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Present

The Uses of Philosophy for Living: The End of History

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The triumph of the West, of the Western idea, is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism. In the past decade, there have been unmistakable changes in the intellectual climate of the world's two largest communist countries, and the beginnings of significant reform movements in both. But this phenomenon extends beyond high politics and it can be seen also in the ineluctable spread of consumerist Western culture in such diverse contexts as the peasants' markets and color television sets now omnipresent throughout China, the cooperative restaurants and clothing stores opened in the past year in Moscow, the Beethoven piped into Japanese department stores, and the rock music enjoyed alike in Prague, Rangoon, and Tehran. What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government. This is not to say that there will no longer be events to fill the pages of *Foreign Affairs's* yearly summaries of international relations, for the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real or material world. But there are powerful reasons for believing that it is the ideal that will govern the material world in the long run. To understand how this is so, we must first consider some theoretical issues concerning the nature of historical change. (Fukuyama, 1989)

The Sun never sets on the British Empire. (Literally true *for a time*)

An incomplete list of Empires and large states that endured longer than the US and then failed:

In China The Xia?2000-1600bc, Shang 1600 – 554bc, Western Zhou 1046-771, Eastern Zhou 770-256bc, Han Dynasty 200bc-200ad, Tang Dynasty 618-907, Song

Dynasty 960-1279, Ming Dynasty 1368-1644, Qing Dynasty 1644-1912. Achaemenid Empire 220 years, Aksumite 700 years, Armenian Empire 600 years, Babylonian 300, First Bulgarian Empire 338, Caliphate of Cordoba 275, Carthaginian 500, Chola Dynasty (at least 500 maybe 1500), Khmer 629, Ottoman Empire 623, Parthian 471, Roman Empire 503.

Events since 1989:

Collapse of the Soviet Union: 1991

Dotcom crash 1999-2000

9/11 Attacks 2001

Invasion of Iraq 2003

Great Recession 2008 -?? (You can't lose money in real estate)

Brexit/decline of the EU 2016

Election . . .

Zeno and the Stoics The school taught that virtue, the highest good, is based on knowledge, and that the wise live in harmony with the divine Reason (also identified with Fate and Providence) that governs nature, and are indifferent to the vicissitudes of fortune and to pleasure and pain.

Epicurus and the Epicureans The school rejected determinism and advocated hedonism (pleasure as the highest good), but of a restrained kind: mental pleasure was regarded more highly than physical, and the ultimate pleasure was held to be freedom from anxiety and mental pain,

Crates and the Cynics As reasoning creatures, people can gain happiness by rigorous training and by living in a way which is natural for themselves, rejecting all conventional desires for wealth, power, sex, and fame. Instead, they were to lead a [simple life](#) free from all possessions.

The Enlightenment European intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th centuries emphasizing reason and individualism rather than tradition. It was heavily influenced by 17th-century philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Newton, and its prominent exponents include Kant, Goethe, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Adam Smith.