

Definitions of nation, ethnic group, race, etc.: How can we classify human beings?

Multi-Ethnic Society (Apr. 24, 2014)

Some Examples

- @ Minority groups in Japan (such as Ainu, Okinawan, Korean, etc.) are categorized as ethnic groups, nations, or anything else? How about the majority?
- * We use “Japanese-American”, “Japanese-Brazilian” but how about “American-Japanese”, “Brazilian-Japanese”?
- @ Native Americans: are they called “tribes” while other minorities are not?
- How are other races/ethnic groups categorized?

Considering Various Concepts by Comparison

国民／民族(種族)／部族／... = nation／
ethnic group／tribe... ?

- nation・race → in Japanese? (Shiokawa 2008:9)
- Minzoku(民族) → in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Thai, etc.
- Translation problem, yes, but...

Example of Comparison

- Race vs. Ethnicity (Brubaker 2009: 25-6)

Race	Ethnicity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involuntary• External categorization• Differences of phenotype or nature• Rigid• Involve super- and subordinate• Process of exclusion• European colonial encounter with non-European	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voluntary• Internal self-identification• Differences of culture • Flexible• Coordinate groups • Process of inclusion• History of nation-state formation

Criteria of Classification?

- Population size
- Language, culture, lineage, etc.
- Degree of “evolution / development”
- Physical traits/ appearance (visibility) = race?

Space, Time, Context of Terms

- Developed and developing countries : ethnic group and tribe
- Pre-modern and modern times : ethnic and ethnic group
- Political, academic and/or everyday words
- Proper and/or common nouns

Who Can Classify Whom?

- Objectivity vs. subjectivity
 - Essentialism vs. constructionism
 - Macro and micro levels
- @Nation, indigenous people(s) as status of
raison-d'etre

Nation-State, Nationalism, Ethnic Group

@Nation-state

- “A sovereign state of which most of the citizens or subjects are united also by factors which define a nation, such as language or common descent” (Oxford dictionaries)(but Encyclopedia Britannica provides more complicated descriptions)
- 「国家への忠誠心を共通のアイデンティティとしている民(民族nation)を国民としてもつ領域的国家」(石川一雄in『世界民族問題事典』)

→Idea of self-determination

@Nationalism

- “Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.”
(Gellner 1983)
- Why should it be congruent?

@Ethnic Group

- “a social group or category of the population that, in a larger society, is set apart and bound together by common ties of race, language, nationality, or culture.” (Encyclopedia Britannica)

References

- Brubaker, Rogers, 2009, “Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 35
- Gellner, Ernest, 1983, *Nation and Nationalism*, Blackwell
- Shiokawa, Nobuaki (塩川伸明), 2008, 『民族とネイション』岩波書店

【Email assignment】 (by Apr. 30)

How do you differentiate the concepts such as nation, ethnic group, tribe, race, etc.?

【Preparation】

What can be effective and necessary for national symbols? I would like to connect the assigned article with Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities", though Anderson is not directly mentioned in the article.