

Joining scholarship by Erica Fudge and Peter Sahlin on the cultural history of animals in early modern Europe, *Transoceanic Animals as Spectacles* offers an example of how to read across many literary and artistic genres to analyze the histories of nonhuman beings. Scholars of European art history will value the book's careful study of the transmission of animal iconography in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish visual culture. Historians of human-animal interactions will appreciate the book's contributions to the field in the early modern period. By touching on non-European contexts, the book invites scholars to consider further the paradoxical relationship between theatrical display and violent erasure in early modern cities containing animal collections outside of Europe, such as Tenochtitlan or Agra. University professors intrigued by the book's methodology will be interested in the appendixes, which offer a sample assignment for teaching biogeography in undergraduate humanities courses.

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Early Modern Sovereignities: Theory and Practice of a Burgeoning Concept in the Netherlands. Erik De Bom, Randall Lesaffer, and Werner Thomas, eds. Legal History Library 47. Leiden: Brill, 2021. x + 310 pp. €141.

In 2014, a group of scholars organizing a conference on early modern sovereignties sought papers examining the influence of Spanish Scholastics' theoretical views about sovereignty on the politics of the early modern Low Countries. I know nothing about the submissions they received, their experiences at the 2015 conference, or the editorial process that culminated in the final volume. Whatever the case, the results seem to have abandoned the effort to examine how political theory influenced politics. In fact, members of the Salamanca School only appear in Gustaaf van Nifterik's essay, which compares two Spanish Scholastics' ideas about state power to those of Hugo Grotius. The other essays in this fascinating and useful volume underline that early modern political theories in the Low Countries tended to be reactive expressions developed as justifications for actions, decisions, and strategies that were driven by contingent military and diplomatic purposes. That is, when it came to ideas about sovereignty, practice often drove theory, and not the other way around.

Bram De Ridder's essay (which appears fourth) offers an intellectual framework that nicely encompasses the volume overall. De Ridder argues for the usefulness of understanding sovereignty not as a theoretical concept but as a type of political argumentation used to claim control over territory. As he explains through a study of treatises signed between 1576 and 1664, notions of sovereignty evolved willy-nilly with the military and diplomatic vicissitudes surrounding struggles over territory in the Eighty Years' War.

Other contributions reinforce the conclusion that claims about sovereignty were often adapted to serve immediate demands. Hans Blom demonstrates that Hugo Grotius altered his theory of sovereignty to suit the political interests of the Dutch Republic. Lies van Aelst highlights how Simon Stevin and François Vranck developed divergent understandings of sovereignty to serve the same interest of justifying the Dutch Revolt. And Shavana Haythornthwaite demonstrates how individuals and governments utilized sometimes contorted logics of sovereignty to restore property seized in the maritime Anglo-Dutch wars. Alicia Eseban Estringana details the dynastic management plans of Charles V and Philip II to keep the Netherlands within the Habsburg patrimony while minimizing the threat that these fractious provinces posed to the dynasty's European strategies. José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez describes the transfer of sovereignty in Cambrai from a French warlord allied with King Henri IV to Philip II of Spain. While Cambrai's urban militia claimed the authority to change their sovereign, Philip II portrayed the transfer as a justified response to an act of aggression within the accepted rules of war, thus not acknowledging limitations to his royal authority. Simon Groenveld describes the diverse claims and functions of sovereignty in the United Provinces, including a discussion of a newly discovered 1642 treatise that envisioned the Prince of Orange and the states of Holland as exercising a shared sovereignty that ultimately lay with the people as a whole. René Vermeir offers the only contribution that focuses on the southern Netherlands after the functional break between north and south. Even in this monarchy, Vermeir shows, legislating included the participation of the States General (in 1632–33) and the provincial states, even if delegates of the states of Flanders (examined here) treated their role as reactive to emerging problems, not driven by any distinct political ideology.

Gustaaf Janssens's essay, which is not about sovereignty *per se*, shows that Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, the Duke of Alba, felt that he had successfully restored political order in the Netherlands by 1571, following the unrest of the previous years. Taking Alba's perspective is extremely valuable, even if stopping in 1571 leaves the impression that the renewed revolt in 1572 emerged largely independently of the unrest of 1566–68.

Jean Bodin, Hugo Grotius, and (more generally) the canon of European political philosophers who reconceptualized sovereignty during the early modern era loom over this book. Valuable essays in this collection help scholars appreciate that key agents shaping European political theory were not just titans of the Western canon, but a far more diverse range of historical actors to whom political theorists merely responded, either as participants in the debates of their day or as retrospective justifiers of contingent outcomes.

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