

World history bringing  
it all together



## YOUR FULL YOUR World History - Bringing it All Together Discussion

Technology. From the River Valley Civilizations through the Classical Period and beyond, one of the driving forces for civilization as a whole has been the technology of the society. History is replete with instances of one nomadic group displacing residents of an area because they had a more advanced technology; certainly those conquered by the Mongols would agree that horses are superior to feet when fighting. Similarly, bronze was always better than stone, iron was always stronger than bronze and steel was even better yet. I think it is important to note the developmental force upon these societies that technology brought to bear. Certainly for many, the pace of advancement in technology had to be overwhelming; as the ability to do more things was moving faster than the societal awareness of its ultimate consequence. Witness, for example, the impact of gunpowder; not only its role in the early Mongol invasions of Japan, but the ripple effect it created throughout history as that technology spawned not only primary improvements in the substance itself, but also tactical warfare revolutions into the medieval baronies and even later. This is only one example of a single new technology changing society and civilization forever.

Discussion 2 - Inequality. Certainly when viewed from today's perspective, the institutionalized social and gender inequality during this time is repugnant. Man's inhumanity to man has always been a shocking part of history, and the socialized stigma of being a woman, or a Jew, or a slave certainly recognized no individual human right in the modern sense. That said, however, I want to note that it was upon these unequal foundations that civilization was built. Accepting the status quo was the very mindset that allowed those enslaved by the Romans to build the empire. Without the

technological development of the Romans, built on the backs of those slaves, we wouldn't have running water. As difficult as it may be to accept, social stratification and disparity in status was a stabilizing factor in many cultures.

Discussion 3 - Human Agency. Of all the various technological impacts upon society and the advancement of civilization in general, human agency lies at the core. After all, history really is about us as a species; how we developed from simple, agrarian societies into the complex social orders seen in the Post-Classical period. The decisions made by leaders and individuals alike that, if were not for the one little thing that did or didn't happen, would have re-shaped history. The social order accepted by societies that would advance the individual rights cherished in later eras. These are all the result of human agency and it could never be any other way: We are the stuff of which history is made. It's our story.

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