
UNIT 14 END OF COLD WAR: EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL ORDER/DISORDER*

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14.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, you will be reading about the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a new global order/ disorder. After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- Identify the factors that led to the end of the Cold War
- Describe the varied, yet connected, images and explanations of the post-Cold War global order/ disorder that were developed by American scholars and the
- Analyse the evolving trends in the international system.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

The Berlin Wall began to be dismantled on 9th November 1989 sounding the death knell of erstwhile Cold War. Mikhail Gorbachev the then General Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) and President of USSR (United Soviet Socialist Republic) resigned on 25th December 1991 and transferred the Soviet Nuclear Codes to Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The Communist flag over the Kremlin was replaced by the Russian flag, and USSR officially split into fifteen independent Republics, marking the collapse of the Soviet Union and its final dismemberment.

The events that occurred during 1989-92 in Soviet Russia, East and West Germany, East Europe, and Yugoslavia marked the end of the Cold War. The world ushered into a new international system. The New World Order that emerged has been interpreted variedly by various experts and is still unfolding itself. One group of scholars believed it has marked the 'End of History'. According, to another group of experts, the world order was asserted to be unipolar where United States of America (USA) was the lone superpower. According, to yet another group, the world has entered into an era of peace with the end of hostilities and competition between the two blocs. It raised a pertinent question: what kind of world order has emerged or is emerging? There were apprehensions and misgivings: what was emerging at the global level looked more like a world disorder.

Much of the theorization about the end of the Cold War and the nature of emerging world order/disorder soon fell into disrepute. There is lots of fluidity and some uncertainty in what is happening at the global level. Not that there is anarchy or chaos at the international level; things are still being managed and international organizations are working. But the pace of change and fluidity is enormous. Russia has resurged; its action in Ukraine and Syria are good examples. This has made many to see the return of Cold War II. Others see in the rise of China the coming of a new bipolarity. US and China, the G-2 will do mutual handholding to dominate and govern in their respective spheres of influence. Then there is the thesis of multipolarity. The emergence of new powers, such as India, China, Brazil, South Africa Russia, and others indicate the arrival of multipolarity. There is redistribution of economic and political power at the global level; power is shifting from trans-Atlantic to Indo-Pacific region. Most of the theories that emerged seem to have been shaken over the last three decades since the end of the Cold War. Post-Cold War world thus has been a subject of interpretation as to whether it is one of order or disorder? Different images of the world as interpreted by a cross-section of experts since the end of the cold war have been described and enumerated below.

14.2 FACTORS LEADING TO THE END OF COLD WAR

Following factors led to the end of the Cold War.

Reforms in Soviet Union: Mikhail Gorbachev assumed the reins of power in 1985 and introduced the policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. *Glasnost* or 'openness' meant political liberalization. It meant a greater willingness on the part of Soviet officials to allow discussion of political and social issues and adoption of some Western ideas and goods into the USSR. *Perestroika* meant economic restructuring - was an initiative that allowed limited market incentives to Soviet citizens. He introduced these reforms with the hope that they would be enough to spark the sluggish Soviet economy. Freedom is often addictive and people in different parts of Eastern Europe started craving for more of it creating a dominos effect all over. The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania declared independence. Similar talks started happening in Ukraine, the Caucasus, and the Central Asian states. Ukraine, Byelorussia and Russia itself declared independence in December 1991, leading to the dissolution of Soviet Union. Gorbachev became President without a country.

Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe: The unravelling of the Soviet Bloc began in Poland in June 1989. Despite previous Soviet military interventions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland itself, Polish voters elected a non-communist opposition government to their legislature. The world watched anxiously, expecting Soviet tanks to roll into Poland to prevent the new government from taking power. Gorbachev refused to act and Communists were ousted thereby creating again a dominos effect in Eastern Europe. Subsequently, Communist regimes were ousted in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. On the Christmas Day of 1989, the brutal Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife were summarily executed on live television. Yugoslavia threw off the yoke of communism only to dissolve quickly and ushering into a violent civil war.

Fall of Berlin Wall: The East and West Germans tore down the Berlin Wall with pickaxes. Many took axes and picks to the Wall upon the collapse of Communism in Germany in 1989. However, the official destruction of the Berlin Wall did not begin until June 1990.

Economic Collapse of the Soviet Union: The Soviet Union could not sustain the arms race further. Its military-industrial complex was highly developed and consumer industry was highly underdeveloped. Hence, people had to stand in queue running into several kilometres even for a loaf of bread. This created dissensions and discontentment among citizens.

14.3 IMAGES OF GLOBAL ORDER/DISORDER IN POST-COLD WAR WORLD

Since 1945, majority of the world population were born and brought up into the Cold War culture that featured McCarthyistic witch-hunting in the US; American destabilization and interventions in the name of fighting ‘International Communism’; Soviet interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia; proxy wars, an arms race; space race, Cuban missile crisis, Vietnam war, detente, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Star Wars proposal. Once the enemy is gone, the world slipped into an era which according to many turned out to be unsafe. Some Americans advocated that facing one superpower was simpler than challenging dozens of ‘rogue’ states and ‘renegade’ groups sponsoring global terrorism. Subsequently, several models, images or paradigms of the international system or world order/disorder that emerged after the end of the Cold War have been provided by different experts of world political system and international relations. Nevertheless, it has caused widespread confusion over how to characterize contemporary global order, international politics and how to project trends and scenarios for the future.

14.4 END OF HISTORY: FRANCIS FUKUYAMA

Francis Fukuyama, in his 1989 essay “The End of History?” (which was expanded into a book, *The End of History and The Last Man* in 1992) argued that the advent of Western Liberal Democracy may signal the endpoint of humanity’s sociocultural evolution and the final form of human government. He wrote: “What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is the endpoint of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western

Liberal Democracy as the final form of human government.” What Fukuyama said was the triumph of liberal democracy and market economy is final and ultimate; this is the end to all debates on alternatives to capitalist democracy. The end of the Cold War is also the end of communism. Thus, Marxist’s prophecy that communism will displace capitalism has been disproved, as the end of the cold war led to the demise of communism.

However, this thesis of Fukuyama was favoured as well as criticised equally by a cross-section of scholars. Jacques Derrida criticised Fukuyama, whereas ‘democratic peace theorists’ favoured him. However, the evolution of the post-Cold War world reveals that both democracies and dictatorships have declined in the world; whereas communism continues in certain parts of the world. ‘The end of history’ thesis reflects the great urge to ensure the “death of Marx”. Derrida rejected the glorification of capitalism and liberal democracy: “no degree of progress allows one to ignore that never before, in absolute figures, have so many men, women and children been subjugated, starved or exterminated on the earth” as under capitalist democracy. Apologists of the ‘end of history’ disinterred Immanuel Kant to celebrate his thesis that democracies don’t fight against each other, and therefore the creation of a zone of democracies is necessary to establish a zone of peace and security.

14.5 THE THREE-BLOC GEO-ECONOMICS MODEL

This model has been visualised by Walter Russell Mead, Jeffrey Garten, Edward Luttwak, Lester Thurow etc. The advocates of this model argued that in the new international system geo-economics has replaced geopolitics as the crucial determinant of the rise or decline of nations; , and that military power was thus becoming increasingly less relevant, hence wasteful, in the context of global competition. They further advocated that the world is evolving into three competitive economic blocs: (i) a Japan-led Pacific Rim region including Korea, Southeast Asia, and presumably China; (ii) a US-led Western Hemisphere bloc centred on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and potentially encompassing Latin America; and (iii) a German-centred European bloc, assumed to include Russia and other ex-Soviet states and perhaps also North Africa. It thus makes it obvious that the less-developed regions of Africa and South Asia, and the Middle East stand relegated to the status of neo-colonial resource zones to be courted by the three major blocs.

Thurow predicted that in the race ahead, one of the three great economic powers is apt to pull ahead of the other two. Whichever pulls ahead is apt to stay ahead. That country or region of the globe will own the twenty-first century in the sense that the United Kingdom owned the nineteenth century and the United States owned the twentieth century (Thurow, 1992). It is yet to be witnessed as China is not in the queue.

Joseph Nye has made three basic criticisms of the three-bloc thesis. First, he says it “runs counter to the thrust of global technological trends,” and that ‘while regional trade will certainly grow, many firms would not want to be limited to one-third of the global market and would resist restrictive regionalism.’(Nye, 1992). Secondly, “restrictive regional blocs run against nationalistic concerns of

some of the lesser states that need a global system to protect themselves against domination by their large neighbours.” Thirdly, the three-bloc vision is too dismissive of security concerns, for instance, the need of Germany and Japan for a continuing US security umbrella in case Russia or China emerge as a threat. This theory seems to be a dominant theory of regionalism even today and as a common-sense categorization of world order could be that militarily the world may be a unipolar world with the USA as the sole superpower. However, from the viewpoint of economic strength and activity, there are multiple regional centres of economic power and hence world order is multipolar.

14.6 THE REVITALISED BALANCE OF POWER MODEL

Within the Realist school of International Relations, some traditionalists envisioned that future could not differ more sharply from that of the geoeconomists. According to them, security and brute power relationships always function as the most fundamental determinants of international systems. The end of the Cold War makes a return to multipolarity and balance of power almost inevitable. This model argued that four powers were likely to define the emerging pattern of the twenty-first century: the United States, China, Russia and Europe.

As predicted, the most likely scenario was to be a loose alliance among Europe, America and Russia for the containment of China, while Japan intimidated by China’s growing power, and needing America’s protection, would stay modestly at sub-great power level. A second likely scenario predicted was an alignment between rising China and the Islamic world, which would in turn push Russia and Europe closer together. Another and the third scenario that was envisaged was of a rising China at loggerheads with the containment alliance comprising of the United States, Japan and India with Korea tilting towards the latter combination and Russia playing a neutral role and selling arms and energy to China. Yet another scenario was that of a China-Japan-Korea alliance aimed at driving US influence out of Asia, with Russia and Europe remaining on the sidelines (Harkavy, 1997). The third prediction is currently visible to a great extent in the contemporary world with the ‘bromance’ between Russia and China gaining lots of traction.

Kissinger’s analysis of a new, emerging balance of power is somewhat similar. He advocated that a cohesive if not fully integrated Europe and is perhaps more inclined to foresee a gradual decline of America’s relative power. The US would remain *primus inter pares* as the greatest and most powerful nation, but a nation with peers. He further emphasised that “The absence of both an overriding ideological or strategic threat frees nations to pursue foreign policies based increasingly on their immediate national interest” (Kissinger, 1994).

Joseph Nye criticized this multipolar model as a false analogy with the nineteenth-century order that rested upon a balance of five roughly equal powers, i.e. Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia (Nye, 1992). Russia’s economic weakness, China’s status as a developing country, Japan’s limited military power, and Europe’s lack of political unity suffices in his view to refute Kissinger’s historical analogy.

Richard Rosecrance also questioned the validity of the traditional balance of power thinking in the post-Cold War age. He agrees that the balance of power

held sway during most of the nineteenth and the first half part of the twentieth century, but it was an inefficient mechanism at best, providing no automatic equilibration of power relationships, and gave rise to the world wars of this century (Rosecrance, 1992). Unlike most other forecasters, Rosecrance saw danger emanating from Japan rather than China. According to him:

“The most potent future antagonism the world could witness is a radical division between the United States and Japan. The Westernization of contemporary Japan is as yet incomplete. Beneath the external policy of a Japanese trading state boil nationalist resentments directed at a half-century of American tutelage and Western neglect....If current trends continue, it may not be too long before ideological rationalizations of Confucian strength and vitality are propounded by Japan as antidotes to supposed Western decadence and lethargy”.

Rosecrance was hoping that a concert of like-minded states would be dashed if one or more of its major members turned revisionist in pursuit of territorial aspirations or to erase a historical sense of humiliation or lost status. Thus, Russia, humiliated by its loss of the Cold War, near-collapse of its economy, and territorial dismemberment could well play the role of a disruptive expansionist. China nurtures revisionist territorial aims with respect to some or all of the South China Sea islands, portions of Siberia, and perhaps of Kazakhstan, all of which were once in the Chinese orbit. China’s long humiliation at the hands of Western “barbarian” has also made it especially sensitive to perceived unequal treatment and desirous of a “place in the sun.”(Lilly, 1996)

The most recent formation of ‘Quadrilateral Security Dialogue’ consisting of US, Japan, Australia and India is an endeavour to balance China’s assertion in the South China Sea and its growing dominance in Indo Pacific Ocean. Changing narrative from ‘Asia-Pacific’ to ‘Indo-Pacific’ too is an endeavour in this direction. Thus, this image of the global order also has some value and relevance.

14.7 CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS MODEL

Another image of the future world order is the “clash of civilizations’ thesis model as proposed by Samuel P. Huntington. Huntington wrote in 1993:

“It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future”.

It meant that the coming age was going to be unique in the sense that henceforth the great conflicts may occur between, and not within, civilizations.

Huntington defined civilizations as “the highest cultural grouping and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species,”; and identified seven or eight major civilizations of the contemporary world: - Western, Confucian (Sinic), Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly the African.

Stating that fault lines between civilizations are replacing the political and ideological boundaries of the Cold War as the flashpoints for crisis and bloodshed, Huntington focuses particularly on cultural lines of demarcation between Western Christianity and Orthodox Christianity in Europe, and between the latter and Islam. Other fault lines that contain potential for large-scale future conflict include that between Arab Islamic civilization and the animist or Christian Africa to the south, and that between the Muslim and Hindu civilizations in South Asia. One might also interpret the potential conflict between the United States and either Japan or China as a clash between Western and Confucian civilizations. With the conflict in Bosnia, the Persian Gulf, and the Caucasus in mind, Huntington predicted that the next world war, if there is one, will be a war between civilizations. He was keener on the potency of cultural clash between the West and Islam. All civilization to him appears to be a giant monolith – unalloyed and uninfluenced by anything else except their adversarial cultural cores and doctrinaire obsessions.

Huntington's theory gained increased prominence when America's World Trade Centre was attacked by Al-Qaeda terrorists on September 11, 2001 (often referred to as 9/11). Most realist scholars began to look at the world order or the international political system from the prism of 'clash of civilizations'. However, going by the Huntington's categorization of civilizations the recent developments within the civilization called Islam disproves the theory of 'Clash of Civilizations' and presents a scenario for theorization in context with 'Clash within Civilizations'. Within the Islamic world, not only the sub-Islamic civilizations called Shia and Sunni were found standing like gladiators against each other but there was also a clash within the organizations of Sunnis for one-up-man-ship; as well as a power struggle for assuming the leadership of the Islamic world. The advent of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and its resumption of terroristic activities in Iraq and Syria and the subsequent declaration of Caliphate whereby Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi had declared himself as the Caliph and pronounced for the allegiance of the Islamic people all over the world not only set the tone for clear-cut 'Clash within Civilizations' but also demonstrated in its deeds and actions. Interestingly, the rise of ISIS and al-Qaeda marked another fault line in the so-called Islamic world: established regimes, mostly monarchic and autocratic found themselves being challenged by powerful non-state actors carrying the banners of very divergent agendas.

The pronouncement of 'Caliphate' was soon subtly contested by erstwhile al-Qaeda when its leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced for the creation of South Asian wing of al-Qaeda and pledged renewed loyalty to Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Omar. The most important development to be noted here was that both ISIS and al-Qaeda are Sunni Terrorist outfits and the former is a break-away group of the latter. Even within Iraq and Syria, the turf was not wide open for ISIS, as another group owing allegiance to al-Qaeda and supported by it, Jabhat al-Nushra was active and fighting in Syria against the forces of Syrian State. Hence, 'Clash of Civilizations' seems to have given way to 'Clash within Civilizations' and consequent imperatives for new theorization. It led to the almost complete destruction of Syria and devastation of Iraq where Russian and American forces were involved to demonstrate their military prowess. The continued wars in the Arab world where multiple stakeholders, local, regional, and international, are engaged with myriad agendas and grievances shatter the American thesis of the so-called unified 'Muslim World'. In reality, there is nothing to call 'Muslim World'.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

1) What is the central argument of ‘Clash of Civilizations’?.

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14.8 THE ‘UNIPOLAR MOMENT’ WORLD

Charles Krauthammer argued that the end of the Cold War had left the United States in the position of the sole superpower. Thus, the post-Cold War international system is unipolar. He described the period immediately after the end of the Cold War as the ‘unipolar moment’ in IR; and Krauthammer knew that like all moments, it would pass soon. But how soon? Krauthammer’s thesis, echoed by many other experts of International Relations, that was summed up: as “The most striking feature of the post-cold war world is its unipolarity. No doubt, multipolarity will come in time. In perhaps another generation or so there will be great powers coequal with the United States, and the world will, in structure, resemble the pre-World War I era. But we are not there yet, nor will we be for decades. Now is the unipolar moment.” Thus, ‘unipolar moment’ was supposed to last for decades; which it did not.

Those who argued for the US being in the position of sole superpower, and thus made the world unipolar in the aftermath of the Cold War, had first to contend with, the ‘declinist’ theories that posited an exhausted America; second, the geo-economic assumption that military power was passe; and finally, the ‘chaos’ theorists who saw America as incapable of dealing with the real problems that would define the next age of history, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, local famines and genocides, pollution, and resource depletion.

It was also argued that America’s ability to maintain hegemony will depend greatly on the extent to which it can maintain leadership of the now widely heralded Military Technical Revolution or Revolution in Military Affairs (MTR/RMA) made manifest in the Gulf War of 1991. Observers differ as to American prospects. Some point out that leadership in new technology is never more than temporary because of rapid diffusion. Others insist that the quantum leap made by the United States in the ‘systems of systems’ approach, integrating space technology, smart weapons, computers, and communications, was beyond the reach of any competitor in the then world. In sum, the ‘unipolar moment’ may last, but only so long as Russia, Europe, Japan, and China are unable or unwilling to replicate the sinews of high-technology warfare pioneered by the United States.

14.8.1 Age of Triumphalism

The end of the Cold War marked the dawn of the American Triumphalism. The US took the credit for the demise of the ideology of socialism and the disintegration of Soviet Union – its Cold War adversary. No one was ready to accept the truth that the Soviet Union collapsed under its weight – a system that had brought misery to its people had been dead for long. Triumphalism had another sinister dimension: everything about American culture, politics and economics came to be portrayed as ‘virtuous’; and that the US has a right to set the world right – after its own image. Proponents of Triumphalism explained the implications of these two notions in their distinctive ways. As noted earlier, Francis Fukuyama wrote that the triumph of Western liberalism is the endpoint of time; nothing new or improved would come hereafter. For Charles Krauthammer, this was the ‘unipolar moment’ which would last for decades; there is no military adversary in sight to challenge the US for generations.

Triumphalist ideas continued to flow in the 1990s. William Kristol and Robert Kagan, the two neoconservatives, wrote that the post-Cold War is fulfilling history’s purpose and perpetuating American primacy. Like two sides of the same coin, American assertiveness would hasten history’s arrival at its predetermined destination where American values would prevail everywhere. America has the “responsibility to lead the world”; it must follow the strategy of “benevolent global hegemony” backed by its military power and moral values. Thomas Friedman equated globalization with Americanization and suggested that the spread of free-market be backed by America’s ‘hard’ power.

The terrorist events of 9/11 turned Triumphalism into the official credo. Imbued with his divine mission, President George W Bush declared the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). He declared free-market democracy as “a single sustainable model for national success”; and secondly, that no one should ever entertain the ambition of ever “surpassing, or even equalling, the (military) power of the United States.” And thirdly, no international law could ever stop the US from unleashing its military might against a perceived challenger.

Before his term was out in 2008, President Bush discovered that free-market stood discredited; foremost in the US itself with the collapse of the Lehman Brothers and the onset of the Global Financial Crisis. Instead of the free market, the US economy had turned into the heavily state-owned and state-backed economy through stimulus packages. Unipolarity was a chimaera. The Age of Triumphalism had collapsed. Multipolarity had gained ground. US remains engaged in its GWOT in Afghanistan, and Iraq and Syria with no end in sight; yet prepares for interventions in an ever-growing list of countries – Libya, Venezuela, Iran and North Korea. It has defeated ISIS, al-Qaeda on battlefields but not at the intellectual level. American Triumphalism continues to produce reactions and rejections. It was American Triumphalism and humiliation of Russians which is responsible for the resurgence of Russian nationalism and the rise of Vladimir Putin.

14.8.2 The ‘Declinist’ Thesis

Robert Pape of the University of Chicago argued in *The National Interest* that the United States is in unprecedented decline and without deliberate actions, the fall of American power will be more precipitous with the progress of time. He

further pointed out that economic power provides the wherewithal to meet global commitments and advance national interests. America's overall share of gross world product is falling while others' shares are rising. America's current position of primacy is deteriorating rapidly, in part because other states are rising but also because the Bush administration (2000-08) managed to mismanage foreign policy and fiscal policy simultaneously (See Walt, 2009).

At its most basic level, the declinist thesis argues that the United States of America is in a period of - some say terminal - decline from its position of hegemony over the rest of the world. On most fronts - technological, economic, military - the US has neither the will nor the capability to project effective power; and shall soon be overtaken by others. It does not have the will and means to reverse this trend either. The US will soon have to adjust to the reality that it is no longer the preeminent power. The declinist thesis is not new in the US. It had its origin in the early years of Cold War in the backdrop of arms and space race when many Americans began saying that it is not too far when Soviet Union would overtake the US in military and technological terms. The thesis surfaced a second time in the 1970s in the wake of US defeat in Vietnam war, detente which many read as a sign of America's military weakness, and economic rise of Germany and Japan. Both times, US overcame the 'declinist' syndrome: John F Kennedy in the 1960s energised American idealism of global engagement and in the 1980s, Ronald Reagan went on the offensive by launching the second Cold War. The thesis resurfaced the third time in the context of emerging economies and declining US share in global GDP. Hence, US President Donald Trump's trade and tariff war against adversaries and allies alike.

14.9 ZONES OF PEACE AND ZONES OF TURMOIL

Another way of understanding the post-Cold War international system or world order has been suggested in terms of 'Zones of Peace' versus 'Zones of Turmoil' dichotomy popularized by Max Singer and the Aaron Wildavsky in *The Real World Order*. According to them, "the key to understanding the real world is to separate the world into two parts", one part of which, the 'Zone of peace, wealth and democracy' includes Western Europe, the US, Canada, Japan and the Antipodes, comprising some 15 per cent of the world's population, and the other of which, the 'zone of turmoil, war and development' includes the lands of the former Soviet Empire, and most of Asia, Africa, and Latin America

The main thesis of their book is that the political relations among the countries in the zones of peace and democracy will not be influenced by relative military power. Nor will those nations be divided into competing for military blocs seeking to balance each other's power. There probably will be plenty of national and other conflicts, but the decisive special characteristic of this conflict is that no one will believe that it can lead to war. However, some writers insist on to broader construction of these issues under the banner of what has come to be known as 'endism'. This is reviewed in Samuel Huntington, in which 'endism' is seen to incorporate notions about the end of warfare among civilized and wealthy states, the war proneness and democracy thesis and the 'end of history' thesis which celebrates the unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism (Huntington, 1989). Singer and Wildavsky expect permanent peace in the first global zone because a central pillar of the next world order is that modern democracies...do not even seriously imagine the possibility of being at war with one another.

Zones of turmoil, by definition, are by comparison poor, overpopulated, disaster-prone, and virtually ungovernable. Robert D. Kaplan in his *The Coming Anarchy* sets out to show how scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet (Kaplan, 1994). This theory again holds enough water as the world indeed seems to be divided into zones of peace and chaos which may not be specific to the form of government, yet it is there.

14.10 THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

There are yet another group of scholars whose viewpoint has been that the coming age will be the one in which unity—the “global village”—will be finally realized. Their argument is based on the on-going advances in telecommunications and data processing as the strongest forces in world affairs. The term means simplifying the whole world into one village through the revolution in telecommunication and computers. The term was coined by Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan and popularised in his book *The Guttenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*, (1962), and *Understanding Media* (1964). He argued that the instantaneous movement of information from one point of the world to others has led to the contraction of the world.

They note that the popular American television programmes and rock music video cassettes/DVDs can be found in the remotest villages of Africa and Latin America and that the whole world is adopting the technologies, values, lifestyles, and aspirations of the West. They heralded the Internet, stressed global interdependence, not only in matters of trade, investment and raw materials but concerning such global issues as environmental pollution, water shortages, weather, and population movements—solutions to which can only be found through global cooperation and by evolving global regimes of norms and mechanisms.

Here again, this trend is growing at a faster pace with Globalisation, despite fragmentation in different parts of the world. There is increased movement of goods, services, capital and people across the world which carries local cultures with them to different parts of the world. It has also led to growing cultural connectivity among nation-states and non-state actors of the world. Yet, the ushering of the world into the Digital Era and Globalisation sounded true for the thesis of the Global Village theorists. However, Trump’s policy of American First has led to theorization about ‘End of Globalisation’.

14.11 INCIPIENT BIPOLAR SYSTEM

Despite the current talk of the unipolar and multipolar world, the eventual possibility of a return to bipolarity cannot be ruled out. Some experts think that a new form of US-Russian conflict may take place in future after regaining power by Russia. Moreover, a bipolar bloc system may well evolve from the current or anticipated multipolar one as a China-Russia bloc faces American-led Western bloc against the combination, or an All-Asia bloc confronts a US-Europe-Russia one, thus belying hopes of global villagers. However, it has been observed that in Syria both US and Russia were once again at loggerheads. They confronted each other on Iran as well as on NATO’s eastward expansion.

There could be another analysis of bipolarity in terms of the Chinese challenge to US hegemony, a new Cold war, and a new 'containment' strategy; or US and China could form the G-2 with a pledge not to interfere in their respective zones of influence. This theory has been popularized of late by Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro (1997). A bipolar world system might evolve from the current or anticipated multipolar one as a China-Russia bloc faces off against US-Europe combination.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the Unit for tips for your answer.

- 1) Explain the concept of 'global village'.

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- 2) Comment on 'Zones of Peace' and 'Zones of Turmoil' categorization of the world political system.

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14.12 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have seen that much of the theorization about the end of the Cold War and the nature of emerging world order/disorder has fallen into disrepute. There is lots of fluidity and some uncertainty in what is happening at the global level. Not that there is anarchy or chaos at the international level; things are still being managed and international organizations are working. But, as we saw, the pace of change and fluidity is enormous.

Americans were pleasantly shocked at the fall of communism all over Eastern Europe. They were quick to claim credit for winning the Cold War. The Age of Triumphalism dawned and would rule the roost in American academia for nearly two decades.

Several others have claimed that no one won the Cold War. The US spent trillions of dollars arming itself themselves for a confrontation with the Soviet Union that fortunately never came. Moreover, thousands of American lives were lost waging proxy wars in Korea and Vietnam. Hundreds of thousands perished in the proxy wars the two sides waged through their allies and puppet regimes in

Africa, Asia and Latin America. Post-Cold War era was marked by both order and disorder. There were global orders in the sense that the world passed through unipolarity, multipolarity to sometimes bi-polarity; and disorder in the sense that both Russia and America were trying to demonstrate their military prowess against each other in Syria, Iran and in different other parts of the world on different occasions. Yet, nothing could be said with certainty as to who won and who lost. There are limitations to American power in the world and so is the case with Russia, China and other major powers. Hence, the kerfuffle that was created by the demise of the Cold War had disturbed the entropy of the globe to such an extent that it is yet to settle in some order.

14.13 REFERENCES

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14.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The central argument of the Clash of Civilisation is that the primary sources of conflict in the future are not ideological or economic factors, but cultural divisions. In other words, conflicts in the future may occur between, and not within, civilisations.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Initially advanced by media theorists to refer to the interconnected world, the concept of the global village has acquired wider connotations with growing interdependence. The concept is used to address common or global problems (environment, health, migration etc) through global cooperation and by evolving appropriate global intuitions and mechanisms.

- 2) This thesis is a combination of democratic peace theory and the familiar division of the world into developed and the developing regions. The Zone of Peace roughly coincides with the developed countries of the North that are mostly democratic and economically well off while the Zone of turmoil include countries of the South and former Soviet empire where democratic institutions struggle to cope with challenges of economic development and internal conflicts.

