

Dear Rozita,

Here is my contribution, structured as open mail to you.

After reading your “position paper” – “Reading Bruebaker through Ivy (and vice versa)”, I am not quite sure what should be the purpose of our short reviews.

You are suggesting that Ivy’s self-conscious rhetorical attempt is a successful way to transcend the reification of nations “by coining fluid analytical tools (e.g. loss, phantasm, imaginary, the mirror phase...) that take her beyond binaries and reification.”

I tried to “google” your expression “fluid analytical tools”, but the outcome was “No results found for “fluid analytical tools”” (?!).

What kind of “analytical tools” are the concepts of “loss”, “phantasm”, and “the mirror phase” in the discursive analysis of ‘nations’ remained a mystery to me after reading Ivy’s introduction as well as after reading your review.

Finally, your conclusion is that “Only by identifying complex theoretical conjunctions and relying on them not only as content of analysis but also as a form of analysis that shapes the language, one could attempt to resist the challenge of reification”.

Certainly, your vocabulary does not represent “the lack of sophisticated theoretical reflection” but “high-power post-modern theory”.

However, I was educated to follow the Wittgenstein’s slogan “What can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence”.

Another Wittgenstein’s ‘language game’ could be very inspiring in the analysis of discourses which are trying to go “deeper and deeper into the concept” of ‘nation’:

"...we search for formulas which are to enunciate the innermost essence of concepts. One asks, 'What are space and time? What is their essence?' One complains that psychology has not yet unearthed the secret of consciousness. One specifies as the ultimate goal of logic the fathoming of the essence of truth. And so on... A substantive [noun] misleads us into looking for a substance."

I hope that 'coining fluid analytical tools' is not the only way "to resist the challenge of reification" of nations. Instead of coupling suspicious Marxism and ambiguous psychoanalysis, I am just following the simple Wittgensteinian advice: Do not look for a substance of "nation" when you are analyzing 'language games' in which the substantive 'nation' is used. This Wittgensteinian advice could be recommended to all scholars who are so inattentive to fall into trap of reification of 'nation'.

Best regards,

Zarko