

tudes towards women's work are only very briefly addressed. In comparing, contrasting and connecting women's economic roles in the Netherlands and Java, Van Nederveen Meerkerk makes an original contribution to the field of Dutch imperial economic history. However, such Dutch research could benefit greatly from feminist and decolonizing approaches to knowledge production that are more considerate of and sensitive to colonized peoples' and women's perspectives.

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Jan Willem Veluwenkamp and Werner Scheltjens (eds.), *Early Modern Shipping and Trade. Novel Approaches Using Sound Toll Registers Online* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018). 243 p. ISBN 9789004371774.

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The registers of Elsinore's Sound Toll (Denmark) scarcely need an introduction. They are one of the best known sets of primary sources on Europe's maritime transport and trade from the beginning of the sixteenth well into the nineteenth century. For the past one hundred years, economic historians have mined from these serial records to obtain information on the flows, volumes and value of intra-continental trade, and to assess the increasing exposure of European markets to all sorts of products coming from overseas. In turn, political, diplomatic and military historians have also taken an interest in the Sound Toll registers because they provide evidence on the reach and effectiveness of the 'mercantilist' (for lack of a better term) policies of pre-industrial European states.

While everyone but the non-specialist scholar might assume that these primary sources have yielded all the information and insight they could, the authors of this edited volume show that there is still much to be done with them. The volume makes use of a novel database of the Sound Toll registers, the STRO (Sound Toll Registers Online), patiently compiled over the past decade as part of a project based at the University of Groningen and Tresoor, the Frisian Historical and Literary Centre, in Leeuwarden (www.soundtoll.nl). The main goal of the editors of *Early Modern Shipping and Trade* is to establish the STRO as the reference tool for the study of the Baltic trade in the *longue durée*.

As the editors claim in the introduction (and the volume's contributions confirm) the STRO supersedes previous summaries of the Sound Toll registers, such as the seven volume 'Sound Toll Tables' (*Tabeller over Skibsfart og Varen-*

transport gennem Øresund, in the original Danish) compiled by Bang and Korst in the first half of the twentieth century. It does so by allowing a more varied and detailed analysis of shipping routes, the composition of cargoes in transit, the patterns of specialization of specific ports and even aggregate estimates of the national volumes and values of trade to and from the Baltic. Another major breakthrough of the novel dataset is that it includes brand new data for the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, whereas the STT stopped in the 1780s. Last but not least, the STRO can be accessed online, making its contents easily available to the academic community at large.

The volume's ten contributions, all of which make use of the new dataset and demonstrate its analytical potential (and equally its shortcomings), are organized in a four-part structure. The first part deals with the impact of politics and human constraints on the patterns and volumes of trade that passed through the Sound. This is exemplified through different cases studies, namely the Partitions of Poland and the commercial ascent of Prussian in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the evolution of Stockholm's external trade in the 1700s and the permeability of the grain trade embargo that Britain imposed on Napoleon's France.

The second part demonstrates how the STRO can be used to shed light on import and export markets, located far away from the Baltic. Its three chapters range from an overview of Spain's centuries' long reliance on Dutch shipping and commercial entrepreneurship to reach out to the Scando-Baltic markets, to a comparison between the structure and regulating mechanisms of the Baltic with the Mediterranean, and to the various commercial circuits through which German ports and hinterlands imported from and exported to the Baltic.

The third part puts the STRO to the test in a more macro analytical sense by comparing the serial data it yields on the volumes and values of France's, Portugal's and Sweden's trade with the Baltic during the eighteenth century. Finally, the two contributions on the fourth and last part rely on name recognition analysis to measure the speed of the voyages that passed through the Sound and the involvement of West Frisian shipmasters and crews in the Dutch trade with the Baltic in the 1700s.

One of the volume's strengths is the way it combines the STRO with other data sets, such as in the chapters of Crespo Solana (the CrespoDynCoopNet-Data Collection) and Galani (the *Lloyd's List*), but especially in the two papers on part 3 (Daudin and Charle's and Ojala et al.), which compare and contrast the custom records of the STRO with the national statistics compiled by French, Swedish and Portuguese Boards of Trade. By having its registers cross-checked with other archival series, the accuracy and completeness of the novel registers is scrutinised and their analytical potential is expanded.

Early Modern Shipping and Trade is not without some of the customary drawbacks of such edited volumes. The quality of individual chapters and the range of insights offered varies. Some contributions are more descriptive and do not refer to a wider historiographical problem or question that the STRO could clarify. In certain chapters the conclusions drawn from the new dataset are not particularly novel, while others provide some preliminary new findings but offer little in the way of explanation, referring the reader to research to be carried out sometime in the future. In some other chapters the reader could have used a basic exposition of the context behind the shipping and trade flows analysed therein. Naturally, not all contributions will hold the same interest to every reader (who will find some topics or geographies to be of greater interest than others), but this should not be held against a volume that spans various corners of the European continent (from Archangelsk to the Mediterranean Levant). In turn, it is a pity that, from a database spanning a period of four centuries, the majority of the contributions focus on the eighteenth century and the early 1800s. An analysis of the sixteenth century for instance would have better showcased the full chronological reach of the STRO. Finally, this reviewer would have welcomed a chapter where a more ‘micro’ approach is followed, for example by looking at the entrepreneurial careers of a few representative individuals involved in trade and shipping. By narrowing down the scope, some light could have been shed on the day-to-day aspects of seafaring communities and a voice given to the individuals hiding behind the ‘big data’.

Despite these shortcomings, the volume makes a convincing case for the STRO as a highly useful tool for future research. This edited volume is a welcoming addition to the field of European trade and market integration from the *Ancien Régime* into the industrial era. Apart, from the macro-economic oriented scholars, who will relish the database’s voluminous quantitative data, this book will be of some interest to scholars of merchant networks, those interested in the lives of seafaring communities and even to diplomatic and military historians, especially with regards to the transnational commodity chains that underpinned the supplying of the armed forces of various warring states. We can only wait and see how our knowledge can be further deepened through the use of the STRO in the years to come, particularly in fields like environmental history or in the study of consumption preferences and trends.

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