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East and West, by C. Northcote Parkinson (Houghton, Mifflin, 1963, \$5.00), a history of the contact of Europe and Asia since the fall of Troy, is the author's thirteenth book. Carroll Quigley, author of The Evolution of Civilizations, teaches history at Georgetown University.

C. Northcote Parkinson, one-time Professor at the University of Malaya (but now removed from academic halls to the more remunerative work of an economic consultant in London), has produced more than a dozen books over the last 29 years. Most of these sank with scarcely a ripple, until, in 1957, his Parkinson's Law roused widespread enthusiasm. Its attack on bureaucracy and Big Government was kept afloat in a sea of jokes which helped to conceal the fact that the author's basic outlook was contemporary with Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). Three years later, Parkinson shifted his attention from politics to economics, and, in The Law and the Profits, attacked the basic principle of twentieth century taxation from a Spencerian (or John Birchite) point of view. He deplored the graduated income tax and any tax of over 25 per cent. This book, with fewer and poorer jokes, revealed its author's old-fashioned outlook to anyone who read with both eyes.

Now Mr. Parkinson has shifted his field once again, this time to history. Lacking his earlier camouflage of jokes,

except in isolated spots, East and West shows that Parkinson's historical training is as dated as his politics and economics, almost pure Oxbridge, vintage 1880. And unfortunately, not one of the better samples of that year. Except for its length, this work might pass for an undergraduate tutorial essay worthy of a "gentleman's C" or of a Third Class in the Final Schools examination.

The characteristics of a mediocre book are not very much different from those of a merely "passing" undergraduate essay and are fully evident in this volume: (1) underlying confusion of thought, and thus of organization; (2) inadequate knowledge of the evidence; (3) limited reading of up-to-date authorities; and (4) masses of factual information without strict control of its relevancy.

For Parkinson, as for his Victorian contemporaries, the meeting of East and West begins with the Iliad (on page 1) and advances chronologically, based on the writings of Herodotus, Xenophon, Plutarch, and the lesser historians of the wars against Carthage and the achievements of the Caesars, with much borrowing from that up to date writer, Edward Gibbon. More than half the ~~PARKINSON'S~~ volume is concerned with the period from the fall of Troy to the fall of Constantinople, and much of the rest is a prosaic account of the expansion of Europe to Asia (especially southern Asia) since the fifteenth century. The period before 1000 B.C., the immense impact of archaeological discoveries since 1880, the newer literary evidence obtained from the twentieth century's deciphering of papyrus and archaeological inscriptions

are ignored. As a result, Parkinson believes (galley 45) that the "first wave of oriental influence to reach Europe came from Persia....Zoroaster ^{*}[about 500 B.C.]." Such a statement wipes aside almost the whole of European, including Greek, culture as non-existent even when, like the alphabet, it was called by an Asiatic name. Parkinson has a whole chapter on Alexander the Great, but ignores all recent work on the subject going back to W. W. Tarn (1938). His extensive attention to military exploits may seem to reflect the present (1963) concern with military history, but Parkinson's approach is biographical not tactical, and his treatment of war recalls my own happy days reading G.A. Henty. There are scattered footnote references to books on the history of armaments but no evidence that Parkinson really read them, for he tells us such untruths as that the crossbow could be "shot with accuracy from a horse-ridden at a gallop" (gal. 59) or that "the real cavalryman" was invented by Macedonia before Alexander the Great's time (galley 21; real cavalry could, in fact, come into action only with the invention of stirrups many centuries after Alexander).

Much of the amorphous character of this volume arises from failure to define its terms. The first five words of the Introduction read, "This book deals with civilizations," but there is a firm refusal to demark any civilizations or culture areas. Instead, it soon appears that the author is thinking of Asia and Europe as geographic areas (which he mistakenly divides at the Ural Mountains

and the Caspian Sea instead of at the Pripet Marshes, which form the only meaningful boundary.) This two-part division leads to great confusion, because the situation can hardly be understood in terms any simpler than a four-factor melange (Western, Asiatic, northern steppe grasslands, and Semitic). Culturally the optimistic and balanced empiricism of the West and the resigned Heraclitean flux of Asia have been separated by the rationalistic, dualistic, and often extremist, outlooks of the Indo-Europeans and the Semites. The former of these buffers left its imprint most strongly on Iran (Zoroaster and Mani) and on Greece (Plato), carried on through Byzantium and Russia. It is a fundamental fact in any history of the contacts of Asia and the West that ~~so~~ many of these contacts were filtered through the two buffers of the Indo-European and the Semite cultural heritages.

Even on the simple level of contact between two geographic areas, Parkinson's attempt to show the interaction of Europe and Asia is almost a total failure. This results from his neglect of the most obvious interchanges and of the whole of the early (and most significant) period and from his failure to establish a chronological outline based on the factors which impelled such interchanges.

These factors have rested on the interaction of climate changes and technology, with the former dominating the situation in the more remote past (by influencing the ability of the grasslands of Central Asia and Arabia to support herds of grazing animals and

the human populations which used these herds as food) and the latter dominating the situation in recent centuries, with a lengthy period (500 B.C.-1700) of transition in between. Lacking any conception of this interplay of forces, Parkinson has no real conception of why these interactions occurred and falls back on quite unconvincing explanations based on personal reactions and personal revenge. The Persian invasion of Greece in 490^{B.C.}_A is explained as a reaction to the Greek capture of Troy in 1184^{B.C.}! (galley 2 and 8).

Even in Parkinson's day under the great Queen Victoria every school boy knew Ex Oriente Lux. Europe's peoples and languages came from the east as did the very basic attributes of European life: its food (wheat, beef, lamb, swine, fowls), its textiles (~~wool~~, linen, cotton, silk), its systems of measures (12 eggs in a dozen, 12 inches in a foot, 12 hours in the day and in the night, 60 minutes in the hour), its basic technology (writing, the wheel, paper, printing type, gun powder, the plow, the number system, and those ~~these~~ major targets of Parkinson's antipathy, governmental bureaucracy, taxation, and state regulation of economic life). Even today, a London economic consultant wears trousers and a jacket slashed in the rear so that the sides will hang straight as he sits on his horse, attire derived from a Turkic cultural predecessor in the central Asian grasslands of two millennia ago.

This volume contains scores, possibly hundreds of gross factual errors. If these were based only on the ignorance and prejudices of 1880, we might pass over them in silence, but when

they join the current campaign to corrupt our youth with the myths of John Birch they should be pointed out. Parkinson tells us (galley 67) that the decline of Asia after A.D. 1000 was fundamentally due to biological decadence but the "immediate cause was, of course, excessive taxation." We are solemnly informed (galley 102) that Marxiam, like Marx himself, is "a religion derived ultimately from Judaism". Or again (galley 76), of British "administrative talent...the best always went overseas, leaving only the dægs in Whitehall." As long ago as the time of Alexander the Great, Greek ascendancy in Asia meant that "democracy had to go" (galley 21). And of course, the fall of Rome in the West was due to "overtaxation" (galley 47).

These numerous outbursts of personal prejudice ^{are} ~~is~~ buried in ~~a~~ great masses of simple factual errors. Parkinson's knowledge of geography, despite his personal travels, is woefully deficient. Roman military control of the Balkans in the 3rd century, he says (galley 47) required "the reconquest of Dacia and Mesopotamia", a statement which is not only nonsense, but implies that Rome had previously held Mesopotamia. Or again (galley 51), he tells us that the Arabs, about 800, controlled the whole trade route between Canton and Cordova—"from end to end."

Among numerous factual errors are statements: 1. that the Hittites taught Babylon to train horses (gal. 1; it was the Mittani); 2. that the people east of the Halys River in Asia Minor were "Of Semitic character" (gal. 5; they were largely Hurrian); 3. that the

Hittites first coined money (gal. 6; it was the Lydians almost 800 years later); 4. that all "Phoenician" literature was lost in the destruction of ^{Carthage} ~~Carthage~~ by Rome (gal. 13); 5. that no Greek would discard his possessions to become a beggar (gal. 17; there was a whole school of such Greeks, the Cynics); 6. that the militarization of Spartan life was not based on "necessity" but on "self-respect" (gal. 17; it was based on the need to keep down ten times as numerous Helots); 7. that "the Greeks ceased to be discoverers when they became teachers" under Alexander (gal. 22; this ignores the amazing achievements of Hellenistic science, such as Hipparchus or Archimedes); 8. that the middle classes were "a Greek invention" (gal. 26; the Phoenicians were more middle class than the Greeks and much earlier); 9. that Rome obtained its original culture from the Greeks (gal. 30; it was from the Etruscans); 10. that the Greeks had a belief in Progress (gal. 39); on the contrary, the Greeks believed in retrogression from a remote "Golden Age"; ^{11.} _A that the "pastoral type of economy" was earlier than the rise of agriculture (gal. 1; it was several thousand years later); 12. that Indo-European invaders about 1600 made Babylon "the center of the Hittite Empire" (gal. 2; Babylon was never a Hittite city). 13. that Alexander's Empire brought four "of the five known civilizations... in a single monarchy" (gal. 27; it did not include either India or China); 14. that Roman ships reached India (gal. 37); 15. that the Russian choice of Byzantine Christianity [presumably over the Latin type] brought Russia "into the western rather than the Eastern Camp" (gal. 48); 15. that "Gothic architecture is plainly Islamic" (gal. 58);

16. that the United States "began to look on the Chinese and the Japanese as possible customers and converts" because of the competition of the trans-continental ~~RAILROAD~~ railway in 1869 (gal. 73); (American merchant ships were trading extensively with both peoples before the Civil War); and 17. that "discoveries in navigation did not precede but followed the great voyages of discovery" (gal. 81; in fact, the compass, rudder, sails, hull construction, and methods of determining latitude were all in use before the great navigations.)

Fortunately Parkinson does not launch this myriad of errors on the reader without fair warning, for in the Preface we may read, "Given a more suitable diet, as recommended by the food reformers (plain food, uncooked, and Spartan) I might perhaps have had the energy to ransack libraries....Instead I have relied upon the results of desultory reading...." Surely an honest statement, but without scholarship, the volume certainly needs more jokes!