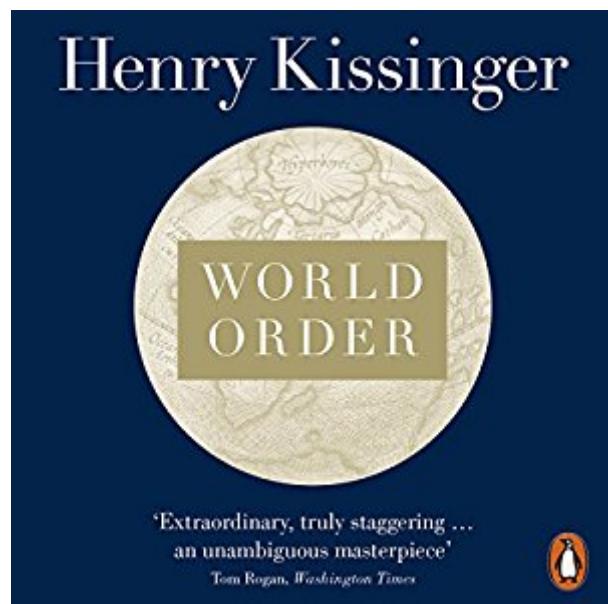


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World Order: Reflections On The Character Of Nations And The Course Of History



Synopsis

Penguin presents the unabridged, downloadable audiobook edition of *World Order* by Henry Kissinger, read by Nicholas Hormann. *World Order* is the summation of Henry Kissinger's thinking about history, strategy and statecraft. As if taking a perspective from far above the globe, it examines the great tectonic plates of history and the motivations of nations, explaining the attitudes that states and empires have taken to the rest of the world from the formation of Europe to our own times. Kissinger identifies four great 'world orders' in history - the European, Islamic, Chinese and American. Islamic states have looked to their destined expansion over regions populated by unbelievers, a position exemplified today by Iran under the ayatollahs. For over 2,000 years, the Chinese have seen 'all under heaven' as being tributary to the Chinese Emperor. America views itself as a 'city on a hill', a beacon to the world, whose values have universal validity. How have these attitudes evolved, and how have they shaped the histories of their nations, their regions, and the rest of the world? What has happened when they have come into contact with each other? How have they balanced legitimacy and power at different times? What is the condition of each in our contemporary world, and how are they shaping relations between states now? To answer these questions, Henry Kissinger draws upon a lifetime's historical study and unmatched experience as a world statesman. His account is shot through with observations about how historical change takes place, how some leaders shape their times and others fail to do so, and how far states can stray from the ideas which define them. *World Order* is a masterpiece of narrative, analysis and portraits of great historical actors that only Henry Kissinger could have written.

Book Information

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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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