4. From the end of the cold war to a new world dis-order?

This chapter provides a broad overview of the international system between the end of the cold war—when many claimed that liberalism and the West had triumphed—through to the second decade of the twenty-first century, when the West itself and the liberal economic order it had hitherto promoted appeared to be coming under increased pressure from political forces at home and new challenges abroad. But before we turn to the present, the chapter will look at some of the key developments since 1989—including the Clinton presidency, the George W. Bush administration’s foreign policy following the attacks of 9/11, the 2008 financial crash, the crisis in Europe, the transitions taking place in the global South, the origins of the upheavals now reshaping the Middle East, the political shift from Barack Obama to Donald Trump, the emergence of Asia, and the rise of China. The chapter then concludes by examining two big questions: first, is power now shifting away from the West, and
4. From the end of the cold war to a new world disorder?

second, to what extent does the current wave of populism in the West threaten globalization and the liberal order?