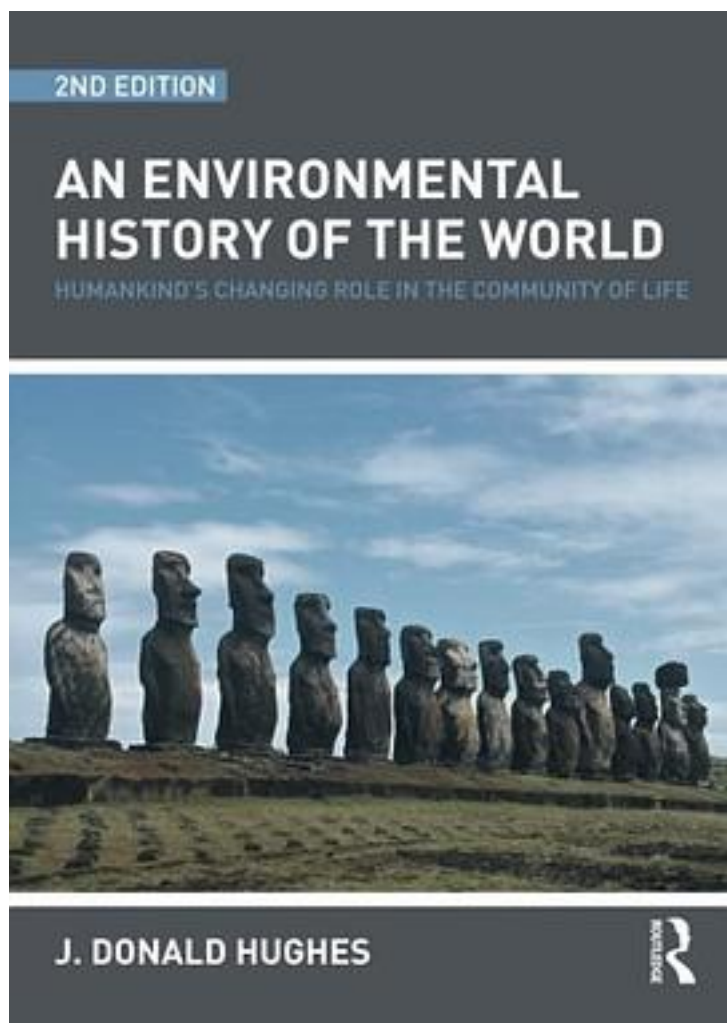


An Environmental History of the World



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This second edition of "An Environmental History of the World" continues to present a

concise history, from ancient to modern times, of the interactions between human societies and the natural environment, including the other forms of life that inhabit our planet. Throughout their evolutionary history, humans have affected the natural environment, sometimes with a promise of sustainable balance, but also in a destructive manner. This book investigates the ways in which environmental changes, often the result of human actions, have caused historical trends in human societies. This process has happened in every historical period and in every part of the inhabited earth. The book is organized into ten chapters. The main chapters follow a chronological path through the history of mankind, in relationship to ecosystems around the world. The first explains what environmental history is, and argues for its importance in understanding the present state of the world's ecological problems. Chapters two through eight form the core of the historical analysis, each concentrating on a major period of human history (pre-civilized, early civilizations, classical, medieval, early modern, early and later twentieth century, and contemporary) that has been characterized by large-scale changes in the relationship between human societies and the biosphere, and each gives several case studies that illustrate significant patterns occurring at that time. The chapters covering contemporary times discuss the physical impacts of the huge growth in population and technology, and the human responses to these problems. Our moral obligations to nature and how we can achieve a sustainable balance between technology and the environment are also considered. This revised second edition takes account of new research and the course of history containing new sections on global warming, the response of New Orleans to the hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the experience of the Dutch people in protecting their low-lying lands against the encroachments of rivers, lakes, and the North Sea. New material is also offered on the Pacific Islands, including the famous case of Easter Island. This is an original work that reaches further than other environmental histories. Rather than looking at humans and the environment as separate entities, this book places humans within the community of life. The relationship between environmental thought and actions, and their evolution, is discussed throughout. Little environmental or historical knowledge is assumed from the reader in this introduction to environmental history. We cannot reach a useful understanding of modern environmental problems without the aid of perspective provided by environmental history, with its illustrations of the ways in which past decisions helped or hindered the interaction between nature and culture. This book will be influential and timely to all interested in or researching the world in which we live.

作者介绍:

J·唐纳德·休斯 (J. Donald Hughes) 是美国丹佛大学约翰·埃文斯杰出历史学教授, 著有《什么是环境史》、《地中海地区环境史》, 以及《潘恩的劳苦: 古代希腊人和罗马人的环境问题》。同时他还是美国环境史学会和欧洲环境史学会的创始会员, 曾任《环境史》杂志编辑。

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评论

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书评

人类所有的努力，都需要一个前提，就是要考虑是否符合与自然和谐共处的法则。人类不能只考虑自身的利益，而是要考虑如何对整个生命系统有益，因为我们是这个系统的一部分，我们个人和团体的幸福和满足感都建立在这个系统之上。我们的群落，从最深层的意义上讲，是生物群落。

历史就是一连串变化的集合。如果人类及其周边环境总是一成不变，或者只是简单地重复着成长、衰退的单一循环，那么世界上就不会有历史值得去写或者值得去读。然而，幸运或者说不幸的是，在人类社会、自然界以及两者的关系中，改变都是一种必然。有时，这种变化会以自然灾害的形...

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