



McKay Hill Buckler

*A History of*

WESTERN SOCIETY

5th Edition

**VOLUME II**

FROM ABSOLUTISM

TO THE PRESENT

 FIFTH EDITION

# A HISTORY OF WESTERN SOCIETY

Volume II *From Absolutism to the Present*

**John P. McKay**

*University of Illinois at  
Urbana-Champaign*

**Bennett D. Hill**

*Georgetown University*

**John Buckler**

*University of Illinois at  
Urbana-Champaign*

**HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY**

Boston Toronto

Geneva, Illinois Palo Alto

Princeton, New Jersey

**Sponsoring Editor:** Sean W. Wakely  
**Basic Book Editor:** Elizabeth Welch  
**Senior Associate Editor:** Jeffrey Greene  
**Senior Manufacturing Coordinator:** Priscilla Bailey  
**Marketing Manager:** Pamela Shaffer

**Credits:** Page 550: Poem by Joost van den Vondel quoted from *Europe in the Seventeenth Century* by David Ogg. Copyright © 1967 by A & C Black, Ltd. Page 735: "International Industrialization Levels from 1750 to 1980" by P. Bairoch, *Journal of European Economic History II* (Spring 1982): 294. Page 883: Poem by Rudyard Kipling quoted in *The Social History of the Machine Gun* by John Ellis. Copyright © 1975 by John Ellis. Reprinted by permission of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, Inc. and Croom Helm Ltd., a division of Routledge.

**Cover designer:** Harold Burch, Harold Burch Design, New York, New York  
**Cover image:** Mikhail Nesterov. Portrait of a Girl. Russian State Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia. Scala/Art Resource, NY

Copyright © 1995 by Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written permission of Houghton Mifflin Company unless such copying is expressly permitted by federal copyright law. Address inquiries to College Permissions, Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116-3764.

Printed in the U.S.A.  
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 94-76525  
ISBN Student Text: 0-395-70843-5  
ISBN Examination Copy: 0-395-71721-3  
23456789-VH-98 97 96 95

## About the Authors

**John P. McKay** Born in St. Louis, Missouri, John P. McKay received his B.A. from Wesleyan University (1961), his M.A. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (1962), and his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley (1968). He began teaching history at the University of Illinois in 1966 and became a professor there in 1976. John won the Herbert Baxter Adams Prize for his book *Pioneers for Profit: Foreign Entrepreneurship and Russian Industrialization, 1885-1913* (1970). He has also written *Tramways and Trolleys: The Rise of Urban Mass Transport in Europe* (1976) and has translated Jules Michelet's *The People* (1973). His research has been supported by fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and IREX. His articles and reviews have appeared in numerous journals, including *The American Historical Review*, *Business History Review*, *The Journal of Economic History*, and *Slavic Review*. He edits *Industrial Development and the Social Fabric: An International Series of Historical Monographs*.

**Bennett D. Hill** A native of Philadelphia, Bennett D. Hill earned an A.B. at Princeton (1956) and advanced degrees from Harvard (A.M., 1958) and Princeton (Ph.D., 1963). He taught history at the University of Illinois at Urbana, where he was department chairman from 1978 to 1981. He has published *English Cistercian Monasteries and Their Patrons in the Twelfth Century* (1968) and *Church and State in the Middle Ages* (1970); and articles in *Analecta Cisterciensia*, *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, *The American Benedictine Review*, and *The*

*Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. His reviews have appeared in *The American Historical Review*, *Speculum*, *The Historian*, *The Catholic Historical Review*, and *Library Journal*. He has been a fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies and has served on committees for the National Endowment for the Humanities. Now a Benedictine monk of St. Anselm's Abbey, Washington, D.C., he is also a Visiting Professor at Georgetown University.

**John Buckler** Born in Louisville, Kentucky, John Buckler received his B.A. (*summa cum laude*) from the University of Louisville in 1967. Harvard University awarded him the Ph.D. in 1973. From 1984 to 1986 he was an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow at the Institut für Alte Coschichte, University of Munich. He has lectured at the Fondation Hardt at the University of Geneva, and has participated in numerous international conferences. He is currently the professor of Greek history at the University of Illinois. In 1980 Harvard University Press published his *The Theban Hegemony, 371-362 BC*. He has also published *Philip II and the Sacred War* (Leiden 1989), and co-edited *BOIOTIKA: Vorträge vom 5. International Böötien-Kolloquium* (Munich 1989). He has assisted the National Endowment for the Humanities, and reviews articles for journals in the United States and Europe. His articles have appeared in journals both here and abroad, including the *American Journal of Ancient History*, *Classical Philology*, *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, *Classical Quarterly*, *Wiener Studien*, *Symbolae Osloenses*, and many others.

# Preface

**A History of Western Society** grew out of the authors' desire to infuse new life into the study of Western civilization. We knew full well that historians were using imaginative questions and innovative research to open up vast new areas of historical interest and knowledge. We also recognized that these advances had dramatically affected the subject of European economic, intellectual, and, especially, social history, while new research and fresh interpretations were also revitalizing the study of the traditional mainstream of political, diplomatic, and religious development. Despite history's vitality as a discipline, however, it seemed to us that both the broad public and the intelligentsia were generally losing interest in the past.

It was our conviction, based on considerable experience introducing large numbers of students to the broad sweep of Western civilization, that a book reflecting current trends could excite readers and inspire a renewed interest in history and our Western heritage. Our strategy was twofold. First, we made social history the core element of our work. Not only did we incorporate recent research by social historians, but also we sought to recreate the life of ordinary people in appealing human terms. At the same time we were determined to give great economic, political, intellectual, and cultural developments the attention they unquestionably deserve. We wanted to give individual readers and instructors a balanced, integrated perspective so that they could pursue—on their own or in the classroom—those themes and questions that they found particularly exciting and significant. In an effort to realize fully the potential of our fresh, yet balanced approach, we made many changes, large and small, in the three editions that followed.

## Changes in the New Edition

In preparing the fifth edition we have worked hard to keep our book up-to-date and to strengthen our distinctive yet balanced approach. Six main lines of revision guided our many changes.

**Updated Approach to Social History.** First, in a thorough revision of social developments, we have given greater attention to cultural and intellectual life, and somewhat reduced the quantitative and demographic aspects. Increased emphasis on culture and attitudes invigorates our social history core and accurately reflects current scholarship and changing interests within the historical profession. Accordingly, this edition has expanded discussions of religious life including popular religion in Mesopotamia (Chapter 1), classical Greece (Chapter 3), and revolutionary France (Chapter 21); the evolution of Jewish religion (Chapter 2), Eastern monasticism (Chapter 7), and Calvin's Geneva (Chapter 14); and religious revival in the twentieth century (Chapter 28). Consistently greater attention to popular culture includes new sections on medieval music, troubadour poets, and recreation in Chapters 11 and 12; community values in the eighteenth-century (Chapter 20); and the counter-culture in the 1960s (Chapter 30). New material on health and health care features recent research on medieval practices (Chapter 10), early hospitals and the Black Death (Chapter 12), and eighteenth-century practitioners (Chapter 20). Interactions between cultures have also been highlighted, as, for example, the relations between Egyptians and Nubians (Chapter 1), pagans and Christians (Chapter 6), Muslims and Christians (Chapter 7), and



educated elites and popular classes (Chapters 18 and 20). In addition, we have carefully revised sections on the life of the people to set social developments consistently in their larger historical context. For example, Chapters 18 through 21 provide a dynamic, thoroughly updated treatment of the eighteenth century that interrelates cultural change, economic expansion, social life, and political revolution.

**Integrated Treatment of Women and Gender.** Second, we have broadened our treatment of women's history and gender issues and integrated it into the main narrative, rather than reserving it for separate sections. This approach also reflects current scholarly thinking. For example, the updated discussion of Hellenistic women has been integrated into the central narrative (Chapter 4); new material on women in agriculture and commerce during the Middle Ages (Chapters 10 and 11), and on gender roles in the arts (Chapter 15) has been appropriately positioned; elite women in the Enlightenment and peasant women in village communities have been reconsidered in context (Chapters 18 and 20); and women in twentieth-century dictatorships have been compared systematically (Chapter 29). The contemporary women's movement receives expanded separate analysis (Chapter 31) because it emerged as a major cultural and political force.

**Organizational Changes.** Third, our integrated treatment of women's history is one of several organizational improvements. In addition to the revision of Chapters 18 through 21, Chapter 15 has been thoroughly revised to relate sixteenth-century social and cultural changes consistently to political and religious developments. Chapters 30 and 31 have been completely recast, interrelating political, economic, social, and cultural developments from the new edition's post-Cold War perspective. Chapter 1 has been reorganized to clarify the chronology and the role of writing in Sumerian civilization. The early development of the Kievan principality has been relocated to Chapter 8 to maintain the chronology, and to highlight the integral role of the eastern Slavs in early medieval Europe.

**Incorporation of Recent Scholarship.** Fourth, every chapter has been carefully revised to reflect recent scholarship. Because the authors are committed to a balanced approach, we have continued to incorporate important new findings on political,

economic, and intellectual developments in this edition. Revisions of this nature include the Babylonian Captivity (Chapter 2), democratic ideology in Athens and political background to Plato and Aristotle's thought (Chapter 3), and Roman commerce and frontier relations between Romans and Germans (Chapter 6). Similar revisions in Chapters 7 through 16 incorporate new material on the Spanish *reconquista* (Chapter 7), the medieval origins of the modern state and the power of the church in private life (Chapter 9), economic causes for Magna Carta (Chapter 11), and political violence (Chapter 12). There is new material on banks in continental industrialization and the early labor movement (Chapter 22); the role of class conflict in nineteenth-century domestic politics, imperialism, and the origins of World War One (Chapters 25-27); educational reforms and political culture in Republican France (Chapter 25); Nietzsche and his influence (Chapter 28); and the Nazi state and the origins of Italian fascism (Chapter 29). In short, recent research keeps the broad sweep of our history fresh and up-to-date.

**New "Problems of Historical Interpretation."** Fifth, the addition of more "problems of historical interpretation" in the fourth edition was well received, so we have increased their number again in this edition. We believe that the problematic element helps our readers develop the critical-thinking skills that are among the most precious benefits of studying history. New examples of this more open-ended, interpretive approach include the debate over the origins of Rome (Chapter 5), the impact of the Renaissance on the lives of ordinary and elite women (Chapter 13), the motives and legacy of Christopher Columbus (Chapter 15), popular reading habits and their significance (Chapter 20), social tensions and the origins of World War One (Chapter 27), and the nature of twentieth-century dictatorships (Chapter 29).

**Revised Full-Color Art and Map Programs.** Finally, the illustrative component of our work has been carefully revised. We have added many new illustrations to our extensive art program, which includes nearly two hundred color reproductions, letting great art and important events come alive. As in earlier editions, all illustrations have been carefully selected to complement the text, and all carry captions that enhance their value. Artwork remains an integral part of our book; the past can speak in

pictures as well as in words. The use of full color throughout this edition also serves to clarify the maps and graphs and to enrich the textual material. The maps and map captions have been updated to correlate directly to the text.

### Distinctive Features

Distinctive features, both new and revised, guide the reader in the process of historical understanding. Many of these features also show how historians sift through and evaluate evidence. Our goal is to suggest how historians actually work and think. We want the reader to think critically and to realize that history is neither a list of cut-and-dried facts nor a senseless jumble of conflicting opinions.

**New Primary-Source Chapter Feature.** To help students and instructors realize this goal, we have added a two-page excerpt from a primary source at the end of each chapter in the fifth edition. This important new feature, entitled "Listening to the Past," extends and illuminates a major historical issue considered in the chapter. For example, in Chapter 4, a selection from *Plutarch's Lives* recounts the sacrifice of a famous queen for her people, while Chapter 9 presents a mind-opening Arab account of the First Crusade. Crime in medieval England is examined through criminal case reports in Chapter 12, and the German traveler Olearius provides a fascinating and influential picture of the Russian state and society in Chapter 17. Writer Stephan Zweig probes the sexuality of young men and women in nineteenth-century Vienna in Chapter 24, and a Jewish doctor who survived Auschwitz describes the horrible inhumanity of Nazi death camps in Chapter 29.

Each primary source opens with a problem-setting introduction and closes with "Questions for Analysis" that invite students to evaluate the evidence as historians would. Drawn from a range of writings addressing a variety of social, cultural, political, and intellectual issues, these sources promote active involvement and critical interpretation. Selected for their interest and importance and carefully fitted into their historical context, these sources do indeed allow the student to "listen to the past" and to observe how history has been shaped by individual men and women, some of them great aristocrats, others ordinary folk.

**Improved Chapter Features.** Distinctive features from earlier editions have been revised and im-

proved in the fifth edition. To help guide the reader toward historical understanding, we pose specific historical questions at the beginning of each chapter. These questions are then answered in the course of each chapter, and each chapter concludes with a concise summary of its findings. All of the questions and summaries have been reexamined and frequently revised in order to maximize the usefulness of this popular feature.

In addition to posing chapter-opening questions and presenting more problems in historical interpretation, we have quoted extensively from a wide variety of primary sources in the narrative, demonstrating in our use of these quotations how historians evaluate evidence. Thus primary sources are examined as an integral part of the narrative as well as presented in extended form in the new "Listening to the Past" chapter feature. We believe that such an extensive program of both integrated and separate primary source excerpts will help readers learn to interpret and think critically.

Each chapter concludes with carefully selected suggestions for further reading. These suggestions are briefly described to help readers know where to turn to continue thinking and learning about the Western world. Also chapter bibliographies have been revised and updated to keep them current with the vast amount of new work being done in many fields.

**Revised Timelines.** The timelines appearing in earlier editions have been substantially improved in this edition. In addition to revising the timelines placed within many chapters, we have expanded the comparative timelines previously dispersed throughout the fourth edition and placed them in a unified format in an appendix at the end of the book. Comprehensive and easy to locate, this useful timeline allows students to compare simultaneous political, economic, social, cultural, intellectual, and scientific developments over the centuries.

**Flexible Format.** Western civilization courses differ widely in chronological structure from one campus to another. To accommodate the various divisions of historical time into intervals that fit a two-quarter, three-quarter, or two-semester period, *A History of Western Society* is being published in four versions, three of which embrace the complete work:

- One-volume hardcover edition, *A HISTORY OF WESTERN SOCIETY*

- Two-volume paperback, *A HISTORY OF WESTERN SOCIETY Volume I: From Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (Chapters 1–17), *Volume II: From Absolutism to the Present* (Chapters 16–31)
- Three-volume paperback, *A HISTORY OF WESTERN SOCIETY Volume A: From Antiquity to 1500* (Chapters 1–13), *Volume B: From the Renaissance to 1815* (Chapters 12–21), *Volume C: From the Revolutionary Era to the Present* (Chapters 21–31)
- *A HISTORY OF WESTERN SOCIETY Since 1400* (Chapters 13–31), for courses on Europe since the Renaissance

Note that overlapping chapters in both the two- and the three-volume sets permit still wider flexibility in matching the appropriate volume with the opening and closing dates of a course term.

### Ancillaries

Learning and teaching ancillaries, listed below, also contribute to the usefulness of the text.

- *Study Guide*
- *Computerized Study Guide*
- *Instructor's Resource Manual*
- *Test Items*,
- *Computerized Test Items*
- *Map Transparencies*
- *Videodisc*
- *Videodisc Guide*

The excellent *Study Guide* has been thoroughly revised by Professor James Schmiechen of Central Michigan University. Professor Schmiechen has been a tower of strength ever since he critiqued our initial prospectus, and he has continued to give us many valuable suggestions as well as his warmly appreciated support. His *Study Guide* contains learning objectives, chapter summaries, chapter outlines, review questions, extensive multiple-choice exercises, self-check lists of important concepts and events, and a variety of study aids and suggestions. The fifth edition also retains the study-review exercises on the interpretation of visual sources and major political ideas as well as suggested issues for discussion and essay, chronology reviews and sections on studying effectively. These sections take the student through reading and studying activities like underlining, summarizing, identifying main points, classifying information according to se-

quence, and making historical comparisons. To enable both students and instructors to use the *Study Guide* with the greatest possible flexibility, the guide is available in two volumes, with considerable overlapping of chapters. Instructors and students who use only Volumes A and B of the text have all the pertinent study materials in a single volume, *Study Guide, Volume I* (Chapters 1–21); likewise, those who use only Volumes B and C of the text also have all the necessary materials in one volume, *Study Guide, Volume 2* (Chapters 12–31). The multiple-choice sections of the *Study Guide* are also available in a *Computerized Study Guide*, a tutorial version that tells students not only which response is correct but also why each of the other choices is wrong; it also provides the page numbers in the text where each question is discussed. These “rejoinders” to the multiple-choice questions also appear in printed form at the end of the *Study Guide*. The *Computerized Study Guide* is available for IBM® computers.

The *Instructor's Resource Manual*, prepared by Professor John Marshall Carter contains instructional objectives, annotated chapter outlines, suggestions for lectures and discussion, paper and class activity topics, primary source exercises, map activities, and lists of audio-visual resources. The accompanying *Test Items*, by Professor Charles Crouch of Georgia Southern University offer identification, multiple-choice, map, and essay questions for a total of approximately 2000 test items. These test items are available to adopters in both IBM® and Macintosh versions, both of which include editing capabilities. To add an exciting multimedia component to lectures and learning laboratories, we have created *The History of Western Civilization Videodisc/Videotape/Slide* program. The program allows the instructor to create customized multimedia classroom presentations using this rich collection of visual images. The program is divided into five chronological periods (ancient, medieval, early modern, modern, and Twentieth Century) and contains over 165 still images, 30 animated maps, and motion footage accompanied by period music. A companion *Videodisc/Videotape* instructor's guide provides descriptions, printed bar codes, bar code stickers to create customized lectures, and numeric codes. The program is available at no cost to adopters of the book. Please contact your local Houghton Mifflin representative for more information about this innovative and exciting multimedia program.

In addition, a set of full-color *Map Transparencies* of all the maps in the text is available on adoption.



# Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to thank the many instructors who have read and critiqued the manuscript through its development:

Anthony Cardoza  
*Loyola University*

Jack Cargill  
*Rutgers University*

Stephanie Christelow  
*Idaho State University*

Jessica Coope  
*University of Nebraska*

George Early  
*Black Hills State University*

Charles Evans  
*Northern Virginia Community College*

Keith Francis  
*Pacific Union College*

David Graf  
*University of Miami*

Barbara Hanawalt  
*University of Minnesota*

Paul Harvey  
*Penn State University*

Charles Ingrao  
*Purdue University*

Gary Johnson  
*University of Southern Maine*

Ellen Kittell  
*University of Idaho*

Harry Liebersohn  
*University of Illinois*

James Masschaele  
*Rutgers University*

Mavis Mate  
*University of Oregon*

Kathryn Norberg  
*University of California, Los Angeles*

Kathleen Paul  
*University of South Florida*

William M. Reddy  
*Duke University*

Raymond Sickinger  
*Providence College*

Sherill Spaar  
*East Central University*

Ruth Suyama  
*Mission College, Los Angeles*

Bruce Taylor  
*University of Dayton*

Marilyn Yancey  
*Virginia Union University*

It is also a pleasure to thank our editors at Houghton Mifflin for their effort and support over many years. To Elizabeth Welch, Senior Basic Book Editor, who has skillfully guided and encouraged our work since the third edition, we owe a special debt of gratitude and admiration. To Jean Woy, Editor-in-Chief for Social Sciences, who has led us onward for more than a decade, and to Sean Wakely, Sponsoring Editor for History, we express our sincere appreciation. And we thank Leslie Anderson Olney and Carole Frohlich for their contributions in production and photo research.

Many of our colleagues at the University of Illinois continued to provide information and stimulation for our book, often without even knowing it. N. Frederick Nash, Rare Book Librarian, made many helpful suggestions for illustrations, and the World Heritage Museum at the University allowed us complete access to its sizable holdings. James Dengate kindly supplied information on objects from the museum's collection and Caroline Buck-

## XX ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ler took many excellent photographs of the museum's objects. Such wide-ranging expertise was a great asset for which we are very appreciative. Bennett Hill wishes to express his sincere appreciation to Ramón de la Fuente for his support, encouragement, and research assistance in the preparation of this fifth edition.

Each of us has benefited from the generous criticism of his co-authors, although each of us assumes

responsibility for what he has written. John Buckler has written the first six chapters; Bennett Hill has continued the narrative through Chapter 16; and John McKay has written Chapters 17 through 31. Finally, we continue to welcome the many comments and suggestions that have come from our readers, for they have helped us greatly in this ongoing endeavor.

J. P. M.      B. D. H.      J. B.

# Introduction



## THE ORIGINS OF MODERN WESTERN SOCIETY

The origins of modern Western society lie in the ancient and medieval past. Through archeological evidence, scholars trace the roots of Western culture to Mesopotamia, the area in southwest Asia bound by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Each civilization that successively flourished there between roughly 7000 and 500 B.C.—Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Hittite—made notable achievements. These achievements became the legacies that were absorbed and utilized by later cultures, Hebraic, Greek, and Roman. The Middle Ages built on the Greek and Roman past. Similarly, the European intellectual and religious movements often called the Renaissance and the Reformation derive from the medieval past. History, the study of change over time, reveals that each age has reinterpreted the cultural legacy of its predecessors in the effort to meet its own demands. The modern world exists as the product of all that has gone before.



## THE ANCIENT WORLD

The ancient world provided several cultural elements that the modern world has inherited. First came the beliefs of the Hebrews (Jewish forebears) in one God and in a chosen people with whom God had made a covenant. The book known as the Scriptures, or “sacred writings,” embodied Hebraic law, history, and culture. Second, Greek architectural, philosophical, and scientific ideas have exercised a profound influence on Western thought. Rome subsequently gave the West language and law. The Latin language became the instrument of verbal and written communication for more than a thousand

years; Roman concepts of law and government molded Western ideas of political organization. Finally, Christianity, the spiritual faith and ecclesiastical organization that derived from the Palestinian Jew, Jesus of Nazareth (ca 3 B.C.–A.D. 29), also conditioned Western religious, social, and moral values and systems.

## The Hebrews

The Hebrews probably originated in northern Mesopotamia. Nomads who tended flocks of sheep, they were forced by drought to follow their patriarch Abraham into the Nile Delta in Egypt according to biblical tradition. The Egyptians enslaved them and put them to work on various agricultural and building projects. In the crucial event of early Jewish history known as “the Exodus,” the biblical lawgiver Moses, in response to God’s command, led the Hebrews out of Egypt into the promised land (Palestine) in the thirteenth century B.C. At that time, the Hebrews consisted of twelve disunited tribes made up of families. They all believed themselves to be descendants of a common ancestor, Abraham. The family was their primary social institution, and most families engaged in agricultural or pastoral pursuits. Under the pressure of a series of wars for the control of Palestine, the twelve independent Hebrew tribes were united into a centralized political force under one king. Kings Saul, David, and especially Solomon (ca 965–925 B.C.) built the Hebrew nation with its religious center at Jerusalem, the symbol of Jewish unity.

The Hebrews developed their religious ideas in the Scriptures, also known as the Hebrew Bible and (to Christians) the Old Testament. In their migration, the Hebrews had come in contact with many peoples, such as the Mesopotamians and the Egyp-

tians, who had many gods. The Hebrews, however, were monotheistic: their God was the one and only God, He had created all things, His presence filled the universe, and He took a strong personal interest in the individual. According to the Scriptures, during the Exodus from Egypt, God had made a covenant with the Hebrews. He promised to protect them as His chosen people and to give them the land; in return, they must worship only Him and obey the Ten Commandments that He had given Moses. The Ten Commandments comprise an ethical code of behavior, forbidding the Hebrews to steal, lie, murder, or commit adultery. This covenant was to prove a constant force in Jewish life. The first five books of the Hebrew Bible constitute the Pentateuch, or the Torah, meaning divine instruction; theoretically, the Torah provides instruction on all activities and social relationships. The Hebrew Bible also contains detailed legal proscriptions, books of history, concepts of social and familial structure, wisdom literature, and prophecies of a Messiah (savior) to come. Parts of the Scriptures show the Hebraic debt to other cultures. For example, the Books of Proverbs and Sirach reflect strong Egyptian influences. The Hebrews developed an emotionally satisfying religion whose ideals shaped not only later faiths, such as Christianity and Islam, but also the modern world.

## The Greeks

Whereas ancient Middle Eastern peoples such as the Hebrews interpreted the origins, nature, and end of humanity in religious or theological terms, the Greeks treated these issues in terms of reason. In the fifth century B.C., small independent city-states (poleis) dotted the Greek peninsula. Athens, especially, created a brilliant culture that greatly influenced Western civilization. Athens developed a magnificent architecture whose grace, beauty, and quiet intensity still speak to people. In their comedies and tragedies, the Athenians, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were the first playwrights to treat eternal problems of the human condition. Athens also experimented with the political system we call democracy. All free adult men participated directly in lawmaking and in the government of the polis. Because a large part of the population—women and slaves—were not allowed to share in the activity of the Assembly, and because aristocrats held most important offices in the polis, Athenian democracy must not be confused with mod-

ern democratic practices. The modern form of democracy, moreover, is representative rather than direct: citizens express their views and wishes through elected representatives. Nevertheless, in their noble experiment in which the people were the government and in their view that the state existed for the good of the citizen, Athenians served to create a powerful political ideal.

Classical Greece of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. also witnessed an incredible flowering of philosophical ideas. The Greeks were not the first people to speculate about the origins and nature of human beings and the universe. The outstanding achievement of the Greeks, rather, was their interest in treating these questions in rational instead of religious terms. Hippocrates, the “father of medicine,” taught that natural means—not magical or religious ones—could be found to fight disease. He based his opinions on observation and experimentation. Hippocrates also insisted that medicine was a branch of knowledge separate from philosophy. This distinction between natural science and philosophy was supported by the sophists, who traveled the Greek world teaching young men that human beings were the proper subject for study. They laid great emphasis on logic and the meaning of words and criticized traditional beliefs, religion, and even the laws of the polis.

Building on the approach of the sophists, Socrates (ca 470–399 B.C.) spent his life questioning and investigating. Socrates held that human beings and their environments represent the essential subject for philosophical inquiry. He taught that excellence could be learned and, by seeking excellence through knowledge, human beings could find the highest good and ultimately true happiness. Socrates’ pupil, Plato (427–347 B.C.), continued his teacher’s work. Plato wrote down his thoughts, which survive in the form of dialogues. He founded a school, the Academy, where he developed the theory that visible, tangible things are unreal and archetypes of “ideas” or “forms” that are constant and indestructible. In *The Republic*, the first literary description of a utopian society, Plato discusses the nature of justice in the ideal state. In *The Symposium*, he treats the nature and end of love.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), Plato’s student, continued the philosophical tradition in the next generation. He investigated many subjects, including the nature of government, ideas of matter and motion, outer space, conduct, and language and literature. In all his works, Aristotle emphasizes the

importance of directly observing nature; he insisted that theory must follow fact. Aristotle had one of the most inquiring and original minds that Western civilization has ever produced, and his ideas later profoundly shaped both Muslim and Roman Catholic theology.

The Greeks originated medicine, science, philosophy, and other branches of knowledge. They asked penetrating questions and came up with immortal responses. Recent research of Greek historians has focused on two areas: the social and cultural context in which the ideas of Plato and Aristotle flourished and women's experience within that context.

These phenomenal intellectual advances took place against a background of constant warfare. The long and bitter struggle between the cities of Athens and Sparta called the Peloponnesian War (439–404 B.C.), described in the historian Thucydides' classic, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, ended in Athens' defeat. Shortly afterward, Sparta, Athens, and Thebes contested for hegemony in Greece, but no single state was strong enough to dominate the others. Taking advantage of the situation, Philip II (359–336 B.C.) of Macedon, a small kingdom encompassing part of modern Greece and the former Yugoslavia, defeated a combined Theban-Athenian army in 338 B.C. Unable to resolve their domestic quarrels, the Greeks lost their freedom to the Macedonian invader.

In 323 B.C., Philip's son, Alexander of Macedonia, died at the age of 32. During the twelve short years of his reign, Alexander had conquered an empire stretching from Macedonia in the present-day Balkans across the Middle East into Asia as far as India. Because none of the generals who succeeded him could hold together such a vast territory, it disintegrated into separate kingdoms. Scholars label the period dating from ca 800 B.C. to 323 B.C., in which the polis predominated, the Hellenic Age. The time span from Alexander's death in 323 B.C. to the collapse of Egypt to Rome in 30 B.C., which was characterized by independent kingdoms, is commonly called the Hellenistic Age.

The Hellenistic period witnessed two profoundly significant developments: the diffusion of Greek culture through Asia Minor and the further advance of science, medicine, and philosophy. As Alexander advanced eastward, he established cities and military colonies in strategic spots. Militarily, these helped secure his supply line and control of the countryside. Culturally, as Greek immigrants

poured into the East, they served as powerful instruments in the spread of Hellenism. Though the Greeks were a minority in the East, the dominant language, laws, and institutions became Greek. Thus, a uniform culture spread throughout the East. Greek culture linked the East and the West, and this cultural bond later helped Roman efforts impose unity on the Mediterranean world.

Hellenistic scientific progress likewise had enormous consequences. Aristarchus of Samos (ca 310–230 B.C.) rejected Aristotle's idea that the earth is the center of the universe, and using only the naked eye, advanced the heliocentric theory that the earth and other planets revolve around the sun. The Alexandrian mathematician Euclid (ca 300 B.C.) compiled a textbook, *Principles of Geometry*, which has proved basic to education in the West. Archimedes of Syracuse studied the principles of mechanics governing instruments such as the lever and invented numerous practical devices, including the catapult and Archimedian screw. Hellenistic physicians dissected the human body, enabling better knowledge of anatomy and improvements in surgery. The mathematician Eratosthenes (285–ca 204 B.C.), who directed the library of Alexandria—the greatest seat of learning in the Hellenistic world—calculated the earth's circumference geometrically at 24,675 miles; it is actually 24,860 miles.

In philosophy, Hellenistic thinkers continued the rational approach of the Greeks. Stoicism, so called from the building where its earliest proponents taught (the *Stoa*), represents the greatest philosophical development of the Hellenistic period. Stressing the value of inner strength, or fortitude, in facing life's difficulties, the Stoics originated the concept of natural law; that is, because all men are brothers and all good men live in harmony with nature (reason) and the universe, one law—the natural law—governs all. The Stoics advocated a universal state government: not a political state but an ethical one based on individual behavior. These ideas strongly attracted the Romans, who used the ideal of a universal state as a rationale for extending their empire over peoples of diverse laws and institutions.

## Rome

The city of Rome, situated near the center of the boot-shaped peninsula of Italy, conquered all of what it considered to be the civilized world. Rome's great achievement, however, rested in its ability not

only to conquer peoples but also to incorporate them into the Roman way of life. Rome created a world state that embraced the entire Mediterranean basin. It bequeathed to the Middle Ages and the modern world three great legacies: Roman law, the Latin language, and flexible administrative practices.

According to tradition, Rome was founded in the mid-eighth century B.C. Etruscans from the north and waves of Greek immigrants from the south influenced its early history. In 509 B.C., Rome expelled the Etruscan king, Tarquin the Proud, and founded a republic. Scholars customarily divide Roman history into two stages: the Republic (ca 509–31 B.C.), during which Rome grew from a small city-state to an empire, and the Empire, the period when the old republican constitution fell to a constitutional monarchy. Between 509 and 290 B.C. Rome subdued all of Italy, and between 282 and 146 B.C. slowly acquired an overseas empire. The dominant feature of the social history of the early Republic was the clash between patrician aristocrats and plebeian commoners.

While the Greeks speculated about the ideal state, the Romans pragmatically developed methods of governing themselves and their empire. Their real genius lay in government and law. Because the Romans continually faced concrete challenges, change was a constant feature of their political life. The senate was the most important institution of the Republic. Composed of aristocratic elders, it initially served to advise the other governing group, the magistrates. As the senate's prestige increased, its advice came to have the force of law. Roman law, called the *ius civilis* or "civil law," consisted of statutes, customs, and forms of procedure. The goal of the *ius civilis* was to protect citizens' lives, property, and reputations. As Rome expanded, first throughout Italy and then into the Mediterranean basin, legal devices had to be found to settle disputes among foreigners or between foreigners and Romans. Sometimes magistrates adopted parts of other (foreign) legal systems. On other occasions, they used the law of equity: with no precedent to guide them, they made decisions on the basis of what seemed fair to all parties. Thus, with flexibility the keynote in dealing with specific cases and circumstances, a new body of law, the *ius gentium* or "law of the peoples," evolved. This law was applicable to both Romans and foreigners.

Law was not the only facet of Hellenistic cul-

ture to influence the Romans. The Roman conquest of the Hellenistic East led to the wholesale confiscation of Greek sculpture and paintings to adorn Roman temples and homes. Greek literary and historical classics were translated into Latin; Greek philosophy was studied in the Roman schools; Greek plays were adapted to the Roman stage; educated people learned Greek as a matter of course. Public baths based on the Greek model—with exercise rooms, swimming pools, reading rooms, and snack bars—served not only as centers for recreation and exercise but as centers of Roman public life. Rome assimilated the Greek achievement, and Hellenism became an enduring feature of Roman life.

With territorial conquests Romans also acquired serious problems in the control of their vast lands, which surfaced toward the end of the second century B.C. Characteristically, the Romans responded practically, with a system of provincial administration that placed appointed state officials at the head of local provincial governments. The Romans devised an efficient system of tax collecting as well. Overseas warfare required huge armies for long periods of time. A major theme of current historical research has been the changing composition of the Roman army during the Republic and the Empire. A few army officers gained fabulous wealth, but most soldiers did not and returned home to find their farms in ruins. Those with cash to invest bought up small farms, creating vast estates called *latifundia*. Because the law forbade landless men to serve in the army, most veterans migrated to Rome, seeking work. Victorious armies had already sent tens of thousands of slaves to Rome, and veterans could not compete with slaves in the labor market. A huge unemployed urban population resulted. Its demands for work and political reform were bitterly resisted by the aristocratic senate, and civil war characterized the first century B.C.

Out of the violence and disorder emerged Julius Caesar (100–44 B.C.), a victorious general, shrewd politician, and highly popular figure. He took practical steps to end the civil war, such as expanding citizenship and sending large numbers of the urban poor to found colonies in Gaul, Spain, and North Africa. These settlements spread Roman culture. Fearful that Caesar's popularity and ambition would turn Rome into a monarchy, a group of aristocratic conspirators assassinated him in 44 B.C. Civil war was renewed. Ultimately, in 31 B.C. Caesar's



adopted son Octavian, known as Augustus, defeated his rivals and became master of Rome.

The reign of Augustus (31 B.C.—A.D. 14) marked the end of the Republic and the beginning of what historians call the Empire. Augustus continued Caesar's work. By fashioning a means of cooperation in government among the people, magistrates, senate, and army, Augustus established a constitutional monarchy that replaced the Republic. His own power derived from the various magistracies he held and the power granted him by the senate. Thus, as commander of the Roman army, he held the title of *imperator*, which later came to mean "emperor" in the modern sense of sovereign power. Augustus ended domestic turmoil and secured the provinces. He founded new colonies, mainly in the western Mediterranean basin, which promoted the spread of Greco-Roman culture and the Latin language to the West. Magistrates exercised authority in their regions as representatives of Rome. (Later, after the Empire disintegrated, local magnates continued to exercise local power.) Caracalla later extended Roman citizenship to all free men. A system of Roman roads and sea lanes united the empire. For two hundred years, the Mediterranean world experienced the *pax Romana*—a period of peace, order, harmony, and flourishing culture.

In the third century, this harmony collapsed. Rival generals backed by their troops contested the imperial throne. In the disorder caused by the civil war that ensued, the frontiers were sometimes left unmanned, and Germanic invaders poured across the borders. Throughout the empire, civil war and barbarian invasions devastated towns and farms, causing severe economic depression. The emperors Diocletian (A.D. 285–305) and Constantine (A.D. 306–337) tried to halt the general disintegration by reorganizing the Empire, expanding the state of bureaucracy, and imposing heavier taxes. For administrative purposes, Diocletian divided the Empire into a western half and an eastern half. Constantine established the new capital city of Constantinople in Byzantium. The two sections drifted further apart throughout the fourth century, when the division became permanent. Diocletian's unrealistic attempt to curb inflation by arbitrarily freezing wages and prices failed. In the early fifth century, the borders collapsed entirely, and various Germanic tribes completely overran the western provinces. In 410 and again in 455, Rome itself was sacked by the barbarians.

After the western Roman Empire's decline, the rich legacy of Greco-Roman culture was absorbed by the medieval world and ultimately the modern world. The Latin language remained the basic medium of communication among educated people for the next thousand years; for almost two thousand years, Latin literature formed the core of all Western education. Roman roads, buildings, and aqueducts remained in use. Rome left its mark on the legal and political systems of most European countries. Rome had preserved the best of ancient culture for later times.

### Christianity

The ancient world also left behind a powerful religious legacy, Christianity. Christianity derives from tradition regarding the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of the Galilean Jew, Jesus of Nazareth (ca 3 B.C.—A.D. 29). Thoroughly Jewish in his teaching, Jesus preached the coming of the kingdom of God, a "kingdom not of this world," but one of eternal peace and happiness. He urged his followers and listeners to reform their lives according to the commandments, especially those stating, "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole mind, and your whole soul," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Thus, the heart of Christian teaching is love of God and love of neighbor. Some Jews believed that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. Others, to whom Jesus represented a threat to ancient traditions, hated and feared him. Though Jesus did not preach rebellion against the Roman governors, the Roman prefect of Judea, Pontius Pilate, feared that the popular agitation surrounding Jesus could lead to revolt against Rome. When Jewish leaders subsequently delivered Jesus to the Roman authorities, Pilate, to avert violence, sentenced him to death by crucifixion—the usual method for common criminals. Jesus' followers maintained that he rose from the dead three days later.

Those followers might have remained a small Jewish sect but for the preaching of the Hellenized Jew, Paul of Tarsus (ca A.D. 5–67). Paul taught that Jesus was the Son of God, that he brought a new law of love, and that Jesus' message was to be proclaimed to all people—Greek and Jew, slave and free, male and female. He traveled among and wrote letters to the Christian communities at Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, and other cities. As the

Roman Empire declined, Christianity spread throughout the Roman world. Because it welcomed people of all social classes, offered a message of divine forgiveness and salvation, and taught that every individual has a role to play in the building of the kingdom of God, thereby fostering a deep sense of community in many of its followers, Christianity won thousands of adherents.

Roman efforts to crush Christianity failed. The emperor Constantine legalized Christianity, and in 392, the emperor Theodosius made it the state religion of the Empire. Carried by settlers, missionaries, and merchants to Gaul, Spain, North Africa, and Britain, Christianity formed a fundamental element of Western civilization. Recent scholarly research has stressed that Christianity was a *syncretic* religion; that is, Christianity absorbed ideas and practices from other Middle Eastern religions, such as belief in a savior-god who died and rose again and a sacramental system that included baptism and the Eucharist.



## THE MIDDLE AGES

Fourteenth-century writers coined the term “Middle Ages,” meaning a middle period of Gothic barbarism between two ages of enormous cultural brilliance—the Roman world of the first and second centuries, and their own age, the fourteenth century, which these writers thought had recaptured the true spirit of classical antiquity. Recent scholars have demonstrated that the thousand-year period between roughly the fourth and fourteenth centuries witnessed incredible developments: social, political, intellectual, economic, and religious. The men and women of the Middle Ages built on the cultural heritage of the Greco-Roman past and made impressive advances in their own right.

### The Early Middle Ages

The time period that historians mark off as the early Middle Ages, extending from about the fifth to the tenth century, saw the emergence of a distinctly Western society and culture. The geographical center of that society shifted northward from the Mediterranean basin to Western Europe. Whereas a rich urban life and flourishing trade had characterized the ancient world, the Germanic invasions led to the decline of cities and the destruction of com-

merce. Early medieval society was rural and local, with the farm or *latifundium* serving as the characteristic social unit.

Several processes were responsible for the development of European culture. First, Europe became Christian. Christian missionary activity led to the slow, imperfect Christianization of the Germanic peoples who had overrun the Roman Empire in the West. Christianity taught the barbarians a higher code of morality and behavior and served as the integrating principle of medieval society. Christian writers played a powerful role in the conservation of Greco-Roman thought. They used Latin as their medium of communication, thereby preserving it. They copied and transmitted classical texts. Writers such as St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) used Roman rhetoric and Roman history to defend Christian theology. In so doing, they assimilated classical culture to Christian teaching.

Second, as the Germanic tribes overran the western Roman Empire, they intermarried with the old Gallo-Roman aristocracy. The elite class that emerged held the dominant political, social, and economic power in early—and later—medieval Europe. Germanic custom and tradition, such as ideals of military prowess and bravery in battle, became part of the mental furniture of Europeans.

Third, in the seventh and eighth centuries, Muslim military conquests carried Islam, the religion inspired by the prophet Muhammad (?570–632), from the Arab lands across North Africa, the Mediterranean basin, and Spain into southern France. The Arabs eventually translated many Greek texts. When, beginning in the ninth century, those texts were translated from Arabic into Latin, they came to play a role in the formation of European scientific, medieval, and philosophical thought.

Monasticism, an ascetic form of Christian life first practiced in Egypt and characterized by isolation from the broader society, simplicity of living, and abstention from sexual activity, flourished and expanded in both the Byzantine East and the Latin West. Medieval people believed that the communities of monks and nuns provided an important service: prayer on behalf of the broader society. In a world lacking career opportunities, monasteries also offered vocations for the children of the upper classes. Thus, monks in the West pioneered the clearing of waste and forest lands; served royal and baronial governments as advisors, secretaries, diplomats, and treasurers; and frequently conducted schools for the education of the young.

In the eighth century, also, the Carolingian dynasty, named after its most illustrious member, Charles the Great, or Charlemagne (768–814), gradually acquired a broad hegemony over much of what is today France, Germany, and northern Italy. Charlemagne's coronation by the pope at Rome in a ceremony filled with Latin anthems represented a fusion of classical, Christian, and Germanic elements. This Germanic warrior-king supported Christian missionary efforts and encouraged both classical and Christian scholarship. For the first time since the decline of the western Roman Empire, Western Europe had achieved a degree of political unity. Similarly, the culture of Carolingian Europe blended Germanic, Christian, and Greco-Roman elements.

Its enormous size proved to be the undoing of the Carolingian empire, and Charlemagne's descendants could not govern it. Attacks by Viking (early Scandinavian), Muslim, and Magyar (early Hungarian) marauders led to the collapse of centralized power. The new invaders wreaked more destruction than had the Germans in the fifth and sixth centuries. Real authority passed into the hands of local strongmen. Political authority was completely decentralized. Scholars describe the society that emerged as feudal and manorial: a small group of military leaders held public political power. They gave such protection as they could to the people living on their estates. They held courts. They coined money. And they negotiated with outside powers. The manor of local estate was the basic community unit. Serfs on the manor engaged in agriculture, which everywhere was the dominant form of economy. Because no feudal lord could exercise authority or provide peace over a very wide area, political instability, violence, and chronic disorder characterized Western society.

### The High and Later Middle Ages

By the beginning of the eleventh century, the European world showed distinct signs of recovery, vitality, and creativity. Over the next two centuries that recovery and creativity manifested itself in every facet of culture—economic, social, political, intellectual, and artistic. A greater degree of peace paved the way for these achievements.

The Viking and Magyar invasions gradually ended. Warring knights supported ecclesiastical pressure against violence, and disorder declined. Improvements in farming technology, such as the

use of the horse collar, led to an agricultural revolution. Old land was better utilized and new land brought under cultivation. Agricultural productivity increased tremendously. These factors led to considerable population growth.

Increased population contributed to some remarkable economic and social developments. A salient manifestation of the recovery of Europe and of the vitality of the High Middle Ages was the rise of towns and concurrent growth of a new commercial class. Surplus population of the search for new economic opportunities led to the expansion of old towns, such as Florence, Paris, London, and Cologne, and the foundation of completely new ones, such as Munich and Berlin. A new artisan and merchant class, precursor of the later "middle class," appeared. In medieval sociology, three classes existed: the clergy, who prayed; the nobility, who fought; and the peasantry, who tilled the land. The merchant class, engaging in manufacturing and trade, seeking freedom from the jurisdiction of feudal lords, and pursuing wealth with a fiercely competitive spirit, fit none of the standard categories. Townspeople represented a radical force for change.

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed an enormous increase in the volume of local and international trade. For example, Italian merchants traveled to the regional fairs of France and Flanders to exchange silk from China and slaves from the Crimea for English woolens, French wines, and Flemish textiles. Merchants adopted new business techniques. They had a strongly capitalistic spirit and were eager to invest surplus capital to make more money. These developments added up to what scholars have termed a commercial revolution, a major turning point in the economic and social life of the West. The High Middle Ages saw the transformation of Europe from a rural and agrarian society into an urban and industrial one.

The High Middle Ages also saw the birth of the modern centralized state. Rome had bequeathed to Western civilization the concepts of the state and the law, but for centuries after the disintegration of the western Roman Empire, the state as a reality did not exist. With the possible exception of the Carolingian experience, no early medieval government exercised authority over a wide area; real political power rested in the hands of local strongmen. Beginning in the twelfth century, kings worked to establish means of communication with all their peoples, to weaken the influence of feudal lords and thus to strengthen their own authority, and to build efficient bureaucracies.