



BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review

Guidelines for book reviewers

BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review continuously publishes book reviews on the Journal's website.

When writing a book review the following guidelines should be borne in mind:

1. The length of the book review should be 800-1200 words.
2. A book review has three functions:
 - Positioning: the book reviewed should be placed in a historiographical context so that the reader can relate the book to the existing historiography of the subject in question.
 - Description: a review should give a good idea of the book's content. What is the central theme? Which subjects are dealt with and what are the author's principle arguments?
 - Assessment: a review is a (first) contribution to the debate on a book and gives both the strong and weak points of the work reviewed: a summary of the book is not sufficient. Both praise and criticism should be supported in a constructive manner and the author's viewpoint should be given correctly.
3. A book review should be readable: overly long sentences should be avoided.
4. A book review should be clear and accountable: statements should be supported (for example when it is stated that 'economic historians and art historians can learn a great deal from each other' an example should be given).
5. The guidelines for authors should be consulted in connection with style and annotation.
6. A review should be submitted within two months of receiving the book.

Reviewing collections of essays (edited books)

Collections of essays (edited books) are a difficult genre to review. Reviews of these are all too often no more than a summary of the articles, which is not what a review should be. As a result the editors advise the reviewer to make a clear choice:

- If the collection has a theme that clearly links the contributions, concentrate on discussing this theme.
- If the collection does not have a single theme, state this and then consider a limited number of articles that deserve attention.