

A Cogent Case for Nationalism

JOHN VINSON

The struggle between globalism and nationalism is moving to center stage as a key issue of the modern world. At stake is whether historic nations will be allowed to exist or whether they will be subsumed into a world ruling state.

The globalists don't like for the matter to be stated this bluntly, lest they arouse patriotic opposition to their schemes. Commonly they work to chip away at national sovereignty without explicitly stating their final goal. Nevertheless, as they press on to that goal it becomes difficult for them to hide their true intention.

This is particularly the case in Europe where the European Union (EU) is imposing its will across the continent. Recently the globalist leaders of France and Germany, Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel, proclaimed that they wanted a European army. And why would they want that when they already have the protection of NATO?

The most likely reason is that some EU members, notably Hungary and Poland, have made it known that they will not follow EU dictates to open their doors to mass Third World migration. An EU army would be quite useful to quell such insurgencies.

The EU is arrogant and highhanded, but its partisans maintain that its position is firmly planted on the moral high ground. They maintain that globalism is the path to a much better world where nations will no longer go to war with each other and peace and prosperity will reign.

A welcome rebuke to this ethical posturing is Yoram Hazony's *The Virtue of Nationalism*. An Israeli citizen, Hazony offers an interesting perspective of this topic from the vantage point of his background. He affirms that the historical nationalism of Western countries derives from the Old Testament's provision for nationhood as a part of God's order and providence.

This particularly became true during the Reformation when copies of the Bible began to circulate widely.

To this analysis one might note that the New Testament has similar provisions which guided Christian Europe. It stated that the division of nations encouraged men to seek after God and that nations would continue to exist in Heaven.

Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke and Emmanuel Kant set the stage for a different view of nationalism, the notion prevalent today that global order should supersede nations. Locke held the view, Hazony notes, of extreme individualism. He maintained that society is a construct created by autonomous persons pursuing their self-interest. Locke also believed that people are "blank slates" on which anything may be written.

THE VIRTUE OF NATIONALISM

By Yoram Hazony

Basic Books, New York, 2018

293 pp., \$30



Hazony rightly sees this as a complete misreading of human nature. Human beings through history have shown an innate tendency for society which transcends simple self-interest. The loyalty of family members to one another is a primary example. That loyalty and the duty it entails provides a deep sense of purpose and meaning to life. The same applies to extended families and clans.

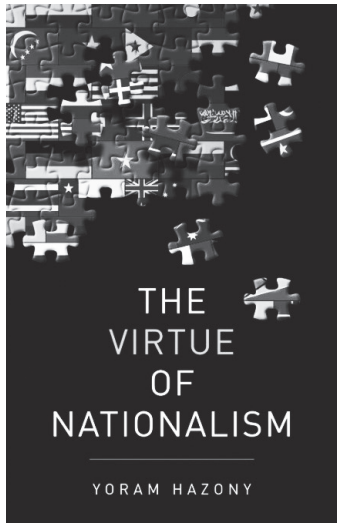
Loyalty to nation binds people together in a similar fashion through the sharing of a common history, culture, ethnicity, and religion. This broad loyalty allows large numbers of people to achieve goals far beyond what individuals, families, and extended families could accomplish, such as America's manned moon landing.

Globalists maintain that by uniting all nations, we might accomplish even more through global allegiance. Hazony counters that equal loyalty to all human beings stretches loyalty to the point where it becomes abstract

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and meaningless. Loyalty and the love that inspires it is particular in its nature. Remove that focus, and it dissipates to nothing. As Theodore Roosevelt once remarked, “A man who loves all countries as much as his own country is like a man who loves all women as much as his wife.”

Globalists generally ignore this point and try to counter by saying that any particular love for country



will lead to hatred of another — as if loving one’s children implies hatred for other children. They often conflate patriotism with “xenophobia,” maintaining that the end of sovereign nations will mean the end of war.

Hazony replies that it is not really nationalism or patriotism that prompts conflict. A people who respect their own nationhood are often inclined to respect

the nationhood of others. The problem, Hazony maintains, is not nationhood but imperialism — the desire one group to impose its power, will, and ways on others. Globalists often cite the two world wars as unrestrained nationalism leading to massive bloodshed.

Hazony’s take is that imperial ambitions among the Germans, French, Britons, and others is what led to the First World War. Prompting that conflict was each

side trying to impose its will beyond its borders, both in Europe and abroad. Globalists next will cite Hitler’s Germany in World War II as unbridled nationalism leading to strife. Hazony replies that Hitler used and abused Germany as a means to advance his imperialist ideology across Europe.

Imperialists, motivated by transnational ideologies, typically claim that their motives are benevolent. Napoleon, Hitler, and Stalin promised a new order of human progress. But in the end their schemes led to tyranny and war. Having made these points, Hazony states the key premise: globalism is an imperial ideology.

Whether they’re well-intentioned or not, globalists aim to impose commonality on everyone. By doing so they arouse intense opposition, which is hardly a basis for world peace. In their ideological myopia they simply can’t appreciate the fundamental preference of most people for the distinctions that make their homelands feel like home.

As the European Union pushes its imperial agenda, rebellion is growing. As already mentioned, some countries are openly defying EU quotas requiring them to take in Third World migrants. Britain has voted to leave, and Italy is expressing defiance. Across the continent nationalist parties are growing, even in unlikely places like Sweden. At the end of 2018, large-scale riots against globalist-related policies erupted in Macron’s France.

What will the globalists in Europe and elsewhere do in response to this resistance? Will they back off, or double down even harder on their agenda? The nature of imperialists, unfortunately, suggests the latter. In this situation, patriots must challenge the globalist Orwellian lie that love of country is hate. It is a virtue, as Hazony so well demonstrates. ■

I have always thought that to be a nationalist is a virtue. This is not only because the order of national states is the best political order, and it is an admirable thing to devote oneself to moving this old Earth a step closer to such a political order. Besides this, I believe that orienting oneself toward an order of independent national states paves the way for certain positive traits of character that are more difficult, if not impossible, to attain so long as one remains committed to the dream of empire....

Human beings are intolerant by nature, and it would be foolish to attribute this intolerance entirely to one or another political or religious standpoint. Nevertheless, if one wishes to inflame this innate intolerance, making it harsh and poisonous to the greatest degree possible, one could hardly do better than to disseminate a worldview according to which there is but one true doctrine, and mankind’s salvation depends on the entire world submitting to it. Such beliefs are the fuel of empire because of the kind of men and women they create: imperialists who are at the same time revolutionaries. Regarding the universal ideal before their eyes as true for all, these are individuals who will not hesitate to overthrow whatever particularist tribal or national traditions stand in the way of the deliverance they see at hand. ■

—Yoram Hazony
The Virtue of Nationalism
(pp. 229-230)