We wrote this textbook to answer questions about the identity of the civilization in which we live. Journalists, politicians, and scholars often refer to our civilization, its political ideologies, its economic systems, and its cultures as "Western" without fully considering what that label means and why it might be appropriate. The classification of our civilization as Western has become particularly problematic in the age of globalization. The creation of international markets, the rapid dissemination of ideas on a global scale, and the transmission of popular culture from one country to another often make it difficult to distinguish what is Western from what is not. *The West: Encounters and Transformations* offers students a history of Western civilization in which these issues of Western identity are given prominence. Our goal is neither to idealize nor to indict that civilization, but to describe its main characteristics in different historical periods.

*The West: Encounters and Transformations* gives careful consideration to two basic questions. The first is, how did the definition of the West change over time? In what ways did its boundaries shift and how did the distinguishing characteristics of its cultures change? The second question is, by what means did the West—and the idea of the West—develop? We argue that the West is the product of a series of cultural encounters that occurred both outside and within its geographical boundaries. We explore these encounters and the transformations they produced by detailing the political, social, religious, and cultural history of the regions that have been, at one time or another, a part of the West.

**Defining the West**

What is the West? How did it come into being? How has it developed throughout history? Many textbooks take for granted which regions or peoples of the globe constitute the West. They treat the history of the West as a somewhat expanded version of European history. While not disputing the centrality of Europe to any definition of the West, we contend that the West is not only a geographical realm with ever-shifting boundaries, but also a cultural realm, an area of cultural influence extending beyond the geographical and political boundaries of Europe. We so strongly believe in this notion that we have written the introductory essay “What Is the West?” to encourage students to think about their understanding of Western civilization and to guide their understanding of each chapter. Many of the features of what we call Western civilization originated in regions that are not geographically part of Europe (such as North Africa and the Middle East), while ever since the fifteenth century various social, ethnic, and political groups from non-European regions (such as North and South America, eastern Russia, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa) have identified themselves, in one way or another, with the West. Throughout the text, we devote considerable attention to the boundaries of the West and show how borderlines between cultures have been created, especially in eastern and southeastern Europe.
Considered as a geographical and cultural realm, the West is a term of recent origin, and the civilization to which it refers did not become clearly defined until the eleventh century, especially during the Crusades, when western European Christians developed a distinct cultural identity. Before that time we can only talk about the powerful forces that created the West, especially the dynamic interaction of the civilizations of western Europe, the Byzantine Empire, and the Muslim world.

Over the centuries Western civilization has acquired many salient characteristics. These include two of the world's great legal systems (civil law and common law), three of the world's monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), certain political and social philosophies, forms of political organization (such as the modern bureaucratic state and democracy), methods of scientific inquiry, systems of economic organization (such as industrial capitalism), and distinctive styles of art, architecture, and music. At times one or more of these characteristics has served as a primary source of Western identity: Christianity in the Middle Ages, science and rationalism during the Enlightenment, industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and a defense of individual liberty and democracy in the late twentieth century. These sources of Western identity, however, have always been challenged and contested, both when they were coming into prominence and when they appeared to be most triumphant. Western culture has never been monolithic; even today references to the West imply a wide range of meanings.

**Cultural Encounters**

The definition of the West is closely related to the central theme of our book, which is the process of cultural encounters. Throughout *The West: Encounters and Transformations*, we examine the West as a product of a series of cultural encounters both outside the West and within it. We show that the West originated and developed through a continuous process of inclusion and exclusion resulting from a series of encounters among and within different groups. These encounters can be described in a general sense as external, internal, or ideological.

**External Encounters**

External encounters took place between peoples of different civilizations. Before the emergence of the West as a clearly defined entity, external encounters occurred between such diverse peoples as Greeks and Phoenicians, Macedonians and Egyptians, and Romans and Celts. After the eleventh century, external encounters between Western and non-Western peoples occurred mainly during periods of European exploration, expansion, and imperialism. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for example, a series of external encounters took place between Europeans on the one hand and Africans, Asians, and the indigenous people of the Americas on the other. Two chapters of *The West: Encounters and Transformations* (Chapters 13 and 18) and a large section of a third (Chapter 24) explore these external encounters in depth and discuss how they affected Western and non-Western civilizations alike.

**Internal Encounters**

Our discussion of encounters also includes similar interactions between different social groups within Western countries. These internal encounters often took place between dominant and subordinate groups, such as between lords and peasants, rulers and subjects, men and women, factory owners and workers, masters and slaves. Encounters between those who were educated and those who were illiterate, which recurred frequently throughout Western history, also fall into this category. Encounters just as often
took place between different religious and political groups, such as between Christians and Jews, Catholics and Protestants, and royal absolutists and republicans.

Ideological Encounters

Ideological encounters involve interaction between comprehensive systems of thought, most notably religious doctrines, political philosophies, and scientific theories about the nature of the world. These ideological conflicts usually arose out of internal encounters, when various groups within Western societies subscribed to different theories of government or rival religious faiths. The encounters between Christianity and polytheism in the early Middle Ages, between liberalism and conservatism in the nineteenth century, and between fascism and communism in the twentieth century were ideological encounters. Some ideological encounters had an external dimension, such as when the forces of Islam and Christianity came into conflict during the Crusades and when the Cold War developed between Soviet communism and Western democracy in the second half of the twentieth century.

* * *

The West: Encounters and Transformations illuminates the variety of these encounters and clarifies their effects. By their very nature encounters are interactive, but they have taken different forms: They have been violent or peaceful, coercive or cooperative. Some have resulted in the imposition of Western ideas on areas outside the geographical boundaries of the West or the perpetuation of the dominant culture within Western societies. More often than not, however, encounters have resulted in a more reciprocal process of exchange in which both Western and non-Western cultures, or the values of both dominant and subordinate groups, have undergone significant transformation. Our book not only identifies these encounters, but also discusses their significance by returning periodically to the issue of Western identity.

Coverage

The West: Encounters and Transformations offers both comprehensive coverage of political, social, and cultural history and a broader coverage of the West and the world.

Comprehensive Coverage

Our goal throughout the text has been to provide comprehensive coverage of political, social, and cultural history and to include significant coverage of religious and military history as well. Political history defines the basic structure of the book, and some chapters, such as those on Hellenistic civilization, the age of confessional divisions, absolutism and state building, the French Revolution, and the coming of mass politics, include sustained political narratives. Because we understand the West to be a cultural as well as a geographical realm, we give a prominent position to cultural history. Thus, we include rich sections on Hellenistic philosophy and literature, the cultural environment of the Italian Renaissance, the creation of a new political culture at the time of the French Revolution, and the atmosphere of cultural despair and desire that prevailed in Europe after World War I. We also devote special attention to religious history, including the history of Islam as well as that of Christianity and Judaism. Unlike many other textbooks, our coverage of religion continues into the modern period. The West: Encounters and Transformations also provides extensive coverage of the history of women and gender. Wherever possible the history of women is integrated into the broader social, cultural, and political history of the period. But there are also separate sections on women in our chapters on classical Greece, the Renaissance, the
Reformation, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, World War I, World War II, and the postwar era.

The West and the World

Our book provides broad geographical coverage. Because the West is the product of a series of encounters, the external areas with which the West interacted are of major importance. Three chapters deal specifically with the West and the world.

- Chapter 18, “The West and the World: Empire, Trade, and War, 1650–1815”

These chapters present substantial material on sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, India, and East Asia. Our text is also distinctive in its coverage of eastern Europe and the Muslim world, areas that have often been considered outside the boundaries of the West. These regions were arenas within which significant cultural encounters took place. Finally, we include material on the United States and Australia, both of which have become part of the West. We recognize that most American college and university students have the opportunity to study American history as a separate subject, but treatment of the United States as a Western nation provides a different perspective from that usually given in courses on American history. For example, this book treats America’s revolution as one of four Atlantic revolutions, its national unification in the nineteenth century as part of a broader western European development, its pattern of industrialization as related to that of Britain, and its central role in the Cold War as part of an ideological encounter that was global in scope.

What’s New to This Edition?

This edition of The West: Encounters and Transformations has been revised to reflect the latest developments in historical research and has added a host of new features to assist student learning. The most significant pedagogical innovation has been the seamless integration of documents, maps, videos, illustrations, and other resources from MyHistoryLab into the textbook. A new pedagogically driven design highlights a clear learning path through the material and offers a visually stunning learning experience in print or on a screen. With the Pearson eText, students can transition directly to MyHistoryLab resources such as primary source documents, videos, and maps.

Additionally, questions have been added to the captions of all the maps. The list of Suggested Readings has been revised and updated, and many of the terms in the Glossary have been edited to improve student comprehension.

Specific changes in the contents of this edition are as follows:

- Chapter 3 expands the discussion of Corinth and adds a new illustration linking the legendary wealth of that polis to its strategic geographical position.
- Chapter 4 refines the interpretation of Alexander the Great and directs the student to a Closer Look in MyHistoryLab that analyzes the famous mosaic of Alexander at the Battle of Issus.
- Chapter 5 uses new images from the Theater of Marcellus and the Parthenon to illustrate and clarify the differences between Greek and Roman architectural style.
- Chapter 7 refers students to several new documents about early Christianity in MyHistoryLab and a selection examining the role of religion in the fall of the Roman Empire.
Chapter 8 clarifies the causes of the growing alienation between western and eastern rite Christians. It also discusses why, on the basis of the Qur’an, Muslims might disagree about the proper attitude they should take toward Jews and Christians.

Chapter 9 revises the discussion of the differences between the status of Germanic and Roman women, providing a much more carefully nuanced picture. It takes account of the tremendous variation among the Germanic tribes in the status of women and pays more attention to class differences among women. The discussion of monastic life notes how monks did not just copy ancient texts but made their own significant intellectual contributions. The chapter offers an enriched discussion of Viking culture and technology.

Chapter 10 expands the discussion of the papal monarchy.

Chapter 11 employs the latest DNA research to revise the discussion of the epidemiology of the Black Death. Rather than leaving the cause of the Black Death as an open question, the new evidence gives greater support for the thesis that the high mortality came from a form of bubonic plague. The discussions of the Mongol Empire and the Silk Road have also been enriched, as has the account of medieval guilds.

Chapter 12 expands the discussion of Lorenzo Valla as an example of humanist critical techniques. The debt of the Italian Renaissance to Muslim science is clarified.

Chapter 13 adds a section on Aztec religion and examines how the spread of “New World” silver altered the global economy not just in Europe but also in China.

Chapter 14 expands both the explanation of the religious justification of violence and the ways the Jesuit missionaries contributed to a better European understanding of other cultures.

Chapter 15 adds additional material on the limits of religious toleration during the period.

Chapter 16 presents a more nuanced interpretation of the theory of absolutism and adds an excerpt from John Locke’s Second Treatise of Government to illustrate the radicalism of his political thought.

Chapter 17 expands the definition of alchemy and gives it a more prominent place in the section on the causes of the Scientific Revolution. The new illustration of dissection in 1632 is superior to the eighteenth-century image in the third edition.

Chapter 18 adds new material on the activities of slave traders in Africa.

Chapter 19 simplifies the Map of the Enlightenment to make the international character of the Republic of Letters clearer. References to works by Voltaire, Mary Wollstonecraft, Cesare Beccaria, and Catherine the Great reveal the diversity of the contributions that the Enlightenment made to Western culture.

Chapter 20 includes a new illustration that highlights the militancy of the sans-culottes and includes new material on the Republic of Virtue. The Closer Look in MyHistoryLab on the execution of Louis XVI supplements the discussion of this event in the text and in the “Justice in History” feature.

Chapter 21 includes new material on industrialization in Europe and an illustration of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. It also refers the student to a new map of English Railways in MyHistoryLab.

Chapter 22 clarifies the doctrine of liberalism and includes excerpts from John Stuart Mill and David Ricardo to support the description of this new ideology. Inclusion of the Chartist People’s Petition of 1838 helps explain why Britain did not experience a revolution in 1848.

Chapter 23 includes a new map of the United Kingdom in 1910. The section titled “The Irish Identity Conflict” has been completely rewritten, incorporating new material. The section on “Russia: Revolution and Reaction” has been revised to reflect the emphasis in scholarship on nationalist upheaval within the Russian Empire and adds a discussion on the tsarist policy of Russification.
Chapter 24 strengthens and reorganizes the section titled “The Birth of Modernism.”

Chapter 25 includes a new map on the Eastern Front that identifies the national regions of Poland, the Baltics, Ukraine, Caucasus, East Prussia, and Galicia. It adds new sub-sections titled “A War of Movement” and “Germany and the East” to reflect current research on the Eastern Front and the German occupation of Russian territories. Another new sub-section, “A Very Different Battle,” deals with the influenza pandemic. The discussion of the October Revolution has also been expanded.

Chapter 26 has been extensively reorganized to make discussions more coherent, to improve “teachability,” and to take into account recent research. It adds new sub-sections titled “NEP and Nationalities” and “From Lenin to Stalin.” The substantially revised section on the Irish Revolution includes new material.

Chapter 27 includes a new section titled “The Wars Within the War” that takes into account the most recent research on the Holocaust and the Eastern Front. The section titled “The Decisive Front” has been extensively revised and includes new material.

Chapter 28 incorporates new material in the section titled “Devastation, Death, and DPs.”

Chapter 29 adds a new sub-section, “The Turn to Terrorism,” in the section on “Economic Stagnation and Political Change: The 1970s and 1980s.” It also extensively revises and adds new material to the sections “Islam and the West” and “The European Union.” This chapter also brings the story of Russia under Putin up-to-date.

Features and Pedagogical Aids

In writing this textbook we have endeavored to keep both the student reader and the classroom instructor in mind at all times. The text includes the following features and pedagogical aids, all of which are intended to support the themes of the book.

“What Is the West?”

*The West: Encounters and Transformations* begins with an essay to engage students in the task of defining the West and to introduce them to the notion of cultural encounters. “What Is the West?” guides students through the text by providing a framework for understanding how the West was shaped. Structured around the six questions of What? When? Where? Who? How? and Why?, this framework encourages students to think about their understanding of Western civilization. The essay serves as a blueprint for using this textbook.

“Encounters and Transformations”

These features, which appear in about half the chapters, illustrate the main theme of the book by identifying specific encounters and showing how they led to significant transformations in the cultures of the West. These features show, for example, how camels enabled encounters among nomadic tribes of Arabia, which led to the rapid spread of Islam; how the Mayans’ interpretation of Christian symbols transformed European Christianity into a hybrid religion; how the importation of chocolate from the New World to Europe changed Western consumption patterns and the rhythms of the Atlantic economy; and how Picasso’s encounter with African art contributed to the transformation of modernism. Each of these essays concludes with questions for discussion.
“Justice in History”

Found in every chapter, this feature presents a historically significant trial or episode in which different notions of justice (or injustice) were debated and resolved. The “Justice in History” features illustrate cultural encounters within communities as they try to determine the fate of individuals from all walks of life. Many famous trials dealt with conflicts over basic religious, philosophical, or political values, such as those of Socrates, Jesus, Joan of Arc, Martin Luther, Charles I, Galileo, and Adolf Eichmann. Other “Justice in History” features show how judicial institutions, such as the ordeal, the Inquisition, and revolutionary tribunals, handled adversarial situations in different societies. These essays, therefore, illustrate the way in which the basic values of the West have evolved through attempts to resolve disputes and conflict.

Each “Justice in History” feature includes two pedagogical aids. “For Discussion” helps students explore the historical significance of the episode just examined. These questions can be used in classroom discussion or as student essay topics. “Taking It Further” provides the student with a few references that can be consulted in connection with a research project.

“Different Voices”

Each chapter contains a feature consisting of two primary source documents that present different and often opposing views regarding a particular person, event, or development. An introduction to the documents provides the necessary historical context, identifies the authors of the documents, and suggests the different perspectives they take. A set of questions for discussion follows the two documents.

Questions for Discussion

This edition of The West: Encounters and Transformations offers many opportunities for students to address a variety of questions in each chapter.

- The main question that the chapter addresses appears after the introduction to each chapter.
- Each of the major sections of the chapter begins with the main question that the section addresses. These questions also appear at the bottom of the first page of the chapter under the “Learning Objectives” heading and are repeated in the Chapter Review at the end of the chapter.
- At the end of each chapter a set of questions under the heading “Making Connections” asks the student to think about some of the more specific issues discussed in the chapter.
- Each Encounters and Transformations, Justice in History, and Different Voices feature is followed by a set of questions under the heading “For Discussion.”
- The caption for each map includes a question related to the map for which the text of the chapter provides an answer.

Maps and Illustrations

Artwork is a key component of our book. We recognize that many students often lack a strong familiarity with geography, and so we have taken great care to develop maps that help sharpen their geographic skills. Complementing the book’s standard map program, we include maps focusing on areas outside the borders of Western civilization. More than 300 images of fine art and photos tell the story of Western civilization and help students visualize the past: the way people lived, the events that shaped their lives, and how they viewed the world around them.
Chronologies
Each chapter includes a varying number of chronologies in time line format that list the events relating to a particular topic discussed in the text. Chronologies present the sequence of events and can be helpful for purposes of review.

Key Terms and Glossary
We have sought to create a work that is accessible to students with little prior knowledge of the basic facts of Western history or geography. Throughout the book we have explained difficult concepts at length. For example, we present in-depth explanations of the concepts of Zoroastrianism, Neoplatonism, Renaissance humanism, the various Protestant denominations of the sixteenth century, capitalism, seventeenth-century absolutism, nineteenth-century liberalism and nationalism, fascism, and modernism. We have identified these concepts as key terms by printing them in bold in the narrative and defining them in the margins of the book. All key terms are listed in alphabetical order, together with their definitions, in the Glossary at the end of the book.

Suggested Readings
An annotated list of suggested readings for all the chapters appears at the end of the book. The items listed there are not scholarly works for the benefit of the instructor, but suggestions for students who wish to explore a topic in greater depth or to write a research paper. References to books or articles relevant to the subject of the “Justice in History” feature appear at the end of each feature under the heading “Taking It Further.”

Chapter Reviews
At the end of each chapter, a Chapter Review revisits the questions that accompany each section heading and summarizes key concepts within the section that address these questions.

Time Lines
A time line at the end of each chapter lists important events discussed within the chapter.

A Note About Dates and Transliterations
In keeping with current academic practice, *The West: Encounters and Transformations* uses B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (common era) to designate dates. We also follow the most current and widely accepted English transliterations of Arabic. Qur’an, for example, is used for Koran; Muslim is used for Moslem. Chinese words appearing in the text for the first time are written in pinyin, followed by the older Wade-Giles system in parentheses.

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