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Review: The Year 1000. When Explorers Connected the World and Globalization Began

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Abstract

The analysis of The World in the Year 1000 is of particular importance in the study of world history, as it offers a new approach to the process of globalization, one that is fundamentally different from the narratives established in traditional Western historiography. The dominant narrative links the beginning of globalization to the European voyages of the fifteenth century and believes that the recognition and connection of continents is the product of the era of geographical discoveries. However, Valerie Hansen, in the introduction to her book, criticizes this Eurocentric view and argues that communication networks between continents had formed much earlier and that the year 1000 is one of the most critical turning points in these early connections. During this period, the world was experiencing a primitive but powerful form of globalization economically, culturally, and technologically. The extensive exchange of goods, intercontinental migrations, long-distance Viking voyages, the expansion of Indian Ocean trade, and the central role of civilizations such as Song China (960–1276 CE) and the Islamic world all suggest that some regions have long been participants in an emerging world system. Drawing on archaeological evidence, scattered textual sources, and interdisciplinary analysis, Hansen attempts to show that this period was not merely an era of "pre-globalization" but a genuine phase of polycentric globalization. This article examines Hansen's book to examine the theoretical and historiographical dimensions of this claim.

Keywords: world history, Islamic Civilization, Chinese civilization, Latin American civilization, African civilization.

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