

## Globalizers of the World, Unite!

Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*. New York: Times Books, 1995.

Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 1992.

Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

Robert Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. New York: Random House, 1996.

Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies*. New York: Free Press, 1995.

The past decade has not been kind to the nation-state. Its economic and security functions have been called into question. The advanced industrial states have lost much of their influence over the global economy a trend epitomized in September 1992 by the collapse of the pound sterling on "Black Wednesday," when a speculator's bet proved stronger than the full faith and credit of the British Treasury. Governments today have little choice but to privatize their economies and pursue rigidly stable macroeconomic policies. Powerful multinational corporations circumvent states, conducting their own foreign affairs and international agreements (Strange 1992). If the leading industrial nations have found themselves constrained, weaker states have been torn asunder. Culture and ethnicity, thought insignificant during the Cold War, have proven stronger than state institutions in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Many governments face a situation of juridical but not actual sovereignty over their territories (Jackson 1990). All told, the Westphalian system of state sovereignty looks much weaker at the

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end of this century than at its mid-point.

The nation-state's eroding influence is underscored by the recent spate of books predicting its demise. Kenichi Ohmae argues that the authority invested in nation-states is devolving to regional organizations. For Samuel Huntington, the civilization is replacing the state as the primary unit in global politics. Francis Fukuyama and Benjamin Barber believe that global economic forces are creating a homogeneous world culture, making the state superfluous. Robert Kaplan is the most apocalyptic, claiming that demographic and environmental changes will lead to the end of the nation-state and the beginning of chaos.

These books split along economic and cultural lines. Ohmae, Barber, and Fukuyama focus on globalization—the cluster of political, economic, and technological changes that have reduced barriers to exchange. Huntington

and Kaplan emphasize the renewed importance of cultural forces—the growing desire to be part of a tribe or civilization that excludes and barely tolerates the rest of the world. The cumulative effect is akin to a group of doctors bickering about the specific disease but nodding in solemn agreement that the patient is very sick.

Yet, what is striking about these books is not their areas of disagreement, but rather their areas of consensus. All of them echo another philosopher previously considered out of style: Karl Marx.

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Like Marx, all of these authors are economic determinists. They agree that the global spread of capitalism is eroding the power and autonomy of the nation-state, either through assimilation into a homogeneous global culture or the violent rejection of it. With one important modification—the replacement of class with cultural identity—the modern-day proponents of globalization echo Marx's theories of transnational capital's effect on states, cultures, and individuals developed over a century ago.

The renewed use of Marx is compelling, but ultimately it is not convincing. Undoubtedly, the forces of globalization impose stringent constraints on national governments, but they also empower them in new ways. Globalization does not imply the erosion of the nation-state's authority, but rather a change in state strategies and a redirection of state energies. Furthermore, these books share some of the less savory aspects of Marxism—in particular, the rejection of positive social science and the use of grand theories to make policy proposals. Both of these trends deserve to be resisted. The globalization thesis is seductive, but not satisfactory.

## The Economic Logic of Globalization

Accusing a book of Marxist leanings does not have the same meaning now that it did during the Cold War. None of these authors calls for a proletarian revolution or the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Rather, they share Marx's belief that changes in political or social relations are a function of changes in the economic mode of production. Some of these books go further, echoing the Marxist mechanisms through which globalization denudes the state of any autonomy. According to Marx, the globalization of capital is detrimental to the nation-state because it weakens the autonomy of state institutions and dissolves the political bonds between the state and its populace. In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Friedrich Engels note,

The bourgeoisie, whenever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors," and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor, of chivalric enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egoistic calculation. (Tucker 1978, pp. 475-476)

To some extent, Barber, Fukuyama, Huntington, Kaplan, and Ohmae all accept this logic.<sup>1</sup>

Ironically, the most vigorous acceptance of Marx's logic has come from those on the right of the political spectrum. Fukuyama is the most explicit in acknowledging his intellectual debt to Marx, observing that his explanation is "a kind of Marxist interpretation of history that leads to a completely non-Marxist conclusion." (p. 131) Whereas Marx focused on the breakdown of institutions, however, Fukuyama concentrates on changes at the cognitive level. Because capitalism requires a universally educated labor force, as well as the mobility of factors of production, individuals lose what Fukuyama refers to as "thymos," or their need for recognition by others.

Individuals must constantly retool for new careers in new cities. The sense of identity provided by regionalism and localism diminishes, and people find themselves retreating into the microscopic world of their families which they carry around with them from place to place like lawn furniture. (p. 325)

The rational part of Fukuyama's individual triumphs over the irrational, thymotic part of the soul. (p. 185)

This change in individuals leads to greater cosmopolitanism and cultural homogeneity as people recognize similar social relationships across borders. The decline of thymos and the recognition of a universal culture eliminates any desire to give one's life for some ancient hatred. The result is an audacious prediction:

Economic forces encouraged nationalism by replacing class with national barriers and created centralized, linguistically homogeneous entities in the process. These same economic forces are now encouraging the breakdown of national barriers through the creation of a single, integrated world market. The fact that the final political neutralization of nationalism may not occur in this generation or the next does not affect the prospect of its ultimately taking place. (p. 275)

Stripped of any economic or patriotic purpose, the nation-state loses its relevance.

Ohmae's prediction of the nation-state's demise is based on similar grounds but differs slightly in the outcome. He argues that the spread of the marketplace and the rapid pace of technological change weaken the social

contract between individuals and nations. The globalization of capital leads to a homogenization of cultures, eliminating differences between nationalities or civilizations. Ohmae refers to this phenomenon as the "Californiaization" of individual preferences, a blending of taste that blurs differences between states and eradicates historical animosities, making interstate war less likely and thus removing one of the nation-state's primary functions. At the same time, the spread of global capital places new economic constraints on the state's role in economic affairs: "Reflexive twinges of

sovereignty make the desired economic success impossible, because the global economy punishes twinging countries by diverting investment and information elsewhere." (p. 12)

Ohmae's original contribution is his prediction that, in the future, the natural organizing unit will be "region-states," which can be located within one country, such as Silicon Valley, or across borders, as in Southeast Asia. Regional variations in economic growth within the nation-state generate political and economic conflicts. More dynamic regions start to question the wisdom of subsidizing less dynamic regions within the same country, whereas intraregional ethnic tensions decline: "Indeed, because the orientation of region-states is toward the global economy, not toward their host nations, they help breed an internationalism of outlook that defuses many of the usual kinds of social tensions." (p. 94) Echoing Marx, Ohmae predicts that the global reach of the marketplace will constrain the nation-state and induce a cosmopolitanism that renders it irrelevant.

Barber's description of globalization in *Jihad vs. McWorld* is perhaps the closest in spirit to Marx, although his metaphors are unquestionably juicier.

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His definition of the global marketplace—what he calls McWorld—is

that future in shimmering pastels, a busy portrait of onrushing economic, technological, and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerize peoples everywhere with fast music, fast computers, and fast food—MTV, Macintosh, and McDonald's—pressing nations into one homogeneous global theme park. (p. 4)

His mechanism for McWorld's erosion of the nation-state echoes Marx as well. Globalization creates new sources of economic power and a universal culture, stripping the nation-state of its economic and political rationales.

*Jihad vs. McWorld* differs from the other books in two respects. First, Barber attaches more importance to multinational corporations, particularly the media conglomerates that control the means of intellectual production. This emphasis places him closer to Marx's vision of monopoly capital than the other authors considered here. Second, Barber recognizes that the disruptive effects of McWorld will lead to an inevitable backlash within each culture; his use of "Jihad" refers to this rejection of modernization and cosmopolitanism. In the end, however, McWorld will win out, or so he says: "My prediction that Jihad will eventually (if not any time soon) be defeated by McWorld rests almost entirely on the long-term capacity of global information and global culture to overpower parochialism and to integrate or obliterate partial identities." (p. 82) In this prediction, Barber has merely updated Marx to the Information Age.

By stressing the direct economic effects of globalization, the first three books implicitly focus their energies on the developed world. In *The Ends of the Earth*, Kaplan looks at a slice of the developing world but comes to the same conclusions about the effects of the global market on the nation-state. More than the other authors, however, Kaplan examines the effect of the global market on states that resist laissez-faire policies. In most cases, he says, it erodes the state's monopoly on coercive violence. Corruption and the pursuit of government favors destroy the coherence of institutions designed to resist the expansion of the free market. He observes, "The border existed to tax the wealthy and to provide jobs and supplemental income for government bureaucrats. It was a wealth-transfer mechanism." (p. 73) In many of the areas he describes, in particular West Africa and Central Asia, little difference seems to exist today between states and armies, armies and militias, militias and criminal gangs. In the developing world, coercive power has become a marketable commodity. The breakdown of the state's monopoly on coercive violence is powerful testimony to the erosion of the nation-state.

The dominant themes in Kaplan's book involve how environmental and demographic change affects cultures and states. His source of ideas is Thomas F. Homer-Dixon (1991), an academic who stresses environmental fac-

tors as the cause of conflict. In particular, Kaplan argues that soil erosion and mass urbanization are the main causes of the nation-state's demise. This argument, he thinks, replaces "social-social" theory with "physical-social" theory. He fails to appreciate that the physical factors he mentions are the outcomes of economic causes, namely the spread of industrialization to the developing world. Kaplan's environmental and demographic mechanisms are different, but the causes are still economic and the effect remains the erosion of state power. In the end, his characterization of the modern world economy parallels Marx:

In a sense, the world economy has become a larger version of pre-revolutionary Iran's, where in the 1960s and 1970s per capita income rose from \$200 to \$1,000. But the rise was unevenly distributed, and a large subproletariat was created in the process. The result was upheaval. (p. 387)

Although his causal mechanism differs, and although he never acknowledges it, Kaplan shares Marx's economic determinism.

Even Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, though the most removed from the theory of globalization, uses some of Marx's argument. Huntington concedes that the spread of the free market has created a homogeneous set of values for the global elite. He refers to this as the Davos Culture, after the World Economic Forum held in Switzerland every year; indeed, his description of this group of people sounds eerily reminiscent of Marx's description of the bourgeoisie:

They generally share beliefs in individualism, market economies, and political democracy, which are also common among people in Western civilization. Davos people control virtually all international institutions, many of the world's governments, and the bulk of the world's economic and military capabilities. (p. 57)

Huntington differs from the other authors only in arguing that cultural homogenization is restricted to the elite level and fails to trickle down into a more cosmopolitan outlook among non-Western populations.

This does not mean globalization has no effect in Huntington's vision of the world. Rather, he argues that it needs to be parsed into modernization and Westernization. Most of the world embraces the effects of modernization: technological dynamism and the reduction of barriers to economic exchange. Yet, the Western values associated with modernization, such as democracy and individual liberty, generate a backlash that Huntington believes strengthens civilizational, as opposed to national, identities:

The most obvious, most salient, and most powerful cause of the global religious resurgence is precisely what was supposed to cause the death of religion: the processes of social, economic, and cultural modernization that swept across the world in the latter half of the twentieth century. Long-

standing sources of identity and systems of authority are disrupted. People move from the countryside into the city, become separated from their roots, and take new jobs or no job. They interact with large numbers of strangers and are exposed to new sets of relationships. They need new sources of identity. (p. 97)

With this logic, Huntington agrees with the other authors that globalization is eroding the autonomy of the nation-state; any disagreement is over the precise mechanism through which this occurs. Ohmae, Barber, and Fukuyama stress the ability of global capitalism to reduce the nation-state's economic role and to create a genuine cosmopolitanism that erodes its political role. Huntington and Kaplan believe it is in the negative reaction to this cosmopolitanism that identities change.

### **The Nation-State and the Reaction to Global Capitalism**

Just as these authors share Marx's belief in economic determinism to some degree, they also (with the exception of Ohmae) share Marx's use of the dialectic. They acknowledge that the forces of globalization generate social upheaval and resistance to the free market. They further agree that these reactions create new movements led by educated urban elites and consisting of workers alienated by the callousness of capitalism. But at this point, the similarities with Marx, and with each other, end.

Marx believed that capitalism would alienate the laborers from the global economic system, creating a transnational class consciousness of workers. One hundred and fifty years after *The Communist Manifesto*, the new globalizers recognize that cultural identity remains more powerful than class identity. Because cultural identities do not match up well with existing state boundaries, the nation-state is thus caught between the cross-pressures of globalization and the fragmentation produced in reaction to it, weakening state power and sovereignty.

Fukuyama and Ohmae mention the threat of ethnic fragmentation primarily to dismiss it.<sup>2</sup> For them, the economic forces for cosmopolitanism are too great. Barber acknowledges the reaction in his description of Jihad, but he also believes that it is a transient phenomenon. Kaplan and Huntington, on the other hand, devote most of their books to the reaction to globalization.

Of all of the books, Barber's may be the best at describing the interplay between the forces of globalization and fragmentation. He points out that the forces of Jihad are a direct result of the forces of globalization: "Jihad stands not so much in stark opposition as in subtle counterpoint to McWorld and is itself a dialectical response to modernity whose features both reflect and reinforce the modern world's virtues and vices--Jihad via McWorld rather than

Jihad versus McWorld.” (p. 157) He shrewdly observes that these reactionary movements exploit the same technological advances as those in favor of globalization. Modernization enhances the ability of these rejectionist groups to mobilize. He does not think this will benefit nation-states: “Jihad, even in its most pacific manifestations, almost always turns out to be not simply a struggle on behalf of an ethnic fragment for self-determination, but a compound struggle within that fragment that risks still greater fragmentation and plenty of confusion as well.” (p. 179) He makes the expected references to the Middle East and the former Soviet Union, but to show that Jihad is also a global phenomenon, he also devotes chapters to the United States and Western Europe. In an ironic counterpoint to Ohmae’s *The End of the Nation-State*, Barber claims that regional entities will increase their power because of ethnic rather than economic motivations.

Kaplan sums up his empirical conclusions with the following line: “All I had learned so far was that states in West Africa, the Near East, and Central Asia were weakening, and that ethno-religious identities appeared stronger by contrast.” (p. 272) Kaplan’s descriptions are compelling. West Africa has seen violent ethnic conflicts and a growing resentment of Lebanese immigrants. Turkey and Iran fear the secession of Kurdish and Azeri minorities; Egypt fears the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. From his description, Pakistan is not so much a state as a collection of clans and drug warlords. Everywhere he looks, Kaplan finds states incapable of coping with the environmental and geographic implications of modernization; in their place, new identities are formed, based on religion or ethnicity.

If these observations were confined to the countries south of the equator, then Kaplan’s book would have few implications for the more powerful and established nation-states. But he goes further in his conclusions, asserting that these are global problems:

Many of the problems I saw around the world—poverty, the collapse of cities, porous borders, cultural and racial strife, growing economic disparities, weakening nation-states—are problems for Americans to think about. I thought of America everywhere I looked. We cannot escape a more populous, interconnected world of crumbling borders. (p. 436)

Yet he is extremely pessimistic that the United States or the developed world can do anything about these problems: “We are not in control. As societies grow more populous and more complex, the idea that a global elite like the UN can engineer reality from above is just as absurd as the idea that political ‘scientists’ can reduce any of this to a *science*.” (p. 436) Academic aspersions aside, Kaplan’s statement reveals his belief that both globalization and the reaction to it are structural changes that cannot be thwarted by policymakers.

For Huntington, the reaction to modernization and the rejection of



“Western” values leads to an erosion of the nation-state’s power:

Political boundaries increasingly are redrawn to coincide with cultural ones: ethnic, religious, and civilizational. Cultural communities are replacing Cold War blocs, and the fault lines between civilizations are becoming the central lines of conflict in global politics. (p. 125)

This occurs through three mechanisms. First, states lose their identity relative to civilizations and thus reject the practices of *realpolitik* that govern the Westphalian world order. They have no choice but to ally with states of the same civilization. Second, many states face internal divisions because they straddle civilizational fault lines, or because their leaders tried in the past to imprint Western values upon their societies and only partially succeeded. The roster of conflicted states includes China, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Third—and this is where Huntington follows Kaplan’s strategy of analyzing international relations to urge a change in U.S. domestic policy—Western civilization faces internal threats from immigration and multiculturalism:

Western culture is challenged by groups within Western societies. One such challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home societies. ... In the name of multiculturalism they have attacked the identification of the United States with Western civilization, denied the existence of a common American culture, and promoted racial, ethnic, and other subnational cultural identities and groupings. (pp. 304–305)

Just as other civilizations are challenging the West, the permeability of state borders has diminished the ability of Western civilization to respond. Huntington, like Kaplan, believes that the developing world’s reaction to globalization will spread, tearing apart the advanced industrial states as well.

### **Critiquing the Last Seduction**

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Marxism was a seductive philosophy because it attempted to explain, well, *everything*. These books make the same theoretical leap, and the effect, sometimes, is dazzling. In the face of explanations that unite disparate facts and trends, it is tempting to embrace their claims. Yet, rather than join the chorus of mourners for the nation-state, I contend that the arguments for economic determinism do not stand up to empirical or theoretical scrutiny. Empirically, much of the evidence provided in the books is inconclusive. Theoretically, the economic and cultural forces unleashed by globalization

impose new constraints on countries, but not a straight-jacket. Globalization also creates new strategies and roles for the nation-state.

Empirically, these books leave many questions unanswered (*The End of History and the Last Man* excepted, as it is primarily a theoretical tract). These books were written for a relatively broad audience and thus skip over much of the drudgery of data collection and fact checking, which leads to some sloppiness. With so much ground to cover, each of the books have their factual *faux-pas*. For example, Kaplan states that the United States actually has less enmity and deeper military, economic, and educational links with Iran than either Japan or Germany. (p. 186) Fukuyama claims that Russian nationalism is neither expansionist nor a powerful force within Russia. (p. 272) Barber includes South Korea as an example of how free markets can be divorced from free political institutions. (p. 184) Huntington asserts an Islamic revival in post-Soviet Central Asia that has yet to be observed by others. (pp. 96–97) And Ohmae categorizes North Korea as having a higher per capita income than China. (pp. 90–91)

Even when the facts are correct, however, they do not necessarily corroborate the authors' claims. Kaplan and Ohmae commit this error in different ways. Kaplan "discovers" that countries with corrupt governments, stagnant economies, and short histories of statehood are falling apart. In other words, he looks only at failed states and concludes that all states are failing. He believes these trends can be generalized to the rest of the world, yet his own descriptions contradict him. In the countries where statehood has a longer tradition, such as Turkey, Iran, and Thailand, Kaplan finds a stronger state and a less fragmented populace. This distinction severs the contagion effect Kaplan wants to ascribe to events in West Africa and Central Asia.

Ohmae makes the mistake of most business gurus: In looking only at the economically successful, he analyzes a biased sample and thus reaches flawed conclusions.<sup>3</sup> Ohmae provides no compelling evidence that information technologies favor regional units of economic organization. Many of the traits that Ohmae describes in successful region-states are also evident in areas that have yet to experience rapid economic growth (Saxenian 1989), implying that the region is not the natural unit of organization across the globe. Furthermore, his East Asian examples present a paradox. On the one hand, he uses the Pacific Rim to show that the nation-state is losing its relevance in the borderless economy. In making this argument, he seems to have ignored the rising defense budgets of most states in the region, the collective effort to suppress internal dissent, and the sovereignty dispute over the Spratly Islands. In the part of the globe where his argument should be the most powerful, the nation-state remains a robust institution.

Barber's description in *Jihad vs. McWorld* is certainly vivid, but his evi-

dence consists of anecdotes, film revenue reports, and rock lyrics, none of which proves his theory that capitalism erodes democracy. Indeed, Robert Putnam (1993) offers a rigorous analysis of the ingredients of a good democracy and concludes that economics has very little to do with it; the bonds of civic association are far more resilient than Barber claims. Barber contradicts himself on the ability of markets to erode state power, railing at Rupert Murdoch for his repeated concessions to the Chinese government. Furthermore, the claim that globalization strips states of their domestic autonomy does not have much empirical support; studies of economic integration suggest that governments have been able to *increase* their role, even in a globalizing economy (Garrett 1995; Hallenberg 1996; Katzenstein 1985).

As for cultural homogenization, Barber's references to movies and MTV are not enough to prove his point. He describes a thin gruel of global culture but ignores the richer cultural stew that all countries, the United States included, possess. In describing the aspects of culture that can move across boundaries, he fails to realize that much of what defines culture is immobile. To Barber's credit, he tries to show the forces of Jihad in the areas where it would be least expected, such as Western Europe and the United States. The problem is, he finds very tenuous support for his thesis. Even in the areas where fragmentation would be expected, such as the former Soviet Union, his knowledge is at best superficial and at worst wrong.<sup>4</sup>

**Affirmations of cultural identity would seem to bode well for the nation-state.**

Huntington's book is the best researched of the lot, but his evidence could be interpreted in several ways. For example, to show a resurgent Confucian civilization in East Asia, he liberally quotes Lee Kuan Yew and Mahathir Mohamad asserting the existence of distinct Asian values. Fair enough, but these two are leaders of relatively small countries—Singapore and Malaysia—trying to maintain their internal control; it is not surprising that they would use such rhetoric as a way of increasing their power and prestige. Huntington also uses the length and viciousness of ethnic conflicts as proof that “fault-line” civilizational wars are longer and bloodier than other conflicts. But not all ethnic conflicts are civilizational, as Rwanda and Northern Ireland attest. Wars based along clan lines (Somalia) or ideology (Cambodia) can be just as long and just as bloody.

This is not the first time the proponents of the globalization thesis have cried wolf. Marx's predictions about the subjugation of national governments to transnational capital did not occur in the nineteenth century. In

1907, a Prussian official complained: "In our time of international trade, the telephone and the telegram, the owners of 'mobile capital' are in no way bound to a specific residence. If the demands of the state on their performance become too large, then the danger is near that they will brush the Prussian dust from their feet and leave."<sup>5</sup> E. H. Carr (1945) wrote during World War II that state sovereignty "is being sapped by modern technological developments which have made the nation obsolescent as the unit of military and economic organization, and are rapidly concentrating effective decision and control in the hands of great multi-national units." (p. 39) In 1969, noted economist Charles Kindleberger argued that the nation-state "was just about through as an economic unit."<sup>6</sup> None of these predictions came true.

### **The Nation-State at the New Millennium**

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Theoretically, the global trends described in these books should enhance both the economic and political role of the nation-state. Economically, the constraints of global finance have three positive effects. First, although states must abdicate certain responsibilities, such as the ownership of corporations and the ability to manipulate the trade-off between inflation and unemployment, most countries were never particularly successful at these tasks to begin with. Government ownership of firms rarely provides the best management, and the inflation/unemployment trade-off is a temporary expedient that breaks down over the long run. In the language of business, shedding these functions empowers states to focus on their core competencies.<sup>7</sup>

Second, rather than the inevitable race to the bottom, globalization can encourage states to coordinate their regulatory policies. The European Union added a social chapter that even Great Britain might join.<sup>8</sup> The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) imposed more stringent labor and environmental conditions for Mexico. Globally, the Montreal Protocol moved toward the ban of chlorofluorocarbons. Since 1990, the United Nations (UN) has been much more willing to impose multilateral economic sanctions for violations of international norms.<sup>9</sup> States clearly retain the option of interventionist policies in some areas of economic life. Although enforcement is a problem with some of these policies, it is not an insurmountable one. And although coordination can lead to reduced state powers, it can also lead to an enhanced state role (Cohen 1996).

Finally, the increased mobility of capital forces the nation-state to focus on the location of innovation rather than production. This benefits both the state and society. Economists agree that the greatest source of economic growth is technological change (Denison 1974; Abramovitz 1989; Boskin

and Lau 1992). A renewed focus on innovation can only expand the economic pie for society. Furthermore, economists also agree that the state can and should play a role in fostering technological innovation. States are assigned tasks, such as the provision of public goods and the establishment of the necessary rules and institutions, that cannot be easily replicated by other actors. Economically, the globalization of markets implies the redirection, not the elimination, of the nation-state's role.

The state's political role also remains. The renaissance of cultural and ethnic identities might spell doom for some nation-states, but not for the nation-state in general. There is a sense in some of these books that ethnic and cultural conflict are the inevitable result of ancient hatreds. In fact, recent work suggests that governments successfully manipulate these ethnic identities to enhance their own power (Gagnon 1995; Chege 1996). Regrettably, this often implies war and bloodshed, but it also shows that states still provide people with their strongest identities. Sometimes this can take relatively benign forms, as in France or the United States. Sometimes, as in Rwanda, it leads to genocide. Furthermore, many ethnic conflicts are not over cultural disagreements, but rather over who controls the machinery of the state. Breakaway groups do not want to abolish the nation-state; they want their own.<sup>10</sup> The nation-state is not a hostage to ancient hatreds; one of its political roles is to manipulate these identities, and, one can hope, to direct them toward peaceable ends.

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Globalization and its ripple effects do create new constraints for the nation-state. In part, the adaptability of national governments to their new roles explains the varying fortunes of nation-states in this decade. Paradoxically, at the same time as globalizers are claiming the end of the Westphalian system, the United States has increased its relative power and influence. It has strengthened its lead in the military applications of information technologies (Nye and Owens 1996). It has been more willing to use economic statecraft as a policy tool. Beyond its ability to project coercive power, the United States has also increased its co-optive or "soft" power, because the economic changes caused by globalization mirror the preferences of U.S. society and ideology (Nye 1990). Even the collapse of several developing-world states hints at the strength of the great powers. These states collapsed in part because the United States and other former colonizers declined to intervene to prop up failing regimes. The great powers are still capable of performing this function when they choose, as in Haiti and Albania, but the

end of the Cold War removed the incentive to intervene everywhere.

Finally, each author makes the mistake of assuming that state sovereignty is an absolute and indivisible commodity. Stephen D. Krasner (1995) notes that the violations of sovereignty that have been observed recently are nothing new; since its inception, the Westphalian norm of absolute state sovereignty has been consistently violated by other states. Even if the nation-state is weakening in the face of global forces, it still has a few centuries of life remaining. Its death is likely to be as slow as its birth.

### **Social Science and Policymaking**

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The final connection between the books reviewed here and Marxist philosophy is a disturbing one. Marx scorned the social philosophies of the nineteenth century, arguing that the point was not to explain the world but to change it. The result was a theory that could never be disproven; Marx's successors made amendments to explain away failures, all the while focusing on political change. What is striking about these five authors' books is the varying degrees of scorn they heap on modern social science—and, like Marx's successors, the fact that they use grand theories as a vehicle for radical policy proposals.

The disregard for political science is particularly noticeable in Kaplan and Barber. Kaplan, for example, argues,

A political scientist can do little more than what a journalist does: Go to places where there appear to be interesting linkages ... and see if the causal relationships exist. From this, some useful ideas or theories might emerge. To call it a science, though, is an overstatement. (p. 413)

Barber comes to a similar conclusion:

The data are too protean to be definitive and the events too vulnerable to distortion by the very probes that effect to explain them to be detachable from the normative frames by which we try to capture them. This is the general problem with pretending that social and political theory can be "scientific." (p. 168)

The other authors are somewhat more generous about the utility of political science, but they reject the accepted theories of international relations as outdated and sterile.

It is a rite of passage for Washington policymakers to bash academics for their scientific pretensions and abstract theorizing. There is certainly enough bad political science to justify it. Nevertheless, it is a dangerous tactic, because it tarnishes a singularly useful purpose of social scientists vis-à-vis policymakers: the role of the critic. Politicians have the incentive to use dubious theories when they are politically expedient (Blinder 1987). Aca-

demics test arguments for their theoretical and empirical rigor to filter out those that may be emotionally appealing but wrong. This is useful to policymakers, because it tells them which theories should be ignored and which merit further attention. Scholarly criticism can make a difference. For example, Paul Krugman (1995) has performed an exemplary service in debunking theories of pop internationalism. One wonders whether the accusations against social science made in these books are not self-inoculations against academic criticisms down the line.

Why have so many grand theories been put forward? I would argue that it is a nostalgic, anachronistic search for an American grand strategy. One of the virtues of the Cold War was that the United States had an overarching framework of containment that dictated most of its foreign policy and some of its domestic policies. Many in the policy community look at the frequent chaos of U.S. foreign policy today and conclude that we need a new universal framework. All of these books attempt to provide it, but globalization is not the constraint on U.S. policy that Soviet power was during the era of bipolarity. Accepting this false analogy would lead to an artificial reduction of U.S. policy options.

## Conclusion

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These books agree with each other on at least four points. First, the nation-state is losing its influence in world politics. Second, this weakening is caused either directly or indirectly by global market forces. Some argue, akin to Marx, that economic forces directly affect the nation-state by constraining its economic functions and creating a homogeneous global culture that weakens nationalist sentiments. Others argue that economic forces are indirectly responsible, because they generate a cultural backlash that re-ignites older identities not associated with the nation-state. Third, these effects are global; they are not confined to the developed or developing world. Fourth, conventional social science cannot explain these changes.

These arguments challenge conventional paradigms and are genuinely thought-provoking. In the end, however, they are no more persuasive than the original Marxist argument. Whereas much of the description is accurate, it does not imply an erosion of the nation-state's authority, but rather a redefinition of its role in the international system. As a guide for the modern-day constraints on the nation-state, the globalization thesis can serve a useful purpose. Yet, the nation-state has faced constraints since Westphalia, and it has not withered away; some trends these authors mention empower rather than weaken states. As a framework for policy advice, or a map of the future, the globalization thesis leaves a great deal to be desired.

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## Notes

1. This has been observed elsewhere. Falk (1997) notes, "In paradoxical fashion, the Marxist account of the relation between economic and political power seems persuasive only after Marxism has lost its capacity to win adherents to its world view." (p. 135)
2. Fukuyama's tone in *The End of History and the Last Man* is more somber than in his original essay. In his final chapters, he warns that if capitalism leads to the erosion of civil society, individuals will resort to violence to express their thymotic urges. Yet, this warning contradicts his earlier claim that the end of history is the victory of the rational over the thymotic part of the human soul.
3. Another example of this error is Peters and Waterman (1982).
4. For example, his description of Ukraine on pp. 199–200 is badly off; its first president was not "lethally nationalist" and its current one does not have a pro-Russian tilt. Barber clearly derived these characterizations from the 1994 presidential election between Leonid Kuchma and Leonid Kravchuk, but he fails to separate campaign rhetoric from actual policies of either leader.
5. Quoted in Hallenberg (1996), p. 336.
6. Quoted in Cohen (1996), p. 294.
7. I do not want to imply a Panglossian view on globalization's constraints on the state. In the future, it is questionable whether the nation-state will be able to ameliorate the distributional conflicts caused by globalization. Rodrik (1997) provides an excellent account of how globalization can impair the state's ability to fulfill these tasks. Yet, Rodrik also concedes that the state might not be the institution best suited for this task.
8. See Rodrik (1997) for a more pessimistic appraisal of the European Union social chapter.
9. The Security Council has mandated economic sanctions seven times since 1990, as opposed to twice during the UN's first 45 years of existence.
10. The case of Moldova is instructive. Prior to World War II, Moldova was historically part of Romania. Annexed by the Soviet Union in 1945, the alphabet was changed from Roman to Cyrillic, and the republic's language was called Moldavian rather than Romanian. After the break-up, there was a push in Moldova to reunite with Romania. In the end, however, Moldova's leaders decided they did not want to relinquish political power, and therefore spurned any integration with Romania. Even though this state has little history independent of Romania, it survives.