From Dawn To Decadence 500 Years Of Western Cultural Life 1500 The Present Jacques Barzun

From Freud to Babbitt, from Animal Farm to Sartre to the Great Society, from the Theory of Relativity to counterculture to Kosovo, The Modern Mind is encyclopedic, covering the major writers, artists, scientists, and philosophers who produced the ideas by which we live. Peter Watson has produced a fluent and engaging narrative of the intellectual tradition of the twentieth century, and the men and women who created it.

The French historian takes an anti-ethnocentric look at the broad, continuing sweep of the history of civilization since the eighth century. By the author of The Structures of Everyday Life. The lecturer traces the historical development of attitudes toward the arts over the past 150 years, suggesting that the present is a period of cultural liquidation, nothing less than the ending of the modern age that began with the Renaissance.

William Brown introduces a new method of exegesis, particularly for biblical poetry, that attends to the metaphorical contours of the Psalms. His method as proposed and demonstrated in this book supplements traditional ways of interpreting the Psalms and results in a fresh understanding of their original context and contemporary significance. This narrative, intersperses the author's analysis of wars, philosophy, science, manners, sex, religion, morals and art; from the Reformation to the present day. Included are biographical sketches of influential historical figures.

Drawing from the works of influential figures in art and literature, the author traces the development of romanticism from classicism and the emergence of the modern ego. An anthology of essays, criticism, and reviews, unpublished for fifty years, includes Trilling's thoughts on "The Wind in the Willows," Auden on drugs and cooking, and Barzun on the the work of Robert Lowell.

A fter a lifetime of writing and editing prose, Jacques Barzun has set down his view of the best ways to improve one's style. His discussions of diction, syntax, tone, meaning, composition, and revision guide the reader through the technique of making the written word clear and agreeable to read. Exercises, model passages both literary and casual, and hundreds of amusing examples of usage gone wrong show how to choose the right path to self-expression in forceful and distinctive words.


A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR by The Washington Post and The Financial Times • "How did our democracy go wrong? This extraordinary document ... is Applebaum's answer." —Timothy Snyder, author of On Tyranny A Pulitzer Prize–winning historian explains, with electrifying clarity, why elites in democracies around the world are turning toward nationalism and authoritarianism. From the United States and Britain to continental Europe and beyond, liberal democracy is under siege, while authoritarianism is on the rise. In Twilight of Democracy, Anne Applebaum, an award-winning historian of Soviet atrocities who was one of the first American journalists to raise an alarm about antidemocratic trends in the West, explains the lure of nationalism and autocracy. In this captivating essay, she contends that political systems with radically simple beliefs are inherently appealing, especially when they benefit the loyal to the exclusion of everyone else. Elegantly written and urgently argued, Twilight of Democracy is a brilliant dissection of a world-shaking shift and a stirring glimpse of the road back to democratic values.

From Dawn To Decadence chronicles a detailed account of our history since 1500, from what Western Man wrought from the Renaissance and Reformation down to the present day. The renowned scholar and author of "Teacher in America" and "The House of Intellect," examines how the urge to be snobbish, prestigious, technical, scientific, and abstract has led the English language astray

The essence of culture is interpenetration. From any part of it the searching eye will discover connections with another part seemingly remote. If from my descriptions the reader finds this wide-angled view sharpened or expanded, my purpose in publishing these pages will have been served.

Looks at the feats of the early twentieth century's greatest provocateurs, including Rimbaud, Freud, Joyce, Stein, Planck, Einstein, and Kandinsky

Criticizes the current educational system, and offers suggestions on curriculum, testing, grading, and teaching methods

Personal essays exploring identity, work, family, and community through the prism of race and black culture.

From Dawn to Decadence500 Years of Western Cultural LifeTurtleback Books

Highly regarded here and abroad for some thirty works of cultural history and criticism, master historian Jacques Barzun has now set down in one continuous narrative the sum of his discoveries and conclusions about the whole of Western culture since 1500. In this account, Barzun describes what Western Man wrought from the Renaissance and Reformation down to the present in the double light of its own time and our pressing concerns. He introduces characters and incidents with his unusual literary style and grace, bringing to the fore those that have "Puritans as Democrats," "The Monarch's Revolution," "The Artist Prophet and Jester" -- show the recurrent role of great themes throughout the eras. The triumphs and defeats of five hundred years form an inspiring saga that modifies the current impression of one long tale of oppression by white European males. Women and their deeds are prominent, and freedom (even in sexual matters) is not an invention of the last decades. And when Barzun rates the present not as a culmination but a decline, he is in no way a prophet of doom. Instead, he shows decadence as the creative novelty that will burst forth -- tomorrow or the next day. Only after a lifetime of separate studies covering a broad territory could a writer create with such ease the synthesis displayed.
Finally the Truth about the Rise of the West Modernity developed only in the West—in Europe and North America. Nowhere else did science and democracy arise; nowhere else was slavery outlawed. Only Westerners invented chimneys, musical scores, telescopes, eyeglasses, pianos, electric lights, aspirin, and soap. The question is, Why? Unfortunately, that question has become so politically incorrect that most scholars avoid it. But acclaimed author Rodney Stark provides the answers in this sweeping new look at Western civilization. How the West Won demonstrates the primacy of uniquely Western ideas—among them the belief in free will, the commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, the notion that the universe functions according to rational rules that can be discovered, and the emphasis on human freedom and secure property rights. Taking readers on a thrilling journey from ancient Greece to the present, Stark challenges much of the received wisdom about Western history. How the West Won shows, for example: Why the fall of Rome was the single most beneficial event in the rise of Western civilization · Why the “Dark Ages” never happened · Why the Crusades had nothing to do with grabbing loot or attacking the Muslim world unprovoked · Why there was no “Scientific Revolution” · Why scholars’ recent efforts to dismiss the importance of battles are ridiculous: had the Greeks lost at the Battle of Marathon, we probably would never have heard of Plato or Aristotle · Stark also debunks absurd fabrications that have flourished in the past few decades: that the Greeks stole their culture from Africa; that the West’s “discoveries” were copied from the Chinese and Muslims; that Europe became rich by plundering the non-Western world. At the same time, he reveals the woeful inadequacy of recent attempts to attribute the rise of the West to purely material causes—favorable climates, abundant natural resources, guns and steel. How the West Won presents Rodney Stark’s gifts for lively narrative history and making the latest scholarship accessible to all readers. This bold, insightful book will force you to rethink your understanding of the West and the birth of modernity—and to recognize that Western civilization really has set itself apart from other cultures.

Throughout his career Jacques Barzun, author of the New York Times bestseller and National Book Award Finalist From Dawn to Decadence, has always been known as a witty and graceful essayist, one who combines a depth of knowledge and a rare facility with words. Now Michael Murray has carefully selected eighty of Barzun’s most inventive, accomplished, and insightful essays, and compiled them in one impressive volume. With subjects ranging from history to baseball to crime novels, A Jacques Barzun Reader is a feast for any reader.

Western society is in crisis, the result of our culture’s embrace of naturalism and postmodernism. At the same time, the biblical worldview has been pushed to the margins. Christians have been strongly influenced by these trends, with the result that the personal lives of Christians often reflect the surrounding culture more than the way of Christ, and the church’s transforming influence on society has waned. In Kingdom Triangle, J.P. Moreland issues a call to recapture the drama and power of kingdom living. He examines and provides a penetrating critique of these worldviews and shows how they have ushered in the current societal crisis. He then lays out a strategy for the Christian community to regain the potency of kingdom life and influence in the world. Drawing insights from the early church, he outlines three essential ingredients of this revolution: · Recovery of the Christian mind · Renovation of Christian spirituality · Restoration of the power of the Holy Spirit He believes that evangelical Christianity can mature and lead the surrounding society out of the meaninglessness morass it finds itself in with humility and vision. If you would like a more detailed description of the book, please see the “Table of Contents” section, where there is a short summary of each chapter CONVERSATIONAL DESCRIPTION: This is a book by an Oxford professor that’s been a long time in the making—it’s been under contract for ten years—and that we’re very excited about and have a deep investment in. It’s a big, sweeping, incredibly ambitious book of history that tells the whole story of communism from its origins in the French Revolution with Rousseau and Robespierre all the way up to today in China and Cuba and North Korea and everything in between. We’re going to publish it in November, which is the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Wall coming down, which should give us a good news peg in terms of publicity and reviews. This book has a lot of things going for it but the biggest are probably the way it has a totally epic sweep from the 1700s onward, and its incredible cast of characters, and the way that it gives you the intellectual history of the movement—the ideological stuff—along with the narrative of what literally happened over hundreds of years—the power struggles, the back-room stuff, the infighting—and the way that Communism affected the big picture of world history. It is reminiscent of Niall Ferguson’s new book The Ascent of Money as well as our book A Splendid Exchange because like those books this is history on a very large canvas that weaves together a lot of different threads—the ideas, the politics, the economics, the military stuff, the cultural stuff into a compelling narrative. It’s also similar to Laurence Wright’s recent book The Looming Tower, which gave you the intellectual roots of Al Qaeda at the same time as it was giving you this amazing human story of what actually happened. The author has done staggering research over the course of a decade and just puts the story together brilliantly. He brings to life Marx and Engels, who are working the intellectual angle with The Communist Manifesto and laying the foundation for Lenin and Stalin who come along to put the ideas into practice. But one thing to emphasize here is that this is not just the story of Soviet Communism. This is the whole story. You get Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam, you get Mao and Deng Xiaoping in China, you get Castro and Che in Cuba, Tito in Yugoslavia, and dozens of others around the world. Obviously you also get Khurshtchev and Kennedy and Gorbachev and Reagan and all that, but it’s important to realize that it isn’t just the Soviets. What you come away with is this complete understanding of a new piece of the puzzle of humanity’s ongoing struggle to govern itself and organize society and figure out how to live in the best way possible. You get the sense that Communism as it was envisioned in the early days—as a pure idea—probably wasn’t any worse than Capitalism, it’s just the old story of people getting involved and screwing things up with their egos and greed and hubris and insecurities—that’s another similarity with The Looming Tower, where you saw how humiliation at the hands of the West drove so much of Al Qaeda’s ideology. In the case of Communism, there was insecurity in these countries that the West saw them as “backward” and a lot of the terrible stuff that happened came out of a desire to prove that they weren’t. The author is a very highly regarded Oxford professor and we’re going to deliver some big blurbs on this. We don’t have them yet because the author just delivered but if you look at what we’ve done lately in terms of blurbage with these big history books, it will be similar. In terms of reviews, there’s never any guarantee that we’ll get them but I think we have a much better shot than we did with Old World New World, where we didn’t have any kind of news peg, but with this book we will in the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Wall coming down. MORE FORMAL DESCRIPTIVE COPY: Communism was one of the most powerful political and intellectual movements the world has ever seen. At the height of their influence, Communists controlled more than a third of the earth’s surface. But perhaps more astonishing than its rapid rise and extraordinary reach was Communism’s sudden, devastating collapse in November of 1989. In The Red Flag, Oxford professor David Priestland tells the epic story of a movement that has taken root in dozens of countries across two hundred years, from its birth after the French Revolution to its ideological maturity in nineteenth-century Germany to its rise to dominance (and subsequent fall) in the twentieth century. Beginning with the first modern Communists in the age of Robespierre, Priestland examines the motives of thinkers and leaders including Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Castro, Che Guevara, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Gorbachev, and many others. He also asks what it was about Communism that inspired its rank and file—whether the militants of 1920s Russia, the guerrilla fighters of China, or the students of Ethiopia—and explores the experience of what it meant to live under Communism for its millions of subjects. He
shows how Communism, in all its varieties, appealed to different societies for different reasons, in some as a response to inequalities and in others more out of a desire to catch up with the West. But paradoxically, while destroying one web of inequality, Communist leaders were simultaneously weaving another. It was this dynamic, together with widespread economic failure and an escalating loss of faith in the system, that ultimately destroyed Soviet Communism itself. At a time when global capitalism is in crisis and powerful new political forces have arisen to confront Western democracy, The Red Flag is essential reading if we are to apply the lessons of the past to navigating the future.

After World War II, the former allies were saddled with a devastated world economy and traumatized populace. Soviet influence spread insistidely from nation to nation, and the Atlantic powers—the Americans, the British, and a small band of allies—were caught flat-footed by the coupes, collapsing armies, and civil wars that sprung from all sides. The Cold War had begun in earnest. In The Atlantic and Its Enemies, prize-winning historian Norman Stone assesses the years between World War II and the collapse of the Iron Curtain. He vividly demonstrates that for every Atlantic success there seemed to be a dozen Communist or Third World triumphs. Then, suddenly and against all odds, the Atlantic won—economically, ideologically, and militarily—with astonishing speed and finality. An elegant and path-breaking history, The Atlantic and Its Enemies is a monument to the immense suffering and conflict of the twentieth century, and an illuminating exploration of how the Atlantic triumphed over its enemies at last. Originally published in 1897, this early works is a fascinating novel of the period and still an interesting read today. Contents include: The function of Latin, Chansons De Geste, The Matter of Britain, Antiquity in Romance, The making of English and the settlement of European Prosody, Middle High German Poetry, The 'Fox,' The 'Rose,' and the minor Contributions of France, Icelandic and Provencal, The Literature of the Peninsulas, and Conclusion. Many of the earliest books, particularly those dating back to the 1900's and before, are now extremely scarce and increasingly expensive. We are republishing these classic works in affordable, high quality, modern editions, using the original text and artwork.

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In this book, Jacques Barzun pays what he describes as an "intellectual debt" to William James—psychologist, philosopher, and, for Barzun, guide and mentor. Commenting on James's life, thought, and legacy, Barzun leaves us with a wise and civilized distillation of the great thinker's work.

Essays by a literary master illuminate the nature of writing, and offer concrete advice on the art of composition.

The product of the author's lifetime, this powerful narrative, intersperses the author's analysis of wars, philosophy, science, manners, sex, religion, morals, art, et al, from the Reformations to the present day, with biographical sketches of influential historical figures. His conclusion is that the decadence of the current age is merely a watershed for a new age in which Western culture will gain flourish.

Historian Arthur Herman traces the roots of declinism and shows how major thinkers, past and present, have contributed to its development as a coherent ideology of cultural pessimism. From Nazism to the Sixties counterculture, from Britain's Fabian socialists to America's multiculturalists, and from Dracula and Freud to Robert Bly and Madonna, this work examines the idea of decline in Western history and sets out to explain how the conviction of civilization's inevitable end has become a factor of the modern Western imagination. Through a series of biographical portraits spanning the 19th and 20th centuries, the author traces the roots of declinism and aims to show how major thinkers of the past and present, including Nietzsche, DuBois, Sartre, and Foucault, have contributed to its development as a coherent ideology of cultural pessimism.

A poignant and unexpectedly inspirational account of women's suffering and resilience in Stalin's forced labor camps, diligently transcribed in the kitchens and living rooms of nine survivors.

The pain inflicted by the gulags has cast a long and dark shadow over Soviet-era history. Zgustová's collection of interviews with former female prisoners not only chronicles the hardships of the camps, but also serves as testament to the power of beauty in face of adversity. Where one would expect to find stories of hopelessness and despair, Zgustová has unearthed tales of the love, art, and friendship that persisted in times of tragedy. Across the Soviet Union, prisoners are said to have composed and memorized thousands of verses. Galya Sanova, born in a Siberian gulag, remembers reading from a hand-stitched copy of Little Red Riding Hood. Irina Emelyanova passed poems to the male prisoner she had grown to love. In this way, the arts lent an air of humanity to the women's brutal realities. These stories, collected in the vein of Svetlana Alexievich's Nobel Prize-winning oral histories, turn one of the darkest periods of the Soviet era into a song of human perseverance, in a way that reads as an intimate family history.

From the New York Times columnist and bestselling author of Bad Religion, a powerful portrait of how our turbulent age is defined by dark forces seemingly beyond our control. Today the Western world seems to be in crisis. But beneath our social media frenzy and reality television politics, the deeper reality is one of drift, repetition, and dead ends. The Decadent Society explains what happens when a rich and powerful society ceases advancing—how the combination of wealth and technological proficiency with economic stagnation, political stalemates, cultural exhaustion, and demographic decline creates a strange kind of “sustainable decadence,” a civilizational languor that could endure for longer than we think. Ranging from our grounded space shuttles to our Silicon Valley villains, from our blandly recycled film and television—a new Star Wars saga, another Star Trek series, the fifth Terminator sequel—to the escapism we’re furiously chasing through drug use and virtual reality, Ross Douthat argues that many of today’s discontents and derangements reflect a sense of futility and disappointment—a feeling that the future was not what was promised, that the frontiers have all been closed, and that the paths forward lead only to the grave. In this environment we fear catastrophe, but in a certain way we also pine for it—because the alternative is to accept that we are permanently decadent: aging, comfortable and stuck, cut off from the past and no longer confident in the future, spurning both memory and ambition while we wait for some saving innovation or revelations, growing old unhappily together in the glowing light of tiny screens. Correcting both optimists who insist that we’re just growing richer and happier with every passing year and pessimists who expect collapse any moment, Douthat provides an enlightening diagnosis of the modern condition—how we got here, how long our age of frustration might last, and how, whether in renascimento or catastrophe, our decadence might ultimately end.

In this book, we have hand-picked the most sophisticated, unanticipated, absorbing (if not at times crackpot!), original and musing book reviews of “From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life 1500 to the Present.” Don’t say we didn’t warn you: these reviews are known to shock with their unconventionality or intimacy. Some may be startled by their biting sincerity; others may be spellbound by their unbridled flights of fantasy. Don’t buy this book if: 1. You don’t have nerves of steel. 2. You expect to get pregnant in the next five minutes. 3. You’ve heard it all. Written in clear, lively prose, The End of Kings traces the history of republican governments and the key figures that are united by the simple republican maxim: No man shall rule alone. Breathtaking in its scope, Everdell’s book moves from the Hebrew Bible, Solon’s Athens and Brutus’s Rome to the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson and the Watergate proceedings.
during which Nixon resigned. Along the way, he carefully builds a definition of "republic" which distinguishes democratic republics from aristocratic ones for both history and political science. In a new foreword, Everdell addresses the impeachment trial of President Clinton and argues that impeachment was never meant to punish private crimes. Ultimately, Everdell's brilliant analysis helps us understand how examining the past can shed light on the present. "[An] energetic, aphoristic, wide-ranging book."—Marcus Cunliffe, Washington Post Book World "Ambitious in conception and presented in a clear and sprightly prose. . . . [This] excellent study . . . is the best statement of the republican faith since Alphonse Aulard's essays almost a century ago."—Choice "A book which ought to be in the hand of every American who agrees with Benjamin Franklin that the Founding Fathers gave us a Republic and hoped that we would be able to keep it."—Sam J. Ervin, Jr.

The perfect St. Patrick's Day gift, and a book in the best tradition of popular history -- the untold story of Ireland's role in maintaining Western culture while the Dark Ages settled on Europe. Every year millions of Americans celebrate St. Patrick's Day, but they may not be aware of how great an influence St. Patrick was on the subsequent history of civilization. Not only did he bring Christianity to Ireland, he instilled a sense of literacy and learning that would create the conditions that allowed Ireland to become "the isle of saints and scholars" -- and thus preserve Western culture while Europe was being overrun by barbarians. In this entertaining and compelling narrative, Thomas Cahill tells the story of how Europe evolved from the classical age of Rome to the medieval era. Without Ireland, the transition could not have taken place. Not only did Irish monks and scribes maintain the very record of Western civilization -- copying manuscripts of Greek and Latin writers, both pagan and Christian, while libraries and learning on the continent were forever lost -- they brought their uniquely Irish world-view to the task. As Cahill delightfully illustrates, so much of the liveliness we associate with medieval culture has its roots in Ireland. When the seeds of culture were replanted on the European continent, it was from Ireland that they were germinated. In the tradition of Barbara Tuchman's A Distant Mirror, How The Irish Saved Civilization reconstructs an era that few know about but which is central to understanding our past and our cultural heritage. But it conveys its knowledge with a winking wit that aptly captures the sensibility of the unsung Irish who relaunched civilization. BONUS MATERIAL: This ebook edition includes an excerpt from Thomas Cahill's Heretics and Heroes.

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