

Feitsma probeerde de samenleving gaande te houden, zonder scherpelijperij en overmatig hard optreden. Vries roept de vraag op of Feitsma idealist dan wel opportunist is geweest. Hij zoekt het antwoord primair bij de bezadigheid die de man steeds meer ging kenmerken. Volgens mij koos Feitsma met de ommekeer in het zicht steeds meer voor een invulling van de functie die qua stijl deed denken aan de ouderwetse paternalistische burgervader. Een brug naar de democratische orde kon hij daarmee echter niet meer slaan.

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VOOR OORLOGSDOCUMENTATIE

Futselaar, Ralf, *Lard, Lice and Longevity. The Standard of Living in occupied Denmark and the Netherlands, 1940-1945* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2008, 251 blz., ISBN 978 90 5260 253 0).

In accounts of the 1940-1945 war years in the Netherlands edited by Boerema, Burger, and Stein, the situation was described from a medical perspective. More recently, Trienekens and Klemann have focused on agricultural production, the food distribution system, and other socio-economic aspects of daily life. Based on these later studies, we now accept that by and large the food situation was satisfactory until November 1944. Thereafter, rations declined steadily and people in the western cities in the Netherlands suffered increasingly from undernutrition although there was a sizeable black market supply of additional foods for those with the necessary means. The account by Futselaar is a welcome addition to the literature on this period and now compares events in two countries. It is well written and a stimulating read, but some essential data are missing from the account.

Futselaar first explains why comparative research can be useful in understanding differences in war-time economic circumstances

and health outcomes in the Netherlands and Denmark (Chapter 1).

He then describes how during the war these two countries were comparable in many respects. The Dutch Royal family and Government had fled to England upon the German invasion but had left instructions for the civil service to continue their duties, as long as this would benefit the Dutch population more than the Germans. Denmark was technically an occupied neutral state, and kept its King and government. In both countries, the local authorities handled most daily matters under the supervision of the Germans. The situation for the Jewish population was very different however. In the Netherlands, nearly all the Jews had been deported by the Germans by 1943 with the passive and sometimes active collaboration of the Dutch authorities. In Denmark, no such deportations took place. In the final months of the occupation, the cities in western Netherlands were exposed to severe undernutrition and famine. Transportation of foodstuffs from the agricultural north and east to the occupied west had come to a stop because of a railway strike and the freezing of waterways (Chapter 2).

The main thesis of the book is based on the proposition that there was a significant increase in overall deaths during the war in the Netherlands, far exceeding any estimates that have been accepted to date. And that child mortality was enormously increased mainly because of deaths from infectious diseases. Why did this happen in the Netherlands (Chapter 3)? As will be discussed briefly below, these propositions are not well documented and are at variance with commonly accepted data sources that are not mentioned or further discussed in the book.

Were the national food rationing systems much different? The amounts of food available to the Danes appear to have been enormous throughout the war. The Dutch still had enough calories during most of the war but did not much like their wartime diet with little meat, butter and milk. Other between country comparisons include

the struggle for heating fuels, textiles, shoes, clothing, housing, and luxuries such as coffee, tea, tobacco, chocolate and alcohol. Housewives in the Netherlands may have benefited from a high-tech soap industry which provided powerful synthetic detergents. Costs of living also differed in the two countries, as did the effects of inflation on incomes, wages, and unemployment. No clear explanation for mortality differences emerges however from these comparisons (Chapters 4-8). Therefore further explanations are sought in the areas of nutrition, micronutrients, and immunity (Chapter 9).

Futselaar proposes that deaths throughout the war in the Netherlands increased dramatically because of poor nutrition, not lower in calories but lower in animal fats. These nutrition changes then induced deficiencies in micronutrients such as vitamin A which lowered immunity status and increased mortality from infectious diseases, especially among children. By contrast it is stated that there were no such mortality increases in Denmark where existing nutrition standards did not suffer (Chapter 10).

The author's thesis is fascinating and worth examining using all relevant data. One problem however is that the stated estimates of wartime deaths in the Netherlands are not compatible with relevant sources, and that discrepancies are not discussed or resolved.

According to Futselaar, wartime mortality in the Netherlands but not in Denmark was 'consistently and considerably' higher than expected and he estimates the number of excess deaths to be around 160,000. This estimate is compared to 'a list of rough figures used until recently by the Netherlands Institute of War Documentation' which gives a number of 50,000, in addition to 25,000 from the Hunger winter.

With age and sex specific mortality data by cause of death for the period 1921-1955 as published by the Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics (1957) we can calculate from Table 1 that the number of excess deaths for the period 1940-

1945 was less than 120,000, taking into account changes in age and sex structure and the generally downward trend in mortality over time. These data sources are not discussed by the author. Neither are other relevant studies from the Netherlands on the immediate or long-term effects of the war on morbidity and mortality.

Futselaar also states that the large increases in child mortality throughout the war in the Netherlands were caused 'by an upsurge in infectious diseases'. With data from Tables 2, 5a, and 5b in the above publication we see that child mortality in 1945 was indeed higher than in any previous year, but also that the pattern in the occupation years 1940-1944 was quite variable. We also see that the total number of reported deaths in infants ages 0-4 increased from 8,600 in 1938 to 22,000 in 1945. With regard to the cause of mortality, deaths attributed to infectious diseases (including tuberculosis) increased from approximately 1,000 in 1938 to 4,000 in 1945. Therefore less than a quarter of the increase was due to infectious diseases. These issues are not discussed by the author.

It appears therefore that national mortality data are at odds with the author's thesis that the increase in mortality from infectious diseases during the war in the Netherlands is a phenomenon that needs further explanation. And it is somewhat surprising that these crucial differences in estimates are not further discussed with a closer examination of the various data sources. Other aspects of presentation and documentation also receive casual treatment. Futselaar's mortality calculations were based on datasets from the KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation in the Netherlands and from the Human Mortality Database, but further relevant information is not provided and the estimates can not be easily replicated. Adherence to reporting guidelines from the Human Mortality Database might have clarified matters somewhat but these suggestions were not followed by the author. With regard to presentation, no references are given for key

figures in Appendices or for important articles cited in chapters. A study by Eilers and Borgdorff for instance on the Analysis of Tuberculosis deaths is mentioned more than once in the text but it is missing from the bibliography and can not be found using Medline or Google searches. There are additional problems of documentation. On a technical note, the use of Standardized Mortality Ratio's in the presence of important mortality differences for specific diseases by subgroups of age and gender is dubious. Standardization alone can not substitute for the comparison of specific rates in subgroups of which only some have been provided.

In summary, Futselaar's thesis has identified an important research area that could be fruitfully explored. To examine the thesis, some baseline data need to be presented for discussion however. This information should include mortality by cause of death for relevant age categories (by sex by year) in Denmark and the Netherlands, together with the population counts for these categories. It will then be possible to evaluate any changes in mortality over time in specific subgroups in the two countries. Once comparative mortality patterns have been established, it may be necessary to explore potential explanations in terms of nutrition or other causes. From Futselaar's account to date it is not yet clear which patterns, if any, require such explanation.

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Meijers, Erica, *Blanke broeders – zwarte vreemden. De Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk, de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland en de apartheid in Zuid-Afrika 1948-1972* (Dissertatie Theologische Universiteit Kampen 2008; Hilversum: Verloren, 2008, 236 blz., ISBN 978 90 8704 037 6).

In dit boek – de handelseditie van het proefschrift dat zij verdedigde aan de Protestantse Universiteit te Kampen – schetst Erica Meijers de gewijzigde houding van de twee grootste protestantse kerkgenootschappen van Nederland tegenover apartheid. Vlak na de Tweede Wereldoorlog onderhielden deze Nederlandse kerken in hun contacten met Zuid-Afrika uitsluitend banden met hun 'blanke broeders', de Afrikaners die de gereformeerde kerken in Zuid-Afrika domineerden. Maar aan het begin van de jaren zeventig – de periode waarmee haar boek eindigt – waren niet langer de Afrikaners maar de 'zwarte vreemden' de belangrijkste discussiepartners over de vraag hoe er een einde kon komen aan apartheid. Binnen een kwart eeuw veranderden de Nederlandse kerken in de woorden van Meijers 'van een wit naar een zwart perspectief' en verschoof de aandacht 'van Paul Kruger naar Nelson Mandela'. Cruciaal in deze verschuiving van loyaliteit was de realisatie dat er hier sprake was van ongelijke machtsverhoudingen. Het racisme van de apartheid kon niet beëindigd worden door een christelijke dialoog aan te gaan met hen die deze macht bezaten. Velen binnen deze Nederlandse kerken werden ervan overtuigd dat solidariteit met de onderdrukten de enige manier was om een einde te maken aan apartheid. Voor hen die bekend zijn met de naoorlogse Nederlandse geschiedenis (of zelfs de westerse wereld) zal deze geconstateerde verschuiving in het kerkelijk denken nauwelijks verrassend zijn. Meijers doet ook te weinig moeite om in kritisch gesprek te gaan met de bestaande historiografie, hoewel zo'n gesprek haar eigen betoog had kunnen verlevendigen. Bovendien zou het aardig zijn geweest als ook de kleinere protestantse kerkgenootschappen deel hadden mogen uitmaken van