

# Agrarian Capitalism in the Preindustrial Low Countries

## Local, Regional, and Global Dimensions

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In scholarship concerning the transition from feudalism to capitalism, the concept of agrarian capitalism has played a crucial role as it marks the dominance of market mechanisms over other forms of exchange of land, labour, and capital in the countryside. The medieval and early modern Low Countries form a particularly interesting case in this scholarship, as both the Southern Low Countries and the Dutch Republic have been associated with early forms of agrarian capitalism. These transitions, however, have mostly been discussed in isolation from not only one another, but also from broader social developments such as the overseas expansion of the Dutch Republic, the flourishing of textile industries in the Southern Low Countries, or war-driven migration, to name a few.

New research projects are attempting to approach the agrarian capitalism framework from a different angle, stressing its many interrelated links with environment, inequality, the rise of the world market, and gender relations. This workshop attempts to consider new approaches to and uses for the agrarian capitalism framework for the Low Countries. Under what circumstances do we speak of agrarian capitalism? How do we distinguish it from 'urban' or 'regular' capitalism? What kind of variables indicate its emergence or dominance? Where do we place it chronologically? Do we speak of an internal institutional transition in the countryside, or is it impossible to see it apart from broader, global socioeconomic developments? How did these processes relate to (changes in) the gendered division of labour and economic autonomy of women? By addressing such questions, we aim to test the relevance of the agrarian capitalism framework for the case of the preindustrial Low Countries and vice versa.

We welcome papers (max. 6000 words) on agrarian capitalism in the preindustrial Low Countries and related areas, such as border regions and colonies under the Dutch Empire. We particularly welcome contributions on the links between agrarian capitalism and the subjects mentioned above: environment, inequality, the rise of the world market, and gender relations. Comparative perspectives are also very much encouraged. We are hoping to receive contributions from researchers at various points in their respective careers and especially encourage the application of early career researchers such as PhD candidates and postdocs. **Please send in your abstracts (200-300 words) to [hilkens@eshcc.eur.nl](mailto:hilkens@eshcc.eur.nl) by December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.** Applications will be reviewed in February and full papers are expected by May. We have the intention to publish the contributions in a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal.

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The Hay Harvest by *Pieter Brueghel the Elder* (1565).