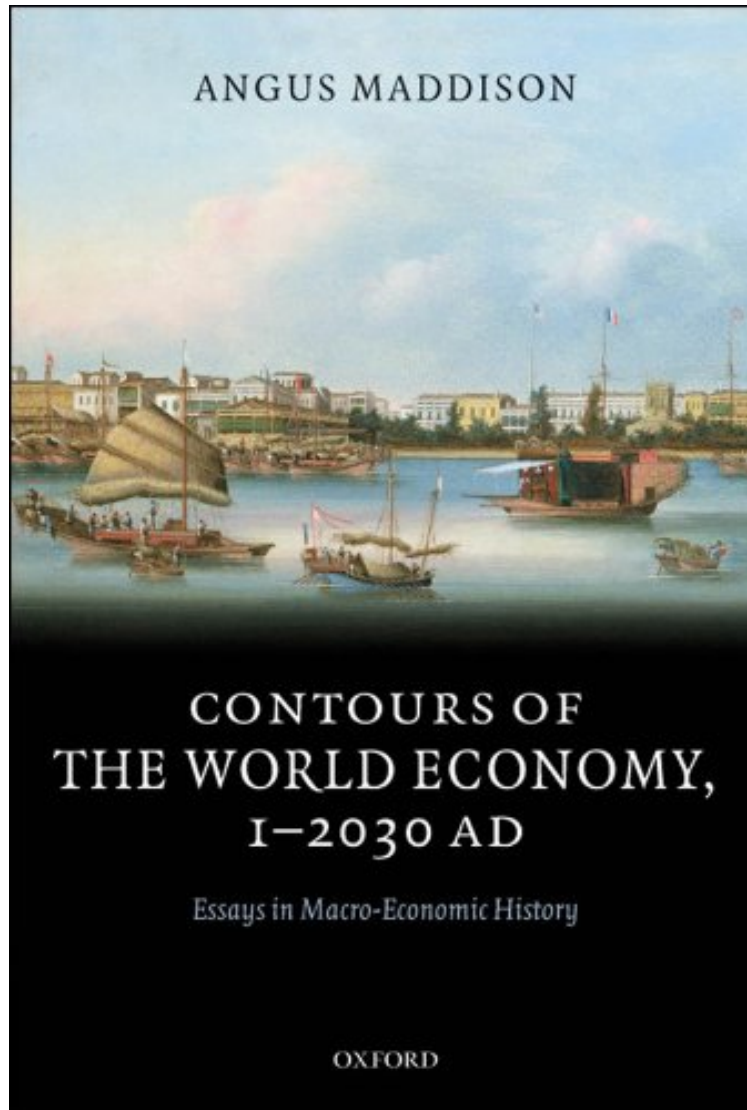


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# Contours of the World Economy 1-2030 AD: Essays in Macro-Economic History

*Angus Maddison*

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**Angus Maddison : Contours of the World Economy 1-2030 AD: Essays in Macro-Economic History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Contours of the World Economy 1-2030 AD: Essays in Macro-Economic History:

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a number of essays, which are kind of free-standing and not so coherent. So don't buy this book for a narrative of the world economy during the last 2,000 years. Buy the book for its statistics. If you don't need the statistics, don't buy the book. 2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. *Contours of the World Economy 1-2030 AD: Essays in Macroeconomic History* By Angus Maddison. Excellent review of what happened to the economy along the history. It's a classic book and all economists should read it to understand better the economy nowadays. 29 of 30 people found the following review helpful. Useful; 3.5 Stars By R. Albin. A useful set of essays from the distinguished economic historian Angus Maddison. The best parts of this book are the numerous data tables and charts examining various aspects of economic history. Included are essays on the demography and economy of the Roman empire, the revival of the Western European economy in the age of mercantile capitalism, the effects of expanding trade with Europe on Asia, Africa, and the Western Hemisphere, an assessment of the sources of the industrial revolution, an essay on pioneers in demography and accounting for national economic activity, and some projections for the future. Each essay, except the one on the early British pioneers of demography and national economic accounting, are essentially a concise text built around presentation of data on demography, economic activity, trade, etc. A great deal of this data is quite valuable. Estimates of population and trade in the Roman empire, the magnitude of the African slave trades across the Atlantic and to the Moslem world, the amount of silver transferred from Europe (originally from the Western Hemisphere), and many other important features of world economic history are included. These datasets are fascinating reading. The accompanying texts are a bit uneven. Generally, these are solid descriptions of major trends and facts but Maddison is not always a careful writer and some of his facts are wrong. The description of the Roman army, for example, is the army of the late Republic and early Principate, not the army of the later Roman Empire. Another example would be his underestimate of the number of deaths associated with the failure of the coup attempt in mid-1960s Indonesia. In some of his discussions of controversial issues, such as the origins of the industrial revolution, I'm not sure he is fair to some of the people he criticizes and he may exaggerate the differences between western Europe and China in some respects. His discussion of global warming is relatively superficial and he gives too much weight to skepticism about IPCC estimates of CO2 release and its probable effects. In fact, these estimates have been generally conservative underestimates. For a recent concise overview of this topic, see the recent article by James McCarthy in *Science* and for a good discussion of the economics, see the recent book by Nicholas Stern.

This book seeks to identify the forces which explain how and why some parts of the world have grown rich and others have lagged behind. Encompassing 2000 years of history, part 1 begins with the Roman Empire and explores the key factors that have influenced economic development in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe. Part 2 covers the development of macroeconomic tools of analysis from the 17th century to the present. Part 3 looks to the future and considers what the shape of the world economy might be in 2030. Combining both the close quantitative analysis for which Professor Maddison is famous with a more qualitative approach that takes into account the complexity of the forces at work, this book provides students and all interested readers with a totally fascinating overview of world economic history. Professor Maddison has the unique ability to synthesise vast amounts of information into a clear narrative flow that entertains as well as informs, making this text an invaluable resource for all students and scholars, and anyone interested in trying to understand why some parts of the World are so much richer than others.

"The scope of the book is sweeping and ambitious.... Recommended."--CHOICE About the Author Angus Maddison is Emeritus Professor of Economic Sociology at the University of Groningen. Known for his pioneering work in the field of the quantification of economic growth in the global and historic perspective, Professor Maddison has enjoyed a varied career. He has held a number of positions at St. Andrews University, Johns Hopkins University, McGill University, the OECD, and Harvard University. He has also acted as a policy advisor for a number of institutions and advised the governments of Ghana and Pakistan. Prof. Maddison was recently awarded the title of Commander in the Order of Orange-Nassau in the Netherlands.