لوعي الوطني: دراسة وجهات نظر فرانتز فانون وأوجرمان أندرسون

National Consciousness: A Study of Frantz Fanon's and O'Gorman Anderson's Viewpoints

باقر صافي عزيز البوشور
جامعة الزهراء للبنات
كلية التربية – قسم اللغة الانكليزية

Baqer Safi Aziz Albushor
AlZahraa University for Women
College of Education - English Dept.

Baqer.safi@alzahraa.edu.iq

الكلمات المفتاحية: فرانتز فانون، المجتمعات المتخيلة، الوعي الوطني، ما بعد الاستعمار

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الملخص

يدرس هذا المقال وجهات نظر اثنين من العلماء المؤثرين، فرانتز فانون وبنديكت أندرسون، حول مفهوم الوعي القومي. درس فانون، وهو مُنظر بارز في مرحلة ما بعد الاستعمار، الآثار النفسية والاجتماعية والسياسية للاستعمار على تطور الوعي الوطني. من ناحية أخرى ، ركز أندرسون على المجتمعات المتخيلة التي تشكل أساس القومية. من خلال مقارنة وجهات نظرهم ، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى توضيح التعقيدات والفروق الدقيقة في الوعي الوطني كظاهرة ثقافية وسياسية.

بالاعتماد على أعمال فانون المؤثرة، بما في ذلك معذبو الأرض والجلد الأسود، أقنعة بيضاء ، تبحث هذه الورقة في تحليله للآثار النفسية للاستعمار على الأفراد المستعمرين سابقا. جادل فانون بأن الإمبريالية ولدّت مشاعر الدونية وكراهية الذات بين المستعمرين، مما أدى إلى رغبة جماعية في التحرر وتشكيل وعي وطني يرتكز على التمكين والوكالة. يوفر فهم منظور فانون فهماً قيماً للأبعاد النفسية للوعي الوطني ودورهُ في نضالات إنهاء الاستعمار.

في المقابل، يقترحُ كتاب أندرسون المهم، المجتمعات المتخيلة: تأملات في أصل القومية وانتشارها، نهجاً أكثر بناء. يفترض أندرسون أن الأمم هي كيانات مبنية اجتماعياً، تتحقق من خلال الرموز والأساطير والروايات المشتركة. لعب تطور رأسمالية الطباعة دوراً مهماً في توحيد الأفراد المتنوعين تحت راية هوية مشتركة ، مما أدى إلى نمو المشاعر القومية. من خلال فحص وجهات نظر أندرسون ، تهدف هذه المقالة إلى الإشارة إلى الأبعاد

الأيديولوجية والخطابية للوعي الوطني. علاوة على ذلك، يوفر هذا التحليل نظرة ثاقبة للتحديات والفرص المرتبطة بالوعي الوطني في السياق العالمي المعاصر، مما يوفر سبلاً محتملة لمزيد من البحث والتحليل.

Abstract

This article studies the viewpoints of two influential scholars, Frantz Fanon and Benedict Anderson, on the concept of national consciousness. Fanon, a prominent postcolonial theorist, examined the psychological and sociopolitical implications of colonialism on the development of national consciousness. Anderson, on the other hand, focused on the imagined communities that form the basis of nationalism. By comparing their perspectives, this study aims to elucidate the complexities and nuances of national consciousness as a cultural and political phenomenon.

Drawing from Fanon's influential works, including *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, this paper looks into his analysis of the psychological effects of colonization on the formerly colonized individuals. Fanon argued that imperialism engendered feelings of inferiority and self-hatred among the colonized, leading to a collective desire for liberation and the formation of a national consciousness grounded in empowerment and agency. Understanding Fanon's perspective provides valuable understandings of the psychological dimensions of national consciousness and its role in decolonization struggles.

In contrast, Anderson's important book, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, proposes a more constructivist approach. Anderson posits that nations are socially constructed entities, realized through shared symbols, myths, and narratives. The development of print capitalism played a significant role in uniting diverse individuals under the banner of a common identity, fueling the growth of nationalist sentiment. By examining Anderson's perspectives, this article intends to refer to the ideological and discursive dimensions of national consciousness. Furthermore, this analysis provides insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with national consciousness in the contemporary global context, offering potential avenues for further research and analysis.

1. Introduction

National consciousness signifies a collective sense of national identity and a common feeling that people belong to a specific cultural and racial group and also speak the same language. National consciousness is in fact very important in establishment of a nation. According to Tevzadze (1994), "a nation is a natural society which comprises the unity of territory, origin, traditions, language and self-consciousness. That was the first doctrine of nation" (p. 437).

Oppong (2019) has also declared that national consciousness indorses national union, maintainable progress, amity, admiration of multiplicity and devotion. Unquestionably, most of the factors which were mentioned are attained through the exploration of national history (p. 1). The concept of national consciousness has its roots in the mid-nineteenth century, and some scholars like Mancini claimed that it was a feeling which inspired internal and external national accomplishments.

According to Oppong (2019), the national consciousness of the traditional communities of Europe who lacked their own nation-state, was initially concerned with the features of language and culture, their ancestral origins, awell as their historical roles in relation to other ethnic groups, and led to the establishment of the nation-states of the19th and 20th centuries (p. 3).

National consciousness has been one of the most significant themes in postcolonial literature. In other words, nationalism as remarked by Richards (2005) plays a crucial role in the process of identity creation in postcolonial literary works (p. 20).

However, Abuawad (2015) has stated that the association between literature and nationalism is unquestionably a tricky issue for literary criticism, since as a socio-political incident that has been

established from a kind of intercession between originality and attachment, national consciousness is definitely easier to scrutinize from a social angle than from a literary persepective (p. 1). In some other page of the book, he has discussed the relationship between the narrative and national consciousness,

> Narrative also has the more concrete function of providing a model for the embodiment of individual and nation, an embodiment that any nationalism must naturalize in order to become established and perpetually disseminate in order to overcome the test of time. (p. 25)

2. Review of Literature Related to National Consciousness

"Pitfalls of National Consciousness" (2017) is a psychological investigation of colonial subjugation in which Fanon mixed psychological with class exploration (pp. 36-40). As another significant study, *National Consciousness and Literary Cosmopolitics: Postcolonial Literature in a Global Moment* (2013) by Gui states that postcolonial literature which has been written within an outline of globalization takes nationalism seriously. In fact, writers and texts that are mostly viewed as cosmopolitan, diasporic, or drifting actually contest globalization's inclination to treat countries as unconditional and uniform sociocultural units.

Imagined Communities (1983) is an important study in this realm. In this book, Benedict Anderson referred to the nations as imagined. According to Anderson, a nation is socially created, and it consists of people who think of themselves as part of a community. Anderson referred to nations as "imagined communities" because he believed that nations, or imagined communities, were encircled. Anderson alleged that the nation functions through exclusion. However, nations discount not only those who are outside of it but also their affiliates who are not directly measured in the communal idea of their national perception.

Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) is another important book in which he has discussed the difference between the nation and state through referring to the fact how, in the modern imagination, the concept of nationality is completely essential to the individual. He has stated that an individual who does not have a nationality is practically unconceivable:

> A man without a nation defies the recognized categories and provokes revulsion…a man must have a nationality as he must

> have a nose and two ears; a deficiency in any of these particulars is not inconceivable and does from time to time occur, but only as a result of some disaster, and it is itself a disaster of a kind. All this seems obvious, though, alas, it is not true. But that it should come to *seem* so very obviously true is indeed an aspect, or perhaps the very core, of the problem of nationalism. Having a nation is not an inherent attribute of humanity, but it has now come to appear as such. (p. 6)

Also, Anthony Giddens (1990) has referred to the tie between "empty time" and "empty space" which develops only in modernity, and results into "conditions under which time and space are organized so as to connect presence and absence" (p. 14). This issue makes the feeling of imaginary attachment or national consciousness possible. Giddens has referred to this process as "disembedding," which he has defined in *Modernity and Self-Identity* (1991) as "the lifting out of social relationships from local contexts and their recombination across indefinite time/space distances" (p. 242).

Jenson's *The Roots of Nationalism: National Identity Formation in Early Modern Europe, 1600-1815* (2016) is another pivotal source which has shared the viewpoints of different scholars from diverse fields. By discussing their outlooks regarding the matter of national individuality development in numerous European settings between 1600 and 1815, the current book refers to the challenges concerning the opposition between modernists and traditionalists in nationalism debates.

Other related studies include Colley's "Whose Nation? Class and National Consciousness in Britain 1750-1830" (1986), Anderson's "The Nation and the Origins of National Consciousness" (2010), and "National Consciousness and the Specificity of (post) colonial Intellectualism" (1994) by Lazarus.

3. A Short Review of O'Gorman Anderson's Viewpoints

As a famous theoretician in this regard, Benedict Richard O'Gorman Anderson (1936–2015) was a well-known political scientist and historian. He was of both Irish and Anglo-Irish origin with a family who played a considerable role in Irish nationalist movements. His grandfather used to be a loyal senior officer of the British Empire while his grandmother, on the other hand, belonged to the Gaelic MacGorman clan, the famous active clan that strongly supported Irish nationalist movements for centuries.

His father, James Carew O'Gorman Anderson, after failing to pass the entrance examination of Cambridge, moved to the Republic of China and found a position in the Chinese Maritime Customs (Zhang, 2016, p. 153). Concerning the reason why Benedict Anderson decided to study nationalism, Wollman and Spencer (2007) stated that it was the Irish part of his descent that left the utmost effect on Anderson. His outlook to England is at best abstruse, sometimes bordering on aversion (pp. 2-3).

Anderson owes most of his reputation for writing *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) which revolves around the roots of nationalism. According to McCleery and Brabon (2007), 1983 has been regarded as a remarkable year due to providing the critics with a contemporary revision of nationalism. In fact, three works were published in 1983 that have had noteworthy influence all over the world. The first was *Nations and Nationalism* by Ernest Gellner; the second was *The Invention of Tradition* as a gathering of essays co-edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger; and finally the third was Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. Wollman and Spencer (2007) have stated that,

> Anderson's *Imagined Communities* has, however, been perhaps the most influential of these three works, providing a whole set of new directions for the study of nationalism. This was in some ways quite surprising. Unlike Gellner's work at least, it seemed to come out of the blue; the work of a scholar who had not previously contributed to general political or cultural theory or to the field of nationalism. (p. 1)

In an interview, Benedict's brother Perry talked about the family history and conditions, "It was a very cosmopolitan household; I suppose that would be the decisive thing. After the American experience, the family went back to Ireland, and then I was sent to school in England. And then, you know, we were sent abroad. So from a very early age, I got a sense of the importance of other cultures and other nations" (Wollman & Spencer, 2007, p. 2). Anderson looked completely conscious of the impact of this background. He importantly referred to his experiences as a foreigner as a "series of estrangements" and even as "various exiles":

> As I look back at it now it seems an odd book to be written by someone born in China, raised in three countries, speaking with an obsolete English accent, carrying an Irish passport, living in America, and devoted to Southeast Asia. Yet perhaps it could only be written from various exiles, and with divided loyalties. (Wollman & Spencer, 2007, p. 2)

Nation for Anderson represents an "imagined political community that is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (*Anderson, 1983, p. 7*). The nation is in fact imagined as "members . . . will never know most of their fellow members . . . yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (*Anderson, 1983*, p. 6). In this book, Anderson studied the way through which nationalism resulted into the formation of nations or imagined communities.

In this study, Anderson has hypothesized the circumstances that brought about the growth of nationalism in the 18th and 19th centuries, and as mentioned before, he superbly referred to the nation as an "imagined community." According to Anderson (1983), nationalism which was established in the 18th and 19th centuries first started in the United States, Brazil, and the previous Spanish colonies before most of Europe. The expansion of nationalism was instigated by the union of capitalism and print media (p. 35). An important point in the rise of national consciousness, according to Anderson, is that,

> The revolutionary vernacularizing thrust of capitalism was given further impetus by three extraneous factors, two of which contributed directly to the rise of national consciousness. The first, and ultimately the least important, was a change in the character of Latin itself. Second was the impact of the Reformation, which, at the same time, owed much of its success to print-capitalism. (Anderson, 1983, p. 39)

These print-languages are the foundations for national consciousnesses in three discrete ways. The first and most important way is that they shaped united arenas of altercation and communiqué below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars. Second, print-capitalism attributed a fresh fixity to language, which has resulted into forming antiquity so dominant to the idiosyncratic impression of the nation. Third, print-capitalism has formed languages-of-power of a type other than the older governmental vernaculars (Anderson, 1983, pp. 44-45).

Anderson (1983) has also stated that the progress of "mass vernacular newspapers" has been the foundation of the nation since their audiences could envisage partaking a cooperative knowledge of the news, regardless of their geographic

distance from each other and of societal classes (p. 44). Anderson's work also emphasizes the status of creole innovators like Benjamin Franklin and Simón Bolívar as major people who guided a number of movements of national freedom.

Anderson considers nationalism as a dominant issue in the formation and evolution of the state. Anderson (1983) has declared that "Nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which—as well as against which—it came into being" (p. 12). What has distinguished this scholar from many other theorists of nationalism is that Anderson has differentiated nationalism from racism because of its potential to tie people belonging to different classes and lead them to sacrifice themselves for this union. However, Anderson's viewpoints regarding the issue of nationalism has been the subject of criticism by some postcolonial thinkers.

Anderson is often assumed as one of the modernist writers on nationalism, because he is like all modernists who believe that nations are fundamentally modern structures, and that nationalism is a basically modern occurrence. Anderson's arguments concerning the relationship between religion and nationalism are also regarded as some of the most central parts in his theory. Nationalism, according to Anderson, has to be considered as a substitute to religion, since it is nationalism that provides the answers to such big questions as: Why are we here? How did we come to be here? Where is it all going?

4. A Short Review of Frantz Fanon's Lookouts

Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) is another substantial scholar of postcolonial studies whose viewpoints regarding national consciousness are of high significance in this realm. As stated by Sajed and Seidel (2019), there is a difference between nationalism as disinfected formalism and national consciousness as a cooperative ownership of the goals of anticolonial brawl (p. 583).

In her article as "National Liberation, Consciousness, Freedom and Frantz Fanon" (1992), Caludia Wright has mainly focused on such important features of Fanon's philosophy as self-consciousness and the freedom of the individual through the national liberty struggle, national consciousness and the national liberation struggle in association with social uprising, and the freedom and formation of the country in the procedure of decolonization. In fact, Wright has declared that all three of these aspects of his attitude are fundamentally connected to his dissertation on decolonization, nationalism, and the problem of independence (p. 427).

According to Fanon, the colonized person is not a self-conscious person, but a confused one, who is estranged from himself or herself. The basis of this estrangement is in to some extent as the result of the cultural influence of colonization and the reception of or embracing the colonizer's ethos. Moreover, Fanon has remarked that national consciousness is closely associated with the issue of national liberty which will ultimately lead to the freedom of one's self who is free of the made-up consciousness of colonialism. This individual is actually the result of the ferocious revolutionary nationwide liberation struggle. The creation of national consciousness and a self-governing country is in fact a direct reply to the colonizers' control (Murphy, 2003, p. 125).

As stated by Green-Simms (2011, pp. 203-223), despite the belief of lots of postcolonial philosophers that "the nation-state is on its last legs", the likelihood of national consciousness, as Fanon referred to them, have not utterly given way to the imagined drawbacks. For Fanon (2007), "The national government, if it wants to be national, ought to govern by the people and for the people, for the outcasts and by the outcasts" (p. 205). Therefore, Fanon has described a sort of national consciousness that can be accurately national, and henceforth, "oppositional" only by fulfilling the benefits of those who have been "cast aside by the national bourgeoisie" (Green-Simms, 2011, p. 203). The national bourgeoisie refers to the previously colonized selected members and it is formed when colonialism is ousted. It means that the colonized people who were the most influential under colonialism take the control from the colonial government once it is conquered.

Freedom and consciousness form the major themes of Fanon's work. Associated with the link between politics and psychology, Fanon declared that decolonization will free the colonized from manipulation. Furthermore, his mind will be liberated. A significant theme in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) is the different systems of consciousness, or self-awareness which is the result of freedom and individuality. Fanon has also referred to a national consciousness, or an awareness of oneself as fitting into an independent and autonomous nation. When colonized, Africans are deprived of belonging to a nation, since they are under the authority of European power. But in decolonization, Africans are allowed to think of themselves as being in charge of their life. The liberation of their land from colonial authority is also a liberation of their thoughts from obedience and suppression.

The Wretched of the Earth (1961) is one of the most important books by Fanon in which he has criticized the subject of nationalism. In fact, through reviews of nationalism, Fanon has discussed the personal

and social psychological health, and the way using language is practiced in order to develop imperialist distinctiveness. This book also contains an essay as "On National Culture". In this essay, Fanon has written about how a national culture will arise amid the previously and still-colonized countries of Africa. Fanon has declared that a national culture should be formed based on the material confrontation of people against colonial control.

In the concluding parts of the essay, Fanon (2007) has remarked that establishing a national culture is not a goal in itself, but a "stage" to a larger international solidarity. The fight for national culture makes a break from the lower position that was forced on the nation by colonization, which in turn results into a national consciousness. He has stated that this national consciousness which is the result of the struggle commenced by the people, embodies the uppermost system of national culture (p. 2). In one of this book's chapters entitled as "The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness", Fanon has sustained his historical advancement through the anticolonial contest.

5. Conclusion

The present study is an attempt to examine the notion of national consciousness based on Frantz Fanon's and O'Gorman Anderson's lookouts. It was stated that national consciousness is of high significance in socio-economic and political progresses in lots of nations. Generally, national consciousness indorses national harmony, maintainable growth, amity, admiration of variety, and nationalism. Moreover, according to both Fanon and Anderson, national consciousness signifies a communal sense of national identity and a collective realization that a specific group of people has the same ethnic/linguistic/cultural circumstances. Archaeologically, in order for a nation to be established, an increase in national consciousness is essential.

6. References

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