

Nationalism approaches: review and practices of nationalism

Abstract

By definition, it expresses the dependence of the people and individuals belonging to the nation state on the state to which they identify. Nation and state are understandable together. In this context, nationalism can be expressed. In the 18th century, the nationalism movement that emerged after the French Revolution brought many theories with it. Some of these theories come to the scientific approach such as the instrumentalist approach to the theory of nationalism through Marxist thought, primordialism nationalism theory and instrumental approaches. So, in this research paper has shown that emphasizes the three movements of approaches nationalism approaches unbiased way.

Keywords: Marxist approaches, nationalism, primordialism, instrumental approach, nationalism movement

Volume 5 Issue 2 - 2023

Selin Çınar

Altınbas University, Turkey

Correspondence: Selin Çınar, Department of Political Science and International Relation, Altınbas University, Turkey, Email selincinarresm@gmail.com

Received: June 26, 2023 | **Published:** July 07, 2023

Introduction

One of the most important issues in the approach to nationalism has been the Marxist thought, which, together with Marxism, has influenced the approaches to the theories of nationalism that came after it.

In general, the idea of nationalism is a feature that separates the national groups of societies from each other. On the other hand, Marxism assumes that the divisions of societies are horizontal divisions, while nationalism favors vertical divisions. It is precisely for this reason that the concept of nationalism is more effective at social integration than any other division. Marxists, on the other hand, show a development in the form of class consciousness.¹ The ideas of nationalism and Marxism differ from each other for these reasons. Approaches to Marxism and nationalism emerged after 1864. Political scientists and thinkers such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Otto Bauer, and Karl Renner have given various definitions of this approaches.²

Max and Engel worked in this direction in their book, The Communist Manifesto, written in 1848. In some parts of the book, the national question is mentioned. However, it cannot be said that this idea of a national question is very necessary. Because Max and Engel are clear that the struggles of the workers of many countries in the national field will reflect the common goals of the proletariat in a common sense without depending on any nation, that is, independently, In this context, the working class must first become a ruler in their own nation. In the meantime, they can fight to minimize national strife or differences of opinion. In general terms, Max and Engel are of the opinion that the common language and the common culture that societies have in common, the common geography, and the common history are not sufficient for the formation of a nation. Because they emphasize that economic prosperity and social development are also important in this context.³ According to some thinkers, Max and Engel abandoned the idea of the distinction of the characteristics that must be present for the nation to come into being.⁴ On the other hand, there are nations without history. This group is not capable and powerful enough to form a bourgeoisie in general. Since they are a small society, they are not inclined to establish a state. Max and Engel also had ideas about the international socialist movement. According to them, an understanding of nationalism is necessary for capitalism, and they see nationalism as a support for capitalism.⁵

According to Luxemburg, the theoretical approach of Marxist nationalism was carried out with the independence of Poland.⁶ It is Poland against Poland's independence, with the understanding that Russia will depend on Russia. In this context, he saw the working class as creating Poland's self-determination. However, in contrast to Luxemburg's thought, Max and Engel supported the liberation and independence of Poland. In this context, with the policies implemented by Russia for Poland, Poland's policy has not only contributed to the whole of this community in Poland but has not created a proletariat. According to her, Poland has a past responsibility since achieving the Polish average would prevent the capitalists from turning to sociological. According to Luxemburg, there is no concept of a nation. In fact, according to her, the nation does not exist but rather consists of small groups and small classes within each nation, and she believes that these classes also have interests and have different characteristics. She sees socialism as an idea that shapes the formation of nations.⁷ Luxemburg thought that capitalism would not allow nations to form themselves.⁸

Another thinker is Lenin. When Lenin's assurance of the national question meets Luxemburg's integrity, there is a difference of opinion. He divided capitalism into two periods: the first is the period of feudalism, and the second is the end of absolutism.⁹ According to Lenin's understanding, the proletariat must support national-level movements in order to achieve national peace and carry out an international revolution. Later, they should not accept this understanding because they only defend the interests of the nation to which they belong. On this idea also sits the principle of imperialism. The idea of self-determination had Lenin evaluated and assessed the situation. It had an ideological purpose; political interests came to the fore. In this way, the process of self-determination was seen as a means against capitalism for other societies to recognize the revolution. In general, this world of thought also has value as an element of strategy in international politics.¹⁰

Otto Bauer's thought and Karl Renner's approach Otto Bauer and Karl Renner separated the concepts of "nation" and "state." Their peers, Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, separated the concepts of nation and state. Thus, they developed the idea that it was necessary for nations to form independent states in order to achieve self-determination and applied such a model.¹¹ According to this model, nations and their constituent individuals will declare their citizenship when they vote, and as a result, citizens will unite as a national community and form a public.

This approach also supported the idea that nationalization would only cover education and culture, while the state would be concerned with general issues within the country, such as justice, politics, economy, and defense. Their idea is one that distinguishes between nations. This model coincides with the descriptive representation style seen in political science, especially in voter behavior.

Methods

The method used by the researcher in this paper is based on the first and second data. The first data used are the books written on the subject of the research have been taken under review, but they are stated in the research article in a descriptive way. The research method used quantitatively was analyzed on secondary data, and as a result of these analyses, second-hand data were used in the perspective approaches related to the subject. In this research paper, firstly, certain data were collected and secondly, these data were analyzed. Finally, the data analyses were interpreted objectively.

Different types of criticisms to primordialism

Criticisms against the nature of ethnic and national ties; One of the common characteristics of non-culturalists is that they tend to see their identity, which is formed in the national context, as a given.¹² In other words, their cultural characteristics are passed on from generation to generation without changing. Therefore, they have continuity. However, in recent years, this idea has started to lose its validity in terms of individual preferences. The basic characteristics, which are fixed, are updated and defined from one generation to the next as they evolve in response to changing conditions. The nature of ethnic and national ties in the past seems to be renewable today.¹³

The second criticism is the origins of ethnic and national ties. According to this criticism, if ethnic and national ties are given, they are derived from earlier times and cannot be explained by verbal communication. This idea was also characterized as unscientific by a certain section. This is because this idea is not scientific at all but has a primitivism character. In this context, they see the history of the formation of primitive nations as a situation that takes the history of the formation of that nation from its beginnings to the present day with reference to a predetermined result.¹⁴

The third criticism is the date of the emergence of nations. According to this, there are differences in approaches between the earlier way of perceiving the meaning of their identity among the people and the current perception.¹⁵ The reason for this is that they are formed over the long term.

The last criticism was the issue of emotion and affect. According to this, the role played by emotions in both people and societies has been a factor. This is a misconception, since when the social environment is analyzed, it is seen that this emotional attachment is not only a result of social and external communication but also of the idea that it is passed on from one's origin to one's descendants. National identities are characterized as static, essentialist, reductionist, and teleological.¹⁴

Instrumental' nature of ethnicity and nationality

Brass's view of ethnic nationalism emphasized the ownership of instrumental health. Accordingly, he saw the factors that they saw and that arose because of their national identity as a qualification to the competing situation, that is, to the power struggle and to the issue of prestige, which was deemed appropriate in order to gain the support of the generalization. National ethnic identity changes and develops

according to national loyalty. Paul R. Brass explained his ethnic considerations as follows: Firstly, the formation that comes with ethnic identity, whatever the processes of this formation continues without effort to transform the understanding of nationalism. On the other hand, he came to the idea that the deviations of these cultural identities, which carry the political characteristics of these cultural identities, can occur when some conditions are possible to change. The second feature is that the source of ethnic conflicts is perceived as political and economic, not cultural. This rivalry, that is to say, this rivalry that is formed by the transformation into ethnicity, also characterizes the permanence of the groups in a very intense way. Because of the cultural characteristics of ethnic groups, there has been a widespread power struggle in politics.

Brass also defined the concept of an ethnic category. According to Brass, the ethnic category is based on the assumption that the ethnic category is formed by the production that takes place thanks to the division of labor between the people with certain objective cultural criteria and the people with differences between objective cultural criteria. At the same time, he stated that objective cultural criteria also vary. In periods when ethnic transformation has not started the process of nationalism, he is of the opinion that the criteria determining ethnic categories are not clear. According to Brass, when the ethnic transformation process begins, the boundaries begin to become clear. In this process, it is necessary to politicize the ethnic group in order to culturally distinguish one group from another. This happens in the following way: the ethnic group needs to be politicized in terms of the social aspects of the ethnic group, which may be the rights of the ethnic group or demand made to them to be accepted as another nation.¹⁶ The competition for leadership between ethnic groups can take place in four different ways. These can be listed as follows: Firstly, with local and foreign authorities; secondly with rival religious elites; thirdly between local religious elites and aristocrats; and finally, between local and foreign aristocrats. There are some conditions for the transformation of ethnic groups into nationalism. On the other hand, in order for this transformation to take place, rivalry must overcome the group, and nationalism can occur when the stronger group sees the other group as a threat. Because nationalism depends on political demands, these factors are mentioned. These factors can be listed as follows: strategies of nationalist political organizations; government response to ethnic group demands; general political context.¹⁷

The strategies of political organizations are, first of all, more advantageous for organizations that are responsible for controlling the resources of societies than for organizations that do not assume this responsibility. This is because these organizations are more effective than other organizations that create a self-interested effect in the community and have an effect on the masses. In this way, the leadership is shaped as a nationalist in the process of forming the identity of society. Because it is very important to keep up with the times and move on to the political organization. In terms of nationalism, in order for this strategy to be successful, the interests of the group it represents must be more dominant than the interests of the other groups it represents. Secondly, there is the government's response to the demands of ethnic groups. For example, it consists of areas such as assimilation. The aim of ethnic groups is to harm the population to which they belong. However, politicians respond positively to ethnic demands if they adopt a pluralist policy. For example, freedom of speech in the mother tongue The general political context finally becomes important. The restructuring of both political and social organizers is important in terms of their willingness to form partnerships with other leaders who better represent and demonstrate their elite power among influential groups. If these features are not

present, no positive outcome can be expected from the solutions, which most people would not support.¹⁸

Brass followed two paths in explaining ethnic formation. Firstly, the concepts of ethnicity and nationalism are not given; on the contrary, they occur in a social and political structure. Second, it is the idea that the concepts of ethnicity and nationalism are phenomena created through the movements of the state.¹⁹ At the same time, according to Brass, societies are always in a state of renewal if they are composed of very different ethnic identities. In these societies, conflicts sometimes occur. These conflicts arise from the struggles of the elites. But he also shared his ideas about the solution to this conflict. The solution actually consists of negotiation and compromise.

Conclusion

Finally, with the approach made to the theories of nationalism, it has developed since the 18th century. Nationalism has the quality of encouraging the idea that people belong to a nation. Important theories have been put forward over time to explain the theories of nationalism. The first of these theories was the idea of Marxism, which was developed on the ideas of nationalism, and many scientists have expressed their own ideas on Marxist thought. These include Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Otto Bauer, and Karl Renner. The second idea of primordialism has been added to the theories of nationalism. Since this was not accepted by many scholars, it caused four main debates.

Finally, Brass's views on the 'instrumental' nature of ethnicity and nationality and his theoretical assumptions on ethnic transformation.

Acknowledgments

None.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Funding

None.

References

- Ahmad A. In theory: Classes, nations, literatures. Verso; 1994.
- Jessop B. The capitalist state. New York: New York University Press; 1982. p. 9–12.
- Glenn J. Nations and nationalism: Marxist approaches to the subject. *National Ethnic Pol.* 1997;3(2):79–100.
- Petrus JA. Marx and Engels on the National Question. *J Politics.* 1971;33(3):797–824.
- Davis HB. Nationalism and socialism. NYU Press; 1967.
- Luxemburg R. The national question: Selected writings by Rosa Luxemburg. NYU Press; 1976.
- Baier W. Luxemburg, Lenin, Bauer—The Left and the National. *The Radical Left in Europe.* 2019;73.
- Walicki A. Rosa Luxemburg and the Question of Nationalism in Polish Marxism (1893-1914). *The Slavonic and East European Review.* 1983;61(4):565–582.
- Chopra S. Marxism and the National Question: An Overview. *Social Scientist.* 1984;3–13.
- Lenin VI. Marxism & nationalism. Resistance Books; 2002.
- Bauer O. The question of nationalities and social democracy. U of Minnesota Press; 2000.
- Bayar M. Reconsidering primordialism: an alternative approach to the study of ethnicity. *Ethnic and racial studies.* 2009;32(9):1639–1657.
- Horowitz DL. The primordialists. Ethnonationalism in the contemporary world. Walker Connor and the study of nationalism. 2002.
- Joireman S. Nationalism and political identity. A&C Black; 2003.
- Bader V. Culture and identity: Contesting constructivism. *Ethnicities.* 2001;1(2):251–273.
- Smith AD. Ethno-symbolism and nationalism: A cultural approach. Routledge; 2009.
- Ozkirimli U. Theories of nationalism: A critical introduction. Bloomsbury Publishing; 2017.
- Brass PR. Ethnic groups and the state. Taylor & Francis; 2023.
- Wimmer A. Ethnic boundary making: Institutions, power, networks. Oxford University Press; 2013.