

What is the Relationship between Theory and Research? Current Points from *The Polish Peasant*

Silvia Cataldi, Gennaro Iorio

How to cite

Cataldi, S., Iorio, G. (2020). What is the Relationship between Theory and Research? Current Points from *The Polish Peasant*. [Italian Sociological Review, 10 (2S), 489-502]
Retrieved from [<http://dx.doi.org/10.13136/isr.v10i2S.359>]

[DOI: 10.13136/isr.v10i2S.359]

1. Author information

Silvia Cataldi

Department of Social and Developmental Psychology, Università Roma
La Sapienza, Italy

Gennaro Iorio

Department of Political and Social Studies, Università degli Studi di
Salerno, Italy

2. Author e-mail address

Silvia Cataldi

E-mail: silvia.cataldi@uniroma1.it

Gennaro Iorio

E-mail: iorio@unisa.it

3. Article accepted for publication

Date: April 2020

Additional information about
Italian Sociological Review
can be found at:

[About ISR-Editorial Board-Manuscript submission](#)

*What is the Relationship between Theory and Research?
Current Points from The Polish Peasant*

Silvia Cataldi*, Gennaro Iorio**

Corresponding author:
Silvia Cataldi
E-mail: silvia.cataldi@uniroma1.it

Corresponding author:
Gennaro Iorio
E-mail: iorio@unisa.it

Abstract

100 years after its publication, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* can be remembered for the attempt to merge different perspectives and overcome the dichotomies. However, it cannot be denied that it is also a controversial work: indeed, beyond the intentions of the authors pronounced in the introduction and methodological note, the integration between theory and research is not so fluid. Our hypothesis is that these limits can be traced back to an intrinsic tension that crosses the whole work and also the Chicago School: the tension between emic and etic. On this basis, the paper traces the choices that the authors made in the different research phases: from the selection of the object of study to the gathering of information, from the data analysis to the reporting and applying the results. In the end the paper demonstrates that in *The Polish Peasant* the relationship of circularity between theory and research can be recognized as problem-oriented, and that the main result of the work is not so much in its interpretative capacity, nor in its (desired) methodological rigor: it is rather in the affirmation of a public role of sociology.

Keywords: theory and research, emic and etic, public sociology, Chicago School.

* Department of Social and Developmental Psychology, Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy.

** Department of Political and Social Studies, Università degli Studi di Salerno, Italy.

1. Introduction

100 years after its publication, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* can be remembered for the attempt – until then unpublished – to merge theory and research (Coser, 1971; Acocella, 2010). The work presents ‘a distinctive social theory symbiotically connected to systematic empirical research, and an equally distinctive methodology’ (Stanley, 2010: 142). Precisely for this reason, the Polish peasant is recognized as a work that succeeds in overcoming the dichotomies, as it manages to combine intense theoretical and methodological debates and controversies between ‘competing schools and “isms”’ (Stanley, 2010: 140). Thus, the attempt to combine objectivism and subjectivism, nomothetic and idiographic, structuralism and interactionism can be read.

On the other hand, there are many influences and sources of inspiration that this work has received: for example, it is recognized that the epistemological approach of the work is inspired by Durkheim’s thought and methodological monism (Guth, Schrecker, 2002); it has also been established that the cultural approach and the comparative method can be traced back to Weber thought (Masiello, 2012); the study of social phenomena as processes, rather than as statistical phenomena, is recognized as an inspiration attributable to the thought of Simmel (Hannerz, 1980); Sumner is the concept of mores (Masiello, 2012); from symbolic interactionism and the relationship with Mead, it is worth considering how it derives from the elaboration of the concept of defining the situation (Deegan, 1988); while the pragmatist matrix of the work is inspired by the influence of authors such as Dewey (Janowitz, 1966).

This ability to put together different settings is therefore recognized as a strength of the work. However, it cannot be denied that *The Polish Peasant* is also a controversial work that has been criticized over the years. The most evident criticisms show that, beyond the intentions of the authors pronounced in the introduction and methodological note, the integration between theory and research is not so fluid. Not only is the interpretation of the various monographs left to the reader, so are the procedures for collecting information, with the procedures used not being explicitly clarified. Likewise, in several points the documents collected are not rigorously analyzed, nor do they provide solid support for the presented theory (Blumer, 1939). In other words, unlike the initial research program of the Chicago school, the biggest limitation of the work lies in the fact that the authors did not bother to reconstruct the various elaborations within a unitary framework (Madge, 1962). Therefore, the systematization of research for an overall interpretation of society remains unfinished, just as its theoretical framework often remains implicit, leading to modest cognitive progress (Tomasi, 1997: 19).

Our hypothesis is that these limits can be traced back to an intrinsic tension in the whole work and also found in many of the works of the Chicago School: the tension between the etic and emic perspectives. Taking up the well-known dichotomy created by the linguist Pike (1967), etic and emic refer to different meanings: they can be two kinds of field research, two viewpoints and two types of data (Given, 2008; Krippendorff, 1980). However, while the concept of etic expresses the enhancement of external observer scientific perspective on reality, the concept of emic expresses the enhancement of the insider's view of reality.

Regarding the etic approach, it is clear that the study was conducted with the firm intention to show researcher-relevant distinctions as well as exemplify the method outlined in the methodological note (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 55). Precisely for this reason, Thomas and Znaniecki's premise of all work in the social sciences are nomothetic, with their objective being to develop laws to reveal causes operating in social life (Guth, Schrecker, 2002: 289). On this basis, the authors argue that sociology, like the natural sciences, must be a science that is capable of reaching a certain knowledge and the formulation of scientific laws on human society through a rigorous method. This is enough to define the epistemological and methodological approach of Thomas and Znaniecki as an etic since it is based on a naturalist and positivist vision that sometimes even risks appearing as a scientist (Acocella, 2010).

Regarding the emic approach, the thing that immediately leaps to the reader's eye is the use of the biographical material, as well as the quantitative and qualitative consistency of the empirical material presented in the entire work. The dense correspondence of letters is presented to the reader only with brief notes and comments, with the firm intention of making the point of view of the social actors and their stories talk.

In other words, our hypothesis is that the tension between emic and etic crosses the whole work and can effectively help to read the choices that the authors made during the research. Precisely for this reason, in the pages that follow the different steps of the investigation will be analyzed, trying to highlight the elements that converge on a pole as well as those that focus on the other pole of the dichotomy.

We are aware that the proposed work implies a re-reading of the work according to a current perspective and a conceptualization at the time unknown to the authors. From a historical point of view, it is therefore a work of forcing. However, we propose it with the aim of accounting for the authors' effort to put theory and research into a circular relationship.

2. The choice of the object of study

One of the presuppositions of an emic perspective is to study objects of study that represent real problems for the natives, assuming the concept of problematic issues from the concrete life of people. The link between the world of life and the problems of the people of Chicago and the questions of social research at the time is extremely close and self-evident. During the early twentieth century, there was a vast migration movement from Poland (Matthews, 1977). In 1913, in the United States, there were 1300 Polish immigrants, while another 800,000, formally resident in Poland, emigrated seasonally to Germany in search of work. The research topic, therefore, dealt with a question of great proportions connected to the rapid social changes that took place in Poland in those years.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the topic has come from the life-and-world problems that are perceived by coinciding (Cataldi, Iorio, 2020). This observation therefore suggests an emic perspective of the choice of the object of study.

There are other elements to consider: the empathy that is, the adoption of an investigative method based on the social actor, and the process of selecting the subject for study in the context of a personal and social biographical pathway.

Regarding the first element, the question of empathy was well known to the members of the Chicago School, albeit often implicitly. Thomas theorized not only that the subject of a study must remain independent from the research itself, but also that selection of the research question could not be made without the social actor providing a definition of the situation (Cataldi, Iorio, 2020).

In relation to the latter, it is well known that for personal, biographical, or socio-political reasons, researchers from the Chicago School had nearly always had direct experience of the subject of their inquiries. This is also true in the case of *The Polish Peasant*. The unit of research analysis, the condition of the peasants and the traditional culture, derives from the personal interests of Thomas as the son of a farmer, a Methodist pastor. Likewise, the interest in Polish society derives from the journeys undertaken in Europe by Thomas and the encounter with Znaniecki who, at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, moved to Chicago, where he first assisted and then became a partner of the entire work (Znaniecki, 1948). It is therefore possible to argue that the interest in the object of study is to be linked to the biographical experiences of the authors, who partly lived as insiders of the groups under study: Thomas as a farmer and Znaniecki as a Pole. However, the same authors specify:

Our acquaintance with the Polish society simply helps us in noting data and relations which would perhaps not be noticed so easily by one not immediately acquainted with the life of the group (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20: Vol. I, 76).

Social and political interests are also to be considered among the biographical elements. Thomas and his wife Harriet Park, for example, cultivated a militancy in favour of minorities and the women's issue. The association with social work circles is also very important. It is worth noting the Hull House of Chicago, frequented at the time by Thomas, as well as by many other members of the Chicago School. Like other similar places (for example, the Toynbee Hall), the Hull House was both a place of research and meeting place, a place of intellectual activity but also of reform. It was a radical, secular and women-friendly place (Stanley, 2010: 149). In this context, the boundaries between science and civic engagement were complex and overlapping. It is certain that for political-social reasons the authors not only had a direct experience of the object of study, but also cultivated a socio-emotional involvement. All this, as well as the elements analyzed so far suggest an emic perspective concerning the identification of the object of study.

However, it is the authors themselves who specify that a research cannot be conducted by valuing only the point of view of the actors. This for two reasons. First of all, because research must be freed from all dependence on practice and must be considered an end in itself endowed with absolute freedom and selfless help (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20: 22). Secondly, because the authors say:

But as soon as the investigation is started both indignation and idealism should be put aside (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 8).

In this sense, if the choice of the object of study can be made to fall in the pole of the emic (as it is linked to individual experiences and burning current issues), the reference to the objectivity and non-exploitation of science requires combining the needs of the current events with scientific rigor. Only in this way, according to the authors, is it possible to have an empirical and exact social science.

3. Gathering and selecting information

When the reader approaches the work *The Polish Peasant*, the thing that comes to light is the titanic work of gathering biographical information. The breadth of the collected material responds to the epistemological vision of the

authors, who in the enunciation of the research methodology suggest opening up to an “indiscriminate receptivity” and approaching the object of study moving from the assumption of not knowing absolutely nothing on the subject of investigation (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20).

Regarding the type of materials collected, Thomas and Znaniecki, however, differ greatly from the Durkheimian statistical tradition, so much so that they are considered the founders of a new trend, life writing, based on the importance of reflecting on their own lives and relationships. Precisely for this reason the first impulse is to attribute the entire information gathering phase to the sphere of the *haem*. However, it is necessary to analyze the practical ways to succeed in extricating oneself.

It is known that Thomas and Znaniecki obtained the letters by publishing in November 1914 an advertisement on the *Dziennik Zwiakowy*, a newspaper for Polish immigrants in America, offering 10 to 20 dollars for each letter from Poland. A total of 764 letters were collected in 50 family series. The interesting thing about these letters is that they come from a wide range of social classes belonging to the rural world: small agrarian nobility, peasants of the large estates, peasant proletariat, seasonal workers and small landowners.

Moreover, the research makes extensive use of secondary materials, such as newspapers, autobiographies, public and historical documents that help to outline the background of the historical-social situation. Thus, some hundreds of pages long, third person newspaper files and third person reports from Polish-American welfare organizations were collected. Finally, biographical material was used: Wlodek Wisznienski's autobiography is famous, which was commissioned by Thomas to the same author for money.

We could therefore ask how the use of this biographical material can be combined with the methodological vision described in the note, characterized by a strong nomothetic approach and pertaining to an *etic* approach. In reality, as early as 1912, Thomas was concerned with exploring change and migration by using ‘undersigned’ sources in which people represented their own lives in their own terms (Bulmer 1984: 51), rather than responding to the pre-conceived ideas of researchers with other more structured techniques. Writing takes a responsive, dialogical and serial form of analysis, capable of providing this link between macro and micro-social aspects and putting together (as in a ‘wide-angle’ perspective) the individual, his family, community, urban context, up to the wider one of the whole country (Masiello, 2012). According to the authors, the life-records have a marked superiority over any other kinds of materials because they constitute the perfect type of sociological material (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1832; Volkart, 1981: 147): this is because, on the one hand, they are the only ones able to communicate the meanings that the actors attribute to their behaviour and to the situations in which they find themselves (Hannerz,

1980); on the other, because they allow us to detect how one's own structure of attitudes influences the reactions of individuals before the objective factors they encounter (Coser, 1971). Life histories and other personal documents therefore allow the sociologist to understand the social actor in a holistic way: his attitudes, values and definitions of situations operate in a context and their understanding can only be done in an integrated manner (Harvey, 1986: 204; Stanley, 2010: 143).

How were these materials selected? In reality, little information is known about this aspect. What we know is that the same authors claim to have tried to carry out minimal interventions, declaring:

We have tried to proceed in the most cautious way possible. The private letters constituting the first two volumes have needed relatively little selection, particularly as they are arranged in family series. Our task has been limited to the exclusion of such letters from among the whole collection as contained nothing but a repetition of situations and attitudes more completely represented in the materials which we publish here. In later volumes the selection can be more severe, as far as the conclusions of the preceding volumes can be used for guidance. (Thomas, Znanięcki, 1918-20/1974: 76).

At first glance, therefore, it seems that the selection took place according to a superficial criterion that relates to the sole exclusion of those redundant materials. What redundancy are we talking about? Certainly not a quantitative redundancy that implies an enumerative saturation criterion. This is a theoretical-based selection criterion that implies the semantic coverage of a conceptual category. This aspect is part of a non-naturalistic inductive approach. In conclusion, the information gathering phase can be considered in continuous tension between the emic approach, stressed by the biographical approach used by the authors and the etic approach, required not only by the methodological rules, but also by the use of theoretical criteria for the material selection.

4. The analysis of the information

Even in the information analysis phase, the two authors showed a tension between the etic and emic perspectives. On the one hand, the methodological rigor and nomothetic approach have given precedence to the reference patterns of the researcher in the treatment of materials; on the other, the authors have tried as much as possible to get the social actors as well as their mental and

cultural patterns to speak, reducing the notes and comments to a minimum, making the interpretation derive from the information gathered.

It is worth trying to follow the step by step procedure. First of all, the method that Thomas and Znaniecki applied is the comparative method. At the time, it was considered the par excellence method of social sciences (Madge, 1962). The authors used it 'to distinguish the essential from the accidental, the simple from the complex, the primary from the derived' (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 17). By distinguishing themselves from a comparative method that compares the individual aspects of a society, the authors opted instead for a comparative method applied in a holistic way, for the study of single society and culture.

To do this, a tool widely used in the Polish peasant is the classification. It was used in two forms: in the first version, it was used to group empirical material; in the second form, it was used to construct ideal types, i.e. concepts and mental constructions that serve in a comparative manner to highlight the theoretical relevance of some information over others. Regarding the first form of classification, there are numerous examples of information grouping in the work. For example, in work they suggest there are five types of familial letters: (Stanley, 2010). With regard to the second type, the authors proposed that they would be presented as ideal-types. They are analytical tools that are not reflected in concrete reality but that perform a heuristic function. There are several applications in the work. For example, they use them in personal life-records for the understanding of subjective interpretations, i.e. attitudes (Zaretsky, 1984).

Following the comparative method, it is therefore also possible to explain social facts. According to Thomas, the analysis of personal documents serves to isolate attitudes, demonstrate similarities and relationships of dependence between them, as well as interpret them in relation to the particular social terrain in which they occur (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 67-68). The scientific nature of the method therefore lies in the rigor with which the 'simple elements' are compared and selected to identify the 'causes' of a given event. According to Thomas and Znaniecki, three types of data are concerned: objective conditions (values), pre-existing attitudes and the definition of the social situation. To formulate laws, it must be assumed that a cause must by definition always and necessarily have the same effect (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-1920). Therefore, if we want to explain the emergence of a new attitude, we need to find both the value and the pre-existing attitude on which it acted, as well as identify in their combination the necessary and sufficient cause of the new attitude.

This is therefore the work that the authors try to do throughout their work: isolate simple elements and see how they behave in all the combinations in

which it can be observed in order to identify a cause. What is the transition from identifying the cause to defining the law? The same authors explain how declaring:

We use in this work the inductive method in a form which gives the least possible place for any arbitrary statements. The basis of the work is concrete materials, and only in the selection of these materials some necessary discrimination has been used. (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 76).

To arrive at generalizations, therefore, they used the 'analytical' induction as a new specific form of inference. This logic type tries to identify some combinations of characteristics related to the intension of the conceptual analysis unit that one is trying to define. These combining characteristics also allow to explain the constitutive process of the phenomenon observed (Znaniecki, 1934). The interesting thing about this inferential path is how the generalization is formulated progressively: the hypothesis is formulated through the analysis of the empirical materials collected and its adequacy is gradually specified during the comparison between all the cases observed, identifying common characteristics deemed helpful for grasping the phenomenon to be defined. In this sense, analytical induction is less interested in the enumerative saturation of the cases, but rather in the saturation of the semantic coverage of the conceptual category. In this way, the explanation is subjected to continuous empirical checks to reject it or integrate it with other generalizations (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20) and then establish whether a law is valid for a single social context or for all the contexts.

Thomas and Znaniecki's objective is to provide precise laws for the analysis and description of social change. These laws would have originated in empirically tested and testable facts (Guth, Schrecker, 2002: 287). It is understood that for the authors the ideal would be to find laws that are applicable to all societies at any historical period. However, they themselves realize the limits of this claim and support:

There is less risk in assuming that a certain law applies exclusively in the given social conditions than in supposing that it may be extended over all societies (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 62).

Obviously, there is a gap between the declared methodological approach and the practice of research. In this regard, Blumer points out that Thomas and Znaniecki did not work in the strictly inductivist way. He emphasized that many footnoted interpretations cannot be made to 'stick' to the particular section of a letter they are attached to. This hiatus can always be interpreted in a tension

between the emic and etic perspectives: on the one hand, the authors claim an analytical approach of an almost experimental nature of the data, on the other, its absolute naturalness and priority, such as to impose itself on the reader and even on the same scientist. Precisely for this reason the authors argue:

The analysis of the attitudes and characters given in notes to particular letters and in introductions to particular series contains nothing not essentially contained, in the materials themselves (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 56).

5. Reporting and applying the results

An activity that at first glance appears to be squashed on the pole of the mica is that of writing the report. The text presents a large amount of material with little intervention from the authors. Furthermore, the comments and footnotes contain basic information, such as factual information, both background and foreground. Each family has an introduction sketched out. The information is only factual and relates to the family group and the peasant society more generally.

Some comments contain other information, such as explanations of elliptical comments or accounts of general points concerning the research materials; interpretive commentaries and abstract statements from or about social theory.

This way of writing was actually also severely criticized. For example, Madge (1962) points out that nowhere in the volumes of the work is there what one might consider a sufficiently accurate description of the materials displayed or the results of the research. Blumer (1939) criticized the footnotes because they are very mixed in nature. Plummer (2001) also took a critical approach because the letters contain shifting perspectives between writer and recipient and have a high 'dross rate' because they are 'not generally focused enough to be of analytic interest' (Plummer 2001: 55).

Literature has highlighted how *The Polish Peasant* contains what is now called 'retrievable data' (Stanley 2010: 146). Research accounts conventionally provide conclusions and arguments, and merely snippets of data are provided to support what are in effect closed texts (Stanley 2010: 146). For example, in the writing style, it is possible to guess how the notes were compiled at different times, looping back and reworking the content. This style is consistent with the analytical induction approach, in which the cases which do not fit a phenomenon require a re-specification of the explanatory concept and therefore a reformulation of the generalization hypothesis. For this reason, from writing, it emerges that every time the analysis was able to reach a

conclusion on a specific aspect, this was reported in the introduction and led to reformulate the introductory sections.

The most interesting thing, however, concerns the possibilities of intervention that derive from the results of the investigation. This aspect is not always sufficiently highlighted in the literature. It is fundamental to understand how the etic and emic dimensions of the research are combined for the authors. In their view, the aim of the research, although detached from practice, always has a social and political impact and this responds to the typically American desire to change the world. The authors in fact state that:

Our success in controlling nature gives us confidence that we shall eventually be able to control the social world in the same measure (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: 1).

While differing from purely practical reasons, sociology aims to the understanding of social facts, the construction of a rational technique of social analysis and the development of the possible applications of sociology (Guth, Schrecker, 2002: 282). This approach can be considered ambivalently. On the one hand, it is in line with the typical etic approach of the epistemological and methodological vision expressed, as it implies a logic very close to the behavioural and experimental approach. In the eyes of the authors, intervention means changing values and attitudes in the desired sense, making use of causal knowledge as provided by social theory (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20). It is therefore necessary to have a social science that would be the basis of a rational and effective social technique.

On the other hand, the intervention can be included in a broader framework. We cannot fail to understand that the concerns of Chicago sociology were largely applicable (Stanley, 2010: 140). This partly came from the influence of the pragmatism of Pierce, James, Dewey and Mead, in part the social and intellectual context linked to Hull House can be considered. In this context, the boundaries between 'formal sociology' in Chicago and research and 'reform activity' were blurred. Consider the relevance that Hull House had in financing the same investigation.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, despite the fact that at first glance *The Polish Peasant's* research can be considered as one of the fundamental works of the emic approach - starting from the choice of biographical material and the enhancement of the point of view of social actors - to a more accurate analysis, the investigative approach falls mainly in the sphere of ethics. The use of rigid

and external reading schemes by the authors is in fact very evident in all the research phases.

Precisely for this reason, the work can be considered the fruit of a continuous tension between the etic and emic perspectives. This tension is so stressed that the text is often unbalanced towards one or the other poles without any balance. Moreover, each step of the investigation can be considered a tear of the authors towards a perspective at the expense of the other.

Despite this imbalance, the research presents many aspects of innovation. The idea that emerges from the analysis conducted so far is that the tension between emic and ethics intrinsic to all the work is attributable to a founding anxiety that the authors have towards sociology.

This is confirmed by the methodological note where the need to found sociology as a scientific discipline and research practice clearly emerges, tracing its boundaries both with respect to common sense and to other sciences. This also emerges throughout the whole work which is proposed as an instrument of knowledge of the changes taking place in the contemporary world, but also as a form of accreditation of social sciences in front of public opinion and institutional actors, in view of possible interventions and changes.

In this perspective, the authors' aspiration to find a discipline that rigorously applies the experimental method can be considered as responding to a logic of reputational growth of the social disciplines that aspire to be recognized as the natural ones. It is therefore possible to understand why alongside a biographical interest and the social and political commitment behind the choice of the object of study – as is typical of the Chicago school – there is the importance of the objectivity of the science and its autonomy with respect to social practice. This also explains why the collection of information, while at the forefront in the use of “naturally occurring sources” (Stanley: 148), is continuously submitted by the authors to the proof of causal explanation and generalization with nomothetic aspirations.

This is precisely why Thomas and Znaniecki explain that the work is not a monograph on Polish peasant society and immigration to the US, but it is a programmatic work establishing an independent and fully-articulated sociology discipline (Thomas, Znaniecki, 1918-20/1974: VII-IX).

In other words, our idea is that we cannot fully understand the scope of the work and all its internal tensions if we do not understand the role that sociology wanted to assume in the public field at the time of the Chicago School. In this sense, the relationship of circularity between theory and research can be recognized as problem-oriented, because it addresses burning issues of the society of the time – immigration, disorganization and social change – with the intention not only to study or understand them, but above all to give them visibility in view of a desirable intervention that modifies the course. Precisely

for this reason, we can say that the main result of the work is not so much in its interpretative capacity, nor in its (desired) methodological rigor. It is rather in the affirmation of a public role of sociology.

References

- Acocella, I. (2010), 'La scuola di Chicago: tra innovazione e tradizionalismo', *Quaderni di Sociologia*, 53: 107-127.
- Blumer, H. (1939), 'An Appraisal of Thomas e Znaniecki's "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America"', *New York, Social Research Council, Bulletin* 44.
- Bulmer, M. (1984), *The Chicago School of Sociology*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.
- Cataldi, S., Iorio, G. (2020), 'Participation in action: the research approach of the Chicago School beyond the myth', *Studi di Sociologia*, ISSN: 1827789.
- Coser, L. W. (1971), *Masters of Sociological Thought*, New York, Brace Jovanovich.
- Deegan, M. J. (1988), *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School 1892-1918*, New Brunswick, Transaction Book.
- Given, L. M. (2008), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (Vols. 1-0). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Guth, S., Schrecker, C. (2002), 'From the rules of sociological, method to the Polish peasant: a comparative view of two foundational texts', *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 2(3): 281-298.
- Hannerz, U. (1980), *Exploring the City. Inquiries toward an Urban Anthropology*, New York, Columbia University Press.
- Harvey, L. (1986), 'The Myths of the Chicago School', *Quality and Quantity*, 20, 2-3: 191-217.
- Janowitz, M., ed. (1966), *W. I. Thomas. On social Organization and social Personality*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Krippendorff, K. (1980), *Content Analysis. An Introduction to its Methodology*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage.
- Madge, J. (1962), *The Origins of Scientific Sociology*, New York, Free Press.
- Masiello, S. (2012), 'Definire la realtà sociale: lineamenti del pensiero di William I. Thomas', *Quaderni di Sociologia*, 58: 107-124.
- Matthews, F. H. (1977), *Quest for an American Sociology: Robert E. Park and Chicago School*, Montreal, MacGill-Queen's University Press.
- Pike, K. L. (1967), *Language in relation to a unified theory of the structures of human behavior* (2nd ed.), The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton.
- Plummer, K. (2001), *The Documents of Life 2*, London, Sage Pub., 2nd edition.
- Stanley, L. (2010), 'To the letter: Thomas and Znaniecki's The Polish Peasant and writing a life, sociologically', *Sociology*, 45: 947-962.

- Thomas, W. I., Znaniecki, F. (1918-20), *The Polish Peasant in Europa and in America*, voll. I-H, University of Chicago, Chicago, and voll. I-V Richard G. Badger, Boston; cited version: New York, Octagon, 1974.
- Tomasi, L. (1997) *La Scuola sociologica di Chicago. 1. La teoria implicita*, Milano, FrancoAngeli.
- Volkart, E. H. (ed.) (1981) *Social Behavior and Personality: Contributions of W.I. Thomas to Theory and Social Research*, Westport, CT: Greenwood. (Orig. pub. 1951.)
- Zaretsky, E. (1984), 'Introduction' to *William Isaac Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, abridged edn. Urbana and Chicago, Illinois University Press.
- Znaniecki, F. (1948), 'W. I. Thomas as a collaborator', *Sociology and Social Research*, 32: 765-767.
- Znaniecki, F. (1934), *The Method of Sociology*, New York, Rinehart.