

*Cultures of Conflict Resolution in Early Modern Europe.* Stephen Cummins and Laura Kounine, eds.

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This volume represents an excellent contribution to the ongoing debate on peacemaking in the early modern period. By explicitly taking inspiration from John Bossy's seminal edited book *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West*, the editors have conceived this collection of essays by taking into account all the theoretical and methodological reflections that for decades, on this particular issue, have affected several fields of research, such as history, history of law and of legal practices, anthropology, sociology, and the philosophy of law. Since the mid-twentieth century historians have abandoned the paradigm of the process of civilization (Burckhardt, Huizinga, Elias) by welcoming the suggestions coming from anthropology, which taught scholars from different disciplines not to consider vengeance and feud as a social pathology and as a typical archaic custom of the stateless societies, but as a very effective instrument of social regulation.

The editors have chosen a rather wide approach to the question of peacemaking: space is not only given to questions strictly concerning the practices of justice, since several contributions analyze numerous phenomena and historical contexts more generally characterized by the search for mediation and peace. Peacemaking thus appears as a multiform process that depends on a wide range of factors: territorial specificities, social contexts, social standing, age, and gender. Furthermore, the need for a comparative approach and for the enlargement to non-European contexts (see the essay by Tara Alberts on the pacification of factional disputes in Portuguese Asia) is strongly asserted.

The volume is divided into three sections: "Rethinking Disputes and Settlements," "Mediation, Reconciliation, Coexistence," and "Law, Courts and Conflict." In the first part, several methodological questions are raised by John Jordan, particularly on the ways in which historians can take advantage of theoretical acquisitions of legal anthropology, which was the novelty of the collection of essays edited by John Bossy, in which an article written by Simon Roberts stood out for originality and profoundness. Marco Cavarzere, on his part, addresses the issue of the Medici's intervention in the pacification of the sixteenth-century Tuscan factional conflicts, not before outlining a suggestive landscape of the Italian historiography concerning peacemaking. Cavarzere stresses that if, on the one hand, Italian historians traditionally reflected on this issue from the perspective of the early modern state-building process, on the other hand, Italian microhistorians explicitly refused any teleological interpretation that would assume the historical necessity of political and administrative centralization. It is in the second section that the volume opens up to a wider concept of peacemaking: Christian Schneider tackles the issue of the perception and self-perception of the different types of authorities that could

assume a peacemaking or arbitration role (the early modern papacy, above all); Christian Kühner and Nicholas Funke study the mediation and arbitration activity carried out, respectively, in France in the aristocratic milieu during the Wars of Religion and in Germany during the Thirty Years' War.

The third and final section contains essays addressing more traditional aspects of peacemaking—that is, from the point of view of courts and legal practices. Tom Hamilton studies the rituals of public executions in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Paris, focusing on the crowd's responses, which could be of full approval or, on the contrary, of criticism and protest leading to requests of pardons and forgiveness. Gabriella Erdélyi, on her part, analyzes the appeals to the Roman curia—that is, the requests for pardons addressed to the pope—coming from the Hungarian countryside during the late Middle Ages, highlighting the various ways in which the social actors could use a transnational institution such as the Apostolic Penitentiary in order to negotiate local disputes and to bypass official lay justice. The witches on trial in early modern Germany are at the center of Laura Kounine's contribution, while Stephen Cummins studies the pardons and the various types of peace agreements (compositions, remissions, etc.) stipulated in the kingdom of Naples during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Finally, Stuart Carroll in the afterword warns historians about the necessity of re-adjusting the Foucauldian perspective of a modern, absolutist state that had no hesitations in punishing blood crimes with the utmost rigor. Even in the late eighteenth century, pardons and peace agreements were not a rare event, and the “lexicon of hatred” can be found everywhere in the judicial records. We all should keep in mind Carroll's final exhortation, inspired by John Bossy's historiographic legacy: “If, as the advocates of ‘legalism’ desire, we are about to return to elucidating the rules and establishing the norms, let us hope that this does not come at the expense of the history of real people” (286).

Paolo Broggio, *Università degli Studi Roma Tre*

*Factional Struggles: Divided Elites in European Cities and Courts (1400–1750).*  
Mathieu Caesar, ed.

Rulers and Elites 10. Leiden: Brill, 2017. xii + 258 pp. \$138.

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Consisting of an introduction and ten contributions, this volume edited by Mathieu Caesar seeks to capture the phenomenon of the city and court factions in Western Europe from the fifteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century. Analyses of social and anthropological nature have been extensively used to decrypt such con-