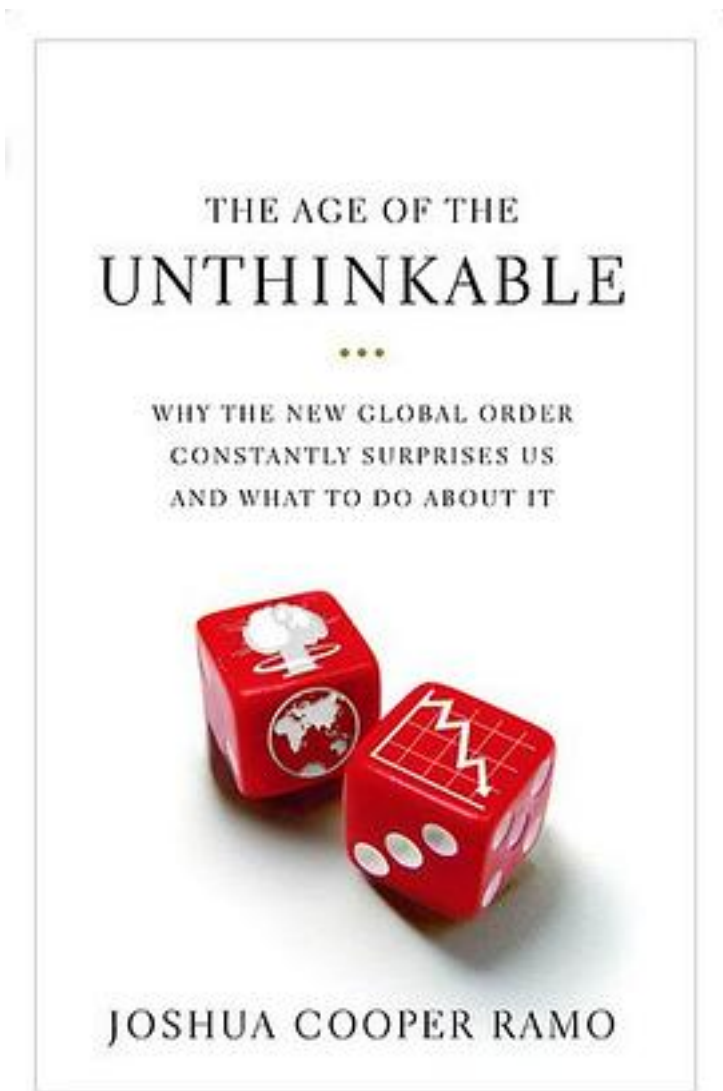


The Age of the Unthinkable



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著者:Ramo, Joshua Cooper

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American policy-formers -- from Madeline Albright to Thomas Friedman to George W. Bush -- subscribe to the idea that peace and prosperity bloom from the spread of capitalism and democracy in a globalised world. If only it were that simple. As Joshua Ramo reveals in this provocative and fiercely intelligent book, the belief that globalisation is harmonising the planet has failed both tests of good science: it neither predicts nor explains our world. The US government misfired over and over again, failing to predict the World Trade Center attacks and the rise of al Qaeda, overestimating the number of soldiers needed to depose the Taliban, underestimating the number needed to control Iraq, advocating global democracy -- then wondering what to do when it produces Ahmadinejad and groups like Hamas. Now, drawing upon history, economics, political theory and his own extraordinary experiences, Ramo puts forth a radical new model for looking at the world, one that embraces its inherent unpredictability -- and offers our best hope for dealing with problems and disasters as they emerge.

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