

Lecture 6

5 April 2006

Globalisation and Governance I:
The Demise of the 'Nation-State'?

'Nation-state'

- The modern 'nation-state' owes its current predominance to the historical fact that its Western European antecedents were militarily and economically so successful – an 'example' that others followed.
- The predominance and ongoing persistence of the term is indebted to the two hundred years-long state-building process of Western Europe.

Political map of the world shows **states**:



'Nation-state'

- the ideas of 'nation' and 'state' have been so successfully merged that they are usually treated as synonymous
- the term 'nation-state' implies that the cultural and the political units correspond → that the 'people' who are ruled by the institutions of the state are culturally (ethnically) homogeneous – when in fact:
- only nations which have their own state can be described as 'nation-states' and the reality is that these are very few

Nations and states

- Multiethnic, multinational, multicultural states (Belgium; UK; Nigeria; Canada; Spain...)
- 'Nations without states' (Catalans); 'stateless' (Scots); 'small nations' or 'non-dominant ethnic groups' (most EE nations)
- Ethnically homogeneous 'nation-states': Japan? Iceland? Albania? Armenia? Greece? Korea? Lesotho? Poland?

G and states

- The 'crisis' of the national state
- The national state is besieged from the **top** (by growing interdependence of the world; changes brought by G) & from **below** (pressures of identity politics; rediscovering identities)

The end of the national era?

- Can states preserve their sovereignty intact? (increasing cross-border economic activity and regulation; politics being conducted at supranational and sub-national level...)
- Will belonging to the nation (national identity) be replaced by other forms of community that offer alternative focus?

G and the growth of N

- G reduces relative power of states – more difficult to stop/prevent the rise of minority nationalisms within their borders
- Ethnic and national movements can exploit transnational networks to advance their cause
- It is premature to consider nationalism outmoded form of consciousness

Beyond nationalism?

- Growth of non-territorial identities and cosmopolitan solidarities; increase in cultural 'hybridisation' ('creolisation')
- The nation is no longer the only form of community that counts for many people (rise of non-national frameworks of belonging along the lines of class, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation...)
- The state is fast becoming outmoded by economic globalisation

But...

- Economic G has not yet overrun the state
- Not transcendence of the state as such but a transformation of its functions
- Nation continues to be important source of political and cultural identity for many people
- Security and identity are felt by many to be under threat, hence “the rise of nationalism” →
- Recent revival of ethnicity and N interpreted as resistance to the disruptive impact of G
- Post 9/11 a series of drastic national security measures are in opposition to the idea of a borderless world

Reading list for Lecture 7:

- **Has Globalization Gone Too Far?** Dani Rodrik
- **The Role of the State in the Age of Globalisation** Kofi Annan