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Buzan and Little Chapters 16&17

Peer Instruction

- Based on the readings, do you think we are headed into a postmodern system? Why, or why not? If so, what will it look like?

Postmodern system?

- End of Cold War = systemic changes
 - Risk of major war recedes, so does fear
- Brave new world, or old wine in new bottles?

Interaction capacity

- Physical technology has reached its limit (has it?)
 - Terrestrial transportation systems mature
 - Communication: Room to increase number of people connected, but no significant qualitative changes in technology
 - May challenge territorial basis of political organization
- Societal technology
 - Tough to predict
 - Does not always promote interaction

Process



- Already very intense
- Very uneven
 - Centre-Periphery formation looks stable
 - Two worlds:
 - Zone of Peace
 - Zone of conflict
- Regionalism

Process

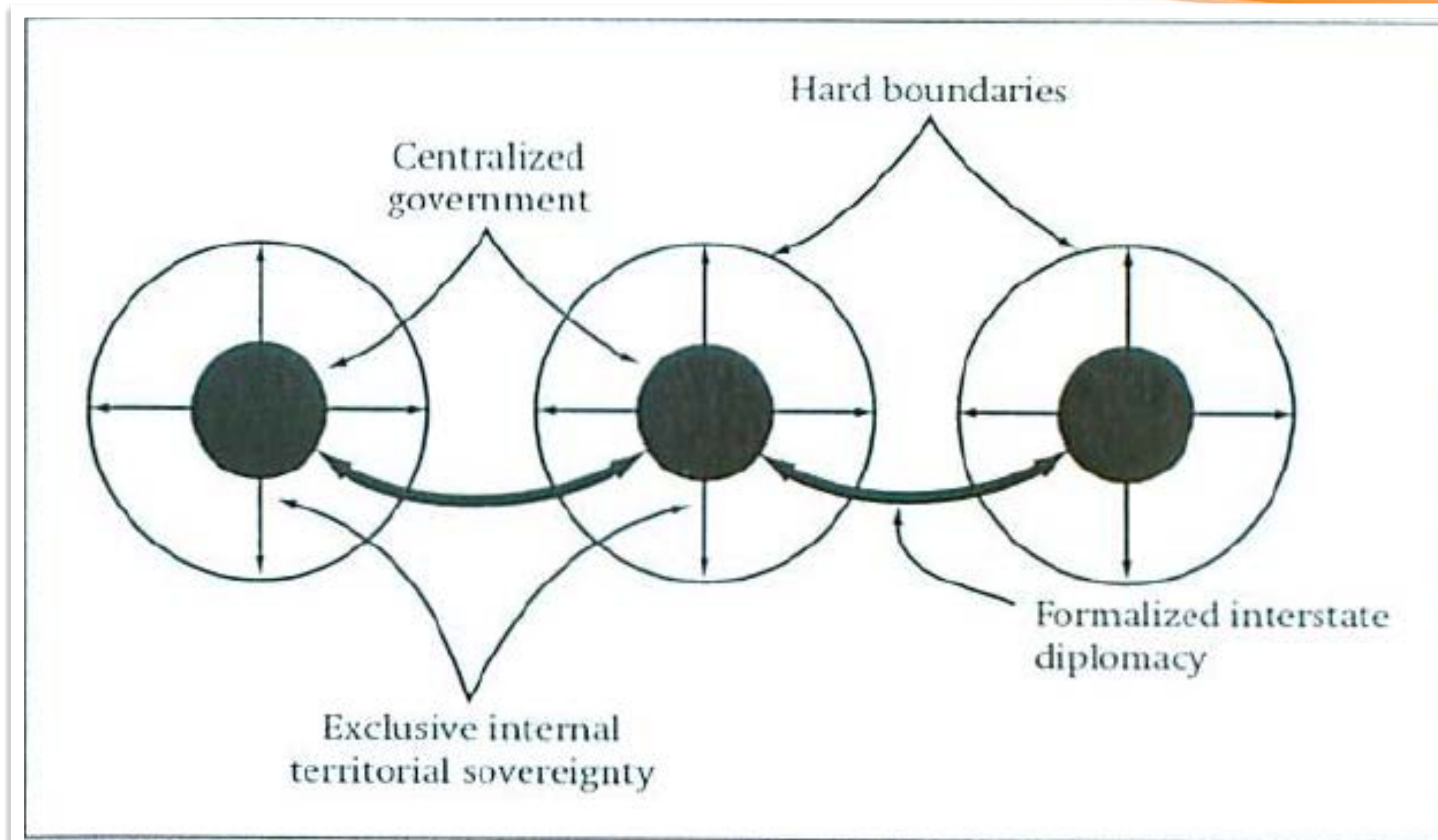


- We should look for qualitative (in type) rather than quantitative (in number or volume) changes
- Changes in importance of sectors
 - Democratic peace and globalization
 - Environmental processes

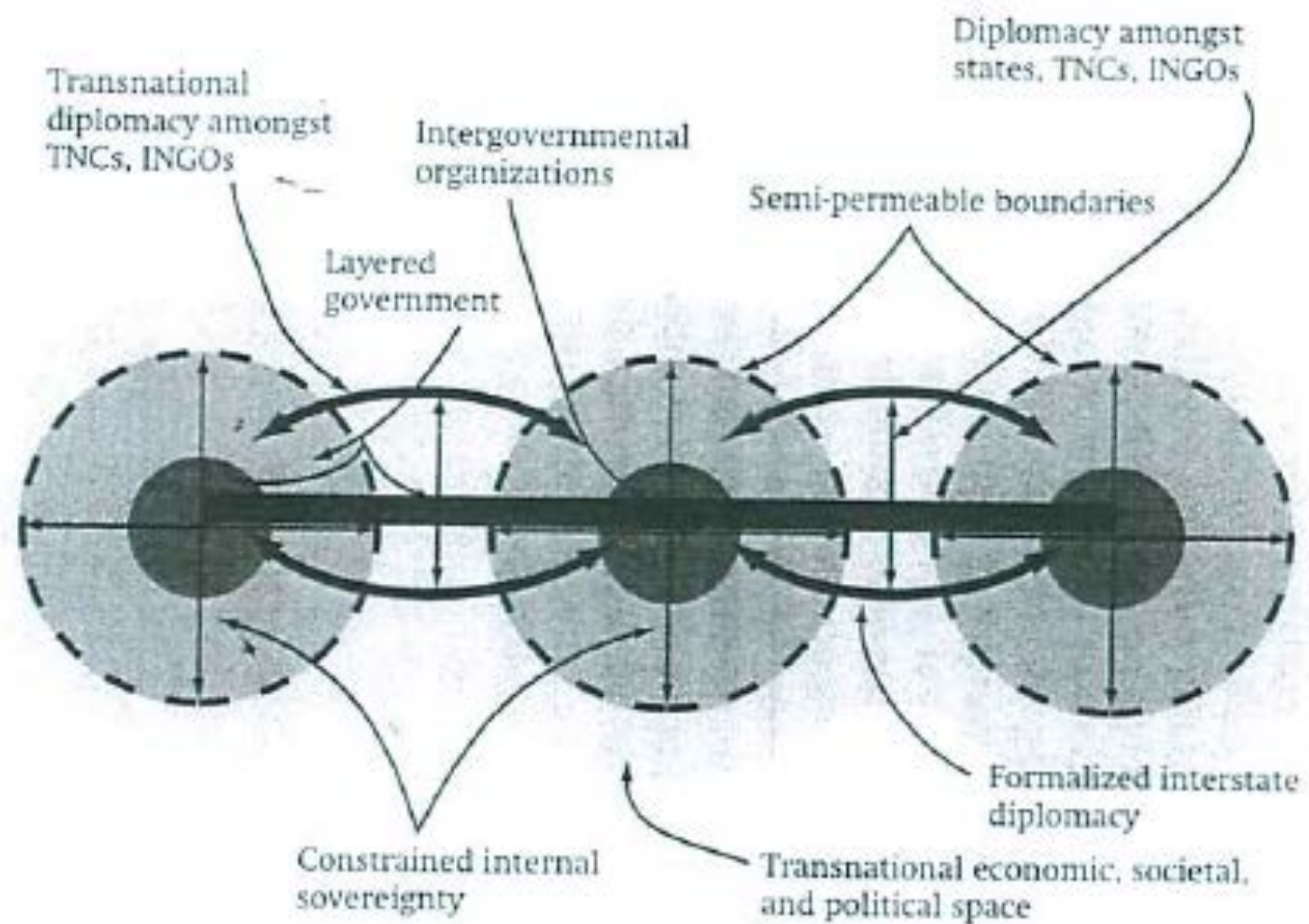
Units

- Dominant units traditionally territorial and military-political
 - What happens to units if the military sector diminishes in importance?
- Evolution of the unit
 - Permeable boundaries
 - Layered sovereignty (subsidiarity)

Units



Units



Structure

- In Postmodern system, what is political-military structure...?
- Logic of like units might survive, but only in classes of units (states alike, INGOs alike, etc.)
- We might view the system as an ecology, where survival of the fittest drives unit diversification to niches

Peer Instruction

- What lessons do you think world history holds for IR?

Lessons of World History for IR

- IR Theory has an impoverished view of international systems
- International systems vary along six dimensions (how many does neorealism assume?)
 - Intensity
 - Geometric arrangement
 - Scale
 - Type of interaction
 - Time-span
 - Nature of dominant unit

Lessons of World History for IR

- Changes in unit, not structural variables, define biggest changes in international system
 - More than polarity!
- Major theme of the book: evolution of units as a process of social learning.

Lessons of World History for IR

- Interaction capacity: distinction between IC and process is messy when it comes to social technology
- Process:
 - Deep embeddedness of social processes in international system
 - Durability of process formations
 - Process defines scale, intensity, and character of international system

Lessons of World History for IR

- Structure:
 - Interaction capacity constrains the possible processes
 - Strength/weakness of process determines whether systems are structured or not

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