THREE THOUSAND. For us to understand our world, we must understand the past. We will never know our destiny, but if we look at the past, present and future as a continuum, our decision-making will be more far-sighted. Modern man - homo sapiens - emerged two hundred thousand years ago and left Africa ca. seventy thousand years ago, while undergoing the Paleolithic Cognitive Revolution. Early humans were hunters & gatherers, but ca. ten thousand years ago commenced the Agricultural Revolution. About two thousand BCE began the Age of Technology. Humans have lived in cities - or used wheels - for not much more than four or five thousand years. Around the time our modern calendar begins - at Christ's birth - the Roman Empire was the dominant civilisation in the West. The fall of the Roman Empire in 476 brought the Middle Ages; about fifteen hundred was the Scientific Revolution. The Renaissance (the Age of Rebirth) followed and then - from the eighteenth century - the Enlightenment (the Age of Reason). During the last two hundred years of the second millenium we had the Industrial Revolution.* At the end of the second millennium mankind entered the Age of Electronics & Communication - the Information Age. Boosted by the capacity to communicate globally and to access electronically stored knowledge instantly, we were able to bring to an end a crippling epoch of ignorance. The two thousand years since Christ had been a period of rampant feudalism, religious fundamentalism and selfish profiteering that fostered poverty and unrest, which in turn brought war and ruinous damage to the environment. In the past we have seen the rise and fall of civilisations; how then could we effect peaceful growth for our society? Let us now, in the year three thousand, look at the past millennium with its dramatic evolutionary developments.

When it became evident that biological, chemical and nuclear weapons killed indiscriminately, caused extensive environmental damage and ultimately threatened the survival of human civilisation, those weapons of mass destruction - and eventually war altogether - were outlawed. At the same time advances in electronics, medicine and genetic engineering brought a boost in human health, resulting in a median age rise. This made it necessary to abandon the wasteful production of meat-based foods. Today's vegetarian foods not only use ten times less energy to produce - they also lead people to appreciate life in its various forms and guide man to be more peaceful. Abandonment of war, vegetarianism, re-focused, unpolitical religions and fair distribution of resources were shifts that provided non-aggressive perspectives for humankind. These shifts brought about another Age of Enlightenment; furthermore, with the arrival of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Replicants (bio-engineered or bio-robotic androits), man's perspective on his position in the world changed. Alongside this dramatic new paradigm - where man was exposed to conscious entities other than homo sapiens - a key requisite for the setting up of an urgently needed, efficient world-government was global multiculturalism, which brought true universal harmony to our societies. Unrest, terrorism and war sprang from class systems with deprived, impoverished and suppressed under-classes. Those forces had to be counteracted and a classless society with a multicultural nature had to be established. Thus, once governments learnt to foster tolerance and equality for their indigenous people, minority communities and aliens amid the general public, this understanding and support paved the way to our non-violent world society that developed over the past thousand years.

*with content from SAPIENS, a brief history of humankind, by Y. N. Harari

mul·ti·cul·tur·al·ism

an ideology advocating that society should consist of - or at least allow and include - diverse cultural and religious groups, with equal status