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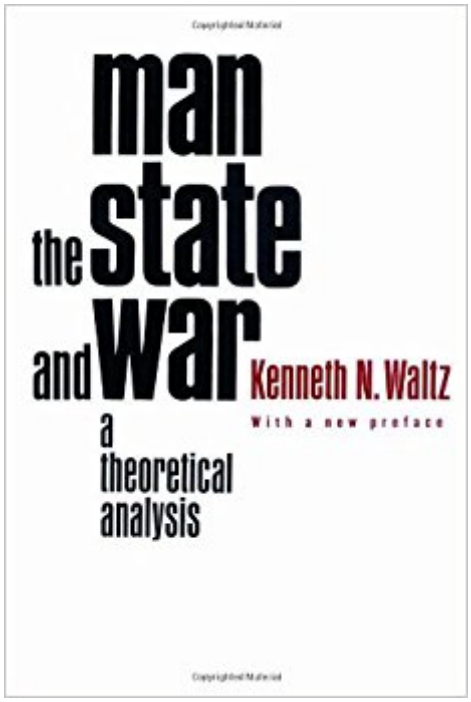
Man, The State, And War: A Theoretical Analysis



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Synopsis

What are the causes of war? To answer this question, Professor Waltz examines the ideas of major thinkers throughout the history of Western civilization. He explores works both by classic political philosophers, such as St. Augustine, Hobbes, Kant, and Rousseau, and by modern psychologists and anthropologists to discover ideas intended to explain war among states and related prescriptions for peace.

Book Information

Paperback: 263 pages

Publisher: Columbia University Press; Revised edition (April 15, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0231125372

ISBN-13: 978-0231125376

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 37 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #22,253 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 inÂ Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > War & Peace #30 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Military #42 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Political Science > Political History

Customer Reviews

In this thoughtful inquiry into the views of classical political theory on the nature and causes of war, Professor Waltz follows three principal themes or images: war as a consequence of the nature and behavior of man, as an outcome of their internal organization of states, and as a product of international anarchy. (Foreign Affairs)Despite the changes in the world, the text stands as a classic effort to explain why men and nations fight. (Military Review)

What are the causes of war? To answer this question, Waltz examines the ideas of major thinkers throughout the history of Western civilization. He explores works both by classic political philosophers, such as St. Augustine, Hobbes, Kant, and Rousseau, and by modern psychologists and anthropologists to discover ideas intended to explain war among states and related prescriptions for peace.

Dear ReadersThe book is apocalyptic, and that’s why I am so impressed by it.It is not just a book on International Relations.It is in fact a book on philosphy.It has in fact for all intents and purposes extended the study of epistemology.It tells us why history repeats itself. (see Kissinger’s "On China", Epilogue)It (this book) explains books like Ellsberg’s "Memoirs on Vietnam" and explains why wars are createdand cannot be stopped.Waltz introduces his "three images".These three "states" of knowledge are so "epistemological" in character.The first, the human being and the nature of human beings.....we all say things like "if only.....X were true!"The second, the nature of the state.....the second image.....the state is hierarchical.The individual now is no longer able to control their own society.Relies heavily on the influence of Rousseau.....some philosophers would take issue with this, but isnevertheless convincing in argument.The power of the status quo.....on the individuals of any society.And then the third image.....that the international situation is beyond the control of any oneperson..... (or any one state for that matter).....the intrinsic nature of this environment is now, nothierarchy but one ofpure anarchy.....no control, except if you (your state) has the weapons to protect itself.What follows from this theoretical analysis by Waltz is a total comprehensive theory of strategy,and strategic studies.....Seems like that it predicts that terrorist nukes and/or tactical nukes are inevitable.Best Regardssjw

Man, the State and War should be required reading for anyone who wants to discuss international politics. The insights on domestic politics are also valuable. Waltz works through various classical works from Hobbes, Locke, and Spinoza to formulate a coherent and explanatory theory on why wars occur. The first line of the book is, for me at least, political science’s version of Call me Ishmael.Waltz divides his book into three separate sections (Man, State, and War) deducing the permissive cause of why wars are able to occur - the answer anarchy of the state system.This book is the foundation upon which all IR is built. Truly a top five classic in political science.

A must read for any student of international relations. This is one of the most basic and used founding theories about how our world works and can be applied to just about any subject for study.It goes into historical, social, and political examples in order to back the theory. It also goes into many of the concepts by ancient and modern philosophers on the world and war.

I’ve always been recommended this book by various IR professors who have said this is a must read for modern IR poli sci students. If you only have a passing interest in IR then don’t bother, but

for those who want a better understanding of the structure of the system, this book is an excellent STARTING point for your research.

Very interesting book. Paperback is efficient, although as a note taker I would have preferred wider margins.

A classic for good reason!

good book

I really like this analytic essay. It really looks at our understanding of war in a clear, concise approach. I think this will help me write better essays for my political science classes.

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