

Met deze studie heeft Polkowski ook aangetoond dat de katholieke literatuur ondanks de moeilijke situatie waarin hij na 1572 was terechtgekomen toch zijn voortzetting vond. Hij ziet vooral continuïteit op het vlak van thema's en genres zoals de hagiografie. Door het heterogene materiaal gespreid over een lange periode was het niet gemakkelijk om tot algemene conclusies te komen. Maar via de grondig uitgewerkte casussen belicht Polkowski een aspect dat in de literatuurstudies over de Noordelijke Nederlanden slechts zelden aan bod komt. Het boek is dan ook belangrijk voor de literatuur-, boek- en godsdienstgeschiedenis van de Republiek.

Het boek is mooi verzorgd. Veertig prenten voorzien van de nodige uitleg, die zeer goed aansluiten bij het verhaal, verhogen nog de aantrekkelijkheid. Het is wel spijtig dat de prenten achteraan in het boek zijn geplaatst en niet tussen de hoofdstukken zodat ze het betoog nog beter hadden kunnen illustreren. Polkowski heeft iets te veel op het automatische splitsingssysteem vertrouwd met als gevolg dat vrij vaak Nederlandse woorden verkeerd zijn gesplitst, zoals Gheti-jden (p. 83), Ker-ck (p. 199) of bed-rieglycke (p. 315). Het boek wordt afgesloten met een uitvoerige literatuurlijst, waar ik alleen de verwijzing naar Van Oostrom in voetnoot 33 (p. 28) niet kon in terugvinden. De index op persoonsnamen maakt het werk goed toegankelijk.

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Duco Hellema, Ryszard Żelichowski, Bert van der Zwan (Eds.), *Poland and the Netherlands: Case Study of European Relations*, Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing, 2011, 256 pp.

*Poland and the Netherlands: A Case Study of European Relations* was published to remind the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Utrecht Conference which since 1999 has served as a platform for the Polish-Dutch academic encounters. As its title implies, the book attempts to analyse the relations between Poland and the Netherlands within the perspective of European relations. Its fifteen case studies provide the reader with an opportunity to form a general, but simultaneously multifaceted impression of Polish-Dutch relations and mutual perceptions as part of a broader European history from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on. Indeed, already on the first page the editors claim that the countries' relations have always been marked by "dramatic events, unexpected twists and serious rifts" (p. IX); an exact depiction of European history *per se*. Not so long ago the Polish and the Dutch history were not automatically understood as belonging to *the same* European history. The reviewed book seems to fulfil an emancipating role for the CEE, because it provides an analysis of the relations between Poland and the Netherlands as historically, politically and economically complex. The editors and authors, such as Maria Bogucka, Duco Hellema, Ryszard Żelichowski and Bert van der Zwan, have published extensively on Dutch-Polish relations as well as Dutch foreign policy.

Out of the fifteen case studies, the initial three deal with Polish-Dutch relations between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The following eight address the dynamics of these relations in the *short twentieth century*. The concluding four studies follow the post-Cold-War developments. The introductory studies offer a bird's-eye view on the nations' political, economic and cultural exchange throughout the period of the three centuries, and 'furnish' the reader with a necessary *longue-durée* perspective on the later parts of the book. The first study looks on the pinnacle of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Baltic sea trade driven by the commercial exchange between Amsterdam and Gdańsk. The economic connections triggered firm political and cultural cooperation which the second study scrutinizes for the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The third study delves into the Dutch perception of the Polish insurrections against the Russian rule in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The core and concluding studies shed light on

the so-far under-researched points of Dutch-Polish relations and reinterpret them based not only on archival materials, but also on personal accounts of former diplomats. The first core study presents the interwar Dutch foreign policy against Poland's newly regained, and troubled, statehood. The following two studies document the cooperation of the Dutch and Polish exile governments during the Second World War and the Polish military contribution to the liberation of the Netherlands. The following studies are based on a detailed and vivid scrutiny of the countries' uneasy relations in the divided Cold-War Europe. Finally, the concluding studies highlight Poles' endeavours "to give Europe back to Poland, and Poland back to Europe" (p. 266) and the Dutch ambiguous position on them.

The book could be a valuable source of information not only for the researchers focused on Polish-Dutch relations, but also for all those interested in the broader relationships between the European West and East, the historical underpinnings of these relationships and both their conjunctions and contradictions. Unfortunately, the editors do not offer any introductory chapter that could show clear constants of the countries' relations. And there would be a possibility to indicate one or two of them, put into a broader theoretical framework that is applicable to the West-East division of Europe.

The Polish connection *vis-à-vis* the Netherlands has become a salient one already in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as Maria Bogucka states in her study of the trade connections between Amsterdam and Gdańsk (pp. 1–26). In this time Gdańsk exported raw materials (grain and wood) in exchange for the hard currency and technology transfers from Amsterdam (shipbuilding or manufacturing technologies) and Amsterdam utilized the raw materials to grow technical plants and supply its own manufactures. The commercial exchange encouraged the Dutch to become important patrons of Polish Protestants and their aspirations to gain their communal rights on Polish soil or financing their education at Dutch universities, as Wojciech Krieger describes (pp. 25–39). The intense economic cooperation resulted in migrations and exchange of ideas and products. As Maria Bogucka points out, the economic exchange was followed by interesting cultural exchanges. Duco Hellema's (p. 123–140), Ryszard Żelichowski's (p. 141–165), Floriber Baudet's (p. 185–210) and Wanda Jarzabek's (p. 211–226) accounts of the Cold War prove the persistent Polish 'dependency' again. All four studies discuss Poland's many attempts to reinstate the dialogue with the Netherlands. Indeed, not only was the socialist regime keen on legitimizing its position by the diplomatic recognition of the West, but it was also desperate for the Dutch loans and investment to salvage its own failing economy. The political dissenters similarly relied on the West for support: without foreign patronage, in which the Netherlands played a prominent role, they would have been a far easier target of persecutions. Also the post-Cold-War developments in Poland were connected with a wish to receive support from the Netherlands: while the Netherlands were a member of the EU and NATO, Poland simply was not. The contributions on this period authored by Duco Hellema with Lotte Kaatee (p. 227–246) and Bianca Szytniewski with Mathieu Segers (p. 259–282) show precisely that Poland, once again, had to meet the membership criteria co-produced and co-approved by the Dutch political and economic elite.

The different national fortunes have also influenced mutual perceptions. The perceptions of the Poles against the Netherlands are diffused throughout the whole book. They aptly reflect the general West-European representations of what is deemed the Eastern periphery of Europe. And so, Idesbald Goddeeris's study (p. 51–74) shows the general Dutch disregard for the Polish unsuccessful insurrections against the Russian rule in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As he concludes, the Dutch as a dominant nation hardly grasped the subaltern Poles' regular attempts to rebel against *their* Russian emperor. Poles earned a reputation as a nation of, perhaps heroic, but cruel insurrectionists and exploitative nobles who foolishly strived for an unattainable goal: the national sovereignty. When Poles re-established their state, the Dutch foreign policy elite, predictably, was not very optimistic about its political and economic vitality. Poles were depicted as a nation unable to rule itself, a belief well expressed in a Dutch foreign minister's conviction that integration of Upper Silesia into the Polish state would compromise the region's economic potential (p. 62). At the same time, Poles were blamed for in-

volutioning Europe in a new war through their stubborn refusals to revise the borders with Germany. The Cold-War regime only reaffirmed the stereotype of Poland as a malfunctioning country ruled by exploitative elites (p. 145, 150–154, 202–204) and an ideational antagonist that actually caused the Cold War (pp. 130–131, 193). The end of the Cold War hardly changed anything: faced with the Polish desire to join NATO and EU, the Netherlands engaged in public discussions, which revealed the picture of Poland as corrupted, socio-economically dysfunctional, not complying with the minimum security standards or metaphorically failing its tests and not doing its homework (pp. 239–246, 272–276).

The European relations, with their perplexing conjunctions and contradictions, can become more understandable, when one keeps these two constants in mind. Poles constantly sought to establish relations with the Dutch as a way of engaging with the most important European countries. The Dutch were not really concerned about Poles situated on the European periphery. More importantly, the perception of Poland as the European Other helped the Netherlands to justify their indifference to the Polish fate. And in times when the Dutch were compelled by history to encounter Poland (again), they could easily maximally escalate the strictness of (their) conditions for the establishment of closer bilateral relations with Poland. Remco van Diepen stresses that in the interwar period Poland was not a priority partner for the Netherlands. The Second World War seems to have been the only period in modern history when the two nations depended on each other in equal measure, according to Magdalena Hulas's (p. 79–108) and Ben Schoenmaker's (p. 109–122) studies. During the war, both the Dutch and Poles lost their independent states. Moreover, the Dutch owed their regained independence to the military effort of Polish soldiers who fought to liberate the Netherlands. This, however, was a short episode. The division of Europe after WWII into two opposing blocs produced an adverse climate for relations with Eastern Europe. In the Cold War, the Netherlands engaged with Poland only unwillingly and only in response to the diplomatic activity of other Western states. Floribert Baudet stresses that the Dutch government supported Edward Gierek's regime (1970–80) and was not likely to react to violations of human rights. On the other hand, the public opinion in the Netherlands was deeply shocked when martial law was proclaimed in Poland in 1981. Edy Korthals Altes, the Dutch ambassador to Poland between 1977–1980, remembers (p. 165–184) how difficult it was to persuade the Dutch elites that Poland had to be taken into account seriously. Henryk Szlajfer, one of the Polish negotiators in the NATO enlargement talks, tells (p. 247–258) that the general distrust toward the CEE states and their intentions was symptomatic of all the future NATO allies, not only the Dutch. According to Duco Hellema and Lotte Kaatee, just before Poland's accession to the NATO there was still no consensus about it among the Dutch political elites. Given all this, it is surprising that the editors felt no need to clarify their understanding of the Dutch-Polish relations as *European* relations; their Europeanness has not been uniformly taken for granted, as many of the fifteen studies well document.

The book leaves many issues pertaining to the countries' relations undiscussed. One of them is, notably, the role of Dutch foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Poland's economic restructuring. As this is an issue of the last years, this question could have been answered in place of Agnieszka Cianciara's (redundant) study about Poland's first six years of membership in the EU (p. 283–302). The formative impact of the FDI on the institutional framework of the CEE economies was indeed recognized as equally important to the effects of *acquis communautaire*. As Andreas Nölke and Arjan Vliegthart suggest (2007), the FDI inflows into the CEE states stabilized their economies, but made them simultaneously dependent on the external capital, employees' skill-formation and technological transfers. European multinational corporations were the main proponents of the idea of the EU (market) enlargement. The Netherlands-based multinationals, such as Unilever, Philips or Shell, were in the forefront of these efforts. As the book only cursorily sketches in several studies (pp. 60–61, 125, 139–140, 147, 259–260), the Dutch capital played a crucial role in the Polish-Dutch relations. Nevertheless, despite a few minor gaps in its research, the reviewed book offers an

indisputable contribution to scholarship on Polish-Dutch relations. The publications might stimulate further research projects on Dutch-Polish relations in political, economic and cultural contexts. The Polish post-accession migration to the Netherlands might be another interesting subject for further in-depth analyses.

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