

Chapter 1 : Plough, Sword, and Book Quotes by Ernest Gellner

Plough, sword and book - sounds like the title of another easily digested history of humanity, but don't be mistaken. Ernest Gellner never wrote a book just to restate the familiar and obvious. His style is intellectually challenging and not intended for leisurely reading.

Gellner has produced a sharp challenge to his colleagues and a thrilling book for the non-specialist. Deductive history on this scale cannot be proved right or wrong, but this is Gellner writing, incisive, iconoclastic, witty and expert. His scenario compels our attention. The author aims to outline human history with theories and models that employ a method of deductive reasoning. Specifically, Gellner wishes to offer his readers a "clear and forceful" view of his philosophy so that it may be examined critically page His variety of sources allow for a wide range of both philosophic input and debate. Essentially, the author pushes for a philosophic historical outline that depicts hunting and gathering groups of humans who eventually initiate an agricultural community stemming from a sense of long-term obligation to their individual group page As the author discusses the shift between the three principle stages of human history, he outlines the major activities that pushed society through the industrial and agricultural revolutions, or "great leaps" of human history. These activities fall into three main groups identified by Gellner as production, coercion, and cognition page Agrarian societies focused mainly on the production and storage of food page 16 while Industrial societies focused on the production of wealth and weapons, or means of coercion, and the production of food becomes a lesser focus page One of the most important elements in the evolution of human history, cognition, occurred at the point when "the genetic equipment of man became so permissive as to allow the wide range of social comportment" that we can observe in the modern society page Gellner includes ideas from Aristotle to Weber and from Kant to Kuhn making his philosophic vision of human history a scholarly work indeed. Advanced theories of history By T. Ernest Gellner never wrote a book just to restate the familiar and obvious. His style is intellectually challenging and not intended for leisurely reading. This book presents a theory of history utilizing mostly sociological tools, but also with many elements from the history of philosophy. Gellner finds unique perspectives by combining material from different fields in his analysis, but quite a bit of background knowledge is assumed. This book is of course not a detailed study of any of those classics, but much of the text proceeds by discussing platonic, cartesian and weberian ways of thought on an abstract level, so you do need to have some understanding of the associated terminology before you start reading this book. However, while abstractions can be useful for seeing the big picture, in this book they are sometimes simply confusing. Some historical exemplification in between the theorizing would have been very helpful. Too many times Gellner flies so high in his abstractions that the reader has no chance of connecting his ideas to any real event or movement in world history. This is the case especially for his analysis of Cognition, where the argument is framed with strange phrases like "Platonism is the supreme expression of agro-literate man" p. It is actually difficult to understand what Gellner means by "Platonism" in this context since his usage is unconventional and historical examples are not offered. In my opinion, the analysis of the other main topics of the book Coercion and Production stands on a firmer basis than the theory about Cognition. Towards the end of the book some of the material is actually a bit outdated since Gellner discusses the contemporary "marxist state" and the like the book was written in So this book has some minor flaws, but the great majority of it is still very interesting and useful for people who want to study our contemporary world from a critical and historical perspective. The breadth of material is very impressive, ranging from the dynamics of agrarian societies to problems of modern democracy and colonial legacies. For people with the some background in these topics, this is a book which can be read several times, providing new questions with each reading. The produced surplus must be stored and protected: Those who could defend the rulers used the prestige of religion for the legitimation and the cohesion of their power base. An agrarian society is authoritarian wealth for the rulers, poverty of the ruled and characterized by oppression, superstition and economic stagnation. Its philosophical proponent is Plato. Within one of the agrarian societies Western Europe a unique industrial and scientific revolution took place. Gellner cannot explain the cause s of this revolution. For MHO, see the end of this

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review. The upheaval is characterized by the separation of cognition from authority and religion Descartes. Authority is replaced by liberalism; religion by empiricism and rationalism D. Knowledge innovation is Power. There is no push towards a more homogeneous humanity. However, this link seems to be more an affair of coincidence rather than consequence. The main reason of the forceful development of the merchant society could be the loss of the stranglehold on monetary matters by the Church. Once the stranglehold was broken indeed, in protestant countries the merchant class could freely build its commercial empire. Five Stars By Allen R. Kamp on Mar 08, Insightful overview of human history. This particular edition is in a Paperback format. It was published by University of Chicago Press and has a total of pages in the book. To buy this book at the lowest price, [Click Here](#).

Chapter 2 : Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History by Ernest Gellner

Plough, Sword, and Book has 48 ratings and 6 reviews. David said: An ambitious mix of anthropology, history, sociology, and philosophy. At times Gellner.

Mar 06, David M rated it liked it An ambitious mix of anthropology, history, sociology, and philosophy. At times Gellner writes in fairly barren generalization: I found the most interesting part to be his discussion of the philosophy underlying the Enlightenment. He distinguishes, on the one hand, the naively triumphalist thinkers. These would include Voltaire and the philosophes, who think that we merely need to put our trust in the glorious progress of science, to spread reason far and wide, and all will be well. Gellner contrasts that with the critical Enlightenment; he chiefly identifies this with Kant and Hume, whom he sees as more alike than not. They recognized the internal incoherence of reason, its failure to guarantee anything by itself. You might ask what this is doing in a book that purports to tell the story of transformations affecting literally billions, the whole population of the earth. I do think all of us live by ideas to some degree, however contradictory or confused our ideas may be. Figures like Hume and Kant may represent a heroic effort to go as far as possible in articulating and untangling our vast reservoir of implicit and unexamined thoughts. Its icy indifference to values, its failure to console and reassure, its total inability either to validate norms and values or to offer any guarantee of their eventual success, is in no way a consequence of any specific findings within it. It is a consequence of the overall basic and entrenched constitution of our thought, not of our accidental findings within it. To what extent does the ideology of facts precede the facts themselves? The starting point, our background intellectual framework, is taken for an incontrovertible, value-neutral conclusion. The theory has in fact been revived in our time when in fact the tremendous size of the required infrastructure renders it absurd - pp Oh, snap! We cannot, we are told, experience anything without a prior framework, a "paradigm," which pre-moulds it and saturates it with theory, but if there is no experience without paradigms, without theory-saturation, how can one use experience to adjudicate between paradigms? Answer comes there none, and on the premisses of the argument, there simply cannot be one. In the Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Kuhn seemed to want to limit the problem to the very narrow and highly specialized domain of the hard sciences. But many other thinkers have taken this step. His notion of the fusion of horizons may offer a way out of the bind Gellner describes above. No longer is it a question of choosing between but rather of creating a third kind of thing. Our neo-romantics take pleasure in affirming the latter view, but their demonstrations of it fall a very long way short of cogency. Who are these unnamed neo-romantics? By page , has he simply forgotten all that? Why does he now revert to a positivist claim for science as the only real form of understanding?

Chapter 3 : Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History, Gellner

The book Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History, Ernest Gellner is published by University of Chicago Press.

Our products are hand crafted in the U. Our team is led by a U. Army officer and her sister who grew up in a military family. We work with manufacturers with veteran sewers who are transitioning to civilian life. We want you to join our story! Hey Kickstarter, Thanks for checking out our project! We are a quadruple bottom line people, purpose, planet, profit bag company that works with American veterans to repurpose military surplus fabric into durable and stylish bags. My sister, Betsy, and I wanted to create something that would emotionally and physically touch civilians in their everyday lives and remind them, in a beautiful way, of the challenges our country and veterans face, and the power that everyone has to help. Everyone uses a bag of some sort throughout their day. By recycling and repurposing military gear with a fashionable touch and working with veterans to sew our products, we create sturdy and sophisticated bags. With your help we will be able to create veteran jobs, reduce landfill waste, and strengthen civil-military understanding. In this way, our bags are rugged, refined and relevant. After a year devoted to developing our mission and prototypes through the Middlebury Center for Social Entrepreneurship and the Dell Summer Social Innovation lab, and establishing proof of concept by winning the Harvard Pitch for Change Competition, we are ready to invite you to join our mission! All Kickstarter funding will go towards covering the production and launch of our first line of bags. Thanks for your support! We use only recycled, natural, and organic fabrics. These repurposed military materials paired with rich, local, Colorado eco-leather combine to make classic and durable designs. From repurposed parachutes, canvas tents, and Gore-Tex sleeping bags, we make sure your bag is rich with history. Made in America, with care for the Planet. Everything from the fabric to the packaging is made in the USA. Where we are now: The money will go towards covering the production costs of our first line of bags along with fixed and variable costs of making the bags in the USA. Please note that the products pictured below are prototypes. The final product you receive may look slightly different.

Chapter 4 : Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human Hist () by Ernest Gellner

LibraryThing Review User Review - thcson - LibraryThing. Plough, sword and book - sounds like the title of another easily digested history of humanity, but don't be mistaken.

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Chapter 6 : Plough, Sword and Book: The Structure of Human History by Ernest Gellner ()

Plough, Sword, and Book Quotes (showing of 3) "One persistent attempt to find a thread in the history of mankind focuses on the notion of Reason. Human history, on this view, is the unfolding of rationality.

Chapter 7 : Sword & Plough by Emily & Betsy NÃ±ez â€” Kickstarter

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