Michiel van Groesen, ed.

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This volume collects articles from the workshop “The Legacy of Dutch Brazil” held in Amsterdam, 2011 and presents evidence that the period of Dutch rule in Brazil had an impact far beyond the colonial and national histories of Brazil and the Netherlands. Michiel van Groesen has edited a fine collection of articles that is successful in its stated aim of initiating a “radical shift” in the historiography of Dutch Brazil. Scholars have tended to dismiss the colony as a short-lived (1624–1654) anomaly, to be excluded from Atlantic studies because the Dutch Atlantic does not fit the same patterns as other major European empires, the prominent place of Brazil in Latin American historiography notwithstanding. The book both interrogates how legacies were constructed and questions “whether the way we think about the colonial episode today is the product of conventional historical wisdom or of a set of functional myths” (2).

This volume offers compelling evidence for the influence of Dutch Brazil, which is treated as a “legacy”—geopolitical, cultural or national. The reader should not, however, take the three categories of legacy too strictly: it is not always clear why an article is placed in one category rather than another (for example why an article on trade and monopolies is placed in culture). Wim Klooster opens the discussion of the “geopolitical” legacy by examining Habsburg policies, inquiring how Dutch Brazil’s potential as a naval base affected Spanish dominance in the Caribbean and the Pacific coast of South America. Arguing against Jonathan Israel and his claim that Madrid’s response to Dutch control of Brazil was to close off the Caribbean, Klooster believes that the “Spanish Indies survived in spite of metropolitan inaction” (33). Klooster’s revision, however, actually lessens the impact of the Dutch navy on Habsburg interests. Stuart Schwartz demonstrates that the legacy of Dutch Brazil stems, in part, from its status as a model colony (at least, before the 1640s). The decline of sugar in the 1640s, as he shows, brought with it a host of problems for the Dutch, problems which ultimately helped precipitate the Luso-Brazilian revolt. The second half of the seventeenth century witnessed a quest for a new Brazil “in both a real and metaphorical sense—a great and profitable tropical colony based on coerced labor that facilitated the realization of dreams of wealth and power” and religious tolerance (46). Mark Meuwese delves into indigenous loyalties after 1654, comparing how some mission Indians and autonomous Tapuya peoples of the Northeast integrated into Portuguese society rather seamlessly, while others retained their independence for more than half a cen-

ture. After the departure of the West India Company, many indigenous peoples put their hope in the Jesuits because they allowed them to remain autonomous under Portuguese rule. In Dutch Brazil, indigenous peoples learned lessons on the acquisition of territorial rights and the preservation of their political autonomy “by remaining flexible in the face of the uncertain outcome of the wars between European powers” (76). Roquinaldo Ferreira traces the legacy of the Luso-Dutch peace treaty of 1661, which saw the Dutch relinquish Brazil, in exchange for money and restrictions on Portuguese trading along the Slave Coast. Through the movement of tobacco and gold between Brazil and Africa in the eighteenth century, Ferreira analyzes both sides’ circumventions of the treaty’s provisions. After the loss of Elmina, Portuguese traders rebuilt their ties to African rulers and continued purchasing slaves, in blatant violation of the treaty. Likewise, the Dutch illicitly carried slaves to Bahia in exchange for smuggled gold.

Mariana Fraçoço begins Part II, the “cultural” legacy, with an account of gift-giving, and the assembling and dismantling of Johan Maurits’s collection of curiosities. Africans, Indians, and Europeans partook in the exchange of gifts that became a product (and producer) of global connections, and that could have very different meanings depending on the geographic and cultural context. In chapter six, Evan Haefeli argues that Dutch Brazil “marked a significant break in the expansion of Christianity overseas” (125), because the Dutch tolerance of Judaism and the beliefs of African slaves brought the Christianization of the Americas to a halt. Since Protestantism required adherents to be at least minimally literate, and slave owners felt threatened by the thought of an educated labor force, the Dutch did not baptize and catechize slaves as the Portuguese and Spanish had. After the Dutch left, however, Brazil was (inadvertently) more firmly Catholic than before they had arrived. Luso-Brazilian Catholics waged “The War of Divine Liberation” using the rhetoric of a religious war and their victory was “divine confirmation of the rebels’ catholic zeal” (131). In chapter seven, Johan Verberckmoes examines the Antwerp Jesuit Cornelius Hazart, who wrote about Brazil as a battleground for confessional conflict. Even though the directors of the West India Company expelled the Society from Brazil in 1635, Hazart included Brazil in his *Ecclesiastical History of the Entire World*. Hazart believed that “the legacy of Dutch Brazil was the ultimate victory of Catholicism” (155). Verberckmoes compares the *History* to the writings of the Jesuit António Vieira from Maranhão in the 1640s: while Vieira believed that the Society had to accept Dutch presence as a *fait accompli*, Hazart, writing from the Spanish Netherlands more than twenty years later, wrote that Catholics in Brazil were “fiercely opposed” to the Calvinists. Neil Safier addresses the legacy of Georg Marcgraf and Willem Piso, two naturalists

at Maurits's Brazilian court, specifically the impact of their *Historia naturalis Brasiliae* on subsequent natural and historical treatises that followed. Published in 1648, the *Historia naturalis* was the model for writing on natural history for the next 150 years. Arthur Westeijn analyzes the debates over free trade in the United Provinces, which were ultimately to hamstring Dutch Brazil. Westeijn argues that the Dutch commercial experience in Brazil in the late 1630s produced the free trade ideology of the 1660s, which was to continue through the Enlightenment, as manifested in such thinkers as the former Jesuit Guillaume-Thomas Raynal.

Part III examines how the memories and mythologies of Dutch Brazil eventually contributed to the rise of nationalism. Michael van Groesen investigates why certain Dutch naval heroes are well remembered, while others have been forgotten. Rebecca Parker Brienens looks at the sale and collection histories of 155 Frans Post paintings from Dutch Brazil, focusing on Dutch and Brazilian collectors since the nineteenth century. She argues that Post's paintings have contributed to the process of nation-building in the Netherlands of the late nineteenth century, and in Brazil up to the present day. Specifically, she posits that his landscapes "help create an idealized vision of the past on which the success of the present may be built" (247). Julie Berger Hochstrasser considers the visual legacy of Dutch Brazil in the world today, looking at architecture, town planning, *azulejos* (glazed ceramic tile work), newspaper prints, and Albert Eckhout's paintings. Eckhout's work, the first depictions of Brazilian identity as a blending of races, cannot be isolated from Gilberto Freyre's "racial democracy" in the mid-twentieth century. Lastly, in a fascinating historiographical epilogue, Joan-Pau Rubiés questions how scholars of Dutch Brazil have constructed myths in the process of historical writing. One wishes the themes of the epilogue had been more central to the volume: the idea of myth, raised in the introduction, has become lost in the intervening chapters. Rubiés argues that in the case of Dutch Brazil "history matters *because* it becomes myth" (288). He locates the origin of this particular myth in the conflicting seventeenth-century accounts, and in the ideological concerns of various historians. Of the many myths spawned since Brazil's colonial days, the country as ethnic and racial melting pot is the most prominent.

This book vindicates the study of Dutch Brazil, profoundly illuminating a colony whose significance is utterly disproportionate to the brevity of its existence.

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