

# Theories and Practices of Nationalism Term Paper

Will nationalism survive globalisation? Or will globalisation, in its current information technology mediated version, lead to the fading away of nationalism and nation-states?

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## Abstract

Something something summary of paper

## Introduction

- There is an interesting dichotomy between the “globalisation is dead” messages and the “globalised society is the future” crowd. Which is the case?
- We are more specifically looking to see if and how it would impact the existence of Nationalism and the nation-state.
- For understanding globalisation we rely heavily on [Scholte \(2005\)](#), and we compare it against the various theories taught in class. Special emphasis will be given to the theory of the minimal self-reproducing unit required to sustain a community, introduced by [Gellner \(1983\)](#)<sup>1</sup>

## Globalisation is not dead; What even is it?

- To make a case, we need to know what globalisation is in the first place.

## What globalisation is not

- Searching for Globalisation, we are met with a flood of articles announcing that it is dead – most, from the financial fields. Hence you have [Saval \(2017\)](#) writing on the “fall” of Globalisation due to (then) recently elected world-leaders opting for “nation first” approaches, or Michael O’ Sullivan calling for a “new [multipolar] world order” ([2019](#)).
- These operate under an understanding of “globalisation” as a synonym for “internationalisation.” Such a definition is not beneficial to begin with<sup>2</sup> due to the redundancy. It also reduces globalisation to the limits of internationalisation, which by definition conceives the idea of nations as the primary political unit.
- Another common thread is to align it with liberalisation – removing official border constraints on international trade and the like – making globalisation about the spread of contemporary neoliberal macroeconomic policies.<sup>3</sup> The usual arguments about invalidity due to reduction apply, but this is important because as a policy implementation of ‘globalisation’ for a majority of corporations and many countries, it is common to assume *neoliberalist globalisation* to be the

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<sup>1</sup>More specifically, Gellner specified the need for a community to sustain an independent educational system if it hoped to sustain itself in modern society (see [Gellner 1983, 32](#)). We will explore this later.

<sup>2</sup>See ([Scholte 2005, 52–54](#)), on how definitions should try to “advance knowledge,” and why the new word should not be expressible as a synonym for another existing concept.

<sup>3</sup>([Scholte 2005, 56](#)). As the book says, “large-scale globalization and widespread economic liberalization have frequently transpired concurrently in the past quarter-century ... it is quite something else to conflate the two concepts, so that globalization and liberalization become the same thing.”

only one available, and thus (the authors comment that) most opponents to to ‘globalisation’ are often just opposed to *neoliberalist globalisation*.

- Globalisation as Universalisation, and globalisation as Westernisation are the following two TODO write later

## Globalisation as a shift in social space

- For definition, we primarily use the proposal put forth by [Scholte \(2005\)](#) - globalisation as a shift in the social space, expressed through the spread of transplanetary and supraterritorial connections between people.
- Spatiality: operating now on Planet Earth, and not as a nation, or a village, or a community. This is a bold claim, and we’re trying to justify why we claim that the social space has in fact shifted so much
- Transplanetary relations: by no means new, but definitely higher numbers due to cheap air travel. More social relations, more economics, more diseases, etc. Which is great, but it doesn’t take us all the way there to a “shift” as described previously. Which is where supraterritoriality comes in.
- This is where communication comes in big: also the telephone, but especially the internet. Supraterritorial:

As the word suggests, ‘supraterritorial’ relations are social connections that substantially transcend territorial geography. They are relatively delinked from territory, that is, spatial domains that are mapped on the land surface of the earth, plus any adjoining waters and air spheres.

Fast worldwide travel. Shared currencies, and exchange rates. Ecological changes affecting everyone. Global sports events. Events in Wuhan changing planetary history. Imagination of a common ‘humanity’ that gets emphasised whenever even private agencies like SpaceX send people to the ISS.

- Essentially: globalisation is a paradigm shift in many ways. Will it stand the test against nationalism?

## Why do people herald the death of the nation-state?

- Given this rudimentary understanding of globalisation, we are yet to examine exactly why it has been heralded as the successor to the ideology of nationalism. We look at that now.
- For some context, we should be aware that the bulk of the work surveyed was in the 90s/early 2000s, in the heyday of global optimism.
- The conditions that allowed globalisation as a viable ideology – better communication and transport across vast distances – was a paradigm shift in how people perceived the world. One might imagine instantaneous communication akin to the printing press,<sup>4</sup> a revolution in communication – the way the latter was the herald of print capitalism. And not just telephonic or internet network-based communications: broadcast radio and television, global brands in peoples’ day-to-day lives, and the ability to travel the world in under a day all brought about an awareness of ‘global consciousness’ to the masses, something that was a hundred years ago “generally limited to fleeting perceptions in limited elite circles.”<sup>5</sup> Globalisation – when not perceived as Interna-

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<sup>4</sup>It is true that telephonic conversation was a thing since the late nineteenth century, but as Scholte noted in his chapter “Globalization in History,” early phone and telegraph systems were slow, unreliable, and very expensive – as such, unavailable to a vast majority of even the ‘civilised’ world.

<sup>5</sup>(see [Scholte 2005, 116](#))

tionalisation – allowed people to imagine themselves as global citizens in a discourse dominated by nation, be a “man without his shadow” sans the ostracization.<sup>6</sup>

- A key factor where the internet plays a role is in its (somewhat) democratization of news flow.

## Outline

- Introduction
- Globalisation is not dead
  - Even though some economic arguments claim is
  - Define it, and give examples where you agree (5 definitions, cases against or for each in brief)
  - General agreement with the book, and mention how *this will all factor in*
  - Overall: summarise the book. 600 words.
- Why would people herald the death of the nation-state?
  - There’s the whole globalisation OP not-fad respatialization thing. Global village, Economic liberation, yada yada.
  - Globalisation != Internationalisation, does not necessitate nations.
  - The internet eased communication in unreal, unexpected fashion. Two-way communication. State seemingly does not control this dimension. Most arguments were from earlier.
  - Gellner did say Nationalism was a weak force, a well tended garden
  - Scholte says the State remains, but its character shifts. Possible over-appeasement (but perhaps not to democratic globalisation)?
  - Bemeyeh. Will get to responses to him later.
- Looking at history of nationalism, comparing against globalisation and viability:
  - Anderson’s Imagined Community: No other
  - Kohn’s Replacement for God: No cause
  - Gellner’s Nationalism came first (so I don’t forget: in Gellner’s chicken and egg problem, the egg came first)
  - Hobsbawm’s Invented Tradition: Maybe but how?
  - (Maybe) De-universalisation of literate high culture (in new shape)?
  - (Maybe) Alike to the “Colonial Indian Elite?” Football idea.
- How information-mediation may actually help nationalism:
  - Already exists a long-distance nationalism (Anderson)
  - Becomes worse with the internet (Eriksen, Conversi)
- Also other theories, that I cannot back as strongly, leaning towards...
  - Not viable due to violation of Gellner’s nationalist sentiment in global economy, and also the other way with global social respatialization
  - Nations as emotional conduits to rouse support for state governance
  - Most people do not move, and Facebook is a social bubble. Weak, but in need of a Gandhian figure.
  - What is key is control over devices of reproduction: schooling and mass communication. The government controls, but corporations...
  - Pobodnik mentions that capital has not managed to reacquire autonomy from political regulation, but especially with tech sector being new ground, lots of gaps showing up in the national framework (methodological territorialism from Scholte). The new East India Company.
  - Globalisation would require policy implementation, but those in charge of education either favour national interests (government) or neoliberal interests (corporations). No framework

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<sup>6</sup>(Gellner 1983, 6) spoke of how it is near-impossible for someone to imagine themselves nation-less: statelessness is still imaginable, if not viable, but to be without a nation would be like a man without a shadow (his interpretation of a book by Chamisso, a French immigrant in Germany).

- for reproduction.
- Statelessness as an example, unable to continue without a framework of reproduction and trampled effectively by the advent of communication and fast, convenient travel.

## References

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