

Paul Mason: PostCapitalism. My book of the year, so far

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I've read Paul Mason's new book, PostCapitalism over the last week or so.

I have not written a review as yet. Take this from Gillian Tett in the FT as fair comment in lieu of my own assembled thoughts, as yet:

[W]hile Mason's ideas might seem crazily idealistic, they are thought-provoking. And it is worth remembering that the concept of Wikipedia would have once seemed crazy, too. So perhaps the key message from the book is this: in a world of rapid technological change, we need to rethink our old assumptions about "left" and "right"; cyberspace is ripping up many ideas about the government and class system. Politicians of all stripes should take note. And so should the people who vote for them.

It's my book of the year, so far. If you're a serious reader of this blog (and whether you agree with what I write or not) there will be much to engage you in it. Just one quote from near the end gives an indication of its tempo, clear spirit and idealism:

There's one change which anybody in charge of a state could implement immediately, and for free: switch off the neoliberal privatisation machine. It's a myth that the state is passive in neoliberalism; in reality the neoliberal system cannot exist without constant, active intervention by the state to promote marketisation, privatisation and the interests of finance. It typically deregulates finance, forces governments to outsource services and allows public healthcare, education and transport to become shoddy, driving people to private services. A government that was serious about post-capitalism would give a clear signal: there will be no proactive extension of market forces. Simply for attempting this, the relatively conventional leftists of Syriza in Greece were overtly sabotaged. The ECB staged a run on the Greek banks and, as the price for stopping it, demanded more privatisation, more outsourcing, more degradation of public services.

And Paul was there to witness it.

Please do take note. This is one not to miss and a lot easier and more readable than Piketty with, if anything, more to say.