

Good essay about cultures and institutions

[Parts of the World](#), [European Union](#)



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- Characteristics of the nation-state and transnational entities

A nation-state refers to an organized community living under one government that derives administrative legitimacy from serving an independent unit for a realm as an independent territorial entity. The term nation-state is derived from nation and state. Nation refers to a coming together of people sharing a culture and language. A nation does not necessarily assume a formal political entity. On the other hand, a state is a political legally formed entity that comprises of a defined territory, a government, a permanent population, and the ability to enter into legal relations with other states. Of note is that a government may not be in a position to exercise independence or exclusive jurisdiction over a demarcated territory, but a state can inspire and to some extent force certain patterns with regard to human activities to ensure conformity with a political map. As such, a nation-state is incorporates the characteristics of a nation and a state, namely: it has permanent citizens, has a government, the people share a common culture, and has sovereign territories.

It is the continued development as regards the complexity and size of communities inspire the people to pursue administrative establishments that

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are initially based on kinship. Kinships are then followed by the collated tribes known as clans. Clans then transformed into city-states. Accordingly, around the 15th century, the city-states progressively began to transform to nation-states with defined sovereign territories. The ideal models of modern nation-states populations characterize a nation, the state houses the nation while at the same time guarding the population and its identity. This is evidence that the modern nation-states have not always been in existence and that their current locations were previously occupied by other non-nation federations. As such, the existence of modern nation-states can be attributed to nationalist political movements and form ideal establishments as a result of autonomist campaigns.

Transnational entities are communities that are made-up of different sets of people from different nation-states. They are entities that transact and act based on common or shared interests and objectives. Such interests may be in the form of shared benefits regarding shared territories and linguistics. In order to achieve their mandate, transnational communities use networking approaches in a bid to reinforce their camaraderie that traverse national boundaries. As such, transnational entities develop as a consequence of the emergence of the nation-states. Transnationalism is phenomenon that emerged during the pre-colonial and even post-colonial times.

An example of a transnational entity is the European Union. Its members consist of various European nation-states and its mandate is to foster trade ties among member countries within Europe. This entity was formed based on political cooperation among member countries in a bid to establish a formidable social capital. As a transnational entity, the European Union has

been able to form its own identity by empowering the citizens of different member states. Ideally, the entity has improved economic experiences and individual rights of citizens within member states. It has also managed to increase transnational economic and social activities.

The transnational entities are usually governed by international relations and also adhere to international treaties and conventions. This development has been an important aspect in ensuring mutual respect among nation-states, especially after the cold war. Nation-states and transnational entities adapt foreign policies that enable them to trade and liaise with other nation-states or transnational corporations in a manner that promotes their welfare and ultimately the well-being of their citizenry. As such, transnational entities are responsible for developing and promoting cohesion among nation-states regardless of whether they are member-states. This is an important objective that nurtures global peace and unity (Cerny, 1996, p. 617).

- How the United States functions as a modern nation-state

The United States functions as a modern nation-state because it has all the components of a nation-state. Specifically, the United States has sovereign geographical fixed territories, it has a national government, and all the fifty states that make up the United States are further divided into interdependent territories for the purposes of governance. The government through an established military that comprises the navy and the air force protects the fixed national borders. As such the United States reinforces its fixed territories through internal security organs. Consequently, the citizens of the United States share common values since the 18th century when the country was founded up till now. For instance, although the citizenry of the

United States comprise of people of different ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds, they maintain their unity through adhering to shared beliefs and values that promote individual rights and freedoms (Friedman, 2008). The first and foremost objective of the United States foreign policy is to safeguard its national security. The United States has established itself as a global player for its membership in various transnational entities to develop its foreign policy. For instance, the United States is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Through NATO, the United States is can protect its national boundaries and specifically its citizens from external invasion. NATO also protects other member states such as Israel and Japan from acts of aggression. As a nation-state, the United States also adheres to international regulations that are embodied in transnational entities such as the International Labor Organization (ILO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and other transnational treaties that foster peace and unity.

- The European Union as a transnational entity

The ideology of establishing sovereign states based on alliance and cooperation among sovereign states in Europe was mooted after the Second World War. This was at the time when the European nation-states were trying to rebuild after their considerable losses that had been occasioned by the war. The task to rebuild individually was seen as a big challenge which could be eased through inter-state cooperation. It was through such cooperation that the states would be able to secure themselves by ensuring that there would be recurrence of the war. As such, the European Union was established as a decision-making organ for multinational political

communities. These multinational political communities would then transfer their authority through their respective governments to the multinational body to make decisions on behalf of the European region and for the benefit of individual member states.

One of the most important occasions that led to the establishment of the European Union was the founding of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) back in 1952. The ECSC comprised six nation-states whose main purpose was to unite the nation-states in the Western European region during the period of the Cold War. The ultimate aim was to establish a profound foundation that today characterizes the economic growth throughout the European Union.

Major Institutions of the European Union

European Parliament

The European Parliament is a parliamentary institution of the European Union which consists of directly elected members. The European Parliament together with the European commission exercise legislative authority.

However, the two institutions do not have the power to strictly recommend legislation. The European Parliament further has the mandate to control budgetary allocations for the European Union. The members are usually elected after a five-year period.

The European Commission is a subsidiary of the European Union. The Commission is responsible for the enforcement of the treaties that have been made by the Union and also exercises general executive authority. The European Commission also liaises with the European Parliament to legislate. The Commission is comprised of 27 commissioners who are selected by each

of the member countries. It is the only organ that has the power to propose legislation.

Council of the European Union is the upper legislative body of the European Union. It represents the executives of each of the European Union member states. The exact involvement of the configuration may depend on the topic of discussion depending on the policy area. The Council is headed by a presidency that alternates every six years among the member states.

The present-day function of the European Union

The present-day function of the European Union is to foster close ties among member states. This ensures that the member states are able to achieve their objectives collectively. For instance, the union fosters free trade and free movement of citizens between member states. The Union also enables by-passing of bureaucracies that characterized governments of member states before its formation.

Examples of foreign policy objectives for the European Union

The first policy objective of the European Union is to foster diplomacy on key global issues. For instance, the Union is a key player in matters relating to global warming. Another policy objective of the European Union is to ensure a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The CFSP is a diplomatic strategy that may be supported through provision of foreign aid, trade, and peacekeeping missions.

- U. S. foreign policies chosen in part A2b and the two European Union foreign policies chosen in part A3d

The interests of the nation-states usually influence their foreign policies,

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depending on the needs of the nation. For instance, nation-states may foster peace and unity through foreign policies in a bid to promote trade ties between the different states, with a view of improving their respective economic policies. A perfect example is the United States' signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. The NAFTA was aimed at improving the trade ties between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. The war on terror is the latest United States foreign policy regarding aimed at improving security following the September 11th attacks. This policy is not only focused on securing the United States but also its allies. Accordingly, the European Union that represents the interests of the 27 European countries has made progressive efforts towards reducing the global warming. Through its foreign policy, the European Union has reached to other countries and continents with the view of reaching an agreeable solution that would reduce global warming.

The establishment of modern nation-states has ensured the establishment of progressive institutions that have been vital in the development and improving peace and security. Progresses such as industrialization have been achieved through cooperation among nation-states. In the absence of peace and security among nations, it would have been virtually impossible to achieve sustainable development.

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