

theoretical introduction and a rich series of highly diverse case studies make it an inspirational read for anyone interested in early modern connectivity and movement.

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Marc van Alphen, Jan Hoffenaar, Alan Lemmers, Christiaan van der Spek. *Military Power and the Dutch Republic. War, Trade and the Balance of Power in Europe, 1648-1813*. Transl. [from Dutch] by P. Arblaster and L. Preedy (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2021). 549 p. ISBN 9789087283650.

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This book is the third in the imposing *Military History of the Netherlands* series, and the second to be translated into English. All four authors are currently researchers at the Netherlands Institute of Military History, and their specialist expertise is reflected not only in the quality and sophistication of the text but also in the remarkable range and quality of images that complement the discussion throughout the volume. These range from unfamiliar topographical depictions of sieges and fortifications, through an impressive range of land and naval battles, as well as images of model ships and of the material culture of soldiering and naval service. Full-dress portraits of key military and naval officers vie with garrison or village genre scenes and drawings or watercolors of ordinary soldiers or sailors on and off duty.

The volume is divided into two sections: a detailed narrative of the military history of the Dutch Republic is then followed by chapters examining the organization of the military, its financing, war-fighting capabilities, the social background and lives of soldiers and sailors, and finally civil-military relations. Throughout, the discussion is divided equally between armies and navies and benefits substantially from the numerous opportunities for close comparison between the two.

The first four chapters provide a well-structured account of the military history of the Republic. The narrative moves from the triumphant success of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 through the naval conflicts of the mid- and later seventeenth century, when the Dutch navies still showed impressive powers of adaptation to changing military technology, tactics, and scale, while benefiting from impressive

levels of capital investment, good leadership, and popular support. The scale of Dutch land warfare in the later seventeenth century dwarfed the forces that had been raised and maintained during the Eighty Years War and put a corresponding strain on Dutch financial and organizational resources. Sustaining warfare on this scale had its price, and the account of the Dutch armies and navies in the eighteenth century shows the slow, but inexorable decline of the Republic into a second-rank military power. In part, as the account stresses, this descent was because the Dutch failed to keep up with the military expansion of other European powers. Yet it was also the case that public debt crippled the financial flexibility that had allowed the Dutch to respond so effectively to earlier military challenges. Although soldiers and sailors remained disciplined and professional, longer periods of peace had an impact on the quality and skill of the senior officers, while Dutch society was less engaged by the military and its activities and less committed to sustaining their armed forces. The field was sown for the military failures in the face of the French Revolutionary armies in 1795, then the weakness in resisting British and Russian invasion campaigns, and finally against Napoleon himself, who annexed the Republic wholesale in 1810-11.

The subsequent analytical chapters offer an outstanding resource of valuable and hard-to-obtain information about the Dutch armies and navies, steering convincingly through historical controversies, yet willing to admit that in certain areas the current state of knowledge is weak and the sources patchy or underdeveloped. In the discussions of financial and logistical support for the armies and navies, the authors explore what is now a well-established theme of early modern warfare: the intersection of public and private resources in managing the fluctuating material demands of war and peace, as well as meeting patterns of military expenditure that rarely correlated with revenue flows. Instead of looking at these private-public partnerships as a regrettable necessity forced upon an underdeveloped administration, the authors convincingly argue that the policy was deliberately maintained. It both avoided the creation of a large, expensive bureaucracy and allowed access to private capital and expertise that was efficient and met military needs well. The crucial question was how effectively the government officials could control and oversee the contractors. Ships' captains were expected to purchase food supplies for their vessels before embarking on a voyage, and the admiralties would reimburse these costs on return at a level which ensured a respectable profit – often amounting to more than the captains' basic pay. The

longevity of this system indicated that it worked effectively, and though by the later eighteenth century captains frequently complained about the delays in reimbursement, both sides seem to have honored the basic terms of the contract, and warships were capably victualled by their captains throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The chapter on land and naval tactics, weaponry, and the evolution of artillery and fortifications links to European-wide discussions about the 'art of warfare' in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the authors' work demonstrates how Dutch army tactics, for example, developed after the adoption of the flintlock musket and bayonet in the later seventeenth century. The third chapter shifts attention to the combatants themselves, using a wide range of sources to examine the lives of soldiers and sailors, petty-officers, and long-serving naval and army officers. Myths about the low social status of ordinary soldiers and sailors are challenged by evidence of muster rolls, though the foreign origins of so many Dutch soldiers make social precision difficult to achieve. Also notable are some excellent sections exploring motivation – at all levels of the military hierarchy – morale, and the evolving nature of military professionalism.

The final chapter is perhaps the most ambitious, charting the relations between soldiers, sailors, and civilian populations and exploring changes in perceptions across the two centuries. Refreshingly open to contemporary evidence rather than received assumptions, the authors make a case that the presence of soldiers in established garrison towns was seen as an economic and social benefit, invigorating the commercial life of garrison towns which would otherwise have been economic backwaters. Even though detailed economic data to quantify precisely the extent of the benefit brought by troops or sailors is difficult to come by, the broad case is convincing. The impact of a violent and potentially rapacious soldiery is not ignored, and numerous cases of disorders and destructiveness are noted, but a discussion of the positive aspects of civil/military cohabitation is a useful corrective to common assumptions that soldiers and warfare were an inevitable drain on the economy and a challenge to any notion of orderly society.

Mention finally should be made of the excellent and lively quality of the English translation, all too rare in academic works of this nature. Overall, the book makes an invaluable contribution to a wider understanding of the Dutch military machine and deserves a wide readership.

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