D.L. Noorlander, *Heaven's Wrath: The Protestant Reformation and the Dutch West India Company in the Atlantic World*. Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2019. vii + 289 pp. (Cloth US\$45.00)

In the past two decades or so scholars of Atlantic history have emphasized the importance of connections that extend beyond imperial boundaries. The Dutch in particular are often highlighted as drivers and carriers of goods, people, and ideas in the “French,” “Iberian,” “Scandinavian,” or “English” Atlantic worlds. *Heaven's Wrath*, however, does not focus on (for example) the role of Calvinism in an interimperial Atlantic or the multi-ethnic background of the clergy within a “Dutch” Atlantic to contribute to this strand of Atlantic historiography. Instead, D.L. Noorlander argues for the “strength and immediacy” of the relationship between the Church and the West India Company (WIC) (p. 8). It therefore primarily contributes to the historiography of the relationship between religion and economic activity.

In eight well-written chapters, Noorlander argues (in contrast to J.G. van Dillen, Jelle Riemersma, and George L. Smith) that the Church and the Company did not have very opposing interests. Calvinism was not an afterthought for profit-driven merchants, but part and parcel of the WIC's endeavor in the Atlantic. The book discusses Calvinism in the boardroom, forts, and fields and on ships, while simultaneously covering the Dutch territorial claims in North America, South America, Africa, and the Caribbean. On board the Nassau and Brouwer fleets, the book even ventures briefly into the Pacific Ocean. The writing engages readers with sentences such as “The King was too busy just then to answer his Flemish hate mail” (p. 79). Moreover, the narrative includes many entertaining anecdotes from primary sources such as mention of the cross-dressing Maritgen/David Jans (pp. 107–8) or poor Karel van Hartsteen who wanted to become a member of the clergy so badly that he tried five times, but was rejected because he “was a ‘very incapable singer’” (p. 33). These sorts of examples come from a very large primary source base in many different archives (and even a Dutch television program! [p. 36]) and it is an impressive feat that Noorlander managed to weave in so many anecdotes and at the same time keep the book so coherent and readable.

The downside of the many quotes and anecdotes in a language other than their original is that sometimes a reader might want to look up the original Dutch to see the context and translation choices. For example, when Frederick V appealed to the WIC in 1628 on behalf of “sad persons” from the German lands (p. 31), were they *miserabele personen* (e.g. widows, orphans, or the poor) or were they the social upper classes that were a bit disappointed as a result

of ongoing the Thirty Years' War? Unfortunately, the endnotes do not provide original quotes.

A more fundamental criticism of the book is the choice of what historiographical debate to engage. *A priori*, I did not need to be convinced of the argument that business and religion went hand in hand. Naturally, religion was central to the WIC and the Dutch Republic. The same individuals that had a seat in the City Council and were Company Directors also served on Reformed consistories and Church councils—or if not them, their family members. The Dutch Republic can be seen as a *Familial State* (Julia Adams, 2005) or a republic of aggregate interests (Jan Glete, *War and the State*, 2002). Instead of positioning the book so fully within religious historiography, Noorlander could have included a contribution to (for example) the literature on the relationship between the Church and State-chartered expansion. A good alternative could have been Iberian discussions of the “nebula of power” (Francisco Bethencourt & Diogo Ramada Curto [eds.] *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion*, 2007) and the role of the Church.

Moreover, the claim that “the Dutch failed to establish a durable empire” because of “tremendous expenses” related to Calvinism (book jacket) is unsubstantiated at a salary cost of less than 20,000 guilders per year (pp. 194–99), especially if we consider that the Brazilian Governor General's dinner table already cost 9,000 guilders per month and that much of the paid salaries would be spent in the colonies and thus indirectly flow back into the coffers of the Company.

Heaven's Wrath is a well-written and enjoyable monograph based on thorough research in an enormous collection of primary sources by an author who demonstrates joy in writing. Noorlander has written a book that is a boon for everyone interested in any religious element of the Dutch Atlantic. It will prove to be a welcome reference (in both the text itself and its footnotes) for everyone working on this general topic.

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