Wim Klooster & Gert Oostindie, *Realm between Empires: The Second Dutch Atlantic, 1680–1815*. Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2018. viii + 337 pp. (Cloth US\$39.95)

The history of the early modern Atlantic world is in the midst of something of a “Dutch turn.” Increasingly, scholars are recognizing the importance of the Netherlands and their overseas colonies in the Atlantic system and incorporating Dutch people and places in their research. Much of the responsibility for this historiographical moment can be credited to scholars such as the historians Wim Klooster and Gert Oostindie. For the past generation, Klooster and Oostindie have emphasized the importance of the Dutch in the Atlantic world and inspired a younger generation of scholars—not only of the Dutch, but also of the British, French, Portuguese, and Spanish empires—to build Dutch perspectives and sources into their work. Following on their 2011 edited volume, *Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795–1800*, their new, co-authored, book is reflective of this movement as it draws upon their deep knowledge of the Dutch Atlantic and synthesizes the latest scholarship on the subject.

Realm between Empires should also be considered a sequel to Klooster’s *The Dutch Moment* (2016). There, Klooster explored the rise and fall of the Dutch empire in the seventeenth-century Atlantic world and chronicled the Atlantic dimensions of the Dutch Revolt, the Dutch conquest and loss of Brazil and New Netherland, and the creation and collapse of the first Dutch West India Company. This new book picks up where *The Dutch Moment* left off, exploring the Dutch Atlantic in the long eighteenth century. This period was not characterized by imperial ambition and territorial conquest. Rather (as the title implies), the Dutch became middlemen and free traders in a mercantilist world. Klooster and Oostindie explain that the presence of the Dutch “allowed the various mercantilist systems to function better, plugging holes and adding lubricants wherever possible” (pp. 255–56). The Dutch presence in the eighteenth-century Atlantic ameliorated some of the worst aspects of mercantilist empires, namely limited access to manufactured and Asian goods, by offering those products and other services to Spanish, British, French, and Portuguese colonists. When other European empires began adopting free-trade policies in the late eighteenth century, however, it spelled doom for the Dutch Atlantic system, rendering most of their colonies obsolete and destroying all memory of their importance.

Realm between Empires consists of an introduction, seven chapters, and a conclusion. Klooster and Oostindie combine the latest literature and their vast knowledge of the primary sources to walk readers through the history of the eighteenth-century Dutch Atlantic with great effect. The first and last chapter

NEW WEST INDIAN GUIDE

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are chronological narratives that provide an overview of the origins, and then the decline, of the Dutch Atlantic system. The chapters in between focus on various themes and places. Chapter 2 examines finance, government, and commerce, helping readers make sense of the complicated system of public and privatized governance, while Chapter 6 is, at the moment, the only intellectual history of the eighteenth-century Dutch Atlantic. The three middle chapters explore the geographic regions of the Dutch Atlantic, including West Africa (Chapter 3), the Guianas (Chapter 4), and the “Insular Caribbean” (Chapter 5).

The book is framed by the theme of “entanglement.” Dutch colonists and colonies were part of extensive networks of trade, finance, and circulation that crossed imperial boundaries. Every Dutch colony in the Americas, even the plantation colonies of Suriname, Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo, had extensive connections outside the Dutch realm. Over 90 percent of the ships that traded in Suriname, for example, were from British North America. In West Africa, the Dutch West India Company’s fortress at Elmina remained solvent by catering to Portuguese and Brazilian slavers. The Dutch Caribbean islands, especially Curaçao and St. Eustatius, were effectively free-trade ports, offering slaves, luxury goods, rum, and manufactures to Spanish, British, and French colonists. These islands were also clearing houses for a number of commodities (such as Venezuelan mules and cacao in the case of Curaçao) that fueled commerce across the Caribbean and in the Netherlands itself. Likewise, people from many different European and African ethnic backgrounds populated Dutch colonies, while Dutch Creoles drifted around the Atlantic littoral, living as merchants and planters in many different empires.

Overall, this is an important book for scholars of early America, the early Caribbean, and the early modern Atlantic world. As Klooster and Oostindie lament, the study of the Dutch Atlantic has been hindered by the language barrier. Now, because of their brilliant work, we have the first comprehensive history of the eighteenth-century Dutch Atlantic available in English. More significantly, *Realm between Empires* conclusively demonstrates that the Dutch must be included in discussions of the early modern Atlantic world.

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