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0521549914 - Remapping Global Politics: History's Revenge and Future Shock

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

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Remapping Global Politics

This book seeks to redraw our mental maps of global politics and to explain the shifting and accelerating forces that are shaping those maps. The authors build on the concept of “postinternationalism,” focusing primarily on “political space” and “political identity” which, they argue, are the new frontiers of global political theory. They suggest that the state is losing capacity, legitimacy, and authority to remain the primary actor in world affairs and is giving way to a more complex postinternational universe characterized by diverse and overlapping polities. This book is the result of the authors’ long-standing joint research into the nature and dynamics of global politics, a collaboration that has spanned over three decades. It makes an important contribution to the literatures on globalization and the future of international relations theory.

YALE H. FERGUSON is Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the Center for Global Change and Governance, Rutgers University, Newark, and Honorary Professor, University of Salzburg.

RICHARD W. MANSBACH is Professor of Political Science, Iowa State University. Their previous co-authored books are: *The Web of World Politics: Nonstate Actors in the Global System* (with Donald E. Lampert, 1976), *The Elusive Quest: Theory and International Politics* (1988), *The State, Conceptual Chaos, and the Future of International Relations Theory* (1989), *Politics: Authority, Identities, and Change* (1996), and *The Elusive Quest Continues: Theory and Global Politics* (2003).

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Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

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Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

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To
Rhoda and Kitty

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0521549914 - Remapping Global Politics: History's Revenge and Future Shock

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
1 Postinternational politics	1
2 Theory and method	35
3 Political space and time	67
4 States and other polities	107
5 Identities in a postinternational world	143
6 A postinternational world economy	181
7 War in a postinternational world	227
8 Technology and change	273
9 The future	312
<i>Index</i>	343

Cambridge University Press

0521549914 - Remapping Global Politics: History's Revenge and Future Shock

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

The authors have been pursuing a joint research collaboration and agenda for over three decades. Our first joint book, *The Web of World Politics* (1976) sought to analyze what we perceived to be the growing significance and proliferation of nonstate actors in the global system. Our second, *The Elusive Quest* (1988) focused on the evolution and normative foundation of theory and method in the field of international relations. Next, *The State, Conceptual Chaos, and the Future of International Relations Theory* (1989) pointed up the diversity of interpretations of “the state” as a concept that masked different views of its character and significance. In *Politics* (1996) we turned to historical case studies of six pre-Westphalian systems and elaborated what we still believe is a timeless framework for understanding authorities, identities, and change. We put the Westphalian State in historical perspective, noted the contemporary erosion of state capacity, and suggested that the future would probably be more like the past of multiple authorities than the era when the European nation-state model was preeminent. *The Elusive Quest Continues* (2003) updated trends in theory and method in the preceding fifteen years.

Remapping Global Politics now compares and contrasts two political worlds, one international and the other postinternational. This book seeks to do exactly what the title promises – redraw our mental maps of global politics and explain the forces shaping change. Recognition of the changing nature of political space and time takes us well beyond the two-dimensional cartographic representations that were deemed sufficient for centuries. Among the most important of the outcomes is to confirm the always important but increasingly salient role of identity in explaining behavior. There are also separate chapters on the global economy, war, and technology.

Cambridge University Press

0521549914 - Remapping Global Politics: History's Revenge and Future Shock

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

This book owes much to towering theorists ranging from Karl Deutsch, Ernst Haas, and Hedley Bull to Susan Strange and James N. Rosenau, who early on glimpsed a world beyond an unchanging state system. There is insufficient space to name them all, but their contributions to our field have been enormous. The field keeps reinventing the wheel by failing to recognize that “new theory” is too often recycled “old theory,” but in every period there have been pioneers or “jailbreakers” as Rosenau likes to put it – and he himself, happily and most decidedly, still is.

Thankfully, our marriages have lasted even longer than our research collaboration – hence the heartfelt dedication of this book to our spouses, Rhoda Mansbach and Kitty Ferguson, for their constant love and support.

Cambridge University Press

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Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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0521549914 - Remapping Global Politics: History's Revenge and Future Shock

Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach

Frontmatter

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