The history of criminal law stretches back thousands of years, with various societies and civilizations developing systems to establish rules, maintain order, and punish individuals who violated those rules. Here is a broad overview of the world history of criminal law:

**Ancient Mesopotamia (c. 2100 BCE**): The Code of Hammurabi, one of the earliest known legal codes, was established in ancient Babylonia. It provided a set of laws and corresponding punishments for offenses, emphasizing the principle of "lex talionis" or "an eye for an eye."

**Ancient Egypt (c. 3000 BCE):** Egypt had a hierarchical legal system with different punishments based on social status. The "Book of the Dead" contained laws and punishments for various crimes, including theft and murder.

**Ancient Greece (c. 12th century BCE):** Greek city-states had different legal systems, but the concept of justice and the rule of law emerged. Athens is notable for its democratic legal system and the development of courts and juries.

**Ancient Rome (c. 753 BCE - 476 CE):** Roman law heavily influenced Western legal systems. The Twelve Tables, enacted in 450 BCE, established the basis for Roman criminal law. The Roman legal system emphasized the role of judges and the principle of proportionate punishment.

**Medieval Europe (5th-15th centuries**): During this period, legal systems varied across feudal societies. The concept of "trial by ordeal" was prevalent, where guilt or innocence was determined by subjecting the accused to a physically or mentally challenging test. Later, legal codes like the Canon Law and Magna Carta (1215) influenced the development of criminal law.

**Islamic Law (7th century onwards**): Sharia law, based on the teachings of the Quran and Hadith, governed criminal justice in Islamic societies. It included prescribed punishments for specific offenses and emphasized restoration and retribution.

**Renaissance and Enlightenment (14th-18th centuries**): Legal systems in Europe underwent significant changes during this period. The Enlightenment influenced the emergence of modern legal principles such as equality, due process, and the presumption of innocence.

**19th and 20th Centuries**: The emergence of nation-states and the Industrial Revolution brought significant changes to criminal law. The idea of rehabilitation gained prominence, and legal systems focused on preventive measures and imprisonment rather than solely retributive punishment.

**Contemporary Era:** Modern criminal law is characterized by a balance between individual rights and societal interests. International criminal law has evolved to address crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. Various legal systems have adopted alternative approaches such as restorative justice and diversion programs.

It's important to note that this is a general overview, and the development of criminal law has been influenced by numerous cultural, social, and political factors specific to different regions and time periods.

Criminal law in America on the other hand, has its roots in English common law, as the early American colonies were largely influenced by the legal system of England. However, over time, American criminal law evolved and developed distinct features. Here is an overview of the development of criminal law in America:

**Colonial Period (17th and 18th centuries):**

 Colonists in different regions brought with them various legal traditions, including English common law and local customs.

 Early criminal laws were based on moral and religious principles, and punishments were often severe, including public humiliation, physical chastisement, and even death.

 Important legal documents that influenced colonial criminal law include the Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776) and the Massachusetts Body of Liberties (1641).

**American Revolution and Early Republic (late 18th to early 19th centuries):**

 The American Revolution brought about a desire for greater individual rights and liberties, leading to changes in criminal law.

 Influenced by Enlightenment ideas, states began to codify their criminal laws to ensure fairness, consistency, and the protection of individual rights.

 Notable legal documents include the United States Constitution (1787) and the Bill of Rights (1791), which established fundamental principles such as due process, the right to a fair trial, and protection against cruel and unusual punishment.

**Expansion and Reform (19th century):**

 The 19th century saw significant expansion of criminal law as the United States expanded westward and faced new challenges.

 The development of federal criminal law, including offenses related to counterfeiting, piracy, and slavery, became important during this period.

 Legal reforms aimed at addressing issues such as prison conditions, juvenile justice, and the abolition of the death penalty gained momentum.

**Modern Era (20th century onwards):**

 In the 20th century, criminal law in America underwent further developments and reforms in response to changing social, cultural, and legal contexts.

 Notable developments include the expansion of federal criminal law to cover a wide range of offenses, the establishment of specialized courts (e.g., drug courts), and the introduction of sentencing guidelines.

 Civil rights movements and Supreme Court decisions, such as Miranda v. Arizona (1966) and Gideon v. Wainwright (1963), had a profound impact on criminal law, emphasizing the protection of individual rights.

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