

## Chapter 1

### Introduction: Past for Present

#### *Chapter Objectives:*

- Introduce the utility of psychology's past to understand the diversity of psychology in its expression as a research and professional discipline.
- Contrast the approaches to history: Great Person vs. *Zeitgeist*.
- Acknowledge that the cultural context of psychology as a European intellectual development should not ignore other intellectual and cultural history, particularly Middle Eastern and Asian traditions.
- Introduction of primary and secondary resources and the general organization of the text.

#### *Chapter Summary:*

This chapter introduces the reader to a justification for the study of the history and systems of psychology. After a consideration of the approaches to historical study, focused on either notable people of the past or on the *Zeitgeist*, the emergence of psychology within western European intellectual history is reviewed. Before setting off on the study of psychology's history, some attribution of psychology within non-Western history is presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of resources, including the book's glossary.

#### *Suggested topics and issues for class discussion and/or short essay examination questions:*

1. Consider the functions of psychology within contemporary society. How many different levels of functions can you enumerate? Relate these levels of functions to the subject matter of psychology. What is the commonality?
2. Contrast the "great man" with the *zeitgeist* interpretation of historical progress and cite an example of each.
3. In the cycles of the development of new paradigms within science, according to Kuhn, what factors would be especially critical in the initiation of the quest for a new paradigm and the final settlement on a new paradigm?
4. Certain studies of psychology's history (e.g., Watson, 1971) have proposed that there are critical issues underlying psychological inquiry throughout Western history, and these issues are perhaps unsolvable. Is this assumption at odds with the goals of psychology as a unified scientific discipline?
5. The specialization of the history of psychology within the general discipline implicitly recognizes the benefits of understanding historical context. Can you think of some intellectual dangers that psychologists should be aware of when studying their own history?

6. Cite some examples of historical influences from the East on the development of psychology.
7. Discuss psychology as a Western development in light of the assumption concerning the nature of the person with Eastern philosophies and religious systems.
8. Describe Persia's role as a crossroad between Eastern and Western cultures.
9. How were good and evil portrayed in Zarathustran teachings?
10. What was the basic view of human nature taught in the Hindu *Upanishads*?
11. Cite some examples of Hindu achievements in science.
12. How is the concept of unity used in Hindu philosophies?
13. What happens to the traditional definition of psychology within Buddhist teachings?
14. What is the goal of human existence in Buddhist teachings?
15. Discuss the level of learning and scholarship of ancient China.
16. How were principles of relativity expressed in early Chinese moral and religious teachings, such as *I-Ching*?
17. What were the major psychological teachings of Confucius?
18. How did Confucius' successors change or support his teachings?
19. Describe how psychology is subsumed into guidelines of individual deportment within existing Chinese social structures.
20. Describe the traditional reliance on imported Chinese scholarship and values.