
UNIT 20 NATION-STATE SYSTEM

Structure

- 20.1 Introduction
- 20.2 The Historical Context
- 20.3 The Ideological Concerns
- 20.4 Regional Variations in Europe
- 20.5 The Role of Economic Development
- 20.6 Imperialism and Nation-State System
- 20.7 Nation-State System and International Relations
- 20.8 Summary
- 20.9 Exercises

20.1 INTRODUCTION

Nationalism was perhaps the most significant outcome of the French domination in Europe during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in the early 19th century. The power of the nation state was to become overwhelmingly crucial in international relations throughout the 19th century. A strong sense of national pride would overwhelm other sentiments. French revolutionary ideas spread across the European continent during the Napoleonic Wars but equally significant was the emergence of a cultural revolution. This was rooted in a growing sense of one's civilization symbolized by historical memories, shared sense of pride in language, literature, folk traditions, food, dress and many other elements of daily lifestyle. Countries like Britain, France, Russia and Spain were already nations in the beginning of the 19th century. Germany and Italy apart from many other smaller entities were yet to emerge as nations. A sense of cultural identity could very easily flow into a strong sense of national pride. The political situation in the first decade of the 19th century in Europe is therefore of crucial importance to determine the various ramifications of European nationalism and the impact of the French ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity on those republics which were occupied by France.

20.2 THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Feudal systems of land tenure were done away within countries of West Europe occupied by France. So also were citizens granted equality before law. The stability of a government was now increasingly linked to a written constitution. The Code Napoleon seemed to have left a considerable impact and this could be linked to the idea of liberty. France had kept Europe engaged in almost continuous warfare for nearly 2 decades now, so one could hardly talk of fraternity existing between different political entities, but Europe was never going to remain the same after the French Revolution and the wars thereafter. The symbols of the revolution were to be the most enduring, ideological aspects in 19th century. Europe. Nationalism and concept of the nation state led to many significant changes in the map of Europe. Changes already made in the frontier by the Napoleonic wars and the imposition of peace terms on France by the victorious Allies opened up a tremendous diplomatic exercise. It was further complicated by Napoleon's second bid for power when he reclaimed his position from 20th March to 22nd June 1815 that is till his defeat at Waterloo.

Just a year before Napoleon's return, on 9 March 1814, Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia decided to restore the Bourbons to the French throne. On 12 April 1814, Napoleon by signing the treaty of Fontainebleau formalized his abdication and was given the island of Elba, his imperial title and an annual income of 2 million francs. Alongside, diplomatic decisions were taken to maintain the territorial integrity of several European countries. The allies i.e. England, Russia, Austria and Prussia decided to meet in Vienna on 10th Oct 1814, to look into further territorial problems like those of Poland. German states were united into a federation and France had to go back to her territorial possessions of 1792. The final treaty of Vienna was signed on 9th June 1815 (after dealing with Napoleon's final bid for power) a few days before the battle of Waterloo where Napoleon was finally defeated by the combined armies of Austria, Russia, Prussia and Britain. On 20th Nov 1815, a second treaty of Paris was signed and France had to go back to her frontiers of 1789 which meant returning territory to Piedmont and Switzerland. A war indemnity of 70 million francs was imposed and an allied army of occupation along her borders was stationed. The allies also signed the Quadruple Alliance to guarantee each other's sovereignty, to ensure "repose and prosperity" of nations for the peace of Europe.

Balance of power and peace of Europe had been rudely shaken by France in the first decade of the nineteenth century so the task of restoring this balance through diplomatic exercises fell on the big four - Austria under Metternich the Foreign Minister, Britain under Castlereagh, again the Foreign Minister, Tsar Alexander I of Russia and the Prussian foreign minister. Peace was no doubt the main aim of these powers but each country had its own specific ambitions. For example, Prussia had its eyes on Saxony, as Russia had on Poland, Austria wanted a continuing influence on Northern Italy and Britain wanted to firm up her many maritime and colonial rights in many areas. Conflicting ambitions were bound to complicate matters as would the principles of legitimacy be constantly under challenge. Napoleonic wars had significantly distributed the power equations in many states. For example, the Holy Roman Empire had been dissolved and many states had thus become independent of Austria. So had German states like Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg. A new German Confederation was thus established with 39 states - which although under the Austrian emperor, now had more important forms of independence like non-interference of the confederation in internal affairs. There was however to be no representative government as yet. Countries like Austria were compensated with Lombardy and Venetia, Tuscany and Modena. Naples and Sicily went to Spain. Geneva went to Switzerland and Britain added to her overseas possessions by taking Ceylon and Cape of Good Hope (from Holland) and Trinidad from Spain.

20.3 THE IDEOLOGICAL CONCERNS

The Congress of Vienna therefore restored territorial rights to major powers and thus put the clock back. Can we say that the peacemakers in Vienna were ignoring the principles of liberation and nationalism and reconfirming the reactionary hereditary states of the old rules in their retrospective countries? During the Napoleonic wars, states had fiercely defended their people, their frontiers, their identity and so national heroes and national symbols became an important part of the common man's existence. The 19th century citizen with important constitutional rights also developed strong nationalistic loyalties and the concept of the nation state thus struck deep roots in the body politic of nations. The French Declaration of Rights 1789 said - "The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation." Nation state loyalties were bound to the political rights of the people. Universal suffrage did not come to West Europe till 1870 and in East Europe till 1919. Thus it was mainly the educated, urbane middle class who pursued the ideologies of nationalism and liberalism and built movements around them. Many

19th century philosophers guided a highly teleological course towards nationhood by linking it with a common race, a common language or common folk traditions. This could become problematic when proclaimed nationalistic political boundaries intervened with ethnic nationhood giving rise to aggression and destruction.

In Europe, after the Congress of Vienna, such conflicts would take on alarming proportions in the Habsburg, Russian and Turkish empires. Many empires would thus have to have their boundaries reworked. Nationalism could thus act as a means of breaking up empires or of bringing together people who were increasingly identifying themselves by a common language, culture or religion.

Examples of both are provided below. Italy and Germany are two important examples of how language, folk culture and common historical memories lead to very strong nationalistic feelings helping to build the two people into sovereign, united and independent nation states by 1870. The Sultan of Turkey was the nominal head of the Balkan Peninsula which was inhabited by different ethnic groups like Bulgarians, Croats, Serbians, Montenegrins, Romanians and Greeks. All these groups would soon be clamoring for independence. Similarly, the Poles, Ukrainians and Finns would be demanding independence from the Russian empire. Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks would also gradually start demanding certain political rights. Thus ethnic nationalism would become an extremely significant political issue leading to many new movements in the future.

Nationalist movements in Europe were mainly confined to the educated groups. Language was very often besides religion, the most important means of identifying with each other. Hungarian, Romanian and Croatian languages for instance were recognized as languages to write in, rather than in the previously dominant languages.

Beginnings of nationalistic sentiments in universities and student circles in the urban areas, supported often by gentry groups were however confined to small numbers. A number of revolts took place in Italy, Spain, Greece and Belgium at this time. The agenda was mostly some sort of democratic rights or nationalistic independence.

20.4 REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN EUROPE

In the period between 1818 and 1825 several conferences were held in Europe where autocratic rulers of Russia, Prussia and Austria expressed fears about these revolts seen as threats to peace & tranquility. Britain preferred to maintain a position of neutrality & non-interference. Participating countries in the conferences also maintained ambiguous positions when it came to supporting or opposing the revolts. Examples below would clarify the point - when revolts in Italy took place they were put down by Austria. Yet revolutionary groups were allowed to thrive in some of the democratic countries. If the revolts happened to threaten monarchical rule, they were suppressed, Britain supported Belgium's full claim for independence from Holland - the new ruler was Leopold, uncle by marriage to Victoria. Similarly, although nationalities like Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Montenegrins, Bosnians and Greeks were struggling for independence from the Ottoman Sultan, countries like Austria, Russia, France and Britain had some interest at stake in the Ottoman Empire. Britain's naval domination in the Mediterranean could be threatened by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Russia, however, since the 1820s had been thrusting forward energetically in the Balkans, often intervening on the side of Greece, Serbia and Romania thus threatening the stability of the Ottoman Empire. French ambitions deepened the crisis, because French naval presence in the straits of Gibraltar led to disagreements with Russia which had taken it upon herself to protect the 12 million Orthodox Church members within the Ottoman Empire. This annoyed the Turks who were further enraged when Russian troops entered Moldavia and

Wallachia to support Rumanian claims. This led to almost a state of war, with France and Britain helping Turkey against Russia. Neither Austria nor Prussia came to Russia's aid. The Crimean War ended in September 1855 after 2 years with the fall of a Russian naval base on the Black sea called Sevastopol. Casualties in the Crimean War were close to 500,000 out of which 300,000 were Russians. The Treaty of Paris signed on March 30, 1856, guaranteed integrity of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan in turn promised a policy of religious tolerance and the Black Sea was demilitarized. Nationalistic aspirations clashed with territorial ambitions of bigger powers and armed conflicts in these areas would continue through the nineteenth century.

Around this time the nationalist ideology was becoming the most important political creed among middle class liberals in Greece fighting monarchical rule or Italian nationalists led by Mazzinni, trying to inspire the people of Italy towards a united nation free from Austrian dominance. Republicanism, civil liberties, adult suffrage and other aspects of liberalism were becoming the most important subjects of political debate in many parts of Europe. In France the Bourbons had been restored, but the rulers from Louis XVIII to Charles X to Louis Philippe were under constant pressure to establish constitutional monarchies. Revolutionary, middle class political organizations continued to fight for political rights including the right to vote which they did not have. The 1830 and 1848 revolutions in France represented precisely these struggles for democratic rights.

In another monarchical state that is Austria, the Chancellor Metternich was the main upholder of the conservative system, which fell only during the 1848 revolution in that country. Metternich had been completely indifferent to the nationalistic sensibilities of different ethnic groups within the Austrian empire and he believed only in the hereditary principle of monarchical rule. He felt that middle class urban nationalism was disturbing the aristocratic tranquility in politics and society. The 1848 revolutions took on different forms in France, Italy, Prussia, Austria and Belgium. Reactionary politics and conservatism was not however simplistically replaced by republicanism. Louis Philippe was replaced by Louis Napoleon in France. Metternich was replaced by Schwarzenberg in Austria. However the middle class revolutionaries had at least fought against the status quo and against aristocratic rule as never before. Rulers would now be more conscious of liberal principles and new states like Greece, Belgium and Serbia came up as a result of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848. In Russia and many other East European countries however, absolutism continued to thrive.

After 1848, the Unification of Italy and that of Germany were significant political events and a total vindication of middle class nationalism. In Italy, Mazzinni, Cavour, Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel II were instrumental in forming the Italian State. The vision of a united, liberal republic based on democratic values and popular sovereignty led to the founding of young Italy, an organization which spread these ideas among the middle classes. The struggle for unity and republicanism would also involve outside powers like France, Britain and Russia who were supportive, critical of misgovernance or tolerant towards a united Italy. Piedmont was an important centre of struggle under Cavour the Prime Minister of the Piedmontese ruler Victor Emmanuel. Cavour turned to Napoleon III for help against Austria after 1849. Austrian troops were sent to protect her interests. In the ensuing armed conflict, Milan fell to the Piedmontese forces and this led to withdrawal of Austrian troops from Northern Italy. By 1860, other parts of Italy including Parma, Modena, Tuscany, Savoy, Nice, Lombardy and the eastern parts of the Papal states merged with Piedmont. Rome and Venetia were occupied in 1870 to complete the unification process. However the newly formed Italian state was not to be ruled by a popular republic as envisioned by Mazzinni but by an elite which was obviously from the privileged class.

German unification was as much a political as a cultural process. The formation of the German state was not easy. There were a number of non-German speaking people in South and West Prussia, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovenia; and Schleswig - Holstein was ruled by Denmark and Hanover by England. Thus many solutions were considered. Prussia nursed ambitions as the leader of a future united Germany. Bismarck, appointed Minister – President in 1862, was a conservative and would favour monarchical rule.

Under Bismarck, Prussia went to war with Austria and forced Austria to surrender Schleswig Holstein, Hesse-Cassel and he also made peace with South German states like Baden, Bavaria and Wurttemberg. Austria withdrew from any involvement with the German Confederation. Prussia also went to war with France in 1869 when France tried to secure Luxembourg and Belgium and opposed Prussia's support for a Hohenzollern candidate for the Spanish throne. This war led to a new nationalist wave sweeping through the South German states as well. This would obviously help in the process of unification. The war ended with the treaty of Frankfurt in February 1871 by which Alsace Lorraine was ceded perpetually to Germany and France also had to pay an indemnity of 5 billion francs.

In January 1871, the German empire was proclaimed at Versailles. The dominance of Prussia was obvious over the rest of Germany, just as Piedmont seemed to have dominated the process of Italian unification.

20.5 THE ROLE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In the period under review industry and empire can be considered as the most significant aspects of European political, economic and cultural life. Formation of nation - states like Germany and Italy in the 1870s was an important step towards redefining imperial spaces which were earlier occupied primarily by Britain, France and Spain.

The world economy of capitalism from mid 19th century onwards was a conglomeration of national blocs or national economies which had emerged with the growing number of nation states. These states protected their industrializing economies against competition from other nations. Thus these nations also became rival economies. Domestic markets became the chief concern of national industries. Broadening profit margins was not easy. Depression in the 1890s had seen a fall in prices worldwide. Capitalist concentration was an important development in this period. Large enterprises went through significant transformations between 1880 and 1914.

This period inevitably saw the hunt for more profitable investment and more markets. This led to the clamor for colonies outside the areas traditionally dominated by Britain. There was a gradual decline of Britain and growing presence of the U.S and Germany. Populations increased by leaps and bounds. In Germany the increase was from 45 to 65 million and in the U.S.A. from 50 to 92 million. Britain being smaller was not the only reason for her being left behind in the aggressive stride towards industrialization.

The world economy was becoming increasingly global because on one hand developed nation states were growing fast and on the other hand, the un-developed countries supplied goods to the capitalist nations depending on what they produced most, like coffee, bananas or beef.

Britain continued to dominate the international capital market till the 1st World War. In 1914, France, Germany, U.S.A., Belgium and Netherlands, Switzerland and others had 56% of the world's overseas investments and Britain alone had 44%. Yet pluralism was a fast growing characteristic of the world economy. Two significant and parallel developments were taking place in this period. Governments were under increasing pressure to adopt social welfare policies and to defend economic interests of voters

who were facing challenges of economic concentration. At the same time, economic competition and economic rivalry between nation states led to imperialism of the 20th century and to the genesis of the 1st World War. The world had come closer together than ever before through more complex economic transactions, a growing network of transportation and with technological advancement came the growing need for raw materials like oil, rubber, copper and precious metals. All this meant that imperialism would grow in directions it had never done before. Remote undeveloped countries in Africa or Asia supplied a lot of the raw material. Sugar, tea, coffee, cocoa and tropical fruits were also in great demand now and big business grew around these products leading to the growth of gigantic companies in the west who now had vital business interests in the undeveloped world. Markets in these areas were another motive which drove the western nations to look for colonies. Political prestige was not far behind as an important motive especially for countries like Germany and Italy. Britain and France had already established themselves as old colonial powers. The ideological and political content of nationalism from the 1880s till the 1st World War acquired new, culturally aggressive dimensions. A larger number of entities would now start staking their claims as 'national'. Thus nationalism along with other ideologies like Marxism and socialism gave Europe new languages of political articulation and brought up concerns which had never disturbed the men and women of the 19th century.

20.6 IMPERIALISM AND NATION-STATE SYSTEM

Sticking to the nationalistic energies prevalent in Europe at this time taking new shape and flourishing as movements in many parts of the continent, we can identify a number of nationalities like the Finns, Slovaks, Estonians, Macedonians etc expressing themselves as unified groups. In the 1890s, the Gaelic League for the Irish nation, the Hebrew for the Jews and the Baltic languages by the turn of the century were gaining prominence too. Around such sensibilities including sense of space or territory, an 'imaginary' community of the nation grew. The state was an integral part of that nationhood reaching every level of the citizens' socio-economic, political and cultural existence. According to E.J. Hobsbawm the 'nation' was the new civic religion of the states.

The significant linkage between the state and nationhood also led to further divisions within already formulated nations because many groups within these entities felt alienated and struggled for their own identity. After 1870, imperialism was not only because of factors related to economies and capitalism but also political concerns which prompted nation states to protect their overseas territorial interests in an aggressive manner which included interventionist territorial claims, common patriotic pride in empire building and backing often given by big entrepreneurs and industrialists. From 1880s for instance, European powers divided up almost the whole of Africa amongst themselves in what historians have called 'Scramble for Africa'. Economies and politics were blurred which became blurred in these contexts.

Disraeli, the British Prime Minister was promoting and popularizing imperialism in a big way in Britain. Victoria was now Empress of India. It seemed like a psychological booster. Conservative ideologies were tying up patriotism to imperialistic triumphs. Bismarck the German Chancellor had also launched an imperialistic crusade for a 'place in the sun'. France was making colonial claims in Africa among other places. Her sense of prestige had to be nurtured vis a vis the powerful German empire.

At the Congress of Berlin 1878, there was general agreement among nations like France and Britain, to protect the Ottoman empire and the Austro Hungarian empire from Russian ambitions in the Balkans. Meanwhile, the issue of Alsace Lorraine remained a sore point between France and Germany and France was eagerly looking for allies.

Relations between Germany and Russia were also not good. In 1890, Bismarck was removed from Chancellorship and Germany had meanwhile moved closer to Austria - Hungary with the signing of the Dual Alliance in 1879. This made Russia feel isolated. Russia and France came together in an alliance concluded in 1894. Britain and France also struck deals as far as colonial claims were concerned with Britain acquiring Cyprus during the Congress of Berlin 1878 and also encouraging France to further its Moroccan interests. This was also meant to counter German pressure on Morocco. Thus the two traditional colonial rivals decided to embark on the Entente Cordiale in 1904. Italy supported the French in Morocco. Germany continued to challenge the French there. France however was eager to recover her lost prestige during her defeat in the Franco Prussian War 1870-71 and thus reached multiple agreements regarding colonial claims with Russia, Britain and Italy. Meanwhile, after Russia's humiliating defeat at the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05, Russia was eager to reach agreements with Britain in 1907.

Germany's territorial gains between 1890 and 1914 were actually quite meager although Bismarck's successors began a rather aggressive expansionist policy. Bismarck had been more conscious of maintaining good relations with Russia, Italy and Austria and had indeed isolated France. Now at the turn of the century the maze of alliances was going to provide the seed bed for future military alliances.

1890-1912 was the period when Germany found herself increasingly isolated because France was reaching agreements with Britain, Russia and Italy; getting her colonial policy sorted out and tilting the European balance of powers in her favour. Austria was also losing her pre-eminence after the unifications of both Germany and Italy. Austria had also lost to France in 1859-60 and to Prussia in 1866, so not much remained of the Habsburg Empire. Austria turned more towards the Balkan problem and thereby clashed with Russia and Serbs supported Slavic interests in the Balkans. This led to inevitable ups and downs between Russia and Austria between 1860 and 1914. After Russia had imposed Treaty of San Stefano on the Turks, Austria was additionally disturbed to see Russia supporting Bulgarian claims. Austria meanwhile laid its claims on Bosnia - Herzegovina. The Congress of Berlin had ratified Austria's claim - this had alienated Russia and in 1879 when Austria and Germany signed the Dual alliance, Russia felt all the more threatened.

In 1907, the Serbs publicly adopted a resolution demanding independence of Bosnia from Austrian domination. In 1908, matters got worse when Austria annexed Bosnia - Herzegovina. Germany supported Austria in this. Serbia recognized this annexation in 1909 as if to maintain good relations with Austria but Serbia nationalist organizations were fast coming up in support of Serbia's expansion with Bosnia. Russia was supporting the Slavs in the Balkan region who were clamoring for independence from either Austria or the Turkish Empire. Russia's diplomatic isolation in the 1890s as a result of the Dual Alliance and subsequently her humiliating defeat in the Russo-Jap War made her more vulnerable. She had finalized a treaty with France in 1894. She also wanted to settle differences with Britain which in turn was getting disturbed by the growing naval power of Germany. All this led to the signing of the Triple Entente between Britain, France and Russia. Afghanistan was now conceded by Russia as a British sphere of influence as was a part of Persia. Although the entente was not a military alliance, nor was it targeted against Germany, yet it led to rival alliances being formed by Germany and Austria - Hungary. This gives us an idea about how the alliance system solidified on the eve of the World War. In 1899 at The Hague, peace conferences were held - war seemed a distinct possibility in early 1900s and a vast network of military alliances was in the process of being finalized.

From 1908-09, the Bosnian Crisis was exacerbated because Serbia, much to the annoyance of Austria, continued to push for Bosnian independence. Germany was

behind Austria and this aggravated the situation. Europe got divided into rival military camps and disputes tuned in to what Hobsbawm calls 'unmanageable confrontations' - beyond the control of respective national governments. In 1882, when Germany, Austria and Italy had signed the Triple Alliance, it was already a significant step towards solidification of rivalries, though Italy in 1915 went over to the anti-German camp. The Triple Entente firmed up the anti-German bloc.

The international power game in these years was marked by an extremely important development - namely, the widening of political interests outside one's own immediate regions. The world was now a stage where power games were played. For instance, naval power by the beginning of the 20th century was no longer the prerogative of Britain. By 1897, Germany had built a large fleet. Also, Britain was no longer the sole economic power around which the world economy revolved. A worldwide industrial capitalism had emerged and there was growing competition for control of the world market and control of different regions. Diplomatic rivalry led to the formation of blocs and when the Franco - German clash over Morocco erupted into the Agadir crisis (when Germany sent a gunboat to seize the south Moroccan port of Agadir) and Austria annexed Bosnia followed by Italy's occupation of Libya in 1911 and with Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece pushing Turkey out of the Balkans by 1912, these multiple crises culminated in the crisis of 1914.

On 28th June 1914, a Serbian student terrorist Gavrilo Princip assassinated the Austrian heir to the throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand who was visiting Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. Within five weeks, Europe was plunged into a World War. A freshly energized wave of patriotism swept over nations in Europe the moment the war began. Liberal, labour and socialist opposition to the War notwithstanding, the number of volunteers went up phenomenally by the next few weeks. Nationalism came to the forefront as the overwhelming ideology of this era driving men & women to sacrifice for their country.

Nations were at war with each other, putting behind them the tranquil years of the 19th century liberal utopia and the bourgeois sense of security. Now crisis would be followed by crisis, revolutions would dramatically change the social hierarchies never to be reversed again and the existing moralities would be severely challenged. Bourgeois liberalism would itself undergo drastic changes and the ideology of nation and nationalism, a product of 19th century Europe, would henceforth extend to multiple political groups. States after the First World War, given the status of nations, would no longer be confined to the old, 'developed' world.

20.7 NATION-STATE SYSTEM AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

After the defeat of Germany and her allies in 1918, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States succeeded in having a charter for a League of Nations incorporated in the Treaty of Versailles - the peace treaty with Germany. The covenant of the League of Nations which formed Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, was signed on June 28, 1919 and came into effect on January 10, 1920.

On 14th Feb 1919, President Wilson had already presented to the Paris Peace Conference, a plan for a League of Nations, declaring it as a guarantee of peace against aggression. The armistice had commenced on Nov 11, 1918 but the peace conference of the victors began in Jan 1919. England, France, the U.S, Italy and Japan constituted themselves into a Council and the League was incorporated into the Treaty. Wilson became Chairman of the League Commission. Members comprised the victorious powers and on vote of 2/3rd of the Assembly, any self-governing state, dominion or

colony, could be a member. Article X of the Covenant read ‘The members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity of all members. In case of any such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation should be fulfilled.’

The articles’ meaning was uncertain and its implementation might be slow. The Treaty including the League Covenant was however not ratified by the American Senate. Without the U.S., the League could not pursue collective security as originally conceived.

However, the ‘general association of nations’ that President Wilson had called for in the last of his Fourteen Points - meant that henceforth diplomacy would proceed more or less under the dictum laid down in the first of these Fourteen Points that is ‘frankly and in public view’. In the League therefore, open diplomacy came into widespread use. Wilson had set certain utopian standards of cooperation and the pre-existence of common interests among nations. But this was not always practically possible. However, without expecting the League to have been instrumental in altering the fundamental behaviour of individual nations between 1919 & 1939, it is significant to remember that the League was more the creature of its members rather than a higher body imposing codes of behavior.

If the main function of the League was to prevent war, it failed to do so. The respect due to international law and to territorial status established by the allied powers could be open to confusion and the League ultimately proved a weak and ineffective organization. Ten years later, the Kellogg - Briand peace pact signed at the instigation of the U.S proclaimed the illegality of war as a political instrument. Bringing about imposing changes by peaceful methods was beyond any International organization in this period. When Japan encroached into Manchuria and was condemned by the League, she left the organization. Germany left the League when there were differences in matters of disarmament. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia was another instance when the League was unable to use effective sanctions. The more powerful member nations were generally unwilling to use force to settle acts of aggression by other states. International law seemed ineffectual in many situations. Emotions and desires were overwhelmingly forceful energies which made most efforts to maintain peace between nations unsuccessful in the long run.

20.8 SUMMARY

This unit is an exploration of the ways in which nation-state system came to the centre stage in international relations. From a stage where international relations meant courtly exchange and recurrent warfare between various ruling armies, nation-state system defined the modern world with a new definition of international relations. Coming of Germany and Italy as new kinds of nations in the eighteenth century, the subsequent treaties between various nations, a new economic configuration due to large scale industrialization and subsequent colonization of the world led to various diplomatic exchanges which set the scene for the twentieth centuries international politics.

20.9 EXERCISES

- 1) What was the role of nationalism in defining the modern international relations?
- 2) How did the German and Italian unification lead to new diplomatic maneuvers which re-defined the role of nation-states in international relations?
- 3) What was the ideological and economic impetus behind the emergence of modern international relations?

UNIT 21 INTERNATIONAL RIVALRIES OF TWENTIETH CENTURY

Structure

- 21.1 Introduction
- 21.2 The Great War of 1914-1918 and Consequences of the Peace
- 21.3 The Rise of Extremism and Causes of the Second World War (1939-1945)
- 21.4 The Cold War
- 21.5 The Nuclear Arms Race and Efforts to Control Proliferation
- 21.6 Decolonization and Non-aligned Movement
- 21.7 The End of the 20th Century and Issues in International Relations Theory
- 21.8 Summary
- 21.9 Glossary
- 21.10 Exercises

Annexure: A Chronology of the International Events of Twentieth Century

21.1 INTRODUCTION

You must be familiar with the main features of the modern world, including the formation of nation states, the expansion of Europe, technological changes, and the incorporation of the whole world into one international system. Technological change and economic integration were greatly accelerated during and after the global conflicts marking the 20th century, leading to ‘globalization’ and conditions for new challenges, opportunities, and rivalries in the 21st Century. In this Unit we discuss:

- causes and results of the first and second World Wars,
- the course of the Cold War and the global roles played by the ‘super powers’, the United States of America (US) and the Soviet Union (USSR),
- the Non Aligned Movement, and
- the chief characteristics of the twentieth century

The 20th century was termed the “age of extremes” by historian Eric Hobsbawm because it saw unprecedented death and destruction during two world wars and other conflicts, more than one genocide, bitter ideological and religious clashes, indiscriminate violence, destruction of the natural environment, and threats or uses of weapons of mass destruction. Yet, during the same century there was spectacular scientific advance, economic growth, and widening humanitarian concern. The 20th Century is also called the “short century” (1914-1991) to highlight the impact of the Great War, the Russian Revolution and the collapse of the Soviet Union on the whole world. Many also refer to the 20th Century as the “American Century” because the US soon became the most productive and largest single economy in the world, possessing unprecedented military power and technological ascendancy, along with a moral conviction of the superiority of its own socio-economic-political-value system over those of others, and showing at times the willingness to play an active, at times hegemonic and unilateral role in the Western hemisphere and the rest of the world.

Rivalries between the traditional 'Great Powers' of Europe brought about the catastrophes of the first and second world wars, but the second half of the 20th Century was dominated by a multifaceted rivalry known as the Cold War between the Western or capitalist 'bloc' and the Eastern or communist 'bloc', in which enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons were amassed by both the US and the USSR as 'deterrence' against open military conflict between them. Other international rivalries in various regions of the world such as South Asia and West Asia, and international tensions within many newly independent, ethnically plural, and economically underdeveloped countries, sometimes dovetailed with the Cold War, but did not necessarily end with it, so that several unresolved conflicts continued into a new century.

The 20th century was marked in every part of the world, if to varying degree, by dramatic changes in demography, technology, means of production, political participation and social mores. For example, total population is estimated to have reached one billion in the 1850s, two billion in the 1920s, four billion in the 1970s, and crossed six billion in 1999, with consequent pressure on all resources. In 1901 several empires ruled Europe east of the Rhine river as well as most of Africa and Asia; only about 40 states (mainly in Europe and the Americas) were recognized as sovereign. The empires vanished after the first and second world wars, and by 1999 there were 189 states (of greatly different size and power) around the world whose membership in the United Nations Organisation testified to their independent status. Moreover, while the process of building international institutions had begun in late 19th Century Europe, by the end of the 20th Century there were literally thousands of international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, functioning in cultural, economic, humanitarian, legal and political domains. States remained the basic unit of international relations, but their sovereign control over populations and resources was eroded by the forces of economic globalization, political internationalism, sub-state conflicts, and non-state actors such as transnational corporations as well as criminal and terrorist organizations. The first wireless message was sent in January 1903 and the first successful flight took place in December 1903; by 1999 transmission of words and pictures without wires choked the airwaves, approximately six million people were travelling by air per day, and space travel was no longer confined to science fiction. Advances in the technologies of biomedicine, communications, information sharing and weaponry have been revolutionary and defy brief comment. In 1901 relatively few people were permitted to vote anywhere, and women practically nowhere; by 1999 virtually every country had adult franchise, if not genuinely democratic government, and all aspired to, though few achieved, an equitable share in global wealth.

All of these changes influenced international rivalries either directly, for example by altering the calculus of national power from quantity to quality, or indirectly, for example by exacerbating the gulf between those who gained and those who lost from change. It is not easy, therefore, to generalize, and analysts adopt various theoretical approaches in order to discern pattern in international relations. The traditional historical approach providing a reasoned description of events on the basis of written records is therefore used in this Unit. But we must not ignore different scientific approaches stressing the importance of domestic and international environmental factors, perceptions, personalities, and policy-making processes in world politics. Nor can we focus entirely on international conflict and ignore the construction of an impressive body of literature, law and organization. Faced with a super-abundance of facts about change and contrast, some might see the 20th century as a time of transition between the eurocentric civilisation of the modern era to an as yet unpredictable post-modern.



Europe on the Eve of First World War, 1914

21.2 THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-1918 AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE PEACE

The first decade of the 20th Century saw much talk of war between the 'great powers' of Europe and a recurrence of crises reflecting their insecurities and unsatisfied ambitions. That decade also showed that chief decision makers of the time lacked the skill and the will to sustain the subtle diplomatic practices that had supported peace in Europe for several decades previously despite conflictual colonial ventures. Most importantly, a 'balance of power' system of shifting affiliations, five roughly equal and regularly consulting powers on the continent with Great Britain enjoying maritime supremacy, avoiding commitment, and playing 'balancer', had given way to a bipolar configuration. On one side stood a united Germany, already the most powerful land power militarily and economically, allied with the large and outwardly confident empire of Austria-Hungary as also with Italy. On the other side stood France, bitter in enmity over its defeat and loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany in 1871, seeking security by allying with Russia in 1892 and forming an 'entente cordiale' with its traditional rival Great Britain in 1904. Both sides amassed armaments, which were becoming more lethal as advancing technologies of explosives, metal design, petroleum fuel, and shipbuilding were applied to them. Military chiefs (notably Alfred von Schlieffen of Germany) planned strategies that relied on swift mobilization, rapid offensive strike, and inevitable escalation, which compressed the time for political decision making and diplomatic control of crises. Newspapers stimulated feelings of danger, deprivation, and patriotism in public opinion, which came to think of war as possible, even desirable.

Crisis was inherent in the many disputes, rivalries and insecurities infesting Europe. Briefly, Austria-Hungary was fearful of Russia to its east, especially as restive Slav minorities in its provinces looked to Russia for support in carving out autonomy or even statehood for themselves. Austria was also irked by Serbia to the south, reading insolence into its leadership of Slav unification and drive toward an outlet to the Adriatic Sea. Germany had territorial ambitions beyond its eastern frontier in areas controlled by Russia. Also, Germany was jealous of British navel supremacy and colonial possessions and aspired to parity, supremacy, and equal status in world affairs. Germany feared encirclement by Russia and France and so clung to Austria-Hungary and suggested partnership to Great Britain. But suspicion rather than partnership characterized Anglo-German relations, even though their kings were cousins. Traditional British fears of Russian expansion, growing influence in the Ottoman Empire, and engineering skills manifested in widening the Kiel Canal connecting the Baltic and North Seas, building new battleships, and constructing the Berlin-Baghdad Railway. Russia too had ambitions that augured conflict with both the Ottoman and the Austria-Hungary Empires, and a huge, if cumbersome, military machine. Russia was disquieted by Japan's rising power to its east but aimed for gains in Europe, backing Serbia in the Balkans, even as Germany urged on Austria to chastize Serbia.

Military and naval expansion, mobilization plans, and a tightening of the hostile coalitions built a momentum for war over-riding arguments for peace emanating from trade, industry and good sense. International crises erupted over Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, Morocco in 1911, and the Balkans in 1912, but were defused by negotiation and restraint. These qualities were not conspicuous after the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serb terrorist in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. Austria delivered an ultimatum of 15 far reaching demands to Serbia on July 23, demanding a response in 48 hours. Serbia sent a conciliatory reply but also mobilized, as did Russia, and then France. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28. The British government toyed with the idea of neutrality but when Germany sent its armies across Belgium to attack France, Great

Britain was obliged by its earlier guarantee of Belgian neutrality to summon its fleet to action and declare war on Germany on 4 August 1914.

Though some European states remained outside the initial circle of conflict, the guns of August ultimately sounded far and wide. Five empires were engaged and colonial troops were brought into the fray as one entire generation of European young men massacred each other to a stalemate. The jubilation with which troops and publics had greeted war declarations in expectations of early victory was soon buried in mud, disease, poison gas, rockets, submarine warfare, and battles over a few hundred yards that proved insanelly costly in human lives. More than nine million men in the armed forces were killed along with five to six million civilians. The anti-war poetry and prose of that catastrophe still lives. The 'Great War', as it was known before the Second World War made this the First, carried on for more than four years, with neither side on any front willing to accept defeat or negotiate peace. The Russian Revolution of 1917 brought a cease-fire on the eastern front in December with Russia losing substantial territory and monies to Germany in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The US declared war on Germany only on April 6, 1917 but the entry of American troops, aero planes and fresh supplies in 1918 nullified German gains on both fronts. An armistice was declared on November 11, 1918 and a peace conference opened in Paris on 18 January 1919.

US President Woodrow Wilson was a dominating figure of the peace conference so that his moralistic 'fourteen points' were incorporated into the resulting treaties, which transformed the map of Europe on the principle of 'self-determination of nations', and established a League of Nations to uphold the peace on the principle of 'collective security'. The far reaching consequences of the peace, therefore, were territorial, economic, and political. A 200 page Treaty of Versailles signed with Germany contained a 'war guilt' clause ascribing full responsibility for the war to Germany. Germany was punished territorially and financially. Alsace-Lorraine was restored to France. The port of Danzig was made a free city and a Polish Corridor ran through the eastern provinces of Germany. Rearmament of any kind was forbidden, as was fortification of the Rhineland or union with Austria. Colonial possessions were detached and unspecified amounts demanded in reparations. The Habsburg Dynasty was dismissed and its Austria-Hungary Empire dismantled. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland became independent. Austria ceded South Tyrol, Istria, the Dalmatian coast and some Adriatic Islands to Italy, and its southern Slav provinces of Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina to Yugoslavia. Other territorial transfers took from Bulgaria and added to Romania. The Ottoman Empire too was abolished with the Treaty of Sevres, 1920; Turkey became a republic, its Arab provinces were placed under British or French mandate. British and French colonial possessions remained intact and were augmented by mandated territories, nationalist unrest grew therein, spurred in part by evaporation of the European myth of civilizational superiority.

Territorial changes failed to solve the basic problems of insecurity in Europe, dividing the continent into 'satisfied' but weakened powers such as Britain, and dissatisfied or revisionist states, including Germany and Russia, now the Soviet Union. Moreover, the principle of 'self-determination' was difficult to implement and sowed the seeds of continuous disputes over borders and treatment of minorities in eastern and central Europe. These small new states were equally fearful of Germany to their west and Russia to their east and relied on France, itself vengeful on Germany but too weak to act without Anglo-American support, which was not forthcoming. The League of Nations proved unequal to the task of maintaining peace, not least because the US repudiated Wilson in 1920, withdrew into isolation, and played no part in the League. Neither Germany nor the Soviet Union was initially a member. Resolutions, treaties, plebiscites, and declarations outlawing war – such as in the short lived Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 – or embracing disarmament – as



attempted in Disarmament Conferences held in 1922, 1925, 1933 – did not amount to institutional strength since they lacked the backing of power and commitment. Moreover, the League’s principle of collective security mistakenly assumed that all powers would have the same perceptions of aggression and be equally willing to bear the costs of opposing a great, or even a minor, power. Thus, the League could take no effective action against Japan in 1931, Italy in 1935, or Nazi Germany in successive violations of the Treaty.

The economic consequences of the peace compounded the high cost of the war to cause inflation and unemployment, undermine currencies, and disrupt trading patterns, leading to the Great Depression of the 1930s. At the core of a complex process lay the problem of reparations claimed by the victorious allies from Germany and the related problem of allied war debts to the US. Neither the amounts nor the distribution of reparations were fixed by treaty, and uncertainty fostered exaggerated expectations of Germany's capacity to pay, varying pressure on it to do so with discernible differences between Britain and France, and a growing resistance to pay on the part of Germany, which borrowed heavily from the US. Since payments could be made only in goods, services, or gold, transfers of the large amounts involved served ironically to strengthen Germany's productive capacity, to undercut employment and domestic prices – especially of agricultural produce – in creditor countries, to contract world markets, and to destabilize all currencies and exchange rates. A bubble of false prosperity burst in the US with the Wall Street crash of October 1929. Austrian banks collapsed in May 1931. Britain was forced to abandon the gold standard for the pound sterling in September. A World Economic Conference held in 1933 failed to stabilize the situation and acute hardship was experienced in China, Japan, and throughout Europe, inevitably weakening liberal political institutions everywhere. The revival of economic nationalism and the abandonment of blocs based on gold, sterling, the dollar, the mark and the yen followed.

By the 1930s it was evident that the main political expectations of the peace had been belied. A world-wide system envisaged in the League of Nations had *not* replaced the European power system in international relations. The dominance of the great powers had *not* given place to a democratic international system with greater participation by smaller states, which continued to feel insecure. Local or regional alliances had *not* been superseded by general and automatic cooperation in service of collective security. Notwithstanding declarations of intent, the world had *not* been made safe for democracy, war had *not* been outlawed, and several disarmament conferences had *not* achieved their objectives. The peace settlements ending the First World War ushered in what came to be called the 'twenty year crisis' leading to the Second World War.

21.3 THE RISE OF EXTREMISM AND CAUSES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1939-1945)

Russia was the first great power to collapse under the strain of the Great War, which demoralized its peasant army and hastened the disintegration of the Tsarist regime. From the beginning of 1917 Russia experienced a tremendous domestic political and socio-economic upheaval with several factions struggling to gain exclusive power. In October-November 1917 the Bolsheviks led by Vladimir Lenin replaced a coalition of socialists in the Kremlin and immediately sued for peace with Germany. The Bolshevik Revolution affected every aspect of Russian life and also had profound effects on the rest of the world, most immediately in Europe and on international relations. The western allies pressured Russia to remain in the war and assisted 'White' Russians opposed to the Bolshevik in southern, northern and Siberian provinces while civil war raged until 1920, without success. On the other hand, Lenin's expectations of an early communist revolution in Germany were not fulfilled, though there was a rash of radical socialist uprisings in many parts of Central Europe in 1919.

Avowed Bolshevik aims of fostering world revolution aroused acute anxiety in all capitalist societies that lasted over the next seven decades. The ideology of revolution and its accompanying propaganda of workers rights across national borders became an instrument of the Communist Third International, which replaced the Second International in 1920, as well as that of the Soviet Union. At the same time, Lenin wanted Russia to

have normal relations – including credits and trade – with the western powers, which did not then recognize the Soviet Government, and to regain its place in world councils, from which it was presently excluded. Announcement of a New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921 enabled a commercial agreement with Britain but *de jure* recognition was not forthcoming from Britain, France or Italy until 1924 and from the US only in 1933. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union and Germany found themselves similarly ostracized by the Peace Treaties, and burdened with reparations or debts; the two countries signed the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922 resuming diplomatic relations, cancelling financial claims on each other, and providing most favoured nation treatment for trade, but including no defence provisions. Soviet diplomacy in Europe, Asia and toward colonial dependencies was based on the self-interest of the Soviet state as well as the ideology of communist revolution and did not mesh with established Western practices of the time. Moreover, Stalin's assumption of power in 1928 and the means he adopted to ensure his supremacy and implement his policies of economic transformation in the 1930s – such as the forced collectivization of agriculture and purges of the Communist Party – were extreme by any definition, and made the Soviet synonymous with 'totalitarianism' in the western lexicon.

Totalitarianism was not confined to the Soviet Union and surfaced to varying degrees in the 1920s and 1930s in Italy, Japan, Spain, and most completely in Germany. Considerable scholarship has been devoted to exploring the roots of totalitarianism, which eradicates individual liberty in the name of the state, but for purposes of this Unit it is sufficient to mention the following five: modern instruments of mass communication and mobilization; populist nationalism; widespread unemployment and economic distress that is not ameliorated by liberal institutions; exaggerated fears of enemies, both external and internal, and 'encirclement'; the emergence of a hero figure or 'leader' demanding total power and commanding total obedience.

Benito Mussolini established a Fascist regime in Italy in October 1921 when dissatisfaction with parliamentary democracy was high, and the peace settlement was unpopular for having brought only limited gains. Italy's territorial ambitions in southeastern Europe were opposed by France, an uncompromising upholder of the Treaty settlement, and Italy's bid to augment its north African colonies by occupying Ethiopia in 1935 antagonized Britain as well as creating a crisis in the League of Nations, which was unwilling to enforce meaningful sanctions against Italy under Article 16. Mussolini had come to admire the more efficient Adolf Hitler and signed a pact with him to create a 'Berlin-Rome Axis' in 1936. Their first collaboration was to assist militarily General Francisco Franco in overthrowing a newly formed and fragile Republic in Spain governed by a left-oriented coalition called the Popular Front.

Japan's modernization drive since the late 19th century led it to graft what it considered the best of America, Britain, and Germany on to its own homogenous and disciplined society, to alliance with Britain in 1902, a victory against Russia in 1904, the annexation of Korea in 1910, and a self-image of being the leader of Asia. Though it received the Shantung province of China (formerly controlled by Germany) in 1919, Japan's other '21 demands' were not met at Versailles. Japanese officials felt that they did not receive equal treatment in the Naval Disarmament Conferences of 1922 and 1927, or in the Council of the League of Nations. Japan's assertiveness was externally expressed in expanding its commercial and industrial reach into Western markets, the Manchurian province of northern China, through Southeast Asia, and into the western Pacific basin where it rivalled the US. Internally, Japan's civilian and parliamentary government came under increasing strain, especially as economic depression deepened, and soon passed under the control of a militaristic clique of army and naval officers. Though Japan's depredations in China aroused verbal protests from other powers, neither the US nor the Soviet Union were members of the League, which published a condemnatory report, and

Britain was unable to act alone. Japan announced its withdrawal from the League in 1933 and joined an Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany and Italy in November 1937.

Germany was penalized by the 1919 peace treaties but not destroyed; it remained potentially the strongest power in Europe. Germany harboured many grievances that some people in Britain and the US considered legitimate and was the leading proponent of 'revisionism' even while it strove in the 1920s toward acceptability in world councils and democracy at home under the Weimar Constitution. That constitution could not withstand the strain of coping with economic depression. The Nazi Party had eliminated all opposition, especially of the Communists and the Socialists. We need not elaborate here the reasons and methods by which the Nazis established control over a people considered to be cultured and advanced, though many scholars have done so, but emphasize the fact that Hitler led a 'resurgence' of Germany on an explicit ideology of 'Aryan' racial purity, virtue and superiority, reunification by 'self-determination' of the German race, *lebensraum* or 'living space' for them, and cancellation of the 1919 peace treaties. Further, other countries, large and small, even while making paper pacts to safeguard their own security, were so frightened of Soviet Bolshevism that they long turned a blind eye to the internal brutalities of the Nazi regime, such as the genocide of Jews and Gypsies, and 'appeased' rather than opposed German transgressions of the peace settlement.

Germany abrogated the disarmament clauses of the Treaty in December 1933 and proceeded to build an army, air force and navy machine oriented to the future that virtually overran Europe in 1940-41. Germany recovered the Saar region by plebiscite in January 1935, overturned the free city status of Danzig between 1934 and 1936, and remilitarized the Rhineland in March 1936. Hitler's timing and estimate of feeble resistance in each case proved more accurate than that of his more cautious advisers. Hitler also brought about an *Anschluss* (Union) with Austria – where a Nazi party had gained strength since 1934 – in March 1938 and then made a bid for Czechoslovakia, first launching a propaganda barrage about ill-treatment of the German minority in the Sudeten province. France was committed by alliance to the security and integrity of Czechoslovakia but would not act without British support. The British Government of Neville Chamberlain did not feel justified in risking armed conflict with Germany on the issue of what he called a 'distant' province. Months of negotiation and increasing tension culminated in a four power conference of Britain, France, Germany and Italy in Munich on 29 September 1938 renouncing war and permitting German military occupation of most of Czechoslovakia. Less than one year later, having first protected his eastern front through a pact with the Soviet Union on 23 August 1939, Hitler ordered the invasion of Poland and declared war on Germany.

The Second World War was a 'total' war, unprecedented in its destruction of military and non-military assets and people, and truly world-wide in its scope. Its outbreak in Europe in September 1939 was preceded in August 1937 by the Sino-Japanese War and succeeded in December 1941 by the entry of the US against both Japan and Germany. The war in Europe ended with Germany's surrender on 10 May 1945 and in Asia with Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945. The causes of this war have been expounded and explored repeatedly by different people, and at different times, with varying and often disputed interpretations of specific events and the actual intentions of key players. Nevertheless, some generalizations can be drawn from the huge body of archival and documentary material available on the subject. Most importantly, the peace treaties of 1919, coupled with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and a fundamentally weak League of Nations, did not resolve the basic problems of security in Europe. Deep seated ambitions, fears, insecurities, and mistrust there were bound to clash politically and militarily in the absence of habits, institutions, and mechanisms to facilitate the peaceful resolution

of conflict. Nor did the then existing international system make provision for the rising power of Japan, which eventually brought the US into the war.

Beyond the underlying systemic weakness, specific causes are stressed differently by different people and include both design and blunder on the part of decision-makers. Main interpretations are as follows : Nazi Germany in general and Adolf Hitler in particular was primarily responsible for the war and deliberately prepared for it, whether or not he intended the exact timing of its outbreak or expected its ultimate scope. Britain and France were equally responsible for the war because their leaders had appeased Hitler's ambitious demands instead of checking them, had neglected to build an anti-fascist alliance, and had encouraged an eastward expansion of Germany so as to draw the Soviet Union into war. The US was at fault for not participating in the League, for being isolationist and ambivalent about Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, and then for encouraging Britain, France and Poland to resist without clearly warning Hitler. Poland was at fault for not forming a common front with the Soviet Union and then for not submitting 'peacefully' to German demands. Mussolini was blamed for support and encouragement of Hitler, before joining the Western allies in 1943. The Soviet Union was responsible for propagating the idea of an 'inevitable' conflict between communism and capitalism/fascism, but most of all for entering into a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany in August 1939 and so giving it a 'green light' for attack on Poland while simultaneously annexing several territories itself. This temporary alliance was reversed when Hitler ordered an invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 and his armies advanced toward Moscow and other cities before being halted at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942-43. In East Asia and the Pacific militarist Japan took on an aggressive role with all its neighbours to build an Economic Co-Prosperity Zone, antagonizing the US, another Pacific Ocean power that tried to deny Japan access to oil and other raw materials. When Japan destroyed part of the US fleet anchored at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii on 6 December 1941, and Hitler declared war on the US on 11 December 1941, the US entered a new global war against both Japan and Germany, which ended only with their 'unconditional surrender' in 1945.

21.4 THE COLD WAR

Within two years of the end of the Second World War the chief victors had fallen out with each other, the Soviet Union was ranged against Britain and the US in an armed truce, and the division of Europe into two antagonistic spheres became evident. That divisive rivalry soon extended over the rest of the world, despite efforts made by some newly independent countries, such as India, to remain unentangled in it and form 'nonaligned' movements of their own. The Cold War defined all international relations until its sudden end in 1989-91, brought about by the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the USSR. Considerable research into the origins and course of the Cold War continues to be conducted – facilitated by declassification and availability to scholars of relevant governmental archives in the protagonist countries – and some general approaches are common in the literature along with differences on details and attributions of blame.

The Cold War differed from the First and Second World Wars because ideological conflict between the US and USSR, between capitalism and communism, infused and sharpened all other sources of their rivalry, even when ideological motivations were missing from their policies or practices. From this point of view the origins of the Cold War lay in the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the image of communism as a militant faith determined to produce world revolution and liquidate non-believers through a combination of internal subversion and external pressure that was held by many American policy-makers from the 1920s onwards. US policies of 'containment' as well as President Reagan's depiction of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" in the 1980s grew out of that mindset. For their part, Soviet and Chinese Communist leaders depicted 'bourgeois capitalism' in equally

extreme and condemnatory terms as oppressive, imperialist, bent on encircling and destroying 'progressive forces', but ultimately doomed to be buried under Socialism. Thus, two universalistic but contradictory blue prints on how to organize domestic and international order were in opposition throughout the Cold War, partially modified by Soviet and Chinese offers of 'peaceful coexistence' made in the mid-1950s, efforts toward détente made in the 1960s and 1970s, and the US-China rapprochement in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Cold War also originated in and reflected conflicts of tangible interest between the two major victors of the Second World War, the US and the USSR. Conferences between their leaders, and including British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, were held in Teheran (November 1943), Yalta (February 1945) and Potsdam (July 1945) to set out post-war territorial and international arrangements. The supreme power of the US in 1945 was evident in its economy that accounted for about 50 per cent of total world GNP, its superiority, and its technical prowess seen in the detonation of two atomic bombs over Japan to end war in the Pacific. The USSR had lost 20 million men in war casualties and approximately the same number in related events and suffered the devastation of industry and about one third of its territory, but its armies controlled eastern and central Europe into the centre of Germany as well as the Balkans and its prestige overall was very high. Stalin insisted that Soviet security demanded a zone of friendly, communist dominated, states along its perimeter, and seemed to have won US President F.D. Roosevelt's agreement to this at Yalta. But Allied understanding broke down between American insistence on applying the principles of 'free elections' and 'free markets' throughout post-war Europe and Soviet methods of achieving complete control successively in the Baltic states, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania.

Defeated Germany was divided into four occupation zones, as was its capital Berlin situated within the Soviet zone. The occupying powers differed on many subjects including de-Nazification, reparations, the German-Polish border, currency and economic policies, and transit rights. The American, British and French zones were soon fused and when the Soviet Union made an attempt to cut western road access to Berlin, the city was kept supplied by a year long Anglo-American air-lift in 1948-49. No written agreement resulted so that a similar crisis over Berlin continued during the existence of two German states until 1990 : the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the west and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the east. The 'German problem' lay at the heart of the Cold War, with no unanimity of opinion anywhere on key questions of reunification, neutralization, rearmament; events provided their own answers over the years. Mutually reinforcing fear and suspicion could be seen on the one hand, in Soviet convictions that the US intended to renege on promises made at Yalta and use a rearmed Germany against the USSR, and on the other hand, in American convictions that the Soviet Union intended to control all of Germany and advance into as much of Europe and the rest of the world as possible. To forestall such an eventuality through a policy of 'containment' of communism became the prime foreign policy objective of the US.

The US took several far-reaching measures in pursuit of this objective. In March 1947 President Truman announced a 'doctrine' for opposing communism. All Latin American countries committed themselves to joint defense against internal and external communist subversion in the Rio treaty signed with the US in 1947. In June 1947 Secretary of State John Marshall launched a plan of massive economic grants (\$17 billion between 1948 and 1952) to 16 non-communist European countries conditional on their removing barriers to economic integration. The formation of a six-member European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 led, through successive difficult steps, to one of the most remarkable achievements of the 20th century, namely, the creation of an European Union (EU) in 1992. This body adopted a common currency in 1999 and aspired to common foreign



and security policy. Long before that, however, a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was formed in April 1949 under US leadership and including Canada to provide defence and security for the West. Turkey joined in 1952 and the FRG was included in 1955 at the same time as the central and eastern European countries were brought together in the Warsaw Pact time under leadership of the Soviet Union. Confrontation between these two military alliances armed with increasingly sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons was the central feature of the Cold War. Though both sides probably overestimated the aggressive intentions of the other, fear of their capabilities spurred an arms race and sharpened the sense of danger of imminent nuclear conflict over several decades, especially at times of crisis such as over Berlin in 1948 and 1961, the Hungarian nationalist uprising of 1956, the Taiwan Straits in 1958, or the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962. Gradually, however, nuclear weapons came to be seen as non-usable and the territorial status quo in Europe was accepted by both sides, even when challenged by internal events such as the 'Prague Spring' of 1968. A European détente was initiated and in 1975 all the European states along with Canada, the US, and the USSR came together in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) affirming the status quo as well as the need to protect human rights.

The Cold War came to Asia first when the proclamation of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in October 1949 was interpreted as a grievous ‘loss’ in the US, (sole occupying power in Japan and chief supporter of a Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan). The Chinese leader Mao Zedong saw the US as his chief adversary and decided to “lean to one side” in alliance with Stalin’s USSR. In June 1950 the partitioned peninsular nation of Korea erupted in war and the US led United Nations forces against communist North Korea forces assisted by PRC ‘volunteers’. The Korean War ended in a stalemate and an armed armistice in 1953 that created a demilitarized zone along the 38th parallel. Communist North Korea, in alliance with neighbouring PRC, seemed to freeze in time even as substantial US forces were stationed in South Korea and remain there to the present time. The Eisenhower Administration in the US deployed its Seventh Fleet to neutralize the Taiwan Straits and prevent open conflict between the PRC and ROC. The US also announced a doctrine of ‘massive retaliation’ – that is, possible use of nuclear weapons – to deter communist expansion, supported the French in Vietnam against nationalist forces led by communist leader Ho Chi Minh, and erected two multiparty alliances to confine the Sino-Soviet bloc within continental Eurasia. A defence pact setting up the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) was signed on 8 September 1954 by the US, Australia, Britain, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. The following year the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) was established by the US with Britain, Iran, Iraq (withdrew in 1958), Pakistan and Turkey to knit together countries on the vulnerable southern border of the USSR. The Soviet Union and PRC did not attempt to replicate the Warsaw Pact in Asia but each stepped across the Western line of containment by conducting an active diplomacy of political support, trade, economic assistance, and arms supplies with various neighbouring and/or nonaligned states such as Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and North Vietnam. There was no simple dichotomy in Asia, however, and the picture was greatly complicated by regional rivalries as well as the rift between China and the Soviet Union that became public knowledge in the early 1960s and nearly erupted in war in 1969.

The most dangerous crisis of the Cold War took place in October 1962 over the issue of Soviet missiles placed in the Caribbean island of Cuba. There a popular revolution led by Fidel Castro had displaced the military regime of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959 and US backed attempts by Cuban emigres to overthrow Castro had failed. The Soviet post-Stalin leader Nikita Khrushchev decided to protect Cuba against American invasion by positioning nuclear missiles in Cuba. The US President John F. Kennedy reacted in anger to their discovery by a reconnaissance aircraft on 10 October 1962, demanding removal of the missile bases and ordering a naval blockade of Cuba on 18 October. No other episode of the Cold War has received such microscopic scrutiny from historians and re-enactments by prominent participants of the time, partly because every facet of American-Soviet competition intersected in it: conflicting ideologies, the nuclear arms race, relations with allies and newly independent states, domestic political linkages with foreign policy, public and private diplomacy exemplified in United Nations leaders, neither of whom could afford to publically step down. By mid-November the crisis was over. Soviet missiles were withdrawn from Cuba and some months later American Jupiter missiles were withdrawn from Turkey; Castro remained in power and threats of open invasion were ruled out; Kennedy won a victory with dignity and without war; the Soviet Union was not humiliated. Most importantly, both sides were shocked by realisation of their own vulnerability and moved towards avoiding direct confrontation in areas of peripheral interest and framing rules for conducting the nuclear arms race such as the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty of 1972.

If the two major antagonists in the Cold War avoided direct confrontation after 1962 they did not eschew participation in regional conflicts by providing materials, training and sometimes active military assistance to their respective favourites or ‘clients’. For example,



American involvement in the Vietnam War began in support of an anti-Communist but weak South Vietnam facing insurgency backed by communist North Vietnam in the early 1960s. A central security premise of US policy in Asia at the time was the subsequently ridiculed 'domino theory' that the toppling of one non-communist government inevitably would lead to successive falls and expanding communism. A major US bombing campaign from the air in the mid and late 1960s was accompanied

by the introduction of larger and larger number of American combat troops on the ground, where they were bogged down in a quagmire of guerilla warfare, and an enlargement of the war zone into Cambodia and Laos. Vocal opposition to the Vietnam War within the US and its allies, as well as strategic considerations about détente with the Soviet Union, led US President Nixon to make a dramatic rapprochement with China in 1971-72 and extract American troops from Vietnam in 1973. Not surprisingly, a reunification of Vietnam by the communist North followed soon after in 1975. The US underwent considerable self-questioning and loss of confidence in the mid-1970s and earlier bipartisan consensus on national security policies was fractured.

By a coincidence of time, perhaps, the Soviet Union enjoyed a period of stability and self-confidence under the leadership of Leonid Brezhnev in the 1970s and appeared to expand its political and military influence in South and Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, West Asia, Africa and even Latin America. Without direct Soviet participation too, events in what had come to be called the Third World, such as the assertiveness of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973 and after, the growth of the Non Aligned Movement, conflict within the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, and the Islamic Revolution in Iran of 1979, militated against Western interests. The Soviet Union used the 'Brezhnev Doctrine' to justify military intervention to protect a communist (or leftist) government outside its own borders – as in Czechoslovakia in 1979. American reactions, and the election of Republican Ronald Reagan as president in 1980, ushered in a 'New Cold War' of proxy conflict fought by government forces and Islamicist Mujahedin in Afghanistan, in Nicaragua between Sandinista government forces and right-wing 'contras', and in El Salvador and other Central American countries between right-wing governments and left-wing guerilla fighters. None of these wars, or the many other conflicts erupting at the time throughout the Third World, fitted tidily into the rigid dichotomy of the 1950s, and the bipolar international system itself had been modified by a war less amenable to simple analysis than the original Cold War. The costs of continued conflict, however, were similarly high, especially as the nuclear arms race between the US and the USSR was renewed, and contributed directly to the economic undermining of the Soviet system and the end of the Cold War.

21.5 THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE AND EFFORTS TO CONTROL PROLIFERATION

Spectacular advances in scientific knowledge in the first half of the 20th century included theoretical and experimental discovery of how to split the atom, the smallest particle of a chemical element. It was no easy task, however, to learn how to release atomic (nuclear) energy through a controlled chain reaction of fission in the element uranium, and during the late 1930s leading scientists in America, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, perhaps Japan, and Russia separately worked on the problem. In 1942, after the US had entered World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the Manhattan Project, a costly programme with several locations and many scientists and engineers, to build nuclear reactors and fabricate an atomic weapon as soon as possible and before Germany could do so. Project Y headed by Robert Oppenheimer at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, New Mexico, successfully tested one such device at Alamogordo on 16 July 1945 when he saw "a thousand suns". Truman conveyed this news to his allies Churchill and Stalin at Potsdam where they were conferring after the defeat of Germany, and also made the decision to use two remaining bombs on Japan which had not yet acknowledged defeat. Accordingly, an atom bomb equivalent to 15,000 tons of TNT named "Little Boy" was dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August and a larger one named "Fat Boy" on Nagasaki on 9 August. The resulting death and destruction through the effects of blast, fire, heat, and radiation far exceeded anything experienced before, even

during extensive ‘carpet bombing’ of cities during the war. Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945. Reports compiled soon after, as well as later reports on the effects of nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean and elsewhere, provide incontrovertible scientific evidence that the use of nuclear weapons in any conflict would be catastrophic for all life on earth, to say nothing of civilization as we know it.

Yet, an integral part of the Cold War was the nuclear arms race, primarily between the US and the USSR that tested its first atomic weapon on 26 August 1949. Neither superpower explicitly ruled out use of nuclear weapons – indeed their status as superpowers as well as their respective doctrines of national security rested heavily on their possession and threatened use of nuclear weapons – and the numbers of nuclear warheads of different kinds they produced multiplied exponentially to total over 60,000 at the height of the Cold War. Even after both had agreed to strategic arms limitations and reductions in the 1980s and 1990s, their arsenals remain formidable. According to reliable 2001 estimates the US possessed 7,206 strategic nuclear weapons, 1,670 non-strategic nuclear weapons and between 1,000 and 2,000 other nuclear weapons, while the figures for Russia in the same categories are given as 5,606; 3,800 and 10,000. The destructive power of a single such weapon, often measured in terms of megatons or one million tons of TNT, was enough to wipe out an entire city and exceed the total of all conventional bombs dropped in the Second World War. Adding to the many complexities of the super power arms race was the fact that despite strenuous efforts, the US did not long retain its nuclear monopoly, and after the Soviet Union, others too tested and produced their own nuclear weapons: Britain in 1952, France in 1959, China in 1964, Israel probably and in secret in 1968, India in 1973 though it did not weaponize until after 1998, and Pakistan in 1998 or possibly in 1987. Iraq, Iran and North Korea also have been widely suspected of having nuclear weapons ambitions and possible capability. None of these states amassed large arsenals of nuclear weapons, reliably estimated in 2001 as totaling 410 for China, 348 for France, 185 for Britain, about 200 for Israel, between 80-150 for India and between 30-50 for Pakistan. Nevertheless, the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction continues to be a serious problem in contemporary international politics.

Some of the profound questions raised in the atomic age are the following:

- Are scientists obliged to refrain from ethical judgments about the use to which their discoveries may be put by governments?
- What is the proper relationship between technical possibilities of creating weapons systems and political decision making on national security?
- Did nuclear weapons serve to maintain stability in Europe through balance of power during the Cold War, and would they produce stability or instability elsewhere?
- What were or are the economic and psychological costs of constructing national security policies on the basis of nuclear power with their implicit threat to all civilization and all life?
- Is it possible to control the proliferation of nuclear weapons to other states, and possibly to non-state groups, without nuclear disarmament by everybody?

As is evident, more than one answer has been offered, and will continue to be offered by thinking persons, to every one of the above questions. In this Unit we confine our interpretation of the historical record to separate three distinct strands: the role of nuclear weapons – and successive stages of their sophistication – in the security policies of the super powers during the Cold War fueling an arms race, perceptions of aggressive intention on either side, and heavy reliance on the military component of state power, created a spiral of competitive interaction expressed in electoral rhetoric in the US about a so-

called ‘missile gap’ and increased military spending and arms accumulation in both states that is called the ‘arms race’. Scholars studying the American-Soviet arms race, as well as arms races that have occurred between other rival pairs of states, seek to explain causes and suggest ways of controlling such ultimately self-destructive behaviour. Bruce Russett writes that while international hostility and conflicts over spheres of influence suffice to begin and maintain high levels of military spending, domestic influences are equally important. In the context of the US as well as the USSR he stresses bureaucratic politics, organizational dynamics and inter-service rivalry in obtaining budget allocations, technological momentum in developing (or matching) new and superior weapons systems such as inter continental missiles (ICBMs) and multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles (MIRVs), and pressures generated by mutually reinforcing networks within society and the economy that came to be called the “military-industrial complex”. He also notes that the arms race did not proceed in a regular spiral but with occasional upward spurts and few periods of significant reduction.

American and Soviet nuclear doctrines must be added to the above list of factors producing an arms race during the Cold War and these need more detailed analysis that can be attempted here. Very briefly and broadly speaking, in the first decade of the Cold War the US relied on its air and nuclear superiority to counter Soviet conventional and ground superiority in Europe and threatened ‘massive retaliation’ against any attempted change in the status quo; in the 1960s it relied on ‘flexible response’ and the creation of an invulnerable ‘second strike’ capacity based on a triad of air, land and sea based missiles aimed at a range of targets including cities to ‘deter’ any possible ‘first strike’ by the Soviet Union; in the 1970s the US aimed for stability in the status quo through arms control negotiations and détente; and then in the 1980s engaged in a military build-up that included deployment of intermediate range missiles in Europe to reassure Western Europe of American commitment to its defence, and a new Strategic Defence Initiative, what Reagan called ‘Star Wars’. The theory of ‘deterrence’ – itself a term capable of flexible interpretation but based on the assumption of two roughly comparable hostile powers with common conceptions of what constituted ‘rational action’ – was central to American strategic doctrine throughout. In the absence of open debate it was more difficult to decipher Soviet military doctrines and objectives beyond security, equality, equality of status and stability or assess the role of deterrence theory in Moscow. It can be seen, however, that what kept the Cold War from becoming hot was Mutual Assured Destruction. Though the Soviet Union in its search for strategic parity and possible and strategic or tactical superiority more or less kept pace with US weapons innovations, and initiated breakthroughs in some areas such as orbiting satellites in space, Reagan’s initiatives in the 1980s convinced the new reformist Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that his country could neither afford the arms race economically nor sustain it technologically.

Meanwhile, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 had brought the dangers of a nuclear exchange shockingly close to decision makers, and the US and USSR moved toward arms control measures beginning with the Partial Test Ban Treaty (banning atmospheric tests) signed on 5 August 1963. Arms control negotiations were extended exercises in bargaining and conflict management, not efforts to bring about disarmament or conflict resolution, so that perennial Cold War disputes over Berlin, Korea, Taiwan, remained unsettled and the multiplication of weapons systems continued. Moreover, some systems were kept on hair trigger alert so that accidental conflagration easily could have been flared as is well documented by Scott Sagan. Arms control measures were intended to reduce risks, to remove incentives for first strike by either side, and to stabilize the arms race around notions of strategic parity and balance. There were lengthy and often vituperative disagreements on what constituted balance or equivalence in force structures and weapons systems, as well as over the technology and credibility of verification. The

details of these debates, as also the agreements eventually reached, were extensively reported at the time so that it is not necessary to repeat them here. The major bilateral nuclear weapon treaties signed by the US and the USSR/Russia are as follows:

26 May 1972	Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I)
03 July 1974	Threshold Test Ban Treaty
18 June 1979	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II)
08 December 1987	Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty
31 July 1991	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I)
03 January 1993	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II)

Notwithstanding significant reduction in nuclear arsenals promised in START I and II, and a plethora of writings, resolutions and conferences on the desirability of universal nuclear disarmament – developing nuclear weapons raised acute anxiety in world capitals. Measures were undertaken to prevent and check that type of ‘horizontal’ proliferation, notably the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) negotiated over three years and opened for signature by states on 1 July 1968 with an initial validity of 25 years. With 135 initial and 187 current signatories, the NPT is the largest multilateral treaty on record and was indefinitely extended in 1995. The NPT specifically defines a nuclear-weapon state (NWS) as one that had manufactured and exploded a nuclear device before 1 January 1967, thus recognizing two different categories of states, and makes different requirements of them. Article 1 stipulates fully that NWS undertake not to transfer any nuclear explosive device, or any encouragement to or means of manufacturing them, to any non-nuclear weapons state (NNWS). Article II of the NPT obliges non-nuclear explosive devices. This explicit bargain between NWS and NNWS was struck only when it was agreed that the treaty would establish the norm that no state should have nuclear weapons embodied in Article VI stating that the parties to the treaty undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith to “general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” Also the treaty recognized the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) created in 1954 to foster the exchange of scientific and technical information on the peaceful uses of atomic energy while ensuring that none of it was used to further any military purpose.

In addition to the NPT the US and others took further measures to discourage and prevent proliferation. Some industrialized and nuclear capable countries such as the FRG, Japan, and Sweden were in the NPT as NNWS. Other potential proliferators, such as Argentina and Brazil, were persuaded or pressurized into signing regional bans on nuclear weapons. Increasingly stringent limitations have been placed on trade and transfers of any materials or technologies that could be used for military purposes by suppliers, groups such as the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group founded in the 1970s, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) of 1987 and the Warsaw Guidelines of 1992. Domestic legislation and vigorous surveillance in some countries since the 1970s, notably in the US, raise very high barriers to transfers of doubtful materials and technologies, and “counter proliferation” tactics devised to discourage potential proliferators. International public opinion rose against nuclear weapons after the end of the Cold War. Former republics in the Soviet Union, Kazakastan and Ukraine relinquished nuclear weapons. South Africa terminated its nuclear weapons programme at the time of making a transit to democracy. The US and Russia agreed to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion on the Nuclear Weapons Case in July 1996 and held that the use of nuclear weapons would violate

humanitarian law. In September 1996 a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was opened for signature and negotiation for a multilateral treaty on a cutoff of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons was in process.

Notwithstanding the above, the proliferation clock was ticking again by the end of the century. The CTBT required the 44 states, judged to be nuclear capable to sign and ratify it before coming into force; India objected to being numbered one of the 44 and did not sign, and though President Clinton signed in 1999 the US Senate did not ratify the treaty. India, and Pakistan, openly tested nuclear weapons in May 1998 and moved toward their deployment; US pressures on them to “roll back” their programmes failed. It also became evident that some state signatories of the NPT, and some private companies within signatory countries, had previously violated prohibitions on transfers of technology and materials to the then NNWS such as Pakistan; and North Korea not only threatened to withdraw from the NPT but boasted of having manufactured weapons. At the heart of the proliferation dilemma, however, is the issue of equity. The NPT created a hierarchy of states, privileging the NWS on condition that they sincerely move toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. Their failure to do so and their adoption of counter-proliferation measures (including development of new types of nuclear weapons) raised suspicions that they wanted a perpetual freeze of hierarchy. In the words of Richard Butler, former head of the UN Special commission to disarm Iraq, “it is simply beyond any concept of civilisation to maintain the security of any state or person on the basis of the threat of mass destruction of others. It is inevitable that as long as the threat exists, others will seek to defend against it by measures of a similar kind. The consequences of such action and reaction are an endless spiral of proliferation.”

21.6 DECOLONIZATION AND NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

The Second World War brought about the dissolution of European empires in Asia and Africa, beginning with the independence of the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma in the mid-1940s, Ghana in 1956, and most of Francophone Africa in the early 1960s. The process of decolonization was neither easy nor rapid and was only completed in the last decade of the century, when South Africa threw over its apartheid regime, and when Britain returned Hong Kong and Portugal returned Macao to China in 1997 and 1999 respectively. One immediate effect of decolonization was the multiplication of state members in the international system, mentioned at the beginning of this Unit as a characteristic of the 20th century. Another immediate effect was to widen the agenda of the international system, especially that of the United Nations General Assembly of which the newly independent states were members, to include subjects of interest to them such as decolonization, racial equality, and economic development. A third effect was to alter the functioning of the international system somewhat, away from the *realpolitik* of power play toward norms of equity, international law, universal participation and legitimization of collective action by the UN. Efforts of multiple parentages to so reform the international system were delayed, diffused, and incomplete no doubt, but none the less discernible in the latter half of the 20th Century when the Cold War was at its height. For example, a victory for the principles of decolonization and self-determination was seen in passage of UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV): Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, on 14 December 1960 and its virtual elevation to international law.

Decolonization came to be associated with the development of a Nonaligned Movement (NAM) because important countries such as India, Indonesia, Egypt, and Ghana gained their independence at a time when the world was riven in two blocs by the Cold War and they naturally wished to assert their diplomatic and ideological independence not only

from their former colonial masters, but from that particular conflict, which was not their own. As Jawaharlal Nehru announced in 1946, “We propose as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale.” In much the same way a newly independent USA had declared its non-involvement in the Napoleonic conflict of early 19th Century Europe. And in similar fashion Yugoslavia’s President Tito asserted the independence of a communist state from the Soviet bloc in 1948. Initially, therefore, nonalignment denoted the foreign policy orientation of a particular state disassociating itself from the major international conflict of the time, and easily was confused with neutrality or neutralism, negative terms often used to denigrate such assertions of independence. Nonalignment was always different from neutrality or neutralization, however, because nonalignment was a freely chosen position and not imposed by others as in the case of neutralization, because nonaligned states never claimed to be strictly equidistant from the two super powers and tolerated cynical allegations of manipulating Cold War rivalries for their own benefit, and because nonalignment, as Nehru often explained, demanded an active participation in the international arena and not the passive withdrawal of a neutral.

These positive aspects of a nonaligned position became evident in the course of the Korean War (1950-1953) and UN debates about its conduct and end. First, the Korean War raised anxiety about the prospects of international peace, seen as a prerequisite for the independence and self-development of new states, and so led to India’s successful attempts to mediate differences between the opposing sides on the disposition of prisoners of war and condition for armistice, as well as many exhortations to peace and ‘zones of peace’. Secondly, Asian and Arab members of the UN cooperated in drafting mediatory resolutions and found an affinity in mutual concerns for accelerating decolonization and emphasizing economic and social development in the functioning of the UN over the ideological and military conflict of the super powers that dominated the agenda.

The first Asian-African Conference was held at Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955 among high representatives of 29 states to consider problems of common interest and discuss ways and means of reaching fuller cooperation. This conference is regarded as a precursor to NAM; its final communiqué heralded future final communiqués of NAM summit meetings in stressing the need for economic and cultural cooperation, human rights and self-determination, attention to the problems of dependent peoples, and promotion of world peace and nuclear disarmament. But there was no agreement at Bandung on what was one criterion of nonalignment, that is, abstaining from membership of (Western sponsored) military alliances, because some states, including the Philippines and Pakistan, hoped to gain security from such alliance. The following year President Nasser of Egypt, Prime Minister Nehru of India, and President Tito of Yugoslavia met at Brioni to review international developments and reaffirmed their commitment to the principles laid down at Bandung as well as the need to persevere in settling international problems and creating an atmosphere of peace. By the late 1950s the term ‘nonalignment’ was in usage, as also the French term *Tiers Monde* and its Anglicized form Third World, denoting a group of countries in contradistinction to the First World of capitalist liberal democracy and the Second World of command economic planning. Though not synonymous the terms ‘newly independent’, ‘nonaligned’, ‘developing countries’, and ‘third world’ came to be used more or less interchangeably.

The first Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries was held at Belgrade in September 1961 and issued a passionate appeal to the US and USSR to “suspend their recent war preparations” and “resume negotiation for a peaceful settlement” of outstanding differences between them. The final communiqué noted the weakening of imperialism and reaffirmed support to UNGA Resolution 1514. In addition,

the communique called for general and complete disarmament and urged participation of nonaligned states in all world conferences on disarmament, denounced the establishment of foreign military bases as a violation of sovereignty, advocated policies of peaceful coexistence, and called attention to specific problems, such as racial apartheid in South Africa and the rights of the Palestinian people, to be tackled in conformity with UN principles. The 25 leaders assembled at Belgrade denied “any wish to form a new bloc” but agreed to convene similar meetings every three years and tried to specify criteria (such as non-acceptance of foreign military bases) for invitees. NAM was launched and steadily gained members. 92 heads of state or government met at the Havana summit in 1979 and 114 at the Kuala Lumpur, 13th summit of 2003. Meanwhile, NAM criteria had been so enlarged that there was little similarity among members beyond their relative weakness in the international system both political and economic.

The goal of economic independence and self-reliance proved to be more elusive than that of legal independence. Third World members of the UN conferred and often voted together as a group (the G-77) in the General Assembly and new agencies such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the 1960s to try and redress adverse terms of trade and gain concessions for their exports in more developed and affluent markets. Ideas about revising the entire international system of economic relations were aired at the NAM Summit at Lusaka in 1970 and presented as a manifesto at the Algiers Summit three years later, before being adopted at a special session of the General Assembly in 1974 as a Programme for Action for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). It was no coincidence that demands for an NIEO were launched concurrently with the first dramatic oil-price hike and demonstration of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries’ (OPEC) bargaining power with industrialized economies dependent on imports of cheap energy. For a time it appeared as if a fundamental shift of economic and therefore diplomatic power away from the industrial North toward the pre-industrial South were possible. The reforms demanded under NIEO fell under five main heads as follows:

- Reforms in the terms of trade and pricing for primary products and commodities, and better access to the markets of the advanced industrial countries through preferences.
- Reforms in the major international economic institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund, to benefit developing countries.
- Recognition of the growing problem of Third World debt and measures to alleviate it.
- Greater economic assistance and technology transfers to developing countries.
- Recognition of sovereign rights to direct national economic policy and control the activities of Multi-National Corporations.

The above charter of demands for socio-economic justice was addressed to the advanced industrial countries of the First World but had little tangible effect on their policies, though the rhetoric of various reports such as those of the Commissions on South-South cooperation echoed that of NIEO. The Second World Socialist countries claimed to be a “natural ally” of NAM but disclaimed responsibility for the injustices of the capitalist international economic system or the means to redress them. The victory of conservative leaders with hard ideology in the West, especially Margaret Thatcher in Britain and Ronald Reagan in the US, was certainly a setback to the cause of international social justice, and a blaze of militarism accompanied the New Cold War of the 1980s. Once again nonalignment was denigrated as ‘immoral’ and ‘anti-American’ and UN voting records of NAM members scrutinized and sometimes penalized. NIEO demands had not been

met by the end of the 20th Century and some problems, such as Third World debt, had become more acute, even as increasing globalization and the rules of the World Trade Organisation presented new challenges to all countries, including those belonging to NAM.

In advocating an NIEO, NAM also addressed its own members in exhorting them to increase cooperation and exchanges of information and technology among themselves and improve them abroad. These exhortations had only limited effect, mainly because the economies of the newly independent countries remained firmly linked to those of the metropolitan 'core' of advanced industrial countries, and the ruling elites of the former frequently were dependent on the explicit or tacit approval of the latter in order to remain in power. Their ability and willingness to implement the NIEO charter within their own countries was correspondingly weak. Linkages between 'periphery' and 'core' were evident in Latin America and inspired the neo-Marxist theory of *dependencia* to explain contemporary international relations; practical instruction on how to end the cycle of dependence without revolution, however, was largely confined to making declarations in international conferences. Lack of means was a ready explanation for the paucity of South-South cooperation. But even when financial means were available, as from petrodollars generated by successive oil-price hikes, they were directed more toward arms purchases from and investments in the West than toward assisting broad-based economic development in oil-importing countries of the South.

Other weaknesses of NAM deserve attention. Most stemmed from the diversity of its members, drawn as they were from every continent and therefore lacking the common perspectives of a geographically contiguous region, and having leaders of varying ideological leanings and practical experience in governance. Many members were racked by internal divisions and conflicts as well as by authoritarian governments. India was for long a rare democracy in the Third World. Each member had its own definition of national self-interest, and of nonalignment, that did not coincide with another's definition strongly enough to produce an alliance or even a coalition capable of joint action, except at the level of declaration and, it must be added for some, in lending moral and material assistance to the anti-apartheid forces of democracy in South Africa during the 1980s. Even the problems of the Arab people of Palestine that featured in every NAM summit document inspired no substantive common action beyond granting membership to the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and drafting resolutions criticizing Israel and Zionism (predictably offensive to the US). Typically, NAM comments on important areas of conflict, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Central America in the 1980s, were drafted by members from that particular region and paragraphs put into a collage of the final statement to await the next summit meeting. Institutional underpinning was slight, derived from the diplomatic missions of members at UN headquarters in New York.

The weaknesses of NAM, in short, stemmed from the administrative, diplomatic, economic, financial, institutional, and political weaknesses of the individual members themselves. These were most evident in cases of civil conflict that racked most of Africa, and of conflict among member states, such as between Iran and Iraq for years of bitter war during 1980-1988, and perennial disputes between Pakistan and India, that NAM could neither prevent nor seriously attempt to mediate. NAM still lacks the mechanisms and power to resolve conflicts; but then, so do other states and international organizations. The strengths of NAM arose from the courageous efforts of its founding leaders to approach questions of international peace and security from the point of view of the larger good of humanity, to provide representatives of distanced and newly independent states opportunities for free discussion of issues and interaction with each other that were not easily available elsewhere, and to articulate principles that might not have been matched by practice but pointed toward a more equitable and humane international code of conduct

produced by power politics. It is for this reason, perhaps, that NAM did not disappear with the end of the Cold War, as was expected by those who judged it relevant only to bipolar military-security configuration. Instead, NAM continues to grow and change its role with the demands of the day, while reaffirming the realities of diversity and pluralism in the contemporary world.

21.7 THE END OF THE 20TH CENTURY AND ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

For those who see the Russian Revolution of 1917 as the most important event of the 20th Century, the unexpected dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked not only the equally unexpected termination of the Cold War but the end of century itself. Events of the 1990s illustrated dilemmas, issues, and problems that also dominate the first years of the 21st Century. These stemmed both from the end of a bipolar balance of power international system that had lent some predictability to world politics since the end of the Second World War, and from the collapse of a great multi-ethnic superpower with a command economy. The 1990s also saw the breakdown of civility and governmental authority in several states, such as Yugoslavia and more than one in Africa, that were not caused by changes in the international system as such and evoked muddled responses from it, but which stimulated debates inside and outside the UN about ethnic identity, displacement of peoples, and so on. It is difficult to generalize about international rivalries at the 20th Century's end than at its beginning and we confine ourselves to a brief overview.

When an ailing Brezhnev passed away in November 1982 the internal problems of the Soviet Union had been severe for a decade or more, though concealed by the aura of a superpower from the outside world, including US intelligence agencies. Brezhnev was succeeded by men of his own generation, first by Yuri Andropov, who died in February 1984, and then by Konstantin Chernenko, who died in March 1985. Neither had the time nor energy to attempt internal reform or external initiatives. The credit for doing so belonged to the next General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 54 year old Mikhail Gorbachev, who came to be described as “the man who changed the world” in five years. Gorbachev saw the imperative of revitalizing a stagnant Soviet economy and the near impossibility of doing so without loosening state control that had corrupted administration, introducing open debate to stimulate initiative, and reducing defence expenditures then amounting to an estimated 25 per cent of GNP. But the latter was unfeasible while the Soviet Union was engaged in a debilitating war in Afghanistan and faced a vociferously hostile Reagan Administration that was raising the US defence budget above \$400 billion a year, albeit less than five per cent of American GNP.

Gorbachev simultaneously launched three campaigns and conducted them personally. One was externally directed to establish good relations with world leaders, especially in the West beginning with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and to restructure relations with other Socialist states on the basis of independence rather than the Brezhnev Doctrine of intervention. Another campaign was to promote the idea of *perestroika* – meaning reform and an all-embracing modernization so as to improve economic performance and living conditions of the people – among Soviet officials and the public during his many tours around the country. And a third campaign was also internal, to introduce *glasnost* – meaning openness – in sharing information with the frequently alienated intelligentsia, and reaching economic and political decisions on the basis of facts rather than secretly fabricated statistics. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* amounted to a reversal of Soviet policy and practice of over 60 years and needed active support from Party and State *apparatchiks* (functionaries) at every level in order to succeed. Not surprisingly, well entrenched, highly placed *apparatchiks* collectively known as the *Nomnclatura*

offered the greatest resistance to *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Gorbachev's vocal attacks on the system and Party he had inherited, especially at the 27th Party Congress of February 1986, merely strengthened their opposition to modernization or democratization, while the habits of dependence and obedience to authority in the general population were not easily overcome. *Glasnost* too made the task of reform from above more, not less, difficult, partly because it delegitimized the use of coercion, and partly because it provided no adequate response to the catastrophic meltdown of a nuclear reactor at the Chernobyl power station on 26 April 1986, the worst nuclear accident in the world. Gorbachev wrote in his Memoirs (1995) that he laid the basis for *perestroika* in the years 1985-1988 and expected democratization to take place peacefully in the next phase. In fact, his reforms sparked a kind of uncontrolled revolution leading to economic chaos, political fragmentation, and self-assertion by larger and smaller 'national groups – including Russia itself – that unraveled the Soviet Union in 1991.

Before that happened, however, Gorbachev's diplomacy assisted by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevarnadze, brought an end to the Cold War. The Cold War was described earlier as being an ideological conflict between communism and capitalism, a territorial conflict over control of Central Europe epitomized in the division of Germany, and a power struggle between the US and USSR played out by proxy on all continents but most of all in the arms race. Gorbachev's economic reforms moving the Soviet Union away from its state controlled 'command' model toward a mixed and even a market economy obviously diminished ideological conflict, as did his public advocacy of universal 'democratic' values reiterated on the occasion of his summit meeting with US President George Bush at Malta in December 1989.

Meanwhile, unrest in the Socialist states of Eastern Europe caused Gorbachev concern, but he did not go back on his principle of non-interference so that demands for change were no longer met by repression backed by Soviet arms. Instead, elections in Poland brought Solidarity to power in place of the Communist Party. Hungary embraced a multiparty system and opened its border with Austria in May 1989. The regimes in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and later Romania collapsed. Gorbachev wrote that when he visited Berlin for a meeting with GDR leaders in October 1989 he was reminded "of an overheated boiler with the lid tightly closed". On the night of 8 November the crises came to a head with huge crowds gathering at the Berlin Wall and tearing parts of it down with their hands; the checkpoints to West Berlin were opened to allow for an exodus. The future of Germany, in one or in two states, was a difficult question to resolve against the background of 20th Century wars, the growing weight of Germany and the crucial importance of German-Soviet relations to the stability of Europe. Gorbachev had met FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl for the first time in October 1988 when they both agreed in Moscow to promote links between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and found they could do business with each other. But Kohl's ten point plan for the rapid unification of Germany put forward in November 1989 dismayed Gorbachev as well as British and French leaders. Intricate consultations among concerned parties worried about possible instability followed, and all questions were then referred to a body consisting of the four occupying powers – Britain, France, the US and the USSR – plus the two German states. Soviet delegates were not able to achieve their objective of effectively neutralizing Germany through membership of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and no one anticipated the practical difficulties of reunification. But finally, skilful diplomacy resulted in all accepting a re-united Germany within NATO, at the same time renouncing forever possession of WMDs and formally committed to "good neighbourliness, partnership and cooperation."

More than one account has been published detailing interchanges between Moscow and Washington between 1985 and 1991 that brought about an end to the Cold War and

produced significant agreements on arms control after tough negotiations. All these accounts show the importance of individual personalities and their interaction with each other in making initiatives possible, the cleavages that existed *within* each side between hard-liners who scorned any diminution of hostility and new thinkers hoping to bridge the chasm of mistrust through compromise, and the constant negative influence of domestic politics and media coverage in each country on the progress of bilateral negotiations. Without discussing these general propositions affecting all international relations, we outline the main events in US-USSR relations between 1985 and 1991.

The New Cold War of the 1980s intensified danger not only because of heightened conflict in Asia, Africa, and Central America, but because of the introduction of new and more lethal nuclear weapons into superpower arsenals and the deployment of some in Europe, as well as Reagan's proposed Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) that threatened stability of the 1972 ABM Treaty by taking the arms race into space. The principal Soviet and US interest was to reduce the threat posed by these weapons to their respective countries but the chasm of mistrust between them was immense. After intricate negotiations between foreign ministers, Gorbachev awaited the outcome of the first meeting between American and Soviet heads of state since 1979. Despite their ability to communicate with each other as human beings, the two men could reach no agreement beyond the desirability of meeting again. They did so next at Reykjavik, Iceland, on 11-12 October 1986 and bargained seriously about eliminating offensive ballistic missiles from their arsenals within ten years, and all other nuclear weapons too. Their respective advisers were appalled by this unplanned leap their leaders had made, and relieved when negotiations failed because Reagan refused to relinquish SDI. (He also ignored the six-continent initiative launched by Argentina, India, Greece, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania on behalf of NAM, calling for a worldwide moratorium on the testing, production and development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.) Nevertheless, Reykjavik was a turning point in new thinking; it made possible the INF Treaty of December 1987 eliminating some species of missiles from Europe and opening the way for reductions in all classes of nuclear weapons subsequently agreed to in START I and II in July 1991 and January 1993. Gorbachev's state visit to Washington D.C. in December 1987 was a public relations triumph for him and the beginning of a personal rapport with then Vice-President George Bush that was carried forward into the next few years. For example, the US and the IMF tried to assist marketization of the Soviet economy – though the actual impact of their efforts is controversial.

Gorbachev was acutely aware of internal economic problems as he introduced *perestroika* and reduced costly external commitments. Thus, on 9 February 1988 he announced specific steps for a political settlement in Afghanistan through the UN, including the withdrawal of Soviet troops over the following year. Multilateral settlement of the Cambodia problem and UN supervision of elections followed soon after, as also settlements in Angola and Namibia with active UN participation. Gorbachev quickened the pace of normalizing relations with China and received a warm welcome in Beijing in May 1989, an event overshadowed for the international media present to cover it by the unrelated pro-democracy student demonstrations taking place in Tiananmen Square at the same time and their subsequent repression by force. Also, the Soviet Union was diplomatically active during the crisis caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990; it could not persuade Saddam Hussein to withdraw peacefully and joined the rest of the Security Council in sanctioning military action against him. A long-standing Soviet objective was advanced in October 1991 when it co-sponsored with the US an international conference on the Middle East convened at Madrid to set out a programme – or 'road map' as it was called – to resolve conflict between Israel and Palestine. But success abroad could not conceal failures and fissures at home, especially on the 'nationalities problem' constituting relations between Moscow at the centre and constituent

units or Republics of the federated USSR, as well as between different ethnic groups in each constituent Republic. There were many anomalies in the vast multi-ethnic expanse of the Soviet Union and Gorbachev had no new thinking to offer on those subjects; he showed a preference for centralized and ethnic-Russian authority. But once 'national' urges to recover language, religion and identity were stirred at the grassroots, a momentum grew. The Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania exploded in resentment against Russians and the CPSU, tacitly helped in their drive for independence by the US, which had always refused to recognize them as part of the USSR. Corruption in Uzbekistan led to an insurrection there in 1986, followed by troubles in Kazakhstan and throughout the Trans-Caucasian region including Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, and later Chechnya. An attempted coup against Gorbachev in August 1990 failed, but his leadership was noticeably depleted. Meanwhile, the revival of Russian national feeling – in contrast and subsequent opposition to Soviet feeling – was also strong, and owed much to the ambitions of Boris Yeltsin, perhaps, who became President of the Russian Federation in 1990 and successor to Gorbachev in 1991. The Soviet Union was officially dissolved in December 1991, replaced in name by the Commonwealth of Independent States. Fourteen new states became members of the United Nations.

Yugoslavia, a conglomerate state created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, had survived the death of its unifying leader Josip Broz Tito in May 1980 but faced intensifying tensions between the more and the less economically developed republics and shrinking resources fueled animosity among different ethnic and religious groups. Croatia and Slovenia declared independence in 1991 and Slobodan Milosevic became leader of a nationalistic Serbia determined to build a 'Greater Serbia' out of the remaining units of multi-ethnic Yugoslavia at the cost of minority groups, including the Muslims of Bosnia and the Albanians of Kosovo. Atrocities that came to be called 'ethnic cleansing' led to military conflict, expressions of international alarm, and an inadequate United Nations intervention in Bosnia in 1991-92 that was replaced by a NATO force in late 1995. Neither force could restore peace or prevent massacres and population transfers that resulted in an ethnically-partitioned Bosnia reflected in the final Dayton peace agreement. Further conflict flared in Kosovo and US led-NATO forces conducted 11 weeks of air strikes on Serbia and its capital Belgrade in 1999 before stationing peace keeping troops in Kosovo. Milosevic was displaced and taken to face trial for 'crimes against humanity' at the International Tribunal in The Hague. The OSCE subsequently attempted to outline a regional strategy for dealing with crisis prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation in Europe.

The internationally publicized Yugoslavia episode illustrated several trends noticeable also in other parts of the world at the end of the 20th Century but not discussed here. Very briefly, five of these trends were as follows:

- Increasing economic integration, or globalization, while welcomed in many prospering quarters, also quickly transmitted economic problems across national frontiers and caused societal stress. Yugoslavia suffered from Western Europe's economic slow down and unemployment in the 1980s. In 1997 a financial crisis caused by rapid transfers of capital spread from South Korea through all of Southeast Asia, undercutting the dynamism hitherto displayed by the 'Asian Tigers' and affecting world trade negatively.
- The breakdown of central governmental authority in multi-ethnic states was accompanied often by inter-ethnic conflict and the commitment of atrocities that sometimes amounted to genocide. The Bosnian horrors viewed on international television were equalled or exceeded by 'humanitarian crises' in various parts of Africa, particularly in Rwanda in 1994 when the Hutu massacred the Tutsi people in their thousands, but also in Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, and Zaire.

- Crises often hit international headlines too late to be prevented or managed by multilateral diplomacy. As an association of sovereign member states, the UN did not possess the institutions, the finance, or the mechanisms to meet the challenges posed by human disasters and failing states. Nor did regional organizations such as the EU or the OAU. The inability of concerned persons to put potential crises high on the international agenda sometimes was an unavoidable tragedy, as in Rwanda.
- The issue of protecting human rights received increasing international attention in the aftermath of the Cold War and the Tiananmen Square event in China, with non-governmental organizations playing important roles in the effort both domestically and internationally. No world-wide consensus was reached, however, on what constituted violation of human rights or how such violations were best remedied. There was even less agreement on the legitimacy or modality of ‘humanitarian intervention’ encroaching on traditional notions of state sovereignty.
- In the absence of effective UN or EU action the US took the lead in Bosnia and Kosovo. An image of the US a ‘hyper power’, the ‘indispensable power’, gained currency in the 1990s when it was the only remaining super-power, but also triggered expressions of preference by many world leaders for a multi-polar international system. Thus, evident strains developed between the US and its closest allies in Europe, Japan, as well with its more recent and problematic partners, Russia and China.

The last decade of the 20th Century seemed to justify it being called the ‘American Century’. American military spending was more than the next 15 military budgets added together, US military power was overwhelmingly superior to that of every other country and truly global in its reach. The US economy showed more dynamism than those of Europe or Japan and American corporations were at the core of the international economy. The US attracted more immigrants per year from all over the world than any other country. American universities were global centres of study and research. American popular culture expressed the hard power of the US. American triumphalism in the collapse of socialism and easy victory in the Gulf War of early 1991 was evident in calls for a New World Order, and succinctly expressed in the title of Francis Fukuyama’s celebrated book, *The End of History*, which argued that there were no viable alternatives to capitalistic democracy left in the world. American hegemony over the international system at the end of the 20th century appeared to be even greater than it had been 50 years earlier (when it accounted for approximately 50 per cent of World GDP in contrast to the current approximate 20 per cent) or that of Great Britain one hundred years earlier. One result was widespread resentment of the US, not merely among newly independent developing countries that experienced difficulty to having their voices heard in Washington DC, but also among well-established great powers, and other permanent members of the UN Security Council, several of which complained of American heavy handedness in diplomatic style. While no one state or group of states was able or willing to create a counter balance to the US, there was much talk in world capitals about ‘multi polarity’ providing a more widely acceptable basis than ‘hegemonic stability’ for world order. Since large swathes of the world were infected with transnational crime, drug trafficking, insurrection, terrorism, and destruction of the natural environment in the last decade of the 20th Century, no one could pretend that world order prevailed or that American power alone was sufficient to establish it. Within the US there were many references to the illusionary or transient nature of a unipolar world and speculation on how a rising power, such as China, could be accommodated or changes in the international system be brought about peacefully. At the same time, Samuel Huntington, an eminent political scientist, seemed to predict protracted conflict between the Judeo-Christian West and other major civilizations such as the Islamic or Sinic, in his widely read *Clash of Civilizations*.

21.8 SUMMARY

The 20th Century was indeed an age of extremes and provided ample empirical data to support or refute various social and political theories. Also, it was in the 20th Century that International Relations came to be recognized as an academic discipline separate from history or political science, and a respectable body of theoretical literature on relations among states was accumulated. The field of International Theory is too rich to be surveyed here, but some schools of thought as well as the major issues that attract attention can be mentioned. The two major schools of thought, once labeled 'Idealist' and 'Realist', have long since spawned many variations and refinements under the rubrics 'Neo-liberal' and 'Neo-realist' as well as explanations that bridge both schools. The crucial difference between them is of emphasis in explanation. Realists stress the pursuit of survival and national interests defined as power by states and the predominance of conflict among them. The Mid-century produced a methodological revolution in the social sciences known as 'behaviourism' that pushed international relations in a 'positivist' direction for many decades. Structuralism and neo-Marxism also influenced international theory. Some of the assumptions and conclusions underpinning these schools were challenged towards the end of the century by 'critical theory', by 'feminism', by 'constructivists' and by those social historians who saw the behaviour of states as an interplay of external and internal factors. Debates were sustained between and among different theories and greatly enlarged the field of research. Some questions of practical and theoretical interest recur in the literature, such as:

- What is the appropriate level of analysis for the study of international relations? Is it the global or transnational, the state-centric, or other? Stated differently, the question is, who are the actors in world politics?
- What is the meaning of state sovereignty in conditions of the late 20th Century?
- What kind of international system is most conducive to order and stability, human welfare, and legitimacy from among the known international systems of balance of power—whether multi-polar or bipolar in configuration – and hegemonic or imperial, also with variations?
- What are the causes of violent conflict?
- What constitutes 'just war'?
- What are the sources and sanctions of international law?
- What are the mainsprings of foreign policy in a given state?
- What, if any, are the ethical or normative dimensions of international relations?

The brief summary of international rivalries in the 20th Century given in this Unit hints at possible answers to these questions of continuing interest, which can be explored through further research and participation in the engrossing subject of world history.

21.9 GLOSSARY

- Bloc** : A group of states seen as generally standing together in international relations, though not necessarily in formal alliance.
- Collective Security** : A doctrine premised on the belief that all nations would perceive threats to international security in the same way and be equally prepared to assist each other in resisting them.
- Deterrence** : The strategy and doctrine of defence adopted primarily by the United States in the nuclear age to convince the other side that it would face mortal retaliatory damage if it struck first.

Entente	: An understanding between states conducive to cooperation, but short of formal alliance.
Genocide	: The use of deliberate methods, including killing, calculated to destroy or exterminate a group of people definable by culture, language, politics, race or religion.
Hegemony	: Preponderant influence or authority.
International System	: A structure of states within which they regularly interact.
Rapprochement	: The establishment of cordial relations between hostile states.
Realpolitik	: A foreign policy based on calculations of power and national self-interest rather than abstract principles of morality.
Strategic Triangle	: A term applied to relations between the United States, Soviet Union and China during the 1970s and 1980s.
WMD	: Weapons of Mass Destruction: biological, chemical, and nuclear.

21.10 EXERCISES

- 1) What do we mean by Cold War? How did it affect world politics?
- 2) Discuss NAM, its strength and weaknesses in changing the World order.
- 3) Where does world polity stand at the end of the 20th century?

Annexure: A Chronology of the Major International Events of the 20th Century

International Rivalries of Twentieth Century

1901	Queen Victoria dies
1904-05	Russo-Japanese War Anglo-French Entente
1912-13	Balkan War
1914, 28 June to 4 August	Austrian Archduke Ferdinand assassinated by a Serb in Sarajevo. Ultimatums and successive mobilizations of armies
1914-1918	The Great War, or First World War
1917	Russian Revolution
1918, 11 Nov.	Armistice ends Great war
1919-20	Peace Treaties signed. Influenza epidemic kills many.
1920	League of Nations established with headquarters in Geneva
1925	Locarno Agreements stabilizing Germany's western frontiers
1929	Wall Street crash precipitates world wide economic depression
1931	Japan occupies Manchuria
1933	Adolf Hitler leading. National Socialist Party takes power in Germany
1935	Italy occupies Abyssinia (Ethiopia)
1936	Arab revolt in British mandate of Palestine Berlin-Rome Axis established Germany and Japan sign Anti-Comintern Pact Germany remilitarizes the Rhineland
1937	Full scale war between China and Japan
1938 March September	Germany annexes Austria Munich Conference dismembers Czechoslovakia
1939, 23 August	Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Soviet Union and Germany
1 September	Germany invades Poland. Britain and France at war with Germany
1940	Germany over runs Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway. Air Battle of Britain
1941, 22 June 07 December	Germany invades Soviet Union Japan bombs US Fleet at Pearl Harbour US enters war against Japan and Germany
1943	German army surrenders at Stalingrad
1944	Anglo-American forces land in Normandy. Soviet forces advance toward Germany
1945, 10 May August September	Germany surrenders Atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japan surrenders United Nations Charter signed in San Francisco
1946	Differences between Western Allies and Soviet Union sharpen. Europe effectively divided by 'iron curtain'
1947	Cold War between Western and Eastern blocs hardens US announces new National Security Policy Marshall Plan of US economic grants to Western Europe Independence (and partition) of India
1948	Israel established as a state. First Arab-Israel war Berlin blockade and Anglo American airlift to West Berlin
1949 1949	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) formed Peoples Republic of China established Indonesia independent
1950-1953 1953, April	The Korean War Death of Stalin

International Relations

1955	Geneva Conference on Indo-China Warsaw Pact established between Soviet Union and East European states Bandung Conference of Asian and African states
1956	Suez Crisis. Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt Polish revolt and nationalist uprising in Hungary crushed by Soviet Union Ghana independent
1957	Treaty of Rome establishes the European Economic Community
1959	Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro takes power
1960	Sino-Soviet disputes surface Africa's year of independence
1961	Berlin crisis. Berlin Wall erected Belgrade Conference of Nonaligned
1962	Cuban Missile Crisis China-India War
1963	Partial Test Ban Treaty signed US President J.F. Kennedy assassinated Increasing US involvement in Vietnam War
1965	Indo-Pakistan War
1967	'Six Day' Arab-Israeli War
1968	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty drafted 'Prague Spring' First landing of man on the moon
1971	PRC becomes member of the UN and Security council India-Pakistan War
1972	US-China rapprochement, President Nixon visits China US-USSR sign Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty. Initiation of detente
1973	Oil Price crisis Arab-Israeli War
1975	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) proclaims Helsinki Accord on improving East-West relations Portugese colonies in Africa independent
1979	Iran revolution and proclamation of Iran as Islamic Republic
1979-1989	War in Afghanistan against Soviet occupation
1980	Josip Tito dies Iraq invades Iran Latin American debt crisis
1985	Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of Communist Party of Soviet Union, initiates extensive reforms
1987	Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev agree to eliminate/reduce some strategic nuclear weapons
1989 3 October	Mass demonstrations in Eastern Europe Berlin Wall breached and dismantled by public
1991 December	Persian Gulf War Warsaw Pact dissolved Soviet Union dissolves into many republics
1992	Yugoslavia breaks up. 'Ethnic cleansing' and civil war in Bosnia
1994	Rwanda genocide Nelson Mandela elected President of South Africa
1997	Hong Kong reverts to China
1999	War in Kosovo

UNIT 22 UNIPOLAR WORLD AND COUNTER-CURRENTS

Structure

- 22.1 Introduction
- 22.2 What is a system?
- 22.3 Features of the Systems Theory
- 22.4 What is Systemic Theory?
 - 22.4.1 What is a Domestic Political Explanation of Foreign Policy in Systemic Terms?
 - 22.4.2 Is Systemic Theory, a Theory of Foreign Policy?
- 22.5 Defining Unipolarity
- 22.6 The Debate over Unipolarity
- 22.7 The Future of Unipolarity: Balance of Threat versus Balance of Power
- 22.8 Challenges to the Unipolar World
- 22.9 Summary
- 22.10 Exercises

22.1 INTRODUCTION

The conclusion of the Second World War led to the emergence of a phase in international politics that was termed the 'Cold War.' The victors of the war had divided Europe into two antagonistic spheres, primarily based on the ideological differences between capitalism and communism. The Cold War in *realpolitik* reflected the conflicts of interest that had grown amongst the allies as the war came to a close. Mutual suspicion about the motives of the 'other' and the competing universalistic yet contradictory ideologies generated hostile posturing that on several occasions could have led to another catastrophic war with unforeseen consequences for humanity at large. For close to five decades the antagonism between the United States and the erstwhile Soviet Union determined the ebb and flows of international power politics with their proxy nations being witness to civil and military conflict, especially in Asia and Africa. The consequences of the Cold War, it can be premised, are still visible in the changing international order.

The Cold War resulted in the development of technologies that could exterminate mankind as also the stockpiling of immense weapons of mass destruction. Sheer quantities of weaponry apart, the Cold War phase tested the emergence of an international structure of conflict resolution and negotiations that primarily stemmed from the 'balance of terror' achieved by both the superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union. The concept of 'balance of terror' arose from the realisation that the superpowers were evenly matched when it came to unleashing their weaponry on each other should a conflict arise, leading to the annihilation of each other. To strengthen international structures of cooperation and negotiation, organisations with a pan-European identity began to shape the international system since the 1950s. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) formed in 1952 with six members is a prime example of such endeavours. The ECSC has evolved in the past five decades to become what is today known as the European Union (EU). Prior to the formation of a common economic identity was the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), that today has as its members nations of the former Warsaw Pact., the countries under the influence of Soviet Union.

With international politics almost always at the crisis mode, it was a turning point in 1989 when the Berlin wall was dismantled, and almost overnight communist states of East Europe abandoned an ideology that determined ‘production relations’ for a system where market forces were predominant. The implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 was the final footnote in the history of the Cold War. The years after the collapse of the Soviet Union have yielded to the emergence of a system where one superpower dominates all spheres of influence, and this phase can be called the rise of the unipolar world with the United States as the main determinant of the international order.

The centrality of the United States to this order is a matter of discourse for international relations and political science theorists. Before explaining the various cross currents situated within the unipolar order, it is imperative to elaborate on the prevailing global “system” – within whose rubric the dynamics of a unipolar world operate.

22.2 WHAT IS A SYSTEM?

The structure and norms of the world polity are products of policies *chosen* by states and other actors that make the world system and its various subsystems. At the same time the structure and norms of the world political system influences the behaviour of the subsystems comprising it.

Theorising based on systems brings together two fundamental approaches to International Relations (IR) theory. The first is focused on actors and the interaction that takes place between them, whether they are individuals, groups of people such as nations, or bureaucratic units. This approach has been termed *reductionist* because its focus is the development of explanations or theory at the level of the individual participants or units. The second approach places emphasis on the structures that provide the framework within which such interactions take place. The structural approach attempts to explain how the structures within which the actors exist affect the interactions between the actors, and how and why changes in the structure take place. This structural approach has been termed *holistic* or *systemic* because it is based on the development of explanations at a more micro level of analysis.

In a systems framework, change or stability can be generated at any level (from micro to macro) in the world polity. Such change or stability-generating forces can also come from or be processed through factors not fully encompassed by the political system, namely, ethnic/cultural, religious groupings, economy, ecological environment and the physical universe. Developments in any of these “non-political” fields will affect, sometimes profoundly, the conditions of life, perceptions, and values of the same persons who construct, operate and transform the world’s political system and subsystems.

22.3 FEATURES OF THE SYSTEMS THEORY

The world polity should first of all be viewed as the global configuration of governance – meaning the enforceable rules, and the rule-making and rule-implementing processes and institutions. It includes not only the prevailing configuration of governance but also efforts directed towards changing the prevailing configuration. As such the world polity is appropriately conceived of as a subsystem of the world’s social system. Other subsystems, at this level of analysis, would be the world economic system, the humanity centred ecological system, the world’s pattern of cultures, and so on.

The world polity, viewed as a system, itself comprises various political subsystems:

- a) The ‘nation-state system’ (often referred to as the “international system”) of official government to government relations among countries including numerous regional and functional intergovernmental agencies.

- b) The rapidly proliferating “transnational” organizations and political movements operating beyond the direct control of national governments (the transnational actors may be political sub-divisions of the nation states as well as non-governmental groups or persons)
- c) The internal or domestic systems of politics and government of each nation-state, comprising their own subsystems: provincial and local governments, party systems, interest group organizations etc.
- d) The individual as political actor.

An essential feature of the proposed theory is that the various systems and subsystems, although analytically discrete, are open to one another: causes and effects typically move laterally from subsystem to subsystem, but also vertically from one level to the next, even leaping over levels. Yet each system or subsystem has its own partially unique configuration; and some of them as a matter of policy, may try to restrict the extent to which they are open to influence from other systems. It may be theoretically valid, therefore and often analytically useful, to heuristically treat them as closed systems. But, with increasing mobility of persons, substances and information, the *interpenetrability* of the various systems that make up the world’s political system would seem to be a more useful premise of a general theory of the world polity.

The premise of open systems is consistent with the analytic strategy advanced by James Rosenau for understanding the turbulence of the contemporary era. We need, he advises, to “analyse world politics in such a way as to use labels that do not automatically accord superior status to nation-states.” We should operate from the assumption that “sub-national and supranational sovereignty-free actors may be as relevant as sovereignty bound actors, . . . conceiving of whole systems and sub-systems as the cast of characters at the macro level that, along with the individuals at the micro level act out global dramas.” This conceptual frame, says Rosenau, “facilitates inquiry into the conflicts that divide collectivities and the efforts they must make to bridge the issues that separate them.”

22.4 WHAT IS SYSTEMIC THEORY?

A systemic theory presumes that how power is distributed among states — or what is called the systemic structure — affects how states behave. The idea is that how states behave is a function of what the international arena looks like. A system with one dominant power (unipolarity) is likely to function differently from one in which there are two dominant powers (bipolarity) or more than two dominant powers (multipolarity). How the actors relate to each other and the relationship between the structure and the actors – agents – (the structure-agency relationship) forms a critically important part of the quest for an understanding of change at the systemic, holistic level.

22.4.1 What is a Domestic Political Explanation of Foreign Policy In Systemic Terms?

This depends on an implicit contrast to “systemic” or “structural” explanations. What we count as a domestic theory can vary depending on the way we conceive of systemic theories: (1) those that envision states as unitary and purposive actors that consider what other states will or might do, or (2) those that, in addition to this, do not consider characteristics of particular states as relevant to the explanation offered.

22.4.2 Is Systemic Theory, a Theory of Foreign Policy?

Yes: international political outcomes are the direct, even if sometimes unintended, result of individual states’ foreign policy choices; if the theory explains tendencies, it must help

explain choices. For Kenneth Waltz, systemic theories are not theories of foreign policy “by definition.” A domestic theory would be one in which (a) at least one state is represented as non-unitary, and pursues a suboptimal foreign policy due to the interaction of the actors within the state, or (b) either include this or explain differences in foreign policies by referring to regime types or particular foreign policy goals. If one adopts the broader understanding of systemic theory, the scope for domestic politics to matter is greatly reduced. It is limited to cases where a state pursues a foreign policy that is suboptimal.

Systemic analysis itself incorporates domestic factors. Domestic theories trace an individual foreign policy to facts about its political system rather than solely, or at all, to its international position. Elaborating further, James N. Rosenau terms the international system as having entered an era of “cascading interdependence” based on rapidly changing patterns of interaction among such phenomena as “resource scarcities, subgroupism, the effectiveness of governments, transnational issues, and the aptitudes of publics.” Cascading interdependence distributes power in an erratic fashion among state entities and numerous sub-systems at many levels.

In the post-Cold War world, an overwhelming amount of scholarly attention has been directed at quantifying, evaluating and predicting the trajectory of American power. Terms like primacy, unipolarity, empire and hegemony have been used to capture the essence of the United States status in the international system. A definition of the term unipolar will be as follows: “the preponderant influence or authority over others, or, the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant state/group.” Not only does the United States possess an unprecedented amount of power relative to other states in the system, but it also exhibits a preponderant influence over other states across all realms of interaction, including the creation of international institutions.

22.5 DEFINING UNIPOLARITY

The concept of polarity in the international system is used to describe the distribution of power capabilities across states. Polarity is a descriptive term that illustrates the structure of the system through a portrayal of the concentration of hard power capabilities in the system. The three main variations in polarity are unipolarity, bipolarity and multipolarity. However it is important to recognise that even within each type of polarity there exists variation. For example, John Mearsheimer has distinguished between balanced multipolarity and unbalanced multipolarity, which depend on the degree to which power capabilities vary among multiple great powers. Polarity is a system-level concept that relates to the distribution of power, real or perceived, in the international system. Unilateralism and multilateralism are choices about the policies that states adopt within a given international system.

Charles Krauthammer and Robert Kagan are what might be called unipolar unilateralists. They see the distribution of power in the international system as essentially unipolar. They also embrace unilateral policies as the means by which the United States must protect its interests and act for the greater good of humanity. Krauthammer identified the “unipolar moment” in his seminal article of 1990 and later came to see unipolarity as an enduring feature of the international order. John Ikenberry and Joseph Nye are similar to Krauthammer and Kagan in that they perceive the international system as essentially unipolar. Ikenberry essentially updates hegemonic stability theory to post-Cold War conditions, arguing that through restraint and the judicious use of international institutions, the US can perpetuate its special status in the international system, forestalling the formation of hostile coalitions or the rise of a new hegemon. Nye acknowledges some elements of multipolarity in the international system – he argues that international relations has become a three level game involving military, economic and so-called soft power, with the US

enjoying unipolar dominance only on the first level – but he is concerned that a shift to across-the-board multipolarity would be destabilising. American foreign policy, according to Nye, can and should work to preserve US military dominance through the judicious use of soft power.

Traditional realists such as John Mearsheimer reject both the neoconservative and liberal views of the unipolar world order. They argue that the international system is inherently multipolar. Any unipolar imbalance can only be momentary, as competing power centres inevitably rise and seek to counterbalance the dominant power. Mearsheimer also argues that US policy must be unilateralist for the simple reason that all great powers pursue essentially unilateralist policies.

For William Wohlforth, unipolarity is, a structure in which one state's capabilities are too great to be counterbalanced. Unipolarity is an extremely useful term for capturing the current state of the international system, which is marked by an overwhelming and unprecedented concentration of power in both the military arsenal and the economic strength of one nation. In other words, the term unipolarity describes a heavily skewed distribution of power in favour of one state. Building on this understanding, unipolarity can take more than one form. According to the traditional understanding of unipolarity, it can be present when there is one great power in a system full of minor powers. Other alternative forms of unipolarity could be present in a system that contains one superpower with all great powers or one superpower with all minor powers. The key to understanding unipolarity is in the degree to which power capabilities are concentrated in the hands of a single dominant state.

Unipolarity implies neither the absence of all politics among great powers nor the absence of all power balancing among lesser powers nor certainly the resolution of all global problems. It does not mechanistically determine a specific strategy on the part of the major powers. It simply creates incentives for strategies that diminish if not eliminate two major problems that bedeviled international systems of the past: struggles for global primacy and competitive balancing among the major powers. The US follows a strategy of maintaining a preponderance of power globally and deep engagement in the security affairs of Europe, Asia and the Middle East. It has adapted rather than abandoned the central institutions and practices it fostered during the bipolar era, expanded the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to central Europe, strengthened its military alliance with Japan, and taken on a great many other less heralded new security commitments in areas formerly under the grasp of the Soviet Union.

While unipolarity captures the essence of the distribution of power in a system, it does not capture the amount of influence exerted on others in the system. Even in a unipolar system, the dominant state can choose to demonstrate little or no desire to control both the internal and external affairs of states around the globe. In other words, unipolarity is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the status of global hegemony.

22.6 THE DEBATE OVER UNIPOLARITY

For realists, the debate over the structure of international politics is primarily centred on two explanations of world order: balance of power theory and balance of threat theory. Both theories have different predictions and policy prescriptions for US behaviour in the post-Cold War world.

Within the realist debate about the emerging structure of international politics, several commentators have suggested new configurations of world power. Some commentators have cited the erosion of US primacy as evidence of a changing international system. For instance, Samuel Huntington has proposed that changes in post-Cold War international

politics reflects a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major powers. It has been argued that the waning of 'American hegemony' has given rise to the regional power centres of Europe and East Asia. However, despite the devolution of US power globally, the shift towards multipolarity is several decades from now. The extent to which post-Cold War international politics remains unipolar will depend on the cautious exercise of US preponderance and its ability to convince other states of its apparent 'benign intent.'

In a widely cited essay Christopher Layne argues that America's unipolar moment will be short-lived, as smaller states will inevitably balance against it, leading to a new multipolar era. Similarly, other commentators believe that at least the structure of the economic world is multipolar. For instance, the former US president, Bill Clinton had proclaimed at a summit in Tokyo in 1993 that "we now live in a tripolar world, driven by the Americas, Europe and Asia."

The durability of unipolarity has been particularly questioned by neo-realists. For neo-realists, unipolarity is the least stable of all structures because any great concentration of power threatens other states and causes them to take action to restore a balance. Other commentators suggest that a large concentration of power works for peace, and they doubt that US preponderance is fragile and easily negated by the actions of other states. Despite this, many analysts argue that unipolarity is an 'illusion', a 'movement' that will not last long, or is already giving way to multipolarity. Kenneth Waltz is instructive in his response to unipolarity. Waltz points out the inevitable recurrence of balancing against hegemonic powers:

Balance-of-power theory leads one to expect that states, if they are free to do so, will flock to the weaker side. The stronger, not the weaker side, threatens them, if only by pressing its preferred politics on other states.

For Waltz, structural change affects the behaviour of states, compelling them to balance and thwart even a 'benign hegemon' such as the US. Despite Paul Kennedy's assertion that, "it simply has not been given to any one state to remain permanently ahead of all the others states," the real question is how long will international politics remain unipolar? For Waltz, polarity is the concentration of power among major states. "Poles" are those states with unusually large concentrations of all underlying elements of power. The US is the only state today- and indeed, the only state in modern international history- that excels markedly and measurably in all the relevant power capabilities: military, economic, technological and geopolitical. The power of the US is not unlimited, but it is unprecedented. The US accounts for 60 per cent of all defence spending among the world's major powers. It also accounts for 40 per cent of economic production, 40 per cent of technology production and 50 per cent of total research and development expenditures. No state in history could do this and leading states tended to be either great commercial and naval powers or great land powers – never both.

Those who see the world as multipolar and embrace genuinely multilateral policies include Michael Lind, who has called for an effort to revive a concert of great powers, as well as David Calleo and Charles Kupchan, both of whom also embrace a form of multipolar multilateralism, albeit one that is highly Eurocentric. Lind argues that the US should concentrate on working with the other major powers in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the G8, an approach that will spare the US the need to choose between a reflexive multilateralism that subordinates US interests to the rule of small and weak countries and an arrogant unilateralism that places the US at odds with the rest of the world. Calleo and Kupchan see the European Union (EU) as evolving into a great power counterpart of the US, one that is neither weak nor necessarily a threat to US interests. Calleo sees a stronger EU as the natural partner of a chastened and more

modest US in building a “cooperative multilateral system based on rules with an effective balance of power to sustain those rules,” while Kupchan heralds the “return of a world of multiple power centres” in which Europe is America’s only near-term major competitor.

Coral Bell and Michael Mastanduno argue that the durability of unipolarity rests on balance-of-threat theory. Balance-of-threat theory proposes that states will not balance a dominant power if its behaviour is perceived as benign and non-threatening. Following this, a dominant power is supported if it exercises its power to promote shared interests and institutions that subvert anarchy and competition. In contrast, states that exercise unfettered power and engage in predatory behaviour are likely to trigger balancing coalitions.

The grand strategy of preserving unipolarity was enunciated in the Defence Planning Guide (DPG) of 1992. The paper stated that the US “must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role.”

The conclusion of the DPG reflected official views about unipolarity. For instance, in 1991, the Pentagon’s Director of Net Assessments defined a ‘manageable’ world as one in which there existed no threat to America’s superpower role. Clearly, from the point of view of US officials, the post-Cold War system is unambiguously unipolar.

For Huntington, international primacy is “the ability of one actor to exercise more influence on the behaviour of more actors with respect to more issues than any other government.” Kenneth Waltz argues that the ability of the US to exert international influence is determined by its different sources of power. For Waltz, size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence rank high as important sources of power.

The strategic direction of the 1992 DPG was driven by a desire to preserve US primacy. In addition to maintaining US primacy, the DPG envisioned the US seeking to prevent the rise of challenges by promoting international law, democracy and free-market economies.

22.7 THE FUTURE OF UNIPOLARITY: BALANCE OF THREAT VERSUS BALANCE OF POWER

To preserve its dominant position, the US, acts by reassuring and integrating potential challengers into security and economic institutions. Since the end of the Cold War, US security policy has tended to conform to the predictions of the balance-of-threat theory. US officials have sought to preserve US preponderance through efforts to convince countries like Japan and Germany to remain *partial* great powers, and to integrate potential great powers like Russia and China into an American led new world order. It must be mentioned here that neither balance-of-threat nor balance-of-power commentators suggest that unipolarity is indefinite, but rather have different views as to how long unipolarity will last.

Balance-of-threat theory, first advanced by Stephan Walt, points to the durability of the ‘unipolar movement.’ Walt suggests that the balancing behaviour of states may be overcome, provided that the foreign policy of the dominant state is moderate and is seen by other states as preferable to the rivalry of a multipolar world. Similarly, Mastanduno proposes that, “unipolarity will not be preserved forever, but balance-of-threat theory implies that it may be sustainable for a meaningfully longer period than balance-of-power theorists anticipate. Balance-of-threat theory accounts for the tendency in US security policy to preserve America’s position at the top of the international hierarchy by engaging and reassuring other major powers.

In contrast to this, balance-of-power theory, developed most explicitly by Kenneth Waltz, argues that unipolarity will be transformed into multipolarity by the early decades of the

twenty-first century. In Waltz' analysis he draws on the historical behaviour of states to moderate asymmetries of power among nations and to balance what he terms "American hegemony." Balance-of-power theory suggests that efforts to preserve unipolarity are bound to be futile and likely to be counterproductive. In the case of other major powers Layne suggests that:

...a policy of attempting to smother Germany's and Japan's great power emergence would be unavailing because structural pressures will impel them to become great powers regardless of what the US does or does not do.

In the current unipolar world the rise of new powers to balance the US (like China) is not a foregone conclusion. US statecraft in the post-Cold War world has asserted a *limited* hegemony over political-military matters. Accordingly, US officials emphasise multilateral coalitions and decision-making processes over unilateralism, even in cases of military intervention. The logic of balance-of-threat theory is instructive here. States that engage in self-binding and exercise their power in a benign manner are unlikely to trigger balancing. The benign exercise of power gives rise to trust and shared interests and institutions that underwrite stability and negate competition between states.

22.8 CHALLENGES TO THE UNIPOLAR WORLD

The post-Cold war era has been dominated by the US and the international system is unipolar. The comprehensive power of the US has encouraged a commitment to multilateral decision-making, trade liberalisation and the stated global ideals of liberal norms. The structure of international politics reflects the preferences and interests of the US – the world's only superpower now evolving into a hyper-power. This unipolar system is in all likelihood the prime determinant for the foreseeable future.

The extent to which the international system remains unipolar depends on the exercise of US power. The US has sought to legitimise its primacy in political-military matters through a combination of 'benign hegemony' and 'multilateral rule-making' rather than forceful unilateralism. To maintain its primacy in international affairs, the US has followed the prescriptions of balance-of-threat theory in promoting limited American hegemony. However, the ability of the US to convince other states about its intentions is perhaps the most studied aspect of the international system today.

Contrary views to this 'unipolar moment' are reflected in the growing opposition to 'globalisation' and a formalised structure of free trade as exemplified by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The WTO is an institution that is much loathed in developing countries and seen as a vehicle promoting the interests of the industrialised countries at the expense of the large majority of people who make do with little. The emergence of the WTO paradoxically highlights the emergence of a 'supra state' that through its policies can wreck the livelihoods of people through its policy prescriptions. The increased role and reach of non-government organisations and the growing awareness and empowerment of large populations spread across all the continents is finding its expression in the World Social Forum (WSF) umbrella organisation that champions the voices of the unheard. The WSF is increasingly vocal in its opposition to policies enunciated by the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the garb of 'structural adjustment' that denies developing countries the chance of arriving at a consensus of what development paradigm to adopt and instead forces an agenda that suits the industrialised nations of the West. This approach of undermining the sovereignty of a nation-state by adopting economic measures is facing growing resistance. The panacea of 'globalisation' benefiting the entire world with its aims of 'shared prosperity' are increasingly coming under close scrutiny as large parts of the world still remain impoverished and strife-stricken.

22.9 SUMMARY

This Unit has attempted to theoretically define what unipolar world means as a part of systemic theory. More importantly, the debate around the unipolar world has been largely in the context of the 20th century history of the world, where cold war gave way to the dominance of U.S.A. in large spheres of world polity. The Unit also attempted to chart out some future directions in this regard.

22.10 EXERCISES

- 1) What is the theoretical debate around the idea of unipolarity?
- 2) In what ways has the dominance of USA over world polity led to the establishment of the unipolar world?
- 3) What are the possible future directions in the present scenario of a singular dominance of the world by U.S.A.?



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