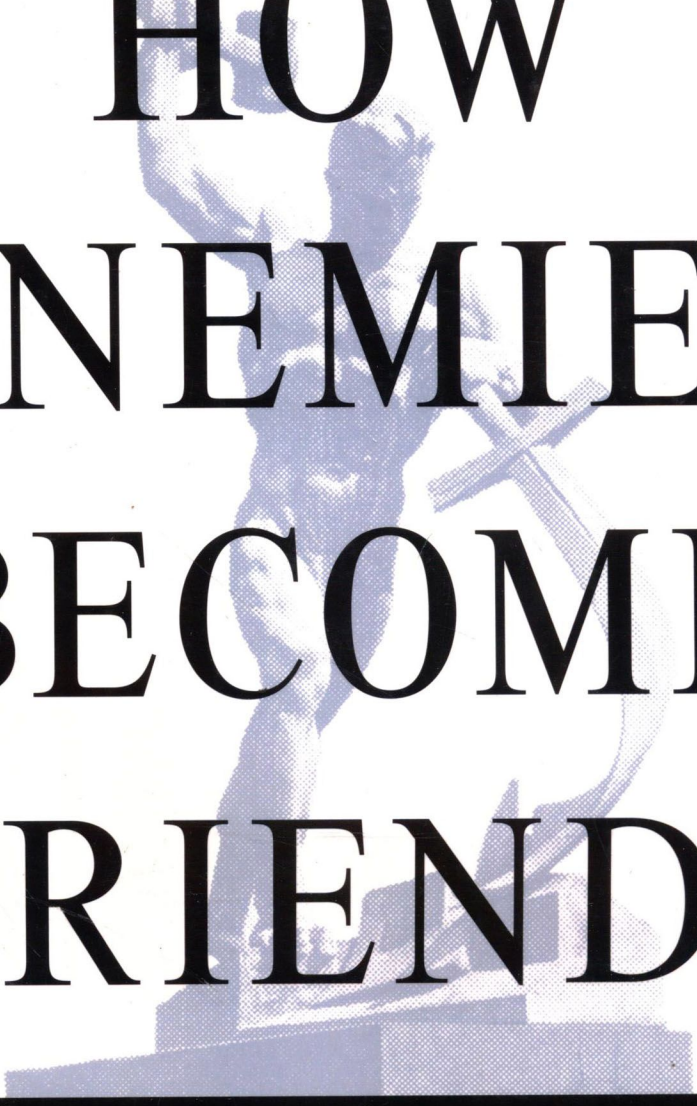
HOW ENEMIES BECOME FRIENDS



THE SOURCES OF STABLE PEACE

CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

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For Nicholas and his generation
May they know only peace

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I began to ponder the central themes of this book about a decade ago, prompted by two emerging trends. The first was the ongoing diffusion of power in the international system. This development begged the question of whether the transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world could occur peacefully. The second was the growing divide between the United States and Europe, a rift that became apparent during the late 1990s and was then brought to a head by the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. The resulting acrimony opened the possibility that the political community forged by the Atlantic democracies during the second half of the twentieth century might falter and again fall prey to geopolitical rivalry.

I began to address these changes in international politics in my last two books. In 2001, my co-authors and I published *Power in Transition: The Peaceful Change of International Order*, a volume that explicitly addressed how to manage shifts in global power. I am indebted to my collaborators: Emanuel Adler, Jean-Marc Coicaud, and Yuen Foong Kong. Jason Davidson and Mira Sucharov contributed a chapter, as well as valuable research assistance. United Nations University published the book and provided financial support. I continued my exploration of global change in *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-first Century* (Knopf, 2002). This book focused on the changing nature of American internationalism and transatlantic relations, the waning of U.S. primacy, and the onset of a multipolar world.

Both of these volumes helped lay the intellectual foundations for this book. Exploring how and when states are able to manage change peacefully and escape the dictates of geopolitical rivalry led me to the question, at once simple and profound, that is at the core of this work: How do enemies become friends?

My two home institutions, Georgetown University and the Council on Foreign Relations, provided ideal settings for exploring this question. My colleagues and students at Georgetown offered a vibrant community in which to try out new ideas and explore the historical cases. Robert Gallucci, the former dean of the School of Foreign Service, provided consistent encour-

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Finally, I am profoundly grateful to my family. Nancy Kupchan Sonis, Clifford Kupchan, Sandy Kupchan, and Nicholas Kupchan provided unlimited love, support, and encouragement. My father, S. Morris Kupchan, bequeathed to me so much, including many of the qualities—curiosity, discipline, determination—essential to scholarship. My stepfather, H. Richard Sonis, was a true friend and a man of uncommon decency. Simma Asher was my loyal partner when this book was just getting under way. She is now my wife, a clear sign of her fortitude in putting up with the necessarily idiosyncratic habits of an author at work. Her love, companionship, and applesauce cake helped see me through.

Charles A. Kupchan
Washington, DC

HOW ENEMIES BECOME FRIENDS

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CHAPTER ONE

STABLE PEACE

Long before European immigrants came to North America, Iroquois tribes settled the lands that would eventually become upstate New York. These tribes were regularly at war with each other, exacting a heavy toll on their populations. In the middle of the fifteenth century, five Iroquois tribes, aggrieved by the mounting losses, gathered around a communal fire in the village of Onondaga in an attempt to end the fighting. The confederation they forged not only stopped the warfare, but it preserved peace among the Iroquois for over three hundred years. Several centuries later, the Congress of Vienna served as a similar turning point for Europe. The gathering of European statesmen in 1814–1815 not only marked the end of the destruction wrought by the Napoleonic Wars, but also produced the Concert of Europe, a pact that maintained peace among the great powers for more than three decades. Iroquois delegates resolved disputes in regular meetings of the Grand Council in Onondaga, while European diplomats preferred more informal congresses called as needed to diffuse potential crises. But the results were the same—stable peace.

Although the Iroquois Confederation and the Concert of Europe are now historical artifacts, both amply demonstrate the potential for diplomacy to tame the geopolitical rivalry that often seems an inescapable feature of international politics. President Barack Obama appreciates this potential; he entered office determined not only to repair America's frayed relations with traditional allies, but also to use America's clout to address some of the world's most intractable conflicts. In his inaugural address, President Obama asserted that Americans, having experienced civil war and the national renewal that followed, "cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace."[1]

Obama wasted no time in acting on his words. Two days after assuming

[1] http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/01/20/obama.politics/index.html.

power, the new administration assigned high-level emissaries the tasks of forging peace between Palestinians and Israelis and bringing stability to Afghanistan and Pakistan. As former senator George Mitchell, Obama's choice for Middle East envoy, stated, "There is no such thing as a conflict that can't be ended. . . . Conflicts are created, conducted and sustained by human beings. They can be ended by human beings."[2] Even with respect to Iran, perhaps America's most intransigent adversary, the new administration arrived in Washington intent on opening a dialogue. The Obama administration clearly believes that enemies can become friends.

The Iroquois Confederation and the Concert of Europe are not alone in demonstrating the potential for diplomacy to produce enduring peace. At the end of the nineteenth century, for example, Great Britain deftly accommodated the rise of the United States, clearing the way for a strategic partnership that has lasted to this day. Not only did the United States peacefully replace the United Kingdom as the global hegemon, but over the course of the twentieth century the liberal democracies of North America and Europe went on to forge a uniquely cohesive and durable political community. Although it formed in response to the threats posed by Nazism, fascism, and communism, the Atlantic community became much more than a military alliance. Indeed, like the Iroquois Confederation and the Concert of Europe, it evolved into a zone of stable peace—a grouping of nations among which war is eliminated as a legitimate tool of statecraft.

It is not simply the absence of conflict that makes a zone of stable peace a unique and intriguing phenomenon. Rather, it is the emergence of a deeper and more durable peace, one in which the absence of war stems not from deterrence, neutrality, or apathy, but from a level of interstate comity that effectively eliminates the prospect of armed conflict. When a zone of stable peace forms, its member states let down their guard, demilitarize their relations, and take for granted that any disputes that might emerge among them would be resolved through peaceful means. To study historical episodes in which states succeed in escaping geopolitical rivalry is to explore how, when, and why lasting peace breaks out.

In investigating the sources of stable peace, this book not only offers a diplomatic road map for turning enemies into friends, but it also exposes several prevalent myths about the causes of peace. Based on the proposition that

[2] http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/01/23/mitchell.mideast/.

democracies do not go to war with each other, scholars and policy makers alike regularly claim that to spread democracy is to spread peace. To that end, successive Republican and Democratic administrations have pursued robust policies of democracy promotion. Indeed, during the 2008 presidential campaign, influential voices on both sides of the aisle called for the establishment of a "League of Democracies," a new international body that would institutionalize peace among democratic states while excluding autocracies on the grounds that they are unworthy of partnership.[3] So too is thinking within both the academic and policy communities heavily influenced by the assertion that economic interdependence promotes stability. Commercial linkages between the United States and China, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, or Serbia and Kosovo, the prevailing wisdom maintains, promise to serve as fruitful investments in peace, not just prosperity.

This book directly challenges such conventional wisdom. It refutes the claim that democracy is necessary for peace, demonstrating that non-democracies can be reliable contributors to international stability. Accordingly, the United States should assess whether countries are enemies or friends by evaluating their statecraft, not the nature of their domestic institutions. In similar fashion, this work reveals that commercial interdependence plays only an ancillary role in promoting peace; it helps deepen societal linkages, but only after a political opening has first cleared the way for reconciliation. Deft diplomacy, not trade or investment, is the critical ingredient needed to set enemies on the pathway to peace.

These and other insights about how and when states are able to escape geopolitical competition and find their way to durable peace have profound implications for both scholarship and policy. Understanding the phenomenon of stable peace is of paramount theoretical importance. International history is characterized by recurring and seemingly inevitable cycles of geopolitical competition and war. The emergence of zones of stable peace makes clear that conflict is neither intractable nor inescapable, pointing to a transforma-

[3] See, for example, G. John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, Princeton Project on National Security, *Forging a World Under Liberty and Law: U.S. National Security in the 21st Century* (Princeton, NJ: Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2006); Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, "Democracies of the World, Unite!" *American Interest* 2, no. 3 (January/ February 2007); Robert Kagan, "The Case for a League of Democracies," *Financial Times*, May 13, 2008; and Senator John McCain, address to The Hoover Institution on May 1, 2007, available at: http://www.johnmccain.com/informing/News/Speeches/43e821a2-ad70-495a-83b2-098638e67aeb.htm.

tive potential within the international system. To theorize about stable peace is therefore to advance understanding of one of the most enduring puzzles in the study of global politics: how to explain change in the character of the international system—in particular, the transformation of international anarchy into international society.

The study of stable peace is also of obvious practical importance. Peace might be more pervasive if scholars and policy makers alike knew more about how to promote and sustain international communities in which the prospect of war has been eliminated. Why and how did peace break out among the United States and Great Britain, Norway and Sweden, the founding members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the nomadic tribes that now constitute the United Arab Emirates? What lessons can be drawn for fashioning zones of peace between China and Japan, Greece and Turkey, or other contemporary rivals? In the Middle East and Africa, regional institutions have the potential to help dampen rivalry and prevent war, but they have yet to mature. What can be done to advance the prospects for stable peace in these regions?

Another priority for policy makers is preserving existing zones of peace, the durability of which can by no means be taken for granted. Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the Concert of Europe succeeded in securing peace among the great powers for over three decades. By 1853, however, Europe's major powers were again at war—this time in the Crimea. The Soviet Union and China forged a remarkably close partnership during the 1950s; by the early 1960s, they were open rivals. The United States enjoyed more than seven decades of stable and prosperous union among its individual states, only to fall prey to a civil war in the 1860s. The United States survived the challenge to its integrity, but other unions have not been as fortunate. The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, the Senegambian Confederation, Czechoslovakia—these are only a few of the many unions that are today historical artifacts.

The fragility of former zones of peace makes clear that comity among the Atlantic democracies can by no means be taken for granted. Indeed, since the Cold War's end, transatlantic tensions have mounted over a host of issues, including ethnic violence in the Balkans, the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. Amid the rift that opened over the Iraq war, Europeans began to question whether they could still look to the United States to provide responsible international leadership. In turn, Americans

began to question whether they should continue to support European unity, suspecting that the European Union (EU) was gradually transforming itself from a partner into a rival. The Atlantic community is still a zone of stable peace—armed conflict among its members remains unthinkable—but geopolitical competition, even if only in subtle form, has returned to relations between the United States and Europe.

The challenge for contemporary statecraft entails not just preserving existing zones of stable peace, but also deepening and enlarging them. The EU continues to seek more centralized institutions of governance even as it extends its reach to the south and east, exposing new members to its peace-causing effects. ASEAN's membership has also grown, taxing the body's capacity to coordinate regional diplomacy. South America has of late enjoyed advances in cooperation on matters of commerce and defense, but the deepening of regional integration still faces significant obstacles. These experiments in taming geopolitical rivalry are far from complete.

Fashioning stable peace among the great powers is another key challenge. With the European Union, China, Russia, India, Brazil and others on the rise, major changes in the distribution of power promise to renew dangerous competition over position and status. It may well be, however, that shifts in the global balance need not foster great-power rivalry. The history of the Concert of Europe yields important lessons about how to forge cooperation among major powers—but also sobering warnings about how easily such cooperation can erode. Rapprochement between the United States and Great Britain demonstrates that hegemonic transitions can occur peacefully—but it represents the only case of peaceful transition on record.[4] Examining the Concert of Europe, the onset of Anglo-American rapprochement, and other instances of stable peace thus promises to elucidate the opportunities—as well as the challenges—that will accompany the onset of a multipolar world.[5]

[4] The end of the Cold War could be considered a case of peaceful hegemonic transition—the transition from bipolarity to unipolarity occurred without major war. However, the transition was effectively accidental. The Soviet bloc collapsed as its satellites defected and the Soviet Union unraveled. The United States was left as the sole superpower. In contrast, Britain deliberately ceded hegemony to the United States as it gradually withdrew from its commitments in the Western Hemisphere.

[5] On the impending transition to multipolarity, see Charles A. Kupchan, *The End of the American Era: The Geopolitics of the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Knopf, 2002); and Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: Norton, 2008). On the potential durability of U.S.

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