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BIOHISTORY

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Decline and Fall of the West



Jim Penman

Biohistory: Decline and Fall of the West

by Dr Jim Penman PhD

This revolutionary new book, by Australian historian and social theorist Dr Jim Penman PhD, investigates for the first time the biological and physiological underpinnings of social change, including the rise and fall of the major civilizations across the centuries.

From Ancient Rome and the powerful Chinese dynasties, and the British Empire to the Nazis, to the modern dominance of Western powers, Biohistory: Decline and Fall of the West sheds new and compelling light on the key ingredients for the success and failure of societies.

Drawing on scientific research and empirical evidence, this eagerly-awaited book challenges current thinking in areas ranging from history, politics and economics to zoology and cross-cultural anthropology, and explores the impending decline and fall of Western civilization as we know it - and what, if anything, we can do to avert it.

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The political and economic collapse of great nations, and the ongoing dichotomy between developed and third-world nations, attract continued global attention, not least from the academic community. Many proposals have been put forward to explain the success and failure of societies - from genetic variations between peoples and cultural factors - such as the desire to work hard - to environmental stimuli and other more idiosyncratic factors.

In Biohistory, newly published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Dr Penman promises to push aside all previous hypotheses with his bold but scientifically-testable new theory of 'biohistory' - the study of the biological roots of human social behaviour including the outbreak of wars, economic growth and decline, forms of government, and the rise and fall of civilizations.

Biohistory proposes that changes in these areas, and on a wider scale the collapse of civilisations, reflect changes in the prevailing temperament of the population, which is in turn rooted in epigenetics, the study of how genes are switched on and off by environmental stimuli such as food shortages.

According to Dr Penman, human temperament and behaviour is influenced on a hormonal and genetic level by factors including parenting styles, religious rituals, and cultural miens. These changes pass from generation, partly through direct inheritance but mainly through experiences in early life, feeding back into the prevailing social culture and creating a cycle.

He sees the same kind of cycle at play in the animal kingdom, from gibbons to lemmings, and in Biohistory sets out to expose the invisible but tangible link between the fortunes of human societies and the way animal social behaviour is dictated by changing environmental conditions.



Conclusions from Biohistory, which are considered in depth and presented in a clear and simple-to-follow format, include:

- The rise and fall of civilizations can be explained by mass behavioural changes in populations, driven by epigenetic factors.
- Humans, like animals, are governed by biologically driven population cycles which have significant effects on social behaviour.
- The tendency for societies to go to war can be largely explained by the epigenetic effects of early life experience.
- National wealth and poverty can also be explained by differences in behaviour and temperament which are in turn set epigenetically
- Major recessions can be understood as the result of a significant rise in stress before the crisis unfolds.
- Western civilization is in a sustained, long term decline which no current economic or political program can slow or halt.

To support Biohistory, Dr Penman draws on empirical evidence and a decade's worth of privately-funded scientific research contracted through high-profile Melbourne Universities and Institutions in Australia. Though the researchers lacked knowledge of the theory and its broader implications, their findings were consistent with the assertions and hypotheses that relate to Biohistory.

Speaking from his home in Melbourne, Australia, Dr Penman described the book as a "call to arms", and said its findings may prevent the West from sharing the same fate as other bygone empires.

He said: "Biohistory is a radical new way of looking at social behaviour, informed by the study of history, cross-cultural anthropology, and zoology. For the first time it connects human biology and temperament with the rise and fall of empires, including our own.

"The biological foundations of history and society may seem contrary to common sense but the concept has one major benefit lacking in other social theories - it is scientifically testable. I have spent 40 years developing Biohistory and it is underpinned by extensive and ongoing analysis and scientific research detailed in the book.

"If the Biohistory hypothesis is correct then our future will be one of economic decline, rising levels of disease, and the end of democracy and the nation state.

"No conceivable government action could affect this trend, except just possibly an intensive program of scientific research. My overarching aim with Biohistory is not only to reveal the underlying mechanisms that drive human culture, but also to fund just such a programme - the Biohistory Foundation."

Aimed squarely at the layman rather than the academic community, Biohistory: Decline and Fall of the West is essential reading for those with an interest in how societies and cultures evolve, and the wider fields of 'big history', anthropology, biology and the cutting-edge science of epigenetics.

By examining past civilizations from a radical new perspective, Biohistory offers a glimpse into the future of society and discloses the interplay of natural forces determining the fate of the West.

Biohistory: Decline and Fall of the West is out now in paperback and Kindle eBook formats through Cambridge Scholars Publishing, priced £11.99 and £6.99 respectively. Visit www.biohistory.org.

Media Enquiries

Dr Jim Penman PhD is available for international media interviews. Copies of Biohistory: Decline and Fall of the West are available on a complimentary basis to members of the press for review and research purposes. High-resolution images are also available.



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