

Blom, Hans W. (ed.), *Property, Piracy and Punishment: Hugo Grotius on War and Booty in De Iure Praedae. Concepts and Contexts* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009, vi + 422 pp., ISBN 978 90 04 17513 6).

As editor Hans Blom notes, the 'interest for, and study of Hugo Grotius and Grotiana is rising, both in span and detail' (1). This volume, representing the work of seventeen scholars from across the globe, testifies to the international reach of Grotian studies. It contains the papers of an international conference that took part in June 2005 at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS). The degree to which it will appeal to those not already studying Grotius is another matter.

A conference volume is a challenge for editors and publishers alike. In this case, the ostensible focus of the volume is on a particular text (the manuscript volume *De Iure Praedae*) by Grotius. This focus allows the authors – who comprise a remarkable range of scholars working in such diverse fields as history, philosophy, political science and religious studies – to investigate several different themes emerging out of the text, each in their own disciplinary style. Essays address the sources (or lack thereof) of Grotius' thought; its legal and religious aspects; investigate the manuscript itself; and comment on its connections to ideas about piracy, trade, violence, and international order. Because the papers are short, and each comes with an abstract, the reader can easily dip into the volume at will and pull out those that address his/her questions or interest. In this sense, the volume has a coherence and significance for several fields of study that certainly merits publication.

However the real significance of the volume is hard to grasp. It seems to represent a state-of-the-field assessment of Grotian studies. For those unfamiliar with the NIAS conference that produced this volume and not fully up-to-date on Grotian scholarship (which is marvelously multi-

disciplinary), it would help to know more about the production of this volume. What were the editorial criteria? Are the authors simply those scholars familiar with or to some degree working on *De Iure Praedae*, or is it a group of important scholars invited to engage with that text by the conference organizers in the hopes that they would have something interesting and original to say about it?

One misses a strong interpretive hand in the compilation of this volume. This may well be an artifact of the editor's generosity. He seems to have included all the papers rather than sort through them with particular criteria in mind. The goal of the volume, as he says, is to show how *De Iure Praedae* 'is approached from different angles and perspectives', producing a collection with a 'conversational character' (9-10). This reviewer could not help but wish for a more authoritative guide through that conversation than the simple, very brief summaries of the papers provided in the introduction. For example, those (like this reviewer) uninitiated in the minutiae of Grotiana might want to know more about the lines of controversy and debate surrounding the man, his life, his writings, and the studies thereof. Also, within the volume there seems to be a certain amount of cognitive dissonance between the philosophical, legal and scientific scholars who want to insist on the specifics of Grotian thought and the textual scholars who insist on the various revisions involved in the creation of Grotian texts. Does this pose a problem? Perhaps an introductory chapter laying out the relevant and agreed upon facts of Grotius' life and the manuscript would help provide a vehicle for exploring the differences.

There are certain current approaches to intellectual and cultural history that would seem to be of relevance but did not make it into this volume. Yes, *De Iure Praedae* was first published in 1864, but did it not circulate at all in manuscript form before then? Much important work in early modern European history of late has focused on the circulation of manuscripts – something modern scholars, with their preference for published

books, had long overlooked. There is a fascinatingly detailed piece on the re-editing of portions of the text for publication as *Mare liberum*, but virtually nothing else on the life of *De Iure Praedae* from the time of its composition until its 1864 publication. Also, what about the contemporary reception (if any) to the text? Another essay notes that publishing a new edition of *De Iure Praedae* poses a challenge, given its many layers of composition. Could this not also be seen as a fruitful avenue of inquiry? Students of the creation and transmission of knowledge need to take a closer look at Grotius.

The essays make clear that between the surviving manuscripts and letters, Grotius offers much material for further study. This volume will undoubtedly be a valuable reference point for future studies. But one is left wondering, will a new wave of scholarship emerge, or will older interpretive habits continue to frame how we write and think about Grotius?

EVAN HAEFELI, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Stern, Jill, *Orangism in the Dutch Republic in Word and Image, 1650-75* (Studies in Early Modern European History; Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 2010, xii + 227 pp., ISBN 978 0 7190 8116 3).

When on 6 November, 1650, stadholder William II died from smallpox, many regents in Holland and elsewhere in the Dutch Republic must have breathed a sigh of relief. This was their chance to get rid of the stadholderate and they did so almost immediately. Holland led the way, but already in 1651 a majority of the provinces in the Great Assembly agreed to leave the position of stadholder vacant. The following two decades, known to historians as the First Stadholderless Era, witnessed an explosion of innovative republican political thought. These were the years in which Franciscus van den Enden wrote his *Vrije Politieke*

*Stellingen*, Spinoza formulated his subversive theories, and the brothers De la Court celebrated the advantages of a commercial republic without a stadholder in a stream of publications. Others, such as Radboud Scheels in his *Libertas Publica* of 1666, praised the establishment of a true republic along more traditional lines by appealing to classical antiquity. There were also those who used the rich arsenal of Dutch history to argue that the ancient rights and privileges of Dutchmen were much better protected in a state without a stadholder. A great many eminent historians have studied this wide variety of republican argument against the stadholderate. Much less attention has been paid to the arguments of those who deplored the abolition of the stadholderate during the third quarter of the seventeenth century. Although the Orangist writings of these decades have been discussed by Pieter Geyl and, more recently and in a far more sophisticated manner, by Gert Onne van de Klashorst, a comprehensive monograph on the subject was hitherto lacking. Jill Stern's study on the political language of Orangism during the First Stadholderless Era is therefore a most welcome addition to the existing scholarly literature.

The shrill and sometimes near hysterical tones in which the adherents of the States party discussed the potential dangers of the stadholderate suffice to make it clear that this was a topic of absorbing interest and great importance to contemporaries. This was especially so since under the seemingly solid edifice of 'true liberty' a most dangerous time bomb was ticking. A few days after the death of William II, his wife Mary Stuart had given birth to a son, whose claims to become stadholder grew stronger and less easy to ignore as he approached adulthood. The Orangists of the 1650s and 1660s made it their task to support the claims of William III with a rich arsenal of arguments and thereby to keep him in the public eye at all times. A particularly effective argument they deployed, and one moreover with impeccable classical roots, was the theory of mixed government. Following the political thought of