



# CIVILIZATION

P A S T & P R E S E N T

VOLUME I – TO 1650

*Ninth Edition*

# Civilization

P A S T & P R E S E N T

Ninth Edition

## Volume I To 1650

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# To the Instructor

The ninth edition of *Civilization Past & Present* continues to present a survey of world history, treating the development and growth of civilization not as a unique European experience but as a global one through which all the great culture systems have interacted to produce the present-day world. This edition includes all the elements of history—social, economic, political, military, religious, aesthetic, legal, and technological—to illustrate that global interaction.

The authors acknowledge that for our predominantly Western audience, an appreciation of their civilization is an essential aim of education, but this alone is no longer adequate. With the accelerating tempo of developments in business, communication, and technology, every day each part of the world is brought into closer contact with other parts: economic and political events that happen in even the most remote corner of the world affect each of us individually.

## Changes to Organization and Content

The ninth edition maintains the strengths that have made *Civilization Past & Present* a highly respected textbook. As they revised, the authors used the latest historical scholarship and profited from many helpful suggestions from both adopters of the text and reviewers. Maintained throughout the text is a consistent writing style and level of presentation seldom found in multiauthored texts. In addition, the text introduces two new authors: Palmira Brummett of the University of Tennessee writes about Islam and West and South Asia, and Robert B. Edgar of Howard University provides coverage of Africa. While the ninth edition retains the basic organization and approach of its predecessors, all chapters have been reviewed and revised in light of the globalization of a rapidly changing world. Without increasing the number of chapters, the authors have carefully evaluated, revised, and rewritten chapters to provide balanced coverage of all parts of the world throughout history.

The new edition features the following specific changes:

- Chapter 1, on prelithic to neolithic societies, has been rewritten to reflect recent scholarship in prehistory.

- Chapter 2, "Early Civilizations: The Near East and Western Asia," is a new chapter featuring substantial information on Nubia.
- Chapter 5, "Classical China: From Origins to Empire, Prehistory to 220 C.E.," is a new, full chapter on early Chinese history.
- Chapter 6, "Ancient India: From Origins to 300 C.E.," is a new, full chapter on the early history of India.
- Chapter 10, "Islam: From Its Origins to 1300," rewritten by our scholar-author on Middle Eastern studies, offers expanded discussion of early Islam.
- Chapter 11, "The African Genesis: African Civilizations to 1500," rewritten by our scholar-author on African studies, features expanded coverage of early African history.
- Chapter 12, "The Growth and Spread of Asian Culture, 300–1300," has been updated and expanded.
- Chapter 13, "The Americas to 1492," includes a new section on the Amerindians of North America, in addition to already strong coverage of Central and South American civilizations.
- Chapter 15, "The Christian Reformations and the Emergence of the Modern Political System: Faith and State in Europe, 1517–1648," provides an improved analysis of the interrelationship of religious and political developments.
- Chapter 17, "The Islamic Gunpowder Empires, 1300–1650," is a newly written chapter.
- Chapter 18, "Ming China and National Development in Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia, 1300–1650," provides coverage of these Asian civilizations.
- Chapter 19, "From Absolutism to the Old Regime: Centralized Power in Europe, 1648–1774," is reorganized and features expanded treatment of the origins and crises of central power.
- Chapter 20, "Limited Central Power in the Capitalist World, 1600–1789," emphasizes the interrelationship between decentralized political power and the world market.
- Chapter 21, "The Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment: New Ideas and Their Consequences," discusses the interaction of scientific discovery and new political and social thought.



and the consequence of that fusion in enlightened despotism and the American Revolution.

- Chapter 22, "The French and Napoleonic Revolutions and Their Impact on Europe and the Americas, 1789–1825," illustrates the impact of the quarter century of French dominance and its role in introducing the modern world.
- Chapter 23, "Africa, Asia, and European Penetration, 1650–1815," newly written and expanded, presents the European advances from a global rather than a Eurocentric view.
- Chapter 24, "Foundations of Western Dominance: Industrial, Scientific, Technological, Business, and Cultural Developments, 1815–1914," provides an enhanced overview of the material and of the intellectual forces fueling the Industrial Revolution and a century of European domination.
- Chapter 25, "The Politics of Ideas in the Western World, 1815–1861," and Chapter 26, "Power Politics in the West, 1861–1914," consider Western political developments in two stages: the politics of ideology to 1861 and the politics of Realpolitik to 1914.
- Chapter 27, "Africa and the Middle East, 1800–1914," an entirely new chapter, gives an account of non-Western affairs of that century from a non-Western point of view.
- Chapter 28, "Four Faces of Nineteenth-Century Imperialism," offers an analysis of the various forms of Western colonialism.
- Chapter 29, "The Perils of 'Progress': Middle-Class Thought and the Failure of European Diplomacy, 1878–1914," is a study of the complacency, misreading of science, and racism that permitted Europeans to ignore ticking time bombs such as the crisis in the Balkans.
- Chapter 30, "Winning the War and Losing the Peace: The Democracies, 1914–1939," discusses the end of the liberal dream in Europe after the disaster of World War I.
- Chapter 32, "Emerging National Movements in Asia and Africa, 1920s to 1950s," a new chapter, offers expanded treatment of Asia and Africa during the period between World Wars I and II.
- The final three chapters, Chapter 34, "The Cold War and After: Russia and Eastern Europe, 1945–1999," Chapter 35, "The 'Developed World' Since 1945," and Chapter 36, "The Developing World: The Struggle for Survival," have all been updated and expanded to reflect events of the late 1990s.

## New Split

The split for the two-volume edition has changed: Volume 1, To 1650, contains Chapters 1–18; Volume 2, From 1300, contains Chapters 14–36. The start of

Volume 2 has been moved back to accommodate courses that cover material beginning earlier than 1650.

## Pedagogical Features

The text has been developed with the dual purpose of helping students acquire a solid knowledge of past events and, equally important, of helping them think more constructively about the significance of those events for the complex times in which we now live. A number of pedagogical features—some well tested in earlier editions and a number of new ones—will assist students in achieving these goals.

### New

**Full-Color Format:** The full-color format design of the ninth edition is intended to make *Civilization Past & Present* more "user-friendly" to its readers. **Photographs:** The text's more than 500 photos, most in full color, have been carefully selected to present a mix of Western and non-Western images. Special care has been taken to include images illustrating the lifestyles and contributions of women for all eras and areas. **Maps:** The use of full color allows students more readily to see distinctions on the more than 120 maps in the text. Some maps make clear the nature of a single distinctive event; others illustrate larger trends. The caption accompanying each map highlights the significance of the map and its relevance to a specific text topic.

**Discovery Through Maps:** A special new feature focusing on primary maps in each chapter offers a unique historical view—be it local, city, country, world, or constellation—of the way in which a particular culture looked at the world at a particular time. For example, a 4000-year-old Chinese map shows the major facts of life for the time: rivers and where they run, mountains, and provinces that paid tribute to the emperor; while an elaborate seventeenth-century map of Amsterdam makes clear that it was the Golden Age not only for the Netherlands but also for the Dutch cartographers who depicted its world.

**Part Opening Essays:** New essays at the beginning of each part relate the various chapters one to the other and emphasize thematic development within the book. These essays allow students to take stock of where they have been in their study of global history and to discover where the flow of history will take them.

**Suggested Web Sites:** Following the Suggestions for Reading is a listing of Web sites related to major topics of the chapter, offering access to differing interpretations, images, sounds, and discussion groups.

**Chronology Tables:** Short chronology tables within the chapter narrative allow the reader a quick recap of the important events or trends of a specific period.

## Revised

**Excerpts from Primary Source Documents:** These excerpts from original sources represent a mix of the best of the old and a strengthening of the new, particularly non-Western documents. The selections have been chosen to give a variety of testimonies—political, economic, legal, religious, artistic, social, and popular—to show students the kinds of materials historians use to understand and interpret the past.

**Chapter Opening Pages:** Redesigned chapter opening pages feature an illustration relevant to the chapter topics, a chapter outline, and a streamlined, easy-to-read time line of key events that are discussed in the chapter.

**Suggestions for Reading:** Detailed annotated bibliographies list general interpretations, monographs, and collections of source materials that students can consult to expand their understanding of a particular topic or to prepare reports and papers.

**Pronunciation Guide:** The general index at the back of the text includes a pronunciation for most proper names. Students should find it easy, as well as helpful, to look up the correct pronunciation of the names and places they encounter in the text. The index also provides pronunciation guides for unfamiliar, difficult, or foreign words.

The ninth edition of *Civilization Past & Present* is a thorough revision in both its text narrative and its pedagogical features. It is intended to provide the reader with an understanding of the legacies of past eras and to illuminate the way in which the study of world history gives insights into the genesis, nature, and direction of our global civilization. The need for this kind of perspective has never been greater.

## For Qualified College Adopters: Supplements for Instructors

**Annotated Instructor's Edition** by Paul Bischoff of Oklahoma State University. This unique edition helps instructors cover cultures and periods outside their areas of expertise with teaching suggestions, project ideas, chapter comparisons, additional background, and suggestions for further reading. It is an especially

valuable resource for both new instructors and more experienced faculty in search of new ideas and for all professors who struggle to teach cultures outside their areas of expertise.

**Brummett Online**, <http://www.awlonline.com/brummett>, by Richard Rothaus of St. Cloud State University. This course companion provides text-specific resources for students and instructors and includes our on-line syllabus manager. Students will find it easy to learn and study with the chapter outlines, self-testing programs, Web activities, primary sources, Internet links, and glossary. Instructors will love it for the teaching ideas and aids, on-line images, links, and syllabus manager.

**Instructor's Resource Manual** revised by Patricia Ali of Morris College. This collection of resources includes chapter outlines, definitions, discussion suggestions, critical thinking exercises, term paper and essay topics, and audiovisual suggestions. It also includes special *African Perspectives* essays by Robert Edgar and *Genocide in History* essays by George Jewsbury.

**Brummett Presentation Maker** These easy-to-customize PowerPoint slides outline key points of each chapter of the text and are available as transparency masters and on dual platform CD-ROM and Windows or Macintosh disks.

**Guide to Teaching World History** by Palmira Brummett of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. This new guide offers explanations of major issues and themes in world history, sample syllabi and instructions on how to create a manageable syllabus, ideas for cross-cultural and cross-temporal connections, a pronunciation guide, and tips on getting through all the material.

**Test Bank and Test Generator** by Susan Hellert of the University of Wisconsin at Platteville. This easy-to-customize test bank presents a wealth of multiple-choice, true-false, short-answer, and essay questions.

**Discovering World History Through Maps and Views Overhead Transparency Acetates** by Gerald Danzer of the University of Illinois at Chicago. This unique resource contains more than 100 full-color acetates of beautiful reference maps, source maps, urban plans, views, photos, art, and building diagrams.

**Longman World History Atlas Overhead Transparency Acetates** These acetates are available to instructors who select the *Longman World History Atlas* for their students.

**Overhead Transparency Acetates to Accompany *Civilization Past & Present*** These text-specific acetates are available to all adopters.

**IRC World History Videodisk** Instructional Resources Corporation's library of 2400 still images, 71 historical maps, and 12 narrative section overviews is especially flexible for classroom lectures and presentations.

**Historical Newsreel Video** This 90-minute video contains newsreel excerpts examining U.S. involvement in world affairs over the past 60 years.

**Longman-Penguin Putnam Inc. Value Bundles** Students and professors alike will love the value and quality of the Penguin books offered at a deep discount when bundled with *Civilization Past & Present*, Ninth Edition.

## Supplements for Students

**Interactive Edition CD-ROM** This new CD-ROM is an electronic version of the text that contains the entire text, maps, and charts, as well as photos, glossary, and electronic student study guide. Its easy-to-use navigation makes it simple to search by topic or name, take notes on-line, and link to the Internet.

**Brummett Online**, <http://www.awlonline.com/brummett>, by Richard Rothaus of St. Cloud State University. This course companion provides text-specific resources for students and instructors and includes our on-line syllabus manager. Students will find it easy to learn and study with the chapter outlines, self-testing programs, Web activities, primary sources, Internet links, and glossary. Instructors will love it for the teaching ideas and aids, on-line images, Web links, and syllabus manager.

**Student Study Guide** in two volumes: Volume 1 (Chapters 1–18) and Volume 2 (Chapters 14–36) prepared by Sterling Kernek and David G. Egler of Western Illinois University, and Melvin Lyttaker III of Southeastern Community College. Each chapter includes chapter overviews, lists of themes and concepts, map exercises, multiple-choice practice tests, and critical thinking and essay questions.

**StudyWizard Computerized Tutorial** prepared by Paul George of Miami-Dade Community College. This interactive program features chapter outlines and multiple-choice, true-false, and short-answer questions. It also contains a glossary and gives users immediate test scores and answer explanations.

**Everything You Need to Know About *Civilization Past & Present*** This is a concise guide to the textbook's organization, pedagogy, themes, and special features.

**Everything You Need to Know About Your History Course** by Sandra Mathews-Lamb of Nebraska Wesleyan University. This guide helps students succeed in history courses by describing good techniques for taking notes, researching and writing papers, reading primary and secondary sources, reading maps, charts, and graphs, taking exams, learning from lectures, and using the textbook.

**Guide to Internet and Advanced Media Resources for World History, Second Edition**, by Richard Rothaus of St. Cloud State University. This guide shows students how to make the most of the Internet in their world history course and includes a comprehensive listing of Web resources for all areas of world history.

**Documents in World History, Second Edition**, edited by Peter N. Stearns et al. This two-volume collection of primary sources makes history come to life with first-hand accounts from all areas of the world.

**World History Map Workbooks, Second Edition**, by Glee Wilson of Kent State University. This two-volume workbook includes over 80 maps accompanied by a contextual overview and exercises in making, reading, and understanding maps. The exercises teach the locations of and relationships among various countries.

**Longman World History Atlas** This full-color, easy-to-read atlas contains 56 maps designed especially for the world history course. It is free when bundled with the text.

**Longman World History Series** These books focus on the world historical significance of a particular movement, experience, or interaction. Concise and inexpensive, they bring the global connections and consequences of these events to the fore, showing students how events that happened long ago or far away can still affect them.

**Environmentalism: A Global History** by Ramachandra Guha. Discusses the global and interconnected nature of the environmental movement from the Romantics to today with clear language and organization.

**Colonial Encounters in the Age of High Imperialism** by Scott B. Cook of the Rhode Island School of Design. Examines the world-transforming experience of Western imperialism from 1870 to 1914, focusing specifically on Belgium and the Congo, the United States and Hawaii, and Britain and India.

**Timelink: World History Computerized Atlas** by William Hamblin of Brigham Young University. A high-

ly graphic, Hypercard-based computerized atlas and historical geography tutorial for Macintosh computers.

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# To the Student

We set two goals for ourselves when we wrote *Civilization Past & Present*. The first is to provide you with an understanding of the contributions of past eras in all parts of the globe to the shaping of subsequent events. The second is to illuminate the way in which the study of world history gives us insights into the genesis, nature, and direction of our own civilization.

These are challenging tasks. However, given the globalization of all aspects of our lives, they are essential. When economies in East Asia are in a state of crisis, the impact is felt on Wall Street. The culture of the New World—especially music and movies—has spread around the globe. When tragedies occur in the Balkans, we are all affected. Long gone are the days when an occurrence that took place far away could be isolated.

Now you are taking a course in world history to understand the development of the cultures of the world—cultures that are coming together to form a multifaceted world civilization. Understanding how and why other civilizations have chosen differing routes to their future, you can gain an understanding of why your part of civilization has succeeded or failed in attaining its potential. With an understanding of world history, you will be able to respond more knowledgeably to the changes through which you will live and make informed choices as a world citizen.

History is the study of change over time. A historian is a person who focuses on one aspect of changes in the past, poses questions about why a particular event has taken place, proposes answers—hypotheses—and tests those hypotheses against the evidence—all of the evidence. We do not expect you to be historians at this point in your career—to form your own hypotheses and write monographs. We have written this book, however, to enable you to study change over time in seven major chronological stages:

- Part 1, “The Ancient World,” takes you from pre-history to the development of civilizations in Africa, Southwest Asia, South Asia, and East Asia to the third century of this era.
- Part 2, “The Middle Ages,” studies the formative stages of the world’s peoples at this pivotal time. Here we examine the establishment of the political,

religious, social, and cultural frameworks that would characterize Europe, Southwest Asia, Africa, Asia, and the Americas to the fifteenth century.

- Part 3, “The Transition to Modern Times,” examines the impact of new intellectual frameworks, new modes of technology, and new economic systems in the world to the middle of the seventeenth century.
- Part 4, “The Rising European Tide,” traces the interrelated burst of political, economic, scientific, and ideological energy that propelled the European continent to prominence by the end of the eighteenth century.
- Part 5, “The Century of Western Dominance,” concentrates on the West’s ascendancy during the nineteenth century. The wave of technological, scientific, business, and intellectual exploration swept over, but did not overwhelm, the non-Western world.
- Part 6, “The New Thirty Years’ War,” discusses the end of the liberal dream during the three decades that witnessed the bloody catastrophes of the two world wars, the advent of authoritarian states, and the horrors of the Holocaust and nuclear weapons.
- Part 7, “From Bipolar Ideology to Global Competition,” discusses the globalization of the world since 1945, first as part of the bipolar conflict known as the Cold War and then with the economic unification of the world and its vast disparity between the very rich and the extremely poor.

The authors have included a number of tools to help you on your voyage through this text. At the beginning of each part, a brief **essay** summarizes the major events and accomplishments occurring in its time frame and relates the chapters, and their world regions, to each other. These essays will give you a helpful overall perspective of the chapters included in each part.

As you begin the chapter, take five or ten minutes to look at the **chapter opening pages**. These two pages at the beginning of each chapter telegraph what is to come: a photo conceptualizes the main themes of the chapter, and a chapter outline and a time line allow you to fix beginning and end points in this part of your trip. Take time to read the introduc-

tion and then thumb to the end of the chapter to read the conclusion. Next, go through the chapter reading only the main and secondary headlines. Finally, return to the beginning of the chapter and start to read—knowing in advance where you have come from and which way you are going.

Within each chapter we offer you other tools to gain an understanding of the past. Events take place in a location, and each location has particular features that affect what will happen. Thus the text includes more than 120 four-color **maps**, each with its own explanatory caption. Some maps are designed to make clear the nature of a single distinctive event; others illustrate larger trends.

Different civilizations have different visions of themselves and their place in the world. The **Discovery Through Maps** boxes will give you a notion of the way that various cultures in the world have seen themselves and their relation to the rest of the globe. For example, in “A Korean-Centered View of the World,” dating from around 1600, Japan shrivels away to a distant, tiny archipelago; and the labeling of non-Western areas of “An American View of the World in the 1820s” makes American intolerance toward the non-Western world immediately clear.

We also include two or more excerpts from **primary source documents** in each chapter. These excerpts from original sources offer you a window into the way that the people of the time expressed themselves. The documents cover a variety of viewpoints: political, economic, legal, religious, social, artistic, and popular. As examples, an ancient Roman text gives

advice on how to “Avoid Enticements into the Snares of Love”; in “Louis XIV to His Son,” the Sun King of France instructs his son, a young man who never does become king; and in “That Was No Brother,” two documents—one by an African chief and the other by the English explorer Henry Morton Stanley—give two very different perceptions of the same battle.

Short **chronology tables** within the chapter narrative will give you a quick view of the important events in a specific period.

The text’s 500 **photos**, most in full color, give balanced pictorial coverage of all parts of the world. They enhance the reading of each chapter by giving additional context and bringing the matters under discussion to life. For this edition, we have paid special attention in these photos to the lifestyles and contributions of women.

After you have finished each chapter you will find two features to help you prepare a paper or project, or simply to learn more about a particular topic. The annotated bibliographies of **suggestions for reading** indicate useful general studies, monographs, and source materials. Also provided is a list of **suggested Web sites** to allow you to hook up to databases, sounds, images, or discussion groups dealing with the topics under consideration.

Finally, you will encounter numerous terms and names in your reading. The **pronunciation key** in the index will help you pronounce these often perplexing words. Say the words aloud so that you will become familiar with how the words sound as well as how they look.

# Prologue

## *Perspective on Humanity*

If the time span of our planet—now estimated at some 5 billion years—were telescoped into a single year, the first eight months would be devoid of any life. The next two months would be taken up with plant and very primitive animal forms, and not until well into December would any mammals appear. In this “year,” members of *Homo erectus*, our ancient predecessors, would mount the global stage only between 10 and 11 P.M. on December 31. And how has the human species spent that brief allotment? Most of it—the equivalent of more than half a million years—has been given over to making tools out of stone. The revolutionary changeover from food-hunting nomads to farmers who raised grain and domesticated animals would occur in the last 60 seconds. And into that final minute would be crowded all of humanity's other accomplishments so far: the use of metal; the creation of civilizations; the mastery of the oceans; and the harnessing of steam, then gas, electricity, oil, and, finally, nuclear energy. Brief though it has been, humanity's time on the globe reveals a rich tapestry of science, industry, religion, and art. This accumulated experience of the human species is our *history*.

## Past and Present

As we read and learn about early societies and their members, we discover them to be very different from us and the world in which we live. Yet we are linked by more than curiosity to our ancient predecessors. Why? Because we are of the same species, and we share a fundamental commonality that connects present with past: the human-environment nexus. It is the dynamic interplay of environmental factors and human activities that accounts for the process known as history. The biological continuity of our species, coupled with humanity's unflagging inventiveness, has enabled each generation to build on the experiences and contributions of its forebears so that continuity and change in human affairs proceed together.

## The Universal Culture Pattern

In the interplay of humans with their environment and fellow beings, certain fundamental needs are always present. Six needs, common to people at all

times and in all places, form the basis of a “universal culture pattern”:

1. *The need to survive.* Men and women must have food, shelter, clothing, and the means to provide for their offsprings' survival.
2. *The need for social organization.* For people to make a living, raise families, and maintain order, a social structure is essential. Views about the relative importance of the group and the individual within it may vary with any such social structure.
3. *The need for stability and protection.* From earliest times, communities have had to keep peace among their members, defend themselves against external attack, and protect community assets.
4. *The need for knowledge and learning.* Since earliest times, humankind has transmitted knowledge acquired through experience, first orally, then by means of writing systems, and now by electronic means as well. As societies grow more complex, there is increasing need to preserve knowledge and transmit it through education to as many people as possible.
5. *The need for self-expression.* People responded creatively to their environment even before the days when they decorated the walls of Paleolithic caves with paintings of the animals they hunted. The arts appear to have a lineage as old as human experience.
6. *The need for religious expression.* Equally old is humanity's attempt to answer the “why” of its existence. What early peoples considered supernatural in their environment could often, at a later time, be explained by science in terms of natural phenomena. Yet today, no less than in archaic times, men and women continue to search for answers to the ultimate questions of existence.

## Culture Change and Culture Lag

When people in a group behave similarly and share the same institutions and ways of life, they can be said to have a common *culture*. Throughout this text we will be looking at a number of different cultures, some of which are designated as *civilizations*. (If all societies have culture, then civilization is a particular *kind* of culture.) “A culture is the way of life of a

human group; it includes all the learned and standardized forms of behavior which one uses and others in one's group expect and recognize. . . . Civilization is that kind of culture which includes the use of writing, the presence of cities and of wide political organization, and the development of occupational specialization."<sup>1</sup>

Cultures are never wholly static or wholly isolated. A particular culture may have an individuality that sets it off sharply from other cultures, but invariably it has been influenced by external contacts. Such contacts may be either peaceful or warlike, and they meet with varying degrees of acceptance. Through these contacts occurs the process of culture *diffusion*. Geography, too, has profoundly influenced the development of cultures, although we should not exaggerate its importance. Environmental influences tend to become less marked as people gain technological skill and mastery over the land. The domestication of animals and cereals, for example, took place in both the Old and New Worlds, but the animals and grains were different because of dissimilar ecological factors. Invention is another important source of culture change, although it is not clear to what extent external physical contact is required in the process of invention. However, men and women in different times and places have reached similar solutions to the challenges posed by their respective environments—resulting in the phenomenon known as *parallel invention*.

Some parts of a culture pattern change more rapidly than others, so that one institution sometimes becomes outmoded in relation to others in a single society. When different parts of a society fail to mesh harmoniously, the condition is often called *culture lag*. Numerous examples of this lag could be cited: the exploitation of child laborers during the nineteenth century, the failure to allow women to vote until the twentieth century, and the tragedy of hunger in the midst of plenty.

## Past and Present as Prologue

What can the past and present—as history—suggest to us for tomorrow's world? Changes in the physical and social environments will probably accelerate as a result of continued technological innovation. These changes can result in increased disequilibrium and tensions among the various segments comprising the universal culture pattern—in other words, in increased culture lag.

Has the past anything to tell the future about the consequences of cultural disequilibrium—anything that we might profitably use in present-day planning

for the decades ahead? Because our planet and its resources are finite, at some point a society must expect to shift progressively from exponential growth toward an overall global equilibrium. By that term, we mean the setting of maximal levels on the number of humans who can inhabit this planet with an assured minimal standard of life and on the exploitation of the earth's resources required to provide that standard. Otherwise, environmental disaster on an unprecedented scale could result in the decades ahead. Past and present conjoin to alert us to the need to engage in new forms of planning for the years ahead and also to the need to rethink our existing social goals and value systems. We need as long and as accurate a perspective as possible to make realistic analyses and to take the appropriate actions to improve our quality of life.

## The "How" of History

History is the record of the past actions of humankind, based on surviving evidence. History shows that all patterns and problems in human affairs are the products of a complex process of growth. By shedding light on that process, history provides a means for us to benefit from human experience.

## History as a Science

There is more than one way to treat the past. In dealing with the American or Russian Revolution or the Meiji Restoration, for example, the historian may describe events in narrative form or, instead, analyze general causes and compare stages with the patterns of similar events in other countries. Unlike the scientist, who attempts to verify hypotheses by repeating experiments under controlled conditions in the laboratory and to classify phenomena in a general group or category, the historian has to pay special attention to the *uniqueness* of data, because each event takes place at a particular time and in a particular place. And since that time is now past, the historian cannot verify conclusions by duplicating the circumstances in which the event occurred.

Nevertheless, historians insist that history be written as "scientifically" as possible and that evidence be analyzed with the same objective attitude employed by scientists examining natural phenomena. This scientific spirit requires historians to handle evidence according to established rules of historical analysis, to recognize biases and attempt to eliminate their effects, and to draw only such conclusions as the evidence seems to warrant.



## The Historical Method

To meet these requirements, historians have evolved the "historical method." The first step is the search for *sources*, which may be material remains, oral traditions, pictorial data, or written records. From the source the historian must infer the facts. This process has two parts. *External criticism* tests the genuineness of the source. *Internal criticism* evaluates the source to ascertain the author's meaning and the accuracy of the work.

The final step in the historical method is *synthesis*. Here the historian must determine which factors in a given situation are most relevant to the purpose at hand, since obviously one cannot include everything that occurred. This delicate process of selection underscores the role that subjectivity plays in the writing of history. Furthermore, the more complex the events involved, the more crucial the historian's judgment becomes.<sup>2</sup>

## Periodization

Can we really categorize history as "ancient," "medieval," or "modern"? Clearly, what is "modern" in the twentieth century will conceivably be considered "medieval" in the twenty-fifth century and eventually "ancient" in the thirty-fifth century. Yet not to break up the account would be akin to reading this book without the benefit of parts, chapters, paragraphs, or even separate sentences. Like time itself, history would then become a ceaseless flow of consciousness and events. To simplify the task and to manage materials more easily, the historian divides time into periods. The divisions chosen and the lines drawn reveal the distinctive way in which the historian regards the past.

## The "Why" of History

The historian seeks to describe not only *what* has happened and *how* it happened but also *why* society undergoes change. Any search of this kind raises a number of fundamental questions: the impact of long-term geographical, economic, and social forces; the role of the individual; the power of the group in the extent to which events are unique or, conversely, can fit into patterns; and the problem of progress in human affairs. The answers vary with different philosophical views of the universe and the human role therein.

People who hold the teleological view see in history the guidance of a Divine Will, directing human destinies according to a cosmic purpose. Other

thinkers have exalted the role of the individual in the historical process, contending that major figures chiefly determined the course of human events. Opponents of this thesis argue that history is determined by "forces" and "laws" and by the actions of entire societies. Sociologists approach history primarily by analyzing the origins, institutions, and functions of groups. Economists tend to look at the historical record from the standpoint of group action and especially the impact of economic forces.

To Karl Marx irresistible economic forces governed human beings and determined the trend of events. Marx contended that the shift from one economic stage to another—such as the shift from feudalism to capitalism—is attained by upheavals, or revolutions, which occur because the class controlling the methods of production eventually resists further progress in order to maintain its vested interests.

Numerous other attempts have been made to explain societal processes according to a set of principles. Writing at the time of World War I, the German Oswald Spengler maintained that civilizations were like organisms; each grew with the "superb aimlessness" of a flower and passed through a cycle of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Charles Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis made a strong impact on nineteenth-century thought and gave rise to the concept that the principle of "survival of the fittest" must also apply to human societies. This line of thought—known as social Darwinism—raises social and ethical questions of major importance.

Does history obey impersonal laws and forces so that its course is inevitable? Or, at the other extreme, since every event is a unique act, is history simply the record of unforeseen and unrelated episodes? Can this apparent dilemma be avoided? We believe it can. Although all events are, in various respects, unique, they also contain elements that invite comparison. The comparative approach permits us to seek relationships between historical phenomena and to group them into movements or patterns or civilizations. We eschew any "theory" of history, preferring to see merit in a number of basic concepts. These include the effects of physical environment on social organization and institutions; the roles played by economic, political, and religious factors; and the individual impact exerted by men and women occupying key positions in various societies.

## The Challenge of History

Progress and growth are continuous factors. They depend on, and contribute to, the maintenance of peace and security, the peaceful settlement of inter-



national disputes, and worldwide improvement in economic and social standards. Surely an indispensable step toward solving contemporary humanity's dilemma—technology without the requisite control and power without commensurate wisdom—must be a better understanding of how the world and its people came to be what they are today. Only by understanding the past can we assess both the perils and the opportunities of the present—and move courageously and compassionately into the future.

## Notes

1. David G. Mandelbaum, "Concepts of Civilization and Culture," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1967 ed., Vol. 5, p. 831A.
2. See P. Gardiner, *The Nature of Historical Explanation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 98.





