

Book Reviews

Les mondes de l'océan Indien

[The Worlds of the Indian Ocean]

By Philippe BEAUJARD

2 Vols. Paris: Armand Colin, 2012. Vol. 1, 624 pp.; Vol. 2, 799 pp.

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Doing justice to two substantial volumes in a review is difficult. As Africanist Beaujard's perspective on the Indian Ocean world is particularly welcome; more so as the African world(s) usually remain under-represented in Indian Ocean studies.

For a long time now, Beaujard has argued for an early globalization in the Indian Ocean world, taking not only Arabia or Asia as examples, but also the North and East African coasts, thereby integrating these regions into Indian Ocean studies. Beaujard delineates what he calls the Afro-Eurasian world-system (Philippe Beaujard, "The Indian Ocean in Eurasian and African World-Systems before the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of World History* 16,

no. 4 [2005], pp. 411-465), and not the more usual Eurasian world-system (Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989]; A.G. Frank, *ReORIENT: Global Economy in the Asian Age* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998]).

Significantly, as the title suggests, Beaujard discerns various worlds in his Indian Ocean. Volume 1 is subtitled 'From the Formation of the State to the First Afro-Eurasian World System: 4000 BCE to 6th century CE,' while volume 2 is about 'The Indian Ocean at the Heart of Globalizations of the Ancient World: 7th-15th centuries.' Note again, Beaujard's emphasis on multiple globalizations, suggesting not one world-system at work but perhaps several.

Beaujard's strength lies in underlining the various worlds of the Afro-Eurasian world-system that end in the 15th century. To do this he adopts a highly schematic model whereby the Afro-Eurasian world-system is represented in 13 special maps in the two volumes. Through these maps Beaujard shows multiple shifting cores in the system from 3100 BCE to the 15th century.

Volume 1 contains maps 1.12 to 1.16 and 2.4 to 2.6 dating from 3100 BCE until the 3rd century CE. These show cores centering on Egypt, Sumer and West Asia during the period 3100 BCE-1950 BCE (maps 1.12-1.14) and thereafter hinging on Egypt, Babylon and Assyria c. 1950 BCE-1200 BCE (maps 1.14-1.16). Between 750 BCE and 1st century CE an interesting mutation occurs in the system and cores now re-position themselves on North India and China with zones of interaction stretching to the Mediterranean and North Africa (maps 2.4 and 2.5). Map 2.6 (1st-3rd century CE) retains the new geographic focus, but parts of peninsular India are now added to the model.

Volume 2 contains maps 3.2, 4.1, 4.3 and 5.1. Between the 7th and 9th centuries CE (map 3.2) cores break up. New cores appear in Cordoba and Byzantium, the Persian Gulf/Red Sea region coalesces into a unified core, India splits into 4 regional cores (east, west, north, and south) and China retains its hegemonic status. A general shrinking is observable in the 11th century (map 4.1): other than China all seem to lose vitality; nevertheless a new core emerges

centered on Fatimid Cairo. This picture contradicts the thesis of the 11th century trade revolution in the Indian Ocean elaborated by Chaudhuri who talked of the Fatimids and the Songs at two ends of the Indian Ocean initiating the trade revolution, Kulke adding the Cholas of India to the list. (K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985]; Hermann Kulke, “Rivalry and Competition in the Bay of Bengal and Its Bearing on Indian Ocean Studies,” in *Commerce and Culture in the Bay of Bengal 1500-1800*, ed. Om Prakash and Denys Lombard [New Delhi: Manohar/ICHR, 1999], pp. 17-35; Hermann Kulke, “The Naval Expeditions of the Cholas in the Context of Asian History,” in *Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa: Reflections on the Chola Naval Expeditions to Southeast Asia*, ed. Hermann Kulke, K. Kesavapany and Vijay Sakhuja [Singapore, ISEAS, 2009], pp. 1-19).

Map 4.3, detailing the system in the 13th and 14th centuries, shows a change: the West Asian core declines, South Asia recovers, while the Chinese core enlarges. Finally in map 5.1 (fifteenth century), the West Asian core cedes way to two smaller cores centered on Istanbul and Cairo, thereby presaging the decline of Africa. In the same map, India fragments into regional cores, but China still looms large. I also refer the reader to Map Ep.1 detailing the Asiatic, African and European world-systems from 3500 BCE until 1750, where the Euro-Asiatic and African system occupies the largest space and the longest time frame. A problem I faced was that none of the maps are paginated so hunting for them was an immense and time-consuming task. The publisher should rectify this in forthcoming editions.

Since it is not possible to discuss, for reasons of space, Beaujard’s rich argument, supplemented with lavish images and additional maps whereby far-flung regions of the Eurasian world interact with the African systems, I will concentrate on Beaujard’s notion of the world-system and its divergences from the Wallerstein model.

First, Wallerstein spoke of a modern world-system emerging from European mercantilism, while Beaujard’s world-systems deal

with antiquity and early history.

Second, Beaujard's cores are city-centric unlike Wallerstein's largely regional model (Europe); moreover Beaujard's cores lie in various parts of the Asiatic/Indian Ocean world and not in Europe. Beaujard notes elsewhere: "Cities are sited at the nodes of the networks; they direct production and exchange according to a hierarchical structure. Within a given core or periphery, there exists a further hierarchical division between each metropolis and its dependent zones. Urban points linked by long- distance trade create a string of conglomerations or relay points—'archipelagos of towns' to use Braudel's delightful phrase. . ." (Beaujard, 2005, p. 414).

Third, Beaujard's cores are not only city-centric: they are often political entities, unlike Wallerstein's economic models: Cordoba, Cairo, Istanbul, Vijayanagara. In this respect Beaujard is closer to Braudel (*Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Centuries*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 3 vols. [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979]).

Fourth, and this is perhaps very important, Beaujard follows Edgar Morin's world-system scheme where "(1) a system represents a 'complex unit and the complex of relations between the whole and its parts,' (2) a system is made up of cumulative *interactions*, (3) which constitute the *organization* of the system. The character of this organization is, in essence, both complex and dynamic. The system generates order and disorder, unity and diversity. Taking into account these general characteristics of all systems and their implications can aid the interpretation of the available historical data for the Eurasian and African zone. The systemic approach provides a new 'logic,' and leads to a new understanding of world history" (Beaujard, 2005, pp. 412-413). Beaujard's scheme is more flexible as it allows for multiple cores in a single temporal scheme.

What can the reader expect from this magisterial study? From a careful reading of the synthesis offered by Beaujard we gain not only an insight into the functioning of the system, but according to the reader's spatial preference, we see the various networks generated within a specific space at a particular moment in time. These two volumes generate many questions and as such are valuable ad-

ditions not only to world history but also to scholarly knowledge in general.

Cuisine and Empire: Cooking in World History

By Rachel LAUDAN

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Laudan's work on the world history of cooking is not only a thought provoking book on the relations between acts of ruling and eating, but also a welcome addition to the literature of macro-leveled cultural history. Even with growing interest in world history, there are still few scholarly works on daily practices which all humans share regardless of their ethnicity, nationality, and gender. Eating is one of the many inevitable aspects of human life, but has been hardly discussed by historians. In this book, Laudan presents to us a rare scholarly treatise on the long-term historical evolution of culinary practice and philosophy. In particular, the book persuasively identifies the influences of multi-ethnic dominions over how and what to eat. The author often links the formation of new cuisines to the effects of "new culinary philosophies" which "came from new ideas about politics and economics, religion, the human body, and the environment" (p. 6). This approach remains central throughout the book, giving us an intriguing account that the kitchen is a space where politics, philosophies, and religions are processed for digestion.

The strength of the book is its full coverage of culinary history from 20,000 BCE to present. Although it sounds ambitious to write