

METAMORPHOSES IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NON-EUROPEAN WORLD

Foreword / 9

INTRODUCTION / 14

THE CRADLE OF MESOPOTAMIA: SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION / 21

Mesopotamia and the Origins of Sumerian Civilization / 22

The Riddles of Sumerology / 24

The Problem of Sumerian Ancestry / 27

Agricultural Characteristics / 29

The Birth of Urban Civilization / 31

Mythology and Religion / 33

Invention of Writing / 34

Social and Political Model / 36

Akkadian Conquest / 37

Forms of Artistic Expression / 39

Accomplishments of Sumerian Civilization / 40

IN THE VALLEY OF THE RIVER OF LIFE: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION / 43

The Origins of Civilization / 44

Peculiarities of Historical Development / 47

The World of Religion and Mythology / 51

The Role of Hieroglyphic Script / 54

The State, Social Structure and Forms of Agriculture / 56

Culture, Ethics and Science / 60

Aesthetics and the Concept of Beauty / 62

Characteristics of Artistic Forms / 65

THE GATES OF GODS: THE IDEAL OF A CIVILIZED CITY IN BABYLON / 69

The Origins of Civilization and the Role of the First Dynasty / 70

The "Dark" Period of Civilizational Development and Revival / 72

Characteristics of Culture and Arts / 73

Accomplishments of Babylonian Civilization / 75

ASSYRIAN MODEL OF MILITARIZED CIVILIZATION / 77

The Origins and Characteristics / 78

Territorial Expansion / 78

Assyria's Near-Perfect War Machine / 79

Peculiarities of Economic, Political and Social Structure / 81

Culture and Arts / 83

PERSIAN-ANCIENT IRANIC CIVILIZATION / 85

Genesis of Civilization / 86

Achaemenids as the First Persian Empire / 88

Parthian Arsacids as the First Eastern Iranic Empire / 93

Sasanids – the Second Persian Empire / 95

Characteristics of Persian Artistic Tradition / 100

Challenges of Islamization and Traces of Persian Civilizational Influence / 103

CIVILIZATIONAL PHENOMENON OF THE JEWS / 105

Uniqueness of a Non-State and Non-Territorial Civilization / 106

A Glimpse on Jewish Civilization Studies / 110

The Origins of Civilization / 111

Judaism and Its Relationships with Other Religions / 115

Legal and Religious Principles of Self-Rule / 120
 Lifestyle and Labor Activities / 124
 Education and Learning / 126
 Ethic and Aesthetic Attitudes / 128
 Antiquity: Destruction of the Temple and Transformation of Judaism / 131
 Challenges in the Early Medieval Era / 136
 Jews in the Arab-Muslim Civilizational Space / 139
 The Rise of Jewish Translators and Thinkers in Spain / 143
 Jewish Status in Other Countries of Christian Europe / 148
 Summing-up / 152

THE RIDDLES OF INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION / 155

The Origins / 156
 The Character of Indus Valley Civilization / 157
 Political and Societal Structure / 160
 Characteristics of Urban Culture / 162
 Forms of Agriculture / 163
 Crafts and Trade / 165
 Works of Art / 166
 Ecological Crisis and Civilization's Collapse / 168

UNITY IN DIVERSITY: INDIAN CIVILIZATION / 171

Civilization's Origins and Characteristics / 172
 The Castes and Indian Social Structure / 176
 Vedic Period / 178
 Classical Period / 182
 The Flourishing of Buddhism and Jainism / 185
 Architecture and Sculpture of the Classical Period / 190
 The Rise of Culture during the Gupta Period / 196
 Hinduism and the Early Middle Ages / 198
 Kashmir Renaissance and Diffusion of Tantrism / 209
 Jain Cultural Tradition / 215
 Cultural Challenges of Islamization / 217
 The Rise of Mughal Culture / 221
 Contribution of Indian Philosophy and Science to the History of Civilization / 226

CELESTIAL EMPIRE: CHINESE CIVILIZATIONAL WORLD / 231

The Birth of Civilization / 232
 The "Middle Kingdom", Its Hegemonic Ambitions, and the Tribute System / 236
 Relationships with Other Civilizational Worlds / 238
 The Impact of Confucianism, Daoism and Chan Ideas / 242
 The Power of Tradition / 249
 The Script and *wen* Culture / 252
 The System of Classical Education and Principles of Elite Formation / 255
 Characteristics of Chinese Aesthetics and Artistic Tradition / 260
 Peculiarities of Economy / 266
 Accomplishments of Chinese Science / 269
 The Golden Age of Tang Culture / 275
 Song Neo-Confucianism and Peculiarities of Chinese Renaissance Culture / 278
 Challenges of the Yuan Period / 281
 Revival of Traditions in the Ming Period / 284
 Manchu Qing Dynasty and the Sunset of the Empire / 289

THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM: KOREA'S SEARCH FOR CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY / 293

Characteristics of Korean Civilization / 294
 Early History and the Process of Korea's Unification / 296

Joseon Dynasty: from "Little China" to Separate Empire / 300
Peculiarities of Cultural Development / 302
Features of Traditional Urbanism and Architecture / 304
Characteristics of Artistic Culture / 306

THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN: JAPANESE CIVILIZATION / 309

Determining Factors of Japanese Civilizational Characteristics / 310
Problems of Periodization / 313
Relationships with Other Civilizations / 314
Shintoism and the Origins of Japanese Civilization / 316
Buddhist Culture of the Asuka Period / 319
The Cultural Ascent in the Nara Period / 322
Aestheticism of the Heian Period / 324
The Growth of Zen-Buddhist Influence in the Kamakura Period / 329
Religious Syncretism / 333
Challenges of the Muromachi Period / 335
Political Unification and Features of Japanese Renaissance / 338
Prerequisites for Modernity in the Edo Period / 345

CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY PROBLEM OF THE EURASIAN NOMADS / 351

Common Features of Early Nomadic Culture in Eurasia / 353
Economic, Social and Political Organization / 353
Technological Achievements and Artistic Expression / 355
Relationships with Sedentary Periphery / 356
Prerequisites for the Eurasian Nomadic Empire in Scythian Culture / 357
Xiongnu as Asia's First Nomadic Great Power / 361
The Role of Turkic Tribes in Unifying the Eurasian Steppe / 364
Mongol Empire as the Apex of Nomadic Power / 368
The Sunset of the Eurasian Nomads / 376

ISLAMIC, OR ARAB-MUSLIM CIVILIZATION / 381

The Research Conundrum of the Arab-Muslim Civilization / 382
Characteristics of Civilization / 387
Expansion of Islam and Religious Tolerance / 396
Prerequisites for the Umayyad Cultural Ascent / 402
Abbasid and Fatimid Golden Age / 404
The Rise of New Empires / 412
The Period of Ottoman Cultural Predominance / 414
The Sunset of Classical Islamic Civilization / 416
Features of Cultural Development / 419
Scientific Accomplishments / 423
Urbanism and Architecture / 433
Historical Mission of Islamic Civilization / 441

SUBSAHARAN AFRICA'S CIVILIZATIONAL CENTRES / 445

The Origins of African Studies / 446
Africa's Civilizational World and the Power of Stereotypes / 452
Geographical and Cultural Peculiarities of the African Continent / 456
Forms of Social Organization / 459

NORTHEAST AFRICA / 460

Development of Nubian Civilization and Relationships with Egypt / 460
Civilizational Centre of Meroe / 463
Ethiopian, or Axumite Civilization / 465

WESTERN AFRICA / 470

Civilizational Belt of the Sahel / 470

The Role of Trans-Saharan Trade / 472
 The Process of Sahel's Islamization / 474
 Emergence of the First Wagadou (Ghana) Empire / 477
 The Mali Empire / 480
 Timbuktu's Phenomenon of Academic City / 482
 The Songhai Empire and Decline of the Sahel States / 486
 Forest Kingdoms / 487

AFRICA SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR / 491

Summing-up / 495

THE "NEW" WORLD OF MESOAMERICAN CIVILIZATIONS / 497

Discovery of the New World's Civilizations / 498
 The Rudiments of Civilization in Mesoamerica / 503
 Olmec Civilization and Its Influence on Mesoamerica / 505
 Zapotec Culture and Monte Alban / 509
 Teotihuacan as the Cradle of Civilization / 511
 Cultural Genius of Maya Civilization / 516
 The Riddles of the Toltec Empire / 526
 The Flourishing and Collapse of the Aztec Empire / 528

ANDEAN DIVERSITY OF CIVILIZATIONAL EXPRESSION / 535

The Seeds of America's First Civilization in Norte Chico Culture / 537
 The Cult of Chavin and Its Diffusion / 538
 The Riddles of Nazca Culture / 539
 Achievements of the Moche Culture / 540
 First Claimants for Imperial Status: Tiwanaku and Wari / 541
 Chimú – Continuation of Moche Traditions / 542
 Inca Empire and Its Collapse / 544
 Summing-up / 547

CIVILIZATIONAL PECULIARITIES OF OCEANIA / 549

AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL TREASURY / 550

LAPITA AS EARLY CENTRE OF OCEANIAN CULTURE / 553

MELANESIA / 554

New Guinea / 555

Insular Melanesia / 556

MICRONESIA / 558

POLYNESIA / 559

Western Polynesia / 560

Eastern Polynesia / 561

Southern Polynesia – New Zealand / 563

CONCLUSIONS / 565

Summary / 573

Literature / 575

Index of Personal Names / 592

Table of Contents in French / 596

Table of Contents in English / 600

Table of Contents in Russian / 604