THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The morning of December 12, 1937, dawned cold in China's new capital, Nanking. Chinese soldiers, weak and demoralized, watched as soldiers of Imperial Japan maneuvered heavy guns into position for an assault on the city. The Japanese attacked from three directions, supported by heavy artillery and aerial bombardment. Some Chinese troops dropped their weapons and ran, others stripped off their uniforms and tried to blend in as civilians, while still others resolved to fight on, beyond the city.

The next day, Japan's army entered Nanking; all hell broke loose. Chinese soldiers who raised their hands and knelt in surrender were simply executed. Many more were bayonetted or beheaded. Women and girls as young as six or seven were raped. Thousands were raped and gang raped each day, and usually murdered afterward. The rapes, murders, executions, torture, and humiliation of thousands of human beings were witnessed by an international community of journalists, missionaries, and businesspeople who maintained delegations in China's capital. Their letters of complaint to Japanese authorities went unanswered. By January 1938, about one month after the carnage had begun, the Japanese Army had purportedly murdered a staggering 300,000 noncombatants.

For the Chinese today, the "Massacre" or "Rape of Nanking" is never forgotten. The fact that Japanese officials honoring the war dead visit the Yasukuni Shrine today angers the Chinese, who are forced to remember those horrible events.

Students of international relations need to understand the events and trends of the past. Theorists recognize that historical circumstances have shaped core concepts in the field—concepts such as the state, the nation, sovereignty, power, and balance of power. It will prove difficult to understand the contemporary politics of the Koreas, China, and Japan, for example, without understanding how the peoples of each present-day state remember the events of World War II.

In large part, the roots of the contemporary international system are found in Europe-centered Western civilization. Of course, great civilizations thrived in other parts of the world, too. India and China, among others, had extensive, vibrant civilizations long before the historical events covered here. But the European emphasis is justified because for better or worse, in both theory and practice, contemporary international relations is rooted in the European experience. In this chapter, we will begin by looking at Europe in the period immediately preceding and following the Thirty Years' War (1618–48). We then consider Europe's relationship with the rest of the world during the nineteenth century, and we conclude with an analysis of the major transitions during the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ■ Analyze which historical periods have most influenced the development of international relations.

- ■ Describe the historical origins of the state.

- ■ Understand why international relations scholars use the Treaties of Westphalia as a benchmark.

- ■ Explain the historical origins of the European balance-of-power system.

- ■ Explain how the Cold War became a series of confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

- ■ Analyze the key events that have shaped the post–Cold War world and the first two decades of the new millennium.

The Emergence of the Westphalian System

Most international relations theorists locate the origins of the contemporary states system in Europe in 1648, the year the **Treaties of Westphalia** ended the Thirty Years' War. These treaties marked the end of rule by religious authority in Europe and the emergence of secular authorities. With secular authority came the principle that has provided the foundation for international relations ever since then: the notion of the territorial integrity of states—legally equal and sovereign participants in an international system.

The formulation of **sovereignty**—a core concept in contemporary international relations—was one of the most important intellectual developments leading to the Westphalian revolution. Much of the development of the notion is found in the writings of the French philosopher Jean Bodin (1530–96). To Bodin, sovereignty is the "absolute and perpetual power vested in a commonwealth."[1] It resides not in an individual but in a state; thus, it is perpetual. It is "the distinguishing mark of the sovereign that he cannot in any way be subject to the commands of another, for it is he who makes law for the subject, abrogates law already made, and amends obsolete law."[2]

Although, ideally, sovereignty is absolute, in reality, according to Bodin, it is not without limits. Leaders are limited by divine law and natural law: "All the princes on earth are subject to the laws of God and of nature." They are also limited by the type of regime—"the constitutional laws of the realm"—be it a monarchy, an aristocracy, or a democracy. And lastly, leaders are limited by covenants, contracts with promises to the people within the commonwealth, and treaties with other states, though there is no supreme arbiter in relations among states.[3] Thus, Bodin provided the conceptual glue of sovereignty that would emerge with the Westphalian agreement.

The Thirty Years' War devastated Europe. The war, which had begun as a religious dispute between Catholics and Protestants, ended due to mutual exhaustion and bankruptcy. Princes and mercenary armies ravaged the central European countryside, fought frequent battles and undertook ruinous sieges, and plundered the civilian population to secure supplies while in the field. But the treaties that ended the conflict had three key impacts on the practice of international relations.

First, the Treaties of Westphalia embraced the notion of sovereignty. With one stroke, virtually all the small states in central Europe attained sovereignty. The Holy Roman Empire was dead. Monarchs—and not a supranational chruch—gained the authority to decide which version of Christianity was appropriate for their subjects. With the pope and the emperor stripped of this power, the notion of the territorial state came into focus and people increasingly accepted it as normal. The Treaties not only legitimized territoriality and the right of *states*—as the sovereign, territorially

contiguous principalities increasingly came to be known—to choose their own religion, but the Treaties also established that states had the right to determine their own domestic policies, free from external pressure and with full jurisdiction in their own geographic space. The Treaties thus introduced the principle of noninterference in the affairs of other states.

Second, because the leaders of Europe's most powerful countries had seen the devastation wrought by mercenaries in war, after the Treaties of Westphalia, these countries sought to establish their own permanent national militaries. The growth of such forces led to increasingly centralized control, since the state had to collect taxes to pay for these militaries and leaders assumed absolute control over the troops. The state with a national army emerged as a powerful force—its sovereignty acknowledged and its secular base firmly established. And that state's power increased. Larger territorial units gained an advantage as armaments became more standardized and more lethal.
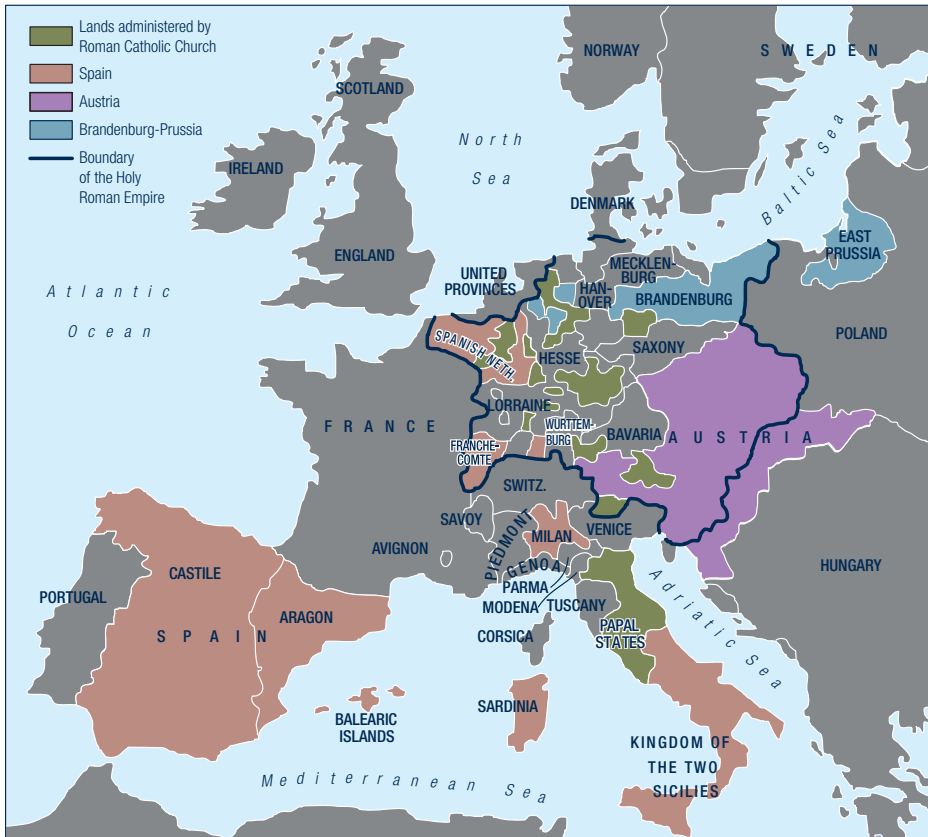
Europe, c. 1648

IN FOCUS   KEY DEVELOPMENTS AFTER WESTPHALIA

- Concept and practice of sovereignty develops.

- Capitalist economic system emerges (stable expectations facilitate long-term investment).

- Centralized control of institutions to facilitate the creation and maintenance of military; military power grows.

Third, the Treaties of Westphalia established a core group of states that dominated the world until the beginning of the nineteenth century: Austria, Russia, Prussia, England, France, and the United Provinces (the area now comprising the Netherlands). Those in the west—England, France, and the United Provinces—underwent an economic revival under the aegis of liberal capitalism, whereas those in the east—Prussia and Russia—reverted to feudal practices. In the west, private enterprise was encouraged. States improved their infrastructure to facilitate commerce, and great trading companies and banks emerged. In contrast, in the east, serfs remained on the land, and economic development was stifled. Yet in both regions, states led by a monarch with absolute power (called "absolutist" states) dominated, with Louis XIV ruling in France (1643–1715), Peter the Great in Russia (1682–1725), and Frederick II in Prussia (1740–86).

The most important social theorist of the time was the Scottish economist Adam Smith (1723–90). In *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,* Smith argued that the notion of a market should apply to all social orders. Individuals—laborers, owners, investors, consumers—should be permitted to pursue their own interests, unfettered by all but the most modest state regulations. According to Smith, each individual acts rationally to maximize her or his own interests. With groups of individuals pursuing their interests, economic efficiency is enhanced, and more goods and services are produced and consumed. At the aggregate level, the wealth of the state and that of the international system are similarly enhanced. What makes the system work is the so-called invisible hand of the market: when individuals pursue their rational self-interests, the system (the market) operates in a way that benefits everyone.[4] Smith's explication of how competing units enable market capitalism to ensure economic vitality has had a profound effect on states' economic policies and political choices, which we will explore in Chapter 9. But other ideas of the period would also dramatically alter governance in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.

Europe in the Nineteenth Century

Two revolutions ushered in the nineteenth century—the American Revolution (1773–1785) against British rule and the French Revolution (1789) against absolutist rule. Both revolutions were the product of Enlightenment thinking as well as social-contract theory. Enlightenment thinkers saw individuals as rational, capable of understanding the laws governing them and capable of working to improve their condition in society.

The Aftermath of Revolution: Core Principles

Two core principles emerged in the aftermath of the American and French revolutions. The first was that absolutist rule is subject to limits imposed by man. In *Two Treatises of Government,* the English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) attacked absolute power and the notion of the divine right of kings. Locke argued that the state is a beneficial institution created by rational men to protect both their natural rights (life, liberty, and property) and their self-interests. Men freely enter into this political arrangement, agreeing to establish government to ensure natural rights for all. The crux of Locke's argument is that political power ultimately rests with the people, rather than with a leader or monarch. The monarch derives **legitimacy** from the consent of the governed.[5]

The second core principle was **nationalism**, wherein a people comes to identify with a common past, language, customs, and territory. Individuals who share such characteristics are motivated to participate actively in the political process as a **nation**. For example, during the French Revolution, a patriotic appeal was made to the *French* masses to defend the French *nation* and its new ideals. This appeal forged an emotional link between the people and the state, regardless of social class. These two principles—legitimacy and nationalism—arose out of the American and French revolutions to provide the foundation for politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The Napoleonic Wars

The political impact of nationalism in Europe was profound. The nineteenth century opened with war in Europe on an unprecedented scale. France's status as a revolutionary power made it an enticing target of other European states intent on stamping out the contagious idea of government by popular consent. In addition, France appeared disorganized and weak, stemming from years of internal conflict. As a result, following its revolution, France became embroiled in an escalating series of wars with Austria, Britain, and Prussia, which culminated in the rise of a "low-born" Corsican artillery officer named Napoleon Bonaparte to leader of the French military and, eventually, to the rank of emperor of France.

Napoleon, with help from other talented officers, set about reorganizing and regularizing the French military. Making skillful use of French national zeal, Napoleon fielded large, well-armed, and passionately motivated armies. Modest changes in technology—in particular, more efficient cultivation of the potato—made possible the advent of a *magazine* system; this system meant war supplies could be stored in pre-positioned locations along likely campaign routes so troops could retrieve them on the move and avoid having to stop and forage for food. In combination with nationalism, the magazine system made it possible for the French to field larger, more mobile, and more reliable armies that could employ innovative tactics unavailable to the smaller professional armies of France's rivals, such as the highly regarded Prussian army. Through a series of famous battles, including those at Jena and Auerstedt (1806), in which Napoleon's armies shattered those of "invincible" Prussia, Napoleon was able to conquer nearly the whole of Europe in a few short years.

Yet the same nationalist fervor that brought about much of Napoleon's success also led to his downfall. In Spain and Russia, Napoleon's armies met nationalists who fought a different sort of war. Rather than facing French forces in direct confrontations, Spanish *guerrillas* used intimate local knowledge to mount hit-and-run attacks on French

The dramatic successes and failures of France's Napoleon Bonaparte illustrated both the power and the limits of nationalism, new military technology, and organization.

occupying forces. The Spanish guerrillas also enjoyed the support of Britain, whose unrivaled mastery of the seas meant the country could lend supplies and occasional expeditionary forces. When local French forces attempted to punish the Spanish into submission by barbarism (including looting, torture, rape, and execution of prisoners and suspected insurgents without trial), resistance to French occupation escalated. The cost to France was high, draining away talented soldiers and cash and damaging French morale far beyond Spain. When Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812 with an army numbering a staggering 422,000, the Russians also refused to give direct battle. Instead, they retreated toward their areas of supply, destroying all available food and shelter behind them in what came to be known as a "scorched earth" policy. The advancing French began to suffer from severe malnutrition, with the entire army slowly starving to death as it advanced to Moscow.

By the time the French reached the Russian capital, the government had already evacuated. The French army occupying Moscow had dwindled to a mere 110,000. Napoleon waited in vain for the tsar to surrender. After realizing the magnitude of his vulnerability, Napoleon attempted to return to France before Russia's harsh winter set in. But, it was already too late. By the time French troops crossed the original line of departure at the Nieman River, Napoleon's *Grande Armeé* had been reduced to a mere 10,000. The proud emperor's final defeat in 1815 by English and Prussian forces at the Battle of Waterloo (in present-day Belgium) was assured.

Peace at the Core of the European System

Following the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 and the establishment of peace by the Congress of Vienna, the five powers of Europe—Austria, Britain, France, Prussia, and Russia—known as the Concert of Europe, ushered in a period of relative peace in the international political system. These great powers fought no major wars after the defeat of Napoleon until the Crimean War in 1854, and in that war, both Austria and Prussia remained neutral. Other local wars of brief duration were fought, and in these, too, some of the five major powers remained neutral. Meeting more than 30 times before World War I at a series of ad hoc conferences, the Concert became a club of like-minded leaders. Through these meetings, these countries legitimized both the independence of new European states and the division of Africa among the colonial powers.

The fact that peace among great powers prevailed during this time seems surprising since major economic, technological, and political changes were radically altering power relationships. Industrialization, a critical development during the nineteenth century, was a double-edged sword. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the powers focused all attention on the processes of industrialization. Great Britain was the leader, outstripping all rivals in its output of coal, iron, and steel and the export of manufactured goods. In addition, Britain became the source of finance capital, the

Boundary of the German Confederation
- Austrian Empire
- France
- Prussia
- Russian Empire
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland

KINGDOM OF NORWAY AND SWEDEN

SCOTLAND

IRELAND

ENGLAND

KINGDOM OF DENMARK

SCHLESWIG
HOLSTEIN
MECK-LENBURG

KINGDOM OF NETHER-LANDS

HANOVER

P R U S S I A

POLAND

R U S S I A N
E M P I R E

HESSE

SAXONY

Atlantic Ocean

LUXEMBOURG

BADEN

BAVARIA

WURTTEM-BURG

REPUBLIC OF CRACOW

HUNGARY

MOLDAVIA

K I N G D O M
O F
F R A N C E

SWISS CONFED.

A U S T R I A N   E M P I R E

WALLACHIA

LOMBARDY-VENETIA

PARMA

MODENA

LUCCA

TUSCANY

PAPAL STATES

MONTENEGRO

K I N G D O M   O F   S A R D I N I A

O T T O M A N   E M P I R E

KINGDOM OF PORTUGAL

KINGDOM OF SPAIN

KINGDOM OF THE TWO SICILIES

Mediterranean Sea

MOROCCO

ALGERIA

TUNISIA

Europe, c. 1815

banker for the continent and, in the twentieth century, for the world. Industrialization spread through virtually all areas of western Europe as the masses flocked to the cities and entrepreneurs and middlemen scrambled for economic advantage. In addition, more than any other factor, industrialization led the middle classes to capture political power at the expense of the aristocratic classes. Unlike the aristocratic classes, the middle classes did not depend on land for wealth and power; their ability to invent, use, and improve industrial machines and processes gave them power. As machine power became indispensable to the security (think artillery, battleships) and prosperity (think merchant ships and railroads) of states, the middle classes began to seek more political power to match their contributions.

The population of Europe soared and commerce surged as transportation corridors across Europe and the globe were strengthened. Political changes were dramatic: Italy was unified in 1870; Germany was formed out of 39 different fragments in 1871; the United Kingdom of the Netherlands was divided into the Netherlands and Belgium in the 1830s; and the Ottoman Empire gradually disintegrated, leading to independence for Greece in 1829 and for Moldavia and Wallachia (Romania) in 1856. With such

dramatic changes under way, what explains the absence of major war? At least three factors discouraged war.

First, Europe's political elites were united in their fear of revolution among the masses. In fact, at the Congress of Vienna, the Austrian diplomat Count Klemens von Metternich (1773–1859), architect of the Concert of Europe, believed that returning to the age of absolutism was the best way to manage Europe. Elites envisioned grand alliances that would bring European leaders together to fight revolution by the lower classes. During the first half of the century, these alliances were not successful. In the 1830s, Britain and France sided together against the three eastern powers (Prussia, Russia, and Austria). In 1848, all five powers faced demands for reform from the masses. But during the second half of the century, European leaders acted in concert, ensuring that mass revolutions did not spread from state to state. In 1870, in the turmoil following France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, the leader Napoleon III was isolated quickly for fear of a revolution that never occurred. Fear of revolt from below thus united European leaders, making interstate war less likely.

Second, two of the major conflicts of interest confronting the core European states took place within, rather than between, culturally close territories: the unifications of Germany and Italy. Both German and Italian unification had powerful proponents and opponents among the European powers. For example, Britain supported Italian unification, making possible Italy's annexation of Naples and Sicily. Austria, on the other hand, was preoccupied with the increasing strength of Prussia and thus did not actively oppose what may well have been against its national interest—the creation of two sizable neighbors out of myriad independent units. German unification was acceptable to Russia, as long as Russian interests in Poland were respected. German unification also got support from Britain's dominant middle class, which viewed a stronger Germany as a potential counterbalance to France. Thus, because the energies and resources of German and Italian peoples were concentrated on the struggle to form single contiguous territorial states, and because the precise impact of the newly unified states on the European balance of power was unknown, a wider war was averted.

The third factor in supporting peace in Europe was the complex and crucial phenomenon of imperialism-colonialism.

Imperialism and Colonialism in the European System before 1870

The discovery of the "new" world—as Europeans after 1492 called it—led to rapidly expanding communication between the Americas and Europe. The same blue-water navigation technology also made contact with Asia less costly and more frequent. The first to arrive in the new world were explorers seeking discovery, riches, and personal

glory; merchants seeking raw materials and trade relations; and clerics seeking to convert "savages" to Christianity. But the staggering wealth they discovered, and the relative ease with which it could be acquired, led to increasing competition among European powers for territories in far-distant lands. Most of the European powers became empires and, once established, claimed as sovereign territory the lands indigenous peoples occupied. These empires are the origin of the term **imperialism**, the annexation of distant territory (most often by force) and its inhabitants to an empire. **Colonialism**, which often followed or accompanied imperialism, refers to the settling of people from a home country like Spain among indigenous peoples of a distant territory like Mexico. The two terms are thus subtly different; most but not all imperial powers settled their own citizens among the peoples whose territories they annexed, and some states established colonies but did not identify themselves as empires. Still, most scholars use the two terms interchangeably.

This process of annexation by conquest or treaty continued for 400 years. As the technology of travel and communications improved, and as Europeans developed vaccines and cures for tropical diseases, the costs to European powers of imposing their will on indigenous people continued to drop. Europeans were welcomed in some places but were resisted in most. In most cases, Europeans overcame that resistance with very little cost or risk. They met spears with machine guns and horses with heavy artillery. In the dawning machine age, it became more common to target indigenous civilians deliberately, often with near genocidal results. By the close of the nineteenth century, almost the whole of the globe was "ruled" by European states. Great Britain was the largest and most successful of the imperial powers, but even small states, such as Portugal and the Netherlands, maintained important colonies abroad.

The process also led to the establishment of a "European" identity. European states enjoyed a solidarity among themselves, based on their being European, Christian, "civilized," and white. These traits differentiated an "us"—white Christian Europeans—from an "other"—the rest of the world. With the rise of mass literacy and increasing contact with the colonial world due to industrialization, Europeans more than ever saw their commonalities, the uniqueness of being "European." This identity was, in part, a return to the same kind of unity felt under the Roman Empire and Roman law, a secular form of medieval Christendom, and a larger Europe as Kant and Rousseau had envisioned (see Chapter 1). The Congress of Vienna and the Concert of Europe gave more concrete form to these beliefs. The flip side of these beliefs was the ongoing exploration, conquest, and exploitation of peoples in the non-European world and the subsequent establishment of colonies there.

The Industrial Revolution provided the European states with the military and economic capacity to engage in territorial expansion. Some imperial states were motivated by economic gains, seeking new external markets for manufactured goods and obtaining, in turn, raw materials to fuel their industrial growth. For others, the motivation was

cultural and religious—to spread the Christian faith and the ways of white "civilization" to the "dark" continent and beyond. For still others, the motivation was political. Since the European balance of power prevented direct confrontation in Europe, European state rivalries were played out in Africa and Asia.

Two important questions follow. First, why did territorial expansion only happen in Asia and Africa and not Latin America? Second, how did Germany and Italy—two European powers who unified late— react to having so few of their own colonies as compared to, say, Portugal, a much smaller state? Latin America was "protected" from late-nineteenth-century European colonial and imperial attention by the Monroe Doctrine—the U.S. policy of defending the Western Hemisphere from European interference.

In the nineteenth century, explorers often paved the way for the colonization of African and Asian lands by European powers. Here, a French expedition seeks to stake a claim in central Africa.
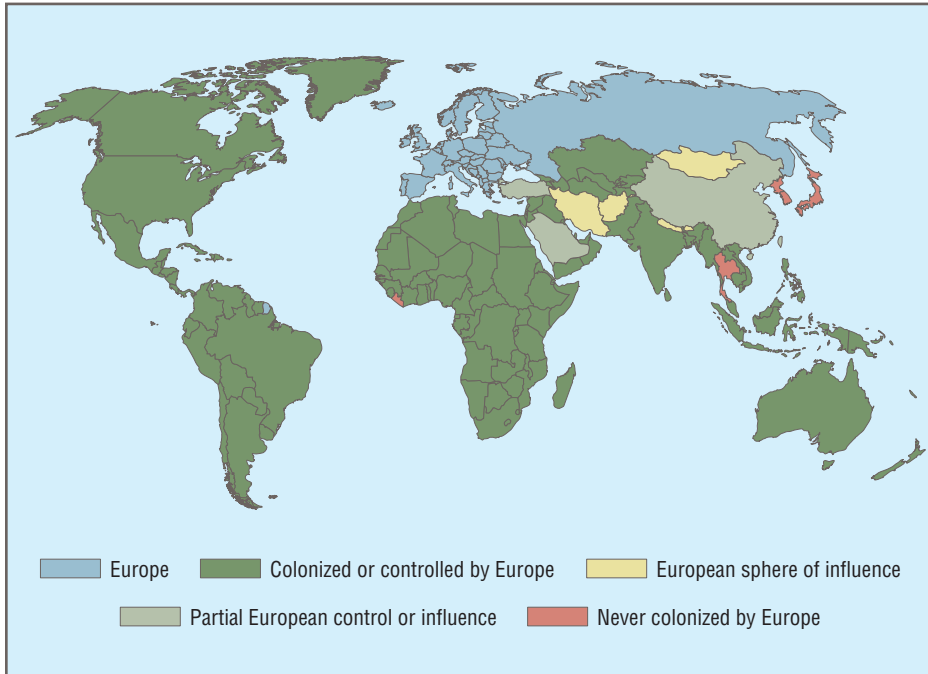
As to Italy and Germany, once they unified and industrialized, many within each state felt that to have international respect (and to guarantee cheap imports of raw materials), both states "needed" to annex or colonize countries in Asia or Africa. Italy attempted to conquer and colonize Ethiopia, a Christian empire in the horn of Africa, but suffered a humiliating defeat at the Battle of Adowa in 1896.

To mollify Germany's imperial ambitions, during the Congress of Berlin in 1885, the major powers divided up Africa, "giving" Germany a sphere of influence in east Africa (Tanganyika), west Africa (Cameroon and Togo), and southern Africa (Southwest Africa). European imperialism seemed to provide a convenient outlet for Germany's aspirations as a great power, without endangering the delicate balance of power within Europe itself. By the end of the nineteenth century, 85 percent of Africa was under the control of European states.

In Asia, only Japan and Siam (Thailand) were not under direct European or U.S. influence. China is an excellent example of the extent of external domination. Under the Qing dynasty, which began in the seventeenth century, China had slowly been losing political, economic, and military power for several hundred years. During the nine-

This map shows every country that has been under European control at any point from the 1500s to the 1960s. The United States, Mexico, and most of Latin America became independent of Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, respectively, but much of the rest of the world remained under colonial control until after World War II.

teenth century, British merchants began to trade with China for tea, silk, and porcelain, often paying for these products with smuggled opium. In 1842, the British defeated China in the Opium War, forcing China to cede various political and territorial rights to foreigners through a series of unequal treaties. European states and Japan were able to occupy large portions of Chinese territory, claiming to have exclusive trading rights in particular regions. Foreign powers exercised separate "spheres of influence" in China. By 1914, Europeans had colonized four-fifths of the world, and still controlled much of it.

The United States eventually became an imperial power as well. Having won the 1898 Spanish-American War, pushing the Spanish out of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and other small islands, the United States acquired its own small empire.

The struggle for economic power led to heedless exploitation of colonial areas, particularly in Africa and Asia. One striking aspect of the contest between the Europeans and the peoples they encountered in Africa and Asia is that European weapons and communications technology proved very difficult for indigenous peoples to resist. European states and their militaries became accustomed to winning battles against vastly more numerous adversaries, and often attributed their ability to do so to their military

technology. As one famous apologist for colonialism put it: "Thank God that we have got the Maxim gun, and they have not."[6]

But, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, the assumption that imperialist countries could cheaply control vast stretches of distant territory containing large numbers of aggrieved or oppressed people with only a few colonial officers and administrators was being challenged with increasing frequency. For Great Britain, the world's most successful colonial power, the future of colonialism was clearly signaled by Britain's Pyrrhic victory in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902; also known as the South African War). British soldiers fought, against Boer commandos (white descendants of Dutch immigrants to South Africa in the 1820s), a lengthy and bitter counterinsurgency war that claimed the lives of more than 20,000 Boer women and children through the failure of the British to provide sanitary internment conditions, sufficient food, and fresh water. The war, which Britain expected to last no longer than three months and cost no more than 10 million pounds sterling, ended up costing 230 million pounds and lasting two years and eight months. It proved the most expensive war, by an order of magnitude, in British colonial history. The war was largely unpopular in Europe and led to increased tensions between Britain and Germany, because the Boers had purchased advanced infantry rifles from Germany and sought German diplomatic and military intervention during the war. However, the five European powers had still not fought major wars directly against each other.

In sum, much of the competition, rivalry, and tension traditionally marking relations among Europe's states could be acted out far beyond Europe itself. Europeans raced to acquire colonies to achieve increased status, wealth, and power vis-à-vis their rivals. Europeans could imagine themselves as bringing the light of civilization to the "dark" regions of the world, while at the same time acquiring the material resources (mineral wealth and "native levies") they might need in a future war in Europe. Each colonial power understood it might take years to accumulate sufficient resources to gain an advantage in a major European war. Therefore, each state maintained an interest in managing crises so conflicts of interest would not escalate to all-out war. Thus, the "safety valve" of colonialism both reinforced European unity and identity and prevented the buildup of tension in Europe.

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the toll of political rivalry and economic competition had become destabilizing. Germany's unification, rapid industrialization, and population growth led to an escalation of tension that could not be assuaged in time to prevent war. In 1870, France and Germany fought a major war, in which France suffered defeat. Through a humiliating peace treaty, France was forced to surrender the long-contested provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which became part of the new Germany. The war and the simmering resentments to which it gave birth were mere harbingers of conflicts to come. In addition, the legacy of colonialism, which had served to defuse tension in Europe, laid the groundwork for enduring resentment of

Europeans by many Asians and Africans; this resentment continues to complicate peace, humanitarian work, and development operations in these areas of the world to this day.

Balance of Power

During the nineteenth century, colonialism, the common interests of conservative European elites, and distraction over the troubled unifications of German and Italian principalities seemed to promote a long peace in Europe. But this condition of relative peace was underpinned by another factor as well: a **balance of power**. The independent European states, each with relatively equal power, feared the emergence of any predominant state (**hegemon**) among them. As a result, they formed alliances to counteract any potentially more powerful faction, thus creating a balance of power. The idea behind a balance of power is simple. States will hesitate to start a war with an adversary whose power to fight and win wars is relatively balanced (*symmetrical*), because the risk of defeat is high. When one state or coalition of states is much more powerful than its adversaries (*asymmetrical*), war is relatively more likely. The treaties signed after 1815 were designed not only to quell revolution from below but also to prevent the emergence of a hegemon, such as France had become under Napoleon. Britain or Russia, at least later in the century, could have assumed a dominant leadership position—Britain because of its economic capability and naval prowess, and Russia because of its relative geographic isolation and extraordinary manpower. However, neither sought to exert hegemonic power; each one's respective capacity to effect a balance of power in Europe was declining and the status quo was acceptable to both states.

Britain and Russia did play different roles, however, in the balance of power. Britain most often played the role of off-shore balancer; for example, it intervened on behalf of the Greeks in their struggle for independence from the Turks in the late 1820s, on behalf of the Belgians during their war of independence against Holland in 1830, on behalf of Turkey against Russia in the Crimean War in 1854–56, and again in the Russo-Turkish War in 1877–78. Thus, Britain ensured that power in Europe remained relatively balanced. Russia's role was as a builder of alliances. The Holy Alliance of 1815 kept Austria, Prussia, and Russia united against revolutionary France, and Russia used its claim on Poland to build a bond with Prussia. Russian interests in the Dardanelles, the strategic waterway linking the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea, and in Constantinople (today's Istanbul) overlapped with those of Britain. Thus, these two states, located at the margins of Europe, played key roles in making the balance-of-power system work.

During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, the Concert of Europe frayed, beginning with the Franco-Prussian War (1870) and the Russian invasion of Turkey (Russo-Turkish War, 1877–78). Alliances began to solidify as the balance-of-power system began to weaken. The advent of the railroad gave continental powers such

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

- From revolutions emerge two concepts: the idea that legitimate rule requires (some) consent of the governed, and nationalism.

- A system managed by the balance of power brings relative peace to Europe. Elites are united in fear of the masses, and domestic concerns are more important than foreign policy.

- European imperialism in Asia and Africa helps to maintain the European balance of power.

- The balance of power breaks down due to imperial Germany's too-rapid growth and the increasing rigidity of alliances, resulting in World War I.

as Germany and Austria-Hungary an enhanced level of economic and strategic mobility equal to that of maritime powers such as Britain. This change reduced Britain's ability to balance power on the continent. Russia, for its part, began to fall markedly behind in the industrialization race, and its relatively few railroads meant that its massive manpower advantage would be less and less able to reach a battlefield in time to determine an outcome. So Russia's power began to wane compared with that of France, Germany, and Austria-Hungary.

The Breakdown: Solidification of Alliances

By the waning years of the nineteenth century, the balance-of-power system had weakened. Whereas alliances previously had been flexible and fluid, now alliances became increasingly rigid. Two camps emerged: the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) in 1882 and the Dual Alliance (France and Russia) in 1893. In 1902, Britain broke from the "balancer" role, joining in a naval alliance with Japan to forestall Russian and Japanese collaboration in China. This alliance marked a significant turn: for the first time, a European state (Great Britain) turned to an Asian one (Japan) to thwart a European power (Russia). And, in 1904, Britain joined with France in an alliance called the Entente Cordiale.

In that same year, Russia and Japan went to war (the Russo-Japanese War) in a contest Europeans widely expected to result in a Japanese defeat. After all, the Japanese had come late to industrialization, and although Japan's naval forces looked impressive on paper, their opponents would be white Europeans. But Russia's industrial back-

wardness would affect it severely. As the war opened, Japanese forces surrounded a key Russian fortress at Port Arthur. Russia's lack of sufficient railroads meant it could not reinforce its forces in the Far East by rail, so it attempted to relieve the siege by sending a naval flotilla from its Baltic home ports 18,000 miles away. But after a very costly Japanese assault, Port Arthur was captured while the Russian fleet was still at sea. In May 1905, the Russian and Japanese fleets clashed in Tsushima Bay, and the result was perhaps the greatest naval defeat in history: Russia lost eight battleships, some 5,000 sailors were killed, and another 5,000 were captured as prisoners of war. The Japanese lost three torpedo boats and 116 sailors. The impact of Japan's victory would extend far beyond the defeat of Russia in the Far East. An Asian power's defeat of a white colonial power seriously compromised a core ideological foundation of colonialism— that whites were inherently superior to nonwhites. The Russian defeat spurred Japanese expansion and caused Germany to discount Russia's ability to interfere with German ambitions in Europe. Russia's defeat severely compromised the legitimacy of the tsar, setting in motion a revolution that, after 1917, was to topple the Russian empire and replace it with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, or the Soviet Union).

The final collapse of the balance-of-power system came with World War I. Germany's rapid rise in power intensified the destabilizing impact of the hardening of alliances at the turn of the twentieth century. By 1912, Germany had exceeded France and Britain in both heavy industrial output and population growth. Germany also feared Russian efforts to modernize its relatively sparse railroad network. Being "latecomers" to the core of European power, and having defeated France in the Franco-Prussian War (1870), many Germans felt that Germany had not received the diplomatic recognition and status it deserved. This lack of recognition in part explains why Germany encouraged Austria-Hungary to crush Serbia following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), who was shot in Sarajevo in June 1914. Like most of Europe's leaders at the time, Germany's leaders believed war made the state and its citizens stronger, and that backing down after a humiliation would only encourage further humiliations. Besides, the outcome of a local war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia was certain to be a quick victory for Germany's most important ally.

But under the tight system of alliances, the fateful shot set off a chain reaction. What Germany had hoped would remain a local war soon escalated to a continental war, once Russia's tsar ordered a premobilization of Russian forces. And once German troops crossed into Belgium (thus violating British-guaranteed Belgian neutrality), that continental war escalated to a world war when Britain sided with France and Russia. The Ottoman Empire, long a rival with Russia, entered the war on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Both sides anticipated a short, decisive war (over by Christmas), but this did not happen. Germany's Schlieffen Plan—its strategy for a decisive victory in a two-front war against Russia and France—failed almost immediately, leading to a

Europe, 1914

ghastly stalemate. Between 1914 and 1918, soldiers from more than a dozen countries endured the persistent degradation of trench warfare and the horrors of poison gas. The "Great War," as it came to be known, saw the introduction of aerial bombing and unrestricted submarine warfare as well. Britain's naval blockade of Germany caused widespread suffering and privation for German civilians. More than 8.5 million soldiers and 1.5 million civilians lost their lives. Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia were defeated, while Britain and France—two of the three "victors"—were seriously weakened. Only the United States, a late entrant into the war, emerged relatively unscathed. The defeat and subsequent dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire by France and Britain—which created new states subject to control and manipulation by both—continues to affect interstate peace in the Middle East to this day.

The Interwar Years and World War II

The end of World War I saw critical changes in international relations. First, three European empires were strained and finally broke up during or near the end of World

War I. With those empires went the conservative social order of Europe; in its place emerged a proliferation of nationalisms. Russia exited the war in 1917, as revolution raged within its territory. The tsar was overthrown and eventually replaced by not only a new leader (Vladimir Ilyich Lenin) but also a new ideology—Communism—that would have profound implications for international politics during the remainder of the twentieth century. The Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires disintegrated. Austria-Hungary was replaced by Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, part of Yugoslavia, and part of Romania. The Ottoman Empire was also reconfigured. Having gradually weakened throughout the nineteenth century, its defeat resulted in the final overthrow of the Ottomans. Arabia rose against Ottoman rule, and British forces occupied Palestine (including Jerusalem) and Baghdad. Turkey became the largest of the successor states that emerged from the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

The end of the empires accelerated and intensified nationalisms. In fact, one of President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points in the treaty ending World War I called for self-determination, the right of national groups to self-rule. Technological innovations in the printing industry and a mass audience, now literate, stimulated the nationalism of these various groups (for example, Austrians and Hungarians). Now it was easy and cheap to publish material in the multitude of different European languages and so offer differing interpretations of history and national life.

A second critical change was that Germany emerged from World War I an even more dissatisfied power. Germany had been defeated on the battlefield, but German forces ended the war in occupation of enemy territory. What's more, German leaders had not been honest with the German people. Many German newspapers had been predicting a major breakthrough and victory right up until the armistice of November 11, 1918, so the myth grew that the German military had been "stabbed in the back" by "liberals" (and later Jews) in Berlin. Even more devastating was the fact that the Treaty of Versailles, which formally ended the war, made the subsequent generation of Germans pay the entire economic cost of the war through reparations—$32 billion for wartime damages. As Germany printed more money to pay its reparations, Germans suffered from hyperinflation, causing widespread impoverishment of the middle and working classes. Finally, Germany was no longer allowed to have a standing military, and French and British troops occupied its most productive industrialized region, the Ruhr Valley. Bitterness over these harsh penalties provided the climate for the emergence of conservatives such as the National Socialist Worker's Party (Nazis for short), led by Adolf Hitler. Hitler publicly dedicated himself to righting the "wrongs" imposed on the German people after World War I.

Third, enforcement of the Treaty of Versailles was given to the ultimately unsuccessful **League of Nations**, the intergovernmental organization designed to prevent all future interstate wars. But the organization itself did not have the political weight, the legal instruments, or the legitimacy to carry out the task. The political weight of

the League was weakened by the fact that the United States—whose president Woodrow Wilson had been the League's principal architect—itself refused to join, retreating instead to an isolationist foreign policy. Nor did Russia join, nor were any of the vanquished states of the war permitted to participate. The League's legal authority was weak, and the instruments it had for enforcing the peace proved ineffective.

Fourth, the blueprint for a peaceful international order enshrined in Wilson's Fourteen Points failed. Wilson had called for open diplomacy—"open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in public view."[7] Point three was a reaffirmation of economic liberalism, the removal of economic barriers among all the nations consenting to the peace. The League, a "general association of nations" that would ensure war never occurred again, would maintain order. But these principles were not adopted. In the words of historian E. H. Carr, "The characteristic feature of the twenty years between 1919 and 1939 was the abrupt descent from the visionary hopes of the first decade to the grim despair of the second, from a utopia which took little account of reality to a reality from which every element of utopia was rigorously excluded."[8] Liberalism and its utopian and idealist elements were replaced by realism as the dominant international-relations theory—a fundamentally divergent theoretical perspective. (See Chapter 3.)

The world from which these realists emerged was a turbulent one. The German economy imploded; the U.S. stock market plummeted; and the world economy sputtered, and then collapsed. Japan marched into Manchuria in 1931 and into the rest of China in 1937; Italy overran Ethiopia in 1935; fascism, liberalism, and communism clashed.

IN FOCUS

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE INTERWAR YEARS

- Three empires collapse: Russia by revolution, the Austro-Hungarian Empire by dismemberment, and the Ottoman Empire by external wars and internal turmoil. These collapses lead to a resurgence of nationalisms.

- German dissatisfaction with the World War I settlement (Versailles Treaty) leads to the rise of Fascism in Germany. Germany finds allies in Italy and Japan.

- A weak League of Nations is unable to respond to Japanese, Italian, and German aggression. Nor can it prevent or reverse widespread economic depression.

World War II

In the view of most Europeans and many in the United States, Germany, and in particular Adolf Hitler, started World War II. But Japan and Italy also played major roles in the breakdown of interstate order in the 1930s. In 1931, Japan staged the Mukden incident as a pretext for assaulting China and annexing Manchuria. The Japanese invasion of China was marked by horrifying barbarity against the Chinese people, including the rape, murder, and torture of Chinese civilians, and by the increasing inability of Japan's civilian government to restrain its generals in China. Japan's record in Korea was equally brutal. Japan's reputation for savagery against noncombatants in China reached its peak in the Rape of Nanking, discussed at the beginning of the chapter. When news of the massacres and rapes reached the United States—itself already embroiled in a dispute with Japan over Japan's prior conduct in China—a diplomatic crisis ensued, the result of which was war, when Japanese forces attacked the U.S. Seventh Fleet at Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

But Nazi Germany, the **Third Reich**, proved to be the greatest challenge to the nascent interstate order that followed World War I. Adolf Hitler had come to power with a promise to restore Germany's economy and national pride. The core of his economic policies, however, was an over-investment in armaments production. Germany could not actually pay for the foodstuff and raw materials needed to maintain the pace of production, so it bullied its neighbors—mostly much weaker new states to the east, such as Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania—into ruinous (for the weaker states) trade deals. As one economic historian of the period put it: "The process was circular. The economic crisis itself was largely caused by the extreme pace of German rearmament. One way out would have been to slacken that pace: when that was rejected, Germany was in a position where she was arming in order to expand, and then had to expand in order to continue to arm."[9] But once the other European powers realized how far behind they were, they used every diplomatic opportunity to delay confronting Germany until they themselves might have a chance to succeed. For these and other reasons, including the economic damage both Britain and France suffered in World War I, Britain and France did little to halt Germany's resurgence.

The Third Reich's fascism effectively mobilized the masses in support of the state. It capitalized on the idea that war and conflict were noble activities from which ultimately superior civilizations would be formed. It drew strength from the belief that certain racial groups were superior and others inferior, and it mobilized the disenchanted and the economically weak on behalf of its cause. In autumn 1938, Britain agreed to let Germany occupy the westernmost region of Czechoslovakia, in the hope of averting a general war, or at least delaying war until Britain's defense preparations could be sufficiently strengthened. But this was a false hope. In spring 1939, the Third Reich annexed the remainder of Czechoslovakia, and in September 1939, after having

Europe, showing alliances as of 1939

signed a peace treaty with the Soviet Union that divided Poland between them, German forces stormed into Poland from the west while Soviet forces assaulted from the east. Hitler's real intent was to secure his eastern flank against a Soviet threat while he assaulted Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, and, ultimately, France (intending to force Britain into neutrality). His grand plan then called for Germany to turn east and conquer the Soviet Union. Poland was quickly overcome, but because Britain and France had guaranteed Polish security, the invasion prompted a declaration of war: World War II had begun.

In 1940, Hitler set his plans into motion and succeeded in a series of rapid conquests, culminating in the defeat of France in May. In the late summer and fall, after being repeatedly rebuffed in its efforts to coerce Britain into neutrality, the Third Reich prepared to invade and the Battle of Britain ensued. Fought almost entirely in the air, Britain eventually won the battle with a combination of extreme courage, resourcefulness, and luck; and Hitler was forced to turn east with a hostile Britain at his back. In June 1941, the Third Reich undertook the most ambitious land invasion

in history: Operation Barbarossa—its long-planned yet ill-fated invasion of the Soviet Union. This surprise attack led the Soviet Union to join sides with Britain and France.

The power of fascism—in German, Italian, and Japanese versions—led to an uneasy alliance between the communist Soviet Union and the liberal United States, Great Britain, and France, among others (the Allies). That alliance sought to check the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan), by force if necessary. Thus, during World War II, those fighting against the Axis powers acted in unison, regardless of their ideological disagreements.

At the end of the war in 1945, the Allies prevailed. Italy had already surrendered in September 1943, and the Third Reich and imperial Japan lay in ruins. In Europe, the Soviet Union paid the highest price for the Third Reich's aggression, and, with some justification, considered itself the victor in Europe, with help from the United States and Britain. In the Pacific, the United States, China, and Korea paid the highest price for Japan's aggression. With some justification, the United States considered itself the victor in the Pacific. Two other features of World War II demand attention as well.

First, the Third Reich's military invasion of Poland, the Baltic states, and the Soviet Union was followed by organized killing teams whose sole aim was the mass murder of human beings, regardless of their support for, or resistance to, the German state. Jews in particular were singled out, but Nazi policy extended to gypsies (now called Roma), communists, homosexuals, and even ethnic Germans born with genetic defects such as a cleft palate or a club foot. In Germany, Poland, the Baltic states, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union, persons on target lists were forced to abandon their homes. Nazi captors forced these people to work in forced-labor camps under cruel conditions, then either slowly or rapidly murdered them. In East Asia, Japanese forces acted with similar cruelty against Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean noncombatants. The Japanese often tortured victims or forced them to become subjects in gruesome experiments before murdering them. In many places, women were forced into brothels, or "comfort stations," as Japanese rhetoric of the day described them. The nearly unprecedented brutality of the Axis powers against noncombatants in areas of occupation during the war led to war crimes tribunals and, ultimately, to a major new feature of international politics following the war: the Geneva Conventions of 1948 and 1949. These conventions—which today have the force of international law—formally criminalized many abuses, including torture, murder, and food deprivation, all perpetrated against noncombatants in areas of German and Japanese occupation during World War II. The conventions are collectively known as international humanitarian law (IHL); however, because enforcement is largely voluntary, their effectiveness has often been called into question.

The Germans and Japanese were not the only forces for whom race was a factor in World War II. As documented by John Dower in his book *War without Mercy*, U.S., British, and Australian forces fighting in the Pacific tended to view the Japanese as

"apes" or "monkey men." As a result, they rarely took prisoners and were more comfortable in undertaking massive strategic air assaults on Japanese cities. In the United States in 1942, citizens of Japanese descent were summarily deprived of their constitutional rights and interned for the duration of the war. In the Pacific theater, racism affected the conduct and strategies of armed forces on *both* sides.[10]

Second, although Germany surrendered unconditionally in May 1945, the war did not end until the Japanese surrender in August of that year. By this point in the war, Japan had no hope of winning. Japan had made it clear as early as January that it might be willing to surrender, so long as Allied forces did not try or imprison Emperor Hirohito. But the Allies had already agreed they would accept no less than unconditional surrender, so Japan prepared for an invasion by U.S. and possibly Soviet forces, hoping that the threat of massive Allied casualties might yet win it a chance to preserve the emperor from trial and punishment. Instead, on August 6, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and three days later, a second bomb on Nagasaki. The casualties were no greater than those experienced in fire-bombings of major Japanese cities earlier that year. But the new weapon, combined with a Soviet declaration of war on Japan the same day as the Nagasaki bombing (and Japanese calculation that the emperor might be spared), led to Japan's unconditional surrender on August 15, 1945.

The end of World War II resulted in a major redistribution of power. The victorious United States and Soviet Union emerged as the new world powers, though the USSR had been severely hurt by the war and remained economically crippled as compared to the United States. Yet what the USSR lacked in economic power, it gained from geopolitical proximity to the two places where the future of the international system would be decided: Western Europe and East Asia. The war also changed political boundaries. The Soviet Union virtually annexed the Baltic states (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) and portions of Austria, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania; Germany and Korea were divided; and Japan was ousted from much of Asia. Each of these changes contributed to the new international conflict: the **Cold War**.

The Cold War

The leaders of the victors of World War II—Britain's prime minister, Winston Churchill; the United States' president, Franklin Roosevelt; and the Soviet Union's premier, Joseph Stalin—planned during the war for a postwar order. Indeed, the Atlantic Charter of August 14, 1941, called for collaboration on economic issues and prepared for a permanent system of security. These plans were consolidated in 1943 and 1944 and came to fruition in the United Nations in 1945. Yet several other outcomes of World War II help explain the emergence of what we now call the Cold War.

Origins of the Cold War

The first and most important outcome of World War II was the emergence of two **superpowers**—the United States and the Soviet Union—as the primary actors in the international system, which resulted in the decline of Western Europe as the epicenter of international politics. The second outcome of the war was the intensification of fundamental incompatibilities between these two superpowers in both national interests and ideology. Differences surfaced immediately over geopolitical national interests. Having been invaded from the west on several occasions, including during World War II, the USSR used its newfound power to solidify its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, specifically in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania. The Soviet leadership believed that ensuring friendly (or at least weak) neighbors on its western borders was vital to the country's national interests. In the United States, there raged a debate between those favoring an aggressive **rollback** strategy—pushing the USSR back to its own borders—and those favoring a less-aggressive **containment** strategy. The diplomat and historian George Kennan published in *Foreign Affairs* the famous "X" telegram, in which he argued that because the Soviet Union would always feel military insecurity, it would conduct an aggressive foreign policy. Containing the Soviets, Kennan wrote, should therefore become the cornerstone of the United States' postwar foreign policy.[11]

The United States put the notion of containment into action in the Truman Doctrine of 1947. Justifying material support in Greece against the communists, President Harry Truman asserted, "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way."[12] Containment as policy—essentially, the use of espionage, economic pressure, and forward-deployed military resources—emerged from a comparative asymmetry of forces in Europe. After the Third Reich's surrender, U.S. and British forces rapidly demobilized and went home, whereas the Soviet army did not. In 1948, the Soviets blocked western transportation corridors to Berlin, the German capital—which had been divided into sectors by the Potsdam Conference of 1945; the United States then realized that even as the sole state in possession of atomic weapons, it did not possess the power to coerce the Soviet Union into retreating to its pre–World War II borders. And, in August 1949, the Soviets successfully tested their first atomic bomb. Thus, containment, based on U.S. geostrategic interests and a growing recognition that attempting rollback would likely lead to another world war, became the fundamental doctrine of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War.

The United States and the Soviet Union also had major ideological differences. The United States' democratic liberalism was based on a social system that accepted the worth and value of the individual; a political system that depended on the participation

of individuals in the electoral process; and an economic system, **capitalism**, that provided opportunities to individuals to pursue what was economically rational with minimal government interference. At the international level, this translated into support for other democratic regimes and support of liberal capitalist institutions and processes, including, most critically, free trade.

Soviet communist ideology also influenced that country's conception of the international system and state practices. The failure of the Revolutions of 1848 cast Marxist theory into crisis; Marxism insisted that peasants and workers would spontaneously rise up and overthrow their capitalist masters, but this had not happened. The crisis in Marxist theory was partly resolved by Vladimir Lenin's "vanguard of the proletariat" amendment, in which Lenin argued that the masses must be led or "sparked" by intellectuals who fully understand **socialism**. But the end result was a system in which any hope of achieving communism—a utopian vision in which the state withered away along with poverty, war, sexism, and the like—had to be led from the top down. This result meant that to the United States and its liberal allies, the Soviet system looked like a dictatorship, bent on aggressively exporting dictatorship under the guise of worldwide socialist revolution. Popular sovereignty vanished in every state allied to the Soviet Union (e.g., Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, and so on). For their part, Soviet leaders felt themselves surrounded by a hostile capitalist camp and argued that the Soviet Union "must not weaken but must in every way strengthen its state, the state organs, the organs of the intelligence service, the army, if that country does not want to be smashed by the capitalist environment."[13]

These "bottom up," "top down" differences were exacerbated by mutual misperceptions. Once distrustful, each side tended to view the other side's policies as necessarily threatening. For example, the formation of the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** (or **NATO**) became a contentious worldwide issue. On the Western side, NATO represented a desperate effort to defend indefensible Western Europe from the fully mobilized Soviet Army; while from the Soviet perspective, NATO seemed clearly an aggressive military alliance aimed at depriving the USSR of the fruits of its victory over the Third Reich. When the USSR reacted in ways it took to be defensive, Britain and the United States interpreted these actions as dangerous escalations.

The third outcome of the end of World War II was the collapse of the colonial system, a development few foresaw. The defeat of Japan and Germany meant the immediate end of their respective empires. The other colonial powers, faced with the reality of their economically and politically weakened position, and confronted with newly powerful indigenous movements for independence, were spurred by the United Nations Charter's endorsement of the principle of national self-determination. These movements were equipped with leftover small arms from World War II, led by talented commanders employing indirect defense strategies such as "revolutionary" guerrilla warfare,

Europe during the Cold War

and inspired to great self-sacrifice by the ideals of nationalism. Victorious powers were forced—by local resistance, their own decline, or by pressure from the United States, to grant independence to their former colonies, starting with Britain, which granted India independence in 1947. It took the military defeat of France in Indochina in the early 1950s to bring decolonization to that part of the world. African states, too, became independent between 1957 and 1963.

The fourth outcome was the realization that the differences between the two emergent superpowers would be played out indirectly, on third-party stages, rather than through direct confrontation. Both rivals came to believe the risks of a direct military confrontation were too great. The "loss" of any potential ally, no matter how poor or distant, might begin a cumulative process leading to a significant shift in the balance of power. Thus, the Cold War resulted in the globalization of conflict to all continents. International relations became truly global.

Other parts of the world did not merely react to U.S. and Soviet Cold War imperatives: they developed new ideologies or recast the dominant discourse of Europe in

IN FOCUS

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COLD WAR

- Two superpowers emerge—the United States and the Soviet Union. They are divided by national interests, ideologies, and mutual misperceptions. These divisions are projected into different geographic areas.

- A series of crises occurs—Berlin blockade (1948–49), Korean War

(1950–53), Cuban missile crisis (1962), Vietnam War (1965–73), Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan (1979–89).

- A long peace between superpower rivals is sustained by mutual deterrence.

ways that addressed their own experiences. The globalization of post–World War II politics thus meant the rise of new contenders for power. Although the United States and the Soviet Union retained their dominant positions, new alternative ideologies acted as powerful magnets for populations in the independent and developing states of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Later, in the 1970s, these states advanced a new economic ideology, summarized in the program of the New International Economic Order (see Chapter 9).

The Cold War as a Series of Confrontations

We can characterize the Cold War itself (1945–89) as 45 years of overall high-level tension and competition between the superpowers but with no direct military conflict. The advent of nuclear weapons created a **deterrence** stalemate in which each side acted, at times reluctantly, with increasing caution. As nuclear technology advanced, both sides realized that a nuclear war would likely result in the destruction of each power beyond hope of recovery. This state of affairs was called "mutual assured destruction"—aptly underlined by its acronym: MAD. Though each superpower tended to back down from particular confrontations—either because its national interest was not sufficiently strong to risk a nuclear confrontation, or because its ideological resolve wavered in light of military realities—several confrontations very nearly escalated to war.

The Cold War, then, can be understood as a series of confrontations. Most were between proxies (North Korea versus South Korea, North Vietnam versus South Viet-

nam, Ethiopia versus Somalia) that, in all likelihood, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union had intended to escalate as they did. Thus, the Cold War comprised not only superpower confrontations but also confrontations between two blocs of states: the non-communist bloc (the United States, with Canada, Australia, most of Western Europe [allied in NATO], South Korea, Japan, and the Philippines); and the communist bloc (the Soviet Union, with its **Warsaw Pact** allies in Eastern Europe, North Korea, Vietnam, and the People's Repubic of China, along with Cuba). Over the life of the Cold War, these blocs loosened, and states sometimes took positions different from that of the dominant power. But for much of this time, bloc politics operated. Table 2.1 shows a timeline of major events related to the Cold War.

One of the high-level, direct confrontations between the superpowers took place in Germany. Germany had been divided immediately after World War II into zones of occupation. The United States, France, and Great Britain administered the western portion; the Soviet Union, the eastern. Berlin, Germany's capital, was similarly divided but lay within Soviet-controlled East Germany. In 1948, the Soviet Union blocked land access to Berlin, prompting the United States and Britain to airlift supplies for 13 months. In 1949, the separate states of West and East Germany were declared. In 1961, East Germany erected the Berlin Wall around the West German

TABLE 2.1	IMPORTANT EVENTS OF THE COLD WAR
1945–48	Soviet Union establishes communist regimes in Eastern Europe.
1947	Announcement of Truman Doctrine; United States proposes Marshall Plan for the rebuilding of Europe.
1948–49	Soviets blockade Berlin; United States and Allies carry out airlift.
1949	Soviets test atomic bomb, ending U.S. nuclear monopoly. Chinese communists under Mao win civil war, establish People's Republic of China. United States and Allies establish NATO.
1950–53	Korean War.
1957	Soviets launch the satellite *Sputnik*, causing anxiety in the West and catalyzing superpower scientific competition.
1960–63	Congo crisis and UN action to fill power vacuum.
1962	Cuban missile crisis, nuclear war narrowly averted.

(CONTINUED)

1965	United States begins large-scale intervention in Vietnam.
1967	Israel defeats Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in the Six-Day War. Glassboro summit signals détente, loosening of tensions between the superpowers.
1968	Czech government liberalization halted by Soviet invasion. Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) signed.
1972	U.S. President Nixon visits China and Soviet Union. United States and Soviet Union sign strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT I).
1973	Yom Kippur War between Israel and Arab states leads to global energy crisis.
1975	Proxy and anticolonial wars fought in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Somalia. South Vietnam falls to communist North Vietnam.
1979	United States and Soviet Union sign SALT II (but U.S. Senate fails to ratify it). Soviet Union invades Afghanistan. Shah of Iran (a major U.S. ally) overthrown in Islamic revolution. Israel and Egypt sign a peace treaty.
1981–89	Reagan Doctrine provides basis for U.S. support of "anticommunist" forces in Nicaragua and Afghanistan.
1985	Gorbachev starts economic and political reforms in Soviet Union.
1989	Peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe replace communist governments. Berlin Wall is dismantled. Soviet Union withdraws from Afghanistan.
1990	Germany reunified.
1991	Resignation of Gorbachev. Soviet Union collapses.
1992–93	Russia and other former Soviet republics become independent states.

portion of the city to stem the tide of East Germans trying to leave the troubled state. U.S. president John F. Kennedy responded by visiting the city and declaring, "Ich bin ein Berliner" (improper German for the sentiment "I am a Berliner"), committing the United States to the security of the Federal Republic of Germany at any cost. Not surprisingly, the dismantling of that same wall in November 1989 became the most iconic symbol of the end of the Cold War.

The Cold War in Asia and Latin America

China, Indochina, and especially Korea became the symbols of the Cold War in Asia. In 1946, after years of bitter and heroic fighting against the Japanese occupation, communists throughout Asia attempted to take control of their respective states following Japan's surrender. In China, the wartime alliance between the Kuomintang (non-communist Chinese nationalists) and Mao Zedong's "Peoples Liberation Army" dissolved into renewed civil war, in which the United States attempted to support the Kuomintang with large shipments of arms and military equipment. By 1949, however, the Kuomintang had been defeated, and its leaders fled to the island of Formosa (now Taiwan). With the addition of one-fourth of the world's population to the communist bloc, U.S. interests in Japan and the Philippines now seemed directly threatened.

In 1946, in what was then French Indochina (an amalgamation of the contemporary states of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam), Ho Chi Minh raised the communist flag over Hanoi, declaring Vietnam to be an independent state. The French quickly returned to take Indochina back, but though French forces fought bravely and with great skill, they proved unable to defeat the communists (known as the Viet Minh). In 1954, after having laid a trap for the Viet Minh in a fortified town called Dien Bien Phu, the French were themselves trapped and decisively defeated. France abandoned Indochina; a peace treaty signed in Geneva that same year divided Indochina into the political entities of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, with Vietnam being divided into two zones: North Vietnam and South Vietnam.

After having spent years seeking support from the USSR to unify the Korean peninsula under communist rule, North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung finally persuaded Joseph Stalin to lend him the tanks, heavy artillery, and combat support aircraft needed to conquer non-communist South Korea. On June 25, 1950, communist North Korean forces crossed the frontier into South Korea and rapidly overwhelmed the South's defenders. The North Korean offensive quickly captured Seoul, South Korea's capital, and then forced the retreat of the few surviving South Korean and American armed forces all the way to the outskirts of the port city of Pusan. In one of the most dramatic military reversals in history, U.S. forces—fighting for the first time under the auspices of the United Nations because of North Korea's "unprovoked aggression" and violations of international law—landed a surprise force at Inchon. Within days, the U.S.

forces cut off and then routed the North Korean forces. By mid-October, UN forces had captured North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, and by the end of the month, the destruction of North Korea's military was nearly complete.

Yet the war did not end. Against the wishes of U.S. president Harry Truman, U.S. General Douglas MacArthur ordered his victorious troops—now overconfident of victory and spread thin—to finish off the defeated North Koreans, who by this time were encamped very close to the border with communist China. The Chinese had warned they would intervene if their territory was approached too closely, and in November, they did. The relatively poorly equipped but more numerous and highly motivated Chinese soldiers attacked the UN forces, causing the longest retreat of U.S. armed forces in American history. The two sides then became mired in a stalemate that finally ended in an armistice in 1953. But, as with the Berlin crisis, numerous diplomatic skirmishes followed the armistice over the years—provoked by the basing of U.S. troops in South Korea, the use of the demilitarized zone between the north and the south, and North Korean attempts to become a nuclear power; even after the end of the Cold War, the last is still a source of conflict today.

The 1962 Cuban missile crisis was a high-profile direct confrontation between the superpowers in another area of the world. The United States viewed the Soviet Union's installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba as a direct threat to its territory: no weapons of a powerful enemy had ever been located so close to U.S. shores. The way in which the crisis was resolved suggests unequivocally that neither party sought a direct confrontation, but once the crisis became public, neither side could back down and global thermonuclear war became a very real possibility. The United States chose to blockade Cuba—another example of containment strategy in action—to prevent the arrival of additional Soviet missiles. The U.S. president, John F. Kennedy, rejected the more aggressive actions the U.S. military favored, such as a land invasion of Cuba or air strikes on missile sites. Through behind-the-scenes, unofficial contacts in Washington and direct communication between Kennedy and Soviet premier Nikita Khruschev, the Soviets agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba and the United States agreed to remove similarly capable missiles from Turkey. The crisis was defused, and war was averted.

Vietnam provided a test of a different kind. The Cold War was also played out there, not in one dramatic crisis but in an extended civil war. Communist North Vietnam and its Chinese and Soviet allies were pitted against the "free world"—South Vietnam, allied with the United States and assorted supporters including South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand. To most U.S. policy makers in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Vietnam was yet another test of the containment doctrine: communist influence must be stopped, they argued, before it spread like a chain of falling dominos through the rest of Southeast Asia and beyond (hence the term **domino effect**). Thus, the United States supported the South Vietnamese dictators Ngo Dinh Diem and later Nguyen Van Thieu against the rival communist regime of Ho Chi Minh in the north, which

For the United States, Vietnam became a symbol of the Cold War rivalries in Asia. The United States supported the South Vietnamese forces against the communist regime in the north. Here, a female Vietcong guerrilla prepares to fire an anti-tank rifle during the Tet Offensive of 1968.

was underwritten by both the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. But, as the South Vietnamese government and military faltered on their own, the United States stepped up its military support, increasing the number of its troops on the ground and escalating the air war over the north.

In the early stages, the United States was confident of victory; after all, a superpower with all its military hardware and technically skilled labor force could surely beat a poorly trained Vietcong guerrilla force. American policy makers were quickly disillusioned, however, as communist forces proved adept at avoiding the massive technical firepower of U.S. forces, and a corrupt South Vietnamese leadership siphoned away many of the crucial resources needed to win its more vital struggle for popular legitimacy. As U.S. casualties mounted, with no prospects for victory in sight, the U.S. public grew disenchanted. Should the U.S. use all of its conventional military capability to prevent the "fall" of South Vietnam and stave off the domino effect? Should the U.S. fight until victory was guaranteed for liberalism and capitalism, or should it extricate itself from this unpopular quagmire? Should the U.S. capitulate to the forces of ideological communism? These questions, posed in both geostrategic and ideological terms, defined the middle years of the Cold War, from the Vietnam War's slow beginning in

the late 1950s until the dramatic departure of U.S. officials from the South Vietnamese capital, Saigon, in 1975, symbolized by U.S. helicopters leaving the U.S. embassy roof while dozens of desperate Vietnamese tried to grab on to the boarding ladders and escape with them.

The U.S. effort to avert a communist takeover in South Vietnam failed, yet contrary to expectations, the domino effect did not occur. Cold War alliances were shaken on both sides: the friendship between the Soviet Union and China had long before degenerated into a geostrategic fight and a struggle over the proper form of communism, especially in Third World countries. But the Soviet bloc was left relatively unscathed by the Vietnam War. The U.S.-led Western alliance was seriously jeopardized, as several allies (including Canada) strongly opposed U.S. policy toward Vietnam. The bipolar structure of the Cold War–era international system was coming apart. Confidence in military alternatives was shaken in the United States, undermining for more than a decade the United States' ability to commit itself militarily. The power of the United States was supposed to be righteous power, but in Vietnam, it was neither victorious in its outcome nor righteous in its effects.

Was the Cold War Really Cold?

It was not always the case that when one of the superpowers acted, the other side responded. In some cases, the other side chose not to act, or at least not to respond in kind, even though it might have escalated the conflict. Usually this was out of concern for escalating a conflict to a major war. For example, the Soviet Union invaded Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, both sovereign states and allies in the Warsaw Pact. Under other circumstances, the United States might have responded with counterforce, but while it verbally condemned these aggressive Soviet actions, the actions themselves went unchecked. In 1956, the United States, preoccupied with the Suez Canal crisis, kept quiet, aware that it was ill prepared to respond militarily. In 1968, the United States was mired in Vietnam and beset by domestic turmoil and a presidential election. The United States was also relatively complacent, although angry, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979. The Soviets likewise kept quiet when the United States took aggressive action within the U.S. sphere of influence, invading Grenada in 1983 and Panama in 1989. Thus, during the Cold War, even blatantly aggressive actions by one of the superpowers did not always lead to a response by the other.

Many of the events of the Cold War involved the United States and the Soviet Union only indirectly; proxies often fought in their place. Nowhere was this so true as in the Middle East. For both the United States and the Soviet Union, the Middle East was a region of vital importance because of its natural resources (including an estimated one-third of the world's oil), its strategic position as a transportation hub between Asia and Europe, and its cultural significance as the cradle of three of the world's major reli-

gions. Not surprisingly, following the establishment of Israel in 1948 and its diplomatic recognition (first by the United States), the region was the scene of a superpower confrontation by proxy between the U.S.-supported Israel and the Soviet-backed Arab states Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. During the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel crushed the Soviet-equipped Arabs in six short days, seizing the strategic territories of the Golan Heights, Gaza, and the West Bank. During the Yom Kippur War of 1973, which the Egyptians had planned as a limited war, the Israeli victory was not so overwhelming, because the United States and the Soviets negotiated a cease-fire before more damage could be done. But throughout the Cold War, these "hot" wars were followed by guerrilla actions supported by all parties. As long as the basic balance of power was maintained between Israel (and the United States) on one side and the Arabs (and the Soviets) on the other, the region was left alone; when that balance was threatened, the superpowers acted through proxies to maintain the balance. Other controversies also plagued the region, as evidenced by events after the end of the Cold War.

In parts of the world that were of less strategic importance to the two superpowers, confrontation through proxies was even more regular during the Cold War. Africa and Latin America present many examples of such events. When the colonialist Belgians abruptly left the Congo in 1960, civil war broke out as various contending factions sought to take power and bring order out of the chaos. One of the contenders, the Congolese premier Patrice Lumumba (1925–61), appealed to the Soviets for help in fighting the Western-backed insurgents and received both diplomatic support and military supplies. However, Lumumba was dismissed by the Congolese president, Joseph Kasavubu, an ally of the United States. Still others, such as Moïse Tshombe, leader of the copper-rich Katanga province, who was also closely identified with Western interests, fought for control. The three-year civil war could have become another protracted proxy war between the United States and the Soviet Union. However, the United Nations averted such a confrontation by sending in peacekeepers, whose primary purpose was to stabilize a transition government and prevent the superpowers from making the Congo yet another violent arena of the Cold War.

In Latin America, too, participants in civil wars were able to transform their struggles into Cold War confrontations by proxy, thereby gaining military equipment and technical expertise from one of the superpowers. In most cases, Latin American states were led by governments beholden to wealthy elites who maintained a virtual monopoly on the country's wealth (such as the coffee industry in El Salvador). When popular protest against corruption and injustice escalated to violence, Communist Cuba was often asked to support these armed movements, and in response, the United States tended to support the incumbent governments—even those whose record of human rights abuses against their own citizens had been well established. In Nicaragua, for example, after communists called Sandinistas captured the government from its dictator in 1979, the Ronald Reagan administration supported an insurgency known as the

"Contras" in an attempt to reverse what it feared would be a "communist foothold" in Latin America. Such proxy warfare enabled the superpowers to project power and support geostrategic interests (e.g., oil in Angola, transportation routes around the Horn, the Monroe Doctrine in Latin America) and ideologies without directly confronting one another and risking major or thermonuclear war.

In sum, the Cold War was really only relatively cold in Europe, and very warm, or even hot, in other places. In Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, over 40 million people lost their lives in superpower proxy wars from 1946 to 1990.

But the Cold War was also "fought" and moderated in words, at **summits** (meetings between leaders), and in treaties. Some Cold War summits were relatively successful: the 1967 Glassboro summit between U.S. and Soviet leaders began the loosening of tensions known as **détente**. Others, however, did not produce results. Treaties between the two parties placed self-imposed limitations on nuclear arms. For example, the first Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT I), in 1972, placed an absolute ceiling on the numbers of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), deployed nuclear warheads, and multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs); and limited the number of antiballistic missile sites each superpower maintained. So the superpowers did enjoy periods of accommodation, when they could agree on principles and policies.

The Immediate Post–Cold War Era

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 symbolized the end of the Cold War, but its actual end was gradual. The Soviet premier at the time, Mikhail Gorbachev, and other Soviet reformers had set in motion two domestic processes—*glasnost* (political openness) and *perestroika* (economic restructuring)—as early as the mid-1980s. *Glasnost*, combined with a new technology—the videocassette player—made it possible for the first time since the October Revolution for average Soviet citizens to compare their living standards with those of their Western counterparts. The comparison proved dramatically unfavorable. It also opened the door to criticism of the political system, culminating in the emergence of a multiparty system and the massive reorientation of the once-monopolistic Communist Party. *Perestroika* undermined the foundation of the planned economy, an essential part of the communist system. At the outset, Gorbachev and his reformers sought to save the system, but once initiated, these reforms led to the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, Gorbachev's resignation in December 1991, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself in 1992–93.

Gorbachev's domestic reforms also led to changes in the orientation of Soviet foreign policy. Needing to extricate the country from the political quagmire and economic drain of the Soviet war in Afghanistan while seeking to save face, Gorbachev suggested that the permanent members of the UN Security Council "could become guarantors of

regional security."[14] Afghanistan was a test case, where a small group of UN observers monitored and verified the withdrawal of more than 100,000 Soviet troops in 1988 and 1989—an action that would have been impossible during the height of the Cold War. Similarly, the Soviets agreed to and supported the 1988 withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. The Soviet Union had retreated from international commitments near its borders, as well as others farther abroad. Most important, the Soviets agreed to cooperate in multilateral activities to preserve regional security.

The first post–Cold War test of the so-called new world order came in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait in August 1990. Despite its long-standing support for Iraq, the Soviet Union (and later Russia), along with the four other permanent members of the UN Security Council, agreed first to implement economic sanctions against Iraq. Then they agreed in a Security Council resolution to support the means to restore the status quo—to oust Iraq from Kuwait with a multinational military force. Finally, they supported sending the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission to monitor the zone and permitted the UN to undertake humanitarian intervention and create safe havens for the Kurdish and Shiite populations of Iraq. Although forging a consensus on each of these actions (or in the case of China, convincing it to abstain) was difficult, the coalition held—a unity unthinkable during the Cold War.

The 1990s were marked by the struggle of former allies and enemies to find new identities and interests in more complex world. As the threat of World War III vanished, what was the purpose of an organization such as NATO? What was the purpose or focus of state foreign policy to be if not the deterrence of aggression by other states? The United States and Israel, for example, were unparalleled in their capacity to

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IMMEDIATE POST–COLD WAR ERA

- Changes are made in Soviet/Russian foreign policy, with the withdrawals from Afghanistan and Angola in the late 1980s, monitored by the United Nations.

- Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the multilateral response unite the former Cold War adversaries.

- *Glasnost* and *perestroika* continue in Russia, as reorganized in 1992–93.

- The former Yugoslavia disintegrates into independent states; civil war ensues in Bosnia and Kosovo, leading to UN and NATO intervention.

- Widespread ethnic conflict arises in central and western Africa, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent.

Explaining the End of the Cold War:
A View from the Former Soviet Union

Many scholars of American diplomatic history attribute the end of the Cold War to policies the United States initiated: the buildup of a formidable military capable of winning either a nuclear or conventional war against the Soviet Union and the development of the strongest, most diversified economy the world has ever known. However, those within the Soviet Union perceived the events leading to the end of the Cold War differently.

The predominant viewpoint in the former Soviet Union is that the explanation for the end of the Cold War can be found in a very long and complex chain of domestic developments in the Soviet Union itself. Political, economic, and demographic factors led to what seemed to be an abrupt disintegration of the Soviet Union and hence the end of the Cold War. International relations theorists did not predict it; perhaps they were not looking at domestic factors within the Soviet state itself and did not have a sufficiently long historical perspective.

The political dominance and authority of the Communist Party, the main ideological pillar of the Soviet Union, had significantly eroded by the late 1980s. The revelation of Joseph Stalin's horrific crimes against the Soviet people, especially ethnic minorities, intensified animosity in the far-flung parts of the Soviet empire. Many of the smaller republics and subnational regions bore a grudge against the central government for forced Russification, the resettlement of certain minorities, and other atrocities such as induced famines in Russia and Ukraine in the early 1930s. Increasingly open discussion of such events undermined the ideological fervor of the common population and shook their trust in the "people's government."

During the 1960s, some Soviet leaders saw stagnation in the economic, technological, and agricultural spheres. Internal critics of the regime blamed the top-level political leadership, which had become ossified. The policy of lifelong appointments to leading posts, a policy that remained in effect until the mid-1980s, meant that political appointees stayed in their posts for 20 or more years, regardless of their performance. There were few efforts to reform and modernize the system, and younger people had little opportunity to exercise political leadership. These failures in leadership, exemplified by the poor economy, led to widespread discontent and resentment in all layers of the society.

Moreover, the Soviet Union was a very ethnically diverse state, consisting of 15 major republics, some of which also contained "autonomous" republics and regions, inhabited by hundreds of ethnicities. Although the Soviet Union had benefitted economically from extracting resources found in the far reaches of its territories, the costs of keeping the empire together were high. Subsidies flowed to the outer regions at the expense of the Soviet state. With growing economic discontent and the erosion of the ideology promoted by the Communist Party, local nationalist movements started to fill the ideological vacuum by the late 1980s.

Before the mid-1980s, the inherent distortions and inefficiencies of the Soviet planned economy were partially offset by the profits from the energy sector based on oil and gas exports. However, the Soviet industrial and agricultural sectors lagged behind, inefficient and uncompetitive. Technological development stagnated, too. The sharp decline in world oil prices in the 1980s compounded the problems. The resulting rationing of basic food products and the poor quality of domestically manufactured products totally discredited the socialist economic model and added to the general discontent. The declining state budget could no longer bear the burden of the arms race with the United States, finance an expensive war in Afghanistan, and keep the increasingly fractured empire within its orbit.

The interplay of all these factors came to a climax when Mikhail Gorbachev took power in 1985. Acknowledging the urgent need for change, he launched ambitious domestic reforms collectively referred to as *perestroika*, literally, "restructuring" of economic relations, including stepping back from central planning and curbing government subsidies. *Glasnost* was the political component, an "opening" that relaxed censorship and encouraged democratization. In foreign policy, "New Thinking" meant improving relations with the United States and the possibility of the coexistence of the capitalist and socialist systems through shared human values. The underlying reasons for most of these domestic changes were economic. Reducing military expenditures and gaining access to Western loans became critical for the survival of the troubled state.

The rapid dissolution of the Eastern bloc led to a dramatic shift in the balance of power in the international system. Rising nationalist movements and local liberal forces gained momentum and won significant representation in the local parliaments after the first competitive elections in the former Socialist republics.

Mikhail Gorbachev addresses the Russian parliament in 1991.

Eventually, Russia became one of the first to declare independence and affirm sovereignty, with the rest of the republics following suit in the "sovereignty parade" in 1991. The de facto dissolution of the Soviet Union marked an important chapter in the history of the Cold War, but given recent events in Russia and Ukraine—especially the annexation by force of Crimea—we cannot yet say that the collapse of the Soviet Union is the Cold War's final chapter.

FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS

1. How can we balance the traditional view that Western economic and military dominance caused a Soviet "defeat" with the Soviet view that internal weaknesses and contractions were primarily to blame?

2. *Glasnost* was supposed to make it possible for Soviet citizens to share information, but it also made it possible for them to compare their own lives with those beyond the USSR. How might this development have affected the legitimacy of the Communist Party?

3. If states "learn" from their own mistakes and achievements as well as those of other states, what might a state like China have learned from the collapse of the USSR?

fight and win interstate wars. But who might these other states be? What role might armed forces specialized to win interstate wars play in substate violence? Yugoslavia's violent disintegration played itself out over the entire decade, despite Western attempts to resolve the conflict peacefully. At the same time, the world witnessed ethnic tension and violence in central Africa. Genocide in Rwanda and Burundi was effectively ignored by the international community. And, despite U.S. military primacy, Russia maintains enough military power and political influence to prevent U.S. intervention in ethnic hostilities in the Transcaucasus region.

These dual realities converged and diverged throughout the 1990s and continue to do so today. The disintegration of Yugoslavia culminated in an American-led war against Serbia to halt attacks on the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. The 78-day air war by NATO against Serbia ended with the capitulation of the Serbs and international administration of the province of Kosovo. The war also severely challenged core principles of international law: technically, the action of NATO in Kosovo was a violation of Serbian sovereignty. Yet NATO's leaders held that Serb rapes, lootings, and murders constituted a greater harm: violating the principle of sovereignty was less than the harm of allowing Serbians to murder and torture Kosovar Albanians. The repercussions affect international politics to this day.

Clearly, the end of the Cold War in the 1990s denotes a major change in international relations, the end of one historical era and the beginning of another. The overwhelming military power of the United States, combined with its economic power, appeared to many to usher in an era of U.S. primacy in international affairs to a degree not matched even by the Romans or Alexander the Great. The United States seemed able to impose its will on other states, even against the strong objections of its allies. Yet this moment of primacy now appears doubtful; it proved insufficient to deter or prevent ethnic conflict, civil wars, and human rights abuses from occurring, whether in Somalia, Rwanda, or the former Yugoslavia. And many threats, like terrorism, cyber security, and the global financial crisis of 2008, have shown themselves, by their very nature, to demand *multilateral* engagement: no single state, however, powerful, can remain secure against these threats on its own.

The New Millennium: The First Two Decades

Perhaps the biggest change in interstate politics following the end of the Cold War was the puzzling elevation of terrorism—once a relatively minor threat—from a law-enforcement problem to a vital national security interest (and therefore a military problem). On September 11, 2001, the world witnessed lethal, psychologically disruptive, and economically devastating terrorist attacks organized and funded by Al Qaeda

against New York City and Washington, D.C. These attacks, directed by Osama bin Laden, set into motion a U.S.-led global "war on terrorism." Buoyed by an outpouring of support from around the world and by the first-ever invocation of Article V of the NATO Charter, which declares an attack on one NATO member to be an attack on all, the United States undertook to lead an ad hoc coalition to combat terrorist organizations with global reach. As discussed in Chapter 8, this new **war on terrorism** combines many elements into multiple campaigns in different countries. Many countries have arrested known terrorists and their supporters and frozen their monetary assets. In October 2001, the United States launched a war in Afghanistan to oust the Taliban regime, which was providing safe haven to Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda organization and a base from which it freely planned, organized, and trained operatives to carry out a global terror campaign against the United States and its allies.

Following an initially successful campaign in Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002, called Operation Enduring Freedom, that specifically targeted terrorists and their supporters and paved the way for popular elections, the United States broke from its allies. Convinced that Iraq maintained a clandestine **weapons of mass destruction (WMD)** program and posed a continued threat by backing terrorist organizations, the United States attempted to build support in the United Nations for authorization to remove Saddam Hussein forcibly from power and find the hidden WMD. When the United Nations refused to back this request, the United States built its own coalition, including key ally Great Britain. This coalition destroyed the Iraqi military and overthrew Iraq's government in 2003. No weapons of mass destruction were found, but additional justifications for the invasion were offered, including promoting democracy for Iraq's three main peoples—Kurds, Sunni Arabs, and Shia Arabs—within a single state. Fighting in Iraq continues today, although Hussein himself was executed in 2006 and U.S. combat forces have withdrawn. Iraq remains riven by sectarian conflict, and its U.S.-built and trained armed forces have suffered repeated defeats and setbacks since the United States withdrew in 2011. Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon now face a new and barbarous group calling itself the "Islamic State." Sadly, then, Iraq's future stability and the fate of its long-suffering people remains unclear.

In an important way, Operation Enduring Freedom set a very dangerous precedent. If the United States and its allies could invade Afghanistan to punish or preempt terrorism, why couldn't it also invade any other state that hosted terrorists? After the defeat of the Taliban in 2001, much of the Taliban's leadership escaped across the poorly controlled border between Afghanistan and Pakistan's Northwest Territories. But Pakistan was a formal U.S. ally, and extremely sensitive to any perceived slights to its sovereignty. This situation created a dilemma that is not unique to U.S.–Pakistan relations. If the United States is now to succeed in stabilizing Afghanistan, it must have the help of Pakistan to eliminate the sanctuary it gives to groups the United States and its allies consider terrorists. Yet Pakistan currently lacks both the capacity, and possibly

the will, either to close the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan or to stop the groups in its territory from attacking Afghan forces within Afghanistan. If the United States attempts to use its own resources to achieve its objectives, Pakistan will vehemently resist. Thus, the "war on terror" poses tricky dilemmas for U.S. policy makers.

Even after the economic downturns following the September 11 terrorist attacks and the financial crisis of 2008, the U.S. military and economy remain the strongest in the world. Yet despite this strength, citizens of the United States do not feel secure. The global war against terrorism is far from over and appears no nearer to victory. The issue of whether U.S. power will be balanced by an emerging power (or coalition of powers) is also far from resolved. And although the U.S. military is still

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIRST TWO DECADES OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM

- Al Qaeda terrorist network commits terrorist acts against the homeland of the United States and U.S. interests abroad; U.S. and coalition forces respond militarily in Afghanistan and Iraq.

- Terrorist attacks occur in Saudi Arabia, Spain, Great Britain, Nigeria, and France.

- A financial crisis in the United States in 2008 devastates its economy and rapidly spreads to other countries.

- In the spring of 2011, Tunisia becomes the first in a series of Arab countries in which a popular uprising topples a long-established dictator. The outcome of this so-called Arab Spring remains indeterminate.

- In 2014, China's military budget expands, making it the second largest after the United States. China also begins dredging operations to support its ambitious territorial claims in the South China Sea. Tensions between China, its neighbors, and the United States escalate.

- In February 2014, soldiers in uniforms with no national insignia begin occupying key government and communications facilities in Crimea. In March, Crimea votes overwhelmingly to rejoin Russia, a move that is unsettling to Europeans and states bordering Russia.

- In June 2014, the Islamic State declares itself to be a worldwide caliphate with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as its caliph and lays claim to territory containing more than ten million people in Iraq and Syria. The United States and a coalition of Arab partner states have so far failed to defeat the IS or seriously impair its territorial control.

held in high esteem within the United States, the war in Afghanistan—all but a few U.S. military advisors were withdrawn in 2014—became widely unpopular.

Contemporary events continue to hold surprises. In December 2010, a local protest by a single man in Tunisia sparked a massive social protest against the cruelty and corruption of Tunisia's long-standing dictator, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. In January 2011, Ben Ali was overthrown and fled to exile in Saudi Arabia. But protest against corrupt and brutal Arab leaders did not stop there. Soon popular protests broke out in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and later Syria. Egypt's leader, Hosni Mubarak, was taken by surprise and faced a choice of mass murder of protestors or stepping down. With Egypt's military refusing to kill protestors, Mubarak was forced to step down. The fate of Libya's dictator, Muammar Qaddafi, was more severe: after having been forced from power by a rebellion actively supported by France and the United States, Qaddafi was captured and later murdered by his captors.

Protesters in Tunisia attack the office of the prime minister using a coffin draped in the Tunisian flag in January 2011. Many authoritarian governments in the Middle East faced popular uprisings during the Arab Spring.

The ultimate fate of what we now think of as the "Arab Spring" of 2011 remains unclear; in Bahrain protest was brutally suppressed, and in Syria, Bashar al Assad's efforts to stay in power against widespread social protest have led to his forces killing more than 70,000 of Syria's own citizens and a massive refugee crisis. In Egypt, "democracy" has proven elusive as the fall of Mubarak was followed by the election of Muhammad Morsi (leader of an unpopular religious party), then his ouster by the Egyptian military, and now a provisional government run, essentially, by Egypt's military. The Arab Spring is nevertheless remarkable for two reasons. First, it gave lie to the claims of radical and militant Islamists (such as Al Qaeda) that only through Islamic revolution, terror attacks on "the West," and the reestablishment of strict Islamic law could Arab dictators be overthrown. Second, the combined might of secret services and militaries failed to resist the power of young people armed with mobile phones, courage, and conviction.

Why Can't a Powerful State like Japan Use Armed Force Abroad?

In early 2015, two Japanese journalists were beheaded by the Islamic State (IS). The IS recorded and posted the executions—beheadings—in graphic detail on the Internet, shocking and angering Japan and the world. Many, including Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, called for Japan to respond with military force. Yet the headline "Beheadings Frame a New Debate About Restraints on Japan's Military"[a] calls our attention to "restraints" on Japan's military. What are these restraints? Where did they come from? Why do they matter?

Japan is a constitutional democracy now, but it was not always so. Japan's constitution was largely modeled on that of the United States, because the United States was the chief victor and occupier of Japan after Japan's surrender in World War II. Although Japan was, and remains, a powerful advanced-industrial state with a skilled population and the world's third largest economy in terms of gross domestic product, its postwar constitution contained several unusual provisions and con-

Japan's Maritime Defense Forces remain the key military force in Japan today. Like contemporary Britain, another advanced-industrial island nation, Japan has a small army and maintains considerable naval capability to guard its sea lanes of communication for commerce purposes. Discussions over whether to increase the size of the army and to allow it to deploy abroad remain controversial.

straints. Chief among these is the prohibition against the use of Japanese armed forces abroad (contained in Article 9). So, except for humanitarian operations, Japan's defense forces are currently prohibited from deploying abroad.

Japan's historical experience constrains contemporary actions. Many historians argue that during World War II, Japan's enemies and the victims of its military campaigns came to understand Japan's aggression and brutal conduct in wartime occupation as a *national* or *race* characteristic, rather than as bad leadership. The Rape of Nanking described at the beginning of the chapter is an example of the horrors during that time. This history is why a *constitutional* constraint on the use of Japan's armed forces abroad seemed sensible to many in 1945. This contrasts with the case of Germany's Third Reich, the other major aggressor in World War II. In that case, blame largely fell on Germany's leader, Adolf Hitler, although many believed that something in German culture made Germans more warlike and brutal as a nation. Constraints, too, were put on the German military under the new constitution. Are these constraints still relevant?

Times do change; norms change. Should constitutions change with them? If so, how and how quickly? There is an ongoing debate in both Japan and Germany over this question. In the case of Japan, is the restraint on use of military force abroad still a useful way to protect its citizens from terrorism or other abuses committed outside of Japan? Does this restraint on the use of military force diminish Japan's power more generally? When can Japan become a "normal" state again—one able to protect its national interest like other states do?

FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS

1. Should Japan be trusted to send its armed forces abroad today? Why or why not?

2. How long should the consequences of historical events affect current political decisions and institutions?

3. What are some factors that would encourage a nation to move beyond historical lessons?

a. Martin Fackler, "Beheadings Frame a New Debate About Restraints on Japan's Military," *New York Times,* February 3, 2015.

Four additional recent developments merit attention. First, "China's peaceful rise" was a term first used by China's leadership in 2003; it was meant to frame China's growing economic, military, and diplomatic power as something that would not provoke fear and insecurity in China's neighbors. Yet since 2014, China has been expanding its military at a very high rate, making it the world's second largest military budget behind the United States. In addition, in 2014, China began the practice of dredging large quantities of sand onto fragile coral reefs in the disputed waters of the Spratly Islands. These islands are a critical strategic resource for Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Taiwan, who have each responded with their own dredging programs, though on a much smaller scale. If China's "peaceful rise" was intended to allay regional or international concerns about rising Chinese power, China's military spending and dredging have had the opposite effect. In October 2015, the U.S. Navy sent the guided missile destroyer USS *Lassen* to within 12 nautical miles of one of these artificial islands in protest, and tensions in the area—which not only traverses key shipping routes but is said to contain vast energy resources—have continued to rise.

Second, in 2014, the Russian Federation invaded Ukraine—an independent sovereign state—and then annexed the Ukrainian province of Crimea (along with its strategically important port of Sevastopol). The action was undertaken not by Russian Federation soldiers in Russian uniform, but by Russian soldiers (often special forces) wearing uniforms without insignia (a practice now called **hybrid warfare**). This tactic enabled both the Russian government and NATO and EU representatives to support the argument that no violation of international law had actually taken place, although outside of Russia, no credible authorities believe this assertion. What is perhaps most dangerous about Russian foreign policy in Ukraine is not its annexation of Crimea as such, but the precedent the action has set. In a move reminiscent of Germany's claims about Sudeten Germans in 1938, Russia argued that its citizens in Crimea and Ukraine were being physically threatened after the legitimate government of Ukraine had fallen in a coup. NATO members Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are concerned that Russia might use similar tactics to bring down their governments and annex large portions of their respective territories.

Third, Germany has been the European Union's most reliable engine of economic productivity and growth, but since 2009, the economic health and even long-term sustainability of the Eurozone has come into question. Fellow EU members Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Spain, and Cyprus have proved unable to repay or refinance their government debt. This inability has led to serious political tensions between Germany and the "northern tier" of Eurozone states. The wealthier nations have come under pressure to forgive the debt. And the debtor states claim that whatever the causes of their economic problems, allowing them to go bankrupt would destroy the European Union and, by extension perhaps, the relative peace that Europeans have come to expect.

These issues—along with closely linked issues of migration and refugees—are covered in greater detail in Chapters 7, 9, and 10.

Fourth, the weakening of powerful dictators in the Arab Spring also gave rise to the Islamic State (IS), sometimes called ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) or ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant), which has affected Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, but also Iran and even Europe (many refugees from the region have sought asylum in Europe). Beyond its naked brutality (including the deliberate and systematic rape of non-Muslim girls in areas it controls) and religious conservatism (it relies on very narrow and, to most Islamic scholars, incorrect interpretations of the Koran and sayings of the Prophet), the IS has gained and maintained large swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, and has systematically destroyed cultural heritage sites in territories it occupies asserting that these represent idol worship. We discuss the IS further in Chapter 8.

Beyond what appear to be the emergence of old-style realpolitik conflicts for all states in the new millennium, two additional major issues remain moving forward: (1) Will the **transnational** issues of the first decade—important issues that cross state boundaries, such as religion, organized crime, communicable disease, the environment, cyber security, and terrorism—become easier to redress or harder? (2) Toward what ends should states devote their national energies: military, economic, cultural, diplomatic, and political? Will containing or rooting out terrorism become the new national aim of states? Will it be preventing global environmental catastrophe? Will it be finding a way to overcome increasing income inequality worldwide? It remains to be seen which national and international goals will dominate the political landscape as the twenty-first century advances, and who will lead the way.

In Sum: Learning from History

Will the new millennium world be characterized by increasing cooperation among the great powers, or will the era be one of conflict among states or over new ideas? Do recent conflicts of interest in North Africa, the South China Sea, and Russia's geographic periphery signal a return to the multipolar system of the nineteenth century? Or is the entire concept of polarity an anachronism? How can we begin to predict what the future will bring or how it will characterize the current era? How will changing state identities and the interaction of nonstate actors and organizations affect the interests and capabilities of states moving forward?

We have taken the first step toward answering these questions by looking to the past. Our examination of the development of contemporary international relations has focused on how core concepts of international relations have emerged and evolved over time, most notably the state, sovereignty, the nation, balance of power, and the

international system. Each concept developed within a specific historical context, providing the building blocks for contemporary international relations. The state is well established, but its sovereignty may be eroding from without and from within. The principal characteristics of the contemporary international system are in the process of changing as Cold War bipolarity ends.

Moreover, we have seen that the way peoples and their leaders remember events dramatically affects their sense of the legitimacy of any given cause or action. China's remembrance of the Rape of Nanking in 1937 and its feeling that Japan has never satisfactorily acknowledged its racist brutality in China during World War II still complicate China-Japan relations today. And Iran's memories of U.S. and British support for the former Shah of Iran (whom Iran considers an evil dictator), and their recent invasions of two predominantly Muslim states—Iraq and Afghanistan—strongly affect Iran's views on acquiring an independent nuclear deterrent. Thus, understanding historical events is a good way to understand the motives of *contemporary* leaders and the peoples they lead.

To help us further understand the trends of the past and how they influence contemporary thinking, we turn to theory. Theory gives order to analysis; it provides generalized explanations for specific events. In Chapter 3, we will look at competing theories of international relations. These theories view the past from quite different perspectives.

Discussion Questions

1. The Treaties of Westphalia are often viewed as the beginning of modern international relations. Why are they a useful benchmark? What factors does this benchmark ignore?

2. Colonization by the great powers of Europe has officially ended. However, the effects of the colonial era linger. Explain with specific examples.

3. The Cold War has ended. Discuss two current events in which Cold War politics persist.

4. The developments of international relations as a discipline have been closely identified with the history of Western Europe and the United States. With this civilizational bias, what might we be missing?