Another excellent piece is the contribution by Mark Goldie and Clare Jackson on ‘Williamite Tyranny and the Whig Jacobites’. Not many of us, specialist historians included, have previously heard much about ‘Whig Jacobites’ so here is genuinely an opportunity to learn something new. Whig Jacobitism, intent on proclaiming the Glorious Revolution unfinished and flawed business which needed straightening and being carried further, expressed in some forty published pamphlets, especially in the years 1692-1695, was greatly aided by the fact that James himself was converted, albeit only temporarily, to their programme. In a declaration of April 1693, the Jacobite court in exile promised ‘a free parliament, religious toleration, and bills for frequent parliaments and free elections’. It is a fascinating story. The most effective of the Whig Jacobites was the lawyer Charlwood Lawton, who personally evaded identification and arrest but whose publisher, William Anderton, was executed in 1693 for publishing his anti-Williamite tracts. For Lawton, the Revolution was ‘the greatest advantage lost, that perhaps the nation ever had’ (181).

Other essays worthy of being singled out for their originality and novel perspectives are Allan I. Macinnes’ essay on the Williamite regime in Scotland which innovates by considering the Scottish experience in the context of an impressive range of trans-Atlantic developments stretching far beyond Scotland and not just the still troubled relationship between England and Scotland, and Andrew Barclays’ essay ‘William’s Court as King’ which demonstrates the role of the British as well as Dutch courtiers, favourites and sinecure-holders in William’s household. Finally, in his study of the image of William in contemporary prints, Hugh Dunthorne provides a welcome evaluation of a large, not to say vast, body of visual material relating the reign. He comes to the interesting conclusion that ‘pictorially speaking, William III stands in a kind of twilight zone, a transitional point midway between the age of Van Dyck on the one hand and the age of Gillray on the other’.

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As is also the case with the Spanish, Scandinavian and Italian enlightenments, the Dutch Verlichting remains, both to the Dutch and to others, one of the least familiar of the important examples of European Enlightenment. Given the increasing cultural, political and also theological importance of the Enlightenment in the world today and the pressing need to make the Enlightenment a larger and more important element in the study of history not only in universities but also in schools, it is welcome news that a well-balanced 450-page survey volume of twenty-three essays such as this, devoted to the complex and sometime fraught relationship between religion and
One of the great problems involved in bringing students and the general reader, as well as academics orientated towards other topics, to a considered and accurate understanding of the Dutch Enlightenment in its various aspects is that virtually none of the relevant original texts have been reissued in modern editions or are readily available in electronic versions. Whereas anyone interested in the French, British or German Enlightenment can fairly easily get hold of the most important texts, and many minor ones, this is, unfortunately, still far more difficult in the case of the Dutch Verlichting. In compiling this very useful overview of the many different ways that religion and Enlightenment affected and changed each other in the Netherlands during the late seventeenth and eighteenth century, the editors and their collaborators hit upon the innovative and interesting expedient of publishing each contribution in two parts: the essay proper coupled with a choice of one or two original eighteenth-century texts illustrating the points made in the essay, material mostly of between three and ten pages in length. In this way the reader can sample the authentic wording, terms and modes of expression of the period and the student acquires a more precise knowledge of key concepts and arguments.

Needing to cover a great deal of ground, the survey is divided into seven parts. The first consists of two very useful general articles, by Ernestine van der Wall, on the many-sided and complex character of the relationship between religion and Enlightenment and by Leo Wessels, on the broad political and historical context, placing the Dutch Enlightenment, and its encounters with religion, within the wider European context, explaining the topical relevance of the subject, and indicating how the various essays and other sections relate to each other. The second part, entitled ‘Rede, geloof en bijgelooi’ focuses on the double challenge facing faith during the early Enlightenment period posed by reason, on the one hand, and ‘superstition’ on the other. This again consists of two contributions, one by Jan Wim Buisman and Jan de Vet, dealing in particular with the deeply problematic views of Anthonie van Dale and the highly controversial Balthasar Bekker and the other by Rienk Vermij dealing with Jacob Leydekker’s remarkable text, De blyde Spinosist published in 1719. Although in general, Spinoza and Spinozism are given the central position in this volume which they undoubtedly should have, it is a pity that so important and controversial a ‘Spinozist’ within the Reformed Church as Frederik van Leenhof nowhere receives any mention.

The third part, ‘Godsdienstig liberalisme en geestdrijverij’, comprises five contributions, each illustrating in different ways the tensions that arose through the general advance of toleration and more liberal and flexible attitudes to doctrine. These comprise a contribution, by Roel Bosch, analyzing the case of Antonius van der Os (1722-1807), the Reformed preacher expelled from his predikstoel and the Church, by the Synode of Overijssel (like Van Leenhof) at Zwolle, for heterodoxy, in 1755, another considering the problem posed by the extraordinary emotional outbursts associated with the ‘opwekkingsbeweging’ that started at Nijkerk, in the Veluwe, in 1749; and that by M. Van Rooijen-Van Kempen, which analyzes the curious periodical De

Verlichting should appear at this point.
Zeedemeester der Kerkelyken published in the years 1750-1752 by the Lutheran preacher Philippus Ludovicus Statius Muller under the pseudonym, ‘Philippus Aletophilus’. There is also a piece by Jan de Vet on the anonymous, fiercely anti-clerical journalist who published a periodical under the title De snelziende Lynceus, at Amsterdam, in the late 1740s; and another by Ton Jongenelen on the rather strange anonymously published text, De godsdienst zonder bygelooft, bevattende het geloof der deisten (1752), by Pieter Bakker (1703-1761), a homosexually-inclined, somewhat unbalanced man who suffered more than his fill of persecution at the hands of the public church and whose life ended tragically in suicide.

The five contributions of the fourth part focus on the still very fraught issue of toleration in the Republic. Among these, Ernestine van der Wall revisits the impact of the Marmontel affair on Dutch society, in 1768-1769, showing how deep was the rift that the controversy between hard-line and more liberal Reformed provoked, in particular causing disagreement about the scope of toleration, with ‘toleranten’ opposed to ‘anti-toleranten’; and René van den Berg deals with the ‘anti-Enlightenment’ preacher and publicist, Johannes Barueth (1709-1782). Two more of this group, by Theo Clemens, consider the impact of the Enlightenment on the Catholic community that by Jack de Mooij, focusing on the position of the roughly 500 Catholics who lived in Vlissingen, in particular. It took until 1778 until the Vlissingen town government permitted a Catholic schuilkerk to be built; a massive anti-Catholic popular demonstration and riot, on 12 October 1778, obliged the town regents to close it again.

All in all, it is clear that the Enlightenment made massive inroads in the eighteenth century Republic but without shifting the traditional confessional attitudes and intolerance of most of the population. The fifth part of the volume comprises four essays on social and cultural aspects of the subject and the sixth, three essays on the relationship between state and church. A fascinating seventh and concluding section consists of two essays dealing with early and mid nineteenth-century views on Enlightenment and anti-Enlightenment, confirming that it was not only most of the population but also part of the intellectual elite who roundly rejected the Verlichting.

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Lijst van webrecensies


Chotkowski, M., Vijftien ladders en een dambord. Contacten van Italiaanse migranten in Nederland 1860-1940 (Dissertatie Universiteit van Amsterdam 2006; Amsterdam: Aksant, 2006, 294 blz., ISBN 90 5260 204 2) (Corrie van Eijl)

