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# A HISTORY OF WORLD CIVILIZATION

**J.E. SWAIN**

A History  
of World Civilization



# A HISTORY OF WORLD CIVILIZATION

*By*

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*Dedicated to the memory of  
my father and mother*



## Preface to the Second Edition

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This edition has been prepared in an attempt to remedy certain defects in the original work and to bring into the picture events which have occurred in the past few years. Recent trends have necessitated some reinterpretations of earlier periods and the addition of new materials. Any world survey must include increased emphasis on the Far East and Latin America. Their prominence today is beyond question. There also have been profound changes in our economic and social orders. These must be reevaluated.

The author is very grateful for the friendly help and criticism which various teachers have given the first edition of this text. Many of their ideas have been incorporated in the revision. He is especially indebted to Professor Frederick L. Schuman for the use of maps that appeared in the third edition of his *International Politics*, and to Dr. Ralph Turner for permission to use maps and illustrations from his *Great Cultural Traditions*. Dr. Victor L. Johnson of the Social Science Department at Muhlenberg College has given much time and effort in preparing the manuscript for publication.

JAMES EDGAR SWAIN.

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE,  
August, 1947.





## Preface to the First Edition

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This book is an outgrowth of ten years' experimentation with a course in the History of Civilization. It is presented with the hope that teachers and students will find it useful in solving some of the difficult problems that arise in such a course.

A book of this kind should be presented with modesty. I think I am thoroughly imbued with this feeling. The field is so large that no one person can claim to have mastered the whole thing. The specialist will be dissatisfied with the parts of the book that treat his particular subject, and justly so. Some years ago, as an undergraduate, I took a course in which Wells's *Outline of History* was used as the text. Specialists from different departments in the university were called in to conduct the recitations, each in that part which was his particular field. Almost without exception each one, unaware of the nature of the remarks of the others, in commenting on the text, made the point that all the fields except his own were quite well done. In other words, the important thing to keep in mind is that a work of this kind is intended not for specialists but for beginning students or (may I optimistically add?) for the general reader.

The author of a book like this is under heavy obligations to a number of authorities. Tribute must be paid to pioneers in the field, such as H. G. Wells's *Outline of History*, L. Thorndike's *History of Civilization*, and Barnes's *The History of Western Civilization*. I have naturally leaned heavily on other standard works, since original research on all these topics was impossible. I am indebted to the following publishers for permission to use quotations from books which they have published: The Macmillan Company; Harvard University Press; Ginn and Company; Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.; Yale University Press; F. S. Crofts and Com-

pany; Harper & Brothers; Doubleday, Doran & Company; University of Minnesota Press; University of California Press; and University of North Carolina Press.

I am especially indebted to Mr. Ephraim B. Everitt of the English Department in Muhlenberg College for patiently and painstakingly going over the whole manuscript. Dr. S. S. Visser of the Geography Department in Indiana University, Dr. William T. Morgan and Dr. F. Lee Benness of the History Department in Indiana University, Dr. C. H. Karraker of Bucknell University, Dr. W. H. Mohr of George School, Dr. J. S. Jackson, Dr. Victor L. Johnson, Mr. R. F. Hartman, and Dean R. C. Horn of Muhlenberg College, as well as a number of others, have given advice and encouragement in this work. These men have saved me from many pitfalls. Mistakes that remain are clearly my fault and I assume responsibility for them.

JAMES EDGAR SWAIN.

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE,  
*September, 1938.*

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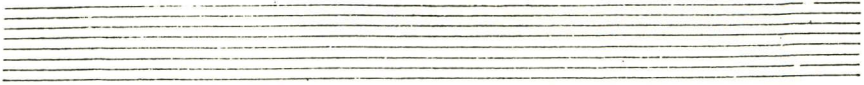
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A History  
of World Civilization



## Introduction

The modern age appears to be a period of disillusionment. Principles and practices that in the past have been accepted generally are being discredited and challenged without hesitation. Democracy was regarded as the ideal form of government, its value seemed unquestionable, and its future assured. Philosophers in ancient times dreamed of the day when it could be realized. In more recent times, thousands have given their lives to promote and to protect the democratic ideal. Within one-half century, two of the most destructive wars in history have been fought ostensibly to make the world safe for democracy. More than twenty million people were killed, countless homes were destroyed, and untold suffering occurred.

A realization of only a part of the ideals for which these wars were fought might have been sufficient compensation. However, it is questionable if there is any greater feeling of security now than before. The implications drawn from the possible use of the atomic bomb casts an even deeper shadow over the whole picture. The League of Nations failed to control international anarchy, and there is grave doubt about the success of the United Nations Organization. Materialism seems to have submerged our idealism and intolerance has raised its ruthless head in the most unexpected places.

The cause for this general disorder is not easily discernible. Perhaps, we have been too confident and too satisfied to face realities. More likely, it is due to a lack of understanding of the past. The only clue to the future we possess is an understanding of the past and that must be presented in a true perspective.

One important advantage in studying world history is that it tends to correct the distortion of notionalism, one of the recognized present-day evils. Civilization is not confined within the

political boundaries of a state ; it is world-wide. A recognition of this fact ought to relieve, to a certain degree, international friction. Too many people have an exalted opinion of their own country and are woefully ignorant of the others. Woodrow Wilson, a historian of experience, went to the Congress of Versailles with the best of intentions, but he met with insurmountable obstacles. He had greater knowledge of American history than of European. What he had in mind might have represented the American point of view, but certainly not the European. An intelligent interpretation of 20th century civilization necessitates an understanding of world affairs and an acquaintance with all the great cultures of the past.

The terms *civilization* and *culture* are used here in the most inclusive sense, embracing economics and politics, as well as art, literature, and learning. These are, after all, very closely inter-related, one depending upon the other. There are periods in which art, in the restrictive sense, is more emphasized than it is in others. Since the middle of the 19th century, economics and politics seem to have monopolized man's mind. The cultural aspects of life appear to have been pushed into the background. With this in mind, I have put what may seem to be undue emphasis on economics and politics in the last two chapters. However, these are the most outstanding developments in the world today. A materialistic philosophy has us firmly within its grasp and has rendered everything else secondary. Where it is going to lead us remains to be seen.

This is an age of specialization. The specialist becomes so engrossed in his particular field that he neglects almost everything else. Too many students complete their formal education without much appreciation of the vast storehouse of human knowledge. To enjoy life at its fullest and to be a man of culture, one should have at least an appreciation of the various phases of culture, be it Occidental or Oriental. The world today is too small to allow anyone to live a segregated existence. We are being brought closer and closer to the once remote Orient. One reason for the conflict between Orientalism and Occidentalism is that they do not understand each other.

The purpose of this book is to open up to the student the vast field of human knowledge ; to present a perspective of the whole cultural history of mankind. It would be presumptuous to assume

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that a record of all human accomplishment is compressed between the covers of this volume. What they enclose is merely an outline, and the book will not have served its purpose unless the student is encouraged to read further on certain subjects in more specialized works. The names of books of that nature will be found in the bibliography at the end of each chapter.