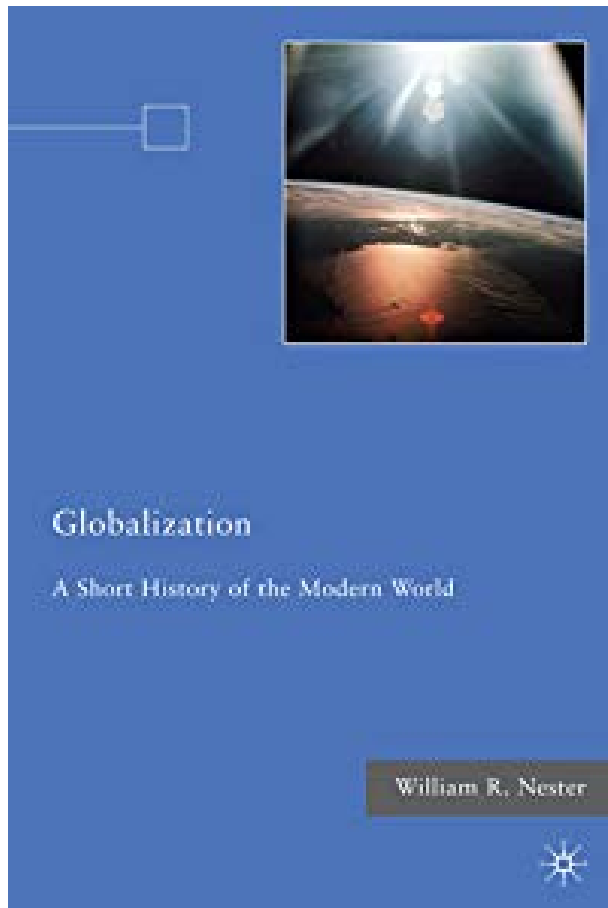


Globalization: A Short History of the Modern World



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| Pages: | 190 |
| Genre: | History |
| Language | English |
| Author: | William R. Nester |
| ISBN10: | 0230106919 |
| Goodreads Rating: | 4.00 |
| Published: | November 15th 2010 by Palgrave Macmillan |
| ISBN13: | 9780230106918 |

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International politics began with the emergence of the first organized states thousands of years ago.

Global politics is more recent--it appeared about five centuries ago when the European powers began to mesh the world's far corners together through conquest and trade. Today we live on a planet characterized by globalization or the ever more complex economic, cultural, technological, and environmental interdependence among all people everywhere. Until recently globalization's development was slow. Although countries increasingly traded, allied, and negotiated with each other, the divisions among them far outweighed the ties, and nations often settled their conflicts with war or the threat of war. However, since 1945, despite or more likely because of the "Cold War," globalization has developed rapidly and profoundly. Today all humans are formally tied to all others through their country's membership in the United Nations and numerous other international organizations, along with the immediate benefits of global trade, telecommunications, travel, and the internet. Yet globalization has a dark side—it destroys as well as creates jobs, wealth, and lives, while every human lives under the shadow of potential nuclear and ecological extinction. How did humanity reach a stage of history so filled with such an array of prospects and perils? *Globalization: A Short History of the Modern World* explores that all powerful force for good and evil from the Renaissance through today and beyond.