

## Robert D. Kaplan



Robert D. Kaplan is the bestselling author of fifteen books on foreign affairs and travel translated into many languages, including *Asia's Cauldron*, *The Revenge of Geography*, *Monsoon*, *Balkan Ghosts*, and *Eastward to Tartary*. He is a senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security in Washington and a contributing editor at *The Atlantic*, where his work has appeared for three decades. He was chief geopolitical analyst at Stratfor, a visiting professor at the United States Naval Academy, and a member of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, appointed by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. Foreign Policy magazine twice named him one of the world's "Top 100 Global Thinkers."

*New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman has called Kaplan among the four "most widely read" authors defining the post-Cold War (along with Stanford Professor Francis Fukuyama, Yale Professor Paul Kennedy, and the late Harvard Professor Samuel Huntington). Kaplan's article, "The Coming Anarchy," published in the February, 1994 *Atlantic Monthly*, about how population rise, ethnic and sectarian strife, disease, urbanization, and resource depletion is undermining the political fabric of the planet, was hotly debated in foreign-language translations around the world. So was his December, 1997 *Atlantic* cover story, "Was Democracy Just A Moment?" That piece argued that the democracy now spreading around the world would not necessarily lead to more stability. According to *U. S. News & World Report*, "President Clinton was so impressed with Kaplan, he ordered an interagency study of these issues, and it agreed with Kaplan's conclusions."

In the 1980s, Kaplan was the first American writer to warn in print about a future war in the Balkans. *Balkan Ghosts* was chosen by *The New York Times Book Review* as one of the "best books" of 1993. *The Arabists*, *The Ends of the Earth*, *An Empire Wilderness*, *Eastward to Tartary*, and *Warrior Politics* were all chosen by *The New York Times* as "notable" books of the year. *An Empire Wilderness* was chosen by *The Washington Post* and *The Los Angeles Times* as one of the best books of 1998. *The Wall Street Journal* named *The Arabists* one of the five best books ever written about America's historical involvement in the Middle East. *The Financial Times* named *Asia's Cauldron* one of the ten best political books of 2014.

Besides *The Atlantic*, Kaplan's essays have appeared on the editorial pages of *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *the Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Los Angeles Times*, as well as in all the major foreign affairs journals, including cover stories in *Foreign Affairs*. He has been a consultant to the U. S. Army's Special Forces Regiment, the U. S. Air Force, and the U.S. Marines. He has lectured at military war colleges, the FBI, the National Security Agency, the

Pentagon's Joint Staff, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the CIA, major universities, and global business forums. He has briefed presidents, secretaries of state, and defense secretaries; Kaplan has delivered the Secretary of State's Open Forum Lecture at the U. S. State Department. He has reported from over 100 countries. Two earlier books of his, *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, and *Surrender or Starve: Travels in Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea*, have been re-issued, so that all his books are in print.

In 2004, Kaplan was given the Distinguished Alumni Award by the University of Connecticut. In 2009, he was given the Benjamin Franklin Public Service Award by the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia.

Robert D. Kaplan was born June 23, 1952 in New York City. He graduated in 1973 from the University of Connecticut, where he was the features editor of the *Connecticut Daily Campus*. In 1973 and 1974 he traveled throughout Communist Eastern Europe and in parts of the Near East. From 1974 to 1975 he was a reporter for the *Rutland Daily Herald* in Vermont. In 1975, he left the United States to travel throughout the Arab and Mediterranean worlds, beginning a period of 16 years living overseas. He served a year in the Israel Defense Forces and lived for nine years in Greece and Portugal. He has been married to Maria Cabral since 1983. They live in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts. They have one son, Michael, who is married with a daughter and works for an investment bank in Boston.