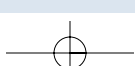
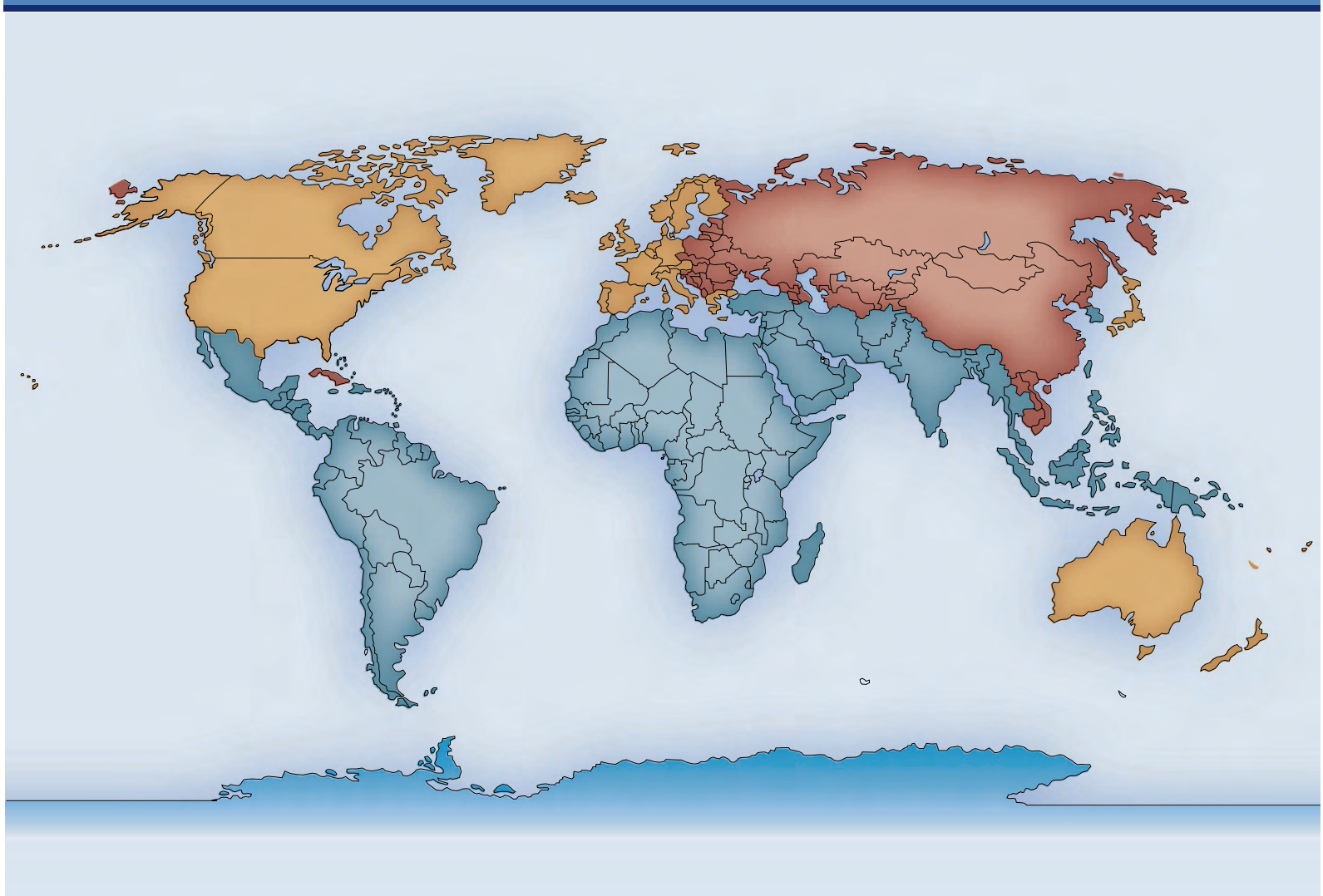
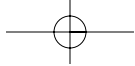


# Part 1

# INTRODUCTION

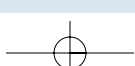
**CHAPTER 1**  
Seeking New Lands,  
Seeing with New Eyes





*The voyage of discovery consists not  
in seeking new lands but in seeing  
with new eyes.*

MARCEL PROUST



## Chapter 1

# SEEKING NEW LANDS, SEEING WITH NEW EYES

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Dangers and Opportunities in a Changing World
- Leaders in Transition
- The State: One Focus among Many
- Comparative Politics
- Three Templates
- Five Themes
- Using This Book

### Dangers and Opportunities in a Shrinking World

This book is based on three premises.

The first is all but obvious these days. Events taking place around the world affect us all.

The fact that we live in an interdependent world was driven home as clearly as it could possibly have been on 11 September 2001 when airplanes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon just outside of Washington, D.C. The cartoon that follows sums up how many people around the world felt that day. Before 9/11, many Americans thought that other countries and continents were far away. By noon on that warm and sunny fall day they knew the world and its problems were on their doorsteps.

Literally speaking, the cartoon is not accurate. The world and its oceans have not shrunk. Europe, Africa, and Asia are as far from the Americas as they were on 10 September 2001. However, our political, social, economic, telecommunications, and other systems have changed so much so fast that we ignore the problems of the rest of the world at our peril.

That, of course, is not only true of Americans. Citizens of more than twenty countries were among the nearly three thousand people killed at Ground Zero. At the end of 2004, captured Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters

from Australia, the United Kingdom, and a number of Middle Eastern countries were still being held by American authorities at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. In recent years, major terrorist attacks have occurred in France, Germany, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Tanzania, Russia, Indonesia, Colombia, and more.

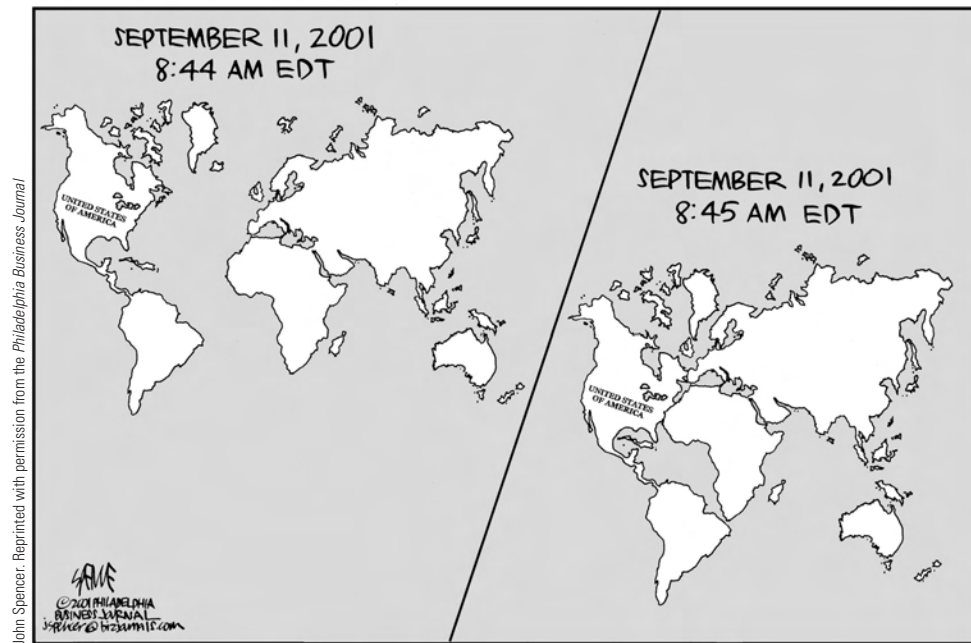
And for the purposes of this book, terrorism is but the tip of the political iceberg. We are tied into an increasingly interconnected world in ways that are so unremarkable we rarely think about them.

Just before writing this chapter, I put away my clean laundry. Knowing I was going to be writing about interdependence, I checked the labels. None of the shirts were made in the United States. Then I checked my ties, pants, and suit coats. Same thing. Labor costs are simply too high for companies to manufacture most clothes in the United States, Great Britain, France, Japan, or any other wealthy country.

The loss of jobs in the textile industry is part of a broader shift in manufacturing jobs to the poorer countries of South America, Asia, and Africa. Try as they might, governments have not been able to slow the trend of **globalization**<sup>1</sup> over the last fifty years.

<sup>1</sup>Terms in boldface can be found in the list of key terms at the end of each chapter and in the glossaries of concepts, people, acronyms, organizations, places, and events at the end of the book.

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Consider the impact of the little-known African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) that became U.S. law in 2000. The act reduced tariffs and other restrictions on 1,800 textile and other products imported into the United States from Africa. As such, it was designed to give manufacturers an incentive to open factories in the world's poorest continent. At that, it seems to have succeeded. The *New York Times* reports that it has helped to create tens of thousands of jobs in such countries as Kenya, Lesotho, and Uganda, where the women who work in the new textile mills are referred to as AGOA girls.<sup>2</sup>

The jobs, however, are a mixed blessing. The women who work in those factories do make more money than they could anywhere else. But the work is hard, in many ways reminiscent of American sweatshops of a century ago. Moreover, the jobs came with a cost. Most of the companies who opened these workshops were owned by South Asians who had closed more expensive operations in their home countries. Last, but by no means least, it is not certain that these jobs will last. The act itself is due to expire in 2008, and its provisions may run afoul of the World Trade Organization's rules on textiles that are due to take effect in 2005.

Comparative politics is mostly about much weightier issues than what we wear and where it is made. None-

<sup>2</sup>Marc Lacey, "U.S. Law Gives Africa Hope and Hard Jobs," *New York Times*, 14 November 2003, A1, 8.

theless, global shifts in the textile trade show us that what happens as far away as Uganda affects us all.

The second premise is harder to see in the politics surrounding AGOA. For that, it is best to return to 9/11, which may well prove to be the defining event of our time.

We live in a time of **crisis**. However, I do not intend to use that term the way it is typically employed in the West to convey a moment of great danger whether in the life of a family or of a country.

Of course, a crisis is about danger, as anyone who has been through either a divorce or the build-up to a war knows. Nonetheless, there is more to a crisis than "simply" a threat.

Physicians, for instance, refer to a medical crisis as that point in the development of a disease at which the patient will either live or die. It is, thus, a turning point when good as well as bad outcomes are still possible. The ancient Chinese broadened the idea of a crisis even farther by combining two characters to convey what we mean by the word "crisis." The first is danger; the second is opportunity. In other words, if handled well, a crisis also opens the door to new, often previously unthought of, possibilities.

The dangers associated with 9/11 and subsequent events are easy to see. But so, too, are the opportunities. To supporters of the Bush administration, they include passage of a series of laws designed to improve American security and the prosecution of the war on terrorism. To



The second World Trade Center tower, hit by a hijacked airplane on September 11.

some of Bush's opponents, the opportunities encompass the need to better understand Islam and to address the underlying causes of terrorism as reflected in the often asked question, "why do they hate us?"

In the pages that follow, we will not encounter many issues as threatening or as dramatic as 9/11. Nonetheless, we will encounter turning point after turning point in which politicians and average citizens had to make momentous decisions. Sometimes they succeeded, as when Charles de Gaulle and his followers created the French Fifth Republic in 1958. At other times we will find mixed results, as in the limited success Vicente Fox has had in Mexico since becoming the first president chosen from a party other than the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in more than seventy years. At still other times we will encounter abject failures as in Russia during the first few years after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Not every issue warrants being called a crisis. Indeed, much of politics is routine—and even rather dull. But the questions we focus on in comparative politics typically are fraught with implications. And in the final chapter I will make the case that there is also an integrated global crisis facing us all, rich and poor, young and old, North and South alike.

The third premise builds on the first two. Events in the news also remind us of how much and how fast our

world is changing. A century ago, most of the world was ruled by colonial powers. A half century later, Germany and Japan were economically devastated by their defeat in World War II and were occupied and governed by the victorious Allied powers. A generation ago, Mexico's PRI ran the country without any serious opposition, Communists were firmly in power in the Soviet Union, and the apartheid government in South Africa seemed as invulnerable as ever. A decade ago, Japan was considered a threat to American and European prosperity, and its state was considered a model of how a government could steer a capitalist economy.

In 2005, there are almost no colonies left. The Soviet Union has disintegrated, and Communism in Eurasia is no more. South Africa's multiracial democracy has held three elections and seen its charismatic first president, Nelson Mandela, go into retirement. The PRI has lost its first election ever. Germany continues to struggle economically after nearly a half century of rapid growth that returned it to third place among the world's industrial powers.

It is at most a slight exaggeration to say, as some pundits do, that change is the only constant in our lives. And, in technological and some other areas of our lives, change is occurring at a dizzying, accelerating rate. To cite but one example, the president of Intel once said that computers would get twice as fast and powerful every eighteen months. Today it is occurring faster than that. The computer this book was written on was two thousand times more powerful than the first one I bought twenty years earlier—and cost hundreds of dollars less.

Comparative politics is but one of several academic disciplines you can turn to if you want to understand these and the other trends we will discuss in the pages that follow. As you will see, its focus is on domestic politics—that is, on what happens inside a country. To that end, this book and the course you are taking will introduce you to the ideas, findings, and techniques of comparative analysis.

## Leaders in Transition

The rest of this chapter focuses on how comparative politics can help us understand political life around the world. However, because the concepts scholars use can be rather abstract, we will begin with a brief discussion of three of the more important national leaders who are likely to be out of office by the time the next edition of this book is published and whose careers illustrate the three premises discussed earlier.

## 6 Part 1 Introduction

Tony Blair (1953–) became prime minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in May 1997 when his Labour Party ended a string of four consecutive defeats in a landslide victory over the ruling Conservative (Tory) Party ([www.number-10.gov.uk/output/page4.asp](http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/page4.asp)). The young and telegenic Blair took office amid a lot of hope and hype. He promised a wave of economic and constitutional reform, much of which he carried out. Observers began talking about a “cool Britannia” infused with a new sense of optimism and panache.

Labour won almost as sweeping a victory four years later. This time, however, the luster of Blair’s first years had worn off. In fact, Blair won in large part because the Conservatives were even less popular than he was.

Support for Blair had eroded for many reasons. Many people objected to what seemed to be his obsession with maintaining total control over his party often with colleagues who made a series of dubious ethical decisions. Others objected to the fact that Blair was more pro-European than most British citizens and seemed likely to endorse adopting the euro as the country’s currency. Yet others were dissatisfied with the relatively slow rate of economic growth that made it hard for the government to improve the National Health Service and other social programs.

Blair’s woes only mounted after 9/11. He has been the United States’ most loyal ally since then, as most British prime ministers have been since World War II. That did not get Blair into much trouble during the war in Afghanistan. However, he lost the support of a majority of his own party’s supporters and the country as a whole when he took Britain into the war against Iraq without the support of the United Nations Security Council.

By the time President Bush paid a state visit to the United Kingdom in November 2003, Blair’s support in the polls was at an all-time low. As we will see in Chapter 4, there was little or no chance that he would lose a vote of confidence in the House of Commons. Nonetheless, there were plenty of leading politicians in both the Labour Party and the opposition who called on him to resign.

On 31 December 1999, Boris Yeltsin made the surprising announcement that he was resigning immediately as president of Russia. According to the Russian Constitution, which had been written by Yeltsin to enhance his own power, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin (1952–) became acting president until new elections could be held ([www.cnn.com/interactive/profiles/putin/putin.bio.html](http://www.cnn.com/interactive/profiles/putin/putin.bio.html)).

Before summer 1999, Putin was a virtual unknown. He had spent most of his career in the KGB, the Soviet



AFP/Getty Images

Blair leaves his residence at 10 Downing Street to attend the weekly Prime Minister’s Question Time when he takes queries and comments from government and opposition Members of Parliament.

spy agency, before joining the city government of St. Petersburg in the mid-1990s. He moved to Moscow in 1996 and held a number of minor posts before being named head of the Federal Security Bureau (FSB), the KGB’s successor organization. In August 1999, Yeltsin nominated Putin to be prime minister, the fourth person to hold the job that year.

Putin proved remarkably popular and effective. He got a lot of credit for his forcefulness in the renewed war with rebels in Chechnya. He also steered the new political party, Unity, to a surprisingly strong showing in the 1999 legislative elections and then won a decisive victory in the presidential elections in March 2000. Both Putin and his party won far more convincing victories in 2003 and 2004.

As was the case with Blair, Putin’s success at the polls masks serious problems. Despite several years of relatively strong growth, the economy is still only a fraction of its Soviet-era size, and direct foreign investment is far below what Putin and his colleagues had hoped for.

Moreover, Putin spent much of his time in office in a struggle with a dozen or so wealthy “oligarchs” who had supported Yeltsin but came to oppose his successor. Many worried that Putin’s strong-armed tactics with the oligarchs and with the rebels in Chechnya reflected a

willingness to use Soviet-style repression rather than to rely on the rule of law.

Like Blair, Iranian president Mohammad Khatami (1943–) was first elected in 1997. Like Blair, he was seen as a moderate and a reformer who might loosen some of



Reuters NewMedia Inc./CORBIS

Russian president Vladimir Putin with his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin.



Reuters/CORBIS

Iranian president Mohammad Khatami (L) discusses political issues with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Both wear black turbans indicating that they are clerics who are direct descendants of the Prophet Mohammad.

## 8 Part 1 Introduction

the controls imposed by the Islamic Republic following the 1979 revolution that overthrew the Shah's regime (abcnews.go.com/reference/bios/khatami.html).

Like his predecessors beginning with the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Khatami is an Islamic cleric. But he also is a reformer. Khatami's government loosened some restrictions. Women are now allowed to wear skimpier veils. Men and women can hold hands in public. It is easier for some dissidents to make their points of view known in the media. On the other hand, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the lack of professional opportunities for young people, who make up the bulk of the country's population. The authorities are having a harder and harder time keeping Western ideas out of the country now that hundreds of thousands of people own satellite dishes. And, of course, outside pressure on Iran to reform its authoritarian rule has mounted ever since President George W. Bush included it in the "axis of evil" with Iraq and North Korea during his 2002 State of the Union Address.

Nonetheless, Khatami has had a rough time during his second term in office. Since Iran is one of the few theocracies in which religious leaders rule, Khatami has to share power with the supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Hoseini Khamenei, who has to approve most major public policy initiatives. More generally, Khatami cannot count on the support of the conservative majority in the Majlis, or parliament.

### The State: One Focus among Many

Seeing the three premises and three leaders allows us to look at the core issues in comparative politics. As is the case with most social sciences, political scientists do not agree on what the best focus of a text or course should be. I have chosen to organize this book around the evolution, structure, and performance of the state. Others have chosen to concentrate on public policy, the political economy, the role of average citizens, and the overall performance of the system as a whole. In fact, the focus an author chooses may not be all that important because all those other issues will get plenty of attention too.

I decided to focus on the state because it puts one of the most important questions in political life on center stage—the way scarce resources are allocated. That, in turn, means focusing on the single most important common denominator of political life—**power**, which is most often defined as the ability to get people or groups to do *what they otherwise would not do*. Those last six

words are key. They suggest that the exercise of power requires coercion. People typically have to be forced into doing things they don't want to do. The exercise of power does not always involve the use of physical force, but the threat of force is almost always there.

**Politics** is not exclusively about power. In the pages that follow, you will encounter plenty of people who have been driven to act politically for other reasons, such as the desire to help people or to create a fairer society. There are also newer definitions of power that strip the necessity of coercion from it. However, as things stand now, in most countries at most times, there is no escaping the connection between power and the ability to force adversaries to comply with one's wishes.

### What Is the State?

The state is the first term in this book that we need to define with some precision. Many people use the terms *government*, *state*, *nation*, and *regime* interchangeably. In the case of some countries, like the United States, it may not be terribly misleading to do so. When we consider the former Soviet Union or Iraq before the 2003 war, however, treating the terms as synonyms can be extremely misleading:

- **Government** refers to a particular set of institutions and people authorized by formal documents such as a **constitution** to pass laws, issue regulations, control the police, and so on. For the moment, it is enough to note that the government rarely holds all the power available in a given country and, in some cases, can be far less influential than other actors. That is certainly true of what are referred to as failed states, in which the government lacks the ability to do much of anything in a society wracked by civil war. To a lesser degree, it was true of Mexico before Fox's election, when the PRI was far more important than government institutions.
- **State** is a broader concept that includes all the institutions and individuals that exercise power. One of Putin's main accomplishments has been the sharp reduction in the political clout of that shadowy group of oligarchs, who had had tremendous leverage during the Yeltsin years and were unquestionably part of the state.
- **Regime** refers to the institutions and practices that typically endure from government to government or, in American terms, administration to administration. This is, of course, a term that burst onto the political scene when President George W. Bush be-



gan demanding, and later enforced, a change in regime in Iraq. However, it should be noted that it is a concept political scientists have used for a half century or more.

- **Nation** is a psychological rather than an institutional concept. It refers to the cultural, linguistic, and other identities that can tie people together. Thus, the Chechens who want to secede certainly do not think of themselves as Russians. Indeed, as we will see in several chapters, a lack of national identity often reflects deep-seated ethnic and other divisions that can undermine support for any state, whatever institutional levers it may have for exerting power.

### Types of States

All states are not alike. Some, like the United States, are large, rich, stable, and powerful. Others, like Somalia, are so poor, fragile, and weak that a “state” hardly seems to exist. The same is true as I write about Iraq, which may still be under American occupation when this book is published. About the only thing all states have in common is that what each state does—and doesn’t—do matters for its own citizens and for many others who live outside its borders.

Unfortunately, political scientists have still not reached agreement about the best way to classify

states. Despite all the changes since the end of the cold war, I have decided to stick with a traditional three-way classification:

- Industrialized democracies
- Current and former Communist regimes
- The third world

This way of dividing up the world is outdated. Nonetheless, because the industrialized democracies and the once-solid Communist bloc in particular have many historical and contemporary traits in common, it still makes sense to use this framework.

The **industrialized democracies** present us with a paradox. On the one hand, they have the most resources and, so, the greatest potential for creating and sustaining powerful states. Like Great Britain, most are wealthy and have at least reasonably effective and popular political institutions. As table 1.1 (also on the inside front cover) shows, the citizens of industrialized democracies enjoy standards of living similar to those of most Americans. Virtually everyone can read and write, and the infant mortality figures suggest that they enjoy at least basic health-care coverage.

On the other hand, these states also have the most built-in restraints on the exercise of power. Most of those limits on what leaders can do are laid out in constitutions and other laws. What the state can do is also determined to some degree by public opinion and by the re-

■ **TABLE 1.1** Basic Data

COUNTRY	POPULATION (MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN 1999)	AVERAGE POPULATION GROWTH 1990–1999 (%)	GNP PER CAPITA (US\$)	GROWTH IN GNP 2001–2002 (%)	LITERACY (%)	INFANT MORTALITY (PER 1,000 BIRTHS)	AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY
Canada	31	1.1	22,300	3.3	99+	7	79
China	1,281	1.2	940	8.0	91	36	72
France	59	0.5	22,010	1.0	99+	5	79
Germany	82	0.2	22,670	0.2	99+	6	77
India	1,048	1.9	480	4.4	61	83	45
Iran	66	2.6	1,710	5.9	70	35	70
Japan	127	0.5	33,350	−0.7	99+	5	77
Mexico	101	12.0	5,910	0.7	91	35	72
Nigeria	133	2.9	290	−0.9	67	110	52
Russia	144	0.3	2,140	4.3	99+	20	65
South Africa	44	2.1	2,600	3.0	86	83	49
United Kingdom	59	0.2	25,250	1.5	99+	7	77
United States	288	1.0	35,060	1.5	99+	7	77
High Income	965	0.7	26,310	1.3	99+	8	77
Low Income	2,495	2.1	430	4.1	64	107	60

Source: World Bank, *World Development Report*. [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org). United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report*. [hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/](http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/). Iraq not included because data are incomplete.

Note: The World Bank and the UNDP do not put exactly the same set of countries into their poorest and richest categories. Therefore, the first, third, and fourth columns, which are based on the former, are based on slightly different calculation criteria from the others. That should not dramatically impact the findings, which would be stark whatever the criteria used.

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sults of competitive elections that determine who the leaders are.

That paradox is reversed in the current and former **Communist** states. During their heyday, these states were extremely strong. The government controlled almost everything, from the schools to the press to the economy. Indeed, the term **totalitarianism** was coined to describe these and other states that sought complete control over their societies.

The collapse of Communism in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, however, demonstrated that repression and central control were not enough to keep these states strong indefinitely. Among the many causes of this historical turning point, we will focus on the failure of Soviet-style regimes to adopt innovative economic policies, which in turn reinforced the people's hostility toward a regime that suddenly lost most of its political teeth. There were many reasons for this failure. At or near the top of any list is the decision by the Soviet and Eastern European leaders to give their people more freedom in order to breathe new life into their economies. Once that happened, they could no longer rely on repression, and they lost the political "glue" that kept them in power.

The Chinese have followed a different path, implementing liberal economic reforms while retaining tight control over political life. So far, this strategy has "worked" in that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is still in power. However, most observers doubt that the CCP can continue stifling dissent indefinitely.

The **third world** is much harder to describe as a whole, which is hardly surprising given that it includes over 130 countries. Above all else, the third world is poor. Some third world countries are so impoverished that the average citizen has no more than \$300 to \$500 a year to live on. Table 1.1 shows just how wide the gap is between the industrial democracies and the forty-one poorest third world countries. Moreover, as the shortage of doctors, the large number of young people, and the high degree of illiteracy in the poorest countries suggest, third world governments face far more problems than the other two types of state. To make matters even worse, many still have not been able to forge states with functioning courts, bureaucracies, and other institutions people in the industrialized democracies take for granted. Many, too, have experienced military coups and other forms of political upheaval that have sapped a succession of regimes of the popular support vital to the long-term strength of any state.

There are exceptions to this otherwise gloomy picture—the **newly industrializing countries (NICs)**, which have made great strides in breaking out of the trap

of underdevelopment. The most famous are the Asian tigers—South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia—as well as a few other Asian countries and, perhaps, Mexico, Brazil, and Chile. Although there is still some debate about what allowed these countries to grow so fast from the 1970s through the mid-1990s, every list of causes includes the way each state was able to build cooperative relationships with business and labor, albeit sometimes through force.

### *Strong and Weak States*

We will also be asking why some states are stronger than others. Obviously, every state has tried to respond to the kinds of challenges faced by the three leaders discussed earlier. Just as obviously, there is tremendous variation in what these leaders have been able to accomplish.

The distinction between strong and weak states is one of the most controversial in comparative politics. In a textbook for an introductory course, however, we can use a fairly simple definition. **Strong states** take on more responsibilities and generally carry them out more effectively than do weaker ones. **Weak states**, by contrast, are less able to define and carry out policy goals.

Comparativists have not been able to reach many conclusions about the factors that determine how strong a given state is. The best we can do is to note that, when viewed over the long term, strong states are relatively wealthy, their regimes have widespread popular support, and their governing elites work reasonably effectively together. The use of repression can strengthen states in the short run. However, as events of the past two decades suggest, it may not be enough to sustain such states under today's social and economic conditions.

Basic patterns in state structure and power roughly coincide with the three types of states outlined earlier. In particular, the former Communist states could not adapt to the changing social and economic conditions they faced in the 1980s because their strength lay in their ability to maintain order, not innovate. Similarly, poverty, internal divisions, and other factors are part of the reason most third world countries have relatively weak states as well.

No state comes close to being able to do whatever it wants whenever it wants. If anything, most states are losing the ability to shape their own destinies in the light of globalization, which we will consider shortly.

Finally, we will spend a lot of time on the distinction between the state and regime. In particular, we will see that industrialized democracies are able to weather most crises because there is all but total acceptance of the regime that insulates it from such divisive protests as those

of the new left of the 1960s and 1970s. We will also see that most other regimes lack that bedrock popular support and that dissatisfaction with the government of the day more easily spills over to the regime and even, in some cases, to the existence of the country itself.

## Comparative Politics

Comparativists agree on very little. We do, however, have one point of view in common—a way of analyzing the political world. We are convinced that you can reach the most accurate and insightful conclusions by comparing two or more examples of the phenomenon you are interested in—in this case, states. In this text, we will use eleven states and one international organization as intellectual springboards for trying to understand political life as a whole.

Though political scientists compare in many different ways, we all start by asking two sets of questions about the phenomena that we are interested in:

- What are the key similarities and differences among them?
- How can we explain those patterns?

There is an extensive and often complex literature on what it takes to do comparative political analysis. In practice, however, it is quite easy to compare. When George W. Bush had to choose a running mate in 2000, he compared Dick Cheney with a number of other possible candidates and decided that someone with Cheney's vast experience, including service in the first President Bush's cabinet, would provide his ticket with the balance it needed. You, too, have undoubtedly done some serious comparing—for instance, in deciding which college or university to attend.

To see what comparative political analysis can do, consider the following simple example from the 2001 British general election. A total of 58 percent of registered voters cast their ballots. That one fact tells you very little about Britain or its political system. But the picture changes dramatically once you add two more pieces of information that allow you to compare Britain over time (it was the lowest turnout since 1935) and with another country (it is rare that much more than half of registered American voters vote in presidential elections). With those two pieces of comparative data, you can learn a lot more and can pose far more insightful questions about elections in general. For example, why is turnout in British elections normally higher than that in the United States? Why has it been declining in recent elections? What difference does turnout make? Does the fact that

nearly three-fifths of the people voted make it easier or harder for Prime Minister Blair to meet the challenges he faces during his second term in office?

## Three Templates

Comparative analysis can be a powerful tool. Comparison, however, is not powerful enough on its own to lead us to the kinds of overarching conclusions mentioned previously. We also have to know what to compare, what questions to ask, and which criteria to use in evaluating the evidence we uncover.

Most political scientists believe that theories best provide that focus. Unfortunately, comparative politics is not chemistry, physics, or microeconomics, each of which has a single theory or paradigm that structures everything from cutting-edge research to introductory textbooks. The best tools available to us are less powerful models that only allow us to see how the various components of a state are related to one another.

Think of models as equivalent to the templates for typical, routine tasks that computer companies provide when you buy new software. The three models that follow weave together most of the themes discussed so far in this chapter and so will help you organize the material in the rest of the book.

### *The Political System*

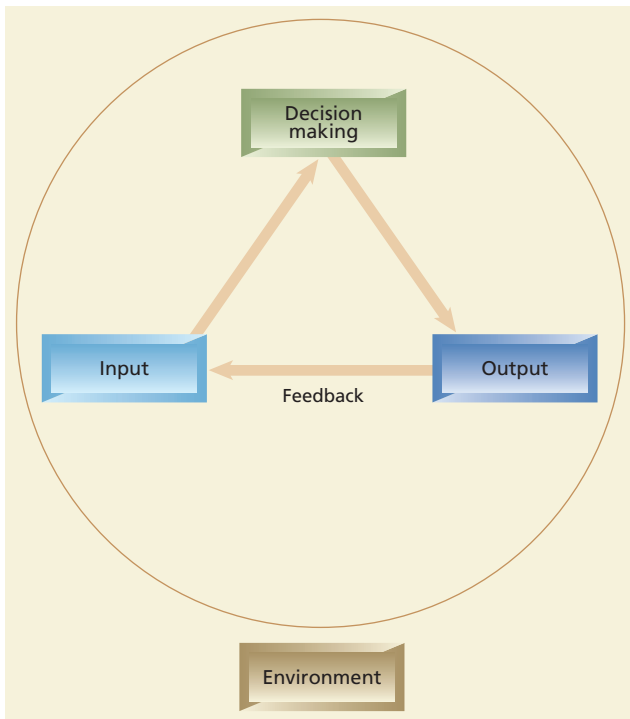
The chapters on individual countries are organized around a model known as **systems theory**. (See figure 1.1.) Although most of the natural sciences are based on it, it is no longer very popular in political science. Nonetheless, it is more useful for our purposes than its intellectual competitors are because it allows us to see how a state's components interact over time and how nonpolitical and international forces shape what it can and cannot accomplish.

Systems theory revolves around five concepts: inputs, decision making, outputs, feedback, and the environment. **Inputs** are the ways average citizens and the groups they form engage in political life. David Easton, who adapted systems theory to political science, divided them into two types of activities: those that **support** and those that place **demands** on the state. Both come in many forms.

Individuals can act on their own by, for example, voting or writing a letter to the editor. However, most activity, especially that of a demanding nature, is channeled through two types of organizations: **interest groups** and **political parties**. Interest groups typically

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■ **FIGURE 1.1** The Political System



deal with a limited range of issues and represent a narrow segment of a country's population. Examples include trade unions, business associations, and environmental groups that organize and "lobby" around specific issues and other concerns. A political party, in contrast, tries to bring the interests of a number of groups together and to gain control over the government either on its own or in a coalition. A party need not build its support or power largely, or even primarily, through elections, as was the case in the former Soviet Union or when the Baath Party was in power in Iraq.

The conventional wisdom is that British interest groups are weaker than American ones because it is harder to lobby effectively in a parliamentary system than in a presidential one, something we will explore in the next three chapters. Nonetheless, the Labour Party has traditionally done well at the polls because of its close ties to the Trade Unions Congress, which helped form the party in the first place and is still an integral part of its organization. On the other hand, the opposition Conservative Party has close links to the major business and trade associations.

Sometimes demands go beyond the conventional "inside-the-system" activities of interest groups and political parties. Protesters, for instance, tried to disrupt President Bush's state visit to London in late 2003.

Chechen rebels have fought two wars in a thus-far vain attempt to win their independence from Russia. But there is no better example of "outside-the-system" protest than the attacks on 9/11. Analysts will long debate what motivated the nineteen hijackers and their supporters. However, there seems little doubt that their faith and their hatred of Western politics and policies led them to be willing to take not only their own lives but those of thousands of people in the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the four airplanes.

Political participation is also shaped by a country's **political culture**, or the basic attitudes people have toward each other, the state, and authority. A culture, in essence, reflects the impact of history on a society's beliefs.

In Great Britain, the legacy of feudalism remains (albeit faintly) in the willingness of some working-class voters to trust their "social betters" with roots in the aristocracy. The widespread support of Shiite Islam is an important value supporting the continued rule of the Islamic Republic in Iran. Russians' values today are in large part shaped by more than seventy years of Communist rule. Finally, the Chechen case also shows us that not all countries are homogeneous and that some have strikingly different subcultures.

Easton's second main concept, **decision making**, covers the same intellectual ground as the state, and thus does not need much elaboration here. It is enough to note that we will examine states from two main angles: the structure of their institutions and the values, skills, and personalities of their leaders. Institutions matter more in older, established regimes like Britain's even though it does not have a written constitution. That is less the case in a country like Iran, where the ruling clerics often do political end runs around the elected institutions they themselves created, or in Russia, where the institutions are barely a decade old. Each of the three examples presented earlier highlights the importance of leaders' values (Khatami's commitment to reform), skills (Putin's ability to consolidate power), and personality (Blair's ability to use the media effectively).

Inputs and decision making are important in their own right. However, their importance grows when we take the next step and explore what those decisions lead to—the system's **output** or **public policy**.

The most common type of policy regulates the behavior of individuals or organizations. Thus, Britain is struggling to find new ways of managing its aging railroads, which were sold to private owners under the Conservative governments of the 1990s.

Other policies redistribute resources, sometimes to such a degree that they alter a society's basic patterns of wealth and power. That, of course, has always been the

goal of Marxists and other socialists. But even with the growing support for market economies, states are still heavily involved in distributional politics. In Iran, the authorities have channeled billions of dollars to companies and foundations they control in order to shape the way the country's economy modernizes.

Policies can also be symbolic. Under both Yeltsin and Putin, the Russian government has tried to build support for the symbols associated with the new state, including adopting a new national anthem. Even more obvious on this score is the fact that the Islamic Republic changed both Iran's flag and its national anthem when it came to power in 1979 to reflect its commitment to theological orthodoxy. By contrast, despite its long-standing disputes with the United States, it not only allowed a team of American wrestlers to compete in the world championships in Tehran in 1998, it encouraged its fans to cheer the team when it paraded around the arena waving the stars and stripes.

Systems analysis is also the most useful general model for our purposes because it incorporates **feedback**, which is the process through which people find out about public policy and the ways in which their reactions to it help shape the next phase of political life. Sometimes a decision directly affects an individual or group. More often, people only learn about a policy indirectly, either through the media or by word of mouth.

In each of the countries we will be covering in this book, the media play a powerful, and frequently quite biased, role in political life, either in supporting the state or in criticizing its policies. There are times, too, when people do not find out about state policies at all, which can result either from conscious attempts to keep these policies secret or from public apathy.

Feedback makes systems analysis particularly valuable, because it forces us to consider how a system changes over time. Too many of the other models political scientists use provide the intellectual equivalent of snapshots that show what a system is like during a relatively brief period. Focusing on feedback, however, draws our attention to how the entire system has evolved over the years, thus turning the snapshot into the intellectual equivalent of a videotape—and an extended-play one at that.

Here, of course, the media play a critical role. Britain's BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) is renowned for the quality and impartiality of its coverage, though it has been criticized lately for what some see as its not so thinly veiled opposition to Blair's policies in Iraq. Similarly, Putin has been taken to task for his decisions to take away the licenses for all television stations that are not under government control. On the other end

of the spectrum, the Iranian authorities are struggling to control access to television stations run by émigrés, which hundreds of thousands of people watch on nominally illegal satellite dishes.

The **environment** includes everything lying outside the political system. Systems are defined as being "bounded" or having an autonomous identity and organization. No system, however, is completely autonomous. All politicians and citizens must react to forces beyond their control. There are three types of forces that can limit—sometimes sharply—their ability to shape their own destinies.

The first is the impact of history discussed earlier. No country's history shapes exactly what happens today, but it does partially set the political stage, determining what is and is not likely to work. Thus, there is no way either Putin's government or Putin himself can escape the Communist past.

Second are the limits imposed by domestic social, economic, and physical conditions. Britain is densely populated, and traffic jams in major cities are unavoidable since many of the roads were built centuries before the car was invented. Therefore, its leaders have to pay more attention than their American colleagues do to mass transit, which is why the railroads in Britain are a major issue and why London recently imposed an \$8 toll on every car that enters the center of the city.

Finally, and today perhaps most importantly, there are the global forces that arise outside a country's border. Sometimes their impact is hard to miss, as when British and American forces invaded and occupied Iraq. Other times they are subtler and far harder to document, as when global media conglomerates assume control of a country's television stations and other outlets. Sometimes they have massive consequences, as did the introduction of the euro in 2002. Other times the impact can be more limited, as was the European Court of Justice's 1995 decision overturning rules that limited the number of foreign players on a professional soccer team.

### *Historical and Contemporary Factors*

Table 1.2 draws our attention to four types of forces that have largely determined the basic patterns of politics in all countries. The first row of the table highlights the historical forces that set the stage for the "dramas" of global political life today. Undoubtedly, the most important is **imperialism**, which led to the imposition of Western political, economic, and cultural institutions on the rest of the world. For example, although Iran was never formally colonized (as we will see later), the West had a profound and negative impact on its society and economy.

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■ **TABLE 1.2** Factors Affecting the Development of States

	INTERNATIONAL	DOMESTIC
HISTORICAL	Imperialism	State and nation building
CONTEMPORARY	Globalization and the end of the cold war	Pressures from below

Opposition to Western influence, for instance, had a lot to do with the overthrow of the Shah in 1979. More generally, to this day, many former colonies are desperately poor and dependent on the policies and practices of the wealthy states and private corporations in the “north.”

Imperialism was also important in determining how the state itself was formed and then spread around the world. In many respects, the modern state is a by-product of imperialism. Prior to the 1600s, the European monarchies were weak and decentralized. But the decision to expand abroad meant they needed more powerful states that could raise armies and feed, equip, and pay them.

State building never occurred smoothly. Everywhere, the power of the state grew at the expense of at least some of its citizens and left lasting scars. It was particularly difficult when one or both of two problems arose. First, when the state developed quickly, antagonisms arose toward a national government that all of a sudden demanded more of its people. Second, when minority ethnic, linguistic, or religious groups were forcibly incorporated into the emerging state, this tended to produce tensions that undermined the state’s ability to govern.

The difficulties associated with state building have been particularly pronounced in the third world. Gaining independence usually involved an intense struggle with the old imperial power. When the conflict was especially prolonged or violent, as in Vietnam or Algeria, the new nation found itself physically and economically drained once it finally did gain its independence.

Moreover, when the imperialist powers carved up the Southern Hemisphere, they did so largely for their own reasons, ignoring traditional boundaries and lumping together groups that had historically been antagonistic toward each other. As a result, new states such as Angola, Afghanistan, and Nigeria faced deeply rooted ethnic tensions, which made it all but impossible for leaders to agree on anything.

As the second row in table 1.2 suggests, you cannot understand everything about political life today merely by putting it into historical perspective. If you could, there would be little reason to take a course such as this

one or to want to change a world whose basic contours are already set!

The most important contemporary global force remains the **cold war** between the United States and the former Soviet Union. The two countries emerged from World War II as the most dominant powers on earth, ushering in an unprecedented period in which two superpowers alone shaped the destinies of almost every other country.

As the United States and the Soviet Union jockeyed for position, regional problems became global ones as well. When the superpowers’ interests collided most directly, countries such as Vietnam, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan paid the price. Even such regional powers as Japan, Britain, Poland, Hungary, and the two Germanys saw their freedom to maneuver limited by the superpowers.

Now that the cold war is over, no one is quite sure how those international forces will play out. Some observers think supranational institutions like the United Nations or the European Union will play a larger, more constructive role in finding peaceful resolutions to the conflicts that still plague international and domestic political life. Others are more skeptical. Optimists thought the global shock wave caused by the attacks of 9/11 would unite the international community and go a long way toward eradicating terrorism once and for all. Pessimists worry that the subsequent wars and the upsurge in terrorist activities will only sow the seeds for more, bloodier violence in the future. No one, however, doubts that international political forces will remain an important determinant of domestic events around the world.

Since the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil embargo of 1973–1974 and the economic downturn that followed, we have become aware of another global force limiting what individual states can do—the **international political economy (IPE)**, which is the term political scientists use to describe trade and other interactions that take place between countries. To some degree, the IPE is a legacy of imperialism. But as we are all painfully aware from the daily news reports about the loss of American factory jobs and the destruction of the Brazilian rain forest, the IPE has taken on a life of its own.

The countries that are suffering as a result of globalization are indeed in a difficult bind. How can the poorest nations break out of their poverty when those international dynamics are leaving them even further behind? How can countries as different as Mexico, Poland, and the United States solve their domestic problems when they owe billions of dollars to other govern-

ments and private financiers? How can a country like Brazil balance the needs of the environment with those of its impoverished citizens?

Finally, there is the traditional subject matter of comparative politics—what is happening within individual countries today. Because of what occurred in the past and because of what is taking place now outside their borders, few states are as fully masters of their own destinies as they were even a generation ago. Conversely, no state is completely at the mercy of globalization, although some states are better able to shape their future than others.

### *State, Society, and Globalization*

We can work through the third template quickly because figure 1.2 covers many of the phenomena already discussed in this section. What makes this template different is its focus on the causal links among three key factors you can use to help stitch the pieces of this book together.

At least since Thomas Hobbes wrote in the seventeenth century, most political theorists have pointed out that individuals and the groups they form tend to seek ever more freedom and power. The more pessimistic of them have feared that people motivated by such self-interest would tear society apart if left to their own devices. Thus, like it or not, we have to create states to maintain order by keeping such centrifugal forces in check.

As a result, most political scientists believe that state and society exist in what they call an inverse relationship: For the power of one to increase, that of the other must be reduced. For example, when the Republicans

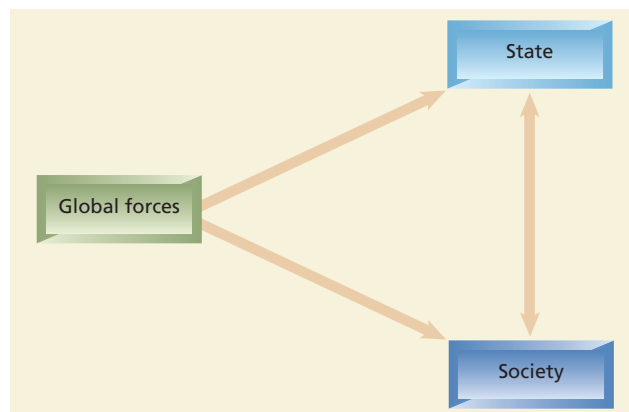
took control of both houses of Congress in 1994, they were convinced that the way to give average Americans more power was to limit the jurisdiction of what they believed was a far too dominant state. Similarly, the creation of the National Health Service in Great Britain in 1948 left doctors less free to practice medicine as they saw fit and left affluent patients less able to choose their own health-care options than they had been before.

Moreover, this inverse relationship seems to hold rather consistently across all types of political systems. Giving more power to Soviet citizens in the 1980s came at the expense of the state and contributed to its collapse. By contrast, there can be no clearer example of the way a state can limit people's freedoms than the rules the Iranian government imposed on what women could do and even what they could wear.

It also draws our attention to the way globalization is reshaping political life by reducing the real ability of states to make and implement economic policy. Although international institutions such as the European Union and the International Monetary Fund play a critical role in this respect, rarely can we pinpoint exactly how such influence is wielded, because these pressures are far subtler than those used by the U.S.-led coalition in the war against terrorism. Nonetheless, they are real and important enough that they may force us to change the ways in which we view global political life both as academics and as average citizens.

Even the more restrained analysts of globalization stress the degree to which states are losing influence, especially over the formation and implementation of economic policy. If current trends continue, we will soon have to develop wholly new intellectual models in which the line between comparative politics and international relations is blurred, if not eliminated altogether.

**FIGURE 1.2** The Impact of Global and Domestic Forces on the State



### Five Themes

You will also find it easier to absorb the material in the chapters that follow if you keep five overarching themes in mind. All of them have been mentioned before, but they bear repeating here because they are excellent vehicles for helping you compare. For that same reason, there will be boxes on each of them in chapters to come to help you put the countries and types of regimes in a broader perspective. The first four of them will be featured in boxes and the fifth as the conclusion to the chapters on individual countries that follow.

First, as should already be clear, political life is filled

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with conflict. The citizens, parties, and interest groups of a relatively stable country such as Great Britain differ sharply on a number of issues, including Northern Ireland, the European Union, and the future of the welfare state. In most other countries, the conflicts are even more intense and frequently erupt into violence, which threatens the very existence of regimes and even the states themselves. And, despite tremendous progress in methods of managing, preventing, and resolving conflict in recent years, there are typically at least thirty states in the midst of a civil war or other armed conflict at any time.

Second, there has also been a significant shift toward more democratic governments in the past decade or so. The end of the cold war ushered in new regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that at least hoped to become democratic. In the same vein, President George H. W. Bush used to delight in pointing out that 1990 marked the first year that all the countries in South America had democratically elected governments. However, as with globalization, the past few years have brought sobering news that **democratization** is not as easy as many had thought and hoped. Most of the newly created democratic regimes are fragile at best. Meanwhile, there still are plenty of ruthless dictators, and military coups remain a possibility in much of the third world.

Third, among the most important changes of the past quarter century has been the resurgence of capitalism and market economies as the preferred system for most of the world's political and business leaders. As recently as the late 1970s, Marxism and other forms of socialism still had a tremendous appeal. And, even in countries that were basically capitalist, economic theories that emphasized state coordination and planning still held sway. Since then, two things have happened that have tilted the balance toward less state involvement and a greater reliance on markets. The first was the declining performance of state-led and relatively autarchic policies in response to global and domestic economic pressures, which put a premium on innovation and other attributes that large organizations—public and private alike—rarely possess. The second was the crisis and then collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and its allies, which left Marxism a highly unpopular political and economic ideology.

Fourth, globalization refers to the apparent “shrinking” of the world amid the simultaneous integration of our economic, social, environmental, and cultural lives. As such, it has probably been the most hyped concept in recent years. Some critics have cast doubt on how fast globalization is occurring and how interdependent the

world really is. Nonetheless, as noted earlier, there is no denying that global forces increasingly constrain what even the strongest states can do. Therefore, no book on domestic politics would be complete without paying attention to globalization and the ways in which states and their citizens are coping with it.

Together, the first four themes lead to the fifth—the challenges most states face at the dawn of the twenty-first century. With few exceptions, states, their leaders, and their citizens are finding it ever more difficult to develop mutually acceptable and effective policies to cope with their problems, whether domestic or international in origin. Although comparativists still focus on the state as their key unit of analysis, researchers are beginning to question whether it remains the institution that is best able to cope with the problems we expect to face in the next millennium, an argument I will address in the final chapter.

## Using This Book

**Y**ou are at the beginning of what in one sense will be a typical introductory course with a typical textbook. To fully master the material, however, you will have to go beyond the typical, because you will constantly be confronted with controversial questions that do not have clear and obvious answers. What's more, many of them will have a direct bearing on your life for years to come.

In short, you will have to do more than merely memorize the notes you take in class or the key points you highlight throughout these pages. Courses that deal with new, complex, and controversial subjects succeed only when students stretch themselves to consider unsettling ideas, question their basic assumptions, and sift through evidence to reach their own conclusions. Therefore, if you are going to truly master the material, you have to take to heart the advice of the French novelist Marcel Proust that begins this chapter. You will be seeing new lands, because much of this book and your course will focus on places you do not know much about. But, if Proust is right, you will not get very far in this voyage of discovery unless you also try to see these lands through what will be the new “eyes” of comparative politics.

This book has a number of features that make the “active learning” side of the course as useful (and, I hope, as enjoyable) as possible, beginning with the structure of the book itself. The core of the book covers politics in the three kinds of states mentioned earlier—industrialized democracies, current and former Communist regimes, and the third world. Each part begins with an overview



chapter that explores the key trends, theories, and ideas about that type of state. The rest of the part is devoted to case studies of countries that exemplify the different aspects of that particular type of state. The countries discussed in this book were chosen because they are important in their own right and because you can use them as intellectual springboards for reaching more general conclusions about the political trends (re)shaping our world. These countries are categorized as follows:

- Industrialized democracies: the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, the European Union
- Current and former Communist regimes: Russia, China
- The third world: India, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Mexico
- Additional chapters on Canada, Japan, and South Africa can be found at the Book Companion Website: <http://politicalscience.wadsworth.com/hauss05/>

Because this book focuses on countries and individual instructors assign various subsets of them in their classes, it is hard to build comparative analysis into the text itself. However, the boxes on the four themes discussed will be explicitly comparative. So too will be the boxes on HIV/AIDS policy that will also appear in each country chapter. HIV/AIDS is an important issue in and of itself. But it is also a useful vehicle for comparative analysis, because the way a country has responded to the greatest health crisis in generations tells us a lot about how its political system as a whole operates.

I have also tried to write a timely book, but parts of it will be out of date before the book is actually published. So, each summer, I will post updates on the countries covered in the book on its companion website, which also includes general information on the countries and self-paced quizzes you can take to test your knowledge.

### Key Terms

Cold war	Imperialism
Communist	Industrialized democracy
Constitution	Input
Crisis	Interest group
Decision making	International political economy (IPE)
Demand	Nation
Democratization	Newly industrializing countries (NICs)
Environment	Output
Feedback	Political culture
Globalization	
Government	

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Political party	Strong state
Politics	Support
Power	Systems theory
Public policy	Third world
Regime	Totalitarianism
State	Weak state

### Critical Thinking Exercises

- 1 Much has changed since this book was finished in early 2005. Do the various assertions made in this chapter still make sense? In what ways? Why (not)?
- 2 Public opinion pollsters routinely ask whether people think the country is heading in the “right” direction or “is on the wrong track.” If you were asked such a question about politics in the world as a whole, how would you answer? Why did you reach that conclusion?
- 3 Take your campus, community, or state, and analyze it using the three templates. What new insights did this exercise lead you to? What, if any, important facts, trends, or institutions were left out of the analysis?
- 4 Of all the concepts covered in this chapter, which do you think are the most and the least important? Why did you reach this conclusion?
- 5 You could interpret this chapter as arguing that it is becoming harder for governments to govern effectively. Do you agree? Why (not)?

### Useful Websites

The Internet has become an essential tool for students of comparative politics. There are not many sites dedicated to comparative politics per se. However, the Internet is filled with information on specific countries, individuals, and issues. In particular, because so many newspapers, radio and television networks, and news services have gone online, it is easy to keep up with breaking news and evolving trends around the world.

That said, the Internet is increasingly hard to use because there are so many sites, and even the best search engines can catalogue only a tiny fraction of them. Therefore, I have created a companion website, which includes links to what I think are the best sites for the issues and countries covered in this book, updates on the countries, sources of statistical and other data, and quizzes on each chapter so you can gauge how well you have mastered the material. You can also e-mail me with questions about the book or issues that have arisen in your own course. It is located at:

<http://politicalscience.wadsworth.com/hauss05/>

Each chapter includes a section like this one with web addresses to portals and other general sites. Specific web-

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sites will be inserted in the text the first time an institution or individual is mentioned, as was the case with the brief biography of Putin earlier in this chapter.

There are other good resources for comparative politics. Here are three general sites that divide up the field in different but useful ways from the Universities of Colorado, Keele, and West Virginia, respectively:

[sobek.colorado.edu/POLSCI/RES/comp.html](http://sobek.colorado.edu/POLSCI/RES/comp.html)

[www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area.htm](http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area.htm)

[www.polsci.wvu.edu/PolyCy/pscomp.html](http://www.polsci.wvu.edu/PolyCy/pscomp.html)

The Internet also has dozens of sources providing basic data on countries that take you far beyond what can be covered in a single book and that include material on events occurring after this book was published. The CIA Factbook is a treasure trove of information about the world's countries and is updated quite frequently. The other three sources are the work of international "open source" teams of men and women willing to volunteer their time to provide general information about countries in general and elections in particular. The final one is a new commercial service that seems to rate sites but does not always include clickable links to them.

[www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html](http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html)

[www.adminet.com](http://www.adminet.com)

[www.politicalresources.net](http://www.politicalresources.net)

[www.electionworld.com](http://www.electionworld.com)

[political-science.designerz.com/political-science-comparative-politics.php](http://political-science.designerz.com/political-science-comparative-politics.php)

Finally, it is important to keep up with the news in any course on comparative politics and international relations. At this point, all of the world's major newspapers, news services, and broadcast media put much of their material on the web. Many, however, take the postings down after a week or two. The BBC and CNN do not and have searchable data based on their coverage, including items that never made it on air. That said, their coverage on third world issues is not great. Therefore, I also frequently look at One World, which is a good source for that part of the planet.

[www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)

[news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk)

[www.oneworld.net](http://www.oneworld.net)

### InfoTrac College Edition Sources

Bates, Robert. "Comparative Politics and Rational Choice Theory."

Burke, Johnny. "Rethinking Multiculturalism."

Hauss, Charles. "Duh, or the Role of IT in Teaching Comparative Politics."

Wiarda, Howard. "The End of the Great International Systems Debate."

Wilsford, David. "Getting Students to Think (Comparatively)."

### Further Reading

Almond, Gabriel, and G. Bingham Powell. *Comparative Politics: System, Policy, and Process*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1978. Dated, but still the best presentation of the classic approach to comparative politics.

Ambrose, Stephen, with Douglas Brinkley. *The Rise to Globalism*, 8th ed. New York: Penguin Books, 1997. The best short volume outlining global history since World War II.

Basu, Amrita. *The Challenge of Local Feminisms*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995. The most comprehensive and readable book on women's issues, which have become important in comparative politics in recent years.

Chilcote, Ronald. *Theories of Comparative Politics*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1993. A comprehensive review of the theoretical and conceptual schools of thought in comparative politics; written primarily for graduate students.

Friedman, Tom. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2000. The most influential and controversial book on globalization.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. A powerful but controversial book about the way cultural change is remaking the political world; by one of the most respected and conservative analysts, who has left his mark on this field since the early 1960s.

Lane, Ruth. *The Art of Comparative Politics*. Needham Heights, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon, 1997. One of the few recent books arguing that comparativists have made substantial progress.

Lichbach, Mark, and Alan Zuckerman, eds. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. A fairly dense but important set of essays by political scientists writing from a number of perspectives.

Peters, B. Guy. *Comparative Politics: Theory and Methods*. New York: New York University Press, 1998. The one recent attempt to make sense of the entire field of comparative politics by one of the most prolific scholars of the past thirty years.

Soe, Christian, ed. *Comparative Politics: Annual Editions*. Guilford, Conn.: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill, published

annually. A collection of recent articles from the press. Your best bet to stay up-to-date if you don't have access to InfoTrac®.

Stoan, Alfred. *Arguing Comparative Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. A collection of essays by one of the few leading scholars in comparative politics willing to take on most issues and most regions.

Wilson, Frank L. *Concepts and Issues in Comparative Politics*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 2002. An

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excellent introduction to the basic ideas in comparative politics by one of the best writers in the field who, alas, died just after his book was published.

Zahariades, Nikolaos. *Theory, Concepts, and Method in Comparative Politics*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1996.

One of the few attempts to update the ideas of comparative politics since the 1960s.

## Exploring THE WORLD WIDE WEB



This book comes with a website that complements the material presented in these pages. The website has hundreds of links to useful resources, updates on the countries written when important events occur, and quizzes you can take to gauge your progress.

The website lets you go deeper into some of the issues raised in the book. At the end of the first chapter of each of the first four parts of the book, I provide some guidelines for using the online resources for that section.

A study guide, developed by Ken Wedding, focuses on key issues raised in each chapter. In part 1 the focus is on key concepts in comparative politics and the degree to which the United States should (and should not) serve as our frame of reference.

Map exercises, also developed by Ken Wedding, will give you a better "feel" for what the various countries are like. The maps are based on the excellent series of outline maps that the CIA includes in its *World Factbook* ([www.odci.gov](http://www.odci.gov)).

Additional information supplements the "basic" data tables that begin each chapter. This information, like the tables themselves, is taken mostly from the *World Factbook*.

Constitutions and other key documents allow you to explore some of the formal political arrangements in the

countries covered in this book. For the United States, for instance, you might want to look at the highly ambiguous language of the Second Amendment, which lies at the heart of the dispute over gun ownership and control.

There are questions to ask in reading at least two InfoTrac College Edition articles per chapter. For chapter 1, you might want to think about a phenomenon I call the "parable of the frog" in assessing the state of comparative politics in the post-cold war teaching environment.

Perhaps the most distinctive part of the website is its incorporation of statistical and other data collected by my colleague and friend Michael LeRoy for his comparative textbook, which uses the MicroCase software package. Clicking on the MicroCase option on the book website will take you to its website (your internet connection must be on).

There you can do some simple mapping exercises and statistical analyses of selected variables drawn from his file of "global" data and national-level statistics. The examples we have developed can be done using the function that gives you maps depicting differences from one type of country to another. If you have had courses in statistics and research methods, you can use more advanced statistical techniques.

Instructions for using MicroCase are provided on the website.

