

Chapter 32

Globalization and the transformation of political community

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Reader's Guide

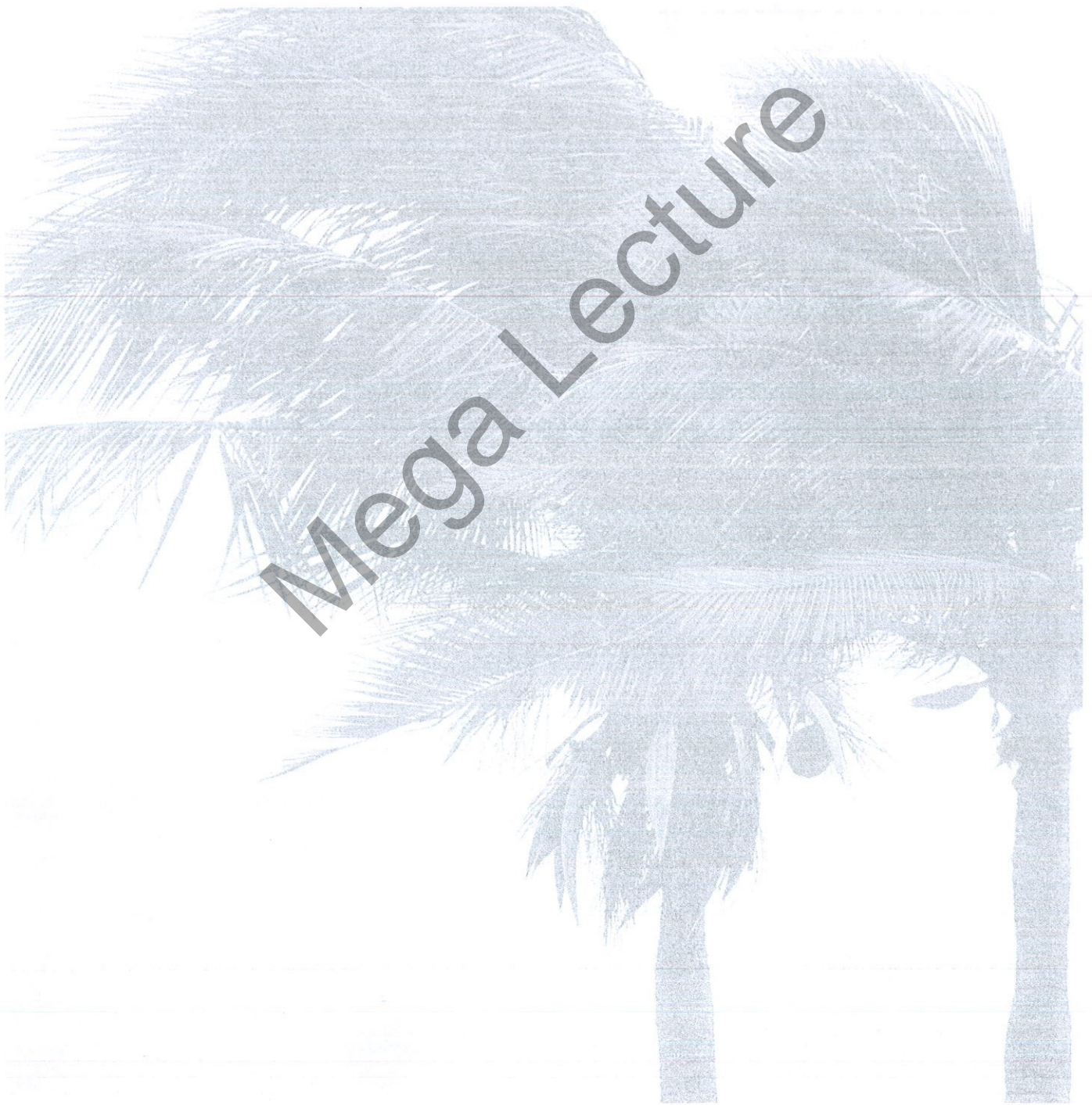
Realist approaches to international relations seek to explain competition and conflict between political communities. They argue that international anarchy leads to unending struggles for security and power. In the main, realists believe that separate states will survive long into the future. Critics maintain that important challenges to traditional conceptions of political community have emerged in recent times. Globalization has led scholars and activists to question the nation-state's capacity to solve global problems

such as environmental devastation. It has led many to defend cosmopolitan responses to those problems.

In the light of those disputes, this chapter begins by analysing the idea of a political community and then considers the impact of nationalism on the modern state and on the development of citizenship over the last two centuries. It analyses new conceptions of community and citizenship that have appeared in recent decades. Of particular importance are the claims for 'group rights' that have been advanced by various national minorities and indigenous groups within states. No less significant are calls for promoting

democratic accountability in the current phase of globalization. Arguments for 'cosmopolitan democracy' reveal why many prefer the idea of world politics to international politics. As the editors explain in the Introduction, the latter concept suggests a world that is divided between states; the former draws attention to a more complex world consisting of various international organizations and transnational actors as well

as states. The idea of world politics also suggests that the basic units of the international system—nation-states—are changing in fundamental ways. Extending those points, the final sections of the chapter ask how far the nation-state is likely to endure as the main object of political loyalty, and how far it is likely to change because of the challenges that accompany rising levels of human interconnectedness.



Mega Lecture

Introduction: what is a political community?

Many different types of **community** exist in the modern era: local communities such as neighbourhood groups, associations such as sovereign states, transnational movements such as scientific associations or **international non-governmental organizations** (INGOs), and the 'virtual communities' that flourish in an age of instant global communication. Each of those communities has its distinctive pattern of **cooperation**. Each depends on a powerful sense of emotional identification with the group and on the willingness to make some sacrifices for a more general good. Such dispositions are central to the understandings of those who see themselves as belonging to a community (see **Box 32.1**).

Politics exist in all such communities because members do not have identical views about collective goals or about how to realize them. In modern states, for example, sharp divisions exist between those who think that governments should redistribute wealth and those who believe that unfettered markets should allocate resources. Like **states**, religious communities have their politics, but they may not be political communities according to the definition used here. The desire to worship with others is an essential part of belonging to a religious community, but it is the aspiration for self-rule—to be free from the dominion of others—that turns religious and other groups of people into **political communities** (see **Chs 25 and 26**).

The **loyalties** that bind the members of a political community together mark the outer limits of close cooperation. Members prefer to collaborate with each other and to avoid sharing power with 'outsiders'. Conceptions of a shared past that highlight memories of suffering in warfare have long been central to political unity. Annual commemorations of 9/11 are an example of how death and sacrifice shape national identities. Some religious communities ask believers to be martyrs for the cause. But the expectation that members will sacrifice their lives in war for the sake of the larger group has been a central feature of political communities for millennia.

Most people belong to several communities simultaneously—to professional or religious groups that may be transnational as well as to **nation-states**. Several regimes, such as Nazi Germany and Stalin's Russia, tried to compel citizens to forsake loyalties that clashed with the state. Many failed because citizens attached more importance to their religious or ethnic affiliation than to the state. Liberal democratic communities recognize that citizens value different loyalties, some directed towards local areas, others towards non-governmental associations such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International. Those states believe that they have some moral duties to peoples elsewhere. Most think that they should obey **international law** and promote universal respect for human rights. Whether **globalization** weakens national loyalties and encourages closer identification with distant peoples is one of the most important questions of the contemporary era.

Box 32.1 Some political theorists on political community

'The primary good that we distribute to one another is membership in some human community.'

(Michael Walzer)

'What makes a man a citizen [is] the mutual obligation between subject and sovereign.'

(Jean Bodin)

'Do we want peoples to be virtuous? If so, let us begin by making them love their homeland. But how will they come to love it, if their homeland means nothing more to them than it does to foreigners, and if it grants to them only what it cannot refuse to anyone?'

(Jean-Jacques Rousseau)

'[D]ecisions taken by representatives of nations and nation-states profoundly affect citizens of other nation-states—who in all probability have had no opportunity to signal consent or lack of it—but . . . the international order is structured by agencies and forces over which citizens have minimum, if any, control.'

(David Held)

'I am a citizen of the world.'

(Diogenes)

'I am not a citizen of the world . . . I am not even aware that there is a world such that one could be a citizen of it. No one has ever offered me citizenship, or described the naturalisation process, or enlisted me in the world's institutional structures, or given me an account of its decision procedures . . . or provided me with a list of the benefits and obligations of citizenship.'

(Michael Walzer)

Whatever the future may hold, there is no doubt that, from the earliest times, war has had a powerful impact on political communities. Modern states are no different from their predecessors in trying to ensure that they can count on citizens' loyalty when security and survival are at stake. The importance of that demand is no longer as great in the communities that have escaped major war in recent decades. The period since the end of the Second World War has been described as the longest peace between the great powers since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Liberals have argued that globalization—the condition in which many economic, political, cultural, and other changes affect all interconnected peoples more or less simultaneously—has begun to overtake great power rivalry as the primary determinant of the course of world politics (on global interconnectedness, see Mazlish and Iriye 2005). Realists argue that globalization does not have such transformative consequences. The use of force to oust the Taliban in Afghanistan or to topple Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq provided a reminder of the continuing centrality of power politics. The proliferation of **weapons of mass destruction** may result in a new era of inter-state

rivalries. For those reasons, **cosmopolitanism** may not be the main beneficiary of globalization. The belief that the current era stands on the threshold of a new era in the history of political community may turn out to be unfounded.

Key Points

- Members of a political community are committed to self-rule.
- Anticipating major war, states have long aimed to persuade citizens that obligations to the 'national community' override duties to other associations.
- Totalitarian powers endeavoured to make the political community absolute. Liberal-democratic states recognize that citizens value membership of many communities alongside the nation-state.
- Many liberals have argued that economic globalization ushers in a new era of peace between the major industrial powers.
- Realists have argued that the 'war on terror' and the renewed risk of nuclear proliferation show that globalization has not altered the basic features of world politics.

Nationalism and political community

The nation-state has been the dominant form of political community since the French Revolution, but very different forms of community existed in earlier times. The first city-states of Mesopotamia and ancient Greece, the early **empires** of Assyria, Persia, and Rome, and the Ottoman and Chinese Empires, were political communities but they were very different from nation-states. Ancient Greek city-states cherished their autonomy but, compared with modern democracies, they had highly exclusionary ideas of community because rights of participation were restricted to adult male citizens. Most political systems in human history have been hostile to popular rule. Empires were governed by military elites, not by the 'sovereign' people. Ruling strata did not believe that states should represent **nations** or think that each nation should exist as a separate state. Those ideas have dominated political life for just over two centuries.

European states in the seventeenth century were not nation-states but **territorial states** governed by absolutist monarchs. It is important to explain how territorial

states differed from earlier political associations, how they were replaced by nation-states, and how pressures on those relatively new forms of community have arisen in the recent phase of global **interconnectedness**.

Territorial states

The German sociologist, Max Weber, argued that the state monopolizes control of the instruments of violence. But states differ greatly in what they can do with coercive power. Pre-modern states had a limited ability to direct the lives of subjects, whereas modern territorial states can regulate (if not control) most aspects of society, including economic activity and relations within the family. With respect to that difference, Michael Mann (1986: 7–10) argues that modern states enjoy high levels of 'intensive power': **power** that can be projected deep into society. Furthermore, pre-modern states had poorly defined frontiers and a limited ability to control frontier populations. Viable modern states have clearly demarcated borders and the ability

to project power across national space—and often well beyond it. Commenting on that difference, Mann (1986) argues that modern states enjoy a high level of ‘extensive power’: power that can be exercised across their territories. The overseas empires that brought non-European peoples under European control demonstrated the modern state’s astonishing ‘global reach’. That is crucial for understanding the history of globalization. The Spanish and Portuguese conquest of Central and South America in the sixteenth century, and the second wave of European expansion in the late nineteenth century, point to the same conclusion: that states have often been the driving-force behind higher levels of interconnectedness. As the editors observe in the Introduction, that is one reason why realists do not believe that globalization changes international politics in fundamental respects.

From territorial states to nation-states

Many territorial states that established the first overseas empires turned into nation-states. As Norbert Elias (2000) argued, the modern state’s monopoly control of force largely pacified society, allowing closer economic and social ties to develop. Stronger emotional ties between citizens appeared. There were at least two reasons for that overall development: the rise of industrial capitalism and endemic warfare. Benedict Anderson (1991) argues that ‘print capitalism’ prepared the way for national forms of political consciousness. Books, pamphlets, and other mass media disseminated national symbols along with shared narratives about the past and common hopes for the future. Strangers who would never meet could identify with the ‘imagined community’ of the nation. The point is that the species is not divided naturally into nations. States played a central role in creating national identities, not least by building national education systems that disseminated shared values (see Ch. 25).

Modern territorial states emerged in the cauldron of war; indeed, they were largely instruments for waging war. Successful European states in the sixteenth century were small enough to be governed from a central point, but sufficiently large to resist external threats (Tilly 1992). Warfare was crucial for the transition from the territorial to the national state. Warring states encouraged national solidarity so that citizens would remain loyal in moments of crisis. The turning point was the 1789 French Revolution, which created the ‘nation in

arms’ and national conscription. From then on, nationalism has been the ideology that has had most influence on the contours of political communities.

To repeat, warfare and capitalist industrialization led to modern societies with powerful nationalist feelings. By claiming to represent the nation, the state increased its ability to mobilize populations for war and for building overseas empires. By the end of the nineteenth century, European nation-states had expanded their worldwide empires, drawing non-European peoples into longer webs of interconnectedness, while at the same time intensifying national differences.

Nationalism was a late eighteenth-century European invention that spread to the rest of the world. Third World nationalist movements harnessed that European idea to replace alien government with self-rule. Success in throwing off imperial domination meant that the number of sovereign states more than tripled in three decades after the Second World War, but many of the new political units failed to become viable nation-states. In several African societies, for example, ethnic rivalries prevented close identification with the state. In several regions, divided peoples dismembered the former colonial territories and established their own nation-states. As a result of decolonization, the modern state, which was not indigenous to non-European societies, became the dominant form of political community across the world. The globalization of the modern state is one of the main expressions of greater human interconnectedness.

Key Points

- Most forms of political community in human history have not represented the nation or the people.
- The idea that the state should represent the nation is a European invention that has dominated politics for just over two centuries.
- War and industrial capitalism are two reasons why the nation-state became the dominant political community.
- The extraordinary power of modern states—the growth of their ‘intensive’ and ‘extensive’ power made global empires possible.
- States have been the principal architects of global interconnectedness over the last five centuries.
- The global spread of European conceptions of the state and nationalism are defining features of the modern interconnected era.

Community and citizenship

Modern states acquired an extraordinary ability to wage war and administer overseas empires. They were also the site for unique experiments in liberal democratic forms of governance. Modern states created national societies that could be mobilized for war. Peoples that were formed in that way often resented the state's greater power, demands to serve in war, and to finance it through taxation. They organized to extract **citizenship** rights from the state. Demands for universal citizenship were first advanced in the leading European states, but they now exist everywhere. Along with the spread of the language of universal human rights, such calls for citizenship reveal that the outlines of a global political culture have developed alongside increased interconnectedness (see Ch. 25).

Citizenship and rights

Territorial states in early modern Europe were ruled by absolute monarchs who saw the state as a private realm. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the rising commercial and industrial classes challenged absolutist power; they struggled for political rights that were commensurate with their economic importance. Middle classes aimed to destroy royal privileges and to secure the rule of law and representation in politics. They succeeded in winning democratic rights, but refused to grant those rights to the working classes and women. Struggles to extend the suffrage to all adult men and women became distinguishing features of modern industrial societies during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Demands for welfare rights followed. Labour movements and political parties on the Left argued that increasing inequalities of power and wealth denied the poor full membership of the community. They maintained that legal and political rights mean very little unless people have the power to exercise them. In Britain, for example, pressures mounted to deepen the meaning of citizenship by adding social or welfare rights to the legal and political rights that had been won earlier. In the first part of the twentieth century, many Western states introduced national health services, systematic welfare provision, and more open educational systems in response to such demands.

In the 1950s and 1960s, several Western intellectuals believed that the former colonies would follow the West's path of economic and political development. These 'modernization theorists' were confident that new states would undergo the nation-building process that had occurred in Europe. They would imitate Western free market economies and conceivably democratize in the long term. In short, the radically different societies that have been forced together in recent times would develop similar conceptions of economy, society, and government.

Ethnic and religious conflict in new states, the rise of military governments, and economic stagnation demonstrated that modernization theorists underestimated the challenges facing postcolonial societies. Or, as the editors stress in their Introduction, modernization has had multiple forms. But the belief that most societies will come to resemble the West has not disappeared from view. Echoes of modernization theory could be heard in Francis Fukuyama's claim in 1989 that the end of the bipolar era revealed that the global spread of liberal democracy is unstoppable. Many liberals have championed exporting democracy on the grounds that liberal states form a unique 'zone of peace' that can be extended across the world. Many regarded the 'Arab Spring' as clear evidence that Western ideas of freedom and equality—and not the forms of radical Islam promoted by Al Qaeda—command most support. Such beliefs have been contested by those who think there is no guarantee that revolutions in the Middle East will lead to stable Western liberal democracies, or they have been rejected, most notably by those who envisage a coming **clash of civilizations** (Huntington 1993). Recent analyses of the religious revolt against Western secular modernity which has flourished since 9/11 have also argued that globalization produces new cleavages and conflicts rather than an inexorable trend towards a global agreement on core values. Muslim reactions to what are regarded as sacrilegious representations of Muhammad are often used to show that many reject the separation of 'religion' and 'politics' that has dominated modern Western notions of political community. The corollary is that there is little reason to perpetuate the Western myth that all societies are heading towards secular modernity (Thomas 2005).

Key Points

- Citizenship rights developed in response to the growing power of modern states.
- The demand to be recognized as a free and equal citizen began with struggles for legal and political rights, to which welfare rights were added in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- The stability of modern forms of political community has owed much to the fact that citizens won those rights.
- Modernization theory assumed that Third World societies would emulate Western economic and political development.
- Images of an emerging 'clash of civilizations' contest the idea that globalization will result in a consensus about the superiority of Western values.

The changing nature of political community

One paradox of modern times is that the globalization of economic and political life has increased, but the national fragmentation of political communities has not declined. Religious and cultural diversity are greater than at any time since the end of the Second World War. Globalization, the fragmentation of many states—most obviously, the former Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc—and the diversification of belief systems—as in the rise of Christian and Islamic fundamentalism—are forces transforming political communities.

As noted earlier, state fragmentation has occurred in many Third World regions. Novel approaches to precarious Third World states appeared in the early 1990s. The notions of the **quasi-state** or failed state described those that the international community recognized as sovereign but were demonstrably unable to satisfy the basic needs of their populations (Jackson 1990; Helman and Ratner 1992–3). Especially since 9/11, attention has been directed at pacifying failed states such as Afghanistan that can provide a safe haven for 'Islamist' terrorist organizations.

In the 1990s many thinkers asked whether liberal democracies have duties to the peoples of failed states that include humanitarian intervention to end human rights violations (see Ch. 31). In an unforeseen development, the failed state also emerged as a problem in Europe. The disintegration of the former Yugoslavia was the striking example. Although there were major public disagreements, NATO enjoyed substantial popular support for its military intervention in Kosovo in 1999. In that period, many states—although not the USA—supported the establishment of the International Criminal Court so that human rights violators could be

brought to justice. In a parallel development, the idea of the 'responsibility to protect' embodied the idea that sovereign governments are required by international law to respect the human rights of subjects or citizens (Bellamy 2009).

In Yugoslavia, violent nationalism destroyed a multicultural political community that many observers had regarded as exemplary. Developments in Canada, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom illustrate a more general theme that must be considered. In most societies, some national or ethnic minorities are engaged in struggles to win respect for cultural differences. Those demands are part of a global movement in which minority nations and indigenous peoples learn from each other's experience. Globalization, fragmentation, and cultural diversification are clearly not unrelated phenomena. There is no more dramatic example of the rejection of Western forms of political community than Al Qaeda, which rejects Western secular and material values, and is violently opposed to Western influence in the Islamic world. But such movements are hostile to Western globalization, and not to globalization as such. Al Qaeda used the modern banking and communications system to promote its objectives. Disparate and loosely organized, it is a global movement that seeks to unite the 'faithful' in a transnational political-religious community. Western nationalism and the sovereign state are rejected precisely because they have divided a more fundamental community of faith (see Mishra 2012).

The politics of difference

The rise of militant Islam has led some social strata to fear that 'multiculturalism' results in division and

sectarianism. But the difficulties in fostering any consensus about national identity indicate that many societies face problems in reconciling tensions between 'patriotic' attachments to the nation-state and particular demands for the recognition of cultural differences. To understand the predicament, we need to return to the place of war in the formation of modern political communities. In promoting national identification in Europe, ruling strata invariably imposed a dominant language and specific values on subordinate groups. As the British case reveals, a sense of Scottish, Welsh, Irish (and English) identity has survived such efforts to create an inclusive national identity that binds these groups together. Similar differences and divisions are evident in most states.

Ethnic efforts to achieve a degree of political autonomy, if not outright independence, exist in most states, but the prospects of success were low when political communities faced the permanent threat of war. The 'long peace' between the great powers gave national movements new opportunities to promote group rights. Core industrial states no longer need to mobilize whole populations for war, and many find it difficult to construct an idea of the nation that can command widespread support. The 'war on terror' demonstrated that governments can harness support for military operations if they can persuade the public that such action is essential to safeguard personal and national security. On the other hand, public opposition to the Iraq War in the Western democracies indicated that many people regard loyalty to the state as conditional on respect for the United Nations and on compliance with international law. The increasingly conditional nature of loyalty is an important trend in modern political communities (Waller and Linklater 2003). However, the 'ethnic revolt' is a reminder that many minority nations and indigenous groups have long been reluctant members of their nation-state.

Group rights

Claims for group rights are evidence of global changes in attitudes to citizenship (Young 1990). Over the last two centuries, efforts to extend citizenship rights took place without much regard for cultural and other differences. Feminists have argued that they were gender-blind and took little account of the needs of women. Exponents of new images of citizenship have argued that public policy, national laws, and social attitudes should display greater sensitivity to differences between citizens—differences of ethnicity, race, gender, and religion. Minority nations and indigenous peoples in Australia, Canada, and elsewhere

spearheaded claims for group recognition. They have aimed for self-government and 'land rights'. Those are not unrelated 'national' developments. Representatives of such groups belong to a transnational movement that attempts to create a global political culture that is more supportive of group rights (see Case Study 1).

The movement of peoples across borders is one dimension of globalization that feeds into that process. Again, important arguments arise about how far traditional notions of community should adapt to the growing multicultural, multi-racial, and multi-denominational nature of society. Recent discussions about wearing 'the veil' in Britain (and about the 'headscarf' in French schools) have produced tensions over group rights. As noted earlier, many fear that concessions to 'difference' will lead to parallel societies and to an erosion of the shared loyalties that are central to their image of political community. Others emphasize that the real challenge is how to promote greater respect for difference (and to solve the interrelated problems of economic inequality, marginalization, and discrimination). Others argue that it is now impossible to recreate earlier visions of the national community in contemporary societies.

No account of on-going struggles over the nature of community and citizenship is complete without discussing feminism. Many feminists have challenged gendered ideas of national culture anchored in the male experience of war. They have opposed traditional 'masculinist' notions of community that glorify the national past, often by commemorating success in war. There are tensions within feminism, as within all belief systems. Some feminists have protested against what they see as patriarchal assumptions that underpin, for example, the 'Muslim veil', while many Muslim women regard the veil as an important emblem of Islamic identity. Western feminism has been accused of seeking to impose a particular conception of 'womanhood' on non-Western peoples. Feminism is therefore entangled in wider global forces. Challenges to patriarchy exist in every society, and exemplify global shifts in attitudes to gender. At the same time, many groups attempt to protect 'traditional' social structures from Western modernity; they resist the spread of what they see as atheistic materialism and licentiousness. The varieties of religious fundamentalism—Christian, Hindu, Islamic, etc.—are not divorced from each other. Just like the spread of the 'Western values' which they protest against, they are indications of how globalization produces similar disputes over social ideas in almost all societies.

Case Study 1 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



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Over sixty years ago the political philosopher, Hannah Arendt, maintained that one of the greatest calamities that can befall people is losing the right to belong to a political community. That observation raises the question of what is done to assist those who are stateless in a world of states. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1951 to protect and support refugees. A refugee was defined narrowly as someone who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted by reason of his race, religion, nationality or political opinion . . . is unable or . . . unwilling to avail himself of the protection of the government of his nationality'.

The organization was established to deal with circumstances in Europe at the end of the Second World War. It was predicted that it would last for about three years, but UNHCR became involved with increasing numbers of refugees in the non-European

regions, and particularly in Asia and Africa. In the main, refugees in those regions were not refugees according to UNHCR's strict definition. They were what the organization would call 'displaced persons of concern', who are often the victims of civil war. For political reasons, Palestinian refugees were excluded from UNHCR, but came under the remit of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East, which was established in late 1949.

The principal aim of UNHCR has been to promote voluntary repatriation where that is possible, to ensure integration into the host country, or to secure resettlement in another society. Realizing such aims has become ever more complicated given that over 20 million people of concern exist at the present time; they outnumber those who are refugees in the terms of the 1951 Convention. Assisting displaced persons who live in refugee camps in their own societies has become a major activity of UNHCR.

The 2001 Declaration of State Parties to the 1951 Convention referred to the wider 'social and humanitarian nature of the problem of refugees'; it encouraged 'better refugee protection' through a 'framework of international solidarity and burden-sharing', including to 'build capacity' in societies with 'protracted refugee situations'. Progress has been limited. In recent years, national governments have intensified border controls because of the scale of illegal migration and the fear of terrorist attacks. States are unwilling to broaden the meaning of the idea of the refugee beyond the original 1951 meaning, not least because there may be an enormous increase in the number of 'environmental refugees' in the years ahead. The calamity that Arendt described may become even more serious (see Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2007).

Cosmopolitan democracy and transnational citizenship

An intriguing feature of political communities is how they deal with class, gender, religious, ethnic, and racial differences. No less important is what they make of distinctions between citizens and aliens. Resistance to doctrines that claim that one race, nation, or gender has the right to dominate others has spread to most regions. Modern nation-states have been changed by egalitarian ideas that challenge 'natural' hierarchies between people. A key issue is whether globalization will undermine a core assumption of political communities, which is the belief that members of the same society have few, if any, obligations towards other groups (see Box 32.2). The question is whether, over the decades and centuries to come, the growing interweaving of people's lives is likely to promote closer identification with humanity as a whole. That question has special significance because, as the editors note in their Introduction, many regard globalization as the cause of a 'risk society' which is

sharply divided between those who win and those who lose from increasing interconnectedness.

Globalization has led many to question the traditional idea that political communities have few responsibilities beyond protecting their own citizens' interests. Global problems that states cannot solve on their own—climate change, for example—have encouraged the proliferation of **non-governmental organizations** (NGOs) that are concerned with the fate of the earth. Affluent populations are often disturbed by images of suffering caused by state terror, civil war, natural disaster, and famine. Support for humanitarian intervention in Somalia in 1993 and Kosovo in 1999, and the largely spontaneous assistance to the victims of the Asian tsunami in 2004, developed in response to images of suffering that are disseminated by the global media. Many think that a global **civil society** marks the dawn of a new era of human cooperation. Sceptics stress the continuing appeal of nationalism, the tenacity of the state, and the weakness of cosmopolitan solidarities (see Ch. 25 and

Box 32.2 Contrasting views about the scope of human sympathy

'Whether we can conceive of a way to think of morality that extends some form of sympathy further than our own group remains perhaps the fundamental moral question for contemporary life.'

(Jean Tronto)

'If he was to lose his little finger to-morrow, he would not sleep tonight; but provided he never saw them, he will snore with the most profound security over the ruin of a hundred millions of his brethren, and the destruction of that immense multitude seems plainly an object less interesting to him, than this paltry misfortune of his own.'

(Adam Smith)

'[O]ur sense of solidarity is strongest when those with whom solidarity is expressed are thought of as "one of us", where "us" means something smaller and more local than the human race.'

(Richard Rorty)

'The fact that a person is physically near to us . . . may make it more likely that we shall assist him, but this does not show that we ought to help him rather than another who happens to be further away.'

(Peter Singer)

'We are nowadays more strongly than ever aware that an enormously large part of humanity live their entire lives on the verge of starvation . . . Many members of richer communities feel it to be almost a duty to do something about the misery of other human groups. To avoid misunderstanding on the issue, let it be said that relatively little is done.'

(Norbert Elias)

Do the 'oceans make a community of nations impossible?'

(Immanuel Kant)

Case Study 2). In their view, recent interventions have demonstrated that national populations are unwilling to sacrifice the lives of a significant number of military personnel to save distant strangers (see Ch. 31).

Cosmopolitan democracy

Cosmopolitan images of political community have enjoyed a renaissance in recent years (see Box 32.3). The idea of world citizenship has been used by many international non-governmental organizations to promote a stronger sense of responsibility for the global environment and for the future of the species. Proponents of **cosmopolitan democracy** have argued that the citizens of nation-states have little control over global markets—the meltdown of global financial markets illustrates the point—and they have limited influence on **transnational corporations** whose decisions influence currency values, employment levels, and so forth. They argue for democratizing international organizations such as the **World Trade Organization**.

Critics argue that such visions are utopian. They maintain that democracy will not flourish at the global level because no counterpart to national loyalties engages popular emotions. Democracy, it is argued, requires levels of trust and a commitment to the common good that only exist between people with a shared national identity (Miller 1999). On that argument, it is better to concentrate on improving existing nation-states rather than squander resources

in the pursuit of unrealistic cosmopolitan objectives. Some attempt to find an alternative to 'communitarian' beliefs and cosmopolitan aspirations by defending **neo-medievalism**, which is a concept used to describe

Box 32.3 Visions of new forms of community and citizenship

It is 'time to go higher in our search for citizenship, but also lower and wider. Higher to the world, lower to the locality . . . The citizen has been too puffed and too compressed.'

(Andrew Wright)

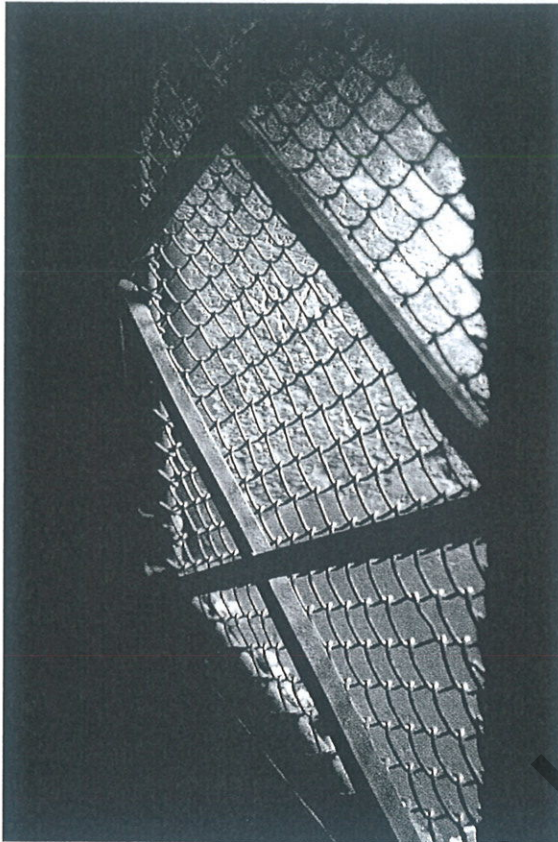
'We may envisage a situation in which, say, a Scottish authority in Edinburgh, a British authority in London, and a European authority in Brussels were all actors in world politics and all enjoyed representations in world political organisations, together with rights and duties of various kinds in world law, but in which none of them claimed sovereignty or supremacy over the others, and a person living in Glasgow had no exclusive or overriding loyalty to any one of them. Such an outcome would take us truly "beyond the sovereign state".'

(Hedley Bull)

'The preference of Western powers . . . for air strikes, despite the physical and psychological damage caused even with highly accurate munitions, arises from [the] privileging of nationals or Westerners. This type of national or statist thinking has not yet come to terms with the concept of a common human community . . . Whereas the soldier, as the traditional bearer of arms, had to be prepared to die for his country, the international soldier/policeman [would risk] his or her life for humanity.'

(Mary Kaldor)

Case Study 2 Torture, civilization, and the war on terror



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The sociologist Norbert Elias (2000) analysed the forces that led Europeans to believe they belonged to a higher civilization. Their 'civilizing process' included growing repugnance towards violence and cruelty. The abolition of public execution and capital punishment in many European societies is an example of changing attitudes to violence. Related shifts have occurred in global politics. The international community declared its opposition to torture in the 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or

Punishment. Great powers have often ignored human rights violations committed by allies. Nevertheless, the belief that torture is morally unacceptable became a leading global norm after 1945.

The 'war on terror' led the USA and its allies to cooperate with states that had been accused of serious human rights violations. Western liberal democracies debated whether certain forms of torture could be justified to extract information from terrorist suspects, and whether 'extraordinary rendition' (transferring suspects to authoritarian regimes that use forms of torture that are deemed illegitimate in the West) was justified. The morality and legality of methods of detention and interrogation remain critical issues in the British and American legal and political systems. In Britain, for example, the House of Lords ruled in December 2005 that evidence that had been acquired by torture was inadmissible and therefore could not be used against terrorist suspects in British courts. In November 2012, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg ruled that the British Government could not extradite Abu Qatada to Jordan, where the courts might use evidence against him that had been gained by torture. Abu Qatada was detained in the UK in 2002 on suspicion of offences under the anti-terrorism legislation that was introduced after 9/11, but never formally charged. He was deported to Jordan on 7 July 2013 following an agreement between the British and Jordanian governments that evidence acquired by torture would not be used during his trial. Such cases highlight the complex relationship between human rights and national security in liberal societies. They illustrate the difficulties they have had since 9/11 in reconciling torture (however defined) with notions of civilization (see Linklater 2007).

The relaxation of the norm prohibiting torture raised profound questions about how far liberal restrictions on violence can alter the course of world politics. Before 9/11, there was a broad global consensus that torture is illegitimate. Most regimes that used torture did not do so openly. The 'war on terror' may have been a temporary setback to the torture norm, but realists will argue that such principles are cast to one side when fears for security run high. The fact that those 'moral compromises' do not go unchallenged offers hope to those who support eliminating unnecessary violence from human affairs (see Foot 2006).

an ideal condition in which people are governed by many overlapping authorities and have loyalties to all of them (which is roughly how life was organized in the Middle Ages before the emergence of the modern state). Globalization and fragmentation have led to reflections on a neo-medieval world order in which governments transfer some powers to international institutions while moving others to devolved authorities in regions where feelings of cultural difference are strong (Linklater 1998). In that vision, national

governments retain many powers, and citizens remain loyal to the state, which is, however, just one level of a multi-tiered system of rule. Loyalties to state would then coexist with strong attachments to sub-state and transnational authorities. National and cosmopolitan citizenship would not be antithetical; they would both be critical to new forms of political community that combine respect for various internal group differences with loyalties to a state that is internationalist in its relations with the wider world.

Key Points

- Globalization and fragmentation are interrelated phenomena that challenge traditional conceptions of community and citizenship.
- Ethnic fragmentation is one reason for failed states in Europe and in the Third World, but demands for the recognition of cultural differences exist in all political communities.
- Some globalization theorists defend cosmopolitan democracy on the grounds that national democracies cannot make global institutions and associations accountable to their citizens.
- Important debates exist between those who maintain that citizenship will remain national and those who regard world citizenship as crucial for adapting to an increasingly interconnected world.

The challenges of global interconnectedness

Mega Lecture

on a stable international system in which there is little prospect of major war. Without the revolution in technology and communications in the period since the Second World War, economic changes would not affect most societies simultaneously, as occurred during the recent global financial crisis. Nor could states construct global intelligence networks; nor could terrorist groups coordinate transnational activities.

Higher levels of interconnectedness—strategic, economic, and so forth—expose societies to forces that they cannot control on their own, although great powers are more able than small states to secure the outcomes they desire. Studies of international cooperation in the functionalist tradition have argued that, for well over a century, governments have relied on global institutions to create regulatory frameworks that help them to manage the effects of revolutions in military technology and to control the spread of disease, promote trade and communication, or detect and punish transnational criminal organizations.

Efforts to coordinate action at the global level do not suspend ‘power politics’, but they alter it since states have to become skilled at prevailing in diplomatic arenas (through forming coalitions, for example) as against (or as well as) prevailing on the battlefield. They have to recognize that there are often trade-offs between using their power to secure short-term advantages and offering concessions to others that may produce significant public goods in the long run. It is conceivable that the challenge of climate change will lead societies to follow the second route, but the future is open, and it is possible that states and other associations will concentrate on short-term gains that compound their collective plight. The point is that globalization creates incentives for states to adapt their interests to each other, and to consider how to manage the patterns of interconnectedness that affect them. But it does not guarantee that they will ever reach the point where ‘global’ interests matter as much as ‘national’ interests.

Cosmopolitans have been criticized for underestimating the difficulties in making such a transition. The so-called communitarian strand of political thought stresses the value that people attach to their membership of a specific community (Miller 1999). Such collectivities have obligations to each other, but they are not as extensive as the duties that fellow citizens have to one another. That condition, the argument continues, is not set to change because of globalization. Efforts

linked with the rights and duties they have within particular nation-states (see Walzer 2002).

Poststructuralists have argued that new forms of power and domination may be inherent in cosmopolitan visions and notions of world citizenship. Cosmopolitan projects that rest on supposed universal truths may create pernicious distinctions between those who identify with the species and the ‘parochial’ that stand in the way. The danger is that the cosmopolitan advocates of, say, the universal human rights culture, prepare the ground for new forms of Western power over societies they think they should ‘liberate’. Unsurprisingly, the idea of **humanitarian intervention** has aroused suspicions that it serves to elevate ‘civilized’ Western liberal societies above those who are assumed to be incapable of escaping ‘tribal’ animosities and curbing the use of force. The implication is that intervention for ‘humanitarian’ reasons may do less to relieve suffering in war-torn areas than to cultivate images of superiority among those who can help. It may be a small step from stressing such divisions between the ‘civilized’ and the ‘barbaric’ to using excessive force against those who oppose the ‘liberating’ force (as in the case of the atrocities at Abu Ghraib). Neo-medievalism is not immune from that critique. Jacques Derrida (1992) defended a European political community that reduces the monopoly powers of the nation-state and promotes ‘post-national’ citizenship. But such political designs, he added, are not risk-free. New arrangements may reconstitute divisions between insiders and outsiders that were central to nation-building—for example, by setting a European identity against the Islamic world.

Poststructuralists have not restricted their criticisms to cosmopolitans, but criticize all ‘totalizing’ identities that rest on divisions between ‘self’ and ‘other’ (see Ch. 11). From that standpoint, the communitarian critics of cosmopolitanism may be guilty of defending a vision of political community that marginalizes specific groups. Representatives of minority nations and indigenous peoples make a similar claim when they argue that the dominant images of national identity erase their history and ignore their place in the wider society. Feminist movements have argued that large numbers of women suffer exclusion at the hands of ‘their’ community (see Ch. 17).

The lesson to draw from this is that all communities include some people as full members and exclude

organizations, or support measures to build a world community. That is not to argue that neo-medieval projects should be avoided or that cosmopolitan programmes are bound to fail. It is to stress that a high level of reflectiveness should accompany every effort to transform political community or to improve existing ones.

Higher forms of individual and collective reflectiveness are imperative for managing rising levels of global interconnectedness. The social standards that people become accustomed to in the course of growing up in particular nation-states do not automatically prepare them for the challenge of living with others in a highly interdependent world. Changing social structures and personal lifestyles in response to the challenge of climate change are complex matters that may take decades to bring about. Societies are still at an early stage in learning how to adapt to the challenges of interconnectedness that may increase significantly in the coming decades and centuries as people's lives become even more closely interwoven.

It is possible that societies will fail. Various international organizations have been designed to promote global governance, although their role in protecting the interests of the privileged has attracted criticism (see Pogge 2002). But the fact that they are judged by cosmopolitan principles of justice should not go unnoticed, particularly because many people in very different societies concur with those sentiments. Awareness of how global affluence and poverty are interrelated has increased since the 1960s. Knowledge of how the global trading system or agricultural subsidies disadvantage vulnerable producers in poor societies is more widespread. Those who spearheaded the fair trade movement can point to success in disseminating a sense of moral responsibility to producers in distant places. Ideas of socially responsible investment represent an advance in highlighting the moral problems that

result from profiting from economic transactions with regimes that violate human rights. Evidence of climate change has promoted a global awareness of how everyday routines in different parts of the world contribute to environmental problems that cause immense suffering in many regions and may impose unfair burdens on future generations (see Chs 13 and 22).

As a result of globalization, individuals are linked with 'distant strangers' in unprecedented ways, and cannot avoid difficult questions about the principles that should bind them together. It is impossible to know whether globalization will eventually lead to a strong sense of identification with the species, and to a greater willingness to cooperate with other peoples in building a cosmopolitan community. It is probably unwise to suppose that any single trend will dominate. But there is no doubt that how communities and individuals should respond to the problems of global interconnectedness is the most important moral and political challenge of the age.

Key Points

- The apex of nationalism in relations between the great powers occurred in the first half of the twentieth century.
- Nationalism remains a powerful force in the modern world, but globalization and fragmentation have led to important debates about the nature of political community and about the principles that should govern the patterns of interconnectedness.
- Cosmopolitan approaches that envisage an international order in which all individuals are respected as equals have flourished in the contemporary phase of globalization.
- Realists emphasize the obstacles that stand in the way of new forms of political community.
- Poststructuralists and feminists argue that attempts to create more cosmopolitan arrangements may replicate forms of power and domination that are similar to those in existing nation-states.

Conclusion

The study of international politics has largely been concerned with understanding relations between separate political communities—particularly relations between the great powers. Realists and neo-realists argue that all states must compete for security and survival in an anarchic condition. They maintain that separate states promote their own interests first and foremost,

and contend that the sense of community that exists between the citizens of particular states is unlikely to develop at the level of humanity as long as international anarchy survives.

There is no reason to think that sovereign states are about to be replaced by new forms of political community; but globalization and fragmentation have posed

new challenges for nation-states. The most recent phase in the history of global interconnectedness invites discussion of how far the forms of cooperation that exist in viable states can be developed globally. It is difficult to be optimistic about the immediate future, but it must be remembered that modern forms of globalization are a very recent development, and that species may only be starting to learn how to adapt to them (McNeill and McNeill 2003).

Many different perspectives are important for thinking about the future of political community. They include standpoints that regard the rise of global civil society as evidence that cooperation across national

frontiers is increasing, and that the ties between world citizens may become stronger in future; approaches that hold that political communities may succeed in creating stronger forms of cosmopolitan governance; and perspectives that hold that the struggle for power and security is not about to lose its primacy or maintain that globalization will simply entrench Western economic and political dominance. The differences between those perspectives sharpen the issues that need to be addressed when trying to understand a central issue in the study of globalization: whether or how far it will bring an end to the violent conflicts that have dominated international relations for millennia.

Questions



- 1 What is community, and what makes a community a political community?
- 2 Why has the modern state been the dominant form of political community?
- 3 What is the relationship between nationalism, citizenship, and political community?
- 4 What is the relationship between war and political community?
- 5 To what extent are globalization and fragmentation transforming political communities, and to what extent do they point to the limited nature of the dominant theories of the state and international relations?
- 6 Can one be a citizen of the world?
- 7 What are the arguments for and against cosmopolitan democracy?
- 8 What are the main differences between cosmopolitan, communitarian, and poststructuralist understandings of political community?
- 9 Did the 'war on terror' demonstrate that realists are correct that global norms (such as the norm prohibiting torture) lose their power the moment that societies fear for their security?
- 10 To what extent is globalization encouraging a consensus about the moral and political principles that should govern the structures of human interconnectedness, and to what extent is it creating new fissures?

Further Reading



General

Linklater, A. (1998), *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press). Provides a detailed analysis of many of the themes considered in this chapter.

Communitarian and cosmopolitan arguments

Nussbaum, M. (2002), *In Defence of Country* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press). An excellent collection of essays on patriotism and cosmopolitanism.

The modern state

Elias, N. (2000), *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell). A landmark study of the rise of the modern state.