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Sep 09, 2022 by [Nicholas J. Cull](#), [Simon Anholt](#)

People, Places, Power | Season 2, Episode 42: All About Me? National Images and Personal Identity ^[1]

Note from the CPD Blog Manager: This post features the podcast *People, Places, Power* co-hosted by CPD Faculty Fellow [Nicholas J. Cull](#) and Good Country Index founder [Simon Anholt](#) and features their weekly discussions on international reputation, foreign policy and related issues along the way.

Season 2 launched in May 2022 and covers nation-ranking indices, the impact of COVID-19 on national images, branding indices, transnational issues and much more.

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Episode 42: All About Me? National Images and Personal Identity

This episode probes the connection between personal identity and national image, considering Simon's past contention that national image is an extension of the sense of self. Nick agrees and suggests that the connection helps to explain why people feel so strongly about slights to a nation's standing or evidence that a government has allowed prestige to slip. The conversation moves on to consider the ways in which images of other countries became part of self-identity, including ancestral enemies, countries that are historically connected and countries whose culture merges with expressions of generational identity. Simon points to the phenomenon of reciprocal liking in national image and how countries like France and Germany each understand that the other admires them. He seldom finds examples of unrequited love. The discussion moves on to consider examples of one nation's symbols becoming fashion statements abroad. Nick and Simon then turn to issues of exclusion and minorities. Nick points out that excluded people sometimes only experience their national identity fully when overseas. They note the integration of identity-based politics into international image: Britain, the U.S., the Nordics and so forth making their concern of LGBTQ rights a major part of their foreign policy, while Russia makes its hostility to such rights a part of its brand. The conversation ends with the question of whether it is wise to identify a country with principles that are not universally held by its citizens.