



A Concise Survey of Western Civilization: Supremacies and Diversities throughout History, Vol. 2: 1500 to the Present (Volume 2: 1500)

By Brian A. Pavlac

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This engaging text offers a brief, readable description of our common Western heritage after Europe expanded into the rest of the world during the Renaissance, then through revolutions that have created today's technological global society. Providing a tightly focused narrative and interpretive structure, Brian Pavlac covers the basic historical information that all educated adults should know. His joined terms "supremacies and diversities" develop major themes of conflict and creativity throughout history. "Supremacies" centers on the use of power to dominate societies, ranging from warfare to ideologies. Supremacy, Pavlac shows, seeks stability, order, and incorporation. "Diversities" encompasses the creative impulse that produces new ideas, as well as efforts of groups of people to define themselves as "different." Diversity creates change, opportunity, and individuality.

These concepts of historical tension and change, whether applied to political, economic, technological, social, or cultural trends, offer a cohesive explanatory organization. The text is also informed by five other topical themes: technological innovation, migration and conquest, political and economic decision-making, church and state, and disputes about the meaning of life. Throughout, judicious "basic principles" present summaries of historical realities. Written with flair, this easily accessible yet deeply knowledgeable text provides all the essentials for a course on Western civilization.

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Editorial Review

Review

Written with the skill of a novelist, this book guides the reader step by step through the process of what a historian thinks, does, and interprets. Chapter content establishes the foundation for each future chapter with carefully selected questions, key-word definitions, and ideas in bold type. This is the best-written textbook on Western civilization that I have had the pleasure to read in thirty-five years of teaching. (Paquette, William A.)

Professor Pavlac has come up with an effective comparative approach: what's new, what's different, what's changed, what's distinctive. This way of encountering Western civilization without drowning in details will produce students who are well-grounded for upper-division courses. (Christopher M. Bellitto)

About the Author

Brian A. Pavlac is the Herve A. LeBlanc Distinguished Service Professor and chair of the Department of History at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

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