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The purpose of this book (*Nationalism and Social Theory*, Sage Publications, 2002) is to provide a comprehensive and critical review of the theory on nationalism by placing it in the framework of the theories of modernity. The second aim was to look at possible problems that theorists encounter when employing the comparative perspective on nationalism. Last but not least the concept of nationalism is discussed in relation with the recent debates cosmopolitanism.

“Delanty and O’Mahony have developed a major sociological perspective on the kaleidoscopic world of nationalism, patriotism, xenophobia and fundamentalism.” (Bryan S. Turner, University of Cambridge) Drawing on the relevant literature in sociology, historiography, anthropology and political science, the authors provide students and researchers with an authoritative guide to interpreting and understanding nationalism.

Before 1970, nationalism tended to be a marginal part of mainstream sociological theory and political science. That happened because: **Functionalism** considers culture as an integrative structure. That culture might be anarchic rather than a force of stability was rarely questioned in modern social or political thought from Matthew Arnold through Durkheim and Weber to Parsons. **Marxism** normatively disagrees with the system-confirming assumptions of structural-functionalism, proposing instead a theory of structural adaptation through the mode of production. Individuals and collectives agency (not very creative) are subsumed within the functional roles.

Nationalism became a major international issue in the wake of the fall of communism from 1989 onwards, in part, as a result of the theoretical innovations of the 1908s: post-colonialism, feminism, globalization theory and postmodernism.

Now, sociologists, like Eisenstadt, distinguish between two dimensions of culture: order-maintaining and order-transforming. Nationalism, like all discourses, constitutes a power network almost autonomous. It cannot be appropriate exclusively by the state. Sometimes it works against it.

Nationalism emerged under the conditions of modernization. Delanty and O’Mahony identify four “institutional dynamics” that characterizes modernity. These are state formation, democratization, capitalism and the intellectualization of culture. The analysis of the four concepts reveals the fact that the interaction between these their contradiction creates shape to the conditions for nationalism to occur. The authors’ claim is that nationalism is related to the idea of radical freedom and it represents “the symbolic violence of modernity”.

The conditions that give birth to different constellations of nationalism can be more meaningfully understood the authors claim if we look at two dynamics. The first one is the relationship between agency and structure and the second is between “culture or life-world” and social systems. The former refers to the effects of cultural movements for social and cultural change on existing structures or to the conception of new structures. The latter contains different levels of differentiation, integration and cultural orders that allow for the reproduction of social processes in the form of institutions. The agency structure axis emphasizes the historical temporal dimension of nationalism as an agent of social change. The life-world / system dimension looks at nationalism as an institutionally stabilized culture

in the life-world that offers parameters for the operation of social system. It shows the institutional presence of nationalism in stable societal value systems and institutions. The intersection of the two dimensions gives us a conceptual map in which modernity and nationalism are interrelated elements.

Nationalism emerged under the conditions of modernization and connected the political project of modernity – the radical project of elites, state formation, etc. – with the cultural project of shaping new identities and new forms of thinking & meaning. In this, as structuralist accounts have always argued, the social project of modernity played a crucial role. Nationalism was one kind of reaction to the particular constellation of social, political and cultural forces that shaped modernity.

In nowadays, the situation differs from the past in one major aspect: the political project is less connected with the cultural project. Consequently, under the conditions of globalization, the dynamics of modernity have produced a different field of conflicts which are characterized by greater fragmentation.

Jew and anti-Semite. Otto Weininger

Geschlecht und Charakter's first edition was published in Vienna, 1903. After 100 years appears the first Romanian edition – publisher ANASTASIA.

Today, Otto Weininger is no longer considered a genial philosopher. Jacques Le Rider a specialist in Weininger's work said that it is valuable only because of its symptomatic character: Weininger was considered as being both Jew and anti-Semite. And he assumed this paradoxical identity: „The Author must recognize that he's Jew by origin.”¹ The writer Arthur Schnitzler was joking about this situation: „anti-Semitism was never been successful until the Jews have not become themselves anti-Semites.” In his entire book, especially in the first part, Weininger is using the terms “woman” or “Jew” in a metaphorical sense. Some considered him as being subtle, but I am considering that he's confuse and incoherent. This bizarre logic which created the Jew as a metaphor permitted Weininger to believe he's a Jew and, in the same time, an anti-Semite.

“The Jew” as a platonic idea made possible that some Germans, “Arians”, to be “more Jew than the Jews”². And “the masculine” and “the feminine” seemed to be a characteristic for both women and men. In the Weininger's opinion, “the man and the woman are only types that cannot be found in pure form nowhere in the real world”³ and he “demonstrates”, “mathematically” that M+F is a constant in couples; so, if the man is more feminine, *his* woman will be more masculine.

He almost convinces us that he's a deconstructionist *avant la lettre*: “Woman's education must be withdrawn from her; the entire humanity's education must be withdrawn from mother. This will be the first condition to accomplish for putting the woman in the humanity ideas services [...]. A woman who really looks for the peace in herself, *such a woman will no longer be a woman.*”⁴

But, at 310 pages, Weininger reveals his confusion, because: “The woman cannot ever become a man. There is the point where we have to make the most important delimitation from the ideas expressed in the first part of our paper”

In Weininger's opinion, *feminine* or *Jewish* identities are not “mothers' education” products; these identities are not socially / culturally constructed and thus “improvable”. For him, the identity is *definitive*.

In this way of thinking, the Jews and the women are “the most dangerous incarnations of heteronomy and disorder threats for the *Aufklärung* project”⁵. Thus, the cause / effect relation is inverted; so, he can “blame the victim”⁶. Under these circumstances, he interprets the fact that a married woman takes always the husband's family name as a proof of her personality lack – because the women, and the Jews, renounces too easy at their family name...

There is the paradigm of all the analogies specifics for the racial hatred. We can find examples of it everyday in all the discourses and all the social practices referring to the dominated and stigmatized groups: women, blacks, immigrants, etc. that are declared responsible for their marginal position.

NOTES:

¹ Weininger, Otto, *Sex si caracter*, Ed. Anastasia, Bucuresti, 2002, p. 507, nota 75

² *ibidem* p. 508

³ *ibidem*, p. 71

⁴ *ibidem*, p. 577

⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Meditatii pascaliene*, Ed. Meridiane, Bucuresti, 2001, p.85

⁶ *ibidem*, p. 86