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Western (civic) versus Eastern (ethnic) Nationalism. The Origins and Critique of the Dichotomy

Abstract: The author focuses on Hans Kohn (1891–1971) who is generally regarded as the founding father of modern Anglophone academic research on nationalism. He was first to adopt a more neutral stance toward nationalism, one that made sustained attempt at dispassionate analysis of the phenomenon in order to define, classify and explain it. However, not only did he bring in a innovative and novel perspective to the subject by producing broad comparative studies but he was responsible for introducing one of the basic and long-lasting themes to the study of nationalism, namely a strongly moralistic distinction between a good nationalism, which he associated with the West, and a bad nationalism allegedly typical for the non-Western world. The paper discusses three questions: first, how did Kohn conceptualize the differences between the two types of nationalism? Second, how and why did he come to his conclusions and, finally, if it can be argued as many authors claim, that his discrimination between the two types of nationalism are valid and useful?

Keywords: Hans Kohn; nationalism; Eastern nationalism; ethnic nationalism; Western nationalism; civic nationalism; nationalism studies.

Introduction

Anglophone students of nationalism have recognized Hans Kohn (1891–1971) as one of the most learned and influential authorities on history of nationalism (Wolf 1976: 651; Kuzio 2002; Özkirimli 2000; Snyder 1995). Kohn's works together with the writings of Carlton Hayes are generally regarded as a turning point in the study of nationalism in the English-speaking world. Kohn and Hayes have been even called “the twin founding fathers” of modern academic research on nationalism (Kemiläinen 1960: 8–12; Hobsbawm 1992: 3; Shafer 1976: 16, 44–45). “Anglophone scholarship on nationalism—argues Brian Porter-Szücs—stood for decades in the shadow of two towering authors (...): Carlton Hayes and Hans Kohn” (Porter-Szücs 2009: 4). It was in the 1920s that they began to publish their first works on the subject. It is argued that they were the first to adopt a more neutral stance toward nationalism, one that made sustained attempt at dispassionate analysis of the phenomenon in order to define, classify and explain it (Smith 1996: 182). However, they were not altogether successful in this effort as they were both prone to treat nationalism as an moral issue. This was especially true in the case of Kohn for whom nationalism was a living experience and who was exposed to its excesses in his early life (Lawrence 2005: 119). However, not only did he bring in a new and fresh perspective to the subject

by producing broad comparative studies but, what is more important in my view, he was responsible for introducing one of the basic and long-lasting theme to the Anglophone study of nationalism, namely a strongly moralistic distinction between a “good” nationalism, which he associated with the West, and a “bad” nationalism typical for the non-Western world (Porter-Szücs 2009: 4; Jaskułowski 2009: 95–127). In my article I will focus on three questions: first, how did Kohn conceptualize the difference between the two types of nationalism? Second, how and why did he come to his conclusions? Third, can we argue, as some authors claim, that his discrimination between two types of nationalisms is “valid and useful” (Smith 1991: 81)? In other words, I will combine a contextual approach, which is an attempt to examine Kohn’s arguments within their historical and social context, with a presentist stance, which focuses on evaluating his arguments with reference to what they might contribute to current debates (Szacki 1991).

Kohn’s dichotomy turned out to have enormous impact on Anglophone nationalism studies. It gave rise to quite a widespread discrimination between civic (western) nationalism and ethnic (eastern) nationalism. For example John Plamenatz builds directly on Kohn’s typology in his famous study called *Two Types of Nationalism*. He retains the sharp distinction between more benign and civic Western nationalism and non-Western nationalism which was “hostile,” “illiberal,” “oppressive” and “dangerous” (Plamenatz 1973). James Kellas distinguishes between Western nationalism which was inclusive and liberal in form and Eastern nationalism which was exclusive and often led to authoritarianism (Kellas 1991: 73–74). Anthony D. Smith in extension of Kohn’s dichotomy distinguishes two types of nations, the Western territorial or civic nation and the Eastern ethnic concept of the nation (Smith 1986). One can continue a long list of authors (e.g. Eric Hobsbawm, Ernest Gellner, Liah Greenfeld) who have contrasted in some way Western and Eastern nationalism or Western (civic and political) model of the nation with Eastern (ethnic and cultural) model of the nation (Hobsbawm 1992; Gellner 1983, 1997; Ignatieff 1994; Schöpflin 1995; Sugar 1997, 1999). As Brian Porter rightly notices:

“This dichotomy reproduced itself over the years in both chronological and typological schemes, even among those who superficially eschewed explicit moral assessments (...) Though repeatedly debunked, the spatial embodiment of nationalism’s Janus face continues to resurface” (Porter 2009: 4–5).

Juxtaposing two types of nationalism and nation seems to be habitual enough in academic and journalist discourse, that it is often forgotten that it was invented and that its merit was shaped by a specific socio-political context (Calhoun 2005: i).

Hans Kohn (1891–1971)

In order to shed some light on this context it is necessary to introduce some biographical details. Kohn was born in Prague to a bilingual Czech-German family of Jewish origins at the end of 19th century. He received his higher and academic education there, including a doctoral degree in law and political science granted from the German University in Prague. Prague at that time was a site of bitter national tensions

between the Czech nationalists and the German ruling class over educational policy, language rights, autonomy, and the stuffing of state administration. Kohn wrote in his memoirs: “In my youth, in the atmosphere of Prague, with its pervasive mood of nationalist stirrings and historical romanticism, I myself succumbed to the fascination of such attitudes” (Kohn 1964: 29; Cohen 2006, Mosse 1970). Thus, in 1908 while studying at the Prague University he became a Zionist. For the next six years he was an active member of the Jewish student association, which bore a name of the ancient Jewish military leader Bar Kochba. Although the name of the organization recalled a militaristic figure the members of the Prague branch were more interested in cultural and ethical issues. Their Zionism was based on humanitarian ethics and a hope that the would be-Jewish state in Palestine would accommodate the rights of Arabs (Kohn 1922; Wolf 1976: 652).

Later developments, especially the break-out of the First World War, the nationalizing policies—as Kohn saw them—of new states which emerged after the disintegration of the Romanov and Habsburg empires, and the suppression of the Arab uprising of 1929 made Kohn more skeptical of the nationalism he saw in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Middle East. After the event of 1929 he decided to leave the Zionist movement. As he put it “Zionist nationalism went the way of most Central and Eastern European nationalisms” (Kohn 1964: 53; Liebich 2006: 585–588). His engagement in nationalism and subsequent disappointment may partially explain his overcritical view of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. In 1931 after working for Zionist organizations in different parts of Europe, and in Palestine he decided to start new life in the USA.

“I had set my heart on going to the United States—he explained in his memoirs—for I was convinced that with its open, pluralistic society it promised a greater measure of freedom and diversity than was possible in Europe” (Kohn 1964: 150).

Later, he wrote he had not been disappointed in his expectations.

After a few trips to the USA he settle here permanently there and managed to secure a job in academia as a lecturer in 1933. He spent the rest of his life in the USA lecturing and doing research on nationalism and history of Europe. He was a prolific writer, authoring or editing in the course of his life more than fifty books covering the history of nationalism in different parts of the world (e.g. Kohn 1944, 1946, 1968). His *opus magnum* was a voluminous book entitled *The Idea of Nationalism*, first published in 1944 and since then appearing in several editions and translated into many languages (Snyder 1990: 172–173). The latest edition was published in 2005 with an extensive introduction written by a contemporary sociologist who stresses the influence, importance and originality of the book (Calhoun 2005).

Hans Kohn Dichotomy

Kohn’s definition of nationalism was not clear. In his main book *The Idea of Nationalism* he interchangeably used various terms to define it such as a living and

corporate will, idea, sentiment, and state of mind. However, for Kohn the essence of nationalism consisted in a demand that each nationality should form a state, that the state should include the whole nation, and that loyalty to the national-state should override all other public loyalties (Kohn 1944: 16). He stressed that the national idea was a modern phenomenon which became widespread only with the coming of the French Revolution. However, his modernism was tempered by three factors. First, he regarded nationalities, that is cultural units aware of their distinct character, which formed a base for nationalism, as the product of long history. Second, nationalism itself, he claimed, had a very long history going back to ancient times. Third, his language was full of organic metaphors suggesting that nationalities naturally evolved into mature nations (Kohn 1944: 16). Although Kohn wrote his book during the Second World War, which was caused by extreme Nazis nationalism, it actually may be interpreted as a defense of a certain kind of nationalist thinking (Snyder 1990: 176). Thus, for Kohn, nationalism as such was not an accidental or aberrational development running contrary to the tradition of European civilization. Quite the reverse, he rehabilitated nationalism linking it with ancient Greek and Jewish civilizations. These ancient peoples purportedly developed and bequeathed to later societies some fundamental traits of nationalism like the idea of a chosen people, the emphasis on a common history and future, national messianism, and the supreme loyalty to political entity. Kohn in this and his subsequent books traced the changes, modifications and adjustments these incipient ideas of nationalism had undergone during their peregrination through centuries of European history from ancient to modern times when they were transformed to fully-fledged nationalism. Kohn believed that this transformation took place in the West in the age of Enlightenment. Then, the national idea diffused to other more backwards parts of Europe and to the rest of the world. However, when nationalism spread to these other regions it degenerated itself and became dangerous, violent and vicious. Ultimately, it found its culmination in Hitler and the Second World War.

Kohn's explanation of the development of nationalism relying heavily on the belief in independent causal force of ideas contains a strongly polarized vision of two kinds of nationalism. Although Kohn identified elaborate and multi-dimensional distinctions between two different nationalisms, he did not present it as a clearly and logically coherent classification which could be used as an analytical tool. Various remarks on it were inherent in his historical descriptions and explanatory scheme, and dispersed throughout his various books. In an introduction to *The Idea of Nationalism* he succinctly described the Janus face of nationalism in the following way: "Where the third estate became powerful in the eighteenth century—as in Great Britain, in France, and in the United States nationalism found its expression predominantly but never exclusively, in political and economic changes. Where, on the other hand, the third estate was still weak and only in a budding stage at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as in Germany, Italy and among Slavonic peoples, nationalism found its expression predominantly in the cultural field. Among those peoples, at the beginning it was not so much the nation-state as the *Volksggeist* and its manifestations in literature and folklore, in the mother tongue and in history, which became the center

of the attention of nationalism. With the growing strength of the third estate, with the political and cultural awaking of the masses, in the course of nineteenth century, this cultural nationalism soon turned into desire for the formation of a nation-state” (Kohn 1944: 9). Analyzing this quote and other statements made by Kohn it is possible to point out seven dimensions of his dichotomy: first, ideological; second, geographical; third, sociological; fourth, political; fifth, chronological; sixth, psychological; seventh, historical.

An ideological dimension attracted the most attention and was reproduced later as a distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism. However, Kohn himself seemed not to use terms “civic” and “ethnic.” Instead, apparently following Friedrich Meinecke who distinguished between *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation* in a book *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat (Cosmopolitanism and the Nation-State)* published originally in 1908, Kohn occasionally spoke about politically oriented and culturally oriented nationalisms (Meinecke 1970). It should be said that by ideological dimension I mean the differences in the content of the two types of nationalisms. These differences in the writings of Hans Kohn took a form of the binary oppositions which may be summarized as follows: politically oriented nationalism focusing on policy-making and government *versus* culturally oriented nationalism concentrating on education, propaganda and the cultivation of native values; a nation based on the idea of social contract / a nation understood as organic and natural community; open membership in a nation based on a free choice / belonging to a nation determined by objective and ascribed factors, particularly by birth; sovereignty located in individuals who enjoy civic rights / sovereignty attributed to a nation understood in collectivistic terms as a *suis generis* social entity apart from and above individuals; a rational nationalism because it was forward-looking and aimed at political and economical advancement / an irrational and mystical nationalism which looked back to the remote past in search of its roots and the lost folk-soul or folk-spirit as a blueprint for its regeneration; realist as it stayed in touch with reality / idealistic and utopian based on imaginary visions fused with emotions; universalistic, this is combining loyalty to a nation with all-human ideals / particularistic based on an idea of national egoism and eager to impose its values upon other societies in a missionary fervor. In short, on the one hand, we have a nationalism which goes hand in hand with democracy, liberalism and civil society, on the other hand there is nationalism which tends to be authoritarian, exclusionary and based on *Machtpolitik*. According to Kohn these two types of nationalism had different philosophical sources. The benign form of nationalism was based on the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson and John Locke, the oppressive one had its roots in the writings of Gottfried Johann Herder. In his dichotomy Kohn pointed out not only to different types of nationalist ideologies but also he seemed to regard these ideologies as deeply rooted in respective societies, forming long lasting and persisting traditions and ways of thinking. He conflated an ideology with a state of mind not paying enough attention to the problem of social penetration of ideas (Kohn 1944: 325, 329–334, 350–351, Kohn 1929, 1940, 1957, 1960).

The geographical dimension refers to a spatial referent of Kohn’s dichotomy. This spatial referent is usually misinterpreted and it is claimed that for Kohn political

nationalism was typical for the West and cultural nationalism for Eastern Europe. Thus, his dichotomy was reproduced in the form of distinction between western and eastern nationalism, which evoked the image of two different Europes. For example in nationalism reader published by Oxford University Press excerpts from Kohn's book *The Idea of Nationalism* are titled "Western and Eastern nationalism" (Hutchinson; Smith 1994: 162). Strictly speaking, Kohn actually did not use the term "eastern nationalism" nor did he write exclusively about Eastern Europe. To be precise, he distinguished between, on the one hand, "the West" and "Western nationalism" and, on the other hand, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, occasionally he also mentioned particular states like Germany, Russia, Spain, Ireland, Italy, India or he simply wrote about "nationalism outside the Western world" (Kohn 1944: 329–331). For him there was not any specific Eastern European nationalism as it was a part of a much broader geographical category of the non-West. Accordingly, his distinction may be termed more precisely as Western nationalism and non-Western nationalism or, to paraphrase Stuart Hall, "nationalism of the West and nationalism of the Rest" (Hall 1992). By the Western world he meant Great Britain (he used this phrase as a metonymy for England implicitly overlooking Wales and Scotland) and British dominions, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States (Kohn 1944: 329). Thus, he identified good nationalism with a narrowly defined geographical area he called the West, and bad nationalism with the world outside the West.

As for sociological dimensions, according to Kohn these two types of nationalism were the product of different social classes. Thus, the bearers of nationalism in the West were middle-classes; conversely, in the non-West world, due to its less developed social and political structure they could not play such a role. In the non-West world, nationalism was propagated by detached intellectuals like poets, scholars and so on. This difference in the social base of nationalism explained according to Kohn why non-Western nationalism was less rational and sound. Non-western intellectuals, Kohn argues, in contrast to the western middle classes, were deprived of any political influence in politically backward states and found a rescue in imaginary world. Lacking possibility of practical testing of their ideas they developed an unreliable political projects. By distinguishing a political dimension I would like to point out that for Kohn western nationalism was integrative as it appeared after emergence of national states and aimed at consolidating them. In non-western world nationalism was subversive and divisive since it preceded the emergence of national states and was directed against existing political entities aiming at redrawing state boundaries along cultural lines.

By a chronological dimension I mean the simple fact that, in Kohn's view, the West was first to develop nationalism and it subsequently became a model and teacher for the rest of the World. In other words, for Kohn Western nationalism had a primary character and non-Western nationalism was secondary, derivative and imitative. Most of contemporary theories of nationalism share this belief in the Western origins of nationalism although this is view is not uncontested (Anderson 1991). According to Kohn the imitative character of non-Western nationalism had important psychological implications. This dependence on the West hurt the pride of the native educated

classes who developed an inferiority complex. They compensated their hurt pride and inferiority complex by hostility toward the West and its rational and liberal outlook. They also overemphasized vernacular traditions of their own societies claiming that they represent something much richer, more spiritual and authentic than technical and over-rational Western civilization. To put it differently, they felt forced to imitate the West but at the same time they rejected it, which led them to over-reaction or, rephrasing Jose Ortega y Gasset, to the revolt of the non-West world (Ortega y Gasset 1957). Thus, and here is the fifth psychological dimension of his dichotomy. In Kohn's view non-Western nationalism and western nationalism sprung from different psychological sources. As I have already mentioned the Western one was the effect of the optimistic and confident climate of Enlightenment. In contrast, non-Western nationalism was based on an inferiority complex, lack of self-assurance, frustration and hostility (Kohn 1944: 330, Kohn 1955: 30). It is worth mentioning that his depiction of psychological forces underlying non-Western nationalism bore a clear similarity to the mechanism of resentment described by Friedrich Nietzsche in his book *Zur Genealogie der Moral* published in 1887 (Nietzsche 2006). In his early life Kohn was fascinated by the philosophy of Nietzsche, which evidently found its expression in his writing on nationalism (Kohn 1964: 60–61). Additionally, the psychological aspect of Kohn's dichotomy found its striking continuation in some contemporary theories of nationalism, especially in Liah Greenfeld's book *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity* (1995) and to some extent in Tom Nairn's book *The Break-up of Britain* (1981). Greenfeld explicitly mentioned Nietzsche as her inspiration claiming that the emergence of nationalism in Germany and Russia was accompanied by resentment, that is a psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy toward the superior England and the USA and at the same time hatred of them. This led to the emphasis on the elements of indigenous traditions and "transvaluation of values," that is the construction of a new system of values hostile to the liberal principles of original nationalism. Greenfeld stressed that especially in Russia resentment was the single most important factor shaping the character of Russian nationalism and that it fostered particularistic pride and xenophobia (Greenfeld 1995: 16).

The last historical dimension refers to the fact that for Kohn differences between Western and non-Western nationalisms were not accidental but rather were a product of a long history. As he put it "The difference in the concepts of nation and nationalism was a historical consequence of the difference in effect produced by Renaissance and Reformation between Germany and Western Europe" (Kohn 1944: 331). Discussing various routes of historical development he focused on the differences between the West and Germany. According to him the latter country was the original site of the development of virulent form of nationalism, which then spread like a lethal virus to other parts of Europe and the world. He underlined the role of two spiritual revolutions Renaissance and Reformation for the shape of modern times. In Kohn's view the main difference between Renaissance in the West and in Germany was that in the latter country it had an exclusively scholarly character and, thus a limited social resonance preventing it from changing the existing social and political order. In consequence, Germany never abandoned medieval dreams about

restoring Roman Empire, which in the age of nationalism were transformed into the concept of *Lebensraum* (the living space). The popularity of the imperial idea also led German humanists to reassert their imperial dreams by proving that the German civilization was better and older than others, which later would lend itself to the idea of national superiority. Furthermore, Kohn indicated the political significance of theological differences in Western and German reformation. Thus, Germany was shaped mainly by Lutheranism, which put stress on inner life, discipline and blind obedience to rulers and repudiated the new commercial capitalism. In Kohn's view "Lutheranism with its political apathy and its fundamental conservatism became the mainstay of the existing order, of the princes and all privileged classes, and gave them right to demand passive obedience" (Kohn 1944: 136). The national character and history of Switzerland, Holland and the Anglo-Saxon world and France were shaped, on the other hand, by Calvinism, which directed the Reformation into a different political path. According to Kohn although Calvin was removed from any concept of modern democracy or liberalism his doctrine helped to reevaluate the secular world, to develop the idea that people had a right to control government, and to justify revolt against tyranny and bad government. In sum: "The differences between Wittenberg and Geneva widened, in their consequences, the estrangement between Germany and the West which had begun during the Renaissance" (Kohn 1944: 138). Kohn suggested that Renaissance and Reformation did not penetrate farther east at all. He strikingly overlooked the experience of Central Europe.

It is hard to agree that "the distinction does grasp important aspects of modern history and contemporary politics" or that the criticism of Kohn is "unreasonable" (Calhoun 2005: 1, Snyder 1976: 31). Many authors have already criticized the historical aspect of his dichotomy and I do not have enough space to discuss in detail their arguments. In short, they usually point out that we cannot ascribe different kinds of nationalism to particular geographical areas as we can find both historical and contemporary examples of Western (civic and political) nationalism in non-Western world and non-Western (ethnic and cultural) nationalism in the Western world (Kuzio 2002). For example Andrzej Walicki reminds that Polish nationalism emerged as a political nationalism of the Western type although according to Kohn Poland unmistakably belong to the non-Western world (Walicki 1982: 68–69). Kohn's sociological generalizations also do not find support among historians, as there were examples of what Kohn defined as western nationalism in areas liking a strong middle class like nineteenth century Poland. Besides this, Kohn did not take into account the heterogeneous experiences of Central and Eastern Europe, and he overlooked differences between different national movements like on the one hand, the Polish and Hungarian nationalism which could draw on political traditions and, on the other hand, Latvian or Estonian which were based to a greater extent on ethnographic facts (Snyder 2003). It is also worth paying attention to his highly idealized view of Western nationalism, especially in the USA. It is striking to what extent Kohn was blind to its negative features and overlooked such issues as for example tightening of immigration law in interwar period, which was driven as some authors argued by racial prejudice towards some nations, racialization of public discourse, exclusion of Afro-Americans

from American nation or treatment of native inhabitants of America (Gerstle 2002). In the only passage about race issue in the USA in his memoirs he repeated highly stereotypical views on “Negroes”—as he called Afro-Americans—claiming that they were closer to nature, taller, better built and more graceful than whites (Kohn 1964: 180). Even if he paid some attentions to the exclusive elements of American nationalism like in a book *American Nationalism. An interpretative essay* he tended to explain them as a transient phenomenon, present only as a series of short-lived and accidental upsurges against a background of liberal openness, the effect of economic deprivation or small groups of racists (Kohn 1957).

The problem is not whether or to what extent Kohn’s dichotomy is adequate description and explanation of development of nationalism but how and why he came to such schematic and oversimplified conclusions. To some extent it may be explained by his disappointment in Zionism, experience of the First World War and nostalgia for the world in which he grew up, a multinational Austro-Hungarian state, which disintegrated along apparently ethnic lines. He tried to explain not so much what happened but what went wrong. In accordance with his methodology he focused on ideas, states of mind, and people’s will to find some kind of nationalism responsible for distorted and irrational views held by people. His interest in a question “who can be blamed for it” and his critical view of Germany as a country responsible for initiating and spreading vicious forms of nationalism was also fuelled by widespread tendency after the First World War among historians and politicians to treat this country as the single reason for the outbreak of the war (Lawrance 2005; Cobban 1945). The emergence of Nazism seemed to confirm widespread belief that the “German mind,” as Kohn called it overlooking internal divisions, is inherently irrational and abnormal and validated oversimplified teleological narratives from “Herder to Hitler” (Kohn 1960; Porter 2009: 6). From a psychological point of view Kohn was also a victim of the psychological mechanism called attribution error, which can explain his idealization of the American society he identified himself with. As I said he explained American ethnic nationalism assigning causality to outside, accidental or situational factors. Eastern nationalism, on the other hand, was caused by internal factors, that is by factors inherent in Eastern European societies, and it was reflection of their deeply-rooted and persistent traditions. To put it differently, Kohn made dispositional attribution for Eastern European societies behavior and situational attribution for his own society, namely USA (Allison, Messick 1985; Jones, Harris 1967).

Save psychological factors one may point out to intellectual traditions in the incipient study of nationalism. Kohn’s dichotomy did not appear *ex nihilo*. There has been a long tradition of dividing nationalism or entire nations into bad and good ones in the European social and political thought. It seemed to be for a quite some time one of the obstacles in the study of nationalism. This way of conceptualizing nationalism allowed generations of social and political thinkers to take for granted or idealize nationalism of their own societies, while projecting the more virulent form of nationalism into other societies and condemning them. For example John Stuart Mill in his *Considerations on Representative Government* distinguished between civilized nations like Britain and France and “the half-savage relics” like the Welsh, the Scottish or the

Basque who for their own sake should merge with the British and the French nations respectively (Mill 2008: 234). Lord Acton, usually mistaken as a stringent opponent of nationalism, in his famous essay *Nationality* praised the British theory of nationality and scorned the French revolutionary one, which he found false, dangerous and oppressive (Acton 1996). Ernest Renan, on the other hand, in his lecture *What is a Nation?* singled out the benign voluntarist and civic nationalism he attributed to France and vicious one based on objective (especially ethnic) criteria of nationality associated with Germany (Renan 1995). Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels who, according to *communis opinio*, were unambiguously anti-nationalist succumbed themselves occasionally to narrowly nationalistic rhetoric, especially during the Springtime of People when they distinguished between historical and history-less nations, by the former being Poles, Hungarians and particularly Germans and the latter referring to all other Slavic nations, which they thought to be barbarous, culture-less, reactionary and doomed to become merely “ethnographic monuments” without any significance or to disappear from the earth altogether (Rosdolsky 1986). Also Emile Durkheim strongly advocated integrative and inward-looking patriotism while denouncing aggressive exterior-looking nationalism, of course for him the former was exemplified by France the latter by Germany haunted by war-like mentality (Durkheim 1915). To some extent a similar point can be made about Max Weber who, conversely, defended German nationalism (Mommsen 1984). All of them drew oversimplified distinctions with strong moral overtones. More often than not they were also prone to regard nationalism of their own societies as a good one and someone else’s nationalism as a bad one. Kohn did not escape this tendency.

Besides the intellectual tradition there were also some cultural factors which made possible conceptualization of different types of nationalism in terms of Western and Non-Western dichotomy. Kohn’s writings seemed to validate claims made by such authors like aforementioned Stuart Hall in article *The West and the Rest*, Larry Wolff in *The Invention of Eastern Europe* or Edward Said in *Orientalism* about the pervasive and deeply-rooted tendency to define the West in relation to different Others (Hall 1992; Wolff 1994; Said 1978). By and large, this tendency emerged as some authors state during Enlightenment or as others argue in the second half of nineteenth century and relied on highly idealized image of the West embodying positive virtues of rationality, progress, civilization, humanity and so on. The Non-Western World, in different guises: Eastern Europe, Orient, the Third World was defined as lacking all these features, serving as a negative reflection of the West. For example, Ezequiel Adamovsky inspired by Edward Said examined the discourse of “Euro-Orientalism” which emerged in the second half of nineteenth century in Western Europe. According to him by means of the concept of Eastern Europe, the narrative of Western civilization transferred onto the Slavic nations stereotypes and prejudices traditionally ascribed to the Orient. Thus, the difference between the West and Eastern Europe was defined in term of the following binary oppositions: civilizations / cultural handicaps, balance / contradictions, normal / deviant, rational / irrational, authentic / imitation, capable / incapable, active / inactive (Adamovsky 2005). Thus, Kohn’s theory of nationalism and his dichotomy were not original since

he reproduced stereotypical views of the West and the non-Western world and simply utilized them in his study of nationalism.

Conclusions

Although Kohn's dichotomy in its original version seems to be unattainable some authors claim that it points to some important distinctions and may be utilized in the study of nationalism after some modifications. For example according to Anthony Smith if we remove all dimensions save the ideological we would be left with an important distinction between voluntarist and organic versions of nationalism. Both version of nationalism claim that a nation is a fundamental social reality and that the individuals must belong to some nation but in the voluntarist version they are free to enter or opt out of any national unit. On the other had, in the organic version, the individual is bound to a given nation by objective factors of language, custom, history, religion, etc (Smith 1991: 11). Liah Greenfeld argues in similar vein that nationalism differs in relation to the understanding of the nature of a nation and individual rights. A nation may be understood as collectivistic entity, that is sovereignty may be located in a nation envisaged as a whole, social reality *sui generis* that is irreducible to individuals. Collectivistic ideologies tend to be undemocratic because they are prone to assume that the collective social entity like individual person possesses of a single will, and some are bond to know it better than others. On the other hand, a nation may be understood as made up of individuals who are the bearers of sovereignty. Nationalism may also be distinguished according to criteria of membership in a nation, which may be civic or ethnic. In the former case membership is identified with citizenship and it is open to everyone who can declare loyalty to a shared set of political practices and values. In the latter case, nationality cannot be changed because it is not a matter of individual choice but of biology or culture (Greenfeld 1995).

However, even after such purifications the distinction seems to have dubious value. There is on-going debate on the usefulness of civic and ethnic dichotomy and it would be necessary to write another article to do justice to the complexity of this discussion (e.g Kymlicka 2001). In conclusion, I would like only to pay attention to two important points. First, a word of caution. The Civic/ethnic dichotomy in its concrete applications has often led many authors to characterize entire nations as civic or ethnic. Thus, according to Smith western nations were political, Eastern nations were ethnic. Greenfeld claimed that Germany and Russia are examples of ethnic nationalism while Great Britain and the USA are political. But it is doubtful whether we can characterize such heterogeneous social formations as nations in such unitary terms. Jarosław Kiliński persuasively argues that four major dimensions of this heterogeneity can be distinguished: first, the levels of social reality which refers to the forms in which it is experienced, second, the diversity dimension resulting from the diversity of the institutions which reproduce it, third, diversity of social actors, and fourth, historical changeability dimension (Kiliński 2004). The first dimension refers to the fact that the nation is, as Benedict Anderson called it "imagined community."

In short, a nation is a remote community of strangers we shall never know, with a territory which we shall never visit in its entirety. Thus, a nation is an abstract category which can be only grasped by means of symbols which are produced and disseminated by many different social actors. Its presence is experienced differently at many different levels, from a purely practical reality of everyday life to the abstract reality of political theory or ideology. The second dimension refers to the fact that social life is not homogeneous but as sociologist Pierre Bourdieu notices is divided on relatively independent spheres of reality which have their own rules like political, economic or academic fields in Bourdieu's terminology. The diversity of social actors refers to the multitude of groups, organizations, parties, etc. which are bearers of specific national projects. The last dimension points out that we need to take into account factor of time, this is that the situation may change in time. From this point of view attempts aiming at oversimplified categorizing of entire nations in singular terms (ethnic or civic) is reductionist and does not do justice to the necessary internal heterogeneity of nation.

Second, even if we were more cautious in applying the distinction to concrete cases there would remain some other problems. The distinction wrongly suggests that there may be a purely civic nationalism removed of any cultural referents. However, as Will Kymlicka and Antonina Kłoskowska notices even nationalisms regarded as the purest examples of civic nationalism (as for example American nationalism) are based on some elements of common culture, common values, myths, memories and symbols (Kymlicka 2001; Kłoskowska 1996). What may be added, however, is that attachments generated by symbols of the supposedly civic nation may and very often go beyond rationally motivated membership as in the case of the cult of the flag in the USA. Even the most civic nationalism has symbolic dimension and symbols are prone to magical interpretations. Symbols, as Emile Durkheim taught, fulfill an important social purpose. First of all, they fulfill cognitive and condensing functions. According to Durkheim, thought encompasses great things composed of many parts of complicated structure with difficulty (as the abstract concept of nation) (Durkheim 2001: 165). Symbols simplify a complex reality making it something tangible and concrete, easy to understand even for those who are not used to abstract thinking. Thus, the American flag is concrete, material and visible representation of abstract and anonymous American nation. In short the flag conventionally stands for the nation. However, in popular mode of thinking the flag is the nation, i. e. the flag is treated as if it was the nation. The symbol takes the place the abstract idea it represents. A magical relationship between a symbol and what a symbol represents is created. Infringement or degradation of a symbol can in consequence appear dangerous for a nation. It is a way of thinking which suggests associations with a type of collective consciousness, which cultural anthropology has named syncretic. This mode of thinking is based on a specific coexistence of a metaphorical (symbolic)-metonymical (casual) relationship. The metaphorical or symbolical relationships are culturally constructed or in other words they are arbitrary and conventional (as relationships between the flag and the idea of a nation, i.e. there is no prior intrinsic relations between the flag and the nation, Leach 1976). Metonymical (casual) relationships are based on physical

contiguity (part-wholeness) or causality (cause-effect). Magical thinking is based on the constant transformation of metaphorical relationships into metonymical ones and vice versa (Kmita 1985: 123–157). Nationalism regardless of its apparent civic or ethnic type refers to magical type of thinking enabling mental access to abstract and complex notions such as nation or national territory by means of a system of metonymy—concrete and closer to people’s experiences and easier to grasp (Burszta, Jaskułowski 2005).

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