

Nationalism vs patriotism essay sample



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Nationalism and patriotism both show the relationship of an individual towards his or her nation. The two are often confused and frequently believed to mean the same thing. However, there is a vast difference between nationalism and patriotism. Nationalism means to give more importance to unity by way of a cultural background, including language and heritage. Patriotism pertains to the love for a nation, with more emphasis on values and beliefs. When talking about nationalism and patriotism, one cannot avoid the famous quotation by George Orwell, who said that nationalism is ‘the worst enemy of peace’. According to him, nationalism is a feeling that one’s country is superior to another in all respects, while patriotism is merely a feeling of admiration for a way of life.

These concepts show that patriotism is passive by nature and nationalism can be a little aggressive. Patriotism is based on affection and nationalism is rooted in rivalry and resentment. One can say that nationalism is militant by nature and patriotism is based on peace. Most nationalists assume that their country is better than any other, whereas patriots believe that their country is one of the best and can be improved in many ways. Patriots tend to believe in friendly relations with other countries while some nationalists don’t. In patriotism, people all over the world are considered equal but nationalism implies that only the people belonging to one’s own country should be considered one’s equal.

A patriotic person tends to tolerate criticism and tries to learn something new from it, but a nationalist cannot tolerate any criticism and considers it an insult. Nationalism makes one to think only of one’s country’s virtues and not its deficiencies. Nationalism can also make one contemptuous of the

virtues of other nations. Patriotism, on the other hand, pertains to value responsibilities rather than just valuing loyalty towards one's own country. Nationalism makes one try to find justification for mistakes made in the past, while patriotism enables people to understand both the shortcomings and improvements made. Summary:

Patriot: Expresses the emotion of love towards his country in a passive way

Nationalist: Strives for independence and the interests and domination of a nation and expresses his love or concern for the country in an active political way.