

ETHNOSOCIOLOGY LECTURE 2 PART 2 AMERICAN ETHNOSOCIOLOGY

Okay, and now to continue with the second part of Professor Alexander Dugin's lecture on the Ethnos and the Science of Anthropology. Specifically, this will concentrate on the American and English schools of anthropological science. Now I am continuing to discuss academic sources of ethno-sociological knowledge.

Now we are coming to American school that is known as cultural anthropology. As I have said already, there is identity between ethno-sociology, as it is called in Germany and in Russia, and cultural anthropology, as this science is known in the United States. In Great Britain, they call it social anthropology, and in French, structural anthropology.

But in any case, we are dealing with the same discipline. So when, for example, German authors that are considered to be ethno-sociologists are translated in English and published in the United States, the name of the collection is always cultural anthropology or social anthropology. But before we could speak about Franz Boas, the main representative of this cultural anthropology, the father of American cultural anthropology, we need to say some words about the first stage of American anthropology.

For example, about Morgan Lewis, one of the fathers of classical or first stage anthropology. This anthropology, that could be called also pre-cultural or uncultural, was based on the idea of evolution, or the idea more or less close to Spencer. Spencer's idea that human society is continuation of the animal society, and that human society is a kind of sophisticated animal society, where the same patterns that rule the world of animals are fully applied, but on the other level.

So this evolutionary theory being applied to the society gives us the concept of progress. And anthropology was conceived by the persons as Morgan, Lewis Morgan, as a kind of studying of first apparition of the primitive man from the animal state. So it was considered as the ending stage of the animal history and the beginning of the human history.

So it was placed in the middle of the transition between animal and human being. So anthropology was based first on this evolution concept and the progress, so-called progress of the society by the first anthropologist were considered as in the case of Morgan in three phases. First, wilderness, second barbarism, and the third civilization.

So the human history and the history of the man, anthroposophy, was conceived to be the passage from the wilderness through the barbarism to the civilization. So that was a kind of vision of the fate of the humanity. And studying the primitive peoples, considered to be the last stage of animality and the first stage of humanity, the idea was to understand better the origins of the human history.

So it was the realm or the field called anthropology. So studying of primitive savage man or a culture without writings, nor without texts, scriptures. The continuation of this Lewis Morgan School of Anthropology was a very interesting American sociologist, William Sumner, that in his famous book that is called Fox Ways, he explained how that self-identity in different ethnic groups is formed.

So he was first to introduce in the sociology the concept of we group and they group. So the ethnic identity, according to the Sumner, is based on the concept of the identification of ourself and the other. So we group and they group.

And this point of this instrument of sociological analysis that actually is used by any sociologist was introduced as very important by Sumner precisely in the context of the study of the Fox Ways, so ethnic groups and their identities. And also Sumner spoke of the Mores, Latin world, that is a kind of customs or ethical procedure, ethical codes. But for him, for Sumner, it was a kind something as concept was more or less close to Paideuma, the Frobenus.

It was a kind of cultural code, Mores. And any society, any ethnic group has its own Mores. It's very important.

It is a kind of particular cultural code that defines the particularity of such or such people. So folk customs, we could name it. And Sumner began to systematically study ethnic identity using this concept of they group and we group and how this concept of the same and the other are socially organized.

So any ethnic group has its own form to define what is ours, what is theirs. So it is a kind of concrete ethno-sociological study. What is also interesting that the case of William Thomas, co-author with Polish sociologist Florian Znaniewski, the very famous study about Polish peasants in Europe and America.

So William Thomas, famous American sociologist, tried to explore modern European society with anthropological methods. So he has made a journey to Poland and tried to observe Polish society as anthropologists observe primitive people. So trying to understand, trying to explain using their native terms and categories.

That was the starting point of his cooperation with Florian Znaniewski. And the result of this anthropological application to the modern European society was a famous book The Polish Peasants in Europe and America. So here we are also dealing with an ethno-sociological approach.

Revolution and anthropology. It is the apparition of Franz Boas, that is considered to be the father and the founder of cultural anthropology. So the main idea of Franz Boas was that we should refuse the traditional anthropological means of study of primitive people, regarding them as a transitional stage between the animals and the humans.

So they are humans, but they are different, insisted Boas. He studied himself Inuit, Eskimos, Eskimo of Greenland, and he has arrived in his field researches at the conclusion that this Inuit culture is absolutely different, not only in the primitiveness, comparing it to the sophisticated modern society, but also in the context, in the content, in the values. And it is not the transitional stage from the savagery, wilderness to civilization.

It is a kind of particular civilization, civilization that possesses its own criteria, its own structures. It is extremely rich, for example, in the name of the natural phenomenon, and extremely poor in the technical sense. But its technical inventions and its technical aspect also possess a particular sacred dimension.

So if we compare primitive society, insisted Boas, and the highly developed technical one, we see that in one thing, in some things, the primitive society is more rich than the sophisticated one. For example, the vocabulary of name of the flowers, or animals, or physical, natural events, or seasons, for example. And it is obvious that the vocabulary lacks the words for technical or some special things, or feelings, or attitudes of the western society.

So, we are dealing not with the pre-society, pre-western society, pre-modern society. We are dealing with different society, that is organized completely differently. And Franz Boas was the first to refuse any kind of hierarchization of the types of the society.

He was the first to insist on the necessity to live with the society, within the society that we study, that we are studying. That he insisted to be involved in the customs and the tradition, to understand them, to live them, to understand the language. As conditions to be a real anthropologist.

So, we need to describe the society, primitive society, or ethnic society, as they see themselves. And not as we western see them. So, that is a very important point.

We are invited to give insight in this society, to describe the inner structure that we could not understand and could not see from without. So, it is very important to pass from the observation from without and to come to participation within these societies. So, the idea that cultural anthropology should understand not only technical and exterior superficial aspects of the society, primitive society we study but also enter in the middle of the society, to leave its cultural content.

And that was the turning point of cultural anthropology. So, the people, archaic peoples for the Bois, France Bois, were not the objects. They are, as for example, natural phenomena.

They were subjects, they were human and they were equal as ourselves with modern man. So, that was a very important point. So, after France Bois, there were the tradition

of cultural anthropologists that was based on this approach, fundamental approach to study in the primitive ethnic, on the simple society, the human phenomena.

And not to make comparison without to say about hierarchy. So, every society, any society is equal. It is different, but equal.

So, it is a kind of fundamental pluralistic vision of human phenomena. Pluralistic and polycentric. Different societies create different civilizations.

And they are incomparable among themselves. So, we need to understand and to study them, to observe them, to leave them open-heartedly. So, this idea was developed by his pupils and disciples, Alfred Kroeber, that studied the cultural pattern as the basic identity and the kind of cultural code that is transmitted through the generations.

There was his pupil Ruth Benedict. Also, that developed an ethno-sociological approach to the case of Japan. She defended Ruth Benedict, defended cultural pluralism and studied different kind of society as if they were complex structures that should be understood based on their own criteria.

That was a very... The concept of Ruth Benedict and the classification of different types of the cultures proposed by her were very important theories in ethno-sociology. Abraham Cardinal, the other people of France, introduced the concept of basic personality. Basic personality is the personality that is a kind of normative personality that doesn't correspond to any living or existing or empiric person but is presumed by any member of such or such community.

Studying this basic personality is the same as the study of the identity, of common identity or also the normative cultural code. What is interesting is that one of the classical sociologists, Ralph Linton, also was a continuator of Franz Boas' cultural anthropological theory and it was Linton who has introduced in sociology the concept of status and the role. So, the most important instruments of sociological study were introduced by Linton who also formed the circle of culture and personality with Ruth Benedict and Abraham Cardinal, two other people of Franz Boas.

Also, this idea to study the society as a set of the status and the roles was also initially applied to the study of primitive society and after that it was applied to the most complicated modern society. We could also cite the other people of Franz Boas, for example, Cora Dubois, that introduced the concept of model personality, something like development of the concept of Abraham Cardinal's basic personality or Edward Saper, Saper, the author of the hypothesis of linguistic relativity and Saper, with the other linguists, they proposed the concept that the sense of the word is defined by the context of the language as a whole and not by the object that it indicates. So, that is a very interesting structuralist approach to the language that the sense of the word is impossible to translate from one language into the other language without translating

the language itself as a whole because all the senses of the words and the sentences are embedded in the semantic field of these concrete languages.

What is important is that this hypothesis is the continuation of the Boas cultural anthropological concept of pluralism of the societies. So, it is application of basic cultural anthropological attitude to the field of the linguistic. So, that is not chance, it is a kind of mainstream of American humanistic intellectual tradition that has one of the founders of France Boas in cultural anthropology and pluralism included in it.

Clyde Clughan also was the continuator of this ethno-sociological tradition and also I would like to evoke Clifford Geertz, the founder of the concept of Symbolical Anthropology that continues to develop the concept of cultural pluralism by France Boas and Clifford Geertz insisted that all gestures, all signs, all symbols, all technical instruments, all social status has symbolical value. All the society is symbolical, the field of the symbols. So, the sense, it is not pragmatic aspect of such or such custom or technical instrument, but symbolic value is predominating one.

So, we need, insisted Clifford Geertz, thick description of the society. So, to make thick description of the ethnic society or primitive society is to deduce the symbolical context, to recreate or reconstruct the symbolical dimension of this society and dealing with the symbolical meaning we could understand why this society conducts itself in such situation by such a pattern. We could understand profoundly the sense and the rationality, particular rationality of such or such society.

Also, Geertz insists that society is also, ethnic society is symbolical community. So, we could enter the ethnical society if you could make the symbolical preparation of adoption, for example. Ethnic society seems to be closed one, but there are many point of entrance in this society, if all of them are symbolical ones.

So, we could also cite Lark Whistler, Margaret Mead, Grigory Bateson, Melville Herskovits, Robert Redford, as the other pupils of Franz Boas. So, every name is very famous that I am citing and they make, they developed important theory in the field of ethnology, of sociology. And about Robert Redford, I would like to stress his concept of folk society.

Folk society that is exactly the definition of what is ethnos. Ethnos is folk society. So, people who are members of folk society are very similar, says Redford.

Their customs and habits are identical. All members of the folk society have a strong sense of their mutual appurtenance, that they are part of the same unity. Folk society is small, isolated community, often without written culture, uniform, with a strong sense of group solidarity.

In the folk society there is very small, very little division of labor, except for the gender.

And the subject and object of production are families. The folk society also can be defined as sacred society.

So, all these definitions of Redford's folk society are applicable to the ethnos as the simplest form of human society. So, we could also evoke the names of Paul Radin that was introduced in the study of religions, the concept of trickster, that is very important as a symbolical figure in many ethnical and religious narratives. Mircea Eliade, Romanian-American author, that also dedicated to the primitive society some very important book, insisting on the eternal return as a basic feature of archaic society or ethnic society.

Ethnic society is based on the eternal return, not on the linear time. We could also mention Harald Garfinkel that introduced the concept of ethno-methodology. It has little to do with ethno-sociology, but Harald Garfinkel understood by ethnos in his methodological, sociological theories that it is unqualified group, but it is not properly ethnos.

It is unqualified, uncivilized, casual set of individuals. According to Garfinkel, it is a kind of ethnos as a primitive form of human organization, human community. But it is not exactly, or better to say, it has nothing to do with ethnos as ethno-sociology or cultural anthropology understands it.

So, the similarity is superficial. Ethno-methodology of Harald Garfinkel is a very fruitful form of sociological research, but it doesn't fit in the field of ethno-sociology. In the actual situation, there are two American, very interesting authors that qualify themselves as ethno-sociologists as McCoy Marriott and Ronald Inden who are studying non-Western society trying to create or reconstruct the sociological vision and sociological theories of the peoples themselves.

So, how to create the new kind of sociology, not the sociology of the Western type applied to the study of such or such non-Western society, but they create a kind of ethno-sociology. So, they create the concept how concrete, archaic or traditional people understand their own society. So, Inden and McCoy Marriott worked in India trying to describe what is normative concept or what is Indian society that most Indians live in.

So, that doesn't correspond to the official declaration of the Indian government or Indian constitution, that doesn't correspond to what Western people think the Indian society is or should be, but how Indians themselves understand their society and their normative on actual, realistic, empiric way. So, it is kind of new sociology. So, I think that what is interesting to conclude with American school of sociology it is very interesting that cultural anthropology and mainstream of American anthropology is based on the pluralistic vision, on the concept of polycentric civilization, on the humanism that includes non-Western and non-developed society that insists on the refusal of any kind of hierarchy or racism or any kind of the concept of evolution or progress.

And also, it challenges, this tradition challenges the concept of the individual that is in the center of the American society. It tends to regard individual as a person, as a social construct and not as given empirical fact. So, I am obliged to recognize that American tradition of cultural anthropology is very little American or maybe it is not that belongs to America or United States.

We don't know the other America, humanist that is for just and democratic, pluralistic understanding of the social, historical, ethnic and civilizational phenomena. It is something very close to the German sociological tradition, to Herder, to concept of cultural circles, to political geography or anthropogeography of Ratzel and it is very far from Spencer or from evolution theory and maybe there is one explication. The Franz Boas was the Jew from German region and he was formed in the tradition of German Herderian organism as the other German Jews were, for example, Lazarus that I have already mentioned.

So, I think maybe that was the reason, maybe the other, but the fact is that American cultural anthropologist tradition structure, pluralistic doctrine, pluralistic relativistic theory, it is more post-modern and in some sense anti-modern than the other aspects of American science and American political science or American society. And that will conclude our second part of the lecture on the study of cultural anthropologies and in the next lectures we will discuss the British and French schools.