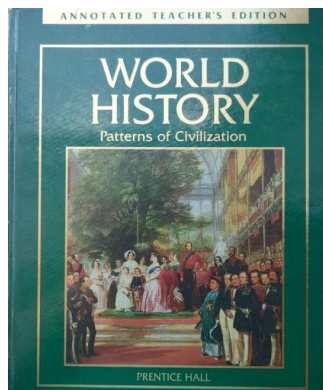


Рецензія на: Бірс, Ф. Бертон. *Всесвітня історія: Моделі цивілізацій*. (Нью Джерсі: Прентис Гол, 1990), 904. ISBN 10:0139686452, ISBN 13:9780139686450

The Review of: Beers, F. Burton. *World History: Patterns of Civilizations*. (New Jersey: Prentice Hal, 1990), 904. ISBN 10:0139686452, ISBN 13:9780139686450



In his book *World History: Patterns of Civilization* Burton F. Beers, Professor of History at North Carolina State University, presents a study and overview of the development of various human civilizations in chronological order, starting from the most ancient civilizations to the end of the 20th century. It is interesting that the author follows a simultaneous approach to the description of the development of civilizations, giving the reader the opportunity to draw appropriate conclusions and comparisons. In addition, the author characterizes civilizations from the point of view of certain models that were formed during the development of mankind. The characteristics of the foundations of civilization are based on several milestones that contribute to the formation of the appropriate model of each civilization. These milestones include the influence of geography on culture, economic development, political structure, the development of science and technology, contacts between cultures, and the level of perception of creativity within a single society. The author of the publication presents his work as the one that covers continuous history, giving special importance to the use of civilizational heritage by various patterns of civilizations from the earliest times till contemporary ones.

Burton F. Beers also presents his work as an academic textbook. The book has more than 900 pages and can be used for scientific research as well. The main text of the publication consists of 10 units and 37 chapters, each of which includes a corresponding period of history and models of civilization that developed during this period.

The book also contains peculiarities that have a special historical weight and appeal. These include additional materials placed in each section under the name of Features. Here the author tells stories about people who were especially distinguished in the process building patterns of civilizations, this feature is called Builders and Shapers¹. In the following Features, he presents important works written by contemporaries under the general name Through Their Eyes, another Features are called Everyday Life and Economics in History. One of the Features is comparative and is called

¹ Burton F. Beers, *World History: Patterns of Civilizations*. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), XVII

Then and Now, and the last of such features is titled Geography in History. These peculiarities provide an opportunity to better understand the historical process of creating models of civilizations and the formation of periodization. The publication is filled with a large number of maps, illustrations, charts, and graphs.

Due to the fact that Beers' *World History: Patterns of Civilizations* is also an academic textbook, the author prepared a number of modules and quizzes for each unit and chapter. All auxiliary components of the book are convenient supplements to the main text and make it possible to better distinguish the epochs of the historical development and understand the ideas that the author wants to convey to his readers.

The text of the *World History: Patterns of Civilizations* is written in a clean, not too complicated language that enables readers to gain interest in the material and improve their understanding of world history. Each chapter focuses on those elements of human development that are important for the perception of both students and other readers of the academic world. The book makes it possible to analyze historical problems, to compare the development of civilization, to classify information, to understand historical maps, and charts, to be able to see the place of relevant historical events in time, to make generalizations about the development of civilizational models, to see a series of historical events in chronological order, while at the same time understanding the exclusivity of the main events.

It is interesting that the author's periodization, being tied to civilizational patterns, makes it possible to create a new classification of the development of human civilizations and at the same time a new periodization. The patterns that the author proposes to study vary from traditional and innovative to those that introduce new approaches to certain periods of history. For instance, Chapter 6 introduces the concept of the Age of Revolutions, which includes, among other things, the scientific revolution, a number of social revolutions, war, and the main revolutionary events that affected the development of mankind, such as the French revolution, the Civil war in England and the revolutions of 1848². Another innovative feature of the author's history periodization are his civilizational milestones. One of them, according to which the author proposes to differentiate models of civilization, is creative thinking, that helps bolster the comprehensiveness of a society.

The seventh unit of this edition also offers a new approach to understanding historical development. The section is titled the Dawn of the Industrial Era and includes an overview of not only the period of industrialization or the industrial revolution within Western civilization, but also the exchange of ideas as well as the process of expanding thoughts, theories and inventions in different parts of the world³. In his subdivisions, Burton F. Beers reviews the development of civilization from the point of view of the oppositional interaction. In particular, this applies to the sixth unit, the Age of Revolutions, which also characterizes the reaction in some society parts and

² Burton F. Beers, *World History: Patterns of Civilizations*, 398.

³ *Ibidem*, 470.

certain countries after revolutions occurred, as well as to the ninth unit, titled World War and Peace⁴, which also includes an understanding of world war and peace as two interdependent phenomena.

In the book there is another innovative concept of periodization that applies to modern times. The author indicates the last decades of human development as a new age of great discoveries⁵, understanding this time as a continuous flow of new inventions that significantly affect not only the economic, but also the political and cultural pattern of modern civilization.

On the other hand, the author of the publication makes a number of fundamental misinterpretations and omissions in those sections that relate to the historical development of Ukrainian lands, the Moscow principality and Eastern Europe in general. These oversights are caused by the use of historical studies of the Soviet or even the old imperial Russian narratives. Using a historical fact, the author does not distance himself from the ideological side of Soviet and Russian publications.

The text demonstrates total use of Russian transliteration terminology in many parts that relate to the history of Eastern Europe. In addition, the author does not distinguish the differences in civilizational patterns during the period of the establishment of Kyivan Ruthenia and that of later Russia, calling the Kyivan state of the time of Volodymyr the Great “Kievan Russia”⁶. Furthermore, in the same chapter the text holds a term “Southern Russia” concerning Ukraine. This title is a part of Russian imperial discourse and was used in 19th century as a means to russificate Ukrainians, the fact that is covered in the book⁷. Moreover, in paragraph about the Holodomor, Professor Beers indicates Ukraine as the “cradle of Russian civilization”⁸ thus adding more Russian Empire’s narrative to the text. Therefore, this academic edition completely lacks the historical term of Ruthenia (Rus), which existed to denote a large number of lands in Eastern Europe for almost 1000 years.

In consequence, it can be observed that the author used only works published in Russia, communist Poland and other eastern European countries that were under Russian or Communist Rule, despite the fact that in the United States of America there is open access to a large number of publications on the history of Ukraine and Eastern Europe that were published by the authors of the Ukrainian diaspora.

In addition, having established a number of milestones that are the main features of creating a pattern of civilization, the author in some cases ignores some of these milestones. In particular, in the section that concerns the age of nationalism, Professor Beers completely omits the national movements of peoples who lived under the rule of empires. The same thing happens when the author describes the First World War and the revolution in Russia, completely ignoring the national states that were formed

⁴ Burton F. Beers, *World History: Patterns of Civilizations*, 620.

⁵ *Ibidem*, 836.

⁶ *Ibidem*, 228.

⁷ *Ibidem*, 544–545.

⁸ *Ibidem*, 675.

on the ruins of the empires. In this way, precisely those phenomena that helped shape the model of civilization in the interwar period and during the Second World War were omitted.

Thus, *World History: Patterns of Civilizations* by Burton F. Beers, can be recommended for the use in universities and institutes as a textbook for the study of world history as well as a research source but only with clarifications that would correct the indicated misinterpretations and one-sided approaches of the author in those sections related to the history of Ukraine and Eastern Europe.

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