

## XIV.

The introduction and conclusion both emphasize the importance of dynasticism in Louis XIV's reign with an explicit rejection of "modernist" theories of statism and centralization. Given the author's perspective, it is not surprising that Louis XIV's leadership is a focal point within the work, but the implementation and rationale of civil and royal policy in the field deserves increased coverage. Rowlands's total rejection of the statist view of seventeenth-century French history denies the vision of Louis XIV and his ministers, such as Colbert and Louvois, who recognized the importance of established interests (especially those of the nobility) but also the need for reform along rational lines. The desire for reform in civil and military administration coexisted with the continuation and manipulation of traditional patronage, clientage, or dynasticism by the king, his ministers, and royal agents.

The strength of this book is in the details about the management of war in terms of finances, communication, and personal ambitions of the military leaders from the bottom of the military pyramid to the king. Rowlands's mastery of intricate familial and political connections, with reference to multiple and shifting titles, is just one example of how the work is grounded in a solid understanding of the century, the people, and the system. His argument is clear, as is his strident rejection of other interpretations (notably those found in the works of John Lynn, such as *Giant of the Grand Siècle: The French Army, 1610-1715* (1997)), and it has changed the parameters of the ongoing discussion about 'absolutism' among military and political historians of the seventeenth century. Despite his overly broad conception of dynasticism as the primary way of understanding Louis XIV's kingdom and government, his work provides valuable information about royal power, status, and the place of the army within a broad framework of social, cultural, and political history, making an important contribution to our understanding of Louis XIV and his reign.

Alan James. *The Navy and Government in Early Modern France 1572-1661*. Rochester: Boydell & Brewster, 2004. ix + 198 pp. \$70.00. Review by EDWARD M. FURGOL, NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER.

Building upon his doctoral dissertation dealing with Richelieu and the French navy, James has produced a book that contains a number of surprises

for those who consider France to have been an insignificant naval power before Colbert. The book covers nearly ninety tumultuous years of French royal naval policy during the early modern period.

James's book divides into three sections: the navy in the 1570s-1620s, Richelieu's tenure as grand-maitre, and the legacy of his efforts. The first part, consisting of two chapters, addresses both the challenges presented to the crown by Huguenot naval power and the royal government's efforts to secure control of national naval assets. In the first case, a regal response was essential both to curb the potential of Huguenot financing through privateering and to stifle the consequences of the Protestants' involvement with their co-religionists' attacks on Hapsburg Spain, attacks which could have entangled France in unintended foreign wars. The second instance deals with activities dating back to the 1550s, generally through the office of admiral of France. The extensive remit of the admiral—over fortifications, ports, merchant shipping, and admiralty courts, in addition to warships and their munitions—may have presented the incumbent with problems insoluble in an early modern state. When one realizes that Brittany, a major maritime center, and the Mediterranean galley fleet lay outside the scope of the admiral's authority, the possibility of effective national mobilization of naval resources becomes even more questionable. In chapters three through seven, James charts how Richelieu (and his heirs until 1646, and the French state between then and 1660) attempted to resolve these and other problems. In order to circumvent local resistance to central authority, the cardinal secured key provincial and port governorships, as well as naval commands, for himself and his clientele. (Indeed, the increase in naval power required political manipulation, in addition to administrative efforts.) Richelieu simultaneously stressed his authority as Grand-Master of Navigation to control the sailing of merchant shipping and to maintain admiralty courts. Paradoxically, it was fear of English intervention on behalf of La Rochelle, and not the naval power of French's traditional enemy, Hapsburg Spain, that spurred efforts to increase the number of sailing warships, to create national shipbuilding yards and to develop port facilities for the navy. Following the successful siege of the Huguenot port, however, Spanish positions in the Channel, the Bay of Biscay, and the Mediterranean became the focus of French naval activity. These efforts had mixed results, with the capture of Dunkirk balanced against the failure to make headway in northeastern Spain and Italy. The galley fleet, with each ship privately owned

by the captains yet maintained by the national government, and Provence acting as a highly independent province, together presented a complex situation that Richelieu positively impacted by adding more galleys to the fleet. The cardinal contributed more directly to the navy by establishing royal shipyards at Le Havre and île d'Indret, as well as naval bases at the former, Brouage, and Brest. Despite the native production of warships, over a fifth of those in Atlantic service in 1638-40 (Table 2) had been purchased from the Dutch. Reliance on foreign shipbuilding continued as late as 1647, when the navy bought four Swedish warships. Richelieu tried to establish fiscal control of the navy, but like many early modern endeavors money advanced by individuals (including the cardinal) was essential to fund the fleet. One means of establishing sound financial oversight was the appointment of a single treasurer (in this case Louis Picard), who transformed the position from an investment to a career. Chapter eight illustrates how Colbert misrepresented the immediate past in order to enhance his own achievements with the navy. In the six years following Richelieu's death in 1642, France sustained its naval power. The Fronde, which had strong support in Bordeaux, Provence, and Normandy, checked the previous momentum. Intriguingly, the threat of hostilities with England in the mid-1650s led not to war, but to an alliance in 1657. Perhaps one could argue that English naval assistance removed the grounds for expansion of the French navy. James astutely observes that the physical and personal distance between the French capital and the country's maritime centers hampered the country from developing the commercial and naval power found in England, the United Provinces, Denmark-Norway, Sweden, and Portugal.

James's book has many sound qualities and a few shortcomings. His research in the primary sources and comprehension of the secondary sources is outstanding. The provision of a bibliography, as well as notes at the bottom of the page, is laudatory. Four tables in the appendix provide valuable information about the sources of warships in the Atlantic fleet, and the quality of those in the Mediterranean squadron. The index is serviceable. The exclusion of maps and images is unfortunate. Including charts that showed the conflicting lines of maritime authority would have helped one understand the complexity faced by the government in Paris.

James possesses a sound knowledge of the interpretations of his subject stretching from Colbert to the present. He rightly argues that Richelieu, rather

than creating innovative policies, regularly resurrected ideas dating back to the 1500s. The book focuses on political and administrative activities, which causes some difficulty in calculating the effectiveness of the French navy. Only a work concentrating on the operational aspects would allow one to see whether the cardinal's and his successors' efforts were justified by the results. James does a good job in comparing the French situation to the contemporary one in England. Given the French struggle between the center and localities, more attention should have been paid to the Dutch who functioned as a naval power despite a multiplicity of admiralties. Equally, more attention should have been paid to Spanish comparisons, since the period 1621-59 marks the eclipse of that country's navy.

James proves to the reviewer that the French navy was an integral part of the country's armed forces and not a mere afterthought. The book is valuable for scholars of early modern French and naval history. Given the book's complexity, it appears more suitable to academics and postgraduates than to undergraduates and the general reader.

Richard Butterwick, ed. *The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context, c.1500-1795*. Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001. xx + 250 pp. + 4 maps. \$95.00. Review by JAKUB BASISTA, JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY, KRAKÓW.

The English language book market does not spoil students of Central European history with too many publications. It is slightly better when contemporary history and post-Communist times are concerned, but books referring to mediaeval and early modern history are quite rare.

Thus any publication on the topic is welcome, as it enriches our reading lists and allows English language students to venture into the otherwise hardly-accessible territory of Latin, Hungarian, Lithuanian, and Slavic language publications based on sources in those languages. The more so when we are faced with so important a volume as the one presented here.

*The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context* is the result of a colloquium held at the Queen's University, Belfast in 1999. Reading this collection one has to admit that the said colloquium was very well thought up and prepared. It gathered a group of 10 speakers, each an expert on various aspect of European monarchy in the early modern period, and each presenting a different aspect of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth/Monarchy in