

Andrea / Overfield

USD1/009

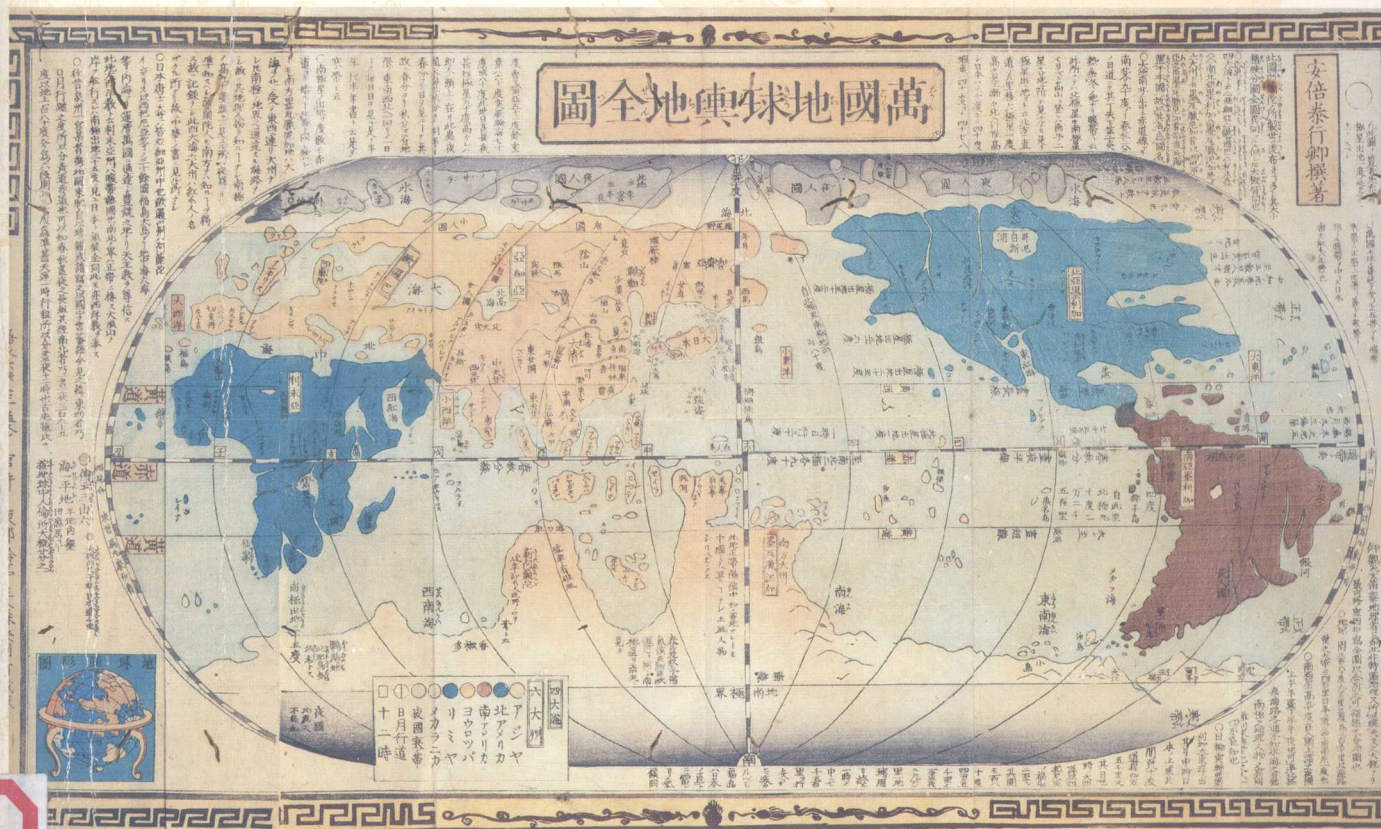
710 BOOK STORE

\$26.95

The

Human Record

Sources of Global History



Third Edition

VOLUME II: SINCE 1500

KO
34

The HUMAN RECORD

SOURCES OF GLOBAL HISTORY

THIRD EDITION / Volume II: Since 1500

Alfred J. Andrea

University of Vermont

James H. Overfield

University of Vermont

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON NEW YORK

Sponsoring Editor: Andrea Shaw
Assistant Editor: Keith Mahoney
Project Editor: Anne Holm
Senior Production/Design Coordinator: Jill Haber
Manufacturing Manager: Florence Cadran
Marketing Manager: Sandra McGuire

Cover design: Sarah Melhado and Sam Shaw
Cover image: Japanese map from Hugh Cortazzi

Source credits appear on pages 521–525.

Copyright © 1998 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: 97-72433

ISBN: 0-395-87088-7

3456789-DH-01 00 99 98

Preface

Many goals and principles have guided our work on the third edition of *The Human Record*. Foremost is our commitment to the proposition that all students of history must meet the challenge of analyzing primary sources, thereby becoming active inquirers into the past, rather than passive recipients of historical facts. Involvement with primary-source evidence enables students to see that historical scholarship is principally the intellectual process of drawing inferences and discovering patterns from clues yielded by the past, not of memorizing someone else's conclusions. Moreover, such analysis motivates students to learn by stimulating curiosity and imagination, and it helps them develop into critical thinkers who are comfortable with complex challenges.

Not only does primary-source evidence enable the student of history to discover what people in the past thought and did, it also allows the researcher to detect significant changes, as well as lines of continuity, in the institutions and ideas of a culture or cluster of cultures. This in turn allows the historian to divide the past into meaningful periods that highlight the turning points, as well as the constancies, that constitute the human story. In short, primary-source analysis is the essence of the historian's craft and the basis of all historical understanding.

Themes and Structure

We have compiled a source collection that traces the long and intricate course of human history. Volume I follows the evolution of the cultures that most significantly influenced the history of the world from around 3500 B.C.E. to 1700 C.E., with emphasis on the development of the major religious, social, intellectual, and political traditions of that supercontinent of interconnected societies known as the *Afro-Eurasian Ecumene*. Although our primary focus in Volume I is on the eastern hemisphere, we do not neglect the Americas. This first volume concurrently develops the theme of the growing links and increasingly important exchanges among the world's cultures down to the early modern era. Volume II picks up this theme of growing human interconnectedness by tracing the gradual establishment of Western global hegemony; the simultaneous historical developments in other civilizations and societies around the world; the anti-Western, anticolonial movements of the twentieth century; and the emergence of today's still often bitterly divided but integrated *one world*.

To address these themes in depth, we have chosen and arranged selections that present an overview of global history in mosaic form, in which each source contributes to a single large composition. We have been careful to avoid isolated sources that provide a taste of some culture or age but, by their dissociation, shed no light on patterns of cultural creation, continuity, change, and interchange — the essential components of world history.

In selecting and placing the various pieces of our mosaic, we have sought to create a balanced picture of human history and to craft a book that reveals the contributions of the world's major societies. We also have attempted to give our readers a collection of sources representing a wide variety of perspectives and experiences. Believing that the study of history properly concerns every aspect of past human activity and thought, we have sought sources that mirror the practices and concerns of a wide variety of representative persons and groups.

Our pursuit of historical balance has also led us into the arena of unwritten evidence. Although most historians center their research on documents, the discipline requires us to consider all of the clues surrendered by the past, and these include artifacts. Moreover, we have discovered that students enjoy analyzing artifacts and seem to remember vividly the conclusions they draw from them. For these reasons, we have included a number of illustrations of works of art and other artifacts that users of this book can analyze as historical sources.

Learning Aids

Source analysis can be a daunting exercise for students. Therefore, to make these selections as accessible as possible, we have provided our readers with a variety of aids. First there is the *Prologue*, in which we explain — initially in a theoretical manner and then through concrete examples — how a student of history interprets written and artifactual sources. Next we offer *part, chapter, section, and individual source introductions*, all to help the reader place each selection into a meaningful context and understand its historical significance. Because we consider *The Human Record* an interpretive overview of global history and therefore a survey of the major patterns of global history that stands on its own as a text, our introductions are significantly fuller than those normally encountered in a book of sources.

Suggested *Questions for Analysis* precede each source; their purpose is to help the student make sense of each piece of evidence and wrest from it as much insight as possible. The questions are presented in a three-tiered format designed to resemble the historian's approach to source analysis and to help students make historical comparisons on a global scale. The first several questions are usually quite specific and ask the reader to pick out important pieces of information. These initial questions require the student to address the issues What does this document or artifact say? and What meaningful facts can I garner from it? Addressing concrete questions of this sort prepares the student researcher for the next, more significant level of critical thinking and analysis: drawing inferences. Questions that demand inferential conclusions follow the fact-oriented questions. Finally, whenever possible, we offer a third tier of questions that challenge the student to compare the individual or society that produced a particular source with another individual, group, or culture encountered earlier in the volume. We believe such

comparisons help students fix more firmly in their minds the distinguishing cultural characteristics of the various societies they encounter in their survey of world history. Beyond that, we believe that global history is, by its very nature, comparative history.

Another form of help we offer is to *gloss the sources*, explaining fully words and allusions that college students cannot reasonably be expected to know. To facilitate reading and to encourage reference, the notes appear at the bottoms of the pages on which they are cited. Some documents also contain *interlinear notes* that serve as transitions or provide needed information.

Some instructors might use *The Human Record* as their sole textbook. Most, however, will probably use it as a supplement to a standard narrative textbook, and many of these professors might decide not to require their students to analyze every entry. To assist instructors (and students) in selecting sources that best suit their interests and needs, we have prepared *two analytical tables of contents* for each volume. The first lists readings and artifacts by geographic and cultural area, and the second, by topic. These two tables of contents suggest to professors and students alike the rich variety of material available within these pages, particularly for essays in comparative history.

New to This Edition

A major goal in crafting *The Human Record* has been to do our best to prepare the student-reader for success — *success* being defined as comfort with historical analysis, proficiency in critical thinking, an understanding of how to view history on a global scale, and a deepened awareness of the rich cultural varieties, as well as shared characteristics, of the human family. To continue to meet these objectives, we have made a number of changes in this third edition. Moreover, because the study of history is an ongoing dialogue between the present and the past, recent developments — the eruption of bitter ethnic rivalries in many parts of the world, the growing appeal of militant religious fundamentalism, and the continuing rapid economic growth of China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Korea — have made revision of some portions of our book desirable. In addition, recent scholarly discoveries, such as the excavation of a human site at Monte Verde, Chile, that has been dated to at least 10,500 B.C.E., have made revision not just desirable but necessary.

Users of the second edition will discover that about one-third of the documents and artifacts are new to the third edition. Volume I has a whole new chapter (Chapter 10) devoted to the parallel and often mutually hostile cultures of two medieval Christian civilizations: Western Europe and Byzantium. New sections have also been added within several chapters of Volume I, all of which focus on various aspects of cross-cultural exchange. These sections include “Travel along the Silk Road” and “Travel across the Indian Ocean” in Chapter 5; “Christianity and the Roman World” and “Religious Exchange and Interchange” in Chapter 7; “Buddhism in East Asia: Acceptance, Rejection, and Accommodation” and “Southwest Asia: Crossroads of the Afro-Eurasian

World" in Chapter 9; and "Pilgrims and Merchants before the Mongol Age" in Chapter 12.

Likewise, Volume II has received a top-to-bottom overhauling, with expanded coverage in some areas and the addition of a number of new areas and topics. For example, religious fundamentalism is the focus of several new sources, including selections from the writings of the late-eighteenth-century African political and religious leader Usman den Fodio (Chapter 6); a summary of the principles of the Muslim Brotherhood, the twentieth-century movement dedicated to Islamic revival (Chapter 12); and a statement of Hindu nationalism by the Indian journalist Girilal Jain (Chapter 13). Economic and political problems of former colonies in Africa and Asia provide the topic for a new section in Chapter 13, which, in addition to Jain's editorials, includes selections from the speeches and writings of C. Odumwegwu Ojukwu, a leader of the Biafran independence movement in the 1970s, and a new set of statistics on world economic development. Finally, excerpts from Deng Xiaoping's speeches and writings shed light on China's ongoing economic transformation.

Other new sources reflect our ongoing commitment to social-cultural history. In this vein we added a number of documentary and artifactual sources that reflect everyday life (and death) and gender issues — topics emphasized in the first two editions but important enough to justify expanded coverage in this new edition. Additionally, some of the new sources appearing in Volume I — such as the Buddha statue from Funan, the Gnostic *Gospel of Thomas*, the Manichaean *Parable about the World-Ocean*, the Nestorian-Chinese *Christian Monument*, Pope Sylvester II's *Letter to St. Stephen of Hungary*, and al-Mas'udi's *Meadows of Gold* — were chosen because they reveal stages in the important process of cultural *syncretism*, in which elements from two or more cultures merge to form a new cultural complex. This essential aspect of global history is a major theme throughout both volumes of *The Human Record*.

Because of the long expanse of time covered by Volume I, several new sources were added to illustrate the way in which some cultures and their institutions evolved over extended periods of time. Thus in Chapter 1, the three documents that comprise source 3, "Three Funerary Documents," allow the student to see how Egyptian notions of a blissful afterlife took shape over a period of more than a thousand years. Likewise, the addition of the vedic hymn "Who Is Indra?" helps clarify essential shifts in the Indo-Aryan cosmology over the period of roughly a millennium.

Always on the lookout for new artifacts that can stimulate student inquiry and aid understanding, we are happy to report that both volumes have received an infusion of new visual sources.

In addition, some new items are actually new translations of documents that appeared in previous editions, and a number of these are our own translations. Our goal is to provide selections that are written in clear and idiomatic modern English. Other new sources have been added simply because we believe they will provide effective material for classroom use.

To reflect up-to-date scholarship, as well as our rethinking and restructuring of a number of source selections, we have revised many of the book's introductions and explanatory notes, occasionally expanding them in order to provide even greater help to the student-reader.

Using The Human Record: Suggestions from the Editors

Specific suggestions for assignments and classroom activities appear in the manual entitled *Using The Human Record: Suggestions from the Editors*. In this manual, prepared by the editor-authors, we explain why we have chosen the sources that appear in this book and what insights we believe students should be capable of drawing from them. We also describe classroom tactics for encouraging thought and discussion on the various sources. The advice we present is the fruit of our own use of these sources in the classroom.

Acknowledgments

We are in debt to the many professionals who offered their expert advice and assistance during preparation of this edition. Scholars and friends at the University of Vermont who generously shared their expertise with us include Doris Bergen, Robert V. Daniels, Carolyn Elliott, Shirley Gedeon, Eric Gilbert, William Haviland, Kristin M. Peterson-Ishaq, Abubaker Saad, Wolfe W. Schmokel, Peter Seybolt, John W. Seyller, Marshall True, Diane Villemaire, and Denise Youngblood. We wish to thank especially Peter D. Andrea, who drew the prototype for the map of "Strabo's world" that appears in Volume I.

We also wish to acknowledge the following instructors, who read and commented on portions of this edition in its earliest stages of revision: Robert Babcock, Hastings College; Blake Beattie, University of Louisville; Norman Bennett, Boston University; Joel Berlatsky, Wilkes University; Jack Betterly, Emma Willard School; Orazio Ciccarelli, The University of Southern Mississippi; Steve Davidson, Southwestern University; David Fahey, Miami University; Frederick Gifun, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth; Bernice Guillaume, St. Louis University; Howard Holter, California State University-Dominguez Hills; Paul Madden, Hardin-Simmons University; Patrick Manning, Northeastern University; Delores McBroome, Humboldt State University; Pamela McVay, Ursuline College; Richard Negron, Central Washington University; James B. M. Schick, Pittsburg State University; Marvin G. Slind, Washington State University; and Charlotte Staelin, Wesley College.

Finally, our debt to our spouses is beyond payment, but our dedication to them of each edition of this book reflects in some small way how deeply we appreciate their constant support and good-humored tolerance.

A. J. A.

J. H. O.

Prologue

Primary Sources and How We Read Them

What Is History?

Many students believe that the study of history involves simply memorizing dates, names, battles, treaties, and endless numbers of similar, usually uninteresting facts with seemingly no relevance to their lives and concerns. After all, so they think, the past is over and done with. Historians know what has happened, and all that is left for students is to absorb this body of knowledge, for reasons known only to educators.

But these notions are wrong — totally wrong. History involves discovery and interpretation, and its content is vitally relevant to our lives. Our understanding of history is constantly changing and deepening, as historians learn more about the past and shed new light on its meaning. Just as significant, each person who studies the past brings to it a unique perspective and raises questions that are meaningful to him or her. Although there is certainly an objective past, which we all should endeavor to discover and understand as fully as possible, each of us also must explore a past that has personal meaning in order to find in it insights and truths relevant to our own concerns. The drive to understand what has gone before us is innately human and springs from our need to know who we are. History serves this function of self-discovery in a special way because of its universality. Contrary to the opinion of many people, the study of history does not focus exclusively or even primarily on politics. It deals with all aspects of past human activity and belief, for there is no subject or concern that lacks a history. Therefore, each of us can and should explore the origins and historical evolution of whatever is most important to us.

Regardless of our individual interests or questions, the study and interpretation of our historical heritage involves coming to grips with the dynamics of the historical process. It means exploring the ways in which human societies reacted to the environments in which they found themselves and the ways in which they sought to reshape those environments to meet their needs. It means exploring the complex interplay of geography, technology, religion, social structures, and a myriad of other historical factors. It means exploring the ways in which societies change in response to stimuli and the ways in which they resist change, as well. It means exploring the traditions that have imprinted themselves upon various cultures and the ways those traditions have provided continuity over long periods of time. It means exploring the

roles of individuals in shaping the course of history and the ways in which individuals have been shaped by historical circumstances. Indeed, the questions we ask of the past are limited only by our imaginations; the answers we arrive at are limited only by the evidence at hand and our ability to use that evidence thoroughly and creatively. Our answers, no matter how partial or tentative, certainly reveal the inner dynamics of whatever historical culture we are investigating. More than that, those insights help us better understand the challenges we face in our own day by enlarging our field of vision. When applied to the global community, historical perspective enables us to appreciate the richness of human experience and expression and the factors underlying the striking similarities and differences that exist among the world's peoples.

This collection of sources will help you discover some of the major lines of global historical development and understand many of the major cultural traditions and forces that have shaped history around the world. As editors we will not hand you answers; you will have to work for them because hard work lies at the heart of historical study. The word *history*, which is Greek in origin, means "learning through inquiry," and that is precisely what historians do. They discover and interpret the past by asking questions and conducting research. Their inquiry revolves around an examination of evidence left by the past. For lack of a better term, historians call that evidence *primary source material*.

Primary Sources: Their Value and Limitations

Primary sources are records that for the most part have been passed on in written form, thereby preserving memories of past events. These written sources include, but are not limited to, official records, law codes, private correspondence, literature, religious texts, merchants' account books, memoirs, and the list goes on and on. No source by itself contains unadulterated truth or the whole picture. Each gives us only a glimpse of reality, and it is the historian's task to fit these fragments of the past into a coherent picture.

Imagine for a moment that some historian in the mid twenty-first century decides to write a history of your college class. Think about the primary sources this researcher would seek out: the school catalogue, the registrar's class lists, academic transcripts, and similar official documents; class lecture notes, course syllabi, examinations, term papers, and possibly even textbooks; diaries and private letters; school newspapers, yearbooks, and sports programs; handbills, posters, and even photographs of graffiti; and recollections written down or otherwise recorded by some of your classmates long after they graduated. With a bit of thought you could add other items to the list, among them some nonwritten sources, such as recordings of popular music and photographs and videotapes of student life and activity. But let us confine ourselves for the moment to written records. What do all these documentary sources have in common?

Even this imposing list of sources does not and cannot present the past in its entirety. Where do we see the evidence that never made it into any official record, including long telephone calls home, all-night study groups, afternoons spent at the student union, or complaints shared among classmates about professors and courses? Someone possibly recorded memories of some of these events and opinions, but how complete and trustworthy is that evidence? Also consider that all the documents available to this twenty-first-century historian will be fortunate survivors. They will represent only a small percentage of the vast bulk of written material generated during your college career. Thanks to the wastebasket, the “delete” key, the disintegration of materials, and the inevitable loss of life’s memorabilia as years slip by, the evidence available to the future historian will be fragmentary. This is always the case with historical evidence. We cannot preserve the records of the past in their totality. Clearly, the more remote the past, the more fragmentary our documentary evidence. Imagine the feeble chance any particular document from the twelfth century had of surviving the wars, worms, and wastebaskets of the past eight hundred years.

Now let us consider the many individual pieces of documentary evidence relating to your class’s history that have survived. As we review the list, we see that no single primary source gives us a pure, unvarnished, and complete picture. Each has its perspective, value, and limitations. Imagine that the personal essays submitted by applicants for admission were your only sources of information about the student body. Given this, would you not conclude that the school attracted only the most gifted and interesting people imaginable? Also consider that these essays by aspiring students are not the only potential sources available to you that are, at least in part, exercises in creative advertising. You certainly are aware of how every college catalogue presents an idealized picture of campus life.

Despite their flaws, however, essays composed by applicants for admission and the school’s official catalogue are still important pieces of historical evidence — when used judiciously. The essays certainly reflect the would-be students’ perceptions of the school’s cultural values and the types of people it hopes to attract, and usually the applicants are right on the mark because they have read the school’s catalogue. That catalogue, of course, reflects the values of the faculty and administrators who composed it. It also provides quite a bit of useful information concerning rules and regulations, courses, instructors, school organizations, and similar items. That factual information, however, is the raw material of history, not history itself, and certainly it does not reflect the full historical reality of your class.

What is true of the catalogue is equally true of the student newspaper and every other piece of evidence generated by or pertinent to your class. Each primary source is part of a larger whole, but as we have already seen, we do not have all the pieces. Think of historical evidence in terms of a jigsaw puzzle. Even though many of the pieces are missing, it is possible to put most, though probably not all, of the remaining pieces together in a reasonable fashion to form a fairly accurate and coherent picture. The picture that emerges might

not be complete (it never is), but it is useful and valid. The keys to fitting these pieces together are hard work and imagination. Each is absolutely necessary.

Examining the Sources

Hard work speaks for itself, but students are often unaware that a historian also needs an imagination to reconstruct the past. After all, many students ask, doesn't history consist of strictly defined and irrefutable dates, names, and facts? Where does imagination enter into the process of learning these facts?

Again let us consider your class's history and its documentary sources. Many of those documents provide factual data — dates, names, grades, statistics. And while these data are important, individually and collectively they have no historical meaning until they have been interpreted. Your college class is not a collection of statistics and facts. It is a group of individuals who, despite their differences, share and help mold a collective experience. It is a community evolving within a particular time and place. Influenced by its environment, it is in turn an influence on that world. Any valid or useful history must reach beyond a mere list of dates, names, and facts and interpret the historical characteristics and role of your class: What were its values? How did it change and why? What impact did it have? These are some of the important questions a historian asks of the evidence. The answers the historian arrives at help us gain insight into ourselves, our society, and our human nature.

In order to arrive at answers, the historian must examine each and every piece of relevant evidence in its full context and wring from that evidence as many *inferences* as possible. Facts are the foundation stones of history, but inferences are its edifices. An inference is a logical conclusion drawn from evidence, and it is the heart and soul of historical inquiry.

Every American schoolchild learns that "In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." That fact is worthless, however, unless the individual understands the motives, causes, and significance of this late-fifteenth-century voyage. Certainly a historian must know when Columbus sailed west. After all, time is history's framework. Yet the questions historians ask go far beyond simple chronology: Why did Columbus sail west? What factors made possible Spain's engagement in such enterprises at this time? Why were Europeans willing and able to exploit, as they did, the so-called New World? What were the short- and long-term consequences of the European presence in the Americas? These are some of the significant questions to which historians seek inferential answers, and those answers can only be found in the evidence.

One noted historian, Robin Winks, has written a book entitled *The Historian as Detective*, and the image is appropriate although inexact. Like the detective, the historian examines clues in order to reconstruct events. However the detective is essentially interested in discovering what happened, who

did it, and why, whereas the historian goes one step beyond and asks what it all means. In addressing the question of meaning, the historian transforms simple curiosity about past events into a humanistic discipline.

As a humanist, the historian seeks wisdom and insight into the human condition, but that wisdom cannot be based on theories spun out of fantasy, wishful thinking, or preconceived notions. It must be based on a methodical and probing investigation of the evidence. Like a detective interrogating witnesses, the historian must also carefully examine the testimony of sources, and both investigators must ask similar questions. First and foremost the historian must evaluate the *validity* of the source. Is it what it purports to be? Artful forgeries have misled many historians. Even if the source is authentic (and most are), it still can mislead the historian. The possibility always exists that the source's author lied or otherwise deliberately misrepresented reality. Even if this is not the case, the historian can easily be led astray by not fully understanding the *perspective* reflected in the document. As any detective who has examined a number of eyewitnesses to an event knows, what each individual reports he or she saw often differs radically due to a number of factors. The police detective has the opportunity to re-examine witnesses and offer them the opportunity to change their testimony in the light of new evidence and deeper reflection. The historical researcher is usually not so fortunate. Even when the historian compares a piece of documentary evidence with other evidence in order to uncover its flaws, there is no way to cross-examine it in detail. What is written is written. Given this fact, it is absolutely necessary for the historian to understand as fully as possible the source's perspective. Thus the historian must ask several key questions: *What* kind of document is this? *Who* wrote it? For *whom* and *why*? *Where* was it composed and *when*?

The *what* is important because understanding the nature of a particular source can save the historian a great deal of frustration. Many historical sources simply do not address the questions a historian would like to ask of them. That twenty-first-century historian would be foolish to try to learn much about the academic quality of your school's courses from a study of the registrar's class lists and grade sheets. Student and faculty class notes, copies of old syllabi, examinations, papers, and textbooks would be far more fruitful sources.

Who, for whom, and why are equally important questions. The official school catalogue undoubtedly addresses some issues pertaining to student social life. But should this document — designed to attract potential students and place the school in the best possible light — be read and accepted uncritically? Obviously not. It must be tested against student testimony and discovered in such sources as private letters, memoirs, posters, student newspapers, and yearbooks.

Where and *when* are also important questions to ask of any primary source. As a general rule, distance in space and time from an event colors perceptions and can adversely affect the validity of a source's testimony. The recollections of a person celebrating a twenty-fifth class reunion could be quite insightful and valuable. Conceivably this graduate now has a perspective and information that were absent one-quarter century earlier. Just as conceivably, that

person's memory might be playing tricks. A source can be so close to or distant from the event it documents that its view is distorted or totally erroneous. Even so the source is not necessarily worthless. Often the blind spots and misinformation within a source reveal to the researcher important insights into the author's attitudes and sources of information.

The historical detective's task is difficult. In addition to constantly questioning the validity and particular perspectives of available sources, the historical researcher must often use whatever evidence is available in imaginative ways. The researcher must interpret these fragmentary and flawed glimpses of the past and piece together the resultant inferences and insights as well as possible. While recognizing that a complete picture of the past is impossible, the historian assumes the responsibility of recreating a past that is valid and has meaning for the present.

You and the Sources

This book will actively involve you in the work of historical inquiry by asking you to draw inferences based on your careful analysis of primary source evidence. This is not an easy task, especially at first, but it is well within your capability. Moreover, along with your professor, we will be helping you all along the way.

You realize by now that historians do not base their conclusions on analyses of single, isolated sources. Historical research consists of laborious sifting through mountains of documents. We have already done much of this work for you by selecting, paring down, and annotating important sources that individually allow you to gain some significant insight into a particular issue or moment in the long and complex history of our global community. In doing this for you, we do not relieve you of the responsibility of recognizing that no single source, no matter how rich it might appear, offers a complete picture of the individual or culture that produced it. Each source that appears in this book is a piece of valuable evidence, but it is only partial evidence. You should never forget this.

You will analyze two types of evidence: documents and artifacts. Each source will be authentic, so you do not have to worry about validating it. We will also supply you with the information necessary to place each piece of evidence into its proper context and will suggest questions you legitimately can and should ask of each source. If you carefully read the introductions and notes, the suggested Questions for Analysis, and, most important of all, the sources themselves — and think about what you are doing — solid inferences will follow.

To illustrate how you should go about this task and what is expected of you, we will take you through a sample exercise, step by step. The exercise consists of our analyzing two sources: a document from the pen of Christopher Columbus and a reproduction of an early sixteenth-century woodcut. By the end of this exercise, if you have worked closely with us, you should be ready to begin interpreting sources on your own.

Before we begin we want to offer a cautionary note. Please understand that we will wring from this sample document many more inferences than we or your professor should expect from you. After all, we bring to this task quite a bit of background that you do not yet have. We have read books on Christopher Columbus that you might never have the opportunity to view, and that reading inevitably has had an influence on how we interpret this particular document. Nevertheless, we believe that leading you through this exercise has value, insofar as it will demonstrate the general way to go about drawing historical inferences and the rich possibilities for insight that lie within a piece of documentary evidence. So please do not be intimidated by what follows. Take from it whatever of value you find in it.

That noted, let us now look at the document. We present it just as it would appear in any chapter of this book: first an introduction, then suggested Questions for Analysis, and finally the source itself, with explanatory footnotes. Because we want to give you a full introduction to the art of documentary source analysis, the excerpt in our example is a bit longer than the average document in this book. The notes that comment on the text are probably also fuller than necessary, but we prefer to err on the side of providing too much information and help, rather than too little. Again do not let the length of the document or its many notes intimidate you. Once you get into the source, you should find it fairly easy going.

Your first step in analyzing any source in this book is to read the introduction and the Questions for Analysis. The former is intended to place the source into context; the latter should provide direction when it comes time to analyze the source. One important point to keep in mind is that every historian approaches a source with at least one question in mind, even though it might be vaguely formulated. Very much like the detective, the historian wants to discover some particular truth or shed light on a given issue. This requires asking specific questions of the witnesses or, in the historian's case, of the evidence. These questions of course should not be prejudgments. One of the worst errors a historian can make is setting out to prove a point or to defend an ideological position. Questions are simply starting points, nothing else, but they are essential. Therefore, as you approach a source, have your question or questions fixed in your mind, and as you work your way through a source, constantly remind yourself what issue or issues you are investigating. We have provided you with a number of suggested questions for each source. Perhaps you or your professor will want to ask other questions. Whatever the case, keep focused on these questions and issues, and take notes as you read each source. Never rely on unaided memory; it will almost inevitably lead you astray.

Needless to say, you must be honest and thorough as you study a source. Read each explanatory footnote carefully, lest you misunderstand a word or allusion. Try to understand exactly what the source is saying and what its author's perspective is. Be careful not to wrench items, words, or ideas out of context, thereby distorting them. Above all, read the entire source so that you understand as fully as possible what it says and, just as important, what it does not say.

This is not as difficult as it sounds. It just takes concentration and a bit of work. To illustrate the point, let us read and analyze Christopher Columbus's letter and in the process try to answer this core question: What evidence is there in this document that allows us to judge Columbus's reliability as an objective reporter? By addressing this issue, we will actually answer questions 3–6 and 8.

“With the Royal Standard Unfurled”



▼ *Christopher Columbus,* A LETTER CONCERNING RECENTLY DISCOVERED ISLANDS

Sixteenth-century Spain's emergence as the dominant power in the Americas is forever associated with the name of a single mariner: Christopher Columbus (1451–1506). Sponsored by King Ferdinand V of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile, this Genoese sea captain sailed westward into the Atlantic seeking a new route to the empires of East Asia described by John Mandeville (Volume I, Chapter 12, source 109), Marco Polo (Volume I, Chapter 12, source 104), and others whose books of travels Columbus had avidly read and digested. On October 12, 1492, his fleet of three ships dropped anchor at a small Bahamian island, which Columbus claimed for Spain, naming it San Salvador. The fleet then sailed to two larger islands, which he named Juana and Española (today known as Cuba and Hispaniola).

After exploring these two islands and establishing on Española the fort of Navidad del Señor, Columbus departed for Spain in January 1493. On his way home, the admiral prepared a preliminary account of his expedition to the “Indies” for Luis de Santángel, a counselor to King Ferdinand and one of Columbus's enthusiastic supporters. In composing the letter, Columbus borrowed heavily from his official ship's log, often lifting passages verbatim. When he landed in Lisbon, Portugal, in early March, Columbus dispatched the letter overland, expecting it to precede him to the Spanish royal court in faraway Barcelona, where Santángel would communicate its contents to the two monarchs. The admiral was not disappointed. His triumphal reception at the court in April was proof that the letter had served its purpose.

As you analyze the document, be aware of several facts. The admiral was returning with only two of his vessels. He had lost his flagship, the *Santa Maria*, when it was wrecked on a reef off present-day Haiti on Christmas Day. Also many of Columbus's facts and figures reflect more his enthusiasm than dispassionate analysis. His estimates of the dimensions of the two main islands he explored grossly exaggerate their sizes, and his optimistic report of the wide availability of such riches as gold, spices, cotton, and mastic was not borne out by subsequent exploration and colonization. Although he obtained items of gold and received plenty of reports of nearby gold mines, the metal was rare in the

islands. Moreover, the only indigenous spice proved to be the fiery chili pepper; the wild cotton was excellent but not plentiful; and mastic, an eastern Mediterranean aromatic gum, was not native to the Caribbean.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. How does Columbus indicate that these lands are worth the careful attention of the Spanish monarchs?
2. What does Columbus's description of the physical attributes of the islands suggest about some of the motives for his voyage?
3. Often the eyes only see what the mind prepares them to see. What evidence is there that Columbus saw what he wanted to see and discovered what he expected to discover? In other words, how had his environment prepared Columbus to see and interpret what he encountered in the Caribbean?
4. What evidence suggests that Columbus's letter was a carefully crafted piece of self-promotion by a person determined to prove he had reached the Indies?
5. Notwithstanding the obvious self-promotion, is there any evidence that Columbus also attempted to present an objective and fairly accurate account of what he had seen and experienced? In other words, to what extent, if at all, can we trust his account?
6. What do the admiral's admitted actions regarding the natives and the ways in which he describes these people allow us to conclude about his attitudes toward these "Indians" and his plans for them?
7. What does this letter tell us about the culture of the Tainos on the eve of European expansion into their world? Does Columbus tell us anything about these people that doesn't seem to ring totally true? What do you infer from your answer to that latter question?
8. How does this letter illustrate the fact that single historical sources read in isolation can mislead the researcher?

Sir, as I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days, I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies¹ with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen, our sovereigns, gave to me. And there I found very

many islands filled with people² innumerable, and of them all I have taken possession for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me. To the first island which I found, I gave the name *San Salvador*,³ in remembrance of the Divine Majesty, Who has marvelously be-

¹An inexact term that referred not just to India but the entire area of the Indian Ocean and East Asia.

²The Tainos, a tribal branch of the Arawak language family. Arawak speakers inhabited an area from the Amazon River to the Caribbean.

³The "Holy Savior," Jesus Christ.