

Book review. Antonio Sandu: Elemente de sociologie (2014)

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Abstract

Appreciated specialist in the social sciences domain and of the socio-human sciences, Professor Antonio Sandu posted at Tritonic Publishing a remarkable book, "Elements of sociology" (Bucharest, Tritonic Publishing, 2014) (Antonio Sandu (2014). *Elemente de sociologie*. București: Editura Tritonic). This represents an introduction to the theory of social phenomena. What performs first of all the value and originality of the research in question is shown to be:

- a) the comprehension and interpretation of the social, i.e. social hermeneutics, and
- b) the novelty of the postmodern and transmodern perspective of methodological, transdisciplinary and constructivist approach.

Keywords: social sciences, sociology, transdisciplinarity, constructivism

1 Method and results

The object of the description and interpretation of the book is constituted of social phenomena, as well process of socialization, social institutions, dynamic status- role, social groups and quality of the life (also Sandu 2011; Sandu, 2012). The work method is a complex one. It combines empirical research, analysis, synthesis and meta-analytic investigation (also Ponea, Alexa & Sandu, 2012). A special chapter, maybe the best chapter of the volume is devoted to social research methodology. Here it is stated that in performing of any sociological research "is starting from the analysis of the reference

theories in the domain to be investigated" and that "any sociological research follows a design methodology that consists of a series of distinct phases: assumptions construction and research questions; explanation and operationalization of coordinated theoretical frameworks and with that of the research hypotheses; establishing of the methods, techniques and the used tools" (p. 143). The theoretical armature of the book is of constructivist nuance one. The research is chaired by "social-constructivist paradigm and the postmodern one" consisting of that it is considered that the social reality is analyzed from the perspective of the social actor. For this actor, the reality is "the result of a process of collective negotiation between interpretative community members of the meaning that they assign to various aspects of social relations". The social interactions and transactions starts from a reality that is procedural constructed by communicational agencies. Interactants and transactants negotiate and renegotiate the meanings, denotations and significations; communicational beings reach an interpretative agreement concerning the reality. In other words, reality is a construct, and people act according to Thomas' theorem: the reality produce consequences by itself its conception. The social constructionism has, in addition, in attention to clarify and to explain the processes by which communicational actors come to understand, to describe, to represent and to explain the world they live in, that passes and that includes them.

It is considered as the starting point of social constructionist the Kennet Gergen's work. In the opinion of Professor Antonio Sandu "the social constructionist model is a postmodern type, that can be related with Habermas's theory of communicative action" (p. 42). The constructivism is based on the individual's social relations and its role in ideational configuration of "significant social realities". Not only that reality is constructed, but also "the truth acquires the character of a social construct". The traditional distinction explanation-understanding comes to be shaped by the way in which is structured, is used, are applied the methodological tools of research. Thus, this distinction is not "fully operational on the validity of research results" (p. 43).

The volume contains seven chapters: "An introduction to social knowledge", "Power", "Society", "The process of socialization", "Elements of groups sociology", "Elements of deviance sociology and marginalization", "Quality of life and construction of public policies" and "Elements of social research methodology". According to the testimony of the author, some parts of the chapters have been "taken over" from previous publications of the author and

were reconfigured in relation to specific preprogrammed of the book.

As shows Antonio Sandu, the target audience of the book is the especially students of social and humanities specializations.

2 Conclusion

The book is distinguished both by topics radiography, and by issues approaching and highlighting the sociological ideas. The main merit of the book is the methodological freshness, using the latest research methods in social studying. We say that we are dealing with the best book of postmodern constructionist sociology written in Romanian until now.

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