



The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation

John M. Hobson

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John Hobson challenges the ethnocentric bias of mainstream accounts of the Rise of the West. It is often assumed that since Ancient Greek times Europeans have pioneered their own development, and that the East has been a passive by-stander in the story of progressive world history. Hobson argues that there were two processes that enabled the Rise of the 'Oriental West'. First, each major developmental turning point in Europe was informed in large part by the assimilation of Eastern inventions (e.g. ideas, technologies and institutions) which diffused from the more advanced East across the Eastern-led global economy between 500–1800. Second, the construction of European identity after 1453 led to imperialism, through which Europeans appropriated many Eastern resources (land, labour and markets). Hobson's book thus propels the hitherto marginalised Eastern peoples to the forefront of the story of progress in world history.

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