

20–1: Exploring Nationalism

WRITTEN RESPONSE

Assignment I

Suggested time: 30 to 45 minutes

Examine the following sources and complete Assignment I.

Assignment I

Examine each source.

Write a paragraph in which you do the following:

a) **Interpret** each source, **explain** the perspective(s) presented, and **discuss** the source’s links to ideas about internationalism.

AND

b) **Identify** and **explain** one or more relationships between the sources.

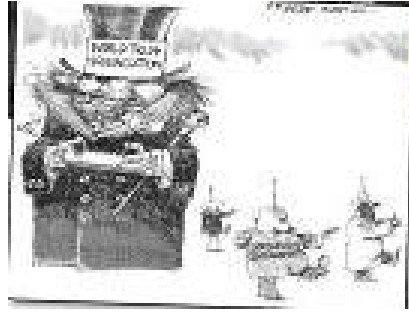
Source I

The UN is not simply a security organization; it is not a sort of NATO for the world. When the present crisis has passed, the world will still be facing (to use Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s phrase) innumerable “problems without passports” that cross all frontiers uninvited; weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, certainly, but also the degradation of our common environment, contagious disease and chronic starvation, human rights and human wrongs, mass illiteracy and massive displacement.

These are problems that no one country, however powerful, can solve on its own — as someone once said about water pollution, we all live downstream. They cry out for solutions that, like the problems themselves, cross frontiers.

— Sashi Tharoor, writer, in the *New Internationalist*, 2005

Source II



This cartoon shows Alberta artist John Larter's opinion on the price countries may pay for joining the WTO.

Source III

We agree that the nation is a great source of emotional attachment, and that emotional ties across borders can sometimes be difficult to build. But [an argument that nationalism is the most universally legitimate political value] ignores the need for a broader international consciousness in today's age, as well as the many international causes that have inspired great passion — from efforts to abolish slavery, to movements that enhance women's and children's rights, to environmental campaigns...

Even without a shared culture, we have a shared commitment to addressing common concerns and problems. This commitment is the foundation of our international community and for world citizenship, illustrated particularly in the work of the United Nations and the development of international law and treaties in the second half of the twentieth century.

— J. Michael Adams and Angelo Carfagna,
in *Coming of Age in a Globalized World*, 2006

Assignment I: Possible Student Responses

a) Answers will vary, but could include some of the following points:

Source I

- identifies current and future world problems that are not halted by national borders (problems without passports) and indicates doubt that unilateral action can solve these types of problems
- identifies the UN as an international agency that can serve humanity well in the future, not just as a “world police force,” but in many social, economic, environmental, and political areas

Source II

- identifies the WTO as an international organization controlled by the affluent. It suggests that the WTO has the power to control countries and undermine their sovereignty
- shows the WTO as a potential flaw in an internationalist approach (not all countries’ needs will be met equally)

Source III

- suggests that it is easier to feel a bond to a nation than to an international group
- states that people around the world have a shared commitment and need to deal with international problems
- points out examples of issues that have created international passions in the past: slavery, women’s and children’s rights, and the environment
- suggests that the UN’s work in international law and treaties illustrates that internationalism is viable

b) Answers will vary, but could include the following points:

- The three sources discuss the type of relationships between nation-states that are most likely to help resolve world problems. Sources I and III support an internationalist position. Source II criticizes a specific example of internationalism.
- Sources I and III identify global problems and the need to revise the old, unilateral approach to solving international problems.
- Sources I and III suggest that the UN will have a major role in this modified world.
- Source II has a narrower perspective. It focuses on one international organization: the WTO. It warns that taking an internationalist approach might pose a danger to countries’ sovereignty.

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Assignment II

Suggested time: 90 to 105 minutes

Examine the following source and complete Assignment II.

Source

Despite the many lessons of history and the problems that affect today’s “global village,” some people still believe that “Right or wrong, it’s my country and I’ll support it, no matter what!”

Assignment II

To what extent should we embrace the perspective(s) reflected in the source?

Write an essay in which you

- a) **analyze** the source and **demonstrate** an understanding of the perspective(s) it reflects
- b) **establish** and **argue** a position in response to the assignment question
- c) **support** your position and arguments using evidence from your knowledge and understanding of social studies

Assignment II: Possible Student Responses

Answers will vary, but could include some of the following ideas:

- a) The source challenges the wisdom of strong nationalism, or blind faith in a nation-state. It suggests that humankind has made many mistakes in the past that were based on unthinking, uncritical nationalism. It suggests that the global/cross-border nature of today's problems require a different kind of response.
- b) Students might choose to support or oppose the position taken in the source. If they support the position, they will likely argue that nationalism does not serve the world's needs today, and that nationalism should be replaced by a new way of thinking. They might suggest internationalism as a viable alternative.

Other students might oppose the position in the source, arguing that unchallenged nationalism contributes to a country's unity, strength and, in the long run, economic prosperity and international prestige. Students might suggest that every nation-state has to do what is right for itself because there is no universal arrangement that works for all.

A third argument might be that nationalism is acceptable, as long as it does not lead to ultranationalism. Students might suggest that a cosmopolitan nationalism might be the best approach for the future.

- c) Students could use any number of examples, including (but not limited to) the following:

Anti-nationalism examples could include how feelings of nationalism led to World War I; how ultranationalism led to racism and genocide in countries like Germany, the former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda; how problems like global warming can only be solved through international action, and so on.

Students could support internationalism with examples of successful UN actions, such as the elimination of smallpox; successful multilateral military actions in Korea or the Gulf War; and the successes of the European Union.

Pro-nationalism examples could include how nationalism helped former colonial states, such as India, gain independence, or how in times of calamity or crisis, like the Great Depression or the South East Asia tsunami, strong nationalism can provide leadership and common goals.

Students could argue against internationalism, citing examples of the failed UN response in Rwanda and how the UN Security Council veto sometimes prevents coordinated, effective action where it is needed.