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In his article “Rethinking Nationhood: nation as institutionalized form, practical category, contingent event” Rogers Brubaker’s main attempt is to criticize the intellectual discourse, which despite its constructivist stance still employs a “groupism” informed writing: i. e. conceiving (national) groups as externally bounded, as constituencies of social life and thus analytical units. The author correctly observes in this practice the reproduction and perpetuation of the folk sociological ontology which is mainly employed by the nationalists themselves. Since Brubaker identifies the deconstruction of nationalism’s discourse as the scholar’s main task he postulates a new conceptual vocabulary of nationhood, nationness and nationalism, which should enable to grasp those phenomena without sliding into the so called *categories of practice* of nationalism. This way of approaching and labelling the subject of analysis according to the author shifts the attention of analysis from “nation” as a substantial entity, with its temporal dimension (historical origins etc) and ontological reality, to an action oriented analysis of a case-wise, rational-action events of nation-making, nationalising and categorizing things in national terms.

As I understand Brubaker, giving nationhood a duration of an event instead of a developmentalist *lounge durée* process the author moves from temporal to strategic forms that should inform our writings. In other words nationhood is less a product of historical processes and structural changes but of actors’ strategic and conscious agencies motivated by different political, economic, etc. circumstances (circumstantialist approach).

Brubaker is one of the proponents of the cognitive turn in the study of phenomena like ethnicity, nationhood, racism, which stress the fact that nationhood, ethnic group etc do not exist independently from their classification, categorization and identification (see Brubaker 2004:45) but only through our perceptions and interpretations. As he states “they are not things *in* the world, but perspectives *on* the world” (*ibid.*:45), thus endowing nationhood with epistemological rather than ontological realities.

I enjoyed reading Brubaker’s article and find him very helpful for my own thesis. Special sympathies I have shared with his anti-genealogical approach to nationness, neglecting the inferential role of time in regard to nationhood and narrating it more through the prism of

sequences of actions that are located within constraining or enabling structures, also called to frames.

Brubaker's concept of official categorization practices I intend to apply in my analysis of the census in 1971 in Yugoslavia, which introduced for the first time the category "Musliman u nacionalnom smislu" ("Muslim" in the national sense) thus interpreting this as an event of institutionalization of nationhood. By the act of institutionalizing Muslim religious identity marker as nationhood in the census of 1971, it had the effect of what Goldberg calls "making up people" or "nominating into existence" the Muslim nationhood. Looking at the minutes of the communist party of that time I try to show through the prism of strategic agency how political and intellectual entrepreneurs eventually reshaped the line of identification in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia introducing new national attributes as identity determinants. Thus, my analysis through the material I have focused mainly on the official, formalized categorization practices, which were employed by the state (in my case the party) as, in Bourdieu's words, a powerful instance to impose legitimate principles of division (Bourdieu 1994: 3).

Further on, through the analysis of the media (*Politika* and *Oslobodjenje*) in the period between September 1970 and April 1971, where several polemics on the introduction of the category "Musliman" (see Cerić vs. Redžić; Purivatra vs. Redžić) took place I pay also attention to the technique of distribution of the institutionalized representation within the population thus calling for certain resonance among "ordinary people" (the concept resonance I borrow from the literature on social movement and framing, see Benford, Maiz in my bibliography). By looking at the mobilizing activities in the media I discern two directions, i. e. de-nationalizing Yugoslavism by devaluating it as a national category and institutionalizing another category of nationhood "Musliman". In my readings I have especially paid attention to the cultural criteria and indicia of the newly institutionalized category in order to see to what extent this form of state-categorization employs the domain of culture and social practices as identity markers for the institutionalized category.

At this point starts my critique on Brubaker's article, who misses to articulate more explicitly the interplay between the content of the officially institutionalized nationhood and the everyday practice of people who are supposed to identify themselves with the institutionalized categories. In other words it remains a question when and why people start to identify with the officially offered and proposed categories. Since our project focuses mainly on this

interplay I see here Chatterjee's argument as a help according to which the state locates the subjectivity of the postulated national category within the domain of culture, which people reproduce in their everyday life (Chatterjee: 132) (in the case of Bosnian Muslims it is mainly the religious practice). Since I do not have this ethnographic material, I will have to rely on ethnographic secondary literature on social practices of Bosnian Muslims.

References:

1. Bourdieu, Pierre, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field", in *Sociological Theory* (1994), vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1-18.
3. Brubaker, Rogers; Loveman, Mara; Peter, Stamanov, "Ethnicity as cognition", in *Theory and Society* (2004), vol. 33, pp. 31-64.
4. Chatterjee, Partha. 1993, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton-New Jersey.