Lecture 3: Community

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Community

* emerges from the the international socio-cultural system

* might be global, might be local…might be both

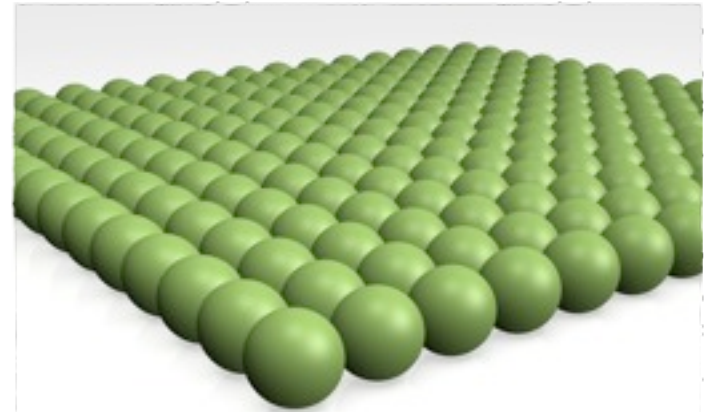* implicit in many if not most political acts

Three Questions

1. what is community?

2. how do communities affect international relations?

3. will there be international community in the future?

What Is Community?

✳ a group of actors

✳ socially salient boundary

✳ some kind of contiguity or closeness (not just physical)

　✳ dense *social transactions* among members

　✳ shared temporal direction: past *or* future *or* both

✳ the community as a whole can *act*

Imagined Communities

* shared attributes insufficient for community

* need a *shared experience* and a *narrative* of that experience

* permits recognition of insiders and outsiders

How Community Works

※ shared norms and values

※ come from diverse, especially popular, sources

※ invoked by elites to justify courses of action

    ※ "because we are X..."

    ※ action includes war and exchange!

Social Purpose

* "collective intentionality": what *we* want

* places boundaries on legitimate action: embeds actions within *rules*

  * "embedded liberalism"

* co-operative, like speaking the same language

* need not be benign or universal

Communities and Social Purposes

states	survival; welfare of citizens
nations / ethnic groups	unity; "homeland"
corporations	profit; fair dealing
religions	salvation; relieve suffering
civilizations	preserve fundamental values

Is There An International Community?

* certainly a group of actors

* contiguity:

  * individual scale, not really

  * cosmic scale, a lot

* lots of social transactions

* shared global past or future?

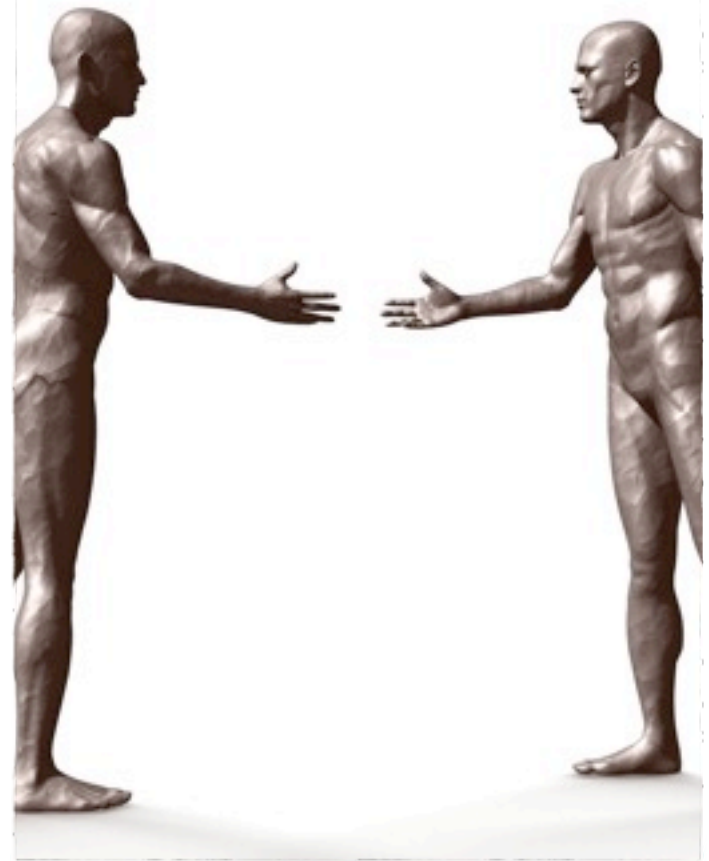

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"The International Community"

* frequently invoked as an actor:
  * UN/Security Council resolutions
  * international law
  * "good governance"
* sounds less parochial
* *nesting* is key

Diplomatic Representation

✳ represent their countries…

✳ …but also represent or symbolize the international community

✳ the *possibility* of peaceful coexistence

NGOs and Social Movements

✳ global, rather than international, community:

✳ Non-Governmental Organizations, transnational in scope

✳ social movements crossing state boundaries

✳ both frequently claim to represent all of humanity

"Humanity"

- ✳ the highest court of appeal short of divinity

- ✳ "human rights"—but not all humans agree on all of them

- ✳ a phrase often used by the dominant

- ✳ sounds different to other members of the species

Boundaries

* no non-human *political* others against which to unify
  * "the human race"
* humanity vs.:
  * global climate change
  * disease
  * poverty
* common human endeavors?

Big Blue Marble

✳ globalization: treating the world as a single place

✳ supported by ecology, geology, meteorology

✳ but also by contemporary business practices

✳ what would a global political community look like?