

larger conversation about the crusades as colonialism or other topics, but this is misplaced; the argument of the book is heuristic, not aiming to deepen our understanding of the period or its dynamics. The book opens a needed conversation, and the extent to which medieval depictions of the “other” are orientalist remains a fascinating and open question. I am less convinced by the utility of some of the other theoretical models used, but even in those cases, the book encourages the reader to reconsider categories, conceptual frameworks, and tools in a way that improves the field as a whole.

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W. Mark Ormrod, Bart Lambert, and Jonathan Mackman. *Immigrant England, 1300–1550*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019. xi + 300 pp. ISBN 9781526109149. \$29.95.

Immigrant England, 1300–1550 provides an insightful and highly readable account of the circumstances and experiences of first generation immigrants in late medieval England. Scholars have long recognized how immigration has shaped modern Britain and recent decades have witnessed a growing awareness among early modern specialists of immigration’s long and consequential pre-modern history. This book provides the first synthetic overview of immigration in medieval England and brings the period’s experiences into meaningful conversation with existing work on more recent periods.

The book has three main objectives. The first is to assess the size and geographical origin of the immigrant population and to document its distribution throughout the country. Much of the analysis in this portion of the book derives from the authors’ deep dive into the alien subsidies, the records of a special tax levied on immigrants between 1440 and 1487. The records do not provide a truly comprehensive register of all immigrants in the period, but they come reasonably close. Immigrants from continental Europe and Scotland paid the tax with few exceptions. Some Irish immigrants also paid but the basis for inclusion or exclusion was not as consistent as for other nationalities and the resulting data are not as conclusive. The only significant lacuna in the evidence involves Welsh migrants, whose status as Crown subjects made them exempt from most iterations of the tax.

Using the subsidy evidence and a few reasonable assumptions, the authors find that England had roughly 30,000 first generation immigrants at any given point in time in the second half of the fifteenth century, constituting between 1 and 2 percent of the total population. Not surprisingly, towns had higher proportions of immigrants than villages, with the immigrant population in some towns approaching ten percent of all inhabitants. London was a particularly attractive destination, but a few other towns, notably Bristol and Southampton, also drew significant numbers. What is most surprising about the subsidy evidence is not the prominence of towns as destinations but rather the extensive immigrant penetration of the countryside. The wide dispersion of the immigrant population in the countryside is particularly striking, with many villages serving as home to

single non-native individuals or households. Viewed regionally, the southeast and the north drew a larger share of immigrants than central parts of the country. Approximately one-third of immigrants came from the British Isles and two-thirds from the continent, with immigrants originating in northern France and other parts of northern Europe predominating among the latter group.

The book's second main objective is to explore how immigrants made a living and to explain the economic circumstances that drew them to their new homes. Immigrants were a diverse group, ranging from wealthy Italian merchants to impoverished Scottish farm laborers. Servants made up the preponderant group of immigrants in the period, with women and Scottish immigrants particularly well represented in the category. Skilled laborers also made up a significant part of the immigrant population. Popular trades for immigrants included textile manufacturing, leather working, and brewing. Immigrants also succeeded in luxury trades such as goldsmithing that catered to the well-to-do. The authors generally adopt a pull rather than a push model of immigration, arguing that in spite of the plague-induced erosion of the population and the general economic slump in the middle of the fifteenth century, England was still a land of opportunity, at least when compared to much of Europe and many other parts of the British Isles.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the book stems from the third objective, an effort to ascertain how well immigrants integrated into English society. There is no shortage of evidence to suggest that medieval English people were fundamentally racist and xenophobic. The appalling treatment of Jews in the thirteenth century and the abiding antipathy towards other non-Christians are clear examples. So is the targeting of immigrants during riots and other moments of disruption. The ferocious massacre of Flemings in the Great Revolt of 1381 is a well-known episode, as is the targeting of immigrants in London on Evil May Day in 1517. The authors provide a catalog of other acts of violence committed between these two dates and the list is long enough to suggest that relations were generally poor throughout the period. The authors also acknowledge the growing sense of English identity that emerged in the later Middle Ages, although they disagree with the view that antipathy to foreigners was a natural corollary of this development.

Ultimately, the authors take the position that incidents of violence were exceptional and not indicative of a deep-rooted and systemic hostility towards foreigners. On many occasions, natives perpetrated acts of violence against specific groups or nationalities rather than against foreigners in general, and their behavior typically stemmed from grievances against special commercial privileges or other financial benefits enjoyed by the targeted group. Anti-immigrant violence was not some kind of indiscriminate lashing out against all people with different cultural traditions or different accents but rather the outcome of targeted campaigns against economic privilege, typically orchestrated by people or social groups that had a direct financial stake in overturning the status quo. Furthermore, troubling though they were, such outbreaks of violence need to be understood in the context of an ongoing, multi-faceted relationship between natives and immigrants, a relationship that was renewed generation after generation in hundreds of towns and villages throughout the entire period under review. Viewing the situation from this perspective, the authors conclude that medieval English people were not

especially xenophobic, that they lived in peaceful coexistence with immigrants most of the time, and that they were, at the very least, willing to accept foreigners into their local communities.

There is certainly room for debate here. The authors' distinction between racism and xenophobia may be too rigid to hold up to deep scrutiny, and even if economic concerns lay behind the aggression against certain immigrant groups, some kind of low-level antipathy against foreigners still seems to be part of the equation when violence erupted. But the authors deserve a great deal of credit for articulating a new and more positive vision for the relationship, and for providing such a thorough and thought provoking presentation of the evidence available for making a judgment.

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Catherine Holmes and Naomi Standen, eds. *The Global Middle Ages*. Past and Present Supplements 18. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 441 pp, 8 maps. ISBN 9780198837503. £28/\$45

Medievalists who have engaged with world or global history have generally worked hard to earn their right to a place at the table, against the common presumption of (early) modernists, both historians and others, that they have nothing to bring to it, by demonstrating the relevance of their specialism to the great questions about the origins and nature of modernity. This volume, which originated in a series of meetings convened by a group of Oxford medievalists to explore the problems and possibilities of teaching medieval history on a global basis, from which evolved the more focused discussions that produced the publication, does not dispute the legitimacy of such concerns. (The reviewer, to declare an interest, took part in the former but not the latter). It does, however, insist that this is not the route to understanding the world before 1500 or thereabouts, and that that world is worth understanding for its own sake and on its own terms. To this end it neither surveys nor synthesizes “The Global Middle Ages,” and does not trouble itself overmuch as to what they might have been. “However great the methodological, terminological and political difficulties associated with (the label),” say the editors, “the plentiful evidence for behaviour and interaction on a global scale in the millennium before 1500 deserves sustained and precise analysis” (1-2), and that is exactly what they offer. It would be a mistake, however, to take that resounding declaration as betokening the traditional British disdain for methodological reflection. On the contrary, both the Editors' Introduction and the individual contributions are fully aware of the (mostly present-directed) debates around the terms of their title, though for the most part they choose not to engage with them at length. Instead, conscious of “the need to resist the teleology of modernity and resist the dominant globalization narrative”, they confront the evidence for their chosen millennium head on, asking first and foremost how to shake free of the distorting burden of the present and understand in its own right a world that “did not know it was before anything.” This requires more than merely avoiding