4

Within the Nation-State

In the last chapter we looked at the nation-state—specifically, what it is, how it evolved, and the critical role that nation-states play in the international system. What we are going to do now is look *within* the nation-state, as we continue to move from the macro to the more micro levels of analysis. (As a reminder, you might want to look back at figure 2.1 on the levels of analysis.) If the international system is the most macro level—it encompasses the entire system at its broadest—then we are moving toward the most micro level, the individual. Why is this important? Nation-states are the products of their component parts: the government and political system that run it; the cultures and societies of the people within it; and the individuals who make up the government, cultures, and societies. In fact, only by understanding all these interrelated parts is it really possible to understand why some nations (such as the United States) hold together despite the disparate groups of peoples it comprises, and why others (such as the former Yugoslavia) fall apart, often leading to bloody conflict. Understanding these pieces is critical to understanding international relations (IR).

We will proceed in this chapter by going through the levels of analysis that are found within the nation-state, ultimately ending at the individual level. It is important to remember that even though we address these as if they were individual pieces, the reality is that they are parts of an integrated whole. For example, the nation-state is composed of the government, the culture, and society, all of which are made up of individuals. But this does not mean we need to know how

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every individual thinks. Rather, as we will see later in this chapter, what is most important is how the individual leaders think, as they are the ones who steer the course for the nation-state. That said, at a time of political transition in parts of the world, it is important to think about how individuals, acting together, can change the course of political action in any one country, as they did in Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt during the Arab Spring, for example, and the impact of such actions on the government.

We will begin with an overview of government in general and of the role that government plays in IR. From there, we will look at the "nation" part of the nation-state, with an eye toward understanding the culture and societies. Just as we examined large questions of peace and war when we talked about the nation-state level, there are important questions to be asked about conflict when we look within the nation-state. Rather than looking specifically at wars between or among nation-states, here we will try to understand and get a better grasp of what causes civil or intrastate conflicts or wars. We need to look within the nation-state at the nations, culture, and societies in order to understand a little bit more about why one group within a country turns on another, and also why these types of conflicts are often so difficult to resolve.

We will conclude the chapter with a discussion of the individual level and what role the individual plays in IR under different sets of circumstances.

THE GOVERNMENT—THAT IS, THE "STATE" PART OF THE NATION-STATE

In chapter 3, we gave the definition of the nation-state as comprising two separate but interrelated concepts. As noted in our definition of *nation-state*, it has two component parts: the nation, or the people, and the state, which includes the boundaries or borders that define the territory but also the government. Every nation-state has a government that is responsible for ensuring the collective well-being and security of the state and the people within it. Looking at it another way, for a government or the political system of the country to be considered *legitimate*, the people within the borders of the state (i.e., the nation) must feel an allegiance to the state. There are any number of different types of political systems or governments, some of which are considered more legitimate than others both by the people within their borders and by those outside them. The latter is an especially important point; if a government is not considered to be legitimate, then other countries and governments will not want to interact with it for fear of the appearance that doing so will be granting it legitimacy.

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This might seem confusing, so let's put it a different way. If a dictator takes power through illegitimate means such as overthrowing an established government, other countries will not want to deal with that leader as a sign that they cannot support the methods used to take control. Hence, another country might not want to grant the country diplomatic recognition or will try to isolate it from interacting with other countries in the international system through measures such as imposing a trade embargo or economic sanctions. We have seen this with the imposition of sanctions against North Korea as "punishment" for moving forward with its nuclear weapons testing. Does that mean the leader does not exist or will go away, or that the country will change its policies? Not really. But it does send a signal regarding that country's place within the international system and other countries' opinions of its policies and/or leaders.

It has also been shown that even if one country opposes the policies of another or the means by which a leader took power, they might continue to work with the leader if they feel it's in the national interest. Here again, examples might prove helpful. Although the United States did not support many of the repressive policies of Joseph Stalin, during World War II the United States and Stalin were allies against Hitler, who was seen as a greater threat. It was after the war ended and Hitler was defeated that there was a huge ideological and military divide between the United States and the then-USSR that grew into the Cold War. More recently, despite a fraught relationship between the United States and Russia, U.S. goods and services trade with Russia totaled an estimated $34.9 billion in 2019. While U.S. goods exported to Russia was down as of 2018 because of sanctions, Russia was still the United States' fortieth largest goods export market in 2019. The point here is that national self-interest becomes an important determinant in any country's behavior.[1]

Countries will also isolate another country when a leader with whom they have problems ideologically takes power. For example, after then–Chinese leader Mao Zedong officially declared the creation of the People's Republic of China as a communist country on October 1, 1949, the United States would not recognize that country as "China," preferring instead to recognize the nationalist government on Formosa (Taiwan) as China. The United States had backed the nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek against Mao during the civil war and preferred to make a statement about their allegiance to that leader, as well as against communism. It was not until many years later, in 1979, that the United States officially recognized what we now know as "China." U.S. nonrecognition of China did not mean that the country did not exist; clearly it did. But the policy sent a

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signal that the United States was continuing to support its ally, Taiwan, which in turn alerted China that should it decide to attack Taiwan and try to annex it, it would have to deal with the United States.

Clearly, there are many different types of governments and political systems. Some impose their will (and the hope of legitimacy) from the top down. These tend to be autocratic or authoritarian governments whose continuity within the country is often assured through means of coercion, such as the use of the military. Another type of government is a democracy, which is generally a participatory system in which the citizens have some say in choosing their leaders and, therefore, in the decisions that are made. Democracies are supposed to reflect the will of the masses (that is, the non–decision makers), because one of the characteristics of this form of government is that if the people are dissatisfied, they can throw out the decision makers in the next election. Democracies can be parliamentary systems, such as the United Kingdom, or presidential, such as the United States. Both of these variations *empower* their people.

We are not going to go into these different types of political systems in depth here—that is really the purview of comparative politics—beyond noting that different forms of governments have implications for IR. Each political system has a different process for making decisions, including decisions on foreign policy. It is this set of points that we will be exploring in more detail here.

What does all this tell us about the level of the government? It means that even though a government is something that exists within the nation-state specifically to govern the people, there are implications for the ways in which other states see the government of that country and interact with it. In other words, what happens within the country has implications for foreign policy, which is also IR.

Democratizing the State

One statistic suggests that "approximately thirty countries shifted from authoritarian to democratic systems during the 1970s and 1980s; this so called 'third wave' of democratization, defined as a move toward competitive electoral politics, was most successful in countries where Western influences were strongest."[2] This point certainly can be seen in the transition that took place in the countries of Eastern Europe, as they moved beyond Soviet-era communist systems to embrace both democratic political systems and capitalist economies in the late 1980s and into the 1990s. Ultimately, this was also manifested in their individual desire to join both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

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BOX 4.1

RUSSIA AND "DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS"

It is important to remember that holding an election does not equate to democracy. For example, in Russia, former President Putin's role was formalized when he was elected president in March 2012, succeeding Dmitry Medvedev, his handpicked successor. But Putin's election in 2012 was not without controversy, leading to street protests that started even prior to the elections and grew violent at times. In many ways, the protests underscored how much Russia had changed in the period since Putin was last elected president in 2000 and again in 2004. Although Putin "won" 64 percent of the vote in 2012, he was not recognized as the legitimate president by many in Russia. According to one report, "The election was neither open nor honest. . . . [And] by some estimates vote-rigging added at least ten percentage points to Mr. Putin's tally."[1] As also reported, the election results of more than 50 percent ensured that Putin did not have to face a runoff election and was a demonstration to the bureaucracy and security services that he remains in charge and can mobilize whatever resources he needs to stay in power. "Yet the fact that the Kremlin was forced to use more elaborate means to rig the election was also testimony to the growing pressure from civil society."[2] Nonetheless, as the "elected" leader, he represents his country at most international meetings, which is one way of granting him legitimacy.

Putin again ran for president in 2018, this time securing 76 percent of the vote, a significant increase over his results in 2012. The main opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, was barred from running, having been arrested on trumped-up charges. Millionaire communist Pavel Grudinin received about 12 percent of the vote, finishing second to Putin. Putin's team described the victory as a "mandate, which Putin needs for future decisions" and as recognition for all that he has achieved. Putin's term will be for another six years.[3]

The elections of Putin in 2012 and 2018 serve as examples of the point that an election does not equate to democracy and the will of the people. Putin continues to serve as the recognized president of Russia.

NOTES

1. "Russia's Presidential Election: Moscow Doesn't Believe in Tears," *The Economist*, March 10, 2012, 62.
2. "Russia's Presidential Election," 62.
3. "Russia Election: Vladimir Putin Wins by Big Margin," BBC News, March 19, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43452449.

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and the European Union (EU), as proof that they were indeed part of the family of "Western" countries.

This transformation to democracy spurred a greater interest in understanding democratization, especially as it was also connected to the growth of free-market capitalist economies and an emphasis on improved human rights, both of which are tied to liberal values. Going back to our earlier discussions of theory, realists assume a unitary actor, which in turn makes assumptions about the behavior of states—specifically that they will always act in their own best interest to maximize power. On the other hand, liberal theorists are more interested in looking at the ways in which the transition to democratic systems has played out, not only economically but also as it affects a country's foreign policy. This is especially important, as the liberal theorists see a direct connection between economics and politics. The constructivists would want us to understand the relationship between the various social and political structures and the country's policy decisions, and of course the Marxists see a direct link between economics and politics.

The feminists would alert us to think about the concept of democracy through gender-sensitive lenses. Doing so alters the perspective still further. The feminist literature reminds us that even in democratic systems, generally women do not have the same access to power that men do, and that political agendas that benefit women are not always put forward. Even liberal definitions of citizenship are grounded in the social contract of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, which were based on "male, property-owning heads-of-households . . . [and] thus, democratic theory and practice have been built on the male-as-norm engaged in narrowly defined political activities."[3] We will return to the ways in which the state genders citizenship later. But the point to remember is that while we often think of democracy as a political form that the people can contribute to and benefit from, we still need to ask who participates and who benefits. Thus, each of the theoretical approaches would have something to contribute to this part of the discussion.

Accompanying the apparent move toward increased democratization has also been the assumption that democracy is a "better" form of government because of the apparent benefits derived: people have a vested interest; government will protect the "national interest" rather than just their own; human rights will be protected; theoretically, decisions will benefit the greater good or the collective; and so on. There is also the emergence of theories such as the "democratic peace," which makes assumptions about the supposedly peaceful nature of democracies, explored in more detail in the following. This too has reinforced the idea of democracy as the "best" form of political system.

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However, it is also important to remember that democracy brings with it certain responsibilities and requirements. Democracy assumes an educated citizenry, who are aware of the issues and are willing participants in the process. In addition to voting, among a citizen's responsibilities are paying taxes, making their voices heard through the political process (i.e., voting), serving in the military if required, obeying laws, and, of course, owing allegiance to the government, among other things. The government, in turn, has its responsibilities, which include providing for the common defense; engaging with other countries (foreign policy); providing for "human security," such as clean air, food, and water; ensuring that the budget is apportioned wisely; and so on. Because of the range of responsibilities associated with democracy, it can be argued that it cannot be *imposed* on any state but must grow organically from within the state. Thus, the countries of Eastern Europe, which had been under Soviet domination, *chose* democracy as their preferred political system and pursued a capitalist market economy when they had the opportunity. This stands in contrast, for example, to cases like Iraq, where one of the stated reasons for the U.S. invasion in 2003 was to rid the country of a dictator and to encourage (impose) democracy in its place. This assumption that because it was the preferred form of political system and would contribute to a more peaceful world led to the liberal notion that democracy could be imposed on another country as a foreign policy goal.

BOX 4.2

CAN DEMOCRACY BE IMPOSED? PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH AND DEMOCRACY IN IRAQ

By looking at a series of speeches made by the Bush administration, it is possible to track the rhetoric leading to the war against Iraq, justified initially by the alleged presence of weapons of mass destruction, to the need for regime change, and ultimately the hope of creating a democratic form of government in Iraq.

In his State of the Union speech in January 2002, Bush made it clear that he would expand the war on terror when he identified Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an "axis of evil," and he stated that "some governments will be timid in the face of terror. . . . If they don't act, America will."[1] While this foreshadowed the eventual attack on Iraq, the rationale for doing so

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continued to change. In August 2002, Vice President Dick Cheney, in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, set the stage by stating that "there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction."[2]

By October 2002, President Bush addressed the country to prepare it for an attack against Iraq, now justified not only by the presence of weapons of mass destruction but by painting Saddam Hussein as "a ruthless and aggressive dictator," "a threat to peace," and "a student of Stalin," who has "links to international terrorist groups." According to Bush, "*regime change* in Iraq is the only certain means of removing a great danger to our nation" (emphasis added).[3] The attacks began in March 2003.

In December 2005, when the war against Iraq had been under way for almost three years, President Bush was speaking explicitly of the imposition of democracy in Iraq: "Today I am going to speak in depth about another vital element of our strategy: our efforts to help the Iraqi people build a lasting democracy in the heart of the Middle East."[4]

A paramount goal for both the United States and Iraq was to stress the importance of Iraq as a sovereign nation headed by a *democratically elected government* once U.S. troops had withdrawn and a sense of "normalcy" had returned to the country. The fighting continues as of this writing, and when—or whether—that will happen remains uncertain. This raises the question of whether democracy can be imposed by an outside nation.

NOTES

1. Joyce P. Kaufman, *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*, fifth edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021), 194.
2. "Full Text of Dick Cheney's Speech," August 27, 2002, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/aug/27/usa.iraq.
3. "President George W. Bush's Address Regarding Iraq, Cincinnati Museum Center," October 7, 2002, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html.
4. President George W. Bush, "The Struggle for Democracy in Iraq: Speech to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia," December 12, 2005, http://www. presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/12.12.05.html.

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The liberal belief in the primacy of democracy goes back to Immanuel Kant, who in 1795 argued that "the spread of democracy would change international politics by eliminating war."[4] In his view, the best way to ensure peace was to encourage the growth of republics, or representative democracies, which he felt would take international law more seriously than any other forms of government, which at that time were monarchies and empires. "The republican constitution, besides the purity of its origin (having sprung from the pure source of the concept of law), also gives a favorable prospect for the desired consequence, i.e., *perpetual peace*" (emphasis added).[5]

BOX 4.3

HOW AND WHY DEMOCRACIES DIE

In 2018, Harvard professors of government Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt published a startling book entitled *How Democracies Die*.[1] The book came out two years into the administration of Donald Trump and opens by asking "Is our democracy in danger?"[2] On the whole, the book is a cautionary tale, drawing on examples from around the world to illustrate that democracy can be very fragile and that, as a political system, it requires nurturing.

At this point in our study of democracy as a type of political system to which countries aspire, the authors note that "Democracies may die at the hands not of generals but of elected leaders—presidents or prime ministers who subvert the very process that brought them to power."[3] One point they make that is relevant to the United States today is that "Democratic backsliding today begins at the ballot box."[4] Democracy as a political system is something that must grow from within a country, as it requires prerequisites. As we saw in Box 4.2, George W. Bush tried to impose democracy on the country of Iraq, which was not successful.

The United States has long been used as a model of a successful democracy, although it took almost one hundred years after the founding of the country for the Fifteenth Amendment to be passed in 1870 which says that "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." That said, women were not given the right to vote until 1919 and the passage of the nineteenth amendment.

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In an Op-Ed piece in *The Washington Post* on June 9, 2021, columnist E. J. Dionne makes the explicit relationship between democracy at home and U.S. policy toward advancing the concept abroad, and he goes back to a report issued in 1947 to reinforce the point that our record here, on issues such as civil rights, affects the perception that other countries have of the United States. Quoting an Irish diplomat, now-retired, there is an explicit relationship between what happens domestically and the role of the United States to defend "democracy, multilateralism and the rule of law," noting that " [the United States] will only have the credibility and influence to do that to the extent that it continues to defend those values at home."[5]

The presidential election of 2020 was unusual not only because it was held in the midst of a pandemic, but for the fact that it had virtually record-breaking turnout due, in part, to making it easier for people to vote (e.g., vote by mail, drive-through voting, etc.). Yet, as of this writing, in summer 2021, Donald Trump, the forty-fifth president who was defeated by Joe Biden, not only has refused to concede but continues to claim that the election was stolen from him, "the big lie." What makes this even more alarming is the fact that a poll taken in May 2021, six months after the election, found that 25 percent of Americans surveyed, including 53 percent of Republicans, say Trump is still the "true president."[6]

One of the lessons of the Levitsky-Ziblatt book is that having a constitution or elections are not enough to guarantee a democracy, but there is a need for common values and norms as well as a commitment to the rule of law, which reside with the nation side of the nation-state, through the culture and the people. In this case, the pieces have to fit together.

NOTES

1. Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die* (New York: Broadway Books, 2018).
2. Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 1.
3. Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 3.
4. Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 5.
5. All quotes taken from E. J. Dionne, Jr., "Opinion: Advancing Democracy Abroad Requires Defending It at Home," *The Washington Post*, June 9, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/06/09/advancing-democracy-abroad-requires-defending-it-home/.
6. Matthew Brown, "Poll: A Quarter of Americans Say Donald Trump is 'True President' of the US," *USA Today*, May 25, 2021, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2021/05/25/poll-quarter-americans-surveyed-say-trump-true-president/7426714002/.

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Democratic Peace

From this eighteenth-century notion about the primacy of democracies for its many positive characteristics and the peaceful nature of this type of political system grew one of the basic principles of IR: *democratic peace*. This idea was introduced into IR thinking in the 1980s, put forward by Michael Doyle, among others. Doyle, an important liberal thinker in IR, wrote in 1986 that "the predictions of liberal pacifists . . . are borne out: liberal states do exercise peaceful restraint, and a separate peace exists among them."[6] He drew on the work of Kant and also Joseph Schumpeter to conclude that although liberal states will fight when they must—when they are attacked and/or threatened in some way—they have established a "separate peace—but only among themselves."[7] This has contributed to the incorrect notion that democracies are more peaceful than other types of governments, although the more accurate representation is that democracies do not fight one another. The reality is that democracies fight as many wars as authoritarian states do, *but not against other democratic states*. "No major historical cases contradict this generalization, which is known as the *democratic peace*" (emphasis in original).[8]

Political scientists continue to ponder why this is the case. Is it a coincidence, or is there something inherent in the democratic system of government that is more peaceful or, at the least, less likely to engage in war as a means of settling disputes? Because democracies depend on "the consent of the governed," are they more hesitant to engage in war, which will not be popular at home, will require public support, and will result in loss of lives and great monetary expense? Or as democratic peace proponents argue, is it because the spread of democracy helps negate the inherent anarchy of the international system as understood by realists? Perhaps the existence of more democracies would help alleviate if not eliminate the "security dilemma," or the insecurity that comes with a buildup of weapons, thereby making war less likely.

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman put forward a slightly different understanding of the concept in his thesis that "no two countries that both have a McDonald's have ever fought a war against each other." His "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention" suggests that "when a country reaches a certain level of development, when it has a middle class big enough to support a McDonald's, it becomes a McDonald's country, and people in McDonald's countries don't like to fight wars."[9] In other words, a country that can support a McDonald's, or any other major multinational corporation that requires a strong economic/middle-class base, has achieved a certain level of development

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BOX 4.4

EXCERPTS FROM "PERPETUAL PEACE: A PHILOSOPHICAL SKETCH," BY IMMANUEL KANT

Section I. Containing the Preliminary Articles for Perpetual Peace Among States

"Standing Armies (miles perpetuus) Shall in Time Be Totally Abolished"

"For they incessantly menace other states by their readiness to appear at all times prepared for war; they incite them to compete with each other in the number of armed men, and there is no limit to this. For this reason, the cost of peace finally becomes more oppressive than that of a short war, and consequently a standing army is itself a cause of offensive war waged in order to relieve the state of this burden."

Section II. Containing the Definitive Articles for Perpetual Peace Among States

"The state of peace among men living side by side is not the natural state (*status naturalis*); the natural state is one of war. This does not always mean open hostilities, but at least an unceasing threat of war. A state of peace, therefore, must be *established*, for in order to be secured against hostility it is not sufficient that hostilities simply be not committed; and, unless this security is pledged to each by his neighbor (a thing that can only occur in a civil state), each may treat his neighbor, from whom he demands this security, as an enemy."

First Definitive Article for Perpetual Peace

"*The Civil Constitution of Every State Should Be Republican*"

"The only constitution which derives from the idea of the original compact, and on which all juridical legislation of a people must be based, is the republican. This constitution is established, firstly, by principles of the freedom of the members of a society (as men); secondly, by principles of dependence of all upon a single common legislation (as subjects); and thirdly, by the law of their equality (as citizens). . . . Is it also the one which can lead to perpetual peace?"

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Second Definitive Article for Perpetual Peace

"*The Law of Nations Shall Be Founded on a Federation of Free States*"

"Peoples, as states, like individuals, may be judged to injure one another merely by their coexistence in the state of nature (i.e., while independent of external laws). Each of them, may and should for the sake of its own security demand that the others enter into a constitution similar to the civil constitution. . . . This would be a *league of nations*." (emphasis added).

Source: Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm.

economically and is probably integrated with the larger global community. Those characteristics alone mean that it is a country that is less likely to engage in war than a country that has not yet achieved those qualities. This also introduces an economic component to the understanding of democratic peace, which in many ways makes it a more complete package.

Militarizing the State

Political scientist John Mueller argues that it is not democracy that "causes" peace, but there are other conditions internal to a nation as well as external circumstances that contribute to both democracy *and* peace. For example, attitudes toward war have changed, such that "the appeal of war, both as a desirable exercise in itself and as a sensible method for resolving conflicts, has diminished markedly."[10] But in some countries, including the United States, there has also been significant militarization, which started during the Cold War and has continued. The growth of the defense sector and its impact on the U.S. economy was something that President Eisenhower warned about in his farewell address to the nation:

> This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

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> *In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.* The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.
>
> We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together. (emphasis added)[11]

The changes that Eisenhower identified, which can be thought of as the *militarization of the state*, have continued, and as the technology has improved, the costs of war, especially the human costs, have changed. So while technologically developed countries like the United States can wage war using technology like drones to replace soldiers, the collateral damage to civilians has increased.[12] Another aspect to this, as Eisenhower warned about almost sixty years ago, is that the defense industry is now an important part of the U.S. economy; according to a 2016 study, the aerospace and defense industries generated "$300 billion in economic value, representing 1.8 percent of total nominal Gross Domestic Product in the U.S., and 10 percent of manufacturing output."[13] Thus, the military-industrial complex is a real phenomenon in the United States that has an impact on policy decisions.

Moving beyond the United States in particular to the international system in general, Mueller also argues that although there has been a proliferation of what he calls "local wars," there is also a marked diminishing of countries resorting to war as a means to settle disputes and differences. And he also makes the distinction between war and conflict, noting that although war has declined, "it certainly does not mean that conflict has been eliminated."[14] However, this also does not necessarily mean that war is the only means by which these conflicts can be resolved. In fact, looking at some of the NATO nations, for example, there can be very extreme disagreements about policy, such as the U.S. decision to go to war in Iraq, but they can be addressed without resorting to armed violence.

In examining the materials about democracy and the democratic peace, it does appear that from the perspective of IR, this form of government has emerged as the most cooperative and beneficial, not only to the individual nation but to the direction of the international system as a whole. That said, the transition from another type of political system to democracy can be difficult and even violent. We know that it cannot be imposed from outside but that the

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desire for this form of political system must originate from within and that the country must have the infrastructure (e.g., an educated citizenry, open access to media, a fair election process, among others) to support it.

Democracy and Feminist Perspectives

In order to truly understand democracy, though, we also need to put on our gender-sensitive lenses and ask who makes the decisions and who is affected by the decisions even in a democratic system. As suggested previously, feminist theorists, such as Ann Tickner, warn us that the movement toward democracy can actually have a detrimental effect both within and across states. Across states, decisions made by some of the more powerful democracies of the northern developed tier of states can limit the options available to the developing countries of the south. Often, the decisions of the major developed or industrialized states are made with consideration as to what is in their best interest, even if that means that the decisions will have a detrimental effect on developing countries. For example, an environmental policy that was designed to improve the air or water quality of developed countries can be more costly for a developing country to implement or might even be irrelevant to a country struggling to feed its own people. The imposition of values by one country or group of countries onto another (something the countries of the developed West have increasingly been accused of doing) is often called *cultural imperialism*.

Within a country, while democracy promotes equality among all citizens in theory, the reality is that often these are patriarchal governmental structures, where power is concentrated in the hands of wealthy men who have the wherewithal to gain access to high office. Further, these same leaders often promote and mentor younger people who look and think just as they do. Thus, it can be argued, this is a system that can limit progress for women, rather than allowing them to advance.[15] So, in order to really understand democracy in practice as well as in theory, we need to ask who has access to the system of governance and who participates in it.

Another point that Tickner and other feminists make—and it is one that keeps women out of decision making—has to do with the differentiation between the public and the private spheres, where politics is associated with the public, and the private sphere of running the household and the family is the domain of women. In fact, Tickner notes that "historically . . . terms such as *citizen* and *head of household* were not neutral but were associated with men."[16]

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What this suggests is that no matter how democratic a political system might appear to be, it can exclude women from decision making and positions of power. This too has implications for the foreign policy decisions that a country makes, including issues of war and peace.

CULTURE AND SOCIETY

In the previous section on the government, we talked about the "state" part of the concept of the nation-state. The *state* represents the formal trappings such as the government and defined borders, and it in turn accepts certain responsibilities for the people who live within those borders. We will now move into a discussion of the "nation" part, which is the people. It is the people as a whole who not only represent the nation but also define the culture and the society. Therefore, the *nation* denotes a group of people with a common history, background, and values, all of whom accept the sanctity of the state. While this level might seem to exist outside the purview of IR per se, it is important for a number of reasons, not least of which is that it can determine whether a nation-state will endure peacefully or dissolve into civil, ethnic, or religious violence.

Ideally, any nation-state has one culture and one societal set of norms, or if there is more than one, they are compatible. These might be characterized by a common language or set of values and traditions. Or in some countries, there might be more than one group within a larger set of cultural and societal norms. For example, within the United States, the majority of people speak English (although a lot speak Spanish), but within the country there are ethnic enclaves, such as the Cajun areas of Louisiana, where the dominant language is a patois based on French. And there are significant Asian communities that may speak Chinese (Cantonese or Mandarin), Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, etc. There are groups that hold on to their original ethnic heritage; they may speak Russian and worship in a Russian Orthodox Church or live in Chinese enclaves and worship in Buddhist temples. The point is that although there are these subgroupings, they are found within a dominant cultural tradition that understands and expects certain behaviors that transcend any one cultural tradition and are "American." Thus, members of these various subgroups will all celebrate the Fourth of July or Thanksgiving as a common tradition, while they may also celebrate the Orthodox Easter or the Chinese New Year. Thus, various nations can live in harmony within one state.

These various "nations" need not be tied to ethnic background or traditions, religion, or culture but may be considered an artifact of "identity"—that is, issues

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of belonging. Sociologists, anthropologists, and other social scientists as well as political scientists have explored various aspects of this concept to try to get a broader understanding of what it is, what it means, and where it comes from. It might be tied to religion, ethnicity, culture, or even region. But in many ways it is the broader understanding of a common identity that holds groups of people within the state together.

For our purposes, though, the question remains: how does this affect IR? The fact of the matter is that it does affect it. For example, look at the strong pro-Israeli group within the United States, which has a powerful lobby that has had a direct influence on U.S. policy toward Israel. This group of people advocates support for Israel as an important component of U.S. foreign policy. Although they are Americans, they also have a strong sense of identity with the Jewish religion and feelings of loyalty to the state of Israel, and therefore they want the United States to support that country. This does not mean they want to leave the United States for Israel, but simply that they also feel strongly about the need to support Israel as a plank of U.S. foreign policy and are willing to lobby for that policy. Or, taking another example, we can look at the impact of the large number of Cuban émigrés who have settled in Florida. They might see themselves as Americans—one first-generation American whose parents left Cuba, Marco Rubio, was elected to the U.S. Senate from Florida—but they also feel strongly about their Cuban identity and follow events on the island, which translates into their interpretation of U.S. foreign policy. Not only has this group of émigrés had a marked impact on the domestic politics of the United States because of the strength of their votes, but they have also influenced U.S. foreign policy toward Cuba.

And the United States is not unique in this regard. Many of the former colonial powers in Europe, such as the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Spain, not only have trade and political ties with their former colonies, but they also have relatively large immigrant populations who, if they don't directly affect the country's foreign policy, certainly affect its culture. Anyone who has traveled there has seen the large number of Indian restaurants in London or the North African restaurants found throughout Paris. Clearly, those immigrants bring with them their own cultural traditions that spill into and affect their adopted homeland in general, making it a culturally richer and more diverse place. But this also affects their sense of identity and belonging, not only to their new or adopted country, but also to what had been their home country. And, as we have seen, it can also contribute to feelings of nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiment that also affects the politics of the home country as well as toward other

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countries. One of the benefits of a democratic form of government is the belief that these various identities should be complementary and not contradictory, although in reality they sometimes are.

Clearly this is not to suggest that assimilation of these immigrant groups into the dominant culture and society is always peaceful and/or easy. As noted earlier, they are often accompanied by a growth in nationalist feelings that can be fueled by political leaders and contribute to a sense of division and exclusion within a country. Donald Trump's "America First" campaign and anti-Muslim rhetoric contributed to the growth of nationalism among some in the United States during and following the 2016 presidential election. Marine Le Pen, leader of the National Rally party in France (formerly the National Front), similarly based her presidential campaign on nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiments. The main point is that these various groups exist *within* a larger cultural and social setting, and they are expected to conform to the norms of that larger culture even though they may still hold on to their own traditions. When they do not, or when even a small and fringe group is perceived as not conforming, it can be threatening to the majority, and conflict can result.

One of the challenges facing all nation-states now is how to handle issues of the integration of different groups of people. This is also tied to issues of migration and immigration, which is one of the cases we will explore in chapter 6. Perhaps the old "melting pot" model is no longer appropriate in a globalized world; regardless of where people move internationally, they can easily retain ties to their home country, friends, family, culture, and traditions. The real issue then becomes what happens when a group's loyalty is to, or their identity is with the *nation* as opposed to the state? That can lead to the growth of nationalism, which ultimately can lead to conflict. That has important implications for IR.

Nationalism and Conflict

Nationalism can be defined as the promotion of national identity to the exclusion of other identities. It promotes the common characteristics of the group and allegiance to that group. In short, nationalism moves beyond patriotism (loyalty to the nation-state) to promote commitment to one's own group over others, including the broader interests of the state. This also alerts us to the fact that as students of IR, it is important to look *within* the state if we are really going to understand the origins or root causes of intrastate civil conflict.

Nationalism is often tied to the principle of *self-determination*, which suggests that the peoples of a nation have the right to form a state and certainly to have control over their own affairs. But in this idea is an inherent theoretical conflict.

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If states are sovereign entities (a notion that goes back to the Treaty of Westphalia), then how can a group of people *within* the state declare themselves to be independent and able to make rules that govern only themselves?

Tied directly to this conundrum and to the idea of self-determination is the concept of *territory*. When the claim of nationhood is contested within a state, then who has primacy over the territory within which the "nation" resides? To address this, we can bring together different theoretical models or approaches, although none can really explain or address all sets of circumstances.

For example, the realists look at the international system as inherently anarchic, and as such, there are few rules as to how to deal with competing claims over territory. Therefore, in realist thinking, war will inevitably break out as a way to settle the dispute, and the group that is more powerful will win. By that logic, the conflicting claims that both Israel (a formal nation-state) and Palestine (a nation or stateless people) have to the land known as "Palestine" will inevitably lead to war, as there is no other way to settle the claim to the contested territory except by military might. Clearly, that has been the case to date. The realist approach would argue that there is no single system-level arbiter that these groups can turn to in order to resolve this conflict, nor can they really negotiate directly—especially because the role of the Palestinians, who do not have a state, does not fit neatly into the model of IR, which presumes that contact will always be state to state. As noted previously, that means that some political actors do not want to negotiate with the Palestinian representatives, including the Palestinian Authority, fearing that doing so will grant them legitimacy.

The liberal theorists would approach the issue differently. Initially, liberals would say that there are viable alternatives to settling disputes beyond war. The liberals especially would argue that the two sets of actors (Palestinians and Israelis) *can* negotiate to see whether it might be possible to settle their dispute peacefully by beginning with what they might have in common rather than their differences. Here the role of individuals can be important. For example, there are grassroots groups such as Women in Black, which started in 1988 when ten Israeli women held a vigil in Jerusalem to protest Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and to show their solidarity with the Palestinian people. As the movement spread, it started to incorporate Palestinian as well as Israeli women, who were united by a common cause.[17] The movement has since spread to other countries, for example, Women in Black vigils were held in parts of former Yugoslavia to protest the wars and the ethnic cleansing that resulted. In this case, then, what started as a small group of women grew to encompass individuals around the world who have joined together to work for peace and justice and against

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violence. While this might not carry much weight officially or influence government policy, it can draw public attention to the issue, thereby building pressure on the government to settle the conflict.

At a more macro and official government level, working to settle the conflict can be done by direct negotiations, or there can be a mediator or neutral third party involved, as we have seen so often in the Arab/Palestinian–Israeli case. In that case, the role of the mediator would be to hear each side's position and see if there is any common ground upon which they can build.

It was this type of mediation process that was used to arrive at the agreement that became known as the Camp David Accords, signed in September 1978 between enemies Egypt and Israel. Mediated by the United States under the direction of then-President Jimmy Carter, the result was the first major peace agreement between Israel and an Arab state (Egypt), which resulted in the resolution of the disputed territory of the Sinai, which Israel had taken in 1967 following the Six-Day War. In that case, consistent with liberal ideas, resolution was possible because of cooperation between the two countries, albeit with U.S. mediation, and because both countries saw peace as in their national interest. This confluence of views allowed both countries to arrive at an agreement that was consistent with the priorities of the members of the groups within the country, thereby ensuring support for the agreement both within and outside the country. However, not all within Egypt were pleased with the outcome. The then-president of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, was assassinated in October 1981 by a group of fundamentalist military officers who were opposed to his policies. Although the long-term international impact of the agreement was peace between Israel and Egypt, it cost the president his life and created rifts between the more fundamentalist members of the population and those who wanted peace. And there were groups within Egypt who similarly felt that it had given up too much in order to achieve an agreement. In the long term, however, the relationship between the two countries has been peaceful.

Intractable Conflicts

In some cases, a conflict is so intractable and deep seated that the issue of the disputed territory cannot be resolved by mediation or negotiation. The example of Jerusalem, a city claimed as sacred by all three monotheistic religions, is a case in point. Since both Israel and the Palestinians lay claim to the city as part of their dispute over land, and since each feels that it has a legitimate right to Jerusalem, peaceful resolution seems impossible in this case. Further complicating

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MAP 4.1
Israel's Borders, 2010

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the possibility of resolution is the fact that the Palestinians see Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

In December 2017, the Trump administration disrupted the uneasy status quo by announcing that the United States would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and would move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which happened in May 2018. In announcing this move, President Trump claimed that it "marks the beginning of a new approach to conflict between Israel and the Palestinians." Trump noted that as a sovereign state, Israel has the right "to determine its own capital. Acknowledging this as a fact is a necessary condition for achieving peace." He also claimed that this was the "right thing to do" as well as allowing him to fulfill a campaign promise.[18] And while he claimed that the United States would continue to support a search for a lasting peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, the decision to move the embassy upended decades of U.S. policy as well as undermining the role of the United States as an honest broker in any future negotiations. The reality is that this move only reinforced the complexity of a two-state solution. In this case we have issues of self-determination and territory coming together, exacerbated when placed within the context of the larger political issues that the two groups have.

There are a number of other apparently intractable conflicts that can be seen today in addition to the case of Israel and the Palestinians. The divided island of Cyprus is another example of two groups of people who share territory—in this case, the island of Cyprus—but with each group aligned with a different country, Greece in the south and Turkey in the north. This separation is the result of a conflict and division of the island that took place in 1974. Since that time, there have been any number of negotiations, both formal (Track I) and informal (Track II), to address the status of the country and to see if there is a way to unite the island. It is important to remember that the division of the island is not only political but also economic.

Although the island as a whole was admitted to the EU in 2004, its status is as a "de facto divided island," which means that the northern part of the island administered by Turkish Cypriots and known as the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" is exempt from full implementation of all EU treaties, obligations, and regulations. It is the southern part of the island, which has the majority of the population and territory, that is seen as "Cyprus" and is represented in the EU. The market-based economy of the north is roughly 20 percent of that of the southern part of the island. Ironically, because the southern part of the island is tied heavily to Greece, it suffered economically as a result of Greece's financial

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crisis that lasted from 2007 to approximately 2010, while the north, which is tied to Turkey, weathered the economic crisis relatively well. This disparity makes issues of reunification even more difficult as the issues are not only those of identity (Greece versus Turkey) but economics as well.

Since the island was divided, there have been a number of negotiations to try to reconcile the two sides. The most recent talks took place in April 2021 and ended without a resolution but with future talks planned. These followed talks that had collapsed in 2017, again, without a resolution. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres mediated the three days of talks in the latest round. As these talks collapsed, the North claimed that what they wanted was to achieve "'equal international status' like that enjoyed by the internationally recognized government run by Greek Cypriots in the south." Those on the southern part of the island, however, held to their position for the creation of a federation "with political equality on the basis of relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions," according to Guterres.[19] While the talks are expected to resume at some point, the position of the two sides continues to harden, making compromise and a solution to this international issue seemingly impossible at this time. What further complicates both the negotiations and the possibility of a solution is the fact that both Greece and Turkey are NATO members, and will continue to be at odds about Cyprus.

MAP 4.2
Cyprus. *Source:* iStock/Peter Hermes Furian

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We can look at other cases of these deep-seated intractable conflicts that are the result of nations, often crossing state borders, seeking self-determination or statehood. This issue will come up again when we talk about stateless peoples in chapter 5.

The Kurds

The case of the Kurds stands as another example of this type of conflict between a nation (the Kurds) and, in this case, a number of states. Like the issue of Israel and Palestine, which was at least in part the result of the redrawing of the map of the area in 1916 with the Sykes-Picot Agreement between France and Britain, the Treaty of Sevres in 1920 redrew the map of the old Ottoman Empire per an agreement among the victorious allies of World War I and the Ottoman Empire. In redrawing the lines, there was no attention paid to the nations or peoples in the region, thereby dividing the Kurds among a number of the newly created nations. In fact, a Kurdish state initially under British control was envisioned as part of this treaty, which did not come to fruition.

The Kurdish people share a common language, culture, and so on, and increasingly support the creation of an independent state of Kurdistan. But as a people, they can be found in parts of Turkey and Iraq primarily, but also in Iran and Syria. Each of the states in which there is a significant Kurdish population refuses to give up any part of its territory in order to create such a state, which they see as a violation of their own sovereignty. This resistance became even more apparent with the uprising that became the civil war in Syria, where Syrian Kurds have been fighting with the rebels against President Bashar al-Assad's government. Part of the rationale for their fighting is the hope of creating an autonomous Kurdish region in Syria as a step toward the creation of an independent state of Kurdistan. But, as noted in one newspaper account, that hope "threatens to draw a violent reaction from those other nations [Iraq, Turkey, and Iran]. They have signaled a willingness to take *extreme actions* to prevent the loss of territory to a greater Kurdistan" (emphasis added).[20]

Within Iraq, the Kurds, who were brutally massacred under Saddam Hussein in an act of genocide, have been allowed to maintain a degree of autonomy since the fall of Hussein in 2003. The Iraqi constitution of 2005 recognizes Iraqi Kurdistan as a federal region within Iraq, and it recognizes Kurdish as an official language of Iraq. Despite what appears to be a resolution of the issue, tensions remain over issues of borders and governance outside the formal boundaries of Iraqi Kurdistan, especially in Turkey. Turkey does not want to cede any of its

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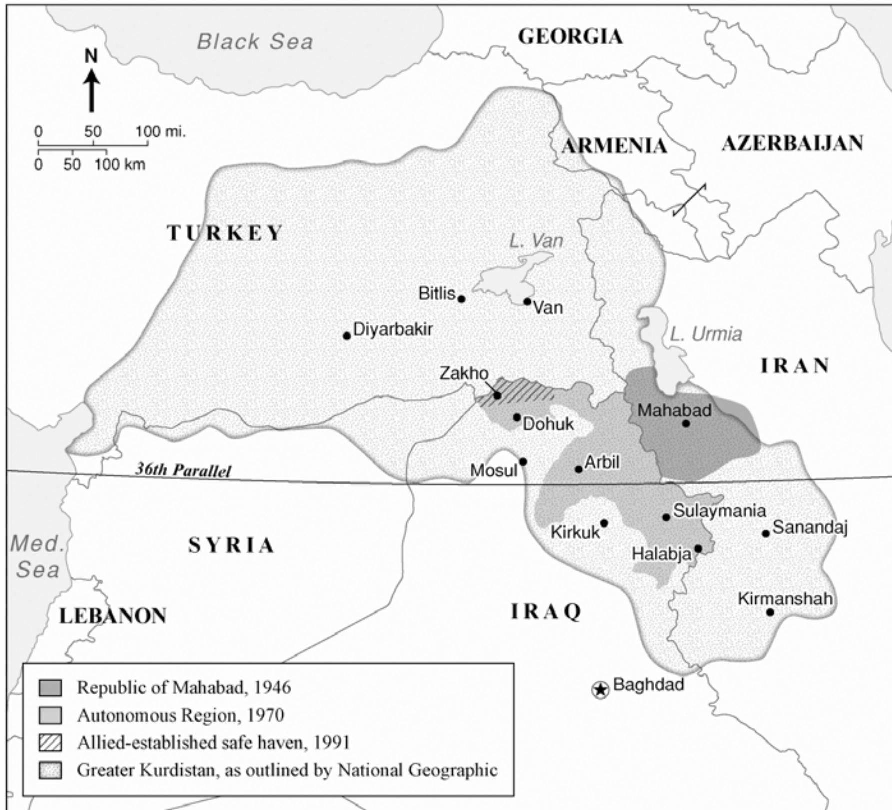

MAP 4.3
Kurdish Regions, 1946–Present

territory to create a country of Kurdistan, and any movement in that direction is perceived by Turkey as a threat to its sovereignty and territory. Thus, while the situation appears to have been stabilized in Iraq, it remains far from resolved in Turkey. The Kurds' quest for self-determination at best, and recognition of its identity within Turkey at a minimum, has manifested as a low-level conflict with Kurdish guerilla forces, known as the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), which was founded in 1974, fighting against the government of Turkey.

The Syrian Civil War, which started in March 2011 and continues as this book goes to press, had a marked impact on the Kurds, both in Syria and in neighboring countries. The Syrian Kurds were important allies in the fight against ISIS, which became their focus in the northern part of the country which borders

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Turkey, and which had been part of their traditional territory. However, this has not brought them any closer to the goal of an independent state of Kurdistan.

The issue of the Kurds and how they should be treated and recognized is not a new one, as the Kurdish people as a nation pre-dated the drawing of the current national boundaries that divided up the group in 1920. That situation becomes even more complicated when a semiautonomous group declares itself independent of its host state and seeks to create a new state. We have used the Kurds as just one example of a nation that straddles multiple states and the issues this creates for the international system.

The main point about these deep-seated conflicts is that in all cases they pit one group within a state against another, and they either threaten to destroy an existing state or they push for the creation of a new one by carving out territory of existing nation-states, which directly threatens sovereignty.

BOX 4.5

"THE DAUGHTERS OF KOBANI": WOMEN OF THE KURDISH MILITIA

A book was published in 2021 called *The Daughters of Kobani: A Story of Rebellion, Courage and Justice*,[1] by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon. This is the story of a Kurdish all-women militia, the Kurdish Women's Protection Units, who fought ISIS initially in the Syrian town of Kobani but who, after winning that battle, moved across northern Syria waging war against ISIS. The book is about a group of extraordinary women, and some of the men who fought with them, who were fighting for their honor, their country, and on behalf of an ideology espoused by Turkish Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan, who insisted that "women must be equal for society to be truly free." Ocalan founded the Kurdish Workers Party in 1978, and it was his beliefs and ideology that infused much of what the Kurdish women were fighting for. The women who fought in this group all shared "the same messages and talking points about women's equality and women's rights" and how they said "women's rights had to be achieved now, today; they would not wait until after the war ended to have their rights recognized."[2]

As is true of other cases where women take on the role of combatants, they are fighting for a cause as their male colleagues are, in this case to

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defeat ISIS. But, as noted in the book, "For the young women fighting, what mattered most was long-term political and social change. That was why they'd signed up for this war and why they were willing to die for it. They believed beating ISIS counted as simply the first step toward defeating a mentality that said women existed only as property and as objects with which men could do whatever they wanted."[3]

What in many ways makes these women so unusual is that they came from a fairly traditional patriarchal society, where women's lives were pre-ordained. This was a world where securing women's rights was nearly impossible. Thus, "Only the extreme act of women taking up arms against ISIS in Kobani, fighting as snipers and field commanders and sacrificing their lives there, had at least led to the possibility of recognition of women as equal players within Kurdish society."[4] For these women, as for so many other women who take up arms for a cause, their own freedom and liberation is tied directly to that of the country they are fighting for, or, in this case, the Kurdish nation.

NOTES

1. Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, *The Daughters of Kobani: A Story of Rebellion, Courage and Justice* (New York: Penguin Press, 2021).
2. Lemmon, *The Daughters of Kobani*, xxi–xxii.
3. Lemmon, *The Daughters of Kobani*, xxix.
4. Lemmon, *The Daughters of Kobani*, 156.

Ethnic Conflict

Nationalism can contribute to conflict in other ways. The concept of ethnic conflict is tied directly to the issue of nationalism. In countries in which there are a number of ethnic groups—nations—a leader often emerges who encourages the supremacy of one group at the expense of another. This can be carried to an extreme and has led to what we now call *ethnic cleansing*, or the systematic extermination of one ethnic group by another (i.e., genocide), often with the approval and support of the state. This is extremely difficult for the countries in the international system, as the issue pits the sovereignty of one state against the need to protect a group against human rights violations and, at its most extreme, genocide.

It was ethnic conflict that ripped the former Yugoslavia apart, with Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims engaged in war over the area of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In this case, the ethnic cleansing was encouraged by nationalist

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leaders (Slobodan Milošević in Serbia, proclaiming the need for a "Greater Serbia," and Franjo Tudjman in Croatia), and it was directed primarily against the Bosnian Muslims.[21]

This can also be seen in Rwanda, where approximately eight hundred thousand people were massacred in about a hundred days between April and June 1994. In Rwanda, the hatred against Tutsis had been building for decades and finally exploded in April 1994 following the death of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, when his plane was shot down above Kigali airport. The blame for the rocket attack was placed on a Tutsi rebel leader, and within hours, the genocide by Hutus against Tutsis started and quickly spread.[22]

There are other examples of such ethnic conflict and genocide, which seems to have become more commonplace. One of the ironies of ethnic conflict, though, is that often there is no ethnic difference between the groups. For example, in the case of Rwanda, "the two ethnic groups are actually very similar—they speak the same language, inhabit the same areas and follow the same traditions."[23]

In the former Yugoslavia, Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims are ethnically the same, although their religions vary. Serbs tend to be Eastern Orthodox, Croats Catholic, and Bosnian Muslims obviously are Muslim. Yet the war in Yugoslavia was not about religion but about nationality commingled with "ethnicity." What that tells us is that often a conflict is attributed to one thing, such as religion or ethnicity, but there are other factors that actually are equally if not more important. So we must really look within the country in order to understand the full set of circumstances related to a civil conflict.

The lesson here is that when we try to understand the roots of violent civil conflict, we often have to look deep within the state to the government, culture, and society and even individuals if we are to really identify all the factors involved.

The Importance of Looking at Culture and Society

These cases all serve to remind us why it is important to look within the nation-state and to focus on the "nation" (culture and society) if we are really going to get a complete picture of why a nation-state behaves the way it does. As noted in chapter 3, especially since the end of the Cold War, we have seen a decline in the number of major interstate wars but an increase in violent national, ethnic, and civil conflicts. If we are to understand the origins of these conflicts, we need to look at the cultural and social issues that exist within the nation-state as a whole.

The realists would claim that the decline in major interstate wars within the international system is the result of the security commitment of the United

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States and its emergence as a global hegemon that has kept other countries in check. They would also argue that although we are seeing the emergence of other major powers, such as China, there is no violent conflict between the hegemons. Rather, each is asserting its presence in different places and parts of the world.[24] However, conflict seems to be inevitable as China's rise seems to be impinging on the status of the United States. Once again, this is not to suggest that the result will be violence or war, rather, that the two sides seem to be on an inevitable collision path. It will be up to the two countries and their allies to determine how to manage that. (See Case 4 in chapter 6, which deals directly with this topic.)

The liberals argue that the decline in major interstate war is the result, at least in part, of the growth of democracies that are unlikely to go to war against one another (the democratic peace). Not only are democracies less likely to go to war against one another, but the fact that they generally have capitalist economic systems and that they trade with one another means that they are also more economically interdependent. This, too, suggests that they are less likely to engage in war with one another.

The constructivists would claim that the relative decline in major war is due to a change in the predominant values of decision makers and the people within the nation from those that support war as a means of settling disputes to those that promote ideals of peace, as well as understanding that countries do not need to compete for material advantage. But this certainly does not explain the increase in intrastate war.

While the major theoretical approaches could all provide some explanation for the decrease in major wars, how well can they also explain the increase in civil wars? As noted previously, the realists would simply argue that this is just another manifestation of the conflict for power. Different groups within the state all seek to maximize their power and position, even if that comes at the expense of another group. Marxists would attribute the growth of civil wars to economic inequities and to the desire of one group (the oppressed or less fortunate) to overturn the existing power balances. Liberals and neoliberals would probably argue that the growth of these wars is the result of failures of institutions and cooperative approaches, and constructivists would similarly look at the failures of the structures that would otherwise have held these aggressive tendencies in check.

So, in understanding the increase in the incidence of civil wars, one can look at the reasons as being the inherent competitive nature of the leaders or as the failures of the state and national structures that would emphasize cooperation among groups rather than conflict. But the important lesson is that in trying

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to get an answer to questions like why there is ethnic violence, or why there is conflict between groups within a country, it is important to look within the country at the various actors involved, their priorities and expectations, what the distribution of power actually is, and who is making the decisions.

It is also possible to examine this question from a broader levels-of-analysis perspective. For example, in focusing within the state on the emergence of national groups and the concomitant rise in nationalism, are we overlooking the possibility that we are witnessing the diminishment of the state as a major actor in IR? As Charles Tilly notes, the state was born from war, and the growth of civil conflicts might mean that the militarized state carries within it the seeds of its own destruction.[25]

Regardless of which theoretical perspective seems most appealing or how one would interpret the rise in conflicts as a lesson about the role of the nation-state, all would suggest at least some need to look within the country and understand the predominant cultures as well as the role and perspectives of the individual decision makers. It is to this last and most micro level of analysis that we now turn.

THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

We have been talking a lot about what goes on within the state and the role of government, culture, and society in order to understand some big questions in IR pertaining to conflict. But one of the other critical variables tied to understanding IR, particularly the behavior of any nation-state, is the individual or individuals who actually make the decisions that affect foreign policy decision making. To do this, we need to ask ourselves how much influence any individual has. What gives these individuals power? Does a single individual really make a difference?

Here we need to distinguish between the individual decision maker, the "average" person, and truly outstanding individuals, such as Nelson Mandela in South Africa or Mahatma Gandhi in India. What about someone like now deceased Mu'ammar Gadhafi in Libya, or Bashar al-Assad in Syria? Each of them was a strong leader who directly influenced the policies of his country. But Gadhafi was overthrown by his own people in 2011, and since 2011 the country of Syria has been engaged in the deadliest conflict of the twenty-first century. What began in March 2011 as a popular uprising against the Assad regime has grown into a bloody civil war that had claimed the lives of more than 380,000 people as of April 2020, with the death toll continuing to rise.[26] In addition, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has estimated that more than 5.5 million

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people have fled Syria, with almost seven million displaced within the country.[27] In this case, Assad, as the leader of Syria, has done little to work with the international community or those within his own country to stop the violence. How does an individual get—and keep—that kind of power? And what changes could threaten that power?

Let's look at this question another way: How much was Mikhail Gorbachev responsible for the end of the Cold War or the fall of the Soviet Union? Or what role did Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa play in leading to a change in the government of Poland, which in turn became a model for other Eastern European countries' rebellions against Soviet domination? In all these cases, we are really asking what role the individual plays. Or, put another way, how did the political and/or structural factors within the country and the changing international environment *coupled with* the role of a particular individual at that particular time result in major change? Is it the individual alone who makes the difference, or a strong and powerful leader who emerges when the environment is receptive, thereby providing a context for him or her to facilitate change? These are difficult and important questions that ask us to think about the role of an individual, but also to place that individual into a larger context if we are truly to understand the changes that have taken place within a culture/society/government/nation-state.

The example of Gorbachev is especially interesting. The end of the Cold War has been attributed to President Ronald Reagan's hard-line rhetoric, which pushed an already significantly diminished Soviet Union to the brink. Yet, when he was questioned about the role that he played in facilitating the end of the Cold War, Reagan referred to himself as "a supporting actor." According to one account, when Reagan was asked at a press conference who deserved the credit for the changes in the Soviet Union that ultimately led to the end of the Cold War, he replied, "Mr. Gorbachev deserves most of the credit, as the leader of this country."[28] The reality is that a number of factors came together at the right time to bring about an end to the Cold War, but both Reagan and Gorbachev were receptive to the ideological as well as political changes that affected both their countries.

For his part, Gorbachev had a broader understanding of the West than had previous leaders of the Soviet Union, and he saw Europe and Russia as sharing a common home. He articulated his ideas about *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (economic restructuring away from a command economy) in his book *Perestroika*, which was readily available in the West.[29] And these ideas affected the direction in which he took the Soviet Union.

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Reagan, in turn, was receptive to Gorbachev's ideas and was willing to work with him on implementing new policies. By the time Gorbachev came to power in 1985:

> Reagan believed that a change in the direction of the Soviet Union would be in the best interests of the United States and therefore modified his own approach over time, becoming less "cold warrior" and more the diplomat whose primary goal was to encourage Gorbachev to continue down the road he had chosen. Doing this required *personal contact*, and *the two leaders met periodically to outline areas of common interest*. Reagan was so successful that by the time his administration ended, the Cold War was on a course to its inevitable end. (emphasis added)[30]

Thus, not only did the individual matter, but it was because of meetings between these two individual leaders that trust was established, leading to political change between their two countries and eventually to the end of the Cold War.

And if one is looking at this major change in policy through "gender-sensitive lenses," some insight can be gained by looking at the impact of Raisa Gorbachev and Nancy Reagan, who both played important behind-the-scenes roles in influencing their husbands. Although each was, on the surface, a traditional wife, they played a part in the historical events unfolding.[31]

More recently, we see changes in the perception of the United States globally tied to the individual who is president. Perhaps more than in any other democracy, the president of the United States is seen as the embodiment of this country. As noted in a column by *Washington Post* correspondent Dan Balz:

> Perceptions of the United States ebb and flow with changes in administrations. The reaction to Biden's arrival as president is similar to what happened when Barack Obama succeeded George W. Bush. Bush was highly unpopular, especially in Europe, as a result of the Iraq War, while Obama had become a warmly regarded figure even before he was elected. Next came a sharp drop in perceptions of the United States and its leadership after Trump won the White House.[32]

And, as Balz notes, a survey produced by the Pew Research Center, released in June 2021 just as Biden was about to begin his first trip abroad, showed "an overnight change in attitudes across twelve countries since the end of Trump's presidency." More specifically, favorable impressions of the United States went from 34 percent when Trump left office to 62 percent.[33]

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The point here is that an individual can play an important role in influencing the direction of a country's policy and, in this case, of the international system. However, that individual can be helped considerably by other factors, especially the structures within which the leader acts. Within any given country, these might include the role of the military, an organized opposition (or lack thereof), the economy, and so on—all of which can either contribute to continued stability and legitimacy of an existing government or work in opposition to defy or even overthrow the individual leader.

In addition, as seen with the example of Raisa Gorbachev and Nancy Reagan, an individual does not have to be the critical decision maker in order to have an impact on a country or even international politics. For example, feminist author Cynthia Enloe in her book *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases* notes:

> In the 1930s Hollywood moguls turned Brazilian singer Carmen Miranda into an American movie star. They were trying to aid President Franklin Roosevelt's efforts to promote friendlier relations between the US and Latin America. When United Fruit executives then drew on Carmen Miranda's popular Latinized female image to create a logo for their imported bananas, they were trying to construct a new, intimate relationship between American housewives and a multinational plantation company. With her famous fruited hats and vivacious screen presence, Carmen Miranda was used by American men to reshape international relations.[34]

Hence, in this case, Enloe would argue that an individual (Carmen Miranda) had a direct impact on foreign policy through symbolism, even if she was not a decision maker. But that symbolism played an important role in furthering U.S. policy interests.

But how representative is this case? How much does or can one individual influence the course of international politics? The individual level of analysis reflects the perceptions of individuals and the choices that they then make. Generally, this refers to leaders, who are in the best position to make decisions that influence international events. But as can be seen with the case of Carmen Miranda and more recently the uprisings of the Arab Spring, individual citizens can have an impact, as can military leaders, people who can influence decision makers (such as lobbyists and members of various interest groups), and even the "ordinary" voter. But in thinking about the individual level, it is also important to remember that it is often difficult to pinpoint the exact impact that any one person has had. According to political scientists Paul Viotti and Mark Kauppi,

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FIGURE 4.1

Carmen Miranda as a Symbol. © 2011 United States Postal Service. All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

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"While individuals can have a tremendous impact on the short-term course of world events . . . it is extremely difficult to identify such individuals after their impact has been felt." In fact, they argue, "most people who want to influence world politics do so in an indirect manner through collective actors such as states."[35]

The fact is that although we speak of "nation-states," "governments," "societies," and "cultures," all of these are collectives of individuals. States do not make the decision to go to war; the individuals within the government do. It is for this reason that political scientists argue that every international event ultimately is the result of decisions made by individuals. And most individuals, regardless of how powerful they are, still operate within and are subject to the constraints of the organization or government or structures of which they are a part.

Decision Maker as Rational Actor

When we do focus on the individual as decision maker, or on any individual who makes a decision that has some effect on a government, it is important to ask to what extent these decisions are *rational.* That means asking whether the decision was based on a logical process that includes an assessment and ranking of choices, an understanding of the costs and benefits of the options, and a review of alternatives before arriving at a final conclusion. In IR, we make the assumption that decision makers will act rationally and that rationality will be reflected in their choices. This may—or may not—be a correct assumption, and it draws heavily on realist thinking. But simplifying the otherwise complex decision making process in this way allows us to explain in general terms why a particular action was taken or a decision made.

In chapter 2 we talked about the importance of theory because it helps us describe, explain, and predict. The only way in which we can describe what happened and explain why it happened so that we can anticipate future events is to simplify reality. Similarly, when we talk about decision making, it is a complex undertaking that has many component parts. Hence, if we really are ever going to understand that complexity, we need to simplify it. Starting with the assumption of the rational actor is one way in which we can do so.

What is important to note is that decision makers are distinct individuals who have differing beliefs, values, and unique personalities. Therefore, the decisions that they make are the result of their own experiences, belief systems and perceptions, intellectual capabilities, personal styles, and so on. And here both liberal and constructivist theoretical approaches play a role. While national decisions are constrained by the political system and by precedent, there is also

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room for any individual to make his or her own mark. For example, you can ask yourself whether the outcome regarding the response to 9/11 would have been the same if Al Gore had been president in 2001 instead of George W. Bush. We know what the outcomes of President Bush's decisions were. But Gore probably would have approached the attacks differently, since he had different experiences, both as vice president and as a long-serving member of Congress, than Bush did, who, before becoming president, had been governor of Texas and a businessman. More recently, we can see that with some of the decisions made by President Trump, who had no experience with government or the political decision making processes prior to taking office. Hence, his approach to the decisions that he made in office were very different from previous presidents, thereby confounding other policy makers both in the United States and abroad. One of current President Biden's highest priorities internationally has been to reverse some of Trump's decisions to better align them with previous U.S. values and approaches. In other words, we can ask, how did the experience of the individual leader affect the way in which he or she would have responded or did respond to an event or to the decisions that he or she made?

But looking at decision makers as unique individuals also raises questions about the assumption of the rational decision maker, as every decision will be affected by the decision maker's own perceptions or (perhaps more important) misperceptions. Every person is selective in his or her perceptions, screening experiences and information and often drawing on those that are most consistent with his or her own existing beliefs. But the role of the decision maker is to filter the information received in order to arrive at a decision that also builds in bias. "*Information screens* are subconscious filters through which people put the information coming in from the world around them. Often they simply ignore any information that does not fit their expectations."[36] Thus, most decision makers will look for information or even "evidence" that supports what they already believe. Clearly, this will also change the outcome of any decision. Nor would all decision makers in the same set of circumstances do the same thing, because they would filter everything through their own information screen.

In terms of foreign policy decision making, what this means is that information can and will be screened as it passes from person to person. In the old children's game of "telephone," one person whispers a secret to the next person, who passes it on to the next person, and so on. By the time it gets to the end of the chain, it is a totally different statement than the one that started. Similarly, when dealing with the interpretation of events regarding other countries and cultures,

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not only do we have to deal with information screens and perceptions, but also with translation and cultural issues that can further skew or bias the information that is needed in order to make the decision. And of course they will also affect the interpretation of any decision that is made.

But these are not the only biases or issues that can affect a decision maker and therefore a decision. There are also *affective biases*—that is, the impact of emotions. Regardless of how dispassionate or rational decision makers try to be, they will be affected by strong feelings that they have about the circumstances under which the decision has to be made and/or the person or state the decision will affect. This stands in contrast to *cognitive biases*, or "systematic distortions of rational calculations based not on emotional feelings but simply on the limitations of the human brain in making choices."[37] For example, individual decision makers will want to construct models that are consistent with their beliefs so that they can reduce cognitive dissonance. This can lead a decision maker to make a decision on a goal or outcome that he or she has a greater chance of achieving rather than a more grandiose or larger goal that, realistically, is unattainable. No decision maker wants to engage in an action that is likely to fail, nor to admit failure about any policy decision that he or she has made.

Here the work of political scientist Robert Jervis is important, because he not only warns us about the dangers or misperceptions that a decision maker will have, but he also recommends "safeguards" that can be followed by any decision maker who is aware of the possible dangers in decision making that come from biases and expectations.[38] Specifically, Jervis asks:

> Can anything then be said to scholars and decision-makers other than "Avoid being either too open or too closed, but be especially aware of the latter danger"? Although decision-makers will always be faced with ambiguous and confusing evidence and will be forced to make inferences about others which will often be inaccurate, a number of safeguards may be suggested which could enable them to minimize their errors.[39]

That is where the safeguards come in. To a student of IR, this makes a great deal of sense. For example, in his first safeguard, Jervis notes that "decision-makers should be aware that they do not make 'unbiased' interpretations of each new bit of information, but rather are inevitably heavily influenced by the theories they expect to be verified." Jervis ultimately concludes that knowing their biases and how information is interpreted through these biases "should lead

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decision-makers to examine more closely evidence that others believe contradicts their views."[40] Or, to put it another way, it is incumbent upon decision makers to look at all points of view. Another safeguard would be to ask whether decision makers' attitudes are consistent and logical and whether they are based on evidence versus belief. All told, Jervis identifies five areas of possible danger and the safeguards that can be used to guard against falling into those traps.[41]

But what a student of IR also knows and understands about foreign policy decision making is that analyzing the decisions after the fact is very different from the process that a decision maker actually goes through in order to make a decision while she or he is in office. We cannot always know what went on in the mind of any decision maker, nor whether she or he fell into any of the possible traps. This is especially true when decisions are made in times of crisis, when they have to be made quickly and a host of other variables come into play.

What all this tells us is that despite our attempts to arrive at the most rational models of decision making, there are a host of irrational and intangible factors that go into the making of a foreign policy decision *whether the decision maker is aware of them or not*. As students of IR, if we really are to understand the decisions that are made, at the individual level we need to know who made the decision, something about his or her background that might have influenced the decision, the circumstances surrounding the decision (e.g., crisis decision making or not), who else was involved with the decision making process, and any other information that will provide insight into the variables and factors surrounding the decision. And we do this while holding the other levels constant—that is, we focus on one level at a time.

Crisis Decision Making: The Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban missile crisis stands as one of the best examples of foreign policy decision making under crisis circumstances. It is also a case where the situation can best be explained by looking at multiple levels of analysis from the individual through the government. Taking place in October 1962 in the midst of the Cold War, it was one of the most dangerous confrontations, when the two superpowers were said to be "eyeball to eyeball."[42]

Graham Allison, who studied and wrote about the Cuban missile crisis, also reminds us that there are a range of approaches that can be used to explain the events that transpired and why, and that these can be found across a number of levels of analysis. His models, initially articulated in an article in the *American Political Science Review* and then developed further in his classic book *The*

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Essence of Decision, illustrate what he calls "alternative explanations of the same happening,"[43] which reminds us of the importance of looking at a range of explanations and how various models may be interrelated, all of which can contribute to our understanding of an event.

As we talk about the role of individuals in foreign policy decision making, we have to ask about the Cuban missile crisis how the decisions were made and what happened now that we know how close the world really was to nuclear catastrophe. Clearly, we have to begin with the role of President Kennedy, the individual decision maker who was a relatively new president and had already experienced a number of foreign policy failures, both in Cuba with the Bay of Pigs and also in Europe. One result of the confrontation between Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev was the building of the Berlin Wall. Kennedy was also dealing with an insurrection in Southeast Asia (Vietnam) that was escalating. So the missile crisis emerged amid a climate of confrontation between the United States and communist countries, most notably the Soviet Union, and the president had to make decisions relatively quickly, which is one of the characteristics of a crisis and crisis decision making.

In assessing the situation, Kennedy made sure that he had carefully chosen close advisers he could depend on. But this too carried certain dangers. First, we have to understand the psychology of *groupthink*, which clearly came into play. As articulated by Irving Janus, who studied the impact of this phenomenon on foreign policy decisions, the concept refers to "a psychological drive for consensus at any cost that suppresses dissent and appraisal of alternatives in cohesive decision making groups."[44] In this case, all were trusted advisers of President Kennedy who were pulled together as the crisis unfolded to try to arrive at a solution. They met intensively for days to arrive at a decision. Kennedy, aware of the potential problems associated with groupthink, periodically left the room to allow his advisers to have more open discussion. They finally arrived at a range of possible options, from doing nothing to invading Cuba, and settled on a naval blockade as the preferred option. In retrospect, this led to a desirable outcome from the perspective of the United States. But the episode stands as an excellent example of the issues associated with crisis decision making.

In addition to the dangers of groupthink, another point about crisis decision making is that the crisis situation itself alters the process by which decisions are made. The fact that the situation is perceived as critical, with the need for decisions to be made quickly, means that decisions will be made based on the information available at the time, even if it later proves to be incorrect, which was the

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case here. The time constraints also weigh in, for it means that decision makers will not screen information as carefully as they might otherwise, or they will discard information that is not consistent with their beliefs. Unlike the assumptions we mentioned previously for rational actors, in times of crisis, choices might be limited, rather than all options being explored.

Further, the decision makers are affected by the stress of the situation, which can further cloud their rational judgment. In a classic *conflict spiral*, the decision makers often overestimate the hostile intentions of the adversary while underestimating their own hostility toward the adversary. Because so much of decision making depends on the perceptions of the individuals making the decisions, this too tends to alter the options that appear to be available.

As the situation unfolded over those few weeks in October, President Kennedy and his advisers arrived at a plan to place a naval blockade around the island of Cuba. Through back-channel negotiations, the situation was finally resolved peacefully, but not without an escalation of tension and the perception that the world was poised on the brink of nuclear catastrophe.

BOX 4.6

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS AND INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING

In October 1962, over a brief period of time, the world was poised on the brink of nuclear catastrophe over a situation that became known as the "Cuban missile crisis." As the situation started to unfold, it evolved relatively quickly, and U.S. President John F. Kennedy, who was still recovering from an embarrassing foreign policy defeat in 1961 at the Bay of Pigs in Cuba, assembled a group of advisers around him to discuss what should be done about the missiles that the Soviet Union was deploying to Cuba, ninety miles off the Florida coast. The group of about twenty advisers, who became known as EXCOMM (for "executive committee"), were members of the National Security Council and close advisers to the president, including the secretaries of state and defense, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and others Kennedy trusted. Meeting regularly, the group charted the course that ultimately led to

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a peaceful resolution of the crisis and withdrawal of the Soviet missiles from Cuba. But what was most important was that the event was a turning point in the Cold War. No longer was Kennedy perceived as a young and inexperienced president, but as one who was able to face down the Soviet Union and win.

It was thirty years later, in 1992, when there was a conference in Havana that brought together former U.S., Soviet, and Cuban officials to explore the circumstances of the event in retrospect, that former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara revealed that "the two nations [the United States and the Soviet Union] were much closer to nuclear conflict than previously realized."[1] McNamara also disclosed that he had learned at that conference that Soviet officials "had sent Havana short-range nuclear weapons and that Soviet commanders there were authorized to use them in the event of American invasion. . . . The short-range nuclear weapons were in addition to medium-range nuclear weapons that would have required authorization from Moscow to use." Given the new information, McNamara concluded that "the actions of all three parties were shaped by *misjudgments*, *miscalculations* and *misinformation*," and that, "in a nuclear age, such mistakes could be disastrous" (emphasis added).[2]

NOTES

1. Don Oberdorfer, "Cuban Missile Crisis More Volatile than Thought," *Washington Post*, January 14, 1992.
2. Quoted in Martin Tolchin, "U.S. Underestimated Soviet Forces in Cuba during '62 Missile Crisis," *New York Times*, January 15, 1992.

From a levels-of-analysis perspective, the three nation-state actors were the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba. But in this case, it is what happened *within* the nation-state level that is most critical. It was Kennedy (the individual) and his close advisers who made the decisions, with communication between the United States and the Soviet Union limited to discussions among a few trusted advisers on both sides. Government involvement was limited to the members of EXCOMM (executive committee), most of whom represented the major executive agencies. There was little congressional involvement.

The public (culture/society) was kept informed through the media, but also through speeches made by Kennedy specifically to ensure the ongoing support

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and cooperation of the public, as well as to reassure them that he was in command of the situation. As noted in a press release from the Kennedy Library, the "public phase covered barely a week (October 22–28, 1962) . . . [and] is one of the key defining events of the Cold War in general and of John F. Kennedy's presidency in particular."[45] In assessing public opinion during and reactions to the missile crisis, a study commissioned by the Kennedy Library found that "similar to responses to other foreign crises both before and since, the Cuban missile crisis drew the country together as people rallied around the president. Presidential approval rose 13 to 15 percentage points, and the public backed the blockade and President Kennedy's resolve to have the offensive missiles removed." The study also found that following the peaceful resolution of the crisis, the public indicated lower fear of nuclear war than it had prior to the event. Thus, although the public was anxious and paid close attention to what was going on, "the public was neither traumatized nor paralyzed by events." And the public saw foreign policy as the most important area for evaluating Kennedy's presidency.[46]

The pattern seen in terms of public support for the president in times of crisis is a pattern that has been replicated in other crisis situations and is often referred to as the "rally-round-the-flag syndrome."[47] Similarly, the fact that the crisis itself galvanized the public has become an established pattern. The author of the Kennedy Library report in fact draws parallels between the missile crisis and the September 11 attacks, noting that:

> they were both events of enormous importance that involved a clear and present danger to the country, galvanized the populace, and propelled the political leadership into decided and forceful action. . . . The American people . . . absorbed the shock, backed their leaders, and carried on with their lives. This may be the hallmark of the American people in times of greatest challenge.[48]

And, one can argue, the individual decision maker and those with whom he or she consults during a time of crisis could not do the job without the support of the public, at least not in a democracy.

In the case of the missile crisis, despite all the things that could possibly go wrong when we look at decision making in general and crisis decision making in particular, the situation was resolved peacefully. But it has become an excellent example of crisis decision making and why foreign policy decision making can be so difficult.[49]

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SUMMARY

In this chapter we looked within the nation-state in order to understand how the range of internal factors—the government or political system, society and culture, and the individual—affect IR and the decisions that are made by one country that affect another. What we learned is that one or all of these factors can have an impact on a nation-state's decisions about any number of issues that are relevant in IR: going to war; how to avoid or, if it becomes necessary, respond to internal conflict; how to deal with divergent groups within the country; and how individual decision makers approach important decisions.

In the next chapter we are going to return to the macro level of the international system with a special focus on understanding nonstate actors. Although they are not explicitly included as part of the classic levels of analysis, they play an important role in affecting the international system and the nations that make up that system. And, as we will see, it is their very omission from this framework that points out one of the major weaknesses in the approach.

FURTHER READINGS

These additional readings are worth exploring and elaborate on some of the points raised in this chapter. This list is not meant to be exhaustive but only illustrative.

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1. Office of the United States Trade Representative, "Russia: U.S.-Russia Trade Facts," (undated), https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/europe-middle-east/russia-and-eurasia/russia.

2. J. Ann Tickner, *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post–Cold War Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 96.

3. Tickner, *Gendering World Politics*, 105.

4. Karen A. Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*, fourth edition (New York: Norton, 2008), 121.

5. Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm.

6. Michael Doyle, "Kant's Perpetual Peace," *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (1986), 1156.

7. Doyle, "Kant's Perpetual Peace," 1156.

8. Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Principles of International Relations* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2009), 72.

9. Thomas L. Friedman, "Foreign Affairs Big Mac I," *New York Times*, December 8, 1996, http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/08/opinion/foreign-affairs-big-maci.html. This idea was developed still further as part of Friedman's book, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999).

10. John Mueller, "Is War Still Becoming Obsolete?" Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 1991, 2.

11. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's farewell address to the nation, January 17, 1961, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/eisenhower001.asp.

12. For a more complete description of the militarization of the United States, see Andrew J. Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War* (New York: Henry Holt, 2010).

13. Aerospace Industries Association, "2015 Economic Impact Study of the U.S. Aerospace & Defense Industry," April 2016, http://www.aia-aerospace.org/report/aerospace-and-defense-an-economic-impact-analysis.

14. Mueller, "Is War Still Becoming Obsolete?" 19.

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15. Tickner, *Gendering World Politics*, 104–06. It is important to note that the election of Donald Trump and the defeat of Hillary Clinton, the first woman to run for president from a major political party, mobilized a lot of women to political action. For example, the so-called Women's March that took place on January 21, 2017, brought more than two million people, a majority of whom were women, to Washington to protest. An article in the *Los Angeles Times* on May 21, 2017, focused on how Democratic women in Orange County, CA, long a Republican stronghold, have been energized to run for local office. (Sarah D. Wire, "Democrats See New Hope on GOP Turf," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 2017, B1.) And the election of 2018 brought a record number of women into office, specifically in the House, the Senate, and as governors. Even more incredible, the presidential election of 2020 gave the United States its first woman, Kamala Harris, elected to the vice presidency. As a candidate and then as vice president, she has openly celebrated her Black and South Asian heritage.

16. Tickner, *Gendering World Politics*, 106.

17. See Women in Black, official website, http://womeninblack.org.

18. All quotes taken from "Statement by Former President Trump on Jerusalem," December 6, 2017, https://il.usembassy.gov/statement-by-president-trump-on-jerusalem/.

19. See Jamey Keaten and Menelaos Hadjicostis, "UN-Led Informal Cyprus Talks Stall, New Round Planned," *Associated Press*, April 29, 2021, https://apnews.com/article/united-nations-middle-east-cyprus-europe-government-and-politics-1516ce6774ffa486a779b03bdde55289.

20. Tim Arango, "Kurds to Pursue More Autonomy in a Fallen Syria," *New York Times*, September 29, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/29/world/middleeast/kurds-to-pursue-more-autonomy-in-a-fallen-syria.html?smid=em-share.

21. There are a number of sources documenting the genocide and other atrocities committed during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some that deal specifically with the acts of ethnic cleansing and the nationalist/ethnic struggle include Tom Gallagher, *The Balkans after the Cold War: From Tyranny to Tragedy* (London: Routledge, 2003); Davorak Ljubisic, *A Politics of Sorrow: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2004); and Vjeksolav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

22. For a quick background, see BBC News, "Rwanda: How the Genocide Happened," December 18, 2008, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13431486. For more detailed background of the conflict, see, for example, Romeo Dallaire and Samantha Power, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (New York:

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Carroll & Graf, 2004); and Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

23. BBC News, "Rwanda: How the Genocide Happened."

24. See, for example, John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001). In this volume, Mearsheimer, who is a quintessential realist thinker, puts U.S. foreign policy and the emergence of the United States as a great power in a broad historical context that takes into account the emergence of other major powers such as China. Also see Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017).

25. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992).

26. "Syria Death Toll Tops 380,000 in Almost Nine-Year War: Monitor," *France24*, April 1, 2020, https://www.france24.com/en/20200104-syria-death-toll-tops-380-000-in-almost-nine-year-war-monitor.

27. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Syria Emergency," http://www. Unhcr.org/en-us/syria-emergency.html.

28. The quote is taken from Jack F. Matlock, *Reagan and Gorbachev: How the Cold War Ended* (New York: Random House, 2004), 302. This is an example of how an individual actor in a position of power can play an important role in affecting the direction of a particular nation-state.

29. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (New York: Random House, 2004).

30. Joyce P. Kaufman, *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*, fifth edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021), 158.

31. See Matlock, *Reagan and Gorbachev*, for a description of the role played by both women.

32. Dan Balz, "As Biden Tries to Rally Allies, He Faces Questions Abroad about the State of U.S. Democracy," *The Washington Post*, June 12, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/as-biden-tries-to-rally-allies-he-faces-questions-abroad-about-the-state-of-us-democracy/2021/06/12/38f66b84-cac9-11eb-a11b-6c6191ccd599_story.html

33. All quotes and statistics taken from Balz, "As Biden Tries." For the actual survey, see Richard Wike, Jacob Pushter, Laura Silver, Janell Fetterolf, and Maria Morecai, "America's Image Abroad Rebounds with Transition from Trump to Biden," Pew

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Research Center, June 10, 2021, https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/06/10/americas-image-abroad-rebounds-with-transition-from-trump-to-biden/?utm_source=Pew+Research+Center&utm_campaign=e51b9845a7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_06_09_06_56&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3e953b9b70-e51b9845a7-399479813.

34. Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 1–2.

35. Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics: Security, Economy, Identity*, fourth edition (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009), 13–14.

36. Goldstein and Pevehouse, *Principles of International Relations*, 47.

37. Goldstein and Pevehouse, *Principles of International Relations*, 48.

38. See Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," *World Politics* 20, no. 3 (April 1968): 455–79.

39. Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," 462.

40. Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," 462.

41. The potential traps and possible safeguards are outlined by Jervis in "Hypotheses on Misperception," section 3, "Safeguards," 462–65.

42. Upon hearing that Soviet ships bearing missiles heading to Cuba had turned around at sea, then–Secretary of State Dean Rusk was quoted as saying, "We're eyeball to eyeball and I think the other fellow just blinked." This statement is quoted in any number of sources. The one used for this volume is from Michael Dobbs, "The Price of a 50-Year Myth," *New York Times*, October 15, 2012, http://www.ny times.com/2012/10/16/opinion/the-eyeball-to-eyeball-myth-and-the-cuban-missile-crisiss-legacy.html. In this OpEd piece, Dobbs uses his analysis of the Cuban missile crisis to draw lessons for more recent foreign policy decisions.

43. Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3 (September 1969): 691. See also Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *The Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, second edition (New York: Pearson, 1999).

44. Irving L. Janis, "Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes," *Abstracts of the American Psychological Association*, http://psycnet.apa.org/record/1975-29417-000#.

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45. "Kennedy Library Releases New Report on Cuban Missile Crisis—Study Documents Impact of Crisis on American Public Opinion," October 16, 2002, http://www.jfklibrary.org/About-Us/News-and-Press/Press-Releases/Kennedy-Library-Releases-New-Report-on-Cuban-Missile-Crisis-Study-Documents-Impact-of-Crisison-Amer.aspx.

46. "Kennedy Library Releases New Report on Cuban Missile Crisis."

47. One of the more interesting cases where this can be seen is regarding the taking of American hostages in Iran in 1979 during the Carter administration. In one poll taken in June 1979, before the event, Carter had a 20 percent approval rating. Immediately following that event, public opinion shifted dramatically to become strongly supportive of Carter and also hostile to Iran. For more details, see Rose McDermott, *Risk-Taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), especially chapter 3, "The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission," 45–74.

48. "Kennedy Library Releases New Report on Cuban Missile Crisis."

49. See, for example, Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971). This is perhaps the classic book on the missile crisis. Also see Raymond L. Garthoff, *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1989), and Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1969), for a fascinating first-person account of the event by someone intimately involved. For a work that draws on previously secret documents from Russian and U.S. archives to offer further insights into the crisis, see Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958–1964* (New York: Norton, 1997). Also see Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Knopf, 2008) for a detailed account of the crisis that draws on exhaustive and relatively new research.

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