

*Letters from Sir James Spens and Jan Rutgers*. Edited by ARNE JÖNSSON. The Works and Correspondence of Axel Oxenstierna II:13. The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in co-operation with The Swedish National Archives. Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien, Riksarkivet, Stockholm 2007. ISBN 978-91-7402-367-1. 643 p. SEK 285.

Axel Oxenstierna, Chancellor of Sweden under King Gustav II Adolf (1611–32), the regency of 1632–44, and Queen Christina (1644–54) is internationally best known as the leader of Swedish foreign policy during the Thirty Years' War. The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities has, since 1888, published Oxenstierna's collected works in two series: series I comprises Oxenstierna's historical and political works and his letters, series II contains letters written to Oxenstierna. The process of editing came to a stop in 1977, but in 1999 it was continued by the Academy in cooperation with the Swedish National Archives. The present volume contains diplomatic correspondence from the Scottish adventurer and officer Sir James (Jacob) Spens (d. 1632) and the Dutch humanist and jurist Jan Rutgers (1589–1625). Both were diplomats in Swedish service; the former was also entrusted with a number of important charges by British rulers. Rutgers received an excellent education; he was taught by some of the greatest scholars of the time, such as Gerhard Johann Vossius, Dominicus Baudius, Joseph Justus Scaliger and Daniel Heinsius.

The 86 letters written by Sir James Spens and the 185 letters by Jan Rutgers are chronologically arranged. Each letter is provided with an English summary of the contents. This enables those who are unable to read Latin to follow the correspondence. The letters are carefully edited according to editorial principles which mainly serve the purpose very well. The biographical notes, the reduced but well-focused selection of literature and the index assist the reader in surveying the letters that open a fascinating view of the European politics of the time. The volume is a valuable contribution to the studies of Neo-Latin epistolography, showing, once again, the importance of letters in the research on early modern times.

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ROGER WRIGHT: *A Sociophilological Study of Late Latin*. Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 10. Brepols, Turnhout 2002. ISBN 2-503-51338-7. VIII, 389 pp. EUR 65.

This book is a collection of twenty-five (mostly recent) articles by the author. They have originally been published in various places, and most of them have been revised or abbreviated to suit the needs of the collection at hand. The term sociophilology that appears in the title is defined by the author as "an approach to the linguistic study of texts from the past which attempts to combine traditional philological analysis with the insights of modern sociolinguistics". This definition immediately invokes interest in the reader, as does Wright's definition of Late Latin, "the language which, when written, is traditionally regarded as a kind of Latin, but when spoken, is often regarded as being 'Early Romance'". The articles have been arranged in chronological order of subject matter and grouped in six sections (Section A: Late Latin, Medieval Latin and Romance, Section B: Texts and Language in Late Antiquity, Section C: The Ninth Century, Section D: Italy and Spain in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries, Section E: