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Nota di contenuto	1. Evolution and early human societies : Physical and cultural evolution: differences and similarities ; Causes of change in early societies ; From collecting, hunting, and fishing to agriculture -- Agrarian societies : The invention of the state ; Class status, and force: increasing inequality and making it hereditary ; Nomads, migrants, and other raiders ; Great cultures: the moral basis of agrarian civilizations ; The

problem of administration and the cycle of political decay and reconstruction ; The conservatism of village life ; The demographic cycle in agrarian societies ; The potential for rapid innovation: the importance of peripheries ; The limits of analogy: societies are not species, and cultural evolution is not biological -- The rise of the West : Europe's ecological advantages ; Religious discordance and political stalemate: the basis for western rationalization ; Science, knowledge, and exploration in China and Western Europe ; The growth of European empires and the transformation of the economy ; Overcoming the agrarian population cycle ; The invention of nationalism and its consequences ; The legitimation of commerce: the ideological basis of the Industrial Revolution -- The Modern era : Industrial cycles ; Internal and international social consequences of modernization and industrial cycles ; Economic class and political power in modern societies ; Political ideologies and protests: two centuries of revolutions ; The unending effort to adapt to modernity ; Ecological pressures persist -- Toward a theory of social change : Why change occurs ; The new or the old?: The paradox of institutional resistance to change ; Freedom or control?: The dilemma of the modern era.

Sommario/riassunto

An exploration of how societies have changed over the past five thousand years. The discussion focuses on the idea that industrial societies, despite their great success, have created a new set of recurring and unsolved problems which will serve as a major impetus for further social change.
