

# The Point of No Return? *Protecting Liberty from Globalism and Nationalism*



**Elliot Zalewski**

The College at Brockport, State University of New York

*Keywords: International Relations, Politics, Military, Economics, Globalism, Nationalism*

## **Abstract**

The world's borders are rapidly fading away from significance. Consequently, previously independent nations are being forced into the same shrinking economic and political arena. Isolationism is a thing of the past, and no nation can escape the gravitational pull of the global governance community, particularly in reference to international organizations such as the UN and EU. Hence, allied nations are voluntarily relinquishing their sovereignty in exchange for a place in the seemingly beneficial conglomerate entities, while nations who are adversaries cannot avoid interactions, rising tensions, and the threat of military intervention. In response, some groups particularly proud of their heritage are responding with strong, sometimes hostile sentiments of nationalism to represent their willingness to revert to independence. Nationalist ideals can be just as dangerous and have shown to provide the appropriate conditions for genocide under 20th Century circumstances similar to today's climate. Therefore, in a free society, both globalism and nationalism directly undermine individual liberty, and the answer to navigating the unstable global future is far more complicated than this dichotomy of conflicting ideals would have one believe.

## The Dawn of a Global Society

For multiple decades now, the term “globalization” has been subject to particular public inquiry not just in sociological circles but on all levels of public discourse. Regardless of who we are and where we live, all of us frequently come in contact with globalizing forces in some capacity ever since the concept emerged into popular vernacular in the 1990s.<sup>1</sup> This is, of course, barring the most remote corners of the un-industrialized world, although even these tribal communities are beginning to find difficult the task of preserving their old traditions and keeping unwanted ideas outside at the door. Historically, the separate nations of the world have been in some form of contact with each other for millennia. However, the level of influence between them, and hence, acceleration of change experienced in the last century is beyond unprecedented. The world is shrinking much faster than we can begin to measure it and we are scrambling to understand our new global community as it continually asserts itself as the permanent solution to international affairs. The unfamiliar territory globalization has guided us into has ushered in the newest ideological discourse and the scope of its implications are still unknown. Globalism, a philosophy that endorses the advance of globalizing forces, poses a unique threat to the sovereignty of nations and their constituents as they are understood today. Conversely, nationalism (which has always existed in various forms) has once again taken root as a reactionary opposition to the rapidly changing world, particularly among groups who fail to understand the necessary changes to ensure mankind’s survival as we enter a period of relative uncertainty. Recent history has shown that both of these doctrines, at extreme positions, can pose fundamental threats to the natural liberties of states and individuals, and thus must be rejected.

Because the idea of the world’s nation-states being drawn closer together than ever before is such a relatively new concept, the debate as to how potentially beneficial or detrimental this process could turn out to be is still fairly uncertain. There is sufficient evidence to suggest a wide range of

---

<sup>1</sup>Steger, M. B. (2017). *Globalization: A very short introduction*. Oxford, UK. Oxford University Press.

unfamiliar yet predictable economic, social, and ethical challenges that have emerged since globalization was made possible, but countless people have also benefitted in similar ways. However, if there is one thing that globalists and even their most polarized opponents can agree on, it is that this trend towards a permanently interdependent worldwide community is quickly becoming evident as irreversible. Although many people, particularly in the developed West may be unaware of certain elements of globalization, its effects are everywhere, to the point where some have come to accept it as reality without giving it the necessary conscious thought. Very few Americans take the time to analyze why their shirt is made in Mexico while they drive a Japanese car, talking on a cell phone manufactured in China, listening to British music as they take a step into a McDonald's during their travels to one of the 101 countries who currently operate at least one.<sup>2</sup> Globalization has indeed benefited society in ways never thought possible for millennia. No one centuries ago could have imagined the possibility to travel anywhere in the world within hours, and communicate with nearly anyone, anywhere, instantaneously. The process has built unimaginable bridges, contributed to prosperous multiculturalism in many areas, and facilitated strong economic ties between regions, which has made more resources and goods accessible than ever before. Diplomatically, the nations of the world are now able to convene and discuss challenges that face the collective, rather than resort immediately to war. Globalization can bring out the best of humanity, if kept in moderation. However, some events seem too good to be true, and globalizing is not met without serious consequences.

### **Globalism: A Product of our Times**

Before further proceeding into the implications of globalization, it is critical to acknowledge that it is merely an apolitical, unbiased process which in many aspects occurs naturally and seamlessly without direct action or influence from any particular entity or individual. It is not to be confused with the newer and more controversial concept of globalism, which is the ideological doctrine

---

<sup>2</sup> Rosenberg, M. (2019). How many McDonald's restaurants operate worldwide. Retrieved on 2/24/19 from <https://www.thoughtco.com/number-of-mcdonalds-restaurants-worldwide-1435174>

that often arises as a sentiment of approval from proponents of globalization who endorse and benefit from the process. This network of values prioritizes further worldwide interconnection, regardless of the consequences to the autonomy of the individual state, or the populations who comprise it. Globalism can very effectively be synonymized to a macro-level interpretation of collectivism, placing the agendas of the group as a whole as a society's primary ambitions.

Advocates of globalism tend to be in favor of diminishing the authority of international borders, and the ability of nations to maintain them, to further facilitate uninhibited global political, economic, and cultural interactions. Although the outcomes of this ideology often occur out of public view, certain public figures of particular sociopolitical orientations make a living off promoting it. Outspoken globalists tend to align with the wealthy, leftist demographic, as globalism can often achieve many neoliberal policies, such as reducing the barriers between opposing cultures and economic integration of underdeveloped nations (although further inquiry will establish that the latter policy is often more exploitative than benevolent). The prominent international financial investor, George Soros, has published several books defending the implications of globalism, particularly referencing economic aspects of it.<sup>3</sup> Overall, globalization is a series of actions that draws the world closer together in nearly every facet. Globalism aims to pursue further homogenization of global economies and cultures through minimizing the means by which nations have traditionally distinguished themselves; namely unique currencies, border policies, languages, among other factors.

The world's economies are seamlessly intertwining into a single unified and well-organized system, concurrent with lengthy debates as to whether the advantage to the Western industrialized world is worth the exploitation of factory workers in developing nations, or if said workers are actually exploited at all. Economies of sovereign nations are becoming subservient to those of the international community. Although this is happening willingly, in most cases, the decisions to participate in the global economy are at the hands of the

---

<sup>3</sup> Soros, G. (2005). *George Soros on Globalization*.

individual country's political elite, leaving local businesses and governments voiceless. Many nations have benefitted from the apparent stability of systems such as the Eurozone, but as was witnessed in Greece during their monumental financial crisis during the last recession, subordinating individual economic interests to the global agenda can indeed have catastrophic consequences, under all the appropriate conditions.<sup>4</sup> Combining national economies severely complicates lending practices between nations, typically by standardizing interest rates, rendering interest obsolete as form of leverage or stimulation. Consequentially, where national debt was once a localized problem, its impact rapidly spreads to all locations that share a universal currency. The anomaly that occurred in Greece over the last decade indicates the problems with financial instability and insecurity that we run the risk of undertaking when we voluntarily participate in a globalizing economy.

Political alliances and rivalries are arguably now stronger and more deeply entrenched than any peacetime ever before. The days of individual countries resolving internal disputes unaided by third parties are far in the rearview mirror. The international community of global governance, namely the United Nations (UN) and other like organizations, are now the primary arbitrators almost any time that quarrels between nations emerge. Many innocent people have learned the consequences of intensifying what used to be localized disturbances into issues of global concern, oftentimes unjustifiably. Often, as has been the case throughout history, these conflicts are resolved with military intervention, but the landscape of war is evolving, yet descending into universal uncertainty. We are entering an era where most forms of international military strategy have, for the most part, been refocused to specialize in counterinsurgency operations, as a response to scope of the global Iraq and Afghanistan interventions that are now knocking on the door of two decades. However, political tensions between the world's most powerful nations, namely the United States and their "4+1" adversaries (Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and semi-affiliated nongovernmental extremist entities), all with conflicting

---

<sup>4</sup> Öztürk, S. (2015). Effects of global financial crisis on Greek economy: causes of present economic and political loss of prestige. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, Volume 3 (6). pp. 26-29.

interests and ideologies, are on the rise, bordering closely on what people experienced during the fifty years of the Cold War. Today, however, it is unlikely we could predict the face of war, and the threat thereof, anywhere close to fifty years out. As a matter of fact, strategists are finding it quite difficult to anticipate the dynamic even four years ahead.<sup>5</sup> As the threat for a conventional war rises, international ties attributed to increased contact between countries amplifies the potential consequences, which may produce a worst-case scenario that we cannot possibly prepare for. Yet even without the unsettling scenario of a third World War, the new form of proxy conflicts, which all major world powers are now competing for influence within, are producing second and third order effects, no longer simply limited to the confines of the host nation, but expanding to the point of legitimate worldwide concern.

A significant disturbance in the balance of global relations is the mass exodus of refugees and other forms of migrants, largely attributed to prolonged warfare, a trend that unsurprisingly is most common in the Middle East, so far this century. Whether we agree on the cause or not, international migration is at an all-time high, and is growing beyond regular patterns of intra-regional travel.<sup>6</sup> Rather, unprecedented rates of migrants are traversing continents in massive swaths, leaving their destination countries, quite often the industrialized West and particularly Europe, thanks to its geographical proximity to the Arab world, struggling to find solutions to their uninvited influx of population. People are most frequently forced out of their homes and countries due to the aforementioned military conflicts, usually aggravated by globalist interests, and elect to relocate to the industrialized nations that in part are responsible for their original displacement. By the millions, people are flooding into nations that refuse to want anything to do with them. Even if governments claim to welcome them with open arms, the general public, namely in Eastern Europe is sometimes coming to see things quite differently.<sup>7</sup> Borders are rapidly

---

<sup>5</sup> National military strategy of the United States of America (2015).

<sup>6</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019). Figures at a glance. Retrieved 2/24/19 from <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

<sup>7</sup> Cienski, J. (2017). Why Poland doesn't want refugees. Retrieved 2/24/19, from <https://www.politico.eu/article/politics-nationalism-and-religion-explain-why-poland-doesnt-want-refugees/>

disappearing, and some members of particularly proud heritages are fearing that culture is on the way out as well. As the world descends into what appears to be the largest melting-pot phenomenon humanity has ever seen, we enter an age of polarization with a fierce divide between those who are openly embracing our new, smaller world, and others who vehemently assert their sentiments of fear and resent about a global society, citing the threats to sovereignty and distinguishable heritages.

The latter group has loosely organized into a strong movement resisting globalizing forces in favor of the resurgence of, a notion that certainly deserves attention. The subject of the most scrutiny is the political element of globalization, which has led many nation-states to feel as though their national and individual autonomy is at severe risk, and rightfully so. Although most nations of the world can benefit from free market trade and increased cross-cultural interaction, global governance has become exceedingly powerful and has transcended its original role of only being called upon to resolve major international disputes when other options became unavailable. The UN's founders did intend for the possibility of military force to be used in extreme circumstances, hence the reason for establishment of the UN Security Council (UNSC). However, this special authority has been used routinely, and perhaps more than is desirable.

Globalism is inherently dangerous, but this risk is amplified when the process occurs separately in two distinct, rival corners of the world with incompatible interests and ambitions. The effects of an international alliance's member states too heavily depending on each other at the cost of their individual national autonomy is problematic enough, now add another alliance in which both are preparing for large-scale conventional conflict against one another. This is further complicated by the introduction of widespread extremist non-state actors, such as militant insurgency groups, which have arisen partly due to the normalcy of geographically isolated yet globally interested proxy conflicts such as the ongoing Civil War in Syria. The world is becoming more interconnected than ever before, but we are making the wrong decisions with regards to embracing the global community. As different groups are being

pushed closer together, ones that share interests in common are losing their status as individuals and sacrificing their independence for the sometimes-misguided agendas of the whole. Meanwhile, those groups with incompatible ideals are also being drawn closer by the uncontrollable forces of globalization, and all-out war is being prepared for instead of efforts at diplomatic compromise. This is a matter about finding the balance between allowing the world to become a monotonous and homogeneous society in which individual culture has been subordinated (the end state of the globalist agenda), and a divisive minefield in which each nation has retreated to their ethnocentric corners, prepared to fight to preserve their cultural and ethnic composition, and refusing to accommodate those who do not share their background (these are the ideals of those dogmatic individuals who give nationalism a poor reputation, discouraging meaningful discourse on the matter in the process). The aforementioned balance may prove to be strikingly difficult to achieve as the remainder of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century takes its course, as has already been observed to be the case. The next 100 years or so are set to be an ideological war between two equally problematic worldviews, and it is our responsibility to recognize this dangerous dichotomy and take action against it, before the effects of one, or both ideas, cause irreversible damage to society and the human condition.<sup>8</sup>

Extreme forms of globalism and nationalism directly undermine liberty. This refers to liberty at the individual level, all the way up to the freedoms of a seemingly autonomous and independent nation-state entity. By allowing the UN, EU, and like organizations of global governance to run their course, we are voluntarily relinquishing the natural rights of separate countries to make decisions that benefit them and their interests. Actively participating in said globalist systems prioritizes loyalty to the whole above sovereignty of the individual, and therefore imposes an unquantifiable sense of indebtedness to the whole, to which the member states comprising the entity are obligated to compensate for. In this way, we can equivocate units of worldwide governance and their consequences to a *globalist social welfare system*, breeding a culture of dependency and discouraging individual components from providing for themselves, but rather instilling a sense that they will be taken care of, regardless

---

<sup>8</sup> Martin, J. (2007). *The meaning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York, NY. Penguin Group.

of what contributions they are actually able to make. These criticisms of socialism are clearly well-documented, but so far are limited to economic circles alone, but these issues are becoming more pervasive in swaths of institutions embracing the ideals. For instance, consider the means by which the world's most powerful nations are deeply entangled in imbalanced military alliances. The United States has a military presence in approximately 150 supposedly sovereign nation-states worldwide, and many of these installations are permanent.<sup>9</sup> Although traditionally the US has attempted to maintain a noninterventionist foreign policy, a long series of international wars, particularly those in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, has contributed to America's permanent status as the global law enforcement entity. These conflicts, to include both World Wars, and the ideological struggles of the subsequent Cold War Era, occurred as a direct result of globalizing factors, therefore giving the US and its allies a reason to be concerned about the potential rise of communism in remote isolated Asian countries, because they knew it would likely spread, with Soviet-endorsed globalism serving as a catalyst. Decades later, with the Cold War over, the residual effects remain. Countries like South Korea, Japan, and more recently Iraq and Afghanistan are still relying on the US for a significant portion of their national defense, rather than developing their own self-sufficient military, costing America's defense budget billions of dollars.<sup>10</sup> This is problematic as the world's military networks are becoming more complicated and entangled, as was previously discussed. The United States, and nations like it, cannot afford economically or politically, to be this deeply involved in the affairs of other nations. Consider the age-old "give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day" proverb. In the event of a new large-scale conflict, nations that rely on the US for defense must teach themselves to fish.

Additionally, participation in a globalist system makes it significantly easier for the fundamental liberties of individual people to be suppressed, and unsurprisingly, they often are. This occurs in several ways, most of which are

---

<sup>9</sup> CNN: US military personnel by country. (2011, September 30). Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2012/04/us/table.military.troops/>

<sup>10</sup> Koo, S. (2017, November 07). Is South Korea's Alliance with the United States Worth It? Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/06/opinion/trump-south-korea-alliance.html>

out of view of the wealthier Western nations. First, consider a historical example, in the case of the Soviet Union, a state that can be asserted as among the first serious globalist entities. Lenin attempted (and failed) to invade Poland in 1920, and this was only the beginning of his ambitions. Eventually, under Stalin, the Soviets did conquer significant European and Asian territory outside of Russia's original borders, to fulfill Lenin's vision of a global communist utopia without borders.<sup>11</sup> As all the history books clearly demonstrate, anyone either inside or outside of the Bolsheviks' original jurisdiction who attempted any form of resistance were swiftly exterminated, all in efforts to homogenize the populations of diverse nations under a single ideology, fully aware of the necessity for dramatic state-sponsored terror to achieve such ends. Most estimates suggest the combined death toll from Lenin and Stalin's combined reigns eclipsed 60 million. Those that survived had their speech censored and naturally were disarmed by the state. Although this is an extreme case unlikely to occur in the coming decades, it is a sobering reminder that a vision to unite the world, or at least a large portion of it, under a set of ideals can be the source of inconceivable destruction. This example is political by nature, but in recent years, the threats to liberty by globalism have been more economically centered. As global powers become more interested in foreign markets, laborers in those markets often suffer as a result of their governments allowing themselves to be exploited. In Indonesia during the 1960s, General Suharto seized the Presidency with the support of the West, and formulated an economic strategy essentially distributing the country's resources and labor among the highest bidders, what he called the New Order. As a military dictator, his regime depended on authoritarian martial law to facilitate this economic transition.<sup>12</sup>

Before we immerse ourselves too deeply in discussions of concepts so abstract as those just previously discussed, it is critical for us to take further steps to solidify our definition and understanding of globalization and nationalism. What are the factors that ever made globalization possible in the

---

<sup>11</sup> Koo, S. (2017, November 07). Is South Korea's Alliance with the United States Worth It? Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/06/opinion/trump-south-korea-alliance.html>

<sup>12</sup> Britannica Editors. (2019, January 30). Suharto. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Suharto>

first place? Even a century ago, it may have been difficult to imagine a world where all the different groups and identities are so closely interdependent as they are today. We can make the argument that the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the most pivotal and revolutionary time period in history, permanently reshaping the course of human existence, and shattering our previously understood definition of it. An improbable, but colossal synthesis of conditions in that time period put us in the position we are now. Rapid technological developments, previously unprecedented social movements, and a so-far once in history perfect storm of economic, political, and military events combined to entirely radicalize the course of events of which we are still scrambling to understand the importance of. Not only did the 20<sup>th</sup> Century give us the radical notion of globalization, we also witnessed for the first time a series of major resistances to its implications, defining nationalism as a concept which, prior to that point, we never had any reason to give any thought to at all. These conditions have now operated to place us at one of the great uncertain impasses of human history, one which we are still a long way from resolving. The result will likely be just as unpredictable and equally complicated as the circumstances which got us here in the first place. But the choices we make here will be somehow even more consequential and critical for our future.

The United Nations (UN) first assembled in 1945 immediately following the conclusion of World War II, and its simple purpose was to take diplomatic lengths to prevent any such devastation from occurring again. This concept was not new, although unlike its predecessor, the League of Nations, the UN has been successful in deterring an armed conflict on the scale of that which the first half of the twentieth century experienced, and has continued to serve as the foundation model that later intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) with more specialized purposes would follow, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). However, particularly in recent decades, the UN has taken full liberty to establish itself as an absolutist authority regarding matters that were once resolved among only actors whom were directly concerned. IGOs often collaborate to resolve foreign conflicts with the cooperation of the global community. Sometimes, this is the only available option barring mass destruction, such as in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait in

pursuit of annexation, violating the latter nation's rights to independence. Had the international community done nothing about it, Kuwait, a peaceful nation, may cease to exist.<sup>13</sup> However, other instances suggest certain conflicts may resolve themselves without global interference. This trend has continued well into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as post-WWII international coalitions such as NATO, originally intended to function solely as anti-Soviet defense entities and comprised entirely of UN member states, have interjected themselves in conflicts which subsequently become escalated as an inadvertent result of these actions. The most powerful nations of the West have invaded Iraq once more, as well as Afghanistan to perpetuate the Global War on Terror (GWOT), and despite the fact that a major terror attack by a foreign national on American soil has not occurred since 9/11, intervention is still inexplicably prolonged nearly two decades later. Although America's initial invasion of Iraq occurred without the permission or consultation from UN allies or NATO, and largely came as a surprise to the international community, many NATO members followed into the conflict shortly thereafter and became nearly as entangled in it.<sup>14</sup> The Syrian Civil War has further demonstrated globalist interests have contributed to isolated conflicts becoming proxy wars where opposing world powers provide support to opposing factions within the fight, to promote their individual interests in the region. Both the US and Russia have supported and armed rivaling insurgent groups to compete for influence against each other, outside the parameters of the UN, despite the IGO's supposed efforts to mitigate conflict.<sup>15</sup> Without the escalation facilitated by these IGOs in such conflicts, it is quite possible they would have been resolved internally, minimizing the casualties and destruction that is always multiplied by foreign involvement. The tendency for world powers acting as unified IGOs to enter local conflict severely complicated diplomatic relationships between belligerent states. Furthermore, in behaving this way, the UN is contradicting the original purpose of its foundation, which was to resolve potential military disputes diplomatically,

---

<sup>13</sup> Steger, M. B. (2017). *Globalization: A very short introduction*. Oxford, UK. Oxford University Press.

<sup>14</sup> NATO and the 2003 campaign against Iraq (archived). (2015, September 01). Retrieved from [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_51977.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_51977.htm)

<sup>15</sup> BBC. Syria crisis: Where key countries stand. (2015, October 30). Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23849587>

when possible. The UNSC is there as a last resort when all else fails, and should remain that way. Another significant consequence of this theme is wider spread and more complicated displacement of refugees, which in itself has subsequently become another highly controversial source of tension in the nationalist struggle against globalization.

Because of the continued conflict in Syria, approximately 11 million Syrian nationals had been displaced by 2016, albeit more than half of them remained within their internal borders. However, this means that close to 5 million individuals were in search of a new nation to call home, at the very least temporarily. Although a majority travelled to the geographically closest bordering nations, such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, millions were and still are in search of refuge in further locations, primarily Europe, the closest group of industrialized nations that are completely isolated from the Middle-Eastern conflicts. This situation put the European Union (EU) in the spotlight for major controversies surrounding their handling of receiving immigrants. The EU became subject to criticism when it developed a plan to distribute the swaths of refugees seeking entry to Europe amongst the member nations, effectively opening the borders of Europe for free flow of migration, much to the vocally expressed contempt of individual members. This decision revealed that the EU, and IGOs like it, were beginning to act as autonomous sovereign bodies themselves, instead of what they were designed to be, a representation of the individual states who originally assembled to meet their own interests. Admittedly, it is true that every state that applies to and successfully becomes a member of the EU or organizations like it does so voluntarily. The challenge is not that EU member states are being forcibly coerced into participation in the globalist system, as they are all well aware of and confident in their actions. But this fails to mitigate the fact that the collective voice nearly always triumphs over that of the individual. Governments choose to join global governance; the people they represent do not, but are often left bearing the burden of the outcomes of those decisions. Upon realizing that the interests of the whole transcended those of the individual, some states withdrew from EU immigration deals and instead implemented strong border control to preserve their sovereignty and repel what they perceived to be a threat. This distaste for

EU policy grew larger and had clearly expanded beyond debates over refugee immigration when in June 2016, a vote in the UK elected that the nation depart from the EU to maintain control over its borders, economy, and other such policies. Other member states have vehemently opposed the EU's imposition of open border policies, namely Poland, which has been among the most vocal European nations resisting EU policies that contradict their own national direction. Poland has strictly closed off its borders to almost all Middle-Eastern refugees, particularly Muslims. Unlike Western Europe, Poland and other Slavic states have been traditionally ethnocentric in an effort to preserve their original heritage and culture, unlike other nations such as Germany and France, which encourage cultural and ethnic diversity, largely to portray a positive and tolerant world image of themselves.<sup>16</sup> Some may claim that Poland is behaving unethically by refusing to grant asylum to those who desperately need it the most, but a sovereign state does not owe anything to non-citizens, particularly since every country has internal problems which it would prefer to prioritize effort and resources into solving, before redirecting them towards outsiders.<sup>17</sup> A consequence of such actions is the experiences of the refugees, who tend to struggle to support themselves and their families while travelling, all while dealing with unfamiliar languages and sometimes-hostile people, constant uncertainty, and the knowledge that they are without a permanent home. It is certainly difficult not to sympathize with such a population, but the greater challenge is finding a way for the global community to fairly delegate any specific actor the burden of a moral obligation to serve their needs.

An independent nation is entitled sovereign and therefore has the inherent right to defending its borders, and therefore the right to protect its national identity. Particularly after witnessing increased crime rates from refugees in places such as Germany since opening their borders, the EU's refugee policy should be subject to scrutiny. In the German state of Lower

---

<sup>16</sup> Cienski, J. (2017, May 21). *Why Poland doesn't want refugees*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.eu/article/politics-nationalism-and-religion-explain-why-poland-doesnt-want-refugees/>

<sup>17</sup> Moorehead, C. (2005). *Human Cargo: A journey among refugees*. New York, NY. Henry Holt Company, LLC.

Saxony, a recent report noted that 17% of violent crimes committed there in 2018 could be attributed to refugees, who comprise about 1% of the Lower Saxon population.<sup>18</sup> The majority of those refugees were from war-torn North Africa, and were unattached young adult males, already the most likely demographic to commit crime anywhere. Nations that want to incur the social and economic cost of welcoming refugees are entirely entitled to do so, but must be willing to bear the responsibility of their actions alone. After all, someone has to do it, but refusing to allow this process to occur naturally on a voluntary, individual-state basis breeds deep contempt for global governance among nation-states that are rightfully passionate about their ensuring their security and preserving their national identity. When there are sufficient nations willing to take on this population, one must question the ethicality of forcibly coercing others into such a policy with unrepresentative international legislation. If western European leaders such as Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel do not see a problem with undertaking the immigrant crisis, there should be no reason for them to divide the responsibility to others without their permission, and attempting to enact such policy is the definition of hypocrisy.

In sum, the globalist community, particularly the EU, is handling the refugee crisis in a reactive manner, refusing to acknowledge the source of the rapid influx of displaced people. It is no secret that extended warfare is the single largest contributor to forced migration, but the countries that produce the most refugees are all afflicted by conflicts that the West has interfered with and often escalated. In 2011, the year of the outbreak of Syria's civil war, the country produced not even 20,000 refugees, per data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In 2014, when Western coalition forces were already deeply involved, that figure was over 3.8 million, or 17% of the country's entire population. That same year, Iraq's refugees had sharply declined to about 370,000 displaced abroad, or 1% of the population, down from almost 1.5 million in 2006, the year considered by many to be the peak of United States GWOT presence. One must recognize the irony that the UN established a humanitarian agency to monitor the flow of refugees, but cannot seem to see, or

---

<sup>18</sup> Alkoussa, R. (2018). Violent crime rises in Germany and is attributed to refugees. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/amp/idUSKBN1ES16J>

perhaps is actively trying to deny, that so many of them are forced out of their homes and countries by UN coalition fueled conflicts, in which they should not have been involved with in the first place.

Political forms of globalization, such as global governance entities like the UN and international military coalitions such as NATO, although still critical to prevent a resurgence of 20<sup>th</sup> Century atrocities, have contributed to, not helped resolve, the humanitarian crises that have plagued the Middle East, among other locations, over the last two decades. However, this is far from the limits of the dangers that centralization of global politics represents. Particularly in Europe, due largely to the overreach of the EU (to no one's surprise), economic systems of independent nations are becoming more similar to one another, and not only in terms of currency. There is significant effort within some political factions to unite Europe under a single set of economic principles, most commonly democratic socialism, according to the self-proclaimed radical UK Labour Party.<sup>19</sup> Due to the interdependence of EU member state governments, and the (apparent) success of the democratic socialist system, the economic ideology has begun to take root in even the most influential societies of Western Europe, notably the UK and Germany. Although seemingly attractive, one must recognize the dangers of sovereign states intertwining their individual economies so closely, not only on the basis of financial system but also standardizing currency to a single unit. During the Russian Revolution of 1917-1919, Vladimir Lenin envisioned unifying Europe under a single economic system based on socialist principles. The Soviet Empire did stretch well west into Europe and south into Asia, only to collapse hardly 70 years later. Although this transition (which ironically and wisely, the Russians have now distanced themselves from) lacks the unspeakable bloodshed credited to the Bolsheviks, it is rooted in similar flawed economic principles and has already generated periods of socioeconomic instability and uncertainty.

The Euro, at the time of its full implementation in 2002, was valued

---

<sup>19</sup> Statement: For a radical Labour campaign in the European elections. (2019, April 29). Retrieved from <https://labourforasocialisteurope.org/2019/04/07/for-a-radical-labour-campaign-in-the-eu-elections/>

higher per unit than many of the former counterparts that it replaced, such as the French Franc and the Italian Lira. That was the desired result after all, to reset the European economy and start from a common denominator. However, its value has significantly fluctuated in that time, undergoing steady and growth until 2007 when a series of global economic crises sharply reduced its value over the following 8 years. It is a natural part of the economic cycle for currency value to inflate and deflate in response to the state of the market. However, uniting close to an entire continent under one currency extrapolates times of recession, usually originating in the confines of a single country, to all member states, who have no choice but to share the burden, because in this system, the prosperity of the individual depends directly on the success of the whole.

Take the infamous Greek financial catastrophe, triggered by the Great Recession. The Greeks were hit particularly hard, relative to other developed nations (all of whom struggled to a degree), due to irresponsible government spending habits leading to near insurmountable debt, combined with stagnated national GDP growth. While other countries with independent currencies (such as the US and UK) recovered, Greece descended even further into economic despair. This is largely in part to the false sense of security and prosperity perpetuated by the Euro. Although appealing to share a common currency with bordering nations and other trade partners, eliminating the inconvenience of conversion rates, the Greeks and other struggling Euro nations learned quickly that recession quickly permeates across borders in an economy regulated by global or in this case, regional governance.<sup>20</sup> Most Greeks were not afforded the option of relocation, at least anywhere nearby, because the faltering state of the currency in other nations was identical. Rather, to halt the crisis, Greece had to accept international loans contributing to their already crippling debt, including from the IMF and other European nations, much of which was unable to be paid off. The crisis led to rapid inflation across Europe, and from 2009-2010, the currency's value continent-wide had depleted from over 1.50 USD to about 1.20. Traditionally, the scope of this crisis would have been isolated to the

---

<sup>20</sup> The New York Times. (2016, June 17). Explaining Greece's Debt Crisis. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/business/international/greece-debt-crisis-euro.html>

country of origin.

Even in times of relative overall prosperity, the Euro and the governments who regulate it have imposed policies that fiercely discourage local economic growth, once again subordinating the individual on behalf of the group, many of whose members have diverse economies that have thrived for centuries before the age of globalist intervention. Now, the near entirety of the European economy functions as a whole organized unit, leaving little room for autonomy for member states themselves. Interest rates for loans are standardized across the Eurozone, as part of Euro monetary policy, disallowing most forms of alteration. Although seemingly a move towards maximized efficiency to facilitate international trade, the consequences incurred by the individual state are too notable to overlook. No longer are member states afforded the possibility of lowering interest rates to stimulate local growth and development, which can be a critical factor in the ability of new businesses to expand and become successful. Therefore, the relative prosperity of the individual is left at the mercy of the whole. Theoretically, if the overall macro EU economy is booming at any given time, it is of no concern to the globalist bureaucracy to ensure that their localities are included in that process. So while the financial centers of Paris, Berlin, and Brussels may appear to be stable, they do not permit small businesses and their regional governments in the countryside the autonomy to manipulate their own monetary policy. What is best for the EU at large is not always best for its constituencies, and the latter has little room to make their own decisions.

### **Nationalism: The Reactionary Perspective**

On the other hand, the term “nationalism” has been subject to intensive public scrutiny, and in the eyes of many (mostly, but not always leftist) media personnel and political officials, has almost become synonymous with hate, bigotry, and racism. This unfortunate and inaccurate pairing of words has been further facilitated by right-wing self-proclaimed nationalists who do not really understand the term but subsequently use it to pursue xenophobic agendas. US President Trump himself has referred to himself as a nationalist, even among constant speculation towards him of suspected sympathy with “white

nationalist” sentiments. This drew sharp criticisms from French President Emmanuel Macron, claiming nationalism is selfish and immoral.<sup>21</sup> Most opponents of nationalism, like Macron, believe there is a moral obligation, particularly burdened on developed nations, to be active participants in perpetuating globalist ideas. But how can there really be such an obligation if it is classified as a *positive* right, which cannot exist in a free society? This topic deserves analysis, but it seems unlikely that any independent nation could actually owe any type of service to another. This Western savior complex is problematic in and of its own right, and contradicts basic fundamentals of liberty. However, regardless of the intentions on either side, the term, like so many others, has been reduced to accusatory ammunition in today’s polarized political battlefield. However, a more moderate less visceral analysis of the highly controversial ideology may lead one to actually recognize it as a viable alternative to the rapidly emerging, very real and concerning complications of globalism, of course only under the proper set of conditions.

At its core, nationalism refers simply to the prospect of prioritizing the interests and progress of one’s own individual nation before those of others, and maintaining the sovereignty of a nation’s (or state’s) own decisions and direction. But what is a nation, after all? To many, the words “nation” and “state” are used interchangeably, but although these concepts are not mutually exclusive, they are far from always identical. A state is quite basically the lines that we see on maps. States are the groups represented at the UN, each with their individual governments to preside over their clearly defined territory. This is also what we know as a country. Defining a nation is where it gets significantly more complicated.

A nation could hypothetically be any group of people with shared interests, history, or culture. Oftentimes, nations fit cleanly within the borders of a state, such as in Europe, where said borders are determined by clearly defined cultural lines. When one crosses a border in Europe, it is implied they

---

<sup>21</sup> Cummings, W. (2018, November 12). 'I am a nationalist': Trump's embrace of controversial label sparks uproar. Retrieved 2/24/19, from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/10/24/trump-says-hes-nationalist-what-means-why-its-controversial/1748521002/>

are moving from one distinct culture to another. In other places, however, where one nation ends and another begins is not nearly as clear-cut. Some borders are only decades old, stains from the Age of Imperialism, and do not accurately reflect the boundaries of a sovereign, united group. Take Africa, which was hastily divided into colonies not based at all on the identities of the people who lived there. Now, the colonies are over but the lines remain the same, leaving countries like Nigeria with the problem of trying to bring together their vastly diverse population of over 500 languages and 8 major distinct ethnicities, many of whom have been historically in direct conflict with each other.<sup>22</sup> As we will explore later, this leaves such countries in an identity crisis without a clear direction in their immediate future, making them critical economic and political battlegrounds between world powers. So, what does nationalism actually mean to us when we discuss it in political debates? Furthermore, what does it ought to mean in a peaceful world of sovereign states? When we talk about nationalism, are we actually referring to the complicated idea of nations the way they are really defined, or are we envisioning well-defined countries with flags and anthems?

There are significant and valid reasons why nationalism has such a dangerous and misunderstood reputation amongst its fiercest critics. That admittedly logical fear is a direct result of the unspeakable atrocities committed by governments of the former half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. People often wonder how populations could be manipulated and mobilized to voluntarily exterminate whole ethnicities close to the point of extinction, all within the confines of a single decade. This happened on multiple occasions all over the world, most notably in Hitler's Third Reich, but also in Mussolini's Fascist Italy, Lenin's (and later, Stalin's) Communist Soviet Russia, and so on. Truthfully, every single one of the aforementioned dictators spewed ultranationalist rhetoric against a scapegoat group to inspire strong, deeply rooted sentiments of resent against a target population within the masses. This, among other strategies, was key for their rise to power and influence, and later made possible the ensuing

---

<sup>22</sup> Findlay, J. (2016). Largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. Retrieved 2/24/19, from <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-ethnic-groups-in-nigeria.html>

genocides.<sup>23</sup> These tragic events represent the darkest moments of human history, which one may only hope the world never returns to, and they would not have been possible without leaders first inspiring irreversible hostility among the entire population towards groups on which blame was wrongfully deflected to for the nation's struggles. Although sharp polarized divides between demographics is an inherent tendency of human nature for all of recorded history, the degree to which the 20<sup>th</sup> Century amplified the persecution of particular nations is unique, and all measured must be taken to avoid anything like it from happening again. But these woeful stories are also directly responsible for the commonly misconstrued, negatively stereotyped definitions of nationalism that are now used to discredit the ideology in pursuance of the globalist agenda. To have a meaningful discussion about the great fork in the road between nationalism and globalism that we are faced with now, we must first take a step back and trace the historical reasons how we ever got to this point of conflicting ideologies in the first place.

Dangerous elements of nationalism have perpetuated well into the current era and has taken serious problematic root in the United States. Ethnic nationalism has hostilely divided American society since prior to the dawn of the Civil War, when Northern Republicans and Southern Democrats took up arms over the role and status of African Americans. With the Union victory and the subsequent decades-long struggle for Civil Rights, the federal and state laws have changed to remove any inclination of bias against any racial group, but sentiments of hate among individuals have not. Now, more than 50 years after the supposed victory of the Civil Rights Movement, groups like the Ku Klux Klan continue to terrorize black people, due to a misplaced sense of biological superiority, and they are not alone in these attacks. Severe nationalism has grown so extreme in the United States that Nazi sympathizers have reemerged in mass numbers, targeting Jews and other groups for a variety of reasons, many of them reminiscent of Hitler's economic rhetoric. In the case of Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017, massive protests erupted which can be traced back to the proposed removal of a statue depicting Confederate General Robert E. Lee,

---

<sup>23</sup> Gellately, R. (2007). *Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler*. New York, NY: Random House.

to induce a stronger sense of political correctness.<sup>24</sup> Far-right conservatives were outraged, considering the statue and the ideals it represents to be part of their Southern pride and heritage, not symbols of hate, as their adversaries would object. The movement quickly became organized into a group self-titled “Unite the Right,” encouraging varieties of Neo-Nazis and white supremacists to conspire with one another. Leftist social justice advocates, by contrast, were disgusted that anyone would idolize what they considered to be a reminder of bigotry and intolerance of America’s most tragic days. The two sides engaged in what can only be described as extensive riots, which neither law enforcement or the National Guard could subdue. The ideological clash turned fatal, when an individual was struck with a car as part of violent outbursts. These events clearly represent significant implications for the dangers of descending down a path of extreme nationalist ideals. It is possible and highly likely that seemingly harmless pride for the group to which one belongs can quickly metamorphosize into hatred towards non-members, which usually translates into violence. Demographics, particularly race, ethnicity, and religion, must not be exploited for nationalist sentiment, as the only logical result of these acts are civil conflicts. Naturally, for multiple groups with dissimilar values and incompatible interests must coexist in close geographic proximity is challenging. For a society such as this to be successful, total assimilation or homogenization is not necessary, but rather harmful. But at least a marginal level of mutual understanding is critical, which is where the people involved with Charlottesville failed the most.

In strikingly converse ways to globalism, the nationalist ideology at its most corrupted and immoral form poses an equally challenging threat to the natural liberties of individuals and groups. The direct aim of many extremist self-proclaimed nationalists is the oppression, removal, or even outright genocide of entire groups of people, most commonly based solely on their demographic composition. This directly contradicts the fundamental rights of all humans, namely “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” as famously posited

---

<sup>24</sup> Keneally, M. (2018, August 8). What to know about the violent Charlottesville protests and anniversary rallies. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/amp/US/happen/Charlottesville-protest-anniversary-weekend/story%3fid=57107500>

by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence. Now, centuries later, forces are threatening the concept of liberty that are far beyond the understanding or prediction of those who revolutionized its meaning. This point can be further demonstrated by historical context, namely in Hitler's Nazi Germany, which rose to power largely as an antithesis to Soviet globalism. The Third Reich accurately demonstrated that extreme nationalism often can result in the same catastrophic consequences to individual liberty as its opponent ideology. The Nazis rose to power largely due to the fact that most Germans were unsettled with the possibility of globalist threats contaminating their unique culture. However, this quickly descended into thinly-veiled ethnic cleansing efforts. One major difference between globalism and nationalism is that the latter tends to thrive in desperation. The German population, on the heels of a devastating economic depression, was already effectively defeated in every facet, and in a position to fight for the only thing they had left, their heritage. This made it easy for Nazi leaders to capitalize on the ability to scapegoat the Jews and other groups with nationalist rhetoric as the reason for the country's downturn.<sup>25</sup> Today, extreme nationalism targets liberty in similar ways. Over 1000 individual, universally recognized hate groups exist in the United States alone, most of them intent on depriving specific racial or religious groups of their fundamental liberties.<sup>26</sup>

We must also take the time to examine the psychological implications of why people are so susceptible to group polarization, making the aforementioned cases of toxic nationalism possible. What are the internal mechanisms of the human mind that make individuals likely to form social circles for which we will go to any, sometimes extremely violent lengths to defend and promote, all the way from the micro to macro level? The answer lies in the unheralded yet monumental discoveries of contemporary moral psychology over the last century. We have made great strides in beginning to understand the forces which operate and dominate our decisions beneath our conscious

---

<sup>25</sup> Gellately, R. (2007). *Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler*. New York, NY: Random House.

<sup>26</sup> Stack, L. (2019, February 20). Over 1,000 hate groups are now active in the United States, civil rights group says. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/us/hate-groups-rise.amp.html>

comprehension, yet as a population, we continue to fall victim to our millennia-old hostile and divisive ways.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps as a whole, improving our own cognizant understanding of human social and moral nature can help lead us to embrace an ethical variety of nationalism while simultaneously resisting the dangerous prospect of identity politics, which unfortunately continue to dominate all aspects of public life today. If we can demonstrate on the surface why beneath it, we are vulnerable to polarizing habits and internal bias, we can eliminate the negative stereotypes of nationalism by practicing it in a morally sound manner.

Namely, it is possible for individuals and groups to hold strong sentiments of national pride for the identity that they belong to, without stimulating the hostility and hatred into action that is frequently associated with the ideology. Ideally, all the nations of the world will be able to recognize the necessity of preserving their sovereignty and individuality in the face of a rapidly accelerating global machine. The key is to do this without immediately resorting to violence, a task which thus far has demonstrated to be much easier said than done. This refers to violence on an individual level (hate crimes, discrimination, and so on), and an institutional level (the possibility of descent into total war in the name of national pride, which, even in a globalizing society, is appearing more likely in recent years, namely attributed to tensions between the West and their political adversarial counterparts). The results, particularly of the latter, would be far too catastrophic for us to ever allow to become reality.

### **A Look Ahead: Navigating the Dichotomy**

The ongoing ideological dispute between the two titular perspectives is one of many examples on long list of conflicts between equally polarized and incompatible value systems. If sustainable peace and cohesion is ever to be achieved by the worldwide community, globalists and nationalists cannot coexist; the conception of an ideal global society held by one group does not permit the existence of the other. As has been discussed, each ideology in its

---

<sup>27</sup> Haidt, J. *The righteous mind: why good people are divided by politics and religion*. New York, NY. Random House.

most basic sense does provide significant benefits to a society which implements it. Globalism permits a more unified world, politically and economically, while nationalism allows for state individuality and security. These benefits are often outweighed by their consequences. When proponents of each are directly unleashed upon each other, as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has created the perfect conditions for, the ensuing disapproval of each other amplifies the reasons why a dual model of extreme perspectives can only end in devastation. One must recognize this and adopt an Aristotelean outlook of moderation, because typically, in any case of two extremes, truth and virtue lie somewhere in the middle. This is not to be confused with centrism, or the failure to take any sides at all. Rather, all that must be done is a rejection of the most extreme consequences of both globalism and nationalism. Extreme globalism is a large-scale representation of the significant problems with modern leftist policies, namely ideological collectivism which undermines the natural rights of individuals; its nationalist counterpart closely resembles the intolerance and bigotry of reactionary conservatism, which presents dire consequences for innocent groups of people who are disapproved of by the majority. Theoretically, the ideal way to prevent these outcomes is maximizing individual and state liberty as the most critical virtue. Nations must be free of foreign interference to achieve their own economic, political, and cultural self-determinism. They must make themselves aware of the potential consequences of immersing themselves into restrictive global governance agreements. Measures must be in place, however, to ensure extreme nationalism fails to rise under these circumstances. Global governance is not inherently immoral, but it must be used diplomatically in moderation to prevent the mistakes of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century from repeating. It cannot overreach sovereign authority, but rather act as an agent of preserving it.

I have personally witnessed the damaging effects of political globalism and nationalism, as I had the opportunity as a member of the US Army to travel to the southeast African nation of Mozambique this summer to meet and train with representatives from the Mozambique Armed Defense Forces, which serves as their equivalent counterpart to the American Army, Navy, and Air Force. During the month I spent there, I learned quite a bit about their history,

in which they suffered severe bloodshed to earn their independence from imperialism, arguably the earliest form of political globalization, albeit much more blatantly unethical than the kind which is experienced today. Between 1964-1974, Mozambican rebels revolted against their Portuguese colonial oppressors in a struggle for national sovereignty. However, neither the colonial authority nor the local rebellion participated alone. Portugal was supported by most of its Western allies, while the Mozambican natives were able to win largely due to assistance they received from communist powers such as the USSR, China, and North Korea. After the conflict, the new nation-state designed itself with many elements of those nations in mind. Although Mozambique never formally adopted a communist government, there is prevalent evidence of the ideology's presence. Without political globalization, a remote African nation would not name its streets after Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong, and Kim il-Sung, nor would it embroider its national flag with an emblem of the AK-47, a now universally recognized symbol for fringe-leftist revolt and communism all over the world. The reason that external nations involve themselves in such conflicts is to promote and spread national ideology and benefit economically. Particularly because the country descended into a civil war that lasted well into the 1990s, which again quickly received international attention, the people whom I met while in Mozambique are well aware of the impact that foreign powers have had on their development, and will continue to have in the future. Specifically, the Chinese currently have a very observable presence in multiple aspects of Mozambican society. In addition to owning various businesses, namely shopping malls and restaurants, China is currently finishing the process of opening the longest suspension bridge in Africa, located in the capital city Maputo, built almost entirely with Chinese loans and overseen by a Chinese construction company.<sup>28</sup> The debt incurred from the bridge is estimated to contribute to 20% of Mozambique's foreign debt, adding to significant debt owed to the World Bank, and as research has concluded, a significant variety of national problems for developing nations are known to

---

<sup>28</sup> Daniel, L. (2018, November 11). China just built the longest suspension bridge in Africa connecting Maputo and KZN. Retrieved from <https://www.thesouthafrican.com/maputo-catembe-bridge-africa-china-kwazulu-natal/>

emerge from WB generated debt.<sup>29</sup> Many of the people I spoke with there were uncertain about the necessity for such an expansive project, and would rather have worked towards relieving their debt and strengthening their sovereignty. This is especially true considering large natural gas reserves were recently discovered in the country's northern region, a fact that is contributing to continued external involvement there. Most locals who I met know that continuing to accept money and projects means fostering a continued political dependency on other countries, and relinquishing control of their own resources, and therefore their future.

Most intergovernmental organizations, at least the way the world understands them today, originated after the darkest days in human history, in order to do their part in preventing such unspeakable atrocities from ever happening again. While the United Nations has helped to mediate tensions and prevent the emergence of another World War, they and their counterparts have grown too powerful to such a point that they are undermining the independence of individual nation states. As we move forward into the most uncertain era the world has ever known, it is critical that we resist the idea of global governance transforming into global government, a trend which is in the early phases of development in many parts of the world. To be fair, the idea of the world's nations converging peacefully to resolve matters diplomatically is very progressive, and would have stopped inconceivable amounts of bloodshed had it been implemented several decades earlier than it was. But it is critical for those nations must remain exactly that: nations. The lines on a map represent more than just borders. Each one represents a different unique and cherished story dating back millennia, laced with prized traditions of values, culture, and language; and such a crime it would be for that ever to be lost.

---

<sup>29</sup> Apodaca, C. (2017). *Expanding responsibilities: the consequences of World Bank and IMF policies on child welfare*. Cheltenham, UK. Edward Elgar Publishing.