

wetenschappelijke revolutie en die dus op de eerste plaats een verklaring behoeven. Daarover valt echter niets te lezen in deze biografie. Andriessse geeft op meerdere plaatsen trouwens blijk van weinig historisch inzicht in de wetenschap van de zeventiende eeuw.

Voor Andriessse is Huygens kortweg een geniale wetenschapper, volgens hedendaagse normen. Als natuurkundige ontkomt Andriessse niet aan de misschien onvermijdelijke fascinatie die uitgaat van het grondlegend werk van één der pioniers van zijn eigen vakgebied, bovendien een landgenoot. In een opmerkelijk persoonlijk intermezzo geeft hij aan hoe deze Huygensbiografie hem heeft geboeid, 'alsof ze met mijn eigen leven te maken had'. Het boek lijdt daardoor aan een teveel aan bewondering, zoals de auteur zelf toegeeft: 'Ik word er klein van en zet het masker snel weer op' (280). Deze biografie zal daarom wel door het brede publiek gesmaakt kunnen worden; voor de professionele historicus heeft zij weinig te bieden. Tenslotte zijn ook het ontbreken van voetnoten en de niet altijd betrouwbare weergave van citaten evenzovele schoonheidsfoutjes die gemakkelijk vermeden hadden kunnen worden.

G. Vanpaemel

J. R. Bruijn, *The Dutch navy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Studies in maritime history; Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1993, xv + 258 blz., ISBN 0 87249 875 1).

This is a more than usually welcome book for—extraordinary though it may seem—there has until now been no modern (i. e. post- World War II) study of the Dutch navy in its great days, during the Republic, either in Dutch or in any other language. Given the importance of the subject and the interest in it on the part of readers all over the world, it is astonishing that we have entirely lacked a modern account which looks at organization, structure, recruitment, finance and conditions of service as well as events and the actual performance of the navy. J. R. Bruijn is undoubtedly the right scholar to finally fill the gap, bringing to the task, as he does a mature and broad expertise not only in naval and maritime history generally but also many other relevant aspects of the history of the Republic. The result is excellent, his coverage being comprehensive, clear, well-documented, and rendered in a straightforward, serviceable English.

One of the most fundamental ideas underlying Bruijn's interpretation is the great difference, as he sees it, I am sure rightly, between what he calls the 'old navy' down to the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654) and the 'new navy' which emerged from a process of far-reaching reorganization, adaptation, and rethinking, resulting from the naval defeats suffered during that war. The result was a very different and altogether more cohesive and successful navy which arose in the 1650s and was at its height in the 1660s and during the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674). After 1688 and the Glorious Revolution, which ended the phase of bitter Anglo-Dutch maritime conflict, the Dutch navy rapidly declined first in terms of size and firepower and later also in organization and quality. Previously, before 1653, despite occasional spectacular triumphs, such as Jacob van Heemskerck's victory over the Spanish fleet in the Bay of Gibraltar, in April 1607, and Tromp's destruction of the great Spanish armada of 1639, off the English coast, the Dutch navy had been a rough-and-ready organization with no real permanent officer corps, rudimentary facilities and logistics, and deficient in many ways in its command structure, finances and methods of recruitment. Nor, especially during the second part of the Eighty Years' War (1621-1648), was it particularly good at carrying out its most essential tasks. This period was not a very successful one for Dutch shipping and trade in European waters and Bruijn rightly emphasizes that one of the major reasons for this was the navy's inability to stop, or even curb,

the high level of attacks by Dunkirk and Ostend privateers, in Spanish service, on Dutch merchant shipping and the herring fleets. Despite continuous and often very bitter complaints from the merchants and seafaring population the navy was simply unable to cope with the challenge effectively.

By contrast, the 'new navy' used mainly purpose-built warships not the often converted merchant vessels of the past, had a trained and permanent officer corps with a proper career structure, and was generally much more successful than its predecessor in protecting Dutch shipping, trade and colonies. Nor does it escape Bruijn's notice — and this is surely a crucial point — that the great Dutch navy, the one on which huge resources were spent, and which made a real impact, was entirely a product of the post-1648 situation when Dutch shipping and commerce outside the Baltic grew strongly down to 1672. He is equally correct, I would suggest, in explaining the precipitate decline of the navy, a decadence, as he puts it 'obvious to most observers' by 1740, to the contraction in Dutch commerce and shipping characteristic of the second quarter of the eighteenth century and subsequent decades.

I have only one substantive criticism. With its 219 pages of actual text, the book is relatively short. This seems a pity given the lack of any other book on the subject. For there are a number of sections, such as his extremely interesting discussion of naval seamen's wages or the scheme for paying compensation to seamen wounded in action, which ideally should have been somewhat longer and more detailed. It would have been good also to have found more discussion of the subject of religion (and also political ideology) in the navy. If such topics had been dealt with more fully it would have been in every respect a definitive work. But as it is it is a fine achievement and indispensable to anyone interested in maritime history or the Dutch Golden Age.

Jonathan Israel

A. Mirto, H. Th. van Veen, *Pieter Blaeu: Lettere ai Fiorentini Antonio Magliabechi, Leopoldo e Cosimo III de' Medici e altri, 1660-1705* (Florence: Istituto universitario Olandese di storia dell'arte, Amsterdam-Maarssen: APA Holland university press, 1993, xiv + 322 blz., f85,-, ISBN 90 302 1298 5).

Tussen het groothertogdom Toscane en de Republiek bestonden in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw vele contacten zowel op politiek niveau als in de persoonlijke sfeer. De haven van Livorno vormde vanaf het midden van de zeventiende eeuw voor de Republiek een belangrijk strategisch steunpunt voor de handel op de Levant. Daarnaast was er sprake van een bescheiden handel tussen beide naties. Op het terrein van de wetenschap bestond er wederzijds belangstelling voor eikaars ontdekkingen en publikaties. Christiaan Huygens, Nicolaas Heinsius, Swammerdam, Boerhaave en vele anderen onderhielden levendige betrekkingen met het intellectuele circuit van de verschillende Florentijnse academies.

Dat in de staatsarchieven van Florence en Livorno een schat aan bronnen over dit onderwerp ligt te wachten op bestudering is sinds *Tuscany and the Low Countries. An introduction to the sources and an inventory of four Florentine libraries* door Henk van Veen en Andrew McCormick (Florence, 1985) genoegzaam bekend. In het Staatsarchief, de Biblioteca Nazionale en de Biblioteca Riccardiana bevinden zich 162 brieven van Pieter Blaeu, telg in de derde generatie van de beroemde uitgeverfamilie. Op het bestaan van de brieven is al in 1901 door Blok de aandacht gevestigd in zijn *Verslag van onderzoekingen naar de archivalia in Italië*.