The Contemporary Transformation of the International System

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Lecture 5
Culture, human rights and justice in the contemporary international system

- THE PROBLEMATIC OF THE 'INTERNATIONAL'
 - 1. the States-system
 - 2. historical perspective
 - 3. the U.S.A. and Russia
 - 4. developing and underdeveloped states
 - 5. culture, rights, justice (and power)

- Questions and issues prominent in the contemporary international system
- a) the idea of an international system based on common rules, institutions, and values associated with a liberal capitalist order;
- b) recent attempts to expand the geographical and moral boundaries of that liberal capitalist international order;
- c) criticisms and challenges to those ideas and processes

- 'social basis' of cultural identity creates
 'collective identity' produces 'sense of belonging' + 'rights of belonging'
- power of States reinforced through appeals to image of the nation, and nationalism
 - = link between culture, rights, justice, and power domestically and within international system
- Social constructivists 'narrative of the nation' shapes national culture and identities

- inside States the dominant culture values,
 beliefs, customs influences and shapes
 rights
 - i.e. dominant culture = 'collective' =
 'collective rights'
 dominant culture = individualistic =
 'individual rights'

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

- established moral claim for individual rights
- asserted that each individual human being matters, deserves to be heard, and must not be silenced
- asserted that each individual deserves respect, and is entitled to be treated with dignity regardless of race, gender, creed, colour, or mental capacity

Communitarianism

- (- rights and justice are culturally specific
- key principles = self-determination, andState sovereignty)

or

Cosmopolitanism

(rights and justice linked to human capacity to reason, and rationality = universal process = basis for universal moral principles on which human rights and justice should be based)

THE 'INTERNATIONAL'

