

» Empty nationalism«.

Being nationalistic but forgetting to dispute cultural differences.

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1. The Problem.

The term »empty nationalism« describes nationalistic sentiments in the context of international status-competitions. Like in the example of media-sport, the dissemination of those feelings are related to unreflected conventions of journalism and audience behavior. The social context of these conventions and its long-term change is the object of this study. In contrast to the old style romantic-, ethnic- and organized nationalisms, »empty nationalism« do not focus primarily on the idealization of cultural uniqueness. This type of nationalism is »empty« in relation to discussions and discourses about a particular content of »culture«. Here, media and the recipient's conventions do not primarily focus on the cultural »content« as a symbol of boundary-drawing towards outsiders. Rather journalists as well as the audience evaluate topics and events with the imaginary eye of the whole world as an arbiter or observer of the own country. The journalistic construction of the »world« as an »world culture« and its acceptance by the audience or the readers functions as a kind of »significant other« that assigns the status of the own nation because of its »performances« and »achievements«. Thus, »empty nationalism« is not about being different but about being better than others!

It is also important to understand that those journalistic conventions do not construct or fabricate empty nationalism. The mass-media do not induce an »innocent« audience with nationalism. There are numerous habits and costumes shared by both the journalists and its audience (or readers) that lay tacitly ground for the acceptance of elements of a world-culture and its particular meaning-structure. This includes the acceptance of the idea that

both »performances« as well as »achievements« of nations should be (and can be) measured and compared. It are those unchallenged habits and customs (that may vary from country to country in its degree of prevalence) that produces the legitimacy of the wide range of international status-competitions.

Sometimes tacitly and in the subtext, US mass-media transports feelings of self-esteem because of its military might and leadership reportedly acknowledged by the whole world. In Western Europe, out of a couple of reasons, nationalistic feelings and public dreams about military dominance are widely taboo. Here, one finds in the mass-media more frequently pride (or shame) about the economic success (or failures), the comparable high standards of the welfare state (or its reportedly decline), or the technological advance or shortfall of the country.¹ Thus, these topics are about international competitiveness. Beside such serious issues, in Western Europe, there is an enormous inflation of reports about trivialities associated with the homeland in competition: alleged world-wide acknowledged scientists, celebrities, actors, or artists increasing the pride of the national audience because they are regarded as successful representatives of the own nation. Particular international contests in sports, music, and the film industry, but also beauty contests, nobel prizes and many other contests are examples of this rather new epidemic of nationalism. The type of nationalism that is involved into these international status competitions is much more in the background of the minds than it is a topic of debate.

However, nationalism studies used to ignore widely those sentiments and sometimes even do not regard them as nationalism, at all. For many scholars, nationalism is linked only to a special type of human thinking: the overt and conscious mental state of identity-discourses that focuses on the drawing of boundaries between the we-group and the outsiders. Especially, organized nationalism is in the focus of nationalism studies because it is associated with those ideals of cultural uniqueness in relation to the we-group. Thus, nationalism theories, too, are mostly about reflectivity and not about habits and feelings.

This paper focuses on a special type of »empty nationalism« that is related to sports. Here all those kinds of sport-competitions that are treated by journalists and its audience as inter-state status-competitions should be called »nation sport«. The paper argues that »empty nationalism« in »nation sport« cannot be understood as the sole instruments of the media-companies' interests or of nation-states policies. »Nation sport« is rather the pro-

¹ International comparable studies, like analyses about ISSP samples concerning with national identity show that there are differences in the attitudes of US and Western European respondents not only in relation to the strength on national pride but also in relation to its dimensions. US respondents indicate much higher levels of pride about the military. Western European data show relatively more pride because of the economic success of the own country or of the performance of the welfare state (i.e. Reicher, 2013: 19).

duct of a long-term social and cultural change in Western Europe (and to a certain extent also in other parts of the world) that took place in the course of the 20th century. The paper focuses on the experience of the German speaking countries that adopted »sports« from England. The paper focuses also on the initial discourses about its legitimacy, and the final and smooth process of accepting sports. The paper argues that as an unintended byproduct of the enculturalization of »sports« national we-feelings in relation to sport-competitions also became accepted. In order to explain the unreflected conventions of »empty nationalism«, the paper rather eclectically refer to Weber and adopt both Elias' concept of the social habitus and its relation to emotions, national we-images and we-ideals as well as Giddens' distinction between »discursive« and »practical« consciousness.

2. Self-reflection and spontaneity in nationalism.

»Nation sport« is based on the conventions of perceiving athletes, teams, sport-functionaries, or host cities as representatives of the whole nation. In a consequence even sportive achievements of the past - sometimes embodied in sport-statistics - are regarded as part of a national history. In some countries particular games or athletic performances become part of what is called the »collective memory« of a nation. However, theories about the collective memory show little attention about the processes of the selection of symbols regarded as worth enough to be considered as national representations. Therefore, there must be an explanation how people even don't consider the grounds and arguments about the legitimacy of certain symbolic representations but take them for granted. Looking back to the history of nationalism one finds that sport was not always related to the topic of national glory. Therefore, the sociological imagination has to focus onto the long-term transformation of national we-images and we-ideals - generally not reflected in the public - leading to the acceptance of sports as a source of national pride.

Status-competitions are not per se symbols of group-identities because amongst certain groups there is maybe the attitude prevailing that those fights for reputations has no significance, at all. Nationalists may fear that rivalry about certain status symbols jeopardize the dignity of the own group or perceive particular rivals, adversaries, or groups as too unworthy to compete. I.e., in the US for a long-time Afro-Americans, in Nazi-Germany Jews, and in some contemporary Muslim societies women were regarded as too unworthy to compete with members of the established group. Sometimes, the competitions in itself is seen as an unworthy activity that brings the group's dignity into danger. In such cases the honor of

the group is related to the ideal of uniqueness that forbids the comparison with others. Herder's concepts of nation and »Volk« (people) are examples of such an ideal of uniqueness. This type of ethno-nationalistic argumentation says that humanity is divided by god (or nature) into separated nationalities. Each possesses a unique and incommensurable »culture« that should not be intermixed or compared with other »cultures«.

In the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, German nationalists (as well as many other nationalists in the world) followed these premises of Herder. Especially, the gymnastic movement (Turnerschaft) in Germany and Austria developed a nationalistic notion towards sport (what they called »Turnen«). This movement emphasized the cultural uniqueness of certain types of bodily activities and linked them to the pathos of an incommensurable German soul or spirit that is related to the ideals of German gymnastics. Such nationalistic ideals would strongly oppose the legitimacy of »nation sport«.

Status-competitions in the field of sport are usually related to the attendance of the audience to permit themselves to spontaneous emotions in relation to the thrill of games and competitions. Thus, outbursts of pride and shame are common amongst fans and even amongst the more distanced part of the audience. Those emotions are also important elements of the media-message of sport-journalism. Its strategy is clearly connected to the aim of transporting the »mood« of the stadium into the homes of the audience. Spontaneity is what gives sport-contests meaning and thus increases its news value. This is also true for »nation sport«. Therefore, the feeling-structure in nation sport relates to a high degree to spontaneity and to affectivity of the outburst of national sentiments.

This feeling-structure is quite different to that of organized nationalism. There, outbursts of emotions are rare like in events of disgust and revolutionary rebellion. Mostly, spontaneity is regarded as a further danger for the national dignity and sanctification. Usually organized nationalism is related to very formalized and controlled celebrations of the national dignity and glory. Celebrations on national holidays, on the grave of the unknown soldiers, or parades are mostly very boring processions (or at least, they are in the light of silent dignity). Organized nationalism knows also other forms of a distanced thinking and feeling about the nation. Art and literature, reading national poems, novels, going into the theatre or the opera are rather indirect and refined modes of getting in touch with national mythology. These and other types of receptions of a nationalistic content are relatively emotional controlled activities. In respect to audience-spontaneity in sports, reading about battles of the past or any other alleged important events is different than watching a football-game. In the cases of reading a book or a pamphlet, or of observing a national ceremony there is both a chronological as well as a spatial alienation towards an event. People usually know

the outcome of these nationalistic stories about battles or other historical events, yet. Watching a football game means not to know the outcome and, thus, puts the glory of the nation into an open-end. Nation sport constitutes an immediacy between the observer and the event. The organized romantic nationalism deliberate reflects about what the own national identity. By reading books about the national history or about politics the reader is confronted with deliberated arguments made by the nationalistic author. In such cases ideas and open formulated ideology is more important than producing and following the outbreak of a spontaneous mood.²

Contemporary, there are important ethno-nationalist movements in Western Europe and North America like in Scotland, Catalonia, Quebec, Corsica, or Flanders. However, the opportunity structure to feel national sentiments even in those countries (and much more in the other Western European countries) is dominantly related to »empty nationalism«. It is nation sport and other such status-competitions covered in the mass-media that provide mostly the opportunity to experience nationalism. There is properly no single day in which nation sport is not the topic of the news. In the eyes of sport-fans nation sport is even experienced in a kind of permanent flow of sport-events that are reported. Some of these events gets attentions by a greater audience (i.e. the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup). They are, therefore, rarer. Most of these events, however, are of minor importance but they are permanently present in the mass-media flow.

Despite the high degree of prevalence of those national sentiments they are, however, only of minor importance for nationalism studies. Two main reasons have prevented nationalism studies to focus strongly on empty nationalism: 1) a too narrow definition of what nationalism is, and 2) the relation between spontaneity and cultural self-reflection is not taken into account.

First, some like Calhoun already criticized the too narrow definition of nationalism in nationalism studies (1997: 11). Nationalism is seen by many either as an idea (Kohn, 1962), a particular political doctrine (Kedourie, 1971), a political principle saying state and nation should be congruent (Gellner, 2006), an instrument in order to control and to manipulate the masses of the population (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983), an ideology uttered by well organized groups (Smith, 2001), or the program of the political opposition (Breuilly, 1993). These definitions are emphasizing strongly the notion of individuals adopting ideas or

² Even if one follows a speech of the shouting Hitler, beside all the mood, there are still arguments and intellectually produced images in the center of this agitation.

ideologies in a highly reflective mode of consciousness. As a consequence also the understanding of the phenomenon of the nation is too narrow. Gellner and some other understand nation only as the product of nationalism; and not as the other way round. Thus, Anderson means that nations are merely »imagined communities«.

However, the example of media-sports suggests to understand nations not only as »imagined« but above all as »feeling communities«. It is true, journalists, the reader of sport-news, or the TV-audience also have to fulfill the imaginary act of consciously and cognitively linking the sportive event to the nation and to recognize sport-competitions as status-competitions between states. However, nation-sport and its type of nationalism is not a deliberately program or ideology. What is not clear, is the structure of feelings and of the effervescence of we-feelings of belonging (quite in Durkheim's sense). People feel pride, shame or other emotions not because of somebody tell them to do so or construct an imagination but because of real events that took place and that triggers certain feeling-patterns amongst a broad mass of population. By observing and imitating those masses, people become used (even conditioned) to feel those kinds of sentiments in relation to sport and the nation.

There is a certain process of habitualization behind connoting national we-feelings, sports, and the nation. On the individual level, persons are trained to feel properly and to develop habits that belongs to nation sport. This is because they are confronted with nation sport since their childhood. They were raised into a world of the unchallenged fandom of nation sport. On the level of state-societies, on the other hand, the whole system of nation sport had become naturalized und unchallenged because there are no longer important political groups that opponents this kind of nationalism. Therefore, nation sport becomes a tradition or a custom. I.e., it is a tradition that the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup takes place every four years. It is a tradition to send an own national team or athletes to these contests (or to a qualifying round) because state-societies do the same since decades. Even the proper feeling-structures and rituals to celebrate the nation is tradition. I.e., people would miss singing or hearing the national anthem before a game. Some of these conventions to celebrate the nation are imitated from others. Nowadays Germans also celebrate a decisive victory in football with the means of cavalcade. They imitated the Italians and Brazilians because it gives them the impression to celebrate nationalism in a friendly way that does not resemble Prussian militaristic stiffness. Thus, there is a diffusion of traditions in nation sport that resembles the diffusion of other traditions. Imitating traditions, however, does not mean to reflect radically the whole system of nation sport that leads to doubt national we-feelings as legitimate expressions. In this sense, nation sport belongs to a

new category of folkways that are not defined by ethnic boundaries, which however, regard nations as its central moment of the logic of competition. All these sport-competitions would not have their present meaning without the logic of interstate status-competitions. Above all, unlike only to image abstract concepts feelings are linked to primordial experiences. They have a immediate quality. We-feelings in connection to sport-teams and certain athletes are learnt in the intimacy of the family context mostly in the childhood. Fandom towards national teams is experienced, therefore, by many as a »natural« thing. Thus, also the »nation« is not only an »idea« or an »image« but a feeling-structure. In a quite different context, Žižek points out, ideology is not so much a system of meaning produced and reproduced consciously. It is more a kind of rationalization or a derivation (in the sense of Pareto) of already existing unconscious world-views, attitudes, and feelings (Žižek, 1989). Thus, nationalism, beside its organized form, puts usually not open discourses but undisputed emotions like the feeling of loyalty to certain representatives of the own nation in its centre. Especially nationalistic sentiments in sport and in other fields of »culture« that is of concern here, adopt a naturalized form of nationalistic ideology that needs not to be exemplified because it is taken for granted and, thus, it misses the higher level of abstract thinking.

Second, in nationalism studies the relationship between spontaneity and cultural self-reflection is usually not taken into account. Instead there are discussions between the objective and the subjective definitions of the nation. However, these very philosophical dichotomy between »subjectivity« and »objectivity« is not very helpful to understand nation and nationalism. Following Herder's primordial objectivism national cultures (nations) exists regardless of their member's capacity to recognize them (Berlin, 1976; Herder, 2006). They are sleeping beauties that have to be awakened. Thus, language, religion, or traditions are seen as objective or natural boundaries between nations. On the contrary, subjectivists argue that nationalism is the result of active human action. Renan and others sought that there is a »will« to participate (a »daily plebiscite«) that constitutes nations (Renan & Girardet, 1996). Modern versions of subjectivism identifies reflexivity and cultural self-consciousness as the main authority that selects elements from »culture« as their symbolic representatives. Subjectivists, however, do not agree on the question whether those concepts of the mind are ideas that came into recognition more or less unintentionally (in the course of a long historical process) or that they are fabricated by interest groups. Thus, Hobsbawm favors an instrumentalist notion of nationalism (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983). For him nation and nationalism are »invented traditions« and instruments of the elites in

order to control the masses (it is opium for the people!). Anderson, on the other hand, means that nations are »imagined communities« (Anderson, 1983). In the long-term nations as imagined communities are unplanned results of the invention of the printing press, the establishment of standardized national languages, novel literature, and newspapers. In this point of view, the mass-media produces knowledge and a certain view onto the world that says that nations are the normal form of political community. Gellner's functionalist approach has some similarities. He, too, favors the notion that nations are uninitiated by-products of industrial society. He thinks that school training necessary for modern industry disseminates standardized »high culture« (language) and, thus, forming national communities which are modern, however, only believe they are old (Gellner, 2006). Armstrong's and Smith's »ethno-symbolism«, too, quarrels to integrate the dichotomy between objective and subjective definitions of the nation (Armstrong, 1982; Smith, 1986). Smith means that nations are modern because they are the result of organized nationalism that emphasizes certain constitutive symbols (»mythomoteur«). However, each nation's core is build on older ethnic communities (seen as objective culture) and its repertoire of symbols. Nations acquire the formal aspect of these symbols - thus, there is the impressions that nations are old - but change their content and the meaning (Smith, 1986: 13ff.). Smith denies that elements of a world-culture - like sport - would be able to replace ethnic culture as the constitutive force of national identity. To him world-culture (americanization etc.) always stays a superficial phenomena (Smith, 2001: 134ff.).

However, all of these approaches do not consider properly the social dynamic that triggers spontaneity or self-reflection. It is Billig's concept of »banal nationalism« (1995) that helps to understand that nationalism needs not necessarily to be connected to open and overt discourses and discussions about identity. For Billig, nationalism can also be something that is integrated in the routine activities of the everyday's live. Billig contrasts »hot nationalism« - that form of nationalism that leads to war, hate crimes, and ethnic cleansing - with the passing manifestations of the nation in the everyday's live of established societies in which country-borders are no longer disputed. Examples of this »banal nationalism« are unnoticed flags in front of school buildings, the TV weather report (with the map of the own country), or media sport. Billig's concept provides the idea that nationalism is embedded into the routine activities of ordinary people and there is no need for a organized nationalism (nationalistic movement) in order to reproduce national we-images and we-ideals. Thus, »banal nationalism« is part of the social habitus that prevails in a certain society. Billig stated that in times of war and troubles the hot form of nationalism once more will be

activated. This is possible because »banal nationalism« helped to reproduce a latent form of national identification in times of peace and relaxation.

Billig's model is helpful for the argument in this paper that will be developed subsequently. However, there are some flaws that needs to be discussed. First, symbolic banality does not prevent violence. Many forms of hate crimes are related with very banal symbols associated with victims that are members of an ethnic minority. Second, the logical opposite of »hot« (violent) nationalism is not »banal« but non-violent nationalism. The term »banal« is more linked to the notion of the everyday's live. It's opposite is what is extraordinary, abnormal, not-habitual, or charismatic in the Weber's sense of exceptional sanctity. Therefore, the opposite of »banality« in the sense of day-to-day is the reflexiv mode of nationalistic identity discourses. One of these reflexive modes of nationalism (within nationalistic groups) is that which is based on the ideal of ethnic and cultural exceptionalism or ethnicity in general. Here, a particular content of culture embodied in certain symbols are the centre of open discourses about identity.

The proper meaning of »banal nationalism«, on the other hand, would mean that cultural content is not disputed but accepted and embedded in practices and routines of the everyday's live. Elias' and Bourdieu's use of the term »habitus« is related to this meaning of culture that is part of non- or only semi-reflected practices.³ Elias' concept of the social habitus describes the process of internalization of constrains into the body and the mind. In the center of his argument is the shifting of thresholds of shame and repugnance (Elias, Dunning, Goudsblom, & Mennell, 2000). Internalized constrains coins the form and the content of we-feelings, we-images, and we-ideals that are regarded as acceptable in a society. Elias means that the quality of the social habitus highly interconnects with the patterns of state-building processes as well as with the increase in the degree of the division of labor (interdependencies). Thus Elias find differences in the formation of the »national habitus« between the 18th and 19th century English upper and middle classes (Elias & Dunning, 2008) and the German middle class (Elias, Schröter, & Dunning, 1996).

Quite similar to Elias and Bourdieu, Giddens distinguishes between »discursive« and »practical« consciousness (Giddens, 1984: 5ff.). However, Giddens focuses not so much on emotions and affects but more the capacity of awareness and the meaning of consciousness that is involved in human action. Discursive consciousness refers to reflexive

³ Here is not the place to discuss the subtle differences in the concept of the social habitus between Elias und Bourdieu. However, Bourdieu contrasts »hexis« (attitudes and customs of thinking) from »doxa«, that is the view onto the world that »appears as self-evident« and that is taken for granted (Bourdieu, 1977: 164). To Bourdieu the development and idealization of national languages are an example of a habitualized kind of national identity formation (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991).

modes of controlling behavior. Practical consciousness is an equivalent to Goffman's concept of implicit knowledge. In the context of Giddens' assumptions, nationalism theories merely exclusively focus on processes of »discursive« consciousness. Empty nationalism in the context of international status-competitions, on the other hand, are much more related to »practical« consciousness. For this paper, it is important to understand the dynamic between discursive and practical forms of nationalistic consciousness. It was already Weber (1978: 910ff.) who developed an argument that tried to understand the relation between a form of nationalism that follows the logic of status competitions between states (prestige of power) and another form of nationalism fixed to the discursive mode of nationalistic consciousness focusing on the question of cultural uniqueness (»prestige of culture«). »Prestige of power« (Machtprestige) is the nationalism of great countries. This form of national prestige sees its goal in the glory of domination about other countries. »Prestige of culture« (Kulturprestige) is based on a different kind of »honor-order« attached to small and militarily »neutralized« countries. In such countries, Weber means that the pathetic feeling of glory is related to the ideal of uniqueness of culture or of political institutions. Weber also classifies this type as an »isolationist« version of nationalism in contrast to the »expansive« »prestige of power«.

Of course, Weber was not yet aware of nation sport and the influence of modern mass media and the consumption of culture pre-produced by a cultural industry. Thus, he only identified an geographically or ethnically isolated type of »prestige of culture«. Status competitions in nation sport based on the implicit acceptance of a world culture combine Weber's idealtypes of »prestige of power« and »prestige of culture«. In the words of Weber, there must be a special »honor order« in the frame of nation sport that gives small as well as great powers realistic chances to gain prestige that transcends any type of »ethnic honor«. However, how was »ethnic« or »national honor« transcended into the international honor order of nation sport that is widely accepted today? How did this type of nationalism lose its discursive characteristic of consciousness? How does the process of »emptying« of ethnic contents work?

In this sense, the question of national sentiments in sports targeting into the heart of the mainstream theories of nationalism that do not usually confront themselves with the question of world culture and status competitions. Is there a link between the discursive forms of national consciousness and the high degree of emotional spontaneity and affectivity that can be observed in nation sport? And how does this link look like?

3. The case sport versus Turnen: the discursive national consciousness of the body.

Unlike »nation sport« the classifications of »ethno« and »nationalistic sport« label types of sports with strong ethnic and national boundaries of honor. In many ancient agrarian societies, games, body aesthetic, and physical education sometimes were related to cults linking former isolated groups into bigger communities. An example is the development of ancient Greek cults around some special temples and holy places like that of Olympia. All members of poleis and kingdoms who had shared the legitimation of such holy places, gods, and oracles the Olympic Games (beside other agonic games) also accepted its standardized honor-order. Thus, a »figuration of honor« between Greek city states evolved. Unlike the contemporary »figuration of honor« of modern nation sport, its ancient counterpart had clear ethnic boundaries. Only Greeks (and later some Romans like the Emperor Nero) were allowed to participate the Games that supported the ideals of panhellenism. Of course, the Swiss Schwingen (Hosenlupf) and Hornussen do not share the same degree of sanctity as the ancient Greek agonic Games. However, they are modern variants of »ethno sports« because these sports are only played in (some) areas of the German Swiss Prealps. There, too, is a regional limited figuration of honor (organized by the Eidgenössischen Schwingerverband). The Alpine ice stock sport (Eisstockschießen) that is played primarily in Bavaria, Austria, South Tyrol, and the German speaking parts of Switzerland is a further example of »ethno sport«. Unlike curling, ice stock sport never developed into a world and nation sport. Even ice stock world cups are pretty regional limited competitions.

These examples indicate that »ethno sports« have regional limits. They are mostly organized on the base of festivals or cups that promotes a certain ideal of tradition. Thus, discursive consciousness is involved into these activities. All of these sports are neither linked to the idealization of the nation nor do they have the political agenda of nationalism. However, it is quite possible that »ethno sports« developed into fields dominated by nationalistic agitations.

»Nationalistic sports« also emphasize regional limited traditions as their main argument of legitimacy. Here, however, nationalists - mostly quite well organized - try to mystify sports with the pathos of the national history and the national character. For them a certain type of sport is intrinsically linked to the soul of the nation. Thus, this very sport is seen as the symbol of the nation. »Nationalistic sports« are grouped around an political agenda. Sometimes this agenda is linked to separatism, irredentism, or the ideals of national unity like

in the case of the German Gymnasts from around 1800 to 1945. By comparing ice stock sport with alpinism that derives from the same geographical area one clearly sees the difference between ethno- and nationalistic sports. Brought from English tourists, their romanticism quickly developed into the anti-modernism of German speaking urban and bourgeois alpinists. The German Alpine Association (Deutscher Alpenverein) developed into an important organization that supports the idea of Greater Germany and antisemitism. After World War I, Jews were neither allowed to become members of the association nor to sleep in the alpine huts of the Alpenverein. German alpinism linked the ideals of ethnic purity with the landscape (ZITAT!).

Modern nationalistic sport movements are in the quite inconvenient position because world sport (and its succession nation sport) is extremely dominant. Thus, Japanese sumo-wrestling recently develops into a nation sport that is dominated even by non-Japanese wrestlers. The same seems to be true with the Basque pelota a mano. The Gaelic Athletic Association once agitated against »English« sports. Today, their position seems not to be that strict (ZITAT!).

»Nationalistic sports« are linked to Herder's idea of a holistic-and primordial folk culture. For Herder these types of »culture« (mostly embodied in language) is the expression of a certain »national character«. The case of the German gymnastic movement, too, stands on the shoulders of Herder and some of his followers. The ideological core of this movement is the concept of »Turnen« (gymnastics). Turnen is seen as an idealization of the German national character. Contemporary German speakers, however, usually do not distinguish anymore between the terms »Turnen« and »Sport«. For them, they are synonyms. Most of them are unable to understand the original nationalistic notion behind »Turnen«. Today, in the school both terms were used (beside even other expressions). It seems that contemporary German speakers have forgotten content and intention of nationalistic sport movements before 1945.

German gymnastics had its beginnings in the end of the 18th century as a pedagogical movement. Johann Christoph Friedrich GutsMuths (1759-1839) influenced by Rousseau and Basedow worked since 1885 in Thuringia's Schnepfenthal as a teacher in a boarding school (Salzmannschule Schnepfenthal). There, GutsMuths established Gymnastics as well as games, hiking, and gardening as school subjects. The aim was - following Greek ideals - to combine intellectual and physical education in order to gain harmony. There was already a first nationalistic bias in GutsMuths project. Her argued that gymnastic strengthen virility that is important for a nation in order to avoid to fall into female »mushiness«

supported by what he called »civilization« (GutsMuths, 1804: 11). Here, clearly, the argument reflects the ideological distinction between »civilization« and »culture« that was virulent amongst the German middle classes. »Civilization« was seen as something French (or English) that is artificial. »Culture«, on the other hand, is the »true« and authentic German thing (Elias et al., 2000).

During the Napoleonic Wars and the French occupation of large parts of Germany gymnastic changed its ideology. It lost its cosmopolitanism, totally, and began to connect body aesthetic and training with patriotism. In 1811 Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) - later called »Turnvater« - founded in Berlin (Hasenheide) the first athletic ground in order to strengthen militaristic virtues. The German gymnastic movement was closely related to the war. Some of the early gymnastic groups developed out of militias (i.e. Lützowsche Freikorps). Some of them later intermingled with patriotic student fraternities. Following Jahn GutsMuths now argued that the military training of the youth should be the aim of gymnastics. Under the influence of Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1815) Jahn yet 1808 started to publish patriotic pamphlets. Jahn also served as an courier during the war. Under this influence GutsMuths, too, changed from cosmopolitanism to patriotism. In 1817, close after the war, GutsMuths wrote:

»For its intellect, give the youth a patriotic education! For its bodies: a physical education in order to prepare for the tunic!« (GutsMuths, 1817: XVII).⁴

»Any athletic ground is a patriotic institution in order to educate not only humanity but primarily the citizenship.« (GutsMuths, 1817: 298).⁵

GutsMuths indeed identified a nationalistic intention behind gymnastics. He, however, had still no concept of ethnic purity in relation to gymnastic. Jahn, on the other hand, does not only understand gymnastics as a mean to strengthen militaristic virtues. For him - clearly influenced by Herder and Fichte - gymnastic was not a universal practice. It was a German virtue. In »The German Art of Gymnastics« (»Die Deutsche Turnkunst ...«) Jahn argues that one has to search in the history of the Germans after ancient mores and customs of gymnastic exercises and folk-games. One can find already reminders of them by looking to

⁴ German in original: »Gebt der Jugend eine vaterländische Erziehung für den Geist und eine körperliche, zur Waffentracht vorbereitende, für den Leib.« Translated by the author.

⁵ »Jeder Turnplatz ist vaterländische Anstalt nicht bloß für Bildung zum Menschentum, sondern vorzüglich zum Bürgertum.«

folk festivals and traditional ceremonies. However, Jahn lamented, they are nowadays all »degenerated«. In order to start a revival of German gymnastics, it needs an organization. Jahn argues bizarrely that gymnastic is therefore something uniquely German because the term »Turnen« derives from »Turnier« (tournament) and coined the French »tournoi«. This should prove that it were the Germans and not the French that developed the knightly tournaments. Therefore, Jahn argued, there is a »primordial character and the Germaneness of the tournaments« (Jahn & Eiselen, 1816: XXXI).⁶ Jahn concluded, the French only copied this practice, latter.

After 1814 the patriotic student fraternities (Burschenschaften) incorporated the militaristic ideals of the gymnastic movement. They practiced academic fencing or duelings (Mensur). The gash developed into their symbol of virility. They also intermingled with the gymnastic movement and founded the »Turnerschaften« (gymnastic associations). After the Carlsbad Decrees, for some decades the gymnastic movement had to submerge into illegality (Turnsperre). Gymnastics developed into a symbol of the liberal political opposition. Only the revolutions of 1848 activated their public agitations for a short time. However, after the failure of the revolution also the gymnastic associations once more fell into illegality. In the course of the 1850s and 60s the gymnastic movements partly adopted right wing political attitudes. They changed from liberal ideals to supporting Bismarck's policy and latter that of Kaiser William II. After 1870/71 the gymnastic movements started to follow a state-based chauvinism (ZITAT). In Austria the notion of German »culture« became associated with Great-German phantasies and the gymnastic movement were one of the most important carriers of this ethno-nationalism that follows the idea that all German speakers should unit in one country (ZITAT).

After the formation of the German Reich, gymnastics become established in school education. Following Adolf Spieß (1810-1858) gymnastic in schools primarily should follow the ideals of obedience and the promotion of nationalism. By many pupils gymnastic was disliked and regarded as boring. However, after 1880, football and some other sports came to Germany, Austria, and Switzerland from England. Young people started to play those games and favored them over the gymnastics in school with its rigorous drill. It was the diffusion of sports to the German speaking countries that once more support the development of nationalistic arguments in relation to gymnastics. Now agitators of the gymnastic movement revisited the arguments of the ethnic nature of gymnastic that Jahn made decades before. They took these arguments and remodeled them into the ideological antipode of

⁶ »Urtümlichkeit und Deutschheit der Turniere.«

the good »German« gymnastics and the bad »English« sports. Once more, there was the attempt to label western culture as superficially, »mechanically«, and corruptible. The alleged German culture was glorified as incorruptible and superior. Thus, the German Turnen was regarded as something that promotes higher virtues. »English sports«, on the other hand, was seen as activities that promotes the »lowest instincts of humanity«. Above all, the main target was the seeking of sport after »dull« records, the competitive character, and the its partly commercialization (ZITAT). This critics also had a general anti-modernistic bias. It was critical of both technics and its relation to sports as well as capitalism. »Turnen« was seen in relation to incorruptible German soul and should be free of competitions as well as of commercialization. It should follow the aims of body aesthetics, harmony, and that of strengthening the body of the German youth in order to become trained recruits for the military (ZITAT).⁷

The apex of the nationalists notion to distinguish English sports and German Turnen was in the period between 1900 and 1914. After World War the so-called »neat deforce« (Reinliche Scheidung) in the years 1923 and 1924 was properly the last important event in the dispute between Turnen und sport. This event marked the organizational split of gymnastic and sport organizations in Germany. Many sport associations were founded once more as new associations. It was later the Nazi policy of »Gleichschaltung« (bringing into line) that ended this splittings and gymnastic and sport associations were re-organized under one state umbrella organization (NSRL) (ZITAT).

The neat deforce as well as the Nazi policy of Gleichschaltung, however, already indicate a slow decrease of the importance of the nationalistic gymnastic movements. The neat deforce was a sign that the sport associations already were dominant. Thus, the gymnasts searched for an alternative and decided to get rid of the very popular disciplines of sport. A decade later, the leading groups within the Nazi-party did not have much interest to tolerate other nationalist movements beside them. Above all, the NSDAP was interested in modern sports and above all Hitler did not wish that gymnasts interfere in their strategies. During the war, the German government even tried to hold up the operation of the football league (like that of the cinema) in order to guarantee distraction for the population (ZITAT).

⁷ This militaristic motif of supporting sport was not only found in Germany but also in many other countries who either introduced directly »English« sport or who tried ideologically - like Turnen - to invent an own national sport tradition. Even the father of the Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin (1863 to 1937) tried to introduce sport from England in France because of the defeat of the French in 1870/71 in order to strengthen French youth. Only afterwards, Coubertin adopted cosmopolitical ideals to sport and developed them into the idea of re-establishing ancient Olympic Games as a platform of peaceful encounter between young men of different countries. Like for the German gymnasts, for the IOC until the 1980s, anti-commercialization was an important principle, too.

4. Forgetting the Englishness of sport: ethnic emptying nationalism.

Terms like »ethnic nationalism« suggests a time-less characteristic of a certain type of nationalism. In reality, however, any type of symbol - even the banalest - can be attributed with ethno-nationalistic meanings. Not unlike the example of the gymnasts, i.e. Wagner believed that a certain musical aesthetic is the expression of the German soul. Others, interpret banalities like clothes, shoes, or even the ways how to greet with the idea of ethnic honor. Ethnic content making is related to story-telling and the willingness to recipe these stories. It is not unlike animism that attaches sacral meaning to the most common objects of the every-days-live. By stressing once more Giddens, it needs people who are engaged in producing discursive consciousness in order to disseminate and re-produce those stories of ethnic uniqueness.

However, there is the reverse process, too: the emptying of ethnic meanings from objects and symbols of every kind. Such processes of deletion of ethnic connoted meaning is quite the opposite of what is focussed by ethno-symbolism. Ethnic emptying means also forgetting collective memories and replacing them with something totally new.

There are quite a number of possibilities that leads to processes of forgetting and emptying ethno-nationalism in relation to certain fields of culture. In relation to the gymnastic movements nine aspects or reasons can be identified which began to trigger a long process of emptying ethnic contents:

- 1) The growing popularity of English sports in the German speaking world.
- 2) The unpopularity of German gymnastics amongst the youth.
- 3) World War I and the rational of the military to support sports.
- 4) Growing commercialization and popularity of professional sports like football.
- 5) The strengths of international institutions and the process of institutional isomorphism.
- 6) The fact that the Olympic Games, World Cups, and other types of sport-events become more important in the whole world also supports its growing importance in Germany.
- 7) The decline of nationalistic sport movements in Germany.
- 8) Deblockading national sentiments in sport.
- 9) The factor of »generation«.

(1) (2) The two first aspects belong strongly together. They have been yet discussed before. (3) The third reasons refers, on the one hand, to the fact that also the German army identified football as a mean to train recruits as well as to fight the boredom of the soldiers. Above all, the nature of this war also had a particular influence. Skiing was a necessity on the Italian front. After the war, many trained soldiers started to work as ski-trainers in the new touristic places of the Austrian Alps. Soon, some of them became professional ski-racers. (4) After World War I, commercialization of professionalization was particular important in the field of football and the establishing of professional football leagues. Austria developed into one of the places with the most successful professional football-leagues in the interwar-period. Here, the national football-team also developed during the 1920s and 30s popularity (the so-called »Wunderteam«). Austria was highly involved into international football cups; like the Mitropa-Cup. (5) The internationalization of sport and sport-organizations also shaped the attitudes of people towards sports. Even gymnastics becomes internationalized. The International Gymnastic Organization (FIG) that was founded in 1881 is the oldest international sport federation. The Germans, however, initially did not become a member state of the FIG. Since the beginning, gymnastics was an important part of the IOC's program for the Olympic Games. Thus, beside its nationalistic variation nation sport began to define the logic of gymnastic competitions. A process of imitation and adoption of rules by national sports associations began to develop. John Meyer and others have studied such processes of adopting world culture and standardizing rules as »institutional isomorphism« (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Drori, Meyer, & Hwang, 2006).

(6) In the meanwhile nation sport gains international importance. After World War I, IOC policy even orientates towards world politics. Thus, Germany was boycotted after World War I and were not allowed to participate until 1928. During the Weimar Republic efforts were made to become the host country for the Olympic Games. First, the Germans argued to host the Olympic Games would be a compensation for the canceled Berlin Games of 1916. Second, and more important, they regarded such an event on German soil as a mean to regain lost reputation (hosting Olympic Games were already a symbol of reputation!). The Nazi government did not want to change this policy. There were discussion within the Nazi party trying to re-emphasize once more the nationalistic notion of German gymnastic and to disregard world sport. However, Hitler and the other leading persons of the Nazi movement already acknowledged Olympic sports, football, and some other types of sports as sources of prestige (ZITAT). At least, for them to host the Olympic Games was also an instrument for disguising the world by displaying the civilized and peaceful country while preparing at the same time for war.

(7) Properly the most important factor for this case is the decline of the nationalistic sport movements in Germany and Austria between 1918 and 1945. In end, for the gymnastic movements the »neat deforce« was not able to stopp the popularity of football and of other sports. The Nazi policy of »Gleichschaltung« and their interest in nation sport, too, weakened the gymnasts. After World War II nationalistic sport movements in Germany and in Austria became unpopular. Even, gymnastic facilities were nationalized and adopted into sport facilities. In Austria, the whole sport-system became newly organized under the logic of the influence of the two great parties (the conservative peoples party and the social democratic party). For al while, the Great German gymnasts had no organization, at all. They only later reorganized their gyms and sport grounds but without stressing the ideological separation of sports and gymnastics. After decades the now three big sport associations began to understand themselves merely as service-organizations that provide sport facilities for the population who wants to pay for it. Nowadays, beside some party affiliations the sports associations do not have anymore an ideological character (ZITAT).

(8) The last aspect describes the process of forgetting the ethnic connotations of sports. In Germany and Austria, since more than seven decades, no powerful organization agitates against sport. Thus, nobody longer even associates sports with its English (or American) origin. Sport is no longer an English thing! It is part of the own culture. There are no influential groups »remembering« the population of the old ideological discourses. »English« sports are seen today as belonging to the own culture similar like music from the Beatles or the Rolling Stones. These practices are all learnt in the early childhood without becoming confronted to somebody exhorting the child of the alleged dangers of foreign culture. Therefor, by practicing or watching sports, children do not learn to examine their own feelings because of any perils in their minds. They are free to feel spontaneously pride if both their football club wins as well their national team wins. Nothing blockades these feelings.

(9) The last aspects refers to Mannheim's concept of the »generation«. This process mentioned above is also associated with changes in the inter-generational relationship. Today adults don't exhort children by playing football. For parents as well as for children experiences in sport are primordial and immediate. However, even in the 1920s and 30s the effect of the »generation« had have some importance. All those who become confronted with football or tennis with the age of about 15 in the 1890s were already between 50 and 60 years old in the 1930s. Out of this perspective, the preference of the Nazis to support the Olympic Games as well as Football seems to be obvious. Already then, the generation

who agitated against »English« sport in the year 1900 was (with some exceptions) too old to influence sport policy.

Nationalistic gymnastics was not the only alternative to world sports before World War II. There are parallels between the destiny of the gymnastic movement and the socialist sport movements of this period that highlights the argument of this paper. Sport functionaries of socialist sport-associations tried to stigmatize Olympic sports as well as professional football as »bourgeois« activities. They also started to establish alternative structures on the level of international competitions. For them, even the concept of the nation was »bourgeois«. Therefore, international status-competitions in sport should be replaced by an organizational logic which don't take the principle of national representativity of athletes into account. Especially in Germany and Austria, the worker's associations already established around 1900 their own sport clubs (Arbeitersport). In 1920, the Socialist Worker's Sport International (Sozialistische Arbeiter Sport Internationale, SASI) was founded out of six national federations. In 1921, the Communist International founded a rivalry association that they call Sportintern. From 1925 to 1937, the SASI organized three Worker's Olympiad: in Frankfurt, Vienna, and Antwerp. They also organized one Winter Worker's Olympiad in Mürzzuschlag (Austria). The number of participants of these events was sometimes even larger than that of the »bourgeois« Olympic Games. Like the German and Austrian socialists, also the Soviet Union established under the structure of the Sportintern three times »Spartakiads« in the summer and two times in the winter. However, after World War II, Stalin changed the Soviet's position towards the Olympic movement. He decided that the USSR should join the Olympic Winter and Summer Games. His rational was that the USSR should »compete with the West in every field«. Thus, beside German nationalists a further major force canceled to dispute the legitimacy of nation sport. During the Cold War, Olympic Games even evolved into a source of symbolic prestige for the East and the West. The boycott-policy of the 1970s and 80s, is in itself is an indicator of the increasing importance of nation sport. It can only been operate as a weapon if the other side takes sports seriously.

In the decades after World War II, the number of participating nations for the Olympic Summer Games as well as for the FIFA world cup rose dramatically. Practically all new countries that were founded in the course of the process of decolonization started to establish one after another both an Olympic team as well as a national football team. Since the 1990's, in due to the breakdown of the communistic world, the number of FIFA and IOC

members have surpassed the number of regular UN member-states. This leads to the situation that in some cases world policy intervenes into UEFA, FIFA, or IOC policy in order to prevent these associations to allow new members to participate. European policy was involved in the cases of preventing Kosovo, North-Cyprus, Gibraltar, or Greenland to join these sport-associations as regular members. None of these new de-facto states in Europe shares a policy towards world-sport that resembles the nationalistic attitudes of the German gymnasts 100 years earlier. They all accept Olympic- and national football teams as symbols of national sovereignty and as legitimate sources of potential national pride. This is the case because they already live in an international environment that overwhelmingly has accepted nation sport. In such a context, nation sport becomes even more important for new countries to demonstrate their nationhood.

Beside these long-term changes, the conditions of the Cold War coined empty nationalism in Western Europe. For Germany as the losing power of World War II but also for most of the other countries waging war becomes rare (like in the case of UK and France) or ceased to happen (like in the case of all other countries). All these countries became »neutralized« in the sense of Weber. However, these changed decisively the structure of opportunity to experience national glory and fierce national sentiments. In the course of the decades after World War II even the memories to war heroes dwindled away (or to idealize war heroes becomes taboo, like in Germany or Austria). For many Germans, winning the football World Cup of 1954 was properly the first event of national pride after the war that was accepted openly. For the Austrians of the 1950s and 60s, success in ski-races becomes an important source for the national identity. Thinking and feeling in terms of power prestige dwindled in all over Western Europe. Live-TV-broadcasts from sport competitions, on the other hand, became an increasing source of feeling national sentiments. In the course of time, the feeling-structured experienced in nation sport even developed into a constitutive force that determines how to feel and to image the nation. In this respect, the Western European experience differs from that of war-waging US.

5. Conclusion.

It would be a mistake to interpret nationalism as the exclusive product of the mass-media by measuring the degree of national wellings before, during, and after important sport-competitions. With such an approach, one only can measure the »national mood« that may vary between events. However, the paper tried to demonstrate that in order to under-

stand »empty nationalism« the distinction between objectivism and subjectivism is not helpful. The mass-media neither fabricates nationalism and induces it afterwards to an audience with former non-nationalistic attitudes. Nor can be denied that, at least, sport-journalism produces and re-produces national we-images, cults of commemoration, and other aspects of collective meaning. The process of adopting »empty nationalism« is therefore more tricky. It needs to focus on the complex dynamic between spontaneity and reflexivity. Not media produced images that induces nationalism but conventions shared by journalists and the audience give »nation sport« its legitimacy. In the case of the German speaking countries, for a long time, »nation sport« was fought by nationalistic sport movements as well as by socialists. For a while, it was the permanent politicization of sport piqued by these groups that prevents »nation sport« to transform undisputed national we-images, we-ideals, and we-feelings.

There is a dialectic relationship between the primordial and the social constructed aspects of nationalism. It was not before nationalistic sport-movements lost reputation and influence that the spontaneous flow of national sentiments in sports could move unblocked between individuals and generations. It needed a change in culture, the forgetting of old fights, and the development of new traditions in order to de-blockade the free flow of those we-feelings that occurs sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker, but never becoming the target of strong doubts about its legitimacy.

It is also the primordial aspect of »empty nationalism« that enables those types of we-feelings to transcend nation sport and to become the denominator of nationalism in others fields of culture, too. There are clearly parallels between the way journalists reports about nation sport and about other topics related to the nation. It is »horse race journalism« that describes conventions of perceiving national »performances« of the economy, the social well-fare, the education systems, artists, musicians, and even the beauties of the own country.

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