

conomic system and the resulting inequalities which are realized in the lives of the Greyhound riders, but this theme is never fully developed. She refers to topics like globalization, the healthcare industry, industries that prey on poor consumers, and crack-downs on unions, but "referring" is the key word. She mentions these issues but never fully delves into their impact and rarely provides evidence to support her claims. For example, her assessment of the problems of Social Security, although accurate, is a surface-level discussion with a citation of one website to ground her argument. Referencing one source would not pass muster in most undergraduate classes. The fact that there are only three pages of notes for the entire text demonstrates that her lack of connection to relevant literature was not isolated to her coverage of Social Security.

These deficiencies make it impossible for me to recommend the book to a scholarly audience. This is a difficult statement to make, because Weston's earlier work has positively and significantly impacted my scholarship. At times *Traveling Light* reads like a novel, a soap-box speech, and occasionally a disjointed journal. Nevertheless, how does it read like a strong piece of research. I found her stories engaging and the text an enjoyable read, but more appropriate for a general audience than for use in the classroom or as a significant contribution to the research on poverty.

THEORY AND METHODS

The Undevelopment of Capitalism: Sectors and Markets in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany, by **Rebecca Jean Emigh**. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2009. 271 pp. \$29.95 paper. ISBN: 9781592136193.

ERIC MIELANTS
Fairfield University
emielants@fairfield.edu

Drawing on over a decade's worth of her own research, most of which has previously been published in such leading sociology

journals as ASR and AJS, Rebecca Emigh addresses important theoretical and methodological issues related to fifteenth century Tuscan socioeconomic structures.

Using what she calls dialectical Weberianism, Emigh's goal is to move beyond the existing classical social science debates, which speak to the transition to capitalism issue but often end up anchored in a specific school of thought replete with their own jargon and concepts. Throughout the book she eclectically uses critical insights from Marx, Weber and Polanyi to rethink why fifteenth century Florence and its hinterland did *not* experience a transition to capitalism, which she does by providing an example of negative case methodology. The first few chapters provide a critical and useful, albeit sometimes brief, literature overview of various Marxist, Weberian and Neoinstitutionalist perspectives as well as sectoral theories that attempt to make sense of the conditions under which a transition to capitalism can or is likely to occur.

The heart of the book (Chapters Four-Seven) provides a great deal of empirical evidence that Emigh has collected or interpreted, which for this reviewer was the book's most significant contribution. Few social scientists provide a study that is as theoretically informed, historically engaged, rich in archival descriptive details, and which simultaneously provides quantitative information. Working with and interpreting fifteenth century Italian data and subsequent standard deviations on agricultural productivity, lease terms, taxation rates, household sharecropping strategies and indebtedness is far from self-evident given the linguistic and paleogeographical challenges involved. Emigh is therefore to be commended for showing how historical comparative sociology done right can advance social science as a whole. As such, the book may function as a prime example for graduate students of how to carry out historical social science research, integrating political, economic and cultural variables when dealing with as important a topic as the transition debate.

Some, however, may find the numerous examples of archival family details provided in Chapter Four somewhat tedious. Theorists may be discomfited by Emigh's own relatively brief theorization of capitalism and

may wonder why there is no elaboration of the discussions on merchant capitalism and industrial capitalism. In fact the question of why industrialization as such deserves so much attention is taken for granted. Demographers may feel left out in the cold as well. Though Emigh engages in remarkable comparative research, these are essentially micro-comparisons: between households in small-holding or sharecropping parishes in parts of Tuscany, or detailed discussions of various interpretations of interactions between Florence's town and countryside (and the degree to which the former had so much power over the latter that it essentially unmade capitalism). Macro-comparativists may also be disappointed. While Emigh does make several references to England and the Industrial Revolution in her final chapter, this is a very late macro-comparative feature; a lengthy and systematic comparison of England (or the Low Countries) and Tuscany would have produced a more impressive study. Given her focus on sectoral interactions, urban sociologists might have preferred a comparison of several cities and their respective hinterlands. More junior non-Western sociologists might even label Emigh's study as fundamentally Eurocentric since only one Western European city and its hinterland are considered in what should be an important discussion on the origins of modernity, (world) capitalism or industrialization. This is not to suggest that Emigh is ignorant of this literature: occasional references to non-Western practices such as Taiwanese subcontracting and different area studies mentioned in the 30-page bibliography clearly demonstrate otherwise. But in order to avoid a Eurocentric focus some might have expected a comparison, if not a discussion, of different rural and urban elite strategies with those in non-Western cities of the same era.

Depending on one's view then, Emigh's book can be considered the best of what American historical social science research currently has to offer, or alternatively a classic example of a venerable tradition of Eurocentrism that does not frame itself in reference to developments in or in dialogue with the "rest of the world. . ." But even if one takes the latter, more critical position, *The Undevelopment of Capitalism* can continue to

be a methodological source of departure for future interdisciplinary studies that compare non-Western regions with Western ones over long periods of time. As such, it constitutes an important scholarly contribution and will remain a major accomplishment speaking to a variety of disciplines for many years to come.

Method and Substance in Macrocomparative Analysis, edited by **Lane Kenworthy** and **Alexander Hicks**. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. 324pp. \$85.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780230202573.

DAVID WEAKLIEM
 University of Connecticut
 weakliem@uconn.edu

In the last few decades, the volume and quality of quantitative data available for comparative analysis has grown dramatically. Researchers have responded to the new wealth of data in several different ways. Some have applied traditional regression techniques, while others have used quantitative data to supplement historical narratives. Finally, a number of sociologists have followed Charles Ragin in developing a new approach known as "quantitative comparative analysis" (QCA). The chapters in this volume use different methods to analyze data on employment rates in affluent nations. As a result, the book is much more focused than the typical edited collection. The book is weighted towards regression analysis and QCA. Two chapters apply what the editors call "small-N analysis," but they are not really comparable to each other, since one considers the macro level and the other is a regression analysis of individual-level data. In fact, it is not clear that small-N analysis is a single approach: by the definition offered by Lane Kenworthy and Alexander Hicks (p. 13), it could encompass a number of very different methods.

These are research papers, not introductions or review articles, so they will be of most value to researchers and advanced graduate students who are already familiar with the area. Two of the papers provide useful overviews of methodological issues related to regression analysis, Bernhard Kitel on panel data and Adam Przeworski on