

Ethnosociology. Part III. Civil Society.

Hello, we are going on with our lectures on ethno-sociology. Today we are going to discuss the third derivative of the ethnic society, the third derivative of ethnos that we identify in the civil society. We could consider civil society as the final process, final stage of destruction of the ethnos, as a simple society based on the common identity, collective identity.

It was seriously damaged in the first phase in the people, because there is a kind of split of the society on two halves. The second important shift of the collective identity towards individual identity is made in the frame of the historic nation and the stage of the creation of the national state, statehood, where we are dealing with a new kind of social identity, purely individual one. But there is a kind of simulacrum of the collective identity in the form of the national identity.

National identity that we have discussed in the last lecture is based on the real individual identity of the citizens, but doubled with a kind of imagined collective identity of the fact to belong to the nation. Nation as artificial bourgeois construction. And when we are coming to the third derivative of ethnic society, we are going to civil society, so there is a very important process.

Liquidation of the artificial national identity. What is civil society? That is a concept of the social organization based absolutely on one and only form of identity, of individual identity. The civil society is considered to be society of the individuals that normally could not share anything in common.

Every individual is the unity, is a kind of unit that is absolutely self-sufficient. It is completely autonomous. This unit could act based on its interests or rational decisions and is considered to be completely responsible for its own being.

So, individual is a kind of closed unit. It could communicate with other closed units, but it is absolutely optional. It could interact, it could communicate, it could choose to share something in common or share not.

So, it is considered, this individual is considered to be absolutely free, absolutely liberated of any kind of collective obligations. It could take on itself some obligations as a kind of free will or based on the free choice, but he isn't obliged to share something with others. That is the concept of the individual.

And this individual identity was implemented in the social science and political science already in the frame of the nation. Because nation is based on this presumption of individual identity, but it was doubled with imposed national identity as a kind of artificial construction. And when we come from the national society to the civil society, so there is liquidation of this artificial national identity.

So, civil society is based only on the individual identity without national frame. But it is possible only after the stage of the national society. Because we could not come to the civil society starting from ethnos or the people.

Because we need preparation in the limits and the context of the national society to prepare, to install, to impose individual identity. And after this national phase, we could create a kind of post-national society, civil society, that doesn't need anymore national frames. Because the conventional wisdom of liberalism affirms that the responsible individual does not need any kind of imposed collective society.

It could create or construct any kind of social association based on its own interests as it creates political parties or firms, economical enterprises and so on. So, the individual is not obliged to accept as something inevitable national frame and could act on the international scale on its own account. So, from this idea of the society based on absolutely and only individual identity, we are logically coming to the global society.

So, what is global society and what is the difference between global society and civil society? To understand that better, we need to follow the process of formation of the individual identity that produces in the frame of the nation. So, civil society begins to be created, to be formed in the frame of the national statehood. So, the so-called enlightenment program for national statehood, the vision of the progressive or democratic state in the opinion of liberals should educate the citizens of the national statehood as the citizens of the civil society.

So, national statehood serves for one purpose, to enlighten the citizens and to prepare them to act on their own account. So, civil society begins to be formed, to be created inside of the national society, inside of the process of modernization, democratization and liberalization of the national society that is regarded as a kind of transition from the traditional society of the people to the civil society. So, that is a kind of preparation for the other, the next form, the next stage of the society, precisely civil society.

And global society is regarded as finalization of this process. When the nations, when the national states fulfill their obligation towards the society and create an accomplished form of individual identity, they could disappear after this function fulfilled and give away and start a global society. So, civil society is global in a normal sense.

It comes to being in the frame of the nation, of the progressive and modernized democratic nations. But little by little, it overgrows the national limits and the state and nation become obsolete. And after that, that could disappear from the historical scene.

So, that is not the conflict between global society and national society. Because they are dealing with the same concept of individual identity. But in the case of the national society, national statehood, we are dealing with some second identity, national identity that serves for the purpose to enlighten the citizens.

And in the context, in the case of global society, we are dealing with the accomplished form of the same society based uniquely on this individual identity. So, civil society appears, manifests itself in the national society, but little by little it overgrows its limits and tends to be cosmopolitan, global and world society. One world concept.

So, the global society is logical and a kind of talus, the end, the goal of the civil society. So, creating and developing civil society inside of the national frame is the same process to prepare the destruction and liquidation of the nation, the state and its sovereignty. Because civil society normally is global society.

Because any kind of artificial limitation of collective identity, including artificial bourgeois and pragmatic rational one of national statehood, nevertheless the state is regarded here as something to be overcome. So, it is a transitory organization of the society that should be replaced by one world, by purely global society as a kind of perfection of the process of the implementation of the individual identity. So, with the perspective of the global society we are dealing with the final disappearance of ethnos.

Because the sense of the ethnic community is the idea of organic collective identity. That is common for any individual, virtual individual in the society. In the case of the people, Laos, we have collective identity in the case of masses of the society.

And the beginning of the process of the individuation in the case of political elites. Heroic, exclusive individuation. In the case of national society, now there is individual identity of the citizen that is regarded as a normative type.

But there is the rest, a kind of ghost of collective identity in the nation. And the idea of national identity. And finally, with the third derivative of the ethnic society, with the civil society as potentially global society, we are coming, we are arriving at the moment where any trace of the collective identity disappears.

So, global society is the society based on absolutely individual identity. Where individual is considered to be absolutely liberated, absolutely free from any traces of the collective identity. From the organic, from the traditional society identity, from heroic identity and also from the national identity.

So, it is a kind of purely individualistic organization of the human society on the world scale. Why civil society should be global? Why cosmopolitanism is included in this project? Precisely because that nation, the state, sovereignty represents nevertheless a kind of collective identity. And that goes against the concept of the absolute freedom of the individual.

So, we could not promote nation, national identity or nationalism. And not to promote by this same gesture, the same step, global society. Creating the nation, we are already destructing, destroying the nation.

So, to create the nation is the same step as to destroy, to begin to destroy it. In the same moment when we are going to create it. Because the process of the transformation on the level of the identity goes in only one sense.

In the sense of the absolutization of the individual identity. So, really civil society, the only accomplished version of the civil society should be necessarily global one. So, we could consider us as the end of the process of the development of the whole cycle of the social transformation.

Starting from the ethnic society and arriving to its final point with the global civil society. So, we go through all kinds of changes inside of the social structures. And we arrive at the final point of the process.

That we could individuate the first stages already in the first signs of the ethno-kinetic processes. And after that the split of the ethnos. After that creation of traditional society, the social structures and social stratification.

After that creation of national statehood and national identity. And finally the final point. It is arrival of the civil society on the global scale.

So, that is a kind of ethno-sociological frame to sociological study of different types of the historic society. So, ethno-sociology understood in this broad context could serve not only to study the ethnic societies or Laos people's society where the considerable presence of the ethnic elements on the basis of it. It could serve also to study post-ethnic society such as national society, civil society or global society.

Because we have in the process of the creation of the collective identity some very important processes dealing with the sense of this creation of individual society. Because individual identity is created instead of collective identity. Individual identity is a kind of destruction of the collective identity of any kind.

But also that is very important shift, because individual in such situation becomes ethnos by itself. It becomes a kind of self-sufficient unit. That is a kind of ethnos, micro-ethnos consisted from one individual.

So, many special features of the ethnic society go through people's society, through national society towards this final point of individual identity. So, there is a kind of destruction of the collective identity in the case of ethnos. So, we could consider historical process as ethnocidal, ethnocide, a kind of ethnocide.

The concrete process of destruction and the killing of any kind of collective identity and at the same time the shift transferred from the ethnos of the main features of this society on the individual. So, individual becomes ethnos. And singular identity receives the features of the previous form of collective form of organization of human life.

So, the most important result of this analysis is the possibility to use ethno-sociological methods in situation when there is no more ethnos. And there is no more including the artificial imagined form of collective identity as in the case of the nation. So, with the help of the ethno-sociology we could study the societies that are not ethnic in no sense, in no way.

So, the society where there is not any traces of any kind of collective identity. Because historically manifestation of such society, global civil society based on exclusively individual identity is a final point of very important process that consists precisely in liquidation of the collective identity. And that is the sense, the semantic aspect, the meaning of the social evolution or involution.

Because involution is the process of coming closer and closer to the central point of some process. And we could call this kind of historical process precisely involution. Because the society as something collective is involving to the point of the individual identity.

So, we could consider the social history and the ethno-sociological sense as a kind of the process of the involution of the ethnos. Involution of the ethnic society towards the individual units. Accepted or regarded as the main actor of global civil society.

So, when we regard individual identity, the individual, as a culminating point of this process, not only something that is evident, that is empirical fact that we could take for granted, but we could interpret the individual with its content, with its meaning, as a culminating point of the involution of the ethnos. And that is very important from the point of the structure of the individual. So, individual is nothing simple or atomic in the physical way.

Individual is a kind of the last stage of the involution of the collective identity. And being involution of the collective identity is, on one hand, the negation of the collective identity. So, it's collective aspect.

But at the same time, appropriation of the sense of the collective identity in the first and single individuality. So, it is a kind of overcoming and absorbing at the same time of the content of the ethnos in the individual unit. That, in this sense, it should be regarded not as evolution in the etymological sense of enlargement of the society or development of its inner possibilities, but a kind of concentration of these collective historic possibilities in the figure of the individual as a normative type of the global society.

And where we are today from the ethno-sociological point of view. Now we stay in the intermediate phase between the creation of the civil society inside of the national limits and the first stage of globalization as the logical way to finish this process, liquidating little by little national states. But liquidation of the national states is not the evil will of some globalist world government, but that is the final step in the process of the

involution of the ethnic collective society through different phases toward the end that follows logically from the first starting point of this historical process.

So, when we are talking about the end of history, we could use the word end in two meanings. The end as the finish and the end as the goal. So, in some sense, the end of the history is the goal of the history, because social history in the ethno-sociological understanding goes precisely from absolutely collective organic identity of the ethnos towards its final stage that is global society based exclusively on the individual identity.

So, now we are living precisely in this moment of the liquidation of the national sovereign states and we shouldn't deplore it, because it is not something that is occurring by the chance. Some kind of abnormality or catastrophe. National states were organized by bourgeois to abolish them in some time as a kind of pragmatic intermediate instruments to prepare the historic manifestation of the bourgeois social identity not only as the ruling type of the society, but as the unique type of the normative social identity.

So, all the world becomes bourgeois. All the other type of social identification, peasants, priests, the warriors, all of them should disappear with the manifestation of the bourgeois as a special social group that is not a third state as we have shown in the previous lecture, but it is something completely new for the traditional organization of the society. And this new type of bourgeois is considered to be absolute winner of the history when on the global scale bourgeois becomes not only dominant class, but the unique type of human and social being that is actually present.

So, it is a kind of absolute victory of bourgeois spirit and bourgeois type over all other form of social identity. So, we should not deplore the liquidation of the states because national states, modern national states were conceived to fulfill some mission, to educate and impose and install the individual identity and disappear just after that. So, they could not be something eternal because they were pragmatically created on the completely artificial basis and so they are destined to disappear sooner or later.

And now it is the time to destroy national states. That is the logic of the evolution of the social history.