

WORLD HISTORY bulletin

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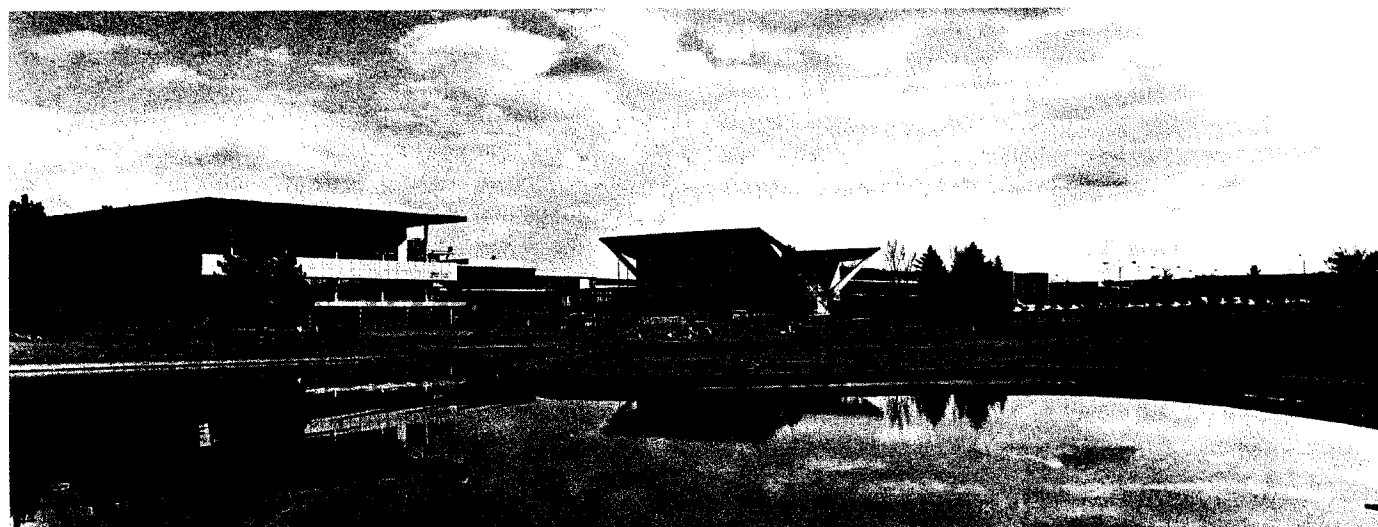
Women and World History*

Kevin Reilly
President

World History Association

The historian James Harvey Robinson said at the beginning of this century that the introductory history course ought to prepare the student to read the daily newspaper. With only slight modification of that statement, to include radio and tel-

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should be sent to Joe Dixon, Executive Director, World History Association, 80 Fillmore Street, Pappilion, NE 68128.



Student Center, Colorado State University, Headquarters, Seventh Annual Meeting

evision, it still offers the best rationale for such a course. To understand the news, to be concerned with local and world events, to develop opinions on current issues, these are the marks of good students and citizens.

While the number of newspapers in America has declined considerably since Robinson's time, the number of news gathering institutions has increased enormously. Today, the

Continued on page 2

*Keynote address to Rocky Mountain Regional World History Conference on Women in World History at Colorado State University May 1, 1987.

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news is more plentiful and more controlled, more remote and more immediate than it was then. The task of producing good students and citizens has increased proportionately.

I would like to suggest that an introductory course in world-history is the most effective vehicle for accomplishing the goal of creating a literate, informed citizenry, able to read the daily newspaper and participate in the modern world.

Since 1900 humanity has become a single community spread to the most remote interiors of continents and the most distant islands of the globe. At the same time, human technology has vastly increased our dependence on one another. In different ways, the atomic bomb, the multinational corporation, the satellite, and the evening news have created what Marshall McLuhan so aptly called a "global village." Messages can circle the globe in seconds, missiles in minutes. Men, women, and microbes take only slightly longer. Events in Iran, Nicaragua, South Africa, and the Philippines are as immediate as events in our own country.

In this century American education has completed two important stages in citizenship training. The first was the development of American history itself. Along with civics courses, American history was the vehicle for a nation of immigrants to become a nation of Americans at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

The second citizenship model that answered that need was the history course that was eventually called "Western civilization." The idea of Western civilization was the invention of an America preoccupied with its relation to Europe between two world wars. The idea of "the West" was always a more meaningful category to Americans than to Europeans who studied their own national histories (and still do). The teaching of Western civilization put America and Europe in the same boat, to weather the stormy seas of world war and economic collapse together.

Before the First World War Americans studied more ancient than European history. Even Mexican history received as much attention as European history in a specimen history exam at Columbia College in 1874.¹ The shift in American thinking about Europe was dramatically demonstrated to me in a count of news column inches of New York Times first pages I made a few years ago.² Between 1890 and 1910 more sto-

ries originated in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (taken together) than in Europe. From 1915 to 1955 more space was allotted to Europe than Asia, Africa, and Latin America combined. At Columbia College in 1917 a request by the War Department led to the teaching of a course for all freshmen called "War Aims." It was a course in European history that might have been called "Why We Fight." After the war it was changed to "Contemporary Civilization." Required of all incoming freshmen, it became the model for the Western civilization survey taught at virtually every American college in the 1940's and 1950's.

Since the Second World War, America has emerged from the shadow of Europe. As a "super power" of the post-war world, the United States requires of its citizens a much broader identity than was necessary before 1945. Since 1960 Europe has further diminished. Since 1960, news stories from Asia, Africa, and Latin America have outnumbered those from Europe. Far more immigrants to the United States since 1960 have come from Asia and Latin America than from Europe.

The history course for the twenty-first century will be less Western as it becomes more global.

"Europe was no longer the world," Gilbert Allardyce wrote a few years ago in an article entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course" in the American Historical Review. "Emerging were other peoples, other histories, a globe of historic diversity beyond the imagination of earlier Westerners, a cosmos where pluralism replaced the 'oneness' of history and where human experience could not be ordered into a unilineal pattern of development. As educators came to recognize the world in this way, they recognized, at the same time, the poverty of the Western Civilization course."³

They realized that the time had come for a third citizenship course for Americans, a course that would teach Americans to understand not only their country, not even just Western civilization, but the place of Americans in the entire world.

The history course for the Twenty-first Century will be less

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Editor • Raymond M. Lorantas

Publications Director • Richard L. Rosen

Book Review Editors • Joe Gowaskie

• Craig Lockard

Composition • MACreations Associates

Typist • Marianne Breier

Copy Editor • Elizabeth L. Allinson

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Western as it becomes more global. But that does not necessarily mean it will contain more information. (Indeed, it cannot reduce Western coverage and increase bulk at the same time.) The simple fact is that no course, even on the most narrow of topics, avoids the problems of selectivity.

In graduate school I took a course called "The French Revolution and Napoleon." Perhaps some of you did as well. It ran two semesters. We read perhaps 20 books, virtually all in English, most written in the last generation --- and they were a small fraction of both of those categories. No one would ever presume that we learned all there was to know about the French Revolution or Napoleon. We were highly selective.

In my state you can take a course in New Jersey history. In most states, probably all, such courses are taught. In two states, Texas and California, some knowledge of state history is required of students. None of these courses exhausts their rich subjects.

We can teach a history of a state or a country in a semester or a year. There is no necessary correlation between the geographical size of the subject and the time we require, because we do not construct state histories from each of the city histories. We reconceptualize the subject.

Probably no teacher of American history organizes his or her course around the separate histories of each of the 50 states. Similarly world history can be much more (and less) than the separate histories of each country or even each civilization.

World history simply requires new perspectives, new approaches and new questions to accommodate the wider field of vision. The possibilities are considerable. Arnold Toynbee asked about the rhythms of development and decline, viewing all civilizations as if they were contemporaneous. He asked about their distinguishing features, searching for a grand classification that would give each civilization its due. William H. McNeill asked how peoples have interacted and spread the scope of civilization in different areas of the globe at different times, but on increasingly larger scales. Each set of questions leads to a history of the world, but they are different histories.

Like any subject, world history can be taught on some meaningful level in any amount of time or space. I used to begin my college course with a little book by Carlo Cipolla called *The Economic History of World Population*, in part to make this point to the students. Cipolla tells a history of the world in a hundred pages, most of which are filled with tables and graphs on changing world population and energy use. It is a world history. There is even a page in the book that shows a graph of world population over the last 10,000 years: a gradual increase until the eighteenth century, then a right angle turn off the page. That graph is a world history, and an important one.

The issue is not if world history can be taught. The issue is how, and what.

I would like to attempt one response to that question "what should we teach?" by focusing on the subject of this conference --- women in world history.

Women are defined out of the Western civilization survey. We celebrated a Greek democracy and a march of liberalism that often excluded women. We defined a Renaissance which was nothing of the sort for half the population. We marked an age of revolution and independence that further increased the dependence of women on men.

We are in the habit of defining history as the study of a particular past in which women have usually played a second-ary role. We think of history as the story of the great literate civilizations, of the march of civilization itself. We begin the story in the great river valley civilizations of the Middle East, (and sometimes) India, and China and we concentrate our attention on the development of their political power, material accomplishments, and great religious traditions.

These are important subjects. Nor are women always excluded. We can point to many of note in our surveys of these great civilizations. As historians we can rediscover many women who have been ignored. I do not mean to dismiss any of this activity. This conference will show how important it is to add women to the story. For the moment, however, I would like to make a different point. It is that most such additions of women do not change the fundamental story, and that the fundamental story is of the development of the patriarchy.

Whether or not we accept the notion of a Neolithic matriarchy, whatever that would mean, there seems to me to be overwhelming evidence that male domination increased enormously, both institutionally and culturally, in the formation of the great literate societies, or civilizations. We can look at the transition from matriarchal clans to patriarchal families, suggested by Lewis Henry Morgan, Friedrich Engels, and later Marxists. We can look at the development of the city, the state, and kingship as a male dominated policy that replaced the looser, more egalitarian Neolithic village, following Lewis Mumford and others. We can emphasize the switch from goddesses to gods, earth mothers to sky fathers, female centered to male dominated mythologies that have been revealed by Robert Briffault, Joseph Campbell, and others. We may see the origins of the patriarchy as early as the first market cities like Catal Huyuk long before the more general "urban revolution" of the fourth millenium B.C., or we may find a more decisive turn with the invasion of Indo-European "Aryan" charioteer armies in the middle of the second millenium B.C. But, in any case, in studying the great traditions, civilizations, empires, and states that emerged from that ancient clash of steppe and sown, we will be studying patriarchies.

When I say they are patriarchies, I mean a number of things. Most are patrilineal and patrilocal, i.e. inheritance is passed from father to son, and brides go to live with the husband's family. Men exercise political power, and (unlike some Neolithic societies) they do so in their own name or in the name of a larger unit than the (frequently matrilineal) clan. City and state rule is by men: kings, priests, armies, officials. Women's role is limited, especially in relation to this new civic world dominated by the men. While women

may still be involved in the culture, especially religion, their religious cults are less important than new male centered religions. Finally, pervasive cultural symbols inform women and men that women's role is secondary in the spheres that matter most: government, the market, the "outside," the active, and the sacred.

Our problem is that when we limit the study of history to the city dominated civilizations of the last 5,000 years, we are accepting the parameters of the patriarchy. In looking to include women's history, we are in something like the position of folklorists studying the "great books" or kinship specialists on the great American highways. We are studying the suppressed and the disappearing. This is especially problematic when we accept the frames of reference that these civilizations used to explain themselves. Frequently their categories of importance are men's concerns: politics, power, expansions, technology, and "mastery."

How do we get around this problem? Well, one thing we can do is tell the history of the patriarchy. We can show our students that it did not always exist, that earlier neolithic societies did provide women with sources of power and prestige which, as Jacquetta Hawkes said, have not been equaled since. We can point to examples of Neolithic cultures and complex societies on the periphery of the urban empires where women, women's work, and women's religion were important. Indeed, we can show the continuance of these traditions in the ancient civilizations, in the worship of Inanna (Ishtar), Isis, and so many others. We can ask about the origins of the patriarchy. What were the causes? To what extent was women's role undermined by urbanization, pastoral or Aryan culture, monotheism, private property, or kingship (to name some of the possible factors)? Or was sexual discrimination the root of slavery and social class distinctions, as Gerder Lerner suggests. These issues and the later history of patriarchal ideas and institutions as well as the challenges to that dominance are rich veins for the introductory history course in world history.

Thus, one of the ways of getting around the problem of including women in a subject which has seemed to exclude them almost by definition is to challenge that exclusion. Another way is to challenge the traditional definition of history. Anthropologists can help us here. Along with archaeologists they have already forced many historians to begin their accounts of the human past before the appearance of writing with pre-civilized agricultural and pastoral peoples. Our most useful prehistories come from much of their work, and can be part of our own--if we see our job as telling the entire human story.

Anthropologists remind us that culture is what people think, feel, and do (even when it is not great).

In some ways, however, the anthropological notion of culture is even more useful to historians. Anthropologists remind us that culture is what people think, feel, and do (even

when it is not great). They have taught us to see how people walk, to ask what they eat, and to value the songs and stories of the average person as well as the artist. This is a source of much of the new social history that has developed in the last generation.

I am reminded of a comment by Fernand Braudel: people are more than waist-deep in daily routine, he said. That routine is the real subject of human history. What people eat, what they wear, and what they dream, how they work, make love, and get bored: these are the important clues to who people are.

The anthropological search for meaning can take us beyond the concerns of the patriarchy to ask larger questions than those that concern politics and the administration of empires. The new social history that Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, Fernand Braudel, and so many others have taught us, has, of course, begun to do that. Some fear it has already gone too far in becoming a new orthodoxy. We might agree with Robert Darnton who recently warned that we don't make episodes like his fascinating tale of eighteenth century cat massacres more important than the French Revolution. But we might take issue with the assertion of Arno Mayer (Darnton's colleague at Princeton) that a correct balance would require teaching political and diplomatic history in order to train "tomorrow's imperial elite."

History is no longer only "past politics." Its function is no longer the training of gentlemen diplomats. Historical education in a democracy can provide insight and understanding to all citizens on a wide variety of issues. Historical education in modern society can offer all students a richer sense of human possibilities than is provided by either their career training or the stories of battles and treaties.

I would like to argue that the interests of women's history and world history came together in the important task of overthrowing the dominance of the old political history. I remember the comment of a faculty member at Southern Mississippi State when I visited the campus last year to discuss world history. He said, in response to the questions of some of his colleagues, that world history was quite easy to teach once we got over our need to name all the kings. After a certain point they are all interchangeable anyway, he said. In fact many of the stories told about each ruler could be easily shifted from one to the other without a loss. Much the same could be said about the desire to have students list the presidents, prime ministers, wars, treaties, and other unexplained items of traditional political history. The attention of the "new political history" to broader issues of structure and change recognizes this.

Political parties, diplomacy, international relations, government administration are important, to be sure. But they are not the only important things in our lives. They are often what Braudel called "epiphenomena" that obscure fundamental changes (Truman and Eisenhower fan a "cold war" with China and Nixon ends it). A not often noticed by-product of political history might be the inflated egos and expenses of our presidents and prime ministers. I've often wondered if Nixon would have taped his every word if he did not think he was

history. He would have been better off if he had a broader view of the historical process, and so would many of our students. More importantly, an internal history of political leaders and political institutions as a separate subject tends to miss the most important lesson a student ought to learn about politics: that politics is not separate from society, economics, and culture. A litany of presidential changes, state department shifts, or Supreme Court decisions in the United States in this century, for instance, might easily fail to make what I would consider the most important point: how government has become enmeshed in more and more aspects of daily life that were once the concern of the family, community, and church. A history of health, of the family, of education could not do that.

As these examples make clear, I am not suggesting we concentrate on private rather than public concerns. Issues of health, family, education, sexuality, work, leisure, welfare, and culture are not private issues. They are very public concerns, political in a broad sense. If they have been traditionally defined as both "private" and "women's issues," it is because of the traditional exclusion of women from the public arena.

If the gentlemen of the past needed history to run the empire, the young men and women of today need history for many more things, only one of which may be running (or dismantling) the empire. Our foreign relations is only one of their problems.

I would like to suggest that we teach our students to think historically about their problems with the same zeal that these older generations of elite men were taught diplomacy and government administration.

What are the problems our students face? They run the gamut, of course: the threat of nuclear war; environmental deterioration; the need for useful work and economic well-being; development of individual identity and self-respect; the achievement of intimacy through marriage, family, or social involvement; an understanding of social inequalities or injustices according to class, race, and gender, for instance. These are the personal and public problems faced by our students and ourselves at the end of the twentieth century. They are the problems of war and peace, energy and environment, economics and work, love and marriage, individuality and society, race and ethnicity, men and women.

If we teach our students to think historically about issues like these, we are not teaching subjects that have been dominated by men. Most are neither male nor female issues. Some, like war, might affect men, as political soldiers, more directly than women. Some, like gender, might be felt more strongly by women. But most are not men's issues or women's issues, but human issues. The issue of environmental deterioration, for instance, is far more gender-neutral than diplomacy (and, I would argue, a good deal more important as well). Like almost any subject, it could be approached through a history of legislation, political movements, or international agreements, but it might more usefully be approached in other ways. One could (without referring to gender at all) discuss the environmental impact of successive hu-

man technological revolutions. Alternatively, one could make gender a prime concern by evaluating the argument of Arnold Toynbee, Lynn White, Carolyn Merchant, and others that Neolithic earth-mother religions encouraged greater respect for nature than monotheistic, sky-father religions. Another alternative might be the investigation of recent historical relations between humans and the environment, perhaps with the aid of studies by Barry Commoner, Rachel Carson, and others. My point is not to advocate one or another approach, but to show that if we view our introductions to world history as opportunities to develop our students' historical understanding of important issues which confront them, we ask each step of the way which information is relevant. We are not bound as much by the categories and collections of data that reflect a patriarchal agenda. We are less likely to be cowered into naming all the male names that have ceased to be relevant to the questions we ask but have, instead, become the disembodied, de-contextualized, non-nutritive raw material that we feed our students, adding to their weight and ballast but not their enlightenment.

It is true that most of us (men at least) have more male names in our baskets than female names, so that even when we ask new questions we often come up with the same answers. But at least the attempt to direct our historical inquiries to issues that matter will raise questions as important to women as to men. Further, the historical inquiries we develop will be geared to answer our questions with the best information we have, regardless of its race, creed, or gender.

I am not merely advocating topical history rather than chronological history. I am concerned with how chronology sometimes obscures or ignores the major developments or changes in world history. Some of the most important changes in world history are often not included in chronological presentations because they do not fit neatly into our centuries, epochs, or dynasties. I am thinking, for instance, of the following:

1. The Neolithic revolution
2. The development of patriarchy
3. The rise of capitalism
4. The ascendancy of the state over the family
5. Secularization
6. The integration of the global economy

Instead of ignoring these developments, we might structure our world history courses around them.

In conclusion, we are at an important point in the process of developing the introductory world history course. We are at a stage equivalent to that of the development of the Western civilization course in American universities between the wars. There is a lot at stake. We are talking about the education of at least the next generation.

The third American general education course will be a course in world history. That battle is almost won. It just makes too much sense for even a particular administration in Washington to prevent. But we are in an ideal position to think clearly and deeply about what kind of world history

course to teach. No single model will do, of course. There should be many. But for my part, I would like to urge that we break with some of the tendencies of the Western civilization survey. These tendencies are: (1) the emphasis on the great civilizations to the exclusions of the "lesser" and "peripheral" traditions, (2) the emphasis on political and diplomatic history, and (3) the excessive attention to undigested subject matter about the time and place instead of helping students think about issues that concern them.

The failure of the Western civilization survey to make women's issues a key ingredient of the course was part of a larger problem. The "Western civilization" that such courses sought to define was by nature male, political, and elitist. Let us not just add some of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to that base. Let us carefully rethink the entire enterprise.

End Notes

1. The Columbia College Announcements, 1874-1875, listed six questions in its "specimen examinations." Three dealt with Europe (England, the Netherlands, and the Bulgarians) and three concerned Mexico (the conquest and Aztec religion) though one of the two questions on Aztec religion might be called comparative:

Draw a parallel between the revolting customs of Mexico, and the barbarities practiced contemporaneously in the most polished countries of Europe. What one feature sunk the Aztec superstition far below the Christian?

2. I compared the first pages of the issues for January 1-5 every five years from 1890 to 1985.

3. The American Historical Review, (87:3) June 1982, pp. 695-743. •

Sixth Annual Rocky Mountain Regional Conference

David McComb
Colorado State University

The sixth annual Rocky Mountain Regional World History Association conference took place May 1-2, 1987, on the campus of Colorado State University at Fort Collins, Colorado. Fifty-one people from around the United States and from two foreign countries registered. Non-registered faculty members from Colorado State, University of Northern Colorado, Colorado University, and students from the campus also participated in various parts of the program. Secondary schools, community colleges, and universities were all represented. The theme of the conference this year was "Women in the History of the World" with emphasis upon teaching approaches. Past conferences have dealt with cities, technology, and Africa.

Kevin Reilly of Somerset County College, President of the

World History Association, gave the keynote address after the Friday night banquet. He stressed the need for world history courses to place the United States in a global perspective, and claimed the possibility of teaching the courses at different levels in any time frame through the selection of themes. One such theme could be the history of women, a topic often excluded from the common subjects of power, technology, and politics. Students also need to look at current problems such as social inequalities, intimacy, and the environment. He concluded, however, that these are human issues, not just male versus female questions.

Following his address there was a lively response from the audience which raised the question about teaching themes to the detriment of chronology and literacy, the common knowledge of intelligent people. There was no resolution over the question about teaching literacy, but Reilly explained further his use of a topical approach in a breakfast seminar the following morning. He wanted to stimulate historical thinking in students by focusing on issues important to them such as men-women, race-nationality, economy-work. He reported that the approach created strong class discussions, but had to be used where discussions were possible, not in large lecture sessions.

On Friday afternoon two sessions had taken place. "Add Women and Stir" involved a panel presentation by Carol Cantrell and James Long of Colorado State University, Jim Jankowski and Pat Limerick of Colorado University, and Jan Worrell of the University of Northern Colorado. They were all members of the SIROW (Southwest Institute for Research on Women) Project which over the past several years has encouraged faculty members to integrate information about women into traditional courses. They discussed the impact on their courses in Western Civilization, Middle Eastern history, Latin American history, and the American West. All concluded that the effort had changed their perspectives on history, but the depth and extent of the change varied from person to person.

Concurrently, at a session of miscellaneous papers chaired by Bryant Shaw of the United States Air Force Academy, Stephen S. Gosch from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire demonstrated the use of documents to introduce students to gender relations in a course on premodern Asia. He emphasized that the selections should be readable, interesting, linked to larger issues, five pages in length, and accompanied by guiding questions. Barbara Preskorn of the Front Range Community College told how ancient stories and artifacts can be used to reveal the historical devaluing of women. Modern women are still valued more for their bodies than their brains, a point she demonstrated with slides of ancient art and modern advertising.



David McComb, Director, 7th Annual meeting of WHA's Rocky Mountain Regional Association

relations in a course on premodern Asia. He emphasized that the selections should be readable, interesting, linked to larger issues, five pages in length, and accompanied by guiding questions. Barbara Preskorn of the Front Range Community College told how ancient stories and artifacts can be used to reveal the historical devaluing of women. Modern women are still valued more for their bodies than their brains, a point she demonstrated with slides of ancient art and modern advertising.

On Saturday morning John Mueller of Aims Community College introduced Marilyn Hitchens of Wheat Ridge High School to talk about her participation in the film series, "The World: A Television History." She illustrated her presentation with portions of the video series. Following this for the remainder of the morning there was shown a group of video tapes from the C.S.U. film library concerning women around the world and changes which had occurred.

At the same time in a concurrent session Donald Johnson of New York University and Jean Johnson of Friends Seminary offered a bureaucratic, ethical, and diplomatic model to replace the heroic model of history. In this meeting, chaired by Wayne Clegern of Colorado State, the Johnsons pointed out that by emphasizing themes of cooperation and group bonding there would be greater room and respect for women in history. The home and family with its cyclical and nurturing features could be the model for an effective and humane society. Self-sacrifice and non-violence could be an alternative to competition and dominance. Gandhi could rank higher than Alexander the Great.

Mark T. Gilderhus of Colorado State chaired another session concerning women in the military. LeVell Holmes of Sonoma State University spoke about Amazons (women warriors) in two precolonial West African nations. In Dahomey, women soldiers formed a segregated elite guard while in Kenoudougou they were a part of other military units. They fought on occasion, died in battle, and otherwise behaved as professional soldiers. Lorry M. Fenner of the United States Air Force Academy explored the mobilization of women in Germany in World War II and concluded that Hitler failed to utilize middle-class women in the factories. Early Nazi policy proclaimed women as mothers and homemakers, a role with which German and other European women agreed. Although the later war effort called for total mobilization, it was not enforced. Fenner along with Holmes recognized other areas about their subjects which deserved further exploration.

Wang Dun-Shu of Nankai University in a session about "women emperors" in China, chaired by Loren Crabtree of Colorado State, talked about Lu Zhi (241-180 B.C.), Ze Tian (624-705), and Ci Xi (1835-1908). These women broke the traditional dominance of men, but were condemned for their treachery and cruelty. Empresses Lu Zhi and Ze Tian deserved some praise for their policies of political unity and economic influence. Ci Xi offered little resistance to Japanese expansion, for example, and appropriated the naval budget to build her summer palace. In the discussion it was explained that the succession of rulers was often bloody because of the weakness of youthful heirs or questions about their authority.

Also in the morning Joseph L. Grabill of Illinois State University presented an explanation about how he used a thematic American history course to compare Soviet and American women. This session, chaired by James Long of Colorado State, grew from Grabill's interest in comparative studies in diplomatic history. He and his students have discovered that an earlier balance between men and women was eroded by hierarchical and urban culture. Some recovery of symmetry

was found under Catherine the Great in Russia and after the Seneca Falls meeting in the United States, but in neither place was equality achieved. Asymmetry in both countries contributed to the cold war, whereas elements of symmetry in the United States and the Soviet Union have aided in nuclear freeze and citizen diplomacy movements.

Robert Roeder, chairperson of the regional steering committee, concluded the morning meetings by asking members about establishing a service center for teachers of world history. He took a written poll concerning the usefulness of sample syllabi, reviews of literature, telephone inquiries, a resource center, audio tapes, and video tapes. The results of the poll were not then available, but in the discussion members of the audience mentioned that the University of Hawaii had proposed a world history journal, several universities have established fields of world history, that the *World History Bulletin* could perhaps serve some of these service functions, and that maybe a modem system could be utilized for inquiries.

At the luncheon, Carol Mitchell, a folklorist at Colorado State, spoke about matriarchal societies. She pointed out that there was no evidence that women ruled politically during neolithic times, but that there was sex equality in a cultural sense. She utilized the shift of emphasis from goddesses to gods to demonstrate the change to a patriarchal culture following the Indo-European invasions. For additional information she pointed to Merlin Stone's When God Was a Woman, and Gerda Lerner's The Creation of Patriarchy.

In one of the afternoon sessions Judith Zinsser of the United Nations International School talked about the significance of the International Decade for Women, 1975-1985. In this session, which was chaired by Sue Ellen Charlton of Colorado State, Zinsser claimed that for historical impact the International Decade is similar to the Industrial Revolution. The meetings at Mexico City in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980, and Nairobi in 1985 served to challenge the patriarchy, establish a global union of women, and change statistical gathering to include unpaid labor such as that of women inside the home. Some 170 nations have ratified the conventions of the Nairobi conference condemning discrimination against women. During the discussion Zinsser pointed to the importance of literacy and cheap contraception for the freedom of women, and also to the great amount of data about women being produced by the United Nations.

Marilyn Hitchens of Wheat Ridge High School chaired a concurrent session about the Women in World Area Studies project of St. Louis Park and Robbinsdale Area Schools in Minnesota. Susan Hill Gross, a co-director of the project, described the student books, sound filmstrips, and the curriculum aids produced. The materials included data about women in Latin America, India, USSR, China, Middle East, Africa, the Middle Ages, and in ancient Greece and Rome. Glenhurst Publications printed the materials and Janet Donaldson of Glenhurst was in attendance to talk about them.

At another session Heidi Roupp of Aspen High School chaired a program about women on the battlefield. Lynda Schaffer of Tufts University spoke about Olga of Kiev, Anne Barstow of SUNY at Old Westbury talked about Joan of Arc,

and Joyce Lebra of Colorado University commented about the Rani of Jhansi. It was pointed out that women warriors generally picked up where their husbands left off, they were respected by men for the most part, and the women who ended up on the battlefield were often those who lived on a frontier.

After a coffee-break the conference concluded with summary remarks from the participants and a business meeting of the Rocky Mountain Regional World History Association. David McComb gave a brief report about the current conference and Robert Roeder discussed the preliminary plans for the conference next year. Some participants mentioned interest in starting other regional meetings while others suggested a national conference for the World History Association. •

Conceptual Strategies For Survey Courses *

John A. Mears

Southern Methodist University

For more than two decades after the Second World War, professional historians lived comfortably with the well-established assumptions that their discipline would serve as a valuable undergraduate major and was an essential component of any properly constituted program of general education. In the 1920's and 1930's, they had sought an efficient means of providing a foundation for the systematic study of history at the baccalaureate level and of fulfilling their widely accepted role in the liberal arts curriculum. They believed without serious question that they had found such an instrument in the standardized survey course that could be staffed with relative ease, did not distract them unduly from their increasingly specialized research interests, and provided substantial enrollments for expanding departments.

The largely unchallenged success of survey courses hampered the ability of historians to anticipate the difficulties which overtook them in the late 1960s. As the needs and expectations of students born in the postwar baby boom began to change, as severe social problems associated with the impact of the Vietnam War and the reverberations of the civil rights movement rocked college campuses, and as cumulative advances in scholarship made it increasingly difficult to fit new ideas into old formats, basic courses which had been regarded as sacrosanct just a few years earlier ceased to function effectively. Students grew unresponsive and instructors lost confidence in what they were doing in the classroom. One after another, faculties drew back from general education requirements. Survey courses in history frequently collapsed while overall departmental enrollments plummeted. Almost everywhere in the 1970s, we historians found ourselves on the defensive.¹ Then, toward the end of the decade, came highly publicized efforts to reexamine undergraduate require-

ments, most notably the reforms completed at Harvard University. Those efforts have been reinforced by recent demands that the nation "return to the basics" in elementary and secondary education. Suddenly, we were encountering golden opportunities to regain our central position in the college curriculum, and one way we have responded has been through a reconsideration of the very survey courses many of us willingly repudiated a decade ago.

In our move back to comprehensive course offerings, we will quickly discover--if we have not done so already--that the approaches of the 1960s will not suit our immediate purposes. Incompatible with some of the most original contributions of primary scholarship as well as emerging perceptions about the realities of the larger world, the "tried and true" methods were already inadequate at the time of their greatest appeal. In the 1970's those of us who remained committed to survey courses compounded our difficulties in the classroom by placing more and more emphasis upon a detailed examination of limited topics, assuming that the context necessary for an understanding of what our students had mastered would naturally emerge from an exacting chronological narrative. Our strategy emanated from ingrained intellectual propensities and the progressive specialization of the profession,² but it proved counterproductive to the extent that it injected yet more data into overburdened survey courses without offering



John A. Mears, Southern Methodist University

viable interpretive frameworks capable of integrating large bodies of information into a meaningful whole. If we want to make our courses manageable for ourselves and usable for student purposes, then we must be prepared to formulate organizing principles and analytic concepts of sufficient explanatory power to reveal

the underlying connectedness and order in an apparently disparate mass of particular facts.

Despite the enormous challenges inherent in this task, we have at our disposal all of the resources necessary to accomplish it. Historical scholarship is presently being revitalized by a creative ferment that has fully justified C. Vann Woodward's description of the unfolding era of historiography as "the age of reinterpretation."³ Earlier initiatives in a variety of fields like urban studies, family history, and demography reached fruition in the 1970s, and we have broadened our intellectual horizons by replacing what Marc Bloch once called "obsolete topographical compartments" with patterns of comprehension that more adequately reflect history's inclusive, synthetic character. With heightened awareness of the need for a genuinely universal view of past events, pacesetters in the profession have turned their attention to hitherto neglected

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cultures and civilizations, and drawn profitably upon theories and techniques devised by social scientists, most especially in their use of quantification and the comparative approach. Blending systematic analysis with narrative description, shifting the focus of their inquiry from unique events to general uniformities, they have, Geoffrey Barraclough believes, reinvigorated historical research, pushing it to a "decisive turning point."⁴

At the same time, our orientation as humanists makes us inclined to "focus on the understanding and explanation of situations, processes, or events, not on the theoretical means by which that understanding or explanation is reached." According to Theodore K. Rabb, we are therefore "indifferent to method as long as the results are illuminating." We are wary of trying to make unique events fit rigid theories and ironclad laws, and we are impelled to confront the full range of complexity and diversity in the human experience. We continue to embrace comfortably a variety of interpretations, and display considerable latitude in the selection of our research tools. We seldom succumb to the pitfalls of reductionism or talk in abstract generalizations (except in papers like this one). Reluctant to claim for ourselves practical relevance as the problem-solvers of societal ills, we convey that sense of long-term perspective crucial for understanding the human condition. As historians, we share what Professor Rabb describes as our "determination to enlarge and reinterpret the classical question."⁵ We have a habit of reconsidering familiar issues and reformulating existing questions by casting them in a new light or adding dimensions previously unnoticed. What the "age of reinterpretation" has given us, in short, is a vital combination of inherited intellectual values and breathtaking advances in scholarship that makes us better prepared than ever before to carry out our classroom objectives and introduce enhanced philosophical and structural coherence into our survey courses.

In initiating an extensive revision process, it would be helpful to keep in mind what we are asking our students to study. All basic courses, even the survey of American history, exhibit the same kinds of problems. But what we are reassessing at this conference involves introductory courses dealing broadly with civilization, especially our own Western experience with civilization. Some of us have been insisting upon the need for a different perspective, one that is truly global in scope, even though most existing courses still treat world history as the sum of the histories of all the great civilizations, and continue to be organized around the established periodizations of the European past, with a consideration of key developments in non-European regions grafted on to the treatment of Western civilization.⁶ But whatever our angle of vision, we have three well-established courses from which to choose: world history, Western civilization, and modern Europe. If we reflect carefully upon these alternatives, I think we will see that they are not rivals for a single place in the university curriculum. Rather, they constitute three distinct possibilities, each evoking radically different problems, each serving particular purposes, and each requiring its own undergirding conceptualization. Yet each is, in its particular

way, concerned with the human experience in the context of civilization, and as foolhardy as it may seem, we must think about the phenomenon of civilization before we devise our analytical constructs or apply our interpretive theories.

Classic definitions associate civilization with a level of societal complexity sustained by hierarchically structured organizational mechanisms and a profound cosmological outlook that intensify human interaction. Considered from this perspective, a civilization is "a functionally interrelated system." It is a complicated network of intersystematic as well as intrasystemic relationships whose component parts typically originate and come together in urban centers.⁷

The high degree of interaction and interdependence that characterizes the infrastructure of civilization explains why a given civilized society can maintain a distinctive identity over huge geographical areas and for very long periods of time, yet undergo myriad alterations on a virtually continuous basis. Once thoroughly integrated patterns have developed, a civilization achieves sufficient coherence in the relationships between its various facets that the possibilities for substantial modification begin to diminish. On the other hand, the diversity of human action and experience embraced by the complex network of relationships (external as well as internal) that makes up a civilization evokes recurring change. Alterations in one aspect of the system give rise to modifications in other elements, thus producing shifts not at particular points in the system, but transformations of the entire configuration.⁸ The persistence of a civilization's forms in the face of cumulative change allows us to perceive it as a unified cultural area, whose existence can be located in time and space, whose limits and divisions can be described, and whose distinguishing attributes can be differentiated from those of its constituent regions and also from the dominant features of other civilized societies.

An approach emphasizing the interrelational aspects of civilizations and embracing very large space/time perspectives must be holistic in nature. We cannot rely exclusively upon chronological narratives that explain particular events in terms of unilinear causation. That does not mean we should abandon the narrative process. Narration, after all, is itself a form of interpretation, and given our preoccupation with the fundamental problem of how and why societal change occurs over time, we will invariably organize past events in a sequential fashion and within the framework of coherent periods. But if we are going to explain the long-term realities of a civilization, we will have to develop explanatory models that integrate an analysis of structures (patterns with continuity over time) and processes (the change of structures through time) into a chronological narrative. James A. Henretta has proposed a method that focuses upon paradigmatic episodes, small but crucial or concrete situations that are symptomatic of major forces and dominant trends, and that can be studied thoroughly for their broad historical significance through the use of Clifford Geertz's technique of "thick description."⁹ Lacking any overarching theory with which to treat the subject of civilization in either our teaching or our research, we will also find the comparative method indispens-

able. Only then will we be able to account for similarities and difference in analogous situations while grappling with the causes and consequences of larger trends.¹⁰

Turning specifically to the existing civilization surveys with these theoretical considerations in mind, what organizing principles --each with their appropriate scales of perception and commensurate explanatory constructs-- can we imagine for the three dominant alternatives? In setting forth my own conceptual strategies, I do not want to suggest that they will offer the only possible solutions to the vexing problem of how to forge exciting survey courses for undergraduates. I only wish to demonstrate that viable principles of organization can be identified, that they are indispensable to innovative curriculum-building, and that their implementation can bring far-reaching benefits to a university community.

In the case of world history, I would insist on a course that is genuinely global in scope. Our goal is to clarify somehow the totality of our shared heritage as human beings. How can such a course be handled in two semesters? How can undergraduates begin to understand the nature and significance of humanity's experience with civilization in an introductory survey? We might begin with a very long-term perspective, considering the last 5,000 years (3000 B.C.- A.D. 2000) as a single, coherent period in the evolution of humankind. After all, this entire period was characterized by the development of civilization and its spread throughout the globe. The period was bracketed by two great transmutations in the human condition, each involving momentous technical innovations and a fundamental restructuring of organization and values that affected virtually every facet of human life.

In the case of world history, I would insist on a course that is genuinely global in scope.

The first of these two major watersheds, which culminated in the breakthrough to civilization in the river valleys of the ancient Near East about 3000 B.C., itself embraced two enormous milestones: the Agricultural Revolution and the Urban Revolution. Those discrete revolutions were preceded by what might be called the Paleolithic Transformation, involving a process of physical and cultural evolution that probably originated several million years ago on the savannas of east Africa and culminated in the appearance of *Homo sapiens sapiens* approximately 35,000 years ago. In all of the earliest cultures of the Paleolithic Age (ca. 600,000-10,000 B.C.), hunting and gathering were the universal means of human subsistence. Since many important facets of the human pattern of life stem directly from the hunting-gathering adaptation, we could appropriately introduce a course on world history with a substantial section on preagricultural times, drawing upon the insights of anthropologists and archaeologists to explore those human attributes, like cooperation, artistic expression, and the permanence of the male-female bond, that received enduring shape in the success of the hunting-gathering adaptation. Our students should understand that for

countless millennia, hunting and gathering peoples functioned in harmony with their environment. Life for them was typically nomadic, leisurely, and egalitarian. After world history students have examined hunting-gathering societies, they would be able to appreciate more fully the significance of the Agricultural Revolution as a true dividing line in human history.

Although we associate the Agricultural Revolution (ca. 8500-6500 B.C.) with events in the ancient Near East, a shift from hunting and gathering to sedentary food production occurred independently and at various times over a several thousand year period in widely separated places: the Fertile Crescent, southeastern Europe, northern China, southeast Asia and Meso-America. As a result of a broad-spectrum utilization of the natural environment, a rise in population, the appearance of enduring settlements, and the development of a preadapted technology, hunter-gatherers were pushed toward sedentary food production and possessed the means by which they could respond to the opportunities it offered. Because settled agriculture provided human beings with the ability to increase their resource base substantially, it constituted a fundamental economic revolution.¹¹ Not only did human beings have a greater impact on their environment with food production, but they accelerated the process of change in societies whose enhanced complexity evoked substantially more variety in the behavior patterns of their members.

The second major transformation associated with the rise of civilization was the Urban Revolution. Like the introduction of agriculture, the growth of cities had an enduring effect on all subsequent societies. The urban transformation again enhanced the scale and complexity of social organization. It altered the nature of interactions between people and in the structure of human communities. It produced new forms of integrating institutions that reflected hierarchical patterns of authority, social stratification, specialization of functions, and unequal distribution of wealth. Consideration of the Agricultural and the Urban Revolutions should help students to understand how civilizations superseded the hunting-gathering context of human existence. Simultaneously, it should provide them with an opportunity to reflect upon the implications of cultural evolution.

The other radical transmutation delineating the last 5,000 years as a coherent unit in the history of humankind is the one that humanity is presently experiencing the world around.¹² A treatment of this watershed might well center on the theme of "modernization" as it was initially experienced by European civilization under the impact of industrial and democratic revolutions and as it subsequently has been felt in other areas of the earth, partly as a consequence of "Westernization."¹³ Such a focus would put students in touch with the increasingly technological, industrial, urban -- and global-- context of contemporary life. They should think about how virtually every aspect of ordinary existence has been altered since the mid-nineteenth century through the wedding of science and technology, how the very concept of the city has been transformed as a consequence of industrialization, why the forces of modernization began in Western

Europe, why its revolutionary effects are now working themselves out in many respects independently of anything Westerners might be doing, and how humankind has reached the end of a prolonged experience with meaningful autonomous civilizations.

When analyzing the nature and significance of the intervening 5,000 years as a coherent period, we do not need to distinguish one traditional civilization from another, describing the characteristic style of each, establishing what each contributed to the legacy of the past. But a world history survey should also explore the common denominators between the several great civilizations that have appeared over the last 5,000 years, recognizing that all of them were founded in one way or another on what Eric Wolf has called "the tributary mode of production."¹⁴ From the outset, civilized societies have rested on an agricultural base, with numerous food producing peasants, dwelling in isolated villages and functioning at or near the subsistence level, subject to and exploited by small ruling elites usually congregated in urban centers. Hierarchy, specialization, and inequality were among the general patterns shared by civilized societies.¹⁵

Until the Industrial Revolution, all agriculturally based civilizations faced the limitations of low productivity and an inability to make substantial technological breakthroughs of the kind associated with the two great transmutations in the texture of human existence.¹⁶ Careful study of these and other common denominators should clarify for students the interrelated nature of human development in its 5,000 year experience with civilization. It should help them grasp the dimensions of the contemporary transformation, which will ultimately displace the now familiar context of human existence in ways that we have only begun to recognize.

While generally accepted criteria for the inclusion of material in a framework capable of embracing the universal patterns of world history have yet to be established, the organizational ideas worked out by scholars like Eric Wolf, L.S. Stavrianos, and William H. McNeill suggest some interesting possibilities. Starting from somewhat different perspectives, these scholars have adopted approaches that emphasize the primary interrelationships between societies throughout the world and the importance of cultural diffusion in all previous epochs. They tend to view cultural diversity in all as an index of human achievement and argue that contacts and collisions between people with conflicting lifestyles have functioned as the mainspring of historical change.¹⁷ Certainly it is possible to quarrel with many of their specific formulations. In the future, their assumptions will continue to be challenged, their arguments modified, and new organizational principles devised. But their accomplishments have already demonstrated that world history constitutes a viable subject for classroom instruction and an appropriate field for advanced research.¹⁸

Turning to the Western civilization survey, I would suggest that a primary function of the course stems from the university's obligation to preserve, extend, and transmit the core of our particular civilized heritage to its undergraduate students. Once more we may ask how the Western civilization survey

can fulfill this purpose? I think we can start with Christopher Dawson's notion that "behind every civilization there is a vision," a point made in a somewhat different fashion by Alfred North Whitehead when he asserted that "in each age of the world distinguished by high activity, there will be found at its culmination. . . some profound cosmological outlook, implicitly accepted, impressing its own type on the current springs of action."¹⁹ When we speak of a social cosmology, we are talking about a set of usually unquestioned assumptions about a wide spectrum of vital issues. A social cosmology defines relations between one human being and another, and between human beings and nature. It offers meaningful concepts of time and space. It answers the difficult question of epistemology. The Western civilization survey could readily be organized around the concept of civilization as a complex society sustained by a profound cosmological outlook or visions that promotes cultural creation, shapes human interaction, and defines institutional structures.²⁰ The essence of the Western tradition, studied from this vantage point, could be explored not only through the development of persistent ideals and values embedded in the high intellectual/cultural achievements of our civilized heritage, but through a complementary consideration of popular attitudes and behavior patterns as well.²¹ Such an approach would allow us to examine more closely structures and patterns that cannot be studied in any depth in the world history survey.

Despite the continuities in our direct heritage, we should keep in mind that we are dealing in fact not with a single Western civilization, but with Western civilizations, i.e., the civilizations that sprang up to the west of the ancient heartland of the Near East. Even if we exclude from our treatment episodic variants like the Hittites, we still must discriminate between two interconnected though different civilizations. We call the earliest Greco-Roman or Classical Civilization. Its history extended from about 600 B.C. to about A.D. 300. Many of the propensities we associate with the Western heritage have been traced back to ancient Greece, including a rationalistic and secular view of life that molded unique forms of philosophical speculation, art and literature, science, law, and government. From the very outset, civilization in the West was markedly different from alternative forms. The distinctive patterns of the West were substantially modified during a prolonged transition that lasted from A.D. 300 to approximately the year 1000,²² by which time a fundamentally new, though related, style of civilization had crystallized between the Rhine and Loire Rivers. A Mediterranean civilization had been transformed into a European one. This modified arrangement of Western civilization, which economic and demographic historians have labeled Traditional Europe, endured in many of its aspects until the early decades of our century.²³ What we should particularly emphasize with our students is the unusual dynamism of these Western civilizations linked to the unique blending of discordant social-cultural elements.²⁴

The juxtaposition of opposites can be applied with equal effect to the modern European survey. Here we are concerned exclusively with the history of Traditional Europe as it

evolved from its formative stage in the ninth and tenth centuries through the period of the twentieth-century world wars. Until about 1930, Dietrich Gerhard has suggested, the history of Europe could still be seen as an entity in itself. The initial phases of the Industrial Revolution had not produced a radical break with the past. The distinguishing characteristics of corporate organization and regional attachment remained intact despite an accelerating rate of innovation. After 1930, Europe became an increasingly industrialized, democratic society whose historical evolution was ever more integrated into patterns of development that were global in scope.²⁵ This survey should not only identify the fundamental sources of dynamic change that repeatedly transformed the dominant institutions and values of European civilization, but also treat the continuities stressed by Professor Gerhard. We need to explain what set Europe apart from the rest of the world, why it temporarily outstripped its rivals as a center of intellectual ferment, political experimentation, economic expansions and technological discovery. And we need to explain why (and in what ways) it became dominant in global affairs between 1500 and 1900. To respond to these questions satisfactorily, we will have to analyze European history from a comparative perspective, and rigorously applied comparisons might compel us to abandon much of our conventional periodization, especially the custom of differentiating between "medieval" and "modern."²⁶

In order to explain the dynamism of European civilization, its propensity for growth through the breaking of cultural restraints, many specialists have adopted an interpretation that focuses upon Europe's pluralism, above all the incorporation of heterogeneous and sometimes incompatible traits into the infrastructure of European society. This interpretation locates the source of Europe's mutability in the tensions radiating out of a society that mixed together Roman-Christian and Germanic-feudal components. The result was a confrontation of opposites --faith and reason, church and state, the sacred and the secular, the universal and the particular-- that over and over again prevented Europe from settling into a fixed formulation of institutions and values.²⁷ We should not try to explain too much with any single interpretation, but the thesis that Traditional Europe represented a fusing of diverse historical strands can surely help our students understand what gave rise to the last great agriculturally based civilization whose extraordinary contributions to the human adventure set the stage for the watershed of the twentieth century.

Clearly our recurring attempts to resolve the problems of survey courses with old methods have proven insufficient.

Given the obvious complications inherent in efforts to reconceptualize the modern European survey or any other broad introductory course, why would a history department want to attempt such a demanding task, especially in universities where available resources are shrinking along with the pool of potential students? Does not substantial reconceptualiza-

tion involve unacceptably high risks for department and individual faculty members alike? I would suggest that it is precisely our present dilemmas that make resuscitation of the survey course so worthwhile and in the final analysis so unavoidable. Clearly our recurring attempts to resolve the problems of survey courses with old methods have proven insufficient. It is hard to imagine anything we could possibly try that would make the situation in our survey courses any worse than it already is.

We might strengthen our resolve by recalling that the potential rewards are as great as the stakes we would be wagering. For our students, a vital history survey could mean welcome direction in their undergraduate experience, offering them an integrating general framework within which they can explore particular interest in the most intellectually meaningful fashion. They would become aware of a wide spectrum of human experience and have an opportunity to reflect upon the challenges of the contemporary world from a long range point of view rather than in terms of their immediate interests and needs alone. Whereas we professional historians have been trained to assume that a broad academic orientation usually means superficiality, and that specialization is the surest road to understanding, I would insist that an exhaustive investigation of limited topics is more likely to evoke deep insight when coupled with background breadth, and that narrowness, by itself, often means shallowness because it leaves specialized information without the enriching context necessary for penetrating analysis.

From this it follows that we historians need strong survey courses for our own professional growth as much as our students need them for their intellectual advancement. Preparation to teach general requirements could broaden our perspective on our specialized research, imparting fresh meaning and relevance to familiar facts, timeworn concepts, and established areas of learning. It might enable us to integrate more effectively our responsibilities as educators with our work as scholars. While providing our students with a solid foundation for their whole undergraduate experience, we would be compelled to demonstrate the very breadth of knowledge that we insist they must have. Through the refinement of survey courses, we might exemplify more perfectly the principles of a liberal education that we theoretically espouse, to the improvement of both teaching and scholarship. Moreover, we might learn how to focus our collective energies, regaining that sense of common purpose and ultimate commitment that has invariably sustained outstanding history departments during their most dynamic periods. We might, in short, employ survey courses to revitalize the study of the past, making it into what Lord Acton always thought it should be: not a burden on the memory but an illumination of the soul.

End Notes

1. The pressure on historical studies was most severe in our high schools, where critics went so far as to mount direct attacks on the discipline as an independent mode of inquiry. Occasionally, they put forth serious efforts to eliminate it al-

together. See, for example, Edgar Wesley, "Let's Abolish History Courses," *Phi Delta Kappan*, Volume XLII, Number 1 (September, 1967), pp. 3-8. The indifference of professional historians to the fate of their discipline in elementary and secondary education has been discussed by Charles G. Sellers, "Is History on the Way Out of the Schools and Do Historians Care?," *Social Education*, Volume 33, Number 5 (May, 1969), pp. 509-16.

2. James A. Henretta offers a plausible explanation of the American predilection for chronology and narrative, with its concomitant reluctance to embrace the theoretical systems developed by European scholars, in "Social History as Lived and Written," *The American Historical Review*, Volume 84, Number 5 (December, 1979), pp. 1306-9.

3. *The American Historical Review*, Volume LXVI, Number 1 (October, 1960), pp. 1-19.

4. *Main Trends in History* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1979), pp. 205-25. See also Michael G. Kammen (ed.), *The Past Before Us* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 19-46.

5. "Coherence, Synthesis, and Quality in History," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Volume XII, Number 2 (Autumn, 1981), pp. 314-32. A helpful supplement to Professor Rabb's remarks can be found in Timothy P. Donovan, "In Defense of History: a Comment Upon Definition and Function," *The Social Science Quarterly*, Volume 62, Number 2 (June, 1981), pp. 344-51.

6. L.S. Stavrianos has commented on these questions in the preface to his textbook entitled *The World Since 1500, A Global History*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982).

7. On these points as well as on much of what follows, I have relied upon Charles L. Redman, *The Rise of Civilization* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1978), Chap. 7 and especially pp. 215-20.

8. Helpful here are the comments of Johan Galtung, "On the last 2,500 Years in Western History, and Some Remarks on the Coming 500," in the *Companion Volume of The New Cambridge Modern History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 343-53.

9. Henretta, pp. 1319-22.

10. A wide-ranging example of the comparative method is provided by E.L. Jones, *The European Miracle* (Cambridge University Press, 1981).

11. This is the approach utilized in Douglass North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* (New York: Norton, 1981), Chaps. 7-8.

12. A stimulating overview of the beginning student can be found in Kenneth Boulding, *The Meaning of the Twentieth Century: The Great Transition* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

13. *Modernization and Westernization* are two words whose use has done as much to confuse as to clarify complicated problems. The literature of "modernization" is enormous, but I like the definition developed in John R. Gillis, *The Development of European Society 1770-1870* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), pp. xi-viii.

14. *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 79-83.

15. Historians will find help with these themes in the writings of anthropologists like Grahame Clark. See, for example, *The Identity of Man* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1983).

16. This point is central to the interpretation presented in Douglass North's *Structure and Change in Economic History*, Chaps. 9-12.

17. In addition to Wolf's *Europe and the People Without History* and Stavrianos's *The World Since 1500*, consult William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963).

18. L.S. Stavrianos was one of the first academics to offer some concrete suggestions about teaching and research in "The Teaching of World History," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol XXXI (March-December, 1959), pp. 114-16.

19. Christopher Dawson, *The Dynamics of World History* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1957), p. 41; and A.N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933), pp. 13-14.

20. See Galtung, pp. 329-42.

21. I have in mind here the kinds of issues addressed by David Landes in his recent book, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1983), to cite just one example.

22. If I am allowed an esoteric footnote in this paper, let it be a reference to the interpretation of this transition period in P.E. Hubinger, "Spatantike und Fruhes Mittelalter," *Deutsch Vierteljahrsschrift fur Literaturwissenschaft*, XXVI (1952), pp. 1ff.

23. See the analysis offered by Arno J. Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

24. See McNeill, *The Rise of the West*, pp. 567, 598-99; and his more recent reflections in *The Shape of European History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

25. Dietrich Gerhard, *Old Europe: A Study in Continuity, 1000-1800* (New York: Academic Press, 1981), p.146. See also Michael Howard, *The Causes of Wars* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp.166-67.

26. Richard P. McCormick, "The Comparative Method: Its Application to American History," *Mid-America: An Historic Quarterly*, Vol. LVI (1974), pp. 231-47, may be read with profit, especially because it provides a ready reference to the literature on comparative history. At this point the opening essay in Alexander Gerschenkron, *Continuity in History and Other Essays* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968) should also be mentioned.

27. After reviewing the relevant works of William H. McNeill, the reader should consult Richard Sullivan, "The Middle Ages in the Western Tradition: Some Reconsiderations" in Bede Karl Lackner and Kenneth Roy Philip (eds.), *Essays on Medieval History* (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1978), pp. 3-31 for an insightful discussion of this pervasive theme in relationship to the formative centuries of Traditional Europe.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

John Mears reiterated several points he made in his paper. He contends that it is a propitious time for a rigorous reevaluation of the European survey course and that such an effort would benefit both the students and the professors. He stated

that three questions should be kept in mind when constructing a course: What to teach? What is the goal of the course?

What is its place in the curriculum? If the instructors remember that every piece of information need not be incorporated in the survey, then these questions will help the instructor maintain the focus of the course. At this point in time professors must rely on comparative techniques when teaching because we do not have an adequate theory on which to build our world history. •

Some African and Asian Fiction for Teaching Modern World History*

Melvin E. Page

Formerly Coordinator of World Civilization Courses at Murray State University. Currently, Professor & Chairman of the History Department, East Tennessee State University

and
Charlotte L. Beahan

Murray State University

Even apart from the particular problems of selecting material from and then organizing a vast subject, teachers of world history courses face a special quandary in trying to help students learn about societies which are not their own. In this latter endeavor, we have had considerable success using fiction written by African and Asian authors. Our students and, we understand, the students of other teachers, have responded well to these sources of firsthand information about other cultures.

The following are some novels which we have used with considerable success. In arriving at these selections, we have followed several guidelines. First, the work must be by Asian or African authors and substantially concern his or her own culture; if not originally written in English, it must be available in a good English translation. The work should also have merit as literature, and it ought to have a strong central character with whom students can identify or empathize. Finally, the novel should clearly present opportunities for teaching major themes in world history; ideally, it should lend itself well to comparative analysis.

While we make no claims that these ten works are necessarily the best for this purpose, they have proved effective in our classrooms and those of other teachers. We hope their being listed here will help still more teachers discover their usefulness in teaching modern world history.

Peter Abrahams, Mine Boy (London: Heinemann Educational Books)

Among the many books, fiction and nonfiction, dealing with the dehumanizing conditions which Africans face in South Africa, this is one of the most moving and effective.

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Although first published in 1946, the essential elements of the problems within South African society not only remain true today but are perhaps even more acute since apartheid took full legal form. Abrahams' *Mine Boy* is Xuma, a young black who comes to the city from the African "reserves" in the countryside seeking work in the white industrial complex, the major employer of black labor. This is the story of his experiences, especially the harsh realities of urban life and the particular demands upon Africans, most importantly upon young Xuma. Perhaps the greatest strength in the novel's portrayal of the oppressive environment is the characterization of the hero himself. Here is a classic tragic hero, one to whom we are drawn and whose entrapment in the web of South African racial injustices causes us pain.

Students seem to find in Xuma their entry into a world which would otherwise not only be closed to them, but which they might also deny existed at all. Through this character they are able at least to glimpse the realities of a world of apartheid, racial segregation, so different from any they might have known themselves.

Here is a classic tragic hero, one to whom we are drawn and whose entrapment in the web of South African racial injustices causes us pain.

Although this novel deals directly with a somewhat narrow issue--the peculiar state of race relations in South Africa--it can help students understand more generally the contemporary problems of racial conflict. What is perhaps most useful is that the novel describes conditions of almost four decades ago, but which have since changed so little. The use of *Mine Boy* in school offers teachers an extremely valuable tool for the introduction of comparative approaches, particularly ones which depend upon comparisons with Great Britain and the United States, but most especially as the South African situation draws attention to changes which have taken place since the 1940s in all three countries. The conclusions, which students can be left to draw for themselves, are striking.

Khushwant Singh, Train to Pakistan (London: Greenwood Press)

This is the story of a small village in northwest India as it is sucked into the maelstrom of communal religious violence between the Hindus and Sikhs on the one side and Moslems on the other when the partition of Pakistan and India was announced in 1947. Mano Majra is a typical Punjabi village, its population half Moslem and half Sikh, which had lived for generations in amity and isolation. But the outside world intrudes in the summer of 1947, as a train filled with corpses of massacred Sikhs arrives in the village from Pakistan. This, and stories of similar atrocities perpetrated against Moslems by Sikhs and Hindus, sow the seeds of hatred and violence even in Mano Majra.

Under the religiously neutral British raj, Hindus, Sikhs, and Moslems were all equally the subjects of a foreign rule, and the faiths lapsed into a coexistence broken only by isolated

incidents of communal friction. The violence of 1947 can be traced to the growth of Indian nationalism in the late nineteenth century; the connection between religion and nationalism is demonstrated in India by the appearance of two distinct Indian nationalist movements, one based on Hinduism (to which Sikhs adhered), and one based on Islam. As self-government and then independence approached, Moslem leaders demanded a separate state lest their interests be drowned in a Hindu majority. The resulting creation of Pakistan left Moslems behind in India, and Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan, while years of acrimonious political debate had heightened communal tensions. The explosion of political and religious violence that summer left at least 500,000 dead.

Students can be led into discussions of the major differences between Hinduism and Islam, while the Sikh creed can be approached as an example of a syncretic religion which builds on earlier religions. The book shows the student the way in which religion provides identity and a whole way of life for an individual in a traditional society. In Mano Majra, religion dictated the mode of dress, shaving habits, diet, and marriage prospects. Ultimately it determined one's choice of homeland, and for many men, the presence or absence of ritual circumcision determined life or death. The violence in India is also reminiscent of other incidents of religious warfare, from the Crusades to the streets of Northern Ireland. And in 1985 the Hindu-Sikh alignment broke down with the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the subsequent massacres of Sikhs.

Of the novels included here, *Train to Pakistan* is the most dramatically effective; it builds to an impressive climax in which one man's humanity creates a small triumph in a sea of unreasoning prejudice.

Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (London: Heinemann Educational Books)

Frequently considered one of the very best African novels, this book has proven in many classrooms a useful work for students. It is set in southern Nigeria at the time of the arrival of the Europeans--first missionaries, then colonial administrators--about the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Achebe superbly creates a memorable character in Okonkwo, the strong traditionalist who breaks with his traditions. Moreover, the story revolves around the complex relationships between the Ibo people of Okonkwo's native village and the intruding white men.

Achebe paints a valuable picture of Ibo society, both as it was before European influences and as it faced the turmoil of change which came with the Europeans. Readers are drawn into this society through empathy for Okonkwo. The novel is extremely helpful in getting students to see not only some aspects of traditional African society, but also the frequently painful processes of cultural change, particularly as they relate to nineteenth-century European imperialism. Achebe's achievement is that he has brought these complex issues to a wide readership through his clear and entertaining writing.

The African Writers series edition contains a brief introduction and chapter summaries at the end, plus a glossary of Ibo

words (but without a pronunciation guide). Students generally respond well to this book and enjoy reading it; written work on assignments for this novel frequently are of surprisingly high quality, which probably reflects the extent to which students become personally involved with the character of Okonkwo and his dilemmas.

Yan-tsung Chen, The Dragon's Village (London: Woman's Press)

This book is a thinly fictionalized account of the author's experience as a young woman member of a team sent to remote Kansu in 1951 to carry out the Communist policy of land reform. Most such workers were, like the author, urban intellectuals with little knowledge of rural China. They were nevertheless expected to establish a rapport with desperately poor peasants and to convince them to carry out the confiscation and redistribution of the land of their landlords.

Several novels on land reform have been published in English, such as Hao Jan's *Golden Road* and Chou Li-po's *Hurricane*, but they suffer from the restrictions imposed by Mao's dictum that literature must serve the people. This led to the atrophy of character development and the appearance of such stereotypes as the incorruptible poor peasant and the thoroughly evil landlord. But *Dragon's Village* was written after the author left China in 1972; its characters are complex individuals, and the heroine can voice her misgivings about the party and her own future. Yet Chen also avoids the opposite extreme--that of the embittered expatriate who finds no good in Communist rule save the saintly endurance of the people. The novel illustrates some of the problems faced by any government attempting to modernize a backward country. The gap between the urban and rural areas is made clear--China's rural interior is as foreign to most of the cadres as it is to us. The absolute poverty stands out well, with the lice, diseases, hunger, and violence born of frustration. Any modernization program would have to increase agricultural output; the major stumbling block was not so much the landlord-tenant problem itself, but the fatalistic, hopeless attitude of the peasants, unwilling to tempt fate or the accepted order. The process of land reform was designed in part to draw poor peasants into political activism, to make them agents of change willing to believe in a better future to be provided by the Communist party. This peasant mobilization is a strong feature of the book. Once the poor peasants of Long Xiang have been convinced that the party will back their seizure of the land, their enthusiasm for the task is so great that the party must restrain them from excessive retaliation against their former masters.

Dragon's Village also makes clear the inferior position of women in traditional society, where their whole social identity hinged on their ability to produce sons to work the land.

The novel illustrates some of the problems faced by any government attempting to modernize a backward country.

And Ling-ling's fear of putting her thoughts on paper, in

spite of her ambition to become a writer, is a harbinger of the increasing attempt by the regime to stifle criticism, which peaked in the Cultural Revolution of the sixties and seventies. The problems of individualism and creativity in a society engaged in revolutionary change, with a weak commitment to human rights, is clear.

Betty Bao Lord, Spring Moor (London: Gollancz)

It is entirely possible that some students will already be familiar with this recent bestseller, which follows the "family across the generations" format so prominent in recent popular fiction. Lord was born into an extended gentry family like the one described in the novel, but left China for America at the age of eight. Rather than a Chinese novel, this is an American novel with a genuine Chinese heritage. *Spring Moor* relies heavily on coincidence; the protagonist and her family have roles in almost every major event from the Hundred Days of Reform in 1898 to the Cultural Revolution. But Lord does an excellent job of integrating historical background into the events in her novel through the use of succinct introductory passages in each new section--an alternative far preferable to having the characters provide such information in improbably and contrived dialogue. She also provides a detailed chronology of major events in Chinese history and a diagram of the layout of the Chang family compound, a living arrangement typical of the Chinese elite.

Lord's narrative touches on a number of items of value to the modern world student. *Spring Moon's* early life shows the complete isolation from the outside world in which gentry women passed their days. Chinese patriarchal society saw women's sexuality as uncontrollable, so women should be kept from all contact with non-family males. Her unexpected literacy, which delights her husband, shows by contrast the usually poor education, if any, given to women. Students can be reminded that their own society questions the capacity of women for education well into the nineteenth century. Also, *Spring Moon* can be used to help students see some of the attitudes toward women which continue to prevail in some societies at the end of the twentieth century.

The author's husband was an assistant to Henry Kissinger, and played a major role in setting up the Nixon visit to China in 1972. This event is the basis for the final chapter, and can be a useful springboard to discussing changing attitudes toward China in this century.

Kamala Markandaya, Nectar in a Sieve (New York: New American Library)

A main theme of this short novel is the effect of the arrival of the modern world on a rural Indian village; the specific date is left unclear. Change arrives in the form of a tannery built in the center of the village, disrupting its traditional rhythm.

The narrator, Rukmani, is introduced when she marries, at 12, a hardworking tenant farmer from a distant village. Child marriage startles Western students, but in a farming culture the acquisition of a new wife's labor is too valuable to be delayed. Rukmani's discovery of love within her arranged marriage to a stranger is contrary to students' expectations,

for many equate lack of choice with unhappiness. Most modern Asian novelists denounce such marriages as cruel and irrational, but Markandaya reminds us that love and happiness can grow from mutual respect, while current Western divorce rates bring into question the efficacy of free choice as a way to select partners. Rukmani's concern at her failure to bear a son, and her daughter's divorce for barrenness, make clear the pressure in peasant societies for sons as a measure of social security. And one son is never enough as long as infant mortality remains high, though a large family may further depress the family economy.

The tannery is an accurate metaphor for the ambivalent nature of modernization. On the one hand, it is a source of jobs for the village's younger sons, their salaries a hedge against a poor harvest. Yet the presence of outside workers and the sudden influx of money into the local subsistence economy drives up the price of necessities and increases land values. Eventually, the absentee landlord succumbs and sells the family's land to the tannery for its expansion. A Western doctor is depicted as a positive feature of change, and introduces the point that Western medicine, the fruit of Europe's scientific revolution, is often the first aspect of Western culture to find acceptance in less developed regions. Students can be made aware that no culture welcomes sickness, death, or infanticide, though some may accept them as inevitable. Once the efficacy of modern medicine is demonstrated, acceptance follows. Medical missionaries were among the first evangelists to be effective in China and India.

Despite the loss of their land, and the death of the husband in abject poverty, the novel ends positively--Rukmani and her family will survive because one son has found work at the new village clinic. This is a rather "pollyanna-like" conclusion that seems tacked on to reverse the family's continuous downward slide; yet a relentlessly pessimistic work would be likely to alienate students. But the teacher can make the point that for every family saved, many more die in the same ditch in the same nameless urban slum as Rukmani's husband.

Ngugi' wa Thiong'o, Weep Not Child (London: Heinemann Educational Books)

This, one of the most popular African novels, was the first to be published in English by an East African writer. The story centers on a young Kenyan, Njoroge, who although not born to privilege is able to dream of a life transformed by Western education and the opportunities which colonialism has brought to his land. Yet these dreams are shattered when his father is caught up in the independence movements in Kenya and is arrested, accused of being in league with the Mau Mau. Njoroge is drawn away from his dreams, back into the African life where European rule meant something other than opportunity. Along with his brothers, he is thrust into the independence struggle. Once having taken his course, his hopes for an education are superseded by the tragedies which accompanied the Mau Mau emergency in Kenya.

Njoroge is beautifully sketched by Ngugi, someone with whom readers can readily identify. Through him, Ngugi paints an extraordinary picture of the importance of Kenyan

family life and the strong traditional bonds of the African family. *Weep Not, Child* is also valuable for its sensitive treatment of the struggles which accompanied the emergence of nationalism in Kenya. Ngugi's writing is so smooth and artistic that students generally find his work pleasant reading. Although he is a controversial political figure in contemporary Kenya, Ngugi's early work--including *Weep Not, Child*--is widely admired and contains little polemical material.

Students may need some help in placing the events portrayed in this book into historical context. It can be read alongside the sharply contrasting (and sensationalized) best-seller by Robert Ruark, *Uhuru*. Ngugi's book will give students much greater insight into the way in which twentieth-century nationalism frequently caught up ordinary people in Africa and Asia, leaving them politically fulfilled yet with little sense of personal fulfillment.

Pa Chin, Family (London: Doubleday)

This book was written in 1931 as a denunciation of the traditional Confucian ideal of the extended family. It follows the three Kao brothers through a tumultuous year in the 1920s in the city of Chengtu, as each balances the attraction of western ideas against the demands on the individual made by the traditional family system. The novel is intensely autobiographical; moreover, just such a sprawling gentry family produced Chou En-Lai for the Chinese revolution. Confucian ethics called for absolute obedience to elders and the submissions of the individual ego to the need of the corporate family. The May Fourth movement, which introduced Western ideas to Chinese youth and encouraged Chinese nationalism, blamed Confucianism for the failure of the republic and the resulting warlord anarchy. Confucianism, said May Fourth intellectuals, placed the family before either the individual or the state, thus fatally crippling China in its dealings with the West.

The eldest Kao brother abandons his dream of school abroad when his father's death makes him the head of his branch of the family. His compliance masks a growing determination to save his brothers from similar fates. The middle brother fights for the right as an individual to marry a girl of his own choice: such "freedom of marriage" was a major demand of modern youth in that era and the subject of one of Mao Tse-tung's earliest articles. The youngest brother vows to forego individual happiness in order to devote his life to saving China in some way. An interesting question to pose to students is the degree to which the varying responses of the three are shaped by birth order; most cultures place the heaviest demands on the first born.

One subplot is the indictment of the fate of servant girls, daughters of the poor sold on contract to gentry families, who could marry them off to peasants, or give them as concubines to family friends; the girls, of course, are not consulted. Another subplot concerns the younger sister, whose feet were bound to ensure her prospects of a good marriage; she finds that binding has become an anachronism--now a modern husband expects natural feet. The death of a daughter-in-law forced to give birth in squalid surroundings, because her pres-

ence at home would pollute the Patriarch's funeral, calls students' attention to the view, common to many cultures, that women and their functions are "polluting." All are topics rich in possibilities for discussion and comparison with practices regarding women in our own culture.

Family was tremendously popular among Chinese youth when it was published, for it spoke to the experiences of the young. It can give students an insight into the dreams and nightmares of the revolutionary generation of the May Fourth Era, which shaped both the Republic of China and the People's Republic.

Sol T. Plaatje, *Mhudi* (London: Heinemann Educational Books)

This remarkable novel, written in 1917, is one of the first in English by an African. Plaatje, a Baralong from South Africa, was a black African political leader, journalist, linguist, and publicist, as well as novelist. The book, in some ways autobiographical, depicts an African society--that of the Baralong--at a time of transition. Built around the story of Mhudi, a strong and courageous woman, and her husband, Ra-Thaga, the book depicts the ways African societies dealt with the white man. Set in the 1830s, *Mhudi* considers both the effects of the "mefecane"--the time of troubles following the expansion of the Zulu nation under Chaka--and the impact of the Great Trek of Boer farmers from the coastal plain where they had been longtime settlers, to the interior of South Africa. In this way it offers a valuable insight into cross-cultural conflicts which are not painted simply in European/non-European terms.

Plaatje carefully illustrates the value and rationality of black African customs, often counterpoising them against European practices of little appeal, even to the student reader. There can be little doubt that the book was intended to be a political statement, written shortly after the Land Act of 1913 which did much to frame the subsequent history of race relations in South Africa. Despite his resentment at the alienation of so much African land, Plaatje's novel is not polemical. In fact, students will need help in seeing how it must be read within the context of the first stirrings of African nationalism in South Africa.

The writing style is not felicitous by modern standards, since it is imitative of Victorian writing. But students who are accustomed to reading contemporary Gothic romance fiction may be at home reading *Mhudi*. With adequate background provided by the teacher, this book will generally be well received by students. The African Writers series edition contains an introduction, although it is much too detailed for student use. There is also a list of the major characters, but no pronunciation guide is given for the African names.

Stanlake Samkange, *Year of the Uprising* (London: Heinemann Educational Books)

For the purposes of teaching history, novels by Stanlake Samkange have the advantage of being written by a man who is also a professional historian. His approach, perhaps best illustrated in this book, is to bring historical events to life

By this technique Samkange intends not only to entertain and inform, but also to educate, to acquaint his readers not just with the African past but the present as well. Samkange is keenly aware of the criticism to which he thus opens himself, of mixing fact and fiction with little distinction. His critics miss the point, however, failing to see that here is a sound scholar writing well and also informing an entertained audience.

This particular novel was completed in the mid-1970s as it seemed that the people of Samkange's native Zimbabwe were about to achieve some measures of independence. But the novel does not directly concern those. It is instead a vivid account of the circumstances involving the great uprisings of the Shona and Ndebele people in 1896 against the then recently imposed rule of the British South Africa Company. The story is set within Shona society and focuses not only on the grievances against Europeans which sparked the revolt but also on the religious institutions which aided the spread of the rebellion throughout the country. To his credit, Samkange depicts well not only Africans but also Europeans caught up in this struggle. There can be little doubt that he sees in this story an allegory for the more recent struggle for Zimbabwean independence, although students may need to be helped to see this aspect of the work. The conclusion that the two events may be connected, more so than just in allegory, is strongly supported by much of the historical research done in recent years on colonial rule in what was known as Rhodesia and the African response to it.

Because of the rather narrow time period involved in the work, and the need for students to absorb some background information, *Year of the Uprising* may not be well suited for all teaching situations. The work does, however, offer numerous opportunities for comparisons. Students themselves could be encouraged to compare the reactions of the Shona and Ndebele, and the rebellions of 1896 with the responses of Indians to the British and the Indian Mutiny of 1857. •

World History: Some Suggestions for Organization and Application

Mark M. Welter

Robbinsdale Cooper Senior High
Minneapolis, MN

Among history teachers, there seems to be growing agreement on two points:

1. For an increasingly interdependent planet, world history should be a part of every curriculum.
2. The subject matter is immense and difficult to teach. While it is probably impossible to teach it all, it is equally difficult to know what to exclude. The difficulties for the student are at least as challenging. As one consultant put it, "Learning world history is like drinking from a roaring fire hydrant. Before you can satisfy your thirst, you are drowning in subject matter."¹

The intent of this effort is to offer some suggestions for organizing and for using the seemingly amorphous mass of names, dates, and places known as world history. The writer

nominates a "course structure," a set of concept-centered generalizations used throughout the year, as an instrument to reap the benefits inherent to the subject. Serving as foci for data (but not replacing them), a series of fundamental concepts help organize information, transcend time and culture, and aid in transferring information to real life situations. With repeated use, the procedure of relating data to key ideas (rather than memory-oriented tests) can carry beyond the classroom and become a lifelong learning process.² A concept-centered framework also aids evaluation. Using a pre-post inventory, teachers can measure the progress made by constantly re-assessing the set of central ideas. Increasingly sophisticated analysis can be expected.³

Long ago professional educators proclaimed the advantages of using a course structure.⁴ Their conclusions bear repeating:

1. If one understands the fundamental ideas of a subject, its entire body of knowledge becomes more comprehensible. If, for example, the student grasps the idea that "trade" plays a cardinal role in a nation's survival, she/he can more fully understand the details and the interconnectedness of events ranging from Mesopotamian commerce, to "Triangular Trade," to contemporary Japanese auto import quotas.

2. Recall and re-use of data are improved. A century of research on the human memory demonstrates that unless information is placed into a structured pattern, it is rapidly forgotten. Details are both better preserved and more frequently used when related to some fundamental principles or central ideas. The use and function of a mathematics formula are excellent examples. The mathematician does not memorize logarithms. She/he recalls the formula and looks up the numbers, applying them to the problem at hand. World history teachers can, with the aid of a structure, use their subject matter similarly. Less memory work is required; only the "structure" or concept needs to be recalled. The process of correlating subject matter and concepts is crucial. There is, of course, no shortage of data which can be applied to a set of concepts. When this process is repeated throughout the term, the procedure becomes familiar and more easily applied to new situations (see below).

3. Understanding the basic principles opens the road to transfer of learning and encourages future use. Key, universal principles give students the tools for permanent learning. Because the concepts (like math formulae) are relatively few in

Key, universal principles give students the tools for permanent learning.

number and almost infinitely adaptable to subject matter, they can be employed in an endless number of situations within and without the classroom. Universal phenomena as "change," "causation," and "diversity" have, of course, touched all humans in all time periods. But, admittedly, the evidence and the interpretations for analyzing their effect and their meanings are always changing. Repeating the math analogy, the "formula" remains stable and permanently usable while the conditions for employing it are endlessly changing.

4. Concepts have universal application. They transcend time and space. As central ideas, they can be used with equal facility to help analyze events and groups ranging from Paleolithic humans to Pentagon budgets. Because all humans have some common needs and experiences, concepts tie together much of the human experience. If some agreement can be reached, therefore, on the selection and the employment of a set⁵ of universals, our task of appropriating human experience as a usable basis for collective decisions is greatly facilitated. Information can be related to a set of "transfer agents" rather than terminating in an examination.

If a structured, conceptual approach to world history offers these advantages, what concepts should be selected? In March, 1985, a group of Minnesota history teachers and scholars met to discuss the status of their subject in the state curriculum. A three-man committee--two St. Cloud State University professors and the writer⁶--was charged with selecting a list of "irreducible" concept-centered generalizations common to all history which could serve as a course structure. With world history foremost in mind, the following list (with the concept underlined) was nominated:

1. Diversity is inherent to all human experience. The desired outcome is, of course, to increase the student's tolerance for and awareness of differences. Using the idea of "diversity" as a focus can facilitate the discovery that people look at common problems in contrasting ways. World history offers the possibility of a comparative, rather than a unilinear, examination of the human adventure. Given the normal curriculum, the student can learn what needs to be known about her/his own nation and culture. With the addition of a global comparison, the student learns that what is locally familiar is only part of the story. The path by which a nation or a region confronts a universal need will more likely be seen as ONE workable solution, not THE resolution to the problem.

With broader awarenesses, tolerance for differences will normally increase. We need people who say "That's different," not "That's weird!" A global examination of the varying solutions to the universal needs for family, economic needs, political organization, communication, aesthetic expression, and spiritual values heightens appreciation of other paths to the same goal.

The familiar effort to award as many gold medals as possible to one's own system --principally by way of nationalistic histories-- has a delusive value in an interdependent age.

2. All people, all institutions, all values experience change and continuity. All events, past and present, are interconnected. More than any other subject, history forces the admission that change is a universal part of the human experience. While different cultures and different eras have dealt with change in varying ways, none has escaped its impact. Some corollary perspectives that are likely to follow are: change is not always synonymous with "progress," and the reasons for change are complex. (See "multiple causation" below.)

Analyzing the ideas of "change and continuity" through the eyes and experiences of many different cultures and time frames confronts students with several questions they are not

likely to ask otherwise. Some of these are:

- A. What portion of present day institutions and values are the product of other times and peoples?
- B. Is it true that "Change is the most permanent part of history"?
- C. If change is ignored for too long a period, what are the consequences?
- D. Are there differing consequences from dealing with change by evolution and by revolution?

The dividends from viewing data through the reference points of "continuity and change" are difficult to overestimate. A weakness of the other social science courses which help shape citizens' political outlooks and actions is the accent on the present. Too many people are led to believe that a problem or an issue which is true when taught

Too many people are led to believe that a problem or an issue which is true when taught will remain so forever.

will remain so forever. Because history's natural domain is "time," it exposes the reality that whatever is perceived as "true" or "right" today will be interpreted differently in another time--or, in the case of world history, in another place.⁷

3. Throughout history, all individual and group events have had more than one cause. The desired outcome of the "multiple causation" generalization is conspicuous. If the young citizen becomes aware that there was no one cause for the fall of the Mayan civilization, or the Ching dynasty, or the coming of the First (or Second) World War, or the French Revolution, or the Reagan election, and ad infinitum, she/he should be less prone to "slogan solutions." This may appear obvious to any "educated" person, but the question remains: has the average citizen learned this? Has she/he even been asked the question? The billions spent on advertising slogans; the conduct of political elections; and the global (current and historical) pervasiveness of single-issue causes (often pursued with terrorist fanaticism) cast doubt on the assumption "everyone knows that."

A student once summarized the need for the causation focus well. In reply to the question "What is the objective for learning about multiple causation?" she replied: "If there are no simple causes, there can be no simple solutions." World history is an ideal medium for demonstrating the ubiquitous nature of complexity. For societies--indeed, for a world--dependent upon collective decisions, this history-enhanced awareness is, of course, crucial.

4. World history offers an enhanced perspective of time and space. For centuries writers have justified the teaching of history in terms of "improved perspective." Reflecting upon a typical secondary student's time-exposure underscores the point. The youth entering tenth grade in the fall of 1985, for example, was born midway into Nixon's first term, knows nothing about Watergate, Viet Nam, or OPEC. This student was not yet ten when the Iranian hostages were seized.

Few would deny that this person needs broader based experiences to participate intelligently in a democracy. For centuries, national history courses have been offered to satisfy this need, but today's world is uncomfortably different and demands more careful cultivation of decision makers. In a global age, problems--pollution, population, poverty, and peace--are universal, but curricula are normally national or regional.

National chronicles are inherently restricted in both time and space. United States history, for example, typically begins around 1492. This exposes about five percent of humankind's experience to the student; and, of course, accents White, Anglo-Saxon accomplishments. Using the same logic, Native Americans might write that American history ENDED in 1492, claiming this is when immigration began. Admittedly, both interpretations lack the perspective needed to generate outlooks in harmony with an interdependent world.

Similarly, intelligent citizenry in a global age demands students with a heightened consciousness of space--often labeled "global awareness." William McNeill summarizes:

Ignorance of history deprives us of the best available guide for collective action, especially in encounters with outsiders - whether the outsiders are from another nation, another civilization, or some special group within national borders.⁸

Logically, if students are limited to local and national dimensions of time and space, they are less likely to know how to approach the majority of the planet's inhabitants with whom they are increasingly forced to deal. Yet most do not seem aware of how much present education dwells on their own particular group. This restriction builds a strong sense of identity with the native group but excludes other members of the human race, suggesting that they do not qualify for membership. Limited vistas breed arrogance, not empathy, and set the stage for potentially catastrophic mistakes.

Directing the data of a world history course at a set of appropriate concepts can encourage a fuller understanding of the human adventure and increase comprehension of contemporary reality. Because our system is based upon group action, group memory is mandatory. Lacking it, McNeill summarizes, we are in trouble:

Without collective memory, agreement on what ought to be done in a given situation is difficult to achieve. Without a reasonably accurate knowledge of the past, we cannot expect to accomplish intended results. Having a limited perspective of time and space, we cannot foresee how others are likely to react to anything we decide to do.⁹

Robert Leestma, noted global educator, spelled out the qualities that future citizens, the users of "collective memory," must have:

1. Some basic cross-cultured understanding, empathy, and ability to communicate with people from different cultures;
 2. A sense of why and how mankind shares a common future ...; and
 3. A sense of stewardship in the use of finite resources and an empathy for those who will come after.¹⁰
- Perhaps it is safe to say that the concepts nominated here, when played against the data of a world history course, can

help elicit the outcomes specified by McNeill and Leetsma--including the needed perspectives of time and space.

Finally, because the concepts transcend time and space, they go a long way toward solving world history's subject matter problem. Whether one is studying the ancient Indus Valley Harappans, the modernization of China, or the rise of the Spanish Empire in the fifteenth century, "multiple causation," "change," "diversity," and "perspective" will come into play and help transfer the material to real life situations. Obviously, the concept approach does not demand all the data from the beginnings to modern times be covered. What is important are representative examples from human experience which, through use of the concepts, develop the transfer process. The product (recall of facts) is less important than the process. One caveat is needed: the teacher must include a sufficient number of non-Western civilizations and recent/ancient experiences to frame a valid "world history" perspective. In other words, to gain a greater understanding of time and space, one must experience it.¹¹

End Notes

1. H. Thomas Collins, President, Global Outreach, Ltd.; June 18, 1985, at the Minnesota Department of Education workshop on world history.

2. To enhance class discussions and to heighten open-endedness, the generalizations offered may be easily re-phrased as questions. As such, they would read something like this:

1. Is diversity inherent to all human experience?
2. Do all people, institutions, and values experience change over the long term? Are all events, past and present, connected?
3. Have all group and individual events had more than one cause?
4. What different perspectives of time and space does a knowledge of world history offer?

To the academician, the "answers" to the above will appear obvious. But the fact must be heeded that they are aimed at novices in history, people who see history mostly as a long list of names, dates, and places which are mostly meaningless. Normally, as the questions are repeated and their inter-relatedness recognized, "answers" become less simple and significance of the questions themselves takes on more depth. Students begin to realize that asking the question itself is more important than the "answer."

3. Simply giving the students the four questions above (end note #2) and having them write their reactions at the beginning of the course will give the teacher (and the student) an idea of where they stand. Keeping the papers and having the class write on the same questions at the end of the term (possibly as a take-home examination) will offer a measure of teaching effectiveness/student progress.

4. Jerome S. Bruner, A Process of Education (Vintage, 1960), Chapter 2.

5. A single concept or two do not generate sufficient perspective and organization. Further, transfer value is limited. The same is true when concepts alone are used; that is, without the accompanying statements. They are too vague and academic, too removed from the real-life situations.

6. History professors John Massman and Edward Pluth, St. Cloud University, St. Cloud, Minnesota.

7. To be a truly global effort, the world history course must include the non-Western world. The dimension is necessary to include the appropriate perspectives of space and the classical value systems which have applied to life (with infinite variety) for at least 2,000 years. Put another way, what is perceived as "true" (say "individual rights and freedom") in the Western world is seen differently in the Eastern (Chinese) cosmos, where group "harmony" is more important. Or, what is seen as "happiness" by a traditional Hindu (generally, self-denial and discipline to one's caste) is viewed differently in the West--material comfort and pleasure in this world. "You only go around once."

Obviously, all this laps over into the "time-space concept-criteria." But this is inherent to any valid set of concepts--they "work together"; they are "interdependent." The application of one inevitably activates another, or all, of the concepts.

8. William McNeill, "Why Study History?", an unpublished article.

9. Ibid.

10. Robert Leetsma, *American Education* (June, 1978), pp. 6-23.

The concepts, of course, can be readily applied to the Leetsma criteria:

- (1) "cross-cultural empathy" calls for an awareness of "diversity";
- (2) "a sense of why and how (multiple causation) mankind shares a common future" (perspective of time and space--it always has--and "change and continuity").
- (3) calls for employing all four concepts.

11. The questions will invariably arise: "But how can we use the concepts in the classroom?" Let me suggest several ways:

A. Simply include the concepts in class discussions. Ten minutes or so daily, one period weekly or bi-weekly--whatever works. The important point is to have students become used to the process of relating data to the concepts. If the concepts are phrased in question form (see end note #2), open-endedness is enhanced and discussions are more lively.

B. Exams, term papers, panels, discussion, debates can, of course, also be used. The writer allows "teams" of up to four students to cooperate and to use any available source: notes, texts, library resources, and so on. Grade evaluation is based upon quality and quantity of information used. A set of "Information Analysis" criteria is issued and discussed.

C. Use the concept-centered questions (I call them "Prevailing Problems") as an end-of-term take-home examination. Basically, the assignment is: Answer the term-long questions. Is diversity inherent to the human condition? Do all events have many causes? What is your evidence? Students are, of course, required to use information from all units covered during the term. NOTE: The same questions are asked on the daily, weekly, or monthly basis as well (see above). •

TEACHING GLOBAL HISTORY: A Wisconsin Panel Discussion

(September 27, 1986)

Gary G. Kuhn

University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

Taking advantage of the Northern Great Plains History Conference holding its twenty-first meeting on its eastern edge in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Association for Teachers of College History sponsored a panel on "Teaching Global History." Stephen S. Gosch, of the host school, UW- Eau Claire, worked with the author to recruit the panel, and also served as moderator. Steve noted a trend toward world history, but posed the question whether it can be taught as effectively as the traditional surveys.

Craig Lockard, the WHA stalwart from UW-Green Bay led off the presentations. He noted that his own course, grudgingly approved in 1980, has grown in enrollment even though not required. In it, his approach is not to seek to be comprehensive, though all regions are referred to. Rather, his aim is to present variant interpretations--from McNeill, Wallerstein, and conventional modernization theory--seeking thus to challenge the student. Aware of an "abyssmal lack" of geographical knowledge, he relies on overhead projection of maps. Some of those flashed at the audience were familiar to those currently teaching; others drew oohs and aaahs of admiration. A tip for good cultural overheads: childrens' coloring books!

Richard Overfield, of the University of Nebraska-Omaha, advanced the topic with insight on the process of developing world history at his school. Pressure from the deans overcame reluctance in the department. It has worked out; from a limited beginning four years ago involving only four professors, the two-semester sequence has reached an enrollment of over 1,000, half the students.

No funds were available to bring visiting experts to UN-Omaha, though dollars for slides and other visuals have been provided. Some load relief enables the staff to cope initially with the new lectures. Dick became the specialist on the Middle East after a "whole month" of study at a summer institute! There is no common text or syllabus; generally, the "industrial era" second semester is smoother due to more modern-era preparation of the staff.

Converts from a U.S. history background have seemed to adjust more easily; Europeanists tend to feel the need to teach all of their previous survey, plus the rest of the world! World history has revitalized the department, which is even preparing a suitable reader on world social history. Probably there

are other faculties of twenty-year veterans needing a challenge!

Jeff Perrill, of Buena Vista College, Iowa, is in a different situation. His is a two-person department, teaching a wide variety of classes. From this context of modest enrollment, he called for student-centered learning. "We must start with what they know;...play upon their self-fascination;...use things in the present to get at the past."

Mark Welter, our clean-up speaker, has been teaching world history for many years at Robbinsdale Cooper High School, in suburban Minneapolis. As a WHA activist, he is "a table-pounding enthusiast for global history." At his school, everybody takes world history. (I wish he would send some of his graduates southeast, across the Mississippi!)

"How do you do it?" was the question Dr. Welter posed. Too many megatons of data "can't be done," some have told him. It can!--around concepts, applying what is current/known (as Professor Perrill had just advocated). Mark waved the morning paper with its headline on South Africa to make the point of an interdependent--and therefore relevant, and teachable--world.

An audience of only about a dozen heard the presentations. This was disappointing in view of efforts made to entice high school teachers and our notion that teaching global history is a "growth industry." The questions and comments were worthy, however:

1) One person had used "games" in teaching sociology, but thought that facts were vital in history because of the nature of the discipline: "There is nothing like a great history lecture."

2) Mark Welter responded to a comment by saying that he doesn't lecture in his high school class all the time: "...couldn't get away with it; I'd get killed." Sometimes his class divides into small groups; the process of analyzing the past through his concepts builds during the semester. The big chart in his home room fills.

3) On the matter of texts, Esler (The Human Venture, from Prentice-Hall) got support from several on the panel and in the audience. After an hour-and-a-half, the session ended, followed by standing further discussions. Several global historians planned to talk further in a nearby establishment. •

PLEASE NOTE

Ernest A. Menze, who was a member of the original steering committee that planned the founding of the WHA and who was the first treasurer of the organization, has been appointed Dean of the Faculty at Iona College. (He has also acted as treasurer following the sad and unexpected death of Michael Zaremski.)

EDITOR'S NOTE

Arnold Austin, a WHA member from Vaud, Switzerland, has hopes that the Bulletin might carry a few articles that would instruct teachers on how to incorporate the Islamic world into a course with global perspective. He has the same hopes for the history of Imperial Russia. The editorial board invites such articles from members who might be willing to provide an important service.

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Three Invitations

- The *World History Bulletin* invites book publishers to submit books of interest to world historians for possible review. Books should be sent to the book review editor, Professor Joe Gowaskie, Department of History, Rider College, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.
- The *Bulletin* invites advertisements for publication. For information on rates, contact the Editor, *World History Bulletin*, Department of History & Politics, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA 19104.
- The editors invite letters and comments on any of the material that appears in the *Bulletin*.

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EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY: Visiting Professor of History.

The Department of History of East Tennessee State University is seeking a Distinguished Visiting Professor for a one-semester appointment for Spring Semester 1988. This appointment is made possible by a grant from the Shulman Family Foundation and the State Board of Regents of Tennessee through the Undergraduate Excellence Program. The distinguished professor will be responsible for leading select-ed faculty in undergraduate curriculum review and will serve as a consultant to the Department of History on the develop-ment of **World Civilization** courses. A focus of the se-mester will be a faculty seminar on the pre-1500 period, with emphasis upon the non-Western world. In addition, the visit-ing scholar will be responsible for an undergraduate course in world history.

Applicants must have an earned Ph.D., be well-established scholars with particular strength in the pre-1500 period, and have the ability to integrate non-Western history into a tradi-tional Western civilization-oriented program. Salary and fringe benefits are negotiable within grant limits. Review of credentials will begin July 1. Please send credentials to Dr. Colin Baxter, Acting Chairman, Office of Personnel, Box 24, 070A, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 37614-0002.

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Theodore H. Von Laue

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