

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

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Economic Determinism, or, the Economic Interpretation of History by Lida Parce

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LIDA PARCE

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OR

*THE ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION
OF HISTORY*

BY

LIDA PARCE

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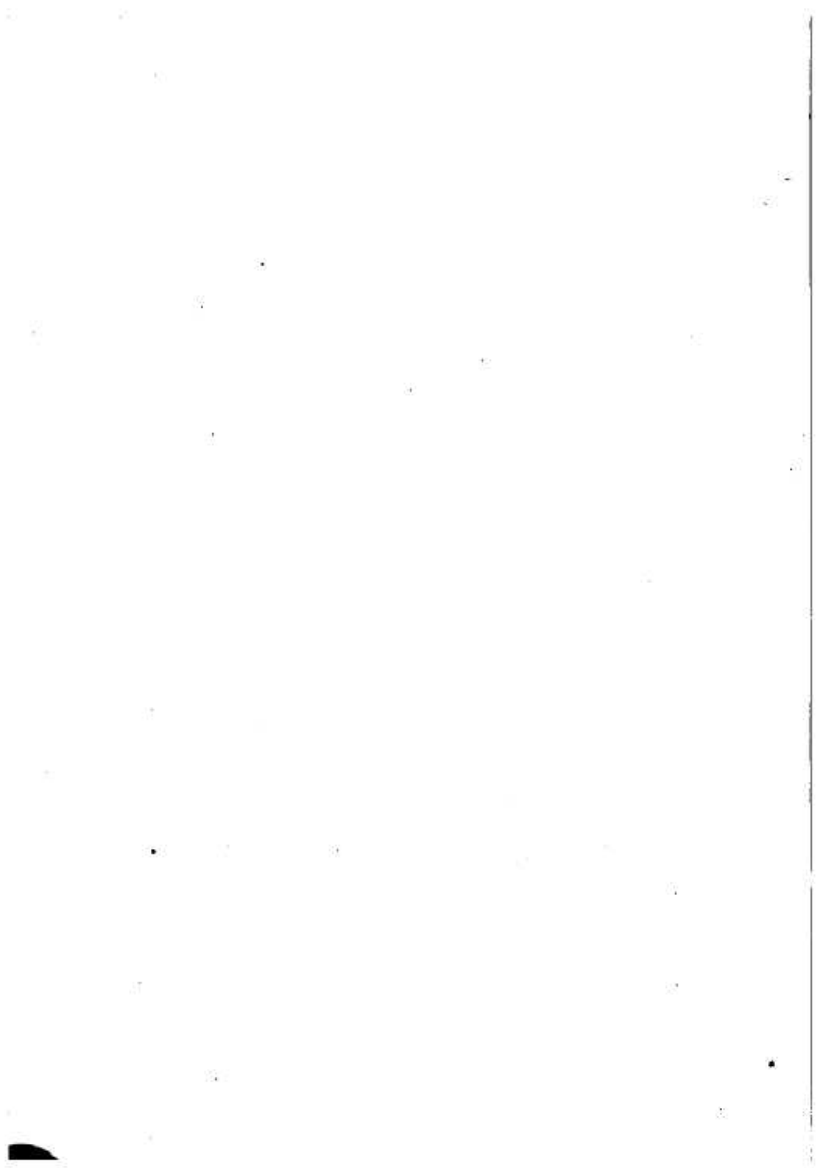
"Economic Determinism" is one of four phrases which are used interchangeably by modern writers in referring to a sociological law which is the joint discovery of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels and was first given to the world in the year 1848. The other phrases used for the same idea are "The Materialistic Conception of History," "Historical Materialism," and "The Economic Interpretation of History." The classic statement of the principle in the words of Frederick Engels is as follows: "That in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolution in which, now-a-days, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class-distinctions and class struggles."

The phrase usually employed by the author of the present work is "The Economic Interpretation of History," but as this exact phrase has been used as the title of a work by Professor Seligman, we have, with the author's consent, used the shorter title for this book.



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



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-