What Is the Nature of World Politics Now?

Students today live in an era of fragmentation in which the interests of individual nation-states have been challenged by the competing ideals of globalization. Essentially, globalization encourages greater movement and cooperation between countries. This global phenomenon blurs the line between domestic and international concerns—driving nations economically, socially, and politically towards integration and interdependence.

Globalization has both advantages and disadvantages. Take, for example, the 2008 recession in the United States, which quickly spread throughout Europe and became a global economic crisis. Most countries are beginning to experience a fragile recovery from the recession, but the consequences have been devastating and will be long-lasting. Issues of national security have also arisen, with European countries adjusting domestic policies to respond to the threats being posed by disaffected young Muslim immigrants. The resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and rising civil strife in Pakistan present huge challenges in that region, compounded by a burgeoning narcotics trade. Al Qaeda continues its efforts to network with, fund, and mobilize terrorists around the globe.

The fifth edition of this book aims to reflect the changes for good and for ill that have occurred since the collapse of the Berlin Wall—a poignant example of globalization. Seeking to distinguish the time period by what it is rather than by what it is not, we have teased out the competing threads of globalization and fragmentation, examining how they tangle and weave through studies of global politics, economics, and culture, with their significance and effects boosted over the 1990s and 2000s by technological advances. By introducing these studies with theory and then supporting them with history, we have created a book that should serve as a comprehensive, contemporary, and thought-provoking text for introductory courses on world politics.

Organization

This volume is designed to provide students with the basic knowledge and skills needed to appreciate the full range of international politics in contemporary affairs.
This edition is divided into two parts. In the first half of the book, “Foundations of World Politics,” we present the fundamental building blocks for comprehending international relations. We begin with an illustration of the complexity of international relations, specifically with an eye to the distinctions between cooperation and conflict, globalization and fragmentation, and order and anarchy. In Chapter 2 we review the theories of international relations and explain how they attempt to identify patterns amid the chaos of world politics. The remaining chapters in this first part cover political and economic history since the founding of the current international system in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. We focus on historical eras from 1648 to the present, but reserve a chapter to consider, in particular, imperialism and its legacy (Chapter 5). When we move into the modern era, we look at the world since the end of the Cold War, the ramifications of 9/11, and the effect on international relations of a dominant United States.

In the second part of the book, “The Major Issues in World Politics,” we break international relations into their components, focusing on security, economics, demography and resources, and international institutions. Chapters 7 and 8 present, respectively, security theories and the contemporary security issues that are at work in international politics, from nuclear deterrence to the extent and significance of terrorism. The next two chapters contend with economic issues at work in contemporary politics. Chapter 9, in addressing matters of trade and investment, handles issues that concern primarily the more developed countries and the established arenas of globalization in the international system. Chapter 10 introduces theories of development and discusses them in light of current practices and progress in the international system.

Chapters 11 and 12 deal with the broad cross-country issues that are affecting worldwide trends, such as population and migration on the one hand and energy and environment on the other.

Although this part begins in the security chapters with an emphasis on conflict, it moves in Chapter 13 to the study of international cooperation as represented by international law and organizations. Though a far cry from global governance, these international institutions both represent and facilitate cooperative relationships, communication, and mutual understanding.

Finally, in Chapter 14 we close by highlighting the role of ethics in studies of international
relations, placing the study of world politics into the broader context of political science, and then—coming full circle—posing the different futures that realists, liberals, and constructivists might anticipate, given their assumptions and beliefs.

New to This Edition

This fifth edition of *World Politics in a New Era* has been thoroughly updated. We have further integrated the discussion of theory across all of the chapters. We have raised constructivism’s profile throughout the book as a paradigm on par with realism and liberalism. We have paid more attention to terrorism, counter-narcotics, and other contemporary security challenges and have also discussed the 2008–2009 recession and its effects on the global economy.

The introductory (Chapter 1) and concluding (Chapter 14) chapters continue to offer a context for the book as a whole, placing the examination of international relations and world politics within the larger realm of political science and global studies.

The theoretical chapter (2) examines the major theories studied in international relations. Whereas the last edition used DR-CAFTA as the illustration of each theoretical paradigm and level of analysis, this edition focuses instead on climate change, a more topical and global subject. The chapter now includes a more detailed discussion of political culture.

The historical chapters (3–5) provide a more focused framing of the chosen events. Each chapter includes a section explaining why the events in the chapter are important or how they relate to events in the new era. As such, it will be much clearer to students why studying history is important. Maps have been added to enhance student understanding of the geographical orientation of international relations. Contemporary research and analysis have been added in select sections to bring the discussions up-to-date with the most recent findings concerning historical events. Chapter 6 has been completely updated to include the most recent events in the Middle East, South Asia, and the Korean Peninsula. Updates have also been included on Darfur, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and global terrorist incidents.

The two security chapters (7 and 8) are thoroughly updated. Both chapters now contain discussions of human security, and Chapter 7 discusses the constructivist concept of “securitization.” Military figures, such as weapons and defense spending, are updated, as is the discussion of defensive weapon systems and arms control treaties. Chapter 8 contains a full update of the nuclear programs of North Korea and Iran, active terrorist organizations, and the violence in Mexico caused by drug cartels.

Chapters 9 and 10, on trade and economic development, respectively, both now have references throughout to the effects of the global economic crisis. Each also has updated and additional data, including changes over time in trade balances, GDPs, internet usage, and top multinational corporations. Substantively,
The discussion of constructivism, and of John Ruggie’s work, in particular, is now more thorough. Overall, with their discussions of economic theorists from Adam Smith to Immanuel Wallerstein, and their coverage of issues pertaining across the board from advanced postindustrial states to the world’s least-developed countries, these chapters continue to offer a solid foundation for understanding the role economics play in international relations as a whole.

The human demographics and resource issues chapters (11 and 12) are thoroughly updated. For example, the most recent data on refugees and internally displaced peoples, global health, global carbon emissions, world oil producers, and consumers is provided. In addition, both chapters include new material that reflects the Obama administration’s positions on these issues, such as immigration and climate change (particularly the UN Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen in December 2009).

Chapter 13, international law and organizations, has been updated (i.e., current peacekeeping operations; IMF’s response to the economic crisis in Greece in mid-2010) and also includes new material, such as women’s rights as human rights (i.e., UN Security Council Resolution 1325’s call for more women in the peace negotiations); Responsibility to Protect and peacekeeping after conflict ends; and the UN Human Rights Council (which replaced the UN Human Rights Commission). The sections have been updated to include information reflecting the new Obama administration (i.e., International Criminal Court).

**Features**

The text includes a number of features designed to reinforce the main themes of the text and to encourage a better understanding of world politics, including:

- **Coverage of Globalization versus Fragmentation** explains when and how globalization influences world politics
- **Theoretical material**—realism, liberalism, constructivism, and a few select alternative theories—is presented in Chapter 2, giving students a basic primer on IR theory, following which theory is discussed in the narrative of every chapter and summarized in the At A Glance feature.
- **At A Glance feature** addresses these theories and how they explain the topic under discussion, but also shows how the “Levels of Analysis” interact with the theories to provide students with the deepest level of understanding.
What Would You Do?

North Korea’s Nuclear Test
You are a political scientist: North Korea is threatening to test another nuclear device. You must provide policy advice on the potential for international conflict and cooperation. You have also been asked to explain the fragmentary impulses North Korea’s move both represents and could stimulate worldwide. Finally, you need to explain how globalization has led to this crisis, how it exacerbates it, and how it might also help mitigate and even resolve it.

What Would You Do?

- **Historical material** is covered in four chapters, beginning with the treaty of Westphalia and the start of the nation-state system, and proceeding to the present, giving students an international relations perspective on historical events.
- **Historical maps** help students grasp the ebb and flow of geopolitics over the centuries; thematic maps reinforce key points visually; and graphs, charts, and tables summarize statistical information.

**Supplements**

- **Companion Website at www.oup.com/us/spiegel**
  Written by text author Elizabeth Matthews, this student study and review site offers learning objectives, key concepts, chapter summaries, multiple-choice quizzes, chapter exams, short-answer essay quizzes, case studies, flashcards, and web links. These resources are located at www.oup.com/us/spiegel
- **Instructor’s Resource Manual with Test Bank**
  Written by text author Elizabeth Matthews, each chapter of the Instructor’s Resource Manual includes Learning Objectives, a Chapter Summary, Lecture Suggestions, Video Suggestions, and a section discussing how the themes introduced in the book are woven into each chapter. Each chapter of the Test Item File includes up to 150 questions in multiple-choice,
short-answer, or essay formats. The Test Item File is available as a Microsoft Word file for download from the companion website that accompanies the text.

- **PowerPoint-based slides**
  For each chapter of the text, succinct chapter outlines are available in PowerPoint format. These slides are available for download from the website listed above.

- **Instructor’s Resource CD**
  This resource puts all of your teaching tools in one place. The CD includes the Instructor’s Resource Manual with Tests, the Computerized Test Bank, the PowerPoint-based slides, and the graphics from the text.

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