

I. CONTROVERSIES ABOUT “EVERYDAY LIFE”

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PROFILE OF RESEARCH AND DEFINITION

Research into the so-called “everyday life” — one of the most fruitful directions in historical study in the second half of the 20th c. — has already resulted in hundreds of publications, and new books in this field continue to appear, gaining the high assessment of their readers, also from outside professional circles. Perhaps precisely because of these successes historians engaged in this field have been sharply attacked and accused of breaking with science and hunting for popularity and even of pursuing commercial aims. Thus “everyday life” has its adherents and fierce adversaries, and there seems to be no end to the long-lasting and sharp controversies about the scope of its research, its profile and the definition of the notion itself. An especially heated discussion broke out in Germany in the 1980s. The *Berliner Historikertag* in October 1984 was the scene of the sharpest disputes. There are also many polemical publications, presenting ever new pros and cons. They certainly deserve credit for clarifying some notions and dispelling a number of doubts, although the definition of “everyday life” itself is still controversial.

Among the adherents of “everyday life” is a well-known German historian Hans-Jürgen Teuberg. He considers studies of “everyday life” to be a new, important direction of research

into social history and the history of culture¹; while deriving the formulation itself from Friedrich Nietzsche, he nevertheless emphasizes the fact that a special development of research into “everyday life” started in the 1970s², when not only historians but also philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists and researchers into literature started to preoccupy themselves with the sphere of “daily” phenomena. Teuteberg associates the intensification of these interests with the development of regional history (*Heimatforschung*), which at that time received new, vital impulses from ecological and feminist movements (the latter arousing interest in the situation of woman in former times). Other researchers emphasize the importance of modern research into the labour movement, a research which tries to “demythologise” this movement and free it of its Marxist patterns, by laying emphasis on studying the material situation, the conditions of life and work and the culture of the working class³. Also the interest in the Second World War and the Nazi period has prompted researchers to take up the “everyday life” of those eras and to open new perspectives by forsaking the studies of the personality of Hitler and figures from his entourage and focussing attention on the existence of common citizens and on the elements of resistance movement⁴.

Nevertheless, one must admit that it is not easy to define everyday life or precisely establish its scope. Some researchers consider the history of “everyday life” as a story of “simple”, “small” people, a story seen from their perspective, i.e. “from below”, in contrast to the traditional view “from above”, from the

¹ H.-J. Teuteberg, *Alles das, was dem Dasein Farbe gegeben hat. Zur Ortsbestimmung der Alltagsgeschichte*, in: *Methoden und Probleme der Alltagsforschung im Zeitalter des Barocks*, ed. O. Pickl, H. Feigl, Wien 1992, pp. 11–42.

² “Everyday life” was discussed even earlier: the French popular Hachette series began to appear in 1938, the Polish “PIW” series in 1960.

³ Cf. M. Henkel, R. Taubert, *Maschinenstürmer. Ein Kapitel aus der Sozialgeschichte des technischen Fortschritts*, Frankfurt/M 1979; H. Maimann, *Bemerkungen zu einer Geschichte des Arbeiteralltags*, in: G. Botz et al. [ed.], *Bewegung und Klasse. Studien zur österreichischer Arbeitergeschichte*, Wien 1978, pp. 599–628; D. Peukert, *Arbeiteralltag — Mode oder Methode?*, in: H. Haumann [ed.], *Arbeiteralltag in Stadt und Land. Neue Wege der Geschichtsschreibung*, Berlin 1982, pp. 8–10; U. Volker, *Entdeckungsreise in den historischen Alltag. Versuch einer Annäherung an die “neue Geschichtsbewegung”*, “Geschichte, Wissenschaft, Unterricht”, 36, 1985, pp. 403–414, especially p. 406.

⁴ Cf. L. Niehammer, *Anmerkungen zur Alltagsgeschichte*, “Geschichtsdidaktik”, Jg. 5, 1980, H. 3, pp. 231–242, especially p. 238.

position of rulers, magnates, intellectuals. Those simple “small” people create history and culture in an everyday process, individually and collectively shaping the forms of their lives. Their subjective activity leads to the rise of objective structures and norms. This is the way the historical process is conceived by one of the most interesting German researchers of the middle generation, Richard van Dülmen⁵. At any rate, not only “small” people, but also kings, magnates, rich burghers, politicians and heroes have their own everyday life which has already been noticed and studied by researchers⁶.

A Hungarian philosopher, Agnes Heller, sees “everyday life”, conceived as the framework of an individual’s realisation, as the “leaven” of all history, thus being close to the views of van Dülmen. In accordance with her definition “everyday life” is the totality of individual actions aimed at individual reproduction which makes possible the reproduction of society as a whole⁷. An individual is here pushed to the forefront before the group, individual actions and subjective motives become the main motive power of history — a view which many historians and sociologists find difficult to accept. According to Edmund Husserl “everyday life” means a direct, limited environment (*Lebenswelt, beschränkte Umwelt*), where one gains experience in the process of naively-natural direct “familiarization” with it⁸. Successive generations inherit the world of culture created by their ancestors and transforming it, hand it down to their successors⁹. Alfred Schütz and his follower Thomas Luckmann conceive “everyday life” (*alltägliche Lebenswelt*) as those regions of reality with which an individual can interfere and transform them. This activity encounters that of others, which limits his possibilities and sets boundaries to his activity¹⁰. Thus

⁵ Cf. R. von Dülmen, *Gesellschaft der frühen Neuzeit: kulturelles Handeln und sozialer Prozess. Beiträge zur historischen Kulturforschung*, Wien-Köln-Weimar 1993, p. 9 ff.

⁶ Cf. K. Tenfelde, *Schwierigkeiten mit dem Alltag*, “Geschichte und Gesellschaft”, Jg. 10, 1984, pp. 376–394, especially p. 385.

⁷ A. Heller, *Das Alltagsleben*, Frankfurt 1978, p. 24 ff.

⁸ E. Husserl, *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Den Haag 1962, p. 144 ff.

⁹ *Ibid.* Cf. also J. M. Greverus, *Kultur und Alltagswelt*, Frankfurt/M 1978, p. 97 ff.

¹⁰ A. Schütz, T. Luckmann, *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*, Neuwied-Darmstadt 1975, p. 23.

what's important are methods people employ in order to live in definite communities; the forms of thinking and ways of behaviour affect the way people shape their existence¹¹.

H. P. Thurn proposes, in contrast to the above mentioned scholars, to give up focussing on "everyday life" as a phenomenon, in favour of conceiving it as the framework of human activity, a category naturally changing, depending on the era. Thus according to Thurn we would pass from the question "what?" to the question "how?", i.e. to studying "the techniques of behaviour", to which "everyday life" owes each of its forms. Thus the focus of the discussion shifts from the issue of definition to the methods of investigation, perhaps more important, in practice, indeed¹².

Many researchers emphasize repetitiveness and even "drabness" and monotony as characteristics that qualify a phenomenon as "everyday life", frequently also conceived as a sphere of "natural", unreflective activity¹³. Thus e.g. Rolf Schörken defines "everyday life" as the world that surrounds us and is accepted as our natural environment, composed of well-known situations¹⁴. Peter Borscheid, however, criticizes this definition as too static, not taking into account the element of change, although in general he agrees with repetitiveness as the most important characteristic of "everyday life"¹⁵. Yet, he finds unacceptable the identification of "everyday life" with private life, since the division between the private and public spheres is a historical phenomenon, which undergoes transformations, and differs in different social groups. Thus e.g. in the Middle Ages and early modern times what dominated the whole of human life was work, and the separation of work from the private-domestic sphere had been completely unknown for centuries¹⁶.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² H. P. Thurn, *Der Mensch im Alltag. Grundriss einer Anthropologie des Alltagslebens*, Stuttgart 1980, p. 4 ff.

¹³ Cf. P. Borscheid, *Plädoyer für eine Geschichte des Alltäglichen*, in: *Ehe, Liebe, Tod*, ed. P. Borscheid, H.-J. Teuteberg, Münster 1983, pp. 1-14; P. Borscheid, *Alltagsgeschichte — Modetorheit oder neues Tor zur Vergangenheit?*, in: W. Schieder, V. Seklin [ed.], *Sozialgeschichte in Deutschland*, vol. III, Göttingen 1987, pp. 78-100.

¹⁴ R. Schörken, *Geschichte in der Alltagswelt*, Stuttgart 1981, p. 3.

¹⁵ P. Borscheid, *Plädoyer*, p. 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Despite these reservations, P. Borscheid is, along with H.-J. Teuteberg, a great enthusiast of the direction in research termed as “everyday life”. In his programmatic article devoted to this issue he sees as the main task not so much the creation of its definition as the separation of “everyday life” (*Alltag*) from the areas that go beyond it (*Nicht-Alltag*)¹⁷. This separation is not easy, since the boundaries are not stable. Everything that happens only once and is unique, goes beyond “everyday life” — thus the essence of “everyday life” is repetitiveness. Borscheid agrees with Agnes Heller that the “everyday” world consists of three “objectifying” (*Objektivationsbereiche*) areas: objects, norms and language. The influence of objects made by man on “everyday life” can be especially clearly seen in reference to work (the division of labour, tools, the organization of work). Norms act as regulators and stabilizers of “everyday life”. Of great weight here are religious systems, which ritualize the most important moments of human life (birth, marriage, death and funeral) as well as the cycles of the week and the year (Sundays and holidays). Side by side with religion, ideology has a special place in “everyday life”, on the one hand by checking the dissatisfaction that can lead to a change in reality, and on the other, by regulating interhuman relations by law. “Everyday life” is also controlled, apart from these codified norms, by emotions and customs that cement societies, creating their culture. The latter, naturally, depends on the social context, place and time, and is demonstrated, e.g., by the expressive symbolism characteristic of popular strata¹⁸, by ostentatious consumption, called by Pierre Bourdieu “a symbolic capital”¹⁹. “Everyday life” is also defined and created by the way people think and their language, both indispensable to the existence and functioning of the collective world²⁰.

According to P. Borscheid it is an important task of scholarship to discover the connections between the apparently immobile, grey world of “everyday life” and the world of particular, “short-lived” events. Instead of opposing these two worlds to one

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁸ M. Medick, *Plebejsche Kultur, plebejsche Öffentlichkeit, plebejsche Ökonomie*, in: R. M. Berdahl, A. Lüdtke (ed.), *Klassen und Kultur*, Frankfurt/M 1982, p. 157 ff.

¹⁹ P. Bourdieu, *Entwurf einer Theorie der Praxis auf der ethnologischen Grundlage der kabyllischen Gesellschaft*, Frankfurt/M 1976, p. 356.

²⁰ P. Borscheid, *Plädoyer*, p. 11.

another, scholarship should build bridges between them, i.e. between structural history, revealed in the long-lasting processes, and the history of events²¹. In order to achieve this, one must analyse the topics so far considered to be trivial: myths, rituals, holidays and their celebration, customs, emotions, feelings, sexuality and the ways of experiencing it, eating habits, etc. The history of civilization is revealed in the style of clothing, food habits, the organization of family life, relations between the sexes, the structure of beliefs and customs — all these phenomena together testifying to the level of people's humanization²². Thus the history of "everyday life" is strictly connected with the history of material culture²³, but at the same time should be closely linked to the history of mentality. It should also involve many other disciplines, such as sociology, statistics, geography, philosophy, anthropology, ethnography, medicine, biology, psychology, linguistics; it cannot consist in telling anecdotes, but must have a solid theoretical basis. P. Borscheid treats the forms in which "everyday life" develops as the basic dimension of the whole human civilization, he treats "everyday life" as the foundation of the development of humanity²⁴. No wonder he thinks research into these areas to be extremely important for the progress of historiography; it was within the framework of "everyday life" that extremely valuable, new directions of research arose, e.g. those dealing with the ways of employing leisure, the working class culture, ways of celebrating holidays, and the customs of various social groups²⁵. H.-J. Teuteberg, too, emphasizes that "everyday life" as a direction in research born on the borderland of the history of culture and social history, by its very nature interdisciplinary, opens new, interesting possibilities of investigation. It was studies in this area that for the first time brought to light e.g. the subjective, carnal-sensual experiences of people, thus enabling the creation of a completely new historical perspective of human existence²⁶.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²³ W. Goetz, *Leben im Mittelalter vom 7. bis 13. Jhr.*, München 1991, p. 14.

²⁴ P. Borscheid, *Plädoyer*, p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁶ H.-J. Teuteberg, *Alles das, das dem Dasein Farbe gegeben hat*, p. 24 ff.

The direction in research termed as “everyday life” has arisen — according to Borscheid and Teuteberg — as a protest against the technical, drily rationalistic, bureaucratic and “synthetic” conception of the past, against ideal abstract models and structures, which reduce human being to a statistical number²⁷. This was a protest against the tendency to leave no room in historiography for people²⁸, a protest opposing the “little world of everyday life” to the “great” world of political and socio-economic structures, a protest that discovered privacy, the role of an individual, the importance of subjective emotions and actions, fascination with hard facts and details²⁹. This was certainly a challenge presented to historiography, fascinated with sociology and preoccupied solely with immense, non-personal processes and creation of abstract models.

No wonder some historians made a fierce attack on “everyday life”; the critics of this new direction included such outstanding scholars as Jürgen Kocka, Klaus Tenfelde and Hans-Ulrich Wehler. The catalogue of their objections is long. The adversaries of “everyday life” contend that instead of analysing the global structures existing objectively in the past or great processes, the new direction presents at best nice pictures of the past, collections of anecdotes and stories, devoid of theoretical reflection (J. Kocka)³⁰. This is a “blind alley”, fascinated with details, skimming the surface of phenomena, rolling in the “sweat and helplessness of oppressed people”, in the private world of past generations in order to gain commercial effects (K. Tenfelde)³¹. “Everyday life” is a flea market for discarded old stuff that satisfies the nostalgic curiosity of wide circles of the general public (A. Lüdtke)³², an insipid pap (*biedere Hirsebret*) served up to naive

²⁷ P. Borscheid, *Plädoyer*, p. 4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ M. Henkel, R. Taubert, *Maschinenstürmer*, p. 30, say: *Die Ereignisse, die im Mittelpunkt unserer Darstellung stehen sind nicht weltbewegend, eher alltäglich. Sie werden lebendig durch viele kleine Details. Geschichte besteht überhaupt nur aus vielen kleinen unwichtigen Details.*

³⁰ J. Kocka, *Klassen oder Kultur? Durchbrücke und Sackgassen in der Arbeitsgeschichte*, “Merkur”, Jg. 36, 1982, H. 10, pp. 955–965; *Idem*, *Zurück zur Erzählung? Plädoyer für die historische Argumentation*, “Geschichte und Gesellschaft”, Jg. 10, 1984, H. 4, pp. 395–408; on the same subject see also L. Stone, *The Revival of the Narrative: Reflection on a New Old History*, “Past and Present”, 85, 1979, pp. 3–24.

³¹ K. Tenfelde, *Schwierigkeiten*, p. 376 ff.

readers (H.-U. Wehler)³³, at best a romantic, pseudorealistic *causerie* deprived of scholarly character (H.-U. Wehler)³⁴, a direction dealing in banalities³⁵. Moreover “everyday life” exists, as it has been said by N. Elias³⁶, only in opposition to the unusual³⁷. This, in a sense, explains the fact that scholars who follow this direction avoid theoretical deliberations and cannot create a coherent, mature definition of “everyday life”³⁸.

K. Tenfelde perceives most danger in the tendency to treat the history of “everyday life” as counter-history (*Gegengeschichte*)³⁹. He also criticizes the tendency to deal only with anonymous and everyday phenomena⁴⁰. He cites the American historian, Peter N. Stearns, who posed the question: can one write the history of Illinois without mentioning Lincoln?⁴¹ Paraphrasing it, Tenfelde asks: can one write the history of resistance movement without Hitler? It seems, though, that such a presentation of the problem reduces it to absurdity.

The objections made by J. Kocka seem to be very serious. He criticizes the new direction as a history of human actions or of

³² A. Lüdtkke, *Rekonstruktion von Alltagswirklichkeit — Entpolitisierung der Sozialgeschichte?*, in: R. M. Berdahl, A. Lüdtkke, *Klassen und Kultur*, p. 322.

³³ H.-U. Wehler, *Geschichte von unten gesehen*, “Die Zeit”, 1985, N° 19, p. 64.

³⁴ H.-U. Wehler, *Neoromantik und Pseudorealismus in der neuen “Alltagsgeschichte”*, in: *Idem, Preussen ist wieder chic... Politik und Polemik in zwanzig essays*, Frankfurt/M 1983, pp. 99–106; *Idem, Der Bauernbandit als neuer Heros*, “Die Zeit”, 1981, N° 39.

³⁵ The adherents of “everyday life” reject this accusation, saying there is no trivial history, there may be only a trivial historiography, cf. H.-J. Teuteberg, *Alles das, was dem Dasein Farbe gegeben hat*, p. 25.

³⁶ N. Elias, *Zum Begriff des Alltags*, in: *Materialien zur Soziologie des Alltags*, ed. K. Hammerich, M. Klein, Opladen 1978, pp. 22–29.

³⁷ He writes: *Der modische Begriff des Alltags wird in der Regel mit einer Spitze gegen etwas oder auch mit einer Parteinahme für etwas gebraucht, was nicht Alltag ist. Aber man muss das gewöhnlich erraten: von wenigen Ausnahmen abgesehen, wird nicht klar und deutlich gesagt, was diese Nicht-Alltag eigentlich ist, der je nachdem als Gegenbild abgewertet oder höher bewertet, bekämpft oder gepriesen werden soll durch das, was man über den Alltag sagt. Die Liste, die folgt, gibt daher einen vorläufigen Hinweis auf den jeweils implizierten Nicht-Alltag. Ohne diesen Gegenbegriff kann man im Grunde nie recht verstehen, worauf sich jeweiligen Darstellungen über “Alltag” oder gegebenenfalls auch “Alltagsbewusstsein” und “Alltagskultur beziehen”*, N. Elias, *Zum Begriff des Alltags* p. 25.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ See K. Tenfelde, *Schwirigkeiten*, pp. 387–389.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁴¹ P. N. Stearns, *Social and Political History*, “Journal of Social History”, 16, 1982/1983, pp. 3–5.

human subjective experiences. It was already J. Habermas who justly observed that history is not made up of what people intend to do⁴². A history seen “from inside”, and “from below”, conceived as a reconstruction of the experiences of “simple” people, is an illusion — the scholar has no direct access to historical reality, thus, what he constructs is only an “elegant story”⁴³. Kocka urges historians to return to theoretical reflections, to connect particular events and individual persons with general structures and processes, since — as he says — the works of E. P. Thompson, C. Ginzburg or E. Le Roy Ladurie show that it is possible to generalize through an analysis of particular events and individual experiences. Kocka’s main postulate runs: *Verknüpfung der Struktur- und Handlungsgeschichte, der Prozess- und Erfahrungsgeschichte*⁴⁴.

It must be admitted that the fact that “everyday life” encompasses very different phenomena and very large areas makes it extremely difficult to construct its theory and definition. “Everyday life” is both the question of the conditions of life, conditions and methods of work, consumption in all its aspects (clothing, furniture, housing, food, etc.), the history of the family, the situation of women and children, of old people, of the sick, the whole sphere of sexual life and reproduction, the crucial moments of life such as birth, marriage, death and funeral, the size and way of using leisure, the world of customs, beliefs and views, finally mentality as a whole. One must say that precisely this direction of research has opened wide perspectives in the all above-mentioned areas.

It is undoubtedly to the credit of historians of “everyday life” that they have drawn attention to sources long unnoticed by historiography: photographs of industrial buildings, memories of simple people, relics of the so-called material culture: tools, machines, furniture, clothes, posters, tombstones, toys, teaching aids, etc. They were also the first to show interest in oral testimonies (the so-called oral history, especially developed in the USA and Great Britain) and to collect interviews concerning the everyday existence, material conditions of life in great agglomer-

⁴² J. Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, vol. 2: *Zur Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft*, Frankfurt 1981, p. 576 ff.

⁴³ J. Kocka, *Zurück zur Erzählung*, p. 399 ff.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 407.

ations as well as in small localities, the conditions of work in industry and agriculture, etc.⁴⁵

The history of “everyday life” introduced some unrest into the world of scholars preoccupied with history, making them pose new questions and provide new answers. Some of them, as a result, consider it a rebellion against the safe, ossified routine of “professional” historiography. On the other hand the opposition between the macro- and micro-scale, put forward by some scholars, in practice turned out to be a false alternative. This is shown by the studies by the above-mentioned: C. Ginzburg, E. Le Roy Ladurie, as well as A. E. Imhof, D. W. Sebean. A thorough analysis of a particular case or detail may be effectively connected to the construction of general structures, and even constitute the basis of the correctness of such a construction. Nevertheless it should be emphasized that researchers into “everyday life” should not avoid theoretical reflection. *Kein Alltag ohne Theorie* — is justly emphasized by such (at the same time critical) adherents of this direction of research as U. Volker⁴⁶ or I. Niehammer⁴⁷.

Summing up the above discussion let us try to draw some conclusions. Is “everyday life” indeed “everything”, as was stated by H. Lefebvre⁴⁸? Certainly not although its scope is really vast, encompassing e.g. the whole of material culture, family life, the areas of work and leisure, the world of individual and group notions and ideas. This does not, however, relieve us from the duty to seek a definition that could designate this subject of research more precisely. Among many above-mentioned proposals it is perhaps repetitiveness that is the most essential criterion that allows to define the character, the essence of “everyday life” and to delineate its boundaries, which at the same time delineate the scope of research. Thus conceived “everyday life” would encompass not only the week-days but also holidays, since they, too, recur, creating the framework of the existence of human being, both the “small person” — one of the common people, a member of the oppressed groups, and the “great person” — a

⁴⁵ Cf. U. Volker, *Entdeckungsreise*, p. 406 ff.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 410.

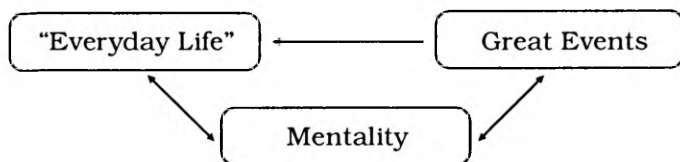
⁴⁷ L. Niehammer, *Anmerkungen*, pp. 231–232.

⁴⁸ H. Lefebvre, *Kritik des Alltagslebens*, vol. I–III, München 1974–1975, *passim*.

ruler, magnate, member of any of the privileged élites. Daily life interlaced with periodically recurring holidays is the direct soil of human existence, the ground for the activity of individuals and groups; in the course of work and leisure they enter various relations and dependences, and create for their own use the image of the world and the norms that regulate their behaviour. This precisely is the “essence” of everyday life.

The study of “everyday life” should not be conducted as collecting anecdotes, as a “tale telling”, devoid of deeper meaning, as a plain description of the relics of the past. One can and should seek the rules and laws governing the course of this widely expanding, by false appearances unchangeable flow of the river of everyday life, made up of recurring human endeavours, emotions, individual and collective experiences. One should also pose oneself the question about the place of “everyday life” in the historical process.

Now, the historical process can be presented in a simplified, model approach as one developing on three levels: “everyday life” — social mentality — great events. Graphically it would look like this:



To great events belong especially wars and peace treaties, large epidemics, changes of dynasties and governments, revolutions, big epoch-making inventions. “Everyday life” is the daily existence of people, both social and political élites (they have their “everyday life”, too) and “simple”, “small” people who make up the majority of all societies. Great events influence directly, sometimes very strongly, the “everyday life”, although it is generally very resistant to any violent changes. Nevertheless human existence during a war, plague, introduction of a new system etc., is full of elements that affect the masses of people, and directly and powerfully influence their way of life. On the other hand, “everyday life” influences great events, not directly, but indirectly, through the mentality which it prepotently shapes. Thus e.g.

great inventions are not always products of a single stroke of genius, but most often depend on the experiences and knowledge accumulated in the course of daily work. Revolutions break out when the oppression arouses wide-spread social dissatisfaction.

“Everyday life”, thus rooted in the historical process, turns out to be its essential, one can say fundamental, element. Hence it must constitute an important area of research and it is not accidental that so many researchers are dedicated to its study.

“Everyday life” is a term corresponding literally to the German *Alltag*. In Polish, apart from the designation *codzienny* (“everyday”) there is also another adjective: *powszedni* (“work day”, “common day”) and some researchers propose to give this trend of study such a label. This seems, however, to lead to the narrowing of research in a disadvantageous way. “Work day” is not a synonym of “everyday” but its reduction to week-days. The repetitiveness of week-days is more narrow than the repetitiveness of every day and does not encompass the rhythmically recurring holidays and celebrations connected with the flow of human life (the recurring rituals of baptisms, weddings, funerals) or with the liturgical year (Christmas, Easter, etc.). Hence the researchers into the “common day” confine the field of their study and reflections to only one sphere of human life, while those who study “everyday life” see this life in the whole context, composed both of work days and festive moments.

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)