

**AP EURO CHAPTER 30:
AFTER THE FALL: THE WESTERN WORLD IN A GLOBAL AGE
(SINCE 1985)**

Table of Contents:

1. <i>The Short Century- It's Over</i> , by John Lukacs.....	p. 2
2. <i>The End of the Cold War</i> , by Raymond L. Garthoff.....	p. 3
3. <i>After Communism: Causes for the Collapse</i> , by Robert Heilbroner.....	p. 4
4. <i>The Rise of China</i> , by Rosemary Righter.....	p. 5
5. <i>Modernization: The Western and Non-Western Worlds</i>	p. 6
6. <i>Terrorism and the Clash of Civilizations</i> , by Samuel P. Huntington.....	p. 6-7
7. <i>Religious Terrorism</i> , by Mark Juergensmeyer.....	p. 7-8
8. <i>The War in Iraq</i> , by Michael Ignatieff.....	p. 8-9
9. <i>Globalization</i> , from <i>The Lexus and the Olive Tree</i> , by Thomas L. Friedman.....	p. 10
10. <i>Global Warming</i> , by Elizabeth Kolbert.....	p. 11
11. <i>Ecological Threats</i> , by J.R. McNeill.....	p. 11-12

19 The Present in Perspective

The most recent years in Western history are particularly difficult to evaluate. They are so much a part of the present that it is almost impossible to gain a historical perspective on them.

While many of the basic trends of the postwar era examined in the previous chapter have continued, some important changes have become apparent—particularly in the last few years. The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union waned during the late 1980s and ended with the collapse of communism after 1989. Revolutionary changes have taken place in what was the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. For the West, these changes may be so far-reaching as to constitute a historical watershed—a marking of the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. The rest of Europe, and indeed much of the world, had already been pursuing increasingly independent courses from the two superpowers. The strife-ridden, oil-rich Middle East

has become an area of great concern and importance to the world community. Certain areas in Asia—like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore—have developed economies that have shifted the economic balance of power in the world. New technological accomplishments, ranging from space exploration to the production of computers, affect our civilization in many ways. Concerns about “globalism” and ecological problems have become more acute. Numerous other recent trends and events could be added to this necessarily brief list.

This chapter is not organized in the usual way, for the sources are so much a part of the present that the usual distinctions between primary and secondary sources are no longer useful. The selections focus particularly on changes in the Communist world, especially the former Soviet Union, and related political changes. Other selections interpret the present era as a whole and suggest problems for the future.

There is much ambivalence about recent developments. Our own involvement makes evaluation of the present particularly difficult. At best, the selections in this chapter can throw elements of the present into perspective.

For Classroom Discussion

What are the most serious problems facing the West and the world today? Use the selections by Kolbert, Huntington, Juergensmeyer, and McNeill.

The Short Century—It's Over

John Lukacs

Historians have traditionally been interested in dividing their study and analysis of civilizations into eras or periods that make some sense—ideally that begin and end with some watershed developments and have some unifying characteristics. This is particularly difficult to do for our own time, for we lack some historical perspective. In the following selection John Lukacs, writing in 1991 before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, argues that in 1989 watershed events occurred in the West, bringing the twentieth century to an end and initiating the twenty-first century.

CONSIDER: *How Lukacs supports his argument; whether his argument works as well for the non-Western world; what this might mean for the future.*

The 20th century is now over, and there are two extraordinary matters about this.

First, this was a short century. It lasted 75 years, from 1914 to 1989. Its two principal events were the two world wars. They were the two enormous mountain ranges that dominated its landscape. The Russian Revolution, the atom bomb, the end of the colonial empires, the establishment of the Communist states, the emergence of the two superpowers, the division of Europe and of Germany—all of these were the consequences of the two world wars, in the shadow of which we were living, until now.

The 19th century lasted exactly 99 years, from 1815 to 1914, from the end of Napoleon's wars to the start of the—so called—First World War. The 18th century lasted 126 years, from 1689 to 1815, from the beginning of the world wars between England and France (of which the American War of Independence was but part) until their end at Waterloo.

Second, we know that the 20th century is over. In 1815, no one knew that this was the end of the Atlantic world wars and the beginning of the Hundred Years' Peace. At that time, everyone, friends as well as enemies of the French Revolution, were concerned with the prospect of great revolutions surfacing again. There were revolutions

after 1815, but the entire history of the 19th century was marked by the absence of world wars during 99 years. Its exceptional prosperity and progress were due to that.

In 1689, the very word "century" was hardly known. The "Oxford English Dictionary" notes its first present usage, in English, in 1626. Before that the word meant a Roman military unit of 100 men; then it began to have another meaning, that of 100 years. It marked the beginning of our modern historical consciousness.

We know that the 20th century is over—not merely because of our historical consciousness (which is something different from a widespread knowledge of history) but mainly because the confrontation of the two superpowers, the outcome of the Second World War, has died down. The Russians have retreated from Eastern Europe and Germany has been reunited. Outside Europe, even the Korean and the Vietnam wars, the missile crisis in Cuba and other political crises such as Nicaragua were, directly or indirectly, involved with that confrontation.

In 1991, we live in a very different world, in which both the U.S. and the Soviet Union face grave problems with peoples and dictators in the so-called third world. Keep in mind that the ugly events in Lithuania are no exception to this: They involve the political structure of the Soviet Union itself. Even its name, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is becoming an anachronism, as once happened with the Holy Roman Empire.

Keep in mind, too, that no matter when and how the gulf war ends, the so-called Middle East will remain a serious problem both for the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Even in the case of a smashing American political or military victory, its beneficial results will be ephemeral. To think—let alone speak—of a Pax Americana in the Middle East is puerile nonsense.

Not only the configuration of great powers and their alliances but the very structure of political history has changed. Both superpowers have plenty of domestic problems. In the Soviet Union, this has now become frighteningly actual; in the U.S., the internal problems are different but not superficial. The very sovereignty and cohesion of states, the authority and efficacy of the governments are not what they were.

Are we going to see ever larger and larger political units? "Europe" will, at best, become a free-trade economic zone, but a Union of Europe is a mirage. Or are we more likely going to see the break-up of several states into small national ones? Are we going to see a large-

SOURCE: From *The End of the Twentieth Century and the End of the Modern Age* by John Lukacs. Copyright © 1993 by John Lukacs. Reprinted by permission of Ticknor & Fields/Houghton Mifflin Co. All rights reserved.

scale migration of millions of peoples, something that has not happened since the last centuries of the Roman Empire? This is at least possible. The very texture of history is changing before our very eyes.

Are we on the threshold of a new Dark Ages? We must hope not. The main task before us is the rethinking of the word "progress." Like that of "century," the meaning of that word, too, is more recent than we have been accustomed to think. Before the 16th century, that is, before the opening of the so-called modern age (another misnomer, suggesting that this age would last forever) progress simply meant an advance in distance, not in time, without the sense of evolutionary improvement.

Thereafter, the word "progress" began to carry the unquestionable optimistic meaning of endless material and scientific promise, until, during the 20th century, it began to lose some of its shine, because of the increasingly questionable benefits of technology. At the beginning of the 20th century, technology and barbarism seemed to be antitheses. They no longer are. But technology and its threat to the natural environment are only part of the larger problem of progress, a word and an ideal whose more proper and true application is the task of the 21st century that has already begun.

The End of the Cold War

Raymond L. Garthoff

For over four decades after World War II international affairs were dominated by the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. While there were times—particularly in the 1970s—when tensions between these two superpowers seemed to ease, conflicts persisted until the mid-1980s. In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power in the Soviet Union and initiated major reform policies: glasnost (political and cultural openness) and perestroika (economic restructuring). Major changes within the Soviet Union, in other eastern European countries, and in international affairs streamed from these policies. By 1991 the Soviet Union had lost control over the states of Eastern Europe and was itself disintegrating—the Cold War was over. In the following selection, Raymond L. Garthoff analyzes the roles played by Gorbachev and American diplomacy in ending the Cold War.

CONSIDER: Why, according to Garthoff, Gorbachev set out deliberately to end the Cold War; what sorts of perceptions influenced American foreign policy during the Cold War according to Garthoff; what other factors might help to explain why the Cold War ended.

SOURCE: Raymond L. Garthoff, "Why Did the Cold War Arise, and Why Did It End?" in *The End of the Cold War: Its Meaning and Implications*, Michael J. Hogan, ed. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 131–32.

In the final analysis, only a Soviet leader could have ended the Cold War, and Gorbachev set out deliberately to do so. Although earlier Soviet leaders had understood the impermissibility of war in the nuclear age, Gorbachev was the first to recognize that reciprocal political accommodation, rather than military power for deterrence or "counterdeterrence," was the defining core of the Soviet Union's relationship with the rest of the world. The conclusions that Gorbachev drew from this recognition, and the subsequent Soviet actions, finally permitted the Iron Curtain to be dismantled and ended the global confrontation of the Cold War.

Gorbachev, to be sure, seriously underestimated the task of changing the Soviet Union, and this led to policy errors that contributed to the failure of his program for the transformation of Soviet society and polity. His vision of a resurrected socialism built on the foundation of successful *perestroika* and *demokratizatsiya* was never a realistic possibility. A revitalized Soviet political union was beyond realization as well. Whether Gorbachev would have modified his goals or changed his means had he foreseen this disjunction is not clear, probably even to him. In the external political arena, however, Gorbachev both understood and successfully charted the course that led to the end of the Cold War, even though in this arena, too, he almost certainly exaggerated the capacity for reform on the part of the Communist governments in Eastern Europe.

As the preceding discussion suggests, the Western and above all the American role in ending the Cold War was necessary but not primary. There are a number of reasons for this conclusion, but the basic one is that the American worldview was derivative of the Communist world-view. Containment was hollow without an expansionist power to contain. In this sense, it was the Soviet threat, real or imagined, that generated the American dedication to waging the Cold War. . . .

American policymakers were guilty of accepting far too much of the Communist worldview in constructing an anti-Communist antipode, and of being too ready to fight fire with fire. Indeed, once the Cold War became the dominant factor in global politics (and above all in American and Soviet perceptions), each side viewed every development around the world in terms of its relationship to that great struggle, and each was inclined to act according to a self-fulfilling prophecy. The Americans, for example, often viewed local and regional conflicts of indigenous origins as Cold War battles. Like the Soviets, they distrusted the neutral and nonaligned nations and were always more comfortable when countries around the world were either allies or the satellites and surrogates of the other side. Thus, many traditional diplomatic relationships not essentially attendant on the superpower rivalry were swept into the vortex of the Cold War, at least in the eyes of the protagonists and partly by their actions.

After Communism: Causes for the Collapse

Robert Heilbroner

The rapid collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has stunned most observers. Only in retrospect have reasons for this collapse been presented with any conviction. Scholars are now struggling to interpret what has happened. One of these is Robert Heilbroner, who has written extensively on economics, economic history, and current affairs. In the following selection he focuses on the Soviet economic system, particularly the Soviet's central planning system, as the key to the collapse.

CONSIDER: *Why the Soviet's central planning system might have worked well enough in the early stages of industrialization or for specific projects, but not well enough for a mature industrialized economy; why the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union has such widespread significance.*

Socialism has been a great tragedy this century, its calamitous finale the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. I doubt very much whether socialism has now disappeared from history, but there is no doubt that the collapse marks its end as a model of economic clarity. Moreover, I suspect that its economic failure may haunt socialism longer than the pathologies of Communism. Early on, one could see that the Soviets were headed toward political disaster, but much of that disaster seemed attributable to the hopeless political heritage of Russian history, not to socialism per se. It was the economic side of the Russian collapse that came as a shock. The prodigies of Russian prewar industrialization appeared to be an incontrovertible argument for the capacity of a planned economic system to achieve growth, and the argument appeared to be confirmed by the spectacular performance of the Soviets during the years of reconstruction immediately following the Second World War. Thus, there may have been discomfiture but there was not much surprise when the Soviet economy during the nineteen-fifties grew twice as fast as the American economy. Surprise did not appear until the nineteen-seventies, when the Soviet growth rate slipped to only half of ours, and consternation was not evident until the middle to late nineteen-eighties, when C.I.A. and academic specialists alike began to report something very close to zero growth. But collapse! No one expected collapse.

There is still no definitive account as to exactly why the Soviet economic system collapsed—one can never find the nail for whose want the shoe was lost. There were undoubtedly elements of this economic disaster with their roots in history: the bureaucrat is well known to Russian literature. Perhaps the final blow was delivered by *glasnost*, which released long-pent-up anger against economic conditions; or perhaps by the Soviet attempt to meet the Star Wars initiative—one hears many such guesses. All we know for certain is that the system deteriorated to a point far beyond the worst economic crisis ever experienced by capitalism, and that the villain in this deterioration was the central planning system itself. The conclusion one inevitably comes to is that to whatever extent socialism depends on such a system it will not work. . . .

The great problem of central planning lies buried in the procedures by which the economy is given its marching orders. As in a military campaign, which central planning resembles in many ways, production is brought about by a series of commands from the top, not by the independent decisions of regimental commanders, company captains, and platoon sergeants. This means that the economy “works” because—and only to the extent that—the quantity, quality, size, weight, and selling price of every nut, bolt, hinge, beam, tractor, and hydroelectric turbine have been previously determined. At the supreme headquarters, the numbers for gross national product are announced. In considerably lower and dingier offices, the numbers for nuts, bolts, and turbines are calculated, but it is apparent that if the plans for the latter are off, the plans for the former may be impossible to attain.

Planning thus requires that the immense map of desired national output be carved up into millions of individual pieces, like a jigsaw puzzle—the pieces produced by hundreds of thousands of enterprises, and the whole thing finally reassembled in such a way as to fit. That would be an extraordinarily difficult task even if the map of desired output were unchanged from year to year, but, of course, it is not: the chief planners change their objectives, and new technologies or labor shortages or bad weather or simply mistakes get in the way. In 1986, before *perestroika* was officially formulated, Gosplan, the highest planning commission in the Soviet Union, issued two thousand sets of instructions for major “product groups,” such as construction materials, metals, and automotive vehicles. Gosplan, the State Material and Technical Supply Commission, then divided these product groups into fifteen thousand categories—lumber, copper, and trucks, for instance—and the various ministries in charge of the categories in turn subdivided them into fifty thousand more finely detailed products (shingles, beams, laths, boards) and then into specific products in each

SOURCE: From Robert Heilbroner, “After Communism,” *The New Yorker*, September 10, 1990. Reprinted by permission. © 1990 Robert Heilbroner. Originally in *The New Yorker*. All rights reserved.

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category (large, medium, and small shingles). These plans then percolated down through the hierarchy of production, receiving emendations or protests as they reached the level of plant managers and engineers, and thereafter travelled back up to the ministerial level. In this Byzantine process, perhaps the most difficult single step was to establish "success indicators"—desired performance targets—for enterprises. For many years, targets were given in physical terms—so many yards of cloth or tons of nails—but that led to obvious difficulties. If cloth was rewarded by the yard, it was woven loosely to make the yarn yield more yards. If the output of nails was determined by their number, factories produced huge numbers of pinlike nails; if by weight, smaller numbers of very heavy nails. The satiric magazine *Krokodil* once ran a cartoon of a factory manager proudly displaying his record output, a single gigantic nail suspended from a crane.

The difficulty, of course, was that the inevitable mismatches and mistakes could not be set to rights by the decisions of platoon sergeants or regimental commanders who were able to see that the campaign was not going as expected.

I am not very sanguine about the prospect that socialism will continue as an important form of economic organization now that Communism is finished. This statement will come as a wry commentary to those who remember that Marx defined socialism as the stage that precedes Communism. But the collapse of the planned economies has forced us to rethink the meaning of socialism. As a semireligious vision of a transformed humanity, it has been dealt devastating blows in the twentieth century. As a blueprint for a rationally planned society, it is in tatters.

The Rise of China

Rosemary Righter

Since the late 1970s, and particularly since the early years of the 1990s, China's economy has grown at an astounding rate. This economic growth has made China more powerful and influential on the world stage. In the following selection, Rosemary Righter analyzes these changes and the role played by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping.

CONSIDER: *Connections between the crushing of the Tiananmen democracy movement and the new emphasis on "getting rich"; the benefits and problems associated with China's economic development.*

Fifteen years ago, that master of political cunning Deng Xiaoping made his famous trip south from Beijing to Shenzhen near the Hong Kong border. It was the moment when he decisively outflanked the Politburo's diehard believers in class struggle and the command economy, men whose "ossified way of thinking" he had challenged on assuming the leadership of China in 1976, and who had made a comeback after his crushing of the Tiananmen democracy movement. Now, under the Orwellian rubric of "socialism with Chinese characteristics", Deng decreed that it was time to let enterprise rip. Out went Mao's "better Red than expert"; in came "it doesn't matter about the colour of the cat, so long as it catches mice".

The pent-up energies thus released generated an economic and social upheaval unequalled in history for scale and speed, as well as unpredictable and potentially unmanageable consequences. The take-off was almost vertical. Within months of Deng's apocryphal injunction that "to get rich is glorious", officially recorded national growth rates soared to five times their post-Tiananmen level, ranging between 7 and 12 per cent thereafter and scoring in double digits for each of the past five years. Industrial output and investment in infrastructure have surged faster still; after more than a year of official efforts to cool the economy, they rose in the first half of 2007 by 18.5 per cent and 26 per cent respectively. . . .

The contradictions are becoming acute. On the positive side of the ledger, when adjusted to take account of purchasing power, China's contribution to global growth has for the past seven years exceeded that of the United States. That bald statistic does not take into account the benign worldwide impact of low inflation, held down in large part by the abundant availability of low-cost Chinese imports. Less benignly, however, China may already be the world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases. China depends on coal, the unwashed, sulphur-belching variety, to meet 70 per cent of its primary energy demand, and already burns more coal than the US, Europe and Japan together. Already China exports sulphur dioxide pollution as far as Los Angeles. This is just the start: the Chinese Academy of Engineering reports that, in the next fifteen years, China will need as much additional power from all sources as the US developed in the past half-century — even if its industries can be compelled to curb wastage so profligate that each unit of output consumes 50 percent more energy in China than in India, and ten times more than in Japan. According to Zhou Shengxian, China's top environment minister, industrial effluent has turned more than a quarter of China's seven main rival systems into "sticky glue". Toxic fumes blanket its cities, and air and water pollution kill 500,000 Chinese a year, according to the World Bank.

China's phenomenal advance has been socially, generationally and geographically lopsided. This Deng

expected: he explicitly said that some people would have to get rich first, although it is doubtful that he anticipated the yawning gulf that would open up between China's wealth-flaunting nouveau riche and the poor at their gates. The rich-poor divide comes as a rude shock in a society where most people over forty remember starting out earning roughly the same pittance as everyone else, with the state providing basic services for free. China's income gap – most spectacularly between town and countryside, but also within cities – now rivals that of Victorian England and exceeds that of the US. An aperitif in a slick Beijing bar costs a month's farm income. Illiteracy is rising because the cost of education is beyond the reach of millions, as is healthcare; rural and urban migrant families can be reduced by a single illness to poverty so abject that they cannot afford enough clothes or food. China has compressed into a few years an industrial revolution and the urbanization of a vast nation, all without the safety valves of political accountability, social security and a fair and accessible judicial system. The dramatic overall increase in prosperity sharpens the resentments of those whose lives are just as poor as before, and considerably more precarious.

Modernization: The Western and Non-Western Worlds

Although almost all areas of the world that were once colonies of the Western powers gained independence during the quarter-century following World War II, the penetration of the rest of the world by Western ideas, values, institutions, and products has been extremely widespread. This is illustrated in the photograph (figure 19.1) showing a citizen of Kuwait, an oil-rich sheikdom of the Persian Gulf, carrying a Western television set across a road. He is wearing Western-style tennis shoes that were probably manufactured in the Far East. In the background are a bilingual store sign and Western automobiles. Reflected in the glass of the television set is a modern building probably designed by a Western architect and built under the direction of an international construction firm using both foreign and domestic labor and materials. This photograph suggests that some of the formerly colonized areas are taking economic, political, and social steps in the same direction as Western industrialized states.



FIGURE 19.1 (© Bruno Barbey/Magnum Photos)

Terrorism and the Clash of Civilizations

Samuel P. Huntington

On September 11, 2001, terrorists struck targets in the United States, killing thousands of people. Scholars trying to explain the causes of these acts often point to other instances of terrorism in recent years and deeper conflicts dividing the Western and non-Western worlds. Samuel P. Huntington is one of the most influential and controversial of these scholars. In an oft-cited article that first appeared in 1996, he argued that a fundamental clash of civilizations—particularly between Western and Islamic civilizations—is in the offing. In the following excerpt from a more recent publication that appeared after the September 2001 attack, he stresses that the risk of a clash of civilizations is growing and that we have entered “the age of Muslim wars.”

CONSIDER: How Huntington explains the causes of contemporary Muslim wars; why, according to Huntington, the makings of a general clash of civilizations exist.

Contemporary global politics is the age of Muslim wars. Muslims fight each other and fight non-Muslims far more often than do peoples of other civilizations. Muslim wars have replaced the cold war as the principal form of international conflict. These wars include wars of terrorism,

SOURCE: Samuel P. Huntington, “The Age of Muslim Wars,” *Newsweek*, December 17, 2001.

6

guerrilla wars, civil wars and interstate conflicts. These instances of Muslim violence could congeal into one major clash of civilizations between Islam and the West or between Islam and the Rest. That, however, is not inevitable, and it is more likely that violence involving Muslims will remain dispersed, varied and frequent. . . .

Overall, however, the age of Muslim wars has its roots in more general causes. These do not include the inherent nature of Islamic doctrine and beliefs, which, like those of Christianity, adherents can use to justify peace or war as they wish. The causes of contemporary Muslim wars lie in politics, not seventh-century religious doctrines.

First, one of the most significant social, cultural and political developments in the past several decades has been the resurgence of Islamic consciousness, movements and identity among Muslim peoples almost everywhere. This Islamic resurgence is in large part a response to modernization and globalization and is highly constructive in many ways. Islamist organizations have moved in to meet the needs of the growing numbers of urban Muslims by providing social support, moral guidance, welfare, health services, education, unemployment relief—all services that Muslim governments often do not provide. In addition, in many Muslim Societies, Islamists are the principal opposition to highly repressive governments. The Islamic resurgence has also spawned a small number of extremists who supply the recruits for terrorism and guerrilla wars against non-Muslims.

Second, throughout the Muslim World, and particularly among Arabs, there exists a great sense of grievance, resentment, envy and hostility toward the West and its wealth, power and culture. This is in part a result of Western imperialism and domination of the Muslim world for much of the 20th century. It is also in part the result of particular Western policies, including American action against Iraq since 1991 and the continuing close relationship between the United States and Israel. It is, more broadly, a reaction of Muslim peoples to their own corrupt, ineffective and repressive governments and the Western governments they see supporting those regimes.

Third, tribal, religious, ethnic, political and cultural divisions within the Muslim world stimulate violence between Muslims. They also promote violence between Muslims and non-Muslims because different Muslim groups and governments, such as those of Saudi Arabia and Iran, compete with each other in promoting their own brand of Islam and have supported Muslim groups fighting non-Muslims from Bosnia to the Philippines. If one or two states dominated the Muslim world, which has not been the case since the end of the Ottoman Empire, less violence would occur among Muslims and, probably, between Muslims and non-Muslims. . . .

These factors are among the sources of the widespread violence involving Muslims. To date, that violence has

been largely localized, limited and dispersed. Could it evolve into a major violent civilizational war between Islam and the West and possibly other civilizations? This is clearly the goal of Osama bin Laden. He declared holy war on the United States, enjoined Muslims to kill Americans indiscriminately and vigorously attempted to mobilize Muslims everywhere for his jihad. He has not succeeded in this effort, in part because of the many divisions within Islam. The United States, on the other hand, has declared a global war on terrorism, but in fact there are many wars by different governments against different terrorist groups. The United States is primarily concerned with Al Qaeda; other governments are concerned with their own local terrorists.

The makings of a general clash of civilizations exist. Reactions to September 11 and the American response were strictly along civilizational lines. The governments and peoples of Western countries were overwhelmingly sympathetic and supportive, making commitments to join with the United States in the war on terrorism. . . . The leading countries of non-Western, non-Muslim civilizations—Russia, China, India, Japan—reacted with modulated expressions of sympathy and support. Almost all Muslim governments condemned the terrorist attacks, undoubtedly concerned with the threat Muslim extremist groups posed to their own authoritarian regimes. Only Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Turkey, however, provided direct support to the American response, and among major Arab governments only Jordan and Egypt endorsed that response. In most Muslim countries, many people condemned the terrorist attacks, a small number explicitly endorsed the attacks and huge numbers denounced the American response. The longer and the more intensely the United States and its allies use military force against their opponents, the more widespread and intense will be the Muslim reaction. September 11 produced Western unity; a prolonged response to September 11 could produce Muslim unity.

Religious Terrorism *

Mark Juergensmeyer

*Terrorism is not new. However, terrorist organizations grew alarmingly in the 1980s and 1990s and adopted bolder tactics aimed at both military and civilian targets. Events during the first years of the twenty-first century, such as the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, and those on Spain on March 11, 2004, suggest how deadly terrorism can become. In the following selection from *Terror in the Mind**

SOURCE: Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Violence* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2001), pp. 5–6, 11.

of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence, *Mark Juergensmeyer focuses on religious terrorism.*

CONSIDER: *The meaning of religious terrorism according to the Juergensmeyer; the possible causes for terrorism; what enables people to carry out acts of terrorism.*

Terrorism is meant to terrify. The word comes from the Latin *terrere*, “to cause to tremble,” and came into common usage in the political sense, as an assault on civil order, during the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution at the close of the eighteenth century. Hence the public response to the violence—the trembling that terrorism effects—is part of the meaning of the term. It is appropriate, then, that the definition of a terrorist act is provided by us, the witnesses—the ones terrified—and not by the party committing the act. It is we—or more often our public agents, the news media—who affix the label on acts of violence that makes them terrorism. (These are public acts of destruction, committed without a clear military objective, that arouse a widespread sense of fear.)

This fear often turns to anger when we discover the other characteristic that frequently attends these acts of public violence: their justification by religion. Most people feel that religion should provide tranquility and peace, not terror. Yet in many of these cases religion has supplied not only the ideology but also the motivation and the organizational structure for the perpetrators. It is true that some terrorist acts are committed by public officials invoking a sort of “state terrorism” in order to subjugate the populace. The pogroms of Stalin, the government-supported death squads in El Salvador, the genocidal killings of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, and government-spurred violence of the Hutus and Tutsis in Central Africa all come to mind. The United States has rightfully been accused of terrorism in the atrocities committed during the Vietnam War, and there is some basis for considering the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as terrorist acts.

But the term “terrorism” has more frequently been associated with violence committed by disenfranchised groups desperately attempting to gain a shred of power or influence. Although these groups cannot kill on the scale that governments with all their military power can, their sheer numbers, their intense dedication, and their dangerous unpredictability have given them influence vastly out of proportion with their meager military resources. Some of these groups have been inspired by purely secular causes. They have been motivated by leftist ideologies, as in the cases of the Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru in Peru, and the Red Army in Japan; and they

have been propelled by a desire for ethnic or regional separatism, as in the cases of Basque militants in Spain and the Kurdish nationalists in the Middle East.

But more often it has been religion—sometimes in combination with these other factors, sometimes as the primary motivation—that has incited terrorist acts. . . .

As these instances show, it takes a community of support and, in many cases, a large organizational network for an act of terrorism to succeed. It also requires an enormous amount of moral presumption for the perpetrators of these acts to justify the destruction of property on a massive scale or to condone a brutal attack on another life, especially the life of someone one scarcely knows and against whom one bears no personal enmity. And it requires a great deal of internal conviction, social acknowledgment, and the stamp of approval from a legitimizing ideology or authority one respects. Because of the moral, ideological, and organizational support necessary for such acts, most of them come as collective decisions—such as the conspiracy that led to the release of nerve gas in the Tokyo subways and the Hamas organization’s carefully devised bombings.

The War in Iraq

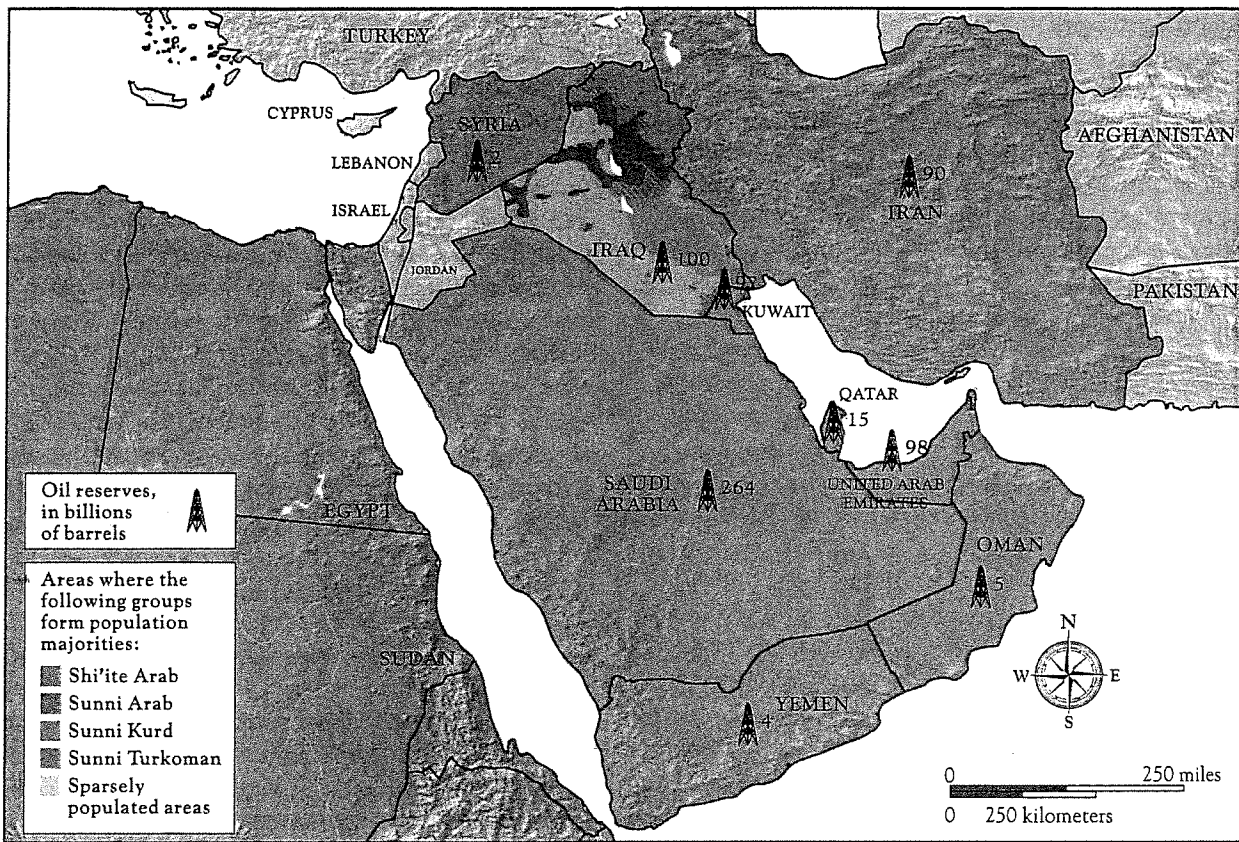
Michael Ignatieff

In March 2003, the United States took a major step in the name of its “war on terrorism.” The U.S. military, backed by British forces and the token support of other nations, attacked Iraq. Within weeks, U.S. and British air and ground forces overwhelmed Iraqi defenders and toppled Saddam Hussein and the Baathist Party, which had ruled Iraq with an iron fist for more than 20 years. From the beginning, many debated the reasons and wisdom of the attack on Iraq. In the following selection, Michael Ignatieff analyzes the reasons for the war. Ignatieff is director of the Carr Center at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He describes himself as a liberal and a reluctant, yet convinced, supporter of the war in Iraq.

CONSIDER: *What, according to Ignatieff, is the most important reason the Bush administration invaded Iraq; what role September 11 played in the invasion of Iraq.*

Human rights could well be improved in Iraq as a result of the intervention. But the Bush administration did not invade Iraq just to establish human rights. Nor, ultimately, was this intervention about establishing a democracy or saving lives as such. And here we come to

SOURCE: Michael Ignatieff, “Why Are We in Iraq?” *The New York Times Magazine*, September 7, 2003, p. 7.



MAP 19.1 The Middle East and Iraq, 2003

the heart of the matter—to where the Bush administration’s interventions fit into America’s long history of intervention. All such interventions have occurred because a president has believed going in that it would increase both his and his country’s power and influence. To use Joseph S. Nye Jr.’s definition, “power is the ability to obtain the outcomes one wants.” Presidents intervene because successful interventions enhance America’s ability to obtain the outcomes it wants.

The Iraq intervention was the work of conservative radicals, who believed that the status quo in the Middle East was untenable—for strategic reasons, security reasons and economic reasons. They wanted intervention to bring about a revolution in American power in the entire region. What made a president take the gamble was Sept. 11 and the realization, with 15 of the hijackers originating in Saudi Arabia, that American interests based since 1945 on a presumed Saudi pillar were actually built on sand. The new pillar was to be a democratic Iraq, at peace with Israel, Turkey and Iran, harboring no terrorists, pumping oil for the world economy at the right price and abjuring any nasty designs on its neighbors.

As Paul Wolfowitz has all but admitted, the “bureaucratic” reason for war—weapons of mass destruction—

was not the main one. The real reason was to rebuild the pillars of American influence in the Middle East. Americans may have figured this out for themselves, but it was certainly not what they were told. Nor were they told that building this new pillar might take years and years. What they were told—misleadingly and simplistically—was that force was justified to fight “terrorism” and to destroy arsenals of mass destruction targeted at America and at Israel.

War, Oil, and Instability in the Middle East

Map 19.1 shows the Middle East, estimated oil reserves in several nations, and ethno-religious groups in Iraq. The oil reserves suggest one reason why the Middle East might be of such strategic importance to many areas in the world that depend on foreign sources for their energy needs. The war in Iraq, Iraq’s internal divisions, the conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis, and the growth of international terrorism stemming from this region also reflect the instability and complexity of the Middle East.

CONSIDER: The ways war in Iraq might change this region; the problems facing those in Iraq who are trying to establish a stable, unified nation.

(9)

Globalization

Thomas L. Friedman

Scholars looking at Western history since the fall of Communism have tried to come up with terms that best characterize the period. Several scholars have focused on "globalization" as the outstanding quality of this period. While some historians also use the term in descriptions of the post-1945 world and even the world during the decades just before World War I, globalization now refers to something different in quantity and quality. In the following selection from his well-received book, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas L. Friedman analyzes the meaning of the globalization system by comparing it with its predecessor, the Cold War system.

CONSIDER: What Friedman means by the "globalization system"; how it differs from the "Cold War system; the three "balances" that structure the globalization system.

Today's era of globalization, which replaced the Cold War, is a similar international system, with its own unique attributes.

To begin with, the globalization system, unlike the Cold War system, is not static, but a dynamic ongoing process: globalization involves the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before—in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before, and in a way that is also producing a powerful backlash from those brutalized or left behind by this new system.

The driving idea behind globalization is free-market capitalism—the more you let market forces rule and the more you open your economy to free trade and competition, the more efficient and flourishing your economy will be. Globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world. Globalization also has its own set of economic rules—rules that revolve around opening, deregulating and privatizing your economy.

Unlike the Cold War system, globalization has its own dominant culture, which is why it tends to be homogenizing. In previous eras this sort of cultural homogenization happened on a regional scale—the Hellenization of the Near East and the Mediterranean world under the Greeks, the Turkification of Central Asia, North Africa, Europe and the Middle East by the Ottomans, or the Russification of Eastern and Central Europe and parts of Eurasia under the Soviets. Culturally speaking, globalization is largely, though not entirely, the spread of

Americanization—from Big Macs to iMacs to Mickey Mouse—on a global scale.

Globalization has its own defining technologies: computerization, miniaturization, digitization, satellite communications, fiber optics and the Internet. And these technologies helped to create the defining perspective of globalization. If the defining perspective of the Cold War world was "division," the defining perspective of globalization is "integration." The symbol of the Cold War system was a wall, which divided everyone. The symbol of the globalization system is a World Wide Web, which unites everyone. The defining document of the Cold War system was "The Treaty." The defining document of the globalization system is "The Deal." . . .

Last, and most important, globalization has its own defining structure of power, which is much more complex than the Cold War structure. The Cold War system was built exclusively around nation-states, and it was balanced at the center by two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union.

The globalization system, by contrast, is built around three balances, which overlap and affect one another. The first is the traditional balance between nation-states. In the globalization system, the United States is now the sole and dominant superpower and all other nations are subordinate to it to one degree or another. The balance of power between the United States and the other states still matters for the stability of this system. . . .

The second balance in the globalization system is between nation-states and global markets. These global markets are made up of millions of investors moving money around the world with the click of a mouse. I call them "the Electronic Herd," and this herd gathers in key global financial centers, such as Wall Street, Hong Kong, London and Frankfurt, which I call "the Supermarkets." The attitudes and actions of the Electronic Herd and the Supermarkets can have a huge impact on nation-states today, even to the point of triggering the downfall of governments. . . .

The United States can destroy you by dropping bombs and the Supermarkets can destroy you by downgrading your bonds. The United States is the dominant player in maintaining the globalization gameboard, but it is not alone in influencing the moves on that gameboard. This globalization gameboard today is a lot like a Ouija board—sometimes pieces are moved around by the obvious hand of the superpower, and sometimes they are moved around by hidden hands of the Supermarkets.

The third balance that you have to pay attention to in the globalization system—the one that is really the newest of all—is the balance between individuals and nation-states. Because globalization has brought down many of the walls that limited the movement and reach of people, and because it has simultaneously wired the world into networks, it gives more power to individuals to

influence both markets and nation-states than at any time in history. So you have today not only a superpower, not only Supermarkets, but, as I will also demonstrate later in the book, you have Super-empowered individuals. Some of these Super-empowered individuals are quite angry, some of them quite wonderful—but all of them are now able to act directly on the world stage without the traditional mediation of governments, corporations or any other public or private institutions.

Global Warming

Elizabeth Kolbert

For years, various observers and scientists have been cautioning that the global climate is warming, in great part thanks to human activities, and that this global warming will soon have alarming consequences. At first, other scientists disputed these claims; fewer now deny them. In the following selection, Elizabeth Kolbert examines some of the evidence for global warming and its potential consequences.

CONSIDER: *Why global warming might become such a historically important development; why the problem of global warming is already so difficult to solve.*

The retreat of the Arctic sea ice, the warming of the oceans, the rapid shrinking of the glaciers, the redistribution of species, the thawing of the permafrost—these are all new phenomena. It is only in the last five or ten years that global warming has finally emerged from the background “noise” of climate variability. And even so, the changes that can be seen lag behind the changes that have been set in motion. The warming that has been observed so far is probably only about half the amount required to bring the planet back into energy balance. This means that even if carbon dioxide were to remain stable at today’s levels, temperatures would still continue to rise, glaciers to melt, and weather patterns to change for decades to come.

But CO₂ levels are *not* going to remain stable. Just to slow the growth . . . is a hugely ambitious undertaking, one that would require new patterns of consumption, new technologies, and new politics. Whether the threshold for “dangerous anthropogenic interference” is 450 parts per million of CO₂ or 500, or even 550 or 600, the world is rapidly approaching the point at which, for all practical purposes, the crossing of that threshold will become impossible to prevent. To refuse to act, on the grounds that still more study is needed or that meaningful efforts are too costly or that they impose an unfair burden on industrialized nations, is not to put off the consequences, but to

rush toward them. Just as this book was being completed, Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans. Though hurricanes are, in their details, extremely complicated, basically they all draw their energy from the same source: the warm surface waters of the ocean. (This is why they form only in the tropics, and during the season when sea surface temperatures are highest.) It follows that as sea surface temperatures increase, the amount of energy available to hurricanes will grow. In general, climate scientists predict that climbing CO₂ levels will lead to an increase in the intensity of hurricanes, though not in hurricane frequency. Meanwhile, as sea levels rise, storm surges, like the one that breached the levees in New Orleans, will inevitably become more dangerous. . . .

Ice core records also show that we are steadily drawing closer to the temperature peaks of the last interglacial, when sea levels were some fifteen feet higher than they are today. Just a few degrees more and the earth will be hotter than it has been at any time since our species evolved. The feedbacks that have been identified in the climate system—the ice-albedo feedback, the water vapor feedback, the feedback between temperatures and carbon storage in the permafrost—take small changes to the system and amplify them into much larger forces. Perhaps the most unpredictable feedback of all is the human one. With six billion people on the planet, the risks are everywhere apparent. A disruption in monsoon patterns, a shift in ocean currents, a major drought—any one of these could easily produce streams of refugees numbering in the millions. As the effects of global warming become more and more difficult to ignore, will we react by finally fashioning a global response? Or will we retreat into ever narrower and more destructive forms of self-interest? It may seem impossible to imagine that a technologically advanced society could choose, in essence, to destroy itself, but that is what we are now in the process of doing.

Ecological Threats

J. R. McNeill

*Over the past several decades, it has become increasingly apparent that modern civilization is exacting a price from nature. Scholars point out that the world’s air and water are becoming polluted, the world’s species are being diminished or destroyed, and the world’s resources are being threatened. In the following excerpt from his book, *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*, J. R. McNeill looks at the combination of ecological and societal problems facing us and the need for policies to deal with these problems.*

SOURCE: Elizabeth Kolbert, *Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006), pp. 184–187.

SOURCE: J. R. McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2000), pp. 360–362.



CONSIDER: *The key causes for the ecological problems we face; how policies have contributed to these problems.*

The reason I expect formidable ecological and societal problems in the future is because of what I see in the past. In this book I have tried to give some measure to the ecological changes experienced in the twentieth century. Only some of them are easily reducible to numbers. They are recapitulated in *Table 19.1*, which is intended as a summary measure of environmental change and some of the factors producing it in the twentieth century. . . .

According to the Hebrew Bible, on the fifth day of creation God enjoined humankind to fill and subdue the earth and to have dominion over every living thing. For

Table 19.1 The Measure of the Twentieth Century

<i>Item</i>	<i>Increase Factor, 1890s–1990s</i>
World population	4
Urban proportion of world population	3
Total world urban population	13
World economy	14
Industrial output	40
Energy use	16
Coal production	7
Air pollution	≈5
Carbon dioxide emissions	17
Sulfur dioxide emissions	13
Lead emissions to the atmosphere	≈8
Water use	9
Marine fish catch	35
Cattle population	4
Pig population	9
Horse population	1.1
Blue whale population (Southern Ocean only)	0.0025 (99.75% decrease)
Fin whale population	0.03 (97% decrease)
Bird and mammal species	0.99 (1% decrease)
Irrigated area	5
Forest area	0.8 (20% decrease)
Cropland	2

most of history, our species failed to live up to these (as to so many other) injunctions, not for want of trying so much as for want of power. But in the twentieth century the harnessing of fossil fuels, unprecedented population growth, and a myriad of technological changes made it more nearly possible to fulfill these instructions. The prevailing political and economic systems made it seem imprudent not to try: most societies, and all the big ones, sought to maximize their current formidability and wealth at the risk of sacrificing ecological buffers and tomorrow's resilience. The general policy of the twentieth century was to try to make the most of resources, make Nature perform to the utmost, and hope for the best.

With our new powers we banished some historical constraints on health and population, food production, energy use, and consumption generally. Few who know anything about life with these constraints regret their passing. But in banishing them we invited other constraints in the form of the planet's capacity to absorb the wastes, by-products, and impacts of our actions. These latter constraints had pinched occasionally in the past, but only locally. By the end of the twentieth century they seemed to restrict our options globally. Our negotiations with these constraints will shape the future as our struggles against them shaped our past.

Those responsible for policy tend to take as their frame of reference the world as we know it. This invites them to think of things as they observe and experience them—the regime of perpetual disturbance as I called it in the Preface—as “normal.” In fact, in ecological terms, the current situation is an extreme deviation from any of the durable, more “normal,” states of the world over the span of human history, indeed over the span of earth history. If we lived 700 or 7,000 years, we would understand this on the basis of experience and memory alone. But for creatures who live a mere 70 years or so, the study of the past, distant and recent, is required to know what the range of possibilities includes, and to know what might endure.

CHAPTER QUESTIONS

1. The closeness of recent years makes it difficult to know what trends and developments will be the most significant historically. Those selected for this chapter are just a few of the possibilities. What others might have been selected? What evidence would demonstrate their importance?
2. It is possible to argue that most of what is claimed to be new about recent years is not really so new, that it is just our impression that it is new because we have been living through it. How might this argument be supported? How might it be refuted?