

**ECONOMIC DETERMINISM:
OR, THE ECONOMIC
INTERPRETATION OF
HISTORY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649497041

Economic Determinism: Or, The Economic Interpretation of History by Lida Parce

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

LIDA PARCE

**ECONOMIC DETERMINISM:
OR, THE ECONOMIC
INTERPRETATION OF
HISTORY**

ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

OR

*THE ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION
OF HISTORY*

BY

LIDA PARCE

"

UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY

1913

HC 85
P3

Copyright, 1913
By CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY

JOHN F. HIGGINS
PRINTER AND BINDER

376-382 MONROE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION	9
II THE PERIOD OF SAVAGERY	16
III THE PERIOD OF BARBARISM	23
IV EARLY CIVILIZATION	38
V THE FALL OF ROME	51
VI THE MIDDLE AGES	59
VII THE MODERN ERA	97
VIII THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION	133

20

10

15
25

30

40

50

60

70

80

90

100

110

120

130

140

150

160

ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE principal uses of the study of history are to train the judgment of the student and to place him in possession of facts on which to form his judgment. Whether the result of such study is good will depend upon the validity of the facts given and the way in which they are interpreted.

Until the past few years it has been customary to present as history only certain events in the lives of conspicuous characters, such as kings and potentates, to celebrate their political successes, record their wars, and make as much as possible of their pomp and trappings of state. The historian has nearly always written with the purpose of cultivating the good-will of those in power, and applauding the nation about which he wrote. The facts presented have been those which would lend themselves to these purposes and the reasoning upon them has been theological in its methods. That is, the whole list of characters who figured in the pages of the historian were assumed to be under the protection of supernatural powers, and the events re-

corded, whether of bloodshed, chicanery or plunder, were regarded as being providential and for the glory of God. The reader is taught that the same supernatural power will answer his prayers and intervene at the proper moment to save him from harm, while at the same time being responsible for his misfortunes in this life. But while this invisible power is at the bottom of his present sufferings, they are all to be atoned for by happiness in a future life, if he will only bear his present burdens with meekness and submission.

The natural result of this sort of teaching upon the mind is that the moral powers of the individual are paralyzed. If his sufferings and his limitations are inevitable, fixed by a power beyond his control, it would be folly to try to save himself from them. If he is saved from worse calamities by his submission, it would be madness to rebel. If by questioning the right and justice of the present order in either heaven or earth he would jeopardize his future happiness as well as his present safety from a worse fate, he will not only submit, he will pray, he will grovel, he will kiss the hand that smites him. Thus the powers that be in the high places of the earth are safe in the possession of their special privileges and powers and have every opportunity to increase them, while the people are kept in a state of both material and moral degradation. This sort of history writing has always been a tool, used more or less consciously, by the class of people in

power, for keeping the mass of the people quiet while they plundered them.

The Economic Interpretation of History proceeds by quite different methods; its purpose is simply to get at the truth and the whole truth, and the effect which it produces on the mind is exactly the opposite from that wrought by the theological method. It is a study of the development of society, and by society is meant all the people, with their facilities for getting a living, their institutions and ideas. It has very little to do with either special events or particular individuals. An individual has no importance at all, excepting in his relation to all the people, and then the people are the important thing; he is merely an incident. And the mainspring of growth and action is found in the nature of the people themselves, and not in any outside power. But above all, it traces the ways in which the races of men get their living, for all other developments depend upon changes and improvements in the ways of producing the food and the clothing of the race.

When a person sees that the conditions in which he lives are due to causes which can and do change from time to time, and when he sees that such changes are the result of new knowledge put to practical use, or of new inventions or discoveries which have been made by common men like himself, it puts new hope and courage into him. When he sees that improvements can be made by people simply getting together and making them, he takes a new attitude al-