

EIGHTH EDITION

# THE WESTERN EXPERIENCE

MORTIMER CHAMBERS • BARBARA HANAWALT  
THEODORE K. RABB • ISSER WOLOCH • RAYMOND GREW

VOLUME II: SINCE THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY



VOLUME II:  
SINCE THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

# THE WESTERN EXPERIENCE

EIGHTH EDITION

MORTIMER CHAMBERS

*University of California, Los Angeles*

BARBARA HANAWALT

*The Ohio State University*



BB

ISSER WOLOCH

*Columbia University*

RAYMOND GREW

*University of Michigan*



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## THE WESTERN EXPERIENCE VOLUME II: SINCE THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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# About the Authors

**Mortimer Chambers** is Professor of History at the University of California at Los Angeles. He was a Rhodes scholar from 1949 to 1952 and received an M.A. from Wadham College, Oxford, in 1955 after obtaining his doctorate from Harvard University in 1954. He has taught at Harvard University (1954–1955) and the University of Chicago (1955–1958). He was Visiting Professor at the University of British Columbia in 1958, the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1971, the University of Freiburg (Germany) in 1974, and Vassar College in 1988. A specialist in Greek and Roman history, he is coauthor of *Aristotle's History of Athenian Democracy* (1962), editor of a series of essays entitled *The Fall of Rome* (1963), and author of *Georg Busolt: His Career in His Letters* (1990) and of *Staat der Athener*, a German translation and commentary to Aristotle's *Constitution of the Athenians* (1990). He has edited Greek texts of the latter work (1986) and of the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* (1993). He has contributed articles to the *American Historical Review* and *Classical Philology* as well as to other journals, both in America and in Europe. He is also an editor of *Historia*, the international journal of ancient history.

**Barbara Hanawalt** is the King George III Chair of British History at The Ohio State University and the author of numerous books and articles on the social and cultural history of the Middle Ages. Her publications include *The Middle Ages: An*

*Illustrated History* (1999), *'Of Good and Ill Repute': Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (1998), *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History* (1993), *The Ties That Bound: Peasant Life in Medieval England* (1986), and *Crime and Conflict in English Communities, 1300–1348* (1979). She received her M.A. in 1964 and her Ph.D. in 1970, both from the University of Michigan. She has served as president of the Social Science History Association and has been on the Council of the American Historical Association and the Medieval Academy of America. She is currently second vice president of the Medieval Academy of America. She was an NEH fellow (1997–1998), a fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation (1998–1999), an ALCS Fellow in 1975–1976, a fellow at the National Humanities Center (1997–1998), a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin (1990–1991), a member of the School of Historical Research at the Institute for Advanced Study, and a senior research fellow at the Newberry Library in 1979–1980.

**Theodore K. Rabb** is Professor of History at Princeton University. He received his Ph.D. from Princeton, and subsequently taught at Stanford, Northwestern, Harvard, and Johns Hopkins universities. He is the author of numerous articles and reviews in journals such as *The New York Times*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*, and he has been editor of *The Journal of Interdisciplinary*



*History* since its foundation. Among his books are *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (1975), *Renaissance Lives* (1993), and *Jacobean Gentleman* (1999). He has won awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Historical Association and The National Council for Historical Education. He was the principal historian for the PBS series, *Renaissance*, which was nominated for an Emmy.

**Isser Woloch** is Moore Collegiate Professor of History at Columbia University. He received his Ph.D. (1965) from Princeton University in the field of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European history. He has taught at Indiana University and at the University of California at Los Angeles where, in 1967, he received a Distinguished Teaching Citation. He has been a fellow of the ACLS, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. His publications include *Jacobin Legacy: The Democratic Movement under the Directory* (1970), *The Peasantry in the Old Regime: Conditions and Protests* (1970), *The French Veteran from the Revolution to the Restoration* (1979), *Eighteenth-Century Europe: Tradition and Progress, 1715–1789* (1982), *The New Regime: Transformations of the French Civic Order, 1789–1820s* (1994), *Revolution and the Meanings of Freedom in the Nineteenth Century* (1996), and *Napoleon and His Collaborators: The Making of a Dictatorship* (2001).

**Raymond Grew** is Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Michigan. He has also taught at Brandeis University, Princeton University, and at the Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. He earned both his M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard University in the field of modern European history. He has been a Fulbright Fellow to Italy and a Fulbright Travelling Fellow to Italy and to France, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a Fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities. In 1962 he received the Chester Higby Prize from the American Historical Association, and in 1963 the Italian government awarded him the Unità d'Italia Prize; in 1992 he received the David Pinkney Prize of the Society for French Historical Studies and in 2000 a citation for career achievement from the Society for Italian Historical Studies. He has twice served as national chair of the Council for European Studies, was for many years the editor of the international quarterly, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, and is one of the directors of the Global History Group. His recent publications include essays on historical comparison, global history, Catholicism in the nineteenth-century, fundamentalism, and Italian culture and politics. His books include *A Sterner Plan for Italian Unity* (1963), *Crises of Development in Europe and the United States* (1978), *School, State, and Society: The Growth of Elementary Schooling in Nineteenth-Century France* (1991), with Patrick J. Harrigan, and two edited volumes: *Food in Global History* (1999) and *The Construction of Minorities* (2001).

This book is dedicated  
to the memory of David Herlihy  
whose erudition and judgment  
were central to its creation  
and whose friendship and example  
continue to inspire  
his coauthors.

# Preface

When this book was originally conceived, the authors who came together shared several concerns. First, several of us were very active in what was then the newly growing field of social history, and we wanted a textbook that would introduce students to these exciting issues and ways of thinking about history. Secondly, we wanted the textbook not merely to set forth information but to serve as an example of historical writing. That means we cared a lot about the quality of the writing itself and also that we wanted the chapters to be examples of a historical essay that set up a historical problem and developed arguments about that problem using historical evidence. Thirdly, we recognized that for American students the *Western Civilization* textbook needed to provide an overview of that civilization, giving students an introduction to the major achievements in Western thought, art, and science as well as the historical context for understanding them. And lastly, we were determined that our book would treat all these various aspects of history—politics, culture, economics, etc.—in an integrated way. Too many books, we felt, dealt with these topics separately, even in separate chapters, and we sought to demonstrate and exemplify the connections. To that end, *The Western Experience* is designed to provide an analytical and reasonably comprehensive account of the contexts within which, and the processes by which, European society and civi-

lization evolved. Now in the eighth edition, this book has evolved with the strength of prior revisions, including the seventh edition's entire rewriting and reordering of the six chapters that cover the Middle Ages.

To continue that evolution, the eighth edition includes substantially revised selected chapters to make difficult concepts more understandable and to remove material that interfered with the general flow of the text. We have worked conscientiously to make the text more readily comprehensible for the student readers, while preserving an analytical framework and the latest historiographical information.

## Features of *The Western Experience*, Eighth Edition

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Each generation of students brings different experiences, interests, and training into the classroom—changes that are important to the teaching-learning process. The students we teach have taught us what engages or confuses them, what impression of European history they bring to college, and what they can be expected to take from a survey course. Current political, social, and cultural events also shape what we teach and how we teach. Our experience as teachers and the

helpful comments of scores of other teachers have led to a rewriting and reordering throughout the book as we have sought to make it clearer and more accessible without sacrificing our initial goal of writing a reasonably sophisticated, interpretive, and analytic history.

Among the changes that we have made in this edition to clarify the text is the use of a **color-coded thematic grid** in each chapter. This enables students and teachers to pick out which of the seven themes are developed in each chapter. A teacher can aid the students to follow through the themes, such as changes in gender roles, the economy, or warfare in various periods. Such a grid makes comparative questions easier to address and permits students to trace different responses to historical change over time. The grid also helps teachers to plan lectures and lessons and coordinate them with supplementary books or audio and visual materials in the course.

The **maps** in *The Western Experience* are already much admired by instructors and much copied in other textbooks. In the eighth edition students will be able to use a URL link to the same maps in an interactive format on the website for the text. The URL location of the website will be available in the book, so that students can have immediate access to the map they wish to work on.

To encourage students to move beyond rote learning of historical “facts” and to think broadly about history, the authors have added “**Questions for Further Thought**” at the end of each chapter. These are too broad to be exam questions; instead they are meant to be questions that stimulate the students to think about history and social, political, and economic forces. Some are comparative, some require students to draw on knowledge of a previous chapter, some ask about the role of great leaders in politics, and some ask about how the less famous people living at the time perceived the events surrounding them.

The Online Learning Center can be accessed through the McGraw-Hill Higher Education website. The Online Learning Center contains a Student Center, Instructor Center, and an Information Center. The features included in the Online Learning Center are PowerPoint presentations, quizzes, flash cards, audio pronunciation, a new “Who am I?” game, and map and chronology exercises. The

integration of the Online Learning Center as an instructional component makes teaching and learning with *The Western Experience* much more accessible and enjoyable.

### ◆ INCORPORATION OF RECENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

For us the greatest pleasure in a revision lies in the challenge of absorbing and then incorporating the latest developments in **historical understanding**. From its first edition, this book included more of the results of quantitative and social history than most general textbooks of European history, an obvious reflection of our own research. Each subsequent edition provided an occasion to incorporate current methods and new knowledge, a challenge that required reconsidering paragraphs, sections, and whole chapters in the light of new theories and new research, sometimes literally reconceptualizing part of the past. That evolution continues with this edition.

We have taken into account recent work in all aspects of history, including economic, intellectual, cultural, demographic, and diplomatic history as well as social and political history. Most striking of all are the new perspectives that arise from work in **gender studies and cultural studies**, which we have sought to incorporate in this text.

### ◆ A BALANCED, INTERPRETIVE, AND FLEXIBLE APPROACH

At the same time, we recognize that the professional scholar’s preference for new perspectives over familiar ones makes a distinction that students may not share. For them, the latest **interpretations** need to be integrated with established **understandings and controversies**, with the history of people and events that are part of our cultural lore. We recognize that a textbook should provide a coherent presentation of the basic information from which students can begin to form their historical understanding. We believe this information must be part of an interpretive history but also that its readers—teachers, students, and



general readers—should be free to use it in many different ways and in conjunction with their own areas of special knowledge and their own interests and curiosity.

### ◆ OVERARCHING THEMES

Throughout this book, from the treatment of the earliest civilizations to the discussion of the present, we pursue certain key themes. These seven themes constitute a set of categories by which societies and historical change can be analyzed.

(1) *Social structure* is one theme. In early chapters, social structure involves how the land was settled, divided among its inhabitants, and put to use. Later discussions of how property is held must include corporate, communal, and individual ownership, then investment banking and companies that sell shares. Similarly, in each era we treat the division of labor, noting whether workers are slave or free, male or female, and when there are recognized specialists in fighting or crafts or trade. The chapters covering the Ancient world, the Middle Ages, and the early modern period explore social hierarchies that include nobles, clergy, commoners, and slaves or serfs; the treatments of the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and twentieth-century societies analyze modern social classes.

(2) Another theme we analyze throughout this book is what used to be called the *body politic*. Each era contains discussions of how political power is acquired and used and of the political structures that result. Students learn about the role of law from ancient codes to the present, as well as problems of order, and the formation of governments, including why government functions have increased and political participation of the population has changed.

(3) From cultivation in the plains of the Tigris and Euphrates to the global economy, we follow changes in the organization of production and in the impact of *technology*. We note how goods are distributed, and we observe patterns of trade as avenues of cultural exchange in addition to wealth. We look at the changing economic role of governments and the impact of economic theories.

(4) The *evolution of the family and changing gender roles* are topics fundamental to every historical period. Families give form to daily life and kinship structures. The history of demography, migration, and work is also a history of the family. The family has always been a central focus of social organization and religion, as well as the principal instrument by which societies assign specific practices, roles, and values to women and men. Gender roles have changed from era to era, differing according to social class and between rural and urban societies. Observing gender roles across time, the student discovers that social, political, economic, and cultural history are always interrelated; that the present is related to the past; and that social change brings gains and losses rather than evolution in a straight line—three lessons all history courses teach.

(5) No history of Europe could fail to pay attention to *war*, which, for most polities, has been their most demanding activity. Warfare has strained whatever resources were available from ancient times to the present, leading governments to invent new ways to extract wealth and mobilize support. War has built and undermined states, stimulated science and consumed technology, made heroes and restructured nobility, schooling, and social services. Glorified in European culture and often condemned, war in every era has affected the lives of all its peoples. This historical significance, more than specific battles, is one of the themes of *The Western Experience*.

(6) *Religion* has been basic to the human experience, and our textbook explores the different religious institutions and experiences that societies developed. Religion affects and is affected by all the themes we address, creating community and causing conflict, shaping intellectual and daily life, providing the experiences that bind individual lives and society within a common system of meaning.

(7) For authors of a general history, no decision is more difficult than the space devoted to *cultural expression*. In this respect, as elsewhere, we have striven for a balance between high and popular culture. We present as clearly and concisely as possible the most important formal ideas, philosophies, and ideologies of each era. We emphasize concepts of recognized importance in the general

history of ideas and those concepts that illuminate behavior and discourse in a given period. We pay particular attention to developments in science that we believe are related to important intellectual, economic, and social trends. Popular culture appears both in specific sections and throughout the book. We want to place popular culture within its social and historical context but not make the gulf too wide between popular and high or formal culture. Finally, we write about many of the great works of literature, art, architecture, and music. Because of the difficulties of selection we have tried to emphasize works that are cultural expressions of their time, but that also have been influential over the ages and around the globe.

Attention to these seven themes occasions problems of organization and selection. We could have structured this book around a series of topical essays, perhaps repeating the series of themes for each of the standard chronological divisions of European history. Instead, we chose to preserve a narrative flow that emphasizes interrelationships and historical context. We wanted each chapter to stand as an interpretive historical essay, with a beginning and conclusion. As a result, the themes emerge repeatedly within discussions of a significant event, an influential institution, an individual life, or a whole period of time. Or they may intersect in a single institution or historical trend. Nevertheless, readers can follow any one of these themes across time and use that theme as a measure of change and a way to assess the differences and similarities between societies.

#### ◆ STRONG COVERAGE OF SOCIAL HISTORY

To discuss history thematically is to think comparatively and to employ categories of social history that in the last generation have greatly affected historical understanding. The impulse behind social history was not new. As early as the eighteenth century many historians called for a history that was more than chronology, more than an account of kings and battles. Closer to our own time, Virginia Woolf asked why there was not a history of ordinary people rather than kings and monarchs. Although in the nineteenth century historical studies gave primary place to politics,

diplomacy, and war (using evidence from official documents newly accessible in state archives), the substantial changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution and colonialism led historians to begin to look at economic and social history. Intense interest in social history came in the 1960s and 1970s when the academic world opened its doors to students from the working class and the availability of computers and large data sets made it possible to trace the life patterns and accomplishments of workers, minorities, and women. But even those working with qualitative sources documented the daily life in ancient Rome or Renaissance Florence or old New York as reflected in styles of dress, housing, diet, and so on. Historical museums and popular magazines featured this “pots and pans history,” which was appealing in its concreteness but tended (like the collections of interesting objects that it resembled) to lack a theoretical basis. Historians writing the history of those who were often illiterate have found abundant sources to bring the lives of ordinary people into our understanding of a society beyond the tiny minority who were the powerful, rich, and educated (and who left behind the fullest and most accessible records of their activities). The ordinary people now have a place within a larger interpretive framework, borrowing from the social sciences, especially anthropology, sociology, economics, and political science. Still an arena of active and significant research, social history has also expanded, strengthened by new work on the history of women. With the development of a stronger theoretical sense, these interests have grown into gender studies that give a fresh new dimension to familiar historical issues. Social history has changed in another way, too, shifting away from explanations that gave priority to social structure and material factors and toward cultural studies.

#### ◆ CHRONOLOGICAL/CONCEPTUAL ORGANIZATION AND PERIODIZATION

These developments in social history, which have greatly expanded the range of evidence and issues that historians must consider, have changed our ideas of periodization. The mainstay for organizing historical knowledge has been the rise and fall

of dynasties, the formation of states, and the occurrence of wars and revolutions. But we all know that people did not wake up on the morning after the war between Sparta and Athens, or Waterloo, or even the Second World War to find their family structures and basic economic needs radically altered because a balance of political power or a change of dynasty had occurred. The periodization most appropriate for describing changes in culture and ideas, economic production, or science and technology is often quite different, and changes in everyday life and popular culture often occur on a still different scale. We have sought a compromise for *The Western Experience*. It maintains the traditional chronological sequence of the introductory European history course. At the same time, insofar as each chapter is an interpretive essay, the information it contains illustrates arguments to describe a period of European history. For all these reasons, chapters also have topical emphases, and sometimes a cluster of chapters is required to treat a given era.

## Pedagogical Features of the Eighth Edition

The eighth edition of *The Western Experience* continues the precedent of earlier editions with its high-quality book production, and the inclusion of full color, clearly focused maps, and a highly accessible format. This edition offers more than 100 maps and 400 illustrations, each with an explanatory caption that enhances the text coverage. It features a variety of pedagogical devices to help students tackle the content without sacrificing subtlety of interpretation or trying to escape the fact that history is complex.

### ◆ COLOR CODED GRID OF SEVEN THEMES

Positioned at the start of every chapter, this grid highlights the seven themes developed in each chapter.

CHAPTER 28. THE GREAT TWENTIETH-CENTURY CRISIS							
	Social Structure	Body Politic	Changes in the Organization of Production and in the Impact of Technology	Evolution of Family and Changing Gender Roles	War	Religion	Cultural Expression
I. TWO SUCCESSFUL REVOLUTIONS							
II. THE DISTINCTIVE CULTURE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY							
III. THE RETREAT FROM DEMOCRACY							
IV. NAZI GERMANY AND THE U.S.S.R.							
V. THE DEMOCRACIES' WEAK RESPONSE							

### ◆ PRIMARY SOURCE BOXES

These excerpts from primary sources are designed to illustrate or supplement points made in the

text, to provide some flavor of the issues under discussion, and to allow beginning students some of that independence of judgment that comes from a careful reading of historical sources.

## OEDIPUS' SELF-MUTILATION

*In Sophocles' tragedy King Oedipus, Jocasta, the mother of Oedipus, hangs herself after learning that she has married her own son. An attendant then narrates what follows. (Those he "should never have seen" are the daughters Oedipus fathered by his mother-wife.)*

"We saw a knotted pendulum, a noose,  
A strangled woman swinging before our eyes.  
The King saw too, and with heart-rending groans  
Untied the rope, and laid her on the ground.  
But worse was yet to see. Her dress was pinned  
With golden brooches, which the King snatched out  
And thrust, from full arm's length, into his eyes—  
Eyes that should see no longer his shame, his guilt,  
No longer see those they should never have seen,  
Nor see, unseeing, those he had longed to see,  
Henceforth seeing nothing but night . . . To this wild  
tune

He pierced his eyeballs time and time again,  
Till bloody tears ran down his beard—not drops  
But in full spate a whole cascade descending  
In drenching cataracts of scarlet rain.  
Thus two have sinned; and on two heads, not one—  
On man and wife—falls mingled punishment.  
Their old long happiness of former times  
Was happiness earned with justice; but to-day  
Calamity, death, ruin, tears, and shame,  
All ills that there are names for—all are here."

From E. F. Watling (tr.), Sophocles, *The Three Theban Plays*, Penguin Classics, 1971, pp. 60–61.

### ◆ HISTORICAL ISSUES BOXES

These boxes explain major controversies over historical interpretations so that students can see

how historical understanding is constructed. They encourage students to participate in these debates and formulate their own positions.

## TWO VIEWS OF COLUMBUS

*The following two passages suggest the enormous differences that have arisen in interpretations of the career of Christopher Columbus. The first, by Samuel Eliot Morison, a historian and a noted sailor, represents the traditional view of the explorer's achievements that held sway until recent years.*

1. "Columbus had a Hellenic sense of wonder at the new and strange, combined with an artist's appreciation of natural beauty. Moreover, Columbus had a deep conviction of the sovereignty and the infinite wisdom of God, which enhanced all his triumphs. One only wishes that the Admiral might have been afforded the sense of fulfillment that would have come from foreseeing all that flowed from his discoveries. The whole history of the Americas stems from the Four Voyages of Columbus, and as the Greek city-states looked back to the deathless gods as their founders, so today a score of independent nations unite in homage to Christopher the stout-hearted son of Genoa, who carried Christian civilization across the Ocean Sea."

From S. E. Morison, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Christopher Columbus* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1942), pp. 670–671.

2. "For all his navigational skill, about which the salty types make such a fuss, and all his fortuitous headings, Admiral Colón [Christopher Columbus] could be a wretched mariner. The four voyages, properly seen, quite apart from bravery, are replete with lubberly mistakes, misconceived sailing plans, foolish disregard of elementary maintenance, and stubborn neglect of basic safety—all characterized by the assertion of human superiority over the natural realm. Almost every time Colón went wrong, it was because he had refused to bend to the inevitabilities of tide and wind and reef or, more arrogantly still, had not bothered to learn about them.

From Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy* (New York: Knopf, 1990), pp. 209–210, 362.

### ◆ MORE HEADING LEVELS

We have given particular attention to adding more descriptive content guides, such as the consistent use of three levels of headings. We believe these will help students identify specific topics for purposes of study and review as well as give a clear outline of a chapter's argument.

### ◆ CHRONOLOGICAL CHARTS

Nearly every chapter employs charts and chronological tables that outline the unfolding of major events and social processes and serve as a convenient reference for students.

<i>Chronology</i> <b>AN OVERVIEW OF EVENTS</b> CA. 7000–486	
(ALL DATES B.C.*)	
<b>ca. 8000</b>	First permanent villages in Near East.
<b>ca. 3000</b>	Formation of cities in Sumer; unification of Upper and Lower Egypt.
<b>ca. 1900</b>	Hebrews begin immigration into Palestine.
<b>1792–1750</b>	Hammurabi unifies Babylonia and issues his law code.
<b>ca. 1595</b>	Sack of Babylon by Hittites.
<b>ca. 1570–1085</b>	Egyptian Empire (New Kingdom).
<b>ca. 1400–1200</b>	High point of Hittite kingdom.
<b>ca. 1230</b>	Exodus of Israelites from Egypt and their invasion of Canaan.
<b>ca. 900–612</b>	Assyrian conquests.
<b>559–530</b>	Cyrus founds Persian Empire.
<b>522–486</b>	Rule of Darius in Persia.
*Some historians use an alternative system of dating: B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era).	

### Available Formats

To provide an alternative to the full-length hardcover edition, *The Western Experience*, Eighth Edition, is available in two-volume and three-volume paperbound editions. Volume I includes chapters 1 through 17 and covers material through the eighteenth century. Volume II includes chapters 15 through 30 and the Epilogue, and covers material since the sixteenth century. Volume A includes chapters 1 through 12, Antiquity and the Middle Ages; Volume B includes chapters 11 through 21, The Early Modern Era; and Volume C includes chapters 19 through 30 and the Epilogue, The Modern Era. The page numbering and cross-references in these editions remain the same as in the hardcover text.

### Ancillary Instructional Materials

McGraw-Hill offers instructors and students a wide variety of ancillary materials to accompany *The Western Experience*. These supplements listed here may accompany *The Western Experience*. Please contact your local McGraw-Hill representative for details concerning policies, prices, and availability, as some restrictions may apply.

### ◆ FOR THE STUDENT

*Student Study Guide/Workbook with Map Exercises, Volumes I and II*: Includes the following features for each chapter: chapter outlines, chronological diagrams, four kinds of exercises—map exercises, exercises in document analysis, exercises that reinforce the book's important overarching themes, exercises in matching important terms with significant individuals—and essay topics requiring analysis and speculation.

New Multimedia Supplements for the Student:

- *The Online Learning Center*: A fully interactive, book-specific website featuring links to chapter- and topic-appropriate sites on the World Wide Web, and a guide to using the Internet. Some outstanding tools included on the site:
  - Chapter outlines



- Interactive “drag and drop” exercises ask students to match up significant individuals and key terms with the correct identifications.
- An audio function helps students pronounce difficult terms.
- Self-tests offer students a chance to find out in what areas they need more study.
- Essay questions
- Map exercises are also included.
- Links with exercises
- New animated maps

### ◆ FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

An integrated instructional package is available in either print or electronic format.

***Instructor’s Manual/Test Bank:*** This fully revised and expanded manual includes chapter summaries, lecture and discussion topics, and lists of additional teaching resources such as recommended films, novels, and websites. In addition, the test bank for the seventh edition of *The Western Experience* includes more questions than ever before. Types of questions include multiple choice, identification, sentence completion, essay (both factual and interpretive), and critical thinking exercises (such as map analysis or source analysis questions).

***Computerized Test Bank:*** A computerized test bank is available in Windows or Mac formats.

***Overhead Transparency Acetates:*** This expanded full-color transparency package includes all the maps and chronological charts in the text.

***The Instructor’s Resource CD-ROM:*** Allows instructors to create their own classroom presentation using resources provided by McGraw-Hill. Instructors may also customize their presentations by adding slides or other electronic resources. In addition, this CD allows instructors access to all their instructional materials (including the test bank) in one integrated instructional package. The IRCD includes the following resources: a PowerPoint slide show, electronic overhead transparencies (maps and chronological charts from the text), the instructor’s manual (with hyperlinks to appropriate maps and timelines to help the instructor build lecture presentations), and the test bank.

***The Online Learning Center:*** Available to the instructor and includes the Instructor’s Manual and PowerPoint slides in addition to students’ resources.

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# Introduction

Everyone uses history. We use it to define who we are and to connect our personal experience to the collective memory of the groups to which we belong, including a particular region, nation, and culture. We invoke the past to explain our hopes and ambitions and to justify our fears and conflicts. The Charter of the United Nations, like the American Declaration of Independence, is based on a view of history. When workers strike or armies march, they cite the lessons of their history. Because history is so important to us psychologically and intellectually, historical understanding is always shifting and often controversial.

Historical knowledge is cumulative. Historians may ask many of the same questions about different periods of history or raise new questions or issues; they integrate the answers and historical knowledge grows. The study of history cannot be a subjective exercise in which all opinions are equally valid. Regardless of the impetus for a particular historical question, the answer to it stands until overturned by better evidence. We now know more about the past than ever before, and we understand it as the people we study could not. Unlike them, we know the outcome of their history; we can apply methods they did not have, and often we have evidence they never saw.

Humans have always found pleasure in the reciting and reading of history. The poems about the fall of Troy or the histories of Herodotus and

Thucydides entertained the ancient Greeks. The biographies of great men and women, dramatic accounts of important events, colorful tales of earlier times can be fascinating in themselves. Through these encounters with history we experience the common concerns of all people; and through the study of European history, we come to appreciate the ideals and conflicts, the failures and accidents, the social needs and human choices that formed the Western world in which we live. Knowing the historical context also enriches our appreciation for the achievements of European culture, enabling us to see its art, science, ideas, and politics in relationship to real people, specific interests, and burning issues.

We think of Europe's history as the history of Western civilization, but the very concept of a Western civilization is itself the result of history. The Greeks gave the names east and west to the points on the horizon at which the sun rises and sets. Because the Persian Empire and India lay to their east, the Greeks labeled their own continent, which they called Europe, the west. The distinction between Western civilization and others, while frequently ethnocentric, arbitrary, and exaggerated, was reinforced by the many encounters that Europeans had with other peoples and civilizations. The view that the Western civilization is all one can be easily challenged in every respect save its cultural tradition.

*The Western Experience* gives primary attention to a small part of the world and thus honors that cultural tradition. The concentration on Europe nevertheless includes important examples of city and of rural life; of empires and monarchies and republics; of life before and after industrialization; of societies in which labor was organized through markets, serfdom, and slavery; of cultures little concerned with science and of ones that used changing scientific knowledge; of non-Christian religions and of all the major forms of Christianity in action.

Throughout this book, from the treatment of the earliest civilizations to the discussion of the present, certain themes are pursued. These seven themes constitute a set of categories by which societies and historical change can be analyzed: social structure, the body politic, changes in the organization of production and in the impact of technology, the evolution of the family and changing gender roles, war, religion, and cultural expression. The themes are developed more fully in the Preface. These themes help readers integrate the narrative of events with a deeper understanding of how societies and individuals responded to changing circumstances. By following through the themes in the text, readers will have a basis of comparison of historical responses to politics, the economy, family and gender roles, war, religion, and culture. The themes are a constant of human history, but each period, sometimes each generation, had different responses to them. Readers of

this book will find many ways to enrich their understanding of history. It introduces historical methods; it provides a framework for what they already know about Western society; and it challenges preconceptions about the past, about how societies are organized, and about how people behave. Historical study is an integrative enterprise that must take into account long-term trends and specific moments, social structure and individual actions.

A college course alone cannot create an educated citizen. Nor is history the only path to integrated knowledge. Western history is not the only history a person should know, nor is an introductory survey necessarily the best way to learn it. Yet, as readers consider and then challenge interpretations offered in this text, they will exercise critical and analytical skills. They can begin to overcome the parochialism that attributes importance only to the present. To learn to think critically about historical evidence and know how to formulate an argument on the bases of this evidence is to experience the study of history as one of the vital intellectual activities by which we come to know who and where we are.

*Mortimer Chambers*  
*Barbara Hanawalt*  
*Theodore K. Rabb*  
*Isser Woloch*  
*Raymond Grew*