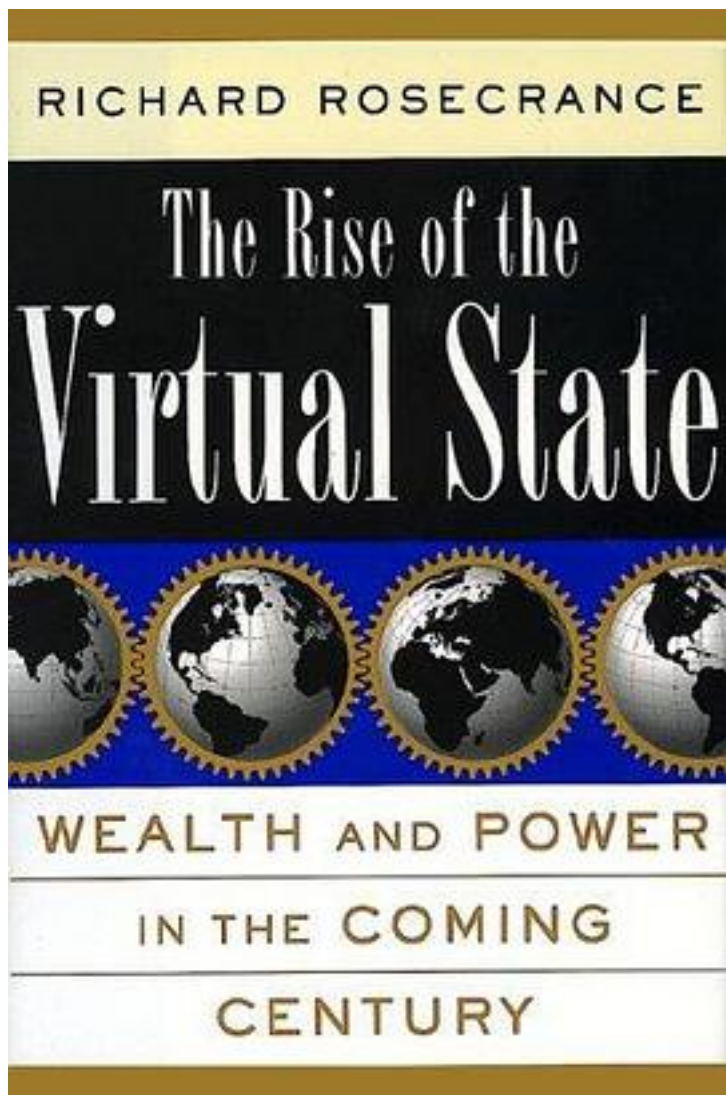


The Rise of the Virtual State



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A leading scholar of international relations tells why the rise of virtual economies will make military conquest obsolete.

This is a sweeping account of the paradigm of state power in the coming century. It forecasts what kind of nation will rise to the top: "Imperial Great Britain may have been the model for the nineteenth century," writes Rosecrance, "but Hong Kong will be the model for the twenty-first." The key to this change is the changing value of land as a source of power: the control of territory brings control of agricultural and industrial raw materials, but this is now less important because economic and political power now derives less from agriculture and industry than from expertise in technical and research services, product design, marketing, and finance. The results are a new kind of world power, a new emphasis on education and training of work forces, a decline in the frequency and importance of wars, and fierce competition for markets.

What will power look like in the century to come? "Imperial Great Britain may have been the model for the nineteenth century," Richard Rosecrance writes, "but Hong Kong will be the model for the twenty-first." We are entering the Age of the Virtual State - when land and its products are no longer the primary source of power, when managing flows is more important than maintaining stockpiles, when service industries are the greatest source of wealth and expertise and creativity are the greatest natural resources.

Rosecrance's brilliant new book combines international relations theory with economics and the business model of the virtual corporation to describe how virtual states arise and operate, and how traditional powers will relate to them. In specific detail, he shows why Japan's kereitsu system, which brought it industrial dominance, is doomed; why Hong Kong and Taiwan will influence China more than vice-versa; and why the European Union will command the most international prestige even though the U.S. may produce more wealth.

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目录:

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