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World Order



Henry Kissinger World Order

Read by Nicholas Hormann

Unabridged



Synopsis

Henry Kissinger has traveled the world, advised presidents, and been a close observer and participant in the central foreign policy events of our era. Now he offers his analysis of the twenty first century's ultimate challenge: how to build a shared international order in a world of divergent historic perspectives, violent conflict, proliferating technology, and ideological extremism. There has never been a true "world order," Kissinger observes. For most of history, civilizations defined their own concepts of order. Each considered itself the center of the world, and envisioned its distinct principles as universally relevant. China conceived of a global cultural hierarchy with the Emperor at its pinnacle. In Europe, Rome imagined itself surrounded by barbarians; when Rome fragmented, European peoples refined a concept of an equilibrium of sovereign states and sought to export it across the world. Islam considered itself the world's sole legitimate political unit, destined to expand indefinitely until the world was brought into harmony by Muslim principles. The United States was born of a conviction about the universal applicability of democratic principles - a conviction that has guided its policies ever since. Now international affairs take place on a global basis, and these historic concepts of world order are meeting. Every region participates in questions of high policy in every other, often instantaneously. Yet there is no consensus among the major actors about the rules and limits guiding this process, or its ultimate destination. The result is mounting tension. Grounded in Kissinger's deep study of history and experience as national security advisor and secretary of state, *World Order* guides readers on a tour of the globe. It examines the events and ideas that formed the historic concepts of order, their manifestations in contemporary controversies, and the ways in which they might ultimately be reconciled.

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Customer Reviews

In World Order, Kissinger is able to summarize hundreds of years of diplomatic struggle in a relatively few pages. He has the amazing ability to summarize clearly and bring clarity to world events while he is compressing them into a few well thought out words. For example, the historical expansion of Europe after the 30 years war and the politics that allowed it - or perhaps I should say encouraged the expansion - are explained without fluff and thus engenders greater insight. The next European wide treaty ended the wars of Napoleon and was based on an entirely different political understanding. Knowing this allows the reader to see the developing crisis leading to WWI in a new light. Excellent Book. Highly recommended.

Kissinger gives to the readers his valuable lessons about world order, and how history has shaped global relations of today. He's one of the top foreign affairs expert, has a deep understanding of history and has given enormous contributions to many US presidents. Maybe he could have offered to the reader few more valuable details of failed US policies on the Middle East or even told some of his striking successes when building relations with China, when cold war was at its heights. A must read book.

This space contains some very well written reviews of Kissinger's book. I will not therefore attempt to replicate what others have written. For me, and as part of my attempt to better understand current events (to wit: the 2016 primary election) this book seems to offer some insights. First, I had no prior knowledge of the Westphalia Peace. That history gives me a better context to assess the political platforms of the candidates based on their "seeming" grasp of the concepts that Kissinger presents in the book. My major fear is that many do not have much of a historical grasp. Also, the issue of our electorate: Again, I have fears that so many lack knowledge and, furthermore, are unwilling to devote the time or effort to gain knowledge by reading history or philosophy. Kissinger (as a minor part of his book) addresses the role of the Internet in the future of world order. He notes that the Internet is a prolific purveyor of raw data (information) but does not package that data as knowledge. He believes it takes the hard work of reading broadly (books, research, etc) to become genuinely knowledgeable. Wisdom, he believes is even harder to achieve...requiring prerequisite years and vast energies in development of knowledge to achieve. Though Mr Kissinger disclaims

having great expertise in electronic media, I do believe his observations are spot on. Our country was founded by men who read and studied broadly (history, political philosophy, religion and much more)..They debated and sought communication with others who were likewise seeking greater knowledge. Some may have even achieved levels of "wisdom." I don't have a great deal of confidence that that is true of our leaders today. And I certainly don't have confidence that the American electorate is, as a whole, "wise" or "knowledgeable." At best, American voters may Google for a few "facts" regarding a candidate. I do hope that Mr Kissinger will continue writing /elaborating further respective of modern communications technologies and their impacts on traditional aspects of world order.

Excellent high level view of world history relative to war and peace in the modern and post modern eras, and the prospects for the future. Provides great contextual understanding of the current wars, failed states and terrorism. Anyone interested in understanding current geopolitics must have this historical context. Also nice to see that Kissinger values the idealism that accompanied the rise of the USA as a superpower, and his hope that this American idealism will not be lost in the future. His take on the Bush Presidencies was enlightening too. I had always viewed Kissinger as part of the cynicism of the Nixon era, and I am glad to be corrected and see that I may have misjudge him as guilty by association with Nixon.

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