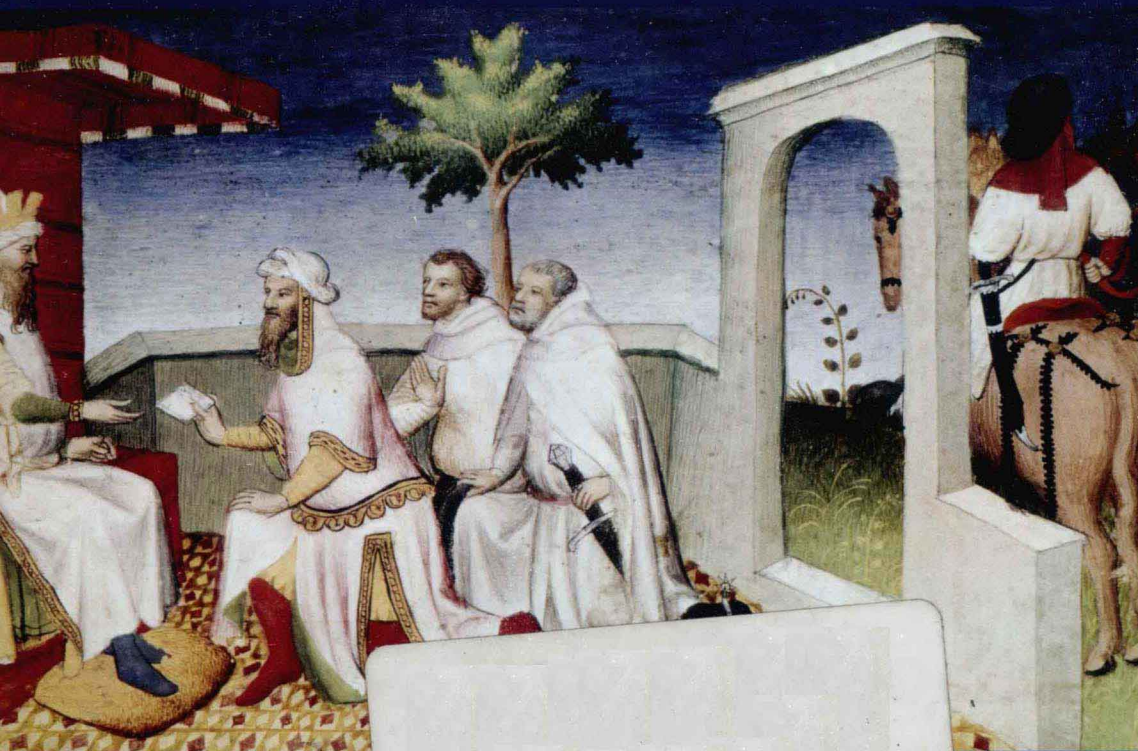


ENCOUNTERS IN WORLD HISTORY

Sources and Themes from the Global Past

VOLUME ONE: TO 1500



THOMAS SAUNDERS
STEPHEN MORRIS

ON
GER

ENCOUNTERS IN WORLD HISTORY

*Sources and Themes from the Global Past,
Volume One: To 1500*

FIRST EDITION

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*To Jolene, Brooke, Joseph, and Jose for their love and support,
and to my mentors, colleagues, and students
for all that they taught me.—TS*

To my family.—SHN

*To Lynne, Robin, Dione, and Raphael:
you can have the computer back now.
And to Velazquez, Vermeer, and Georgia,
missed but not forgotten.—SRM*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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PREFACE



History is an encounter with the past, and the past is a history of encounters. This book is designed to introduce students to both of these sorts of encounters.

APPROACH

The past as a history of encounters is the organizing theme of this book. Each chapter consists of primary sources illustrating various encounters between and within civilizations and cultures. Some encounters involved one group of humans meeting another group of humans, and so encountering different ways of life, modes of thought, and ambitions. Some of these sorts of encounters produced violent confrontations: the meeting of settled farming-based societies with nomadic herding-based societies, or the encounter of industry-based imperial powers with nonindustrial peoples in the nineteenth century, often resulted in warfare. But many, as in the encounters different peoples had with practitioners of new religions, were peaceful, resulting in exchanges of ideas, goods, and populations. Sometimes such encounters produced both peaceful and violent outcomes. The variety of human encounters is one of the things that makes studying history so interesting.

Another sort of encounter this book presents is more abstract, involving not the meeting of separate groups of people, but the encounter of groups of people with their environment, and even more abstractly, the encounter of groups of people with the problems of living together in a functioning society. People encountered nature and their need to explain it; they encountered the conflict between the need for social order and the need for individual freedom and generated codes of behavior; and they encountered divisions in their society, whether based on gender, class, or other sorts of divisions.

We strove to put before the student substantive selections that present the historical evidence for cultural encounters as directly as possible, but in a context that makes the problems the sources address comprehensible. The problem of context and comprehension is a perennial issue in World Civilization courses; we believe the “encounter” format will be effective both in enriching students’ understanding and in helping to provide unity and coherence to the ideas that instructors are trying to get across.

In presenting not a finished narrative of world history, but a selection of sources on which such a narrative could be based, this book shows students some of the evidence that historians use and invites them to interpret that evidence themselves and come to their own conclusions. In other words, it invites them to become historians and to join the constant work in progress that is history.

GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND PRIMARY SOURCES

While “encounters” serves as our overall conceptual device, the book is organized in a broadly chronological fashion, and each chapter is organized around a particular theme. In this way, we have been able to introduce general concepts such as authority, violence, gender, transcendent spirituality, and so on, concepts that are useful in the analysis of concrete historical situations from global human history. We hope by means of the encounters idea and the thematic elements integrated into the various chapters to participate productively in the current effort to present world civilization and history in an integrated and meaningful fashion. We aspire, as well, to assist instructors in providing students not merely with new information, but also with new ways of thinking about the human historical experience.

To provide instructors flexibility in their assignments, we have sought to incorporate a range of civilizations and to rely on as diverse a set of “texts”—including various nonwritten materials—as possible. The encounters themselves were chosen according to criteria of (1) cross-cultural interest or significance, (2) appropriateness to the chronological periods of world history, and (3) applicability to classroom instruction. It is our desire that instructors in all areas of specialization, research interest, and pedagogical approach find in our reader materials that suit their purposes and help them communicate their interpretations of world civilization to their students. To that end, the selections have been judiciously edited to be manageable for students, while retaining enough length to provide a fuller feel for the civilizations that produced these sources and allow students to formulate their own opinions.

We have tried to arrive at a useful mix of new materials and of “classic,” well-established sources. In many cases, even when we have included well-known sources, we have used nontraditional selections or edited the material in novel ways consistent with the perspective of a given chapter’s theme. The inclusion of both new materials and new approaches to traditional sources makes this book unique.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

Each chapter begins with a general introduction, providing students with the context and background required to appreciate the sources that follow. For example, we attempt to connect particular historical encounters with modern versions of

the same sorts of encounters. Comparing how different societies have handled similar problems again shows the variety of human experience, but also offers lessons (if only, at times, in what not to do!). The possibility of learning from the past is another valuable outcome of studying history.

A set of general questions follows the chapter introduction, to orient readers and help them make connections among all of the sources in the chapter. Brief Introductions to each group of related sources outline the cultural and historical context in which the encounter occurred and, just as importantly, seek to locate the encounter conceptually for readers without telling them what to think or what they will discover in exploring the sources themselves. Similarly, a set of Questions to Consider precedes each group of sources, guiding students' reading without telling them what to think or burdening them with a theoretical apparatus. It is our intention that the dialogue established between the documents will (1) give the students a richer information source on which to base their judgments and (2) by focusing on perceptions and ways of "seeing" the other, allow for student assessments even in the absence of extensive background information on the specific cultures.

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Thomas Sanders
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Stephen Morillo
Nancy Ellenberger

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