

BOOKS ON BLACK AFRICA. THE DUTCH PUBLICATIONS AND THEIR OWNERS IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES*

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I. Public opinion, publications, publishers

The political struggles, first with the Spanish-Habsburg Monarchy, later with England and France, were vital issues for Dutch public opinion, not least because they were closely tied to commercial expansion outside Europe. Before 1700 West Africa was one of the arenas where the opponents met. Dutch successes and failures were brought to the attention of the public through maps, pamphlets and books. After 1700 it was clear that the Dutch share in the Atlantic economy was limited and the Republic's position in its hierarchy of power subordinate. The Dutch overseas enterprise had now one centre: Batavia on Java. West African affairs faded into the background. The Cape colony benefited from an enduring and strong interest in the East Indies. It assumed the place formerly occupied by the Gold Coast in the Dutch public mind when it was focused on Africa.

In addition to the struggles for power and wealth, religious matters strongly moved public opinion. The divisions within Christianity were a theme of endless discourse; the massive idolatry outside it posed a challenge to the missionary clergy as well as to learned men, who for a variety of motives undertook comparative studies of beliefs and customs. The Ethiopian Christians were written about, and even the Catholic missionary endeavours in other parts of Africa received some coverage in the growingly Protestant Dutch Republic.

Linked to these religious and profane interests, there developed a curiosity about the geography of the world. The sales of single, illustrated maps, often used to decorate walls, soared in the Northern Netherlands during the seventeenth century. The interest in geographical literature was probably stimulated by this curiosity, although books were primarily intended for the literate public and were not, as a rule, bought to adorn drawing rooms.

Some of the preconditions for the spread of knowledge about sub-Saharan Africa through print were perhaps more favourable in the Dutch Republic than elsewhere in Western Europe. The printers and booksellers of Holland became the leading ones after 1600. They served national and international markets.¹ An estimated 100,000 titles, perhaps half of the total European book production of the seventeenth century, were printed in the Dutch Republic.² Apart from works in Dutch these included Latin and French books that were distributed all over Europe. Dutch booksellers boosted the sales of second-hand books through the invention of the printed book auction sale catalogue.³ In the eighteenth century the Dutch share in European book production declined, although the performance of printers and booksellers

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1 Furstner, 1985: chap. 3; Eeghen, 1978: vol. V¹.

2 Selm, 1982 a: 153–154.

3 Selm, 1985: 16–55, 115–150.

remained respectable compared to that of their colleagues in France and England. During the last two centuries of the *ancien régime* the Dutch Republic served as an intellectual entrepôt for Europe. Together with other stocks of learning, European knowledge about Africa circulated through this Dutch distributing system.

The remarkable growth of Dutch book printing and selling has been attributed to the absence of preventive censorship and the very few interventions of public authorities after publication. This tolerance was of little import for the publishing of books on sub-Saharan Africa, since they would seldom contain anything to invite censorship. Of more importance for the spread of knowledge about this region was the fact that the trading companies did not hinder their employees from publishing about their adventures on faraway shores.

The books on sub-Saharan Africa printed in the Dutch Republic and listed in nineteenth- and twentieth-century bibliographies constitute a very heterogeneous collection.⁴ The 120 titles (50 in the seventeenth century, 70 in the eighteenth) contain only two dozen books that deal exclusively with sub-Saharan Africa. They are mostly eye-witness accounts by Dutchmen or – in translation – by foreigners. The majority of the titles refer to travel accounts, published separately or in compilations, of which only a part deals with Africa. Thus, there are listed dozens of journals recounting a voyage to the East Indies, because they mention a stay at the Cape. Other titles refer to voyages to all four parts of the world or dramatic shipwrecks en route to the East. The other publications are pamphlets on political clashes between European powers on the African coast, comparative studies of beliefs and customs and a few natural history or belletristic works. What is lacking in Dutch publications on sub-Saharan Africa is an independent series of missionary publications. Nor is there an abolitionist literature, since that movement hardly existed in the eighteenth-century Republic. In what follows, I will deal mainly with the monographs on sub-Saharan Africa.

Sixteenth-century printers in the Southern and Northern Netherlands had prepared the ground by issuing some of the Italian and Iberian accounts of Black Africa. Johannes Leo Africanus was published in Antwerp in Latin and French editions. Cadamosto's description of Senegal was part of the *Nieuwe Werelt* (Antwerp 1563), a Dutch translation of Grynaeus' compilation. Dutchmen were informed of the Portuguese sea-route to Asia and *en passant* of 'Gunea' and Prester John's Land by the broadsheet printed by Jan van Doesborch in 1508. Damião de Goes' Latin account of Ethiopia appeared in Louvain, Fr. Alvarez' book, in Spanish, in Antwerp. Paludanus added a description of West Africa to Linschoten's *Itinerario* (Amsterdam 1595). Cornelisz Claesz published a Dutch translation of Pigafetta's account of the Congo in 1596. João de Barros and other Portuguese chroniclers were translated only later.

The Gold Coast and Congo-Angola were the first regions in sub-Saharan Africa in which the Dutch became involved. On these areas they published their earliest and most original contributions: P. de Marees (1602), D. Ruiters (1623), P. van den Broecke (1634), O. Dapper (1668) and W. Bosman (1704). Before 1700, hardly any other works on these areas – in Dutch, in Dutch translation or as a foreign language edition – were published in the Republic except for two French travel accounts in 1692 and 1698. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Pieter van der Aa partially filled these lacunae, in his series *Zee- en Landreysen*, by translations of J. de Barros, A. Battell, R. Jobson and O. von der Groeben. Later on there appeared in the Netherlands four French works – F. Froger (1715; original 1698), J.-B. La-

4 Veth and Kan, 1876; Ouwinga, 1975: 271–290.

bat (1731; original 1728–29), [N.] Gueudeville (1732) and A. E. Pruneau de Pommegorge (1789; original 1788) – as well as a French translation of W. Snelgrave (1735; English original 1734) and a Dutch translation of P. E. Isert (1790; German original 1788).

Few Dutchmen wrote books on the Cape colony. There is the pamphlet of 1652 and a chapter in Valentijn's *Oud en Nieuw Oostindië* (1724–26). The later descriptions are virtually all translations or compilations of foreign authors: P. Kolbe (1727) and a handful of works around 1780, including a translation of A. Sparrman (1787). The seventeenth-century Dutch reader could learn about Ethiopia through translations of F. Mendes Pinto (1652), J. Moquet (1656) and J. Ludolph (1687). Pieter van der Aa supplemented this corpus with translations of Telles/Almeida and F. Lobo (1707; another translation in 1728).

Some of these monographs were money-makers for the publishers, if one judges by the number of reprints and foreign language editions printed in Holland. Number one on the success list was Linschoten's *Itinerario* with 12 editions, followed by Bosman with 7, Leo Africanus, De Marees and Dapper with 4 each, Van den Broecke and Ruiters with 3 each. Linschoten and extracts from De Marees and Ruiters were also published as part of the most successful seventeenth-century Dutch travel collections, such as *Begin ende Voortgang*. I have not encountered any specific information on the number of copies printed of these editions. Van Eeghen states that impressions of 675–2000 copies were customary. Generally, the authors were poorly paid for their efforts, even compared to the editors, illustrators and translators. The receipts from a published work supplemented other income and cannot have been a major incentive to take up writing.⁵

These works were issued by a large number of publishers, the majority of them living in Amsterdam. Some specialised in geographical literature, like Cornelis Claesz, Joost Hartgers, J. van Meurs and Pieter van der Aa, but none can be said to have specialised in *Africana*.⁶ The monographs on sub-Saharan Africa were the smallest part of a more comprehensive geographical literature dealing with the Americas and Asia.

Many works of the European corpus on sub-Saharan Africa did not appear in a Dutch edition. In the literature on Guinea authors such as the following are lacking: the Frenchmen C. Jannequin, and P. Gaby; the Germans W. J. Müller and H. J. zur Eich; the Scandinavians E. Tilleman, J. Rask and F. C. Rømer; the Englishmen J. Atkins, Fr. Moore, W. Smith, A. Dalzel, J. Mathews and A.-M. Falconbridge. In the corpus on Congo: the Italians G. F. Romano, M. Guattini, G. A. Cavazzi, A. Zuchelli and the Frenchman L. Proyard. Likewise the Dutch editions on the Cape and East Africa do not include: Joh. Schreyer, W. ten Rhyne, J. dos Santos, A. de Sandoval, J. G. Böving, M. Wintergeest or O. Mentzel. Some of these works, published abroad, did reach Dutch collections through the international book trade, but not many. After the publication of Bosman, the importance of Dutch publishers in spreading the knowledge of Black Africa to the rest of Europe dwindled. They functioned only moderately well as intermediaries between the Dutch public and the stream of foreign language publications outside the Dutch Republic.

5 Eeghen, 1965: vol. III: 169 and 1978: vol. V¹: 29.

6 On Cornelis Claesz: Selm, 1980: 102–126. On Van Meurs and Dapper: Eeghen, 1972: 250–272. On Pieter van der Aa: Eeghen, 1978: vol. V¹: 179–191.

II. Book collections, large and small

The readership of books on sub-Saharan Africa can be partially reconstructed through a study of the catalogues of institutional libraries, lists of subscribers to a specific publication, probate inventories and book auction sale catalogues. Each type of source has its drawbacks and advantages for the purpose of this investigation.⁷

The contents of the early modern Dutch university and town libraries do perhaps mirror the intellectual preoccupations of the communities they were supposed to serve, but only in a distorted way. The town libraries acquired their contents very haphazardly, dependent as they were on individual donations and sporadic community financing. The holdings of the University libraries were collected somewhat more systematically, at least for traditional fields of learning, but they also had their changing fortunes. The policy of acquiring almost exclusively books in Latin, which lasted well into the eighteenth century, sets another limitation. The catalogues of these public libraries have the advantage of showing what was available to their users over a long period of time. However, it seems very difficult, if not impossible, to establish who these users were and which works they consulted. Libraries as indicators of the intellectual interests of individuals or a milieu are better studied through the other types of sources.

A list of subscribers to a book is interesting because it shows who wanted to acquire it in advance, a sign of some commitment to the subject. In the Dutch Republic, publishers began to use this method of financing at the end of the seventeenth century and then only for expensive publications.⁸ Among the books on sub-Saharan Africa printed in the Dutch Republic I know of only one with a list of subscribers: the Dutch translation of Peter Kolbe's description of the Cape of Good Hope, published in Amsterdam by Balthasar Lakeman in 1727. The list of subscribers gives an indication of the social setting in which this work has to be placed, at the time of its first appearance. It tells us nothing about the character of the collections of which the book was to become a part.

The auction sale catalogues of libraries of which the owner is known are in this respect more informative. In many cases, they mention the profession of the collector. They show the position of a book within a collection and thus the place it may have occupied within the interests of the owner. However, one should be very careful in drawing this type of conclusion. An auction sale catalogue can give a very distorted image of a collection, because a substantial part may not have been put up for sale but disposed of in another way by the heirs or the auctioneer. Booksellers, who in many towns organised these auctions, used quite frequently to sell surreptitiously their own stock. Even when the catalogue states correctly the contents of a library, it may give a wrong idea of the intellectual preoccupations of its owner. For example, the auction sale catalogue of the books of Gerard Johan Vossius (1577–1649) contains very few books that this famous Dutch humanist had once possessed. What was offered for sale at Leyden in 1656 was a selection of works from the library of Christina of Sweden, which Isaac Vossius, Gerard's son, had received from the Queen in compensation for arrears in payments to her former librarian and for books from Vossius' collection that

⁷ Staub, 1984: 110–124. The contributions by Raabe, Weyrauch and Wittmann, in Wittmann ed., 1985.

On book auctions in the Dutch Republic: Eeghen, 1978: vol. V¹: 237–274.

⁸ Eeghen, 1978: vol. V¹: 50–51. The dedications, congratulatory poems and other introductory material may contain valuable information about the milieu of the author and the most immediate circle of readers at the time of the first edition.

she had arbitrarily appropriated. In this selection were volumes that came originally from the libraries of such diverse figures as Hugo Grotius, the Emperor Rudolph II and the Dietrichstein family.⁹ This is an extreme example, but it shows the necessity of consulting other sources as well, wherever possible, before judging the characteristics of a collection on the basis of its auction sale catalogues. Historical pyrrhonists might argue that these catalogues do not reveal so much the character of collections, let alone the intellectual interests of the owner, as what booksellers chose to dispose of by means of an auction.

Another limitation of auction sale catalogues is that they contain information only about the larger collections. It paid to have a catalogue printed when at least a few hundred items could be auctioned.¹⁰ In the Dutch Republic, book auctions without a printed catalogue were more frequent than those which were advertised in this way. Many of the smaller collections were disposed of through this type of sale. Quantitative research on Dutch book ownership in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has begun only recently. In an analysis of probate inventories of Amsterdam inhabitants between 1701 and 1710 J. A. Faber found an average of six books in his lowest tax category (average wealth *f* 3, 334); in the highest category (*f* 71,789) it was 138 books.¹¹ Similar research in Delft, Leyden, Gouda and Hoorn shows comparable results.¹² Apparently, collections of more than 300 books were exceptional even among the higher-income, urban strata. The situation in the countryside will not have been different.¹³ The book auction catalogues most frequently mention as occupation of the owners a university professorship, a position in local or provincial government for which an academic training was required or other jobs of those educated at universities.

Probate inventories cover a broader group of owners than book auction catalogues. They allow inferences about the value of books within the totality of material possessions. There is a reasonable chance that the total number of books is accurately recorded. However, as Faber's lowest tax category shows, not only the poor but the lower-income groups as well are severely under-represented. Another disadvantage of this type of source is that the description of the book titles is often very brief or garbled. The most serious problem for systematic research is, however, one of access. Most of the inventories have not been published and this situation is unlikely to change.

For that reason, I have mainly used printed book auction sale catalogues for this exploratory investigation of Dutch ownership of books on sub-Saharan Africa. An inventory of these catalogues does not exist; but the pioneering explorations of B. van Selm have made it seem likely that at least 2,000 Dutch catalogues are still extant for the period 1599–1800.¹⁴ A considerable number, especially early seventeenth-century ones, are to be found in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, the Heidelberg University Library, the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris as well as Merton College and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. For this investigation I have used only the copies available at the

9 Blok, 1974: 16–34.

10 Selm, 1982 b: 95–129 and 1985: 16–55, 115–150.

11 Faber, 1980: 149–155.

12 Oral communication by Mrs Thera Wijsenbeek, Department of History, University of Amsterdam, who is preparing a dissertation on the distribution of wealth in eighteenth-century Delft. For Gouda, Leyden and Hoorn see Jong, 1985: 267; Prak, 1985: 291; Kooijmans, 1985: 199–200, 207.

13 Meertens, 1970: 39–42.

14 Selm, 1982 b and 1985.

Royal Library, The Hague, and the Amsterdam University Library.¹⁵ I have seen all the seventeenth-century items in these collections. For the eighteenth century I selected the catalogues of the larger collections that were deemed most interesting by the nineteenth-century book historian Fredrik Muller, still the only authority we have on this subject. I supplemented these with catalogues of collections that contained both books and exotica¹⁶ and added a few published library inventories from probate records. To compare the private and public libraries I have used the printed catalogues of university, town and stadholder libraries. Finally, I collected biographical data on the subscribers to the Dutch edition of Peter Kolbe.

The occupational break-down of library owners (Table 1) shows that many of them were teachers or preachers. This is a consequence of the many book auction sale catalogues used. Geographically, the selection is rather limited as well. With the exception of ten all the libraries came from Holland or Zeeland towns, especially Leyden, The Hague, Amsterdam and Middelburg. The collections studied contained at least a few hundred books, in many cases a few thousand. Thus, we are dealing with the very thin upper crust of book-owners.

These limitations are perhaps not too serious for this particular investigation. It seems unlikely that owners of less than ten books possessed geographical works; rather, they owned a copy of the Bible, hymn books and popular romances. Half the population of the Dutch Republic lived in Holland and Zeeland, the provinces most involved in overseas commerce. It is to be expected that the urban patriciate and middle classes were the milieu in which interest in extra-European affairs was greatest. One piece of evidence, albeit without any statistical value, is worth noticing here. The only library inventory of a farmer that I have seen does not contradict these suppositions. Dirck Jansz, from St. Anna-Parochie (Friesland), possessed 44 titles in 1620. Most of them were folk books such as *Reynard Fox*, *Floris* and *Blancefloer*, *Uilenspiegel*; the others are religious, historical and political works. Geographical books were absent.¹⁷

An analysis of the subscribers to Peter Kolbe's description of the Cape points – despite its incompleteness – to a few interesting directions for further research on urban book-owners. I have managed to establish the occupations of 95 of the 314 subscribers (Table 1). The large number of town and provincial officials indicates that further research on this group might be more worthwhile for the subject under consideration than on the teachers and preachers so amply represented in the book auction sale catalogues. Among them are some well-known *mercatores sapientes*: P. Teyler van der Hulst (1702–1778), the founder of Holland's most attractive science museum in Haarlem, Georg Clifford (1685–1760), who supported Linneaus during his stay in Holland, and the grain merchant and comparative linguist Lambert ten Cate (1674–1731). Another remarkable point in the subscription list is the large number of burgomasters and councillors of small towns. This patriciate of the small towns is hardly represented in our sample taken from the auction catalogues and probate inventories. A final striking feature of the subscriber list is the number of writers, poets and engravers. None of them were big names in the history of Dutch literature or the visual arts, but like the small town patriciate they participated in cultural circuits of which little is known.¹⁸ The inven-

15 De Laet's catalogue is in the Royal Library, Copenhagen. I consulted a photocopy, kindly made available by R. van Gelder.

16 These were drawn from Lugt, 1938.

17 Gerbenzon ed., 1960: 36–37.

18 The urban settings of Dutch painting are discussed in Haak, 1984 and Schwartz, 1986.

Table 1. Occupations of Dutch Library Owners and of the Subscribers to P. Kolbe 1727

	17th c.	18th c.	Kolbe
Higher education	20	5	10
Clergy	15		6
Magistrates	11	15	46
Medical doctors	4	3	
Merchants	5		6
Writers			10
Artists	1	1	7
Booksellers	2	1	6
Nobility	1		
Farmer	1		
Military	2		4
Not identified	10	9	
Anon.	3		
Total	79	34	95

ories of the manors of Ammersode and Amerongen point to another weak spot in the sample: the libraries of country squires. Both collections contain a fair number of travel books.¹⁹ The small town patriciate, writers, painters, engravers and the provincial nobility are groups on which the sources consulted for this inquiry remain largely silent.

What do the sources contain on books about sub-Saharan Africa in the collections of university professors, clergy, rulers and merchants from the larger towns of Holland and Zeeland? Books on extra-European areas were seldom completely absent, but often there were no more than a few such volumes. Works on newly discovered lands made up a small percentage of the total. For example, the sections on geography and travel, *including* books on Europe, in 27 collections of eighteenth-century *regenten* in Hoorn, Leyden and Gouda comprised between 6 and 12 % of the total number of books.²⁰ In the materials under consideration a pattern seems to emerge. In a seventeenth-century collection with only a few geographical books, there is a good chance that these few works were cosmographies or comparative studies of manners, originating in the sixteenth century: S. Münster, Fr. Bellesforest, A. Thevet, P. d'Avity.²¹ In a larger collection of geographical works one finds in addition to the cosmographies the early compilations of travel literature: Ramusio, De Bry, *Begin ende Voortgangh*, sometimes Hakluyt or Purchas. Dapper's tome on Africa often belongs to this category, because it makes up a set together with his volumes on the Middle East and Asia, A. Montanus' works on the Americas and Japan, J. H. Niehof on China and Ph. Baldaeus on the Malabar and Coromandel Coasts.²² Seventeenth-century collectors apparently considered the monographic literature an addition to the encyclopedic works. P. de Marees' description of the Gold Coast, Pigafetta's of the Congo and the *Decades* of J. de Barros are generally found in collections that also contained cosmographies and compilations of travel accounts. The monographs on the Americas and the East Indies are as a rule more numerous than those

19 Küpper, 1979: 109–114; Rietbergen, 1982: 271–284.

20 Kooijmans, 1985: 199–200, 231; Prak, 1985: 222–223, 291; Jong, 1985: 207–209, 267.

21 Hodgen, 1964: 131–154.

22 Eeghen, 1972: 250–272.

on sub-Saharan Africa. In the eighteenth-century collections, the cosmographic literature gradually disappears. The seventeenth-century travel compilations are supplemented by series such as Pieter van der Aa's *Naaukeurige verzameling der gedenkwaardigste Reysen na Oost- en West-Indiën* (1707). This genre remained a favourite with the collector who bought little on geography. Monographs appear mostly in the larger collections. This encyclopedic preference in the selection of geographical works on the extra-European world means that specialised collections of Africana are not likely to have been formed. At least, I have not encountered any.

Eighty percent of the inventories consulted do not mention any monographs on sub-Saharan Africa. A few examples from the remaining twenty percent may serve to illustrate the collection profiles discussed above. First, the seventeenth-century rulers and merchants. The library of the Leyden merchant Daniel van der Meulen (1600) comprised 1,200 titles; among the few works on the extra-European world appear a Ramusio and a Latin edition of Johannes Leo Africanus.²³ The jurist A. van de Walle (1648) owned a cosmography by A. Thevet and another by P. d'Avity, *Begin ende Voortgangh* as well as an edition of Johannes Leo Africanus. Three of the 438 volumes of the Amsterdam medical doctor and man of letters S. Coster (1665) contain sections on Black Africa: S. Münster's cosmography, Johannes Leo Africanus in the Elsevier Republics series and Linschoten's *Itinerario*.²⁴ Ph. Marnix van St. Aldegonde, one of the leaders of the Dutch Revolt, left behind a library of 1,700 volumes; the printed auction catalogue (1599), the oldest known one of its kind, mentions only S. Münster's and A. Thevet's cosmographies in addition to a few Americana. The Leyden burgomaster J. J. Orlers (1646) could learn about Africa from his copy of S. Münster and Linschoten's *Itinerario*. Th. à Beeresteyn (1695), a magistrate of Delft, owned a varied and multilingual collection with substantial historical and geographical sections, but these dealt almost exclusively with Europe; Johannes Leo Africanus in the Elsevier edition was his only volume on Africa. The admiral Michiel de Ruyter, who made a famous expedition to West Africa in 1664–1665, left few books behind in 1677, none of them dealing with the extra-European world.²⁵

The geographical sections of many libraries of seventeenth-century Dutch scholars show the same profile, e. g. the Leyden philologist J. J. Scaliger (1609; 1,700 volumes), the sequestered collection of Hugo Grotius (1618), the library of the classicist D. Heinsius (1655).²⁶ The Protestant clergymen W. Merwy (Delft 1636), D. à Gys (Leyden 1645), J. Rosarius (Haarlem 1650), W. Fabius (Delft 1677) owned no geographical books at all. The Catholic parochial library at Horst (1605) had a copy of D. de Goes' *Fides Ethiopum* (Antwerp 1535), but no other geographical volumes on the extra-European world. Nothing on Africa was to be found in the other Catholic libraries at Kerkrade (1609) and Wognum (1697).²⁷ Other Protestant clergy owned J. Ludolph's *Historia Aethiopica* or A. Ross' study of world religions. A rare copy of A. Sandoval's *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* occurs in the catalogue of Th. Winckelman (Leyden 1690).

23 Municipal Archives, Leyden, Van Der Meulen collection nr. 68. The other catalogues mentioned are in the Royal Library, The Hague, or in the University Library Amsterdam, unless stated otherwise.

24 Kleerekoper, 1898: 172–189.

25 Blok, 1928: 187–213.

26 For Grotius see Molhysen, 1943.

27 Herraets, 1980: 334–380; Frijhoff, 1977: 198–302.

In the eighteenth century geography gradually became a more autonomous field of learning, but of small importance compared to traditional subjects. In the auction catalogues geography often remains classed among the ancillary sciences of history. This subordinate position shows clearly even in some very large collections in which other subjects are very well represented. The collection of the tobacco merchant P.-A. Bolognaro-Crevenna was one of the sights for gentlemen passing through Amsterdam on the Grand Tour.²⁸ Its five-volume catalogue (1789) lists in addition to a few works on Asia and America a copy of Ramusio together with the 'Grands' and 'Petits Voyages' of De Bry. The only monographs on sub-Saharan Africa are Ludolph's *Historia Aethiopica* and a collection of Jesuit letters. Even two directors of the West and East India Companies in Zeeland owned remarkably little geographical literature: P. Buteux (1778) possessed no book on Africa; D. Luycx Massis (1771) owned a Valentijn and a Kolbe. In the libraries of scholars such as J. Perizonius (1715) and P. Burmannus Secundus (1779), the works on Black Africa were limited to a Dapper, a Dutch translation of Pigafetta or P. W. Godignus' *De Abassinorum Religio*. Collections with few geographical books on the extra-European world and *a fortiori* on Black Africa seem to occur in all occupational groups. Even a very large collection does not necessarily include a substantial section on extra-European geography.

The fifteen collections with a larger number of monographs on Black Africa occur in three occupational groups: the university professors, the magistrates and the merchants. Clergymen with large geographical collections are not represented in the sample, although this may very well be fortuitous. Jacob Golius (1596–1667) was professor of Arabic and mathematics at Leyden. In addition to the cosmographies by S. Münster, Fr. Bellesforest and P. d'Avity and the collections of Ramusio and *Begin ende Voortgangh*, he owned 21 monographs on sub-Saharan Africa; among them were five different editions of Johannes Leo Africanus, J. de Barros' *Decades*, works on Ethiopia by D. de Goes, Fr. Alvares, J. dos Santos and M. de Veiga, and Dutch, French and English works on West and Southern Africa. Joannes de Laet, a director of the West Indies Company and author of a successful description of the Americas, owned a comparable selection of Africana in addition to copies of Hakluyt and Purchas. The number of specialised works on Black Africa in these libraries of a few thousand volumes is remarkable when compared to those in the library of the diplomat A. Pauw (1654) with 16,000 volumes and the collection of 13,000 volumes of Nicolaes Heinsius.²⁹ The geographical sections in the more modest libraries of C. de Neyn (1681), a member of the Court of Holland, and of H. van der Hem (1674), probably an Amsterdam merchant, can stand up to the ones mentioned earlier.³⁰

The geographical works on the extra-European world in the important library of Henricus Twent (1790), a jurist and alderman of Leyden, seem representative of a late eighteenth-century collection: the cosmographies are lacking. There is a set of Dapper-Montanus-Niehof-Baldaeus covering Africa, Asia and the Americas, the 33 volumes of the *Tegenwoordige Staat van alle Volken*, the Dutch version of Th. Salmon's series. On Ethiopia there is J. Ludolph and J. Lobo, in French; on the Cape: Valentijn, Kolbe, Sparrman; on West Africa: Linschoten and Labat's *Voyage du Chevalier Des Marchais*. A comparable selection can be found in the library of D. Schorer (1771), secretary of the Court of Flanders.

28 Buijnsters, 1984: 144.

29 Krol, 1985: 71–97; Fontaine Verweij, 1986: 103–115; Graaf, 1957: 46–55, 139–149.

30 See also the catalogues of A. Bentes (1702) and P. van Uchelen (1703).

Still larger collections of Africana occur in the libraries of specialists in geography. Pieter van der Aa was the publisher of a series of translated travel accounts. It is in keeping that his library contained many geographical works. Among the 20 monographs on Black Africa are to be noticed M.-A. Gattini, M. Hemmersam, W. Müller, O. von der Groeben, Cl. Jannequin and most of the important Dutch authors. Less numerous, but still considerable are the monographs on Black Africa in the collections of Th. Boendermaker (1722), S. Hulsius (1730) and G. Uilenbroek (1741). These men do not appear in the current biographical dictionaries. They probably belonged to the *regenten* class. All three of them were assiduous map collectors.³¹ The large geography section in their libraries complemented the maps.

The libraries of the universities in Leyden, Utrecht and Groningen and the town libraries of Amsterdam, Enkhuizen, Haarlem, Delft, Hoorn and Gouda could not match the larger private collections. Their holdings were less extensive and consisted almost exclusively of Latin books in the traditional fields of learning. Only at the end of the seventeenth century did the Leyden University Library possess a geographical collection worth speaking of. The catalogue of 1716 mentions among the specialised literature on Black Africa nine books on Ethiopia, Pigafetta and Gattini on the Congo, but no De Marees, Dapper or Bosman. This was the most extensive collection of Africana in a public library.

The libraries of the stadholders were neither institutional nor public libraries. They were considered the private possession of the Oranges. Their contents were small. In 1608 Prince Maurits owned 432 volumes; the library of William III at the Oude Hof in The Hague contained 3,800 titles, seven of which comprised information on Black Africa. In 1749 this collection was auctioned. William IV and William V reconstituted a library, but geography remained of subordinate importance in these collections.³²

This investigation has been merely an exploratory one. It seems to indicate that monographs on sub-Saharan Africa occurred primarily in collections of more than a few hundred volumes, i. e. among the small upper crust of book owners in the Dutch Republic. Magistrates and merchants were perhaps more likely to own a few of these specialised works, especially when they were interested in the new geography, than university professors and clergymen, more devoted to ancient wisdom. Further research, paying more attention to the small-town patriciate and the landed nobility, will have to test and refine these provisional conclusions.

Original titles of cited works on Africa

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