15 Towards the Future: The Emergence of a New Security Order in East-Central Europe and Eurasia?

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The authors of the essays in the volume have analysed the ways in which international relations and foreign policy have evolved across the broad territory once dominated by the Soviet Union. Many expected that the end of the Cold War meant both an 'end of history', defined in terms of the worldwide competition between democracy and its basic foes¹ and also the emergence of a 'new world order' in which global confrontation would be replaced by the peaceful resolution of disagreements.² In many respects these two sets of expectations overlapped significantly, since they attributed the primary source of conflict throughout the world in the post-Second World War era to the confrontation between Marxism-Leninism, as interpreted by Stalin and his successors, and Wilsonian democracy, which lay at the root of the foreign policies of American presidents from Wilson through Roosevelt to Reagan. Yet, what the advocates of the 'end of history' and the emerging 'new world order' failed to recognise was the fact that the global confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union that had characterised the Cold War had, in fact, suppressed and hidden a vast range of local and regional conflicts that had their foundation in factors totally unrelated to the Soviet-American confrontation.

Thus, the end of the Cold War did not usher in the expected new era of global peace and brotherhood. Rather, although it did reduce the immediacy of the nuclear threat, it also opened up possibilities for political elites in many countries to attempt to redress old wrongs – or