

Theories and Practices of Nationalism - HW06

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Given [this twitter thread], respond.

The thread aims to show differences between US/EU nationalism and Indian. However, it overgeneralises a number of aspects, misses some others, and is entirely wrong elsewhere.

First of all, the terminology is not clear - what's liberal and nationalist? Liberalism *seems* to describe civic nationalism (they mention opposition to free will as a criterion) and secularism in general - but they are opposed to multiculturalism, which falls within the definition.

Assuming the two to be civic and ethnic nationalism respectively - "western" nationalism is over-generalised heavily as liberal. This ignores both the ground reality of ethnic politics in western nations and their origin, which is, in the case of much of the EU, ethnic.

They talk of how EU/US nationalism tries to preserve ideas of individual liberty, freedom, democracy. From an origin standpoint: not really. Official nationalisms were a way for European monarchs to consolidate power ¹, and they resisted suffrage ².

Even today many EU countries appear to take pride in national cultural identity, and have very "non-civic" approaches to, say, citizenship [^swisscit]. Consider their approach to the "refugee crisis" ³ ⁴

They also mention "Conservatives/nationalists say the outsider should be treated as no different from any other citizen". This is in direct contradicts to far-right nationalist parties in Europe ⁵. It also assumes the non-existence of demonstrable racism in the areas ⁶.

¹Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Revised). Verso.

²Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. (Eds.). (1992). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.

³A non-academic article on the matter: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/01/refugee-crisis-europe-mediterranean-racism-incarceration>

⁴<https://www.soas.ac.uk/blogs/study/eu-racist-migration-policy/>

⁵Shields, J. (2007). *The Extreme Right in France: From Pétain to Le Pen*. Routledge.

⁶As demonstrated by studies by the European Network Against Racism - <https://www.enar-eu.org/No-progress-in-curbing-racial-discrimination-in-the-European-labour-market-in-1490>

The US has civic nationalism, but it is clear to any observer how the Conservative party is the opposite of liberal, and open to all ethnicity/race. With the US, it is also often a matter of sect of Christianity (the WASP as the default).

When they come to India, not much is actually said on nationalism itself. What is said however is also off by quite a bit. The matter of debate is simplified to Hindus, again over the question of how to integrate Muslims into the country.

The debate here seems to be civic (secular democracy) vs ethnic (Hindu Rashtra), so it is unclear why none of this was brought up in the EU and US.