

How National Identity Relates to Social and Cultural Dimensions

Posted on April 5, 2018

There are numerous perspectives about how the formulation of Gender and [National Identity](#) should be defined. Commonly, scholars like to shed light on the fact that there is a strong need to integrate social matters into personal identity. A person's personal identity is created inside the constraints to which the person is tied and the social framework within which the person is living (Mayer, 2012). Such processes can be enacted in some ways; among them, some prominent ways are to use communication and the construction of self-narration and various accounts.

While one goes through the construction process of the various accounts, one considers some existing structures at a higher level. Then, they try to fit these structures together to locate where they are situated (Mayer, 2012). It has been proved through research that a person does not always reveal his true self rather he adapts to situations and contexts, which sometimes also depends on who he is confronting and what the occasion is. Such a phenomenon is referred to as having a coherent self. For a person to be easily constituted into the mechanism and be understood as an important social being, the necessary element is coherence in his identity (Webster, 1998).

Identities whether individual or collected are situated in social and cultural categories and contexts in an overlapping manner, with no clear distinction among them (Webster, 1998). Identity is defined or expressed regarding the already existing cultural labels, contexts, and concepts. It generates contextualized and variable categories to easily understand and convey identity through communication. Studies have shown how people develop specialized versions of their nationality and gender identity (Webster, 1998).

The construction of identity occurs within a range of constraints such as discursive, symbolic, and material constraints that exist there and shape the nature of self-presentation and subjectivity in a more social context. However, the categories of identity cannot be specifically isolated from each other; without one, the other cannot be defined or understood. This is because the categories are not mutually exclusive (Berger and Lorenz, 2008). They overlap each other, and one cannot be separated from another. In other words, one of them cannot exist without the other. A person's national identity is shaped by the position of his gender in a national context. On the other hand, gender identity has little to do with the cultural or national conceptions about the person being male or female (Mayer, 2012). It is not something new to know that nationality and gender are intertwined in a complex of identity categories such as religious and political beliefs, ethnicity, race, and class. These categories converge to create subjectivity and identity (Berger and Lorenz, 2008). In the following discussion, there are identified and discussed some of the links that exist there between the gender and nation conceptions.

The Nation as Gendered

History has witnessed that each nation that has lived on this earth has made male and female identities and assigned some values to them based on their nature and characteristics (Berger and Lorenz, 2008). They have given birth to discourse, slang, vocabulary, terminologies, analogies, and metaphors such as “Mother Earth,” “motherland,” and “fatherland” and that women are physically weak and more emotional while men are physically strong and tough. It is impossible to calculate such notions’ effect on the contemporary world’s national identities (Mottier, 2000). It has been proved through research that a person does not always reveal his true self rather he adapts to situations and contexts, which sometimes also depends on who they are confronting and what the occasion is. However, such notions can be effectively applied to modern-day politics.

Ethno-National Narratives

Nationalist projects and national identity are the most appealing elements towards the collective narration of nation and national memories. Such narratives are often seen to have differentiated the roles of a man and a woman in society. The concept of private and [public spheres](#) comes to the spotlight of this discussion now. The common identification of men is linked with the public sphere or civilization, and that of women is linked to the private sphere or nature (Mottier, 2000).

The conception of Masculinity/Femininity

The conception of being a male or a female is subject to the national and cultural ideologies of the people (Mottier, 2000). However, such conceptions are then shaped by social and historical factors, including political regimes, religion, and cultural traditions. Such expectations and factors affect relations between genders and their relative positions within local and national contexts. According to Mayer (2012), men and women are symbolic, cultural, and biological producers of nations. He also described how men’s and women’s roles, duties, and rights are structured, and he stated that they are subjective and experienced differently in different national contexts (Mayer, 2012).

Citizens, Duties, and Rights

Connected to this ideological dimension is the formal allocation of citizenship rights and duties. Gender differentiation emerges across national and institutional contexts (e.g., political, civil, and social), reflecting the individual’s relationship to the state. Again, this relationship is likely to be influenced by national ideologies, and the individual’s particular location within these structures (Mayer, 2012).

Race and National Identity

According to Etienne Balibar, the view that nationalism and racism are opposite to each other is completely wrong (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). He argues that racism is an expression characterized by nationalism. According to him, it is rather indispensable to constructing nationalism (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991, p. 54). Colonizing nations in history would deal with internal class and caste problems through the creation of racialized immigrants, or they would produce underclass space in those areas where such problems were more of an acute nature. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, nations of Europe tried and succeeded in using anti-semitism as a scapegoat. They tried to weld together such nations that were formerly considered racially pure to put impurity in them.

According to Balibar racism is strongly tied to the concept of nationalism. It started back in those times when nations and states were trying to take control of population movements. Given a great territory, they shaped people as an ethnic and political entity. Just like racism, nationalism also needs to involve inclusion as well as exclusion. They do not only complement each other but also have the characteristics to presuppose each other. Speaking of which one cannot simply claim that nationalism is a good or a normal ideology because in certain cases it can become a racist ideology (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). The best example for that is the Nazis of Germany who were not only nationalists but also fascists. These two ideas are fundamentally connected to each other. Nationalism comes between particularity and universality. It is considered universal because it gives the notion of human rights such as uniform citizenship; everyone holds the right to be considered a nation; and all nations possess the right to existence (Mottier, 2000). It can also be stated that nationalism is liberatory. On the contrary, it is particularist because it tends to focus on one specific nation and speaks for the well-being of that nation only. It oppresses the minorities and potential nations in the vicinity. So, it can be stated that nationalism is repressive in nature (Mottier, 2000).

Racism redefines and overstates this uncertainty. It might appear odd to guarantee that racism has a humanist, Universalist measurement, yet Balibar contends that inside racism there exists the same uncertain strain between comprehensiveness and identity (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). Racism, or all the more decisively 'hypothetical racism,' includes universalism in different ways. It includes a procedure of classification of humanity, partitioning, and hierarchizing the species, yet also, along these lines, addresses where solidarity lies. It conjures certain universals, for example, 'common' human animosity or inclinations to wed 'one's own.' On the whole, hypothetical racism offers the conversation starter of the idea of the human species, its beginnings, and its fate. Then again, racism is likewise particularist in the way it answers this inquiry and in its subsequent prohibition and persecution of specific classifications of individuals (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991).

Racism can thus reform itself into super nationalism where the notions of national heritage are refigured, and the culture is converted into more power wanting. Racism can be integrated with nationalism to oppress minorities existing in the nation. According to Mosse, on reaching a certain

height nationalism is converted into racism (Wade, 2001). The difference between the people is no more for identification. One can argue that the idea of human identification was chance variation, but that idea is long gone when nationalism is heightened.

Balibar establishes a questionable symmetry between racism and nationalism. According to the universalism of nationalist idea, it is believed that everyone has a right to live and exist on the other hand the universalism of racism contends that everyone has the right to have racial purity. These two ideas simply cannot be aligned. They hold out against each other. In Columbia, there is a comprehensive angle to this philosophy, which holds out the guarantee of change through race blend for people and the country: everybody can be a contender for a blend, and subsequently, it will be good and socially elevating. In the meantime, obviously, it is a profoundly oppressive belief system and practice, since it depends on the possibility of the inadequacy of blacks and indigenous people groups and, by and by, of victimization them (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). Mestizaje was, and is, regularly seen as a worldwide wonder that connects Latin American countries (and to some degree non-Latin Caribbean countries). Yet, there is additionally a progressive system of blended countries, as per the blending level, which places every country on a worldwide scale of whiteness (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991).

Ang and Stratton (1998) in their article write that racism and nationalism interpenetrate which means that they are not mutually exclusive rather there is a lot in common between them. According to her when a close look is given to such systems of classification and ideologies along with the Hindu caste system and kinship, it is observed that they all possess distinct similarities or unity of human substance. They create relatedness among themselves as they share common resources. Nature, defined as a human substance is not present just by itself. Rather, it is created by the people. As a matter of fact, nations and races can also be constructed by people. However, "blood", which is the determinant of purity and non-purity of races among human beings is also a human element (Ang and Stratton, 1998). There are complex ideas that approve or disapprove the interaction such as sex, friendship, and marriage with people of other races. Some races are highly reluctant to have any interaction of any kind because in their opinion doing so could impurity their race or bloodline. They avoid contamination that could lead to race impurity or loss of purity. However, the interaction and intersection of nations, races, and kinships are due to their common basis in characterizing related human beings (Ang and Stratton, 1998).

However, a conflict can arise between the conception of race and nation. According to Williams the conception of races is seen as naturally different no matter all being of it is grounded on one notion of humanity (Mottier, 2000). This system of classification lacked an important element: [racial identity](#) and nationalism. The Hindu caste system is ultimately derived from Brahma. Racial diversity has posed a threat to the US nationalists as the United States in the present era has become the most diversified nation of the world as it contains people from almost all ethnic groups and all the nations of the world. Here, Williams tries to diverge from Balibar's viewpoint, as he believes that racism is an aspect of universalism. However, it can be said that this matter is easy to resolve as racism possesses common humanity at a certain level. Based on that, one can derive that sex between races is

productive to humanity, even if it is highly disapproved of in various historical contexts (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991).

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