

many other essays that emphasize how individual choices are linked to family and community strategies. Fortunately, this book will stimulate further research and debates rather than ending an important chapter in the historiography of early modern economic and social history.

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Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Colonialism and Slavery. An Alternative History of the Port City of Rotterdam* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2021). 247 p. ISBN 9789087283704.

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In *Colonialism and Slavery. An Alternative History of the Port City of Rotterdam*, editor Gert Oostindie marks an important contribution to the field of city histories by offering a volume that not only explores Rotterdam's historical connections with enslavement and colonialism, but also provides contemporary context as to how these legacies are entwined into the city's physical and cultural landscape. Oostindie's introduction tells us that the book is composed of eight chapters, which are mostly edited versions of chapters in *Het koloniale verleden van Rotterdam*, a three-part series resulting from an investigation by the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies from 2018 to 2020. The introduction includes the primary conclusions from this research (pp.11-14). *Colonialism and Slavery* goes on to follow a logical chronology that details the city's colonial and enslavement history, physical legacies of this involvement, inhabitants' reception to colonialism, and finally social and cultural legacies in a postcolonial city. The book provides a re-evaluation of Rotterdam's colonial past and postcolonial present, revealing the many forms that these legacies take throughout the modern city.

The book commences with historical outlines of Rotterdam's involvement in colonialism and slavery by Gerhard De Kok and Alex Van Stipriaan, respectively. De Kok provides an impressive quantitative analysis of the finances of the East India Company taken from national archives and persuasively argues that Rotterdam was immersed in the Netherlands' wider colonial projects from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, contributing to its status as a global port city. Van Stipriaan considers the city's involvement in enslavement through an

analysis of business and kinship involved in the trade, most interestingly making connections to the stories of enslaved people affected by the city's involvement in slavery. This includes stories of resistance, such as the Curaçao Slave Revolt of 1795 led by an enslaved man, Tula, whose 'opponent' Albert Kikkert had previously worked in Rotterdam, and Kikkert's 'aide-de-camp' Hendrik William de Quartel, who was a 'true Rotterdam man', and owned several enslaved people (p.93).

Pauline K.M. Van Roosmalen explores physical legacies of colonialism and slavery in Rotterdam. In addition to considering buildings with direct connections to the West and East India Companies, Van Roosmalen demonstrates how urban space developed as a result of colonial powers. For example, the physical landscapes of Feijenoord, Delfshaven, and Kralingen are tied to colonial shipping (p.138). Furthermore, this is tangibly apparent in the city's everyday sites, as an impressive numerical analysis reveals the number of colonial-associated names, places, companies, and materials found in Rotterdam's street names today (p.143). The importance of street names is similarly noted in Esther Captain's chapter, which highlights a number named after migrants in a postcolonial age. The focus of Captain's examination considers the experiences of migrants to and from the city and stresses changing dynamics of assimilation and identity. Again, important themes of space and place emerge, particularly in the shrewd distinction between migrant identities inside and outside the home (p.212).

One of *Colonialism and Slavery's* most effective inclusions is the notable reflection on receptions of colonial encounters by its inhabitants. For example, Tom Van Den Berge's chapter on Dutch missionary work from Rotterdam offers an assessment on how the work and propaganda of Protestant and Catholic missions shaped understandings of the colonies in the metropole. The analysis of subscription and donor records is particularly interesting, demonstrating that missionary information reached and influenced a wide cross-section of society, including women, working classes, and children. In a similar sense, Alexandra Van Dongen and Liane Van Der Linden's examination of colonial collections in Rotterdam illustrate how the empire was 'brought home' for metropolitan inhabitants, making colonial knowledge increasingly accessible. This chapter goes on to establish how the presentation of colonial collections has and continues to change. Indeed, the Research Centre for Material Culture at the Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen spearheads movements

toward decolonizing the city's museum collections (p.187). The aim is to move from presenting 'accounts from a single perspective' to that of 'multiple voices: multiple histories referring to the multiple realities of equally many narrators, telling a never-ending story' (p.188).

The book concludes with a case study by Francio Guadeloupe, Paul Van De Laar, and Liane Van Der Linden of Rotterdam's summer carnival, an 'alternative community formation' for Antilleans in Rotterdam (p.237). The chapter interrogates the postcolonial city, demonstrating that systemic racism, inequalities, and being bound to its colonial past are postcolonial traits of Rotterdam. However, it also encompasses a wish for a better future, one that celebrates and understands multiculturalism (p.224). It provides an apt conclusion to the book, reminding us of Rotterdam's continuous efforts to engage with and understand its colonial past.

Overall, *Colonialism and Slavery* is an expertly collected analysis of Rotterdam's central importance to Dutch colonialism. The book provides an impressive survey of historical, physical, and cultural legacies in the city, drawing on a wide body of evidence from local and national archives. Despite its curation as condensed material from three existing books, *Colonialism and Slavery* retains rigorous methodologies. It convincingly reshapes our understandings of the European city, and future city histories should look to its success in capturing impact across place, demographics, and culture. Perhaps its only oversight is that this comprehensive study should not be viewed as an 'alternative' history of Rotterdam at all. It is rather a necessary history clearly presenting how slavery and colonialism are inextricably woven into the city's fabric.

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Jaap Evert Abrahamse and Heidi Deneweth (eds), *Transforming Space. Visible and Invisible Changes in Premodern European Cities* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022). 250 p. ISBN 9782503579849.

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This spatial history of urban Europe turns to the 'sometimes radical but often gradual transformations of inner cities' (p.14.) in the medieval and early modern period. It tackles an interesting dynamic of continuity and change: Compared to later drastic transformations, the