

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Terms and concepts to know:

City-state system	Thucydides
Plato	Aristotle
Cicero	Imperialism
Feudalism	Thirty Years War
Westphalian System	Sovereignty
Nationalism	Concert of Europe
Treaty of Versailles	League of Nations
Fascism	Cold War
Truman Doctrine	Containment
Capitalism	Socialism
NATO	Reagan Doctrine
Deterrence	Uni/Bi/Multipolarity
Hegemony	<i>Glasnost / Perestroika</i>

Study and discussion questions:

1. Among Waltz's "images," which of the three do you think offers the best explanation for war and why?
2. Why does Waltz distinguish between the "immediate" causes of war and the "permissive" causes of war?
3. Why does Walt conclude that "realism remains the most compelling general framework for understanding international relations?"
4. Why does Walt believe that constructivist theories best explain change in world affairs?
5. Who started the Cold War? Does the question matter in any way?
6. Why did the Cold War end and who (if anyone) "won" the Cold War?
7. Will the post-Cold War era be characterized by cooperation among the great powers and the rest on the globe?
8. Does the post-Cold War world signal a return to the multipolar system of the late 18th century, or is this going to be a unipolar era with the U.S. exercising the same hegemonic domination that the British did in the early part of the 19th century? Or does the War on Terrorism signal the beginning of a new "Cold War"?
9. What do you think is Goetschel's central criticism of our Cold War policy toward Islamic fundamentalism? Do you agree or disagree and why?

Readings:

Genest. *Conflict and Cooperation*, chapter 1, pp. 1-38.

Video:

Our Own Private Bin Laden, a documentary film by Samira Goetschel.