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Nationalism Is a Force for Good

Guests:

For the Motion: Colin Dueck, Prerna Singh

Against the Motion: Andrew Keen, Elif Shafak

Moderator: John Donovan

AUDIENCE RESULTS

Before the debate:

31% FOR

57% AGAINST

12% UNDECIDED

After the debate:

29% FOR

67% AGAINST

4% UNDECIDED

Start Time: (00:00:00)

[music playing]

00:01:00

00:01:48

John Donovan:

Hi, everybody. I'm John Donovan, your host and moderator for this virtual digital debate. I am online with four guests, who will take on the resolution: "Nationalism is a force for good." We are recording this debate on Monday, June 22nd, and we are releasing it live to you right now.

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I also want to say that this debate is being held in partnership with our friends at the German Marshall Fund. So, a particular welcome to all of you tuning in from the annual Brussels Forum.

Ian Lesser:

Good morning and good afternoon from Brussels. Welcome back to Brussels Forum 2020. Let me thank our partners at the outset as always. To our founding partners, Daimler and the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to our foreign partner, Deloitte, and to all our associate and supporting and knowledge partners, we're very, very grateful for their partnership.

For the last two years we've partnered with Intelligence Squared U.S. on what has become a very central part of Brussels Forum. It's always well received. I series of critical debates. Today, we are going to have debate on the question of whether nationalism is the future.

Let me thank Intelligence Squared U.S., again, for their partnership and a special thank you to Robert Rosencrantz, chairman of Intelligence Squared, U.S., and to John Donovan, our moderator. John, welcome back and over to you.

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John Donovan:

And here is something I would like you all to ponder ahead of today's debate, something to ask yourself about yourself -- which is, how much does your identity hinge on what nation you are a citizen of? From wherever you may be joining us, whether it's in the United States, or France, or Brazil, or Egypt, or Malaysia, or Kenya, how much do you consider being an American citizen, or a French citizen, or Brazilian, or Malaysian, or Egyptian, or Kenyan a core part of who you are? And how much does that bind your interests to the millions of other people who share that citizenship with you?

I'm asking you this because we are taking on the topic of nationalism, a political movement and a theory which has been getting a lot of attention, especially in the last few years, as various nationalist movements and politicians appear ascendant in places like Hungary, and Poland, and Russia, and the United Kingdom -- and the United States, arguably.

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The question we're asking reflects one that you might ask yourself. Are you inclined to embrace nationalism as an expression of who you are and as an organizing principle for how your leaders do business with the rest of the world? Or are you wary? Do you see a dark side to nationalism that causes you deep concern?

Well, we think that, in these questions, we have the makings of a debate, so that's what we're going to do. We're basically going to say and ask you to answer this question -- "Yes" or "No" to this statement: "Nationalism is a force for good."

I am here to help juggle the squares on your screen, these two teams of two, who are ready to argue for and against the resolution. So, let's meet our debaters. Again, the resolution is "Nationalism is a force for good"

So, first up, arguing for the resolution, "Nationalism is a force for good," here is Colin Dueck. Colin, you are a scholar of international affairs.

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You have advised several administrations on foreign policy. And recently, you released a book

on the topic, which you call "Conservative Nationalism." I just want to say, "Welcome to Intelligence Squared." Thanks so much for joining us.

Colin Dueck:
Thanks, John.

John Donovan:
And where are you in the nation -- or the world, right now?

Colin Dueck:
I live in a small town in Virginia called Warrenton. And it's mercifully distant from Washington, D.C.

John Donovan:
[laughs] But not that distant. In the orbit, but outside the Beltway. Thanks so much for joining us. And I want to introduce your partner, who will also be arguing for the resolution. I want to say hello to Perna Singh. Perna, you are a political scientist and author of a book on the emerging nationalism of India. It's great to have you with us. I just want to say welcome. And where are you joining us from?

Perna Singh:
I'm joining you from Little Rhodie [spelled phonetically] -- Rhode Island -- and Providence, where I'm based, because I teach at Brown University.

John Donovan:
Thanks so much for joining us. It's excellent to have you here.

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John Donovan:
Now, arguing against the resolution, we have two debaters, as usual. Again, the resolution is, "Nationalism is a force for good." These debaters are arguing against that. First, I want to say hello to Andrew Keen. Andrew, welcome back to Intelligence Squared.

Andrew Keen:
Hi, John.

John Donovan:
So, Andrew, for folks who haven't seen our debates, you've debated with us a number of times, one of our favorite debaters. You are a film director. You host a podcast. You're an author. And you're one of the foremost commentators on the state of democracy in world today. Welcome back. And where in this world are you right now?

Andrew Keen:
I'm in the People's Republic of Berkeley.

John Donovan:

[laughs] All right. Thanks so much for joining us again. As I said before, it's great to have you back.

And our fourth debater, again, will be speaking against the resolution. I want to say hello to Elif Shafak. Elif, you're an award-winning novelist. You're also a founding member of the European Council on Foreign Relations. It's great to have you with us. And where are you joining us from?

Elif Shafak:

Well, I'm in the U.K. I'm in London.

00:07:02

John Donovan:

Okay. Fantastic. So, we're truly international today -- which, again, plays to what our partners are doing with the Brussels Forum. So, it's great to have all four of you with us.

So, as always, our debate will go in three rounds. And then, you, our online audience, will vote to decide who is the winning team. And here is how that works. You will be asked to cast two votes -- one in just a few seconds from now -- and a second vote after you've heard the arguments from our debaters.

And the way we determine victory is it goes to the team whose changed the most minds over the course of the debate, between the first and the second vote -- the difference -- the greatest difference in an upward direction will be given to -- that's how we determine which team will be our winner.

So, now is the time to cast your first vote. If you're using our chat right now, you'll see a link pop up to vote coming from one of our producers. You just click on that link and you cast your vote for, or against, or undecided. And remember, we're going to have you do this again after you've heard the debate.

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And one more time: it's the side that changes the most minds between the first and the second vote that determines who is our winner. If you don't see the link right now, don't worry about that. You can also, right now, just go to a Web browser, to IQ2US.org/vote. That's a Web browser; go to the URL IQ2US.org/vote. IQ-the number 2-US-dot-org-slash-vote. And you can vote right there. Just click on the word "vote."

So, I think we're ready to get started by going to our first of three rounds. Round 1 is comprised of opening statements from each debater in turn. These openings will be four minutes each.

One more time: our resolution is "Nationalism is a force for good." And here, first, to speak for the resolution, Prerna Singh. Prerna, the screen is all yours.

Prerna Singh:
Thank you.

So, political leaders across the world today are evoking an exclusionary nationalism associated with discrimination, division, and destruction.

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My partner and I, however, will draw on our expertise as political scientists to remind you that nationalism can also be a powerful force for good. Towards this end, I will present a global overview, and Colin will focus in on the U.S.

So, nationalism is fundamentally about the love of country. It generates a sense of shared solidarity of the "we-ness." And this shift from a "me" to a "we" identity links my own welfare to that of my national community as a whole. And this commitment to a national common good is a powerful mobilizing force for the realization of freedom.

Through history, across the world, hundreds of thousands of people have been motivated by nationalism to risk their lives to liberate their homelands from foreign rule. Think of the movements against colonial rule across Asia and Africa in the first part of the 20th century, like that led by Gandhi in India.

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Movements against Soviet Communism in the 1990s in Eastern Europe. Think Solidarity in Poland. The anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, led by Nelson Mandela -- all driven by nationalism. But it's not just in these exceptional movements. Nationalism helps the realization of freedom of every day by facilitating the functioning of liberal democracies. Nation states are the units that allow for the foundation of liberal democracies. Further, nationalism infuses what would otherwise be the technical ties of rights and duties with what has been described as the magic of "my." Through history, political leaders that also see their citizens as "my people" have been more strongly obligated and committed to the welfare of their people. Think of the institution of the welfare state across Western Europe in the wake of the Second World War, or - as I've shown in my book -- the provision of health and education across India.

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On the other hand, national attachments motivate people to make sacrifices for the state: sacrifices of time and effort when they vote, of money when they pay their taxes. And the most supreme sacrifice of all -- of their lives when they join the army and fight for their country.

But to be sure, like all groups, nations have boundaries: those who belong and those who do not. And national boundaries are, in themselves, not necessarily a problem. A healthy drive for national competitiveness has driven important contributions in the arts. Russian literature, Cuban music, French cinema, Thai cuisine. I could go on. It's the lifeblood of sports. The

problem is that national boundaries have -- in the past, and are today -- they've been defined in an exclusive way to shut out and target ethnic minorities, immigrants, and refugees.

This, however, is not a reason to condemn nationalism. In fact, it is precisely the reason to not give up on it -- but instead, to fight to reclaim it from these exclusive definitions and put forward a more inclusive national "us."

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If you vote against the motion, you'll not only give up on the immense constructive potential of nationalism; you do something far more dangerous. You cede our most powerful mobilizational tool to right-wing populist constructions and manipulations. A vote "Yes" recognizes the reality that, despite globalization, nations are here to stay. Nationalism is here to stay. A vote "Yes" opens up to an urgent, necessary conversation about how we can work to construct nationalisms that are inclusive of minorities, through legislation as well as banal practices, such as the flags we fly, the statues we erect or choose to pull down, the festivals we celebrate. A vote "Yes" honors the historic power of nationalism as a force for freedom and allows us to harness its progressive potential today, and in the future.

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I urge you to vote "Yes."

John Donovan:

Perna Singh, thank you very much. So we are off and running. Our next debater will be arguing against the resolution that nationalism is a force for good. Elif Shafak, you're next up on the screen making your opening statement. And the screen is yours.

Elif Shafak:

Thank you. So I'm a storyteller. And as much as I love language, literature, and stories, I am equally interested in silences. There's a part of me that wants to give more voice to people who have been pushed to the margins, disempowered, treated unfairly, and hurt. And this is one of the many reasons why I oppose nationalism, because nationalism, both as an ideology and practices, causes far more damage and hurt than good. It claims to unite, but in truth it divides. It pretends to be inclusive, but it excludes not only people outside the nation but also minorities within the society.

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It talks about achieving order and prosperity, but it is a source of constant tension, distrust, conflict, and, way too often, bloodshed. The proponents of nationalism will tell you that there are different types of nationalism, and some of them are nice and harmless. They will tell you that someone else's nationalism is actually the ugly kind of nationalism, but certainly not ours. Of course, we can spend hours and hours making neat academic distinctions, assuming that, if we have different labels and categories, we can differentiate the good from the bad.

But the truth is, outside academic circles in daily life, in real life, that doesn't mean much because on the streets out there, nationalism is an untamed force. And at its heart lies the duality us versus them and the assumption that "us" is somehow better than "them."

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The definition of "them" will change constantly depending on the circumstances, but the distance between us and them will always be there, ready to deepen and worsen at the first sight of a crisis. And those of us who come from the Balkans, from Anatolia, from the Middle East, from the Levant, and beyond, we do know, but it takes one political crisis, it takes one major economic crisis for a nice nationalism to turn ugly.

And history has given us plenty of examples to prove this point. But let's not go that far in time because it is happening right now as we're speaking, country after country, from Viktor Orban's Hungary to Bolsonaro's Brazil, from Modi's India to Trump's America or Erdogan's Turkey. I come from a country where the civil society has been crushed by populists, religionists, authoritarian nationalism.

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Turkish nationalism teaches young children that we are a nation surrounded by water on three sides and enemies on four sides and the only friend of a Turk is another Turk. That paranoia, that xenophobia is not accidental but intrinsic to nationalism. But allow me to make one thing clear. We are not disputing the beauty and the importance of one's love and compassion for his culture, language, literature, the land of his ancestors. These are beautiful, truly human emotions, and we must celebrate them and honor them. But you don't need nationalism for that. We do not have to become nationalists in order to love and embrace and honor our roots.

Finally, in a pandemic world, nationalism is not only misleading and dangerous, but it's also completely impractical and unrealistic. We have massive challenges ahead, and these are global challenges, starting with climate catastrophe.

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Our planet is burning, whether it's cyberterrorism, the dark side of digital technologies, AI, robotics, or another pandemic, our problems, our lives, our destinies are interconnected. So it is much wiser and much healthier for us to collaborate beyond borders, to think beyond tribes, and always bear in mind our common humanity. We believe we can neither solve global challenges nor heal existing wounds with the toxicity of nationalism.

John Donovan:

Thank you very much, Elif Shafak. Our next speaker will be arguing, again, from the other side, the side arguing for the resolution nationalism is a force for good. Here is Colin Dueck. Colin, the floor is yours.

Colin Dueck:

Thanks, John. Well, let me begin by noting that you might say the chattering classes on both sides of the Atlantic believe that nationalism is not a force for good. That's very clear. They believe that nationalism is warlike, destructive, authoritarian.

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Perna and I are speaking on the other side of that. What we believe, and what she's already outlined, is the fact that nationalism can be a force for good. And I'm going to make three brief points. My specialty is, in particular, the United States and its foreign policy. The first point is that nationalism in itself is really the best device that human beings have yet found to preserve the possibility for experiments with constitutional self-government. We have found no better way.

There is no system of global governance that actually functions any better than a democratic nation-state in allowing for freedom and opportunity at the national level. So there's an honorable tradition of national thought in Europe and in other countries that celebrates that fact. It is a positive force, and it can be a positive force. The second point is the United States in particular, like every country, has its own version of nationalism. In the American case, that version was laid out by the American founders in their Declaration of Independence, which said that all men are created equal.

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And they could have added all women. And what that means is that the American tradition of nationalism, properly understood, is a civic religion or creed, as many have noted, that has respect for minorities built into it, implicitly from the very beginning. And it's a tradition, a nationalist tradition in the United States that celebrates rule of law, constitutionalism, individual liberty, and limited government.

That is American nationalism. Do we really want to reject that? I would suggest not. I think that that's a healthy, benign tradition. And most of the debates we see inside the United States across party lines are debates over how exactly to express it.

My last point is this. When it comes to American foreign policy, there is also a tradition that none other than George Washington outlined suggesting that the United States has the right to preserve its own national sovereignty.

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He suggested that the United States is a sovereign country. It had declared its independence, not its dependence. And although Americans over the course of the 20th century made a variety of commitments necessarily to combat authoritarian states, like Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, we have found that preserving American national sovereignty on balance is a healthy thing. And so the American nationalist tradition is in fact the oldest democratic American foreign policy tradition. It's meant to preserve Americans' right to self-government.

It's meant to preserve the sovereignty of a particular state. And we should celebrate the ability of other states to do the same thing if they are democratic. My opponent just suggested that there's no such thing as a different type of nationalism. I would respectfully differ. I would say she's speaking, I believe, from London. But the British form of nationalism is radically different than the Chinese or the Russian form, which are authoritarian.

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I doubt she would be allowed to make this argument today if she was sitting in Beijing or Moscow. It is the British form of nationalism which celebrates freedom of speech, constitutionalism, and individual liberties that allows her to join us to critique nationalism. I do find that ironic.

So my own conclusion would be that traditional Western forms of nationalism -- and also some non-Western forms, as long as they're democratic -- can be healthy, productive, celebratory, and worthwhile. And I would conclude by saying that I hope you vote yes with my partner and I, that nationalism can be a force for good. Thank you.

John Donovan:

Thank you, Colin Dueck. And we have one more speaker in this opening round to be speaking against the resolution that nationalism is a force for good. Here is Andrew Keen. Andrew, the screen is yours.

Andrew Keen:

Thank you very much, John. So let's remember what the motion is. Nationalism is a force for good. So far, our opponents have suggested it could be, it might be, it was.

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But they're not arguing that it is. We're talking about nationalism on June the 22nd, 2020, today, in a world of Erdogan, of Putin, of Trump, of Bolsonaro, of Duterte, of this new wave of authoritarian nationalism. It's also important to remember that we're not arguing about the existence of the nation-state. I acknowledge, and I think my partner would acknowledge, that nation-states are fine.

The problem is that nationalism as an ideological extreme, ideological manifestation of the nation-state, is deeply problematic. It wasn't always problematic. Back in, let's take 1720, 300 years ago, nationalism was a way of thinking that challenged the authoritarianism, centralized states in England and France.

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In 1820, it was the way for Germany and Italy and other Central European countries to reawake. In 1920, nationalism was a way for colonized countries to react to determine their identities against the colonial powers. But today, in 2020, we have a massive problem with nationalism. The problem is that the way we live our lives, the globalized, the simultaneously globalized and

fragmented nature of early 21st-century life, doesn't conform to the traditional notions of nationalism.

Increasingly, people living in the same political state have less and less in common. People in Berlin and Budapest and Berkeley, California, have more in common as city-states, as globalized networks, than places outside those urban centers.

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And the problem with this fantasy of nationalism is it lends itself to nationalist leaders who lie. Now our opponents suggest that there's a difference between British nationalism and Chinese nationalism. Perhaps in a sense there is, but in another sense there isn't. Boris Johnson is much -- is as much a liar on Brexit as Putin or Orban or Bolsonaro or Trump. They're all lying because there's no existence.

There's no real existence of nationalism. It's a fantasy. It's an imaginary community that doesn't in fact unite us. My partner suggests it divides us. It's divided us historically, particularly in her part of the world. But today, in 2020, it's deeply divisive. The biggest problem -- and this is where my opponents are profoundly wrong -- is they suggest that it enriches democracy.

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But in 2020, they couldn't be more wrong. The most troubling manifestation of the world on June 22nd, 2020, is the rise of deeply authoritarian nationalists all over the world. Orban in Hungary is closing down representative democracy. His model is Putin. Trump is trying to do the same thing in the United States in terms of the election in November. Even Boris Johnson has flirted with this kind of authoritarianism. So I urge you to vote on our side and argue that nationalism today, in 2020, is not a force for good.

John Donvan:

Thank you very much, Andrew Keen. And that concludes our opening round, opening statements. And now we move on to our second round. And in our second round, it's more of a conversation. It'll flow over the next half hour plus, and it's going to be driven in part by questions from me and by questions from you, members of our audience who submitted questions ahead of time.

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And also, the debaters can challenge one another directly. But what I think we've heard is varying conceptions of what nationalism stands for. On one side, the notion that, by its power to turn "me" into "we," it can be a unifying -- a unifying force for getting good done in the world on behalf of the citizens of a nation-state. Particularly it's been argued it's been very, very good, created a very good laboratory for democracy. On the other side, we're hearing that nationalism maybe, from time to time, has done some good but that, on the whole and almost inevitably, it turns into "us" against "them" and that that's the destructive force that has been repeated over

and over again in history.

So I want to take the question to you, Perna, a question, actually, that we received from an audience member who is a prior debater with us, Jennifer Rubin, who is an opinion writer for the Washington Post.

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And she asks, "Isn't nationalism by definition rooted in blood and soil? And if so, does it inextricably lead to xenophobia, racism, and protectionism?"

I would put on top of that question the argument that I think we heard from Elif that nationalism is inherently -- is inherently going to turn dark, that's a sort of inevitable course that it takes. I think Jennifer Rubin's question is pointing out some of the ways in which it turns dark but that it's inevitably going to be a negative force. What's your response to that?

Perna Singh:

Thank you, John. What I would begin by saying is that, so nationalism is about attachment to a political territory. And I was heartened to see that my opponents kind of conceded the fact that we live in a world in which -- we live in a world of nation-states. So if you acknowledge that we live in a world of nation-states, you also recognize nationalism as the legitimizing ideology of political rule.

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And so I acknowledge that there are versions of nationalism in which the blood and soil aspect of it rise to the fore.

But I would also submit that we have, and we cannot ignore this aspect of nationalism, seen how it has driven profoundly inclusive movements in which it is less about blood and soil but about a constructed idea of belonging. And so I'll just briefly talk about a historic -- just give you historical examples, again, in terms of the most profoundly powerful nationalisms that led to the liberation of countries like India, where I'm from, the nationalism of Gandhi, but also today. So there are nationalisms that are not necessarily rooted in blood and soil that are alive and flourishing today and that have played a very important role in tackling the crises of today. So, again, you know, Andrew mentioned this point about the fact that we are today in 2020, and Elif mentioned the fact that we are in the midst of a pandemic.

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Now you see how an inclusive nationalism is allowing people to mobilize even today. So there is a kind of dark nationalism, which is this populist, radical exclusionary nationalism voiced by leaders.

But every day on the streets, there is less of that and much more of a civic conception of the nation that is motivating Italians to come out, sing national anthems and patriotic songs, and

bang their pots in honor of their national health workers. You see in France, Macron's talked again and again about analogy, as other political leaders have done, that this is an invisible enemy, we're at war. But this is a rallying of the nation. The New York Times, a liberal left newspaper, has an Op-Ed that says it is patriotic to social distance. In each of these cases, while this points out, I think, that there are distinct versions of nationalism and it's not limited to academia.

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It's happening every day. And this everyday inclusive nationalism is mobilizing people to fight the pandemic and other current events at this moment. So nationalism at this moment is a force for good.

John Donovan:

Let me take your point to Elif. There was a lot in there, Elif. But what is your response overall to -- especially where we heard Prerna giving examples of outcomes that I think most of us would consider positive, which she attributes to nationalism? What's your response, especially since, Elif, you made the strongest case of anybody among the debaters today that there's an -- there's an inherent -- there's an inherent evil built into nationalism. So what's your response to those examples of good?

Elif Shafak:

So I do make a distinction between one's love and appreciation and compassion for one's country, culture, language, literature. As I mentioned, these are beautiful things. So that kind of patriotism is very different than the nationalism that we are talking about today. Nationalism --

John Donovan:

So can I stop you to -- yeah. That would be very helpful for us to draw the distinction between patriotism and nationalism.

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Your opponents may or may not agree with it, but I'd like to hear how you make that distinction.

Elif Shafak:

Patriotism is much older. Nationalism is much younger. Patriotism, when you look at even how the word has been used, going all the way back to the Elizabethan era, coming from, you know, late Latin but also Greek origin. Basically, it means a connection, a belonged sense of belonging with your fellow countrymen and countrywomen. Whereas the word "nationalism," even the concept itself, the way it was coined. And when you look at people like Herder, Johann Herder, the people who have coined the term, first of all, it is much younger, about a century later. And there is -- and their main preoccupation was not only defining who belongs in a nation, but also who should not belong in the nation. That distinction was there present from the very beginning. So Herder himself, for instance, is also very well known for his anti-Semitic views.

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He was very much busy trying to prove that Jews could not -- could not belong in Europe because they were Asiatic people, and he would call them parasites. And these are not accidental things. I can also -- we can find many other examples throughout history.

When you look at the thinkers, the main thinkers of nationalism, they are busy trying to also highlight who should never, ever belong in the national project. What I'm trying to say is every nationalism comes up with their own official history or the official way of telling the story. What makes the difference is whether that country is a democracy, a pluralistic democracy. In a pluralistic democracy, we can go to a bookstore and find books that question the official history over here, and the authors of those books are not prosecuted. So it's not the nationalism that makes the difference, but it is precisely whether there's pluralistic liberal democracy in that country and freedom of speech that makes a difference.

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And then we can say, wait a minute, nationalism did not tell the story of this minority, that minority. What about all the other stories that we have forgotten? So the nationalist project is not only about remembering, but it's also about erasing. It's also about amnesia.

John Donovan:

Colin, did Elif accurately describe it from your point of view, how nationalism has functioned in the United States? You've already made the case that you feel that nationalism has functioned in a largely positive way most of the time. But she has -- she has outlined a situation in which nationalism, by necessity, excludes and does not attribute the -- to the degree the United States is a successful democracy, that success to nationalism. So what's your response to all of that?

Colin Dueck:

Sure. Thanks, John. Well, I mean, there's generations of American historians who've argued that a sense of American nationalism is central in a benign way, central to America --

John Donovan:

How -- could you define -- could you define -- I'm sorry to interrupt you, but could you take a moment to define what that -- what they mean by that "nationalism," what that is?

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Colin Dueck:

Sure. It means a combination of things. It means a close attachment to U.S. national sovereignty, a desire to protect the sovereignty, integrity, independence of the United States internationally, to stand for its rights, its values, its way of life internationally.

It includes, by the way, the hope that popular forms of self-government will spread. Washington was clear about that as well. There's nothing inherently warlike about it, but there are times where it does have to be vindicated by the use of force as, for example, it was during World War II. I would give World War II as an excellent example, as my partner, I think, suggests as well,

of, you know, nationalism at work in a benign way. I don't see how Hitler and Nazi Germany would have been stopped without nationalism, not just patriotism, but French nationalism, American nationalism, British nationalism, and even Russian nationalism expressed through the bizarre form of the Soviet regime.

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I mean, I don't see how you would have had anything other than a Nazi conquest of Europe without robust popular nationalism to stop it.

Perna Singh:

Can I jump in for a second, John?

John Donovan:

Yes, please do.

Perna Singh:

So I just wanted to kind of just point out the two distinctions that Elif made that I think go against, and she began in her opening remarks by saying that these distinctions are only made by academics, maybe such as my partner and I.

But in the course of her response to you, she made two distinctions, one between patriotism and nationalism. And the second about as these two patriotism and nationalism work in democratic and authoritarian contexts. Those are important distinctions and are precisely the distinctions that our side is making. To me, this is a semantic game. Patriotism and nationalism are the same thing; it is an inclusive, civic-minded nationalism that gets called patriotism. You can't have your cake and eat it too. You can't say that we don't want to make any distinctions and that we are the one telling you that there's a distinction between a more positive and a less positive nationalism.

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And then you can then come out and say, well, this is patriotism, and this is nationalism, and this is democratic and then authoritarian. I don't think it works that way.

Elif Shafak:

Yeah, I hear what you're saying. And actually, I have heard what you are saying many times in Turkey from very different groups in Turkey, because as an author, I've always been interested in the stories that official Turkish history has excluded, denied, suppressed, and silenced. So one of those very important stories is the Armenian genocide. In 2006, I wrote a novel called "The Bastard of Istanbul," which tells the story of a Turkish family and an Armenian American family.

Perna Singh:

It's a great novel; I love it.

Elif Shafak:

I appreciate, so much. It deals with memory and amnesia. When the book was published. I was put on trial for insulting Turkishness. And the accusation against me was that I was a traitor, that I did not love my nation. I believe it is possible to love, to be patriot, to love and care for your country, for the oral culture, for the literature that are more than a patriot, you know? That is something I feel with me. I live in exile.

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I can't go back to Istanbul, but Istanbul comes with me everywhere. So I'm more than a patriot. It's something very different. But am I a nationalist? No, I'm not. Am I critical of nationalism? Yes, I am. So it is quite possible to be patriotic without being a nationalist. And actually, many times nationalists are telling us, "If you criticize the government, then that means you don't love your country. That means you're a traitor." We really need to make those distinctions very, very well. And I think it all ties back to what I said earlier because the nationalist project is constantly trying to erase the stories and the truth of minorities.

John Donovan:

Let me bring in Andrew and I want to point out that you and Andrew are partners. So this is not a parry to what you just said, but I'm expecting his support. But go ahead, Andrew.

Andrew Keen:

And I'm honored to be Elif's partner. I think Elif's point's a really important one.

00:38:02

She underlines the fact that nationalism itself, while pedaling on the metaphysics of history, suggesting that the communities have existed forever, which is another lie, is historically rooted.

There was no such thing -- the word didn't exist until Herder and other 18th century thinkers invented it. There's always been patriotism. There's always been love of one's community. You can find it in antiquity. You can find it in every culture. You can find it in the Middle Ages. So we're not arguing that we should -- this debate is not about loving one's community. This is a debate about how to -- how to operate a nation state around an idea or whether or not we think that the ideology of nationalism, which many authoritarian leaders have fallen on in in the early parts of the 20th century, is a good or a bad thing.

00:39:09

John Donovan:

Andrew --

Andrew Keen:

We're not arguing about patriotism; that's another issue.

John Donovan:

But let me pick up on the point you just made. Is there such a thing? Can there be a nation state without nationalism? And what does that look like?

Andrew Keen:

There can, of course, be many nation states. Canada is a good example. Canada is a country which has come to terms with the idea that many different types of people live in the country and that the notion of Canadian-ness might excite some sports fans and late night comics is essentially irrelevant. And I think that -- and America is an exceptional case, but I think there are also -- there is a tradition in America which is similar to Canada, which I certainly prefer over Trump's ethnic nationalism, defining what it means to be an American, particularly, I think, around race, around whiteness.

00:40:04

Colin Dueck:

So I grew up in Canada. I spent the first 20-some years of my life there and I'm glad that Andrew mentioned it, and I eventually became a U.S. citizen. But as I'm sure Andrew knows, English Canadians and French Canadians both have a robust national pride or sense of nationalism. There is a French Canadian nationalism. There is also an intense English Canadian nationalism or patriotism. And it's often been referred to as a form of nationalism, not just patriotism. It actually -- it actually distinguishes Canada from the United States [laughs]. And it -- that is a central theme in English Canadian nationalism. And it's a great example of how -- what our opponents seem to be doing is saying that when there's a particular version of nationalism they like, they're just going to call it patriotism. When there's a version they don't like -- so that's Canada, for example, is fine. We're fine with Canada. It's harmless. It's tame. It's liberal [laughs]. But then there's a version that they don't like, even if it's democratically elected, like President Trump or Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

00:41:04

That's authoritarian, it's ideological, it's extreme, and it's dark. I have yet to hear a convincing argument as to how they're able to make those distinctions other than just a subjective preference for one, but not --

[talking simultaneously]

John Donovan:

Aren't you and Prerna doing the same thing? Aren't you, as well, saying there's good nationalism and bad nationalism and we're for the good nationalism?

Colin Dueck:

But they're doing something worse than that. They're doing something slicker than that in the sense that they're defining everything as nationalism. Can they -- you know, whatever one calls the political arrangement in Canada, I'm not sure that's nationalism. In Canada, there's an acceptance that, as Colin suggested, there's a -- as a French and as an English speaking communities, they can coexist within the same political territory. They can share power. But the

notion of identity, the notion that English and French and other nationalities in Canada share something essential in a tunnel term doesn't exist.

00:42:09

And that's what nationalism is. That's what Modi and Bolsonaro and Putin and Trump all peddle.

Prerna Singh:

So, you know, historically nationalism has been seen as Janus faced. It has these two faces. And to me, what our opponents are doing is to just take the good face and call it patriotism. But the motion, again, I want to remind the House, is nationalism is a force for good. And today, if you ignore the fact that that face of nationalism that allows it to be a constructive force is actually, in allowing us to respond to the pandemic, but also, I think Elif mentioned a critical point about the role of dissent. So there's nothing intrinsically in nationalism that makes dissent inaccessible. In fact, many nationalisms are founded on dissent, such as Indian nationalism, and all anticolonial nationalisms that began by saying, "We're against British colonial rule."

00:43:05

And if you're not in India, again, responding to Andrew's point about, you know, is today 2020 -- just before the pandemic broke, India was in the throes of protests against citizenship amendment bills and other institutional arrangements that would exclude Muslims. How did the Muslims come out and protest on the streets? They clothed themselves in the Indian tricolor, the same flag that Gandhi had designed and, you know, spun. They sang the national anthem and they chanted national slogans and carried the photographs of national leaders. Every day on the streets, nationalism is a mobilizing force. And today it is. And being able to protest is a critical component.

John Donvan:

Okay. I want to take back the comment that I made. Let me just say this as moderator in regard to what I said your team is doing. I was incorrect. Your team is saying there's good nationalism and bad nationalism, but that you think nationalism can be, has been, continues to be in certain situations a force for good.

00:44:08

Your opponents are saying that there is -- that that's just not true. And they are excluding some of the positive things that you're talking about as demonstrations of patriotism or other -isms, but not nationalism. And I think that that's a fair thing to do within a debate. But I want to go to Elif now because you've been very patient, Elif.

Elif Shafak:

Nationalism is so dangerous and misleading that even our opponents are recognizing that there are so many cases in which it has proven to be incredibly destructive. But this is how things become -- get darker and darker. When you talk about, for instance, making Hindu nationalism

the cement, the glue that holds the nation together, that is incredibly dangerous in a beautiful country like India, in which diversity is the source of richness and strength. Or when we talk about making nationalism the cement or the social glue that holds people together in Turkey, for instance, which nationalism am I going to make the glue?

00:45:05

Turkish nationalism? And how do you think the Kurds are going to feel about that? We do not even recognize the rights of Kurdish people to speak their mother tongue and to have education in their own mother tongue. I'll never forget, as a young writer, years ago, when I went to a festival for the first time, Wales, just stopping by the road signs because I had never seen a road sign in two languages. In Turkey, it's unthinkable to have road signs in Turkish and Kurdish. So all I'm trying to say is the moment to try to make nationalism the umbrella to hold identities together, you start to divide and exclude people.

John Donovan:

Colin, we have a question from a previous debater, Lee Drutman, who's a senior fellow at New America, which I think might help focus where we're going with this. He asks, "Which country in the world today is doing nationalism best and what does that look like?"

Colin Dueck:

Yeah, that is a great question.

00:46:00

I actually don't think Boris Johnson's a liar [laughs]. I don't live there, but I would say that -- I would say that in Britain, whether or not you support the decision to leave the E.U., that was a decision that was, first of all, that was the vote of a majority of British citizens. It's been -- there's been a massive debate about it for years. It's being implemented by a democratically elected leader. I don't see how it's possible to claim that he's authoritarian other than if you're just using the word to mean somebody you don't happen to like. The principal distinction between a -- what I would consider a negative form of nationalism and the positive form is that the negative form is authoritarian and that the positive form is democratic. That is a principal difference. That has nothing to do with whether you like the particular leader that was elected last year or the year before.

It's not a question as to whether you think Boris Johnson is a nice guy or not, or whether you think Donald Trump is a nice guy or not. These are both leaders, for all their differences, that were elected in democratic processes in a free country. So whether or not you like Donald Trump or Boris Johnson, these are not the equivalent of a Russian or a Chinese dictator.

John Donovan:

Forgive me for interrupting. I just wanted to -- because you mentioned Boris Johnson and Andrew, I believe, brought him up in the context of his argument that nationalism allows leaders to lie, that lying becomes enabled in a nationalist system. What's your response to that? And then, Andrew, I would like to get a follow up to whatever Colin has to say.

Colin Dueck:

I don't see why lies would be any more central to nationalism than any other ideology. I mean, nationalism at the heart of it, as we've been talking about, is really love of country or patriotism, which is not a lie. We've heard it described it as a fantasy. I don't believe it's a fantasy. I believe love of country is real. And even for the people who support leaders who are described as nationalists in democracies, whatever you think of those leaders, for many of their popular supporters, that love of country is real. It is not a lie.

John Donovan:

Andrew.

00:48:01

Andrew Keen:

I agree with Colin. It's not a lie. I believe that Boris Johnson does indeed love -- I don't whether it's Britain or England. But let's just remind ourselves again what we're arguing about. Nationalism is a force for good. So we have a situation in the U.K. where Boris Johnson, for better or worse, is an English nationalist. He's opposed to the very idea of the E.U. because it somehow offends his Englishness. He believes in the essential nature of Englishness. And therefore, I think he peddled a series of lies to get the U.K. out of the E.U. I think we just need to come back to the reality of our world in 2020. We live, for better or worse, in a globalized world, whether we like it or not. The U.K., I think, is much better off within the E.U.

I was shocked that Prerna mentioned the coronavirus on her -- in terms of making her argument. The coronavirus is a classic -- a classic manifestation of why nationalism is not a force for good.

00:49:06

Trump talks about the "Kung flu epidemic" to nationalize coronavirus. But in a globalized, networked age, nationalism is not a solution, and because it's not a solution and because it doesn't reflect the reality of our socioeconomic, glued, global world, it lends itself to people like Johnson lying and falling back on historical mythology and absurd nostalgia.

John Donovan:

We have a question from Amber from Nashville, Tennessee, and she asks, "Big tech corporations like Facebook and Google and Twitter connect people around the world, and there's a lot of debate about who should regulate them and whether they're being effectively governed right now.

What does this mean for nation state and national governments? Are they outdated?" I want to take that question and pivot back to you, Prerna, on the point that Andrew just made.

00:50:01

You made the argument that nationalism is an empowering and organizing force in the ability of

particular states to respond now to coronavirus. I'm bringing it up and relating it to Amber's question because there is this -- this virus travels across borders. I think it's a very, very good laboratory experiment for whether something that exists across borders is best responded to through a sort of global cooperative response, perhaps under the egis of an international organization like the World Health Organization, or whether it's better dealt with by nations with their ability to organize. So let's talk a little bit about the coronavirus example that you brought up and go further with that.

Perna Singh:

So -- and I want to bring up coronavirus because, as you rightly pointed out, this is a pandemic. Infectious disease knows no borders. And yet I think coronavirus brings out the centrality of nation states and of nationalism. Responses, for better or worse, have been of individual states; it's led to the shutting down of national borders.

00:51:07

Again, indicating to us the importance of national sovereignty. But returning to the question you asked Colin, you know, about, what is a successful nationalism? I want to return again to this point about Canada. So there has been the scapegoating of minorities and by radical, exclusionary populist leaders like Trump, the kind of blaming of China. So -- and in a way, the scapegoating of minorities for infectious diseases goes back to the bubonic plague and the targeting of Jews. So this is not new. But if you look at data coming out of different countries in the world, there is a difference in -- to the extent to which minorities are blamed and targeted for the virus. And in Canada, where there is this inclusive multi-cultural sense of identity, there has been very little scapegoating of minorities.

We have evidence for this --.

John Donovan:

And you credit that to a Canadian nationalism? I just want to be clear.

Perna Singh:

I credit it to a multicultural Canadian nationalism that values and celebrates diversity.

00:52:05

And that is nationalism. You can call it patriotism, but it is fundamentally about love of country. And also this point about, you know, cosmopolitanism and globalization that Andrew's mentioned a few times. So I want to point out that nationalism is a nested identity. Just because I'm a woman, it doesn't make me less Indian or less American. Linda, Colleague [spelled phonetically], who actually we've been talking about Britain, has a beautiful book on the construction of Britain. And she says, you know, identities are not like hats. We wear more than one at once. And so being a nationalist and being a cosmopolitan are not at odds with each other. In fact, again, we have evidence that people who feel very patriotic, very nationalist, are also the people who are quite committed to a cosmopolitan identity. But I don't think we can put our head in the sand, and as political philosophers have done, and say they're all going to speak

Esperanto and kind of Berlin and Buchdahl [spelled phonetically] are the same.

I mean, nations continue to matter, but avoiding a cosmopolitan identity is not at odds with also being having an attachment to your nation.

00:53:05

John Donovan:

I want to bring Elif into the conversation. You look like you're trying to break in there. So go, Elif.

Elif Shafak:

Yeah, I think we do not have to get stuck in dualities. We're often told that we should either choose nationalism or the kind of globalization that has caused so much damage and inequality and injustice before -- especially before the pandemic and brought us where we are right now. I don't have to choose between these two horrible options. I think I do believe we can, as human beings have more options. We do keep talking about Canada and Scotland. And let's be honest here. We don't have too many examples like Canada and Scotland. And the reason why nationalism in those places does not bother us is not because of the character of their nationalism, but precisely because their nationalism has been counterbalanced by other forces, such as pluralism, multiplicity, multiculturalism, democracy, rule of law, freedom of speech, internationalism in a place like Scotland, because there's that internationalist spirit that the nationalist ideology doesn't work in the same way.

00:54:10

So it's not the power of nationalism at all. But you find they share this with you. I think we women need to take these debates much more seriously because we have seen in country after country, whenever societies go backwards and tumble into nationalism and tribalism, isolationism, we also see a rise of sexism and homophobia and misogyny in those countries. So I believe women need to be especially cautious when it comes to nationalism. We cannot assume that some countries in the world are solid countries. They will never be affected by ugly side of nationalism and some other countries are liquid countries. That is not the case at all.

Just one maybe last bit I want to share with you. You might remember very recently, Freedom House shared a report showing that 35 countries have made progress, which sounded like good news.

00:55:03

The next paragraph in the same report said 70 countries. Twice as many. Their number had been sliding backwards with a bewildering speed. And among them are those countries that we thought were safe, unsullied. So there's no such thing as some country's nationalism being very sure, and we can't take that for granted. I think we are all living in liquid times.

John Donovan:

Coin, Elif mentioned internationalism is a force for good. It's not what we're debating. But it does seem to be at the other end of the pole polarity that we're discussing. Are there problems and challenges where an internationalist -- I don't mean just international, but an internationalist response is appropriate and better and superior to nationalism. And again, I'm thinking of coronavirus being potentially a candidate for that given the nature of the virus itself.

Colin Dueck:

Sure. Well, there's nothing wrong and in fact, a great deal to recommend voluntary cooperation among sovereign democracies to tackle common problems. For example, China's been mentioned several times.

00:56:03

I would like to see, and I've written to suggest that the United States and its European allies could cooperate more effectively to counteract Chinese foreign economic behavior, often mendacious and aggressive. So there's plenty of ways -- if you want to define that as internationalist, go ahead. But I think that the word internationalism over the years has become synonymous with something much broader, a kind of post-Cold War ideology, suggesting that national sovereignty itself is outmoded, an argument that you've actually heard over the last hour that, you know, globalization means that we have more in common than that sets us apart and that therefore there's no need to be so fussy anymore about these outdated concepts of national sovereignty.

I would prefer to see a system where the United States and its allies cooperate around urgent security and economic challenges, as they should. But there's no need to -- there's no need to veer into some sort of fantasy world where out of a sort of a John Lennon song suggesting that we're going to imagine ourselves in a post-national, anti-national, or non-national world, it doesn't make sense.

00:57:11

And it's not even it's not even to be recommended.

John Donovan:

Well, let's take an example of the European Union as a as an administrative system that to some degree compromises its traditional national sovereignty to some degree. Do you consider that a successful experiment or an unsuccessful experiment or neither?

Colin Dueck:

I think it's mainly up for the citizens of European countries to decide that for themselves, as the British, for example, have decided. I think they have the right to decide whether or not they want to continue to be members or not. I don't think that's really primarily the business of outside actors, which is just the point. It's clear that many Europeans find some of these arrangements to be a suboptimal. But I think it's mainly going to be decided by Europeans. And for that matter, I would say the same thing about domestic arrangements and issues inside the United States.

Andrew Keen:

The more we talk, it seems to me as if our honorable opponents our nostalgists for a system that they acknowledge isn't very good, but they seem to believe that it can't be reformed, that that there's no way of doing politics any better than the nationalism that comes out of the nation state.

00:58:18

And it's clear in 2020 that our old system isn't working, our capitalism is in crisis. Inequality, we have the coronavirus now undermining our health systems. We have the Internet, which is fragmenting and disrupting traditional networks. And we need to rethink our politics, too. It doesn't only have to be Britain and Boris Johnson versus the EU. There are all sorts of other really interesting political experiments going on.

In Turkey, for example, civic identity is increasingly strong. And what's really interesting is that the most effective response to nationalist authoritarianism, whether it's in Manila or Buenos Aires or Rio or Istanbul, is coming through local government, through city government.

00:59:10

So there are alternatives. One can have pride in one's city, for example, not be a nationalist and yet be committed to democracy. So this idea that we can't fix anything, that our system doesn't work, that there are no alternatives is deeply conservative and pessimistic. And it's why they're wrong that nationalism is a force for good. It's a force for bad. And we need to find better systems to operate 21st century political, cultural and social life.

John Donvan:

Prerna, your response to that?

Prerna Singh:

So I don't know quite where my opponent is getting this idea of a kind of pessimism or more that we don't know what to do or the system can't be reformed. Again, I point to the fact that national identities are completely complementary and are reinforced by both local identity. So, yes, being a proud New Yorker and being a proud American are not just compatible. They actually, we know from evidence reinforce each other.

01:00:11

And similarly, there isn't a distinction between being proud of your country and also having a larger or supranational identity. So the point about the European Union brings out that you can be a proud European Union citizen, but it hasn't at all eliminated the importance of the nation states or the salience of what it means to be German or French or Austrian. The national identities are very comfortable being layered on with other identities. And this point that Elif mentioned about it being liquid or Andrew said it being reformed. That's to me what our side is arguing for.

If you give up nationalism to these radical right to exclusionary versions of it, that's when you give up your potential to reform it.

01:01:00

Nationalism is liquid. That nationalism is in play. It's in motion. It's being defined at any point in time. There's an official nationalism; there's an everyday nationalism. And if you give up on the concept itself, you basically relegate nationalism to the constructions of the right. And so I think we're arguing very much that this is liquid and we need to take control over it and harness it, because history has shown us and the press at the moment is showing us how it is a force for good.

John Donvan:

Elif, can I bring a question to you, Elif? One point that I don't think your side has responded to from your opponents -- came from Prerna's opening statement in which she talked about various examples in which she thinks what are perceived as good outcomes, would not have happened without the power of nationalism. So, for example, the decolonization of African -- of the African continent and the story of Gandhi, that nationalism was critical, was crucial in the liberation movements in those places, and that without it, those things wouldn't have happened.

01:02:04

That would sound like a very, very strong endorsement of nationalism. I like to know what your response is to that.

Elif Shafak:

Yes, thank you. Because I think it's a very important subject. Anticolonial struggles are incredibly important, and we need to discuss it at more length. But we also need to understand that if an anticolonial struggle gets stuck in its own nationalism, the aftermath of liberation, we will see again the exclusion of the minorities within that community. And again, history has given us so many examples that proves this. So, for instance, what I'm trying to say is what does the aftermath of an anticolonial struggle if it only stays within the context of nationalism? I want to underline that, because until that point, it is it is a movement for equality, for freedom.

But once nationalism becomes the main identity, that is incredibly problematic. What does it mean, for instance, for LGBT communities? What does it mean for ethnic minorities or religious minorities?

01:03:03

What does it mean for the working class, for the people who do not necessarily fit in the description of the majority? And that is a basic problem. With regards to liquid times. What I meant to say was the times we're living, the era we're living is liquid. It is full of uncertainty. So we cannot say that some parts of the world are, you know, -- everything is safe and solid because I've heard this a lot. As a feminist I've heard it a lot, too. I've been told that it was understandable for me to be a feminist because after all, I lived in Turkey, but I never understood

why you wouldn't need feminism in America or in Canada because you can't take your rights for granted. So what I'm trying to say is there's no such thing as some solid lands. Everything is changing in the world we're living.

And nationalism is not liquid. Nationalism does not like to lose. Nationalism does not look like multiplicity. I came to the U.K. about 12 years ago and I have seen nationalism change this country. I have seen it change the language of politics. Imagine buying a tabloid one day and seeing the pictures of judges who are critical of Brexit and underneath it says, "Enemies of the People."

01:04:14

I've heard that kind of language in Turkey. So nationalism does change the rhetoric. And one final example --

John Donovan:

And are you saying that that's inevitable because your opponents are saying, yes, that can happen. But they're saying it's not inevitable, that -- and they're specifically saying that there is a nationalism that can be nurtured, embraced, fed correctly, controlled.

Elif Shafak:

If nationalism is not counterbalanced, if it becomes the main driving force in a country that is inevitable. That is why the previous prime minister in the U.K., there is some [unintelligible] could come forward and say, if you're a citizen of the world, you're a citizen of nowhere. I do not understand this. We need to talk about identity politics.

I am an Istanbulite; I'm also attached to the Balkans, the Middle East. I'm a European by birth. I'm a Londoner. I'm a British citizen. And I would like to think of myself as a citizen of the world. That does not mean I have no sense of belonging. It means I can care about many things at the same time.

01:05:06

John Donovan:

You just made it very -- I'm sorry to break in, but --

Elif Shafak:

I think we should emphasize multiple belongings.

John Donovan:

I want to take that point, which is very powerfully made to Colin. And Colin, you've lived in two nations. You're, to some degree, a multinational. But the argument that Elif just made that there's another way to be that can be very, very enriching and meaningful and positive. What's your response to that?

Colin Dueck:

Well, I think most great patriots have understood historically that they can have multiple identities. They can be proud of their city, of their state, of their country. At the same time, there's -- those are not mutually exclusive. But the desire to put country before self is central. And I would call that nationalism. And I would just say Elif has spoken very eloquently on concern for the disempowered. And that's demarginalized.

01:06:00

And that's important to remember. It's important to remember that nationalism in its benign form can actually do exactly that. I think that if you look at working class voters in parts of northern England, parts of the Rust Belt, the United States, these were voters who obviously felt they had been ignored by existing policies, including trade policies in those countries. Now, you don't have to like how they voted, but they had the right to make those choices. They had their reasons. And I think that we -- I'm thinking now as a conservative, actually -- I think that we who sit inside the Beltway and sit at think tanks and talk about the benefits of globalism need to remember that there are real human beings who have immediate concerns about globalization and that we need to listen. We need to listen to them. These are our people. There needs to be some kind of solidarity with them.

John Donovan:

But what I'm hearing from Elif is, you know, you can use the U.K. and Brexit as an example -- is that the nationalism embodied and us and them about immigrants. That there was a very, very strong and dark aspect to that. And they're saying that that us and them-ness is always built into nationalism and that is -- that always leads to a bad place, to a bad outcome.

01:07:08

Colin Dueck:

Well, I understand, and they've repeated that argument, but I haven't heard it substantiated. I mean, what Perna and I have countered with is to show plenty of examples historically and today of the benign form. So obviously, it's not inherently dark.

Andrew Keen:

But I don't -- I really strongly disagree with that. You haven't shown us any examples. We've pointed to numerous examples of how nationalism has gone wrong in 2020. They're -- they dominate every headline.

John Donovan:

Perna gave many, many examples, Andrew, of places where it's been benign and positive.

Andrew Keen:

Well, she gave the example of India, which is now run by --

[talking simultaneously]

Perna Singh:

-- South Africa, Canada, New Zealand.

Andrew Keen:

But I don't think -- we went over the Canadian case. They haven't responded to the reality of the world in 2020, where authoritarian nationalists are destroying democracy all over the world.

01:08:06

How would they explain Hungary? Where -- Elif is, of course, extremely experienced in Turkey. How would they explain the Philippines? How would they explain Brazil? How would they explain the United States? This is the reality. We keep on hearing oh, well, nationalism could be okay. In principle, it works. In principle, everything works. But the reality of the world today is that nationalism is deeply intolerant. Colin's right about listening to people and listening, particularly to people who are on the wrong side of globalization. But as Elif noted, the reality of all these nationalist movements is that unwillingness to listen. They have created this world in which anyone outside their conception of the nation is illegitimate.

So it's exactly what Putin does. It is exactly what Orbán does. It's what Duterte does. It's what Bolsonaro does. It's what Trump does. They are profoundly and structurally intolerant and anti-democratic. And that's where nationalism leads in 2020.

01:09:08

John Donovan:

Prerna, I can give you the last word on this round --

[talking simultaneously]

Prerna Singh:

I feel we've been -- we've been criticized for not -- I think we've offered you a plethora of examples across history, across the world. And I want to end with something I think is very important that Elif has repeatedly brought up, which is that of what is the role here of margin [spelled phonetically]? What is the place in the nation of marginalized communities, whether it was a sexual minorities, ethnic minorities, you know, poor people like socioeconomic class or immigrants or refugees? I feel as if maybe I'm still stinging a little bit from the opening thing that we are academics and don't know what's happening today in the real world.

So I want to end with an example from the streets. If you want to see -- if you want to kind of reject nationalism, let's just look for a second at the way in which marginalized communities across the world are mobilizing their nation states to give them greater rights.

01:10:04

I've already mentioned the examples of Muslims in India. They're using the language of nationalism. They're using the anthem, the songs, the semantics, the heroes, the figures. Why are they pulling out and pulling down Confederate statues? Because they want a more inclusive

nationalism. If you look at the massive demonstrations against Trump and the most ubiquitous poster was one designed by Shepard Fairey, who went to the Rand School of Design here -- so I'm a proud Rhode Islander -- it doesn't make me any less of a proud American. And if you look at these posters, they were called "We the People." And I want to address Elif's point about women in the nation. There were three photographs of three women, an [unintelligible] woman in hijab, an African-American woman and a Latina. And underneath these posters, which were in the colors of the Stars and Stripes, was excerpts from the Constitution of America.

And in holding up these posters, those millions who marched against Trump were saying, this is our country, too. And this is a version of nationalism.

01:11:04

Colin and I come from different ends of the political spectrum. He has said he's the conservative. I would consider myself highly progressive. And yet we converge on this fact that -- and so, again, if you just look out on the streets today, this is what the marginalized groups that want to be a part of the nation. Nationalism is a rallying cry for them. You cannot reject it.

John Donovan:

All right, debaters, that concludes round two of our debate. And to those of you who are joining us, I want to remind you of where we are. We are about to go into round three and those will be brief closing statements from each debater. Those are going to be two minutes each. This is their last chance to try to change your minds, especially those of you who are now sitting on the fence. They're going to try to persuade you to vote for their side.

And again, I want to remind you the way that this works. Right after the round, you'll be asked to vote for a second time and your votes will decide our winner. Our resolution is "Nationalism is a Force for Good," and here to be making his argument for the resolution, nationalism is a force for good, here is Colin Dueck.

01:12:05

Colin Dueck:

Thanks, John. Well, first, let me thank all the members of both teams. It's really been a pleasure. It's been a very lively and interesting discussion. So I'm going to just tell a short story. I -- if I'm accused of being nostalgic about American history and about this nation, having immigrated here, I do plead guilty. I've noticed that there's a lively debate going on in the United States these days over Confederate statues. And you've already heard a little bit about it, and everyone has their own views on that. I am struck by the fact that a statue of Ulysses Grant was torn down the other day; I think it was in San Francisco. The people that tore down that statue may not have realized the statement they were unintentionally making since Grant, of course, was indispensable to the Union victory in the Civil War.

That war was a vindication of American nationalism; it was understood to be so at the time and should be understood today. That is exactly the type of nationalism we're talking about. It's inclusive. It stands for equality between men and women of all ethnicities, religions, and races.

01:13:08

It was, in fact, the Confederacy at that time, the defeated force, that stood for a version of identity politics that sliced and diced people according to their ethnicity, elevating some above others.

So thank God that Lincoln, Grant, and the Union won that Civil War. And as a matter of fact, I think the protesters who tore down Grant's statues could also be thankful for it. I would conclude by saying, if you are happy as I am [laughs] that the war ended in the way it did, if you believe that Lincoln and Grant in the Union were right, if you believe that that's an example of a healthy American nationalism that is not entirely irrelevant to this day, then you must agree that nationalism is a force for good, and you must vote yes. Thank you.

John Donovan:

Thank you. Thank you, Colin Dueck. And the resolution, again, nationalism is a force for good. Our next closing statement is against the resolution, and it comes from Andrew Keen.

01:14:06

Andrew Keen:

Thanks, and this was a great debate, very lively and fun. I think we've got to get beyond nationalism. I think that that's our challenge in 2020. Nationalism doesn't work. It's an archaic idea rooted mostly on lies and inventions. And let me tell a story of why I think that's the case. I just made a film called "How to Fix Democracy." I interviewed a guy called Rick Stengel, who used to be the editor of Time magazine. Rick, in 2009, went to Moscow to give Vladimir Putin the Time magazine's Person of the Year. When Rick showed up, Putin was incredibly rude and noncommunicative, as he tends to be. And they had a photo session and they were all trying to warm Putin up. They wanted him to talk, to at least smile and acknowledge their presence. So the photographer kept on trying to talk to pinch Putin, at least in a metaphorical sense.

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And at one point, he said to Putin, and this was his way of warming up particularly difficult characters like Putin. "What's your favorite Beatles song?" And Putin, who up to that point had never even uttered a word in English, immediately said, "Yesterday." And I love that because it really reiterates the challenge we have today between yesterdays and tomorrows. What is our favorite Beatles song shouldn't be "Yesterday." I even wrote a book called "Yesterdays versus Tomorrows." The reason why nationalism is not a force for good is because it's being peddled by the cult of yesterday. We need to free ourselves from that. We need to embrace tomorrow. We need to rethink our politics, our institutions, and above all else, our sense of political identity. I don't know what the solution means, but I do know that in 2020, nationalism doesn't work. It's not a force for good. And I urge you to vote against the motion.

01:16:08

John Donovan:

And now we switch back to the other side of the argument for another closing statement. This one comes from Prerna Sing. She will be arguing for the resolution, nationalism is a force for good.

Prerna?

Prerna Singh:

Thank you so much, John. It has -- I just want to reiterate, it's been a great debate. And I thought you were going to say that Putin's favorite song was "Back in the USSR."

[laughter]

So through this debate, the opposition has showcased and exclusionary nationalism associated with xenophobia, racism, and conflict. But as my partner and I have convincingly tried to show you, nationalism has historically been and is being defined today more inclusively in many parts of the world, not maybe by leaders, but by people on the streets, to include those from ethnic class and gender lines. And such an inclusively defined nationalism enables the functioning of liberal democracies. It has flowered movements for freedom. It encourages the adoption of social welfare policies.

01:17:02

It rallies people from marginalized communities to demand their rights from [unintelligible]. Such a shared, overarching national identity has brought together and helped heal divides between ethnic groups.

Such an inclusive nationalism has been and remains today a force for immense good. A vote in favor of the motion is a recognition of this historically documented and continuing constructive potential of nationalism. A vote in favor of the motion is not an endorsement of the Trumps, the Modis, the Bolsonaros. In fact, a vote in favor of the motion is essential to resisting their exclusionary nationalisms, because if they don't accept the constructive potential of nationalism and we reject the concept itself, what this does is that it essentially leaves a powerful dynamo entirely in the hands of right-wing populist leaders who define nationalism in an ethnic, majoritarian way, whether that's white Christian nationalism in the U.S. or Hindu nationalism in India.

01:18:04

And they use this exclusionary nationalism to fuel their destructive agendas. It is only if we accept that nationalism can be a force for good that we open ourselves to the possibility of embracing nationalism and redefining it a way that includes and protects the marginalized.

In conclusion, I just want you to take a moment. The protester -- and just think, that protester who risks severe retribution to come out in the streets to liberate her country from foreign ruler, that soldier fighting to his last breath to defend his motherland, that Olympian pushing herself to

the limits of human physical achievement for national glory, the health worker today who continues to put her own life on the line to help her country fight a viral enemy; if you vote against the motion today, you negate such sacrifices that nationalism inspires. I urge you not to do that and instead to vote yes.

John Donvan:

Thank you, Prerna. And one final pivot on the resolution, back to the against side on the resolution, nationalism is a force for good.

01:19:06

Here is Elif Shafak making her closing statement against the resolution. Elif?

Elif Shafak:

Thank you so much. It was such an inspiring discussion. Nationalism is not a force for good and nationalism does not unite. It divides. It takes only one crisis or one perceived threat for virulent nationalism to turn into violent nationalism. History has shown this again and again. And it's also happening today in India, where we have seen a very dangerous rise of ethnonationalism in one of the most diverse and beautiful countries in the world. In January 2020, this year, a mob carrying iron rods, cricket bats, and rocks entered one of the leading universities in the country, attacking and beating students and teachers violently. They did this in the name of Hindu nationalism. One of the survivors of the attack was the scientist, a professor, said in an interview later on that he was scared to criticize rising nationalism because he knew he would be labeled and stigmatized as a traitor.

01:20:12

A month later, in February this year in Germany, a gunman went to a multicultural neighborhood and randomly killed 10 people. He did this in the name of German nationalism. In the U.K., during our Brexit referendum, a Labor MP, Jo Cox, was horribly murdered on the streets by an English nationalist. In Charlottesville, USA, a white nationalist crowd gathered chanting slogans against Jews, Muslims, and all minorities and anyone who doesn't look like them. A young woman was killed that day. In Hungary just this month in June, a neo-Nazi mob came together and they chanted slogans to keep the Roma minority out of the country, the country that they have known as their home and homeland. And they did this in the name of Hindu -- sorry, Hungarian nationalism.

01:21:04

Unfortunately, I have only two minutes, but the list is so long, and it is getting longer and longer every week. How many more atrocities? How much more pain and hurt and bloodshed do we need to witness to understand that nationalism is not the answer?

And yet nationalism is rising, and national demand plays are creating and feeding nationalists elsewhere. So people who are critical of nationalists and people like Andrew and me, the truth is we are a minority. But I hope you will join us. I hope you will vote against the motion. And

together, maybe we can show that another story, another vision, and another way of thinking is possible.

John Donovan:

Thank you, Elif. And that concludes our closing statements. That concludes the debate itself. The arguing is over. I'd like to ask all four of you to stay right where you are. I'd like to say something to all of you. But first, we have to do a little bit of business, and that's to those of you who are joining from beyond the debate, because we want to hear from you.

01:22:05

Now it's time for your second vote. Again, I want to remind you, it's the side that changed the most minds between the first and the second vote that will be declared our winner. So if you're using our chat, you're getting right now a link to vote from one of our producers.

You can click that link and you can cast your vote on the resolution for, against, or undecided. I'll remind you the resolution, nationalism is a force for good. Are you for or against or undecided at this point? If you're not seeing the link in the chat, you can go to IQ2US.org. I-Q, the number 2, us.org/vote. We're going to keep that open until midnight tonight. So if you just can't wait to see who won, you can go online at IQ2US.org 12:01 a.m. tonight. Or you can subscribe to our mailing list and we will be announcing a winner there. Thank you all for your participation in the vote. Thank you for your comments and your participation in the chat. Thank you to folks who submitted questions ahead of time.

01:23:04

And now I want to say to our four debaters, Colin, Prerna, Andrew, and Elif, I want to thank you for the way in which you conducted the -- this was an argument. This was a clear and powerful and robust argument in which you all felt deeply committed to your points of view.

You were deeply divided and yet you treated one another with respect. I had the sense that you truly, truly heard one another. The evidence of that was how you picked up phrases from one another to try to pivot against them. But you were really listening and you all thanked one another at the end of this debate without -- just spontaneously. That captures the spirit of what we're trying to accomplish at Intelligence Squared U.S. And you captured it so very well. I just want to say thank you. And we would love to have you all back as debaters in the future. So you can go now. You are released. But thank you so much for joining us.

Elif Shafak:

Thank you so much.

Prerna Singh:

Thank you.

Andrew Keen:

Bye.

John Donovan:

And I want to thank you, our live audience, as always, your support is what keeps us going.

01:24:02

If you did not know this, I'm telling you now that we are a philanthropy. We produce these debates, and we put them out into the world for free to all people who watch, view, and listen to them. We also happen to be right now in the middle of our spring/summer giving campaign. So if you enjoyed this new debate format that we're developing, we hope you're going to be considering making a contribution to help us keep innovating and keep serving as a home for real debate, even in these challenging times that we're in. So how to do that? You can donate at IQ2US.org/support-us, support-us, support-us, or look at the check for a direct link that will let you donate.

We hope to see you again very soon. And I want to let you know you can see all of our upcoming debates on our website, IQ2US.org or by subscribing to our mailing list. Until then, I'm John Donovan. Thank you, and goodbye from Intelligence Squared U.S. We'll see you next time.

01:24:56

[end of transcript]

This is a rough transcript. Please excuse any errors.