turfwinning, met name in het Noorden van het land in de jaren 1920, is het verbruik van turf drastisch teruggelopen in Nederland. Was hier dan wel sprake van een succesvolle uitfasering? Ook dat blijkt bij nader inzien een illusie. Nederland importeert tegenwoordig meer turf dan ooit tevoren, vooral uit de Baltische staten. Niet om huizen te verwarmen, maar om tuinen te bemesten. En het wrange is dat de CO_2, die is opgeslagen in de veengrond, en die vrijkomt bij het uitgraven van die turf, nauwelijks minder schadelijk is dan bij verbranding. Ook turf is dus niet verdwenen.

Historici sluiten zich graag aan bij het transitieverhaal. Verandering, breuklijnen en discontinuïteit hebben nu eenmaal hun aantrekkingskracht op de historicus. Maar Fressoz laat juist zien dat het meest schokkende niet de komst van het nieuwe is, maar de vasthoudendheid aan het oude. En juist dat verdient meer aandacht. Hoe komt het dat de verbruikspatronen zo hardnekkig blijven voortbestaan? Fressoz' boek kan daarom ook gelezen worden als een pleidooi voor een koerswijziging in de geschiedschrijving: weg van het romantiseren van transities, naar het blootleggen van de krachten die werkelijke omslag in de weg staan. Want in de praktijk zitten we, ondanks alle transitieretoriek, vooral vast in het paradigma van "meer en meer en meer".

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Wout Saelens, Brundo Blondé, and Wouter Ryckbosch (eds), *Energy in the Early Modern Home. Material Cultures of Domestic Energy Consumption in Europe, 1450-1850* (London [etc.]: Routledge, 2024). 266 pp. ISBN 9780367681371.

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This is a very welcome collection on the domestic use of energy – or put another way, the provision of heating (and to a much lesser degree, lighting) services in the home, because of course this period had no concept of 'energy'. Energy was not considered as part of a generalized system where 'energy carriers' might be substituted, and nor, of course, to the modern idea exist in science. Dissolving that conceptual unity might in this case be to our analytical benefit, notwithstanding the book's title, because the provision of different services takes on very different forms and presents consumers with rather varied challenges

(including mitigating their lack, through insulation or behaviour). What these studies clearly show is the variety and complexity of ways of managing 'energy' in the home. Thus while there is analytical value to grand comparisons – between organic and fossil fuels, or looking at broad price trends – there is much that they do not capture. This book demonstrates very clearly the value of what it calls 'small history'.

One inspiration is to inquire about the relation between the history of energy consumption and the arguments the rise of a consumer culture the second half of the early modern period. The sources for examining these histories – probate inventories of possessions at death and valued for inheritance – are largely the same. They therefore face the same problem in that inventories measure of objects owned at a certain phase in the life-cycle, rather than the 'flow' of goods and the actions associated with them. Nevertheless, despite their limitations, much can be inferred.

After an introduction, the book is divided into four parts (loosely covering technology, ideals of comfort, space, and inequality, although in practice all with considerable overlap) containing ten chapters.

The first chapter by Olivier Jandot is the most general, and very usefully makes available in English work previously only published in French. His view of the fireplace – long dominant in France – gives primacy to it as a place to cook: 'heating the home was only the unintended consequence of preparing meals'. Given that space heating is such a costly use of fuel, it has drawn a lot of attention from energy historians. Perhaps too much? Jandot usefully frames the question as one of a 'search for warmth' rather than 'home heating'. After all, I write from a country where central heating only became the norm after 1970. Reconfiguring our understanding towards a 'search for warmth' stresses how people sought to be near sources of heat, rather than raise the temperature of spaces. They did so by sharing space with other animal and human bodies, preventing the loss of warmth with blankets, heavy clothes or moving around both during the day and the year, or using portable devices, bringing close attention to the qualities of fuel, both in acquisition and use. As a primer for the rest of the book, one could hardly do better.

Stefania Montemezzo provides a case study of this search for warmth among Venetian artisans, stressing the management of the fire, and the importance of what we might call 'little tools' – footwarmers, bed warmers, and the essential layering of textiles of all kinds. The next chapter moves us to Bologna and Milan, authored by Luca Morelli,

Guilio Ongaro, and Paolo Tedeschi, and examines the demand for varied kinds of wood from household industry. Heat for manufacturing purposes *in the home* is often evoked, not least by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations,* but rarely examined so closely. As ever, the situation is complex, underlined by the fact that statistical tests on those factors we can create time series for explain relatively little of price changes. This is not so much a failing of the method as one that underlines the importance of 'small histories' that are also interlinked between sites of demand and supply. John Crowley examines the long rise of the stove, building from his influential history of comfort, while Johanna Illmakunnas and Jon Stobart compare cultures of heating among the grander houses of Sweden and England. They make makes salient points about the importance of expectations about temperature, the 'atmosphere' of rooms, and the intertwining of the functional and the cultural. They highlight an important fact that is still obvious today – there is no simple transition from one heating technology to another, because many people use a range of forms, especially in larger houses with many rooms having varied functions. These all shape choices, even if it is hard to avoid the iron cage of economics in the long-term.

These observations are reinforced, if we leap ahead to chapter nine, by a study of the diversity of heating sources in different rooms by Wout Saelens, comparing Ghent and Leiden. It covers both the significant rise over time in the number of rooms, and their functional differentiation, and in turn how different technologies tended to appear in different rooms (a small complaint is that the index chosen to measure this is not very intuitive to read). Indeed Saelens suggests that the availability of coal may have been a factor in in generating functional specialisation, as it became possible to develop appropriate forms of heating. Before this come three chapters dealing with the kitchen, focused on Antwerp (Bruno Blondé and Julie de Groot), rural Italy (Manuel Vaquero Piñeiro), and Dutch cookbooks (Merit Hondelink). The first uses the 'inventory' method to illustrate the prevalence of the kitchen as an early form of specialisation, but where 'shared' uses, such as sleeping, might be slow to disappear; while the other two chapters rely on more on forms of 'advice literature' to note debates and preoccupations with the best forms of providing heat.

The discussion of many rooms indicates the book largely examines urban households, and quite well-to-do ones ('middling'). Inequality is examined head-on by Wouter Ryckbosch in the final chapter on inequality, based on examining inventories from the Flemish town

of Aalst, and goods from candlesticks to curtains to braziers. This demonstrates, perhaps unsurprisingly, a certain 'wastefulness' (from a resource perspective) among the elite that did not percolate down to the less well-off; but that technologies that provided cost-saving efficiency spread more evenly. This provides a useful research agenda for other places to follow.

Every chapter in this collection is well worth reading and one can hope it will inspire ever more 'small histories' in the field.

Paul Warde, University of Cambridge

Karwan Fatah-Black, Lauren Lauret, and Joris van den Tol, *Serving the Chain? De Nederlandsche Bank and the Last Decades of Slavery, 1814-1863* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2022). 245 pp. ISBN 9789087283926.

DOI: 10.52024/af4mae33

Serving the Chain? provides a history of *De Nederlandsche Bank* (DNB) in the context of the 1814 decree to end slavery in the Dutch colonies. The book's title, its front and back cover hold great promise. The book is a valuable contribution in uncovering the role Dutch financial institutions have played in the slave trade, the subsequent abolishment and the persistent mistreatment of plantation workers. But this book should be thought of as a starting point for further, in-depth and analytical inquiry.

Right from the outset, the main research question of the book is clear. What was the relationship of DNB with slavery just before and in the years after its abolition? To the reader, an important question daunts even before reaching the end of the introduction, how exactly is slavery defined? The focus of the book is on what the authors refer to as "racialized production slavery", but they refer the reader to the appendix to learn how they exactly define slavery.

Chapter 1 aims to describe the history of DNB's establishment in the light of its relationship with slavery. The authors highlight that DNB's starting capital came partly from business ownership with direct interests in slavery. The economic significance of slavery-related capital remains somewhat unclear as by 1814 outset William I owned 60% of the shares and the initial 800 shares that were issued were dispersed