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# From the Editor

## IN THIS ISSUE ...

C. CHRISTINE FAIR, KARL KALTENTHALER, and WILLIAM MILLER seek to explain why some Pakistanis oppose the American drone program while others support it. They find that the principal grounds of opposition to the drone strikes in Pakistan are not religious in nature. Instead, most Pakistanis oppose the strikes because their only knowledge of them comes from highly negative coverage in the elite media.

JOHN MUELLER reflects on Francis Fukuyama's 1989 essay that advanced the notion that history had come to an end in the sense that "liberalism, democracy and market capitalism" had triumphed as an ideology and that effective future challenges were unlikely to prevail. He concludes that Fukuyama seems to have had it fundamentally right and that his celebration of the "autonomous power of ideas" is justified.

SEAN BEIENBURG examines attempts at amending state constitutions in the 2011 and 2012 elections and finds that they were efforts to influence the interpretation of the U.S. Constitution. He argues that some elected state officials see themselves as legitimate challengers of Supreme Court decisions. In addition, he finds that national interest groups use state constitutions as platforms for federal constitutional politics, and that such efforts were predominantly, though not exclusively, conservative in the last two election cycles.

ACHIM HURRELMANN looks at lessons that could be drawn from the European Union about the democratization of other non-state entities. He argues that the EU's non-state character is no insurmountable obstacle to democratization. The "democratic deficit" of the European Union is rooted in the institutional design of its multilevel system and is further influenced by limited and uninformed citizen participation in EU politics.

YONGSHUN CAI discusses why both powerful and weak interest groups in China have been able to pursue their interests successfully. He finds that both groups have access to sources of power and that their success depends partly on the state's policy priorities. By assisting weak groups to pursue their interests, the state enhances its legitimacy and resilience.

DEMETRIOS JAMES CARALEY

# Did History End? Assessing the Fukuyama Thesis

JOHN MUELLER

IN A 1989 ESSAY, FRANCIS FUKUYAMA ADVANCED the notion that, with the death of communism, history had come to an end.<sup>1</sup> This somewhat fanciful, and presumably intentionally provocative, formulation was derived from Hegel, and it has generally been misinterpreted. He did not mean that things would stop happening—obviously a preposterous proposal.<sup>2</sup> Rather, he contended that there had been a profound ideological development. With the demise of communism, its chief remaining challenger after the extinguishment earlier in the century of monarchy and Fascism, liberalism—democracy and market capitalism—had triumphed over all other governmental and economic systems or sets of ordering principles. Looking for future challenges to this triumph, he examined the potential rise of destructive forms of nationalism and of fundamentalist

<sup>1</sup>See also Francis Fukuyama, “A Reply to My Critics,” *National Interest* 16 (Winter 1989/90): 22.

<sup>2</sup>Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *National Interest* (Summer 1989): 3–18. In discussing his essay 24 years after its publication, Fukuyama suggested the appeal of the approach lies in the fact that declaring an end “conveys a kind of apocalyptic sense that there is a big transition underfoot....You perceive there is something going on—saying it is the end of something gives you that aha moment.” The idea seems to have caught on. Since 1989, there have been books and articles prominently declaring the ends of nature (1989), faith (2004), poverty (2006), reason (2008), lawyers (2008), white America (2009), the free market (2010), the future (2011), leadership (2012), money (2012), illness (2012), men (2012), war (2012), courtship (2013), power (2013), and sex (2013). Carlos Lozada, “The end of everything,” *washingtonpost.com*, 5 April 2013.

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religion, but found them unlikely to prevail. Thus, the triumph of liberalism was likely to be permanent.

This article evaluates developments over the subsequent quarter century and argues that Fukuyama seems to have had it fundamentally right. Beginning with the countries of Eastern Europe, democracy continued its progress after 1989. Moreover, capitalism increasingly came to be accepted, so that when the world plunged into widespread economic crisis after 2007, proposed remedies variously recommended tinkering with the system, not abandoning it.

In the meantime, violent forms of nationalism that surged in some places in the last decade of the old century scarcely proved to be much of a challenge to these trends, and the same seems likely to hold for violent forms of fundamentalist religion that surged in some places in the first decade of the new one. In fact, the significance of both of these illiberal developments seems to have been much exaggerated.

In addition, there was a striking decline of civil warfare during the decade after 1989 to low levels that have held now throughout the new century.

Fukuyama's prediction that the end of history would be characterized by "boredom" has, perhaps unfortunately, proven to be savagely mistaken. However, his notion that there is "an emptiness at the core" of liberalism continues to be apt: the success of the ideology seems to have generated little satisfaction in its advocates, probably because they were expecting too much. Moreover, his celebration of the "autonomous power of ideas" seems justified.

The central policy implication of this experience is to suggest that if trends are on one's side (that is to say, coming into fashion), it may well be best not to work too strenuously to move them along: efforts to impose them are likely to be unnecessary and can be costly and even counterproductive.

## THE RISE OF DEMOCRACY

Since 1989, democracy has continued to progress even in some highly unlikely corners of the world. Overall, according to Freedom House measures, the percentage of countries that are electoral democracies rose from 41 when Fukuyama's article was published in 1989 to 61 in 2012, while the percentage deemed fully free (a high bar) rose less impressively from 37 to 46.<sup>3</sup>

Democracy's rise has, it seems, essentially been the result of a 200-year competition of ideas, rather than the necessary or incidental consequence of

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<sup>3</sup>Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2013: Democratic Breakthroughs in the Balance* (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2013).

grander changes in social, cultural, economic, or historic patterns. It has triumphed because the idea that democracy is a superior form of government, ably executed and skillfully promoted—or marketed—at one point in the world’s history, has increasingly managed to catch on.

By 1945, modern democracy had been suitably tested, refined, and packaged to increase its appeal. It had rebounded from such potentially discrediting calamities as the Reign of Terror in France, the Civil War in America, and the Great Depression of the 1930s, and it had seen its comparative appeal and credibility enhanced as it survived two wars in which two of its major competitors—monarchy and Fascism—were substantially destroyed.

Democracy was successfully urged upon the losers of World War II, who willingly accepted it, and there were notable additional advances, particularly after 1975, when the three remaining non-democracies in Europe outside the communist bloc—Greece, Portugal, and Spain—also converted. This was followed by similar developments in Latin America and in much of East and Southeast Asia.<sup>4</sup> The promoters improved neither the product nor the packaging. What changed was the receptivity of the customers: democracy caught on, at least among political elites, as an idea whose time had come. In particular, military leaders, particularly in Latin America, seem to have become convinced that the military dictatorship was a thing of the past.<sup>5</sup>

After 1989, democracy replaced communism in much of Eastern Europe and the splintered USSR as it had replaced monarchy and Fascism earlier. In Africa, there was also notable democratic progress in quite a few places. The most spectacular, of course, was South Africa. But there has also been democratic development in Tanzania, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Mozambique, Ghana, Benin, Kenya, Zambia, Madagascar, Gambia, and Senegal. Also impressive was the way in which the world’s most populous Muslim country, Indonesia, successfully navigated its way to democracy after 1997. Though far freer than in their communist past, both China and, to a lesser extent, Russia remain substantially recalcitrant, however.

Democracy has yet to penetrate deeply into the Islamic countries in the Middle East. However, where leaders have allowed elections, as in Algeria

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<sup>4</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). John Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), chap. 8.

<sup>5</sup>On elite transformations, see John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 18–22.

and Iran in 1997 (and then again in Iran in 2001 and 2013), the voters displayed considerable ability to differentiate and express their interest even though the choice of candidates and the freedom of speech was limited. And some Muslim states in the area, such as Turkey, Pakistan, and Qatar, have certainly been able to move substantially, if sometimes erratically, toward democracy. The popular revolutions waged throughout the Middle East beginning in 2011 suggest that further progress may be in the offing. However, things remain shaky, even in Tunisia and Libya, and a military coup in Egypt in 2013 that overthrew an elected government was, although, popularly supported, hardly an exercise in the purest democracy, of course. But it may be relevant to note that the coup leaders found it necessary to insist that they did not intend to run the government themselves, but would turn in over to a civilian transition government pending later elections. Whether that will happen remains to be seen.

Democracy is a governmental form, generally compatible with a vigorous and productive society, that functions rather well when people manage, on average, to be no better than they actually are or are ever likely to be: flawed, grasping, self-centered, prejudiced, and easily distracted. That is, democracy does not require a great deal from people; they do not need to be particularly good or noble, but merely to calculate their own best interests or, if they wish, interests that they take to reflect those of the collectivity, and, if so moved, to peacefully express them. There are, however, no guarantees that anyone will listen.

It follows from this perspective that contrary to the precepts of a large literature, no set of elaborate prerequisites or cultural preparations is necessary for democracy to emerge, and that an agonizing process of “democratization” is not necessarily required. That is, when not obstructed by armed authoritarians, democracy is often easy to establish and maintain because it is essentially based on giving people the freedom to complain—and, importantly, the freedom peacefully to organize with other complainers—to attempt to topple or favorably influence the government. Complaining comes easily to most.<sup>6</sup>

The popular notion that various attitudinal, cultural, economic, and atmospheric developments are necessary before a country can become democratic has inspired a considerable pessimism about the prospects for the expansion of democracy.<sup>7</sup> Thus, in 1984, in the midst of what he was later to label the “third wave” of democratization, Samuel

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<sup>6</sup>For a development of this perspective, see Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery*, chaps. 6–8.

<sup>7</sup>On the pessimism issue, see also Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, chap. 1.

Huntington looked to the future and essentially concluded that democracy could only emerge as a consequence of very substantial economic growth or through force.<sup>8</sup> Neither development took place, but democracy progressed anyway, and often in countries that clearly lacked the supposed requisites, such as Paraguay. Indeed, over the period, most countries in Latin America probably became *worse* off in many material ways—the rise of democracy there was carried out during a very substantial debt crisis.<sup>9</sup>

It seems, then, that a country can become democratic—*fully* democratic—without any special historical preparation and whatever the state of its social or economic development if elites and political activists generally come to believe that democracy is the way things ought to be done and if they aren't physically intimidated or held in check by force and if they refrain from using it themselves. For example, it is likely that about the *only* thing that kept isolated, backward, impoverished, prerequisite-free Burma from becoming democratic after its free election of 1988 was forceful intervention by the military.<sup>10</sup>

## THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

Capitalism has been counted out quite a few times. For example, in 1950, Joseph Schumpeter famously and repeatedly declared “centralist socialism” to be the “heir apparent” to capitalism.<sup>11</sup> Things have changed markedly since then. As economist Robert Heilbroner, not usually known as an ardent free-marketeer, noted in 1993:

There is today widespread agreement, including among most socialist economists, that whatever form advanced societies may take in the twenty-first century, a market system of some kind will constitute their principal means of coordination. That is a remarkable turnabout from the situation only a generation ago, when the majority of economists believed that the future of economic coordination lay in a diminution of the scope of the market, and an increase in some form of centralized planning.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, “Will More Countries Become Democratic?” *Political Science Quarterly* 99 (Summer 1984): 218.

<sup>9</sup>See Daniel Yergin and Joseph Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights: The Battle Between Government and the Marketplace That Is Remaking the Modern World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), chap. 9.

<sup>10</sup>Compare Francis Fukuyama, “The Future of History,” *Foreign Affairs* 91 (January/February 2012): 58.

<sup>11</sup>Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, 3d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), 417. See also Yergin and Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights*, 22.

<sup>12</sup>Robert Heilbroner, *21st Century Capitalism* (New York: Norton, 1993), 97. On this issue, see George J. Stigler, “The Politics of Political Economists,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 73 (November 1959): 522–532; R.M. Hartwell, *A History of the Mont Pelerin Society* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1995), 191; Yergin and Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights*; Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery*, chap. 5.

In many respects the economic consensus that Heilbroner notes burgeoned only recently, particularly after the abject and pathetic collapse of command and heavily planned economies in the late 1980s and early 1990s that seems to have substantially triggered Fukuyama's essay. As a top Indian economist put it, "Between the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, I felt as though I were awakening from a thirty-five-year dream. Everything I had believed about economic systems and tried to implement was wrong."<sup>13</sup>

In practice, all capitalist, or market capitalist states may not end up looking a great deal like each other—any more than all democracies do. There may be controversy, for example, over the desirable trade-offs between growth and the distribution of wealth, or over whether it is better to go for maximum growth or to sacrifice some growth in order to reduce the amplitude of the boom and bust cycles around an upward growth path, or over how large a government's deficit can rise without stifling economic growth, or over the degree to which a regulation will hurt more than it will help, or over what rate of inflation is most desirable. But, substantially and increasingly, the debate is likely to be more nearly a matter of degree than of fundamental principles.

Most important, when the world plunged into widespread economic crisis in the late 1990s and then again after 2007, proposed remedies variously recommended tinkering with the system—not, as in the 1930s, abandoning it. As Angus Burgin observed in 2012, "Radical alternatives to capitalist modes of social organization found little traction" while "the hold of market advocacy on the popular imagination has remained far stronger than in the early 1930s....Capitalism may be in crisis, but the horizon of alternatives has narrowed."<sup>14</sup>

Notably, international trade was not substantially cut back,<sup>15</sup> and there were no widespread calls for trade protectionism, for the imposition of wage and price controls, or for confiscatory taxes on the rich. And when some enterprises were deemed too big to fail, there were sometimes efforts to subsidize their recovery and to increase regulation, but not to nationalize them or to permanently take them over. Governments also sought to reduce their debt and balance their budgets. Although there was severe economic pain in some countries, there was little call for anti-capitalist revolution. Extremist parties have gained little voting share in Europe, where the

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<sup>13</sup>Yergin and Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights*, 138. See also Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, 41–42.

<sup>14</sup>Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinventing Free Markets Since the Great Depression* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 216.

<sup>15</sup>Daniel Drezner, *The System Worked: How the World Stopped Another Great Depression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), chap. 2.

response of the newly unemployed has been remarkably restrained and where calls to abandon the Euro have sought not to undermine the economic system but to make it work better. Meanwhile, the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States was notable mainly for its impotence and ideological incoherence.<sup>16</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE OF NATIONALISM

In the 1990s, particularly after civil warfare broke out in Yugoslavia, many observers held a rise in nationalism, or ultra-nationalism, to be a potential rival to liberalism and therefore a vital challenge to the Fukuyama thesis—or even a devastating refutation of it. The “breakdown of restraints” in Yugoslavia was said to be part of “a global trend.”<sup>17</sup>

In Yugoslavia, it was contended that elemental and ancient ethnic hatreds had only temporarily and superficially been kept in check by communism and that with its demise, murderous nationalism had erupted.<sup>18</sup> At times, this approach was extravagantly expanded to suggest that whole civilizations were clashing.<sup>19</sup>

However, this perspective proved to be unfounded. In Yugoslavia, “nationalist” and “ethnic” conflicts were spawned not so much by the convulsive surging of ancient hatreds or by frenzies whipped up by demagogic politicians and the media as by the vicious ministrations of small—sometimes *very* small—bands of opportunistic predators. These were either recruited for the purpose from prisons and elsewhere by political leaders and operating under their general guidance, or else they were formed from essentially criminal and bandit gangs. Their participation was required because the Yugoslav Army, despite years of supposedly influential nationalist propaganda and centuries of supposedly pent-up ethnic hatreds, substantially disintegrated early in the war and refused to fight; professing that they

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<sup>16</sup>See also Fukuyama, “The Future of History,” 53, 59–60.

<sup>17</sup>Cvijeto Job, “Yugoslavia’s Ethnic Furies,” *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1993): 71. See also Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); David A. Hamburg, *Preventing Contemporary Intergroup Violence* (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1993); Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Out of Control: Global Turmoil on the Eve of the 21st Century* (New York: Scribner’s, 1993).

<sup>18</sup>See especially Robert D. Kaplan, “A Reader’s Guide to the Balkans,” *New York Times Book Review*, 18 April 1993: 1, 30–32. See also Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man*, 272. For a devastating critique of the argument, see Noel Malcolm, “Seeing Ghosts,” *National Interest* (Summer 1993): 83–88. For additional critiques: V.P. Gagnon, Jr. “Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia,” *International Security* 19 (Winter 1994/95): 133–134; Brian Hall, “Rebecca West’s War,” *The New Yorker*, 15 April 1996, 74–83; Russell Hardin, *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), chap. 6; Yahya Sadowski, *The Myth of Global Chaos* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1998); John Mueller, *The Remnants of War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 145–146, 174–175.

<sup>19</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

did not know why they were fighting, soldiers often mutinied or deserted en masse.<sup>20</sup> In other places, particularly in Africa, groups whose members were often addicted to alcohol, drugs, and Rambo movies engaged in criminal predation in a permissive atmosphere in which the central government had essentially failed.

Rather than reflecting deep, historic passions and hatreds, then, a great deal of the “nationalist” and “ethnic” violence of the 1990s seems, rather, to have been the result of a situation in which common, opportunistic, sadistic, and often distinctly non-ideological marauders were recruited and permitted free rein by political authorities or emerged from bandit gangs to challenge a weak government.<sup>21</sup> It was less a clash of civilizations than a clash of thugs, in which ethnicity or nationalism became something of an ordering or sorting device that allowed people to determine which gangs were more or less on their side and which ones were out to get them.

It was commonly anticipated when the civil war ended in Bosnia in 1995 that violence would soon return.<sup>22</sup> After all, that republic of the former Yugoslavia rested on a key “fault line” between clashing civilizations, according to Samuel Huntington.<sup>23</sup> But there has been an almost complete absence of violence between Muslims, Croats, and Serbs in Bosnia since the armed conflict ended. They may continue to live in a degree of distrust and sometimes at a wary distance. However, if their hatreds are so ancient and elemental, why has the killing stopped so completely? Even more remarkable is the substantial absence of violence between Tutsis and Hutus within Rwanda since the genocide of 1994. In this case, any real physical separation is essentially impossible. Yet the two groups have gone back to living side by side—uncomfortably but peacefully, at least thus far.

Actually, far from destroying what might be called the “Fukuyama process,” nationalism has proved to be a constructive force in many places. It aided the difficult and painful process of unification in Germany for example, and it probably helped strengthen Poland’s remarkable political and economic development of the 1990s. At any rate, far from providing an ideological challenge to democracy and capitalism, nationalism has more commonly embraced them.

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<sup>20</sup>For sources and a discussion, see Mueller, *Remnants of War*, 88–89. As a Serbian General put it, modification of the military plans was made necessary by “the lack of success in mobilisation and the desertion rate.” Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 269. See also Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1995), 239, 249, 265.

<sup>21</sup>For a discussion of the process in detail, see Mueller, *Remnants of War*, chap. 6.

<sup>22</sup>See, for example, the confident predictions by General Lewis McKenzie and Colonel Bob Stewart on 60 Minutes, CBS Television, 19 November 1995. See also Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, 291, 294.

<sup>23</sup>Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, 159.

## THE CHALLENGE OF FUNDAMENTALIST RELIGION

On September 11, 2001, a tiny group of deluded men—members of al Qaeda, a fringe group of a fringe group with grandiose visions of its own importance—managed, largely because of luck, to pull off a risky, if clever and carefully planned, terrorist act that became by far the most destructive in history. There has been great reluctance to maintain that such a monumental event—however counterproductive to al Qaeda’s purpose—could have been carried out by a fundamentally trivial group, and there has been a consequent tendency to inflate al Qaeda’s importance and effectiveness. At the extreme, the remnants of this tiny group have even been held to present an “existential” threat not only to the survival of the United States but also to the ascendancy of the modern state or to civilization itself.<sup>24</sup>

As the apparent rise of violent nationalism and ethnic conflict had been taken to be a refutation of Fukuyama’s thesis in the last decade of the twentieth century, the apparent rise of violent religious fundamentalism was taken to be a refutation in the first decade of the twenty-first.

However, far from supplying a fundamental challenge, it is unclear whether al Qaeda central, a tiny group of 100 or so, has done much of anything since September 11 except serving as something of an inspiration to some Muslim extremists, doing some training, contributing a bit to the Taliban’s far larger insurgency in Afghanistan, participating in a few terrorist acts in Pakistan, and issuing videos filled with empty and self-infatuated threats.<sup>25</sup>

In all, extremist Islamist terrorism—whether associated with al Qaeda or not—has claimed 200 to 400 lives yearly worldwide outside war zones.<sup>26</sup> Terrorist groups variously connected to al Qaeda may be able to do intermittent mischief in war zones in the Middle East and in Africa, but likely nothing that is very sustained or focused. Moreover, the groups seems, for

<sup>24</sup>On such assertions, see John Mueller, *Overblown* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 45–47. See also John Mueller and Mark G. Stewart, “The Terrorism Delusion: America’s Overwrought Response to September 11,” *International Security* 37 (Summer 2012): 81–110.

<sup>25</sup>See also Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). For an array of unfulfilled threats, see John Mueller and Mark G. Stewart, *Terror, Security, and Money: Balancing the Risks, Benefits, and Costs of Homeland Security* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 36.

<sup>26</sup>Anthony H. Cordesman tallies “major attacks by Islamists” outside Iraq: 830 fatalities from April 2002 through July 2005. *The Challenge of Biological Weapons* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2005), 29–31. Brian Michael Jenkins tallies “major terrorist attacks worldwide” by “jihadist extremists” outside Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Algeria, Russia, and Kashmir: 1,129 fatalities from October 2001 through April 2006. *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy and Strengthening Ourselves* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), 179–184. IntelCenter tallies “most significant attacks executed by core al-Qaeda, regional arms and affiliate groups excluding operations in insurgency theaters”: 1,632 fatalities from January 2002 through July 2007. IntelCenter, “Jihadi Attack Kill Statistics,” 17 August 2007, 11, <http://www.intelcenter.com/JAKS-PUB-v1-8.pdf>.

now at least, to be overwhelmingly focused on local issues, not on international projection or on civilizational challenge.<sup>27</sup>

With the September 11 attacks and subsequent activity, such extremists, far from igniting a global surge of violent religious fundamentalism, mainly succeeded in uniting the world, including its huge Muslim population, against their violent jihad.<sup>28</sup> Thus, a terrorist bombing in Bali in 2002 galvanized the Indonesian government into action and into making extensive arrests and obtaining convictions. When terrorists attacked Saudis in Saudi Arabia in 2003, the government became considerably more serious about dealing with internal terrorism, including a clampdown on radical clerics and preachers. The main result of al Qaeda-linked suicide terrorism in Jordan in 2005 was to outrage Jordanians and other Arabs against the perpetrators. In polls conducted in 35 predominantly Muslim countries by 2008, more than 90 percent condemned bin Laden's terrorism on religious grounds.<sup>29</sup> Al Qaeda activities have also turned many radical Islamists against them, including some of the most-prominent and respected.<sup>30</sup> And the mindless brutalities of al Qaeda-affiliated combatants in Iraq—staging beheadings at mosques, bombing playgrounds, taking over hospitals, executing ordinary citizens, performing forced marriages—eventually turned the Iraqis against them, including many of those who had previously been fighting the U.S. occupation either on their own or in connection with the group.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout “Al-Qaeda is its own worst enemy,” notes Robert Grenier, a former top CIA counterterrorism official. “Where they have succeeded initially, they very quickly discredit themselves.”<sup>32</sup> Grenier's improbable

<sup>27</sup>Peter Berger, “Hyping the Terror Threat,” 3 December 2013, accessed on cnn.com.

<sup>28</sup>Joby Warrick, “U.S. Cites Big Gains Against Al-Qaeda,” *Washington Post*, 30 May 2008. See also Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chap. 5; *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>29</sup>For Indonesia, see Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 53, 142, 173. For Saudi Arabia, see Gerges, *Far Enemy*, 249; George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007), 229–32, 247–50. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 53, 144. For Jordan, see Pew Global Attitudes Project, “The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other,” 22 June 2006, Pew Research Center; Marc Lynch, “Al-Qaeda's Media Strategies,” *National Interest* (Spring 2006): 54–55. For the 2008 polls, see Fawaz Gerges, “Word on the Street,” *Democracyjournal.org*, Summer 2008, 75.

<sup>30</sup>Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank, “The Unraveling: The Jihadist Revolt Against Bin Laden,” *New Republic*, 11 June 2008. Lawrence Wright, “The Rebellion Within,” *The New Yorker*, 2 June 2008. Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*.

<sup>31</sup>Bob Woodward, “Why Did Violence Plummet? It Wasn't Just the Surge,” *Washington Post*, 8 September 2008. Frederic Wehrey, “The Iraq War: Strategic Overreach by America—and also by al Qaeda” in *The Long Shadow of 9/11: America's Response to Terrorism*, Brian Michael Jenkins and John Paul Godges, eds., (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2011), 47–55. Peter R. Mansoor, *Surge* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), chap. 5.

<sup>32</sup>Quoted in Warrick, “U.S. Cites Big Gains Against Al-Qaeda.” See also Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank, “Self-Fulfilling Prophecy,” *Mother Jones*, November/December 2007; and Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*. Relevant also may be the massive protests against Islamist leaders that erupted in Egypt in 2013.

company in this observation is Osama bin Laden, who was so concerned about al Qaeda's alienation of most Muslims that he argued from his hideout that the organization should take on a new name.<sup>33</sup>

## THE DECLINE OF WAR

Writing in 1989, Fukuyama envisioned a decline in what he called "large-scale conflict," and a few months earlier I had published a book examining what appeared to be the obsolescence of major war—war among developed states.<sup>34</sup> In an essay later in the year, Samuel Huntington disapprovingly labeled us "endists" and "intellectual faddists" and called our conclusions illusionary, complacent, dangerous, and subversive. He accused us of ignoring "the weakness and irrationality of human nature," noting that, although "human beings are at times rational, generous, creative, and wise," they are also often "stupid, selfish, cruel, and sinful."<sup>35</sup>

Whatever the frailty of human nature, it is now routinely recognized that a standard, indeed classic, variety of war—war among developed countries—has become so rare and unlikely that it could well be considered to be obsolescent, if not obsolete.<sup>36</sup> And, not only has there been no war among developed states in two thirds of a century, quite shattering all historical precedent, but international war even outside the developed

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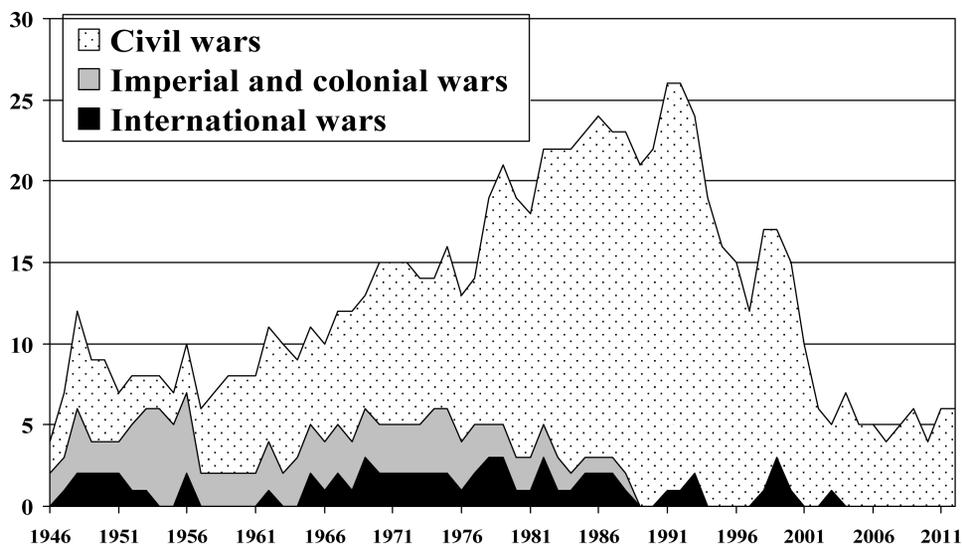
<sup>33</sup>David Ignatius, "The Bin Laden Plot to Kill President Obama," *Washington Post*, 16 March 2012.

<sup>34</sup>Fukuyama, "The End of History?" 18; *The End of History and the Last Man*, 311. John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

<sup>35</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, "No Exit: The Errors of Endism," *National Interest* (Fall 1989): 4, 10.

<sup>36</sup>Evan Luard, *War in International Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986). Michael Howard, *The Lessons of History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 176. John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 59. Robert Jervis, "Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace," *American Political Science Review* 96 (March 2002): 1. Jeffrey Record, "Collapsed Countries, Casualty Dread, and the New American Way of War," *Parameters* (Summer 2002): 6. Andrew Mack, "Civil War: Academic Research and the Policy Community," *Journal of Peace Research* 39 (September 2002): 523. Michael Mandelbaum, *The Ideas That Conquered the World: Peace, Democracy, and Free Markets in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002). John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 262. Andrew Mack, *Human Security Report 2005* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 523. Nils Petter Gleditsch, "The Liberal Moment Fifteen Years On," *International Studies Quarterly* 52 (December 2008): 691–712. Christopher J. Fettweis, *Dangerous Times? The International Politics of Great Power Peace* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010). Richard Ned Lebow, *Why Nations Fight: Past and Future Motives for War* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Joshua S. Goldstein, *Winning the War on War: The Decline of Armed Conflict Worldwide* (New York: Dutton, 2011). Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking, 2011); John Horgan, *The End of War* (San Francisco: McSweeney's, 2012); Azar Gat, "Is War Declining—and Why?" *Journal of Peace Research* 50 (2012): 149–157; John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment*, *Political Science Quarterly* 124 (Summer 2009): 297–321; *War and Ideas: Selected Essays* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011). For a contrary view, see Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005).

FIGURE 1  
*Number of Ongoing Wars by Year 1946–2012*



The data are for “wars,” violent armed conflicts which result in at least 1,000 military and civilian battle-related deaths in the year indicated.

Sources: UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, University of Uppsala, [www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp\\_prio\\_armed\\_conflict\\_dataset/](http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_prio_armed_conflict_dataset/) and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, “A Revised List of Wars Between and Within Independent States, 1816–2002,” *International Interactions* 30 (July–September 2004): 231–262, plus additional correspondence with Gleditsch.

world has become quite a rarity as Figure 1 documents.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, there has been only one war since 1989 that fits cleanly into the classic model in which two countries have it out over some issue of mutual dispute, in this case territory: the 1998–2000 conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea.<sup>38</sup>

Fukuyama does not discuss civil war, which, as Figure 1 vividly demonstrates, has been by far the most common type of war since World War II,

<sup>37</sup>According to the definitions used by the data compilers, the fighting in Afghanistan is considered a civil war, and conflicts involving Israel in the last decade are between a government and sub-state groups, not between two governments. Initially they registered the conflict in Iraq as an international one, but have now coded only the war in 2003 as being international in character with the armed conflict in the following years considered to be a civil one.

<sup>38</sup>In addition, developed countries have engaged in a number of what might be called “policing wars” since 1989, engaging in military interventions in Panama in 1989, in Kuwait and Iraq in 1991, in Somalia in 1992–93, in Haiti in 1994, in Bosnia in 1995, in Kosovo and East Timor in 1999, in Sierra Leone in 2000, in Afghanistan in 2001, in Ivory Coast in 2002, in Iraq in 2003, in Libya in 2011, and in Mali and the Central African Republic in 2013. A few of these ventures have been sufficiently costly in battle deaths to tally as international wars in Figure 1. However, despite a degree of success, the post-Cold War phenomenon of policing wars, rather tentative at best, seems more likely to wane than to grow. There are several reasons for this, among them a lack of clear national interest, an extremely low tolerance for casualties in military missions that are essentially humanitarian, and an aversion to long-term policing. The experience of the wars in Afghanistan (after initial success) and Iraq are likely to further magnify this process. Mueller, *The Remnants of War*, chaps. 7–8; Mueller, *War and Ideas*, chaps. 2, 9.

reaching something of a peak around 1989 when his essay was published. However, there has been a remarkable decline in the number of civil wars since then.

Although it may be tempting to characterize (or dismiss) this decline as a “blip,” perhaps the “blip” is in the *rise* in the number of such wars that took place from the 1960s to the early 1990s. To a very substantial degree, much civil warfare is essentially the result of inadequate government. Civil wars are least likely to occur in stable democracies and in stable autocracies—that is, in countries with effective governments and policing forces.<sup>39</sup> They are most common (almost by definition) in what has come to be called “failed states.” Much of the rise in the frequency of civil wars beginning in the 1960s seems to have come from rapid decolonization, which led to the creation of a host of countries that were ill-governed and therefore prime candidates to become civil war arenas. If that is the case, it is the increase of civil war that is the historical peculiarity, and it is one substantially based on a phenomenon—decolonization—that cannot be repeated.

However, many civil wars have exhausted themselves since 1989, and new ones have failed to arise in sufficient numbers to arrest the decline in the total. It is too early to be certain, but it could be that civil war, following the pattern found with international war in the developed world, is going out of style. One key may have been in the rise of competent governments that have increasingly been able to police domestic conflicts rather than exacerbating them, as frequently happened in the past.<sup>40</sup> The “failed state” phenomenon remains a problem. However, even taking recent problems in the Middle East into account, it is a far less-common one than it was before 1989.

## BOREDOM

At the end of his 1989 essay, Fukuyama declares that “the end of history will be a very sad time,” and he bemoans the fact that “the willingness to risk one’s life for a purely abstract goal,” an enterprise that called for “daring, courage,

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<sup>39</sup>Havard Hegre, Tanja Ellingsen, Scott Gates, and Nils Petter Gleditsch, “Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Democracy, Political Change, and Civil War, 1816–1992,” *American Political Science Review* 95 (March 2001): 33–48. On this point, see also Bruce M. Russett and John R. Oneal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: Norton, 2001), 70; Monty G. Marshall and Ted Robert Gurr, *Peace and Conflict, 2003: A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-Determination Movements, and Democracy* (College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, 2003), 19–20, 25; James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, “Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States,” *International Security* 28 (Spring 2004): 20–21; Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 19, 35. On the importance of effective government more generally, see Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (New York: Crown, 2012).

<sup>40</sup>For an extended development of this point, see Mueller, *Remnants of War*, chap. 9.

imagination, and idealism,” will now be replaced by “economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands.” There will be no art, no philosophy, and “centuries of boredom at the end of history.”<sup>41</sup>

There may be a few people out there who can contain their enthusiasm for dying for abstractions and who wouldn’t mind becoming the butt of a process devoted to fulfilling their every “sophisticated” demand. And for most, boredom would be considerably preferable to having to pay attention to such dramatic disasters as genocide in Rwanda, terrorist destruction in New York, tsunamis in Japan, and chemical warfare in Syria.

Nonetheless, Fukuyama’s somewhat bizarre concluding comment should be evaluated. Liberal ideology may have won out in the sense that it is the only one left standing. And it does not seem to have an ideological challenger on, or even over, the horizon: postmodernism? deep environmentalism? the China half-way model? rule by Mullahs? But its triumph, if that is what it is, does not seem to have come accompanied by any sense of exhilaration or even of much satisfaction. There seem to be several reasons for this.

Fukuyama notes that democracy and capitalism both have a kind of “emptiness at the core.”<sup>42</sup> It can be difficult to get excited about a political or economic system whose chief, and perhaps only, rallying cry is that it is at least marginally superior to other alternatives that have been tried from time to time. This quality can be unpleasantly unsatisfying, at least to people who aspire to grander goals and who have higher visions.

What Daniel Yergin and Joseph Stanislaw say about capitalism can be said about democracy as well: “a system that takes the pursuit of self-interest and profit as its guiding light does not necessarily satisfy the yearning in the human soul for belief and some higher meaning beyond materialism.”<sup>43</sup> And much of what the Polish writer, Adam Michnik, says about democracy can also be said about capitalism. He suggests that we color it gray and characterizes it as “eternal imperfection” as well as “a mixture of sinfulness, saintliness, and monkey business” and “a continuous articulation of particular interests, a diligent search for compromise among them, a marketplace for passions, emotions, hatreds, and hope” that frequently “chooses banality over excellence, shrewdness over nobility, empty promise over true competence.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Fukuyama, “The End of History?” 18.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 14. See also Fukuyama, “A Reply to My Critics,” 28.

<sup>43</sup>Yergin and Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights*, 389.

<sup>44</sup>Adam Michnik, “Gray Is Beautiful: Thoughts on Democracy in Central Europe,” *Dissent* (Spring 1997): 18.

In both systems, compromise is far more common than glorious victory, messiness than crisp decisiveness, and perpetual squabbling than edifying clarity. And both utterly lack any sort of snappy answer to such great philosophical issues as what is truth? what is good? and what is the meaning of life?

Both systems also inevitably cause—indeed, exacerbate—an inequality of result. While both leave people (equally) free to speak their minds and to come up with products others may happen to find worth buying, some people will do better with the opportunity than others due to what Fukuyama calls “natural differences in talent and character” as well, it must be added, to luck.<sup>45</sup> The effect can be vividly seen in historical statistics in international disparities in wealth. In 1750, the richest countries were, on a per capita basis, around 1.6 times wealthier than the poorest. All countries became at least somewhat wealthier over time. However, due to different growth rates, the richest countries by the end of the twentieth century were some 30 times wealthier per capita than the poorest.<sup>46</sup>

In addition, even when capitalism and democracy do deliver, their accomplishments generally go unappreciated. When things get better, we quickly come to take the improvements for granted after a brief period of often wary assimilation. Moreover, many improvements of the human condition are quite gradual and therefore difficult to notice. Milton Rosenberg and L.E. Birdzell observe that the remarkable transformation of the West from a condition in which 90 percent lived in poverty to one in which only a small fraction did so took a very long time: “Over a year, or even over a decade, the economic gains, after allowing for the rise in population, were so little noticeable that it was widely believed that the gains were experienced only by the rich, and not by the poor.”<sup>47</sup> And the oldest punch line in democracy’s joke book is about the constituent’s demand to the elected office holder: “Yes, but what have you done for me *lately*?”

## THE IMPORTANCE OF IDEAS

Except for boredom, which is a condition, all the central issues discussed in this article and arrayed in its lengthy subtitle, are ideas. Fukuyama argues that there is a great deal to the “autonomous power of ideas,” suggesting

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<sup>45</sup>Fukuyama, “The Future of History,” 58. On the importance of luck, see Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), 9, 176–179, 204–208, 215–216; Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery*, 49–52.

<sup>46</sup>Paul Bairoch, “The Main Trends in National Economic Disparities since the Industrial Revolution” in *Disparities in Economic Development since the Industrial Revolution*, Paul Bairoch and M. Levy-Leboyer, eds. (London: Macmillan, 1981), 3, 8. See also Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

<sup>47</sup>Nathan Rosenberg and L.E. Birdzell, *How the West Grew Rich: The Economic Transformation of the Industrial World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 6, also 265.

that it is important, as Robert Dahl has put it, to treat “beliefs and ideas” as “a major independent variable.”<sup>48</sup>

The remarkable rise of liberalism—democracy and market capitalism—and of war aversion over the last two centuries appears to be not so much the result of wider forces but rather, substantially, the result of efforts by idea entrepreneurs who eventually found takers around the world for the concepts they actively sought to promote—or market.

Many observers find this line of thinking to be unsatisfying. They are uncomfortable with the notion that capitalism, democracy, and war aversion are merely ideas that happen to have caught on for various reasons, rather in the way that the bustle was taken up a century or so ago or sliced-up jeans today. Thus, Steven Pinker understandably yearns for “a causal story with more explanatory muscle than ‘Developed countries stopped warring because they got less warlike.’”<sup>49</sup>

After the fact, it is sometimes possible to come up with explanations for why an idea came to be accepted, but these explanations often appear to be ad hoc as well as essentially arbitrary in their willful efforts to ignore luck and consumer caprice. At base, the process may be as mysterious as that attending the acceptance of new commercial products. Thousands of patents have been issued for mousetraps since the invention of the modern one in 1899, and, while at least *some* of these must have been objectively superior, few have made any money, a phenomenon that is difficult to explain.<sup>50</sup> Something like 90 percent of all new products fail despite dedicated marketing efforts by their hopeful hawkers. For high-tech startups, the figure appears to be more like 95 percent, and it may be even higher for restaurants.<sup>51</sup> The acceptance rate for ideas may well be similar.

Fukuyama seems to have been right about the essential appeal and the (perhaps modest) superiority of democracy and capitalism to the known alternatives, and there does seem to be a general, perhaps even natural, migration toward them. For now at least, it certainly seems true that, as Fukuyama observes, “We cannot picture to ourselves a world that is *fundamentally* different from the present one, and at the same time better.”<sup>52</sup> It is

<sup>48</sup>Fukuyama, “The End of History?” 6. Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971), 188.

<sup>49</sup>Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, 278.

<sup>50</sup>John H. Lienhard, *Inventing Modern: Growing up with X-rays, Skyscrapers, and Tailfins* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 204.

<sup>51</sup>Kevin J. Clancy and Robert S. Shulman, *Marketing Myths That Are Killing Business: The Cure for Death Wish Marketing* (New York: McGraw-Hill 1994), 8, 140; Robert X. Cringeley, *Accidental Empires: How the Boys of Silicon Valley Make Their Millions, Battle Foreign Competition, and Still Can't Get A Date* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992), 232.

<sup>52</sup>Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, 44. Emphasis in the original.

not that ideology has come to an end, but that liberalism has become the “default ideology.”<sup>53</sup>

However, it took millennia for them to become fashionable. And even if they are superior, there is no physical reason, since they are merely ideas, why they can’t capriciously be rejected for an alternative that suddenly gains, or returns to, favor. For millennia, people found appeal in authoritarian orderliness and in price controls, and they could again. On the other hand, some ideas do seem to die out completely: formal slavery, a major human institution that was, like formal dueling, summarily hounded out of existence in the nineteenth century, shows little sign of making a comeback.

If ideas can in some important respects be autonomous from proposed causes and correlates, they may often be essentially autonomous from each other as well. For the most part, it may in general be best to see each idea movement as an independent phenomenon rather than contingent on another idea stream. Capitalism can exist without democracy and democracy can exist without capitalism.<sup>54</sup>

One potential connection may be of special interest, however. Warlessness, or peace, may help advance the Fukuyama process. Peace may not “cause” liberalism, democracy, and market capitalism to take hold, but it is likely to facilitate their growth and wider acceptance.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, peace may furnish countries with security and space in which to explore and develop democracy, and democracy (or democratic idea entrepreneurs) are more likely to flourish when the trials, distortions, and disruptions of war—whether international or civil—are absent. Countries often restrict or even abandon democracy when domestic instability or external military threat seems to loom; as James Madison put it in a letter in 1795, “Of

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<sup>53</sup>Fukuyama, “The Future of History,” 53. In this article, Fukuyama explores potential ideological rivals from the perspective of 2012. He finds the “China model” of an authoritarian government coupled with a partially marketized economy to be an unlikely competitor because it is too “culturally specific,” unlikely to be sustainable, and faces a “great moral vulnerability” because it is generating a “dramatic and growing inequality.” However, he is uneasy himself about inequality which, although caused by “natural differences in talent and character,” is, he feels, being exacerbated by globalization and by technological advance. Although noting that “no plausible rival ideology looms,” he holds out hope that an “alternative narrative” can perhaps be fabricated by “somehow” redesigning the public sector so that it “forthrightly” redistributes wealth and ends “interest groups’ domination of politics,” and by “a serious and sustained critique” of modern neoclassical economics to recognize that the “natural distribution of talents is not necessarily fair.” Were that to happen, history, in his terms, would advance, it appears, at least one notch beyond its putative end. (There is no indication in this article that he has become bored.) For the argument that organized interest group activity is absolutely crucial to democracy—indeed, its whole point—see Mueller *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery*, 9, 152–153, 180, 248. For a contrasting perspective, see Kay Lehman Schlozman, Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady, *The Unheavenly Chorus: Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

<sup>54</sup>For a discussion, see Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery*, chap. 9.

<sup>55</sup>John Mueller, “Capitalism, Peace, and the Historical Movement of Ideas,” *International Interactions* 36 (April–June 2010): 169–184.

all the enemies to public liberty war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other.”<sup>56</sup> By the same token, when people are comfortably at peace, they may come to realize that they no longer require a strongman to provide order and can afford to embrace the benefits of democracy even if those might come with somewhat heightened uncertainty and possibly with the potential for less-reliable leadership.

International tensions and the prospect of international war also have a strong dampening effect on trade because each threatened nation has an incentive to cut itself off from the rest of the world economically in order to ensure that it can survive if international exchange is severed by military conflict. By contrast, if a couple of countries that have previously enjoyed a conflictual relationship lapse into a comfortable peace and become extremely unlikely to get into war, businesses in both places are likely to explore the possibilities for mutually beneficial exchange.

The same process may hold for the rise of international institutions and norms. They often stress peace but, like expanded trade flows, they are not so much the cause of peace as its result. Many of the institutions that have been fabricated in Europe—particularly ones like the coal and steel community that were so carefully forged between France and Germany in the years following World War II—have been specifically designed to reduce the danger of war between erstwhile enemies. However, since it appears that no German or Frenchman in any walk of life at any time since 1945 has ever advocated a war between the two countries, it is difficult to see why the institutions should get the credit for the peace that has flourished between those two countries for the last two thirds of a century.<sup>57</sup> They are among the consequences of the peace that has enveloped Western Europe since 1945, not its cause.

The central policy implication of the experience with the remarkable rise of democracy and capitalism is to suggest that, if trends are on one’s side, it may well be best not to work too strenuously to move them along. Seeking to improve the workings of democracy and of market capitalism in the West makes sense for many reasons including, of course, self-interested ones. However, efforts to impose them are likely to be unnecessary and can be costly and even counterproductive.

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<sup>56</sup>Quoted, Christopher Preble, *The Power Problem: How American Military Dominance Makes Us Less Safe, Less Prosperous, and Less Free* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 80.

<sup>57</sup>As in Russett and Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, 158; G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), chap. 6. For the argument that effective business-regulating institutions tend to be put into place when the behavior they seek to impose has already become fairly common, see Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery*, 95–98.

For a century and a half the United States repeatedly and often evangelically urged democracy upon its neighbors to the South, and it was often quite prepared to use money (and sometimes military force) to gild the philosophic pill. These policies seem rarely to have made much lasting difference. For example, in 1913, President Woodrow Wilson dramatically declared the United States to be the “champion” of democracy in the Americas, and, to show that he meant business, he sent U.S. troops to Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic to establish long-term military governments to aid in the democratic process there. All three countries subsequently lapsed into extended dictatorships.<sup>58</sup> The eventual democratization of Latin America after 1975 had little to do with forceful evangelism from the North.

These lessons seem to apply as well to other important developments during what Fukuyama would call “history.” The Cold War, as Nikita Khrushchev proclaimed in the early 1960s was about “goulash”—that system was best that could best provide for the well-being of its citizens. Although it did not turn out the way he expected, it was the comparative failure of the communist system to service such fundamental desires that importantly led to the system’s demise. Strenuous and costly efforts focused on nuclear metaphysics were irrelevant to the process because major war appears never really to have been in the cards; there was, in the end, actually nothing to deter.<sup>59</sup> And strenuous and costly efforts to contain

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<sup>58</sup>Laurence Whitehead, “International Aspects of Democratization” in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe C.Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 6. See also Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery*, 216–18.

<sup>59</sup>Both sides had reason to abhor any experience that might lead to anything like the Second World War. Moreover, Soviet ideology never envisioned direct Hitler-style warfare, whether nuclear or not, as a sensible method for pursuing the process of world revolution, insofar as it embraced violence, focused instead on class warfare, revolutionary upheaval, and subversion. As Robert Jervis notes, “The Soviet archives have yet to reveal any serious plans for unprovoked aggression against Western Europe, not to mention a first strike against the United States.” “Was the Cold War a Security Dilemma?” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 3 (Winter 2001), 59. And Vojtech Mastny concludes that “the strategy of nuclear deterrence [was] irrelevant to deterring a major war that the enemy did not wish to launch in the first place.” “Introduction,” in Vojtech Mastny, Sven G. Holtmark, and Andreas Wenger, eds., *War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War: Threat Perceptions in the East and West* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 3. See also Stephen E. Ambrose, “Secrets of the Cold War,” *The New York Times*, 27 December 1990. As Robert H. Johnson puts it, the process of what he calls “nuclear metaphysics” involved “making the most pessimistic assumptions possible about Soviet intentions and capabilities” and then assuming that the capabilities (which turned out almost always to have been substantially exaggerated) would be used “to the adversary’s maximum possible advantage.” *Improbable Dangers: U.S. Conceptions of Threat in the Cold War and After* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1994), 29, 78. For an extended discussion, see John Mueller, *Atomic Obsession: Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al-Qaeda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), chap. 3. For the argument that war was only a very distant possibility during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, see Max Frankel, *High Noon in the Cold War: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Ballantine, 2004); Mueller, *Atomic Obsession*, 39–40, 248n33.

revolutionary advance, especially as seen in Vietnam, proved to be not only unnecessary, but unwise.

In the wake of the Cold War, there was great alarm in the West about the challenges presented by extreme nationalism in the 1990s and by violent religious fundamentalism in the subsequent decade. In retrospect, it seems clear that these concerns were overwrought and that vigorous efforts to defeat them were unnecessary. For the most part, the “threats,” if that’s what they were, substantially self-destructed. Thus, the disaster in Bosnia—poster child for the clash of civilizations—hardly served as an appealing role model, and terrorism in the name of extreme religion has mostly proved to be counterproductive, both in the Middle East (including Iraq) and elsewhere.

The same holds for the decline of civil war. Although Bosnia and other civil wars have inspired a great deal of hand-wringing from outsiders, this was mostly ineffectual in ending them—and in some cases may have exacerbated the violence. Syria may be providing a contemporary example. The wars chiefly had to burn themselves out. In their wake, exhaustion with conflict and a strong general desire for peace and order rendered post-conflict societies receptive to change—at which point aid from the outside has the greatest chance to be effective.<sup>60</sup>

The West may have helped nudge the Fukuyama trends along in some ways over the last quarter century—particularly with its cooperative work with local forces to deal with terrorism and with its efforts to stabilize shaky peace when civil war combatants have become exhausted. Its most important contribution, however, has been to provide an attractive role, or fashion, model, something that proved especially notable for the remarkable, even miraculous, transition in eastern Europe.<sup>61</sup> People do not seem to need a lot of persuasion to find appeal in shining cities on hills that are stable, productive, and open even if some of the luster wears off as they get closer.\*

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<sup>60</sup>Virginia Page Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents’ Choices After Civil Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008). See also Goldstein, *Winning the War on War*; Doyle and Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace*; Fearon and Laitin, “Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States;” Mack, *Human Security Report 2005*.

<sup>61</sup>On a possible alternative, see Fukuyama, “A Reply to My Critics,” 26. There seem to have been two previous “European miracles.” One, enshrined in the book by that title arises from its amazing economic growth over the last two or three centuries. E.L. Jones, *The European Miracle: Environments, Economics, and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987; see also Gat, “Is War Declining—and Why?” The second is the way it abandoned international (and for the most part civil) war after 1945 as a method for resolving differences on the continent.

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