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Das Auge der Geschichte. Der Aufstand der Niederlande und die Französischen Religionskriege im Spiegel der Bildberichte Franz Hogenbergs (ca. 1560-1610)

Esser, Raingard

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Das Auge der Geschichte. Der Aufstand der Niederlande und die Französischen Religionskriege im Spiegel der Bildberichte Franz Hogenbergs (ca. 1560–1610)

by Ramon Voges, Leiden, Brill, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, vol. 216, 2019, XVII, 422pp, €129

Raingard Esser

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indulgences must surely have played a part in the fall from favour of printed indulgences in the Low Countries in this period.

The last, beautifully illustrated chapter introduces a myriad of delights, revealing how many late medieval or Early Modern manuscripts still have or once had printed images even if the prints have been removed to leave ghostly shapes behind where they were trimmed to exact figure shapes. This chapter is where I should have enjoyed more analysis and more examples as its 61 pages pass far too quickly. I suppose a good book, like an excellent performance, always leaves one wanting more. If I have a small reservation, it is the lopsidedness of the chapters. Perhaps the general overview of chapter four would have fleshed out the context of the short introduction before the forensic detail given to Add. 24332 and to a lesser extent Add. 31002. The personal and hence gendered narrative pursued by Rudy makes her book a wake-up call to the deficiencies of academia; it charts the desperate financial and exhausting mental situations researchers suffer when libraries and institutions do not properly fund research activities and leave the individual to pick up the high costs of copyrighted image fees. Such valuable research should be properly supported. It is heartening that many institutions now allow digital photographs for personal research but disappointing that they feel the need to charge image copyrights for academic books which can run into thousands of pounds, fees that researchers may have to pay out of their own (usually restricted) salaries, or as others (but not Rudy) have done, resort to their own drawings rather than use expensive photographs. Such modern academic issues of being forced to cut one's coat according to one's cloth resonate with how the Maastricht Franciscan tertiaries had to manipulate their stock of engravings, by turning St Wolfgang and his axe into St Servatius and his dragon by judicious use of image, knife, and gluepot. This is an exciting book and, despite some flaws, highly recommended.

Diane Heath
Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, UK
diane.heath@canterbury.ac.uk

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Das Auge der Geschichte. Der Aufstand der Niederlande und die Französischen Religionskriege im Spiegel der Bildberichte Franz Hogenbergs (ca. 1560–1610), by Ramon Voges, Leiden, Brill, *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions*, vol. 216, 2019, XVII, 422pp, €129

Franz Hogenberg's etchings on what became iconic images of iconic events in the Eighty Years' War are omnipresent in any discussion of the conflict. They appear on book covers, in articles, and many of them featured in the recent Rijksmuseum exhibition, *80 Jaar Oorlog*.

It is all the more surprising that until recently, their maker and the strategy of his Cologne printing house have hardly received any scholarly attention. Ramon Voges has filled this gap with his PhD dissertation, which has now appeared in print in its German original. There is a wealth of material which sheds light on the carefully considered selection and marketing of themes and events that laid the foundation of the success of the series that Hogenberg created for the Eighty Years War and for the French Wars of Religion. The thoroughly-researched study of Voges finally allows us to understand the process by which the images of the conflicts

have received the attention and recognition of contemporaries both within and outside the Low Countries (and France) and how they acquired the status as both seemingly accurate depictions of past events and their interpretation. The book follows a chronological approach from Hogenberg's first steps to market his images following his successful publishing business in Cologne and finally to the reception of these images which were incorporated into a number of important histories of the Eighty Years' War of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Voges addresses the content of some of the most recognizable images, the interplay between image and text commentary, Hogenberg's publication strategies of both single sheets and image series and the challenges and opportunities of the exile printer from Mechelen and his business in Cologne.

In his introduction, Voges demonstrates his knowledge of recent iconological theories and approaches and contextualizes Hogenberg's images as image-narratives of contemporary events ('Ereignisbilder'), while applying Erwin Panofsky's understanding of meaning in the visual arts in their interpretation. The image-text composition of Hogenberg's etchings, as well as the entanglement of classical topoi and graphic depictions of events, as argued by Voges, allow both a direct engagement and a critical distance of the viewer, when confronted with the often-grim scenes of violence or executions.

Hogenberg's business strategies come to life in the first two chapters of the book, which sketch the world of the publishing business in the Free Imperial City of Cologne, a prominent early modern printing centre. Its magistrates, in spite of Cologne's impeccable Catholic credentials, did not hinder the activities of Protestant printers, and their works – as long as they did not jeopardize the status and safety of the city itself and its desired neutrality in the great confessional conflicts of the time. Here, the reader learns a lot about the networks that Hogenberg could and did employ to market his etchings, for instance at the important Frankfurt book fair. His business model was based on collaboration with other publishers, authors, and print entrepreneurs such as Georg Braun, with whom he produced the *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* in six volumes (1572–1617), or Michael Aitzing and Emmanuel van Meteren, who republished a selection of Hogenberg's etchings in their own *Histories of the Eighty Years' War*. The collaboration with the latter also enhanced the credibility of Hogenberg's images, given that Aitzing was a supporter of the Habsburg case and van Meteren a (moderate) defender of the rebels. The reader of these chapters is reminded of Sandra Langereis' excellent biography of Christoffel Plantijn and his Antwerp printing business (Sandra Langereis, *De Woordenaar, Christoffel Plantijn, 's werelds grootste drukker en uitgever* (1520–1589), Uitgeverij Balans 2014). While one secret of Plantijn's success was the diversification of his business and the employment of his whole family in different branches, sometimes unrelated to the art of printing, we learn relatively little about Hogenberg's wider family; his wife and children and their contribution to the firm remain obscure.

In Voges' careful and detailed analysis of the themes depicted by Hogenberg, some observations are particularly striking: the choice of urban scenes of sieges, massacres and seemingly mindless violence (in the Low Countries series always committed by Spanish troops, never by the forces of William of Orange) against civilians became a new powerful feature in the iconography of war. Some of the images, for instance of the murder of a pregnant woman whose unborn child was hacked out of her body during the sacking of Oudewater in 1575, were repeatedly featured in later narratives of the event (while contemporary accounts did not mention the murder). The scene was even further dramatized by eyewitnesses who claimed that the woman had been pregnant with twins or even triplets, who were all murdered, thus giving evidence of an increase in violence in the depictions over time. Hogenberg also included classical figures in his drastic scenes, thus adding metaphorical

messages to his images which went beyond the 'mere' depiction of a particular event of violence in wartime. The last chapter, *Receptions*, zooms in on the role that Hogenberg's prints played in the books of the great Cologne chronicler Herman Weinsberg (1518-1597). Here, Voges almost loses sight of his own topic and focuses on the memory and information practices of Weinsberg, in which Hogenberg's work only plays one role among other collections of information and Weinsberg's system of verifying the news that he received from different media. Nevertheless, the chapter succeeds in outlining the role that Hogenberg's images played as trustworthy news media and sources of information among his contemporaries.

The book is generously supplied with images, as befits the topic, but unfortunately, the quality of the reproductions is rather poor and often blurred.

Raingard Esser
University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands

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