

Internet and the plot of resentment

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Keywords

social movements, internet, resentment, emotional energy, social networking

Emotions inheres simultaneously in individual and in the social structures and relationships in which individuals are embedded. They are fruitful "objects" of study to integrate micro and macro sociological perspective in sociological studies. Their role is essential to social processes not only in being central to identity and affiliation, but also in being the most important basis of social action and the form it takes. We can consider emotion and emotional energy (Collins 1990, pp.32-33) as the experience of readiness for personal and social action.

Our thesis is that among other emotions, resentment is particularly suitable for the comprehension of some of the most characteristic and relevant socio-cultural dynamics of post modern society.

Resentment (also called rancour, or ranklement) can be define as "an emotion of anger or bitterness felt repeatedly, as a result of a real, or imagined, wrong done". At social level, it is the feeling experienced by social actors <<when an external agency denies them opportunities or valued resources (including status) that otherwise would be available to them>> J.M. Barbalet 1992, p. 153). Moving from classic (Nietzsche, Scheler) and more recent theorizations (Girard, Tomellieri, Barbalet), the paper as the following pourpose:

1. to demonstrate as resentment is probably one of the most common and appropriate emotional answer for actors living in complex, flexible and high unequal unequal contests;
2. to investigate, from a macro sociological perspective, the role played by Internet and the social networking in the elaboration of resentment. Do internet conversations and social networking help actors to became more aware of social and structural origin of mechanism which generate their resentment? Or, vice versa, do these conversations contribute to reduce the total amount of emotional energy generated by social resentment, making it perceive as a personal guilt to cope with?