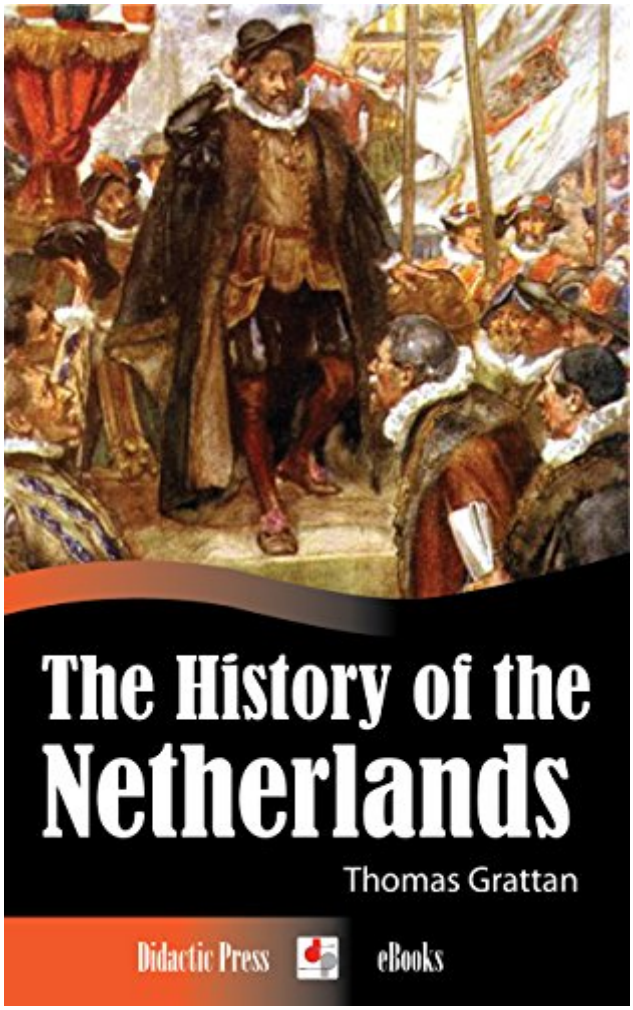
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The History Of The Netherlands (Illustrated)



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Synopsis

The scenery of Dutch history has episodes as stirring and instructive as those of any civilized people since history began; but it reached its dramatic and moral apogee when the independence of the United Netherlands was acknowledged by Spain. The Netherlands then reached their loftiest pinnacle of power and prosperity; their colonial possessions were vast and rich; their reputation as guardians of liberty and the rights of man was foremost in the world. But further than this they could not go; and the moment when a people ceases to advance may generally be regarded as the moment when, relatively speaking at least, it begins to go backward. The Dutch could in no sense become the masters of Europe; not only was their domain too small, but it was geographically at a disadvantage with the powerful and populous nations neighboring it, and it was compelled ever to fight for its existence against the attacks of nature itself. The stormy waves of the North Sea were ever moaning and threatening at the gates, and ever and anon a breach would be made, and the labor of generations annulled. Holland could never enter upon a career of conquest, like France or Russia; neither could she assume the great part which Britain has played; for although the character of the Dutchmen is in many respects as strong and sound as that of the English, and in some ways its superior, yet the Dutch had not been dowered with a sea-defended isle for their habitation, which might enable them to carry out enterprises abroad without the distraction and weakness involved in maintaining adequate guards at home. They were mighty in self-defence and in resistance against tyranny; and they were unsurpassed in those virtues and qualities which go to make a nation rich and orderly; but aggression could not be for them. They took advantage of their season of power to confirm themselves in the ownership of lands in the extreme East and in the West, which should be a continual source of revenue; but they could do no more; and they wasted not a little treasure and strength in preserving what they had gained, or a part of it, from the grasp of others. But this was the sum of their possibility; they could not presume to dictate terms to the world; and the consequence was that they gradually ceased to be a considered factor in the European problem. In some respects, their territorial insignificance, while it prevented them from aggressive action, preserved them from aggression; their domain was not worth conquering, and again its conquest could not be accomplished by any nation without making others uneasy and jealous. They became, like Switzerland, and unlike Poland and Hungary, a neutral region, which it was for the interest of Europe at large to let alone. None cared to meddle with them; and, on the other hand, they had native virtue and force enough to resist being absorbed into other peoples; the character of the Dutch is as distinct to-day as ever it had been...

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Customer Reviews

This was the history I needed to read for my background in understanding the Dutch as a culture. It became clear early on through their battles with the sea and the creating of a solid soil on which to live and thrive, this people banded together for survival. The very creation of the land itself required that they balance their fight with the sea with a utilization of nature, attempting harmony through an adaptable ingenuity to design practical solutions for living. This understanding of self as part of the group, a natural form of socialism, called for sharing the responsibilities as well as the wealth. Working together has created an industrious people who explored and ruled a trading empire and whose wealth protected the people directly, establishing the rights to shelter, food, health and education that live on today.Throughout the 800 or so years that followed this unity has stayed alive in spite of or because of the incessant tribal and imperial European wars that followed. I admit to my head spinning in a number of places over this Treaty and that War, the royal characters interwoven generationally with names that seemed to flow from one monarchy to the next. We are left off before the modern era but by this time so war weary that I can understand the nature of Europeans and particularly the Dutch desire to prefer negotiation at all costs today. Over the generations the

alliances of the Dutch changed many times as did all of Europe and after reading of the intense conflicts for a millennium I'm left with a greater appreciation of the European Union of today and especially of The Netherlands' incredible role in it.

Don't know if it a translation or just poorly written. But it is really hard to get through and understand. Bought for 99 cents and you get what you pay for!

It's a fascinating history, even if I wasn't writing a novel set there in the early 19th Century.

without maps, it is hard to follow for readers unfamiliar with dutch history.

The writing is boring and dwells on wars and not on water management which makes Netherlands unique

Pretty good

very enjoyable read

Detailed and with the right references.

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