

andere door Brown zelf, geminimaliseerd. In een interview uit 2007 stelt Newsome zelf de vraag: 'Why is Sister Betty Newsome being kept a secret?'<sup>1</sup> Een vergeten vrouw avant la lettre.

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### Noot

1 <https://www.villagevoice.com/2007/12/18/its-a-womans-world/>, geconsulteerd op 14 mei 2017.

Jürgen Kocka and Marcel van der Linden (Eds), *Capitalism. The Reemergence of an Historical Concept*. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016). 296 p. ISBN 9781474271042.

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Among the many consequences of the global economic crisis that erupted in 2007-2008 there is one of significant importance to the community of historians and social scientists: a renovated interest in the history of capitalism. The topic has attracted the attention of many scholars and students in recent years, as shown by a blossoming of undergraduate and graduate courses, doctoral dissertations, academic publications, and even mainstream media pieces devoted to the subject.<sup>1</sup> Many important books have already been published, reflecting the vitality of the field: some recent examples are *The Cambridge History of Capitalism*, edited by Larry Neal and Jeffrey Williamson (2014), Sven Beckert's *Empire of Cotton. A Global History* (2014), and of course Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the twenty-first century*. Professors Jürgen Kocka and Marcel van der Linden had made an important contribution to this increasing body of literature with their *Capitalism. The Reemergence of an Historical Concept*, published by Bloomsbury Academic in 2016. The volume brings together contributions by eleven scholars from European and American universities and provides a collection of writings that show the state of the art of this field of research, as well as the broad variety of topics covered by it. At the same time, the contributions of the editors – and also the article by Sven Beckert – intend to provide a more general assessment of the theoretical problems posed by a history of capitalism.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first one is a short but significant theoretical introduction by Jürgen Kocka, that presents the topics discussed in the following sections and undertakes the complex issue of defining 'capitalism'. To do so, Kocka acknowledges a variety of definitions, pointing the differences be-

tween the Marxist and the Weberian traditions, and goes on to propose a 'working definition' of capitalism that includes three aspects: the right of individual and collective actors to make economic decisions in a 'relatively autonomous and decentralized way', the centrality of markets and 'commodification of resources and products', including the commodification of labor, and the key role played by capital accumulation with the perspective of innovation, growth and the pursuit of profit. According to Kocka, this definition 'should be understood as an ideal type' that allows to see capitalism as a historical process with 'discontinuous development and uneven distribution over space and time' (pp. 4-5).

Such developments and historical peculiarities are discussed in the second and longest section of the volume, including essays by Youssef Cassis, Andrea Komlosy, Victoria de Grazia, Patrick Fridenson, Harold James, Andreas Eckert, and Immanuel Wallerstein. They deal with different 'aspects and dimensions' of capitalism, ranging a wide diversity of topics, from a historiographical assessment of the studies of economic and financial crises to a discussion about the development of 'hyper-consumerism' in recent decades. As pointed out by Gareth Austin in his comments, the studies focus mostly on capitalism 'in its traditional heartlands, Western Europe and the United States' (p. 209), although De Grazia and Eckert include China and Africa into the lens. The question remains about which is the state of the art, with regards to the history of capitalism, in the so called Global South, as the volume lacks contributions from scholars working in Latin American, African, and Asian institutions.

The third and last section comprises three articles – written by Gareth Austin, Sven Beckert and Marcel van der Linden – devoted to make comments and remarks about the previous essays and to offer a general overview of the main conceptual questions at stake. All three of them not only acknowledge the reemergence of capitalism in recent historiography but also celebrate this new trend as a positive contribution to historical and social research. Beckert points out some important themes for further research in the field, such as new studies on labor and the countryside but also on the state and the political dimensions of the history of capitalism. Van der Linden closes the book with some conceptual 'final thoughts' that draw upon Kocka's introductory remarks. He focuses on two main interpretations of capitalism which were 'often at loggerheads with each other': one rooted in the writings of Adam Smith, according to which capitalism exists in any system oriented to production for sale in a market for profit, the other one based in the Marxist tradition, according to which capitalism exists not only when the goods and services created by the system take the form of commodities, but also when the inputs (including labor) are commodified. Van der Linden claims that Max Weber, though closer to the Smithian tradition, 'built a bridge between the two approaches', and argues that the working definition provided by Kocka is

rooted in ‘this Weberian-Marxian tradition’ (p. 255-256). He also points out that the question of periodization, central to determine the scope of the historiography of capitalism and its future perspectives, is closely related to the problem of defining what is understood as capitalism.

Overall, the volume represents an important contribution to what is certainly a booming area of research. Despite its heterogeneity, the different essays discuss a wide range of topics and show the diversity and richness of the field. With the introductory and final sections, the editors also succeed in posing theoretical challenges that will hopefully encourage more scholars, from different parts of the world, to engage in a global discussion of capitalism, its history and its future. The book, in sum, shows that the editors have a strong point when they make the case for the “advantages in using capitalism as an analytical concept in historical studies” (p. 6).

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### Noot

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Schuessler, ‘In History Departments, It’s Up With Capitalism’, *The New York Times*, April 6, 2013.

Bart Delbroek. *In de put. De arbeidsmarkt voor mijnwerkers in Belgisch-Limburg, 1900-1966*. [Maaslandse Monografieën, 79.] (Hilversum: Verloren, 2016). 245 p. (Proefschrift Vrije Universiteit Brussel 2011) ISBN 9789087045500.

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Eén van de meest spectaculaire voorbeelden van de transformatie van een agrarische naar een industriële maatschappij voltrekt zich in de eerste decennia van de twintigste eeuw in Limburg met de inplanting van een volledig nieuwe sector die niet of nauwelijks ingebed is in de bestaande maatschappelijke structuren. Nieuwe werkgevers implementeren er hun eigen maatschappelijk model – de maakbare samenleving zo men wil – dat stoelt op autoritaire gezagsverhoudingen en een sterke hiërarchie. Ze stuiten hierbij wel op het probleem van een ‘falende’ arbeidsmarkt. Het is dit sleutelement, dat Bart Delbroek nader onderzoekt in zijn proefschrift dat hij in 2011 aan de Vrije Universiteit Brussel verdedigde. Hij plaatst de betrokken partijen, de mijnpatroons en de arbeidskrachten in een ‘arena’ en heeft hierbij aandacht voor machts- en afhankelijkheidsrelaties. Bijzonder is dat het accent ligt op de materiële organisatie van het werk en het dagelijkse gedrag