeurs et Légendes*, III série, Société du Mercure de France, Paris, 1911; A. Métraux, “Précurseurs de l’ethnologie en France du XVI au XVIII siècle,” in *Cahiers d’histoire mondiale*, vol. VII (1963), no. 3, pp. 721–738; G. Hervé, “Débuts de l’Ethnographie au XVIII siècle (1701–1765),” in *Revue de l’Ecole d’anthropologie*, November 1909, pp. 360–363; M. Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des lumières*, Flammarion, Paris, 1971 and “Discours ethnologique et Discours historique: le texte de Lafitau,” in *Studies on Voltaire and XVIIIth Century*, vol. VLII (1976), pp. 607–623; E. Lemay, “Histoire de l’Antiquité et Découverte du Nouveau Monde chez les auteurs du XVIII siècle,” in *Studies on Voltaire*, vol. CLI–CLV, 1976, pp. 1313–1328; M. T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1964, pp. 348–349; P. Vidal Naquet, *Le Cru, l’Enfant grec et le Cuit*, in *Faire de l’histoire*, vol. II, Gallimard, Paris, 1974, pp. 137–168; S. Landucci, *I filosofi e i selvaggi (1580–1780)*, Laterza, Bari, 1972, pp. 247–262; W. N. Fenton—E. L. Moore’s “Introduction” to *Customs of the American Indians*, op. cit., vol. I; Detienne, *L’invention de la mythologie*, Gallimard, Paris, 1981; S. Moravia, *La scienza dell’uomo nel Settecento*, Laterza, Bari, 1978, pp. 146–148. See also F. Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus*.
45. On the relationship between Lafitau and de Brosses, see A. Radcliffe-Brown, *Method in Social Anthropology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1958 and J. P. Vernant, *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne*, Maspero, Paris, 1974, in addition to some of the texts cited above such as van Gennep, 1914, op. cit., pp. 161–178, Hervé, op. cit., pp. 394–401, Landucci, op. cit., pp. 255–261 (who underlines the differences between them), Fenton-Moore, op. cit., pp. CI–CII, Moravia, op. cit., pp. 149–150.
46. Voltaire, *Essai sur le moeurs*, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 29–30.
47. C. De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains*, J.M. Place, Londres, 1774, .t. II, pp. 54–55.
48. A. Y. Goguet, *De l’Origine des Loix, des Arts et des Sciences; et de leurs progrès chez les anciens Peuples*, 3 volumes, L. Hausmann, Paris, 1758. On the relationship between Goguet and Lafitau, see S. Landucci, op. cit., p. 255; Fenton-Moore, op. cit., pp. C–CI; A. Van Gennep, *Religions...*, V série, 1914, cit., pp. 154–160; G. Hervé, op. cit., pp. 363–366; J. C. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–1791); J. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), H. Home (Lord Kames), *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774), Basil, 1796; A. Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (Report 1762–1763), by R. L. Meek, D. D. Raphael, P. G. Stein, Oxford 1978, vol. V, *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*; J. Millar, *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1771), in W. C. Lehmann, *John Millar of Glasgow*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1960 (reprint of the third 1779 edition, pp. 175–322); W. Robertson, *History*

- of America* (1777), in *Works*, vol. VI, Cadel, London, 1827 (Robertson notes that Lafitau's section on religion "extends to 347 tedious pages in quarto," p. 470). On Lafitau's influence see Fenton-Moore's, "Introduction," cit., pp. LXXXIII ff.; E. Lemay, "Introduction," Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages américains* (textes choisis), 2 volumes, Saugrain et Charles-Etienne Hochereau, Paris, 1983, pp. 17 ff. This selection of writings excludes the chapter on religion and the "Design and Plan of the Work," although it is not clear why. On the relationship between Lafitau and the Scotsmen, see R. L. Meek, *Social science and the ignoble savage*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1976.
49. Cf. Fenton-Moore, op. cit., p. CVII; F. Remotti, "Lewis H. Morgan e lo studio della società antica," *Sociologia del diritto*, X/1982/3, pp. 92–93.
 50. Fenton-Moore, op. cit., p. C X–CXI.
 51. A. Van Gennep, *Pro Ethnographie*, cit., p. 12.
 52. G. C. Lévy, op. cit., p. 319 ff.
 53. F. M. Eiseck, op. cit., p. 53.
 54. As well as the aforementioned writings of Vernant, Detienne, and Vidal-Naquet, see A. Momigliano, "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography," in *Secondo contributo alla storia degli studi classici*, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, Rome, 1960, p. 43.
 55. P. Vidal-Naquet, op. cit., p. 139. Michèle Duchet criticizes Vidal-Naquet for restricting the concept of "premiers temps" to the past of the Greeks, Egyptians, and Phoenicians. The "premiers temps" of Lafitau's title indicate all that precedes "historical time." "The dissonance in the title is only apparent: speaking about American savages or primitive times does not only mean comparing two objects that have a homologous structure. It means the implication in its entirety, through this homology, of the functioning of historical discourse" (M. Duchet, *Discourse ethnologique*, cit., p. 615, my translation).
 56. P. Bayle, *Continuations de Pensées diverses*, in *Oeuvres diverses*, cit., III, p. 311.
 57. M. Duchet, *Discours ethnologique*, cit., p. 607.
 58. Father Joseph François Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, edited and translated by William N. Fenton and Elizabeth L. Moore, in two volumes, The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1974, p. 27.
 59. A. Momigliano, op. cit.
 60. Thucydides, I, 6. See P. Vidal-Naquet, op. cit., p. 138.
 61. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, op. cit., vol. I, p. 4.
 62. Ivi, p. 48.
 63. Ivi, vol. I, p. 104–105.
 64. See C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1962.
 65. It is in this sense that Duchet's interpretation of the "Discours historique" in Lafitau should be seen (see footnote 55). Organized in a system, the Jesuit's comparative method implies the assimilation of what precedes historical times into a general historical discourse.
 66. Lafitau, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 105–106.

67. Ivi, vol. I, p. 107.
68. B. Malinowski, "The Primitive Economics of the Trobriand Islanders," *The Economic Journal*, March 1921, pp. 1–16; and *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, George Routledge, London, 1922.
69. K. Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, Academic Press, New York, 1977, by H. W. Parsons.
70. See M. Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire*, cit. (Italian translation vol. I, p. XIX). On the use of categories such as "primitive" and "savage" in anthropology and, more generally, in the cultural sphere, see M. Godelier, "Primitive," in *Enciclopedia*, vol. X, Einaudi, Turin, 1981 and I. Sachs, "Selvaggio, barbaro, civilizzato," in *Enciclopedia*, vol. XII, Einaudi, Turin, 1981. On the history of the complex problem of the New World in Western culture, see G. Gliozzi, *Adamo e il nuovo mondo*, cit., and also *La scoperta dei selvaggi*, Principato, Milan, 1971; A. Gerbi, *La disputa del Nuovo Mondo. Storia di una polemica 1750–1900*, Ricciardi, Milano-Napoli, 1983; M. T. Hodgen, op. cit.; S. Landucci, op. cit.; G. Atkinson, *Les relations de voyages du XVII^e siècle et l'évolution des idées*, Paris, 1924; G. Gliozzi, "Il 'Nuovo Mondo' nella cultura del Seicento," in multiple authors, *L'Europa cristiana nel rapporto con le altre culture nel secolo XVII*, La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978. On the notion of the savage as "other," see G. Cocchiara, *Il mito del buon selvaggio*, D'Anna, Messina-Florence, 1948; E. Garin, "Alla scoperta del 'diverso': i selvaggi americani e saggi cinesi," in *Rinascite e rivoluzioni. Movimenti culturali dal XIV al XVIII secolo*, Laterza, Bari, 1976; Multiple authors, "Il buon selvaggio nella cultura francese ed europea del settecento," in *Studi di letteratura francese*, VII, 1981. On the "non-contemporaneity of the contemporaries" in the XVIII century, see R. Koselleck, "Il secolo XVIII come inizio dell'età moderna," in *Studi Settecenteschi*, no. 3–4, 1982–1983, pp. 9–23.
71. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., "Americans. The Origin of the Peoples of America," vol. I, pp. 27–102.
72. P. D. Huet, *Demonstratio Evangelica ad serenissimum Delphini*, Parisiis, 1679.
73. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., vol. I, p. 13.
74. Ivi, p. 14–15.
75. Ivi, p. 16.
76. Ivi, p. 17.
77. B. Malinowski, *The Primitive Economics*, cit., and *Argonauts*, cit.
78. M. Mauss, "Essay sur le don," in *Sociologie et Anthropologie*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1950; *The Gift*, English edition first published in 1954 by Cohen & West.
79. E. Durkheim, *Leçons de sociologie*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1950.
80. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., p. 123.
81. W. Warburton, *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*, vol. II, London, 1741, p. 81, footnote (a). The reference is to Diodorus Siculus, I, 8 and to Vitruvius, II, 1. On Warburton, see Paolo Rossi, *I segni del tempo*, cit., pp. 270–281; M. V. David, *Le débat sur les écritures et l'hieroglyphe aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, Bibliothèque générale de l'École pratique des Hautes Études,

- Paris, 1965, pp. 95–103; M. G. Lombardo, “La filosofia della religione di William Warburton,” in *Studi Settecenteschi*, cit., pp. 119–127.
82. W. Warburton, *Essai sur les hiéroglyphes des Egyptiens*, translated by L. de Malpeines, Paris, 1744.
 83. E. Bonnot de Condillac, *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*, 1746. The Italian translation may be found in *Opere*, Utet, Turin, 1976, pp. 207–208, footnote (a). See also C. A. Viano’s “Introduction,” p. 37.
 84. E. Bonnot de Condillac, *Traité des systèmes* (1749). *Philosophical Writings of Etienne Bonnot, Abbé de Condillac*, translated by Franklin Philip, 2 volumes, Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, 1982–1987. Volume I (1982) contains *A Treatise on Systems, A Treatise on Sensations, and Logic, or the First Developments of the Art of Thinking*.
 85. The *Treatise on Systems* was of crucial importance to Enlightenment thought. On this topic see E. Garin’s, “Introduction” to the Italian edition, cit.; E. McNiven Hine, *A Critical Study of Condillac’s Traité des systèmes*, The Hague–Boston–London, 1979. As Garin notes (p. ix, footnote 3), the entries on “Système” and “Divination” in the *Encyclopédie* draw heavily on Condillac’s work. D’Alembert’s *Discours préliminaire* is also influenced by the *Traité des systèmes* (on “Discours” [1751] see *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers*, Impr. des Editeurs, Livourne, 1770, vol. I. D’Alembert–Diderot, *La filosofia dell’Encyclopédie*, edited by P. Casini, Laterza, Bari, 1966; “Divination,” ivi, 1772, vol. IV, pp. 978–981; “Système,” ivi, 1775, vol. V, pp. 745–749. On Condillac and on the concept of system, see W. Tega, *Arbor Scientiarum*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1984, Chapters I and II, pp. 13–111.
 86. Condillac, *A Treatise on Systems*, cit., p. 3.
 87. Ivi, p. 3.
 88. Ivi, p. 123.
 89. Ivi, p. 133.
 90. Ibid.
 91. Lucretius, V, 924–1240. See also *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, by A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, Baltimore, 1955.
 92. Lucretius, V, 1029.
 93. Lucretius, V, 1218–1221.
 94. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 67.
 95. G. B. Vico, *Principii di Scienza Nuova* (1744), edited by Fausto Nicolini, Bari, Laterza, 1928; *Scienza nuova seconda*, 1730/1744; *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, revised translation of the third edition by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1948; Cornell Paperbacks, 1976. Vico quotes a passage from Statius’s *Thebaid*, III, 661: “Primos in orbe deos fecit timor” [Fear first created gods in the world], the same passage cited by Hobbes, op. cit., p. 67. In examining the concept of fear, Vico states that “false religions were not born of imposture but of credulity” (ibid.). In a footnote Nicolini refers to Vico’s polemics against van Dale and Fontenelle. Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that in his *History of the Oracles* Fontenelle sees imposture as a consequence of the easy credulity of primitive minds, of the link between ignorance and

- a sense of wonder, which produce “fables,” myths, stories, and false beliefs (*Histoire des Oracles*, cit., p. 226). On the topic of fear, see A. Minerbi Belgrado, *Materialismo e origine della religione nel '700*, Sansoni, Florence, 1977, pp. 1–29.
96. Condillac, *A Treatise on Systems*, cit., p. 23.
 97. On Fontenelle’s comparative method and on the theory of the “fables,” see the section “Lafitau and Fontenelle: Two Hypotheses for Comparison.”
 98. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., vol. I, pp. 355–356. But as far as comparison is concerned, he rejects the thesis of “diabolic mimesis,” see *ivi*, vol. I, pp. 10, 124.
 99. In the chapter on divination, Condillac cites Fontenelle’s *Histoire des Oracles* (*A Treatise on Systems*, p. 30–31).
 100. J. Le Rond D’Alembert, *Discourse préliminaire*, cit., Italian translation, see in particular, pp. 126–127.
 101. On Fontenelle and Hume, see also P. Bayle, *Pensée écrites à un docteur de Sorbonne, à l’occasion de la comète qui parut au mois de Décembre 1680*, in *Oeuvres diverses*, La Haye (Trévoux), 1737, 2nd edition, vol. III, paragraph 65 (Italian translation, pp. 120–121; on the issue concerning the several editions of the work, see the Editor’s note, vol. I, pp. VII–XVI). On Bayle and his influence, see E. Cassirer, *La filosofia dell’illuminismo*, La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1973, p. 283. Spinoza and Toland associate fear with hope. On Spinoza, see footnote 8; J. Toland, *Letters to Serena* (1704), Italian translation by E. Lecaldano, Laterza, Bari, 1977, p. 79; *Adeisidaemon e Origines Judicae* (1709), Italian translation by A. Sabetti, Liguori, Naples, 1984. On Toland and Leclerc and the relationship between a “primitive mentality” and the origins of religion, see M. Iofrida, *La filosofia di J. Toland*, Angeli, Milan, 1983, p. 74; B. de Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Public Benefits*, edited by F. B. Kaye, Oxford, 1966, vol. II, p. 207. See also M. E. Scribano, *Natura umana e società competitiva. Studio su Mandeville*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1980, p. 21.
 102. G. B. Vico, op. cit., pp. 84 ff., 138 ff. On the relationship between “lightning” and the primitive mentality in Vico, see N. Badaloni, *Vico*, Laterza, Bari, 1984, p. 77 ff. Another element that must be stressed, as far as the issue of a theory of the primitive mind is concerned, is the relationship between Fontenelle and Vico, who share the same view, in particular of the role played by “wonder” and “ignorance.” Vico states, “Wonder is the daughter of ignorance; and the greater the object of wonder, the more the wonder grows” (184), p. 63. On the same topic, see the *Histoire des Oracles*, cit., p. 226 ff. In his analysis of *De l’Origine des Fables*, S. Moravia, op. cit., pp. 146–147, has drawn attention to the relationship between Fontenelle and Vico in connection with the link between the theory of the myths and the theory of a primitive mind. See also Manuel, op. cit.
 103. Condillac, *A Treatise on Systems* cit., pp. 22–23.
 104. B. de Fontenelle, *De l’Origine des Fables* (1724), edited by J. R. Carré, Paris, 1932, p. 40.
 105. It is in this context of the autonomization of human history from revealed history (at least as far as the idea is concerned that it is possible to retrace this history without resorting to God and his truth) that the eighteenth-century

debate against diffusionism can be inserted. For an overview of the issue in relation to the New World, see G. Gliozzi, *Adamo e il Nuovo Mondo*, cit.; A. Gerbi, op. cit. A theory of primitive mentality in which the uniformity of peoples is explained in relation to their degree of civilization tends to break the link between revealed history and diffusionism. Already present in Fontenelle (see Manuel, op. cit., p. 46), this idea would gain ground with Hume and de Brosses. Vico also states: "Uniform ideas originating among entire peoples unknown to each other must have a common ground of truth," op. cit., XIII, 144, p. 57. In his *Scienza Nuova Seconda* (1730) he referred to Lafitau's diffusionism as follows: "Someone recounted to me, since I have not personally seen the book, that Father Lafitau, a Jesuit missionary in America, had written a very erudite work entitled *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*. In this work he argues that the Amerindians bear a striking resemblance to the ancients from Asia and undertakes to prove that they migrated to America from Asia. But this is very hard to prove. He might have taken the right direction, had my work preceded his," G. B. Vico, *La Scienza Nuova l'edizione del 1744 con le varianti dell'edizione del 1730 e di due redazioni inedite e corredata di note storiche*, a cura di F. Nicolini, vol. III, Laterza, Bari, 1916, p. 1031.

See also A. Momigliano, now in *Sui fondamenti della storia antica*, Einaudi, Turin, 1984, p. 235 and S. Landucci, op. cit., pp. 309–310. For an interpretation of the Vichian theory of primitive mind, see N. Badaloni, *Vico*, cit.

106. A. R. J. Turgot, *Plan de deux discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1751), *Oeuvres*, edited by G. Schelle, vol. I, Paris, 1913, pp. 303–304; in "On Universal History," *Turgot on Progress, Sociology and Economics*, translated and edited by Ronald L. Meek, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1973, p. 89.
107. On Turgot's stages theory, see R. I. Meek, translation quoted, pp. 52–57. R. Finzi, "The Theory of Historical stages in Turgot and Quesnay," *The Economic Review*, vol. 33, no. 2, April 1982, pp. 109–118. On the relationship between Fontenelle and Turgot, see S. Bartolomei, "Analisi di una similitudine: 'età dell'uomo' ed 'età del genere umano' in Fontenelle e Turgot," *Studi Settecenteschi*, cit., pp. 84–106.
108. For some background to this issue, see Chapter III.
109. See *Autopoiesis*, edited by M. Zeleny, North Holland, New York, 1978; H. R. Maturana and F. J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of Living*, D. Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, 1980.
110. See R. L. Meek, translation quoted, p. 43–48.
111. Bernard Fontenelle, *On the Origin of Fables*, in Burton Feldman and Robert D. Richardson, *The Rise of Modern Mythology*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indianapolis, 1972, p. 16. For the important role played by Fontenelle in the comparative method, see Andrew Lang, *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, London, 1887, 2 vol. edition, especially Appendix A in the second volume, "Fontenelle's Forgotten Common Sense." On the relationship between myth and history in Fontenelle, see G. Cantelli, "Mito e storia in J. Leclerc, Tournemine e Fontenelle," in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, no. 3 and 4, 1972, especially pp. 391–399 of no. 4. On the concepts of history and system, see A. Pizzorusso, "Fontenelle e l'idea del progresso," *Belfagor*, no. 2, 1962, pp. 150–180.

112. It is true that Fontenelle speaks about the Kaffirs, the Laplanders, and Iroquois as “already ancient” peoples, who have achieved some level of knowledge (“who have come to a degree of knowledge and manners that the earliest men did not have,” p. 11). In this sense, they are ancient with respect to the men of primitive times.
113. Ivi, p. 17.
114. Ivi, p. 17.
115. Ivi, p. 17.
116. Lafitau discovers matriarchy among the Iroquois and compares it with that of the Lycians described by Herodotus (I, ii, 173). As a proof of his diffusionist assumption, see op. cit., vol. I, pp. 69–70. Lafitau hypothesizes that this Iroquoian system derives from the Lycian people. As we can see, this subject fits into a *genetic* determination, thus anticipating McLennan’s and Bachofen’s theories: matriarchy passes from the Lycian people to the Iroquois. The biblical dispersal of humankind and the ensuing diffusionist idea impart a genetic, and thus temporal structure to the comparison of peoples with similar customs. Adam Ferguson would take a strong stand against the hypothesis of matriarchy. See A. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), cit., p. 95.
117. SeeM .D uchet, *Discourse ethnologique*, cit., p. 607.
118. On the relationship between the fragment *Sur l’Histoire* and *De l’Origine des Fables*, see the already quoted critical edition of the latter, edited by J. Carré, where a comparison between the corresponding passages can be found. The fragment was published for the first time in 1758, after Fontenelle’s death. On the dating of the fragment, see G. Cantelli, pp. 392–394, footnote 41.
119. SeeM .D etienne, o.p.c it., p. 17.
120. *Histoire des Oracles*, cit., p. 226. *De l’Origine des Fables*, cit., pp. 12–14.
121. *Histoire des Oracles*, cit., p. 227.
122. *De l’Origine des Fables*, cit., p. 15.
123. G. Canguilhem, “Histoire des religions et histoire des sciences dans la théorie du fétichisme chez Auguste Comte,” in *Études d’Histoire et de Philosophie des Sciences*, Vrin, Paris, 1968, pp. 88–89.
124. Ibid.
125. See *De l’Origine*, cit., p. 16.
126. *The Rise of Modern Mythology*, cit., p. 12.
127. *The Rise of Modern Mythology*, pp. 11, 13.
128. Ivi, p. 12.
129. Ivi, p. 13.
130. Ivi, p. 12–13.
131. Ivi, p. 12–13.
132. Ivi, p. 12–13.
133. Ibid.
134. Ibid.
135. On the relationship between the notion of antiquity and the conceptual organization of time between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see P. Rossi, *Sterminare antichità. Studi vichiani*, Nistri Lischi, Pisa, 1969; see also *I segni del tempo*, c it.
136. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., vol. I, p. 126.

137. Ivi, p. 124f f.
138. David Hume, *Natural History of Religion* (1757), with an Introduction by John M. Robertson (London, A. and H. Bradlaugh Bonner, 1889), p. 20. See Manuel, op. cit., for Fontenelle's influence on Hume.
139. "Mankind are so much the same, in all Times and Places, that History informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief Use is only to discover the constant and universal Principles of human Nature, by shewing Men in all Varieties of Circumstances and Situations, and furnishing us with Materials, from which we may form our Observations, and become acquainted with the regular Springs of human Action and Behaviour," David Hume, *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), London, A. Millar, p. 134, Essay VIII.
140. D.H ume, *Natural History*, cit., p. 23.
141. A. Smith, "The Principles which Lead and Direct Philosophical Enquiries," in *The Early Writings of Adam Smith*, edited by J. R. Lindgren, New York, 1967 (published posthumously in 1795), p. 50. Philosophy does not arise from an expectation of advantage, but from wonder, once the stage of mere subsistence is outgrown and law has established order and security. The date of publication is uncertain. See P. Berlanda's "Introduction" to the Italian edition (*Saggi filosofici*, edited by P. Berlanda, Angeli, Milan, 1984, p. 68). On Adam Smith's essay, see also S. Moscovici, "A propos de quelques travaux d'Adam Smith sur l'histoire et la philosophie des sciences," in *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences et de leur applications*, no. 9, 1956, pp. 1–20 and H. F. Thomson, "Adam Smith's Philosophy of Science," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, no. 79, 1965, pp. 212–233.
142. D.H ume, *Natural History*, cit., p. 25.
143. Ivi, p. 26.
144. Hume disagrees with Fontenelle (and so does Brumoy in *Théâtre des Grecs*, Paris, 1730) on an important point. Referring to a passage of the *Histoire des Oracles*, where Fontenelle speaks about the impieties of Aristophanes, which were applauded by the very same Athenians who put to death the incredulous Socrates (*Histoire des Oracles*, cit., pp. 270–271), he observes: "These writers consider not that the ludicrous, familiar images, under which the Gods are represented by that comic poet, instead of appearing impious, were the genuine lights in which the ancients conceived their divinities" (*Natural History*, p. 30). Hume therefore underlines, for the observer, the problem concerning the relationship between the historical determinacy of a people and the way they imagine themselves by means of the way they imagine their deities.
145. D.H ume, *Natural History of Religion*, p. 18.
146. Ibid.
147. Ibid., p. 18.
148. Ivi, p. 18.
149. Ivi, p. 19.
150. Ibid., p. 19.
151. Ivi, p. 19.
152. Ivi, p. 20.
153. Ibid., p. 20.

154. D. Stewart, "Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith," in A. Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, London, 1853, vol. I, p. xxxv. On "conjectural history," see G. Gusdorf, *De l'histoire des sciences à l'histoire de la pensée*, Payot, Paris, 1966, p. 79.
155. *Natural History*, p.2 6.
156. See R. L. Meek, op. cit., pp. 52–57, 67–72.
157. A. Smith, op. cit. See in particular pp. 48–49.
158. A. Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, cit., p. 14. See also Meek, op. cit., p. 84 ff.
159. See the already quoted essay by Meek, op. cit., pp. 73–123.
160. According to Smith, the North American Indians are an "exception." Even though they have no conception of sheep farming, they have nevertheless some notions of agriculture. See A. Smith, *Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms*, edited by E. Cannan, London, 1896 (reprint New York 1964), p. 108. In the 1762–1763 Lectures Smith had already observed: "The whole of the savage nations which subsist by flocks have no notion of cultivating the ground. The only instance that has the appearance of an objection to this rule is the state of the North American Indians. They, tho' they have no conception of flocks and herds, have nevertheless some notion of agriculture. Their women plant a few stalks of Indian corn at the back of their huts. But this can hardly be called agriculture. This corn does not make any considerable part of their food; it serves only as a seasoning or something to give a relish to their common food; the flesh of those animals they have caught in the chase.—Flocks and herds therefore are the first resource men would take themselves to when they found difficulty in subsisting by the chase." *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (Report of 1762–1763), edited by R. L. Meek, D. D. Raphael, and P. G. Stein, in *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 15. A noteworthy element is Adam Smith's attempt to minimize the exception of the North American Indians when compared to the "natural" course of the stages theorized by the conjectural method.

Two Charles de Brosses's Theory of Fetishism

1. See footnotes 44 and 45 in the previous chapter.
2. F. E. Manuel, *The Prophets of Paris*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1962, p. 32.
3. Ch. de Brosses, *Lettres familières sur l'Italie*, edited by Y. Bezard, Paris, 1931, 2 volumes. On the history of the *Lettres*, see E. Kanceff, *Notes sur l'histoire des Lettres familières sur l'Italie*, in *Charles de Brosses 1777–1977*, Actes du Colloque de Dijon, 3–7 mai 1977, Textes recueillis par J.-C. Garreta, Genève, 1981, pp. 35–46; on the issues regarding the editions, see E. Cagiano, *Les éditions des "Lettres familières": analyse et perspectives*, ivi, pp. 15–34.
4. Ch. de Brosses, *Traité de la formation mécanique des langues et des principes physiques de l'étymologie*, Paris, 1765, 2 volumes. On Turgot and the entry *Etymologie*, see Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century*, cit., p. 184. On de Brosses's works, see the essays by S. Auroux (pp. 187–200), D. Droixhe (pp. 201–208),

- C. Porset (pp. 209–218) contained in *Ch. de Brosse*, 1777–1977, cit.; see also G. Gusdorf, *Les principes de la pensée au siècle des Lumières*, Payot, Paris, 1971. On the connections between the *Traité* and de Brosse's theory of fetishism, see P. P. Gossiaux, *De Brosse: le fétichisme, de la démonologie à la linguistique*, in *Ch. de Brosse*, 1777–1977, cit., pp. 167–185.
5. Ch. de Brosse, *Histoire des navigations aux Terres Australes, contenant ce que l'on sçait des moeurs et des productions des Contrées découvertes jusqu'à ce jour; et où il est traité de l'utilité d'y faire de plus amples découvertes, et des moyens d'y former un établissement*, 2 tomes, Paris, 1756, t. II, p. 372 ff. (translated and edited by John Callander, *Terra Australis Cognita: or, Voyages to the Terra Australis, or Southern hemisphere, during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries*, Donaldson, Edinburgh, 1766–1768).
 6. Ivi, t. II, p. 377 (my translation). Cf. M. David, "Histoire des religions et philosophie au XVIII siècle: le président de Brosse, David Hume et Diderot," *Revue Philosophique*, no. 2, April–June 1974, p. 156 and "Le président de Brosse historien des religions et philosophe, in Ch. de Brosse," 1777–1977, cit., p. 130.
 7. *Ibid.* (my translation). On "Baetyles," see p. 110 ff.
 8. *Ibid.* (my translation).
 9. On this, cf. the two articles by M. David, cit., p. 146 and p. 123 ff., respectively.
 10. Ch. de Brosse, *Du Culte*, cit., p. 10 (partly translated by B. Feldman and R. Richardson, *The Rise of Modern Mythology 1680–1860*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1972, p. 171).
 11. Ivi, pp. 10–11 (trans. cit., p. 171). It has been pointed out that the inappropriate use of the word "fetish" singles out the African practices from similar ones in the rest of the world. In 1760 de Brosse had already done away with this divisive tendency, yet with him, as we shall see, the "misunderstanding" began! Cf. G. Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion*, Hutchinson, London, 1954.
 12. Ch. de Brosse, *Du Culte*, cit., p. 12 (trans. cit., p. 172).
 13. Ivi, p. 14–15 (trans. cit., p. 172).
 14. Ivi, p. 14 (trans. cit., p. 172).
 15. Ivi, p. 15 (trans. cit., p. 172).
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. Ivi, p. 15–16 (trans. cit., p. 172).
 18. Ivi, p. 17 (trans. cit., p. 173).
 19. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, vol. I, pp. 39–42.
 20. *Du Culte*, cit., p. 46 (my translation).
 21. Ivi, p. 67 (my translation).
 22. Ivi, p. 76 (my translation).
 23. In this category de Brosse includes, like Hume (*Natural History*, cit., p. 310), atheist peoples (p. 199), who are classified as the stage zero of religious progress.
 24. Ivi, p. 103. Cf. also p. 64, on the difference between fetishism and idolatry.
 25. Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, I, pp. 9–10. On Sanchuniaton, cf. L. B. Paton, *Sanchuniaton*, in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, C. Scribner's sons, New York, 1920, vol. XI, pp. 178–181; O. Eissfeldt, *Sanchuniaton von*

- Berut und Ilumilku von Ugarit*, Max Niemeyer, Halle, 1952; U. Hölscher, *Eredità di concezioni cosmogoniche in Esiodo*, in AA.Vv., *Esiodo*, edited by G. Arrighetti, Mursia, Milan, 1975, pp. 127–135; L. Troiani, *L'opera storiografica di Filone da Byblos*, Goliardica, Pisa, 1974; S. E. Loewenstamm, *Sanchuniaton*, Pauly-Wissowa, Suppl. XIV, München, 1974, pp. 593–598; A. Momigliano, *Interpretazioni minime VII*, in “Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa D,” serie III, vol. X, 4, Pisa, 1980, pp. 1227–1231 (Momigliano is openly skeptical on the antiquity and authenticity of Sanchuniaton). Cf. also, S. Moscati, *Il mondo dei Fenici*, Mondadori, Milan, 1979, especially pp. 50–63.
26. Cf., for example, Huet, op. cit., Prop. IV, chap. II, 2, pp. 42–43; S. Bochart, *Geographia Sacra seu Phaleg et Canaan* (1646), Ludgurni Batavorum 1707 (4th), lib. II, Chapter II, pp. 703–712; A. van Dale, *Dissertatio super Sanchoniatone*, in *Dissertatio super Aristeia*, Amsterdam, 1705, pp. 472–506; W. Warburton, *The Divine Legation*, vol. I, London, 1738, p. 153; E. Fourmont, *Réflexions sur l'Origine, l'Histoire et la Succession des Ancien Peuples*, Paris, 1747 (2nd) (1st ed. 1735), t. I, 2 volumes, pp. 162–165 (in particular on “Baetyles”); Voltaire, *Essai sur les Moeurs*, cit., vol. I, pp. 46–50; Court De Gebelin, *Monde Primitif*, Paris, 1773, p. 1 ff. (on “Baetyles” p. 58 ff.). For the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century discussion of peoples’ antiquity, cf. P. Rossi, *I segni del tempo*, cit., p. 150 ff.
27. Eusebius of Caesarea, I, 10, 23. Cf. Troiani, op. cit., p. 167 ff.
28. Huet, o p.c it., p. 1 23.
29. Bochart, o p.c it., p. 7 07.
30. *Genesis*, XXVII, 10, 22; cf. also XXXI, 13.
31. Bochart, l oc.c it.
32. Fourmont, o p.c it., t. I, p. 1 65.
33. Op.a ndl oc.c it. (myt ranslation).
34. *Du Culte*, p. 116 (my translation).
35. Ivi, p. 1 35f f.
36. Ivi, p. 1 61.
37. Ivi, p. 1 17.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid. (myt ranslation).
40. Ivi, p. 150 (my translation).
41. Ivi, p. 158 (my translation).
42. Ivi, p. 161 (my translation).
43. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., p. 130. Badaloni draws attention to the differences between Lafitau and de Brosses when he compares the latter, with reference to the question of the “primitive mentality,” to Vico. According to Vico, the peculiar character of the “primitive mentality” is the substitution of substance with an idea or quality. The simplest form of such substitution (which amounts to a conceptual change when compared to Lafitau’s theory) is described by de Brosses as “fetishism.” It is important to note that for Vico such substitution is due to the unusual natural phenomena. Cf. N. Badaloni, *Vico*, cit., p. 77.
44. Ivi, p. 1 51.
45. Ivi, p. 1 46.

46. Ivi, p. 145–146.
47. In M. David, *Lettres inédites de Diderot et de Hume écrites de 1755 à 1763 au président de Brosses*, in “Revue Philosophique,” no. 2, April–June, 1966, p. 138 (my translation).
48. Ibid. (my translation).
49. M. David, *Histoire des religions*, cit., p. 155 ff. and *Le président de Brosses historien des religions et philosophe*, cit., p. 132 ff. On Hume-de Brosses’s relations, cf. A. de Brosses, *Les relations du président de Brosses avec David Hume*, in *Ch. de Brosses, 1777–1977*, cit., pp. 141–148.
50. Ibid.
51. *Du Culte*, cit., p. 182 (translated by B. Feldman and R. Richardson, cit., p. 174).
52. Ivi, p. 184 (my translation).
53. Ivi, p. 185.
54. Ivi, p. 190 (my translation).
55. Ivi, p. 196 (my translation).
56. In David, *Lettres inédites de Diderot et de Hume*, cit., pp. 140–141.
57. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, cit., pp. 360–361.
58. *Du Culte*, cit., p. 200.
59. On this issue cf. L. Dumont, *Homo aequalis. Genèse et épanouissement de l’idéologie économique*, Gallimard, Paris, 1977 (in English: *From Mandeville to Marx: Genesis and Triumph of Economic Ideology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1977).
60. I.K ant, o p.c it.
61. C. G. Heyne, *De causis fabularum seu mythorum veterum physicis*, 1764 (partly reproduced in B. Feldman and R. Richardson, op. cit., pp. 215–220). Cf. also: V. Verra, *Mito, rivelazione e filosofia in J.C. Herder e nel suo tempo*, Marzorati, Milan, 1966, pp. 180, 21 ff.; and Landucci, op. cit., p. 243.
62. J.-J. Rousseau, *Émile ou de l’éducation* (1762), Paris 1966, p. 334 (translated by B. Foxley, *Emile*, Dent, London, 1974).
63. C. F. Dupuis, *Origine de tous les cultes*, Paris, 1791 and *Abrégé de l’origine de tous les cultes*, Paris, 1796 (in English: *The Origin of all Religious Worship*, Unknown Publisher, New Orleans, 1872).
64. (Destutt De Tracy), *Analyse raisonnée de l’origine de tous les cultes, ou religion universelle*, Paris, 1804. On Dupuis and de Tracy, see M. David, *La notion de fétichisme chez Auguste Comte et l’oeuvre du président de Brosses “Du culte des dieux fétiches,”* in *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions*, no. 2, April–June, 1967, pp. 211–212.
65. Ch.-G. Leroy, *Lettres philosophiques sur l’intelligence et la perfectibilité des animaux, avec quelques lettres sur l’homme*, Paris, 1802, p. 305.
66. A. Comte, *Cours de Philosophie positive* (1830), t. V, 52 Leçon, Paris, 1908 (translated and adapted by H. Martineau, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*, London, 1853); H. Spencer, *Principles of sociology*, London, 1873, vol. I, Chapter XXI.
67. On M einers, B öttiger, C onstant, s ee C hapter I Vb elow.
68. G. W. F. Hegel, *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*, von J. Hoffmeister, Bd. XVIII/A, Meiner, Hamburg, 1955, pp. 213–234 (p. 222) (translated by H. B. Nisbet, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Cambridge University

- Press, Cambridge, 1975, p. 198). See also *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religionen*, Dunker u. Humblott, Berlin, 1840, translated by J. C. Sanderson, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, K. Paul Trench Trübner, London, 1895).
69. J.F. McLennan, o.p.c. it.
 70. J.L.ubbock, o.p.c. it.
 71. A.B. Inet, o.p.c. it.
 72. A. Comte, *Considerations philosophiques sur les sciences et les savants* (1825), in *Écrits de jeunesse*, Paris-La Haye, 1970, pp. 324–325 (translated by H. D. Mutton and F. Harrison, *Early Essays on Social Philosophy*, Routledge, London [1911]); *Cours*, cit., vols. IV, pp. 365 e VI, 168. For more details on this, see articles by G. Canguilhem, *Histoire des religions*, cit., and M. David, *La notion de fétichisme*, c. it.

Three The Concept of Fetishism as a Theoretical and Historical Problem

1. M. Mauss, *Oeuvres*, edited by V. Karady, Paris, 1969, vol. II, pp. 244–245 (my translation). Cf. J. Pouillon, *art. cit.*, p. 138. This is notwithstanding the fact that Mauss still regards de Brosses's work as "the first scientific work of comparative religions" (*Oeuvres*, Paris, 1969, vol. III, p. 395, my translation). Before Mauss, Max Müller had already leveled charges against both the concept of fetishism and de Brosses's theories. Cf. F. M. Müller, *Natural Religion. The Gifford Lectures* (1888), Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1889, pp. 158–159, 219–220.
2. W. Wundt, o.p.c. it., t. 2, p. 22f.
3. M. Mauss, *L'art et le mythe d'après M. Wundt*, in *Oeuvres*, vol. II, cit., p. 216 ff.
4. G. Schmidt, *Manuale di storia comparata delle religioni*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1934, p. 94. On the theories of a "primordial monotheism," see the critique by R. Pettazzoni, *L'essere supremo nelle religioni primitive*, Einaudi, Torino, 1974, pp. 153–162 and by G. Van Der Leeuw, op. cit.
5. V. Valeri, o.p.c. it., p. 112–113.
6. J. Goetz, *L'esperienza di Dio nei primitivi*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1983, p. 20 (my translation).
7. For the concept of "formal connections," cf. L. Wittgenstein, "Bemerkungen über Frazer's 'The Golden Bough,'" in *Synthese*, edited by R. Rhees, XVII, 1967 (translated by J. Beversluis, "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*," in *Wittgenstein: Sources and Perspectives*, edited by C. G. Luckhardt, Cornell University Press and Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1979, pp. 61–81, reproduced, with minor corrections in *Philosophical Occasions 1912–1951*, edited by J. C. Klagge and A. Nordmann, Hackett, Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1993, pp. 119–155). On the theoretical-critical perspectives opened up by Wittgenstein, cf. A. G. Gargani, *Introduzione a Wittgenstein*, Laterza, Bari, 1973.
8. J.-B. Bossuet, *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681), Paris, 1966.

9. W. Wundt, op. cit., trans. p. 222. The fetish is also “a means for furthering purposes of magic” (translation, p. 223).
10. M. Mauss, *Oeuvres*, II, cit., p. 217. Cf. Valeri, op. cit., p. 111.
11. M. Foucault, *Le mots et les choses*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966.
12. C. Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction*, in *Sociologie et anthropologie*, edited by M. Mauss, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1950 (translated by F. Baker, *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1987). For a discussion of Mauss’s essay *The Gift*, cf. M. Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*, Aldine de Gruyter, New York, 1972, pp. 148–182; L. Dumont, *Essais sur l’individualisme*, Seuil, Paris, 1983, pp. 167–186; R. Guidieri, *L’abondance des pauvres*, Seuil, Paris, 1984, pp. 31–85, 129–156.
13. C. Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction*, cit., p. XXVIII (trans. cit., pp. 30–31).
14. G. Bateson, *Mind and Nature. A Necessary Unity*, E. P. Dutton, New York, 1979, p. 8 ff.
15. C. Lévi-Strauss, loc. cit.
16. T. H. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1962.
17. Cf. B. Baczko, *Lumières et Utopie*, Payot, Paris, 1978, on Condorcet.
18. Cf. M. Eliade, *The Quest. History and Meaning in Religion*, Chicago University Press, Chicago and London, [1969] 1984, p. 44; also M. Bloch, *Apologie pour l’histoire ou métier d’historien*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1949 on the confusion between “explanation” and “filiation” in those searching for “origins.” In tribal societies, the *myth* of the “origins” is used to provide the reasons for the permanence and stability of the world. Cf. R. Pettazzoni, op. cit., pp. 89–91.
19. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, Oxford 1953 (translated by G. E. M. Anscombe, *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, Oxford [1953] 2001, 3rd edition, p. 122) and “Remarks on Frazer’s *Golden Bough*,” cit., p. 133.
20. “Remarks on Frazer’s *Golden Bough*,” cit., p. 133.
21. On the observer in anthropology, cf. C. Lévi-Strauss, op. cit.; but also the theory put forward by M. Harris in *The Rise of Anthropological Theory. A History of Theories of Culture*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1968; and *Cultural Materialism. The Struggle for a Science of Culture*, Random House, New York, 1979. On the epistemology of observation, cf. H. Von Foerster, *Notes pour une épistémologie des objets vivants*, and H. Maturana, *Stratégies cognitives*, both included in *L’unité de l’homme*, edited by E. Morin and M. Piattelli Palmarini, vol. II, Seuil, Paris, 1974. See also H. Maturana and F. J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of Living*, cit.; F. J. Varela, *Principles of Biological Autonomy*, North Holland, New York, 1979. A. M. Iacono, *L’evento e l’osservatore*, ETS, Pisa, 2013.
22. A. Radcliffe-Brown, op. cit., p. 128. On this, cf. Pietro Rossi, *Antropologia culturale e ricerca storica*, in *Cultura e antropologia*, cit., pp. 76–104 (pp. 87–88). On the relationship between history and the comparative method, cf. also R. A. Nisbet, *Social Change and History. Aspects of the Western Theory of Development*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1969.
23. Ivi, p. 159.

24. M. Mauss, *Les civilisations: éléments et formes*, in *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée*, cit. (I am using here the text in *Essais de sociologie*, Seuil, Paris, 1971.)
25. Cf. G. Gliozzi, *Adamo e il Nuovo Mondo*, cit., on colonialism and ideologies before the eighteenth century.
26. K. Marx, *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Oekonomie (1867)*, I Bd., Berlin, 1977, B. I, K. 1,4, pp. 85–98 (translated by B. Fowkes, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. 1, Penguin in association with New Left Review, London [1976] 1990, pp. 163–177); S. Freud, *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* (1905), in *Gesammelte Werke*, V Bd., Frankfurt am Main 1972 (5th ed.), pp. 52–54 (translated by A. A. Brill, *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., New York, and Washington 1920, pp. 1–35); S. Freud, *Fetischismus* (1927), in *GW*, XIV Bd., pp. 301–317; S. Freud, *Die Ichspaltung in Abwehrvorgang*, in *GW*, XVII Bd., pp. 59–62.
27. On the connections between Marx's theory and Freud's theory, cf. Valeri, op. cit., and the essays in *Objets du Fetichisme, Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, no. 2, 1970.
28. R. Jakobson, "Coup d'oeil sur le développement de la sémiotique," in *A Semiotic Landscape. Proceedings of the First Congress of the International Association of Semiotic Studies*, Milan, June 1974, edited by S. Chatman, U. Eco, and J. M. Klinkenberg, Mouton, The Hague, 1979, pp. 3–19, ivi, p. 16. On this point cf. U. Eco, "The Influence of Roman Jakobson on the Development of Semiotics" (1981), in *Classics of Semiotics*, edited by M. Krampen, K. Oehler et al., Plenum Press, New York and London, 1987, pp. 109–127.
29. On the concept of "context," cf. G. Bateson, op. cit., p. 14 ff. For a semiotics perspective, cf. J. M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind. A Semiotic Theory of Culture*, translated by A. Shukman, Tauris, London and New York, [1990] 2001.
30. G. Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Intertext Books, London, 1972, p. 182 ff.
31. Ivi, p. 190–191.
32. Ibid.
33. Ivi, p. 182 ff.
34. S. Freud, *Drei Abhandlungen*, cit., p. 52.
35. Ibid.
36. C. S. Peirce, *Peirce on Signs. Writings on Semiotic*, edited by J. Hoopes, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1991, p. 252 (article originally published in 1906).
37. J. M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind*, op. cit., p. 54.
38. On the concept of "habit" in anthropological epistemology, cf. P. Bourdieu, *Le sens pratique*, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1980, p. 87 ff.
39. G. Bateson, *Mind and Nature*, op. cit., p. 14.
40. Ivi, p. 14–15.
41. Cf., for instance, N. Wiener, *Cybernetics*, MIT Press, Cambridge (MA), 1965.
42. G. Bateson, *Mind and Nature*, op. cit., p. 15.
43. H. Maturana and J. Varela, *Autopoiesis*, cit., p. 8.

44. Cf. the questions arising from the concept of “paradigm” in “scientific revolutions” in T. H. Kuhn, *op. cit.*

Four Marx's Theory of Fetishism

1. See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, IV/1, Berlin, 1976 (MEGA from now onwards), pp. 320–359. In K. Marx, *Early Political Writings*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought, edited by Joseph O'Malley, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994. The excerpts in question are dated to 1841. Furthermore, the excerpts from Benjamin Constant are not indicated.
2. Ivi, pp. 320–329. The translation used by Marx is that of Pystorius, Berlin and Stralsunt, 1785.
3. Ivi, p. 335–338. C. M einers, o p.c it.
4. Ivi, p. 329–334. C. B öttiger, o p.c it.
5. Ivi, pp. 342–367. B. Constant, *De la Religion considérée dans sa source, ses formes et ses développements*, Bossange, Paris, 1824–1831, 5 volumes.
6. Marx-Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 1, Berlin, 1964 (MEW), in *Early Political Writings*, *op.c it.*
7. MEW, B d.X III, p. 7–8.
8. MEW, Bd. I, pp. 147. “Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Assembly. Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood,” in *Collected Works. Marx K. & F. Engels*, New York, International Publisher, 1. 1975, pp. 224–263.
9. *Du Culte*, *cit.*, pp. 52–53. The story is, in turn, taken from Herrera.
10. MEW, *Ergänzungsband I Teil*, Berlin, 1969.
11. Quotation taken from “Money and Alienated Man,” in *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, translated and edited by D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1997, p. 266.
12. R. Rosdolsky, *Genesi e struttura del “Capitale” di Marx*, Laterza, Bari, 1975, pp. 161–162, vol. I.
13. Quotation taken from “Money and Alienated Man,” in *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, translated and edited by D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1997, p. 266.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 266–267.
15. L.F euerbach, *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, Berlin, 1956, 2 volumes.
16. Quotation taken from “Money and Alienated Man,” p. 267.
17. Ivi, p. 268.
18. *Ibidem.*
19. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, translated by Martin Milligan from the German text, revised by Dirk J. Struik, contained in *Marx/Engels, Gesamtausgabe*, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. xxxvi.
20. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Translated by Martin Milligan from the German text, revised by Dirk J. Struik, contained in *Marx/Engels, Gesamtausgabe*, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. xxxvi.
21. MEW, Bd. XXVII, Berlin, 1963, pp. 55–59 (18 October 1846). The reference is to Feuerbach's *Das Wesen der Religion*, in *Die Epigonen*, Leipzig, 1846.

22. MEW, bd. XXVII, cit., pp. 57–58. MECW Volume 38. First published in *Der Briefwechsel zwischen F. Engels und K. Marx*, 1913.
23. MEW, Bd. III, Berlin, 1962, p. 7. Written by Marx in the spring of 1845, but edited slightly by Engels; first published as an appendix to *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* in 1888; source: Marx/Engels *Selected Works*, Volume One, pp. 13–15. Note that this version differs from the version in Engels' edition published in MECW Volume 5, pp. 6–8; publisher: Progress Publishers, Moscow, USSR, 1969; translated by W. Lough from the German.
24. B. Constant, op. cit., vol. I, 1824, p. 3 ff.
25. Ivi, vol. II, 1825, p. 7 (Marx, *MEGA*, cit., p. 350), my translation.
26. This, on the contrary, is the line of thought adopted by Luhmann, who establishes a relation between the idea of control and the noncorrespondencies, which are seen as the structural elements of complex societies. See N. Luhmann, *Political Theory in the Welfare State*, de Gruyter, New York, 1990, translated by John Bednarz Jr. In this work, the author uses the idea of observing and self-observing systems.
27. MEW, Bd. III, p. 3; MEO, vol. V, p. 29. On the genealogy of conceptual thought in historical materialism, see M. Sahlin, *Culture and Practical Reason*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976.
28. Hegel, op. cit.
29. MEW, cit., Bd. III, pp. 166–167 (MEO, vol. V, p. 177).
30. R. L. Gregory, *Eye and Brain, The Psychology of Seeing* (1966), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998.
31. K. Marx, *Das Kapital*, cit., p. 86 (*Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume One, Introduced by Ernest Mandel, translated by Ben Fowkes, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, Harmondsworth, pp. 164–165).
32. On the relationship between commodities, imagination, and symbolism and, in particular, on the notion that commodities are fetishes insofar as they are fixations of the imagination, see W. Benjamin, "Baudelaire in Paris," in *Angelus Novus*, Einaudi, Turin, 1962, pp. 150–151; *Selected Writings*, translated by Edmund Jephcott et al., Cambridge, MA, 1996–2003, 4 vols. Benjamin's criticism is directed at the way the inversion is produced, since, in capitalistic societies, inversion is inevitably bound up with commodities, even when (or, mainly when) commodities are transfigured and hidden in their social role.
33. L.S. ebag, *Marxisme et structuralisme*, Payot, Paris 1964 (my translation).
34. The limit of Marx's analysis, the centre of conflict between two opposite conceptions, can be exemplified by this well-known statement: "In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out" (MEW, cit., Bd. XIII, p. 9; K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, with some notes by R. Roja). This is the vantage point from which, one moment, the observer can see the transformations as

- if from the outside and the next, experience them within ideological forms. In this sense, one either assumes that science can provide guarantees against the filter or ideology, or that the observer is subject to the same conditions as those of the people he observes. The significance of Marx's major discovery that one has to look beyond the ideological forms, cannot be limited to a rigid juxtaposition between right and distorted forms of observation. This is where we are confronted with some of the contemporary problems related to self-observation, meta-descriptions, and the context. By circumscribing and determining the framework of observation, the context itself becomes an observed object.
35. I. I. Rubin, *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value*, Aakar Books, Delhi, 2007, pp. 21–22.
 36. "The perceptions of my two alternate lives always remained very clear and distinct. However, there was one phenomenon that was inexplicable: that the consciousness of the same 'I' could exist in two so very different beings. I was unable to account for this anomaly, whether I imagined myself to be village priest of ***, or *il signor Romualdo*, the recognized lover of Clarimonde," Théophile Gautier, "The Dead in Love" (1836), in *Demons of the Night: Tales of the Fantastic, Madness and the Supernatural*, edited by Joan C. Kessler, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995, pp. 111–112. The writer here gives an anguished description of the most crucial problem of human knowledge. On the double see O. Rank, *Der Doppelgänger*, Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, Leipzig-Wien, 1914.
 37. *Das Kapital*, I, cit., pp. 86–87 (p. 88); *Capital*, cit., p. 47, Chapter 1.
 38. J. Baudrillard, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Gallimard, Paris, 1972; M. Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, cit. it.
 39. See N. Badaloni, "Marx: centralità della "critica" e suo modo d'essere," in *Marx, un secolo*, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1983, pp. 11–38.
 40. The first draft of *Capital's* first chapter, as it appeared in the first edition, contained only the imaginary models. The historical examples were not included in it. In the *Postscript* to the second edition Marx stated that the paragraph on the fetishism of the commodity had been extensively revised (*Das Kapital*, I, cit., p. 18. See Marx, *L'analisi della forma di valore*, edited by C. Pennavaja, Laterza, Bari, 1976).
 41. Maurice Godelier, *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology* (1973), translated by Robert Brain, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge–New York–Melbourne, 1977, p. 175.
 42. In an essay where he examines these topics in relation to the role and concept of history in Marx, Luporini concludes with the following observation: "The question remains open whether this concept—despite taking this final complexity into account—manages to avoid socio-economical reductionism," C. Luporini, "La concezione della storia in Marx," in *Marx, un secolo*, cit., p. 204.
 43. *Das Kapital*, I, cit., p. 91 (English edition p. 170).
 44. Ivi, p. 92 (English edition, p. 171).
 45. Ivi, p. 90–91 (English edition, p. 169–170).
 46. Ivi, p. 92–93 (English edition, p. 171–172).
 47. Ibid.

48. See the following chapter.
49. Ivi, p. 93 (English edition, p. 172).
50. Ivi, p. 93–94 (English edition, p. 173).
51. Ibid. (p. 96; English edition, p. 173).
52. For the concept of the sign as reference (“renvoi”), see Jakobson, op. cit.

Five History, Nature, and System: Marx’s Anthropological Conception

1. Nikolai Bukharin, *Historical Materialism. A System of Sociology* (first published in English in 1926), Routledge, New York, 2011, pp. 60–61.
2. See M. Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (first published in the United Kingdom in 1974), Routledge, London, 2004: “That sentence of ‘life at hard labor’ was passed uniquely upon us. Scarcity is the judgment decreed by our economy—so also the axiom of our Economics: the application of scarce means against alternative ends to derive the most satisfaction possible under the circumstances. And it is precisely from this anxious vantage that we look upon hunters. But if modern man, with all his technological advantages, still hasn’t got the wherewithal, what chance has this naked savage with his puny bow and arrow? Having equipped the hunter with bourgeois impulses and Paleolithic tools, we judge his situation hopeless in advance,” “Sources of the Misconception,” chapter 1.
3. E. P. Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism,” in *Past and Present*, no. 38 (December, 1967), pp. 56–97 (p. 60).
4. Ibid.
5. Ivi.
6. p. 61.
7. For an analysis of the process of separation of economy from other social spheres as a result of the capitalist way of production, see chapter 4 (“Societies and Economic Systems”) of K. Polanyi’s *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1944. See also the essays edited by G. Dalton, *Primitive, Archaic and Modern Economies: Essays of Karl Polanyi*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1968. For an analysis of Polanyi’s thought, see S. C. Humphreys, “History, Economics, and Anthropology: The Work of Karl Polanyi,” in *History and Theory*, VIII, 1969, no. 2, pp. 165–212; E. Grendi, *Polanyi*, Etas, Milan, 1978; F. Aperi, “Karl Polanyi e la fondazione dell’antropologia economica,” in *Intersezioni*, no. 3, 1928, pp. 603–613.
8. Daniel Defoe, *An Essay Upon Projects*, Arc Manor, Rockville, Maryland 2008, p. 27.
9. J. Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society. Myths and Structures* (1970), English translation by Chris Turner, Sage Publications, London 1998, p. 74.
10. Ivi, p. 75.
11. “This alternate succession of appetite and fear, during all the time the action is in our power to do, or not to do, is that we call DELIBERATION; which name hath been given it for that part of the definition wherein it is said that it lasteth so long, as the action whereof we deliberate, is in our power; for so

- long we have liberty to do or not to do: and deliberation signifieth the taking away of our own liberty," T. Hobbes, *Elements of Law Natural and Politic* (1640), Routledge, New York 2013, p. 61.
12. On the relationship between the notion of scarcity and the social system, see, besides the already quoted works by Sahlins and Baudrillard, N. Luhmann's systemic approach in "Knappheit, Geld und die bürgerliche Gesellschaft," *Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft*, 1972. On the role played by "abundance" and "scarcity" in modern reason, see C. A. Viano, "La ragione, l'abbondanza e la credenza," in *Crisi della ragione. Nuovi modelli nel rapporto tra sapere e attività manee*, edited by A. Gargani, Einaudi, Turin 1979, pp. 305–366.
 13. For a definition of the notion of "non-intentional" or "unintentional," see M. Godelier, "Objet et méthodes de l'anthropologie économique," *L'Homme*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1965, pp. 31–91. On the one hand, the "non-intentional" is related to Marx's treatment of the relationship between "being" and "conscience," while, on the other, it is connected to an idea that emerged in sociology, linguistics, anthropology, and psychoanalysis. On this topic, grounded in the studies of de Saussure and Durkheim (on the links between them, see W. Doroszewski, "Alcune osservazioni sui rapporti tra la sociologia e la linguistica: E. Durkheim e F. de Saussure," in multiple authors, *Il linguaggio*, Dedalo, Bari, 1976, pp. 221–231), see E. Sapir, "The Unconscious Patterning of Behaviour in Society," in *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality*, edited by D. Mandelbaum, University Press of California, 1949, pp. 544–559 and C. Lévi Strauss, "L'analyse structurale en linguistique et en anthropologie," "Langage et société," "Linguistique et anthropologie," "La notion de structure en ethnologie," contained in *Anthropologie structurale I*, Plon, Paris, 1974.
 14. See S. Freud, "The Schreber Case. Psychoanalytic Remarks on an Autobiographically Described Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)," in *The Schreber Case*, translated by Andrew Webber, Penguin, London, 2002. This case has also been addressed by Elias Canetti, who has underlined the relationship between power and the vision in which everyone has perished: "As far as his fellow men are concerned, they have all perished, and he is, as he wishes to be, *the only one*. This is the final and most extreme phase of power. One can work towards it, but it can be fully realized only in delirium," Elias Canetti, *The Conscience of Words*, translated by Joachim Neugroschel, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1984, p. 27. In delirium, power is fully realized the moment Schreber becomes the sole one by annulling the *others*, by reducing the *others* to objects. This is an extraordinary example of the most extreme form of desire to entirely subsume unintentional relationships into intentional acting. On the topic of power and survival, see above all Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, translated by Carol Stewart, Continuum, New York, 1978.
 15. L.D umont, *Homo aequalis*, cit., p. 115.
 16. "It is only in the eighteenth century, in 'civil society', that the different forms of social union confront the individual as a mere means to his private ends, as an external necessity," Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, Diez Verlag, Berlin, 1953, p. 6; Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, edited by David McLellan, Oxford University Press, New York, 2000, p. 380. On the origins of the relationship

- between possessive individualism and the seventeenth-century market society, see G. B. Macpherson, *op. cit.*
17. See on this topic Marx's critique of the economists' Robinsonades (*Grundrisse*, *cit.*, pp. 5–6). The fundamental issue lies in the problem of the relationship between the theoretical procedure of political economy (when it distinguishes between the “transparent” relationship of the isolated individual with objects and the complex relationships of the market system) and the topic of society's origin according to the “four stages” historical theory. Although Meek explored the influence of this theory upon eighteenth-century Scottish and French philosophers, he nevertheless did not address a crucial point: the role played by the “four stages” theory *within* the procedure of economic theory. He briefly touches upon the issue when speaking about analogies and influences (see, for instance, his discussion of the role played by unconscious processes in history and economy alike) and even underlines the fact that the “stages” theory provides economic theory with the idea of an earlier and simpler society; but he fails to grasp, for example, that it was the teleological conception of the “stages” theory that transformed the isolated human being, the hunter and the fisherman—inasmuch as he was seen as the effective historical starting point—into the political economy's operative starting point.
 18. Juri Lotman, “Painting and the Language of Theater: Notes on the Problem of Ironic Rhetoric” (1978), translated by Alla Yefimov, in *Tekstura: Russian Essays on Visual Culture*, edited by Lev Manovich and Alla Yefimov, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1993.
 19. On the problem of the relationship between the material-natural content of a commodity and its social form, as examined in “The Fetishism of the Commodity” in Chapter 1 of *Capital* Volume 1, see the pages that follow.
 20. Good or bad as the “savage” may be—insofar as he is represented as a member of the bourgeoisie living in a world from which social relationships are imagined as having been excluded, because the primal act, the starting point, is the relationship between the individual and the object—he is an ad hoc deformed mirror: the true identity of the bourgeois individual where difference is domesticated even before being established as such. This idea can be traced back to Adam Smith and to Turgot's “Value and Money,” but its most effective expression is to be found in Sismondi, where the image of the isolated man is explicitly used for summarizing the development of the whole society. In his *New Principles of Political Economy*, Sismondi dedicates a chapter to the “Formation of Wealth for Solitary Man,” where, among other things, this figure ideally crosses the four “stages” of society's development as envisaged by Adam Smith and other eighteenth-century economists and philosophers (hunting, pasturage, farming, and commerce): from the struggle for primary needs to the gradual improvement of his technical and organizational capacities. “The history of this man is the history of humanity itself,” J. C. Sismonde de Sismondi, *New Principles of Political Economy, or, Of Wealth in its Relation to Population* (1819), translated and annotated by Richard Hyse, 1991. Hence, it is in Sismondi that the figure of the isolated man fully realizes its semiotic value.

21. "That is to say that Classical Economics can only envisage economic facts as belonging to the homogeneous space of their positivity and measurability on condition that it accepts a 'naïve' anthropology, which bases all the acts involved in the production, distribution, reception and consumption of economic objects on the economic subjects and their needs. Hegel provided the philosophical concept of the *unity* of this 'naïve' type of anthropology with economic phenomena in his famous expression 'the sphere of needs', or 'civil society', as distinct from political society. In the concept of the sphere of needs, economic facts are thought as based in their economic essence on human subjects who are a prey to 'need': on the *homo oeconomicus*, who is a (visible, observable) given, too," Louis Althusser, "The Object of *Capital*," in Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, translated by Ben Brewster, New Left Books, London, 1970.
22. As Althusser observes, following Foucault, "The invisible is defined by the visible as *its* invisible, *its* forbidden vision: the invisible is not therefore simply what is outside the visible (to return to the spatial metaphor), the outer darkness of exclusion—but the *inner darkness of exclusion*, inside the visible itself because defined by its structure" (From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy," in *Reading Capital*, op. cit.). It is precisely for this reason that the structure of the visible and the invisible is determined by the same conceptual system, even when one employs an opposing ideology. Even when we admit that this specific conceptual system derives from an ideology, it nonetheless acquires autonomy and permanence, in the face of which there is not much sense in relinking it to its original ideology (this is true for the individual who supports an opposing ideology, but maintains the same visual field) or placing ourselves in another conceptual system, which we ideologically define as *the science*. In other words, there is not much sense in reducing a conceptual system to the opposition ideology/science, because—although related to both of them—it cannot in any case be reduced to either.
 For an analysis of the juxtaposition (and its role) between different structures of the visible and different conceptual systems, see T. Todorov, who starts from the crisis of communication and failure of comprehension between two worlds, T. Todorov, *La conquête de l'Amérique. La question de l'autre*, Seuil, Paris, 1982.
23. Karl Marx, *MEW*, cit., Bd. 19, 1962, pp. 242–243. "The Reply to Zasulich," in *Marx-Zasulich Correspondence February/March 1881*. Source: *Late Marx and the Russian Road, Marx and the 'peripheries of capitalism'*, edited by Teodor Shanin, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1983.
24. Karl Marx, *MEW*, cit., Bd. 19, p. 112. Written in French at the end of November 1877, Source: *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Correspondence, 1846–1895*, International Publishers (1942), translated by Donna Torr.
25. *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx*, by L. Krader, cit. For an analysis of these passages, see L. Krader's and D. R. Kelley's "Introduction" to "The Science of Anthropology: An Essay on the Very Old Marx," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, no. 2, 1984, pp. 245–262.
26. See Marx's critique of Maine in *The Ethnological Notebooks*, p. 329, and the attention he pays to the elaboration of individuality, viewed as a tearing loose from the originally nondespotic chains of the primitive community.

Marx had already addressed the centrality of the concept of separation in his *Formen*: “*The original conditions of production* (or, what amounts to the same, the reproduction of a growing number of human beings through the natural process between the sexes; for this reproduction, although it appears as the appropriation of the objects by the subjects in one respect, in another appears as the formation or subjugation of the objects to a subjective purpose; their transformation into results and repositories of subjective activity) *cannot themselves originally be products*—results of production. It is not the *unity* of living and active humanity with the natural, inorganic conditions of their metabolic exchange with nature, and hence their appropriation of nature, which requires explanation or is the result of a historic process, but rather the *separation* between these inorganic conditions of human existence and this active existence, a separation which is completely posited only in the relation of wage labour and capital,” K. Marx, “Forms which precede capitalist production,” in *Grundrisse*, cit., pp. 388–389; *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, translated by Martin Nicolaus, Penguin, London, 1973. This passage has been examined by C. Luporini in his “Critica della politica e critica dell’economia politica in Marx,” in *Critica marxista*, 1978, no. 1. Nevertheless, it is necessary to observe that—although he lays great emphasis on the concept of separation—Marx tends to consider historical development as a progressive separation of men from nature, as their alienation from naturalness. This is why, if on the one hand the analysis of social forms is focused on the processes of separation which develop within them, on the other, all this seems to be in some way supported by a more general process of separation from nature, which seems to incorporate the forms themselves. But the problematic point here is linked to the following question: does the idea of the latter process take on such a decisive role *within* its theoretical procedure, which is based on separation, as to domesticate the disruptive power of this category?

27. This, on the contrary, is the interpretation proposed by Krader, who attributes a “stages” theory to Marx. See L. Krader, “Evoluzione, rivoluzione e Stato: Marx e il pensiero etnologico,” in *Storia del marxismo*, I, *Il Marxismo ai tempi di Marx*, Einaudi, Turin, 1978.
28. It is quite significant, for instance, that whereas Adam Smith needs a simplification for explaining the mechanisms of the capitalist mode of production and refers to an imaginary “rude and primitive stage of society” where he locates the formation of the original accumulation process, Marx shifts his analysis of historical processes that have contributed to the formation of the capitalist mode of production toward the dissolution of feudal production. In the former the problem of the system’s *identity* within the theoretical procedure predominates (this does not mean that Smith does not oppose the feudal system), whereas what prevails in Marx’s theoretical procedure is the problem of difference and separation.
29. It is the emphasis placed on separation that hinders this attribution of sense, because internal historicity always implies a bringing to the fore of the *specific* conditions through which a determinate *form* moves with its contradictions. See Balibar in *Reading Capital*, cit. On the centrality of concepts

- such as “antagonism” and “difference,” see Antonio Negri, *Marx oltre Marx. Quaderno di lavoro sui Grundrisse*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1970.
30. See Baudrillard’s *Société de Consommation* (cit., p. 94) for a critique of scholars such as Galbraith, who reduce society’s alienation to the problem of consumption.
 31. K. Marx, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, MEW, cit., Bd. 13, 1963, p. 9.
 32. In the “Marginal Notes on Wagner”—some of whose arguments I would like to call into question—we find the following statement: “But if Rodbertus only wishes to make the trivial statement that use-value which really stands in relation to an individual as an object of utility, relates to him as an individual use-value for him—then this is either a trivial tautology or it is incorrect, since not to mention such things as rice, maize, wheat or meat which does not stand in any relation to a Hindu as food, an individual’s need for the title of Professor or Privy Councillor or an order is possible only in quite a definite “social Organisation.” “Randglossen zu A. Wagners ‘Lehrbuch der politischen Oekonomie,’” MEW, cit., Bd. 19, pp. 372–373 (English translation in *Theoretical Practice*, no. 5, London, 1972). What we find here is the idea that use value cannot be addressed outside a certain social context.
 33. “So far as it is a use-value, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it satisfies human needs; or that it first takes on these properties as the product of human labour. It is absolutely clear that, by his activity, man changes the forms of the materials of nature in such a way as to make them useful to him,” *Kapital*, cit., p. 163. This description of use value is contrasted with the fetish form assumed by exchange value. The crucial problem lies in the fact that—since it is contrasted—use value is conceptually *external* to the commodity form and to its exchange value: it assumes a “simple” form of content through which it is possible to fill a determinate form. And yet, at the same time, we are aware of the fact that use value can only be determined within a specific social organization. But the two ways of understanding use value must be seen as two inseparable and opposed moments of the same theoretical procedure. If they are separated and used in a unilateral way, the former case would lead toward the “naturalization” of the category which is both related and juxtaposed with exchange value; in the latter case, the same category dissolves into exchange value, losing its oppositional theoretical effectiveness.
 34. K.M arx, *Das Kapital*, Bd. I, cit, p. 92.
 35. Alfred Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, Verso Books, London, 2013.
 36. M. Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976.
 37. Ivi, p. 86.
 38. C.L éviStrauss, *Totemism*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1963.
 39. B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (1948), Doubleday Anchor Books, New York 1954, p. 46.
 40. Marx, *Marginal Notes on Adolph Wagner’s* “Lehrbuch der politischen Ökonomie,” in Vol. 24 (1874–1883) in *The Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*, 50 volumes, International Publishers, New York, 1989.

41. Ibid.
42. From a theoretical point of view, what seems to be placed in the background in Sahlins's analysis is the aspect of historicity. Within systems of relations historicity is seen as a permanently problematic element, as an element that enables us to draw attention to differences and contradictions instead of emphasizing the system's power to reproduce itself.
43. Marx, *MEW*, cit., p. 362; *Marginal Notes on Adolph Wagner's "Lehrbuch der politischen Ökonomie,"* in Vol. 24 (1874–1883) in *The Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*, 50 volumes, International Publishers, New York, 1989.
44. On the active and constructive features of language, see Ernst Cassirer's "Die Sprache und die Aufbau der Gegenstandswelt," reprinted in *Symbol, Technik, Sprache, Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1927–1933*, edited by E. W. Orth and J. M. Krois, Meiner, Hamburg, 1985, pp. 121–151. On the ability of language to transcend experience, see E. Sapir, *Culture, Language and Personality: Selected Essays*, edited by David Goodman Mandelbaum, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985.
45. M. Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, cit.: "What is missed by Marx is that men begin *as men*, in distinction to other animals, precisely when they experience the world as a concept (symbolically)," p. 142. On the symbolic role of society, see also E. De Martino's reflections on Marx and Marxism in *La fine del mondo. Contributo all'analisi delle apocalissi culturali*, edited by Clara Gallino, Einaudi, Turin, 1977, pp. 446–462.
46. Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, translated by Martin Nicolaus, Penguin, London, 1973, p. lxxxii.
47. Ivi, c. xii.
48. In his *L'anatomia della scimmia. La formazione economica della società prima del capitale* (Einaudi, Turin, 1979, p. 91). A. Carandini argues that by reciprocally laying the foundations for each other, the systematic and historical planes generate a continuous tension, which prevents them from completely merging into one another. If this is so, then the epistemological problem lies precisely in this "continuous tension."

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