

Perhaps another way to consider Grotius' idiosyncrasies, not much explored here, is as a product of his relatively unusual institutional circumstances: seventeenth-century humanist scholars (at least in the Protestant world) tended to be based in universities (one thinks of Scaliger's other students and followers: Heinsius, Saumaise, Drusius, Amama, L'Empereur, etc.). Grotius was in many ways one of the last great 'sixteenth-century' humanists, attempting to combine a life in scholarship with one in political service. In this he was similar to another lawyer-scholar, John Selden, recently the subject of a very different but equally brilliant biography by G. J. Toomer (2009) – one would be very interested in Nellen's thoughts on similarities between Grotius and his English counterpart.

This book is for the most part beautifully written and produced. However, given the huge number of subjects that will be of interest to a scholarly audience whose members will not all want to read it cover-to-cover, one might have wished for an index that went beyond proper nouns.

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Picturing religious experience. George Herbert, Calvin, and the Scriptures. By Daniel W. Doerksen. Pp. xiii + 241. Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2011. £44.95 978 1 611 356 6
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Daniel W. Doerksen's *Picturing religious experience* is a powerful argument for treating *The Temple* as a representation and enactment of Calvinist spiritual life. Through a series of sensitive close readings, Doerksen draws important and persuasive connections between the poet and the theologian: both, he shows, centred their understanding of Christian experience on the Bible (and especially the Psalms) as a pattern for the believer's inner life, and both saw spiritual conflict as the crux of human intimacy with God. Reading Herbert and Calvin in this way requires revising some approaches to each. The second chapter, a shrewd examination of how early readers impressed *The Temple* and its author into a Laudian programme foreign to both, should be required reading for scholars working on seventeenth-century devotional poetry. More broadly, Doerksen makes the implicit case that reading devotional texts primarily through the lens of doctrine can blur the result, and, in Herbert's case, obscure the affinities of his writings with the pastoral side of Calvin's thought. While Doerksen does turn to the *Institutes* to show agreement between Herbert and Calvin, the latter's *Commentary on the Psalms* is a much more important touchstone throughout the study. In addition to adjusting our understanding of how Herbert's poems work, this emphasis is also part of a much briefer intervention on behalf of Calvin. The caricatures of Calvin as a steely prophet of despair and of English Calvinism as synonymous with Presbyterianism are, fortunately, becoming harder to find even in literary scholarship. *Picturing religious experience* nevertheless reminds readers that the English Church was broadly Calvinist from Elizabeth's accession to the mid-seventeenth century, that Calvinism is not reducible to predestination and that predestination is in any case a way of understanding God's mercy, and

that the theologian was profoundly concerned with the compassionate care of souls. The study is thus convincing in arguing that Herbert had much in common with and on occasion was directly influenced by Calvin. Precisely because forms of devotional experience can sometimes be compatible with multiple doctrines, though, it would have been helpful if the book had had some account of the areas of overlap between the spiritual life described by Calvin, enacted by Herbert's poems, and assumed or prescribed by other devotional texts – for example, the Catholic private prayer books that, after tactful translation into English, were cheerfully used by English Protestants. That is, even Calvin is not always 'Calvinist' when his materials are traditional. Regardless of whether the pedigree of these ideas is completely pure, however, Doerksen here offers a description of how Herbert's lyrics work that seems, simply, true.

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Charles I and the people of England. By David Cressy. Pp. ix + 447 incl. 12 figs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. £30. 978 0 19 870829 2

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King Charles I was a difficult man to know. Divided by rank even from his closest associates, Charles's personality was also less distinctive than, say, his father's, whose preoccupations and salty language generated endless contemporary anecdotes. Nevertheless, speculation on 'the man' Charles Stuart – what sort of man and king he was – has become a cottage industry among historians trying to measure his share of blame for the collapse of his kingdoms into civil war.

David Cressy presents his spirited and exhaustively-researched new book as a contribution to this debate. In fact, *Charles I and the people of England* has very little to say about Charles I as a person; this is one of the book's primary virtues, as the sources for Charles's personal conduct are polemical and difficult to use. Cressy's intervention is more historiographical, and goes like this: some scholars have tried to defend Charles I by arguing that he was not as aloof, unpopular, inaccessible and unreasonable as is often assumed. A few – or at least the late Kevin Sharpe – sometimes suggested that negative impressions of Charles were anachronistic errors, constructed after the collapse of his reign by his parliamentary enemies or their sympathisers in the historical profession. Cressy, however, convincingly shows that negative impressions of Charles I were generated throughout his reign. In other words, not only later propagandists, but also some of Charles I's own subjects, said that he was a rotten king.

Cressy makes this point through what we might call argument by successive quotation, and it is in these extended recitations of evidence that Cressy really finds his voice. *Charles I and the people of England* features a number of passages that only an encyclopaedist like Cressy could write: one eight-page section narrates, in chronological order, weather conditions for every season of every year, complete with illustrative quotations, for the first fourteen years of the king's reign (pp. 56–63). The book jacket blurb, by Tim Harris, describes Cressy's book as 'evocative', which means that Cressy uses primary sources to make things concrete and particular: by enumerating the food available at accession-day festivities in Cambridge (p. 85), or by describing Charles I's royal progresses as the vast