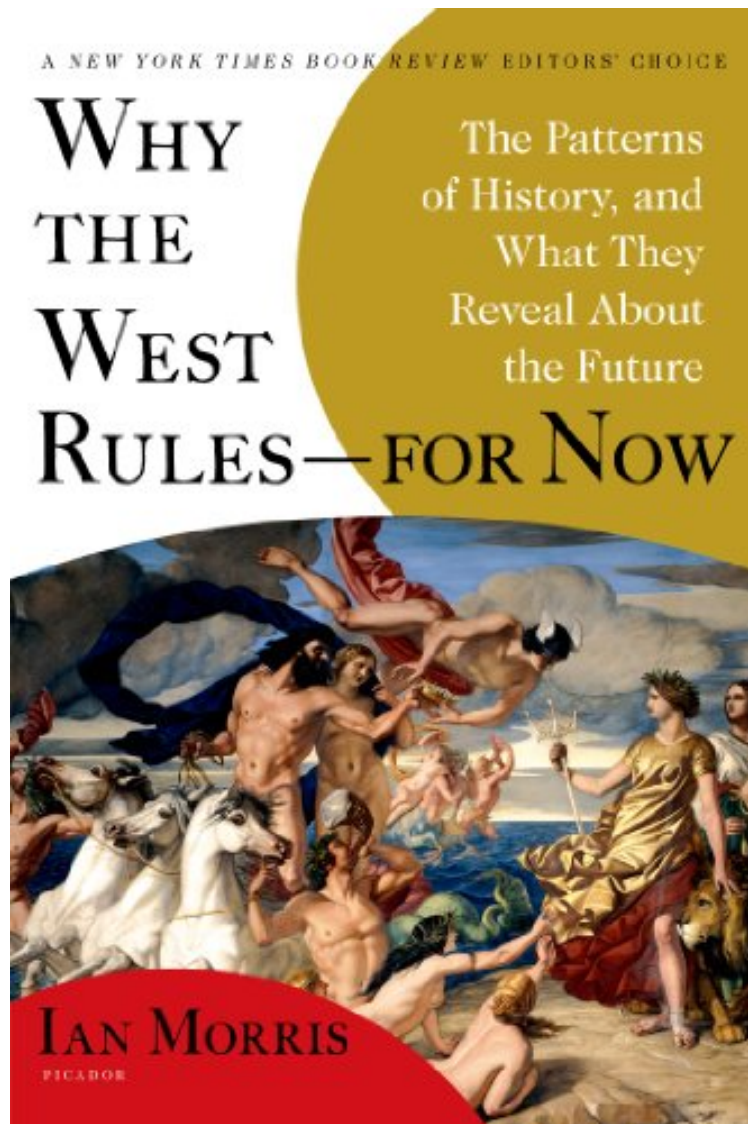


(Mobile pdf) Why the West Rules--for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future

# Why the West Rules--for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future

*Ian Morris*

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**Ian Morris : Why the West Rules--for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why the West Rules--for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future:

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enjoyed the broad sweep of history this book provided. Too often in history we study a small part of the world and don't see what was going on in other parts of the world at the same time. This book gives a better idea as to how the overall world looked at different points in history. The book is easy to read and thought provoking. It can be read as a companion book to Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Spellbinding Tour de Force of the Patterns of History and Their Causes By Q. Publius This is one of the most interesting books I have read, summarizing a vast amount of research in archeology, biology, sociology, and geography. Those interested in thinking about patterns in history and comparing East and West, and various empires within East and West, will find this book quite thought provoking. The book hinges on an index of social development the author uses throughout the book to compare different societies over different periods. His appendix explains how he developed this index, and also contains a sensitivity analysis of the key variables that comprise his index, to argue that his index is unlikely to be so far off that it distorts the patterns of history and societies as he has described them throughout the book. The book is quite detailed and for that reason general readers may not enjoy it. But anyone who wants an overview of research in many social science fields should find this book quite interesting. The only mistake I found was on page 510. While the Wright brothers had their first flight in North Carolina, they were from Dayton, Ohio, and only went to North Carolina because of the high winds near the ocean at Kittyhawk, and because the sand dunes there were conducive to their experiments with gliders and then powered aircraft. But this mistake is minor and does not diminish the great accomplishment Dr. Morris has achieved in this most interesting book. Now his other books are on my reading list. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book - with one glaring gap. By The Anurag Bhatnagar Excellent book - the analysis, parameters and logic used to arrive at your results. I am an ardent student of history, and loved the book. Gripping, and "un-put down able" - if I may say so. But I think it is too focused on East as China - I would go so far as to use the word 'China syndrome' or 'China obsession'. There were equally developed societies in today's South America as well as today's India, which have been largely ignored. They were as developed on all the 4 parameters, if you care to dig deep. Sample this, if I may call it so, three small nuggets : there are only 3 oceans in the world - Pacific, Atlantic and Indian. Historians have through the centuries been so obsessed with India that they named an entire ocean after that country ... and you largely missed it. Or that Indians built a 22 kilometre bridge over sea connecting the mainland to today's Sri Lanka - clearly visible from space (you can check it on Google Earth); a civilisation that had such organisation ability ... Maps and not chaps, you said? Or the now submerged city of Dwarka off the west coast of India, which rivals Roman structures in size and scale - forget my opinion : as an archaeologist and a rational person, check out the last one which is right up your alley (FYI, Dwarka has been carbon dated to 3,200 BCE). I can give you similar examples for Mayan and Inca cultures. But I guess you get my point. Regards, Anurag CEO - GTNFW www.gtnfw.org anuragbhat@yahoo.com

A New York Times Notable Book for 2011 Sometime around 1750, English entrepreneurs unleashed the astounding energies of steam and coal, and the world was forever changed. The emergence of factories, railroads, and gunboats propelled the West's rise to power in the nineteenth century, and the development of computers and nuclear weapons in the twentieth century secured its global supremacy. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, many worry that the emerging economic power of China and India spells the end of the West as a superpower. In order to understand this possibility, we need to look back in time. Why has the West dominated the globe for the past two hundred years, and will its power last? Describing the patterns of human history, the archaeologist and historian Ian Morris offers surprising new answers to both questions. It is not, he reveals, differences of race or culture, or even the strivings of great individuals, that explain Western dominance. It is the effects of geography on the everyday efforts of ordinary people as they deal with crises of resources, disease, migration, and climate. As geography and human ingenuity continue to interact, the world will change in astonishing ways, transforming Western rule in the process. Deeply researched and brilliantly argued, *Why the West Rules for Now* spans fifty thousand years of history and offers fresh insights on nearly every page. The book brings together the latest findings across disciplines from ancient history to neuroscience not only to explain why the West came to rule the world but also to predict what the future will bring in the next hundred years.

From Booklist Only the supremely self-confident put forth all-encompassing theories of world history, and Morris is one such daredevil. An archaeologist by academic specialty, he advances a quasi-deterministic construct that is suitable for nonacademics. From a repeatedly enunciated premise that humans by nature are indolent, avaricious, and fearful, Morris holds that such traits, when combined with sociology and geography, explain history right from the beginning, when humanity trudged out of Africa, through the contemporary rivalry between China and America. Such temporal range leaves scant room for individual human agency: Morris names the names of world history, but in his narrative, leaders and tyrants, at best, muddle through patterns of history that are beyond their power to shape. And those patterns, he claims, can be numerically measured by a social development index that he applies to every epochal change from agriculture to the industrial revolution. However, the reading is not as heavy as it may sound. His breezy style and what-if imagination for alternative scenarios should maintain audience interest; whether his sweeping

perspective convinces is another matter altogether. --Gilbert Taylor Morris is a lucid thinker and a fine writer. . . possessed of a welcome sense of humor that helps him guide us through this grand game of history as if he were an erudite sportscaster. Orville Schell, *The New York Times Book* An excellent and amusing survey of the last [fifty] thousand years or so of human history. Jane Smiley, *The Washington Post* The greatest nonfiction book written in recent times. *The Business Standard* A pathbreaking work that lays out what modern history should look like. Entertaining and plausibly argued. Harold James, *Financial Times (London)* In an era when cautious academics too often confine themselves to niggling discussions of pipsqueak topics, it is a joy to see a scholar take a bold crack at explaining the vast sweep of human progress. . . Readers of *Why the West Rules--For Now* are unlikely to see the history of the world in quite the same way ever again. And that can't be said of many books on any topic. Morris has penned a tour de force. Keith Monroe, *The Virginian-Pilot* Readers of *Why the West Rules--For Now* are unlikely to see the history of the world in quite the same way ever again. And that can't be said of many books on any topic. Morris has penned a tour de force. Keith Monroe, *The Virginian-Pilot* If you read one history book this year, if you read one this decade, this is the one. Tim O'Connell, *The Florida Times-Union* A monumental effort... Morris is an engaging writer with deep insights from archaeology and ancient history that offer us compelling visions about how the past influences the future. Michael D. Langan, *Buffalo News* A remarkable book that may come to be as widely read as Paul Kennedy's 1987 work, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.* 'Like Mr Kennedy's epic, Mr Morris's *Why the West Rules--For Now*' uses history and an overarching theory to address the anxieties of the present . . . This is an important book--one that challenges, stimulates and entertains. Anyone who does not believe there are lessons to be learned from history should start here. *The Economist* Morris' new book illustrates perfectly why one really scholarly book about the past is worth a hundred fanciful works of futurology. Morris is the world's most talented ancient historian, a man as much at home with state-of-the-art archaeology as with the classics as they used to be studied . . . He has brilliantly pulled off what few modern academics would dare to attempt: a single-volume history of the world that offers a bold and original answer to the question, Why did the societies that make up 'the West' pull ahead of 'the Rest' not once but twice, and most spectacularly in the modern era after around 1500? Wearing his impressive erudition lightly -- indeed, writing with a wit and clarity that will delight the lay reader -- Morris uses his own ingenious index of social development as the basis for his answer. Niall Ferguson, *Foreign Affairs* A formidable, richly engrossing effort to determine why Western institutions dominate the world . . . Readers will enjoy [Morris's] lively prose and impressive combination of scholarship . . . with economics and science. A superior contribution to the grand-theory-of-human-history genre. Kirkus s (starred review) Ian Morris has returned history to the position it once held: no longer a series of dusty debates, nor simple stories--although he has many stories to tell and tells them brilliantly--but a true magister vitae, teacher of life.' Morris explains how the shadowy East-West divide came about, why it really does matter, and how one day it might end up. His vision is dazzling, and his prose irresistible. Everyone from Sheffield to Shanghai who wants to know not only how they came to be who and where they are but where their children and their children's children might one day end up must read this book. Anthony Pagden, author of *Worlds and War: The 2,500-Year Struggle Between East and West* This is an astonishing work by Ian Morris: hundreds of pages of the latest information dealing with every aspect of change. Then, the questions of the future: What will a new distribution bring about? Will Europe undergo a major change? Will the millions of immigrants impose a new set of rules on the rest? There was a time when Europe could absorb any and all newcomers. Now the newcomers may dictate the terms. The West may continue to rule, but the rule may be very different. David S. Landes, author of *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* Here you have three books wrapped into one: an exciting novel that happens to be true; an entertaining but thorough historical account of everything important that happened to any important people in the last ten millennia; and an educated guess about what will happen in the future. Read, learn, and enjoy! Jared Diamond, Professor of Geography at UCLA, and Pulitzer Prizewinning author of *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, *Collapse*, and *Natural Experiments of History* Ian Morris is a classical archaeologist, an ancient historian, and a writer whose breathtaking vision and scope make him fit to be ranked alongside the likes of Jared Diamond and David Landes. His magnum opus is a tour not just d'horizon but de force, taking us on a spectacular journey to and from the two nodal cores of the Euramerican West and the Asian East, alighting and reflecting as suggestively upon 10,800 BC as upon AD 2010. The shape of globalizing history may well never be quite the same again. Paul Cartledge, A. G. Leventis Professor of Greek Culture, Clare College At last--a brilliant historian with a light touch. We should all rejoice. John Julius Norwich Deeply thought-provoking and engagingly lively, broad in sweep and precise in detail. Jonathan Fenby, author of *Modern China: The Fall and Rise of a Great Power, 1850 to the Present* Morris's history of world dominance sparkles as much with exotic ideas as with extraordinary tales. *Why the West Rules--for Now* is both a riveting drama and a major step toward an integrated theory of history. Richard Wrangham, author of *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human* The nearest thing to a unified field theory of history we are ever likely to get. With wit and wisdom, Ian Morris deploys the techniques and insights of the new ancient history to address the biggest of all historical questions: Why on earth did the West beat the Rest? I loved it. Niall Ferguson, author of *The Ascent of Money* About the Author IAN MORRIS is Willard Professor of Classics and History at Stanford University. He has published ten scholarly books, including, most recently, *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires*, and has directed excavations in Greece

and Italy. He lives in the Santa Cruz Mountains in California.